



GREY MATTERS

The Newsletter of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership Volume 1 January 2006

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership. This new forum for older people was launched on 29th September 2005 with the object of promoting the interests and welfare of senior citizens in Wealden.

The main function of the Partnership will be to put forward a positive view of senior citizens in society and to help older people enjoy an active and independent life. It will also act as an umbrella organisation, making representations to influential partner organisations in the public and private sectors and disseminating information to the many senior citizens' organisations in the towns and villages of Wealden which it is hoped will want to become part of the Partnership.

Membership, which is free, is open to all senior citizens living or working in Wealden, as well as any organisations and individuals of any age who have concerns connected with older people. Several organisations were represented at the Launch Meeting, including East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, Age Concern East Sussex and the Wealden Federation of Voluntary Organisations. With the help of these and other partnership organisations the new Forum is seeking and expecting to get financial support to cover administration costs, to provide transport to meetings if needed and to take up and originate projects in support of older people. It is aimed to hold two full meetings a year, the next to be held in Hailsham on April 8th – see the next Newsletter for full details.

At the Launch Meeting, after the adoption of a Constitution and the election of a Management Committee, a brief presentation on the subject of Rural Transport was given by John Robbins, Transport Strategy Manager for East Sussex County Council. Those present then split into discussion groups and discussed the kind of topics they would like to see addressed by the new forum.

The Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership is one of eight forums being set up across East Sussex, all with similar aims. Representatives of the eight forums came together at a Conference held in Eastbourne in mid December, as a result of which it is hoped to form an over-arching group, which will be able to speak of behalf of older people all over the county. East Sussex County Council has appointed a dedicated officer to work with the various groups

Topics raised by Discussion Groups at the WSCP Launch on September 29th

1. The Lack of Transport in Rural Areas
2. The High Cost of Adult Education
3. The Problems posed by Long Term Care for the Elderly
4. The high level of Council Tax Rises compared with the level of State Pensions
5. The Dangers posed by poorly lit and badly maintained Footpaths in Rural Areas.

Please complete and return this slip if you would like to become a member of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership and receive future editions of the Newsletter

NAME.....

ORGANISATION (if any).....

ADDRESS.....

Please include my name on the mailing list for the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership, and keep me informed of future events. I am particularly interested in the following concerns:

Return this slip to: Linda Graham, "Four Oaks", 5 Rectory Field, Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4JE

Rural Transport Issues

John Robbins, Transport Strategy Manager from East Sussex County Council, was the main speaker at the inaugural meeting of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership. He began by giving an overview of current transport strategy, explaining the various roles played by Central Government, County Councils and District Councils. He made particular reference to Local Area Transport Strategies (LATS), which regularly set up public consultations on local transport issues. These consultations help to determine objectives for the Local Transport Plan, a countrywide document which is updated every five

years, with the current plan just ending and a new one about to begin. John Robbins said it was vital that the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership should take the opportunity to influence decision-making by actively taking part in these consultations. He also referred to the East Sussex Rural Transport Partnership, part of Action in Rural Sussex, a voluntary body set up to co-ordinate community transport initiatives in East Sussex, which can put groups in contact with possible sources of funding in order to set up community buses. The Co-ordinator is Philip Ayres (01273 407239) who can be contacted for advice and help.

The WSCP Management Committee

Hanno Fry 01825 712410	Chairman	"Two Trees", Crowborough Road, Nutley TN22 3HU hannoreneegodfry@compuserve.com
June Street 01435 867497	Vice Chairman	"Meadowlands", Cross in Hand, Heathfield TN21 0LS
Linda Graham 01892 770487	Secretary	"Four Oaks", 5 Rectory Field, Hartfield TN7 4JE linda_graham@ntlworld.com
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Kath Harburn 01825 761314	Committee	21 Furnace Way, Hempstead Fields, Uckfield TN22 1XG

Profiles of Committee members are planned to appear in future newsletters.

WEBSITE INFORMATION

We will shortly be setting up a website, www.wealden-scp.org to provide up-to-date information on our aims and activities. If your organisation has a website, let us know if you would like to set up a link.

STOP PRESS!

Worried about Bird 'Flu? For full and balanced information visit the DEFRA website:
www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/index/htm