



# GREY MATTERS

## SILVER SURFERS SPRING ONLINE EVENT 2014

Spring Online in association with Carphone Warehouse is Digital Unite's award-winning initiative that makes it possible for thousands of people, often older people, to try out using computers and tablets and the internet, many for the first time. Currently around seven million people have never used the internet and six million of those are aged over 55 years. Many more can't do basic online tasks like sending emails or searching the web. Between 31 March and 4 April 2014, thousands of free taster events and sessions are held by volunteers and organisations across the UK to help and inspire local people achieve a lasting use of the internet.

Following the successful events we organised in 2011, 2012 and 2013, this year we will be joining forces with Uckfield Library for a number of sessions based on simple learning packages that the Library use for their training as tasters to try and whet people's appetite to learn more. Sessions will be held on the following dates and at these times:

Monday 31st March, 10:00 -12:00

Tuesday 1st April, 10:00 -12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00

Wednesday 2nd April, 10:00 -12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00

Thursday 3rd April, 14:00 - 16:00

Friday 4th April, 10:00 -12:00, 14:00 - 16:00 and 16:30 -18:30

To book a place on one of the sessions, ring Uckfield Library on 0345 6080196, or for more information please ring Elizabeth Keating on 01435 865032 or email [elizabeth.keating46@googlemail.com](mailto:elizabeth.keating46@googlemail.com)



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We invite all members to a **Cream Tea** at the Ashdown Forest Llama Park on **Tuesday, July 22nd 2014** at 2:30 for 3pm. To book your place, please ring Elizabeth Keating on 01435 865032 or complete and return the reply slip on page 4. Transport can be provided if required. The cost of the tea will be £8.50, to include entrance to the Llama Park.

For **UK Older People's Day 2014** we plan a repeat of the successful "Cooking for One" event with the Community Chef that we held in 2013 from 10am to 3pm, refreshments provided. This year it will be held at Heathfield Community Centre on **Saturday, October 4th**. To book a place, please ring Elizabeth Keating on 01435 865032 or complete and return the reply slip on page 4.

## THE WEALDEN SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTNERSHIP NEEDS YOU!!!

A number of our committee members have had to stand down over the past few months, leaving us rather thin on the ground!

Please do consider whether you could join us. Like the other Older People's Forums in East Sussex, our aim is to encourage older people to share their views and raise concerns so that their voice will be heard in the planning and provision of services and facilities locally, regionally and nationally. So by joining our committee you could make a real difference.

The committee usually meets once a month, currently in the training room at Heathfield Fire Station, and we also organise a number of events through the year in different venues, at which help is always needed. All out-of-pocket expenses are reimbursed.

**If you would like to find out more, ring the Secretary, Linda Graham on 01892 770487, email [lindagraham@wealden-scp.org](mailto:lindagraham@wealden-scp.org), or complete the reply slip on page 4.**

**Visit our website: [www.wealden-scp.org](http://www.wealden-scp.org)**

## HOW FAR DO YOU WALK EACH DAY?

The Ramblers and Macmillan Cancer Support have launched Walking Works, an extensive overview of the mounting research into the life-threatening consequences of inactivity, which concludes that walking is the answer. Supported by Public Health England, this new report demonstrates walking is the solution to getting the nation active, and shows how England's largest network of health walk schemes, Walking for Health, is already changing people's lives. In the most extensive overview of its kind, the Ramblers and Macmillan have compiled research and evidence that shows why we need to take action now to combat the inactivity epidemic.

The report highlights the severe impacts of inactivity:

- Physical inactivity tops smoking as one of the nation's biggest health problems and is one of the top four global killers
- It is responsible for 10.5% of heart disease cases, 13% of type 2 diabetes cases and 17% of premature deaths in the UK
- Being inactive shortens lifespan by 3-5 years
- The associated health problems of inactivity in England are costing the economy up to £10 billion a year
- If everyone in England did enough walking to meet recommended guidelines it could prevent:  
36,815 people dying prematurely - 294,730 cases of diabetes - 12,061 people going to hospital for emergency coronary heart disease treatment



The report also highlights how physical activity can help prevent certain type of cancers, help manage the consequences of cancer treatment, and even help reduce the chance of some cancers returning.

The Ramblers and Macmillan know walking is the simple solution to getting people active. Walking is a free, low-impact activity that requires no special equipment and almost everyone can do it, wherever they are. The Walking Works report demonstrates that although this solution is simple it can make an enormous difference to the nation's health and wellbeing.

Walking for Health is already at the forefront of getting more people walking. Supporting 600 local schemes across England to organise short, free walks led by friendly, trained walk leaders, they are helping everyone – including those affected by cancer – discover just how good walking can make you feel. With evidence showing that walking is a cost-effective way for local authorities and healthcare providers to increase physical activity, the report highlights the need for continued and further investment in initiatives like Walking for Health to help get the nation active.

**For information about local walks contact Paula Hubens, TCV Healthy Walks Project Officer on 07740 899559/ p.hubens@tcv.org.uk.**

## IS YOUR SPINE STRAIGHT?

Were you ever told to sit up straight, stand up properly, don't slouch!? Good advice, but sometimes whatever happens with our spine is not always under our control. The spine has natural curves, they are supposed to be there, but if unnatural curves are present, it gives cause for concern. If you look at someone from behind, the spine should look straight up and down. If the spine has a sideways curve, it is called a scoliosis. The curve can bend to the left or to the right or may twist unnaturally. A person may not be aware of a scoliosis as it may or may not cause back pain. The curve can be in the lower part of the spine (a lumbar curve), in the upper part of the spine (a thoracic curve), or go from the upper to lower part of the spine (a thoracolumbar curve). In some cases there is a double curve - like an S shape.

There are some curves that are fixed and do not go away when the person changes position. These may be the result of some cases of muscular dystrophy, polio, cerebral palsy for example. In others the curve is usually mild and it changes or goes away when corrected. A scoliosis from a leg length discrepancy is one example. If one leg is shorter than the other it can cause the spine to curve unnaturally unless it is corrected. A leg length discrepancy is usually corrected quite simply with a shoe raise. However, a scoliosis curve in the spine can be produced by bad posture resulting from either knee bending, causing an "apparent" leg-length discrepancy.

There is a condition known as idiopathic scoliosis. This is often seen in young children and often goes unnoticed as there is seldom any back pain associated with this. How is this detected? Quite often when being examined for something else. There is no screening in this country for detecting this condition in children, but if scoliosis becomes severe and is not treated it can cause back problems in later life, breathing problems or heart problems may develop if the deformity in the chest region is severe.

In many cases of scoliosis the diagnosis is obvious. However, some mild cases are not so obvious and need proper assessment by a clinician. A quick test which an Orthotist can do is simply to ask the child to bend forward. A bulge on the back of the chest is more obvious when bending forward. If an Orthotist diagnoses scoliosis you will normally be referred to a specialist. X-rays can show the spine clearly. From these x-rays a specialist can assess the angle of the curve. This gives an idea of the severity of the condition and the likelihood of it getting worse.

Treatment depends on various factors such as the patient's age, whether they are still growing, the severity of the curve, the exact location of the scoliosis (for example, upper or lower back) and the chance that it may progress. Treatment options include, bracing and surgery and physiotherapy.

If you continue to be concerned about this condition a specialist will arrange regular reviews to make sure that the progress of the condition is monitored.

If you have symptoms relating to your spine, further information and advice can be obtained from Galaxy Healthcare: [www.galaxy-healthcare.co.uk](http://www.galaxy-healthcare.co.uk) Telephone: 01825 732590 or email [info@galaxy-healthcare.co.uk](mailto:info@galaxy-healthcare.co.uk)  
Jonathan Wright Senior Orthotist & Linda Pugsley Clinic Manager

**Another in a series of articles kindly supplied by Galaxy Healthcare for publication in Grey Matters.**



A great place for lunch & friendship!



Join us at our friendly and welcoming clubs

Local charity, Engage South East, operates two clubs, both of which offer a freshly prepared two course lunch, and meet on Wednesdays at Hadlow Down Village Hall:

- The TN22 Club provides opportunities for fun and socialising in a warm and friendly environment.
- The new TN22 Plus Club provides tailored support for those with memory loss or dementia with the benefit of specially designed activities.
- Transport can be arranged upon request.



To find out more about the service, pricing details or to book a place please call:

**07864 533884**

If there is no one available to take your call, please leave a message as we aim to respond to all calls within 48 hours.

**website:** [www.engagesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.engagesoutheast.org.uk)

**e-mail:** [enquiries@engagesoutheast.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@engagesoutheast.org.uk)



**Are you over 50 and worried that you may not be doing enough to keep in shape? Then why not join the**

## **HEALTHY LIVING CLUB IN HAILSHAM**

**Boccia - New Age Kurling - Qiqong**

This is a local club aimed at encouraging people to become more active, meet new friends and get advice on health for only **50p** a session.

**For more information and to find out what the Healthy Living Club is all about contact Su Reece, Healthy Living Clubs Co-ordinator on**

**Tel: 01273 476704 Mobile: 07850 987148**

**Email: [susan.reece@ageukeastsussex.org.uk](mailto:susan.reece@ageukeastsussex.org.uk)**



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



## **USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

East Sussex County Council	East Sussex Fire and Rescue	0303 999 1000
• Adult social care – 0345 60 80 <b>191</b>	NHS Direct	111
• Roads and paths – 0345 60 80 <b>193</b>	Sussex Mental Healthline	0300 5000 101
• Buses and waste – 0345 60 80 <b>194</b>	Alzheimers Society	0845 3000336
• Library renewals – 0345 60 80 <b>195</b>	East Sussex Disability Association	01323 514500
• Library enquiries – 0345 60 80 <b>196</b>	Care for The Carers	01323 738390
• Trading Standards – 0345 60 80 <b>197</b>	Diabetes UK Careline	0845 120 2960
• Switchboard – 0345 60 80 <b>190</b>	Parkinsons Disease Society	0808 800 0303
Citizens' Advice Bureaux	Healthwatch	01323 643304
• Crowborough 01892 655303	Age UK East Sussex	01273 476 704
• Hailsham 01323 842336	Wealden & Eastbourne Lifeline	01323 644422
• Uckfield 01825 764940	Minicom:	01323 415111
• Wadhurst 01892 785658	Sussex Police non urgent	101
• Willingdon 01323 842336	Post Office Service	0845 722 3344
Hospitals	Trading standards	08454 040506
• Conquest Hospital 01424 755255	Energy Care Trust	0800 512012
• Eastbourne Hospital 01323 417400	National Talking Newspapers	01435 866102
• Uckfield Community Hospital 01825 769999	STEPS Housing Support Advice	01323 436414
• Crowborough Hospital 01892 652284	Pension Service	0845 6060265
• Tunbridge Wells Hospital 0845 155 1000	East Sussex Benefits Helpline	0333 344 0681
	Benefits Liaison Officer	01323 443774
	Wealden District Council	01323 443322

## GETTING OUT AND ABOUT IN WEALDEN

A recent report published by the Campaign for Better Transport entitled “Buses In Crisis” has highlighted a looming crisis in the funding for bus services. Cuts to bus funding could mean that older people and those with free bus passes will soon no longer have buses to travel on.



Supported buses are services that are subsidised by local authorities because they are not provided by commercial bus companies. They serve communities where no alternative route exists, meaning that any cut or alteration can often have a huge impact on residents and local economies. They also provide services in evenings and at weekends when otherwise services would cease. These subsidised or supported services represent 22 per cent of bus provision in England. This percentage varies considerably across the country, ranging from just 5 per cent in some urban areas to almost 100 per cent in some rural areas. In East Sussex the percentage is high. We await the outcome of the recent bus consultation to find out just how many services currently supported by the Council will be cut next year, but we fear that many will be.

It is clear that poor access to bus services has a negative impact on the lives of older people, exposing them to an increased risk of serious social isolation. **“Access to regular bus services is a lifeline for many older people who otherwise would be isolated and unable to travel independently. Further cuts to services will hit the poorest and most vulnerable who rely on buses to get around to their GP, the local hospital, do their shopping and to visit friends and family. This report is further evidence that cuts are leaving bus services in some areas at a critical level without alternatives being provided leaving many older people stranded.”** *Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director, Age UK*

As with many other services which up to now have been funded by local authorities, the perception is that the voluntary sector will fill the gap. In the case of transport to medical appointments, in many areas voluntary car schemes do exist that can provide this service, but more are needed. For example, the location of the new Meads Surgery in Uckfield is proving difficult to access for people without their own transport. A scheme has been set up for residents of Manor Park, Hempstead Fields and Shaftesbury Court (ring 01825 578006) but other areas are not yet served. Local branches of Age Concern run schemes in East Hoathly, Heathfield district and Uckfield, and there are other schemes in Alfriston, Forest Row, Hartfield, Horam, Mayfield & Five Ashes, Rotherfield, Wadhurst and Ticehurst.

Many of these schemes are for medical appointments only and do not have the resources to offer transport for shopping or social trips. Community Transport for the Lewes Area (CTLA) operates a limited dial-a-ride service in Uckfield (Uckfield Rover) and a timetabled service between Mayfield, Wadhurst and Crowborough (Beaconlink). Wealdlink provides a weekly shopping service for eight parishes around the Ashdown Forest into Crowborough, Tunbridge Wells or Eastbourne, and hopes soon to be able to emulate CTLA’s popular Travel Club in Newhaven/Lewes by setting up a Trips Club for the North Wealden area, offering members shopping trips to other destinations and outings to places of interest (if you are interested, contact Wealdlink on 01892 771332).

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**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)

I/we would like to attend the Cream Tea at the Llama Park on July 22nd

I/we would like to attend the Older People’s Day event in Heathfield on October 4th

I am interested in joining the WSCP Committee  (tick 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