

NHS faces 2012 funding fiasco

Despite the outlook for the next six years being one of promised austerity and cuts, we are told that the NHS budget is protected and remains broadly unchanged. Indeed, Prime Minister David Cameron said on December 7 it would actually increase every year during the life of this Parliament. So that's alright then, but what's the real outlook for Enfield ?

Here we are a diverse, multi-cultural community of some 300,000 people with universally acknowledged inequalities in wealth and health between the east and west of the borough.

Yet we have the third lowest funding for public health in London at £57.7 per head of population against an average of £87.4. Just think what that £30 gap – equal to £9 million a year - could do to close the 10 year difference in life expectation between Edmonton and Hadley Wood – one of the worst differentials in London.

Across all health services in the borough, we are underfunded by an estimated £70.5 million a year. But instead of getting funding commensurate with boroughs of a similar size and health needs, NHS Enfield has to make cuts of £11.2 million in the current financial year to finish in April with a deficit of £18.8 million.

Instead of expanding the health checks programme to identify early warnings of stroke, heart attack or diabetes, controlling blood pressure and cholesterol and increasing the depth and reach of the stop smoking programme - smoking is the cause of up to half of the difference in life-expectancy - we are seeing budget cuts and far too little emphasis on prevention and stopping people from smoking.

Our GPs are under severe pressure to cut the medicines bill, to encourage patients not to use NHS prescriptions for over-the-counter medicines for those patients they assess can afford to pay. They are being told that every time they send a patient to a consultant it costs the NHS £141 and every time a patient attends A&E the bill is £71.

And that pressure will grow if under the new system our local GPs are given a local health spending annual budget which the Forum has been told will be in the region of £20 -£25 per head – and is less than they are now receiving.

No doubt this all comes under the heading of “*efficiency savings*”. But take the case of our Forum member Mr K. He is a patient at a Winchmore Hill GP practice. He developed carpal

tunnel syndrome a few months ago and his GP doubted whether the practice could afford the necessary operation.

The practice applied to the North London group of primary care trusts and recently it had a reply from their headquarters at Stevenson House in Camden denying him the operation as it wasn't urgent.

He is in pain and has some sleepless nights and there appears to be no other treatment. So he can either join a lengthening waiting list or pay himself for private treatment – and that example can no doubt be repeated time and again.

New Year greetings to all Forum members, their families and friends. Let's work together in 2012 to make everyone's later life a better life.

So we want our local GPs to join with us in demanding adequate funding in 2012 to do their job. This is in their interests and ours. They need the money to provide a top-rate health service and we need them to have the resources to provide top class patient care.

Meanwhile, a row is brewing between the BMA representing the majority of GPs in England and the government over plans that are likely to lead to support services for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in England being provided solely by large commercial organisations after 2016.

Primary care trust (PCT) clusters are now forming commissioning support units and, from 2016, would be encouraged to form social enterprises and partner with the private sector, rather than remaining part of the NHS family.

The BMA said in a statement that in view of the implications of the recently published Department of Health document ‘*Developing Commissioning Support: Towards Service Excellence*’, BMA Council:

- publicly announces its opposition to the whole Health and Social Care Bill
- calls for rapid organisation of a public campaign of opposition to the Health and Social Care Bill.

Sarah Thompson, the new NHS Enfield borough director, and Dr Alpesh Patel, chair of the “shadow” local clinical commissioning group will address the Forum at our Civic Centre meeting on Tuesday 28 February at 10 am. This is your chance to have your say.

ARE YOU READY FOR THE DIGITAL SWITCHOVER?

TV is going digital all over the UK, and the standard 'analogue' TV signal will be switched off on 4 April 2012. This means that if you aren't receiving digital TV you will soon lose your current TV service. Almost everyone will be able to watch Freeview after switchover.

How do you know if you are receiving digital TV? The basic rule of thumb is that if you only have five channels or less you're probably not on digital.

The BBC is running a Switchover Help Scheme for older and disabled viewers who may find making the switch difficult. It costs £40 and is free for people on income-related benefits. This includes easy to use equipment, an approved installer to supply and install the equipment, and a 12 month aftercare service including a free helpline. If you're 75 and over or eligible disabled, the Help Scheme will write to you directly and in plenty of time to ask if you want help. To find out more, visit the web site or call the number below.

Be aware of bogus callers knocking on your door offering to retune your televisions or sell you a digital aerial. There is no such thing as a digital aerial - most existing aerials are adequate to receive the digital signal.

Bogus callers may target the elderly and vulnerable who are worried about the switchover. The Switchover Help Scheme does not cold call. Visits are by appointment only and all their employees will carry identification so please make sure you check thoroughly before letting anyone into your property.

For more information call the Switchover Help Scheme on 0800 408 5900 or visit www.helpscheme.co.uk



Helping others all year round

There are many facets to our Forum. Our meetings are designed to inform and communicate matters of interest to older people. Our campaigning, whether it be to ban spitting in public places, repair pavements to prevent falls, or defend the Freedom Pass, is aimed at improving our quality of life.

But there is another equally important dimension to the Forum that is largely fronted by our very active and energetic social committee, and that is in helping others less fortunate than ourselves. Lonely, frail, elderly and vulnerable people, many of whom never leave their homes, never see a neighbour.

We don't have to wait for the festive season to recognise there is a need to combat loneliness or that the new idea of 'independent living' has created an epidemic of loneliness.

Every year the Forum arranges a special day for these isolated elders who live in Enfield. Last year it was a half-day cruise on a canal boat with a fish and chips lunch. Recently, we organised two events: the first one was a **Magic Lunch**, a 3-course hot meal in which Magic Circle member Andrew Murray (not the tennis star) went round the delighted tables entertaining some 60 people.

The second event was called **Down Memory Lane** - also a 3-course lunch with 'a man and his piano' for a sing-along with songs from the '40s and '50s - again with some 60 elders, many for whom the Forum arranged transport to and from their care home.

The feedback to our Development Officer Polly Lawman, who works closely with the social committee planning these events has been staggering and touching. **"We've received thank you letters, phone calls and emails - people really enjoyed the lunch, felt included and were pleased with the opportunity to make new friends,"** says Polly.

"We worked with the local police community support officers, residential homes, Good Neighbour Schemes linked to local churches

and asked our members to nominate people they knew that fitted the criteria. The result has been very positive as we now have 95 names on our Elders Register," adds Polly.

An example of the many 'thank you' messages we received was this from Dawn Conway, the admin. officer at the Reardon Court care home:

"Thank you so much for your kind invitation to the magic afternoon. Our service users all came home very full and happy! There were lots of compliments about the meal they received and some even won a raffle prize. It was very kind of you to think of us and I'm sure they would all love to come to any future events."

Another 'Dear Polly' message from John Harrison MBE went:

"I would like to thank you, all your helpers, the cooks and magician, for such a wonderful time yesterday. The food was excellent, the main course served hot, which is not often achieved; the company excellent as was the magician."

"It was really good seeing how much all were enjoying themselves. One lady on our table, aged 88, was so lively, thoroughly enjoyed her food, had a permanent smile on her face and was so interesting to talk to. She reminded me of my late mother, who at that age was such a chic powerhouse."

"Of course such an event requires a lot of hard work and the enthusiasm of you and your fellow helpers was most commendable. With best wishes for the wonderful work you are doing" - John.

One couple even came to the Forum office the next day to join the Forum! And another lady gave a £10 donation to the Forum after complaining about the lack of coffee on arrival!

Among the charities the Forum has supported in the last year are: Help for Heroes, Sense, the deaf and blind charity, British Heart Foundation and St Mungo's, the homeless charity.

Forum Book Club Meetings

The following are the book club dates for the start of 2012.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday 18th January - | The Finkler Question by Howard Finkler. |
| Tuesday 14th February - | Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders by Gyles Brandreth. |
| Thursday 22nd March - | The Help by Kathryn Stockett. |

All meetings start at 10am at Enfield Library: Contact Sue Scott 020 8368 0861.

FORUM Meetings

JANUARY 2012

Millfield House meeting**Thursday 12 January 10am for 10.30 start**

Millfield House, Silver Street, Edmonton

Karen Hale, LBE discusses *"The regeneration and future developments in the Edmonton Green Area"*.**Skinner's Court meeting****Tuesday 17 January 10am for 10.30 start**

Skinner's Court, 1 Pellipar Close, Fox Lane

Margaret Crear, Senior Campaigns Officer AgeUK, and **Monty Meth**, President of the Forum talk about *"Important national and local issues affecting older people"*. The meeting will start with a short DVD of the Forum's involvement in campaigning.**Civic Chamber meeting****Tuesday 31 January - 10am for 10.15 start****Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield****Doug Taylor**, Leader of the Council consults with the forum on the *"Council Tax Budget 2012-13"* and discusses the implications for older people in the Borough.

FEBRUARY 2012

Millfield House meeting**Thursday 16 February 10am for 10.30 start**

Millfield House, Silver Street, Edmonton

Tiffany Adonis-French, discusses *"The changing nature of delivering social services for Enfield residents"*.**Skinner's Court meeting****Tuesday 21 February 10am for 10.30 start**

Skinner's Court, 1 Pellipar Close, Fox Lane

Councillor Alan Sitkin for Bowes Ward London Borough of Enfield, talks about *"The regeneration and future developments in the Ladderswood, Bowes and Pinkham Way Area"*.**Civic Chamber meeting****Tuesday 28 February - 10am for 10.15 start****Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield****Sarah Thompson**, the new NHS Enfield borough director, and **Dr Alpesh Patel**, chair of the *"shadow"* local clinical commissioning group will address the Forum.**Always look on the bright side.....****Financial Planning**

Gerry was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed a wife with whom to share his fortune.

One evening he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. *"I may look like just an ordinary man,"* he said to her, *"but in just a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit £200 million."* Impressed, the woman obtained his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.

Women are so much better at financial planning than men.

Pub talk

Have you heard about the farmer who bought an expensive ram, but found it showed no interest in getting together with his ewes? That was until his vet prescribed some pills which had an immediate impact when the ram went on the rampage, covering all the ewes several times.

When the farmer told his pals in the pub they eagerly asked the name of the pills. *"Ah doan know,"* he replied. *"but they sure taste of peppermint."*

Senior service

Three men are sitting stiffly side by side on a long flight. After they're airborne and the plane has levelled off, the man in the window seat abruptly says, distinctly and confidently, and in a loud voice: *'Royal Navy, Admiral, retired. Married, two sons, both surgeons.'*

After a few minutes the man in the aisle seat says through a tight lipped smile: *'Royal Navy, Admiral, retired. Married, two sons, both judges.'*

After some thought, the fellow in the centre seat decides to introduce himself. With a twinkle in his eye he proclaims: *'Royal Navy, chief petty officer, retired. Never married, two sons, both admirals.'*

Get a doctor

Retired United States judge Barnett Hoffman told this joke on a BBC4 programme Old Jews telling jokes. A Frenchman, a German and a Jew are walking through the desert. It's hot and they are schlepping along with no protection from the merciless sun.

The Frenchman says: *"I'm so hot, thirsty and tired I must have some French wine."* The German says: *"I'm so hot, thirsty and tired I must have some cool German beer."* The Jewish man says: *"I'm so hot, thirsty and tired I must have diabetes."*

One letter

One spelling mistake can destroy your life! A husband wrote a message to his wife on his official trip and forgot to add an 'e' at the end of a word...

"I'm having such a wonderful time! Wish u were her..!"

Follow me

A man was leaving a café with his morning coffee when he noticed a most unusual funeral procession approaching. A black hearse was followed by a second black hearse about 50 feet behind. And behind the second hearse was a solitary man walking a dog on a leash. Behind him, a short distance back, were about 200 men walking single file.

The man couldn't stand the curiosity. He respectfully approached the man walking the dog and said: *"I am so sorry for your loss, and this may be a bad time to disturb you, but I've never seen a funeral like this. Whose funeral is it?"*

"My wife's." "What happened to her?"

"She yelled at me and my dog attacked and killed her."

He inquired further, *"But who is in the second hearse?"*

The man answered, *"My mother-in-law. She was trying to help my wife when the dog turned on her."*

A very poignant and touching moment of brotherhood and silence passed between the two men.

"Can I borrow the dog?"

The man replied, *"Just fall in behind and get in line."*

Pensions go up in April

On 29 November 2011, the Chancellor George Osborne presented his Autumn Statement. The main announcements affecting older people were as follows:

From April 2012, the Basic State Retirement Pension will rise in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figure for September 2011 of 5.2%, giving an increase from £102.15 to £107.45 per week for a single pensioner and from £163.35 to £171.85 for a couple. SERPS - the second state pension - will also rise by 5.2%.

From April 2012, the means-tested Pension Credit Guarantee for a single pensioner will rise by 3.9% from £137.35 to £142.70 per week and from £209.70 to £217.90 per week for couples. This seeks to give the Pension Credit the same actual cash increase as the basic state pension, rather than the same percentage increase.

The capital disregard is likely to remain at £10,000, but the saving credit threshold will rise from £103.15 to £111.80 for a single pensioner and from £164.55 to £178.35 for a couple.

Steve Webb, the pensions minister said: **"So at a time when the nation's finances are under severe pressure, this Government will be spending an extra £6.6 billion in 2012-13 to ensure that people are protected against cost of living increases: no less than £4.5 billion extra on state pensions; over £1 billion extra on disabled people and their carers; and over £1 billion extra on people who are unable to work through sickness or unemployment."**

From April 2012, Personal Tax Allowances will increase as follows:

Up to 65 -	£7,475 rises to	£8,105
65 - 74 -	£9,940 rises to	£10,500
75 plus -	£10,090 rises to	£10,660

The age related earnings limit has increased from £22,900 to £24,000 and the married couples allowance applicable to those born before April 6 1935 goes from £7295 to £7705. The allowance will be subject to an income limit of £25,400, but there will be a minimum allowance of £2960.

The state pension retirement age for men and women will be raised to 67 between April 2026 and April 2028. Originally this was intended to take place between 2034 and 2036. The change affects around 8million people born between April 1961 and April 1969.

The government has also confirmed it intends to review further increases beyond 67 in due course, such as using an automatic mechanism for raising the state retirement age in line with estimates of life expectancy. Raising the state pension age is also linked to the age at which future pensioners will become entitled to the winter fuel allowance, concessionary travel and other age-related benefits.

Previously, the government had already made the following announcements:

The Winter Fuel Allowance would be reduced in 2011 by £100 to £300 for households over 80 and by £50 to £200 for households under 80. The allowance will then be frozen at this new level for the lifetime of the Parliament.

From April 2011, Housing Benefit has been capped at £400 a week for a four bedroom house, £340 for a three bedroom, £290 for a two bedroom and £250 for a one bedroom property.

Britain's biggest pensioners organisation, the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) described the Autumn Statement as offering "cold comfort" to the country's older generation. It said the decision to link pensions and benefits to the Consumer Price Index rather than the Retail Price Index would over a 10 year period lead to a 15% cut in pension value.

The proposal to raise the state retirement age fails to recognise that all parts of society do not age in the same way. All the evidence shows that life expectancy and income are closely linked – and the poorer you are, the shorter your life will be.

Dot Gibson, NPC general secretary said: **"The biggest concerns currently facing millions of older people are the price of keeping warm, negligible returns on their savings and inadequate increases in their pensions. It was quite amazing that the Chancellor therefore managed to ignore them all."**

"Instead he announced that Britain's poorest pensioners would get a below inflation increase in the Pension Credit of just 3.9%, and no extra help with rising fuel bills."

"The Chancellor also seemed to get confused when in one breath he spoke of getting young people into work, and in the next declared he would raise the state retirement age to 67. The reality is that we will not tackle youth unemployment by forcing older workers to keep on working."

"The gap in life expectancy between the richest and poorest can be as great as 17 years, so any decision to raise the retirement age is basically robbing today's low paid of their future retirement."

CPI/RPI legal setback

The High Court has dismissed the legal challenge for a judicial review of the government's decision to use the lower Consumer Prices Index rather than the Retail Prices Index – which will devalue all future pension increases. By a majority decision of two to one, the judges ruled that it was within the rights of the Secretary of State to adopt the new method to measure inflation-based pension rises – **"even if it draws less on the public purse."**

It is now planned to lodge a Supreme Court appeal against the decision and meanwhile the campaign continues against the government's devaluation of the state retirement pension which will be 17.4% less after 20 years if RPI was retained.

Random round-up

Salaries boom

For top people that is. The pay of the chief executive of Lloyds Bank has gone up by 3,141 % to £2,572,000 – 75 times the average Lloyds employee. In 1980 it was just 13 times the average for a Lloyds employee

Age Action Alliance

AAA – is not the battery size or related to Alcoholics Anonymous but is the new name on the block for a range of some 200 independent organisations which claims to have a new approach to the problems of ageing, focused very clearly on

finding practical means to establish social justice for older people. It includes the National Pensioners' Convention and Age UK.

There is also a UK Advisory Forum on Ageing (UKAFA), a strategic body with a broad remit, to provide a wide ranging advisory function to Government. Roles between the two can be seen as complementary, a relationship that will be reinforced given both the close working relationship developing between the two groups, and the fact that a number of UKAFA members are already involved in the Alliance.

Elderly go hungry in 1 in 7 care homes – Thousands of vulnerable adults abused by their carers - Elderly must remortgage to get care

These are just a few of the many recent newspaper headlines exposing the shocking treatment, physical abuse and neglect, handed out in our hospitals, nursing and care homes, to elderly people.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission recently reported evidence of a **“systematic failure”** in home care across the country. Elderly people are robbed, left hungry and unwashed and their human rights are being breached.

The scandal has prompted the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) – to which the Forum is affiliated - to issue a Dignity Code after it was revealed that a total of 96,000 cases of alleged abuse of adults with physical disabilities, mental health problems or learning difficulties were reported by local authorities in just 12 months.

It has also been revealed that one in seven nursing homes is breaching laws intended to ensure elderly residents have enough food and drink to prevent them becoming malnourished and dehydrated.

Hardly a day passes without another shock report about poor nursing care seeing the light of day. Now even the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – the so-called watchdog - is itself the subject of a Department of Health check at the same time as it is recruiting a further 230 inspectors for 2012-13 – an increase of nearly a third on present numbers. The CQC is also increasing the number of unannounced inspections each month.

NPC Dignity Code

The purpose of this Dignity Code is to uphold the rights and maintain the personal dignity of older people, within the context of ensuring the health, safety and well being of those who are increasingly less able to care for themselves or to properly conduct their affairs.

This Code recognises that certain practices and actions are unacceptable to older people, such as:

- Being abusive or disrespectful in any way, ignoring people or assuming they cannot do things for themselves
- Treating older people as objects or speaking about them in their presence as if they were not there
- Not respecting the need for privacy
- Not informing older people of what is happening in a way that they can understand
- Changing the older person's environment without their permission
- Intervening or performing care without consent
- Using unnecessary medication or restraints
- Failing to take care of an older person's personal appearance
- Not allowing older people to speak for themselves, either directly or through the use of a friend, relative or advocate
- Refusing treatment on the grounds of age

This Code therefore calls for:

- Respect for individuals to make up their own minds, and for their personal wishes as expressed in 'living wills', for implementation when they can no longer express themselves clearly
- Respect for an individual's habits, values, particular cultural background and any needs, linguistic or otherwise
- The use of formal spoken terms of address, unless invited to do otherwise
- Comfort, consideration, inclusion, participation, stimulation and a sense of purpose in all aspects of care
- Care to be adapted to the needs of the individual
- Support for the individual to maintain their hygiene and personal appearance
- Respect for people's homes, living space and privacy
- Concerns to be dealt with thoroughly and the right to complain without fear of retribution
- Provision of advocacy services where appropriate

News from the Met. New police messaging service launched

Enfield Borough Police has launched an innovative community messaging service to provide people with firsthand news and information. Called Neighbourhood Link, it is a free service that enables residents, businesses and people who work in the borough to regularly receive up-to-date and official information from the police.

Those signing up to Neighbourhood Link will receive emails and text messages about crime and safety in the areas they sign up to. Through Neighbourhood Link, Safer Neighbourhoods Teams will keep recipients updated with local police activity, crime prevention advice and what they are doing to address community concerns. The aim is to make Enfield one of the safest boroughs in London.

Simon Laurence, Enfield's temporary borough police commander said:

“I'm delighted to launch Neighbourhood Link in Enfield. Feedback from other boroughs using Neighbourhood Link has been

extremely positive and I would encourage anyone living, working or visiting Enfield to sign up to Neighbourhood Link and receive information about local police activity and what we are doing to address community concerns.”

Neighbourhood Link will also be used by other Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) units to keep recipients informed in the event of a major incident impacting on London. To receive messages, individuals will need to register their details. Registering is free of charge and will enable the police to send messages relevant to the areas where they live and work.

To register please visit www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk.

As part of the registration process recipients will be asked for some personal information including contact details as well as the subject areas they are interested in. The information provided will only be used by the Metropolitan Police Service; it will not be passed on to other organisations.



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Special offers for Forum members

Thinking ahead: Lasting Power of Attorney

With life expectancy reaching an unprecedented level, there's inevitably more mental illness and disabilities being experienced in later life. No one can predict how the ageing process will affect them. So there could well come a point at some time in anyone's life when they will need somebody they trust to help with their affairs.

Having a legal document, prepared by a recognised and qualified solicitor called a "lasting power of attorney" (LPA) in place at the time of your life when you need help will avoid the worry and expense caused by a sudden event, such as an unexpected illness.

A lasting power of attorney for health and welfare allows a family member to have a say about your medical treatment, which is useful if or when you are too ill to express yourself clearly. A lasting power of attorney will help to manage your property and financial affairs. It assists with managing bank accounts and investments and is very useful when important steps are needed to plan for inheritance tax or care fees.

A lasting power of attorney can be used at any time when and if you are ever unable to make your own decisions. And most importantly, it cannot be used until it is registered with the Office of the

Public Guardian – and it can only be arranged when you have the mental capacity to do it.

Stennett and Stennett usually charge for one LPA £495 plus VAT at 20% plus the Court fee, totalling £724.00. They are offering Forum members the chance to prepare an LPA for £350 plus VAT and Court fee - a total charge of £550 and saving £174.00.

However, if members want to prepare two LPAs (one for property and finance and one for health and welfare) the fee would be £550 plus VAT and the court fees, totalling £920, again a saving of £174.00

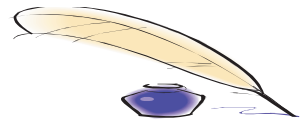
This offer runs from 9 January to 10 February 2012 and the £50 voucher carried in the Newsletter cannot be used for LPAs during this time.

Forum members will also have their chance to make their will for £99 (a saving of £135 on the normal Stennett and Stennett fee) during the Forum's Wills Week. This offer will run from 19 March until 23 March 2012. Again the voucher cannot be used.

To book a free initial appointment or ask any questions call Michael Stennett or Debbie Stimson on 020 8920 3190.



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Fusion promises an exciting 2012

Fusion Lifestyles who manage our leisure centres on behalf of the council says 2012 will see the opening of the totally refurbished and in many respects re-built facilities at Albany and Southgate Leisure Centres.

“Work is well underway at both facilities where we have seen the transition into the temporary facilities at both sites. These moves went smoothly but quite understandably with mixed feedback. We would like to thank all our customers who regularly use these centres for their patience and understanding whilst this work takes place,” said Fusion marketing director Ken Biggs.

“Albany Leisure Centre is scheduled for completion in late spring and Southgate in late summer, so there is still a long way to go but the final results will be a triumph and provide you all with excellent facilities, bigger and better than ever,” he added.

Fusion has also announced that its direct debit and annual membership prices will be frozen in 2012. This also means that all our existing customers and Forum members will stay on their current rate throughout the whole of 2012.

Our other prices that will affect Forum members from January 1 are as follows:

- Concession Card (annual card) £8.00 to Forum members. Normal price £21.00
- Over 50s activity days £7.50 or £3.75 (with concession card)
- Swimming £4.00 or £2.00 (with concession card)
- Fitness £7.50 or £3.75 (with concession card)
- Fitness classes £7.50 or £3.75 (with concession card)
- Membership Joining Fee FREE (saving £35.00)
- Direct Debit Membership £39.00 (saving £5.00 per month for new Forum members, existing members remain on their current rate)
- Annual Membership £390.00 (saving £50 per year for new Forum members, existing members remain on their current rate)

For further information contact Ken Biggs, Marketing Executive Fusion Lifestyle at ken.biggs@fusion-lifestyle.com, contact your local leisure centre or go on-line at www.enfield-leisure.com.

John's Jottings



Bye Bye Sky

What a time we are living through! Old people neglected or even abused by carers. The NHS being outperformed by Slovenia and the Czech Republic in cancer treatments. A "Stalinist" EU Commission forcing out democratically elected leaders in two

states. The highest level of young people not in education, employment or training since the War. The highest sustained level of inflation for 20 years. The Government struggling to balance the books and the biggest public sector strike in decades.

The troubles trickle down to the personal level. The Government has abandoned giving full inflation protection to pensions. Gas, electricity and petrol are all costing more than ever before. Because of high inflation and low interest rates it is seemingly impossible to put money in a bank and get it out a year later without it having lost value. Saving in stocks and shares offers little comfort as the stock market is going sideways at best and has lost around a quarter of its value in the last five years.

Putting it bluntly, I am getting poorer and, in all probability, so are virtually all readers. So what to do? There are a few obvious things. Leave the car at home and use the Freedom Pass whenever sensible. Turn the heating down or off, the latter in unused rooms.

Turn down the thermostat on the hot water system, it is astonishing how much gas is used just keeping the water in the tank and pipes hot even if none is drained off. Shop carefully, for example, two small pears taste just as good as one big one but small ones typically cost around two thirds of the price of big ones. Check the mobile phone tariff still offers good value. Mobile calls are one of the few things that have gone down in price so shop around.

But for me the big one has been cancelling Sky TV. £744 per annum saved "**Just like that**" as Tommy Cooper used to say. Having cancelled Sky I was surprised to discover that there are more good programmes on Freeview and Freesat than I can possibly watch. The difficulty, as ever, with TV is spotting the programmes that will appeal in advance.

Honesty requires me to admit I might have watched the odd game of football if I still had Sky but the programmes I watched instead were possibly more entertaining. So there we are: £744 p.a. saved and no loss of amenity. And do you know I feel better? Keeping my money out of the pockets of the Murdochs gives me a good feeling. You too might think if you get value from pay TV. Cutting it out was a completely painless way of saving money for me.

John Ball

Chairman

One liners

The wife was counting all the 1p's and 2p's out on the kitchen table when she suddenly got very angry and started shouting and crying for no reason. So I thought to myself: "**She's going through the change.**"

Local police hunting the '**knitting needle nutter**' who has stabbed six people in the back in the last 48 hours, believe the attacker could be following some **kind of pattern**.

Murphy says to Paddy "**What ya talkin to an envelope for?**" He replies: "**I'm sending a voicemail.**"

Just got back from my mate's funeral. He died after being hit on the head with a tennis ball. **It was a lovely service.**

19 people go to the cinema, the ticket lady asks "**Why so many of you?**" Mick replies: "**The film says: 18 or over.**"

Make 2012 a record buster

We have had a great 2011 in which our membership bloomed with individuals, couples and affiliates and I am pleased to say some of our old members returned. Welcome to everyone of you and, of course, those who continue to support us year on year.

We are now within touching distance of having 3,900 members and with the welcome arrival of the Enfield Island Over 50s Club we now have 62 affiliated organisations, making us a formidable voice of and for older people in the borough.

Our Social Committee has arranged some very successful holidays, day trips to very interesting places and hopefully will continue to do so in the coming year – thanks and well done to all of you. However, our meeting attendance figures have dropped and we wonder where and how we could improve.

In the New Year we plan to circulate a Satisfaction Survey to see if we can find the answer. Twice this year we held very well attended Elders Day events (reported more fully elsewhere in this Newsletter). Our volunteers supported us so well by driving, serving and generally assisting, for which we thank them. Just recently, we held a conference for our affiliates, very successful it was too. Funding and the Enfield Voluntary and Community Sector Framework 2012-2017 was discussed.

Now comes the grovelling. I have said in previous Newsletters that our Executive Committee is an ageing one and in need of new blood. Our Campaigning Officer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, our General 'Dogs Body' (hope he will forgive me) collecting our newsletters from the printers, taking the stuffed newsletters to the post office dropping copies to our affiliates, sitting on various bodies to glean information for us.

This names only a few of the jobs that need taking care of. So is there anyone out there – and there must be – who have some hours to spare with the skills to assist us as our membership grows.

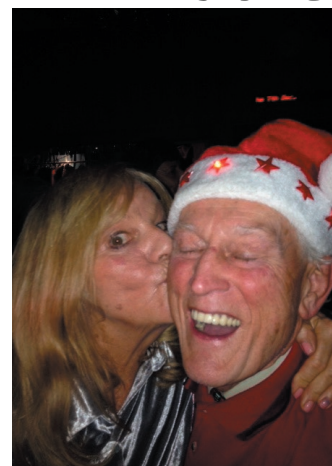
To remind you, our membership year starts 1st April and we do not offer a pro-rata rate. Also, that Forum membership giving concessions at the leisure centres is only available to Enfield residents unless they take out the full annual or monthly membership available at a discount. This does not apply to existing members renewing.

The Forum, our Forum, is a pacesetter among Forums, so lets keep it that way with an even better 2012.

Joyce Pullen

Membership Secretary

Santa enjoying the Forum's Disco



100 Forum folk ate, drank and danced their way through another lively evening at the North Enfield Conservative club on Tuesday December 13th.

"Many thanks for organising last night's disco. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and the food was excellent as usual"-The Gibbs

Despite freezing temperatures outside, the atmosphere was warm and inviting inside and we welcomed many new faces to this annual event.

Olivia Goodfellow

Smokers cut by 1,600

Last year NHS Enfield smoking cessation services helped 1,568 local people to stop smoking. This was either through 1 : 1 support or in a group clinic. And they saved money too! With the average pack of 20 costing approximately £6.50, 10-a-day can cost nearly £1,200 a year.

Smoking is the greatest single cause of preventable death, disability and health inequalities in the borough. Half to two-thirds of smokers will eventually die from a smoking-related illness and many will retire early due to ill-health.

Most smokers say that they want to stop and it can be a difficult thing to do. Many will want to start the new year with a 'clean slate' and with support from the NHS, friends or family many more will do so. NHS Enfield is obviously keen to help.

There are 10 smoking clinics run across the borough (including advisors who speak other than English) and numerous 1 : 1 advisors based in GP practices and pharmacies. Anyone who wants to stop smoking is encouraged to ring 0800 652 8405 or 020 8370 1022 or visit the Stop Smoking Service website at www.quitsmoking.uk.com Anyone who knows anyone who might want to stop smoking is asked to pass this message on to them.

Vitamin D deficiency warning

Vitamin D deficiency is emerging as a new and unexpected problem in Enfield. It is reflected in the rising numbers of children with rickets in London, while locally prescription costs for Vitamin D have been rising dramatically.

This is thought to be because of our indoor life-style; that when people do go outside they are often so totally 'covered up,' and because people are not eating enough oily fish such as sardines, and salmon, eggs and fortified foods such as breakfast cereals.

The result is that aches and pains are more common and in cases of more severe deficiency, there may be more severe pain and also weakness. This may lead to difficulty in standing or climbing stairs, or can lead to somebody walking with a 'waddling' pattern

Bone pains may also develop and are typically felt in the ribs, hips, pelvis, thighs or feet.

Vitamin D is important for good health, growth and strong bones. It is mostly made in the skin by exposure to sunlight. A mild lack of vitamin D may not cause symptoms but can cause general aches and pains. A more severe lack can cause serious problems such as muscle spasms, rickets, poor growth, tooth delay in children and in extreme cases weakness of the heart muscle (in children) and softening of the bones (in adults).

Some people are more at risk of vitamin D deficiency, and so are recommended to take vitamin D supplements routinely. These include all pregnant women, breast-fed babies, children under five, and people aged 65 and over. People who have black or Asian skin types, and people with certain gut, liver or kidney disease.

Fortunately, it is relatively easy to make sure that you have sufficient vitamin D; 90% of our vitamin D is made in the skin with the help of sunlight. Darker skins need more sun to get the same amount of vitamin D as a fair-skinned person. The sunlight needed has to fall directly on to bare skin (through a window is not enough).

Two to three exposures of sunlight per week in the summer months (April to September) are enough to achieve healthy vitamin D levels that last through the year. Each episode should be 20-30 minutes to bare arms and face. This is not the same as sunbathing; the skin simply needs to be exposed to sunlight. Vitamin D supplements are also readily available from pharmacies, supermarkets etc. Although it can take time, recovery from Vitamin D deficiency is usually good and within a few months.

Bowel cancer screening and prevention

Bowel cancer (also known as colorectal or colon cancer) is the second most common form of cancer death (after lung cancer).

In 2008 there were 16,259 deaths from colorectal cancer in the UK. The majority of deaths occurred in older people, around 80% in people aged 65 and over and almost two-fifths in the over 80s.

That's the bad news. The good news is that most bowel cancers develop slowly over a number of years and that there is an effective and safe screening test. If bowel cancer is detected at its earliest stage there is a 93% survival rate compared to a 7% rate if detected at its latest stages.

The NHS began phasing in the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in 2006 for people aged 60-69. Men and women are invited to participate every two years by using Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) kits in their own homes and returning them to the laboratory for analysis. People over the aged of 70 can also ask for a screening kit by contacting the London Hub on 0800 707 6060.

Enfield is the best performing of the five North Central London boroughs combined primary care trust, with a 51% uptake of the FOBT compared with Camden for example on 42%.

People who take part in screening have a 25% reduction in their risk of dying from colorectal cancer. Anyone with rectal bleeding and / or altered bowel habits is advised to see their GP. This is particularly true of people who have a first degree relative who has had bowel cancer as they are at increased risk of the condition.

Of course, prevention is much more than just screening. Diets with less red and processed meat and more vegetables and fibre are associated with reduced risk of colorectal cancer. Smoking, alcohol and obesity are associated with increased risks, as is less physical activity. A healthy lifestyle reduces risk of bowel cancer.

Everyone between the ages of 60 and 69 is therefore encouraged to take part in the Enfield bowel cancer screening programme by ringing 0800 707 6060 and asking for an FOBT kit and returning it to the laboratory in the pre paid envelope.

If you would like more information contact Karen Keane on 020 8238 3802 or email karen.keane@nclondon.nhs.uk. Obviously, if you have already received an FOBT kit you are asked to return the kit to the address supplied.

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Keep the cold out

Each winter, around 35,000 people die as a result of the cold. Winter weather brings two main dangers for older people. Exposure to the cold causes blood pressure to rise and this increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Respiratory problems are also common – from colds and flu, to chest infections and asthma. Older people with respiratory conditions and those who live in poorly insulated homes are most at risk.

For every winter death over the normal rate there are an estimated eight hospital admissions, 32 A&E attendances and 30 calls on social services. Releasing people from being cold and from the stress of high energy bills could help reduce depression and visits to the GP.

Keeping warm is the main way older people can guard against these risks. It sounds obvious – but we know it can be difficult for older people to keep the heating on because many worry about costs.

People in later life are also more likely to be on low or fixed incomes, and therefore less able to cope with the astronomical price rises for energy we have seen over the last five years. Much of the UK's housing stock is also poorly insulated and many older people live in hard to heat homes.

Following are six key actions which older people can take to protect their health in cold weather:

- Close your bedroom window at night. Many people think that leaving their bedroom window open is a good way to get fresh air. But as we get older, exposure to outdoor air in cold weather increases the risk of becoming seriously ill. So take this simple step to keep warm at night.
- Keep your bedroom heated to at least 18C. Having the central heating on at night is not bad for you – but getting too cold is!
- Keep your living room heated to at least 21C. Ideally, keep the temperature throughout your home stable, as sudden temperature changes can be dangerous. If this is difficult, ensure your living room is well heated and other doors are closed.
- Eat an extra hot meal each day. Keep yourself warm from the inside with plenty of hot food and drinks. Ensure your diet includes enough protein which protects against winter illness, and vitamin C to improve resistance to disease.
- Wrap up warmly when you go out. Always wear a hat and gloves as your head and fingers are most sensitive to temperature changes. Wrap a scarf loosely round your nose and mouth because breathing in cold air increases your risk of falling ill.
- Get a flu jab. A bout of winter flu can be dangerous as well as unpleasant. Visit your GP for a flu jab – free to all over 65s.

Recent research shows that older people often ignore important messages about keeping warm in winter because they dismiss the information as 'common sense'. Recent research has found that they are more likely to take the key actions to keep warm listed above if they are reminded about the health risks of exposure to the cold and told clearly what they need to do when they are most at risk (when there is a cold snap).

Recipe books

Age UK have produced a recipe book of winter warmers which contains 7 recipes – one for each day of the week. This reinforces the recommendation to eat an additional hot meal per day in the winter and the booklet also contains tips for keeping warm and well in the winter.

We have asked for 200 copies and the recipe books will be available at Forum meetings or can be collected from the Forum office 020 8807 2076.

Health snippets

Quick march

About 10,000 cases of breast and bowel cancer could be prevented every year in Britain if people quickened their walking pace and became more physically active. According to the World Cancer Research Fund up to 4,600 bowel cancer cases and about 5,500 breast cancer cases could be avoided by more brisk walking and other forms of moderate activity which causes the heart to beat faster and increases breathing.

Being overweight or obese is a known risk factor for several types of cancer, as well as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. You don't have to go to the gym every day to benefit. You can reduce your cancer risk just by making small changes to your lifestyle – brisk walking, taking up walking as a hobby, walking to the shops – can make a real difference to your health, say WCR scientists.

Your choice

Over 130,000 cancers – half the total number diagnosed in the UK each year - are caused by avoidable life choices such as smoking and eating and drinking the wrong things.

A report in the British Journal of Cancer says tobacco is by far the biggest culprit causing 23% of cancers in men and 15.6 % in women. Next comes the lack of fresh fruit and vegetables in men's diets, while in women it is being overweight.

Yoga is best for back pain

Yoga is more effective in helping people with lower back pain to become more mobile than the conventional treatments offered by GPs. A study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine and conducted by the University of York assigned 156 patients with back pain to yoga classes. After 12 weeks they reported less discomfort, performed better physically and were more confident of performing everyday tasks such as walking, bending down and dressing than those offered conventional GP care.

Back pain costs the NHS £1 billion a year and is estimated to affect 80% of adults at some point – one in five people visiting their GP complain of back pain and it is the second biggest cause of long-term disability after arthritis.

The yoga programme which secured these results would seem to have been specially designed for people with back pain, so we'll be asking Enfield Leisure Centres to look into this and see if we can offer similar courses. So that's another good reason to join or maintain your Forum membership and take advantage of the special leisure centre membership discounts we have negotiated.

THE ALEXANDER
OSTEOPATHIC CLINIC
STRUCTURAL OSTEOPATHY
CRANIAL OSTEOPATHY
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OSTEOPATHY IS NOT JUST FOR
BACKS!!



It is a very effective way of treating almost all your aches and pains, so if you have any questions about your problem, or to book an appointment phone 020 8373 0435

Conditions treated include:

Arthritic pain	Hip and knee pain	Disc prolapses
Leg pain	Foot problems	Frozen shoulder
Headaches	Muscular aches and pains	

For further information visit the clinic website at
www.north-london-osteopaths.co.uk

Can you believe it?

The academic chosen to head the new organisation responsible for commissioning health services all over England and Wales has admitted he is **“not a patient of the NHS.”**

Professor Malcolm Grant, provost of University College, London, is the man picked by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley, to chair the NHS Commissioning Board, and in that capacity he will be responsible for ensuring that groups of doctors in each locality – who will be handed about £60 billion a year – spend that money efficiently on the provision of health services.

But, when giving evidence to MPs before his confirmation in the post, Prof. Grant said he found it **“difficult to demonstrate”** his passion for the health service **“because I’m not a patient of the NHS”** – but his wife is a GP.

Prof. Grant will work two days a week chairing the NHS Commissioning Board for which he will be paid £63,000 a year – and he will continue as provost of University College London for the next two years for which he will be paid £380,000. He has said that he will donate his NHS salary to the university.

The NHS Commissioning Board lies at the centre of the government’s plan to change the NHS. Mr Lansley’s intention to hand over the long-held Ministerial and **“constitutional responsibility”** to provide all our health services to an unelected Commissioning Board, which has been dubbed the **“daddy of all quangoes”** has run into trouble.

Faced with a rebellion in the House of Lords, Ministers have decided to delay debating this controversial part of the legislation because many peers are insisting that the health secretary must retain responsibility for health services and be personally accountable to parliament – meaning that the legislation will not be passed until January at the earliest.

Affiliates news

WEA is offering two exciting new courses early in 2012

*THE STORY OF ANDALUCIA, 10 two-hour sessions 10–12 noon from Fri 13 Jan £70, no advance booking necessary and

*FILM STUDIES, 5 two-hour sessions 7–9 pm from Mon 20 Feb £35, advance booking essential: Chris Laughton, 13 Uplands Way, N21 1DH, 0208 360 1124. Venue for both courses: Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road.

Daytime courses continue in Enfield and Palmers Green on subjects as varied as Art History, Geology, Literature and Understanding Music. Contact us: Norma Chapman 020 8882 0615 or Shirley Sandford 020 8882 0207 Online: www.london.wea.org.uk

Edmonton Camera Club meet each Monday throughout January and February at Millfield House, Silver Street, Edmonton N18 1PJ at 7.45pm and welcome anyone interested in photography. We have a varied programme and, we hope, an interesting one. Please check out our website www.edmontoncameraclub.co.uk or ring Peter Hunt on 020 8363 1568.

Enfield National Trust Association will be having evening meetings at 7.45pm on Thu 12 Jan and Thu 9 Feb at the County School, Holly Walk, Enfield and afternoon meetings on Wed 18 Jan and 15 Feb at Holtwhites Sports and Social Club Holtwhites Hill. Please ring Peter Hunt on 020 8363 1568 for further details or find us on our website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/associations

Enfield RSPB has a walk in Whitewebbs Park on Tue 24 Jan – meet at 10am at Beggars Hollow, Clay Hill. There will be an evening talk “South Africa Safari” on Thu 2 Feb at 7.45pm at St. Andrew’s Church Hall, Silver Street, Enfield. A further walk from Middleton House on Wed 22 Feb at 10am. For further details please visit www.rspb.org.uk/groups/enfield/news or ring Pauline Hunt on 020 8363 1568

Pregnant? What next?

We don’t want to frighten our many “glamorous grannies,” but we’ve been asked by the NHS Enfield Public Health Department to help them promote their early access to maternity services campaign. So this is a message for our daughters and grand-daughters.

Traditionally, women have waited before telling people they’re pregnant. However, the first three months of pregnancy are incredibly important in terms of the developing baby. So although we’re not advocating telling the world until a woman is ready, please ensure a health professional is informed so screening and support can be started ASAP.

National guidelines are that pregnant women should ideally receive a ‘booking’ (the health and social care needs assessment) by 10 weeks and certainly before the 13th week. Early booking reduces risks both to mother and baby and results in healthier pregnancies and babies.

The **“Pregnant? What next?”** leaflet aims to encourage early booking. This has been widely distributed to GPs, other healthcare professionals, libraries and children’s centres. There has also been a campaign in pharmacies, so that if anyone asked about pregnancy, folic acid or bought a pregnancy testing kit they were also supplied with a leaflet.

A broader campaign has recently been launched across London called **“ASAP”** – this provides clear information on what a woman should do as soon as she finds out she is pregnant.

How does Enfield compare?

Nationally the target is that 90% of women should book in before 13 weeks.

Locally access to maternity services currently falls below the 90% target; for Barnet & Chase Farm Hospital 85% of women booked by 13 weeks and in the North Middlesex Hospital 47% (August 2011 – data does vary month by month). This shows that there is great potential for improvement in the borough.

Healthy Start vitamins

The national Healthy Start scheme provides vouchers towards the cost of fruit, vegetables and milk and free vitamins for pregnant women who are under 18 and their children (as well as older parents who receive benefits). The aim is to make sure pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under five get the nutrients they need to keep them healthy. The vitamins (Vitamins A, C and D and folic acid) support children’s healthy growth, skin, eyes, bones and immune systems.

Women’s vitamin tablets contain:

Folic Acid: reduces the chance of spina bifida, a birth defect where the spine doesn’t form properly.

Vitamin C: important for general health.

Vitamin D: helps the body to absorb calcium so supports baby’s bones to develop properly.

Healthy Start children’s vitamin drops contain:

Vitamin A: for growth, vision in dim light and healthy skin

Vitamin C: for general health

Vitamin D: for strong bones and teeth

Women can now get these vitamins from the midwifery team at the North Middlesex Hospital in addition to the borough’s baby clinics. From May 2011, eleven Children’s Centres around the borough started stocking the vitamins as a pilot project.

Parents can log on to www.healthystart.nhs.uk or talk to their midwife or health visitor to find out if they are eligible. They just need to complete a form, ask a health professional to sign it and send it back to the Healthy Start programme team. Then they’ll receive vouchers they can exchange for fruit, vegetables and milk in many local shops and a letter they can exchange for free vitamins.

Every name counts to get a Minister for Older People

More than 137,000 people signed the Grey Pride petition now presented to Parliament calling on the government to appoint a Minister for Older People. Prominent celebrities supporting the campaign include Richard Wilson, Angela Rippon, Tony Robinson, Jimmy Tarbuck, Esther Rantzen, Nick Ross and Anita Dobson – as well as politicians from all the major parties.

Thanking our Forum for its support, Kathryn Charles – Wilson from the Grey Pride campaign team said: **“Today I received your filled in petition forms and I wanted to say thank you. We really appreciate the time the Forum members took to find out about Grey Pride and that so many signed up to show their support for our call on Government for a dedicated Minister for Older People.**

“Organisations like Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum have contributed massively to this achievement. Every signature counts and your members have really made a huge contribution, so thank you again”.

Grey Pride campaigners pointed out in a letter to the Daily Telegraph that we have Steve Webb as pensions minister and Paul Burstow as minister for care services, **“but there is no minister whose title shows that it is their role to consider the needs of one of the fastest-growing groups – the old. The issues affecting older people include care, housing planning, financial pressures, transport and discrimination.**

“Only by looking at these in the round can we create a society which supports older people and benefits from their valuable contribution.” *Joining charity officials handing in the petition to Downing Street, Esther Rantzen said: Having a minister who puts the needs of the elderly first would provide a focus for us, and become our champion.*

“We oldies come in many different shapes and sizes. We have widely different incomes, and attitudes and tastes. And although some of us have our frailties, we also have huge amounts to contribute, if only we are allowed to. So why not dear young Dave and Nick create a Grey Minister for older people.”

Spitting campaign takes off

We need another 1,000 signatures to the petition against spitting in public places. We will then have the required 2,750 signatures required to trigger a full council debate seeking government permission to introduce a bye law, with fines imposed for those who breach the law.

“Fight needs your support” was the headline on an unsolicited letter published in the Enfield Independent encouraging their readers to sign the anti-spitting petition sponsored by the Forum.

Mr Leslie Grundon of Monmouth Road, Edmonton wrote: **“At last a council is willing to acknowledge that not only is it a very effective way of spreading germs and disease, but it is also socially unacceptable and, quite frankly, disgusting.**

The council needs 2,750 signatures on the petition to force a full council debate and show the government the strength of feeling in the borough. Log on to the Enfield borough website to show the council that the people have a say in council and environmental matters.”

Mayor of London Boris Johnson said in answer to a question by London Assembly member Joanne McCartney:

“Many people find spitting offensive and so do I. I am also aware that some local authorities have made effective use of relevant by-laws to ban spitting in cabs and theatres”.

The Forum has received signatures from the Enfield Asian Welfare Association and the NHS Retirement Fellowship Enfield and support from Ministers of many different religions at a meeting of the Faith Forum. Petition forms and posters are on display in Chase Farm Hospital, all libraries, Enfield Homes, youth centres and civic centre receptions.

So now its all systems go for those 1000 names and addresses.

Published by Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum.

Contact: The Secretary, Millfield House, Silver Street, Edmonton, N18 1PJ **Tel:** 020 8807 2076

E-mail: info@enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

Web site: www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

Dugdale for advice

Monday morning from 10am to 12 noon sees the opening of the Forum's free and confidential advice surgery. Here you will find a fully-trained retired Inspector of Taxes; a Citizens Advice Bureau adviser and an LBE officer who can help with council tax and housing benefit queries. The team includes Enfield Council's jobs broker who can guide you on where to look for jobs and help with your CV etc.

The Forum's advice surgery is also offering:

- * free 15-minute legal advice by solicitors Stennett and Stennett.
- * Pensions, disabilities and carers advice by appointment.
- * Log your Trading Standards and GLA constituency questions.

All in pleasant, relaxed surroundings. Just drop-in with your enquiry. Or, if you are in the vicinity, pop in for a cup of tea and a chat. We'd love to see you.

Call the Over 50s Forum office for further details 020 8807 2076.

307 back on track – but 318 battle continues

Enfield's London Assembly Member Joanne McCartney has received yet another promise from London Mayor Boris Johnson that the 307 bus, which runs from Brimsdown to Barnet, will start taking patients right into Barnet Hospital in March 2012.

This is at least the third promised date we've had that the 307 would go right into the hospital grounds thus saving a steep uphill walk from the main Wellhouse Road. Now Mr Johnson says that complications in designing the bus stand have been overcome and he expects the work to start in January.

Over two years ago we thought we had succeeded in getting the 307 service extended to Barnet Hospital and here we are still waiting. It's interesting to see how people who told us that fighting for better bus services to local hospitals was unimportant are now jumping on the bandwagon to get some local press publicity.

Ms McCartney told the Mayor she was campaigning along with our Forum to extend the 318 from Stamford Hill to the North Mid up to Winchmore Hill, Grange Park and Highlands Village. But Mr Johnson simply acknowledged that he knew of the concerns of local people about transport to North Mid. And suggested we again meet Transport for London officials which we hope to do early this year.

Poets' Corner

The Poetry Group began on the initiative of our Forum President in April 2008 with nine people present at the Oakwood Library. On 17 November, the last meeting for 2011 took place at the Town Library with some 29 people present under the leadership of Ruth Hanchett, when the theme was Getting Older. Then, on 1 December, David Blake arranged for members to meet for lunch at the Jolly Farmers, giving everyone an admirable opportunity to socialise.

Arrangements have already been made with the Library staff for the Group to continue to meet at the Community Room of the Enfield Town Library between 10.30am and 12 noon on a specified Thursday each month. On 19 January Lawrence Reeve-Jones will lead on the theme of Brief Encounters, whilst the meeting on 16 February will see Annmarie Nicholson leading on Aspirations and on 15 March David Blake leads on Poetry for Children.

David Oliver

Monday 23 January 2012 - Lunch - £11.00

12 - 2.30 North Enfield Conservative Club Baker St Enfield. Buses W8 191 pass the venue and it is near Hop Poles Pub. Xmas is over and another year begins so lets brighten up January with some good food, company and a gossip. New members this is a great lunch so come join us. Book early to avoid disappointment. Contact Jacky Pearce 020 8482 3575 jackypearce@blueyonder.co.uk 07817355672

Wednesday 8 February 2012. Loose Women, studio visit. Another visit to the T.V. studios to watch a recording of Loose Women, cost £1.00, We meet at Enfield Town Station at 9.15am and the show ends at 1.45pm. Tickets are limited to 20 people so apply early. Details from: Lorraine Murray on 020 8805 3506 or email lorraineofenfield@yahoo.co.uk

Monday 20 February 2012 A visit to the television studios for the T.V. programme "Loose Women" There is a £1.00 donation to the forum, We will meet at Enfield Town Station at 9.30am and the show ends at 1.45pm. Tickets are limited to 20 people so apply early.

Tuesday 21st February 2012

Trip to the National Army Museum Chelsea for an introductory talk about the Museum and after to see War Horse Fact and Fiction A major special exhibition exploring the hugely popular War Horse novel. This compelling story is brought to life using exclusive material from Michael Mapurgo, the acclaimed National Theatre stage production and digital content from the Spielberg-directed film. Call Roy Barrows on 020 8360 8561 to reserve your place and for travelling details.

Tues 13 March 2012 - Brick Lane Music Hall £34 for High Tea - St Patricks Day Show - Return coach to Enfield. Come join us for 3 hours of good old fashioned entertainment. Meet outside Lidl/Argos Enfield Town 12-15 for 12-30 departure return approx. 6pm. Lots of seats are available for this very popular event so contact Jacky Pearce now 020 8482 3575 jackypearce@blueyonder.co.uk 07817355672.

Friday 6th April to Monday 9th April A 4-day 3 night Easter break in Holland in conjunction with Crusader Coach Holidays Floriade 2012. Holland is host to the unmissable World Horticultural Expo Staged once only every 10 years. Come and enjoy the exquisite display of

flowers, plants and trees from all over the world. We stay at the family run hotel Grand Metropole in Valkenburg on the Dutch/German border. Cost £349 per person bed breakfast and evening meal £50 single room supplement. Call Roy Barrows on 020 8360 8561 to reserve yourplace.

Thursday 19 April 2012. Come on a wonderful guided tour of Wrest Park House and Gardens, this magical house as seen on T.V., Price will be approx. £22.00, this includes coach from Enfield, entrance and a guided tour. We will meet at Enfield Town, Argos/Lidl, at 9.30.a.m. return about 6.30.p.m. For details contact Lorraine Murray on 020 8805 3506 or email lorraineofenfield@yahoo.co.uk

Monday 14 May 2012. Falcons, planes and planting at Biggleswade: Join us on this day trip to the Old Warden Park at Biggleswade, where you can enjoy guided tours of the Shuttleworth collection of vintage planes and machines, a guided tour of the Swiss Garden, lunch in the restaurant and then a falconry experience, looking at 200 birds of prey and enjoying a flying display to round off the day. For a booking form and further details, please contact Olivia on 020 8447 8841 or email oliviaharrod@virginmedia.com

Friday 22 June 2012 A 5 day trip is planned for next June to Monet's garden, Honfleur, Dieppe and more. This is a coach trip and a Travelsphere holiday. There are just a few Twin rooms left but no single rooms are available. Estimated cost £299.00 For more details and to reserve a place contact Olivia on 0208 447 8841 or email oliviaharrod@virginmedia.com

Sunday 14 October 2012. Join us on the adventure of a lifetime to Marrakech and the Atlas Mountains with Travelsphere. Entice your senses in the fascinating fabledcity of Marrakech which enjoys a spectacular setting between the Sahara Desert and the towering peaks of the Atlas Mountains. Holiday dates are 14 October 2012 for a 6 day trip, which includes wonderful excursions, half board and the usual standard of a Travelsphere holiday.

For further information and a booking form please contact Olivia at oliviaharrod@virginmedia.com or telephone 020 8447 8841.

Some things in life are good to share.
A Great Night Out at North London's
best Theatre is one of them.

SPECIAL OFFER: 2 TICKETS FOR THE PRICE OF 1

**TO SEE THE FABULOUS
ELIO PACE**

MILLFIELD THEATRE - FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 8PM

Bring a friend (or partner) for **FREE** to see one of
Britain's top singer/songwriter/pianists and his band.

Listeners to **BBC Radio 2 Weekend Wogan** will need
no introduction to Elio's work. And Elio has just sold out
the prestigious Ronnie Scott's in Soho.

His music is an exciting and feel-good blend of Rock'n'Roll,
Big Band and Jazz... with a huge dose of Soul thrown in,
an immensely talented piano player... but his vocals are
totally soulful! Check out his music at www.eliopace.com

**Call the box office on 020 8807 6680 to book
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