



# GREY MATTERS

**FULL  
OF LIFE**

## FULL OF LIFE 2011 : 6 OCTOBER

If you missed the very successful "Fun, Fit and 50+" event that we held in Hailsham in July, there are plenty of places still available for anyone wanting to attend the one we are planning to hold in Freedom Leisure,



**freedomleisure**  
we'll show you how

Crowborough on Thursday, 6th October to celebrate UK Older People's Day. Again this will be hosted by the Management of Freedom Leisure and funded by a grant from the Sussex Community Foundation

There will be opportunities to try Shoulder Massage, Reiki, Laughter Therapy, Reflexology and Belly Dancing and the chance to tour the Freedom Leisure Gym. There will also be sessions on Falls Prevention, Walking for Health, Dance and Movement and for Health and Happiness and there will be stands giving a wide range of information on a variety of subjects.

The day will begin with coffee at 10am; a free lunch will be provided at 12:30pm. During lunch we will be holding a short AGM (see below) and the event will end at 3pm. Please ring Carol Hodge on 01825 762934, or email [carolhodge36@gmail.com](mailto:carolhodge36@gmail.com) to let us know you are coming.

## OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It is now 6 years since the Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership was launched in 2005 as the Older People's Forum for the Wealden area, and the forum has gone from strength to strength in that time, with a membership now of over 500. Our Committee is busier than ever. We would like to recruit several new Committee members this year, and we would love to hear from anyone who would like to join us. Meetings are held monthly in the training room of Heathfield Fire Station, usually on a Tuesday afternoon, and committee members are able to claim any expenses incurred. If you are interested in joining us, do ring the Secretary, Linda Graham on 01892 77087, or email [lindagraham@wealden-scp.org](mailto:lindagraham@wealden-scp.org)

## THE BLACK HOLE IN DEMENTIA CARE

The Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership is concerned about a gap that appears to exist in the care and support needed by people suffering from dementia and those caring for them, and the support which is actually provided.

In the early stages of the disease the sufferer will be referred to an NHS-run Memory Clinic by their GP. When their condition worsens, they are discharged from NHS care, and should become the responsibility of the Adult Social Care system. However, time and again it seems that at this point, when extra support is becoming more and more vital to both the sufferer and carer, the support is just not forthcoming, and this appears to be particularly prevalent amongst those people who have to fund their own care.

We are told that calls to Social Care Direct do not always produce the information and support so desperately needed by those caring for someone suffering from dementia. It has to be remembered that those carers are very often older people themselves, and the pressures of caring leaves them without either the time or energy to track down the support and services to which they are entitled, and which they so badly need. It also seems that many are still not aware of the help to which they are entitled – particularly in the area of rolling respite, where the person being cared for goes into care for a few days on an 6 weekly basis, and also attends day care at least once a week, thus allowing the carer time for a rest or just simply to have a little bit of time to themselves.

To enable the Partnership to take this problem up with the relevant authorities, we need as much back-up information as possible. With this copy of Grey Matters we have enclosed a letter with a form on the reverse for you to complete if you have experienced any problems of this kind. If you have received this by post you will also find enclosed an envelope for you to return the form (although funds do not permit us to cover the cost of postage - sorry!) Please do take this opportunity of sharing your experiences - any communication we receive will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The address to which to return the form can also be found at the bottom of the back page of this newsletter.

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

## CHEQUES LIVE ON - BUT WITHOUT GUARANTEE CARDS

Over the past 20 years, the number of people who use cheques guaranteed by card has fallen sharply. At the same time, alternative ways to pay - such as debit/credit cards, online payment facilities and electronic transfers - have grown in popularity.

After talking to lots of businesses and customers, including groups representing older people, the Payments Council coordinated the closure of the cheque guarantee card scheme in June of this year, to prevent confusion, as businesses were increasingly not accepting them. This means that since 30 June, you are no longer able to pay using cheques guaranteed by card, even if your card still carries the Shakespeare cheque guarantee logo.

However, you can still use cheques to pay for things like goods and services, just not guaranteed with a card. And the really good news is that cheques are going to be with us for many years to come - the banks have decided to keep them in use, after all. For more information visit [www.payyourway.org.uk](http://www.payyourway.org.uk) or contact your bank.



Source: Parish Pump



## SPRING ONLINE BEST EVENT AWARD 2011

Following the successful event that we held for Silver Surfers' Day back in May, we were delighted to learn that we had been selected from amongst over 2500 events held throughout the UK as one of the finalists for the 2011 Spring

Online with Silver Surfers' Day Best Event award. After the final judging we were not amongst the award winners but our event was assessed as truly exceptional to have been a finalist,

Our Events Organiser, Carol Hodge, who put a tremendous amount of work into planning this event, along with our Treasurer Jan Cooper, will be attending the Best Event awards ceremony, hosted by the Right Hon. Iain Duncan Smith, Secretary of State for the Department of Work and Pensions, on Monday 5 September 2011. We hope to include a photograph of them at the ceremony in our next newsletter.

## PROSTATE CANCER - MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH

Scientists at the University of Surrey, UK, have made a major breakthrough in the early diagnosis of prostate cancer. They have developed a new way of detecting the cancer by testing a small urine sample from men, allowing faster testing that could save lives and offer the potential of huge cost savings. The research was enabled by a close partnership between the University of Surrey and the Prostate Project. The new test is simple, quick and has the potential to be used in GP surgeries.

The standard 30-year-old PSA test for prostate cancer involves taking a blood sample and is unable to detect a significant proportion of early prostate cancers, which go on to kill over 10,000 men in the UK every year. The new test has been proven to be more reliable and accurate than existing tests and could be used to screen all older men for the disease. The prospect of an immediate result that doesn't involve a blood test or an embarrassing examination may be helpful in getting more men with urinary symptoms to seek medical help.

Scientist, medical doctor and TV presenter Professor Robert Winston, who champions public engagement with science, said "This is an exciting discovery which advances the early detection of this cancer."

Further advances in prostate cancer research will only be made by examining the blood and urine samples from men and women over the age of 40 who are otherwise well with no other medical problems.

The Prostate Project are asking men and women to register if they are willing to be contacted by researchers in the future to discuss the possibility of donating a sample of blood and/or urine for research into prostate cancer. Each project will be explained in detail and written consent obtained from those who participate.

If you would like more information, The Prostate Project, Purbecks, Grosvenor Road, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1NZ, Tel. 01483 419501, email: [info@prostate-project.org.uk](mailto:info@prostate-project.org.uk).

## COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

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\*SIG = Special Interest Group



## HEATHFIELD SOCIAL GROUP

10am-1pm, Red Cross Hall, Streatfield Road, Heathfield

Please join a new group meeting in Heathfield on Tuesdays aimed at people experiencing mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression.

We would like this to be YOUR group so please come along and tell us what you'd like to see from such a service

Please also contact us if you would like to be a volunteer

For more information please call

01323 849524 or email

john.hulm@sussexoakleaf.org.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## WEALDEN GOES DIGITAL

We all now know that the analogue signal we receive on our television sets is to be permanently switched off and replaced by stronger digital signals in the near future, but exactly when will this happen? The answer is: between April 4th and June 13th next year depending which transmitter you get your signals from.

Now is a good time to establish where you are getting your TV picture from. If you already get more than five channels then all you will need to do is retune your set on the appropriate date. If you get five or less channels and your local TV news comes from London then you get your signals from either the Crystal Palace or Forest Row. BBC2 will shut down on April 12th followed by the other channels on April 18th.

If you get five or fewer channels and get your local news from either Meridian or Tunbridge Wells then your transmitter is either Tunbridge Wells or Heathfield. BBC2 will shut down on May 30th followed by the other analogue signals on June 13th.

### Will I need a new aerial?

This will depend on which transmitter you are going to get your pictures from and the condition your old aerial is in.

The Switchover Help Scheme has been set up by the Government and is run by the BBC. Its purpose is to make digital TV easy for older and disabled people by converting one of their televisions to digital in the run-up to digital TV switchover in their region.

### What does the Help Scheme do?

The Switchover Help Scheme aims to reach out to all eligible people, and ensure that those who need our help get it, so that no-one eligible need be left behind without access to television after switchover. People are eligible for help if they are:

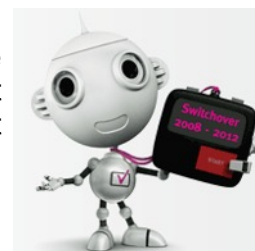
- aged 75 or over,
- have lived in a care home for six months or more,
- get or could get, disability living allowance,
- attendance or constant attendance allowance, or mobility supplement,
- Or if they are registered blind or partially sighted.

### What's next?

In the run-up to switchover, every eligible person receives a Switchover Help Scheme information pack explaining the options for switching to digital. Most people will be asked to contribute £40 towards the help. The service is free for people who are eligible and also get pension credit, income support, income-based jobseekers allowance or employment and support allowance.

For further information on the Switchover Help Scheme visit call 0800 40 85 900. Textphone users can call 0800 40 85 936.

Digital UK has launched an information campaign to provide support and advice around switchover, so if you are concerned about switchover and do not qualify for the Help Scheme then simply visit [digitaluk.co.uk](http://digitaluk.co.uk) or call 08456 50 50 50.



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



## FALLS AWARENESS

As we get older the thought of having a fall is worrying for many of us. Although falls are not age related, getting older does increase the risk of having a fall and the results can be more serious. Fear of falling, lack of confidence, broken bones or a few cuts and grazes are just some of the possible outcomes following a fall. Sadly, getting older can have a huge impact on staying steady and without regular exercise it is even more difficult to maintain strong bones, strength and balance.



Exercise helps to improve balance and co-ordination, reduce falls and increase independence – just a few good reasons! There are many other benefits to exercising: healthy heart, weight management, better sleep, improved mood, more energy and of course, less falls! Try to be active every day. Find an activity that you enjoy doing and, most importantly, **have fun!** Exercise with a friend or family member and, if you are able, walk to the shops or take a stroll around the local park. Find out about local activities and join in.

### Be careful!

If you have a health condition or are new to exercise, check with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine. For those who have been diagnosed with osteoporosis, your doctor may recommend that you avoid certain types of exercises. For example, people with this condition should avoid exercises that bend or twist the spine.

### What to do if you fall

People of any age can have a fall. If you do have a fall it can be a very frightening experience. So what should we do?

Firstly, **do not panic.** Remember to take several deep breaths, assess the situation and determine if you are hurt. If you are injured do not attempt to get up. Instead call 999. If you feel strong enough to get up, follow these steps:

1. Roll over onto your side by turning your head in the direction of the roll.
2. Once on your side ease yourself up onto your elbows.
3. Move onto your hands and knees and make your way to a firm surface.
4. Hold onto the firm surface e.g. a chair, to support you.
5. Facing the chair ease yourself to a standing position.
6. Turn yourself gently and sit on the firm surface.
7. Tell your GP or health professional about your fall.

If you do become unsteady and are worried about falling it is a good idea to have a lifeline of some kind you can press to summon help. A mobile phone is also a quick way of getting help if you fall. When we fall it is natural to feel embarrassed and so we try and rush getting up off the floor. Please don't! Remember: it is more important to take your time and prevent any further injury.

Enjoy exercising ~ enjoy life!

(Article submitted by Ellen Cranton, Falls Prevention Trainer)

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**PLEASE RETURN THIS TEAR-OFF SLIP TO BOOK YOUR FREE PLACE AT FUN, FIT & FIFTY PLUS ON 6TH OCTOBER OR TO LET US KNOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR COMMITTEE**

YOUR NAME.....YOUR ADDRESS.....

POSTCODE.....TELEPHONE/EMAIL.....

PLEASE RESERVE ..... PLACE(S) AT CROWBOROUGH

I AM INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE WEALDEN SENIOR CITIZENS' PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE  (please tick)

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