

Stockton-on-Tees Over 50's Forum

- Overview of the Forum – how it works, who is involved, partnership working (e.g. Council, Police, other voluntary and community sector groups, etc.)
 - Feedback from the community, including:
 - any particular issues regarding safety within / around the home
 - views on any organisations / services they are involved with (e.g. safety and wellbeing messages being received, information on available security options)
 - Any key issues around this scrutiny topic that you feel need to be highlighted
-

Stockton-on-Tees Over 50's Forum has had a long history of working under the umbrella of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council as the Over 50's Assembly.

Some years ago with Council cut backs, they could no longer support the group and so as Chair at the time, I took the group along with a new name, became a Constitutionalised group with the help and support of Catalyst. We still kept the connection with Stockton Council where we had speakers like Neil Schneider, Ann Workman, Rob Papworth, SBC Public Health, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Warm Homes Healthy People, Five Lamps Homecare, Falls Team, Home Instead to mention but a few. This gave members access to information which may not have been available.

The information from these speakers is then taken by members to other groups that they are associated with therefore 'water falling' the information to others. Our members are of differing ages but mainly 70 to 80 year-olds. We never ask people's ages. We are grateful they attend and that we can help with information given by speakers or by the many leaflets available that Catalyst provide at the meeting as well.

What you must understand about older people is that you could have someone in their 70's who is vulnerable for whatever reason who would need help and an 80 year-old who is active and does not need help. So making this Scrutiny review to over 80 year-olds is a little ageist in my view and experience dealing with older people.

My experience with Neighbourhood Watch was a great benefit where all the neighbours could get advice on house security. So much so that I became a Co-Ordinator for my section of the street, but after many years the information given by the police grew less and less and I no longer have contact with anyone. To me it was a great way to look after neighbours especially if they were elderly and also to know how to secure your home.

So where would I advise my older people I see, to get advice and help on safety in the home? Maybe it would be Crime Prevention Officer at the Police Station? Leaflets would be good as most of the older people I deal with do not have any access to the internet.

These leaflets could be provided to the services that have access to the older, vulnerable people in the community. That is whether it is the Fire Brigade, Social Services, Carers visiting homes, or the Thirteen Group. They all have opportunities to be in contact with these elderly people who need help.

On the back of that, I would love people to come and talk to my group and others like the Over 50's Forum to spread the information to make people more secure in their homes.

Providing simple things like adequate locks on doors, safety chains, adequate lighting around the property as well as alarms or false boxes if they could not afford the real thing. These all go to making people feel safer in their homes.

[Note: Stockton-on-Tees Over 50's Forum are meeting on Monday 14th October 2019 where this scrutiny topic will be discussed – feedback from the Forum will be provided to the Committee to supplement the above information.](#)

Jean Kirby
Stockton Voice Officer
Stockton-on-Tees Over 50's Forum