

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

**(Report by Head of Environmental and Community Health Services and  
General Manager, Leisure Centres)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Member of progress since the proposals by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery), to enhance services in the District for older people in order to enable them to retain their physical fitness for longer, went to Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) had identified a number of initiatives that might be pursued to promote better health in older people through physical activity. It was recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) note the arrangements that have been put in place for officers to support the Out and About Steering Group;
- (2) endorse the importance of promoting Out and About through the Leisure Service and District-wide;
- (3) note Out and About's targets to establish a programme of exercise for older people at Luminus' Sheltered Housing and to extend it to 'hub' villages and the progress towards them;
- (4) endorse the financial arrangements contained in Appendix B, which relate to Recommendations (5), (6) and (9) of the original report.
- (5) note the current position with regard to the Active at 50 project bid;
- (6) introduce measures to ensure continuity of existing classes provided by the voluntary sector;
- (7) compile and maintain a comprehensive and up to date database of exercise services and facilities for older people;
- (8) request the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership's Culture and Leisure Thematic Group to consider adopting the promotion of physical exercise amongst older people as one of its objectives; and
- (9) undertake a review of progress with the implementation of recommendations (1) to (8) for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery).

- 2.2 This report is to fulfil Recommendation 9 and provides the findings from a review of progress.

### **3. REVIEW OF PROGRESS**

- 3.1 Recommendations 1-4 related to Luminus' Out and About Scheme.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

The O&S Panel originally desired a representative be appointed to the Out and About Steering Group.

#### 2007 Commentary:

At the time the proposals were submitted the following commentary was provided: Despite a request by the Working Group that undertook the study, a formal invitation for the Council to be represented on the 'Out and About' Steering Group has not been received from Luminus. The Council, therefore, is not in a position to appoint a representative.

#### Progress:

The Out & about Scheme was launched by Luminus on 29 September 2006, the Steering Group supply minutes of their meetings to HDC's Team Leader responsible for Transportation. The next meeting of the Out & about Steering Group is scheduled for March 2009.

#### **3.2 Recommendation 2**

The O&S Panel desired that Out and About be promoted through the Leisure Service and District-wide;

#### 2007 commentary:

The Leisure Centres will, for 2008, be producing their own guide to activities for the 50+ age-group. The guide will contain references to external agencies' activities, including Out and About. Out and About currently produce their own leaflet which briefly details available activities for the 50+ age group at the Centres and elsewhere. This is circulated to their existing 200+ members.

#### Progress:

In autumn 2008 Luminus Group was awarded the National Housing Federation's Communications Award and the 'Out and About' project was highly commended. The Out and About Scheme supports seven non-Luminus Sheltered Housing schemes across the District (Published minutes; 12 June 2008). In its first year (2006-7) – 641 users and 18 external organisations were supported and in the second year (2007-8) – 772 users and 24 external organisations were supported.

#### **3.3 Recommendation 3**

The O&S Panel desired that a programme of exercise for older people be established at 'hub' villages and Luminus Sheltered Housing; to commence in 2007/08

#### 2007 commentary:

The Council has no budget provision to extend a programme of exercise for older people to 'hub' villages. To achieve this recommendation a bid for funding was submitted to the Big Lottery Fund. The bid for the 'Active at 50' project was successful and the Council has been awarded £46,830. The project is being planned for implementation in 2008/09. However, it is still dependant on the success of an MTP bid for match-funding.

#### Progress

Funding has been secured for Active at 50 to run for 3-years until 2011 (see 3.5 below). The 'Active at 50' project was featured in District-wide (Autumn

2008, Issue 9). Luminus' Out and About Scheme supports seven non-Luminus Sheltered Housing schemes across the District in addition to Luminus residents.

### **3.4 Recommendation 4**

The O&S Panel desired that: sufficient leisure staff be trained to NREP level three as required to allow the Open Out programme roll out to proceed; facilities be provided at the Leisure Centres for external trainers to provide their own classes for those aged over 65 years on a pilot basis; and marketing materials designed to encourage those aged over 65 years to use all of the Council's existing leisure facilities and classes as appropriate be produced.

#### 2007 commentary:

The Council has no budget provision to extend a programme of exercise for older people. Space was created in the Leisure Centres' timetables to host 50+ activities but Out and About did not follow through with arrangements to ensure that the Centres did not lose out financially and the activities do not run as originally planned. However, the Centres are participating in "Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age" (8th October for one week) and will be providing a selection of free classes and pool sessions for the over 50's. This will enable the Centres to ascertain a level of demand for the activities on offer which will, in turn, assist in future marketing initiatives.

#### Progress

The 'Active at 50' project includes training and educating instructors to support and sustain the 'Active at 50' programme. The current Fitness Class schedule for the St Ivo, includes 'Keep Fit' classes designed for those 50+: Mondays and Tuesdays; and Huntingdon Leisure Centre offers: Right Start 3: Fitness Class (Wednesdays) and Right Start 1: Chair Based Exercise (Thursdays). The Right Start 3: Fitness Class is a social class with light to moderate exercise to help improve flexibility, strength and fitness suitable for people wanting to exercise for the first time or returning to exercise after a medical condition. Right Start 1: Chair Based Exercise involves a series of chair based exercises, stretches and band work. This is specifically for those 50+ years.

### **3.5 Recommendation 5**

The O&S Panel desired that the 'Active at 50' bid be pursued as an enabler to extend a programme of exercise for older people.

#### 2007 commentary:

A bid for funding was submitted to the Big Lottery Fund. The bid for the 'Active at 50' project was successful and the Council has been awarded £46,830. The project is being planned for implementation in 2008/09. However it is still dependant on the success of an MTP bid for match-funding.

#### Progress:

The Active at 50 project aims to increase participation in physical activity by people over 50 and those in need of additional support. The target is to have 500 people benefiting from classes and a further 1,000 benefiting indirectly. It has attracted £10k LPSA reward money (2009) in addition to the Lottery Funding. It is developing well after a relatively slow start this first year (2008). The target is that 500 older people will have participated in the programme by the end of the 3 years funding, 2011. It involves:

- Delivering a "Right Start Exercise class" programme including offering classes in areas exhibiting health inequalities and with a significant population aged 65 or over.
- Promoting the programme to 50 plus age group in Huntingdonshire

- Introduce play type physical activity sessions across Huntingdonshire (in Q2)
- Introduce club / hobby activities across Huntingdonshire (in Q4)
- Extend range of activities and number of classes in Yaxley (Q5)
- Extend range of activities and number of classes in Ramsey (Q6)

### **3.6 Recommendation 6**

The O&S Panel desired that measures be introduced to ensure continuity of existing classes provided by the voluntary sector.

#### 2007 commentary:

Classes in the voluntary sector have a natural life. Either they evolve to become viable businesses or, if there is not a true gap in demand, they wane. Intervention by the Council needs to be considered on a case by case basis.

### **3.7 Recommendation 7**

The O&S Panel desired that a comprehensive and up to date database of exercise services and facilities for older people be compiled and maintained.

#### 2007 commentary:

There currently is no budget provision to create a database of services and facilities for older people. Cambridgeshire County Council recently established a similar database of youth initiatives, towards the cost of which, a grant of £45k was received. It is likely that a similar sum would be required to implement this recommendation.

#### Progress:

No additional funding has been found to date the creation of this database has not been progressed.

### **3.8 Recommendation 8**

The O&S Panel desired that the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership's Culture and Leisure Thematic Group consider adopting the promotion of physical exercise amongst older people as one of its objectives.

#### 2007 commentary:

Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership's Health, Housing and Social Care Thematic Group sets priorities according to health need. The Primary Care Trust is presently involved in a joint health needs assessment for older people.

#### Progress:

Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership's Culture and Leisure Thematic Group is now defunct and the Health, Housing and Social Care Thematic Group has been replaced with the Huntingdonshire Health and wellbeing Group. The Health and wellbeing group has a wider remit and includes culture and leisure as part of wellbeing. The priorities for this group were set by Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership after extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders. The priorities are currently:

- Appropriate culture and leisure opportunities
- Reduced health inequalities
- Individuals choose healthy lifestyles
- Reduced Accidents
- Increased opportunities for vulnerable people to live independently

These priorities are generally applicable to a wide range of groups within Huntingdonshire. Some of the specific actions are tailored specifically for Older People. For example within "Individuals choose healthy lifestyles":

Objective 5.1 is to: 'Promote the independence of older people'; and action 5.1.3 is to: 'Deliver the Active at 50 project encouraging older people to be more physically active to help their independence'.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Significant progress has been made in enhancing services in Huntingdonshire for older people in order to enable them to retain their physical fitness for longer. In those instances where resources were available, or have been successfully secured from external sources, the recommendations have been implemented. However, in some instances sufficient resources have not been found to implement the recommendations, e.g. the database.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Report of The Older Persons' Working Group to Overview And Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) "Promoting Better Health In Older People Through Physical Activity 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) to Cabinet; 4<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2007: "Promoting Better Health in Older People Through Physical Activity"

Report of the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel to Cabinet 24<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2008 "Promoting Better Health In Older People Through Physical Activity"

Published minutes of Luminus' Tenant Services Consultative Forum, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2008:  
<http://luminus.org/uploads/resources/Minutes%20120608.doc>

**Contact Officer:** Dr S Lammin, Head of Environmental & Community Health Services

☎ 01480 388280

[Susan.Lammin@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:Susan.Lammin@huntsdc.gov.uk)