

GREY MATTERS

COME TO A COFFEE MORNING!

All members and potential members of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership are invited to a FREE Coffee Morning on Saturday, 8th May in Westham Village Hall.

Come along from 10am to noon to learn more about YOUR Older People's Forum, meet members of our committee and learn how you can get involved. Advice will also be available on Staying Healthy in Later Life. For more information ring Carol Hodge on 01825 762934.



THE GENERAL ELECTION - MAKE SURE YOU USE YOUR VOTE

AgeUK, the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged, has suggested that, before you vote at the general election, you try to find out whether any candidate has earned your vote by asking them the following questions:

- Will you re-link the basic state pension to earnings by 2012?
- Will you scrap forced retirement at 65?
- Will you protect social care and support from any impending cuts?
- Will you end the scandal of malnutrition in hospitals?
- Will you protect free local travel for everyone over pension age?



To receive a postcard listing these questions which you can send to the candidate of your choice, ring 020 8765 7503.

Visit our website: www.wealden-scp.org to see a summary of the policies of the three main parties on issues affecting older people.

DON'T FORGET THAT IF YOU CAN'T GET TO A POLLING STATION ON MAY 6th, YOU NEED TO REGISTER FOR A POSTAL VOTE BY APRIL 20th

Contact your Electoral Registration Office at the following address:
Wealden District Council, Pine Grove, Crowborough, TN6 1DH
Tel: 01892 602417 or Email: elections@wealden.gov



COMPUTERS FOR RURAL PEOPLE

If you live in a rural area, whether on a farm or even in a country town, you have to spend time travelling about to get things done or find things out. That is in addition to commuting of course.

Email and Internet provide enormous opportunities when you can't just pop round the corner to the shop or library etc. Yet computers are usually expensive, and few people want to buy one "just to see if it might be useful".

The Arthur Rank Centre is committed to supporting the rural community, and has set up the "Computers for Rural People" scheme to provide computers at very low cost to encourage people to take the first step. So if you think a computer might be useful, but can't afford several hundred pounds just to try, they can help you.

The Centre has made an arrangement with the global charity, Oasis, to supply re-furnished computers. At a really low price they can provide a computer of your own, pre-loaded with Microsoft software, and delivered to your door with 3 months warranty, to get you started. A fully functioning computer costs as little as £109.

Community Projects: If you need more than one computer; e.g. for a Drop-in centre, School etc. the prices are even lower!

How to order:

Call, email or write to them at: 02476 853066 info@arthurrankcentre.org.uk

Computers for Rural People, The Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG.



LOCAL PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM BOWEL CANCER SCREENING

Men and women in Sussex are being invited to take part in a national bowel screening programme to combat bowel cancer.

Those aged between 60 and 69 and registered with a GP in the area will be sent a letter of invitation as they reach the ages targeted by the campaign.

The test does not diagnose bowel cancer but shows whether further investigations are needed.

As not everyone in the target age range will receive a test kit immediately, it is important to be clear that invitations will go out over the next two years in a rolling programme based on age and starting with those aged 69 years.

People aged 70 and above can request a home testing kit by phoning a freephone helpline on 0800 7076060, with plans in place to extend the overall programme to people aged 70-75 years old in the next two years.

You can reduce your risk of bowel cancer by eating a healthy diet, (that is high in fibre and fruit and vegetables and low in red meat and saturated fat) and by taking regular exercise, not smoking, and reducing alcohol intake.

If you experience any symptoms such as change in bowel habit, blood in faeces or weight loss speak to your GP, even if you have had a negative screening result.

Further information can be found at www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/bowel

PEDAL EAST SUSSEX - CYCLING FOR THE OVER 50s

The Pedal East Sussex programme of rides is suitable for those already cycling as well as those returning to cycling after a break. Consequently the programme begins with shorter rides and builds up to longer ones. Each ride begins and ends at a train station. All rides have refreshment stops; certainly at the end. **Why cycle?** Because it makes sense! And becoming more active can:



- reduce your risk of developing heart disease and having a stroke
- help to prevent high blood pressure
- help to control your weight;
- maintain good mental health
- and help you cope with stress.

But most of all cycling is fun and an enjoyable social event. You don't have to book; just turn up. All distances and times are approximate and irrespective of the weather, rides will take place.

ALL RIDES ARE FREE

Contact Tony Rowell, Director, tel. 07714099481 or at: info@go-local.org.uk www.pedaleastsussex.ning.com

ELDERLY WALKER SIGN GIVEN REVAMP

The traditional "elderly pedestrians" road sign showing a hunched couple has been given a makeover.

Cumbria Tourism came up with the idea for the new sign and it has been placed at the summit of Coniston's aptly-named Old Man mountain in the Lake District.

The couple pictured on the sign have straight backs and both carry walking poles, in contrast to the old sign in which an elderly man leans on a stick.

The sign is one of 10 erected in the Lake District.



TRACING YOUR BLUE BADGE

There is a new phone line for people to check on the progress of their application for a Blue Badge, on 01323 464244. The line is open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm (4:30pm on Friday) or you can leave a message. Initial applications for disabled parking badges still go to Social Care Direct at St. Mary's House, Eastbourne, phone 0345 60 80 191.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FACTS AND FIGURES

- A man aged 65 living in the South East can expect to live another 18.4 years, a woman 21 years - the highest life expectancy in England.
- The main cause of death in the South East for those aged 65 to 74 is cancer, for those aged 75 and over it is circulatory disease.
- An estimated 20% of men and 28% of women aged 65 and over in the South East have one or more falls each year, the second and third lowest figures respectively in England.
- According to GP records, over 36,700 people in the South East have been diagnosed with dementia: however based on estimates in the National Dementia Strategy, there are more likely to be 92,700 people in the region with dementia.
- It is estimated that only 35% of people aged 65 and over in the South East consume the recommended five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Ivy Elsey (Chair, ESSA Rep, Health & Social Care SIG*) 01435 863719 ivy@ivywe.eclipse.co.uk
John Collins (Age Concern Rep) 01825 762910 johncollins@jackcoll.plus.com
Jan Cooper (Treasurer & ESSA Rep) 01323 483483 jancey31@hotmail.com
Wendy Downing (Falls Prevention Advisor) 01892 665757 wendy.downing@btopenworld.com
Linda Graham (Secretary & Transport SIG*) 01892 770487 lindagraham@wealden-scp.org
Sheila Guest (Sheltered Housing Rep) 01825 761621 sheila.guest@gmail.com
Carol Hodge (new Committee Member) 01825 762934 carolhodge@tiscali.co.uk
John & Rosemary Jones (Community Network Reps) 01825 749720 john23.jones@mypostoffice.co.uk
*SIG = Special Interest Group



AGE CONCERN EAST SUSSEX'S ADVOCACY SERVICE

Do you

- Feel other people are making decisions for you instead of with you?
- Feel unsure of the choices open to you?
- Feel you are being ignored?
- Feel you are not being taken seriously?
- Feel no one is on your side?
- Find it hard to speak up for yourself?

If the answer is yes to any of these questions, perhaps Age Concern East Sussex can help. The advocates are

- Trained
 - Mostly volunteers
 - Friendly and approachable
 - Non-judgmental
 - On your side
- They can
- Visit you in your own home or wherever you choose
 - Discuss your problem in confidence
 - Get information for you
 - Help you to ask questions
 - Help you to think about the choices open to you
 - Support you and help you present your views and wishes

Age Concern East Sussex is a voluntary organisation committed to the welfare of older people. This service is confidential, free and available to people aged 60 or over living in East Sussex.

Ring 01273 476404 or contact Susi Proffit:
susi.proffit@aceastsussex.org.uk

ANCHOR AT HOME

The Independent Living Service - free of charge advice to help you stay living independently in your own home. The range of services available in the East Sussex area from Anchor At Home is extensive.

- Home safety checks and security advice
- Energy efficiency and 'keep warm' schemes
- Community alarms and 'telecare'
- Exercise and fitness classes
- Social activities and learning
- Home budgeting advice
- Accessing care services in your own home
- Handyman services



Call for a confidential discussion or to arrange a home visit on 01323 4464446

Look out for posters in Parish Council offices and GP surgeries advertising the Anchor at Home Independent Living Mobile Display unit, which travels around East Sussex promoting Anchor At Home services.

HANDYPERSON GRANTS

East Sussex County Council has limited funds from the government to spend on handyman services until the end of March 2011. They can help you with small jobs around the home, such as:

- * Putting up shelves or pictures
- * Hanging or changing curtains
- * Decorating
- * Fitting locks to windows and doors
- * Fitting or repairing a door bell
- * Repairing plumbing
- * Changing light bulbs
- * Moving furniture
- * Securing carpets
- * Assembling flat-packed furniture
- * Pruning shrubs and trees, and
- * Clearing and removing garden waste.



Am I eligible for the grant?

You can apply for the grant if you:

- * Are aged 65 or over
- * Live in East Sussex
- * Have less than £23,000 in savings (£46,000 for a couple).

How do I apply?

If you are eligible for the grant, get in touch with us and ask for an application form, alternatively ring 01273 482805.

East Sussex County Council will check your application and, if it is approved, send you a cheque.

You can then use this money to hire a handyman. East Sussex County Council may contact you afterwards to find out how you got on.

How much money should I apply for?

You can apply for up to £200 in a two year period. It is helpful to get a written quote for the work but you do not need to send this in. You should not pay out any money before you receive a cheque from East Sussex County Council.

MARGARET HOUSE

A new complex comprising one and two-bedroom, spacious self-contained apartments for over 60s with care needs, and providing an on-site professional care team available to give 24-hour emergency cover and care, is due for completion in Lealands Drive, Uckfield, this November.

These apartments, commissioned by East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care, will provide comfortable homes for people who value their independence but who require support with daily living and will be available both for rent and to buy. For further information, contact Saxon Weald's sales team on 01402 226148 (rent) or 01403 226035 (purchase).

Visit our website: www.wealden-scp.org

NEW COMMUNITY TRANSPORT GUIDE

As part of an initiative to raise the profile of community transport throughout East Sussex, a new Community Transport Guide is now available. This takes the form of a bus-map style leaflet and is widely available in libraries, and information centres. It can also be accessed from the County Council website at: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/public/communitytransport



Some new pilot schemes have been set up in Wealden this year. One is an extension of the Wealdlink pre-bookable door-to-door shopping service, which can now pick up passengers from Buxted, Crowborough, Danehill, Forest Row, Groombridge, Hadlow Down, Hartfield, Maresfield, Rotherfield and Uckfield and take them shopping in Crowborough and Tunbridge Wells on certain days. Another is a dial-a-ride service for Uckfield residents, providing access to shopping facilities, doctors, dentists, and the Community Hospital and available on Mondays to Thursdays from 9:50am through to 2:10pm. Potential users can register their interest in either of these services by calling Community Transport for the Lewes Area 01273 517332, or emailing them on info@ctla.org.uk. For information about Wealdlink, visit www.4weald.co.uk

NORTH WEALDEN CARERS' RESPITE SCHEME

This free service may be of help to you!

The British Red Cross Society offers this service specifically designed to support carers. It provides fully trained volunteers to sit with loved ones whilst they take a well-deserved break. This service is suitable for unpaid carers in the community.

How can they help?

They offer a befriending service; shopping facilities, sitting service, assisting with light meals, encouragement and confidence building.

The scheme runs throughout the North Wealden Area, and if you would like to use or find out more about it then please contact:

British Red Cross Society North Wealden Carers Respite Scheme Streatfield Road, Heathfield, TN21 8LA. Tel: 01435 861100 or 07834 496774

Volunteering!

Caring and responsible volunteers are needed to support these carers. Full training will be given and travel and out of pocket expenses paid. For further information on how you can become a Volunteer for Carers, contact the Service Co-ordinator on the number above.



DIGNITY IN CARE – THE DIGNITY CHALLENGE

The Dignity in Care Campaign exists to stimulate national debate around the need for people receiving care services to be treated with dignity. The aim is to create a care system where there is a zero tolerance approach to the abuse of and disrespect towards older people. High-quality services that respect people's dignity should:

1. Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse.
2. Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
3. Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service.
4. Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control.
5. Listen and support people to express their needs and wants.
6. Respect people's right to privacy.
7. Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
8. Engage with family members and carers as care partners.
9. Assist people to maintain confidence and a positive self-esteem.
10. Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation.

CONTACT US IF, IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES PROVIDED IN EAST SUSSEX DO NOT MEASURE UP TO THESE STANDARDS.

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER IN THE POST, WE REGARD YOU AS A MEMBER! IF YOU HAVE PICKED IT UP AND WOULD LIKE TO GO ON OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE LET US KNOW BY COMPLETING AND RETURNING THIS REPLY SLIP. YOU CAN ALSO ASK US TO REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR LIST. WE PROMISE NEVER TO PASS YOUR DETAILS ON TO ANY OTHER ORGANISATION.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE/E-MAIL.....

PLEASE ADD THIS NAME TO/REMOVE THIS NAME FROM THE MAILING LIST (delete as appropriate)

Detach and return this slip to the Secretary: Linda Graham, Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership, 5 Rectory Field, Hartfield, TN7 4JE. Enquiries to: 01892 770487, e-mail: lindagraham@wealden-scp.org