BURY OLDER PEOPLES NETWORK

BURY VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY & FAITH ALLIANCE

Bury Older People's Network – Meeting Notes March 2025

Attending	Joanna Mawdsley (Chair), Gill Stainthorpe, Carol Kemp, Pauline Smith, Jane Lees (age UK), Julie Southworth, Gill James, Jan Wiczkowski, Hilary McColl, Marie Wilson (Bury VCFA), Shelley Caulfield (Bury Council), Steph Boyd (Bury Council)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies.

The meeting was delayed due to challenges accessing the Church, but many thanks to the members' patience and help setting up, etc.

Members introduced themselves, as Rita from the church joined us today. Rita is also part of the U3A.

2. Active Aging – The Bury Offer (Shelley Caulfield, Bury Live Well)

The Importance of Movement & Physical Activity -

- Maintaining bone health, muscle strength, and cardiovascular fitness is critical for independence and quality of life.
- Aging does not automatically mean slowing down; lack of movement is the real issue leading to loss of strength and mobility.
- Women tend to live longer than men but often with poorer health, particularly due to osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease.

Falls Prevention & Recovery

- Many people don't plan for what to do if they fall. Shelley introduced the concept of "backward chaining", which involves:
  - Making a plan to get up safely if a fall occurs.
  - Strengthening key muscles to improve recovery ability.
  - Practicing techniques such as "bum shuffling" or crawling to a stable surface to get up.
- Data from Northwest Ambulance Service shows that of 10 people who call for falls, only one actually needs an ambulance. The rest often panic due to a lack of a recovery plan.

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Simple Exercises to Improve Strength & Balance

- Daily movement is key – no need for expensive gym memberships. Simple exercises include:
  - Sit-to-stands – to build leg strength.
  - Wall push-ups – for upper body strength.
  - Carrying shopping bags – as a form of resistance training.
  - Balance exercises (e.g., standing on one leg, heel raises, and toe raises).
- Consistency is crucial – even 15-20 minutes a day can make a difference in strength, stability, and confidence.
- Many free and low-cost activities, including chair-based yoga, Tai Chi, and community walking groups, are available.

- Real-Life Stories & Experiences from the Group
  - Several members shared personal experiences about struggles with mobility and strength:
    - One member discussed how a fall in the bedroom made them realize they lacked upper body strength to get up.
    - Another participant noted that in Holland, people remain active into their 80s because they regularly cycle, something that is harder in the UK due to unsafe roads.
    - A member mentioned how pushing their grandchild on a swing had already improved their walking ability.
  - The discussion was highly interactive, with members asking about practical ways to build strength at home and Shelley providing specific guidance.

Resources mentioned during the discussions:

- The Super Six Challenge- https://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Super-Six-Strenth-and-Balance-Challenge.pdf
- Get up and Go Guide – Myth busting around falls - get_up_and_go_0.pdf
- Active 10 NHS App - https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/ - The free NHS Active 10 app anonymously records every minute of walking you do. Just pop your phone in your pocket and away you go!

- Importance of Vitamin D supplementation for bone health - https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/bone-health/keep-your-bones-strong-over-65/
- Tai chi. Class in Prestwich - https://www.heatonmoortaichicentre.com/classes-in-prestwich
- Local classes and activities within Bury Leisure - https://www.bury.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/bury-live-well-service/bury-live-well-service-at-bury-leisure

Key Action Points

- Shelley sending over resources & Marie to update BOPN resources page with info
- ALL—Members, please consider one thing to move more.
- ALL – Members requested to do a five minute energiser at the start of future sessions (a volunteer is needed to arrange this). Consider if you would like to pick up leading this.

3. Aging Better Update – Aging without Limits - Pauline

- Pauline explained that it is now the 2nd year of the programme and that the Aging without Limits Day this year co-insided with our meeting date (11th June)
- Pauline is a local champion for the programme in GM, which aims to celebrate aging whilst challenging ageism
- As part of her work, Pauline was a panel member for a micro-funding programme of activities (national grants). She shared resources from the programme and read one of her poems for the event.

- Further information can be found on the campaigns website - https://www.agewithoutlimits.org/

- Pauline also shared about her work with the https://talkingaboutmygeneration.co.uk/ as a community reporter.

4. **Agenda Setting for Upcoming Meetings**

- April Meeting: Greater Manchester Police (GMP) will attend to discuss safety and security for older residents.

- June Meeting: It was suggested that we look at an event linked to the Age without Limits Day. But as its summer maybe link to the request for a Fire Safety Visit to the Bury Fire Training Centre?
- Bury Directory – There has been a request to help with design and user testing. Marie to email Matt at Bury Council around potentially the May meeting.
- There was also a request for Age UK to do a slot about their offer and support for older people in Bury

5. AOB

- Prestwich Clough Day – 18th May. – We attended last year. Is this something we want to do again? Members would need to volunteer to look at booking, managing and running a stall.
- 26th March – Scope are coming into Age UK for people wanting to change their tariffs – energy support etc. (Jane sending information over). They are also visiting Greenmount next Thursday