

# The Pensioner

Journal of Brighton & Hove Pensioner Action



No. 44, Spring 2013

## The value of 'Engagement'



Many organisations (e.g. Age UK and the local Primary Care Trust) now have engagement officers or teams. But the word is ambiguous. What does engagement mean for Pensioner Action? We believe that older people should have a voice in expressing their needs and opinions and know about and have access to services available to them and should be active in society and not socially excluded.

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## Pensioner Action public event - Heat or Eat?

Many people are finding it difficult to manage the costs of heating their home, particularly older people who are at home a lot during the day. At our February reminiscence lunch and information event we discussed the rising costs of food and fuel, with speakers from Warm Homes and the Harvest programme of the Food Partnership giving out lots of information and free samples to participants. Everybody went away with something useful.



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'The Pensioner'  
- help keep our  
magazine going



Arts and activities  
in your city



AgeUK Help at  
Home Service

Inside this issue

No. 44



## Editor's letter

Welcome to the spring edition of The Pensioner. I am sure we're all pleased to see the back of that endless winter! There is much going on locally, especially in the light of the government cuts and the

effect this will have on older people. Pensioner Action has been busy networking and reporting on many of these changes. There are also plenty of good and exciting things happening and we hope you find this issue informative and interesting.

### STOP PRESS - Our future

After 22 years Pensioner Action will sadly close at the end of June, this is due to changes in our funding. The

summer issue of The Pensioner will still be published. In the meantime we are looking at ways to source future funding for the magazine so we can continue to produce it. Part of this process will be to evaluate what makes it a popular and important journal for older people in Brighton and Hove. In the next issue we will be asking for your views, so please watch this space!

At People's Day on Saturday 15th June, Pensioner Action will be celebrating its achievements and acknowledging those who have contributed to our successes. Please come and join us in the Hanover Room at the Brighthelm Centre, North Road from 11am – 1pm, refreshments will be provided.

**Write to: Mandi Sherratt, Pensioner Action,  
1st Floor, Intergen House, 65 - 67 Western Road,  
Hove, BN3 2JQ. Tel: 01273 229 004  
Email: [mandi.sherratt@bh-impetus.org](mailto:mandi.sherratt@bh-impetus.org)**

**The Pensioner** is the journal of Pensioner Action, part of Impetus, a registered charity set up to empower local people by championing volunteering and strengthening community and

voluntary organisations. See our website at <http://www.bh-impetus.org/index.php>. We print 4000 copies of the magazine, three times a year. Most of these are delivered free of charge to older people via

care workers, community nurses, sheltered housing and libraries.

## Getting a regular copy

If you would like to receive a copy of The Pensioner by post and are not already a subscriber then please contact Mandi Sherratt who will arrange for the magazine to be delivered to your home for a small fee of £1.67 per issue to cover postage.

## Pensioner Action team

- Sue Howley - Chair of PA
- Peter Lloyd - Chair of Editorial Committee
- Sue Goodwin – PA Service Manager
- Mandi Sherratt – PA Editor and Administrator
- Stephen Clarke - Proofreader

## Advertise in The Pensioner

The Pensioner is a major means of communication for older people in Brighton & Hove. The editorial work is covered in part by a small grant from the PCT and provided by a voluntary committee. Delivery of copies is largely by volunteers, we have no grant to cover printing costs and we rely heavily on advertising to produce the magazine. We are seeking new advertisers and would greatly welcome local businesses that provide services for older people to place an advert, our rates are:

- ¼ page advert - £75 (A6: 98mm W x 134.3mm H)
- ½ page advert - £150 (A5 = 200mm W x 142.5mm H (1/2 page))
- Full page advert - £300
- Sponsorship of an issue - £475 (Full back page advert/advertorial plus editorial thanks/acknowledgement)

For more details, contact Mandi Sherratt (details above).

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The opinions in this publication are not necessarily those of Pensioner Action or the Editor. Advertisements should not be seen as a recommendation. Edited and designed by Pensioner Action, 1st Floor, Intergen House, 65 – 67 Western Road, Hove, BN3 2QJ. Tel: 01273 229 004.

# Pensioner Action in action!



## Heat or Eat? *Continued from front page*

Speakers from the Warm Homes, Health People and from Public Health explained how they have helped people get better boilers, more layers of insulation, and draught-proofed all kinds of nooks and crannies. Free samples of draught-proofing equipment were distributed. For more information on Warm Homes call 01273 468027.

### Healthy food – or convenience food?

The absence of ready-made food when growing up had formed good lifelong habits of thriftiness and hardiness among many participants, who were still proud of their home-cooking skills. We wondered if a diet of mainly convenience foods would store up health problems for the younger generation in the future. Some participants mixed their home-cooking with eating ready-meals to make the practical side of shopping and cooking easier. We looked at different food labels which speakers from the Harvest Project had brought along. We were mainly comparing salt, fat, and sugar content in ready-made foods. When amounts per 100 grams are listed, this gives us the percentage content for the item. A 'low' amount of salt is defined as 0.3 grams (or 0.1 of sodium), for sugar it is 5 grams, and for fat is 3 grams. When salt was shown by 'recommended daily intake', a packet of instant soup containing 1.5 grams of salt was high at 16% of the daily maximum, and one crumpet alone can have the same salt content as that! Vicki reminded us that when the red, yellow and green 'traffic light' coding system is used on a label, it is based on 'a serving', and you may eat more or less than what they mean by 'a serving', so it is sometimes difficult to compare. For instance, 'a serving' of chocolate is only 2 squares! The nutritionist from Harvest who was our speaker, said that as a general trend it is harder for older people to absorb Vitamin D, so we need to eat more of it. Things like eggs and oily fish are good for this. Vitamin B, calcium, and iron are also more important in later years.

### More ideas

Harvest are now running courses to expand the types of microwave cooking beyond re-heating meals, because you can cook lots of different things in them and some people find it easier than conventional cooking. You can call them on 01273 431700 to find out more. As prices for food go up we discussed another idea - sharing home-made meals. By making an extra portion of your meal, and swapping it within your circle of friends, means you all get more variety for the same cost and effort. Community Buses are useful when shopping trips become difficult. These come to your door, and do a return trip for £3.50, making a sociable day out with others in the area. Lunch clubs are run on a shoe-string by volunteers, many of whom are retired older people. These are a life-line to many. To get an up to date list of lunch clubs, ring Pensioner Action, or look at our page on the Impetus website: [www.bh-impetus.org](http://www.bh-impetus.org).

### Do you have tips to share about good food?

Is there a café or restaurant which offers a cheap nutritious meal which you would like to tell us about? Is there a healthier ready meal you can recommend? If you have joined up with others in your local area to come up with another good food solution, please tell us about it.

**Why not give us a ring? Contact Sue Goodwin on 01273 229 004.**

## The value of 'Engagement'

### *Continued from front page*

Engagement leads to healthier and happier lives; hence the costs to the nation are reduced. Isolation and loneliness can easily lead to depression, self neglect and ill health. Many older people are fully active, both physically and mentally. We need to know what is available, and then individuals have the option to achieve their goals as they wish. But others are isolated; people living alone, with poor mobility or confusion, in poverty etc. These are the people who most need or use services but feel unable to actively seek them out.

It is a major task for organisations who seek to promote the welfare of older people to enable isolated and socially excluded people to express their needs and make full use of the services available to them. 'The Pensioner' magazine seeks to inform and represent the views of older people, and is circulated to people who are housebound. Our Neighbourhood Groups in different areas provide sounding boards for consultations. Pensioner Action's autumn public event discussed three themes or projects illustrating the engagement process - the Age Friendly City, the current City Council Budget, and NHS Patient Participation Groups.

## Brighton & Hove – an Age-Friendly City?

### Brighton & Hove are on the map!



The World Health Organisation (which is part of the United Nations) has launched a programme inspired by the ageing of the world's population and the increasing number of people living in towns and cities like Brighton rather than in rural areas. It considers the 'environmental, social and economic factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults.' In 2012 there was a decision for us to apply for Age Friendly City status which was passed unanimously by the Older People's Council and Brighton and Hove Council. The project is led by Annie Alexander, Programme Manager for Public Health. At a Pensioner Action event in November 2012, Annie Alexander explained that there are eight different spheres of life which influence the health and quality of life of older people: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civil participation and employment, communication and information, community support and health services. Peter Lloyd of Pensioner Action thought that the headings were potentially useful as such but were quite bland without levels of achievement within them being defined by which to measure improvements. Such definitions are to be added in each local area. Annie Alexander explained that the whole Age Friendly City process would take five years to roll out, first planning and assessing the existing 'age-friendliness' of the city, followed by a three-year improvement and implementation stage and then a final report on progress made.

The World Health Organisation project stresses that 'involving older people is an essential element of an Age Friendly City. Their contributions are important for city assessments, setting priorities, proposing solutions for action and monitoring progress.'

## Good ideas from older people

So in January 2013, Pensioner Action set up a focus group of older people who want to make something useful out of this opportunity. This lively group first contributed lots of suggestions on areas of assessment and improvement, including, for example, the possible introduction of a Silver Pound scheme for retailers wanting to offer promotions on their goods and services to older people, or for the provision of a raft of Community Notice Boards across the city to give non-computer-friendly older people information on what is going on in their local area.

To help describe our local identity in our city, we have asked ourselves 'Why do we live here and do we intend to stay in to our later years? What would be on our wish list if we were to design a place to live for older people in Brighton?'

Apart from the mass of factual information which will need to be provided by local service providers to map where we are now, Pensioner Action is keen that the assessment includes older peoples' views on the special culture of Brighton & Hove which older people value too.

Pensioner Action is also contributing to an online forum set up for the purpose, and sits on the Age Friendly City Steering Group, led by the Older People's Council and including representatives of several voluntary organisations.

If you would like to join our next Age Friendly City focus Group discussion, please ring Sue on 01273 229 004.

**Date for your diary:** 50+ Working Group Age Friendly City update - meets at Cornerstone Community Centre, Palmeira Square, BN3 2FL, 12pm – 1pm Tuesday 4th June 2013.

## The funding of voluntary organisations

In early January 2013, 'At Home This Morning', a radio programme on local radio station RadioReverb (see p6 for broadcasting details), Pensioner Action's Peter Lloyd interviewed Jo Ivens (the Chief Executive Officer of the charity Impetus) about the impact of funding cuts on the voluntary sector. As well as explaining the different aspects of all the challenges, Jo described some of the new methods which

voluntary organisations might adopt to keep their projects up and running. These included increased support from local businesses and mergers between organisations, as well as the crucial role of volunteers. Peter concluded; "The importance of voluntary organisations in providing support for people - of all ages - cannot, and must not, be forgotten".



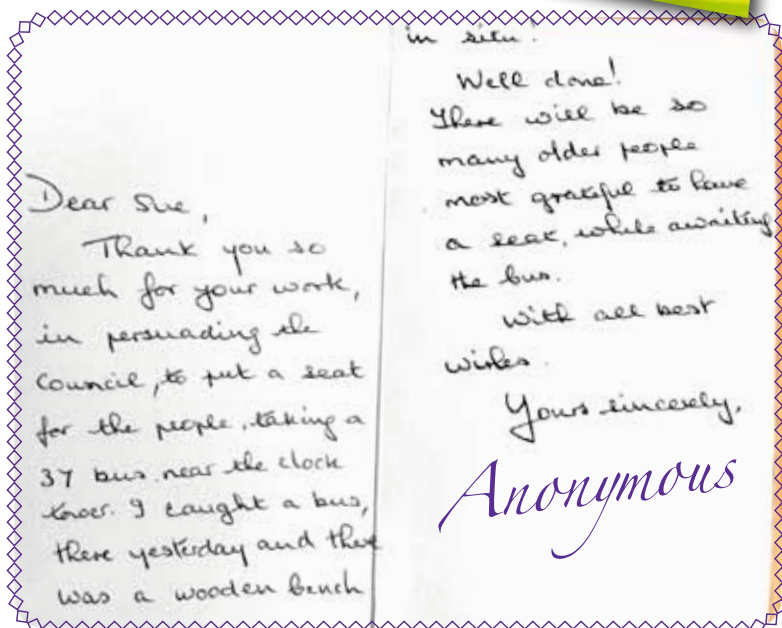
## People's Day 2013

On Saturday, 15th June, Brighton and Hove City Council will again be holding the very successful and enjoyable 'People's Day'. We are pleased to announce that this year there will be a number of events and activities of special interest to older people, all brought together in the Brighthelm Centre (near the top of North Road in Brighton). At least this year we will be warm and dry, which was not the case in last year's awful weather! Pensioner Action, along with representatives from the council and other older people's organisations will be present on the day. Full details are yet to be worked out, but we are in no doubt that it will be an interesting, informative and fun day out. So put the date in your diary NOW and come along! Or for more information, visit [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1245574](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1245574)



## Good News!

Some Pensioner Action members reported to us the lack of seating at a bus stop in the city centre. Pensioner Action contacted the council on your behalf and we are pleased to report that there is now a new bench in place. Please do let us know if we can help make a difference to your experience getting around the city and we will do what we can to help.



A reader's 'thank you' card to Sue Goodwin at Pensioner Action

## Neighbourhood Groups - are they for me?

Pensioner Action's Neighbourhood Groups used to be the 60+ Action Groups until we merged with the Pensioners' Forum. There is a mix of long-standing members and newer people who come along. In the past they were more like social groups, now they are friendly discussion groups on different themes of health and well-being.

In the last year we have covered a wide range of issues:

Keeping our minds and moods positive / seats at bus stops / oral health and our rights as dental patients / retailer scams to watch out for / the TV switchover / cancer prevention / free hand and back massages / unpaid older carers / GP appointment systems / cuts in homecare services / GP surgeries Patient Participation groups – how to get involved.

When there is an issue affecting several people, Pensioner Action gets in touch with the right body to make your views heard. Our groups meet in sheltered housing centres in the north, east, west and central areas of the city. This means that people who live in these schemes but can't get out very easily can still come to the meetings. We usually have a cup of tea to round things off and always welcome new people to our groups. You can just turn up or phone 01273 229 004 if you would like directions.

### Neighbourhood Group dates for your diary - spring 2013

#### Moulsecoomb Neighbourhood Group

The Orchards, Moulsecoomb Way, BN2 4QJ, 2.30 – 4.00pm, Tuesday April 30th

#### Patching Lodge Neighbourhood Group

Meets in lounge area, Patching Lodge, Eastern Road, BN2 0NQ  
2.30 – 4.00pm, Tuesday May 21st

#### West Hove Neighbourhood Group

Meets at Muriel House, Ingram Crescent West, Hove BN3 5NS, 2.30 – 4.00pm, Tuesday May 28th

#### Craven Vale Neighbourhood Group

Meets at Craven Vale Resource Centre, Craven Rd, BN2 0FE, 2.00 – 4.00pm  
Wednesday April 24th (self-run) and  
Wednesday May 29th

*Cut out and keep or photocopy*

## Older people's news

### Older People's Council news



by Jack Hazelgrove, Chair of the OPC

At our last public meeting we had presentations on the council budget and Adult Social Care. James Hengeveld said that despite substantial cuts in Government

grants it was still proposed to spend £112 million on Adult Social Care in the forthcoming financial year. However, the budget gap is growing as there are cuts to help fund the national budget deficit for at least the next six years and the cost of providing services is rising due to inflation and increasing demand – for example the number of people over 85 is set to rise in the coming decade.

Denise D'Souza, Director of Adult Social Services, and Councillor Rob Jarrett, Chair of the Adult Social Care Committee, gave an overview of the Adult Social Care budget strategy approach, with a focus on preventative services as well as telecare, personalisation and reablement. Over the past few years there has also been a shift from placing people into residential care into alternative accommodation, including the provision of Extra Care accommodation. This is better for residents and a better use of resources too. However there is still a great demand for Extra Care housing, anticipating a need for a further 150-180 units this year to stay on top of demand. The council still needs to do more on technology and supported housing; this is where savings can be made in future.

#### Questions and comments:

**Q – The OPC really welcomes personalisation – it's a much more flexible and personal approach. How are home carers (within and outside the council) managed?**

A – There are approximately 11500 home visits per week; all services are carefully monitored and there is a low level of complaints. It should be noted that over the snowy weekend, both council and independent sector carers went out of their way to deliver services, often taking twice the usual time to get to a call but attending all of their appointments. The council is looking into how to recompense the workers for their dedication and hard work.

Cllr Rob Jarrett – the general policy aim is to maintain current services under increasing financial pressures. Last year the budget was protected, which gave a good starting point for this year's budget approach, but there will be a 7% saving this year. Adult Social Care is exploring different ways of delivering services – it may mean looking at how buildings, transport, staff etc. are all used.

He agrees that it would be hugely beneficial to reinvigorate communities and neighbourliness although this would be a long-term approach. There is an intention to involve service users to a greater extent too.

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## At Home This Morning

'At Home This Morning' is a radio programme made for older people by older people. It lasts an hour and is broadcast on RadioReverb's community radio station on 97.2 FM. The shows are broadcast at the following times: Tuesdays – 11.00am / Thursdays – 9.00am / Sundays – 8.00am. The programme changes every two weeks. If you miss a show and have a computer visit [www.radioreverb.com](http://www.radioreverb.com) and 'Click to listen online'.



With regard to homecare workers, 90% of services have been contracted out. The council cannot afford to bring it back in-house or to pay much more. However, in the last re-tendering exercise there was an assumption that staff would be paid the Living Wage or above. He knows that rates of pay are increasing for some, if not all, of the independent sector staff.

The OPC held a public meeting in the Jubilee Library on the 19th of March, the topic addressed major issues in the scrutiny of the NHS, we shall include a report on this in the next issue of The Pensioner.



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## Paying for social care

Articles in the Pensioner have repeatedly highlighted the inequalities faced by older people; if one's health problems are medical the NHS will provide treatment free of charge; but if someone needs social care they may have to exhaust most of their savings, including the value of their home.

The government's proposals to address this were eventually announced on the 11th of February by Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Health. He outlined the procedures that would be introduced in 2017; (all his figures relate to that date and thus include inflation during the intervening period).

Andrew Dilnot had recommended that the limit of savings below which one would be eligible for public funded social care be raised from £23,500 to £100,000. This limit would be increased to £123,000 (which is roughly two thirds of the value of an average house, so most people will still not be eligible).

The Labour government and Dilnot's proposals had recommended a limit or cap of say £35,000, which anyone would be expected to pay for social care, whether that be domiciliary care or the element of social care (i.e. not board and lodging provided by a care home). The government now proposes to raise this to £75,000. However in his budget speech in March the Chancellor reduced this to £72,000, payable from 2016. This might cover a three year stay in a care home. The figure of £72,000 will cover only that social care which one's local authority would normally accept as eligible, and at a cost which it would pay. Many people may top this up by paying more for a higher quality of care.

The present scheme would cost only £1 billion. (Dilnot's proposals would have cost nearly £2 billion). A fifth would be raised by freezing the Inheritance Tax limit at £325,000



for a further five years. (The Conservative Party in its election manifesto of 2010 had promised to raise it to £1 million!). The rest would be paid for by adjustments to National Insurance and pensions already announced.

In promoting the new scheme the government argued that it expected people to be substantially liable for the costs of social care in their later years and that their proposals, with defined costs, would enable everyone to plan accordingly. One possibility is personal insurance, though many have suggested that this would be difficult for private companies to offer.

In his statement to the House of Commons, Hunt admitted that many details of the new proposals were still to be worked out. Increasingly it is suggested that health and social care should be integrated into one organisation – A National Health and Care Service.

2017 seems a long way off; a general election, and perhaps a new government, will come in 2015. Not unexpectedly, while government spokesmen hailed the proposals as a 'great leap forward'; critics responded with 'too little too late'.

**Date for your diary: City Summit on Adult Social Care Local Account - all day, June 11, 2013, Hove Town Hall**

## Farewell to LINK, welcome to Healthwatch

More changes: Brighton & Hove Local Involvement Network (LINK) will shortly be superseded by a Local Healthwatch.

LINKs were set up as statutory bodies under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. But they are fully independent of both NHS and local authorities (though Brighton & Hove LINK is funded by the City Council via the Department of Health). They are powerful networks of local people and groups aiming to improve publicly funded local health and social care services.

Brighton & Hove LINK is a relatively small organisation. Currently it has three salaried staff: Claire Stevens (Manager), Kerry Dowding (Development Officer) and Elaine Elliott (part-time Enter and View Transition Coordinator). But it calls upon the services of some 50 volunteers to achieve its objectives. It has been hosted by the Community Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) and led by a Steering Committee chaired by Robert Brown MBE. Sub-committees deal with research, mental health and other issues.

LINKs have very wide powers. Where a number of issues are raised locally they can investigate them and report to the NHS or Council. Their staff and volunteers may enter and view places where health services and social care are provided, to see if these services are working well or not. Appropriate training is given to volunteers engaged on such tasks.

Significant among Brighton & Hove LINK's achievements are their surveys, largely carried out by the volunteers. The most recent of these have been into Patient Participation Groups, Physiotherapy and Medication for Mental Illness and into the quality of life in care homes. Valuable too is the monthly 16 page magazine which contains up-to-date information on a wide range of services.

The contract to manage the Local Healthwatch has recently been awarded to the CVSF; LINK staff will transfer to the new organization which is expected to function in a similar manner. It too will aim to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within the local community. They will be closely involved with the new Clinical Commissioning Groups and superior monitoring bodies.

An excellent report (42 pages) summarising LINK's five year's work, cited as among the best in the country, is now available: 'Brighton & Hove Achievements, Learning Legacy' by Kerry Dowding and Emily O'Brien, December 2012.

Healthwatch is going to be a very valuable and important local organisation. But its success will depend very much on the participation of all of us and especially on the input of its volunteers.

**Anyone interested in becoming involved in Local Healthwatch can register their interest by contacting the LINK office – 01273 810 235 or email: [link@bhlink.org](mailto:link@bhlink.org) / or visit Brighton & Hove City Council's webpage on Local Healthwatch at: [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwatch](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/healthwatch)**



## Patient Participant Groups and Clinical Commissioning Groups

As we have discussed in previous issues, the transfer of management of primary care (GP practices etc.) from the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) brings decision making closer to patients. The development of patient participant groups is therefore of vital importance.

At our open meeting on 27th November 2012 Jane Lodge, Engagement Officer of the PCT, gave an update of progress. The PCT has, from the outset, advocated that each GP practice should develop a Patient Participation Group (PPG) appropriate to its own surgery. The result has been very varied in modes of organisation and levels of participation. Indeed, some of the enthusiasm expressed at Pensioner Action's own meeting in August 2012 seems to have declined.

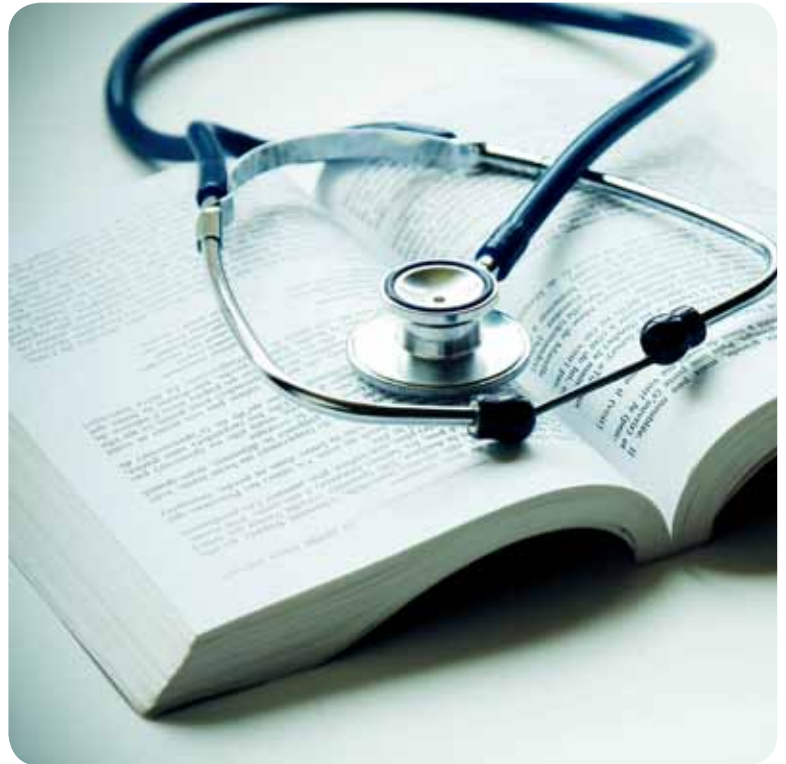
Jane announced that the PCT would be commissioning an audit of all GP practice PPGs. (This is now being carried out by the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum).

In the meantime the CCG organised a Patient Participation Group conference held at the Brighthelm Centre on the 13th of February. Over 60 people attended, most being PPG members. An impressive array of speakers advocated the value of the groups, emphasising especially the role that they could play in improving health within their communities. This vision contrasted markedly with the low levels of patient participation in the groups and with the apparent feeling by many practices that a 'satisfaction survey' (of appointment systems and patient relationships with doctors and nurses; with a response rate of only 1% of patients) was sufficient to create a PPG.

Sadly there was little discussion about how a PPG might be established, its possible constitution, and what might be included in its agenda; does one's practice offer all the services that one would wish for e.g. equipment or support groups? What measures are being taken to enhance preventative care among patients? How might we monitor the success of the practice? The local Department of Public Health is producing a mass of performance data on each practice within the city.

It is hoped that the audit will result in proposals for a minimum level of performance that each PPG might be expected to achieve.

On Monday the 4th of March the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum hosted a meeting by some fifty representatives of voluntary organisations to hear about the workings of Brighton & Hove's Clinical Commissioning Groups and to discuss ways in which they could further its work.



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\*

**Tuesdays: 1.15 to 2.45pm:**

St. Richards, Hangleton (£2)

\*

**Fridays: 11.30am to 1pm**

Elizabeth Court, 65 Wilbury Rd, Hove (Corner of Cromwell Rd), (£3)

\*

**Fridays: 5 to 6pm**

Cornerstone Community Centre, St.John's Room, Palmeira Square, Hove, (£4)

All venues have disabled access

For info: Call Udita on 01273 556755

[www.singforbetterhealth.co.uk](http://www.singforbetterhealth.co.uk)



## What helps people sustain well-being as they grow older and face the changes associated with ageing?

As more of us are living longer it is becoming ever more important to understand how to ensure that old age is a good time of life. Over the last 4 years Age UK Brighton & Hove has been working on a project with the University of Brighton about well-being in old age. The researchers included a team of older volunteers. Together we designed the research so that the older people who took part could talk in their own terms about what well-being means to them and the kinds of things that can contribute to well-being as we get older. It is one example of the increasing opportunities for older people to play an active part in making policies; designing and delivering services and developing new knowledge.

We published a full report of the research last year and the older members of the team also wrote their own booklet *As Time Goes By* which draws on the findings and offers suggestions about how people might think about sustaining well-being as they grow older. It was found that certain themes came up time and again, such as the importance of family and friends; the availability of public transport; housing, health and finance. Some of the interviewees were eager to learn about new technology, in particular systems that helped them keep in touch with family far away, and access to internet information. Others were more concerned with immediate problems such as getting practical advice and help locally.

More recently we were awarded funding to apply research findings in a way that would have a positive impact. This has enabled us to work with social care practitioners and older people to translate some of the research findings

into learning resources for those who work with or support older people. We have now produced a free online film and accompanying handbook which focus on two main topics: supporting people in situations that involve them having to make difficult decisions, and caring relationships in which older people are adjusting to changes in the way they can both give and receive care from others. The resources will be useful for those who work with older people in the public or voluntary sector, are a friend or family member, or an older carer supporting others close to them.

The resources highlight the way in which people need to adapt to changes taking place in their lives and the decisions they need to make, and crucially, the importance of involving people in those decisions. They are not intended to be a 'how to do it' guide, but rather something that will help us reflect on things that are important to all of us as we grow older.

*Dr Lizzie Ward, Senior Research Fellow, University of Brighton*

You can access the film and the accompanying handbook online at <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/sass/older-people-well-being-and-participation/> and find out more about our work by contacting Dr Ward by email at [e.ward@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:e.ward@brighton.ac.uk) / tel: 01273 643 903 - or you can borrow a DVD of the film from AgeUK Brighton & Hove by contacting Bea Gahagan on 01273 720 603 or email at [beatriceg@ageuk-bh.org.uk](mailto:beatriceg@ageuk-bh.org.uk).

## AgeUK Brighton & Hove Services

**Information and Advice** - Open Monday to Friday from 10 am to 4 pm. You can contact us by phone, or make an appointment to come in. There are also Outreach desks operating across the City.

**Help at Home** - Open Tuesday to Friday 10am to 4pm. A low cost matching and support service for older people. It enables access to domestic and gardening support from checked self-employed workers. Subscription costs just £2.00 per week and includes monitoring, liaison and support. The cost for domestic help is £8.00 an hour and £10.00 an hour for gardening. For more information call their dedicated phone line 01273 765275.

**Computer Drop-in** - Open Monday to Thursday 10am to 1pm. You can come in and learn how to use a computer. Volunteer tutors provide support. Beginners, refreshers and those curious all welcome!

**Nail Cutting** - Clinic appointment £8.00, Home visit £10.00. Clinics are on an appointment only basis; however we can cut clients' nails at home if they are unable to get out. Not a chiropody service and some limitations apply.

**Counselling** - can be in your own home or at our Prestonville Road centre. Sessions cost between £5 and £25. All sessions are confidential and our counsellors work to BACP standards.

**Horizons** - Helps older people to regain their confidence and independence. Volunteers provide regular one-to-one support to clients over a limited period of time, encouraging them to work towards self-selected goals.

**Crisis** - We provide a quick response when family and friends cannot help. Through short visits and telephone calls we provide practical help with regards to shopping, medication prompts, preparation of a light meal, light households tasks and low level personal care.

# Age UK Brighton & Hove's Help at Home service

There are not many services that can claim to provide as much caring and dedication to their clients as Age UK Brighton & Hove's Help at Home service.

For nearly 20 years, Help at Home has offered clients regular support with household tasks. With their invaluable personal approach to home help, the service built up numbers of long standing relationships between Home Helps and their clients as well as greatly improving the lives of many local older people.

In October 2012, Brighton & Hove City Council was forced to make funding cuts and the Help at Home service lost its funding. This meant that funds had to be found elsewhere and the service established its first client fees.

**The service today:** Covering as far as Southwick to Saltdean, Age UK Brighton & Hove offers distinctive personal support to older people. Managed by the expertise of two women; Debbie Jordan and Eileen Redmond Courtney the service offers far more than just a little dusting! It is the cleaning service that really cares, giving older people the chance to make close friendships with their Home Help.

We offer help with daily household tasks. Our domestic workers will undertake practical jobs like cleaning, washing, shopping and ironing. The gardeners will carry out general maintenance including mowing, weeding and pruning.

We recruit local people who have been interviewed by us, vetted and hold a current Disclosure & Barring check (previously Criminal Records Bureau check). Once a positive introduction has been made with our client, the same Home Help will visit at an agreed time and day each week or fortnight to suit the client's needs. In addition, we will regularly contact our client to ensure that they remain satisfied with the service.

**The price:** Domestic help: £8.00 per hour, as required, plus the subscription fee to AgeUK Brighton & Hove of £26.00 every 3 months.

Gardening help: £10.00 per hour, as required, plus the subscription fee to AgeUK Brighton & Hove of £26.00 per year. (This applies to gardening only clients).

**Who can get it?** Anyone over 50 years old is eligible, including disabled people who need some support. The service is not means-tested and anyone in these groups can apply.

The service provides a level of monitoring and individual support suitable for many older and more vulnerable clients, and complements self select schemes which are at the unregulated end of the market.

**How to start:** We accept self-referrals, referrals from relatives, friends and other public bodies and voluntary organisations. Fees can be paid by the client themselves or any of their family and friends. You can pay via standing order, cheques or cash, and can cancel at any time. If people feel they cannot afford the service, our free Information and Advice service at AgeUK Brighton & Hove can offer help with Welfare Benefit support and advice. Additionally, we can offer a home visit to help anyone fill out the registration forms.

**Our future:** As for the future of our service, with the continuing support from our increasing client-base we are hoping to develop and expand and make a wider range of services available.

**Contact details:** Our direct phone line: 01273 765275. We are available Tuesday-Friday 9am-4pm (please leave a voicemail outside of office hours). Email: [helpathome@ageuk-bh.org.uk](mailto:helpathome@ageuk-bh.org.uk)



**Minibus** - We offer various day trips on Wednesdays and Fridays and a weekly trip to a lunch club in Moulscombe. You can also hire the Minibus for a special occasion. Please call Chris Poole on 07973 867053

**Advocacy** - We can support and enable you to access information and services, defend and promote your rights and explore options and choices.

### Activities at Prestonville Road

- Coffee Morning
- Yoga, Extend & Tai Chi
- Massage and Reflexology
- Bridge
- Knitting group
- Poetry Workshop
- Legal and Will Writing Clinic

**Confidentiality** - We treat all user information with respect and in accordance with our confidentiality policy and data protection principles.

**Trading Company** - Our Trading company offer a range of services and other specialist products. Call their dedicated line 01273 765270.

**Age UK Brighton & Hove, 29-31 Prestonville Road, Brighton BN1 3TJ Charity Number 1074601**

**Tel: 01273 720 603 / Email: [info@ageuk-bh.org.uk](mailto:info@ageuk-bh.org.uk)**

**Web: [www.ageuk-bh.org.uk](http://www.ageuk-bh.org.uk)**

We are an independent organisation responsible for raising our own funds and are grateful for all donations. Please make cheques payable to Age UK Brighton & Hove using Gift Aid if appropriate.



# Single Tourist Action Centre

## - why pay more for your holiday than you should?



STAC are a consumer pressure group formed to campaign against the discriminations that penalise those who, by choice or circumstance, take holidays on their own, the majority of whom are retired, widowed or divorced. Those that take holidays on their own will know only too well of the much detested SINGLE PERSON SUPPLEMENT, a surcharge that can frequently be in excess of 30 % or more of the basic holiday price. As if that were not bad enough, on a recent holiday to India, I personally was also surcharged an additional £200 by a travel agent, ostensibly for the costs of the telephone calls and emails allegedly required to ascertain if the Indian hotels would even consider taking a single tourist. This was despite the fact that the holiday brochure clearly stated that they would. Naturally, I cancelled and demanded a full refund. As a recently retired lawyer I was able to do this with less difficulty than others may experience. It was this experience that caused me to establish the SINGLE TOURIST ACTION CENTRE.

Another way that single tourists are often discriminated against is the almost inevitable allocation of inferior accommodation. Time after time it will be the solo tourist that will be given a mediocre room next to the lift shaft or above the discotheque or next to the wheelie bin storage area etc. The SINGLE TOURIST ACTION CENTRE intends to

prevent these discriminations and already has achieved much towards improving the lot of the solo holiday maker.

We are favourably reported in the national press. 'The Daily Telegraph' supported us with a recent article and declared that these onerous supplements are one of the key issues it wishes to see changed in the travel and leisure business.

STAC is a non profit making pressure group in the process of applying for status as a charity. Our annual subscription is £15.00. In return we not only campaign vociferously for travel operators to remove these discriminations (and advise our members when they do), but also offer them assistance in any holiday related disputes that may arise. This assistance is backed up by the FREE LEGAL ADVICE offered by a highly qualified solicitor who is affiliated to STAC, and although specialising in Wills, probate, tax issues, Trusts and conveyancing, can advise on a virtually unlimited range of legal issues. Naturally, we also issue regular newsletters to report on our progress.

**If you would like to know more or become a member please contact Steve Lyden-Brown. Founder of STAC, 'The Willows', Mill Lane, Pavenham, Bedford, MK43 7NL. 01234 822685. [www.singletourist.org.uk](http://www.singletourist.org.uk)**

## AgeUK Brighton & Hove IT Drop-in-centre at Seven Dials

Are you over 50 and would you like help with your computer? Or perhaps you would like support in using the internet, emails, online shopping, social networks or form filling online. We also help with using mobile phones, digital cameras, tablets and Kindles. Our service is free but donations help to keep the centre open.

Please phone the AgeUK Brighton and Hove IT drop-in-centre on 01273 720 603 for more information.

## The Council's budget

Every day the media - television, radio, newspapers – provide the latest news of the effects of the recession; shops and businesses close, taxes are raised, benefits are cut or frozen, or grants are withdrawn.

The impact of the government cuts on local council spending was one of the subjects discussed at a Pensioner Action event. Emma Daniels from the Community Voluntary Sector Forum spoke on the subject and circulated a useful paper which showed the different sources of the Council's income of over £750 million; 40% comes from Central Government, 30% comes from residents through charges, and 30% through Council Tax revenues. Much of this is ring-fenced for services which the Council is legally obliged to provide. The Council has freedom to allocate only about a third of its income, as statutory responsibilities are increasingly being passed from central to local government.

The Council's budget is divided into two types: Capital and Revenue Services.

Capital is for infrastructure projects like parks. This cannot be transferred to Services: Currently about 50% is spent on preventative services, but this is likely to decline, except on social care and waste systems. Cuts to the budget are achieved by merging services, transferring costs to individuals or volunteers, raising the thresholds for care services, or raising charges and taxes.

Emma explained that 15% (£79 million) of the council's budget goes to Adult Social Care now, much of it spend on older peoples' care, and older people



also have a substantial interest in onward funding for libraries and transport.

At the time, consultation on the draft budget for the coming year 2013-2014 was felt to be quite limited, with little information being available. Emma told us about other ways of interacting with Council processes through petitions and by raising pre-submitted questions at Council committees, especially the Scrutiny Panel. This is a more penetrating way to raise questions about any Council-funded service, which was endorsed by several Pensioner Action and Older Peoples' Council members who were already engaged with those processes.

Council representatives were keen to reassure older people that they were anticipating the future increase in likely demand with higher numbers of older people, and were planning to invest in services to help people recover their independence after accidents or illnesses wherever possible. 90% of these will continue to be provided by external agencies. There will, however, be 7% decrease in government funds in the next financial year with which to achieve this.

Preventative care measures, however, are advocated and welcomed – but any the benefits may not be felt until a decade hence – and the cuts are now!

## Homeshare in Brighton & Hove

Crossroads Care Brighton and Hove has been delivering support and respite to carers, since 1986 giving them 'time to be themselves'. We have now been awarded funding by Brighton and Hove City Council, to reintroduce Homeshare across the City.

### What is Homeshare?

- Homeshare gives you company and live-in support to enable you to stay in your own home for longer
- Help with everyday domestic duties
- Assistance getting out and about
- Companionship and security

Homeshare is a simple and affordable, low fee option for people who may feel vulnerable or isolated and who need help and companionship around the home. Our carefully selected and thoroughly vetted homesharers can help with things like cleaning, laundry and shopping, as well as providing friendship and security. Homeshare gives you

the support you need to enjoy life to the full and gives your loved ones peace of mind.

**If you are interested in live-in support in your own home and would like more information on Homeshare or Crossroads Care please contact Janette Palfrey on 01273 234 021. Further details can also be found on their website: [www.crossroadscare-esbh.org.uk](http://www.crossroadscare-esbh.org.uk)**

**CROSS  
ROADS  
CARE**  
East Sussex,  
Brighton & Hove

Giving Carers a Break

**carerstrust**  
a Network Partner

## Having your say on the new NHS

Now, as at no other time in the last 50-odd years, is the time to join in with the process of change in the NHS. The basis on which health services are provided is about to change fundamentally, with the introduction of an internal market, and diverse providers being used. Patients, past and future, are needed to be critical friends to the NHS to ensure that services people need are protected.

In the past Pensioner Action has encouraged members to get involved with the GP surgery's Patient Participation Groups. This is just one of six levels of participation which are invited.

The union, Unison, has produced a really useful guide called 'Stronger Together – a UNISON guide to influencing the new NHS'.

### Ways to get involved with the changes in the NHS

**Ordinary public Foundation Trust member:** Anyone can become a member of a Foundation Trust to help ensure that their health services act in the public interest.

**Foundation Trust Governor:** Governors in a majority vote can block more than 5% income being made from private patients by the health providers. A third of the governors can be from local authority, university, or voluntary sector groups. They set the strategy and key plans and ensure good standards are maintained.

**Foundation Trust Non-Executive Directors and Chairs:** By rigorous selection processes and with significant commitments, they have the most powerful roles at foundation trusts, as they are major employing bodies in to the future. People who can represent NHS values are really needed in these roles. Some organisations are entitled to have appointed governors.

**Clinical Commissioning Groups:** These can decide to close or limit health services or change use of buildings.



They will contract out their functions to others. Local activist involvement can challenge this. There will be a small number of lay members on each CCG, for which people can volunteer.

**HealthWatch:** This will be set up to represent patient interests, and will monitor health and social care services to influence CCGs. Like LINKs in the past, they will encourage lay people's involvement in this.

**Local Authority Committees:** Public health functions are being passed to local councils. They can use their powers to produce strategies which reduce inequality. Councillors can directly influence Local Authority decisions. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees can scrutinize 'substantial' changes to services and ensure consultations occur first. Members of the public can attend these committees when they are discussing changes to the health service. In between you can also lobby councillors to take up NHS issues. You can do this in person or by email. For more information on any of these ways of getting involved, you can email on: [ourNHS@unison.co.uk](mailto:ourNHS@unison.co.uk).

## Some useful information for finding care homes and agencies

Many organisations have produced fact sheets or manuals to help one find the care and support one needs. LINK Magazine (January 2013) posted the following:

- Skills for Care, in November 2012, updated its toolkit: Benefits of Employing a Personal Assistant. For details tel. 0113 245 1716 or email [info@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:info@skillsforcare.org.uk)
- Find Me Good Care (run by the Social Care Institute for Excellence) helps people to make choices about care; write to them at Fifth Floor 2-4 Cockspur Street SW1Y 5BH; or [www.findmegoodcare.co.uk](http://www.findmegoodcare.co.uk)

- A Hospital2Home Resource pack, containing essential information for older people to support safe hospital discharge is available online at: [http://housinglin.org.uk/hospital2home\\_pack/](http://housinglin.org.uk/hospital2home_pack/)

Locally:

- Age UK Brighton & Hove (tel. 0800 169 6565) and the Council's Adult Social Care department (tel. 01273 295 245) can also provide assistance.



## Arts and activities in your city

### Spring exhibition events at Fabrica



**The Blue Route at Fabrica** - 6 April - 27 May, see online for opening times.

As part of Brighton Festival, Fabrica will be exhibiting a site-specific installation of artwork by Finnish artist Kaarina Kaikkonen. Kaarina uses simple, everyday objects such as second-hand clothing, toilet paper and women's shoes, to create large-scale installations. The exhibition at Fabrica will be one of her two new works for Brighton Festival 2013, which are comprised of over 1000 second-hand shirts.

**Second Sight** - Monday 22 & Tuesday 23 April, 1.30-3pm, free entry but please book in advance

Second Sight is a tour and discussion that explores the exhibition from a multi-sensory perspective. A regular event, it's open to all and popular with visually impaired and blind participants. Refreshments provided.

**Special Drawing Event** - Monday 29 April, 1-4pm, £3.50 (to be paid in advance).

Artist Jane Fordham invites anyone who likes to draw to these unique, one-off events. Each event is inspired by the current exhibition at Fabrica, and all are very different to the last! Participants don't have to be expert artists to be involved – we usually work with many different ability levels.

Please book in advance by phone on 01273 778 646 or email: [info@fabrica.org.uk](mailto:info@fabrica.org.uk)

**Going to See Culture Together at Fabrica** - Tuesday 30 April, 2-4pm

An event that brings older people together to discover new places, people and art in the city. Led by arts facilitator Jonathan Quarterman. In April, the group will be visiting 'The Blue Route', exploring the exhibition through activity and discussion.

Going to See Culture Together is free but there are limited spaces at each event. Please book in advance. Support with transport to and from the visit is available on request.

**Conversation Piece – The Blues** - Tuesday 14 May, 2-3.30pm

A relaxed heritage-focussed discussion group, led by Lorenza Ippolito. Topics for conversation focus on local history and debate, and draw on themes in the current exhibition. Each event welcomes a local speaker with specialist knowledge on the theme of choice. For the Spring exhibition, the Blues is topic for discussion, as we chat about the history of the music from its roots in American culture to our own backyards. Joined by local music lover Barry Furlong from local Blues music hub The Ranelagh, we will talk about The Blues in Brighton through Barry's twenty year experience. Come and join in the chat – refreshments are provided. Free entry. No need to book, just drop in!

To book, or for more info on any of Fabrica's events, visit [www.fabrica.org.uk](http://www.fabrica.org.uk) email [office@fabrica.org.uk](mailto:office@fabrica.org.uk) or call 01273 778 646.



### Queer in Brighton

**A heritage project hosted by New Writing South celebrating unspoken and unseen histories**

This will be a year long project looking for people of all ages to share stories and to help identify and celebrate the many meanings of what it was to have been Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) in and around Brighton & Hove in years gone by.

Over the next year Queer in Brighton will be publishing a book and website, unveiling an exhibition, and presenting a number of live events...and we need your help!

We are looking for LGBT people to share stories, to record and document their stories and to help to identify and to celebrate the many individual meanings of what it was like, once upon a time, to have been LGBT in Brighton. When did you first come here to live? Where did you meet up with friends? What happened to you? What is your story?

**Interested? Have a story to tell? Please get in touch with us....**

Write a letter to: 'Queer in Brighton',  
C/o New Writing South, 9 Jew Street,  
Brighton BN1 1UT

Visit our website at:  
[www.queerinbrighton.co.uk](http://www.queerinbrighton.co.uk)  
or email us at [info@queerinbrighton.co.uk](mailto:info@queerinbrighton.co.uk)

Call us on: 01273 735 353 and leave a message for Lesley who will call you back

Confidentiality and privacy will be totally respected at all times.

The project is funded and assisted by the Heritage Lottery Fund National Lottery, Brighton & Hove City Council, New Writing South, Pink Fringe and Photoworks.

Our service is free but donations help to keep the centre open.

## Healthwalks

2013 is a special year for Brighton & Hove Healthwalks. The scheme has been providing free walks in the city for ten years, and in that time has helped thousands of local people improve their physical and mental health; and make new friends into the bargain too! Healthwalks are a great way to be more active, get out in the fresh air and make new friends. They are friendly, supportive and ideal for those who want to start exercising in a gentle and safe way, as well as those who want to walk regularly but don't have the time to attend longer walks. There are 15 regular walks across the city, and lengths range from under a mile (average walking time: twenty to thirty minutes) up to three or four miles (average walking time one and a half to two hours walking time). They are all free, led by trained Volunteer Walk Leaders and are also accessible by public transport.

Because walking is such an accessible form of exercise it is particularly beneficial to those who are getting little or no exercise, recovering from illness, or lacking in confidence. Many of the walks are also wheelchair and buggy-friendly.

Walking is increasingly being recognised as an excellent form of physical activity, and health professionals now recommend that everyone should aim to do 30 minutes of moderate exercise (such as walking) at least five times a week.



Although health walking can benefit everyone, it is particularly beneficial to people who do little or no exercise. For example, imagine a scale of 1 to 6. 1 is someone who takes no exercise at all - 6 is an Olympic athlete. Simply moving from 1 to 2 on the scale, by starting some moderate exercise, can halve that person's risk of a heart attack and stroke.

**For more information, visit the Healthwalks website at [www.brightonhove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1115507](http://www.brightonhove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1115507) or contact: Healthwalks Sports Development, Brighton & Hove City Council - email: [healthwalks@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:healthwalks@brighton-hove.gov.uk) / tel: 01273 292 564**

## Find things to do near you!

The 'It's Local Actually' team has been gathering information on activities in your neighbourhood and so far has recorded more than 500 of them across Brighton & Hove.

- Visit [www.thefedonline.org.uk/local](http://www.thefedonline.org.uk/local) on your computer, tablet or smart phone
- Enter your postcode or location
- Find out what is going on your doorstep
- Run a local group? You can register your activity on the site FREE!

Brought to you by The Fed Online  
- Registered Charity No. 1114435  
Company No. 05706441



## Do you live in Portslade or Hove?

### Mayor of Brighton and Hove's Welfare Charity

#### How can we help?

With funding up to £250 we can support the purchase of essential items:

- Household goods:
  - Beds
  - Bed linen
  - Washing machines
  - Ovens
  - Carpets
- Children's toys
- Children's equipment eg high chairs, prams, cots etc
- Costs of activities to support improving health, well-being or employment prospects.



### Who are we?

A small charity local to Hove and Portslade assisting residents young and old by contributing towards things which will make life a little easier.

Application Form and Guidelines can be obtained from our charity administrator:

Michael Hill Tel: 01273 779432  
Email: [hill.michael4@sky.com](mailto:hill.michael4@sky.com)



## The Neighbourhood Care Scheme – ‘We are all members .....’

**This article by Peter Batten about his volunteering with the Neighbourhood Care Scheme (NCS) really sums up what the scheme is about. NCS is a good neighbour scheme that supports older people, adults with physical disabilities and their carers by recruiting local volunteers to help them in a variety of ways. In 2012, we enabled 246 volunteers to support 249 people. If you would like to volunteer with the scheme or need some support yourself, then we would love to hear from you. Contact us on 01273 775 888 or email: [ncs@bh-impetus.org](mailto:ncs@bh-impetus.org). Website: [www.bh-impetus.org](http://www.bh-impetus.org)**

*Sean de Podesta, NCS Project Leader*

### A volunteer's story

One morning, early in January, I went round to see my friend Victor. I visit him once a week for tea and a chat. This morning he was particularly pleased to see me. His left eye had been troubling him for several weeks and today he woke up in agony. He asked me to phone his doctor. I soon became involved in a whole series of calls, including arrangements for an ambulance.

My final job was to help the ambulance team get him out of his flat and off to the Eye Hospital.

At this point you may be wondering why I had to do all this for Victor? He has two problems. Severe arthritis in his legs makes it very difficult for him to leave his first floor flat. But his life is even more restricted by the fact that about five years ago he became totally deaf.

I was introduced to Victor almost three years ago by the Neighbourhood Care Scheme (NCS). In 2006 I joined the scheme as a volunteer. For my first two years I tried to support a very lonely and isolated man. This was not easy. Unfortunately I became seriously ill and had to give up for several months. When I recovered Naomi, the co-ordinator, asked me to meet Victor, who lives quite close to me. We hit it off very quickly. Victor has a lively interest in many things, but we found that we shared some particular interests. Our weekly chats usually start with a roundup of the latest results from the Premier League, but if there is a Snooker tournament that will take precedence. Sometimes Victor



**Peter (left) at one of his volunteer visits with Victor**

may ask my advice about letters he has received or ask me to make an important telephone call. Communication between us is a little slow, because I have to write down all the things I wish to say. He can respond immediately, but then off I go again with pen and paper.

NCS operates in ten neighbourhoods in Brighton & Hove, and offers help to people over 60 and younger people with physical disabilities, who are lonely and isolated. Often, like Victor, they are housebound by one or more physical disabilities. Sometimes the Scheme offers support to those who care for such people. It is work of great value to the community and is warmly appreciated by those, like Victor, who receive support.

For those who volunteer the rewards are surprising. Though not every relationship is straightforward, the sense of satisfaction which comes from helping a fellow human being, even in a small way, is remarkable and very inspiring.

Margaret Thatcher once asserted, "There is no such thing as 'society'." My reply is in my title: "We are all members one of another."

*Peter Batten, NCS Volunteer*

**Contact the Neighbourhood Care Scheme on 01273 775 888 or email: [ncs@bh-impetus.org](mailto:ncs@bh-impetus.org) / website: [www.bh-impetus.org](http://www.bh-impetus.org)**

## Patcham Companions

Do you live in Patcham and are aged 50+? Then we would love to see you at our group! New members are very welcome to join. We meet on a Friday, 2:30 is the time. You will be very welcome and you'll find it just fine; we chat, put the world to rights – we all get on well. Then we leave at 4.30, but we don't ring the bell!

**Please contact us at:** Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile Road, Patcham, Brighton, BN1 8TA / [www.patchamcommunitycenter.org.uk](http://www.patchamcommunitycenter.org.uk) / call John on 07528 472 231 / email: [atqul@me.com](mailto:atqul@me.com)



## Patching Lodge's Fourth Birthday

Some fifty residents and guests gathered in the lounge of Patching Lodge on the afternoon of 17th January 2013 to celebrate the scheme's fourth birthday.

Patching Lodge in Eastern Road, built on the site of a former City Council sheltered housing scheme, is one of only two extra-care (or very) sheltered housing schemes in Brighton & Hove; the other is New Larchwood in Coldean. They differ from ordinary sheltered housing in that they have an in-house care team providing 24/7 support and a restaurant providing a midday meal.

The event was hosted by Betty Hughes, one of the scheme's more active residents. She opened the proceedings proposing a toast to the Lodge's past residents and the scheme's future residents. Betty then introduced a formidable array of people who had been involved in the origins of the scheme or its current activity.

Denise D'Souza, Director of Adult Social Care, outlined the genesis of the scheme as a partnership between the City Council, Hanover Housing Association and the Department of Health; Hanover representatives reminisced about the planning and building days and their involvement in it. Finally several existing residents expressed their appreciation of their quality of life, manifesting in both the design of their flats and in the support of other residents, especially in times of crisis or bereavement.

Patching Lodge was designed with copious public space on the ground floor which accommodates not only activities organised by the residents but also serves the wider local community. Thus Lifelines has a vast programme of activities provided for residents of East Brighton (i.e. Queens Park, Craven Vale, Kemptown, Eastern Road and Tarnar). Residents are free to participate in these activities- but of course, there is no compulsion! Many are happy to do their own thing; others have limited mobility and need help.

Patching Lodge is also the base for CareLink Plus, which has its offices on the first floor.

Much of the overall management of Patching Lodge rests with its Partnership Group consisting of representatives of the residents, City Council and Hanover staff. There is a mix of residents from diverse backgrounds and Hanover provide a safe space for all who live there.

Patching Lodge provides an ideal home for many older people; one has independence in a self-contained flat together with ample care and support. We need many more such schemes. Private sector companies are currently building some, but local authorities and housing associations are short of funds. Brighton & Hove City Council is, however, planning for a third scheme.



## The Computer Swallowed Grandma

The computer swallowed grandma.  
Yes, honestly it's true!  
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'  
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely,  
The thought just makes me squirm.  
She must have caught a virus  
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin  
And files of every kind;  
I've even used the Internet,  
But nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Jeeves  
My searches to refine.  
The reply from him was negative,  
Not a thing was found 'online'.

So, if inside your 'Inbox',  
My Grandma you should see,  
Please scan, copy and paste her  
In an e.mail back to me.

© 2004 Valerie Waite

*This poem has appeared several times on the web; we have tried without success to trace its author to obtain permission to reproduce it here.*

## Acupuncture

Acupuncture literally means to puncture with a needle, when you insert needles into acupuncture points, it can help to stimulate nerves, muscles, and tissue in your body. This stimulation then encourages the body to release certain beneficial chemicals, such as endorphins and serotonin.

### Is Chinese Medicine effective?

Although the practice of Chinese Medicine is relatively new to the West, it has been used in Asia for more than 2000 years to treat a vast number of conditions.

Despite all skepticism, many studies agree that acupuncture is effective, especially in treating chronic pain. This is especially useful to seniors with chronic conditions who can't take more medication for them. Both the World Health Organisation and the National Institute of Health have evaluated scientific research and clinical trials of acupuncture and found it to be effective for a wide range of conditions.

### What can Acupuncture treat?

Acupuncture is effective in treating most ailments presented at a GP's surgery, it can also be used alongside conventional medicine.

*Carlos Peña Martín BSc (Hons) Lic Ac MBAcc*

## Loan shark victims urged to speak out

A nationwide appeal for people affected by loan sharks has been launched by the Stop Loan Sharks Project. An estimated 310,000 households are living in fear of lenders who at first appear friendly and helpful but then go on to use threats, violence and other extreme methods to force borrowers into paying back far and above what they have borrowed and can afford.

The Teams, who work in partnership with Trading Standards Authorities, are urging anyone who has been a victim of this crime to speak out, so the Team can take action. Anyone with information can call 0300 555 2222 to speak to a trained investigator. Lines are open 24/7, all calls are treated in the strictest confidence and callers may remain anonymous if they wish.

Tony Quigley Head of the England Illegal Money Lending Team said "We understand that victims may be frightened but please speak to us, before the situation escalates. It's important to remember that loan sharks are committing a criminal offence and profiteering at the expense of others. We have already helped more than 19,000 victims of

this crime to turn their lives around and can and will support you".

The Teams are urging the public to report lenders who:

- Offer little or no paperwork.
- Are unclear on the terms of the loan ( how much interest is added, how long must you repay for).
- Take items as security, including passports, driving licences and even bank cards with the PIN in order to withdraw directly from borrowers accounts.
- Resort to threats, violence and other extreme methods to enforce debts as they can't enforce them legally.

Nationally the Illegal Money Lending Teams have secured more than 220 prosecutions for illegal money lending and related activity leading to more than 150 years worth of custodial sentences. £40 million worth of illegal debt has been written off.

**To report a loan shark:** Call the 24/7 confidential hotline on 0300 555 2222 / text 'loan shark + your message' to 60003 / email [reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk](mailto:reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk) / Private message us on [www.facebook.com/stoploansharksproject](https://www.facebook.com/stoploansharksproject)

# AFFORDABLE ACUPUNCTURE



For everyone .....

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**Have you got a suggestion for an article for 'The Pensioner'? Contact the editor, details on page 2. We cannot publish everything we receive, but suggestions are welcome.**



Opening  
Soon

# Does someone you know deserve the best care?



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