

Minutes of Forum Meeting 21 January 2010

Present: 28

Apologies: 7

Introductions

Catherine welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.

Topics for the future:

The group discussed some topics for future meetings:

- Accessible Transport
- Finding out about each other
- Scope campaign network
- Council Planning
- Customer care

Tamsin Fudge London Sport Forum

Tamsin came to talk to the group about disability sport and to find out people's views of accessible sport in Hackney.

People's responses were:

- Hard to know what is available
- Many things are hard to access, told you need GP referral or other letters
- Have to join a membership, you can't just use it as and when
- Many leisure centres are inaccessible
- Lots of classes for disabled children not adults
- Free swimming was withdrawn
- If ability fluctuates, want membership only when I can use it
- Kings Hall is too cold
- Britannia is very slippery
- Clissold has many issues, not considered to be accessible at all
- Staff awareness is poor
- I need a motivator to get out, someone to encourage and support me

Tamsin told the group about Inclusive Fitness Initiative, this is based in Sheffield but Clissold is an IFI centre. The aim is to make the leisure centres accessible. There is a new London based IFI group who will be making sure that Clissold is compliant.

Tamsin wants to hear about any groups or sporting activities that you would like to get involved in. She will then look to see what's available and help set up new groups if necessary. The group mentioned wheelchair tennis and bowls. Swimming was a very popular activity but people felt it was the also the hardest to access.

Due to the large amount of issues raised regarding leisure, it was agreed that DBU

set up a new focus group to explore these issues more. It was agreed that we would need external involvement to make the group most effective. It was agreed that Thomas Smith and Tamsin be invited to take part in this group.

John Hall and Rachel Salmon- Hackney's Housing Consultation

Hackney has been conducting a consultation about Housing in Hackney. This consultation has ended, but DBU members have been allowed to take part in an extension.

John gave us an overview of the housing needs in Hackney.

- 3rd most overcrowded borough
- 77% of people live in flat
- 47% of people live in social rented housing
- Private sector is the biggest growing sector, e.g. private landlords
- 14,000 houses have now been made into a “decent”™ homes
- 67% of Hackney Housing now meets the national standard
- Overcrowding has tripled since 2003
- Average income in Hackney is 16k
- The main reason people move to Hackney is to be closer to employment.
- It is estimated that there are over 15,657 people living with supported housing needs
- 77% of all social housing is people with a supported housing need

Questions:

How many people with a supported housing need live alone? We don't know off hand but can let you know

How do people get help to stay in own home? People can apply for a Disabled Facilities grant.

The group agreed that the Disabled Facilities Grant was not easy to access and needs investigation by DBU. We will look to invite a speaker on this issue.

All new builds are now made wheelchair accessible and there is a duty towards making "life time homes" which are accessible and reduce the likelihood of you needing to move if you become frail, ill etc.

The group discussed choice based lettings and agreed that this should be discussed at a future forum meeting.

The group also discussed the issues with aids and adaptations. This will also be looked into and a speaker asked to attend a meeting.

Hackney is working on their housing plan for the next 5 years. Their main aims are:

1. Sustainable and mixed
2. Attractive neighbourhoods
3. Prosperous communities

They will try and achieve these by addressing overcrowding and making more family size housing. It was pointed out that developments such as Dalson are not family sized or suitable for life time homes. It was felt that these developments are being built to serve the fluxuating private rental market not families.

Decent homes programme is on schedule to be completed by 2012 and this will lead to a decent + project.

There is a strong emphasis on equality and accessibility on all new homes and new developments and a commitment to renovate the old stock.

This consultation process is ongoing and is, at present, very broad.

If you have anything to add to the consultation process regarding Hackney's housing for the next 5 years, please contact Catherine.