

A force to be reckoned with



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EASTLEIGH SOUTHERN PARISHES OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM

NEWSLETTER 52
January 2010

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO MEMBERS & READERS

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS FOR US

- 1 **Connect** with family, friends, neighbours and invest in relationships. Keep in touch.
- 2 **Be active** and discover a physical activity that you enjoy and which suits your level of mobility and fitness. Access green space.
- 3 **Take notice** and be curious, savour the moment, be aware, appreciate the good things in life, including food.
- 4 **Keep learning** and try something new, set yourself a challenge, rediscover an old interest, try new recipes. Be creative.
- 5 **Give your time** as a volunteer, do something nice for a friend or a stranger, thank someone, care for someone, join a community group.
- 6 **Value** yourself and others. Do not be afraid to ask for help or to offer it. Take a break.

.....
These factors have been identified as protecting mental wellbeing for everyone. They help us to develop resilience to the pressures of every day living and will enrich our lives.

MORE PEOPLE ARE ENTITLED TO PENSION CREDIT

The first £10,000 of savings or investments are now not counted in claims for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit if one or both claimants are over 60. (The level was £6,000) This could mean that more people could be entitled to Pension Credit. Those already receiving benefit payments will receive a small increase automatically. To check on your entitlements, contact the Pension Service on **0845 606 0265** or ask HISP on **023 902405**.

STATE PENSION INCREASE

The state pension will increase by 2.5% in April.

NEW TRAVEL TOKEN SCHEME FOR HAMBLE (HURRAH!)

"Hamble Parish Council has agreed to set up its own Travel Token Scheme for parishioners who are unable to use buses and who have no access to a household vehicle. A list of eligible parishioners has been drawn up. The Council wants this scheme up and running in the New Year, when eligible parishioners will receive £45 worth of travel tokens. A contact list will be provided for all taxi businesses that have agreed to participate in the scheme, which will include Hamble's own voluntary driver scheme. Hamble residents who think they may be eligible are asked to contact Dianne Cowan on 023 8045 2273 or the Parish Council office on 023 8045 3422." (Hamble-le-Rice Village Magazine)

EBC FREE ASSISTED LIFT SERVICE (WHEELED BINS)

Elderly and disabled residents and those who are unable, and without assistance, to wheel their bins to the edge of their properties for waste collection should telephone **023 8068 8440**.

FREE HANDBOOK ON CHOOSING A CARE HOME

Counsel & Care has produced this updated guide to choosing, paying for and living in a care home for older people and their families living in Hampshire. Tel. **020 7241 8534**

NEW SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH MACULAR DEGENERATION

Treatment provided by Southampton Eye Unit is available to residents every Monday and Tuesday at Blackthorn Medical Centre, off Hamble Lane, to save them going to hospital.

**HAMPSHIRE & I.O.W. COMMUNITY FUND
HAS SPONSORED THIS NEWSLETTER**

ESPOPF COMMITTEE PAGE

MEMBERS 2009/10

Chair: Patience Sambrook (Hedge End) 01489 782552

Vice Chair: Jackie Charles (Hamble) 02380 453296

Hon. Sec./Newsletter Editor: Diane Andrewes (Bursledon) 02380 403311 diane@espopf.org

Hon. Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Betty Lawrence (Netley) 02380 453680 betty@jwlawrence.plus.com

Web Master: David Andrewes (Bursledon) david@espopf.org

Consultation Officer: Judith Cam (co-opted to the committee on December 1st) judithcam@hotmail.com

Members: John Taylor (Butlocks Heath) Jean Huggett Susan Moody (Botley) Margaret Phippard (Hamble) Pat Rose

Jean Purchase Shirley Driscoll (West End) June Watson (Hedge End) Peggy Budd (Netley Abbey) Jean Norton

(Bursledon) Gloria Bowles (Hamble)

2009/10 RESEARCH

Almost 450 responses have been received so far to the 13 ESPOPF Researchers' recent INFORMATION Questionnaire. If you haven't sent yours yet, there is still time, so use your Freepost envelope and post it off. We are busy analysing the responses and we have started our interviews. David is preparing the graphs and tables for the visual presentation of the results. We have also applied for grants to fund the research. Never a dull moment!

ESPOPF's AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

A presentation was made to Hound Parish Council by Judith Cam in December and others will be made to Hedge End Town Council and Hamble Parish Council in the New Year - just Botley to arrange. At the November Open Meeting, ESPOPF Members discussed local leisure and community activities that were known about and the benefits of the proposed village hubs. Meanwhile, Bursledon, Hamble and Hound LAC have adopted an *Older People Plan* consisting of material that is very familiar!

RECENT MEETINGS ATTENDED BY ESPOPF REPRESENTATIVES

1 Safeguarding Adults from Abuse – the new *Vetting and Barring Scheme* Winchester

2 **First Wessex Housing Association's plans for the re-development of their bungalows**
Charlotte Younge House Chandlers Ford

3 CABE (Government's Advisor on Architecture, Urban Design and Public Space) Futures Forum:
Engaging Communities London

4 Launch of *Hampshire Equalities Forum*
Discovery Centre Winchester

5 Launch of *Eastleigh's Community Plan*
The Rose Bowl West End

6 *Eastleigh Passenger Transport Forum*
inaugural meeting Hilldene Centre West End

7 AGE UK (formerly Help the Aged and Age Concern) 1st *Engagement Development Reference Group Meeting* London

EBC NEWS

The Audit Commission's Annual Audit Report and Inspection Letter are available on the EBC website www.eastleigh.gov.uk. 5 areas of the Council are identified and graded as follows : 3, 2, 2, 3, 3. On a scale of 1 - 4, '2' means 'meets only minimal requirements. Performs adequately' and '3' means 'exceeds minimal requirements. Performs well').

The headline on the Borough's website is:

"Council receives glowing assessment"!

The last paragraph of the summary is of some interest to ESPOPF members:

"Some problems remain, but action and plans are in place to improve them... Equalities and diversity is an area that requires development and initiatives are being put in place to take this forward... It (the Council) is developing the plans to drive how well it will deliver future services and in the way it manages, reviews and challenges its own performance."

The ways in which this is required to be done are described in the Report. We know already that the Chief Executive has taken on the responsibility for Equality in the Borough and we wait to see evidence that older people are included - in equality impact assessments, for example.

The Audit Commission's Report for Hampshire County Council is also available.

Older people seem to have been targeted for increased costs of services taking effect in January 2010. Cemetery and pest and rodent operators' charges are to be reviewed. The Cabinet's proposal of a 7% increase on Meals on Wheels was opposed by the Resources Scrutiny Committee doing its job of scrutinising Cabinet decisions. Fortunately, they won. All reports of council meetings are on the website.

We are still awaiting the adjudication of our complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, following the discriminatory withdrawal of the travel tokens concession to older and disabled people in the Borough.

NOTICE BOARD

VICTORY FOR SHELTERED HOUSING RESIDENTS

A high court judge has stopped Barnet Council from removing 24-hour wardens from sheltered housing after a campaign by elderly residents. The judge indicated that the councillors had not adhered to their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act. The Council had insisted that the wardens were too costly and wanted to install alarm buttons and floating wardens instead.

RETIREMENT AGE

Recent research shows that more than 70% of older workers now plan to work beyond the state retirement age, as small pensions and sliding house prices leave them with less to live on than they had hoped. 71% of over-55s expect to work beyond retirement age, up from 40% two years ago. However, Age UK, the new, combined Help the Aged and Age Concern charity, says that *"ageist attitudes and the default retirement age will make it incredibly difficult for people over 65 to continue working or return to work"*.

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS

Southampton General Hospital chaplains are always available. Any patient wanting a visit may phone **023 8079 6745** leaving name, ward, and contact phone number.

BEAT BOGUS CALLERS

- 1 Use your door chain.
- 2 Lock the back door before opening the front door.
- 3 Fit solid, wooden doors.
- 4 Use adequate locks on doors and windows.

5 Check every caller's identity very carefully.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Older people are treated shamefully by Home Insurance companies, because they do not shop around, thinking they will be treated fairly as long-standing customers. However, these companies push up prices year after year and new customers only pay a fraction of the charge for a better level of cover. Even Saga has been found to do this. Check it out. Pretend to be a new customer and see whether you are being treated fairly. Loyalty seems to come at a high price.

FREE HEALTH M.O.T.'s

Southampton residents are invited to make appointments at the Southampton Central NHS Walk-In Centre at the Royal South Hants. Hospital. The checks include a full medical history, a height, weight and body mass index check, blood pressure and pulse check and cholesterol check. Advice will be given to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Eastleigh has no NHS walk-in centre, so most residents will not be offered this service. However, one would imagine that patients of Southampton doctors would be eligible for this Southampton service.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Members living in Bursledon, Hamble or Hound are asked to contact Jackie Charles on **02380 453296** if they have any worrying incidents to report, such as vandalism, drunken behaviour, graffiti, or any other anti-social behaviour. Jackie is our representative on the BHH

Local Area Community Safety Group and she is able to report incidents. It would be helpful if she could be notified of the date and time of the incident and whether the PCSO or Parish Clerk has been informed

ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

Only 31% of people in the south-east have joined the organ donor register, according to a survey by the NHS Blood and Transfusion Service. Yet 96% of us would accept a donated organ, if we were offered one. 368 people are waiting for one in the south east and 26 people died last year whilst waiting for an organ.

It is possible to register by phoning 0300 123 23 23 or visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk.

RENT OUT PARKING SPACE

Earn £500 per month by renting out a driveway, parking space or unused garage, particularly if it is near a football stadium or train station. Register for free at Parkatmyhouse.com or Yourparkingspace.co.uk.

Commuters will typically pay about £75 per month to hire a space in walking distance of a train station.

ARE YOU PAYING TAX ON YOUR SAVINGS?

Banks and building societies automatically deduct 20 per cent tax from savings interest. If you are a non-tax payer, or pay the 10p rate, you might be overpaying tax and be due a repayment. Check with HM Revenue and Customs on **0845 366 7850**.

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 16
general Election Hustings

YOU WRITE...

Dear Editor

Thank you for sending me your Newsletter. I do enjoy reading it. Keep up the good work. I have enclosed £20 for postage. I hope it helps.

Lorna Wallis

West End

Dear Editor

Thank you for allowing us to have a stall at your Open Meeting on November 17. The money taken was £68.89, which was very good for the short amount of time we spent with you. Thank you again.

*Beryl Lythgoe Trading Secretary
Save the Children Fund*

Dear Editor

I am writing to let you know that Mum and Dad no longer live at our address. Mum died two years ago and Dad has moved to a rest home in Woolston. They always enjoyed the ESPOPF newsletters, especially Mum, who sadly succumbed to the rigours of Alzheimer's. Thank you for the regular older people's newsletter posted over their last few years.

Joan Foxwell

Hamble

Dear Editor

Wonderful! Amazing! Hamble Parish Council has now put in place a plan to help the disabled living in the village to reach hospitals, surgeries etc. Tokens will be made and distributed to the most needing help. This is such marvellous news, since Keith House and Eastleigh Borough Council found fit to refuse help for these people and stopped giving out travel tokens. Hamble is putting Eastleigh Council to shame. Thank you, Hamble Parish Council, for being so understanding.

Dianne Cowan

Hamble

(And so say all of us - Ed.)

Dear Editor

A march and rally in central London has been arranged for **Saturday April 10 2010** in support of the welfare state and public services – just weeks before the expected general election.

Pensioners know the value of a decent welfare state and proper public services that support us when we need them. I hope we can bring thousands onto the streets to show how important decent pensions, education and health care are and that ESPOPF members will join us.

*Dot Gibson General Secretary
National Pensioners Convention*

Dear Editor

Our visit to West End during November proved both profitable and enjoyable. On behalf of the RNLI please accept our grateful thanks to ESPOPF members for their support.

Evelyn Ingram

Hamble

Dear Editor

Listening to the news and reading the papers, I am very concerned that the Government is making new proposals on social care for the elderly, when the Coughlan case referring to Alzheimer's has already passed through the highest court in the land. That judgement clearly establishes that, where a person's primary need is for health care, the NHS is responsible for the full cost of the package, including accommodation and social care.

The Coughlan case judgement was updated on April 16 2009 and may be found in the Law Society's Evidence to the House of Commons Health Committee Inquiry into NHS Continuing Care. Visit www.NHSCareinfo,

click on the Coughlan link and watch the video.

Norman Hart

West End

Dear Editor

A report commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) has called for the free bus travel scheme for pensioners to be means-tested. Yet, it has been reported that some councils are using the money, supplied by the Government for the bus passes, for other services. Some bus operators are being allowed to make huge profits from the scheme

It is short-sighted to ignore the fact that society as a whole benefits from enabling older people to stay independent and mobile. The results are reduced demand on health and social care services, less car usage, and money spent by pensioners boosting local economies.

Means-testing has failed in pensions and care and it would be a disaster if it were applied to bus travel.

*Peter Rayner Vice President
National Pensioners Convention*

Dear Editor

Thank you for your response with regard to our Scrutiny Review. I and my colleagues appreciate the opportunity to learn about ESPOPF's views on how Hampshire County Council and its partners engage with Older People. Our findings will be available on web pages which can be found at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/scrutiny/scrutinycommittees/safehealthypeople/engaginewitholderpeople.htm>

Pat West

HCC Cllr

*Please send contributions to
The ESPOPF Newsletter Editor
diane@espopf.org
Tel. 023 80403311*