

Celebrating 20 years 2004-2024

Newsletter Spring 2024



Barbara steps down

Hello Everyone

There are signs that Spring is just around the corner, days are getting longer, thank goodness, but a good sign to the coming of spring is that my neighbours Camellia tree is out in full bloom, it never fails us. I have just had one of those birthdays that we don't talk too much about, "Shu's" but the house is full of the fragrance of spring flowers. There is nothing quite like it.

2023, was certainly a very full year for MSOPC and we have already had an Events planning meeting for 2024, and one event on the —→

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, quarterly newsletters, website and helpline.

It is free to join MSOPC

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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→ 20th of January, you will see later in the newsletter dates of other forthcoming events. You will also note MSOPC is 20 years old this coming year, and like any twenty-year-olds, we must celebrate. So don't miss the event.

That birthday I mentioned, the one we don't talk about! After much consideration and twenty years in the role, I have decided to step down as Chair of MSOPC at the forthcoming AGM and will be handing over to Val, our current Vice Chair. I will still be around and hope to see you out and about and at the MSOPC events.

As one of the original Founders of the Charity, I feel it is now time for someone else to take the organisation forward and ready for the upcoming older generations, who no doubt will have different requirements that we had when we first started the organisation.

But it has been a fantastic journey, and like all journeys the scenery changes, sometimes the sun shines and at other times it can be overcast. But boring, never, exciting, challenging! yes. Would I do it again? Of course I would, otherwise I would not have met so many wonderful people. And hopefully been able to join in their happiness. But there is still much to do. I hope all those who move MSOPC forward into the next twenty years, have as much fun and make as many friends and help others to enjoy life, by bringing people together and creating a warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone can relax and just enjoy themselves, as we have in the first twenty years.

Warmest wishes to you all,

Barbara

East Grinstead Information

Our resident East Grinstead expert, Linda Vickers, gives us an insight into what is going on in the area;

Sunday 21st April Classic Bus Running Day, 10am-4.30pm.

Over 25 classic buses representing types that used to operate in and around East Grinstead, will operate over many of the routes that used to pass through East Grinstead. Destinations reached include Turners Hill, Crawley Down, Lingfield, Godstone, Oxted and Edenbridge. All services are detailed in a souvenir timetable booklet available for £10 on the day, or by sending an A5 SAE and cheque for £9.50 (made payable to 'Country Bus Rallies') to 21 Delves Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5DP (programmes will be posted out 1 week prior to the event). The timetable details all the routes and times of buses running on those routes. Rides on the buses are FREE but the timetable sales help offset the considerable running costs. The event is centred on the High Street which is closed to normal road traffic for the day



Monday 6th May, East Grinstead & District Lions May Fair, 10-4pm

On the bank holiday Monday in East Grinstead High Street. Live entertainment throughout the day, children's rides, crafts and charity stalls, book stall, food and drink and much, much more!

New Sunnyside Friendship Group, last Thursday of the month, 11am

Sunnyside Friendship Group invites you to come and have Coffee/Tea/Biscuits in the newly reopened Sunnyside Barn, formerly St. Barnabas' Church, Dunnings Road, RH19 4AT on the last Thursday of the month, at 11.00 am.

£2 per person to help cover the hiring fee. You will also be given a raffle ticket, so there will be 3 lucky winners! Any profit will be given to Family Support Work.

The dates for 2024 are: 29th February, 28th March, 25th April, 30th May, 27th June, 25th July, (no meeting, in August), 26th September, 31st October, 28th November, (no meeting in December).

Please phone Betty on 01342 326 710 if you would like a lift.

For more information, East Grinstead Town Council's Community and Tourism desk in the library has a wealth of local information available from help organisations, community groups and sports activities to local coach trips. They can be contacted on 01342 410121 or communityandtourism@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

Upcoming MSOPC events!

We do not charge for any of our events

MSOPC Annual Conference

Tuesday 19th March 2024

Our Annual Conference will be held at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre from 10.30 until 2pm. Free for over 60's.

Coleman's Solicitors, Haywards Heath will be giving us a presentation on wills, and have kindly offered to stay afterwards to chat and answer any questions you may have. Burgess Hill Mayor Cllr Janice Henwood will be in attendance and MSOPC will be giving an update on the charity's position. We will also have lots of local organisations there to tell you about their services, including Healthwatch West Sussex, Royal Voluntary Service, Burgess Hill Men's Sheds, Age UK, Burgess Hill Town Council, Bluebird Community Transport, Tapestry Day Club and WSCC Community Safety and Wellbeing Team. The day will include refreshments and lunch. To book your free place, please leave a message on our answerphone with the names and phone numbers of those you wish to book a place for. We can't phone everyone back to confirm, but your place will be booked.



MSOPC Visit to Wakehurst Place

Thursday 16th May 2024

On Thursday 16th May, we are planning a visit to Wakehurst Place, thanks to an extremely generous offer to us from Kew. We will meet at 12.30pm in the car park by the railings at the entrance and all go in together, so that there will be no charge for you to enter. Once inside, you may stay with us as a group or go and explore. If you would like to come, please leave a message on our answerphone with the names and phone numbers of those you wish to book a place for. We can't phone everyone back to confirm, but your place will be booked. Bus 272 arrives at Wakehurst at 12:24pm and departs at 15:29pm. If coming by car, you won't be charged for the car park.



Lindfield Village Day Saturday 1st June 2024

MSOPC will have a stand, as always, at Lindfield Village Day, from 12-5pm. The event expects to include over 100 stalls on the Common, the Grand Competition Tent, a children's dog show, a Food & Drink Quarter (also on the Common), an arena for events/games during the afternoon, and a procession down the High Street. Please come and say hello!

AGM

Monday 4th March 2024

Our AGM where we elect trustees will be held at the Lindfield Evangelical Church at 2pm on 4th March. All public are welcome to attend.

What have we been up to

All MSOPC events are free to anyone over 60 in Mid Sussex, and are run by a friendly group of volunteers.

Adrian Barrott's Leaving Tea

We were sad to hear of Adrian Barrott leaving the Sussex Community Foundation. He has helped MSOPC for many years, to provide funding for our events. On 30th November, Barbara attended his thank you tea, to say farewell and thank you to him for all he has done for us.



MSOPC Christmas Tea

Our Christmas tea, held at the King Edward Hall on Saturday 2nd December, was a brilliant afternoon. This year, we had some very generous donations from local businesses for our raffle, as well as our sandwiches, cakes, mince pies and tea and coffee. We were entertained by Clare Jarvis who sang some lovely Christmas tunes, and everyone had a great time. Thank you once again to the Comber's Trust for donating £200 towards the cost of the Christmas party, and to all the local businesses who donated raffle prizes, as well as to all of our volunteers, the King Edward Hall and Clare Jarvis.



Picture Presentation at Ashenground

We had a lovely afternoon for our picture presentation in Ashenground Community Centre in Haywards Heath on 20th January. Mayor Cllr Stephanie Inglesfield kindly came along and gave a speech and presented Barbara's painting of Ashdown Forest to the centre. We had many volunteers to help serve the food and drink, including a boy scout! Thank you to the Ashenground and Stephanie and all the helpers, and to Barbara for her lovely painting.



Carer's Morning, Burgess Hill School

On Monday 26th February we had an information stand at the annual carer's morning at Burgess Hill Girls school, hosted by Burgess Hill Town Council. The carers were offered haircuts, potted flowers, health checks, lunch and music by the pupils themselves.



Booking to visit the recycling centre

From 12th February 2024, you now have to book a slot to visit any of the West Sussex recycling centres. This includes East Grinstead and Burgess Hill, where you didn't previously have to book. Slots can be booked up to 14 days in advance, up until the day you want to visit if slots are still available.

The booking system has already been in place in some parts of West Sussex, and has allowed visitors more time and opportunity to recycle by ensuring items are disposed of in the correct area, rather than just being put into general waste.



To book a slot, go to www.westsussex.gov.uk/BookToRecyle, or phone 01243 642106. You must bring proof of address when you visit, such as a current driving licence, council tax bill from the current financial year, current bus pass or disabled parking permit, or a utility bill, TV licence or letter from HMRC or the Home Office which are less than a year old.

From 1st October to 31st March, opening hours for recycling centres are 9-4pm every day, but Burgess Hill is closed on Thursdays, East Grinstead is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. From 1st April to 30th September, the recycling centres are open 9-6pm, Burgess Hill is 7 days a week and East Grinstead is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

There are many and varied items which can be taken to the recycling centre, including liquids such as waste acid, antifreeze, household cleaning products and hazardous chemicals, garden chemicals, engine and motor oil, flammable chemicals, cooking oil, paint, petrol, and solvents.

Also things like unwanted electrical appliances and household furniture, car and household batteries, ceramics, DVDs, curtains, bed linen, pillows, fire extinguishers, fluorescent tubes and low energy light bulbs, gas and laughing gas bottles up to 15kg, nitrous oxide canisters, guttering, plant pots and containers, saucepans, scrap metal, shoes, storage heaters, tools, vapes, video cassettes, and much more.

Woodland, Flora and Fauna Group

The woodland, flora and fauna group undertake nature conservation work projects in the countryside of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common, all the way up to Cuckfield and Haywards Heath and down to Poyning and Fulking. All work undertaken is on land in private ownership and is only undertaken with the consent of the landowners. The group has forged a reputation of mutual trust and respect in their dealings with landowners which has enabled many conservation projects to be undertaken. This has benefitted the local countryside and survival prospects of endangered wildlife tremendously. All work achieved is due to the dedication and hard work of all group volunteers who value our natural environment and are prepared to give their valuable time to sustain and improve it. They have installed many owl, bat and dormice boxes, which they clean and monitor regularly, they clear and restore natural habitats and give talks.



To allow all supporters to belong regardless of age or financial income, they do not charge a membership fee but instead ask for voluntary contributions towards their conservation work at annual talks and meetings from anyone able to afford it. This allows all to be involved and kept informed of the well-being and news of all that is going on in their local countryside. They welcome new volunteers to help with the work. You can contact them by phoning 01273 834001 or e-mail dralianmarine@aol.com. Website www.thewoodlandfloraandfaunagroup.org.uk.

State Pension Increases by 8.5%

Average earnings between May and July 2023 were 8.5%, which means that the state pension will rise by 8.5% also from 8th April. So, pensioners in receipt of the full new state pension will get an extra £17.35 a week. Anyone who reached state pension age before April 2016 (and receiving the full basic state pension) will get an extra £13.30 a week.

Broadband and mobile phone bills to rise

As broadband and mobile phone providers have annual price hikes linked to inflation rates, bills will be going up in April, even if you are in the middle of your contract. Most of the bigger companies will be increasing their prices by 7.9%, although some by slightly higher or lower percentages. Only some of the lesser known companies do not directly link their prices to inflation. Usually, the mid-contract price increases are written into the terms and conditions when you start your contract, and so you can only leave that contract if you pay the exit fees. If you are with Sky, you could switch mid-contract because they don't have an annual price increase in their terms and conditions for 2024, so you have 30 days to end your contract if they increase your prices.

If you receive universal credit or other government financial support, it is likely that you are eligible for a discounted social broadband tariff from your provider. These tariffs aren't affected by annual price increases. For more information or help with switching providers, go to USwitch, at www.uswitch.com or phone your provider to discuss options.

Bus Fares

The £2 cap on bus fares has been extended again and is now continuing until 31st December 2024. This means that you can travel on a bus for a low cost if you don't have a bus pass or have lost it, or if you need to travel before 9.30am.

Mid Sussex Wellbeing

The Mid Sussex Wellbeing team is available to support you to live a healthy lifestyle. They offer free outreach appointments where you will get one-to-one advice, guidance and support to make lifestyle changes such as losing weight, eating well, becoming more active, reducing alcohol intake and stopping smoking. There is also an alcohol reduction service, which is up to six one-to-one sessions. They do 12 weeks of stopping smoking sessions, and weight-off workshop group sessions, amongst many other free services. They also do healthy walks in different areas of Mid Sussex and different levels of intensity.



NHS Health checks are available every 5 years for people aged between 40 and 74, which are free face-to-face 30 minute appointments to assess your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. It is to prevent the onset of problems, so if you already have one of these conditions or are being treated for high blood pressure or cholesterol then you aren't eligible. To enquire about any of the above, phone 01444 477191, or e-mail wellbeing@midsussex.gov.uk, or for further information go to www.midsussex.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk.

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 _____

Other happenings around Mid Sussex

We'd Love to hear from you!

If there is anything you think we should be telling people about in our newsletter that would be helpful to over 60's, or you have any feedback or would like to make a contribution such as a poem or short story, we would love to hear from you. Do you suffer from loneliness, and if so, what would you like to see in the community that would help you? What events or talks would you like us to put on? Please contact us using the information below. Thank you.

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 website
www.msopc.org.uk.

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Burgess Hill Bowls Club Coffee Morning

The coffee morning will be held on Saturday 6th April from 10:00 to 12:00.

It's a great way for people to come along, have a look around the club, meet the club members and see what it's all about. You'll be able to sign up to the beginners

evenings which are run on a Thursday evening starting around 9th May for 6 weeks. They also run social events, such as bingo and have a licenced bar open to members most evenings during the bowling season.

Burgess Hill Bowls Club, Westhill Drive, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9PP website www.burgesshillbowlsclub.com

Email: burgesshillbc@gmail.com or phone 01444 870533.



If you aren't local to Burgess Hill, there are bowls clubs all around Sussex, always looking for new members. Bowls England has a find-a-club page www.bowlsengland.com/find-a-club or phone 01926 334609.

Falls Prevention Classes in Haywards Heath

Dolphin Leisure Centre Haywards Heath are running falls prevention classes. It is most essential that as we become older we ensure we develop ways to prevent accidental falls.

These classes are designed to help strengthen your core stability, improve muscle tone and mobility, with an exercise class that has been specially designed for people who are at risk or worried about falling. The instructor will take into consideration your individual circumstances, and has a range of chair and standing exercises.

The Falls Prevention class runs every Wednesday at 1.30pm. It is £3 for a member and £6 for a non-member. If you wish to book a class please call the Dolphin Leisure Centre on 01444 457337.

Ashenground Community Café

Ashenground Community Centre, Southdown Close, Haywards Heath, RH16 4JR, has a community café every Wednesday and Thursday from 12-2pm. Great value light lunches and afternoon teas.

Ashenground Community Centre Film Nights

The Ashenground also runs film nights. Next dates are 9th March, 4th May, 29th June. On Saturday 9th March at 7pm, the film will be Mrs Harris Goes to Paris (rated PG). To purchase your tickets, phone 01444 447050 or e-mail Ashengroundcc@talktalk.net. Adults £5 in advance / £6 on door, children half price. The centre opens 45 minutes before the performance for refreshments (including alcohol).

Mid Sussex
MSOPC
Older People's Council

Please post to;
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