

Newsletter Spring 2023



Some of the brilliant volunteers who run MSOPC, and help at events

Plenty of MSOPC events in 2023

Isn't it lovely to see the days getting a little longer and Spring beginning to show itself again as Snowdrops, and crocus, daffodils and other plants begin to put their heads above the winter soil. Hopefully it means that we don't have to have the heating on for quite so long during the daytime as winter passes into Spring. It has without doubt been a very expensive time for us all. MSOPC has been busy with its 'warm winter lunches', in Haywards Heath, Lindfield, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead. It's been such a pleasure to see so many people and to meet up with some of our old friends again and also make new ones.

Many of you that have been to our lunches have been able to receive some very valuable information from our

WSCC Helpline: 0330 22 27980

Monday to Friday 8am—8pm and on weekends 9am—5pm.
They will be able to signpost you to the people that can help.

MSOPC would like to thank the Sussex Community Foundation for funding all of our newsletters this year.



MSOPC is a local charity set up in 2004, run by older people for older people in Mid Sussex.

Our aim is to improve their lives through the representations we make to decision-makers about older people's needs. We also aim to reduce isolation and loneliness, offering support, advice and information on many issues which older people face, through our social opportunities, public events, roadshows, quarterly newsletters, website and helpline.

There is no charge to join MSOPC, either as an individual or as an organisation working with older people, and your information will not be passed on to third parties. To find out more information, please phone 01444 242 760. Further details of MSOPC and upcoming events can be found on our website at www.msopc.org.uk or Facebook page www.facebook.com/msopc.org.uk

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—→ speakers, Social Prescribers, Citizens Advice and also from Liam our own volunteer who helps us with some of our digital issues, information, that in these hard pressed financial times is very welcome and practical and saves you money.

We hope you will enjoy reading our newsletter and that you will come to the many more events we are holding, and also come and see us at events which are being organised by the many voluntary organisations across the region which we will also be attending. **But some of the MSOPC events you must book**, as space and accommodation is limited. Especially for the **Coronation Afternoon Party at the King Edward Hall Lindfield, Tuesday 9th May, this will be a ticketed event. See details on page 3. But please be aware we can't phone everyone back to confirm your place. We will only ring you if you haven't got a place and are on the waiting list. Hence the advice is to book early.**

Looking forward seeing you again very shortly.

Barbara

Needing Help with Shopping in East Grinstead

We are pleased to have East Grinstead resident, Linda Vickers, to give us some insight into what is happening up there at the top of Mid Sussex. She has given us some helpful information to pass on to you;



If you can't get out of the house, the East Grinstead Being Neighbourly Shopper www.beingneighbourly.co.uk can organise someone to do your shopping for essential items, collect your prescriptions or just give you a friendly phone call. You can call them on 01342 545044 between 10am-4pm Monday to Friday, and 10am—1pm on Saturdays. You can also email them on beingneighbourlyeg@gmail.com. You can use cash or card to pay for your shopping.

If you regularly rely on someone else to do your shopping for you and you are worried about security, most high street banks offer a Carer's Card account, which allows you to give restricted access to the money in your bank account to the person who cares for you. You need to have a personal current account with the bank to begin with, and the person you share access to will get their own debit card. They will only be able to see limited account details, and you control how much of the funds they have access to. The card can only be used for cash withdrawals or spending in physical shops, not online or over the phone.

Natwest has a 'companion card', phone 0800 051 4176, Lloyds Bank has 'My Trusted Person Card', phone 0345 300 0000, Halifax also has a 'My Trusted Person Card', phone 0345 720 3040

Alternatively, you could buy a specific supermarket gift card for your carer to use, so that only the amount up to the card limit can be spent.

Its important to note that if you think you might be a victim of financial abuse by a friend, family member, partner or carer, your bank or other financial provider will be able to help you, so speak to them.

In other shopping news, Iceland give 10% off to over 60s on a Tuesday. Bring some ID to prove it!

If you want to be able to store meals, you can order from Parsley Box, who vacuum pack freshly made meals which store up to 6 months in a cupboard. To order phone 0131 326 0131 www.parsleybox.com

If you need help with your heating bills as well as other free financial and legal advice, you can visit Citizens Advice, which is located in East Grinstead library on West Street next to Waitrose. They are there Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10-4pm. You don't need to book for a visit and you can also phone them on 01342 332900.

Now is the time to join Age UK East Grinstead if you want to try it out. It is only £5 to join which lasts until 1st April. Then it will be £30 for the year.

Town Council Coronation Celebrations



On Saturday 6th May, **East Grinstead Town Council** are organising a fancy dress 'Monarchy through the Ages' community walking parade. The parade will start at East Court and will process through town to King George's field. At King George's field there will be a large screen so everyone can watch the Coronation ceremony together, enjoy family fun, relax on the grass, bring a picnic, or buy food there. There will be a 'right royal dog show' and prizes for the best fancy dress outfits.

On Sunday 7th May, **Haywards Heath town council** will be having their coronation celebrations in Victoria Park from 12pm to 5pm, including a 'Royal Procession' from the Town Hall to Victoria Park.

Tania-Tastic

Upcoming MSOPC events!

We have got a busy year planned! Below are our upcoming activities this spring. All activities are free for over 60's.



'Step into the Warmth' lunch

Wednesday 1st March 12.30-2pm, 8th Burgess Hill Scout Hall, Royal George Road. The last in our series of lunches (35C bus from Church Road leaves at 12.35 and arrives at 12.40. Return bus 35A at 14:25 arrives Church Road 14:30)

MSOPC AGM

Monday 6th March 1.30-4pm, Lindfield Evangelical Church, 1 Chaloner Close. Overview of MSOPC's current position, including its finances, followed by a committee meeting

St. Patrick's Day afternoon tea

Friday 17th March 2.30-4.30pm, Ashenground Community Centre, Haywards Heath, with singing from Tania Rodd.

(33 bus from South Rd leaves at 13:55 and arrives at New House Farm, Rocky Lane 14:00. Return bus 33 16:31 arrives South Rd 16:37)

Sponsored by Haywards Heath Town Council

MSOPC annual Public Meeting

Tuesday 18th April 10.30-1.30pm, St. Wilfrid's Church Hall, Burgess Hill—We will be providing a light lunch and refreshments, and will have information speakers and stands for you to browse. We will also have singing from Tania Rodd

King Charles III Coronation afternoon tea

Tuesday 9th May, 2-4pm, King Edward Hall, Lindfield, with singer Tania Rodd (ticketed event)

(Bus 30 leaves Haywards Heath South Rd 13:17, arrives Lindfield High Street 13:30. Return bus 270 leaves 16:00 arrives South Rd 16:13. Bus 270 leaves East Grinstead Station 13:05 arrives Lindfield High Street 13:48. Return bus 270 leaves at 16:42, arrives EG Station 17:24)

Burgess Hill Festival event

Thursday 22nd June, 10.30-2pm, St. Wilfrid's Church Hall. We will have activities and local clubs for you to come along and try. Light lunch and refreshments provided

If you would like to come to any of our events, please leave the full names and numbers of each person you are booking for on our answerphone 01444 242760. We won't phone everyone back to confirm, but we will book your place. We are a friendly bunch and encourage people to feel brave enough to also come on their own and meet some new faces!

Photo Gallery

MSOPC Christmas Tea (photos below)

Our Christmas Tea was our first one since the Covid-19 pandemic, and it was fantastic to be able to welcome everyone back again! It was a brilliant afternoon, full of joy, laughter and dancing. And of course, copious amounts of tea, cake and sandwiches! We even had a conga line this year, thanks to Tania Rodd who was on stage, singing Christmas tunes and getting everyone up and dancing!

'Step into the Warmth' lunches (photos right)

We wanted to provide a warm space for people to come and enjoy a light lunch and some company too, so at the beginning of the year, we held a series of lunches across Mid Sussex, and served soup, sandwiches and plenty of cakes (huge thanks to Dianne who made a delicious selection of cakes for every single event!). We also invited some speakers to come and offer helpful advice, and we had Citizens Advice, Liam from Burgess Hill I.T. help who also offered advice on reducing telephone costs, and social prescribers. Social prescribers are based in doctors' surgeries and take a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing in order to connect them to appropriate community groups and services. You can be referred to them or self refer by contacting your GP surgery.

Age UK have a similar free service called an outreach service, for which you can phone 0800 019 1310.

Thank you to Haywards Heath Town Council for funding the Haywards Heath lunches, and to Mid Sussex District Council who funded the Lindfield, East Grinstead and Burgess Hill lunches.



Lindfield Evangelical Church Hall, Friday 13th January



Ashenground Community Centre, Haywards Heath, Friday 20th January and Friday 17th February



8th Burgess Hill Scout Hut, Monday 30th



St. Swithuns Church Hall, East Grinstead, Friday 10th February



Kindly funded by Mid Sussex District Council and Haywards Heath Town Council



Cardiac arrest, heart attack and stroke

Every second counts when it comes to saving someone's life, and so it pays to be prepared with a bit of knowledge, in case you, a partner or someone else has a sudden medical emergency, especially in the current climate of ambulance delays. The three emergencies covered here will be cardiac arrest, heart attack and stroke.

Cardiac Arrest and using a Defibrillator

Cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack. It is an electrical problem with someone's heart, causing the heart to stop beating properly, meaning that no blood is being pumped to the brain. Someone in cardiac arrest will suddenly collapse, lose consciousness, have no pulse and stop breathing. Their chances of survival reduce by 10% every minute. Cardiac arrest is what defibrillators are for, which you see on public buildings. It is worth taking the time to find out where your nearest defibrillator is to your home, and when it is available, as some are inside buildings, so can't be accessed when the building is closed. Additionally, some are locked with a keypad code to access them, which will be provided when you phone 999, or there may be another number on the box to phone. Also, think about who you could ask to bring it to you in an emergency if someone you live with collapsed. You would need someone to bring it to you because you would need to stay with the patient to help them.



Once you have phoned 999 (if you are on holiday abroad, dial 112), and asked someone to fetch a defibrillator, you can't just wait for the defibrillator or an ambulance to arrive. Every minute that the heart is not pumping, the brain is not getting blood. Brain injury can occur within 2-3 minutes and becomes worse with each minute. After 10 minutes of the brain not receiving blood, their chance of survival is very low. So you need to pump the blood to the brain manually with your hands, as soon as possible. This is called CPR. The British Heart Foundation has a brilliant tool on their website for you to learn CPR and how to use a defibrillator in just 15 minutes, at www.bhf.org.uk/revivr. If you can get on the internet, please take the time to have a go. If you don't have a computer, you can ask them to help you at the library or visit the Spire Café IT help in Burgess Hill (details on back page), and they will help you.

But basically you lock your hands together and press down on the patients chest about 2 inches deep and keep pumping at a fast rhythm (to the song 'Stayin' Alive' is about the



right speed). You will feel more confident and save time if you have already practised, but don't panic—when you phone 999, the call handler will talk you through what to do, and can also tell you where the nearest defibrillator is if you don't know.

Once you have the defibrillator, you just turn it on, and a voice should instruct you on what to do and where to place the 2 pads on the chest (you may need to warm them first if it is a very cold day). It will analyse the patient's heart rhythm, and will only instruct you to give a shock if it determines that you need to. If successful, the electricity delivered should get the patients heart beating again. Continue following the voice instructions on the defibrillator until the emergency services arrive.

A cardiac arrest is very sudden, but warning signs could appear up to 2 weeks before it happens. This could include chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, palpitations, nausea and vomiting. Most people experience at least one of these symptoms in the hour before the cardiac arrest.

Heart Attacks

A heart attack is different to a cardiac arrest, because it is caused by blood flow to the heart being severely reduced or blocked, due to fat, cholesterol or other substances. Unlike a cardiac arrest, you will still be conscious if you have a heart attack. The sooner you can get treatment, the better your chances of

survival. Many people do not realise all of the symptoms of a heart attack, as they can be quite mild, and so they delay calling 999. Symptoms can include chest pain which is sudden (but not necessarily severe), is heavy or tight, or spreads to your arms, back, neck or jaw. Other symptoms include shortness of breath, feeling sick, sweaty, or light headed, or 'just not feeling right'. Lesser known symptoms include a sudden feeling of anxiety that can feel similar to a panic attack, and excessive coughing or wheezing. Symptoms can last for days or come on suddenly. You do not need a defibrillator for a heart attack, however it is a good idea to send someone to fetch one just in case, as a heart attack can lead to a cardiac arrest. It is important to phone 999 immediately.

As soon as you suspect you may be having a heart attack, dial 999, sit down and take 300mg aspirin if you can, and wait for paramedics to arrive. It is a good idea to phone for someone you know nearby to come over if you are on your own, in case you go into cardiac arrest while you are waiting for the ambulance. If you are with someone who goes into cardiac arrest when the ambulance is on its way, you must phone 999 again and tell them, as the patient will then become a higher priority.

Strokes

Most people know that a stroke is caused by blood flow to part of the brain being cut off, either by a clot or a burst blood vessel, leading to those brain cells being damaged. Time is critical if you have a stroke because for every minute the blood is cut off, you could lose millions of nerve cells. The way to remember the symptoms are F.A.S.T. Face—can they smile, has their mouth or eye drooped, Arms—can they raise both arms? Speech—can they speak clearly and understand what you are saying? Time—time to call 999 if the answer to any of these is yes. The worst thing you can do is wait to see if symptoms improve. The sooner the ambulance arrives, the sooner the patient can be given medication to prevent further damage. Do not give the patient aspirin as you do not know which type of stroke they are having, and aspirin could make bleeding in the brain worse. Do not give the patient anything to eat or drink as they may choke if the stroke has paralysed the swallowing muscles. Once at the hospital, the patient will be taken for a brain scan and be closely monitored.

Get your blood pressure checked

High blood pressure is one of the main factors which lead to cardiac arrest, heart attack and stroke, among many other problems. The high blood pressure can damage the cells of the arteries' inner lining, and left unchecked, over time your arteries will become less elastic, which decreases the flow of blood and oxygen to your heart and brain and makes a blockage more likely. You can reduce your chances of any of these emergencies by getting your blood pressure checked and taking recommended steps to reduce it if it is high. These would obviously include reducing weight and leading a healthier, more active lifestyle. You may also be prescribed medication.

Homocysteine

Did you also know that it is not only overweight, unfit people who are at risk of heart problems? An amino acid in your blood called homocysteine can damage the inside of your arteries and increase the risk of forming blood clots, if you have prolonged high levels. High levels can occur in anyone who does not get enough vitamins such as B6, B12 and folate in their diet from fruit and vegetables, especially leafy greens. B12 must come from animal products but these should be consumed in moderation! It is thought that you are also at risk of having higher homocysteine levels if you have diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, or low thyroid hormone levels. High homocysteine levels are also thought to be associated with many, many other medical conditions including osteoporosis, dementia and cancer. So eat up your leafy greens!



Nicola

Join MSOPC! Its free to join and we won't share your details.

Name Receive by Post ☐ E-mail ☐

Address

Post code..... Telephone (including area code).....

E-mail Signed Date

I.D. needed to vote in local elections

There will be local elections on Thursday 4th May 2023. This will be the first time you have to bring I.D. with you in order to vote, such as your bus pass, passport or blue badge. If you have no I.D. you can apply for free voter I.D. at 0800 323 0280 or electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID.

If you struggle to leave the house, you can apply to vote by post. You can download a form from <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/postal-voting> or ask your electoral office.

Contact us

If you would like to get in touch with us about anything, please phone our answerphone on **01444 242760** with a clear message and we will phone you back.

Or you can write to us at 93 Barnmead, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1XB

Please do have a look at our Facebook page www.facebook.com/msopc.org.uk and new-look website www.msopc.org.uk.

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Triple Lock Pensions

The triple lock guarantees that your state pension will increase every year, by the rate of earnings growth, inflation or 2.5 percent—whichever is the highest. However, Rachel Rickard-Straus from the Daily Mail thinks that this is unaffordable and that a government with a big majority will find an excuse to break the triple lock, which will be devastating for many pensioners already struggling to pay bills. The 'National Pensioners Convention' are urging people to write to their MP (if you don't know who this is you can ask your library or council), and urge them to save the triple lock. You can write your own letter or download a template at www.npcuk.org/post/write-to-your-mp-to-save-the-triple-lock

Befriended

Befriended is a Mid Sussex charity with a vision to end loneliness amongst older people. They have a team of volunteers who each visit their clients once a week for an hour and build up friendships. They also hold a tea party on the first Sunday of every month at Gateway Baptist Church from 3-5 pm; weekly balance fall prevention exercise classes in Hurstpierpoint on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30 in the Methodist Church; and the Bereavement Journey course which is a 5-week course. Call 0300 7727703 or email office@befriended.org

Diabetes Awareness Event, Burgess Hill

Burgess Hill Town Council are holding this event at the Burgess Hill Theatre Club,, Church Walk on Saturday 4th March from 10am to 2pm. They are providing free blood glucose testing and the MSDC wellbeing team will be on hand to answer questions.

Carers Event at Burgess Hill Girls School

If you care for somebody at home without payment, you may be interested in attending the carers event at Burgess Hill Girls School on Wednesday 15th March from 10.15 to 2pm. There will be many free activities and pampering sessions you can try. You can also bring the person you care for. **MSOPC will be there**, so please come and say hello! You need to book, phone 01444 247726 or visit Burgess Hill town council Help Point.

Good Grief Café, East Grinstead

Carers Support are holding a pop-up café for people who have lost someone to dementia, at Glen Vue on Thursday 16th March from 10.30am-12.30pm. Bookings not required, phone 0300 028 8888 for info.

The Computer / IT Help at the Spire Café

(rear of St. John's Church, Burgess Hill) continues every Thursday, drop in with your device or just ask a question 10.00-13.00. They send out regular emails about the latest scams to everyone on their database. If you would like to receive these, e-mail spire.computer.help@gmail.com. **They have also advised us to tell people that the major mobile and broadband companies will increase their prices by as much as 14-17% in April so try and lock in a good deal before then, if you don't have contract exit fees. Try the MSE website for cheaper deals; www.moneysavingexpert.com/cheap-mobile-finder and www.moneysavingexpert.com/broadband-and-tv/cheap-broadband**