

## **PROMOTING BETTER HEALTH IN OLDER PEOPLE THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

### **(Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery))**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report summarises the findings of a study by the Older Persons Working Group and contains Members' recommendations arising from that study, which have been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). The Working Group was established by the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) and comprised Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, K J Churchill and D Harty. It met on a number of occasions, the last being 16th June 2006.
- 1.2 Following analysis of the needs of older people and of the services available to them, the Working Group decided to concentrate on promoting better health in older people through physical activity. Members' overarching aim was to prolong active life for the residents of Huntingdonshire. The Council had responsibility for the governance of the community and for its health and its social well-being. The proposed programme met both of these responsibilities. It also accorded with the Council's Core Strategy objective of enabling elderly people to live independently for their lifetime and corresponded with the Government's objective of enabling older people to remain in their homes.
- 1.3 In undertaking the study the Working Group was mindful of predicted demographic changes in Huntingdonshire. Approximately 13% of the population of the District is aged 65 or over and Huntingdonshire has the largest number of over 65s in Cambridgeshire. Huntingdonshire also has the largest number of residents over 75 and the second largest number aged over 85. It is predicted that the population aged over 65 will increase by 50% between 2002 and 2016, which is double the national rate.
- 1.4 In the course of the study the Working Group held discussions with
- ◆ Councillor Mrs J Chandler, Executive Councillor with responsibility for Leisure;
  - ◆ J Barrett, Huntingdonshire District Council ;
  - ◆ S Lammin, Huntingdonshire District Council;
  - ◆ S Plant, Huntingdonshire District Council;
  - ◆ D Smith, Huntingdonshire District Council;
  - ◆ M Collins, Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust
  - ◆ A Gardener, Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust;
  - ◆ N Finney, Luminus;
  - ◆ A Goddard, Luminus, and
  - ◆ S Bell, Huntingdonshire District Council.
- 1.5 The Working Group recommended the Council extend its current range of services to meet the needs of older people. Details of the services currently provided by the Council for older people are attached at Appendix A and a list of services provided by the Council for those aged over 50 compared

with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire appears at Appendix B. Appendix B does not contain facilities provided at St Neots Leisure Centre.

## **2. THE WORKING GROUP'S FINDINGS**

2.1 The following paragraphs summarise the discussions held and conclusions reached by the Working Group.

### **a) Falls Prevention**

2.2 The Working Group received a presentation from A Gardiner on her work on falls prevention. Mrs Gardener was employed by the PCT but was based at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital as part of a team working on falls prevention, which included specialists on physiotherapy and exercise. Approximately 8,000 falls occurred per year in Huntingdonshire. There was a greater likelihood that those aged over 65 years would experience a fall and the chances of those over 80 falling were 1:2. Falls had a significant impact on individuals' lives. There was, therefore, a need to reduce the incidence of falls, particularly amongst the elderly and exercise was perceived to be an important factor.

2.3 Mrs Gardener acquainted the Working Group with exercise sessions held at the Women's Institute Centre in Warboys. The sessions were run by staff from Ramsey Leisure Centre and key features to their success were their cost, location, transportation and the opportunity they offered for social interaction. As an example of best practice in Huntingdonshire, which could be replicated throughout the District, Mrs Gardiner expressed the view that the initiative in Warboys demonstrated that the link between the Council's leisure service and locally delivered services was critical. In particular, she stressed the importance of specialist training for the staff involved and Mrs Gardiner's team would be able to provide this training. It subsequently was established that this would not meet the Council's standard of training required for teaching exercise classes for older people. See paragraph 2.19.

### **b) Sheltered Accommodation**

2.4 The Working Group considered opportunities to provide exercise programmes at sheltered accommodation in the district. It was felt that there was demand for such services and advice from the PCT suggested that such classes needed to be provided on a regular basis (2/3 times a week) so as to achieve the required physical benefits and build a regular clientele.

2.5 Mr N Finney, Group Director of Housing Services, provided the Working Group with details of the sheltered accommodation operated by Luminus. He also outlined proposals by Luminus to introduce an initiative named "Out and About" to provide activities for older people, the cost of which would be partly met by lottery funding.

2.6 With regard to sheltered accommodation, the Working Group noted:

- ◆ Luminus operated 13 sheltered schemes in the District;
- ◆ Luminus Sheltered schemes housed 590 older people;

- ◆ In total 1,000 older people occupied properties operated by Luminus.

2.7 It was intended that Out and About would start operating in July 2006. It would:

- ◆ Provide a 15 seater mini bus which had been fully adapted to accommodate those with impaired mobility;
- ◆ Employ a part-time driver and part-time activities co-ordinator;
- ◆ Provide an annual programme of activities for older people;
- ◆ Be open to sheltered accommodation and other older people in the community;
- ◆ Aim to attract 700 users per year;
- ◆ Make a nominal charge.

2.8 The Working Group discussed the links between Out and About, falls prevention and exercise for older people. There was an opportunity to provide exercise classes at sheltered accommodation, which would be open to non-resident older people who would be picked up by the mini bus. The classes would be provided by the managers of sheltered accommodation; however, they would need to be trained. Mr Finney assured the Working Group that all necessary training would take place.

2.9 The Working Group discussed the potential to extend the current proposals by recruiting a full time activities co-ordinator under Out and About. In this way it was hoped to provide frequent exercise classes, which would help with falls prevention, and provide sufficient other activities to cross subsidise the exercise classes. The officer also would be expected to produce a newsletter for distribution in the wider community so as to attract the level of interest aimed at for the scheme. Recruitment of a full-time officer would require a financial contribution from the Primary Care Trust (PCT). It was agreed to pursue this with the PCT.

2.10 A steering group would determine the strategy for and oversee the operation of Out and About. Age Concern already had been approached and had agreed to sit on the Steering Group. Members were of the view that the District Council should be represented on the Steering Group and, given their level of knowledge in this area, the representative should be one of the members of the Working Group. If the appointment was to be an officer then appointees would be required from both the Leisure and Community Development sections. In addition, it was agreed that the PCT should be invited to nominate a representative to sit on the Steering Group. Other Housing Associations also would be invited to participate.

2.11 The funding awarded to Luminus for Out and About was available for three years from 2006/07. In this period the main set up costs of the initiative would be incurred. While there was a condition on the funding awarded to Luminus that it remain solely responsible for Out and About, there existed opportunities for joint working between Luminus and other organisations, including the Council. These included advertising Out and About by the Council's leisure service and via Districtwide, with a reciprocal arrangement to advertise the Council's services that emerged in the long term through the Out and About programme via Luminus' monthly publication. Out and

About also could be included in the Council's database of services for older people, which is referred to at paragraph 2.20.

- 2.12 Members noted that sheltered accommodation could be used during down time for the provision of exercise classes, for example, by the District Council or by the PCT.

**c) Developing the Council's Services**

- 2.13 The Working Group received a breakdown of services provided by the Council relating to exercise for older people, which is contained in Appendix A. Additional information on exercise programmes for older people occurring in Huntingdonshire and at other authorities in Cambridgeshire together with examples of best practice further afield also were considered. In reviewing the information on services currently available in Huntingdonshire, Councillor Mrs Chandler drew particular attention to the following:

- Impressions – individually tailored exercise programmes for the Councils fitness suites;
- Doctor referrals – individual programmes;
- Keep fit for older ladies;
- Healthy walks in conjunction with the PCT;

Members thought that a comprehensive directory of activities available to older people in both the public and private sectors would be useful and a recommendation on this appears at the end of this report.

- 2.14 The Working Group were of the opinion that, owing to the potential benefits to older people and its contribution to the objectives of a number of bodies, the Council should seek to establish its own programme of exercise for older people. The Working Group noted that the Council's leisure centres were dual use, which restricted the time they had available during the day for public use. Members did not see that leisure centre availability represented a barrier to the provision of services as older people often preferred activities to be held in local village facilities.

- 2.15 The Working Group also was informed by Councillor Mrs Chandler that many of the exercise programmes at the leisure centres were provided by part-time qualified private individuals who were paid by the Council on the basis of the number of attendances at their classes. The Council acted as a co-ordinator of these classes. The Working Group were of the view that this set-up presented a relatively low risk opportunity to extend the current range to include specialist provision of classes for older people. It was suggested that a pilot exercise be undertaken via the leisure service. The Council would make available space at a Leisure Centre, which an external trainer would use to promote his/her own classes of exercise for older people. This would have little initial outlay or risk for the Council and would provide market testing for future service development by the Council.

- 2.16 The Working Group suggested that, subject to the experience of Luminus with its Out and About initiative, opportunities for exercise classes for older people in 'hub' villages, at sheltered accommodation during 'down time' and at doctors surgeries should be explored. Any programme should be

developed incrementally from the Council's existing initiative in Warboys in this area and on the basis of the pilot scheme referred to in the previous paragraph. Transport would be available via the Luminus Group minibus. The minibus would be put by Luminus into the County Council's Community Transport scheme and could be used by public.

- 2.17 To have the necessary physical effect, the PCT had advised that older people should attend exercise classes three times per week. On this basis the hire of village halls was costed at approximately £6,700 per year at current rates. Bearing in mind the Council's own budget setting process this could not commence before 2007/08. The 'hub' villages suggested by the Working Group were Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys, Ramsey and Yaxley. Although more accurate costings would be required, it was suggested that, at present rates, a budget of approximately £32k would be required; however, Members were of the view that a nominal charge should be made for classes in order that there was little overall cost to the Council. A full programme also would require the use of the community transport network.
- 2.18 Budgetary provision would be required to enable the programme referred to above to take place although, overall, it was stressed that it would be at little cost to the Council. The budgetary provision would be required in advance to meet the costs of the planned services but it was intended that the majority of the budget would be recouped through fees. Indicative costs of up to £54k had been cited for a total programme. The Working Group, however, preferred not to put a figure on the required budget as the costs referred to were for a full programme. The incremental nature of the recommendations meant that it would be a number of years before a full programme could be introduced. Officers would prepare the necessary forecasts for budgetary purposes according to the level and rate of service expansion deemed appropriate.

**d) Training**

- 2.19 The level of qualification that physical training officers would require before they could provide physical activity classes for older people was a concern for the Working Group. The Council's current policy specified that those teaching classes to groups of older people should hold qualifications recognised by the National Register for Exercise Professionals (NREP) at level three. The Council's Impressions and leisure centre fitness class instructors were all qualified to level two or three. Training for an individual would cost in the order of £450 per year. The Working Group were of the view that the Council should seek to host the necessary training to ensure that sufficient staff were trained to the required level to allow the Working Group's recommendations to be implemented. In addition, they felt that, in order to reduce future costs in this respect, the Council should encourage at least one member of its leisure staff to become a qualified trainer in order that training could be provided direct by the Council for its own staff and for others. The last recommendation was, however, subsequently withdrawn. Although technically possible, it was considered that the requirements placed on the Council to achieve trainer status would be so far in excess of the potential savings to the Council as to make it unjustifiable.

#### **e) Marketing and Management**

- 2.20 In addition to those referred to above, the Working Group held discussions on other related matters. Members were aware that many services and facilities were provided in Huntingdonshire that contributed to the overarching aim of the Working Group. They were of the view that a comprehensive and up to date database of these was required in order to improve older people's access to them. This was something that could be undertaken by the Environmental and Community Health Section.
- 2.21 The Working Group discussed the marketing materials currently produced by the leisure service. The Working Group were of the view that the Council's current approach to targeting those aged 50 and over deterred those aged over 65 from using the Council's facilities. Members suggested that marketing materials should be produced that were specifically aimed at those aged over 65 years. This recommendation did not relate to new services and it was stressed that older people were not necessarily restricted to classes and facilities aimed at their age group. It was not intended that new facilities and classes would be provided under this recommendation, merely that some marketing should be undertaken designed to encourage older people to use existing facilities and classes, which were open to all ages. It was felt that this would reduce the likelihood that older people would be deterred from using existing services.
- 2.23 In discussing exercise activities provided by the voluntary/private sector, Members identified a potential problem with succession where services were provided by key individuals. It was suggested that it there was an opportunity to introduce greater continuity of provision if there was a public sector body, such as the Council, co-ordinating the service.

#### **f) Exercise Referral**

- 2.24 The Working Group discussed the current exercise referral service, which operated at the leisure centres. If leisure centre staff were provided with specialist training there was an opportunity to continue to provide services for frail people once their exercise referral programmes had finished. Having considered the extension of the existing exercise referral scheme to continue to provide classes specifically tailored to those who had completed the scheme, this was not pursued. Members were reluctant to do this as there would be considerable benefit from it and there was great demand for such a service. It was, however, of a different nature to the main body of the study in that it dealt with clients post injury rather than injury prevention.

#### **g) Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership**

- 2.25 The Working Group was made aware that the potential benefits of physical activity hit many of the drivers of a number of bodies. Members, therefore, suggested that the Health, Housing and Social Care Thematic Group of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership should be requested to consider adopting the promotion of physical exercise amongst older people as one of its objectives.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 The Older Persons Working Group met on number of occasions. Members decided to concentrate on promoting better health in older people through physical activity. A range of information was considered on the services currently provided by the Council, on services provided by other sectors in Huntingdonshire and in Cambridgeshire and on national best practice. On the basis of this information and of discussions with relevant individuals Members have identified a number of initiatives that might be pursued to advance the objective of the Working Group. The outcomes of these discussions have been summarised above and the Scrutiny Panel:

#### **RECOMMEND**

that the Cabinet be requested to -

- (1) appoint a representative to the Out and About Steering Group;
- (2) promote Out and About through the Leisure Service and Districtwide;
- (3) subject to the progress of Out and About, establish a programme of exercise for older people at 'hub' villages and Luminus Sheltered Housing to commence in 2007/08;
- (4) make the necessary budgetary provision to enable the programme referred to above to take place although overall it will be at little cost to the Council;
- (5) subject to the programme of development referred to in Recommendation 3 and the outcome of the pilot referred to in Recommendation 8, train sufficient leisure staff to NREP level three as required to allow the programme referred to above to proceed;
- (6) provide facilities at the Leisure Centres for external trainers to provide their own classes for those aged over 65 years on a pilot basis;
- (7) introduce measures to ensure continuity of existing classes provided by the voluntary sector;
- (8) compile and maintain a comprehensive and up to date database of exercise services and facilities for older people;
- (9) produce marketing materials designed to encourage those aged over 65 years to use all of the Council's existing leisure facilities and classes as appropriate;
- (10) request the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnerships Health, Housing and Social Care Thematic Group to consider adopting the promotion of physical exercise amongst older people as one of its objectives, and
- (11) undertake a review of progress with the implementation of recommendations (1) to (10) for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery).

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**Background Documents** – Reports of meetings of the Older Persons Working Group.





**APPENDIX A**

	Hunts DC	Cambridge City	South Cambs DC	Fenland CD	East Cambs DC	Peterborough CC
<b>Swimming/Water based Activities</b>						
Over 40's/50's Swimming	√	√		√		
Aqua Aerobics	√	√		√		√
<b>Aerobics/Fitness Class Type Activities</b>						
Body Conditioning		√		√		√
Fitness Pilates		√				√
Circuits	√	√	√	√		√
Mighty Movers		√				
T'ai Chi		√				
Line dancing			√			
Pilates	√		√	√		√
Yoga/Yoga for Beginners/Dynamic Yoga	√		√			√
Stretch and Tone			√			√
Gentle Exercise for the Over 50's			√	√		√
Aerobics	√		√			√
Thighs, Tums & Bums	√		√			
Get Fit for Over 60s			√			
Keep Fit to Music for Over 50's			√			
Tap Dancing			√			
Ballroom Dancing			√			
Keep Fit	√			√		
<b>Sports Based At Leisure/Sports Centres</b>						
Table Tennis	√	√		√		√
Bowls & Badminton		√		√		

Tennis & Badminton	√	√		√		√
Fit 'n' Fifty	√					
<b>Sports Based at Other Venues e.g. private organisations/</b>						
Tenpin Bowling		√				
Tennis Lessons		√				
Golf Lessons		√				
Volley Ball		√				
<b>Gym/Fitness Studio Based Activities</b>						
David's Weekly Workouts		√				
Fit For All		√				
Over 50's fitness class x 2 (off site)	√					

## APPENDIX B.

### CURRENT HDC SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Chief Officers, Heads of Service and Activity Managers have been consulted on the services provided by the District Council specifically for older people. There does not appear to be extensive provision that is targeted at this age group: most services are open to all which.

The following responses were received from officers:

At Huntingdon Leisure Centre there is a Fit & 40s activity morning from 9.00 – 12.00 every Monday (except Bank Holidays). This is aimed at older age groups, but is called Fit & 40s simply to include more customers.

Since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 there have been 47 people over the age of 60 participating in the activity morning, many are regulars.

For only £3.30 (£3.50 from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2006) customers can participate in a variety of activities including:

Activity	Regular cost (£)	Time of activity
Swimming	1.70	10.30 – 11.30
Aerobics	3.50 (3.60 in Jan '06)	09.35 – 10.25
Yoga	5.25 (5.40 in Jan '06)	10.35 – 12.00
Badminton	3.50/ court	09.00 – 11.30
Sauna/Steam	3.00	09.00 – 12.00
Tea/ Coffee	0.90	Any time that day

There are three services that are used to a large degree by older people although they are necessarily targeted specifically at older people.

		Number	%
Cardiac Rehabilitation	Over 60	55	71%
Exercise Referral (04-05)	Over 65	47	15%
Health Walks	Over 60	203	53%

Exercise Referral is only available for over 65's at present as we measure this in age bands rather than specific ages and this is the age that the PCT require for their definition of an older person. The PCT co-funds the scheme.

The numbers for cardiac rehab and health walks are estimates at best as people continually join and leave these schemes.

In addition the Countryside Services Manager has commented that “none of my services are specifically aimed at groups aged 60+ although we provide many services which are used by this age group, such as volunteering. We purposely avoid specific age or ability groups because we have a social inclusion policy. Many of our older volunteers work well with special needs and excluded young people. This is an arrangement that all parties gain from and we actively encourage. It is inevitable that mid-week volunteers are more likely to be retired people but we do not exclude others who wish to volunteer. I do believe that my service does a substantial amount of work with the 60+ age range which should be flagged up to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Unfortunately, under this criterion, services provided by HDC will not be acknowledged by them.”