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EASTLEIGH SOUTHERN PARISHES OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM

NEWSLETTER 48 March 2009

TRAVEL TOKENS CAMPAIGN

The *Daily Echo* reported that we won a partial victory in that the Borough Council was forced to put £20,000 more into the Budget for Concessionary Travel. They decided to extend the Subsidised Hospital Travel service to include GP surgeries up to 3 miles beyond the EBC boundary and consultant clinics in the community – presumably to counter the criticism of the dial-a-ride service: that it does not include medical appointments.

The Subsidised Hospital Travel Service was our proposal, originally, in Hamble – born out of despair that we were going to get nothing. And, here we are again! The scheme will benefit only those who can afford half-price taxi fares and those with medical appointments. How does it help those most in need? No consultation, as usual.

So, no travel tokens, but we are not finished yet. We do not give up that easily. We have this quaint idea that we live in a democracy, where councillors are elected to serve the people. If they don't, they can expect consequences.

What have we achieved so far from the campaign?

1. We raised a Petition of just over 2,000 signatures calling for the restoration of the travel tokens and the support was tremendous.
2. With the support of the *Echo*, we achieved an excellent publicity campaign over many months, raising awareness of the issues.
3. We sent deputations to all the parish councils in the southern parishes and the local area committees and won support for the campaign from those who were not Liberal Democrats.
4. We achieved the wholehearted and unequivocal support of the Conservative, Labour and UKIP prospective parliamentary candidates

in the Borough, who took up the campaign in their leaflets and stalls. Their borough councillors proposed amendments to the Budget to re-instate the travel tokens and we thank them for that.

5. In line with our aims, we provided a platform for our affected members to voice their concerns about the difficulties they would face without the tokens and we brought those concerns to the council and to the attention of the general public.

6. We managed to unite older people across the Borough by forming the Save Our Travel Tokens (SOTT) campaign, involving especially Chandlers Ford, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh and Fair Oak.

7. We recruited many new members and introduced many more to campaigning.

8. We raised ESPOPF's profile.

9. We mounted a very successful lobby of Borough councillors before the budget-making council meeting and ensured that Travel Tokens was the major issue in the debate on the Budget.

10. We exposed the ageist, uncaring, arrogant, unresponsive, tendencies of Eastleigh Liberal Democrats, so clearly evident and shocking at the council meeting.

Our programme for the future includes:

- pursuing our complaint to the Ombudsman that the Borough Council did not follow the correct procedures in making the decision to axe the travel tokens
- investigating the Equalities Bill/Act for breaches by the Borough Council
- reporting the Leader of the Council to the Standards Board for using his right of reply in the Budget debate to accuse ESPOPF's Hon. Secretary of being dishonest!!
- continuing to campaign for the frail elderly and disabled until the elections.

ESPOPF COMMITTEE 2008/9

Chair: Patience Sambrook (Hedge End) 01489 782552

Vice Chair: Jackie Charles (Hamble) 02380 453296

Hon. Sec. Diane Andrewes (Bursledon) 02380 403311

Hon. Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Betty Lawrence (Netley) 02380 453680

Members: John Taylor (Butlocks Heath) Jean Huggett (Botley) Margaret Phippard (Hamble) Shirley Driscoll Pat Rose (West End) Pat Jenkins June Watson (Hedge End) Peggy Budd (Netley Abbey) Jean Norton (Bursledon) Gloria Bowles (Hamble) Botley: one vacancy Web Master: David Andrewes

(Any members interested in filling the vacancy should contact the Hon. Sec.)

JANUARY OPEN MEETING

88 people signed the Attendance Book, but many more people attended and appreciated the very successful Information Day at the Underhill Centre. Over 30 representatives from EBC, HCC and housing associations, public services, Hampshire PCT, One Community, Wildern School, In Touch etc staffed stalls with information during the morning and gave short talks during the afternoon. We thank them all for coming to meet us and for all their work for us.

A similar event involving community and other voluntary organisations is planned for later in the year. The Raffle raised £64 – many thanks to those buying tickets and bringing prizes. The 100 Club membership for 2009 was closed. A fish and chips lunch followed by lemon meringue pie was appreciated by all.

HEARING - AID BATTERIES

David Andrewes has been pursuing **hearing-aid batteries** on our behalf after discovering that they are not available in the southern parishes of Eastleigh. We have asked the PCT, in the first instance, to commission the Blackthorn Pharmacy in Netley Abbey to stock NHS hearing aid batteries, so that they may be delivered to patients with other medication.

Currently, batteries may be obtained from the following NHS clinics:

RSH (Tel. 02380 825124)

Mon. -Thurs. 9am – 12.30pm and 1.30 – 4.30pm.

Bitterne Health Centre (Tel. 02380 420420)

Mon.-Fri. 8.30am – 4.30pm

Woolston Health Clinic (Tel. 02380 447074)

Wed. 1 – 4pm Thurs. 9.30am – 11.30am

Sylvan Clinic (Park Gate) (Tel. 01489 5750980)

Mon.- Fri. 9am -4pm

Private batteries may be purchased from Williams Pharmacy in Netley Abbey.

N.B. Don't forget to take your used batteries and hearing-aid log book with you.

Evelyn West of Hamble brought this problem to our attention. We are grateful to

Chris Huhne MP for his help in getting information from the Minister for Health and to David for pursuing the matter on our behalf.

Please let us know if there are other omissions in our services in the southern parishes and we will take up the matter. We should like to know, for instance, why we do not have an NHS Walk-In Centre in the Borough.

BHH AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

The production of this has been delayed as the Borough Council had second thoughts about presenting it as a joint venture. This meant that we were unable to launch the Plan at the Information Day in January, as planned. However, we have made a successful application to the Hampshire and IOW Community Foundation for a Grassroots Grant to pay for design and printing to the same standard as our research and we look forward to publishing our very own action plan in the spring.

LAUNCH OF HAMBLE VALLEY U3A

Four months ago, ESPOPF decided to look into whether there was sufficient support for a U3A branch in the southern parishes. It was standing room only at the launch of a new branch of the U3A on February 23rd, when 120 people arrived at the Underhill Centre for the occasion.

Hence a HAMBLE VALLEY BRANCH of the University of the Third Age was born.

A strong committee has been formed and has already met twice. We hope to have our first Hamble Valley branch meeting in May. Watch local publications for developments and if you would like to join, telephone our Membership Secretary, on **01489 781845**.

Patience Sambrook
(Congratulations to Patience and her steering group for achieving such a magnificent turn-out! Ed.)

JANUARY 100 CLUB WINNERS

£50 Shirley Driscoll (No 36) West End
£25 Betty Lawrence (No 59) Netley Abbey
£25 Mrs M. Steller (No 48) West End

NOTICE BOARD

PENSIONS TIME BOMB

Guardian Money advice:

- 1 Work till you drop! The employers can't stop you now.
- 2 Spend everything you have, if you have little savings or earnings at retirement age. You'll do better with means-tested benefits such as pension credit.
- 3 Put more substantial savings into individual savings accounts (ISAs). You can make regular savings of up to £3,600 a year. Income from these is tax free.
- 4 Become an amateur landlord. There will be bargain properties over the next year or so, and you can leave this investment to your family, unlike the pension funds.
- 5 Check old pensions – plans from previous employers may be worth more than you think

MONEY-SAVING TIPS

- 1 Fill a large Thermos flask with boiling hot water from the kettle, after first warming the flask. It will last all day and stay piping hot, so you don't need to keep boiling the kettle - and you keep up your fluid intake.
- 2 Ensure that all electrical appliances that are not in use are unplugged, especially mobile phone chargers, the TV, printers and computers (if not to be used for an hour). Do not leave them on stand-by.
- 3 Turn your thermostat down by one degree to save 10% on your heating bill.

50+ DRAMA WORKSHOP

Patrick Sandford, Nuffield Theatre's Artistic Director will lead the workshop on May 2 from 10am – 4.30pm. Cost £15 (concession) Early booking is essential. All levels of experience are welcome.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Hampshire Trading Standards offer to help Hampshire residents to resolve difficult disputes over buying goods, services and other facilities through mediation. The service is free, quicker than court action and can be offered at home, their offices or any other suitable location. **Tel. 01962 833620** or email **rsadvice@hants.gov.uk**

MONUMENT TO THE WOMEN OF WORLD WAR 2

This is situated in Whitehall to the north of the Cenotaph. It was sculpted by John Mills and dedicated by the Queen on July 11th 2005. It stands 22 feet high, 16 feet long and 6 feet wide. There are 17 individual sets of clothing and uniforms around the sides, symbolising the hundreds of different jobs women undertook in World War 2 and then gave back to the returning men at the end of the war.

SPONSORED SCOOTER RAMBLE & WALK MAY 10 ITCHEN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK

Open to all disabled people with a scooter/wheelchair. In aid of Hampshire Friends with ME (registered charity). Volunteer helpers needed. Email Di Pettet: di.madmunchkin@yahoo.co.uk

ROYAL MAIL SCAM ALERT

Do not reply to a card through your door from a scam company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service), saying that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them by telephone. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message, you will already have been billed for £15.

HOME LIBRARY SERVICE

If you, or someone you know, would like a regular visitor to bring books, CDs or talking books, contact your local library or tel. 0845 603563. The Library Service is also keen to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer to be a visitor

ESPOPF SUPPORTS GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEMES

If you are able to spend the odd hour helping people in your community with the small jobs they find difficult or providing them with local transport to wherever they need to go, please contact your local care group. You never know. You may need that little bit of help, yourself. Who will be there for you, if no one is there to help?

Hamble	02380 452273
Netley	02380 453680
Bursledon	02380 402806
Botley	01489 691746

We are hoping that a new group will be formed in West End. If you are willing to help, please contact Diane (02380 403311) in the first instance.

HOW TO FIND YOUR ARMY ANCESTORS

Hampshire County Council and Winchester Council are organising a day event at the Winchester Discovery Centre on June 12. £22 .Contact the Discovery Centre for details.

ARTHRITIS SUFFERERS

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) is set to reconsider guidance that currently limits the use of a new rheumatoid arthritis drug. Originally, patients were to be rationed to one anti-TNF drug each, but campaigners said it was vital for patients to be allowed alternative versions.

NEXT OPEN MEETING: MAY 19TH

YOU WRITE...

Dear Editor

The **free swimming** offer is for local authorities in England which are responsible for leisure services, which means district and unitary councils. County councils aren't eligible for this part of the programme. However, we hope the funding we have made available will bring about a step change in participation in swimming and accelerate the trend to remove charges by local authorities for swimming.

We will be using the evidence from these two years to inform any future funding and delivery arrangements. Feedback is always welcome and I am grateful to Eastleigh Southern Parishes Older People's Forum for their observations.

Andy Burnham MP

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

(We wrote to say that older people in rural and semi-rural areas would not benefit Ed.)

Dear Editor

I am 88 and was alone in the house when I slipped on the stairs at 10pm and bumped my way to the bottom. At first, I was not too concerned as nothing seemed to be broken, but I lost a lot of blood from a bad gash on my leg. I called an ambulance and was taken to the A&E at the Southampton General. They patched me up and sent me home.

A day later, I needed to go again to A&E, as my foot and the big toe were very swollen. X-rays revealed no breakages, but I was instructed to call my GP and ask for the nurse to come to renew the dressings, which she did daily to begin with. Then they contacted ESPRIT, the rehabilitation team,

who phoned to ask what they could do for me.

They came the next day with a Zimmer frame (most useful, especially when I get up in the mornings), checked the house for potential accident spots and promised to come back in six weeks with a bathing aid to attach to my bath. However, it proved to be too expensive for them, so I am having to explore other options.

The nursing staff at Hedge End Surgery have been excellent: careful and gentle. My leg has healed, but my foot is still swollen, and my balance is not as good as it was.

I felt I must write to let members know how good the **local medical services** are when you need them.

Jean Norton

Bursledon

Dear Editor

Please allow me to express sincere thanks to members who supported the Hamble Branch of the **RNLI** when we brought our stall to the Open Meeting before Christmas.

Evelyn Ingram

Hamble

Dear Editor

Every day, thousands of older people suffer dreadful abuse or are on the receiving end of substandard or poor care.

A Government-sponsored report in 2007 suggested that 342,000 old people experience abuse within their own homes. Action on Elder Abuse estimates that the true figure could be more than 500,000.

We are therefore supporting the call by **Action on Elder Abuse** and others for the Government to introduce a new law to put the protection of old people on the same status as children and animals.

If we cannot give safety and security to our older citizens then we have no justification to call ourselves a civilised nation. They deserve better than this.

Baroness Sally Greenham et al
House of Lords

Dear Editor

I am trying to contact old Royal Air Force mates/comrades, mostly senior citizens, to put them back in touch with each other. No doubt, many of these **ex-RAF personnel** could be living alone or are housebound and feeling quite lonely. Belonging to an association such as this would give them an interest.

For more information, please send SAE to

Jim Semple, Secretary TCVA 187
Severn Avenue Swindon SN2S 3NB

Dear Editor

Eastleigh CAB (Citizens' Advice Bureau) is pleased to announce a new **Home Visiting Service**.

This is for people who are unable to access the bureau because of age, disability or illness. The service is available to all, regardless of race, sex, sexuality or nationality.

The CAB is an independent charity, which provides free, independent, impartial and confidential advice. It helps with many problems including debt and money matters, housing issues and homelessness, welfare benefits, family problems, consumer problems and legal procedures.

The CAB offices are at 101 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, the Old Library, St John's Road Hedge End and Blackthorn Health Centre, Netley. Tel. 02380 616046 and 01489 79665 for advice. To request a home visit, contact

Sally Collier

02380 80617575

Eastleigh

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDITOR, ORCHARD HILL, OLD BURSLEDON, SO31 8DH

(The Editor reserves the right to edit letters to meet space requirements.)

EASTLEIGH SOUTHERN PARISHES

OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM

OPEN MEETING

TUESDAY MARCH 17 2009

UNDERHILL CENTRE ST JOHN'S ROAD

HEDGE END SO30 4AF

PROGRAMME

COFFEE/TEA & BISCUITS 10.15AM

WORKSHOPS (Details overleaf) 11AM - 12.30PM

LUNCH 12.45 PM - 1.30PM

RAFFLE /100 CLUB DRAW 1.30PM-1.45PM

***EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HUSTINGS:
QUESTION TIME FOR CANDIDATES
FROM ALL POLITICAL PARTIES***

2 PM - 3.30PM (Details overleaf)

RSVP Betty Lawrence 8 Rookley Netley Abbey SO31 5PH Tel.02380 453680

Name(s)..... Tel.....

Address.....

.CHOOSE :

DEADLINE:

14/3/09

Cod & chips...Scampi & chips ...Jumbo Sausage & chips...Vegetarian Option...
(£3.50)

Roulade with cream: Chocolate... Lemon ...Toffee Pecan ... Diabetic option...
(£2.50)

I/we wish to book...lunches @£5(2 courses)

or Main Course(£3.50)... Sweet... (£2.50)

**PLEASE INFORM BETTY OF ANY CANCELLATIONS PRIOR TO THE EVENT.
ALL ORDERED MEALS TO BE PAID FOR - ON THE DAY IN CASH, PLEASE.**

I/we need..... seat(s) on the FREE DOOR-TO-DOOR BOTLEY BUS.

I/we enclose £3/£5 2008/9 Subscription (made payable to ESOPF).....

My question for the Hustings

**Hon. Secretary: Diane Andrewes Orchard Hill Salterns Lane Old Bursledon SO31 8DH
Tel. 02380 403311 email: diane.andrewes@virgin.net**

OPEN MEETING INFORMATION

1 TRANSPORT- Please assist our driver, Ian Jordan of Botley Neighbour Care. He is a volunteer driver and will be glad of some help with finding our members. Pick-ups from 9.15am - we are unable to be precise for obvious reasons. It was good that members arrived earlier last time. If you use a wheelchair, please come by Dial-a-ride. Contact Diane, if there are problems.

2 FOOD – Our caterers have taken on another contract and are unable to continue. As the fish and chip option last time was so popular and trouble-free, the committee has agreed to use it while we search for another caterer. Please make a note of what food you order and bring the note with you! If you order a meal, you must pay for it, unless you cancel before the deadline for ordering. Otherwise, ESPOPF has to pay.

3 MORNING SESSION (11am – 12.30pm)

a) Workshops:

1 Peter Boustred (EBC) will consult members about the **EBC Walking Strategy**. (Given the deterioration of bus services, the proposed loss of travel tokens and the need to take exercise, walking and how it should be facilitated must be on our agenda.)

2 **EBC Subsidised Transport to Hospital Service** – an ESPOPF assessment. Members are invited to discuss this service in the light of the new proposals to extend it.

3 A Speaker from the **Alzheimer's Society** will lead a discussion and answer questions

b) **Exercises: Diane Rodaway returns.**

4 AFTERNOON SESSION (2-3.30pm)

European Parliamentary Candidates:

Conservative: Richard Robinson
Green: Keith Taylor
Labour: Bob Fromant
Lib. Dem.: Sharon Bowles (invited)
UKIP: Ray Finch

The European Parliament is still in session, so existing Members are unable to attend our meeting and send apologies. All the speakers are standing for election in the south-east. Members are asked to send questions for the speakers to Diane (see *overleaf*).

5 EVALUATION

Please let us know what you think about our Open Meetings. Use our Suggestion Box or tell a committee member. We aim to please, but we need your help.

HEALTH WATCH

Myxoedema is an illness, which is easily missed and easily cured. It is caused by failure of the thyroid gland in the neck to make enough of its hormone, *thyroxine*.

Myxoedema is most frequently seen in middle-aged women and it mimics the normal ageing process.

The symptoms are rather vague: general slowing down; nodding off to sleep; finding it takes longer to grasp and to react to ideas; feeling the cold; loss of appetite and putting on weight.

The trouble is that we all do these things, so what else must we watch out for?

- the face can be expressionless, poker-like, sometimes staring blankly and unblinkingly.
- there can be characteristic swelling of the legs below the knees.
- the voice can become gruff and there may be some thinning of the hair.

If *myxoedema* is suspected, a simple blood-test will confirm or refute the diagnosis.

What if you have it? Good news! The gradual introduction of one or two tablets a day of thyroxine will bring you back to life. Your children will say, "Mum. You do look better these days."

STROKE AWARENESS

Face fallen on one side

Arms – cannot be raised

Speech becoming slurred

Time to ring 999

FAST treatment will aid recovery.

AGE DISCRIMINATION BANNED in NHS

The Government's new Equality Bill was confirmed in the Queen's Speech in December 2008 and will be introduced in March 2009.

The Bill bans age discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services. It introduces a new equality duty on public bodies and strengthens enforcement of discrimination law. The ban will apply to health care, social care and financial services.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 145 of the Health & Social Care Act 2008 ensures that publicly-funded residents of private or voluntary sector care homes are fully protected under the Human Rights Act.