



GREY MATTERS

OUR PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2013

With the help of our new Events Planning Team, we hope that by organising different events across a wide geographical area we have come up with something for everyone this year.



The Silver Surfers event covering Skype, Facebook & Twitter planned for February 21st had to be cancelled due to ill-health, but was re-arranged to take place immediately before our second Silver Surfers' event on **April 11th**. The focus of the afternoon session was Tracing Family History, and gave guidelines on how to conduct research into family history, how to set up a family tree etc., including signing up to research sites, downloading any necessary software, and how to make searches, with also an opportunity for participants to use Google Maps to find the places where they used to live as a child and see what changes there have been in that location. At the end of the event, participants were given an Information Pack to take home with step by step instructions on how to carry out everything they learned during the day so that they could replicate what they had done on their own computer.

Our next coffee morning will be held from 10am to 12:30 on **Friday 31 May** in Broad Oak Village Hall. On this occasion there will be clothes for sale by JJ Fashions and plants by Thorpe Nurseries in Horam. As before transport can be provided on request.



In **June** there will be a coffee morning on **Thursday 27** from 10am to 12 noon in Hartfield Village Hall. This time singers will provide entertainment and JJ Fashions will be on hand again with clothes for sale.

On **July 16th** we are holding a Cream Tea in the Stable Tearooms at Heaven Farm near Uckfield from 2:30-4:30 pm. Set in 100 acres of beautiful parkland, Heaven Farm is steeped in 600 years of farming history, and includes a nature trail (featured many times on BBC TV), wallabies and a rural life museum celebrating 200 years of farming life in the heart of the Sussex Weald.

On **Friday, September 20th** there will be a MacMillan Coffee morning at the Corn Exchange, Hailsham from 10am to 12:30pm. Entrance £1 per head to include a cup of tea or coffee, and there will be a raffle in aid of MacMillan Nurses.

We will celebrate UK Older Peoples' Day this year on **Saturday, October 12th** in The Belmont Centre, Uckfield. The highlight will be a visit from the Community Chef, with a demonstration of "Cooking For One", and there will also be gentle exercise and other taster sessions and information stands. Lunch will be included, during which we will hold our AGM. Booking is essential:- to book or for further information about any of our events ring **01825 762934**



The final coffee morning of the year will be held on **Saturday 30 November** in Forest Row Village Hall when there will be a Christmas Craft and Gift Sale from 10am until 1pm.



Anyone needing transport to any of these events, please ring a committee member near you (see back page), and a lift can be arranged.

Visit our website: www.wealden-scp.org

The Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership is a member of ESSA - The East Sussex Seniors' Association - "The Voice of Older People"



ARE YOUR LEGS THE SAME LENGTH?

It seems like a silly question but not necessarily so! If you have had a hip replacement, you may well have been left with one leg shorter than the other.

Hip replacements are wonderful operations and have given thousands of patients pain relief and a new lease of life, but one small problem experienced by many people is a leg length discrepancy – one leg shorter than the other. As the new hip seats itself into the bone, and the muscles around it start working again, the surgery can result in one leg being shorter, or longer depending on the technique used.

Is this a problem? It can be as many cases go undetected. It can cause severe back pain and in some cases a limp due to bad posture. If one leg is shorter than the other the pelvis tilts and the hip on the shorter side is lower than the other. This tilting of the hip causes the spine to be out of alignment. If not addressed it can be the cause of back problems.

It is a good idea therefore to ensure that a clinician, your consultant or a GP, measures your leg lengths about three months after your hip replacement, to check that all is well. What happens if they discover I have one leg shorter than the other? Don't panic! Ask to be seen by an Orthotist if this is not suggested. An Orthotist will measure the difference in your leg length and suggest how to correct the problem.

How is this achieved? It depends on the difference between the two legs. A small difference of up to about 6mm (1/4") can be corrected by the use of an insole in the shoe of the shorter leg. However, you can only put a small raise inside a shoe and still be able to get your foot in as well. If it is a greater difference than this, the Orthotist will probably suggest a shoe raise. Suitable material can be attached to the outside of your shoe to compensate for the difference. Most shoes can be raised, but the Orthotist will want to see the shoes you want to adapt and will advise you of their suitability.

Healthcare Trusts have different policies about the number of shoes they will allow you to have raised as an NHS patient. Some may raise one pair per year, other may allow more, but the Orthotist will know the policy for the local Trust and advise you. If you want more shoes raised than allowed by your local Trust, the Orthotist may be able to tell you how and where to have them adapted privately.

Not all leg length discrepancies are the result of hip replacement operations; there are other medical conditions that can cause the problem. Sometimes you can have what may look like one leg shorter than the other, but when measured, the legs are actually the same length. This is called an apparent leg length discrepancy and may be the topic for another article!

Further information and advice can be obtained from Galaxy Healthcare:

www.galaxy-healthcare.co.uk telephone: 01825 732590

Jonathan Wright Senior Orthotist & Linda Pugsley Clinic Manager
Partners Galaxy Healthcare

The above is the first in a series of articles kindly supplied by Galaxy Healthcare for publication in Grey Matters.

FEAR OF FALLING

Fear of falling means 225,000 people aged over 75 in the UK won't leave the house by themselves, according to new WRVS research.

This new report reveals how common falls are among the older people – 35% have fallen in the last two years with 32% of those living alone suffering a fall in the last year. The impact often goes beyond the physical. Over one fifth of older people who had suffered a fall in the last five years have lost their confidence as a result, with 16 per cent saying nothing can help them regain it.

The loss of confidence resulting from a fall is directly linked to the physical impact of the incident as 62 per cent have sustained injuries as a result. Seventeen per cent of those over the age of eighty say that having a fall has made them worried about leaving the house. Fear of falling means that five per cent of people aged over 75 won't leave the house by themselves (this equates to 225,000 when extrapolated across the whole population).

Of great concern is that the majority (58%) of those who did not report the fall to a medical practitioner said that this was because the fall was minor. Medical psychology literature shows that, due to the lower expectations that many older people have of their health, some may not report medical problems that would actually require specialist support or advice.

Only 11 per cent of people have received a visit from the specialist falls prevention team. This low level of service response is worrying given the seriousness of the injuries experienced by many older people studied. There is a significant level of variation across the three nations as English older people were less likely to have had support from a falls team than their counterparts in Scotland or Wales.

Seventy six per cent of those who reported extensive physical injuries resulting from a fall had not been visited by a specialist team.

Falls Awareness Week this year will run from 17th to 21st June, with the theme of "Healthy Feet". Look out for events in the local press.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH THE TN22 CLUB



Are you a good listener?

Do you enjoy chatting with others and sharing a joke?

Are you creative, or do you enjoy singing or cooking?

Do you enjoy driving? Why not become a volunteer driver?

The TN22 Club needs volunteers to help create a fun and stimulating environment for older people visiting the TN22 Club at the Village Hall in Hadlow Down, East Sussex, every fortnight on a Wednesday.

No special qualifications or experience are needed; all that is asked of volunteers is that they have the desire to make participants feel comfortable by talking and listening in a sensitive and supportive way. A full induction is given and volunteers benefit from ongoing training and out of pocket expenses.

To find out how to attend a taster session or become a volunteer, please call Suzanne Hammond on **01435 661054** website: www.engagesoutheast.org.uk email: enquiries@engagesoutheast.org.uk



Furniture Now! is a leading community waste, re-use and training organisation helping as many people as possible access learning, skills development and household effects thereby reducing society's negative environmental impact and building social inclusion. As a social enterprise rooted in the community, Furniture Now! takes items that

householders no longer want and makes them available to other householders who really need them - all are welcome at their stores but the lowest prices are only available for those on a low income.

The organisation has a constantly changing stock of beautiful furniture from a wide variety of sources including brand new stock (often end of line and hence very good value) as well as pre-loved/refurbished stock. There will be something to suit every taste and budget.

Additionally, training is central to the work of Furniture Now! - working closely with trainees to get them the skills they need to progress - but the public can also access courses - many for free.

They are grateful for any donations – but ask for items items that are not too damaged and are fit for re-use.

Unwanted items can be collected. Please get in touch if you have furniture, questions or suggestions.

Furniture Now!, Shop One, North Street, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 1DP

Opening times Tuesday - Friday 9.30 am to 4.30 pm Saturday 9.30 am to 4.00 pm

For enquiries about furniture collection and delivery please call 01323 638000

AGE UK EAST SUSSEX'S FUN TASTER SESSIONS

Age UK East Sussex is working with ESCC to deliver some 'Fun Taster Sessions' for older people (55 and over) who are at risk of health inequalities. These sessions aim to allow older people to sample some enjoyable activities which can help them stay active and keep well.

In a relaxed and sociable atmosphere, attendees will have the opportunity to:

- Try their hand at fun indoor games such as Boccia and Wii
- Talk to people involved in activities and schemes in their local area
- Watch a demonstration to pick up some new ideas about food which is tasty, healthy and simple to prepare.
- Get some free healthy recipe cards with ideas to try out at home
- Take home a range of free leaflets and booklets giving tips about simple ways to stay active and keep well.



This year sessions are due to take place in the Charles Hunt Centre, Hailsham, Polegate and NE Eastbourne (Shinewater Community Centre) - look out for posters.

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER IN THE POST, YOU ARE ALREADY A MEMBER! IF YOU HAVE PICKED IT UP AND WOULD LIKE TO JOIN, PLEASE RETURN THIS TEAR-OFF SLIP TO LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE IT ON A REGULAR BASIS. YOU CAN ALSO USE THIS SLIP TO REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR CIRCULATION LIST

YOUR NAME.....TELEPHONE/EMAIL.....

YOUR ADDRESS.....POSTCODE.....

PLEASE ADD MY NAME TO/REMOVE MY 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. Tel: 01892 770487, email: lindagraham@wealden-scp.org

ROADS, ENERGY AND SAFETY INFORMATION



Potholes

Following the severe winter weather, some older people are worried about going out in their cars, particularly in rural areas, due to the large number of potholes. We understand that the Council has set aside extra funding for pothole repairs and the number of repair teams has increased to 37, representing a three fold increase. It is important to report a pothole as soon as you see one - ring 0345 6080193. The A259 and A21 are the responsibility of the Highways Agency as they are trunk roads and faults on these should be reported to them (0300 123 5000).

The Green Deal



The new Government Green Deal initiative on saving energy involves the following steps:

- *Get an assessment of your property to see what improvements you can make and how much you could save on your energy bills.*
- *Choose a Green Deal provider to carry out the work. You discuss with them what work you want done and whether the Green Deal is right for you.*
- *If you want to go ahead with the improvements sign your Green Deal Plan - this is a contract between you and the provider stating what work will be done and how much it will cost. The provider will then arrange for a Green Deal installer to do the work.*
- *Once the work is done, you'll pay off the money in instalments through your electricity bill.*

The following are points to consider

- The assessment is not free. It could be as much as £ 100
- The deal may not be suitable for some older people as it is a long term repayment scheme.
- Interest on the loans is 7% which is more than commercial rates
- This may not be suitable for tenants as the landlord has to give agreement, but the tenant pays
- The repayment scheme stays with the property not the owner so a new buyer will have to take on the loan through the energy provider.
- Be aware that with the Green Deal your electricity bill will show lower electrical consumption but not necessarily a lower cost because of increasing prices.

Energy Companies Obligation (ECO)

The ECO scheme is designed to complement the domestic Green Deal. ECO will be used to provide insulation and heating measures, funded by the government and energy companies, to low-income and vulnerable households and energy efficiency measures to low income communities for those properties which are hard to treat. Assessments are free: visit the Energy Saving Trust web site at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk or ring: 0300 123 1234. The ECO scheme can help with:

- Affordable warmth, which is means tested.
- Solid wall insulation
- Community projects. Villages with a population less than 10,000 will get 100% funding for insulation.
- Carbon community for deprived areas.

For advice on saving energy, visit the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) website at www.cse.org.uk or call free on: 0800 082 2234

Home Safety



The East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service carries out home visits across East Sussex to fit smoke detectors, advise on home safety and give guidance, such as how to prevent falls. Last year there were a higher number of deaths in East Sussex due to older people falling asleep whilst smoking, and the service is looking at providing fire proof blankets for use on the laps of those who smoke but would have limited mobility in an emergency.

The latest smoke alarms use 10-year batteries that last the life of the alarm, so when they run out the whole alarm has to be replaced. The service can also advise on installing carbon monoxide (CO) alarms for vulnerable people as well as cut off devices for cookers that can be accidentally left on by those with memory problems. All households should install CO alarms if they use fossil fuel heating systems (eg coal, gas or oil). Why not ask for a CO alarm as a Christmas or Birthday present? Strobe alarms are also available for deaf people. To find out if you are eligible for a free Home Safety Visit call 0800 1777 069.

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Ivy Elsey (Chair, ESSA Rep, Health & Social Care SIG*)	01435 863719 ivy@ivywe.eclipse.co.uk
Jan Cooper (Treasurer & ESSA Rep)	01323 483483 jancey19@hotmail.co.uk
Linda Graham (Secretary & Transport SIG*)	01892 770487 lindagraham@wealden-scp.org
Sheila Guest (Sheltered Housing Rep)	01825 761621 sheila.guest@gmail.com
Carol Hodge (Vice Chair & Events Organiser)	01825 762934 carolhodge36@gmail.com
Jackie Jackson (Events Committee)	01825 764290 jacqueline_jackson1@sky.com
Ray & Eileen Twort (Events Committee)	01323 831624 rayeil@hotmail.com
Rene Cochrane (Events Committee)	01323 832013 reneanddoug@btinternet.com
Maureen Risbridger	01825 749543 maureen.risbridger@hotmail.co.uk



*SIG = Special Interest Group