

Older People's Network

Tuesday 9th March 2021, 2.00 pm via Zoom

Present: Chris Folwell (BL Project Manager), Lawrence O'Halleron (Chair of BLG), Suzanne Amey (BLG Horticulture), Lynne Greenwood (Soundroom), Marge Greatbatch (Administrator), Christine Frazer, Liz Keating (BL Volunteers), Gian Claudio (Armstrong House), Louise McKenzie (Loose Connections), Jenna Brooks (National Trust), Sally & Keith (Rosewood)

Apologies: Julie Marshall.

1. Welcome: Chris welcomed everyone to the meeting with a round of introductions.

2. Updates:

Lynne, Soundroom - The Soundroom is hosting online community radio sessions, Lynne explained how this runs. There is a fortnightly slot available which she suggested Big Local could utilise and help to get started is available - discussed possibilities.

Chris (BLG) - The Pen-Pals scheme is running along, hopefully the people involved will be able to meet their 'pals' eventually!

The BL Pop-up Shop goes from strength to strength, Chris thanked the volunteers who run it. It's very popular and all are welcome on Fridays 2.00 - 4.00 pm.

Suzanne (BLG) - Trees have all been allocated now and some are already in the ground. The idea of a 'memorial plaque' to go with a tree in the care homes' gardens was discussed again and ideas were put forward for the wording. Christine offered to jot down some ideas and submit to Chris for consideration. Spring veg kits will be made available again this year and seed-sowing kits will be going to the care homes as well.

Christine added that she is connecting with local, elderly residents and hoping to develop a postal service for those unable to get out and about as well as developing other activities. There was a discussion on the benefits of an outdoor, solar powered, large screen which could be used for fitness videos, health messages and many other promotional messages. The Gateshead Fund for Covid relief projects was mentioned and the Soundroom has a large outdoor screen available at their premises available for advertising as well.

Staithe refurbishment - National Trust - Jenna Brooks informed the group about a new partnership between National Trust, Gateshead Council, and Tyne & Wear Building Preservation Trust to revitalise the Staithe and Gateshead riverside park. She gave more information on plans for networking within the community, particularly in forming a 'Spirit of Place' document, and added that they intend to link the area with Gibside estate via green cycle corridors.

Loose Connections - Louise updated us - The project is underway now working on-line with intergenerational pairs to improve their technical skills. There is room for more pairs and Rosewood were encouraged to take part.

Armstrong House - Trees from Big Local have all been planted in the grounds and residents will help with seed planting.

Rosewood - The staff are busy preparing for the resumption of visitors. The Pen-Pals are keen to meet their contacts as well! The Care Dolls have been a great success and the origami artwork is on display. They hope to take part in the Loose Connections project.

3. Matters Arising

Christine said that a Teams and Dunston Easter egg hunt is being organised and she asked if anyone wanted to get involved - displaying eggs for spotting etc. This will be picked up again at the next meeting.

Some members expressed concerns about care home residents who do not receive any visitors, once they have resumed we might have a better idea of the scale of the problem and can look to address it at next months meeting.

4. Proposals:

No new applications have been received, there remains £5,000 in the Older People Network Fund.

5. Any other business:

The Soundroom is still waiting to hear on the outcome of a funding application bid to start 'music4dementia' radio sessions.

Next meeting: Tuesday 6th April 2021, 2.00 pm