

Supporting visually-impaired people in Enfield

BY JIM CANTLE

The Geranium Club for the Blind meets in Enfield Town on a fortnightly basis and provides a social environment for people with visual impairment.

The club was formed about 40 years ago by the then-director of social services at Enfield Council. The co-ordinator for the past 25 years has been Sylvia Chapman, who is ably assisted by volunteers.

It is extremely important in helping prevent isolation among people who may not be able to otherwise get out to socialise. During the two-hour meeting we have entertainers, solo singers, choirs and musicians.

The volunteers provide tea and biscuits while our members have a chat. We hold a raffle and the occasional bring and buy sale. We also have outings by coach to Clacton, a regular visit to a hotel in Hatfield Heath for a meal with entertainment, and an annual trip to Broxbourne for a boat trip on the River Lea with afternoon tea.

We also have regular theatre visits to the Dugdale Centre and transport is provided for these outings. For regular meetings all of our members are picked up on council transport and taken home after the meeting. Members pay £15 every four months for the club.

The Geranium Club is for members who live west of the A10 and takes place every other Tuesday afternoon.

If you live in eastern Enfield there is the Merrion Club, which is exactly the same but on Tuesday evenings. It is also run by Sylvia Chapman and the council runs door-to-door transport. The two clubs occasionally get together for coach trips, theatre trips and meals.

Over the years many great long-lasting friendships have been formed by members of both clubs. During lockdown, Sylvia has kept in touch with all the members by telephone for a chat and everyone will be contacted as soon as it's known that we can get together again.

If you know anyone with a visual impairment who would be interested in joining the Geranium Club or Merrion Club, or perhaps any entertainers who may be able to perform for an hour once or twice a year, please get in touch with me on the number below!

For more information:
Call 0208 363 4969