



2019/2020

# Annual Report



*The Greater London Forum's Annual Question Time  
in the Houses of Parliament*

**THE GREATER LONDON  
FORUM FOR OLDER  
PEOPLE**

[www.greaterlondonforum.org.uk](http://www.greaterlondonforum.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No: 1074368

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The GLF is funded by:



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## **GREATER LONDON FORUM FOR OLDER PEOPLE (GLF)**

The GLF is the umbrella group for older peoples' Forums in the Greater London region. It seeks to co-ordinate the voice of older Londoners in order to engage with the decision makers whose policies impact on older Londoners, whether they be local, pan-London or National.

The GLF seeks to ensure that all older Londoners are heard in representations to decision makers, across all sexes, classes, religious groups, older people with disabilities, and the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) groups.

The GLF seeks to provide support services to the Borough Forums through the organisation of capacity building, training, conferences and seminars, campaigning and fundraising and the dissemination of best practices.

**PRESIDENT:** Baroness Sally Greengross OBE

### **PATRONS**

Professor Allan Walker

Professor Jill Manthorpe

### **TRUSTEES:**

**Chair:** Asoke Dutta

**Vice Chairs:** Peter Denton and John Ball

**Hon.Treasurer:** John Ball

**Secretary:** Tony Tuck

### **Executive Committee:**

Beulah M East

Fay Sandler

Glenn Davies

Gorman Collins

Mary Steensma

Suresh Gupta

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**Registered Charity No: 1074368**

# REVIEW OF THE YEAR

## 2019/2020

### *Review of the year 2019*

Following on from the earlier AGM in 2018, the incoming committee had concluded that the key factor for a pan-London umbrella organisation was sufficient income to enable a part-time co-ordinator and funding for the hire of premises and equipment to support training sessions. With this in mind, and having already defined the objectives for the GLF going forward from 2019, the energies of the Committee focussed on continuing to work with Pan-London organisations and the Forums as well as seeking grant aid.

While a local forum can operate out of a member's front room coupled with access to premises for group and public meetings, the GLF needs to incorporate and involve members from across Greater London and ideally needs a meeting place in central London with good transport access.

In 2019 the GLF was capable of operating through the good offices of the Age UK London, who offered the free use of a meeting room in their offices in Tavis House for our Committee meetings, and on occasions we were able to hold joint events in Tavis House for Forum meetings. The use of Age UK London's address as a postal address, and also critically the services of Kathleen Egan in hands on help with making applications for grant funding.

Thus, while the GLF continued to operate via email as a source of pan-London information for officers of Borough Forums, much of the energy of the 6 members of the Board were focussed on close collaboration with Kathleen Egan on defining the purposes of any funding and application preparation.

This resulted in success on two fronts. The National Lottery though Awards for All agreed in December 2019 to provide a one off grant of £9,960 to support the work of an outreach worker. Critically this matched funding contributed towards the subsequent award of from the Trust for London of £39,720 over two years, towards the salary of a part-time Co-ordinator and the running costs to support campaign and lobbying work of the Forum.

## ***Review of year 2020***

If the 12 months of 2020 are properly described as the Year of 'COVID-19', then looking forward 2021 will hopefully be 'The Year of Recovery'.

Throughout the twelve months of 2020 the GLF has struggled to overcome the restrictions placed on people by the pandemic, but also to find ways in which the mission of the organisation could best be met. That mission is primarily to aid and abet local borough forums in their role of listening to the voices of local older people within their boroughs and then articulating those views and needs to borough decision makers and to then work for needful change. In addition, to collate and coordinate those borough views and speak for older Londoners to pan-London decision makers.

For some four years until 2020 the GLF has had no income and has been able to operate solely with the input and efforts of the volunteer members of the GLF committee, which in December 2019 numbered a mere 6 people, drawn from local forums. At the AGM of the GLF held in January 2020 the committee doubled in size to 12. At that time, the National Lottery, through Awards for All, had just agreed to fund the GLF with £10,000 for the year 2020 and the outcome of further grant bids were awaited.

In March the Trust for London agreed to award a grant of £39,720 to the GLF covering two years activities, including p/t salary, venue hire, printing & publicity, overheads, etc. This would underwrite the costs of a part-time employee as an Outreach and Engagement Coordinator. Because by this time the first full COVID-19 lockdown had been imposed and no face to face meetings were permitted, the committee decided to postpone any appointment of staff. However, in May Age UK London made the offer of seconding Zara Ghods part-time to the GLF. Zara had worked for AgeUK London since 2008 but prior to that, between 2002 to 2008, had worked for the GLF. Consequently the offer was readily taken up by the committee and Zara started work seconded to the GLF in July 2020. This opportunity enabled the GLF to get started on a body of substantive work much earlier than would otherwise have been the case, and with someone already well known to forum officers.

Since July, Zara has worked 3 days a week for the GLF in the role of Outreach and Engagement Coordinator – and it has proved to be a genuine game-changer. In spite of the lengthy lockdown in stage 1, and the introduction of Stage 2

Lockdown in the autumn, culminating in London moving initially into a Tier 2 Lockdown and then from the 15<sup>th</sup> of December into Tier 3. We have used a range of ways and means to revitalise the GLF and underline to the borough forum officers and members the benefits of working with the GLF.

## **WAYS AND MEANS**

Currently the GLF is seeking to develop its roles on a number of fronts:-

a) providing information material to borough contacts within forums is a continuing background role. A range of material from pan-London and national decision makers is emailed to borough forums when received;

b) a series of Zoom sessions are organised to bring forums together to discuss mutual contemporary issues. Some sessions have been with 'chairs and officers', while others have been confined to either those from geographically adjacent boroughs or those with declared special interests e.g. applying for an A4A grant;

c) We are working with forum officerss and developing a template of what the forums want and expect from the GLF. This has also resulted in a register of the current activities of forums and how they are meeting their objectives and maintaining their functions during COVID restrictions;

d) We publish quarterly copies of an 8 page Newsletter, 'Senior London', which has focussed on the work of forums in lockdown and the provision of key current information. Primarily distributed by email, a number of copies are printed and sent to forums and others as required;

e) work is in hand to publish fact sheets on aspects of forum management or activity. Subjects under consideration include such issues as - sources of recruitment to borough committees, how to manage Zoom meetings, how to measure effectiveness, succession planning for officers, appraisal of attributes of committee membership, constitutional procedure and requirements;

f) GLF officers have sought to be pro-active in collaboration with other pan-London organisations involved with the issues and needs of older citizens. This has included membership of the London Age Friendly Forum (LAFF) which draws together a number of bodies including Age UK London, U3A. PAIL, and representatives from retired members trade union organisations. Originally drawn together to develop ways and means of accelerating progress towards

developing London as an Age Friendly City, following the Mayor's initiative in the light of the World Health Organisation's template for Age Friendly Cities, this has evolved during the COVID-19 restrictions into seeking a dialogue with the London Mayor about the Recovery programme charting a way forward from COVID-19.

## **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

The programme outlined above is only possible because Awards for All and Trust for London have awarded grants and funding to the GLF, which underwrite the costs of a part-time Outreach and Engagement Coordinator. Current funding is in place for only just under two years and the present budget involves drawing down some of the GLF's scant financial reserves. Therefore a key component of looking ahead is to seek funding for more than 1½ years, ideally sufficient to enable planning for half a decade.

A bid is in hand to balance the current two year budget and Kathleen Egan of Age UK London is providing invaluable assistance with developing future funding bids. It is not an understatement to say that, if the GLF is to be properly effective not only as an umbrella body for borough forums, but also as a platform for forums to coordinate the views of their older residents to London decision makers, then sufficient funding for staff and facilities is a vital precondition.

Providing such funding can be secured then a future ambition is to seek to develop borough forums in boroughs where none currently exist, working collaboratively with local community groups for older people. In particular, we would seek to be looking and developing our BAMER connections through existing groups in boroughs which don't yet have a forum.

## IN CONCLUSION

The work in 2020 has all been conducted in hugely challenging circumstances where, since March, face to face meetings have been not possible. Nonetheless, the committee of the GLF, together with Zara, have sought to maximise opportunities and consolidate working links with boroughs. As 2021, the Year of Recovery, develops then hopefully by the autumn there should be some sense of normality vis a vis meetings and getting together to discuss mutual concerns.

However, the economic and social ravages of the pandemic will have almost certainly had a dramatic impact on the fabric of our society, not only nationally, but across London and in our local communities. There will, of course, also be in addition the far ranging consequences of the UK leaving the European Union.

The GLF will need to be flexible and reactive to these dramatic changes and we should all prepare ourselves and our aspirations for the new normal.

And finally a word about our sponsors as they say in the world of commerce. We sincerely wish to thank all the staff of Age UK London who have given advice and guidance to the GLF through the recent very difficult years, in the four years that the GLF had no income, they offered us a base in Tavis House for meetings and encouragement. In particular, we would wish to thank Kathleen Egan who has not only given us advice in securing funding and aided and abetted us at every turn but, with the offer of Zara Ghods on secondment, just when the COVID-19 Lockdown One had just started, enabled us to start the process of revitalisation that the small committee had sought for so long. It is only because of their continuing support that the GLF is able move into gear from neutral to start signposting towards the future. But the last word must go in the thanks of the committee to Zara Ghods who has, since she joined us as our part time Outreach and Engagement Coordinator in July 2020, has revitalized the operation of the GLF such that we now stand a genuine chance of fully undertaking the role for which our charity is mandated. It is not just the time and experience that Zara inputs, but also a vitality and energy which enlivens the whole organisation. If the GLF can ensure future funding, then the future, even in these COVID addled times, looks to be promising indeed.

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**Asoke Dutta: Chairperson**

**Tony Tuck: Secretary**

## GREATER LONDON FORUM FOR OLDER PEOPLE

### FINANCIAL REPORT 2019-2020

BALANCE BF		12754.42
EXPENDITURE	491.93	
INCOME	10055.30	
SURPLUS		9563.37
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD		22317.79
BANK	22315.99	
CASH	1.20	
TOTAL C/F	22317.19	

There was very little financial activity in the year.

The largest single item of expenditure was the £187,68 catering bill for the AGM public meeting..

There were only three items of income the only significant one being receipt of a grant of £9960.,00 from Awards for All. None of the money was spent in this financial year but plans are afoot for 2020-2021

John Ball

Hon. Treasurer

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**The Greater London Forum for Older People would like to express their grateful thanks to:**

Age UK London Board of Trustees  
Abigail Wood, CEO, Age UK London  
Kathleen Egan, Business and Operation Manager  
Sue Johnson, Greater London Assembly  
Sam Mauger, CEO The Third Age Trust

**Thank you to the unique group of Forums across the London region for their tremendous support and guidance**

**The Greater London Forum for Older People**

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