



Celebrate - with Age-friendly Whalley Range & Chorlton!



12-6pm Saturday 16th July 2016

Manley Park, Clarendon Road, Whalley Range, M16 0AB

Come and visit the age-friendly marquee at Celebrate!



The Whalley Range Community Forum, MICRA, Manchester University and Age-friendly Whalley Range/Chorlton provided lots of information, activities, refreshments, arts and crafts and entertainment at this year's Celebrate Festival on July 16th 2016 at Manley Park...

The theme this year was 'Friendship' - to spread the message that despite negative events in the news, our multicultural festival demonstrates that we all get along well together as a cohesive community.

There was a great mix of cultures too: the Celebrate Festival is volunteer-led and is a representation of all our communities/faiths/cultures and ages working together to include everyone – with all community groups operating in the area encouraged to host a stall/participate in the event.

There was also a great intergenerational emphasis: we had lots of older people with their children and grandchildren visiting the stalls and getting involved...

The Age-friendly marquee at Celebrate was a fantastic addition to the Festival – and there was a great atmosphere in Manley Park with lots of people getting involved...and no rain :)

The main purpose of the Age-friendly marquee was for MICRA/Manchester University to demonstrate the findings of the ageing study research in Whalley Range and Chorlton - and to talk to people about how the priorities that came out of the interviews with older residents are being addressed.

http://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/files/32297850/FULL_TEXT.PDF

We were able to use a small grant from the Manchester Carer's Forum and some funding from Age-friendly Manchester to pay for a couple of intergenerational activities to engage with local older people and younger residents – including decorating cakes with multi-coloured icing (the age-friendly flower!)

We also had use of the Alexandra Arts hot press (bought with a joint Cash grant bid between Age-friendly Whalley Range and Alexandra Arts) to make vinyl printed bags promoting our 'age-friendliness' demonstrating our expansion to include Chorlton - and featuring our contact details.

The small grants paid for the materials and the workshop facilitator - the bags looked great and lots of people participated.

The fantastic 'opinion tree' - made over a couple of days at JNR8 by Jane Goetze - involved Jane talking to people in the Marquee and giving out leaves and asking people (of all ages) to hang their positive thoughts/negative thoughts/positive suggestions about Whalley Range on the tree: particularly around ageing in Whalley Range.

Jane also chatted with people of all ages, walking around the festival, giving out the leaves and explaining what we were hoping to achieve by gathering people's thoughts.

'Leaf your Opinion on our Age-friendly Tree!'

The University funded the AF marquee hire, the tree workshop and refreshments, along with tables, a small stage and solar PA hire for live entertainment.

There was a range of fresh fruit punches and cakes, in the marquee with lots of friendly chat and information sharing - and an amazing Zimbabwean sculptor called Thomas Ndhlebe and his partner, Evermore.

I wish we'd had more performers or music to make full use of the PA and attract even more people to the marquee - but we didn't realise the PA would be static - and we forgot to bring cd's... we had a couple of performances though (and one accidental act who should have played on the main stage...he was great!!)



We displayed our new Age-friendly Whalley Range and Chorlton banners (paid for with the AFM Airport grant) and noticeboards displaying local news and events relevant to older people and the wider community. We displayed lots of health and wellbeing information including exercise classes for different levels of mobility, activities aimed at reducing isolation including coffee mornings, voluntary groups who support older people, GMP safety information and resources such as window locks and personal alarms - and a board for people to add and suggest local activities for all - particularly those suitable for older residents as well as the whole community.

The Whalley Range Community Forum noticeboard featured news about our centre and other local news and was also displayed in the Age-friendly marquee: lots of people took photographs of the noticeboards - and using the bags they designed - took lots of useful information away with them.

The volunteers in the Age-friendly marquee were given a voucher for free food for volunteering: AFWR donated £30 to Celebrate so people helping out in the marquee could get a sandwich etc.

In terms of the way the team from the University demonstrated the research findings - people commented on how easy it was to understand, how good it was to be able to actually talk face to face with researchers about their priorities – and people were happy that if their own opinion wasn't represented – they could write a comment/suggestion on the tree.

An older resident commented to Bill that he often feels put on the spot if people approach him with a clipboard for his thoughts: the easy to understand displays meant he could see what was being addressed – and then he took two leaves and wrote his own priorities down – in his own time and with no pressure.

The display boards were vibrant, easy to read and in Plain English – and the atmosphere in the marquee meant that people who had any questions were relaxed enough to discuss the work with the researchers and other residents.

Someone commented that a lot of the time people are asked for their views and that's the last they hear of it. I feel the Age-friendly Marquee demonstrated to people that the opinions of residents around ageing and priorities are taken seriously and used to influence change.

A big **"THANK YOU!"** to Tine, Patty, Jill, Jenna and Patrick, Andrea, Jane, Bill, Angela, Anthony and everyone else who got involved in the Age-friendly Celebrate marquee - for all your hard work and support!

