

SPRING  
2010



# MERIDIAN MATURE CITIZENS FORUM

## CHAIR'S REPORT - Kate Davies

This is the time when we look back on what we have done during the past year, and what needs to be done in the year ahead.

### Downlands Court

The highlight for us as a committee has been the opening of Downlands Court in Peacehaven, although not yet fully functioning, is a beautiful building with wonderful facilities. Committee members are on the Friends of Downlands Group where we will take an active interest in its development.

If you want to have a look for yourselves why not visit the Café which is open to everyone seven days a week.

### Transport

Through ESSA (East Sussex Seniors Association) we have made your feelings heard about poor transport links in areas of Peacehaven, Newhaven and the nearby villages of Piddinghoe and South Heighton.

ESCC is funding a major project to enable Community Transport schemes to build on existing services and to develop new ones. We are fortunate in having Community Transport in the Lewes Area (CTLA) based in the Hillcrest Centre in Newhaven. As many of you know, the Taxi Rider and the Community Bus has responded to requests from local residents, and is now running a successful, flexible service for Peacehaven, Newhaven, Telscombe and East Saltdean.

These services depend on you using them. For further information call 01273 517332

### ESSA Newsletter

Enclosed with this newsletter is the ESSA newsletter which shows you the wide range of topics in which we have voiced concerns from you, our members. The views expressed are not just the views of the committee but are your views which we hear when we attend local events – such as Isn't it Bonkers, Older People's Day, the Engagement Day, fairs, fetes, coffee mornings and our own Information Fair held in the Autumn.

### Newhaven Sunday Lunch

At the very end of the year Meridian together with Age Concern, East Sussex ran a Sunday Lunch Club project in Newhaven. This was to find out whether there was a need for this locally. We felt that as Peacehaven has a café open on Sundays Newhaven should have the same opportunity. The Lunch Club was very successful and our task now is to find funding and goodwill for it to continue on a more permanent basis.

### Forward from 50 Questionnaire

Now it's time for you to do some work for us. Enclosed in this newsletter is an evaluation questionnaire for the Forward from 50 publication which many of you have received.

You can help us by filling it in and sending it back to County Hall (freepost). The results of the questionnaire will determine whether there will be an updated reprint or not.



All of you should have received copies of *Forward from 50* but if for any reason you haven't please let me know.

### New Committee Members needed!

Absolutely the last word - at our recent AGM Margaret Whiting, secretary and Di Smith, treasurer stood down as their three-year term of office had come to an end. I would like to thank them for all the hard work they have put in during the past three years and also to Dan who set up and managed our web-site so efficiently. This now leaves us with two vacancies to be filled by one of you!

Our finances are healthy and are easy to manage but unfortunately need to be done electronically. The spread sheets are in place ready for someone to take over.

Being the secretary of the Forum is not an onerous task. There is one meeting a month where minutes have to be taken, typed up and then sent to committee members.

Again we need someone with good computer skills to help those of us who still struggle in this area.

Mileage and any out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

We have been lucky in finding Bill Kocher who has agreed to take over the web-site, but he would really appreciate some feed-back and for you to tell him of any thing you would like to see on the site.

If you think you can help please phone 01273 516207



HELPTHEAGED

## MERGE IN 2010

At our recent AGM Ralph Chapman from Age Concern England talked to us about their merger with Help the Aged. The new charity will be called Age UK and will be formally launched in the Spring.

Kate and James have had a long association with Help the Aged through their programme *Speaking Up for Our Age*. This will continue within the new combined organisation to give older people a voice on matters which are important to them. Over the past few years more and more independent forums for older people have emerged and it seemed logical to go one step further and develop a regional organisation where well established forums could support the newly emerging ones. Consequently, the South East Network of Seniors (SENS) was successfully launched in November with James as secretary and Kate as vice-chair. Kate has also been invited to attend the Engagement Development Group of Age UK to make absolutely sure that it is your voice that is being heard and not the voice of those who think they know what you want. James is the SENS representative on SERFA, the South East Regional Forum on Ageing.

Clearly the collective voice of older people is gathering strength – we are a force to be reckoned with!

Kate has copies of the *Speaking Up for Our Age* publication *Forum to Forum* if anyone is interested.

## Wave Leisure

We owe Wave Leisure an apology for putting in the wrong times for the 'Swim Free - 60 and over' in our last newsletter.

### Free swimming times in Newhaven are

Wed mornings 9.00 to 10.00 Thurs evenings 6.00 to 7.00.

These free sessions will only be available until March when it is hoped that Lewes District Council and Wave Leisure will work together to enable these sessions to continue. However it appears that the take-up in Newhaven has been disappointing and like all these initiatives if the take-up is poor then people in charge see this as a sign that it is no longer needed. But on many occasions we have heard members remark that 9.00 is too early in the morning. Although many of us wake up early we are not always ready to go out at 8.30 or so in the morning, particularly in the winter.

If there is any talk about stopping the free-swims in Newhaven, this is the argument we will put forward, but if you have any other comments to make, please contact Kate Davies or any member of the committee. (*see back page*)

## Feel safe in your home?

At the AGM a question about crime was raised. Do our members feel safe in their homes and in the streets? I think vandalism is the most irritating (and sometimes frightening) thing that people talk to me about. Broken flower pots, garden ornaments, fences and even walls being pushed over have been mentioned. These incidents can be reported to the police by phoning 0845 60 70 999. Have a word with the Community Police Officers who are out and about in your area. Invite them to come and look at your property and they may be able to give you some tips on how to avoid trouble. If it is a persistent nuisance from school children I am sure the CPO's will not mind having a word with the local head teacher on your behalf.

If you have had some damage done to your house you may be able to get help with minor repairs from the Anchor Staying Put Handy-person Service. Charges for this vary according to your circumstances but advice and estimates are free.



01323 442556

Just a reminder that East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service will provide you with a **free** 10 year smoke alarm. They will come to your house and **fit it for free** and talk over anything else that might be a potential hazard in your house. 0800 177 7069

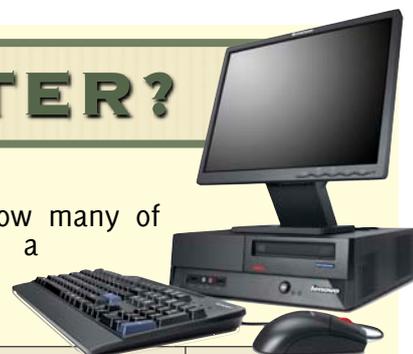
# DO YOU USE A COMPUTER?

## For Members who use computers

We would like to find out from these members what they are using them for, and what help they need using them.

## For Members who don't

We would like to know how many of you would like to use a computer if only some-one could show you how.



For those who <b>use</b> a computer, please tick the <b>YES</b> or <b>NO</b> boxes to indicate what you use it for, and tick <b>NEED HELP</b> next to items you'd like training in.			YES	NO	NEED HELP
NAME:	PHONE:	email:			
Send emails					
Search for your family history					
Keep in contact with your family					
Find out train & bus times online					
Get library books online - if you cannot get to a library due to a disability					
Look at TV programmes you've missed - BBC iPlayer etc					
Shop online - for things like groceries and get them delivered to your home					
Bank online					
Order films online					
For those who <b>do not use</b> a computer, please tick <b>YES</b> next to any of the following that would be of interest to you.					YES
Get help to find out what is the best computer for me to buy					
Get help to set my computer up					
Know how I can get someone to come round and help me sort out my computer if things go wrong					
Get individual tuition to help me use my computer					
Know where I can attend a workshop to help me use my computer					

Please return questionnaire to Meridian Forum, PO Box 161, Newhaven BN9 1AN

## FREE COFFEE MORNING

**Room 4, Hillcrest Centre, Newhaven**  
**10am Monday 15 March 2010**

Meridian, Seaford and Lewes Senior Forums have been working together on the Lewes (Area) Housing and Support Strategy for Older People. Some of you may remember going to the Telscombe Civic Centre some time ago, when we were asked what sort of housing we would like as we got older. The preferred option was to stay in our own homes with proper help and support. All the information collected from various consultations around the Lewes area have been put together in draft form and this is the final chance we have to make any comments.

Two speakers from East Sussex County Council and Lewes District Council will talk about the strategy and you will have your opportunity to ask questions.

I hope you will come along and have your say.

Brenda Bryon has asked us to look into the possibility of having a hand-rail on the steps leading down to the car-park at the Hillcrest Centre. Apparently the Community Bus drops passengers off at this point, which is sensible, but we agree with Brenda that some help is needed to get down those rather steep steps. Watch this space.

## FIT FOR NOTHING...?

Lewes Comnet is organising this interactive wellbeing event on **17 February 2010** from **10am - 2pm** at the Meridian Centre in Peacehaven.

It's a **free event** looking at different low-cost and free ways to keeping mind, body and spirit as fit and well as possible. Aimed at all ages, the event will include **healthy eating on a budget, relaxation, dance & movement workshops**. The main hall will contain a lively marketplace of stalls around **Being Heathy, Active & Curious, Learning Something New & Being Helpful**.



**OPENING TIMES  
DOWNLANDS COURT  
PEACEHAVEN**

Monday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Tuesday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Wednesday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Thursday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Friday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Saturday 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Sunday 11:00am – 2:00pm

Breakfasts available between 9:00am – 11:00am  
Lunches available between 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Sunday Roast every week



# Knit 'n Natter

Group

**Mondays 2 - 4pm**

**The Hillcrest Centre Café, Newhaven**

- Friendly support for knitting enthusiasts - all ages and stages of ability welcomed
- No fees or subscriptions
- Bring along your knitting and enjoy refreshments in the Café
- Beginners welcome
- Wheelchair access

Further details:  
01273 516722  
01323 890205



**Please try to fill in the Forward from 50 questionnaire that is included with this newsletter. Even if you haven't seen a copy, question 1 asks that question, so let them know, then they can make sure it reaches the right people. If you don't tell them they can't improve the distribution.**

## HAVE YOUR SAY!

This is your opportunity to let us know YOUR views. Tell us what YOU want from the Meridian Mature Citizens Forum and what would make YOUR life better living in the Meridian area.

Contact us: [info@meridian-sf.org.uk](mailto:info@meridian-sf.org.uk)  
or PO Box 161, Newhaven, BN9 1AN

We look forward to hearing from you!

For more information on the MMCF visit our website:  
[www.meridian-sf.org.uk](http://www.meridian-sf.org.uk)

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**CHAIR**

Kate Davies  
01273 516207

**SECRETARY**

<<Vacant>>

**TREASURER**

<<Vacant>>

Maurice Langham

Eileen Wood

Pat Bowman

James Rose

Marian Stanley

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Bill Kocher

**Membership is free**  
so contact Bill on 01273 515764  
or email [join@meridian-sf.org.uk](mailto:join@meridian-sf.org.uk)  
with your address details