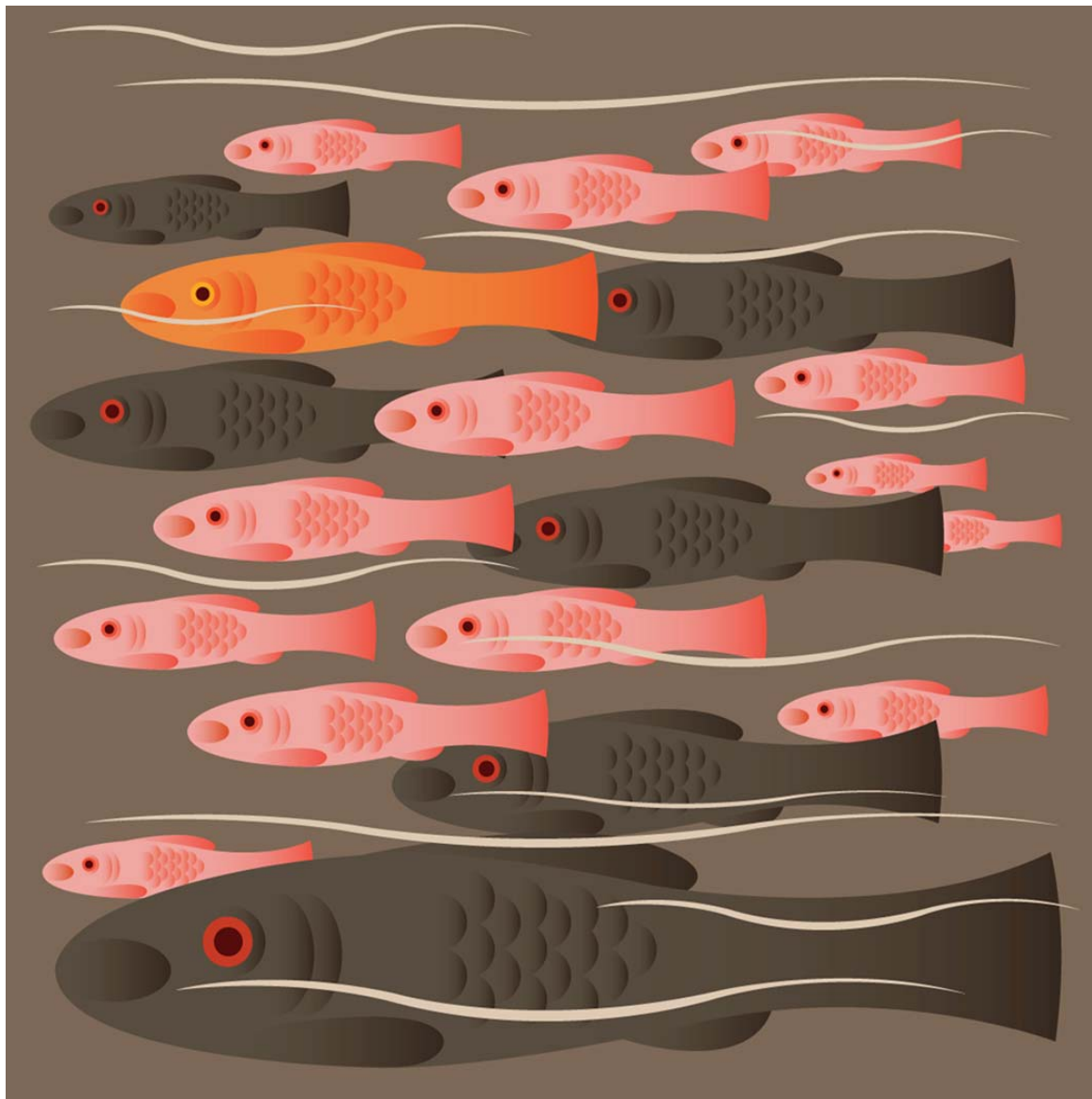


Rickingham11

Forum

Feedback Report April 2008



PARTNERSHIP WITH OLDER PEOPLE (POP) NETWORKING FORUM

Joint Consultations, April 2008

In the true spirit of partnership working, it was agreed to hold joint consultations involving Partnership with Older People and Mid Suffolk District Council to help inform future strategy for people living in the Mid Suffolk area. Various meetings were held with Gill Cook, MSDC policy officer and Jo Collins from Age Concern to discuss the way older people live and experience life in Mid Suffolk and to look at a range of issues considered relevant to older people.

Two sessions were planned one in Stradbroke and the other at Rickingham to get a spread of views from across the district. The event at Stradbroke unfortunately was cancelled due to lack of applicants and the handful that had shown interest was offered places at Rickingham instead. Around 40 + people attended, most being in the 70 plus age group. Delegates were split into groups each with a facilitator and scribe and feedback was provided by each table at the end of each session. The topics discussed included the following:

- A. Housing**
- B. Supporting independence**
- C. Leisure & recreation**
- D. Local facilities and services**

Whilst the sessions represented only a small fraction of the older section of the population living within the district, it is considered likely that the majority of the points raised would be common to a majority of older people, to a greater or lesser extent. Feedback from the participants was very good emphasising how much they appreciated the opportunity to be directly involved in the consultation process. In addition, the delegates listened with interest during the coffee break to Natalie Morley from the Grand Driver Scheme and found out how they could take part in the forthcoming workshops being held across the county.

Mid Suffolk District Council, Age Concern Suffolk and Partnership with Older People wish to extend their thanks to all of those who participated in the Forum

Jill Stewart
Development Manager
Partnership with Older People
Suffolk County Council
July 2008

Workshop 1

A. HOUSING

Helping People to live where they are and enabling that to happen:

- Build more bungalows and/or single level housing
- Ask Norfolk & Suffolk to work more closely together regarding cross boundary housing needs
- Promote information on safety and security in the home and the community, such as:
 - portable alarms
 - community alarms
 - pendant home alarm/alert systems
- Promote adaptations in the home – providing fast assessment and reliable sources of equipment eg. Stair lift, Handrails, Bath aids, Conversions etc.
- Reduce council tax further for pensioners on low budgets
- Plenty of local services eg, transport, GP surgery, chemist, supermarket
- Low level support schemes in the community eg domestic/ garden/handyperson
- Having helpful neighbours to look out for people
- Range of services to provide personal social care for frail, elderly and ill
- Living near friends, relatives and having local social networks
- Knowing what the different housing options are and what each involves
- Awareness/information on what health and social care services provide and cost
- 24 Hour Care Services available, especially at night time
- Availability of appropriate housing near where you want it

Seeking Housing information:

- Communication can be a battle/demoralising/problem
- Many people don't know who to contact to get help
- Need to improve customer services eg planning, housing grants, too many people involved (one contact needed)
- Family – unsure as to who else can help or who to seek information from
- Mid Suffolk District Council or SCC for adaptations - it would be easier for one authority to deal with everything
- Other agencies who could help would be Age Concern, CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau), Estate Agents, Housing associations, Mid Suffolk District Council

Other Influences:

- Housing options - many people lack information about the difference between schemes etc.
- Affordability of housing and diminishing capital reserves to maintain property (equity release schemes) etc.
- Attitude of children
- Independence
- Range of housing options in familiar area
- State of health
- Proximity of services, eg local shops, good public transport, local family
- Safety and security support services
- 24 hour care services
- Help around the garden and home
- Customer services - knowing who to ask for help
- One number CSD for all services
- Funding constraints

B. SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE

What else might help?

- Parish magazines can be a very useful source of information
- Having a range of local support networks available eg lunch clubs, community transport bus, exercise group, etc
- Maximising income
- Breaks for Carers - caring for others can restrict opportunity to do other things
- Approved list of tradesmen to provide small jobs around the house/garden
- Socialising very important, need to get out and mix with others
- Doing voluntary work for as long as possible
- Having a way to contact others and meet new friends
- The local authority can help improve independence eg transport, disabled adaptations, health services (chiropody), dentists, (services not expanding to meet needs of increased population)
- Help required to maximise benefits especially for those on limited pensions
- Parish Councils could be more proactive in developing independence eg Good Neighbour Schemes
- Holidays – reduce single persons supplement (too high)
- Lack of confidence – some people need support and encouragement to participate (newsletter, health centre etc.)

WORKSHOP 2

C. LEISURE, FACILITIES & SERVICES

Ways that the Local authority can be more involved:

- Concessions for older people could be improved (especially public amenities) eg. KEY – Mid Suffolk District Council's discount scheme for older people
- Transport to and from facilities need to be improved eg. Border hopper, similar schemes required in other remote parts
- Information about activities is crucial to enable people to be more involved
- More coordinated approaches to provision of services across parish, district & county boundaries
- More newsletters, needed to encourage others to participate and share information
- Information and grants available to encourage more self help activities especially in village halls eg. Gentle exercise, Lunch clubs etc.
- Community transport services varies in quality and also on eligibility criteria - more coordination required
- Provision of more activities where people live eg. Village halls, Sheltered Homes



Improving the environment:

- Parking problems - stop parking on pavements (Botesdale/Rickinghall)
- Street lighting – poor lighting problems in winter, especially The Fairstead
- Encourage taxis to provide local services
- Overhanging vegetation on paths
- Improve Litter and Dog fouling observance
- More open spaces, less village cramming
- Promotion of inter-generational activities
- More outreach provision especially in rural communities
- Better promotion of services such as meals on wheels, visits from health centres, lunch clubs/groups

Feeling more secure:

- Promotion of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes regarding crime prevention
- More information regarding fire prevention service and who to contact to have a fire safety check (NO LOCAL FIRE STATION)
- Crime prevention services – more information required on security and crime prevention measures eg. advice/support regarding bogus callers
- Police and Community Safety Teams – more information required about the work of the local networks including contact details etc.

Contact Details

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Partnership with Older People - Working in Partnership

