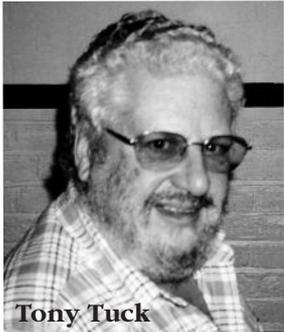




Registered Charity No. 1096322

Annual Review

GOOD NEWS FROM 'COMIC RELIEF'



Tony Tuck

The Era of Austerity glowers sullenly at us from our TV screens and newspaper pages. As the year 2011 develops we shall discover more and more what the practical effects will be of an irresponsible banking system coupled with the writ of callous governance on the lives of Wandsworth pensioners. The Forum will continue to get

its small council grant although, as with most of the grant and contracts for the Wandsworth voluntary sector, it has only been confirmed for a single year, while other local groups and national bodies already know that their income will be reduced in future and their services curtailed.

So let me light a small beacon of hope and affirmation. The Wandsworth Older People's Forum has been successful in a bid for funding from the charity 'Comic Relief'. We have just heard that we have been awarded some £40,000 over three years to continue developing the outreach work that we have been doing for the past year using a small 'Grassroots' grant.

What this means in practice is that, for the next three years, we can continue to make face to face contact with more groups of pensioners, encourage them to become members of the Forum and to respond to proposals from local public service providers.

Our project is not just about increasing our membership. It is primarily about ensuring older people's voices are heard by providers of services and helping pensioners play a significant part in determining the services they receive.

We have found that having our current outreach worker, Mac Downes, available to meet and support small groups and help with their development and capacity building, especially fundraising, has been a much appreciated asset. The pilot work has also revealed that many other agencies are experiencing difficulty in finding the capacity to support many of the groups in sheltered housing or similar schemes. This difficulty will not be eased with the anticipated funding cuts in local agencies themselves

Many partner organisations (Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (WVSDA); Age Concern Wandsworth; Age UK; Wandsworth Housing and the various Housing

Association social Landlords have seen our outreach work as complementing and adding value to the services they offered.

This project will run as the full implications of Central Government's Comprehensive Spending Review are manifested, and the principles and practices that will emanate from 'Big Society' filter through to the lives of pensioners.

In Wandsworth the personalisation of budgets will also roll out during the first 12 months of this project and this may have a considerable shift in services delivered locally.

The council's Day Care Services Review is finalised and this will have a significant impact on proximity and access to services by isolated older people. The cuts in funding to Local Authorities will also have an impact and we will be in a sound position to enable groups successfully to access finite funds to support older people from charitable trusts and other grant bodies.

So we in the Forum are looking forward positively to the coming challenges. As was said elsewhere and in a somewhat different context -"We've seen the future, and it works".

Tony Tuck: Chair



Annual General Meeting

Anchor Church Centre, Garratt Lane

Tuesday 12th April 2011

2.00pm



The Junction Health Centre relocates to its new home at Clapham Junction Station

The Junction Health Centre has relocated to a new purpose built facility in Arches 5-8 Clapham Junction Station. Based right next door to the Grant Road entrance of Clapham Junction Station, the centre is run by Care UK, a leading independent health and social care provider, supported by AT Medics, a group of six highly experienced local GPs, who provide clinical leadership.

Open from 8am to 8pm, staff at the Clapham Junction Health Centre are on hand seven days a week (including all bank holidays) to deal with a variety of health issues.

The centre provides both a walk-in service for anyone in the local area and a full GP practise where patients can register. The walk-in centre is for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses such as cuts, strains, scalds and emergency contraception services. The GP practise provides a range of enhanced services for registered patients such as the management of chronic diseases including asthma, diabetes, pre and post natal care for mothers and infants, vaccinations and many other common health complaints. Drop in or call 0333 200 1718

Wandsworth U3A

(Registered Charity No: 1096590)

Current Activities & Study Group

For more details

Telephone 020 8785 0949

Our monthly meetings with guest speakers are held at Earlsfield Library

3rd Monday of the Month at 2.00pm

Adult Care Information Service

The Adult Care Information Service (ACIS) is an easy to use directory full of useful information of local and national care services available to you, a resident of Wandsworth.

Developed by the Adult Social Services department, ACIS connects social care and the community by providing information on everything from finding a care home and locating your local doctor and dentist to keeping fit and healthy and claiming benefits.

Contact us on: 020 8871 8807
acis@wandsworth.gov.uk
www.wandsworth.gov.uk/acis



Annual Report 2010



Liliias Gillies

The Forum continues to monitor services for older people in the Borough of Wandsworth. The banks' financial crisis brought threats early in the year of cuts to come and by the end these threats were real.

Voluntary organisations hoping to receive funds from trusts found it much more difficult with reduced income to trusts. Those receiving grant or contracts from the Council fear reductions. Increases in charges for services are pending. Closure of Church Lane Day Centre has been agreed. Reduced hours for all libraries and closure of York Gardens Library in the most deprived area of the Borough were to be subject to consultation early in 2011.

The Day Services Review was consulted on over the summer, a bad time to hold meetings, but views were submitted from the Forum. Personal budgets are now offered to everyone entitled to help from the Council with daily living. This will enable people to have choice about the kind of help they receive and who should give it. Some will be able, either themselves or with help from a relative, to manage the accounting required but for many older people this is not feasible at this stage in their lives. The Council offer Third Party Management which takes that chore away but still gives them their choice in how and when they want help. The ability to choose makes a huge difference to the services, particularly the specialist day services. Now people may choose to employ a personal assistant leaving them free to go where they like or remain at home. However this choice is of greater benefit to young, physically disabled, people rather than for older people who have become too frail or too forgetful to look after themselves. Making choices is difficult. There is the small good news that independent advocacy is available to help people who have to make choices about how they will receive care at a time when they are not terribly fit and perhaps have no younger relatives around to help them decide.

The Network of older people's organisations, which the Forum runs on commission from the Council, has held two conferences. The first in March was an update of progress on the actions

promised for the Older People's Strategy. The meeting heard from too many people about all that is being done which left little time for people to ask about the things which were not done. We are planning a repeat in April 2011 with longer time and more time for the participants to have their say. The second conference in November worked better and we had three good accounts about how Wandsworth services were planning to work under the new Government's sweeping changes to health services.

Regular meetings have been held with the Deputy Director of Adult Social Services and many other meetings attended by representatives including the Local Strategic Partnership enable the Forum to keep the views of older people before the authorities.

The monthly members' meetings continued with speakers on topics of interest, some about services in Wandsworth, such as the Specialist Day Centres, a community library, community safety and a new service for people with aphasia. We also had excellent talks on Hampton Court, making a will and one about Two Pioneering Women of Egyptology. The Forum celebrated its 20th birthday, held off from January because of the snow, but held in May. Newsletters were published four times with accounts of the meetings and other items of interest.

Comments were made on the NHS White Paper. The Forum saw it as a very expensive exercise which we thought might be a disaster and the proposed system would probably be less able to be monitored by the new Health Watch. The Forum hopes it will work.

The Forum gained a Grassroots grant to help with outreach and employed a worker to contact small groups of older people in sheltered housing and churches. A number were helped to constitute themselves and apply for funding to help their activities and 12 were successful in gaining grants. It is hoped that funds can be found to continue this work but that may not work out with trust funds being rather depleted at present rates of interest.

Liliias Gillies Hon Secretary

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is circulated each September with the newsletter. This year again we sought the reasons older people give for not being able to do the things they would like to do.

The Forum sends representatives to meetings of many organisations in the Borough and keeps good contacts with the LINk as well as the Council, NHS, police and other local voluntary bodies. The Forum is represented on the Local Strategic Partnership.

Lilias Gillies Hon Secretary

Results of Questionnaire

As in previous years a questionnaire was circulated with the autumn newsletter which was issued during the middle of September. Questionnaires were sent by post to 186 members. There were 40 completed questionnaires (22%). Most questionnaires (72%) were returned from members who received the newsletter by post and the remainder from respondents who had picked up the newsletter from the Civic Centre and from one community centre.

Suggestions were made for the newsletter which will be passed to the Editor. Information on daytime clubs was highest (13%). Notice of events was one suggestion but that is not very practical for a quarterly but regular clubs and events will be included.

Your neighbourhood? The need for clean and safe pavements was important. Cycling on pavements, dog mess and chewing gum were all mentioned. The need for drop-in centres, clubs and more local community came up frequently. Only 23% would talk to a neighbour, 42% to a councillor, 23% to their MP and 36% to people in a group they attend. The lowest was 13% who would talk to their Neighbourhood Watch coordinator while three people left a question mark. The low number speaking to a neighbour about a local problem is surprising and does not suggest we have much of a "society" locally. There is a need for more Neighbourhood Watch coordinators who could be a boon to lonely and isolated older people. Are streets in your area safe? Nearly two-thirds said no. Reasons cited were tripping on uneven pavements, cyclists, dog mess and chewing gum and youth presence at bus stops. Is there still a Safer Neighbourhood police presence at bus stops at school leaving time? Do the police ever warn cyclists on the pavement?

One-third did not go out in the evening and a further 10% would go out only rarely. This limits the occasions when people can meet up with others and highlights the need for local clubs for older people which they can attend during the day. Most of the respondents attended a local group but 13% did not. The Forum has always been aware that a number of the members join because they appreciate the news and the contact the newsletter brings although they seldom get out. A number said they did not attend a local group but would like to and did not because they did not know of any. All of us involved with local groups for older people need to think about publicity and outreach. Almost half volunteer help with groups such as the Forum, Age Concern and Active Days. Residents associations, lunch clubs and local groups for older people, churches, political parties, charity shops, information giving were all mentioned.

Only one respondent had a carer, 3 used the Wandsworth Community Transport shopping bus. 2 had an Age Concern

visitor, 2 used Dial-a-Ride. 1 had Watch Alarm and 2 had visits from a community nurse. As some had more than one service the total with some service was 9 (23%). It is to be hoped that the WCT shopping bus and Age Concern visiting scheme continue. A number said they would like help with gardening or odd jobs around the home. As the Handyperson scheme would provide these it seems lack of information is a problem. Brightside and Age Concern Newsletter were received by 85%, Wandsworth Guardian by 36%. Access to the internet was available at home for 28% and at the library by another 18% but authorities cannot assume that the internet will adequately provide information to older people.

What makes life for older people more difficult?

Loneliness and the difficulty of making new friends were mentioned by 15%. Lack of enough income was mentioned by 10%. Access for people with some disability was not always good and stalls on pavements were awkward. The lack of local community and the closures of local post offices were regretted. Getting used to change came up in various forms and several mentioned the lack of respect from younger people, eg at bus stops, cyclists on pavements and buggies on buses.

What could Wandsworth Borough Council to do?

No club closures and clean and safe pavements were the favourites. Cheaper adult education and more taster courses and free gyms for older people were chosen. Better information and more contact with councillors was requested. Collection of green waste and bulky items are needed.

CAN'T WAIT !!

With public toilets now closed in many of our towns and cities, it is becoming more difficult for older people to use the Loo when they need to.

Charities InContact and RADA have come up with an innovative solution. The just Can't Wait Card, a small pass that shoppers with particular needs can show to use a store's Loo, or to jump the toilet queue.

Businesses are not asked to alter their toilets in anyway but simply to permit a person in need to use them

Individuals can request the card from InContact on 0870 770 3246 or visit www.incontact.org.uk



Help the Aged

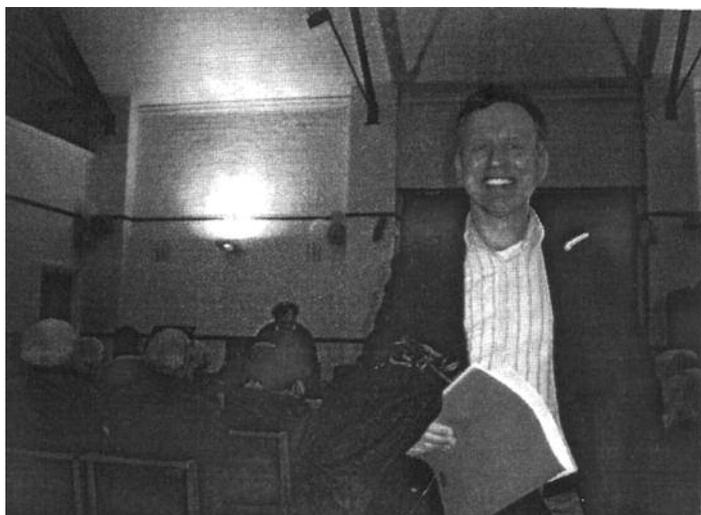
THE DAVID WARD ENSEMBLE

Our pre-Christmas Members' Meeting on December 13th welcomed back David and Elizabeth Ward, who played a wide selection of Classical music.



The Always Welcome Wards

David, playing the piano, and Elizabeth, on the clarinet, brought along with them the German singer Norbert Meyer, and entertained WOPF members with music by composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Haydn and Chopin, both instrumental pieces and lieder.



A Modern Meistersinger: Norbert Meyer

The presentation was followed by our traditional Christmas party.

Obituary



Joan Steward, faithful member of a great many organisations in Wandsworth, died in St George's Hospital on 18 January. Joan was a regular member at the Forum, always questioning and always checking out facilities for people with some disability, particularly those who were blind as she had become in later years.

The Access Association honoured her with an award for a lifetime's achievement of service in October. She was very proud to receive it.



**WANDSWORTH
INTERPRETING
SERVICE**

Wandsworth Town Hall,
Wandsworth, London SW18 2PU
Tel: 020 8871 5751
Email: wis@wandsworth.gov.uk

Scam warning

Scammers are offering council tax refunds in exchange for bank account details, the council has warned.

Don't give details to people pretending to be council officials who say you have overpaid your council tax. The council never requests account details over the phone in this way. If in doubt, call council staff on (020) 8871 8081

On Eradicating our Political Canker

A personal view by Bill Harper

I am interested to see that Tony Tuck has moved into partisan politics (Xmas Newsletter). He asserts that what the government is doing is ‘startling unfair, foolishly unworkable, alien to British culture and a sense of fairness’ to quote his words. Well, I agree, but take issue with him (gloves off, Tony) over what I see as his implication: that if we only had a different government (could he have a Labour government in mind?) all might be well. Alas, as I see it, it is better to put the blame where it really belongs - on the *politicians*. Although politicians like to divide themselves into political Parties, underneath they really *are* all the same people who seek power and, within the rules they make up for themselves (like the old MPs Expenses rules), who believe that he who speaks the most smoothly (like snake-oil salesmen), shouts the loudest (particularly over other people), twists statistics most skilfully, points his finger the most aggressively, insults those of another party (while referring to each other as “the Honourable Member” - Orwell, thou shouldst be living at this hour!) should govern the country. And if you doubt this analysis, just watch Prime Minister’s Question Time - although you may have to hold your nose!

But hold on, I hear you saying, “we *have* to have politicians who are elected by citizens on the democratic principle of ‘one man - one vote’, for the alternative is authoritarianism.” Rubbish, say I. And so did the Athenians -those who we rightly credit with ‘inventing’ democracy in the first place. “They believed, as I do, that a much more democratic method was that of *sortition* - which is, selection of ‘officers’ by random selection or lot. (And if you’ve never heard of ‘sortition’ don’t feel ashamed ‘cause not many people have despite advocating random selection for some years I hadn’t myself until a couple of months ago.) Briefly (and how ‘briefly’!) citizens *select* (not *elect*) representatives by selecting

them from amongst themselves *at random*. Thus, smooth talkers, loud shouters, skilled statistics twisters and finger-pointers are no more likely to be selected than anyone else. Nor can special interests, large sums of money, political debts or party loyalties have any influence on the outcome. And no more broken election pledges. Amazing how so many ills can be cured by one simple technique!

Now hear you saying, “All well and good, but you can’t leave legislation to any Tom, Dick or Harry who knows little about how society operates.” Well, of course, you can’t. Under my own (copyright) utopian Constitution 100 citizens are randomly selected for each constituency of some half-million constituents who, after an induction period during which they are briefed on all relevant topics, elect 5 of their number (and with an electorate of only 100 then smooth talkers, etc, would soon be identified) to a Supreme Council which will appoint and control the Government. Also you may feel such a group could be very one-sided. But a short course on Statistical Method (see “*Statistics*” by W M Harper - modesty prevents me from commenting on this work of genius) should allay such misgiving.

Now, clearly this is only a very, very rough sketch but I would be willing to give many more essential details (at a talk?) if members wish it.

Finally, a few points from Wikipedia (look under ‘*sortition*’):

Both Aristotle and Herodotus (one of the earliest writers on democracy) emphasize selection by lot as a test of democracy. Aristotle says: it is thought to be democratic for the offices to be assigned by lot: for them to be elected is oligarchic.” [*My comment: Although the Athenians also regarded the method of random selection from the ‘electorate’ to be appropriate for all appointments, I do NOT advocate it for selecting airline pilots or heart surgeons!*]

Like Athenian democrats, critics of electoral politics in the twenty-first century argue that the process of election by vote is subject to manipulation by money and other powerful forces and because legislative elections give power to a few powerful groups they are believed to be less democratic system than selection by lot from amongst the population.

So let’s cure the patient - not try and alleviate his symptoms.

First Contact 0845 600 1090

The Service

Information and advice for older people in Richmond upon Thames, Sutton, Wandsworth and Croydon boroughs

Opening Hours

Monday - Friday
10 am - 4 pm

 **AGE** Richmond upon Thames

 **AGE** Sutton

 **AGE** Wandsworth

 **Croydon ageUK**

Suite 301, 3rd Floor, Parkway House, Sheen Lane,
East Sheen, London SW14 8LS

Wandsworth Arts Festival

Wandsworth Arts Festival will run from 6th-22nd May. Sunday May 22nd will be host to The Shimmy in Putney Wharf, with live music performance, dance and drama. The line up of artists includes Spare Tyres' Hot Pots, who will be performing a new outdoor performance piece.

Attendance is free

For more information visit

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/artsfestival or

arts@wandsworth.gov.uk 0208 871 8711

Local Histories

Following an initiative launched through the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, we are collecting stories from local people in all our libraries.

At York Gardens Library, we are particularly interested in hearing local histories or small snippets of information regarding family journeys that have brought people to SW11. Staff can help to write things down! We have albums to receive photos and anything written or typed can be added to store a little of our local heritage. We hope this will be an ongoing project and the albums will eventually add to the Heritage Service Collection at Battersea Library.

Angela Emmott

Branch Librarian

York Gardens Library

34 Lavender Road SW11 2UG

Tel: 020 8871 7471 Fax 020 7223 0864



St George's
University of London

St George's Medical Student Home Visits

On behalf of the Section of Geriatric Medicine at St George's Hospital University of London, I am writing to ask if you would accept a visit(s) from our St George's Students.

This is part of the students' second year training in Ageing, Impairment and Disability. The visit should last only about half an hour to talk about your life experiences. They will make notes from which they will produce a learning document (which is not put on record and is treated as confidential). This helps our second year students acquaint themselves with older people.

The dates this year are:

Tuesday, 29th March

Tuesday, 5th April

Thursday, 5th May

Thursday 12th May

All visits are in the afternoon commencing at approx 2.00 p.m.

If you would like to take part please write or telephone me with your name and address, and if possible your phone number at:

Mrs J.Huxtable Administrator Geriatric Medicine (CDS) St George's University of London, Cranmer Terrace London SW17 0RE Tel.No. 020 8725 5327

Anchor Church Centre

Friday Drop-in for Older People

Every Friday

Lunch from

12 - 1.30pm

(except school holidays)

273 Garratt Lane

SW18

Cost £3.00



MEMBERS MEETINGS

All at Anchor Church Centre,
273 Garratt Lane, SW18. 2pm-4pm
Buses 44 and 270 pass the door

Tuesday 8th March
Kit Burdess on "Magistrates in
the Community"

Thursday 10th March
Network Steering Group Meeting

Tuesday 12th April
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Alternative Voting

Tuesday 10th May
Robert Fromow Westminster Abbey

Tuesday 14th June
TBA

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month
(except August)

Wheelchair Access, Loop System, Refreshments
All are welcome - bring a friend

If you want to join the Wandsworth Older Peoples' Forum,
please fill in the subscription form below and return with
your payment to:

Membership Secretary, Wandsworth Older Peoples' Forum
WCEN inc. DRCA, Charlotte Despard Ave. London SW11 5HD

I wish to join the Wandsworth Older Peoples' Forum.

Individual Membership £5 per year

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone:

Organisation Membership £5 per year

Organisation Title

Contact name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone:

Cheques payable to Wandsworth Older Peoples Forum

Network Conference

**Older People's
Network Conference**
Thursday 14 April 10.30 - 4

Review of Older People's Strategy

Civic Centre Refreshments.
Loop and Palantypist
Transport can be arranged for those who find
public transport difficult
(tel 0208 672 5592)
Book to reserve a place
WOPF, c/o WCEN.
Charlotte Despard Ave,
SW11 5HD



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Affiliated to National Pensioners Association



WOPF voice for older people in Wandsworth
Funded by Wandsworth