

EAST SUSSEX Seniors' Association

The Voice of Older People



The Voice of Older people

Spring 2013 ~ Newsletter No.9



Have your say, Get involved, Make a difference, Shape the Future

www.essaforums.org.uk

Chairman's Report

ESSA is going through a significant number of changes at the moment. This newsletter has changed format and from comments made by my own forum they like the size, the clear print and the interesting articles.

The website is being looked at and updated and I'm afraid I am going to have to ask all those who 'hate' computers to think again – myself included.

Please read carefully the article – '**Show Us You Care**' on page 6. I am asking you to support ESCC's joining of this campaign and to show that support by contacting your MP's to ensure that they too are in agreement.

At the recent Way Ahead Day campaigning was seen as a priority. All the forums campaign on local issues – potholes, incinerators, bypasses, hospitals – but ESSA has to select issues that are relevant across the county which makes it more difficult. However cutbacks affect us all and I feel that this is a worthy cause.

Planning for the Older People's Day events start soon and I know that many of the forums are already well ahead with their plans. It is a wonderful way to celebrate the contribution older people make in the community and a worthy way to give ourselves a pat on the back. A brochure will be available later and mailed out to all members.

Kate Davies, Chair.

The Way Ahead

In November 2008 ESSA held its first Way Ahead Day. It was seen as an opportunity to bring the representatives and deputies from each of the forums together, to look at the progress ESSA had made up to that time and to consider our priorities for the next three years. Sadly it was just before the Way Ahead meeting that John Appleyard died. He had been such a stalwart in getting ESSA and the 7 Forums up and running and had been a driving force in taking us forward.

In March 2012 the three-year Action Plan was signed off with the vast majority of actions completed. The second Way Ahead Day took place on March 6th 2013 which was attended by 27 members of the committee with only one absentee. The day was very successful.

Early findings indicate -:

- Communication between ESSA and the forums is still poor
- Campaigning should become part of ESSA's role
- There should be more frequent/regular Way Ahead Days
- A return to Engagement Days where forum members can participate
- Continuation of Older People's Day events
- Raising ESSA's profile

A new Action Plan will soon be drawn up with the ESSA committee evaluating the Way Ahead report and prioritising items to take forward for the coming year. A full report will be sent. The priorities hopefully will be incorporated into the planning processes of all the forums so that ESSA becomes a united force to be reckoned with.

Kate Davies, Chair.

Become a Dementia Friend!

Take action on dementia where you live – become a Dementia Friend

Dementia is a condition that for a long time has been blighted by stigma and misunderstanding. It is all too often dismissed as a natural part of ageing or just 'forgetfulness'. But with one in three people over the age of 65 developing dementia, Alzheimer's Society believes it's time that this changed: that's what our new Dementia Friends initiative is all about.

Dementia is about more than just memory loss - it affects a person's ability to do day to day tasks that most of us take for granted, like talking to your loved ones, making plans or feeding or dressing yourself. It can also result in mood changes.

The reality is that dementia has a major impact on the people who live with it and those who care for them, as well as for society as a whole. However, with the right support, people are able to live well with the condition and feel part of their community.

The number of people with dementia living in East and West Sussex is rising. There are now more than 27,000 people with dementia across the two counties, and this number is expected to reach almost 34,000 within the next ten years.

It's increasingly important that all those affected have access to quality information, education, support and care to help them live their lives to the full. So, how can you make a difference?



A recent poll reveals that 42% of people in the South East feel they have a role to play to support people with dementia in their local community, and only 55% feel they have a good understanding of dementia .

In response, Alzheimer's Society has launched an England-wide initiative to increase public awareness of dementia, and turn that understanding into actions that can improve the lives of those affected by the condition. Launched in February 2013, Dementia Friends aims to reach one million people over three years. It hopes to change the way the nation thinks, talks and acts on dementia by recruiting Dementia Friends and Dementia Friend Champions across the country.

Anyone of any age can be a Dementia Friend and it's easy to get involved. From training to become a Dementia Friends Champion and talking to people in your community, to attending a Dementia Friends information session in your local area. No action is too small.

For more info visit: alzheimers.org.uk
Alzheimer's Society: 0300 222 1122

Government Pension Reforms

14 February 2013 – Government's pension reforms will give the lower paid bigger incentive to save

The Government's reforms to the state pension will work with automatic enrolment to boost pension-saving among low and medium earners.

The more rapid reduction in means-testing following the introduction of the new single tier state pension will help people to save more and have less taken away in benefit reductions, according to new research by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Pensions Minister Steve Webb said:

"Our changes to the state pension, together with wider welfare reforms and automatic enrolment, mean we're giving lower paid people the biggest incentive to save for a generation. We're making it more worthwhile for people, particularly those on low incomes, to save for their old age."

The amount people's benefits are being reduced because of their income from pension saving - the marginal deduction rate (MDR) - is falling over time. But DWP's figures show this will receive an extra boost from its pension reforms. People will be better off saving when the government's changes to both the state and private pension systems are fully in place.

People retiring now will find that, for every ten pounds they have in a pension, they will lose an average of three pounds in benefits entitlement. After the reforms, people starting out in the workplace now who retire in 2060 will keep an average of nearly nine pounds in ten of what they save.

Steve Webb added:

"As we give 11 million people the chance to save into a workplace pension, with a contribution from their employer, these figures show why we must also reform our state pension to ensure that it pays to save."

Website launched with up-to-date information about benefit changes

East Sussex County Council have added a new section to their website with up to date information about the benefit changes being made as part of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act. www.eastsussex.gov.uk

Tell us what you think about drink!

April sees the launch of the ‘**East Sussex Drink Debate**’ – a consultation which will ultimately inform the East Sussex Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy.

The Debate will find out about and discuss the different ways alcohol features in the lives of individuals, families and communities. And, if you have concerns about alcohol related problems, then we’d like to hear what you think could be done to help.

The findings will be used to develop a new multi-agency alcohol harm reduction strategy for East Sussex; helping us to plan and develop services which help to reduce the impact of alcohol harm on individuals, families and communities.

Taking part

We will be publishing a short survey on our website from early April (www.eastsussex.gov.uk/eastsussex-drinkdebate), and will be running events and focus groups to gauge concerns, attitudes and behaviours around alcohol and its associated risks. If you are interested in taking part in a focus group please contact us on the details below.

We need to know what you think so that we can shape a strategy to best fit the needs of the county.

For more information contact Anita McGrath in Safer Communities Team on anita.mcgrath@eastsussex.gov.uk or 01323 464 088

Our Rights, Our Voices. Promoting the Human Rights of Older People

Human Rights have a bad press. People either groan, shout ‘boring, boring’ or fall into a loud tirade against outcomes of some cases brought before the European Court on Human Rights (ECtHR).

AGEUK some time ago offered training to volunteers to become Human Rights Ambassadors. Two Forums (Lewes and Meridian) have sent two members each to take part in the project. The aim is to come to an understanding of the Human Rights Act, to pass this on to ESSA and therefore to all the Forums and to use the Act to protect the rights of older, perhaps more vulnerable members of our community.

So far we have learnt about the historical setting of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights beginning with ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’. We then looked at case studies to see whether individual’s human rights had been breached. Many of the studies were from hospitals and care homes where nursing or social care had fallen well below basic standards.

After our first session we knew that we must learn more about this and that we should have the knowledge to support families who are seeking advice on where to go or what to do in situations where they are made to feel helpless.

Kate Davies

A useful website – www.yourrights.org.uk

Show Us You Care

East Sussex County Council has joined with councils across the country in a nationwide campaign calling for increased funding for adult social care.



'**Show Us You Care**', organised by the Local Government Association (LGA) is making a case for councils to receive more money to deliver adult social care services and to secure longer-term reform of the system. There is increasing concern there will be a shortfall in funding to councils which have to provide a range of services, including many which are a legal obligation.

As Government funding to councils has gone down ESCC has joined this campaign, particularly as we have one of the highest ageing populations in the country.

Healthwatch England will be part of a new Healthwatch network from April 2013, giving people who use health and social care services a powerful voice locally and nationally.

We will use evidence based on real experiences to highlight national issues and trends and raise these at the highest levels. We will actively seek views from all sections of the community – not just from those who shout the loudest, but especially from those who sometimes struggle to be heard. The success of Healthwatch will be the strength of the network overall.

The network has two connected levels:

- Healthwatch England works at the national level and is helping set up local Healthwatch organisations. We will take local experiences of care and use them to influence national policy.

Bill Bentley ESCC Lead Member for Adult Social Care (Older People's Champion) says: 'We want to ensure the adult social care system provides certainty and stability for future generations, that it is fit for purpose and can be properly funded. We are asking MPs to write to the Chancellor and to take note of our concerns and to address the funding issues now.'

LGA Chairman, Sir Merrick Cockell tells us: 'Efficiency savings won't come close to solving the problem. We need an immediate injection of money into the adult care system to meet rising demands in the short term and, alongside a major revision of the way it is paid for and delivered in future. Local government is best placed to ensure care is provided with dignity to the individual and value for money for the taxpayer.'

Taken from a press report in February 2013

Follow ESCC on Twitter <http://twitter.com/eastsussexcc>

- Local Healthwatch will begin work in April 2013. There will be a Healthwatch organisation covering every local authority area in England. They will take the experiences that people have of local care and use them to help shape local services.

Through the network, Healthwatch England will make sure the voices of people who use health and social care services are heard by the Secretary of State for Health, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the NHS Commissioning Board, Monitor and every local authority in England.

For further details contact: Elizabeth Mackie Community Liason Manager elizabeth@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk or phone Healthwatch c/o 3VA Eastbourne 01323 37393

healthwatch
East Sussex

Introducing CCGs

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are getting ready to take over from existing primary care trusts from 1 April as part of NHS reforms.

In East Sussex there are three CCGs – Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford, High Weald Lewes Havens and Hastings and Rother – responsible for a £690 million budget for 2013/14. CCGs are membership organisations, made up of GPs and intended to ensure a closer relationship between local people, GPs and commissioning decisions. The CCGs will work closely with each other with key partners and stakeholders across the county.

CCGs will build on the strengths of general practice to ensure patients are at the heart of what they do; commissioning high quality and safe health services whilst making best use of their available resources. Priorities across East Sussex include accident and falls prevention, long term conditions, reducing A&E admissions and providing high quality end of life care.



Patient services will not change immediately but the CCGs are determined to improve services and patients' experiences wherever possible and in many cases this will involve moving services out of hospital and closer to home.

As part of the changes, the NHS Commissioning Board is responsible through the Surrey and Sussex Area Team for commissioning specialist and primary care services. The responsibility for public health will move to the local authorities.

A CCG representative attends each ESSA Health and Care group meeting so there is a regular discussion and a chance to raise issues directly. If you want to get involved in the work of the CCG more directly, you can do so by joining your GP practice's patient participation group. Alternatively, you could sign up to receive the regular stakeholder bulletin which will keep you up-to-date with the work of the CCG and promote opportunities to get involved.

If you would like more information about the CCGs and their plans, contact Harriet Bevis – harriet.bevis@nhs.net

Special offer for all ESSA members

Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline (Welbeing) delivers lifeline services across all of Sussex.

More and more people are also benefiting from the additional options such as smoke detectors, flood detectors and falls detectors that raise an alarm to Welbeing's 24 hour response centre in Eastbourne.



Offer One

ESSA members will now benefit from **half price installations** of Lifeline and telecare - £18.50 instead of the standard installation charge for the basic Lifeline and pendant of £37. If you opt for other peripheral devices such as smoke detectors, these installations will also be offered at **half price** to ESSA members (if installed at same time as Lifeline). The weekly subscription for Lifeline is £3.68 (payable monthly, half yearly or annually) with additional monitoring charges for other equipment.

Offer Two

ESSA members who live near to each other are invited to join together to purchase the service and all benefit from a **free installation**. The idea is that by joining together people will be able to support each other as responders should the need arise. If you have a group of 3 or more people who are interested in this please either give Welbeing a call on 01323 644422 or email info@welbeing.org.uk quoting 'ESSA Lifeline Together'.

Membership of any one of the seven East Sussex Seniors' Forums automatically means you are a member of ESSA.

Terms and conditions apply, the offer may be withdrawn at any time. Key safes are not included in the offer



ESSA Recognised Down Under!

One of Seaford Seniors' Forum members recently visited New Zealand with her cousin. Myrtle Krakke was in North Island when a lady came up to them and said: *'I recognize your English accent, from what part of the UK do you come?'* Myrtle replied 'I live near Eastbourne'. This prompted the response that Eastbourne was known very well to the lady as she used to work at County Hall. Myrtle said 'Well actually I live in Seaford,' 'Goodness, said the lady, do you know Don Hart?' 'Of course I do replied Myrtle.'

My name is Jessie McArthur' said the New Zealander. I chaired the group that worked on the concept and helped formed the seven seniors' Forums with the idea that this would lead to what eventually became ESSA in East Sussex. I worked with the late John Appleyard, Don Hart and a couple of other ladies from Age Concern. That was over 10 years ago now. What a small world we live in!

Ron Sunderland tells us...

The two ladies from Age Concern were probably Debbie Beale and Diane Azlett. These two have done so much over the years for ESSA.

The founding Meeting for grouping together the then 6** Forums was chaired jointly by John Appleyard and Ron Sunderland with Vicky Smith (ESCC) assisting. The six forums all had issues about amalgamating as each had differences in their ways of working. Ron provided a forum for all six spokespersons to give voice to their concerns, before summing up the differences and declared all were in favour with only minor reservations and on that basis declared we were a new group. The original name was suggested as ESSE (East Sussex Seniors Executive) but, after discussion, as we wished to be driven by our grass roots rather than be an Executive Board, the term ESSA was coined instead (East Sussex Seniors Association) and so it came about in 2005.

**Eastbourne Seniors' Forum had a false start and was not then in being in its present structure. When it was later re-formed by Steve Thornett and others it grew fast and joined ESSA.

By Don Hart, Seaford with extra information from Ron Sunderland.



FOCUS ON FORUMS

Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership



Our membership numbers have grown steadily since our forum was first set up in 2005 and we have recently sent out our 27th "Grey Matters" newsletter. The newsletter goes out three or four times a year and contains information about local events and services, new initiatives and legislation - in fact anything we hear about that could be of interest to senior citizens living in Wealden.

Our committee meets regularly to discuss issues of importance to older people such as health, community care, transport and the environment, and committee members attend many meetings on these topics so that they can report back on the latest information of interest to members. We are well supported at these meetings by representatives of the County and District Councils.

Each year we run various events that give us the opportunity to meet older people across Wealden and find out about their particular concerns and interests. Our biggest challenge is the extent of our catchment area: Wealden covers roughly half the area of East Sussex and encompasses

over 40 towns and parishes, and we try to hold events in as many of them as possible, as although we always offer help with transport we find that older people prefer not to travel great distances.



Members enjoying the Lunch Out Club last year, for those living in Uckfield

Last year we held events in Heathfield, Wadhurst, Herstmonceux, Crowborough, Pevensey and Hailsham. This year we're targeting some of the smaller villages: Broad Oak, Hartfield, Chelwood Gate as well as the towns of Polegate, Hailsham and Uckfield. A successful innovation has been to organise events as part of Silver Surfers' Day, and in both 2011 and 2012 our events were shortlisted for the Spring Online award. In 2013 we are organising two Silver Surfers' events in conjunction with Hailsham Community College and Hailsham Town Council.

Our other events in recent years have taken up the themes of "Fun, Fit and 50+" and "Live, Laugh and Learn" and in 2012 we held several events entitled "The Alternative Games", when we invited people to participate in games of yesteryear such as bagatelle, snakes and ladders, ludo and draughts.



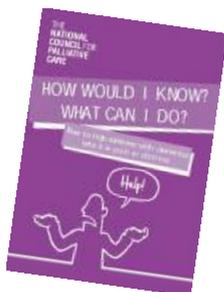
Silver Surfers Event 2012



This year's main event for Older People's Day will focus on cookery, and will include a presentation by the Community Chef with special emphasis on cooking for one.

We launched a very successful Lunch Out Club for members living in Uckfield and have also started an Arts and Crafts Group, also in Uckfield.

The National End of Life Care Programme for Carers Leaflet (NCPC)



An NCPC Leaflet called *'How would I know? What can I do?'* describes how people with dementia, who may not be able to communicate how they feel, might display signs that a carer can recognise and be able to help.

To get a copy of this guide call:
020 7697 1520 or
email: enquiries@ncpc.org.uk
www.ncpc.org.uk



Information about Care & Support in East Sussex all in "1Space"

East Sussex County Council has launched **1Space** - an exciting new website which will help people find the care, support and wellbeing services they need. From personal care to getting odd jobs done, from advice to coping with ill health, East Sussex 1Space will help you find solutions around to help you live independently, safely and in good health.

www.eastsussex1space.co.uk

Seniors' Forums Contact Details



Eastbourne
Seniors Forum

Eastbourne Seniors Forum

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HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS
SENIORS' FORUM

Hastings & St Leonards Seniors' Forum

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Serving the over 50's

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Wealden Senior
Citizens'
Partnership

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Speakers Corner

We are always interested in hearing your views, or maybe you have an item of interest to share with other readers?

Do send your letters to the Editor Steve Thornett, 1 Wellington Close, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 5AR



eastsussex.gov.uk

"East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is proud to support the East Sussex Seniors Association (ESSA). However, it would like to point out that ESSA is an independent organisation and that the views stated in its newsletter will not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the County Council."