

# AGE-FRIENDLY WHALLEY RANGE REPORT 2014



## WHALLEY RANGE COMMUNITY FORUM



In autumn 2012, the Whalley Range Community Forum (WRCF) met with Tracey Annette from what was then known as the Valuing Older People team at Manchester City Council - to get some expert advice on how to bring services and information together, to build links with older residents living in the Whalley Range Ward.

As the Ward doesn't have a central meeting point and the Forum has only a part-time worker, it has been a struggle to maintain engagement with older people in the area - and not for lack of trying.

Over the years, the Forum has supported several attempts at building a local network - including the Carlton Club over 50's, a 50+ social group and reading group, working with Ward Coordination to hold events specifically aimed at identifying the needs and priorities of residents and how they feel about growing older in Whalley Range - and intergenerational activities at various events across the Ward in partnership with other local groups.



An important event in June 2013 was the launch of 'Age-friendly Whalley Range' at the annual 'Celebrate' Community Festival, held at the St Margaret's Centre on Brantingham Road in Whalley Range.

Prior to the festival launch, the Age-friendly Whalley Range Steering Group and mailing list was set up to work with residents and local groups and businesses to encourage an age friendly initiative throughout Whalley Range, with support from the Manchester City Council Valuing Older People team.

(Now known as Age-friendly Manchester /AFM)

A small grant from the British Society of Gerontology (BSG) enabled us to hire a dedicated marquee for the festival, featuring a variety of information stalls relevant to older residents and an opportunity to speak to local residents about their own thoughts about what is currently in place - and what needs to happen to make Whalley Range more age-friendly.

Residents participated in an arts and crafts workshop to create our own Age-friendly Whalley Range mosaic based on the age-friendly flower logo and incorporating the date of the launch.

A gentle seated exercise workshop for people with reduced mobility was provided by a local fitness instructor and around 20 residents participated and expressed an interest in regular classes.

Many residents signed up to the new Age-friendly Whalley Range mailing list to receive updates about the project. The mailing list continues to grow, attracting the interest of residents and relevant groups/agencies. The BSG grant also enabled us to plan and promote an Age Debate at the Forum's base at JNR8 (the leased community rooms of Manley Park Methodist Church, shared with Whalley Range Youth Opportunities Association) - to share more information and to speak to local older people about their own ideas in terms of making Whalley Range more age-friendly.

The Age Debate included information displays and refreshments and took place a few weeks after the Celebrate festival/Age-friendly launch - and we had a really good turnout.

Paul McGarry, Senior Strategy Manager for the Age-friendly Manchester team gave a presentation on the citywide Age-friendly Manchester Programme - and Chris Phillipson, Professor of Sociology and Social Gerontology from Manchester University talked about the Ageing Research Agenda.

Following the presentations, Paul and Chris - along with WRCF Chair Bill Williams and our local councillor Mary Watson - took part in a lively Q & A panel discussion with residents around age-friendly initiatives and how to identify and work with priorities - particularly in our Ward. This was also a great introduction to our new AFWR group - and all attendees were added to the mailing list.

Our initial dedicated website was set up at <http://agefriendlywhalleyrange.wordpress.com> along with a YouTube site: the Age Debate is featured - along with slideshows and videos of our other events and other videos from a wide variety of organisations, highlighting other projects aimed at older people in terms of addressing health and wellbeing - and simply celebrating getting older.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTAec2pQ1fc>

Recently, all our WRCF websites have been combined into one bigger community site, with sections of interest and galleries, local news, events and bulletins: [www.whalleyrange.org](http://www.whalleyrange.org)



### **Manchester Ageing Study**

An age-friendly research project involving local communities is now well underway in Whalley Range and Chorlton. 15 local residents have taken part in a one-day training course and are carrying out interviews across their own neighbourhoods, talking with older people about their experiences of living and growing older where they live. All interviews will form part of the evidence base for the two-year project, which began in October last year. The project is led by Dr Tine Buffel and Professor Chris Phillipson.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

An NHS/Public Health focus group and consultation team were looking at ways to promote and increase the uptake of Flu immunisation and based their pilot project in Whalley Range.

Members of the AFWR Steering Group and key representatives of other Whalley Range groups met at JNR8/Manley Park Methodist Church to discuss effective promotion of the flu jab - and ideas for updated publicity. The pilot of the project was based at the Range Medical Centre, Withington Road.

In October an AFWR representative attended and contributed to a discussion on issues affecting Whalley Range residents with the Clinical Commissioning Group and their 5 year Health Strategy 'Help shape your local NHS' around dementia, mental health and social care.

AFWR are planning a one-off Newsletter to specifically focus on older people and health in the Ward.

### **Projects and AFWR representation**

In March 2014, members of the Age-friendly Whalley Range Steering Group took part in a meeting with Bristol residents via a videoconference call. The Bristol group want to set up their own age-friendly initiatives and our group shared tips and advice with the residents in a discussion about the Whalley Range work and how AFWR initially started.

In September a number of local older people, aged 50+ mainly from the Tangmere Court locality, participated in a research study around Mobility, Mood and Place. The aim of this project is to find out how places can be designed working with older people, to make mobility in different environments easy, enjoyable and meaningful. The study involved a Town Hall focus group session, a walk around the Bridgewater canal and questionnaire as part of a study with Edinburgh University and MMU Design School. Representatives from AFWR also met with a team of delegates from South Korea in October who visited the Age-friendly Manchester team to discuss the age-friendly design of Manchester and Alexandra Park.

### **Community Action**

The AFWR Steering Group has been instrumental in voicing resident's concerns over a number of issues over the past 18 months. For example - our valuable 16 bus service was recently deregulated and local residents and businesses were supported to circulate and deliver petitions outlining concerns - a letter written on behalf of the AFWR group was also sent to the Head of Transport.

The imminent closure of the local leisure centre which currently provides specific health and leisure activities for older residents has raised a number of concerns which the group have highlighted. The new complex is a mile away from the current site with poor transport links: the group also sought reassurance that the new centre development team would be taking mobility and disability issues into consideration.

### **Social interaction**

Thanks to a small grant from the Lord Mayors Charitable Fund we were able to present 6 social/information events - each with a specific focus, including 'Spring to Action', 'Health & Wellbeing', 'Food' and 'Winter Safety' - our final 2 events from this funding stream will be held in the spring of 2015: a Garden Party at the British Muslim Heritage Centre and a Project Celebration at our base in the JNR8 Community Centre.

Accessible host venues have included housing providers for over 55's and local church halls.

The events have provided interactive activities, including singing for wellbeing, an edible flowers and herbs planting demonstration and workshop, a beginners/improvers guide to using a computer, health & wellbeing demonstrations including Reiki and positivity, chair based exercise and pampering.

Entertainment was provided and lunch to share, encouraging conversation with old and new friends.

Information stalls covered everything from volunteering opportunities, consultations, local transport options, fire and crime safety advice, health, hearing, housing, other local projects offering activities for older people - and lots more. Blood pressure and blood sugar testing was available from a local pharmacy, a healthy eating presentation and a range of information about support services - and of course the work of the Forum and Age-friendly Whalley Range was promoted.

We were able to pay transport costs for people with reduced mobility who wanted to come along.

Food was provided by our own volunteers and a food project from a local community group - and meal delivery services who deliver daily meals locally brought along lots of samples.

Our 3rd event - in partnership with Whalley Range Methodist Church representatives who are very active in local food share schemes - focused on food poverty and good nutrition particularly for older residents.

The event launched Whalley Range Taste Buds food sharing scheme, local food growing projects and a presentation of healthy eating by Loren Grant of [www.foodwiser.net](http://www.foodwiser.net)

Local support groups promoted their services including Dementia Friends and Together Dementia Support.

This event also featured a visit from Manchester's Lord Mayor, Councillor Susan Cooley who has Age-friendly Manchester as her theme during the year.

In November we held our 4<sup>th</sup> community event at St Werburgh's Parish Hall with a theme 'Winter Safety' looking at keeping warm and safe during the winter months. Entertainment was provided by the Chorlton Good Neighbours based singing group 'The Melodics' and safety initiatives included a presentation from Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service and energy efficiency tips.



Age friendly Whalley Range



## TIMELINE, LINKS AND ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE:

- Autumn 2012: Initial meeting: WRCF - Bill, Chris, VOP - Tracey Annette
- Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012: Age-friendly Manchester launch event – including workshop and presentation focusing on how to make an area age-friendly - using the Whalley Range Map<sup>i</sup>
- Meeting re forming a dedicated steering group and developing an ‘Action Plan’ to focus on the priorities for local residents
- Steering group formed , email account and mailing list set up and YouTube and Twitter account<sup>ii</sup>
- June 2013: Launch of Age-friendly Whalley Range
- Age Debate: in partnership with MCC VOP and British Society of Gerontology<sup>iii</sup>
- Flu Awareness focus group - arising from the views of the Steering group
- Winter Warm Event: initial engagement with 50 residents and 15 age-friendly agencies
- Age-friendly Newsletter - 1st issue produced and 6000 copies distributed to every house in Whalley Range with funding support from Community First<sup>iv</sup>
- Age-friendly Newsletter - 2nd issue compiled and large print version produced by Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People. CCG additional copies supplied free of charge<sup>v</sup>
- Resource files distributed: local and wider information files featuring useful contacts
- Ageing Study/Age-friendly Whalley Range event: recruitment of co-researchers as interviewers as part of the 2 year University of Manchester Ageing Study - piloted in Whalley Range<sup>vi</sup>
- Successful funding application to the Lord Mayor’s Charitable fund for 6 ward-wide community facing sociable and informative events - including transport costs
- May 2014 - Event 1: Spring Action Planting @ Tangmere Court - attracting 50 residents
- Celebrate 2014: AFRW anniversary: stall - noticeboards, newsletters and photo gallery display
- Event 2: Health & Wellbeing @ Trafalgar Court: again around 50 attendees and 15 info stalls
- Whalley Range Taste Buds planning: a ‘Casserole club’ style scheme whereby residents cook an extra plate of food for older neighbours<sup>vii</sup>
- Alexandra Park Grand Reopening: Age-friendly Whalley Range stall and interview
- Event 3: Food @ Whalley Range Methodist Church with Taste Buds launch: 8 cooks have signed up
- Event 4: Winter Safety @ St Werburgh’s Church
- Age-friendly Newsletter - 3rd issue produced and additional copies printed by CCG<sup>viii</sup>
- Email drafted to approach businesses to encourage them to sign up to the ‘Age-friendly Business Charter’. Businesses/groups who sign up will be able to display the age-friendly flower logo.
- 4 Festive Feasts took place during December. Community First funding was received to hold these events - aimed purely as a social sit-down meal for older residents with transport costs included and entertainment - a two course meal with crackers for party hats and mince pies: 80 attendees!

## ALEXANDRA PARK REOPENING CEREMONY – AUGUST 2014



**The end of August was a time to celebrate in Alexandra Park.** We are fortunate to have the Park within the ward which will serve as a template for national design - including the extensive research into parks - with an Age-friendly strategy for Manchester Parks used as a model in terms of mobility/inclusive features. The World Health Organisation includes outdoor spaces and buildings as one of the 8 recognised criteria to identify an age-friendly city.

During the regeneration of the Park, local older people participated in consultations with the design teams and architects, ensuring the design and planning took older people's priorities into account.

AFWR have suggested the purchase of mobility scooters to help people with reduced mobility to access all areas of the park.

We attracted a lot of interest at the grand re-opening ceremony in August 2014 - hosting an information stall and promoting the group and the Taste Buds scheme at the event.

The event featured history talks in the revamped Chorlton Lodge and interviews with residents about their memories of the park over the years.

Some of the interviews can be found on our AFWR YouTube site: <http://tinyurl.com/p9bjnxf>

Two of the old benches from the park have been donated to AFWR and we are liaising with residents about where to site them in Whalley Range as a resting point from spring 2015.

### **Information Sharing, Publicity and Social Media**

3 Age-friendly Whalley Range Newsletters produced to date and updates provided at Forum meetings/Ward meetings. WRCF also shares relevant information Ward-wide, via a 400+ mailing list.

The Steering Group is very active with regular meetings and information sharing - and the group is regularly represented at local community events.

Presentations at WRCF AGM, articles in WRCF/Celebrate annual reports, Ward Plan/Health Plan input and updates, dedicated website, twitter feed with over 118 followers - and the YouTube channel.

Promotion from other local community groups newsletters/websites and Community Index.

### **Whalley Range Taste Buds**

The Whalley Range Community Forum and Age-friendly Whalley Range have recently launched a new food project: the Food Futures Public Health team are supporting Whalley Range Taste Buds - a Casserole Club-style food project in Whalley Range. The idea is to connect people who like to cook and are happy to share an extra portion of a delicious home cooked meal with older neighbours living close by who could really benefit from a hot cooked meal. The pilot is progressing well and has been promoted at all of our local community events, via our website and newsletters – and in the Community Index magazine - as well as through social networking sites i.e. Twitter, Facebook and other community sites.

Whalley Range residents represent a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, so there is the potential to offer vegetarian, South Asian and West Indian cuisine for diners if mutually agreed.

Cooks have taken a short food hygiene course and Criminal Record Check (DBS) paid for by the project.

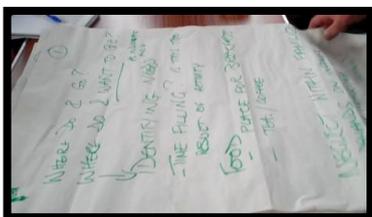
The website is at [www.whalleyrangetastebuds.wordpress.com](http://www.whalleyrangetastebuds.wordpress.com) which is also being used to promote current food-related information.

### **Moving Forward**

To continue to establish AFWR and to develop further, we are looking at formally constituting the group, working in partnership with local stakeholders and relevant services and businesses - including housing providers and established local groups. This will ensure the group is in a position to apply for funding to continue the work, engaging even more with local older residents – particularly those who are isolated and need additional support. The Steering group will continue to support and highlight issues that affect older residents in the Ward and wider community, regularly reviewing our Age-friendly Action Plan - and we aim to produce regular newsletters to ensure residents who do not have access to the internet are still able to access relevant news and information.

We will continue to work with local businesses and service providers to encourage an age-friendly business approach, ensuring the needs and priorities of our older residents are taken into account in terms of premises/venues and accessibility to these services.

We will share good practice with other local organisations - particularly those working with older people and work with established groups to promote their services and signpost residents to support and activities to widen opportunities. We will regularly consult with and listen to residents to ensure Whalley Range is a place where people can access information to develop interests and improve health and wellbeing by disseminating relevant information to people on the mailing list and those living in the Ward.





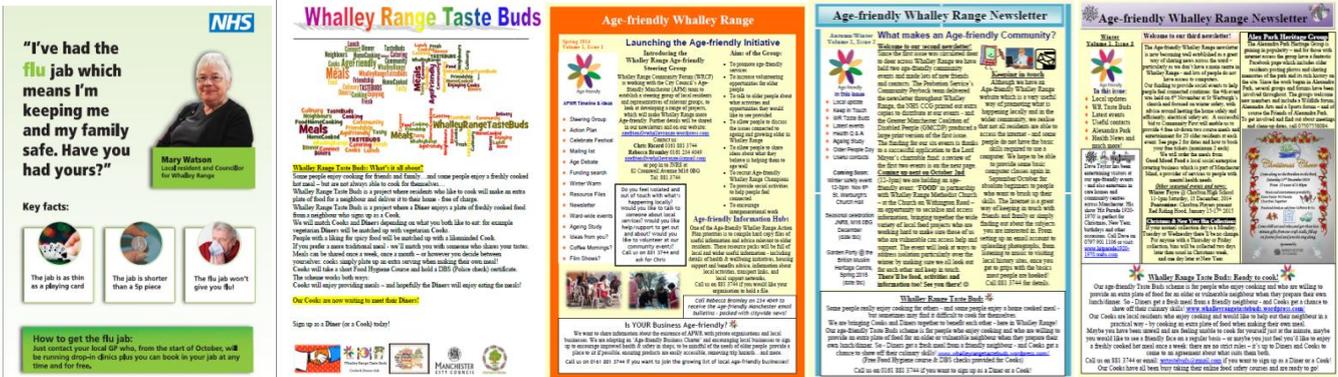
## Event 3: 'Food' at Whalley Range Methodist Church



## Event 4: 'Winter Safety' at St Werburgh's Parish Hall



## Publicity and front pages of our Age-friendly Whalley Range Newsletters



## DECEMBER 2014 - FESTIVE FEASTS!

### 4 fantastic seasonal get-togethers in various venues across Whalley Range.

Funded by Community First grant - and just a good excuse to get together over a delicious hot meal, pull some party crackers, wear party hats, tell rubbish jokes and join in with Freddi's Christmas quiz!

As a result of the community meals we are planning to hold regular Coffee Mornings at the JNR8 Centre. Catering was provided by Good Mood Food based in Hulme - part of Manchester Mind support services for people with mental health issues - and everyone agreed that the food was absolutely delicious!

Entertainment came from Dave Taylor and his Hit Parade and Calypso George Clinton (with Bob Jones) Events held at Trafalgar Court, St Margaret's Centre, JNR8 and Tangmere Court attracted over 70 people. The next 2 social information events for 2015 will be a Garden Party at the British Muslim Heritage Centre and a Celebration at JNR8. Dates to be confirmed....



**Finally - a few words from Rebecca Bromley, Age-friendly Manchester and Ageing Study:**

“It has been a highlight seeing the Age-friendly Whalley Range project progress in expected and unexpected ways, driven first hand by people who live in the community and are passionate about making positive change in their neighbourhood. The Age-friendly Whalley Range project is the first of its kind in Manchester (and we believe in the UK), and the learning from the project will be shared to help develop other initiatives in neighbourhoods in the City and beyond.”

i *Whalley Range Map:* <http://www.sustainable-change.co.uk/sustainable-community-map-whalley-range>

ii *Age-friendly Whalley Range archive website:* <http://agefriendlywhalleyrange.wordpress.com/>

*Whalley Range Community Website:* [www.whalleyrange.org](http://www.whalleyrange.org)

*AFWR Twitter:* <https://twitter.com/AgeFriendlyWR>

*AFWR YouTube:* <http://www.youtube.com/user/AgeFriendlyWR>

iii *British Society of Gerontology* <http://www.britishgerontology.org/>

iv *Age-friendly Newsletter 1* <http://tinyurl.com/p6dku26>

v *Age-friendly Newsletter 2* <http://tinyurl.com/o2adidp>

vi *Manchester Ageing Study:* <http://tinyurl.com/ns4kkng>

vii *Whalley Range Taste Buds* <http://whalleyrangetastebuds.wordpress.com/>

viii *Age-friendly Newsletter3* <http://tinyurl.com/l5ugpgl>

**Report compiled by Chris Ricard**

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