

Newsletter Summer 2026



MSOPC Chairman Val Upton and Haywards Heath deputy Mayor Cllr Bashir at our dementia event at the Ashenground Community Centre on 19th May

MSOPC Dementia Event

Hello,

Well, I was talking about spring in my last letter, but I'm now thinking we're almost into summer. We have just been away and we tow a caravan we were going onto a site and I could hear a chick making lots of noise couldn't see it first then realised it was standing right beside me. I had to stop my husband reversing the caravan, because I didn't want it run over, but it quickly moved to the middle of the site we were going onto. It turned out it was one chick from a pheasant and we saw a photograph that the owner had taken when it was just born. What a joy to see the wonder of creation at your feet as it were, it's

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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



—→ still a bit cold but we are all enjoying the sunshine. I'm sure and looking forward to the heat of the sunshine more in the summer months. For dementia week we actually held a dementia event on the Tuesday. I'm sure many of you know that because even on the television dementia week was published on the television. I'm sure you're looking forward to getting this newsletter and I apologise we are a bit late. But now you have the new dates that we're doing things and there's an event coming up in Clayton to celebrate loneliness week. I think it's good that we have these weeks now to remember certain dates which affect us as older people.

I look forward to seeing you at our next event that you can attend.

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 5th July, 2nd August, 12noon-5pm

East Grinstead Town Council are hosting free outdoor music picnic events on the terraces of East Court, College Lane, RH19 3LT. Pay bar, food stalls and free disabled parking. For more information, go to www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/whats-on/east-court-live or phone 01342 410121.

East Grinstead Armed Forces Day, Saturday 27th June 11am-3pm

A Service of Thanksgiving at East Court memorial, College Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 3LT. Music, static military displays from reserve units, drill displays by cadet organisations, military weapons and vehicle displays by private collectors. Phone 07766 834474 email eastgrinsteadafd@gmail.com

East Grinstead Classic Motor Show, Sunday 13th September 11am-3pm

High Street, East Grinstead. Owners of pre-1996 classic and vintage cars will showcase their vehicles, as well as pre 2006 motorcycles. Free entry and no booking required. www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/whats-on/east-grinstead-classic-motor-show/

Menshare Listening Group, Tuesdays, 7-9pm

Friendly, kind, supportive listening group, St Swithuns Church, RH19 3BB, Tuesdays, free parking. They also do nature walks once or twice a week. If you prefer an earlier session, there is 4:30 to 6:30pm on Wednesdays in Crawley Baptist Church, RH11 7HJ. They also have sessions in Haywards Heath Presentation Hall, RH16 3LE every Tuesday 7-9pm. Phone Sean Orr on 07508 336995 or email letstalk@mslg.org.

East Grinstead Age UK Banking Hub

There is now a banking hub at Age UK, Glen Vue. Customers of all major banks and building societies can use the banking hub counter any day Monday to Friday to: Withdraw or deposit cash, deposit cheques, pay utility bills, top up your gas and electricity and check your account balance. 9am-5pm, with break for lunch.

If you wish to talk to your specific bank, there is a private space to talk to a community banker about more complicated banking enquiries like payments and transfers, managing your account, and how to use online banking: The community banker days are: Mondays—Lloyds Bank, Tuesdays—Barclays, Wednesdays—NatWest, Thursdays—HSBC, Fridays—Santander.

New Eastbourne to Gatwick Bus route

There is a new 24 hour 500 bus route from Eastbourne, via Uckfield, Forest Row, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, Copthorne and Manor Royal to Gatwick Airport South Terminal. It runs around once an hour during the day and every 2 hours overnight.

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 500, 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. Please let us know as soon as possible if anyone you have booked for is no longer able to attend. Thank you.

Clayton Village Coffee Morning

Monday 15th June, 10-12:30

We are holding a free coffee morning with cakes and pastries at Clayton Church Hall, Underhill Lane, BN6 9PJ. All are welcome.

Clayton is on the outskirts of Hassocks, the hall has a car park and is served by the 270 and 273 bus routes. The bus stop a few minutes walk away is called 'Jack and Jill' and the 270 bus runs all the way from East Grinstead through Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Hassocks Stone Pound. The 273 bus runs all the way from Pease Pottage through Handcross, Warninglid, Sayers Common, Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks Stone Pound. The buses are once an hour and arrive at 'Jack and Jill' bus stop at 9:40 or around 10:40 or 11:30. Drop in any time throughout the morning, but please book to let us know you are coming, details at the bottom of the page. This event is generously funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and Mid Sussex District Council.



Visit to Wakehurst

Thursday 23rd July, meet at 10:45 (we will wait for the 272 bus from Brighton to arrive)

We will be having another meet up at Wakehurst Place, courtesy of Kew who have provided us with free tickets, and we hope for better weather this time! We will meet at the railings by the entrance at 10:45, get you in free, buy you a tea or coffee and then have a wonder round the gardens. We have a limited number of tickets, so please **book your place**, details below. The 272 bus, which comes into the car park, runs from Pyecombe, via Hassocks Stone Pound, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and Lindfield, and arrives at Wakehurst at 10:31. (If you wish to hire a Wakehurst mobility scooter whilst we are there, book in advance, you can phone them directly on 01444 894067)

Haywards Heath Town Day

Saturday 12th September 2026

MSOPC will have a stand at the town day at Victoria Park, Haywards Heath, which will be a full day of fun. Come along and say hello.

Silver Sunday Coffee Morning

Thursday 1st October 10-12pm

We will be holding a coffee morning as usual for Silver Sunday at the Orchards shopping centre, St. Wilfrid's Way, Haywards Heath, RH16 3QH, under the marquee. A free hot drink and cake, and entertainment, no need to book, just come along and join us.

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?

Turners Hill Coffee Morning

On 25th February, we held a coffee morning, kindly funded by Turners Hill Parish Council at the Ark Community Centre. East Grinstead Age UK and District and the local social prescriber came along to talk to everyone and tell them what they could offer. It was a lovely relaxed morning full of chatter.

MSOPC AGM

Our AGM on 2nd March at the Lindfield Evangelical Church hall was well attended this year, and Val Upton our chairman summarised what MSOPC have done since last year, and the financials. We have acquired a new committee member this year, Peter, who has also offered to help as secretary and treasurer, so we are very grateful

Annual Public Meeting

On 12th March we held our main meeting of the year at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Burgess Hill, with lunch and refreshments and information stands from the community, who also gave a short introduction of what they do. Dr Tim Fooks, High Sheriff of Sussex also gave an interesting speech about the history of high sheriffs. The event was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Have your say on Older People in East Grinstead!

On 25th March, we travelled to East Grinstead for our quarterly forum with Age UK East Grinstead. We had some very interesting conversations about the difficulties when you come out of hospital, travelling to Surrey hospital by bus, benches around East Grinstead, the provisions during the recent water outage, putting bins out if you are injured and much more. We can help by relaying and discussing this information with the relevant bodies. We would love more of you to attend, so that we can get a group going to make a real difference to your every day struggles.



Burgess Hill Council Spring Tea Party

On 30th April we attended the tea party for older people at the Kings Weald Community Centre, hosted by Burgess Hill Town Council, to try and get some feedback from attendees on the council's services and what people want to see in the town for older people, and also promote MSOPC. It was a lovely afternoon with a singer and afternoon tea and was enjoyed by all.

Dementia Alliance

We attended the Burgess Hill Dementia alliance on 12th May, which is a newly formed group of organisations to try and work together to improve the dementia help available in Burgess Hill. It was held at the new Keymer Hall care home.

We need your help!

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!

Dementia Event

Ashenground Community Centre, Haywards Heath

On 19th May, Mid Sussex District Council's Local Community Network funded a dementia event for us, which both people with dementia and their carers could come along, with local help and advice on hand, and lunch. Good Oaks Home care came along to help, and there was information and talks from the Alzheimers Society, Raise Your Voice dementia singing project, Sussex Police, Brighton and Hove buses, Carers Support, Tu Vida, Age UK dementia team, Wakehurst dementia walks, and Martlet Manor Care Home. We also had several social prescribers from the area. Haywards Heath Deputy Mayor Councillor Bashar came along and gave a heartfelt speech.

Sussex Police brought info on the Herbert Protocol, which encourages carers and family to complete vital information about a vulnerable person living with dementia, in case they go missing. A form can be found at www.medicalert.org.uk or phone 01908 951045.

All frontline drivers for Brighton & Hove buses are trained Dementia Friends to enable patience and understanding, and the buses' seating, lighting, flooring and announcements are all designed to be dementia friendly. They brought information on their Helping Hand Scheme card, which you can show to a driver discreetly with a brief written instruction of what assistance you need. To apply for one phone 01273 886200 or go to www.buses.co.uk/helpinghand

Svetlana from the dementia team at Age UK said "Thank you on organising such a wonderful event much appreciated and enjoyed by all. A really good turn out and lots of interest and networking. Please, express our thanks to your team and all the volunteers that have supported, everything was very well planned and executed!"

Dawn from Alzheimer's Society said "We didn't stop talking to people, our table was constantly busy. The main source of our enquiries were for further support, many carers needing the opportunity to talk to others in a similar situation, and also people wanting to recognise the signs and symptoms of dementia and wanting to know how they can look after their brain health"

The Alzheimers Society gave a great talk and said that people put off getting a diagnosis on average for 2 years. See your GP first, who will do a mini test and refer if necessary and then there is around a 1 year waiting list for a diagnosis. The sooner you get Alzheimers diagnosed and medically treated, the more the progression can be slowed. You can contact them for support even without a diagnosis 0333 150 3456.

To slow the progression of dementia, think heart health, as the more you look after your heart, the more you can slow cognitive decline, as the brain depends on constant blood flow. Try and adapt a healthy lifestyle as much as possible. Moderate exercise 3 times per week not only supports memory but also reduces fall risk.



Lindfield Village Road Show 20th May and Village Day 30th May

Every year, MSOPC has a stand at Lindfield Parish Council road show and village days to meet new faces and raise a few funds. Both are always wonderful events with lots of local organisations stands.

Blue Badges

Some groups have been discussing blue badges and it has been pointed out that blue badges are for the person, and not the vehicle they own. This means that if you travel by minibus or taxi, or even a friend, you can bring your blue badge with you for them to display so that your transport can park close to where you need to be. So if you are no longer able to drive, you should still apply for and renew your blue badge. Always make sure to renew several weeks before your current badge expires, as it is much easier than having to apply again. You can apply online by going to www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge

If you are unable to apply for a blue badge online, you can phone WSCC on 01243 777653 and ask for a form to be posted to you. You can also collect a form from libraries and council offices.

As of 1st March this year, blue badge holders qualify for the disabled persons railcard which offers a third off rail fares. People with a disabled persons bus pass and those unable to drive due to medical conditions also qualify for the railcard.

Financial Help at Age Concern Hassocks

A qualified financial adviser is now offering free general financial guidance and information on helping people understand topics such as pensions, savings, financial forms and paperwork, inheritance, debt and budgeting and later-life planning in a clear and accessible way. It is general guidance and not personalised or regulated advice. For example, he can explain how pensions work but he wouldn't be able to recommend specific products or investment options. Drop in, the last Tuesday of the month 12-4pm, at Age Concern Hassocks, Dale Avenue, BN6 8LW. Craig Fitzsimmons 01273 102378.

EMED transport to non emergency appointments

If you cannot get to hospital in any other transport, for example if you are a stretcher patient, or if using another form of transport would damage your health, or if you need specialist skills for example to administer oxygen during the journey, phone 0300 777 4444 to see if you qualify for EMEDS free transport to hospital. More information at www.emedgroup.co.uk/sussex

WSCC 2026 Adult Social Care Strategy

The council faces its own significant financial challenges with a significant forecast budget gap in 2026/27. Devolution and national reforms, including the Casey Review (conduct of police), will have significant implications for adult social care. The main change in 2026 is that when discharged from hospital, people will be discharged home with intensive care provided for up to 6 weeks, instead of going into a short-term residential care bed. Social workers are now directed to look at what family, community and voluntary groups can support you with before looking at council-funded services. The government has now also mandated councils to pay sustainable fee rates to care providers, meaning they are more stable and better staffed.

Older Renters

1.7 million older people are now living in poverty. Private renting is one of the major causes, and Independent Age and other groups have been campaigning for the rights of older renters. The Renters Rights Act 2025 came into force on 1st May this year. This means the end of section 21 no-fault evictions—landlords will need justifiable reasons to evict you. There will be a limit to upfront payments, and fixed term contracts will give renters the flexibility to end their contract with 2 months notice. Landlords won't be able to discriminate against potential tenants who receive benefits or the state pension. For more information see www.gov.uk/government/news/when-will-the-renters-rights-act-come-into-force

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 and the Comber Trust. Without your support, we would not be able to hold our events and help older people.



Which Council is Responsible For What

The town councils are wrongly receiving a lot of public complaints for things like potholes, the Martlets and Clair Hall, and so I wanted to try and set out which councils are responsible for what, so that it is easy to see where to direct any concerns or problems.

The Parish and Town Councils

These are responsible for allotments, parks, recreation grounds and open spaces, organising community events and festivals, parish lighting, off-street parking and cemeteries in their parish. Also town halls, community centres, public toilets, bus shelters, public seats and public clocks and monuments, dog waste bins, consulting on neighbourhood planning, fines for litter, graffiti and dog offences, tackling things like loneliness, youth projects and setting up dementia-friendly groups. You can usually find contact details for your town or parish council on signs on some of the above features around the town or village.

Mid Sussex District Council

This is your local planning authority, responsible for overseeing licensing and building control, **TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLANS**, leisure centres, council tax and benefits, electoral services, environment and health, housing and housing benefit, wellbeing team, parking, waste and recycling. For Mid Sussex District Council call 01444 458166 or email enquiries@midsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex County Council

Are responsible for Blue badges, education, fire and rescue, highways, libraries, passenger transport, **ROAD CONDITIONS**, social care and health, social services, street lighting on highways, trading standards. For West Sussex County Council, call 01243 777807. To contact online go to www.westsussex.gov.uk

At a recent Haywards Heath town meeting which MSOPC attended, we were told that a resident had bequeathed **£400,000 for bus shelters and benches** in Haywards Heath. The council are also considering potential venues for a youth club in the town.

Devolution Update

The Sussex and Brighton mayoral election has been postponed from 7th May this year to 4th May 2028. Candidates include Katy Bourne for Conservatives, Caroline Baxter for the Labour party, Ben Dempsey for the Liberal Democrats, Rachel Millward for the Green Party, Paul Linehan for Reform UK and Martin Webb as an independent candidate.

MSDC Address for Council Tax and Benefits

You can no longer use the PO Box address if you need to contact the Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits Team at MSDC by post. Please start using Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS.

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

RSV Jabs

Respiratory Syncytial Virus is an infectious disease in the airways and lungs and can potentially cause pneumonia. A vaccine is available free to all between 75 and 79 years old. You can book it through your GP.

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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Events at the Orchards, Haywards Heath

Tuesday 4th-Saturday 8th August Wild West Week. Line dancing, themed games and activities, food and drink and enjoy the rodeo bull!
Every Weds-Saturday Additional traders added to the daily food stalls
Schedule may change. Visit theorchardsshopping.com or 01444 410620

Burgess Hill Town Council Events

Sunday 14th June Summer Fayre and parade 11am-3pm St Johns Park
Monday 6th July Jasper Fforde talk, Burgess Hill Library, 7-8.30pm £5
Friday 17th July Boogie at the Church Walk bandstand, food stalls
1st October Silver Sunday Tea Party
More info on 01444 247726 or www.burgesshill.gov.uk/town-community

Did you know Burgess Hill Town Council produce a printed magazine called About Town 3 times a year to tell you what is happening in the town, which is delivered to the majority of residents in Burgess Hill. If you wish to read it online or sign up to receive a regular digital copy you can sign up at burgesshill.gov.uk/council-its-services/about-town-magazine

Spire Café IT Help, Burgess Hill

The Spire Café IT Help 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 free monthly tech talks at St. Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Burgess Hill. All start at 2:30pm. For details, sign up to the mailing list at www.spirecomputerhelp.co.uk or call Liam 07349 916641, or email spire.computer.help@gmail.com

"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.

Mid Sussex
MSOPC
Older People's Council

Please post to;
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