

May 2016

The **Queen's 90th birthday celebrations** start on her birthday, 21 April and continue up to and including the Patron's Lunch on 12 June.



Book now to take a free place at MSOPC's celebration on 10 June at the Copthorne Hotel Effingham.

Be part of the heritage project, enjoy an afternoon tea fit for a Queen, get into the mood with the Absolutely Vintage Swing Band, enjoy an afternoon with friends. See page 3 for more information.

Leave a message on 01444 242760 or email anita@msopc.org.uk Let us know if you need transport get there.

Celebrate with MSOPC

Barbara Baldwin, Chair, MSOPC writes what a special year! There are quite a few ways in which you can join in the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations locally - including contributing to our heritage project, joining us for afternoon tea on Friday June 10, or at our stand in St John's Park Burgess Hill on Sunday 12 June.

There is also the 175th Anniversary of the train coming to Haywards Heath celebrations over the weekend of the 17/18 September, Older People's Day in October, and before we know it, Christmas! More details about all these events can be found inside this newsletter.



We need your photos! MSOPC has been awarded a heritage lottery grant so that we can record with your help for generations to come the last 90 years in Mid Sussex. See page 4 for more information about its unveiling on 10 June at our afternoon tea celebrating the Queen's birthday.

Do you know someone who is 90 on the same day as the Queen? The Royal Mint is offering a free £5 coin gift to pensioners who turn 90 on the same day as the Queen - April 21. Nominations can be made by friends or relatives via the Royal Mint's Facebook page.

There was a big round of applause and “thank you”, a bouquet of flowers and other gifts at this year’s AGM for Elisabeth Willett. Elisabeth stepped down from her role as MSOPC’s Secretary, Committee member, Newsletter Editor, and fundraiser – roles she had held since MSOPC began – at the 2016 AGM.



A warm welcome to Joan Brown and David Waite, who were voted on to the MSOPC Management Committee at its recent AGM held in March.



“My family have been living in Haywards Heath for the last 38 years. “ I have two children and

Joan retired from a career in nursing at the end of September 2015 after 46 years. She told us, “I trained in Durham and moved South in 1984 with husband and two sons. I have two lovely grandchildren Mollie and Max and a dog called Sadie. Since retiring I have spent the last few months decorating my home, visiting and catching up with family and friends, as well going for long walks with Sadie.”

one grandchild. I have involved myself in community matters where I can, and in particular the health and welfare of retired people in my area. As well as re-joining the MSOPC Management Committee, I am also on Haywards Heath U3A and Music Society committees. I am a chartered surveyor by profession and spent my last 4 years before retirement working as Property Manager at Mid Sussex District Council.

Would you like to be part of the MSOPC Management Team?

Our next challenge is to find a volunteer for the role of Executive Assistant to the Trustees and Directors. This is likely to be a busy role with key responsibilities to provide support to the Trustees and Directors principally through the organisation and booking of around 15 meetings a year for the Trustees and Management Committee and working closely with the trustees, writing minutes and managing the distribution of papers. Our Chairman would love to hear from you if you would like to discuss taking on this role. Ring 01444 242760 and leave a message or email anita@soppc.org.uk.

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Congratulations to Chris Snowling, Non Executive Trustee, who has been appointed to a new role of

Secretary which will see him providing a legal input into MSOPC, beginning with a review of the organisations’ Constitution and Articles and memorandum of Association. Chris is a retired solicitor. His last legal appointment was as a President of Mental Health Review Tribunals. He was a district councillor locally from 1971 to 2015 and continues to be a member of Lindfield Parish Council.



Congratulations also to Val Upton who has been appointed to the role of Vice Chairman.

(Editorial comment: I think this might be our first “selfie” photo.)

MSOPC's Queen's Birthday Tea Celebration 10 June 2.30 – 4.30 pm

As a grand finale of its Connecting Communities initiative, and in celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday, MSOPC decided it should try and bring as many older people living in Mid Sussex together as it could for a couple of hours for an afternoon tea, in a village in Mid Sussex.



MSOPC found the only venue there is in Mid Sussex that can comfortably cope with more than 100 people – the fabulous Millennium Suite in the Copthorne Hotel Effingham which can hold up to 650 people. Mr Colin Field, JP, DL, a West Sussex Deputy Lieutenant will open the Event for MSOPC. The Lord-Lieutenant, whose primary duty, with her Vice-Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants, is to uphold the dignity of the Crown, is Her Majesty's personal representative in the county.



Freshly Baked Scones with Clotted Cream and Preserves

Selection of Teas & Coffee

Finger Sandwiches Cucumber & Dill with Crème Fraiche (v) Smoked Salmon & Cream Cheese Honey Roast Ham and Wholegrain Mustard Mayo Italian Salami and Fresh Rocket

Mini Strawberry Tartlets Chocolate Choux Buns and Puff Pastry Vanilla Slices

Funding to cover the costs of 250 free teas for MSOPC supporters has been obtained. Priority for tickets for these free teas will be given to our long standing MSOPC supporters, who have attended so many of our events over the years. Additional tickets will be available at £17 per person. Compared to the £150 per head ticket to join the picnic in the Mall on June 12, this is a small price for an event to attend with friends at a great venue, with fantastic music, a heritage display, and mouth-wateringly delicious food. You will also stay dry if it rains!

Book your tickets by leaving your telephone number and name on our answerphone service by ringing 01444 242760, or email anita@msopc.org.uk If you need transport to get there, please let us know.



Music will be provided by

Absolutely Vintage Swing Band.

MSOPC's Queen's Birthday Heritage Project – help us create a lasting memory of the last 90 years in Mid Sussex



We are looking for photos over the last 90 years of:

**Albourne
Ansty
Ardingly
Ashurstwood
Balcombe
Bolney
Burgess Hill
Clayton
Cophorne
Crawley Down
Cuckfield
East Grinstead
Fulking
Handcross
Hassocks
Haywards Heath
Horsted Keynes
Hurstpierpoint
Keymer
Lindfield
Newtimber
Poynings
Pyecombe
Sayers Common
Scaynes Hill
Slaugham
Staplefield
Twineham
Turners Hill
Warninglid
West Hoathly,
Worth**

Also to celebrate the Queen's birthday, MSOPC is also very keen to capture some of the memories there are among older people of the last 90 years of living in Mid Sussex.

MSOPC is collecting photographs of Mid Sussex towns and villages over the years, and of any visits from the Royal Family. They will be displayed on a website "Monarchy, Music and Mid Sussex Memories" which will be found at www.90years.org.uk. Some of the pictures are also going to be displayed on banners which will be on display at the tea (see page 3). There will also be a slide show. After our events (see page 5 also), we will publish a special edition heritage newsletter.

In 1999, the Queen and Prince Philip visited Burgess Hill to open the Triangle Leisure Centre. She has visited the South of England Show twice – in 1984 and in 2002.

In 1971, the Queen visited Haywards Heath. She opened the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind's new office "Commonwealth House."

In 1939 she visited Horsted Keynes. She paid a surprise visit to the 140 Battersea children who had been evacuated there.

Did you live in Mid Sussex before the boundaries changed in 1974 and not on the list at the right? We want to hear from you too with any photos you have.

Do you have photos of Mid Sussex in the last 90 years or of the Queen's visits to Mid Sussex that you would like to share with us? Send them to msopcphotos@gmail.com. Or take them to your local library who can do this for you. Any problems or questions? Contact anita@msopc.org.uk or leave a message on 01444 242760.

Thank you to all our funders of our Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations and Heritage project including Affinity Sutton, The Childwick Trust, the Heritage Lottery, Mid Sussex District Council, the West Sussex County Council County Local Committees and the Burgess Hill Rotarians. And to those that have supported our funding applications, including Burgess Hill Town Council.

Other Queen's Birthday celebrations

175th Anniversary of the Train coming to Haywards Heath



There is long tradition of celebrating Royal jubilees, weddings, coronations and special birthdays with the lighting of beacons. This will have happened in Burgess Hill and East Grinstead on Thursday 21st April when beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories in celebration of Her Majesty The Queen's 90th Birthday that day. Do you have any photos of these events that you can share with us (see page 4)?

Burgess Hill Town Council is inviting Burgess Hill residents to write their birthday wishes to Her Majesty in a special leather bound book. The book will be available at the Town Council offices at 96 Church Walk until Friday 3rd June to coincide with The Queen's official birthday. The book will then be forwarded to The Queen for her to read everyone's birthday messages.

In partnership with Mid Sussex District Council, Haywards Heath Town Council will be celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday by organising a family picnic and sports taster day at Beech Hurst Gardens. This will take place on Sunday 12 June from 12 noon to 4.00pm.

St John's Park Burgess Hill 12 June

MSOPC is joining in one other celebration, taking place on 12 June 11am – 4pm in St John's Park Burgess Hill bring your deck chair to MSOPC's gazebo; view the MSOPC's Burgess Hill heritage banner; put your name down for a special edition heritage newsletter and do a bit of flag waving.

A most enjoyable, interesting and informative time was had by all on a lovely sunny spring afternoon on Tuesday 19th April at a presentation by the Haywards Heath Twinning Association, on the joys of Twinning, and the commissioning of the Mosaic to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the train coming to Haywards Heath. A change from some of the more weighty subjects we so often tackle, but thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.



Tim Briggs, Leader of the Town Team opened the event with a short talk on events and happenings in the town leading up to the weekend of 17/18 September. Do come along and join MSOPC at its stand. This was followed by a very interesting presentation by Leslie and Mike Bright about the activities of twinning and how the decision was made to commission the mosaic, which will be unveiled in the renovated railway station on Sunday 18 September.

Philip Ladd stepped in at the last minute due to a change to the programme, with his talk on the events 180 years or more ago, and various happenings, all to do with the railway, and on the town of Haywards Heath.



His, at times very amusing talk, on some of the antics of our predecessors wanting to make a quick buck on the then forthcoming railway, many of whom got their fingers burned, proved that basic human nature hasn't really changed at all.

MSOPC wishes to thank all its speakers and all who attended.

MSOPC's Forthcoming Events

Friday 10 June 2.30 – 4.30 pm

Queen's Birthday Tea (see page 3) – open to everyone but ticket only and must be booked in advance.
Transport available if you cannot get there if not provided.

Sunday 12 June 11am – 4pm

MSOPC Gazebo (see page 5) - free and open to everyone.

October

MSOPC older people's day information lunches in community cafes (we hope) – more news in our next Newsletter

Saturday 10 December 2 – 4 pm

MSOPC Christmas Party in Lindfield– open to everyone, but please book.

To make a booking for any of our events, or if you have any questions, please leave a message on our answerphone 01444 242760 or email anita@msopc.org.uk



Computer one to one weekly drop in sessions continue – more venues and digital champions needed.

Do you want to get connected via the internet, be able to use comparison websites to see if you can get a better deal on your gas or electricity prices – or car insurance, or just want to see your friends when you talk to them over the telephone or watch your grandchildren open the birthday presents you bought them? Maybe you would like to join in a church service but cannot get there – or talk to your GP over the internet?

Then why not come along to the Spire Café St John's Church Burgess Hill 11am – 1pm any Thursday morning and ask one of the digital champions which phone, tablet or laptop to buy – how to obtain broadband – how to connect then “google it”, email, face time and skype? Bring your smart phone, tablet or laptop if you already have one. We are also hoping sessions at Ardingly College in term time on Mondays 1.45 – 3pm will start again soon. Ring or email for more info (see above for details of number and address.)

We'd like to set up some more weekly IT drop in sessions – interested in offering a venue or becoming a digital champions? Not sure? Why not pop along to one of our existing drop in sessions – or give us a ring, or email for more information.

Did you know?

Blind Veterans UK (St Dunstan's from 1915)

This is an organisation that helps ex service men/women who have sight difficulties. 0800 389 7979.

4Sight

A charity supporting people with sight loss and a membership organisation based in West Sussex, with activities, advice and support for people living in Mid Sussex.. 01243 828 555 enquiries@4sight.org.uk

Free Half Day Course at a local surgery to learn what you can do to help avoid type 2 diabetes

You are more at risk if you are overweight, have a large waist, or if you are from an ethnic background and over 40, you have a parent, brother or sister with diabetes or you have had high blood pressure, a heart attack or a stroke.

The Mid Sussex Wellbeing team has launched the free diabetes prevention programme to show people how they can take control for themselves and reduce the risk of developing the condition.

For more information or to book a place call the Mid Sussex Wellbeing Team on 01444 477191 or email wellbeing@midsex.gov.uk

The NHS tells us:

Most people who need to lose weight can get health benefits from losing even a small amount – about 5% – of their weight if they keep it off.

Not sure if you need to lose weight? If you are not living with a condition that means you have regular checks, you could be eligible for a free NHS health check if you are between the ages of 40 and 74. Ask your GP surgery or local pharmacy.

Carrying too much fat around your middle (waist) can increase your risk of developing conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and cancer. What is considered too much fat? More than 94cm (37 inches) if you're a man and more than 80cm (31.5 inches) if you're a woman.

Self help - when is it appropriate?

Barbara Baldwin, Chairman MSOPC, writes

Do you sometimes get a bit fed up with all those messages saying you shouldn't eat or drink this or you will be healthier if you give up something such as meat, wine, cheese or other such foods and only eat XYZ, exercise four to five times a week? Only to be told a few months later by another researcher, well actually, a glass of red wine is good for you and in fact too much exercise can be harmful, especially if not done under the strict control of a qualified person, and in particular for those suffering with certain conditions, and that in fact you do need to eat all those things a few weeks earlier they were telling you not to eat, albeit in moderation. Which most of us already know anyway!

In other words. Do you get fed up with people trying to tell you how to live your life? I know I do, and as such tend to ignore the hysteria. We are mostly intelligent people who have managed to live to our current age, most of us have managed to do that very well, making decisions for ourselves and our families, running our homes whilst holding down a job. Therefore consider ourselves independently minded and responsible people, capable of making our own decisions.

So why then do we consider that our health is (continued in the next column)

MSOPC Representing the interests of older people living in Mid Sussex.

the business only of our Doctor and the NHS, and that everything should be free of charge, and whatever they tell us to do and whatever we need they should give it to us at no cost? We ask they give. Don't get me wrong. I think our NHS is something to be treasured and I like many others have had reason to be thankful that it is there. I would fight to the last to retain it. Also some things that are denied, I think should be paid for by the NHS, but then equally, I think that there are some treatments that should not be down to the NHS and therefore should not be paid for by them. Others may hold a different viewpoint to mine. I and everyone here at MSOPC is always eager to listen to what you our supporters have to say.

I only ask this question, because the other day I was chatting to a friend and I mentioned that I pay for a certain treatment which helps my poor old joints to move a little easier. It doesn't cost me a great deal, in fact I bought a box of chocolates as a gift for someone at Easter, and the chocolates cost more than my weekly treatment. But the reaction of my friend took me aback somewhat. She got very heated when she realised I paid for it myself and went on at great length as to why I shouldn't have to pay, and that it should be (continued on the next page)

(Continued from the previous page)
free under the NHS etc., etc. I did explain that I had already received several weeks of treatment and in addition my GP has prescribed pain killers if things get too uncomfortable. But it was suggested that if I took this particular course of action myself it would help relieve the pain and make things a little easier. So I looked into it and I made a conscious and an independent decision to go for it. It helps enormously. So I took control of the situation, but I also followed good sound medical advice.

But it got me wondering. What does the wider population think on this very evocative subject? Here at MSOPC we would love to know your thoughts on the subject. Especially as we consult on a fairly regular basis with the various sections of the NHS, and it is always good for us to keep in touch with our supporters to know how they feel about things.

You can let us know by leaving a message on our answerphone 01444 242760 or emailing anita@msopc.org.uk.

Non Emergency Patient Transport. Lack of suitable transport for a whole range of journeys is a concern raised with MSOPC on a regular basis, and MSOPC was delighted that the NHS Horsham and Mid Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group gave patients plenty of opportunity to feed their comments into the review of the Sussex-wide service that helps people access healthcare appointments.

MSOPC is concerned to see however that the provider of the resulting new service, Coperforma, which provides some 25,000 journeys per month for people who are unable to use public or other transport owing to medical conditions, has made national headlines because it is not currently proving to be up to the task. Tony Reynolds, our Committee Members most in touch with all that is NHS, wanted to share the following news with you. To ease the pressure on telephone calls to the service please only call Coperforma on **0300-111-2131** if you wish to discuss a journey taking place within the next 48 hours. If you or anyone in your community group encounters any difficulty with the Coperforma service, you can contact the Clinical Commissioning Group on 01293 600300 extension 4255.

You might also want to contact Healthwatch, who provide help and advice in respect of health and social care services, can support with a complaint against an NHS funded service, and are interested in hearing your experience. Healthwatch West Sussex has a walk-in service at your local Citizens Advice. You can also contact them by ringing 0300 012 0122 or emailing helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk.

We know from listening to our supporters that there are many ways in which older people living in Mid Sussex could benefit from some help, currently not available, with transport to get to essential appointments at the GP surgery and at the hospital, or to visit relatives in hospital.

Annie G, one of the MSOPC Committee members said:

“John was in Brighton Hospital. Getting there was something else: 291 bus from East Grinstead was a nightmare, its a 2 hour ride and very bumpy, so I got myself a Senior Railcard. Took the 400 bus to Three Bridges, then the train to Brighton (£8.00 return) then the number 7 bus straight to the hospital.....”

Many local areas have charitable door to door transport services that might be able to help. For example: **CARE** volunteers, who cover the Haywards Heath, Cuckfield and Lindfield areas, use their own cars to take clients to places they need to visit but where public transport is not available or practical. Ring 01444 455955 to find out more. For **Care** in East Grinstead, ring 01342 410086.

Neighbourly Care offers similar transport help to people living on Burgess Hill, Hassocks, Keymer, Clayton, Albourne, Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint. Ring 07876 066368.

The Care Quality Commission, the independent regulator of health and social care in England, wants more older people, and their friends and families, to share their experiences of health and social care.

Research has shown that older people are less likely to complain about services and are less aware of the different ways they can share their views. However older people are the most regular users of health services. Two out of three people admitted to hospital and 70 per cent hospital emergency beds are taken by those aged 65 and over.

It is vital that the voices of our growing elderly population are heard. If you are aged 60 or over and receiving care, or a friend or family member of someone who is, CQC want you to tell them about the care you've received, good or bad.

They explain. "Our inspectors can't be everywhere at once and your information will help us decide when, where and what to inspect. By telling us about your experiences, you could stop poor care happening to someone else."

The CQC Inspection of Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, this includes The Royal Sussex County Hospital (Brighton) and The Princess Royal Hospital (Haywards Health) starts from 4 April.

Contact 03000 616161, alternatively email tellus@cqc.org.uk or enquiries@cqc.org.uk to share an experience with CQC.

Annie G (continues see previous page):

My dear partner John has had major heart surgery, an estimated time of 8 to 10 days went into 7 weeks. He was well looked after and the staff communicated with the family on all levels. But-- the serving of meals: No colour coded trays, so they missed his diabetes for a couple of days, leading to complications. Taking food orders on scraps of paper not very business like. Cleaning of wards and outside in the common parts not good. Also only 2 small shower/toilets for a mixed ward of 16/20 patients. And of course lack of reasonable parking means I went by bus and train from East Grinstead. Building works! When they have finished – however many years time - will it be user friendly? I found it not at all user friendly, dirty, dark and depressing.

But that said the clinical staff are excellent and makes up for all the inconvenience. John is home now and doing well. So thank you Brighton.

I also went to Horsham Hospital on my own account, now that's lovely. I thought I was going into a hotel, friendly staff, light and airy, nice pot plants and so clean.

But I used Car-Care for my trip to Horsham, it is charity run, so you just pay a donation, depending on the length of the journey. **Tel: Number 01342 410086**, put that in your phone book, because they are very good.

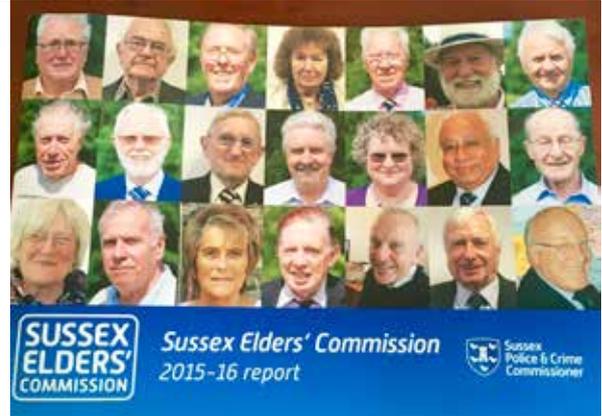


Book an Information Roadshow

Do you want to know more about the benefits and services available for older people living in Mid Sussex? Did you know that the 2016 edition of Community Connections is now out! Do you know what the recommended healthy room temperature is? Are you on the priority services register? Ring 01444 242760 and leave a message or email anita@msopc.org.uk. Recent groups to have done this all agreed the information is interesting and useful.

Creating Safer Communities

Another way in which MSOPC has been able to share Mid Sussex older people's views is to work with the Police Crime Commissioner's Sussex Elders. We are most fortunate that Ray Hoare, a retired resident of Horsted Keynes, invited us to do so. The culmination of their work is the report – launched in Parliament on 8 March – and locally at our Creating Safer Communities Conference one week later.



Katy Bourne, Police Crime Commissioner, was our speaker for the morning.

MSOPC is grateful to all the organisations and individuals who support it in its work



Featured in the photo with Katy are the ("Chain Gang") Mayors of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, and the Chairman of Mid Sussex District.



Nuisance calls and scams were identified by older people as their biggest concern. 15-20% of older people asked said they worried when

the phone rang. Sussex Police and Elder advice – more of it can be found in the Third Edition Little Book of Big Scams:

- Don't trust everyone at face value: If it's too good to be true, it probably is.
- Use the Telephone and Mailing preference services – ask for details.
- Report anything you think might be a scam – use 101 unless its an emergency, then use 999.
- Don't ever give away personal or financial information even if the caller claims to be from a company you know or the police.
- Don't call back using numbers left on your answerphone or reply to text messages you don't recognise.

Action on Elder Abuse, a national charity attended and told us that they spoke confidentially to quite a number of people who had also been a victim of abuse in one way or another. There are five common types of abuse: physical, psychological, financial, sexual abuse and neglect. Ring the free confidential helpline if you would like to talk about suspected abuse - 080 8808 8141

West Sussex County Council Trading Standards has a role to play also in helping us stay safe. Consumer Advice is provided by the Consumer Advice Services. Ring 03454 040506. The 2016 editions of the Buy with Confidence Directory – offering vetted and approved traders – is out. Request your copy by ringing 01243 642124



If you would like to contribute to the MSOPC's response to the Sussex Elders' Report, please leave a message on 01444 242760 or email anita@msopc.org.uk.

Have you got enough income for your needs?

April is often the time when benefits change

- The basic State Pension under the pre-2016 system will go up by £3.35 to £119.30 per week, although you may get more or less than this depending on your circumstances and your National Insurance record.

If you reach State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016, the new State Pension system will apply:

- This will affect you if you're a man born on or after 6 April 1951 or a woman born on or after 6 April 1953.
- The full State Pension under the new State Pension will be £155.65 per week although you may get more or less than this depending on your circumstances and your National Insurance record.
- Visit www.gov.uk/check-state-pension to get a statement to show how much your new State Pension is likely to be.

At the same time, the standard rate of **Pension Credit**, which gives pensioners a guaranteed minimum income level, will increase to £155.60 a week for single people and £237.55 for couples.

The increase in the Pension Credit guarantee is partly being paid for by a reduction in Savings Credit (extra money if you've got some savings or your income is higher than the Basic State Pension). From April 2016 this will be a maximum of £13.07 a week extra if you're single and up to £14.75 if you're a couple. You won't be eligible for Savings Credit if you reach State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016. Only those who reached State Pension age before this date may be eligible.

There will be no change in the rates of other parts of the State Pension such as the Additional State Pension or most other benefits including Attendance Allowance. This is because they are linked to inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) and in the year ending September 2015 this was negative.

Are you entitled to attendance allowance?

You could be eligible if you:

- are 65 or over (if you're under 65, you may be eligible for Personal Independence Payment instead)
- could benefit from help with personal care, such as getting washed or dressed, or supervision to keep you safe during the day or night
- have any type of disability or illness, including sight or hearing impairments, or mental health issues such as dementia
- have needed help for at least 6 months. (If you're terminally ill you can make a claim straight away.)

Attendance Allowance isn't means-tested, so your income and savings aren't taken into account. You don't actually have to receive help from a carer, as Attendance Allowance is based on the help you need, not the help you actually get.

And you don't have to spend your Attendance Allowance on care – it's up to you how you use it. Attendance Allowance can help you to stay independent in your own home. So don't delay in making a claim if you think you could be eligible.

Tax Changes

The personal allowance is the amount of income you can receive before you pay tax. From April 2016 the basic personal allowance will rise to £11,000. This will further increase to £11,500 from April 2017.

From April 2016, a new Personal Savings Allowance will mean that the first £1,000 of interest earned on savings will be tax free for basic rate taxpayers. For higher-rate taxpayers, the first £500 of interest will be tax free.

The ISA allowance for 2016/17 is frozen at £15,240. However, this will rise to £20,000 from April 2017. ISAs are also more flexible now, allowing you the freedom to withdraw and replace money in the same tax year without losing your ISA tax benefits.

Contact the Prevention Assessment Team if you would like practical, financial or emotional help to remain living independently 01403 229510 or pat.north@westsussex.gov.uk

Around the Mid Sussex Towns and Villages

Last, but by no means least, MSOPC is pleased to tell you that it is continuing to build up contacts in the very many towns and villages in Mid Sussex (see page 4 for a list).

Are you are interested in meeting up to discuss ways in which Mid Sussex village older people can be more involved in MSOPC and its activities and MSOPC can improve its knowledge of and engagement with people in the villages? In the past our approach has been to invite people to attend our regular committee meeting in order to do this.



Our new approach is to test whether there is any appetite for setting up a fairly informal MSOPC network of village reps and explore what they might do.

Monica lives in a Mid Sussex village and is interested in exploring the possibility. Monica came into contact with MSOPC via its Ardingly College IT drop in sessions (see page 6). If you are interested in meeting to discuss an MSOPC village network, please leave a message on our answerphone 01444 242760 or email anita@msopc.org.uk

One of the things we think this informal network will establish is two-way communication. Our Development Officer popped into the Albourne monthly tea in April and took with her the latest versions of the booklets and room thermometer cards mentioned on pages 9 and 10. What she was told was that they would like to move the monthly tea to taking place in the mornings rather than the afternoons. But there is no room at the Hall as the play group is in at that time. This is a problem we've come across before – and are not sure what the solution is. As a result of Anita's visit, we are now able to post information on the website and in this newsletter about events that the organisers in **Albourne** would love other people living in Mid Sussex to attend, as follows:

Friday 13 May Quiz at the Pop Up Pub in the Village Hall 8pm **Friday 17 June** Sussex Day Celebrations at the Pop Up Pub in the Village Hall 8pm and **Sunday 17 July** Family Fun Day.

Ardingly

Meeting Point, a once a fortnight coffee morning 10.15 – 11.30 am at Hapstead Village Hall. Refreshments include coffee, tea and home made cakes. There is also a car scheme to help the less mobile get to the centre. The next one is Monday 16 May. stpetersardingly@lineone.net or 01444 892368 to book or for more information.

Burgess Hill

Eric tells us "In our Shed you can enjoy a real sense of camaraderie, purpose and achievement that develops by sharing interests, activities and know-how with other like-minded people." Email shed@openpm.co.uk or ring 01444 236743 or 07709 255631 for more information.

East Grinstead

From Annie, our East Grinstead Committee Member: U3A East Grinstead is raising funds for Age UK East Grinstead, by putting on a Singing is for Pleasure Concert on Friday 20 May 2-4pm at a cost of £5 per head at the Jubilee Community Centre Charlwood Road RH19 2HL Contact Age UK East Grinstead on 01342 327046 for more information about this or any other activities.

Haywards Heath

Andra is a Haywards Heath Dementia Friends champion and has sent the following: For carers, there is a Time for You day on **Wednesday 8th June** at the Town Hall, and for all, 'A Day to Remember' on **Saturday 2nd July** at The Orchards. Contact 01444 455694 for more information. If you are not yet a Dementia Friend come along to the next drop in session at the Town Hall, Haywards Heath is on **Friday 20th May**, 2.00 - 4.00pm

Hurspierpoint

Hurst Afternoon Club – meet at the Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurspierpoint at 2.15pm once a month. Tuesday 7th June 's topic is Musical Entertainment with Daisy Pippage.

Lindfield

Tiger Arts lunchtime concerts continue monthly on the second Wednesday of the month (May 11, June 8 and July 13) in the Lindfield United Reformed Church. Lunches are served in the Hall from 12.15 and concerts begin in the Church from 1pm. Admission and lunches continue to be free, but gifts towards expenses are gratefully received.