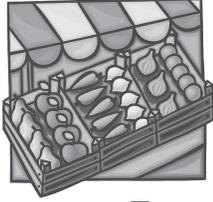




# GREY MATTERS



## COME TO THE MARKETPLACE!

**WE INVITE ALL OUR MEMBERS AND POTENTIAL MEMBERS TO COME TO A FREE DROP-IN COFFEE MORNING AND MARKETPLACE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS FROM 10am UNTIL NOON ON MAY 3rd IN THE LUXFORD CENTRE IN UCKFIELD**

To coincide with the Farmers' market in Uckfield in the Luxford Car Park on May 3rd, the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership will be holding a market of its own. No, we're not setting ourselves up in competition with local farmers - on offer in our marketplace will be free information!

We have invited a variety of organisations to set up displays in the Luxford Centre in order to provide advice and information for older people on a wide range of topics, for example adult education, finance, health and social care matters, the emergency services, etc.

Why not plan a visit to the Farmers' Market on May 3rd and once you have made your purchases, drop into the Luxford Centre between 10am and mid-day for coffee, a biscuit and some helpful information - all free of charge.

Committee members will be on hand to tell you about WSCP - what we can do for you and what you can do for us.



## THE TIME OF OUR LIVES!

A document entitled "The Time of Our Lives Strategy - improving and promoting quality of later life in East Sussex 2008 - 2011" was launched at the East Sussex National Golf Club on 4th March. This launch was part of an Older People's Engagement Day, the aim of which was to provide an opportunity for older people and interested organisations to engage in debate and discussion with people who have influence over a range of services that impact on older people's lives in East Sussex. Part of the event took the form of an 'ask the panel' session designed to take in current service and policy development issues affecting older people. A panel of key people who have influence over services in the county that impact on older people's quality of life (e.g. the County Council, the Primary Care Trust, the Police) participated in a question and answer session with the audience, covering each of the eight areas identified in the strategy as areas where quality of later life can be improved. The Time of our Lives Strategy has an action plan for each area so that the appropriate planning partnerships and bodies can take older people's priorities into account when delivering services over the next 12-36 months.

One of the clear messages that came out of the launch of The East Sussex Seniors' Association in July 2007 was that people want to be heard. They don't just want to be consulted near the end of a decision-taking process but would like to be involved in an ongoing productive and constructive dialogue and debate with decision-makers about the things that matter in their lives as older residents in the county. Older residents also want to make a positive contribution to the future of the county and be a part of the solution to some of the challenges we face, as well as the opportunities. The Older People's Engagement Day provided an opportunity for representatives of all the seven Older People's Forums in East Sussex to do just that.

A summary of the Time of Our Lives Strategy is enclosed with this newsletter. If you would like to read the full document, telephone 01273 481565 to ask for a copy to be sent to you. It can also be downloaded from the internet by following this link:: <http://tinyurl.com/2cgghy>

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [www.wealden-scp.org.uk](http://www.wealden-scp.org.uk)**



## PEACE OF MIND FOR THOSE AT RISK

Telecare is the new name for more advanced community alarm services. Just like the community alarm, Telecare plugs into your telephone line and links to sensors that can detect things like:

- \* fires and smoke
- \* extremes of heat
- \* carbon monoxide and natural gas
- \* flooding
- \* bogus callers
- \* falls
- \* wandering.

If you have a problem a call will go through to the Telecare centre which offers a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week service. They will offer you advice and support and call for help depending on what you need.

### Who can benefit from Telecare?

Telecare can provide help for people:

- \* over 65
- \* with memory problems
- \* suffering from dementia
- \* with learning disabilities
- \* with physical disabilities or sensory problems
- \* with short-term illness or vulnerability
- \* with long term conditions such as epilepsy or heart disease
- \* living alone and needing reassurance
- \* at risk of falling
- \* returning home from hospital.

### How much will I have to pay?

You may have to pay for some elements of the equipment or service. This will be based on your current financial situation. Ring the number below to find out how much you may have to pay as part of the normal assessment process.

### Who do I contact?

For further information please contact [socialcaredirect@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@eastsussex.gov.uk) or telephone 0845 60 80191

## HOW TO PREVENT A FALL

**Exercise** - even if this is only a short walk. Be active in the home to keep muscles strong and joints supple. Join a local exercise group.

**Lighting** - keep stairs and living areas well lit, making sure your light bulbs are bright enough. Keep a torch by the bed and use a night light.

**Obstacles** - never leave objects, which may be tripped over on stairs or in walking areas. Avoid flexes and cables crossing walking areas.

**Bathrooms** - use non-slip rubber mats in the bath/shower. Fit a handrail near the bath/toilet.

**Flooring** - avoid the use of rugs. Securing fitted floor coverings are better.

**Bending and climbing** - minimise bending or climbing. Keep frequently used items on racks on in drawers that are easy to reach. Have a letter tray and rack for milk deliveries fitted. Don't reach up high, use proper steps. Never use chairs or tables, which may be unstable.

**Walking aids** - consider a walking stick/aid to help with your stability.

## HOW TO PREVENT OSTEOPOROSIS

**Exercise** - can also prevent osteoporosis (see above).

**Diet** - bones need calcium and vitamin D. Make sure you eat regularly and have a balanced diet, to include oily fish, meat and breakfast cereals.

**Smoking** - is bad news for bones. If you are a smoker, please seriously consider giving up cigarettes.

**Alcohol** - drinking can be harmful for bones. If you are a heavy drinker, please consider reducing your alcohol intake.

**HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy)** - women who are approaching or have just reached the menopause need to find out about HRT which provides oestrogen required for bone health. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist for further advice if this applies to you. Did you know that men can also suffer from osteoporosis, especially if they've had hormone therapy for prostate cancer?

### USEFUL NUMBERS

Age Concern East Sussex: 01273 611227

Nat. Osteoporosis Society: 01761 471771

## PLEASE JOIN OUR COMMITTEE!!!



We have sadly had to say goodbye to some of our original committee members over the past few months and are seeking to co-opt new members until the next AGM. Please do consider whether you have some spare time to commit to this very valuable and interesting voluntary work. The Committee meets approximately once every six weeks, and committee members also attend

workshops and consultations on many topics of interest to older people such as health and social care services, transport, healthy finances and quality of life. You would be remunerated for any out-of-pocket expenses. If you would like to learn more, please ring our Secretary, Linda Graham on 01892 770487, email [lindagraham@wealden-scp.org](mailto:lindagraham@wealden-scp.org)



## TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

Our Transport and Travel Special Interest Group has now been set up under the leadership of WSCP member Dave Graham. Dave intends to undertake a survey of public transport throughout the Wealden district, but to do this effectively he needs your help.

Below is the World Health Organisation's Transportation Checklist for Age-friendly Towns and Cities. How does this checklist match your own experience? - we would love to hear from you. Write to us at 5 Rectory Field, Hartfield TN7 4JE or email [lindagraham@wealden-scp.org](mailto:lindagraham@wealden-scp.org) and tell us about your experiences.

- Public transportation costs are consistent, clearly displayed and affordable.
- Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- All areas and services are accessible by public transport, with good connections and well-marked routes and vehicles.
- Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- Specialised transportation is available for disabled people.
- Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the kerb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before driving off.
- Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well-lit and well-marked, with adequate seating and shelter.
- Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, schedules and special needs facilities.
- A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- Taxis are accessible and affordable, and drivers are courteous and helpful.
- Roads are well-maintained, with covered drains and good lighting
- Traffic flow is well-regulated.
- Roadways are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
- Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed.
- Driver education and refresher courses are promoted for all drivers.
- Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number and conveniently located.
- Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.

## THE NEW NATIONAL BUS PASS

Most people will know that in recent years a free off peak travel CountyCard bus pass enabling the holder to travel free on all the local buses in East and West Sussex has been available to anyone in the following categories:

- \* Aged 60 years or over
- \* Suffering from a disability
- \* Mentally handicapped
- \* Have been refused a driving licence on medical grounds
- \* Deaf or speech impaired
- \* Partially sighted or blind

The latest news is that if you already hold a bus pass it will expire on March 31 2008, and as from April 1st, the current CountyCard scheme will cease. It will be replaced by the National Concessionary Fares Scheme under which local entitlement for free bus travel will be extended to allow bus travel in every area of the country. It will mean that whether using the bus locally, or visiting other parts of the country, older and disabled people will be able to travel for free.

You can apply for a National bus pass now. Passes will not be issued until late March at the earliest and cannot be used on buses until the scheme commences on April 1st.

However, if you already have a CountyCard, you can continue to use it until your new National pass arrives.

### What is off peak travel?

The card can normally be used after 9:00am on weekdays and at any time at weekends and on public holidays.

### New applications

If you are applying for your first bus pass, this is what you should do:-

- \* Complete an application form (obtainable online or from Wealden District Council, below)
- \* You must attach a recent passport-size photograph of yourself
- \* You will also have to enclose documentary evidence of your eligibility: this could be either a photocopy of your pension book, front & inside cover, a birth certificate, a medical card or driving licence, or other official papers holding your date of birth.

\* Proof of residency, e.g. household bill or other official document showing your name and address. Photocopies are acceptable.

Further information can be obtained from:

Wealden District Council  
Concessionary Fares  
Vicarage Lane  
Hailsham  
East Sussex  
BN27 2AX  
Tel: 01323 443557  
Weblink: <http://tinyurl.com/2um35p>



## THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE - UPDATE

Our reference to the University of the Third Age in the last edition of Grey Matters drew the following response from Peter Davie of the Mayfield and District U3A Group. We apologise for not mentioning this group in our original piece.



It was good to see your article in the last edition of Grey Matters publicising the merits and attractions of U3A, the University of the Third Age. Originally a French concept, it was taken up in England in the '80s and since then its adoption up and down the land has proceeded apace. In East and West Sussex alone, for example, we have a membership now in excess of 8,000 spread across 31 local Groups widely dispersed between Hastings, Chichester, and East Grinstead. Their members pursue studies entirely of their own choice within different interest groups, now numbering more than 160 across the two counties.

You mentioned the Crowborough and Eastbourne Groups as sources of further interest and advice but we ask your readers not to overlook MAYFIELD & DISTRICT! Our Group started in May 2005, serves a wide area, and already boasts 176 members. We have every opportunity to develop our various interests across a range of diverse subjects. 20 separate study groups have already been formed and meet regularly. We have opportunities to attend occasional Study Days and Summer Schools at the universities in Brighton and Chichester. We produce a Newsletter, and also come together monthly in the village hall to listen to visiting speakers, expert in all manner of subjects from art to archaeology. In January this year, we were pleased to welcome our MP, Mr Charles Hendry.

Our Membership Secretary, Hazel Davie (01435 873853) and Ann Scott (Chair/01435 872121) will welcome further enquiries and/or membership applications at any time.

## DOORSTEP SELLERS AND BOGUS CALLERS



Take care when opening the door to anyone. Here are a few simple steps to follow when you get an unexpected caller:

- Fit and use a door security chain every time you open the door. (Need help? Contact the Anchor Handyman Service 01323 441013).
- Always ask for identification that you can verify. Do not let the caller into your house until you have verified the caller's identification.
- Check the identification of the caller by ringing his/her employer. Use the telephone number from your local telephone book. It is not a good idea to ring the telephone number the caller gives you, as this may not be a genuine telephone number.
- Do not agree for anyone to carry out work in your house until you get a second opinion as to whether you actually need the work done.
- Do not agree to any work where the caller says "We are only in the area today".
- If you agree to buy any goods or services from a doorstep seller, and you did not invite the doorstep seller to call, then you may have a short period of time to cancel the contract after it has been signed. Keep all the paperwork in a safe place.
- In order for the contract to be completed successfully by both parties, the trader must serve you a notice of your cancellation rights. This will be in the form of a printed document giving you details of how to cancel the contract.
- Generally the goods or services must be over £35 in value in order to cancel the contract. There are other circumstances where you have no rights of cancellation. Contact your trading standards department for further advice.
- Never keep large sums of money in the house and keep purses out of sight, not near the door.
- Keep a list of numbers of your credit cards and important documents in case of loss.
- Free security advice is available from the Police Crime Prevention Officer at your local police station.



## CONTACT US

If you would like to become a member of the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership, or have an issue which you would like to bring to our attention, please get in touch with us by emailing [lindagraham@wealden-scp.org](mailto:lindagraham@wealden-scp.org) or write to us c/o 5 Rectory Field, Hartfield, TN7 4JE.