



**Daventry District Council,
Northamptonshire**

The Over 50s Forum (DOF) is a Daventry District Council led initiative that aims to campaign, consult and communicate on behalf of the district's older population and influence change in future service development and delivery.

Wanted: Over 50s

The Daventry District Over 50s Forum (DOF) was set up three years ago to provide a channel through which residents over the age of 50 from Daventry and the surrounding District could make themselves heard.

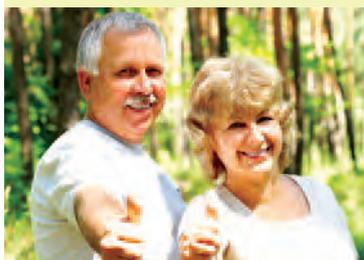
Retired businessman and active member of the Over 50s Forum Management Committee, Richard Bird, joined the group two years ago after reading an advert in a local paper to recruit new members.

Richard said: “I’ve been retired for 10 years and in that time I’ve been involved in a number of voluntary projects in South America and the UK. I had recently moved to Daventry and wanted to get involved in a community led project. When I saw the advert for the Over 50s Forum I thought it would be ideal.”



Communicating...Consulting...Campaigning...

***Celebrating
Seniority***



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Daventry District Over Fifties Forum

Since joining the Over 50s Forum, Richard has been actively involved with a number of activities, from the redevelopment of Daventry in a bid to ensure there are adequate facilities available for older people, to co-authoring and Older People's Strategy with Daventry District Council. Most notably, Richard was engaged in discussions about the closure of Post Office branches for which he made a submission to parliament to air his concerns. He received a written response to confirm his letter had been noted and points taken into account.

Richard continues: “We regard the Over 50s Forum as a mouthpiece for our collective views and issues. It is important that our concerns are heard through a regular communication channel as we, after all, are an increasingly important and growing demographic in the community.”



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“We have a quarterly public forum held in a local leisure centre to which we invite members from public service organisations including police, water authorities and hospitals to make presentations and answer any questions. We recently had a very lively session on hospital hygiene that allowed members to air their frustrations.”

Della Butcher, Support Officer at Daventry District Council, comments: “Everyone involved with the Over 50s Forum works on a voluntary basis to ensure the more mature members of the community have a voice. I think this project has empowered all those involved as they've witnessed small but encouraging changes in the locality. The Over 50s Forum has paved the way for the next generation of over 50s who I hope will continue to campaign for changes as Richard and the committee do now.”

Results

- Responsive and flexible services provided by staff with appropriate knowledge and skill sets
- Ensuring safe communities for the older population
- Providing an effective flow of information on all benefits and services
- The Over 50s Forum is a recognised consultee by the health service, social services, housing association and planning authorities
- The community is better informed on services and policy decisions or changes which directly affect them.