



WOLVERHAMPTON OVER 50s FORUM
Secretary: Mr. Roy Girdler
56 Cherrywood Green
Stowlawn
Bilston
Wolverhampton
WV14 6HN
Tel: 01902 409058

www.wolverhamptonover50sforum.co.uk

Minutes of Over 50s Forum
Held on Wednesday 17 September 2008, 10am

- Apologies:** Rose Powell, Sandra Ullah,
Jenny Purshouse, Marjorie Wedge.
- Present:** 28 Members, Jean Fairclough, (Minutes).
- Speakers:** Brian Pearce, West Midlands Fire Services
Kerry Tanner, Walsall PCT, Update on Bowel Cancer Screening
- Chairperson:** Brad Purshouse

Brad welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Speaker (1)

Brian Pearce gave an excellent presentation of what West Midlands Fire Services does. He explained that they are part of the Blue Light Service and explained that their aim is to make the West Midlands a safer place to live. There are 41 fire stations and they deal with all types of fire. There are approximately 50,000 house fires in Britain every year, fire has a major effect on people's lives and about 500 people die in house fires each year.

High risk groups are older people, children, smokers and the disabled. He said the O/50s are more likely to tackle fires but are probably less able to deal with them. He also stated that animals have the ability to get themselves out of fires. If an older person suffers 50% burn their chance of survival is halved, over 80s with 20% burns the survival rate is nil and if a child has 80% burns the survival rate will be about 12%, a combination of alcohol and medication reduces the risk of survival.

Brian informed forum that 60% of fires start in the kitchen, i.e. chip pans cause 3,500 fires and 30 deaths per year, hot oil and water when mixed can cause 70% burns, most deaths occur in the bedroom as fire often breaks out when people are asleep. The main causes are matches, lighters, electrical faults and cooking, also you should never leave lighted candles unattended. Gas fires should always have fireguards, the majority of fires are caused by candles being used in bedrooms, vases with water should not be put on top of the television and aerosols should not be left on window sills as these are likely to be heated up by the sun and could explode.

Every 3 days someone dies from fire caused by cigarettes, any electric blankets should

be checked annually by Trading Standards, everyone should get into the habit of testing smoke alarms and make sure they are fitted in the correct places. Fire Service undertake visits free of charge to people's homes to make sure their homes are safe from fire risks, they will also provide and fit smoke alarms free.

Ensure that all doors and windows are locked at night (always remember where the keys are kept) and know how you can get out in case of a fire, keep escape routes clear, make sure others know escape route too, never open hot doors as there may be fire behind them, if help is needed, open window and shout **FIRE** not help – people are more likely to respond to fire.

Brian pointed out that the Fire Service does not maintain fire alarms; therefore people need to contact their respective landlords if they feel that smoke alarms are not working as they should. Brian also pointed out that he was not able to answer any political questions. He also emphasised the importance of not overloading plugs.

Mr Rai commented on Diwali - Asian celebration of light where candles are used in the home and suggested that people should be made more aware of the danger of this and be alert to the danger by taking extra care during this celebration. Brian stated that the Fire Service do provide printed information and visit as many groups as possible in order to raise awareness of fire risks.

Speaker (2)

Kerry Tanner & colleague thanked the forum for invite. They gave an overview of what the Bowel Cancer Screening service provides. This service covers Wolverhampton Dudley and part of Staffordshire and has been running for 2 years. The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme was introduced in England in July 2006, offers screening every 2 years to **all** men and women aged 60 to 69. People over 70 can request a screening kit by calling free on **0800 707 60 60**, regular bowel cancer screening has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by 16%.

The screening test detects tiny amounts of blood, which you cannot normally see in your bowel motions. People who receive an abnormal result will be offered an appointment with a specialist nurse. The nurse will explain what's involved, assess the patient's fitness for the procedure and answer any questions.

Bowel cancer screening aims to detect bowel cancer at an early stage, people don't always display symptoms. The risk of developing bowel cancer increases with age; people with a family history of bowel cancer have an increased risk of developing the disease, seek advice from your GP. The risk can be reduced if people, take more exercise, reduce intake of alcohol and red meat, eat more vegetables, fruits and fibre and take part in screening programmes. It is important to be aware of the symptoms of bowel cancer, i.e. bleeding from back passage, persistent change in bowel habit (more regular or less regular), pain or lump in the abdomen etc. It was also pointed out that no one is missed out of the screening programme, i.e. people in residential establishments, others with learning disability have all been considered and are working towards this.

(Booklets on Bowel Cancer were distributed)

Brad thanked the speakers on behalf of forum members and welcomed 2 new members

to the forum.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes were agreed as an accurate account by Pat Whittaker and seconded by Roy Girdler.

Matters Arising

The forum asked that their condolences be passed on to Rose in view of her mum passing away.

Pat Bagley stated that Paul Smith would like to address forum on Low Hill Day Services.

Help the Aged surveys will be sent out with minutes to forum members. Mr Rai informed the forum that he's had a letter of apology from bus company.

Comments were again made regarding allowing older people to use their bus passes at 9am, as many of the buses seemed to be empty at that time, it was also commented on that in Wales older people travel free of charge so why not England.

Mike Nicholls **again** emphasised that people should campaign for the 24 hours nationwide travel pass service which would cover bus, train and trams, 7 days per week.

Chair's Remarks

No remarks were noted.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Walker, Treasurer, reported that the balance in the Forum account is now £2,116.17.

Correspondence

No correspondence was received.

Sub Group Reports

Environmental Committee formerly the Loos Sub Committee

Roy Girdler stated that although forum members were invited to the new environmental meeting it was poorly supported with only 4 members attending. Roy informed everyone that the chief officer of environmental services will be attending the next meeting on **Thursday 23 October, 2008, 2pm – 4pm, in Interview Room 17, Ground Floor, Civic.**

Housing

Pat O'Dowd reported on a number of issues regarding housing repairs which were brought to their attention during the meeting, i.e. kitchen repairs, heating, door repairs, fencing requested by Sandra Ullah, which was denied, etc and how these were dealt with

by contacting the appropriate housing officer for that area. Pat also stated that Wulfruna and Graiseley Court blocks are still empty.

Future environmental meeting dates are as follows:

Tues 21 October 2008	10:30 – 12:00	Interview Room 17, Ground Floor
Tues 25 November 2008	10:30 – 12:00	Interview Room 17, Ground Floor

Transport

David Plant commented on the no. 612 bus schedule, stating that perhaps this service needs to be advertised more fully.

Any Other Business

Health Focus leaflets from PCT, everyone should have had a copy. Also information on diabetes can be obtained from the PCT.

Mike Nicholls stated that the Road Safety Forum needs more support. People can ring Tim Philpot on 555465 with issues they might have. Date for Road Safety meeting has not yet been decided on.

Safer Wolverhampton Joint Consultation meeting will be 13 October 2008, at 2pm, in Meeting Room 3, Third Floor, Civic. Mike stated although the last meeting was very interesting, the attendance was poor.

Comments were made regarding the closure of post offices, and maybe next on the list will be chemists as the government seem to closing everything.

**Date of next meeting is Wednesday 15th October 2008, 10am – 12pm
Committee Room 3, Third Floor, Civic Centre.**