



Tobias entertained us at our Christmas tea for 100 people in Lindfield

Bringing Joy and Fun

Trust that 2026 will be a happy and healthy New Year for each and every one of you.

During 2025, our country celebrated the 80th anniversary, both of Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan. Can't believe another year has passed so quickly - as we get older, they seem to go quicker and quicker.

Another Christmas tea has been held in December and I know that most of you that spoke to me at the end said what a wonderful afternoon it had been, everyone enjoying Tobias singing (photos on p5). We have enjoyed lots of events together over the past year, including Silver Sunday coffee morning on the 9th of October which we held in Haywards Heath. We are very grateful for the provision that

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. Joining form on page 7. To find out more information, please phone 01444 242 760. Further details of MSOPC, upcoming events and joining form can be found on our website at www.msopc.org.uk. Facebook page www.facebook.com/msopc.org.uk

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We thank **The National Lottery** and **Mid Sussex District Council** for sponsoring this newsletter



—→ was made for us by the council, and also by Bay tree, also it was really great to have Tania back to sing for us, everyone enjoyed it.

As I walked through the woods this morning with the dog, I thought spring is around the corner and we look forward to seeing the daffodils and primroses coming up in the woodlands. They're just peaking through now. It's cold at the moment, so keep yourselves warm and cosy.

We're very sadly saying goodbye to Margaret Spendiff from our committee, Margaret has been on our committee for almost 20 years and we say a big thank you to her for her contribution she's made to MSOPC. Thank you Margaret. Margaret is a caring person.

On this cold and frosty morning I look forward to seeing you all at our events in 2026.

Best Wishes,

Val



Would you like £500? MSOPC is looking for a Treasurer



Our current Treasurer is stepping down after five years of dedicated service.

Can you spare one/two hours a week so we can help older people in need.

This is a voluntary role, but comes with a £500 bursary. Please contact Val on 07771 916584, or email chairman@msopc.org.uk

East Grinstead Information

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

Mill View Care Home Community Cinema

Free event, the second Monday of every month, 2pm-4pm, classic 'feel good' films.. Open to anyone, including those living with dementia and their loved ones. In the comfort of their home's cinema, enjoy a movie and complimentary refreshments. Phone 01342 887940 / email beverly.jordan@careuk.com to book.

East Grinstead Breast Screening discontinued

Due to the mobile screening units being larger, they could no longer be accommodated in the previous East Court location in East Grinstead. Therefore, you would need to go to the Princess Royal Hospital. After age 70, appointments are no longer automatic and you will have to book. Call 01903 239757 for more info.

East Grinstead Lions' Social and Tea Party Afternoon

Free event for senior citizens, Saturday 28th February, 2-5pm, Sackville School main hall. Entertainment, afternoon tea. To book call 01342 318255 or email eganddlions@gmail.com. Advise if you need transport.

Quarry Café and Community Fridge

Tuesday to Friday 10:30 to 4pm, Hollands Way, East Grinstead RH19 3EN. Come and fill a bag with food and make a donation or try the café. Phone 07724873336 email info@quarrycafe.co.uk

East Grinstead Age UK

Digital Inclusion Project—3 week course to help you access the NHS App and Rapid Health booking system used by GP surgeries. Starts Wednesday 21st January at Turners Hill Park Social Club, Turners Hill, RH10 4QS Phone 01342 327046 to register your interest.

Every first Tuesday of the month you will find Age UK staff at East Grinstead Library 10 am-12pm, go and have a chat and find out what they do. Also, every first Tuesday they have their Lunch Club at the centre at Glen Vue, Railway Approach, RH19 1BS. £5 for a hot meal & pudding

For the regular activity timetable, feel free to phone 01342 327 046 / email enq@ageukeastgrinstead.org.uk for more info or visit their website www.ageuk.org.uk/eastgrinstead/activities-and-events/

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 also provide timetables for the Metrobus routes 400, 291, 281, 271, 23 and 84. Phone 01342 410121 or communityandtourism@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

A Chat with a Difference

Our upcoming events. All free or donation on the day

All over 60s are welcome at our events. We would be very grateful if people book for only those in their own household, leaving your full names and phone number, and ask others to book themselves separately. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are no longer able to attend. Thank you.

Have Your Say on Older People!

Wednesday 14th January, 10:30-12 noon

Our second group meeting, in partnership with Age UK, East Grinstead, following the meeting in September, for people to have their say on the future for older people in East Grinstead and surrounding areas. This time, we will be meeting at the Haven Centre, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down RH10 4LJ, from 10.30am to 12 noon. All welcome to join the group, to give us feedback on the main issues you are facing in the communities you live. Your insight can help shape decisions that affect your life and community, enabling us to recognise areas where your influence can be most effective. Time for a chat afterwards, and refreshments provided. Book using details below.

Turners Hill Coffee Morning

Wednesday 25th February, 10-12 noon

Turners Hill Parish Council have kindly offered to fund a coffee morning with help available locally to be held at The Ark Community Centre, Mount Lane, Turners Hill, RH10 4RA in the Dove Suite. Please book on the number below.



Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Monday 2nd March, 2-3pm

Our AGM will follow on straight after our March committee meeting at the Lindfield Evangelical Church hall, and all are welcome to attend. Please let us know if you are coming (details below).

Annual Public Meeting

Thursday 12th March, 11-1pm

Our main meeting of the year will be in March, at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Station Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 9EN, we will be serving lunch and refreshments and we will have information stands and speakers from the community, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. Please book - details below.

Haywards Heath Dementia Event

Tuesday 19th May, 11-1pm

Mid Sussex District Council's Local Community Network will be funding a dementia event for us, which will be held at the Ashenground Community Centre, Southdown Close, Haywards Heath, RH16 4JR. We will be working with local dementia experts to plan the event, so that both people with dementia and their carers can come along and benefit from it, with local help and advice on hand, and lunch. Please book using the number below.

To book on any of the above events, please leave a message on our answerphone **01444 242760**. Please start with the event you wish to book for, followed by your full name and phone number. Please ask others who would like to come to book themselves separately. We can cater for dietary requirements if you advise us when booking. We won't call you back but will record your booking.

What Have We Been Up To?

Have your say on Older People in East Grinstead!

On 17th September, we joined forces with Age UK East Grinstead to hold an initial meeting to shape an impact group. The plan is for the group to give feedback on the main issues people are facing in the East Grinstead area. We had a few ladies attend our first group, and lots of tea and cakes! The group will be an ongoing venture, meeting in East Grinstead and areas around it, to discuss what you feel is important for older people and help to shape decisions that will affect them, and we hope to build up the numbers as we go along.



Volunteers Lunch

On 24th September, we invited all people with an interest in helping us to come along to Lindfield Evangelical Church for a chat and hear about what we need help with, and also invited our current volunteers to enjoy the morning, with tea and coffee and a buffet lunch. We are delighted to say that we have had offers of extra help, and are very grateful for any time they can offer, big or small.



Mid Sussex Wellbeing's Local Community Network

On 9th September, we attended the Local Community Network (LCN)'s subgroup meeting, which discussed independent living in older age. We learnt statistics from West Sussex County Council about frailty in older age. They said that frailty is more likely in women than men because they have lower muscle mass, and so need to eat more protein and increase resistance exercises to prevent frailty. Community People spoke of their frailty project, and East Grinstead Age UK spoke of their Ageing Well project, which again looks at frailty, and teaches people how to prevent falls and live well. Burgess Hill Town Council spoke of their plans to hold a health screening event in February and their 'one stop shop' in Burgess Hill. All the topics were very useful and they have also provided us with a grant to hold a dementia event this year (see page 3).

Silver Sunday Coffee Morning

We had our usual Silver Sunday coffee morning at the Orchards Shopping centre, Haywards Heath, under the marquee on 9th October. Once again a lovely morning, and we were delighted that our old friend Tania Rodd was back singing for us again and cheering everyone up! Teas, Coffees and cakes from the Bay Tree Café were once again generously donated by the Orchards, and everyone had a lovely time!



We need your help!

We love holding events and putting together our newsletters to let you know what help is available out there to try and help you, and to bring you joy. We are able to apply for funding from funders who are also keen to help older people who are struggling. However, in order to help us get funding, we would be really grateful if you could let us know if our events and newsletters are helping you and how, so that we can show the funders the impact we are having on people's lives. Comment on Facebook, email us at Nicola@msopc.org.uk or leave an answerphone message on 01444 242760. Thank you!

Christmas Party, King Edward Hall, Lindfield

Our Christmas party on Saturday 13th December was good fun as always, we had Tobias to sing for us, who was very popular, a raffle and buffet. We had help from Good Oaks Home Care who helped serve and also P&S Gallaghers in Haywards Heath, plus other volunteers who very kindly gave their time.

"I must thank you once again for a great party. Tobias was excellent and kept us all entertained well, coming off the stage and joining us. The buffet was superb the array of food was great. (Good Oaks Home Care helpers) couldn't do enough for us. Thank you so much for a wonderful afternoon." Teresa

Our thanks to all the above, the Lottery Community Fund, Mid Sussex District Council and Comber Trust who kindly supported the event and meant we could bring some Christmas joy to many people, some of who may otherwise not have had anyone to celebrate Christmas with.



Community People's Older Person's Forum

Community People (formerly known as MSVA), are a wonderful support for charities in Mid Sussex. They offer training workshops and help charities with funding applications, as well getting charities together to share ideas, help with volunteer recruitment and many other projects.

We attended the older person's forum on 8th October held in partnership with AgeUK, which was a meeting up of local charities, councils, NHS services, social prescribers, who help older people, to discuss how we can all work together to help older people, and we shared information about what various groups are finding and the biggest issues and concerns.

They shared information about a library database 'Clio', which details useful charities in the area, there were presentations and sharing of the latest initiatives and projects which everyone is working on. It's a fantastic resource for all the charities to get to know each other so that we can all work together.



Mid Sussex District Council's Health and Wellbeing Network

On 12th November, we and many other local charities attended the above meeting, to discover the services which Mid Sussex Wellbeing provide, such as their weight off, stopping smoking and drinking workshops. We also discussed ways to exercise in winter, such as their healthy walks, groups walks at Wakehurst, woodland volunteering and Age UK exercise classes at Lamb House. There was also a speaker from West Sussex Affordable Energy Partnership about the energy grants available to people (details over the page).



Energy Funding Available

When we attended the Mid Sussex Wellbeing meeting (see previous page), we listened to a talk by West Sussex Affordable Energy, about the funding available to help pay for energy efficiency in your home, thus reducing your energy bills. There are currently 2 schemes available—both are aimed at homeowners rather than social tenants (although some may be eligible). Private renters may be eligible, but you would need to agree this with your landlord.

Scheme 1—Eco Flex 4. Eligibility—Live in a property of EPC D or below for homeowners or E or below for renters, and have a combined annual income of less than £31,000 OR live with someone with a severe long term health condition made worse by living in a cold home (Eg cardiovascular or respiratory conditions). Potential measures provided: Free or majority of cost of installation of Heat pump / more efficient boiler, solar PV, insulation. To find out more information, contact Arun and Chichester Energy CAB Advice Service on 0800 145 6879 or email energy@arunchichestercab.org.uk.

Scheme 2—Connected for Warmth. Eligibility—Your property is NOT heated by mains gas, the home has an electric credit metre or smart metre, or you are willing to change to one, and have an EPC of D, E, F or G. Plus ONE of the following criteria: Are over 70 or someone in the household receives means tested benefits or has a severe long term health condition made worse by living in a cold home or the total household income is less than £31,000. Potential measures provided: Fully funded installations of air source heat pumps or energy bill support (up to £1,000 over 2 years, subject to t&c's). To find out more, call 0800 995 6564 or go to <https://www.affordablewarmthsolutions.org.uk>

You can find your property's EPC (energy performance certificate) online, go to <https://www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate> or email mhclg.digital-services@communities.gov.uk or phone 020 3829 0748

If you're struggling to pay your energy bill, you can contact your provider to see what help they can give, or contact Citizens Advice for information on grants and support to help you pay your energy bills. Phone 0808 278 7969 or go to <https://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk>

Repair Cafés

Take broken items to your local repair café to see if volunteers are able to fix them for free or a donation, and grab a cuppa and cake while you wait!

Burgess Hill—New Venue! St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Station Road, 2nd Saturday of the month, 10-1pm.

Lindfield—United Reformed Church, 50 High Street, 1st Saturday of the month, 10-1pm.

Hassocks—Age Concern Centre, Dale Avenue. Every 4th Saturday of the month, 9.30-11.30am.

Chailey—Now in its 8th year! St Peter's Church, Chailey Green, 2nd Saturday of the month, 10-1pm

East Grinstead—Glen Vue Community Hub, Railway Approach, 2nd Saturday of the month, 10-1pm.

Forest Row—Community Centre Hartfield Road, every 3rd Saturday of the month, 10-12.30pm

Falls Prevention

Active House Solutions (AHS) Wellbeing have been appointed to manage the new Falls Prevention Programme service on behalf of West Sussex Public Health. They provide free 24 week programmes, in East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Hassocks. They do fill up very quickly, but if you are unsteady on your feet but can rise from a chair without help, then you can self-refer by emailing info@ahswellbeing.co.uk. If your nearest class is full then you can be added to a waiting list. Unfortunately there is not a phone number.

Funders

MSOPC would like to thank all the organisations who are currently funding us, including Joan Ainsley Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Mid Sussex District Council, Mid Sussex Local Community Network, Turners Hill Parish Council the Comber Trust and the Orchards Shopping Centre. Without your support, we would not be able to hold our events and help older people.



Free Toiletries from all West Sussex Libraries

As part of their ongoing Cost of Living response, West Sussex Libraries are providing Essential Toiletries Kits free to residents, containing shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, roll on deodorant, toothpaste, adult toothbrush and tissues. All are in a sealed zip lock bag. They are available from all 36 libraries and are on display for anyone to collect, while stocks last.

The New Online Booking Systems at doctors surgeries

From 1 October 2025, patients have been able to request appointments, ask questions and describe symptoms online throughout the day rather than calling their surgery or visiting in person. But if you cannot use a computer, you can still phone to book an appointment and with less people phoning, the idea is that it will free up practice phone lines for those who need them most. This makes it more convenient to access appointments, so that you can phone throughout the day, rather than the '8am rush'.

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)

All GP practices in England should have established a PPG and groups are now being formed by dental practices and pharmacies. Their members (volunteers who are patients of the practice), work in partnership with their practices to offer the patient perspective on the services that are provided. They collect feedback on patients' experiences at the patient/practice interface and feed it back to the practice. They also work to improve communication, encourage patients to take more responsibility for their health and provide practical support and educational events. PPGs are uniquely placed to represent a collective unbiased view of patients' and the wider community's needs and priorities and their members play a vitally important role in reaching out to their wider patient population actively 'championing' health and wellbeing in their local communities. PPGs seek to connect with those who may have difficulty accessing services and whose voices are less often heard. Every PPG is unique, based on the relationship with practice staff and evolving to meet local needs. For further information or to volunteer for your PPG, contact your surgery.

Social Prescribers

All doctors surgeries in Mid Sussex also have a social prescriber. They connect people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing. Social prescribing works particularly well for people who:

- have one or more long term conditions
- who need support with low level mental health issues
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing.

If you think this could help you, discuss your situation with your GP and ask them to refer you.

Royal Voluntary Service Virtual Village Hall

For those online, the virtual village hall is a free online activity hub and community. There are live activity sessions every weekday and a library of over 3,000 sessions to view on demand, all led by expert tutors and presenters. It's open to everyone and is used by health and social care professionals, including social prescribers. Go to <https://virtualvillagehall.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/flex-page/about>

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 _____

Questionnaire for new members (optional)

If applicable, how easy out of 10 do you find it to get information on the following. **10 being very easy.**

Physical support /10 Mental support /10 Financial support /10 Socialising /10

How easy do you find it to have your voice heard to local authorities? **10 being very easy** /10

How lonely / isolated do you feel out of 10? **10 being extremely lonely** /10

What are you struggling with most _____

Other happenings around Mid Sussex

Burgess Hill One Stop Shop!

3rd Thursday each month, 11-1pm, Salvation Army, Cyprus Road.

Cuppa and a chat with different organisations that can help you with finances, social connections and befriending, and much more! Call the Help Point on 01444 247726

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

Spire Café Free Talks

The Spire Café is a place where you can go if you are stuck on anything whilst trying to use a computer, phone or tablet. Just bring it along to the Spire Café behind St. Johns Church, Burgess Hill **any Thursday between 10am to 12noon**, or St Wilfrids Church Hall, Burgess Hill any Monday between 10am to 12 noon, or Bentswood @34, America Lane, Haywards Heath by appointment. A volunteer will work through your issues with you.

The Spire Café also continue their talks in 2026. **All start at 2:30pm:**

Tuesday January 13th 2026 Making Sense of Cloud Storage

Including iCloud, Google Drive, OneDrive & Samsung Cloud – which you have, how to keep photos safe and whether you need to pay

Tuesday February 10th Getting the Most from your Smartphone

Handy shortcuts, quick access features, organizing your home screen, being smart about WiFi & data and lots more for iPhone and Android

Tuesday March 10th Getting the best from your smartphone camera

Simple techniques for clearer photos, built-in editing tools, and straightforward ways to share pictures with loved ones near and far.

All talks are being held at St. Wilfrid's Church, Station Road, Burgess Hill. There will be refreshments (voluntary donation welcome), talks are 45 minutes plus time for questions and one to one support at the end. **Liam 07349 916641, or email spire.computer.help@gmail.com**

Chatty Café, Triangle Leisure Centre, Burgess Hill, every Monday between 10am –12pm in the Costa Café. The table is hosted by a friendly volunteer. Drop in. You can contact Poppy Morley on 01444 876000.



Age Concern Hassocks are now offering a Monday minibus service exclusively for Burgess Hill residents, bringing you for lunch and returning you after lunch. Phone 01273 844461.

They are also running a 'Man with a Pan' 5 week course for older men £10 starting 25th Feb <https://communitychef.org.uk/man-with-a-pan-new>

"I heard about it from MSOPC..."

If you contact any groups through reading about them in our newsletter, please let the groups know you heard about them here, to help us show that our newsletter is having an impact. Thank you.