



Q&A with the Age of Experience Group

Diane

1) How long have you been a member of the Age of Experience group and what motivated you to join?

I have been involved in the group from the beginning and was told about the group by the manager of Balsall Heath Day Centre where I used to run the coffee shop, I enjoyed running the coffee shop and having a chat with people. I also ran the Thursday morning craft club at the centre which I also enjoyed. I enjoy chatting and interacting with different people which is what motivated me to join the Age of Experience group.

2) What have been your highlights so far?

I have enjoyed many experiences, I particularly enjoyed being part of the funding panel and I have enjoyed listening to professional guest speakers that have attended our meetings and events.

Last July I attended the Ageing Better Celebration in Sheffield which I really enjoyed, I enjoyed meeting different people from around the country and hearing their experiences. I enjoyed taking part in and hosting a workshop with other members of the group.

I had the opportunity to meet people I would never have meet across the two days. I also enjoyed the journey to Sheffield with other members of the group.

About 3 years ago, approximately 9 of us went to number 10 Downing Street for lunch, we meet the minister of health and the prime minister at the time who was David Cameron. Special guests were professional dancers from strictly come Dancing, this was a great experience and I have fond memories of the trip. We were invited as a thank you for our hard work as volunteers and ambassadors, we stayed overnight and meet lots of interesting people. We were given a guided tour of Number 10, I particularly liked seeing Winston Churchill's chair complete with his cigar burns.

3) What would you like the legacy of the Ageing Better in Birmingham programme to be?

I really hope people will remain connected and engaged. We have learnt a great deal about what is important and this work should continue, it would be a shame if everything faded out at the end of the program.

4) What will you take away from the experience once the programme ends?

I will take away the memories of all the people I have meet and experiences I have had. If I had not joined the group, I would not have meet the wonderful people I have. It has been an amazing experience, I will also remember how good it felt to help particularly on the funding panels, and the feeling that we have assisted groups to enjoy life in later years is very satisfying. It's been a real joy to me to imagine their happiness. I have also enjoyed visiting the groups that have received funding, I am sure others on the fund panel feel the same.