

OPEN

Older People's
Engagement Network



“You said, we did.”

February 2016 - February 2017

At the February 2016 OPEN Launch Event, you said...

You wanted City wide consultation about how services could be improved for people aged 50+:

We have engaged with **1000 residents** since **February 2016**. This includes 612 people aged 50+ at **44 community groups** in the city to consult about various issues affecting your daily lives.

Our outreach work has taken us from the Goldenhill 'Out and About Club' in the North of the City to Meir Park Luncheon Club in the South of the city.

We have also visited an additional **60 community groups** in the city to publicise the OPEN service and promote awareness of how you can get involved in giving your views.

In addition we have held three public Forums in the South, North and Central regions of the city, with an overall attendance of 276 people aged 50+. We are also holding a fourth OPEN Forum during February 2017 to ask people their views about Help at Home Services.

You have given your views about:

- The Pains and Pluses of living in Stoke-on-Trent.
- Transport Services in Stoke-on-Trent.
- Health Services for people aged 50+ living in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.

You wanted more opportunities to get involved in engagement activities that will improve the lives of older people in the city:

In addition to the OPEN Forum public meetings, you have given your views about:

- April 2016 - Stoke-on-Trent City Council Information and Advice Joint Strategy Survey.
- May 2016 - Stoke-on-Trent City Council Social Housing Allocation consultation.
- August 2016 - Stoke-on-Trent City Council's plans to improve and develop housing in the city over the next five years.
- August 2016 - Stoke-on-Trent City Council Adult Social Care Local Account 2015/16
- September 2016 - Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent in their proposal to launch an Older Person's Volunteering Programme in the city.
- September 2016 - the Staffordshire Cares Website.
- November 2017 - Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent, Community Hospital Consultation.
- January 2017 - CareLink questionnaire about services that tackle social isolation and loneliness for older people living in Stoke-on-Trent.

OPEN is working to support research into the impact of group discourse of different types of poetry on the health and wellbeing of older People, (overseen by Professor Michael Murray).

In addition, OPEN has supported recruitment of the research project's control group of people aged 50+.

OPEN is also supporting a research project at Keele University that aims to further understand how healthy ageing may affect people's ability to control their attention.

OPEN is ensuring public influence of the 2021 City of Culture bid by asking what culture means to you and how you would like to increase art and cultural activities for people aged 50+.

OPEN is working with Staffordshire University to help establish a Community Advisory Board with CHAD (Centre for Health and Development). The aim of the Community Advisory Board is to find ways of engaging with local communities to improve health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities .

You wanted the Older People's Network to be driven by a Committee of people aged 50+ living in Stoke-on-Trent

We have a passionate and driven Committee of eight people aged 50+ who steer the Older People's Engagement Network. Many of the Committee members are involved in, or run community groups locally. They are committed to improving the lives of older residents.

"The Older People's Engagement Network started in February 2016 with a blank sheet of paper really. We are now recognised throughout the city as a voice for older people. There are many groups and meetings that take place in the community to ascertain older people's views, but none that work at the heart of the community like OPEN does. We not only listen but try and get the answers to feed back to residents. There has been a lot of hard work undertaken by the OPEN team and as a Committee we have helped to direct and shape the programme as a whole. We bring a lot of experience as a Committee and are all committed to making services better for older residents in our city" **Derek Brindley, OPEN Chair, Retired Firefighter and Volunteer with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

You wanted the Older People's Network to feedback local issues in your community.

You have raised issues such as anti-social behaviour, the state of some pavements, public toilets and derelict pieces of wasteland. These issues have been raised during OPEN Engagement visits to community groups and Residents Associations and have been referred to local Councillors, the Local Matters Team at the City Council and to different departments at the City Council to pursue. For example, a large pot hole that was reported by residents on Dunrobin Road was made good after OPEN forwarded resident's feedback.

The input from residents has been so highly valued that the Local Matters Team now contact OPEN direct to consult over a range of issues—most recently, The Local Plan.

You fed back how confusing it is to find the right organisation to provide support or information & advice regarding a range of different issues.

We have referred people to many services that provide further support. Services include those offered by the City Council such as social care assessments and the telecare/lifeline service to organisations that offer help at home and meals on wheels, winter warmth advice/support and financial aid such as will writing/power of attorney. Additionally, when asked, OPEN has asked other agencies and partners to visit particularly isolated community groups of older people. In addition, consultation about your preferred ways to receive information was a key question at our joint forum with the Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups and will influence improvements in the ways that the Clinical Commissioning Groups communicate with NHS service users.

You have told us you want “more impact on the way your services are planned and delivered for people aged 50+ living in Stoke-on-Trent”. Since February 2016:

Improving Transport Services for people aged 50+

We have held an OPEN Forum in July 2016 to discuss Public Transport Services in Stoke-on-Trent with particular emphasis on gaps in current service provision, customer service standards and inconsistent fares.

Gaps highlighted from residents about public transport services in the city will;

- Be used when discussing issues such as routes, fares etc for a Community Flexible Transport System.
- Help to inform the City Council's proposal to trial a Dementia Awareness training session with front of house staff at the bus station.
- Help to increase residents awareness of buses that currently act as a shuttle bus service which link the bus station and the north end of town (Intu Potteries) with the improved signage of existing services.

In response to resident’s feedback, OPEN met with Brian Edwards at the City Council and Councillor Jack Brereton – Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Heritage to discuss the potential scope for local taxi companies/ public transport providers to provide a flexible transport system.

A further two meetings have taken place between OPEN and the City Council to plan a forum with local taxi companies to talk about achieving a Gold Standard Status. Part of this standard will be the delivery of community transport, age awareness, dementia awareness, etc. This innovative initiative (the delivery of the community transport provision which has no cost implications for the public purse - and the linking of it to the achievement of a Gold Standard) has been fully developed and vigorously pursued by OPEN and it wouldn’t have progressed without the drive of OPEN and its members.

Feedback from the July Transport Forum also highlighted the need for more seating and lighting at public bus stops. OPEN will be joining with the council in meeting with the bus providers and other interested parties (such as INTU) to explore effective and commercially viable options for delivering these improvements.

We have held an OPEN Forum in October 2016 in partnership with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to discuss Older People's Health services about around trips, slips and falls, living independently and healthy and optimising NHS communications to patients.

Health Services for people aged 50+

OPEN has fed back your idea of the Flu Vaccine programme to be administered in Care/Residential Homes to avoid patients having to attend GP surgeries. This idea is being presented at the Patient and Public Involvement Steering Group meeting, February 2017. In addition, your feedback about how health services could be improved for older people has resulted in the following recommendations being made to the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups:

Improve Home from Hospital Discharge Services. Improve coordination between the NHS and Social Services e.g. discharge at right time of day, heating on, food in the fridge, domiciliary care arranged, adaptations in place etc.

Partner agencies e.g. Fire Service, local Housing Teams, supermarkets, Voluntary Sector and Community Groups to work together to implement a Falls Prevention Strategy .

Consider a process to improve hospital discharge assessment checks for key risk factors, i.e. heating, shopping, self-care, accommodation, suitability.

Consider developing a locality coordinator role with a single point of access and fixed telephone number.

Develop a proactive media campaign to give information and advice about Falls Prevention.

Develop IT education and familiarisation event for older people's health. Consider hosting a Community Conversation focused on Digital Health and Wellbeing.

OPEN has fed back your views about the longer term commissioning of older people's services in the voluntary sector. The NHS Clinical Commissioning Group are currently considering a two year minimum commissioning cycle of older people's services. OPEN is also currently pursuing a follow-up meeting with Public Health to decide how best to implement your idea of a flu vaccination programme at residential housing schemes.

OPEN continues to deliver considerable added value for the City Council and people of Stoke-on-Trent. For example OPEN has:

- consulted with over 1000 older people in the city in less than one year.
- increased the percentage of those people (over 70% in the last quarter) never having engaged in consultations previously – OPEN is utilising its contacts to reach swathes of the community who have never previously had their voice heard.
- brought influence and ideas to city council decision makers, such as the innovative ideas around community transport provision/launch of the Gold Standard for public transport; the provision of mass vaccinations for residents of retirement homes, etc.
- delivered true public consultation (many forums are dominated by professionals giving their views – OPEN understands and delivers public consultation).
- truly embraced partnership working delivering the October 2016 forum in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Groups/NHS. We have also supported other organisations such as VAST in their research for a programme which will ultimately be of great benefit to the older people of Stoke-on-Trent and of course taking on specific consultations on behalf of the local authority.
- received overwhelmingly positive feedback from members of the public with whom we've consulted – a real need for public consultation.
- conducted quality consultations that must be seen as a major tranche of the City Council's strategic ambition to achieve the Age Friendly City status.
- made key contributions to key pieces of work conducted by both Keele and Staffordshire universities (poetry and ageing well projects) in addition to promoting awareness of our City of Culture bid. It's clear that OPEN has become the 'go to' project in the city for organisations looking to engage with large numbers of the city's older population.
- made further links with the Psychology Department at Keele University to run a research project establishing the social, economic, health and wellbeing impacts of conducting meaningful consultation with older people.

Older People Engagement Network,
Saltbox, Bemersley House,
Gitana Street, Hanley,
Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 1DY

t: 01782 207200 **e:** open@saltbox.org.uk
w: www.saltbox.org.uk

