



West Lancashire Older People's Champion News 2010/11



Welcome to my 2010/11 Newsletter

Older People's Champions visit West Lancashire

As West Lancashire Borough Council's Older People's Champion, I hosted the regional meeting of the Older People's Champions Network in July 2010.



The group, which has been meeting for five years, is made up of 30 councillors who are all responsible for promoting and highlighting the needs and aspirations of older people in their local authority area and across the region.

Nifty Fifties group, based at Banks Leisure Centre and West Lancashire Community Leisure attended to show network members how the council and these partners are supporting the health and well-being of older people.

So far, the network has highlighted the pressures faced by grandparents with Government ministers. Some have to care for their own parents and younger children in the family at the same time.

The group is also working to tackle mass marketing scams, where fraudsters use mail shots to dupe victims into, for example handing over sums of cash in exchange for goods or prizes - which never arrive.

Other topics under review at the present time include Older People and Image and Communities and Older People.

Older People's Day 2010

As part of the national Older People's Day celebrations on 1st October 2010, the West Lancashire Older People's Partnership Board, held two 'Experience Matters' events, which were hosted by Dave Guest, the BBC's North West Social Affairs Correspondent.



The events were held in two locations, the first was held at Emmanuel Church, Ormskirk and the second at Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College, Skelmersdale.

At each event the Partnership Board asked people of West Lancashire who were over 50 to join them and comment on the proposed action plan to help improve all aspects of life for older people. All who attended joined members of the board for lunch.

Unfortunately the weather on the day was very poor. Very heavy rain and wind prevented some people from attending but I enjoyed meeting all who attended and thanked them for the time that they had taken to participate. The action plan was well received by those who attended these special events.



Getting and staying active was the theme for UK Older People's Day 2010 and to celebrate organisations which included the Council's Sports Development team, Age Concern, U3A, CVS organised activity sessions during the week leading up to Older People's Day.

Discussions are taking place to hold events for older people during first week in October. 2011.

Brookside Extra Care Retirement Living



Later in October 2010, I was invited to the cutting of the first sod at Brookside, a three-storey extra care development comprising of, 111 self-contained apartments, a health and well – being centre and enhanced day care service.

Construction of this retirement village is the outcome of a successful partnership between Arena Housing, Lancashire County Council, NHS Central Lancashire and West Lancashire Borough Council and is due to open Spring 2012. When Brookside is open it will offer many facilities on site not only for residents but also of older people of West Lancashire.



Further details can be found on the West Lancashire Borough Council website [Brookside Retirement Living Scheme](#)

Skelmersdale Over 60's Strollers

October also saw me joining Skelmersdale Over 60's Strollers for a most enjoyable walk in Skelmersdale.



Ashurst Tenants and Residents Association

In April this year I was invited by Mr. C. Pollard, Chairman of the Ashurst Tenants & Residents Association to cut the ribbon to celebrate provision of a new bench which is situated in a newly planted garden in Ashurst. The bench has been well received and appreciated by older residents.



Skelmersdale U3A

I was delighted to be invited as one of the guests to the Ecumenical Centre to formally open the new U3A in Skelmersdale on 30th June this year. The event was well attended with interested members of the community keen to make their own U3A a success.

The Town Crier Don Evans, dressed in his magnificent regalia, called the attention of the audience by three Oyez's and clanging bell, and welcomed the guest speakers who were Mayoress WIBC Mrs. Sue Murrin-Bailey, Dr. Alex McMinn MBE, U3A Chairman of the Research Committee for the UK and Founder Member of Aughton & Ormskirk U3A: Greg Mitton, Chief Officer CVS Skelmersdale and Margaret Park, U3A Education & Development Contact N.W. Region and myself.

U3A has three other branches in West Lancashire, Aughton & Ormskirk, Burscough and Upholland. I wish every success to the new U3A in Skelmersdale

Other groups who I have enjoyed meeting this year include:

Skelmersdale Sitting in Service

County Councillor Evans and I were invited to attend the offices of West Lancashire Carers Sitting In Service and together with the Manager Suzanne Blundell and older volunteers for carers, presented certificates to individuals to recognise their long service. The Sitting in Service provides a valuable service to the community.

Older Peoples Communion Club

Older Peoples Communion Club in Parbold invited me to attend their meeting and talk to them about the role of the Older People's Champion. This group meets monthly for a coffee and a chat.

Grants for Older People's Groups

I was please to announce that from June this year voluntary groups, non-profit making and community organisations based in West Lancashire and represent older people were able to apply for small grants to support projects that would benefit their members.

The Older Peoples Communion Club which meets at Parbold Christ Church, applied and received £250.00 towards the costs of replacing broken and unsuitable chairs.



Other groups who received grant funding were:

- ❑ **Appley Bridge Pensioners Club**
£225.00 to replace an old freestanding urn for a wall mounted water heater – safety when making hot drinks etc
- ❑ **Halsall Sunshine Committee**
£250.00 towards transport cost to provide outings for its older members.
- ❑ **Aughton & Ormskirk U3A**
£200.00 to assist with its aims of providing involvement of retired people in physical and mental activities

- ❑ **Bickerstaff Pensioners Social**
£200.00 towards transport costs to provide an outing or their Christmas Party Fund
- ❑ **West Lancs Carers Centre**
£250.00 towards the cost of funding activities/transport for carers partaking in a week's holiday in association with the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.
- ❑ **Ashurst Tenants & Residents Association**
£125.00 towards the cost of purchasing a garden seat within the community garden
- ❑ **West Lancashire Carers**
£100.00 towards the cost of their Presentation Day in which older volunteers received Certificates for their long service to the Sitting in Service

A little money can go a long way and can really make a difference to the lives of older people. If you are part of an organisation who's members would benefit from a small grant please get in touch. Further details are available on the [Older People's Champion](#) page of the Council's website.

I am keen to get to know older people, and the organisations they are involved with, in all parts of the borough and would love to receive invitations to attend your meetings and events. Or if you have any concerns that you would like to discuss please get in touch.

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West Lancashire Older People's Champion