

York Older People's Assembly

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THOUSANDS TO LOSE OUT IF FREE TV LICENCES ABOLISHED

Funding of free TV licences for those over 75 is to be dumped on the BBC by the Government from June 2020.

A consultation has been undertaken setting out possible options to off-set these costs. We have obtained information on the number of older people in York who will be affected by the proposals.

- Currently 13700 households in York have someone over 75 eligible for a free licence.
- If the qualifying age was raised to 80 years old, 4840 would lose out.
- If the entitlement to a free licence was limited to those receiving pension credits, then 10960 would lose out

The loss of the annual license fee of £154 would wipe out the increase in State Pension for 2019 of £3.25 per week.

For those better off and willing to pay in the future then the answer is simple. Don't apply for a free licence when you reach 75!

The BBC is one of our greatest national assets and shouldn't have to endure a massive cut in funding to provide a social welfare measure which is not its responsibility.

80,000 people have signed the Age (UK) petition demanding the Government scrap the proposals.



STOPPING UNWANTED SALES AND MARKETING CALLS

At the January meeting of the Assembly, Jane Aird from the Trading Standards spoke passionately about advice and guidance to minimise scams and unwanted callers.

The Telephone Preferencing Service allows you to register your landline and mobile numbers which requires organisations to check this register before attempting to contact you.

This regrettably only applies to organisations based in this country and therefore callers from abroad cannot be stopped. To register either call 0345 0700707 or register online at www.tpsonline.org.uk

In relation to callers at your home North Yorkshire Police advise **“don't open the door to anyone you don't know or are not expecting”**.

THE ASSEMBLY – WHAT DO WE DO?

York Older People's Assembly started life back in 2002 arising from a central government initiative called "Better Government for Older People". The idea was to put older people at the centre of decision making – moving away from "doing to" older people to "doing with" older people.

We are a small charity and our limited budget covers:

- Campaigning on behalf of older people – banning A boards in the City Centre, retaining the ticket office at the Station etc.
- Organising Open Meetings on a bi-monthly basis at the Friends Meeting House, Friargate

- Producing 4 Newsletters per year – 3500 copies distributed throughout the City
- Organising the Annual Information Fair in the City
- Organising the 50+ Festival annually and sending the programme to all members, together with 3000 copies distributed Citywide.
- Renting office accommodation shared with the Wilberforce Trust

If you are reading this and want to join us contact the office on 01904 202293 and leave a message or email yorkolderpeoplesassembly@outlook.com We are currently seeking volunteers to help organise the Festival in 2019 to be held end of September/early October.

DENTISTRY IN YORK

Martin Ramsdale – Registrar in Dental Public Health addressed the Open Meeting in February. Taken together with key information from a comprehensive report from Healthwatch in 2018 provides a picture of Dental Services in York.

Overall there are 30 Dental Practices in York. 18 of these are wholly private and of the remainder only 8 offer services to NHS patients and private payers. Others specialise in orthodontics – dealing with correction of mal positioned teeth and jaws etc.

The charges for services are set out below:

Description of Service	NHS Cost	Private Cost
Band 1 – Examination, scale and polish etc.	£21.60	£70
Band 2 – Fillings, extractions etc.	£59.10	£82 - £165
Band 3 – As above plus crowns/dentures/bridges	£265.50	From £500

Eleven services offered late evening appointments (after 6pm) and eight offered Saturday mornings by appointment.

The key findings from the Healthwatch survey

- 46% couldn't find an NHS dentist
- 45% had been trying for between 1 and 2 years
- 82% rated their experience of their dentist as good/excellent

The majority who found an NHS dentist did so by ringing round practices. Others used the service of NHS choices www.nhs.uk.

Availability of dentists accepting NHS patients is clearly a major issue in York and taken together with difficulties in accessing such services requires further action.



FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH



The new Mental Health hospital on Haxby Road is fast becoming a reality as the picture shows. Following consultation with the public the number of planned beds was increased from 60 to 72. It is due for completion early in 2020 and is designed with state of the art facilities which will support users, families and carers.

On the downside the Government has revealed that the existing Bootham Park Hospital is to be sold to the highest bidder. Following representation by Rachael Maskell MP, assurances were originally given by Jeremy Hunt, the then Health Secretary, that the sale process would be “paused” until March 3rd, 2019 whilst alternative proposals were developed locally for the site. However, the new Minister of State for Health, Stephen Hammond MP has overturned the previous undertaking and the appointment of a preferred bidder is imminent.

Meanwhile, following extensive consultation with local residents and after receiving 2000 comments from the public, detailed proposals were developed to include:

- Retention of some locally based mental health services
- High-end care apartments in the main building
- A 60 bed care home providing private and “hospital discharge” beds
- Land for 194 homes including keyworker accommodation
- Retaining all land in front of the site for sports, school and community use

What Now?

Pressure must be put on the planners at the Council to persuade the eventual bidder to adopt in whole or in part the proposals developed locally for the benefit of the people of York.



NEW ARRIVAL IN YORK



Sharon Houlden has recently joined the Council as Director of Health, Housing and Adult Social Care. She was previously employed by Southend Borough Council.

She has a keen interest in design and innovation, with a focus on delivering solutions which make the most of the strength and assets across the whole Community in the City of York.

We extend her a warm welcome.

FUNDING AND ARRANGING HOME CARE – CAN YOU HELP?

In partnership with the University of York, a research project is being undertaken to explore the experiences of finding and arranging Home Care which has been paid for privately.

This might be you, a friend, or a family member.

If you could help, please contact Mark Wilberforce on 01904 321297 or e-mail: mark.wilberforce@york.ac.uk

WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Karen Frogatt

York Blind and Partially and Sighted Society based in Rougier Street in York has recently undergone a name change. Diane Roworth had successfully led the society for over 30 years and retired in 2018. With a new person in charge, it was decided change the title of the charity and in future it will be called "MySight York".

Karen Frogatt herself has a long history with the voluntary sector, she was involved in Victim Support for over 9 years and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) before arriving in York some 9 months ago. Contact them on 01904 636269.

YORK TALKING NEWS

Is a monthly audio Newspaper for visually impaired people, giving a round-up of local news and events in the York area. It is published on a USB or memory stick and can be played via a computer or other type of USB player.

USB players can be purchased from MySight York at their Equipment and Information Centre at Rougier House, Rougier Street. York Talking News is a registered charity which relies on donations and is run by volunteers. For more information and how to subscribe, contact the secretary Ann Jackson, on 01904 760140.

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