



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2015

CHAIR'S REPORT

The AGM where we celebrated our 10th anniversary seems a long way away now. During the meeting I looked back at our early beginnings – increasing membership, creating the newsletter and attending meetings with officers at County Hall and reporting to them your thoughts and feelings.

Things have changed quite a bit since then. As we have grown in strength and gained in confidence so the role of the forums has changed. We are much more closely linked to ESCC Adult Social Care and in more recent times with the NHS.

I feel I have to make it clear that we are only involved with the officers and not with the councillors. Together with the officers we put forward recommendations which are then voted in or out by the elected councillors.

All the forums across the county are working together on the **East Sussex Better Together** programme to explore the possibility of Health and Social Care coming together with shared resources to eliminate the constant 'nag' about whether issues belong in the Health corner or the Social Care corner. Meridian maintains that often it's a bit of both.

Marilyn Nolan our treasurer reported a healthy bank balance and our thanks go to Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe Town councils for their regular top-ups. A special thank-you goes to the House Project who so often come to our rescue. Hopefully you will have noticed that since last year the Forum has an up-dated logo, got a new banner printed and has revised the website. If there are things you would like to see on the website let us know.

The committee remains the same and are listed on the back of the newsletter. Our membership now stands at over 500.

I hope you enjoy the ESSA newsletter which contains more information to keep you up-to-date with what Meridian is doing in the wider community on your behalf.

I have enclosed a summary of the talk given by June Pratley the Engagement Officer

Kate Davies

Chair MMCF



The Sussex Police Elder's Commission has been set up covering East & West Sussex and Brighton. You will have seen press releases, posters and general information on the television and elsewhere showing how the police want to provide a service that is accessible for older people and to build up trust and confidence in reporting crime. In a confusing world where sometimes you phone 999 - or is it 101?

The Elders Commission is made up of older people from all over the county. Kate is there putting forward your views and worries. Many people ask ' Why can't we have more bobbies on the beat?' But times have changed and life is more complicated now. Kate would rather see more Community Police Officers (PCO's) out and about in out towns and villages.

The Elders Commission is looking at Scams and the way in which older people seem to be particularly targeted. There are many forms of scams - identity fraud, through banking and payment cards, through the internet, by post and on the phone. Shame and embarrassment often prevents people from seeking help or even telling family and friends what a horrible vicious circle they have got themselves into.

Kate would like to see a Helpline with an easy to remember (free) phone number, where people could talk to someone in confidence as the first stage of seeking help, which would hopefully lead to stopping the scammers and locking them up.

A very useful publication called **The Little Book of Scams** tells you how scammers operate and how you can prevent yourself from being caught. There are also plenty of contact details where you can get help and support.

If you are online, you can download this from the police website:
www.sussex.police.uk

Or call 101 or email 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk to find out where you can get paper copies of this booklet.



and on the subject of scams....

Kate's email was 'taken over' by somebody else. These people used her name to send out emails to people on her contact list who may have opened it and then their emails would have been hacked into.

It was her own fault. She saw an email from someone she knew and opened it. Big mistake - that's where the mischief carries on. She thought it was an odd email from someone she was not often in contact with, but there you go. So now she has had to change her email provider, create a new account, new password etc. Has also lost all of her files, photos and all documents to do with The Meridian Forum, ESSA and other organisations. **DON'T CLICK ON LINKS IN EMAILS.** Delete the email and phone the friend to check if it is from them. If it was genuine, they can always send it again.

June Pratley - ESCC Engagement & Equality Officer

June Pratley spoke at the AGM explaining that since April 2009 local authorities were obliged to provide a variety of opportunities for everyone to have their say.

This is a key issue for the Council. It is important for them to find out what people think of the services provided and ways it might be improved or ideas on a better way of doing things.

Some services are directly provided by the county council whilst others are 'commissioned' - with another organisation providing a service on the council's behalf. Consultations take place on a variety of levels through surveys, focus groups, workshops, questionnaires, public consultations and for older people through the county-wide network of senior forums.

She finished by saying that we are in Year 2 of a three year programme of austerity in which ESCC has to make savings of £60.3m. The provisional financial settlement for Local Government is expected in mid-December and the County Council will make final decisions on the County Plan and the budget for the next financial year in February 2016.

**FULL
OF LIFE**



Older People's Day October 2015

Planning for Older People's Day events are now well in hand.

I have been working with ESCC putting the booklet together and it all looks very exciting with many new events to enjoy. Most of them are free, but do make sure you book up if that's what it says in the booklet.

You can go to any event listed no matter where it is. Booklets will be available in council offices, libraries and dotted around the town, but if you want a free copy sent to your address, fill in our membership form and we will put you on our mailing list.

Phone Kate Davies 01273 516207 or email kate@meridian-sf.org.uk
Or contact info@meridian-sf.org.uk

Havens Dementia Action Group

(Newhaven to East Saltdean)

The Havens Dementia Action Group was set up in conjunction with the High Weald, Lewes & The Havens CCG in April 2015.

- ★ A group of like-minded people got together to plan how best to improve life for people living with dementia, their relatives, friends and carers living in our community.
- ★ Our aim is to raise awareness and understanding of dementia through offering a short training session for staff, voluntary groups, Town Councils, church groups, banks, shops, offices etc so that people living with dementia can live well in the community, can feel welcomed, can participate, can have fun and can feel safe in a caring environment.
- ★ Monthly meetings are held at Downlands Court, Peacehaven.
- ★ At the moment we are a very small group of committed people hoping to produce a newsletter, membership forms and to hold regular open meetings. We do not have a full committee and so cannot apply for funding. If you can help in any way we would be delighted to welcome you aboard. This is such an important project for those living or working locally and we hope you will support us.

Contact Ina at info@SussexElderlyCare.com



Need help getting to grips with your PC/Mac then come to our monthly computer workshops, open to all members.

Bring a laptop if you have one, as you will learn on the computer you use.

We try to give one-to-one help, depending on numbers of helpers, **so booking is essential.**

Email us your details and let us know what you would like help with.

If you just need help about getting a PC or going online phone Bill on 01273 515764 to book to come along.

info@meridian-sf.org.uk

**Classes 10.00am
Hillcrest Centre
6th July**

No August workshop

**7 September
5 October
2 November
7 December**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR Kate Davies (Piddinghoe) 01273 516207

SECRETARY Hillary Ryan (Seaford)

TREASURER Marilyn Nolan (Newhaven)

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Bill Kocher (Newhaven)

Maurice Langham (Newhaven Town Council)

Eileen Wood (South Heighton)

Ruth Rose (South Heighton)

Pat Bowman (Telscombe)

Chris Bowman (Telscombe)

Rani Sharma (Newhaven)

Marian Stanley (Newhaven)

Zena Gibbs (Seaford)

Gill Hart (Newhaven)

Let us know your views!

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

We look forward to hearing from you! For more information on the Meridian Forum visit our website: www.meridian-sf.org.uk

Sunday Lunch Club

Newhaven Day Club

Lunch, dessert and coffee (£6.50) is served at 12.30. The club is open to all, but you must book by 12.00 on Fridays, so we know how many to cook for.

Bookings can be added to the list at the Day Centre or phone Kate on 01273 516207

