



Senior Persons' Council

Newsletter

About the Senior Persons Council...

Established in 2005, the Senior Persons' Council aims to give older people an opportunity to put forward their ideas and to undertake their own initiatives to benefit the local community. It provides a mechanism for consultation but also empowers its members to identify issues of concern and take action to address them.

Future meeting dates:

All meetings start at 10.15am and are scheduled to finish by 1pm.

Monday 14 March

at Washington Village Hall

Wednesday 15 June

at St Michael's Church Room,
Partridge Green

Thursday 15 September

at Rudgwick Village Hall

Friday 9 Dec

at Beeding & Bramber Village Hall

Any resident of the Horsham District aged over 50 is welcome to attend a meeting.

There is also an opportunity for people who are unable to attend meetings to raise issues with the Senior Persons' Council by writing to the address below.

If you would like to attend one of the meetings or for more information about the Senior Persons' Council, please contact Horsham District Council's Youth and Older Person's Officer:

Tel: 01403 215207 or

Email:

community.development@horsham.gov.uk

Address: Park North, North Street

Chairman's Address



It has been my privilege to be Chairman of Horsham District's Senior Person's Council (SPC) for the last two years. It has been an interesting time for all of us with a global recession and a change of Government in the UK. We are already seeing a tightening of the purse-strings which will inevitably mean a reduction in services, not only from the public sector but also from many commercial organisations. I think that most of us are realistic enough to accept that something had to change; however, our role in the SPC is to ensure that these cuts do not affect the older person, often the most vulnerable, disproportionately.

We have been successful in getting the voice of older people in Horsham heard in consultations by public bodies – one of them did not seem to think that Horsham was a large enough town to need consulting! That is a position that was soon reversed following our intervention. We are represented on various sub-committees within the NHS locally, Horsham District Council and are consulted by West Sussex County Council on various matters.

We have taken part in a the Life is for Living event at Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre for some years now – well worth attending if you have not done so before. We mounted a publicity campaign at a number of supermarkets promoting food hygiene. A basic cooking course for the single or widowed man was very successful. We are still hoping to run a finance course for widowed ladies but financial cut backs have delayed this. Sorry to have been seemingly sexist old fashioned but experience has shown that these problems do exist. I am sure that there are other courses that could be useful – so please let us know what.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the SPC for their hard work in attending events and consultations on behalf of the SPC, running courses for the benefit of Horsham District residents and taking time to take part in various consultations. They do valuable work on your behalf.

Barry Mursell
Chair of the Senior Persons Council

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

Regulations introduced by the last government require all Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to publish a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) by 1st Feb, 2011. The West Sussex PNA looks at the pharmaceutical services available to people in West Sussex and how they might be developed in the future. Each PCT worked independently, although exchange of ideas naturally occurred within the NHS.

Earlier in the year and following an interview, I was appointed (as one of two "lay" members (i.e. a volunteer and not an employee of the PCT, NHS etc.) of a Steering Group for the West Sussex PCT to formulate how this Assessment and Consultation on a draft report should be carried out.

West Sussex PCT includes a diversity of communities, from the urban areas such as Crawley and Worthing, to very rural areas such as that north of Chichester. A questionnaire on services provided or needed was devised and copies issued to all dispensaries, from supermarkets to independent pharmacies and dispensing doctors, to be handed out to all customers during the third week of July. There was a parallel questionnaire for the dispensaries about the services they provide. 1898 customer surveys were returned, an overall response of 25%. The results have been analysed and a draft PNA for public consultation was issued in November. Although the consultation period has now ended the document can still be downloaded at www.westsussex.nhs.uk/pna

Michael Jarvis
Member of the Senior Persons Council

LIFE IS FOR LIVING

This event is a wonderful opportunity for older people in Horsham and the surrounding villages to find out about the services and organisations which are available to help them.

You can try your hand at different activities as well as finding out how to avoid a fall. There are lots of charities offering assistance and advice and you are given a voucher for a free swim too.

Carol Duffy
Member of the Senior Persons Council

Senior Persons Council meets MP Nick Herbert

The Senior Persons' Council was joined by Arundel & South Downs MP Nick Herbert at their meeting in Henfield on Friday 21 January.

The MP was invited to speak at the start of the meeting, which was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Herbert highlighted the country's economic difficulties due to the budget deficit and stressed the importance of making savings and spending taxpayers' money wisely. But he said that it was important to treat older people with particular respect. The Government had promised to restore the earnings link for the basic state pension from April 2011, with a triple lock guaranteeing that pensions are raised by the higher of earnings, prices or 2.5 per cent. It had also prioritised spending on healthcare which was

so important to elderly people. Members of the Senior Persons' Council then put questions directly to Mr Herbert. These focused on the management of local crime and policing, including the work of Police Community Support Officers.

In responding to the questions, Mr Herbert talked about the benefits of adopting the Street Watch scheme, introduced in Hampshire, the deployment of local wardens, and the value of PCSOs in West Sussex villages.

Barry Mursell, Chairman of the Senior Persons' Council, commented: "Horsham District's Senior Persons' Council was pleased that Nick Herbert was able to join them recently. He was quizzed quite eagerly by the members of the council and observers from the various parishes on a variety of subjects but

especially on his portfolio concerns of law and justice.

"We believe he took onboard the concerns raised which in many ways were similar to his own. We hope to have him return one day in the future to see how both his department and the Coalition Government have lived up to their aspirations."

Nick Herbert commented: "I was delighted to be invited to speak at the Council's first meeting of 2011 and to listen to their concerns.

"There are many retired people living in my constituency and it's important, as we find new ways to deliver public services that we focus carefully on the impact on a group which we should treat with particular respect."

News Release from The Rt Hon Nick Herbert MP