



Annual Report of Future Years

The Yorkshire and Humber Forum on Ageing

August 2013 -2014

A year in the life of an organisation is usually April to March, our funding from the Department of Works and Pensions is based on these dates, but our accounts are audited in September and our Annual Meeting, which this year we are combining with what used to be our annual conference, is in October. My annual report which I am pleased to present to you will cover August 2013 to August 2014.

Every other year we hold an Away Day in April to fully review our work plan with its priorities for the year ahead. This is an essential piece of work and enables us to draw down our annual funding for the year. This was approved for 2014_15. Our funding has been reduced for this year from £16,000 to £14,245 and we need to account for every penny spent. Our work plan reflects the items on which the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) specifies we may spend our income. Any funding remaining at the year end is clawed back by the Department.

Our priority this past year has been to continue to raise awareness of the Campaign to End Loneliness and act to reduce the effects of those whose health may be at risk because of the lack of social contact and activities. Early in 2014 the Campaign to End Loneliness held the first of nine regional conferences in Leeds and I was asked to give a short presentation on the part which I believed Local Government could play now that it is responsible for Public Health. Furthermore, we began a series of workshops across the region not only to raise awareness of Loneliness, but to inform older people where and when they could influence the policy makers in this 'new world of Health and Social reform.

Our first workshop was held in Doncaster early this year where we concentrated on influencing. We have since held a workshop in Scunthorpe where we informed older people of the risks to their health of loneliness, the opportunities to get involved in local activities and the triggers such as bereavement, retirement, giving up driving and losing hearing; all of which with other issues can lead to someone becoming very lonely. By 2027 it is predicted that there will be 1m people in their nineties with 40,000 centenarians. Earlier this year, The Campaign to End Loneliness launched its three years intermediate programme. We are planning more workshops.

Two further aims for our workshops include raising greater awareness of Future Years, the regional forum, by engaging with different communities and secondly promote the work we do to encourage older people to make their voices heard and where there are opportunities for them to have a say in new policy development of the health and social care services in the area where they live.

We are responsible for engaging with the older people in Yorkshire and Humber listening to their views and taking these to the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing which meets quarterly with Ministers in London. John Welham, Vice Chair of Future Years, represents us all at UKAFA. Here is what John has to report:

" Over the past 12 months, Future Years has been an active member of the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing (UKAFA). We have contributed to debates on a wide range of topics and issues that impact upon older people. For example UKAFA has discussed with Lord Filkin his thoughts on priorities for the new Centre for Ageing, with Steve Webb (Minister for Pensions), his proposals to allow the draw down of pension pots from next April and his recently published Framework for Action " Fuller Working Lives", which highlights the very older people can play in the labour market whilst ensuring adequate income to secure their well being in later life.

We receive updates from Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care and Support, on the progress of the Care Act and had the opportunity to question him. We receive updates from (DCLG) Dept. for Communities and Local Government on creating better housing for an ageing population, and from Dept. of Health on the Government's plans that all vulnerable over 75s should have personalised care plans.

As recently as 18th September Shelagh presented her thoughts on Concessionary Fares and the impact of cuts in funding for transport services, particularly in isolated rural communities. This just gives a flavour of some of the valuable work of UKAFA. It remains to be seen what an incoming government next May will do to engage with older people from across the UK."

Our second major priority is Dementia. Future Years has joined the Yorkshire and Humber Dementia Action Alliance and either the Chair or Vice Chair attend the quarterly meetings which attract some good speakers, helping to inform us of the work being done in the community to recognise people with dementia and the risks to which they are subject. York and Leeds now define themselves as dementia friendly cities. There is much work going on to protect people with dementia from being the victims of cold callers, by telephone and on the doorstep. Cowboy builders still appear to court older people living alone, relieving them of thousands of pounds on roofing repairs which are not necessary. Getting people to seek help and not feel stigmatised if their partner is suffering from dementia is a challenge. Trading Standards in Yorkshire work hard to protect older people from scams and have secured a number of high profile convictions.

As the Chair of Future Years, one of my priorities is to ensure that engagement with older people in Yorkshire and Humber becomes stronger. We have a database of 24 Forums across Yorkshire and Humber which connects us to 5462 thousand older people in our Region. Joanne our administrator gathers news of events, news from the DWP and information and circulates this information fortnightly. We have strong links with the City of York, through our committee member George Wood who has reported the following work of York Older People's Assembly:

"The York Older People's Assembly has continued to hold its bi monthly Open Meetings always trying to ensure that the topics under discussion are topical and relevant as far as Older People are

concerned. The last 12 months have included Welfare Benefit changes, a discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner, various aspects of Dementia Care and a lively Electoral Forum ahead of the European Elections.”

Future Years has changed the format of our quarterly meetings. We have added a morning session with a speaker and time for questions and answers. These morning information sessions are open to our wider membership. This is proving to be a popular move. Some of the speakers during this last twelve months have included Sarah Handley from the BIG Lottery, Sarah visited us the day the announcements were made regarding the successful applicants in the bid for some of the £82m to reduce social isolation. We congratulate Sheffield and Leeds who were successful applicants in Yorkshire & Humber.

Using workshop mode, we have adapted a toolkit to judge material deprivation amongst the older people in Yorkshire & Humber. Future plans for these sessions include a talk from the area Parliamentary Outreach worker. He will talk to us about the opportunities to attend Parliamentary Select Committees to speak when these committees are carrying out a review and gathering evidence. Our formal business meeting then follows after lunch.

During the winter of 2012/13 we accepted funding which was available to organise five workshops for older people enabling them to become Energy Efficiency Champions, the average attendance at each workshop was fifteen. In turn each of these energy efficiency champions cascaded the information to other older people.

The Chair was invited to join an event ‘Digital Connectivity’ organised by the DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) and the Government Office for Science. This was part of the Government’s ‘Grey Cells Policy’. Shelagh joined with the lead for the Digital Skills Working Group of the AAA to prepare a presentation on what works and why, when teaching older people digital skills.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Committee of Future Years and others who have been involved with the work of older people. Additionally the older people themselves in Yorkshire & the Humber, you are a constant inspiration to me and I am totally committed to ensuring your voices are heard loud and clear.

Shelagh Marshall OBE

Chair, Future Years, Yorkshire and Humber Forum on Ageing

Appendix One

Who we are: a list of Future Years Committee members and the organisations they represent

Barry Bothamley	Yorkshire and Humber Pensioners Convention
Cllr David Jeffells	Scarborough
Danny Brown	Hull, Overview and Scrutiny Panel
George Wood	York Older People's Assembly
Hilary Thompson	Age UK Calderdale and Kirklees
John Welham	Leeds Older People's Forum
Judith Gregory	Alzheimer's Society
Katie Smith	York Carers Forum
Mary Laurenson	Hull University
Mary Robinson	Contact the Elderly
Mashud Haque	Bradford District's Senior Power
Neil Martin	Independent (interest in Equalities and Human Rights)
Paul Russell	Yorks and Humber TUC Retired Members Forum
Shelagh Marshall (Chair)	North Yorkshire / Chair of Isolation and Loneliness Working Group (Age Action Alliance)
Richard Palmer	Kirklees Older People's Forum

Appendix two:

Our website and what it can tell you

The Future Years website is at: <http://www.futureyears.org.uk>

It includes information about Future Years

- How we work
- Who we are
- When our meetings are
- Papers for our meetings
- Our workplan
- UK Advisory Forum – meeting papers and presentations

It includes information that might interest older people as follows:

- The latest news stories
- Activities and events
- Consultations on new initiatives from local and national organisations
- Newsletters
- Reports and publications
- The Age Action Alliance working groups
- News about certain issues such as fuel poverty; loneliness and housing