

Celebrating 20 years 2004-2024

Newsletter Summer 2024



Val steps up!

Hello everyone,
Well a lots been going on since our last newsletter but before I begin talking about that would like to say that I feel very privileged now to be the chairman of MSOPC.

A very big thank you goes to Barbara for being chairman for 20 years and for her high standards that she has kept, I trust I may follow. THANK YOU Barbara. Barbara has only retired from being chairman but she is still doing a lot of work for MSOPC in the background and will attend —→

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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—→ some functions. Barbara is a trustee and director still and it's still doing a huge amount of work into MSOPC.

On the 4th of March we had our annual general meeting, with cake of course.

On the 19th of March we had our annual conference at Saint Wilfrid's Church Hall In Burgess Hill, it was a very successful day and we enjoyed a lovely Ploughman's lunch together, The Burgess Hill Mayor attended and opened our event. Many thanks Janice.

On Wednesday, the 24th of April we had our afternoon tea to celebrate St George's Day in Evangelical Church Hall Lindfield, 60 people attended the tea and the feedback has been good. Councillor Will Blunden came to open our event, he is chairman of the Lindfield Parish Council who had recently given us a grant. He had researched St George and gave us a little talk about him. Thank you for coming to the event and a big thank you to all those committee and helpers that help provide and serve the food.

The committee has been planning for another year 2024 to 2025. There is lots to look forward to we will be having a birthday Celebration in October for MSOPC.

Enjoy the summer days that we trust are ahead for us.

Best Wishes

Val

East Grinstead Information

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

East Court Live! Sundays 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August, 1pm-5pm

East Grinstead Town Council will be hosting these free outdoor music picnic events on the terraces of East Court, College Lane, RH19 3LT. Pay bar, food stalls and free disabled parking. On the 2nd June Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA) attended to provide an opportunity to thank specific groups and volunteers within the community in ways they have made a difference. Look out for the banner on the roundabout in East Grinstead thanking all volunteers for making such a difference to the community. For more information, go to www.eastcourtlive.co.uk or phone 01342 410121.



East Grinstead Armed Forces Day, Saturday 29th June 11am-3pm

A Service of Thanksgiving at East Court memorial with Cadets and Standard Bearers. Displays by Cadet Forces.

East Grinstead and District Lion's Summer Sizzler, Saturday 17th August

Sausage and cider event at East Court

Vintage Car Show, Sunday 1st September 11am-3pm

Sausage and cider event at East Court

Activities at Age UK, Glen Vue, Railway Approach, East Grinstead

Age UK has a whole timetable of various activities throughout the week, and a café which is open from 10am to 3pm. For more information phone 01342 327046 or go to www.ageuk.org.uk/eastgrinstead

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

Glow Wild Lantern Making at Wakehurst

Tuesday 18th June 2024

Wakehurst have generously offered us a lantern making workshop from 10am-12.30pm. The event is free of charge, and parking is free for participants. We will meet in the visitor centre at 10am. Limited to 30 places, so please book using the info at the bottom of this page.



Afternoon tea, Sayers Common Village Hall



Friday 5th July 2024 2-4pm

Thanks to a generous donation from Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, we will be holding some events at Sayers Common village Hall, London Road, BN6 9HX. The first of these will be an afternoon tea. Please book using the information at the bottom of this page.

MSOPC 20th Anniversary Party!

Saturday 5th October 2-4pm

Come and celebrate 20 years of MSOPC with us at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Station Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9EN! We will have musical entertainment and plenty of food, drink and of course, cakes! Please book using the information at the bottom of this page.



Silver Sunday Coffee Morning

Thursday 10th October 2024

MSOPC will hold our annual Haywards Heath Silver Sunday coffee morning under the Marquee in the Orchards Shopping Centre Haywards Heath, from 10am-12pm. Refreshments will be kindly supplied by the Bay Tree café, courtesy of the Orchards. No need to book, just come along and join us. All over 60's welcome.

To book any of the above events, please leave a message on our answerphone on 01444 242760, stating which event you are booking, and leave the names and phone numbers of the people you wish to book for. We can't phone everyone back to confirm your place, but will phone if there is a problem with your booking.

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.

MSOPC Annual Conference

On Tuesday 19th March, we held our Annual Conference at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre. We had a presentation on wills from Coleman's Solicitors, Haywards Heath, who have kindly sent some information we have included over the page, and from the Royal Voluntary Service, as well as lots of local organisations with information and to tell us about their services, including Healthwatch West Sussex, Burgess Hill Men's Sheds, Age UK, Burgess Hill Town Council, Bluebird Community Transport, Tapestry Day Club, Home & Company, Carer's Support, Places for People Leisure and WSCC Community Safety and Wellbeing Team. Burgess Hill Mayor Cllr Janice Henwood opened the event, and MSOPC gave an update on the charity's position, as well as a thank you to Barbara Baldwin for her services as MSOPC chairman for 20 years.



St. George's Day afternoon Tea

Thanks to a very generous donation from Lindfield Parish Council, we decided to organise an impromptu afternoon tea to celebrate St. Georges Day at the Lindfield Evangelical Church on Wednesday 24th April. 60 people attended the tea and the feedback has been good. Councillor Will Blunden came to open our event, he is chairman of the Lindfield Parish Council who had recently given us a grant. He had researched St George and gave us a little talk about him. Also was dressed for the occasion in his St. George's day tie.

Thank you to all those that attended, there was no entertainment on this occasion, but people appeared to enjoy conversation with each other while eating. A big thank you to the Committee and our helpers for all the work they put in to make the afternoon so successful. A great afternoon.



Barbara wins Outstanding Adult Of The Year award!

Haywards Heath Town Council held its first Community Awards night on Monday 29th April at the Council Offices. Nominations were received by members of the local community for their unsung heroes, and an awards panel chose the winners. Barbara won Outstanding Adult Of The Year for her 20 years as chair for MSOPC, for 'ensuring so many older people have been able to have social interaction in their lives. She has gone above and beyond for many members, often offering to source help when they are in difficult living situations'. Congratulations Barbara! Barbara would like to thank Haywards Heath Town Council for the presentation of the award, and extends a big thank you to those who nominated and supported her. She was very humbled to receive such a prestigious award.



Sussex Community Foundation Event

On Tuesday 7th May, MSOPC were panellists at the above event about tackling poverty in West Sussex. You can read more details on page 7.

MSOPC Visit to Wakehurst Place

On Thursday 16th May, we organised a visit to Wakehurst Place, thanks to an extremely generous offer to us from Kew. Sadly we did have some rain early in the afternoon, which put a few people off coming, but the sun shone for us as we had lunch, and we had a lovely afternoon. Thank you to Kew for allowing us to visit at no charge, and to everyone who came.

MSOPC at Annual Town Meetings

MSOPC attended both the Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill annual town meetings, to hear about the work they are doing and the issues that are arising. Each meeting was attended by members of the public who could raise issues and ask questions to a panel of councillors and the Town Mayor. In Haywards Heath on 29th April, concerns were raised about the dark alleyways in the town, which we were told are scheduled to be improved in 2025. Also, the increased hours of parking charges in Mid Sussex, which at Haywards Heath are currently 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday, and are to be increased to include Sundays and evenings until 8pm. Hourly rates will increase to help cover the (£12m) shortfall of MSDC's funds. Councillors said extending parking times will increase the churn of visitors to the shops. Members of the public pointed out that shops aren't open until 8pm, but no response was given.



Then at the Burgess Hill meeting on Wednesday 22nd May, MSOPC's Dianne gave a 5 minute talk on what we have been doing in the town, and how we interact with our members, with the example of our Annual Conference in April, as described on the previous page, that was attended by the Town Mayor. After 3 speakers plus one that was unable to attend but sent in a report, the issues in the town were discussed. The meeting was broadcast live on Mid Sussex Radio.

Lindfield Village Day

On Saturday 1st June, we had a stand at Lindfield Village Day, as always. The sun shone for us and we had a preloved clothes sale and tombola stall.



MSOPC would like to extend a big thank you to Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust and Sussex Community Foundation for the very generous support they have given MSOPC over the last few years, to make our events and newsletters possible.

The Importance of Making a Will

Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions surrounding what happens to our assets (known as our Estate) when we are deceased, and if you were to die Intestate (that is without a Will) your assets may not necessarily go to the people you expect. What your spouse or civil partner will receive under the intestacy rules may not be adequate, and in some circumstance this can lead to emotional distress and financial worry for your loved ones. Below we consider 'The Importance of Having a Will'.

What is a Will?

A Will is a legal document that sets out your wishes regarding the distribution of your assets and the care of any dependents after your passing. It ensures that your possessions, finances, and even your loved ones are taken care of according to your desires.

Why is a Will so Important?

There are many reasons why it is important to make a Will. It provides clarity and direction to your loved ones during one of the most challenging time of their lives. You can set out your funeral wishes, who should look after your pets and provide them with the means to ensure that your pets are looked after. You can also incorporate Inheritance tax planning and maximise the benefit to your loved ones. If you die without leaving a valid Will, your assets may not pass to the people you expect them to and/or desire. If you are not married or in a civil partnership, then without a Will your "partner" will not automatically inherit under the intestacy rules and they could be left without anything. Similarly, you may wish your stepchildren to benefit alongside your children. However, without a Will your stepchildren or step-grandchildren would not inherit under the intestacy rules. You may also want to benefit your favoured charities or friends who have supported you over the years but unfortunately without a Will, they would not receive anything from your estate.

The Pros of Seeking Expert Legal Advice

When preparing your Will, expert legal advice ensures accuracy, legality, and consideration of various possible scenarios. An experienced team can guide you through complex legal language, helping you avoid pitfalls and ensuring your Will accurately reflects your wishes.

The Cons of Doing it Yourself

While DIY Will kits are available, they often lack the expertise needed to navigate intricate legal processes. Errors or omissions in a self-made Will can easily lead to your Will being invalid resulting in intestacy. Homemade Wills can also lead to other complications, disputes, and even legal challenges, causing undue stress and financial burden for your loved ones.

What Happens if You Don't Make a Will?

Without a Will, your assets may not be distributed as you wish. Intestacy laws dictate who inherits your estate, which may not align with your wishes. As mentioned above, the intestacy rules do not provide for everything to pass to your spouse or civil partner and as a consequence what your spouse or civil partner will receive under the intestacy rules may not be adequate. This can result in disputes, delays, and additional costs for your loved ones during an already difficult time.

Secure Your Legacy

A well-crafted Will allows you to:

- Ensure your assets go to the right people.
- Appoint guardians for your children.
- Minimise inheritance tax liabilities.
- Leave charitable donations.
- Protect family heirlooms and sentimental possessions.
- Record your funeral wishes

Why Most People Make a Will

Making a Will isn't just about distributing assets; it's about safeguarding your loved ones' futures. By clearly outlining your wishes, you provide certainty and peace of mind to those you leave behind, ensuring they are cared for according to your wishes.

This information was provided to MSOPC by Coleman's Solicitors (Trading name of Parfitt Cresswell Solicitors), Paddockhall Chambers, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1HF.

Coleman's are offering a complimentary initial Consultation, call 01444 459 555 or visit their website www.parfittcresswell.com/free-consultation (Parking available on site). Coleman's kindly did a talk at our annual conference, although MSOPC cannot testify to the quality of their services.

Coleman's is a trading name of Parfitt Cresswell Ltd and is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority No. 8003996

Sussex Community Foundation Event

On Tuesday 7th May MSOPC was invited by Kevin Richmond CEO of the Sussex Community Foundation to take part in their project Tackling Poverty (What's happening in West Sussex?) in Chichester. I was very proud to be invited to be part of the Panel, along with Emma Cross, CEO of Citizens Advice, and Beth Coley CEO of Springboard. With Kevin Richmond from SCF as facilitator. MSOPC'S Dianne, came along as support and to ensure that I behaved myself! But it was a beautiful early May summers day, and we fully enjoyed the drive through the lovely, lush, sunny Sussex Countryside. I was there to represent the older people of Mid Sussex and explain how MSOPC projected itself and help and support it gave to the residents through the various projects and events they have held, and plan to hold in the future. The sort of questions that were put forward regarding effects on older people were as follows.

- How has the higher proportion of households in fuel poverty in Sussex, especially in rural areas, impacted the well-being and health of older residents? And what steps can be taken to alleviate this issue?

- With Sussex's proportion of older people already significant and projected to grow faster than the English average, how can West Sussex prepare to meet the needs of its aging population?

With other questions pertinent to the work the other panellists do, and their roles. The event was very well attended with a cross section of the audience having interests, and investments in the work that charities and community voluntary organisations do across Sussex. Without whom many organisations wouldn't be able to carry out their work. So, a Big Thank You to them. An interesting and thought-provoking day, but one that also showed the amount of interest and excellent work carried out by good people in our communities, here in Sussex.

Barbara

Trustee/Director MSOPC



Priority Services Registers

If you have reached your state pension age, you are eligible to apply to be on the priority services register for water, gas and electricity. This means that you will receive prior warning about any planned works in your area which may disrupt your supply, or be given extra help if your supply is suddenly cut off, including alternative options or supplies. You can also nominate someone else to receive your bill on your behalf, or have your bills and notifications in large print, braille, or they can arrange to call and read your bill to you. If you register for priority services with South East Water, they will also share your address and priority need with UK Power Networks and vice versa. You can fill in a form at www.southeastwater.co.uk/help/priority-services or phone 0800 952 4000 Mon-Fri 8am to 7pm.

Are We About to Lose our Hydro Pool?

Concern is rising as the hydro pool in the Princess Royal Hospital has been closed for some time now. It has been stated that they are waiting for parts, but it has been going on for a long time, which has raised suspicions that they will close the pool altogether, as they have done in Horsham. If this concerns you, please write to the complaints team at NHS Sussex sxib.complaints@nhs.net or phone 0300 140 9854.

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

Voting on 4th July elections

Don't forget to bring your photo ID with you to vote at the general election. If you don't have any suitable ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate by 26th June. Or if you are unable to get out of the house to vote, you can register for postal voting, which you will need to apply for by 5pm on 19th June. You can contact Mid Sussex District Council on 01444 477003, if you need an application form for either form posted to you. To apply online for either, go to www.gov.uk/how-to-vote.

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 37 Luxford Road, Lindfield, West Sussex, RH16 2LY

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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Haywards Heath Carers Event

On Thursday 27th June, Haywards Heath Town Council are hosting a carer's event at the Town Hall, Boltro Road, RH16 1BA from 10.30am until 2.30pm. If you live in the Haywards Heath area and care for a partner, family member or friend who couldn't manage without you because of disability or illness, then you are invited for a day of pampering and activities. For more information phone 01444 455694.

Haywards Heath Town Day

14th September, Victoria Park, 12-9pm. Free community day with live entertainment, stalls, food and drink.

Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfasts Clubs

Burgess Hill Town Council have helped set up a new Veteran's Breakfast Club at the Top House Pub, Keymer Road, RH15 0AD. The breakfast club meets on the third Sunday of every month at 9.30am. Phone the Top House on 01444 220974 for more information.

The Ex Services Club, 4 Station Road, East Grinstead RH19 1DJ have also recently started a Veteran's Breakfast Club on a Wednesday morning. Phone 01342 321384 for details.

Living Well Programme

If you have a long term health condition, such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, depression, anxiety, back pain or chronic fatigue syndrome, the living well programme can help you take greater control of your health.

They are free six week courses run by the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, either online or in person, in small groups, to teach you new skills and techniques to manage your condition better on a daily basis, and also provides an opportunity to meet people sharing similar experiences. E-mail sc-tr.livingwell@nhs.net or phone 01403 620448 / 01273 267545 for more information and details of the next courses.

2 Million Too Many Campaign

Across the UK, there are 2 million older people living in poverty, which Independent Age believe is 2 million too many. Ahead of the next general election, they want all political parties to show they are serious about tackling pensioner poverty. Whoever forms the next government should increase awareness and uptake of entitlements such as pension credit, attendance allowance, housing benefit and social tariffs; reduce unaffordable household costs, establish an adequate minimum income in later life and ensure our housing system is fair, good-quality and affordable; and are given a voice at the heart of government, by creating a commissioner for older people and ageing. They want older people to ask canvassers and candidates how they intend to address these ahead of the general election. Visit www.independentage.org/two-million-too-many or phone 020 7605 4200 for further details and to support the campaign.

Mid Sussex
MSOPC
Older People's Council

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