



# The Pensioner

Journal of Brighton & Hove Pensioner Action



No. 42, Summer 2012

## Pensioner Action's 'Bright and Healthy Minds' event



*Hangleton Holistics giving free massages at the event*

Around 60 people came to our mental health event on 13th March, at which Pensioner Action covered a broad range of issues - from health promotion tips, to views on gaps in services, and relevant advice and information.

Our first speaker was Sylvia Wright, an older carer who spoke of her experience of mental health services' support (see Spouse or Carer piece on page 8). Then speakers from Adult Social Care and NHS (Sussex Partnership Trust) presented information on their services for older people with mental health needs, which included dementia and depression. Representatives from nine older peoples' health-related organisations attended and free hand massages were given by Hangleton Holistics at the start of the event.

We showcased the activity of our Neighbourhood Groups, demystified the extent and types of mental health commonly found in older people, and enabled people to speak out about their own experience of mental health problems, both as sufferers and as carers. We enabled service providers to explain what should be in place, and provided an opportunity for people to feedback on the reality of using those services. We drew in new people to our membership, networked with partner organisations, and set out plans for future actions.

*See p3 for a "You Said, We Did" list of what we've been up to.*

This summer issue is bigger and better with more pages full of Pensioner Action's new campaigns and events in Brighton & Hove!



**Visit Pensioner Action at People's Day in July**



**Arts and activities in your city**



**Research into our later years**

Inside this issue

No. 42



## Editor's letter

Welcome to the summer issue of *The Pensioner*. What a year! Pensioner Action has gone from strength to strength. The Jubilee celebrations have helped put the

spotlight on issues affecting pensioners; thankfully this has generated generous donations and interest - making this issue bigger and better!

Pensioner Action has our work cut out for us, that is for sure! Daily we hear of budget cuts, yet politicians and service providers assure us that the more vulnerable people need not suffer. We are keeping up to date with issues that affect older people in Brighton & Hove so we can report back to the Primary Care Trust and make sure your voice is heard. We hope to demystify some of the changes and help get you involved. If you have experienced any reduction in the services you have been receiving, please tell us and we will investigate.

If you have any 'good' news stories we'd like to hear about them too!

Other news...our charity Impetus is pleased to welcome a new Chief Executive, Jo Ivens. We are confident that her skills and experience will keep us firmly on the map!

We are also very grateful to the Sussex Gerontology Network's Sheltered Housing Group for a substantial donation. For 20 years the group organised conferences bringing together residents, staff and management of sheltered housing. The group has recently disbanded, so a huge thank you to them!

I hope you enjoy this issue and have a wonderful summer.

**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. We print 4000 copies of the magazine, three times a year. Most of these are delivered free to older people via care workers, community nurses, sheltered housing, libraries and more.

## Getting a regular copy

For a subscription fee of £5 per annum, a copy of each issue of *The Pensioner* will be posted to you on publication day; just complete the subscription form on page 6 and send it to Mandi Sherratt (regretfully this has gone up by £2 due to Royal Mail price increases). Or you can request a free email version - just email your request to: [mandi.sherratt@bh-impetus.org](mailto:mandi.sherratt@bh-impetus.org).

## 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

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# Pensioner Action in action!

Section 1, pages 3 to 9, shows what Pensioner Action has been up to on your behalf, and gives information on upcoming events and our latest campaigns.



## People's Day is back!

Come along to the Pensioner Action stand, Jubilee Square, Saturday 14th July 2012.



*Pensioner Action's stand at People's Day 2011*

We used to have an Older People's Day - over 1,000 people came to Hove Town Hall. There was singing, dancing and free sandwiches. Most important were the stalls from various organisations that gave pensioner groups a chance to meet, network and collect subscriptions. The day had support from the Council. The Older People's Day was cancelled (presumably to save money) and many of us are urging for it to be brought back. However all is not lost as in its place we have 'People's Day'!

Last summer a very successful People's Day event was held and we are pleased to announce there is another one on 14th July in the centre of Brighton; Pavilion Gardens, New Road, Jubilee Street and Jubilee Square. We expect 15,000 people to fill the streets, bringing the diverse communities of our city together in a big celebration. There will be sports, games, live performances and food stalls with dishes from all over the world. Support is coming in from all kinds of folk. Pensioner Action will have a stand in the Health & Wellbeing section. We will be offering different ways for older people to have their say, so if you have a view worth repeating on the changes to our NHS, or any other issues, come and find us. We will have a 'Vox Pop' booth where you can voice your views, with recorded interviews, questionnaires, and chats!

It should be a really enjoyable event, so come along and have a great day out!

## You said, we did!

- You said you wanted a centralised location for social group information; we researched the options (see social groups info on page 9).
- You told us you do not get the promised level of support from Community Psychiatric Nurses; we submitted questions to the Mental Health action team within the Local Involvement Network (LINK) and action is still going forward from this.
- You told us you do not necessarily see yourselves as 'carers', we have organised our next public event on the theme; 'Spouse, or Carer', with the Carer's Centre and Age UK (BHP), to raise awareness of the entitlements of older people who are unpaid carers (see page 4).
- In response to the fact that the council's Dementia Strategy had not been implemented, we undertook to chase the relevant council representative with our organisational partners.
- You told us that a limited number of older people are aware of Patient Participation Groups in their GP surgeries. We have canvassed our Neighbourhood Groups on their awareness of these and will be focusing a summer event (see page 6) on the accessibility of GP appointment systems, and how PPGs can be used to change them.

**To get in touch with any issues, contact us - write to 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)**

## Focus for action

Pensioner Action's current themes for 2012 have arisen from what older people tell us.

We support older people to know their rights, join together, and make their voices heard. We can provide information, support and links to get action.

Please tick below if you would like to get involved. Then cut out this section, and return it to Sue Goodwin at Pensioner Action, Impetus, First Floor, Intergen House, 65/67 Western Road, Hove, BN3 2JQ or call us on 01273 229 004.

- Spouse or carer? – Knowing your limitations and entitlements (see p8)
- GP appointment systems and using your Patient Participation Group (see event details p6)
- Getting proper medical advice or treatment when the GP surgery is shut – Out of Hours service
- End of life care – hospices
- Ways for housebound people to get their views heard on any of these issues

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel no: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



## Pensioner Action public event

### Spouse or carer? – Do you know your entitlements?

Sometimes we assume it is just our duty to manage with the consequences of health issues which affect us as we get older. This free event aims to discuss the dilemmas which can arise when you look after your spouse, and whether or when you can get support or help, and from where.

If you know someone affected and would like to know more, please come along. Refreshments will be provided.

- **10am to 1pm Tuesday, 24th July 2012**
- **Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton**

Please see page 8 for our Spouse or Carer questionnaire – we'd love your views!

## Advertise in The Pensioner

The Pensioner is a major means of communication for older people in Brighton and Hove. Its editorial work is covered in part by a small grant from the PCT and provided by a voluntary editorial 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:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  page advert - £75  
(A6 = 98mm W x 134.3mm H)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  page advert - £150  
(A5 = 200mm W x 142.5mm H)
- Full page advert - £300  
(A4 = 210 W x 297mm H)
- Sponsorship of an issue - £475 (full back page advert/advertorial plus editorial thanks/acknowledgement)

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Unlocking the potential of people and places

## Do you know someone who can't get out to meetings and events but has a view on one of our current themes ? (see page 4).

- We are taking steps to reach out to people who find it difficult to get out of the house. Could you take them a copy of The Pensioner?
- Could you encourage them to fill in our questionnaires (see right).
- Would they like us to phone them about their experience of their GP or the Out of Hours NHS service?

Please call us on 01273 229 004 or email us - [susan.goodwin@bh-impetus.org](mailto:susan.goodwin@bh-impetus.org) - if you can put us in contact with them.

## Reader contribution

### Walk on by...

Ever wondered why people who walked always felt better? Here is the answer...KEEP WALKING! And what is the medical explanation?

Keep walking...because:

The organs of your body have their sensory touches at the bottom of your foot.

If you massage these points you will find relief from aches and pains - for example, the heart point is on the left foot.

Typically they are shown as points and arrows to show which organ it connects to.

It is indeed correct since the nerves connected to these organs terminate here.

This is covered in great detail in acu-pressure studies.

God created our body so well that he even thought of this.

He made us walk so that we will always be pressing these pressure points and thus keeping these organs activated at all times.

## Pensioner Action's new campaign: your GP appointment system – does it shut you out?

We are responding to a concern voiced in our Neighbourhood Groups – difficulty getting an appointment with your GP.

Do you have to get up early and go down to the surgery at 8.30am to get an appointment when you are unwell? Or do you have to ring continuously in order to get through and hope that there is still an appointment available when you finally succeed? Are you advised to see your own GP but then can't get an appointment when he/she is in?

As we get older we may need to use our doctor more, so being able to access the appointment system easily is essential. Doctors visit the very sick at home, but what about those who need more flexibility to get to the surgery?

We need your help to research the accessibility of GP's across Brighton and Hove, and support older people to improve things.

Please answer the questions below, cut out this section and return it to Sue Goodwin, Pensioner Action, 1st Floor, Intergen House, 65-67 Western Road, Hove, BN3 2JQ.

See p6 for details on our upcoming public meeting about GP Services, and p4 for details of our public meeting 'Spouse or Carer?' (and related info on p8)- all are welcome to attend.

Cut out and keep or photocopy

**Q1. What is the name of your GP surgery?**

**Q2. Do you have to use an early morning bookings procedure, or does your surgery offer a more flexible approach to getting an appointment on a day when you are ill? If so, what is it?**

**Q3. If your surgery has an online booking system, what impact has it had, and does it benefit you?**

**Q4. Has your surgery got some form of Patient Participation Group (PPG)? If yes, are you involved with it, and how?**

**Q5. Would you feel able to use the PPG to give your views on the appointment system? If not, why is that?**

**Q6. Are you more or less housebound?**

**Q7. Would you like Pensioner Action to help you get something more from your Patient Participation Group? YES / NO**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Pensioner Action public meeting - come to sunny Saltdean to improve GPs' services!

Pensioner Action is holding a second public meeting on **Monday, 20 August, 10.30am–12.00** at the **Community Centre, Saltdean**. The topic is how GPs' services could be improved, particularly the appointments system and how you can get your views across via the Patient Participation Groups. This will not just be a "whinge" session with no chance of changing things! Pensioner Action is funded by the Primary Care Trust (soon to be the Clinical Commissioning Group) to gather the views of older people on the NHS services and to pass these views back to the PCT, so they can act on them.

Attendees will be guests of the Central Sussex Group of the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance (CSPA), which meets every month. To be a member of the Group, you need to have worked for a Government body at local, regional or national level and to be receiving a Government occupational pension. Their meetings are open (by prior arrangement) to older people who are interested in the particular topic being discussed – or those who just want a bit of company!

The CSPA is a national body which campaigns to protect the purchasing power of Civil Service pensions, but also to promote the economic and social well-being of all pensioners. It has 100 local groups, of which the Central Sussex Group is one, covering Shoreham to Peacehaven, and as far as Balcombe. The CSPA is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee this year too, and, as part of its celebrations, the Central Sussex Group is inviting Pensioner Action (and some other older people's groups) to join in.

The event is free and tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided, there will also be a raffle! Afterwards, we will be going to the Saltdean Tavern for a reasonably priced and excellent carvery lunch. So come along and make a day of it!

To get there take buses 12s, 14s, etc along the coast road and it is just behind the Lido. Don't go through the main door but go round the back into the car park & enter through the brown door leading to the ground floor hall where we'll be meeting. There is free parking.

**Due to limited capacity, please  
reserve your space by calling  
Mandi Sherratt on  
01272 229 004.**



## Subscribe to The Pensioner today! Annual subscription fee just £5

What you get for your subscription:

- 'The Pensioner' magazine delivered to your doorstep every 4 months
- News on Pensioner Action events
- Email correspondence and regular e-news

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription renewal: YES / NO \_\_\_\_\_

Cheques payable to Brighton & Hove Impetus, and returned to: Pensioner Action, 1st Floor, Intergen House, 65 – 67 Western Road, Hove, BN3 2QJ

Data Protection Act: The information you have provided on this form will be used to keep you up-to-date with our activities. On occasions, we may decide it is appropriate to pass your contact details on to other organisations who wish to make contact with older people (i.e. Health Service, City Council, arts or community organisations). If you DO NOT wish your contact details to be passed on, please tick here

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Reader contribution

### Sleepless in the City

Sitting at extensive windows  
In deep despair  
The only unmatched beings  
Are seagulls in the air

On watch for early intrusive  
Waste collection noise  
Slumped over my laptop  
Lacking any poise

Dawn breaks as I sit  
Straightforwardly gazing  
Envious of opposite  
Neighbours' double glazing

Each day many large  
Vehicles add to my sorrow  
I will have to sit again  
Tomorrow and tomorrow

For two weeks I have to keep  
An eye almost in tears  
While desperately needing  
To protect my ears

Environmental Health require  
Me to keep a diary  
Collating names and times  
For them, draining me entirely.

*Diana Ward Davis*



# Neighbourhood Groups diary

*Cut out and keep  
or photocopy*

**Why not join us? – Our free friendly discussion groups are open to all.**

**Craven Vale Group.** Meets at Craven Vale Resource Centre, Queensway, Craven Vale, BN2 0FE, 2pm-4pm. • Weds 25th July • Weds 26th September • Weds 31st October • Weds 28th November •

**Patching Lodge Group.** Meets at Patching Lodge, Eastern Road, BN2 0NQ, 2.30 - 4pm. • Tues 10th July • Tues 18th September • Tues 13th November •

**West Hove Group.** Meets at Muriel House, Ingram Crescent West, Portland Road, Hove, BN3 5NS, 2.30 to 4pm. • Tues 17th July • Tues September 25th • Tues 20th November •

**Moulsecoomb Group.** Meets at The Orchards, Moulsecoomb Way, Moulsecoomb, BN2 4JQ, 2.30 - 4pm. • Tues 11th September • Tues 6th November •

**What are the Pensioner Action Neighbourhood Groups?** The Neighbourhood Groups work together to enable older people to tackle issues which affect our everyday lives, such as:

*Hospital and GP Services - Public Transport - Social Services - Benefits - Community Safety - Environmental Issues - and anything else which may be affecting you as an older person in Brighton & Hove.*

We have regular speakers, give information on services, encourage debate, friendship and work together to get the changes we want for our neighbourhoods. For more details, call Sue Goodwin on 01273 229 004.

## Do you have time to help?

**Our Housebound Delivery Service needs volunteers to help bring our library services to the residents of Brighton & Hove who are unable to visit our libraries in person.**



To find out more, please email:  
[Library.volunteering@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Library.volunteering@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
Or contact Matt Day,  
Volunteers Manager 01273 296965

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# Spouse or carer?

**For better for worse....in sickness and in health; "We'll look after each other; we'll be all right as long as we have each other." That's what we told ourselves.**

But when my husband started to forget ordinary things, our world changed. First we stopped going on holiday, then we stopped going on day trips – it distressed him too much being away from familiar environments. Then he wouldn't go out of the flat, and could not bear to be alone for even short periods. I had to stay with him all the time. He started to resist my help, fighting my efforts to care for him, and then he wouldn't sleep at night. I was at my wits end.

Social Services offered him services which he didn't want, and then he was offered a place in a care home, but I wouldn't have that. I wanted to care for him at home. But later I found out I had been seen as 'refusing help! What I needed was some fresh ideas on how to cope at home.

I found help from the Carer's Centre and other older people's voluntary organisations. So I am sharing my tips with you:

1. Drink lots of water!
2. Contact charities for help without delay.
3. Become as informed as you can.

And read these useful books:

- "My Bonny" by Jon Suchet.
- "Keeping Mum" by Marianne Talbot.
- "Keeper" by Andrea Gillies.
- "The Selfish Pig's Guide to Caring" by Hugh Marriott.

*With thanks to Sylvia Wright, member of Carer's Voice*



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Useful information to cut out and keep or photocopy



## Spouse or carer? Test your knowledge of your entitlements

- Q1. Does the consistent support I offer my spouse count as being a 'carer'? YES / NO**
- Q2. Can unpaid older carers get extra financial help to cover loss of income if they give over 16 hours a week care? YES / NO**
- Q3. Do unpaid carers have any rights to an assessment of their own support needs, in addition to the person they are caring for having a social care assessment? YES / NO**
- Q4. If you have savings over £10,000, do you have to use that money first before getting assistance from council services? YES / NO**
- Q5. Does my GP need to know if I am providing substantial support to my spouse? YES / NO**

**Answers: A1.** Recognition as a carer is defined as providing 'substantial' support to someone, by tasks rather than a set number of hours. **A2.** Only people under 65 are entitled to receive money from the Carer's Allowance! However, those on a low income can still benefit through the carer's premium in Pension Credit. Also, one or both of you may be entitled to Attendance Allowance if you have disabilities. **A3.** Yes, but you may have to request this and it does not guarantee service provision, you may have to make a case for getting the support you need. Or you may get support in the form of Direct Payments with which to employ a carer. **A4.** Savings of over £23,000 prevent receipt of a subsidy for social care services, and below that a means test applies on a sliding scale. Assistance from charities are not subject to the same rules, but may still have eligibility criteria. **A5.** It is important to register as a carer with your GP to get regular checks on the known health impact of caring for someone, especially in older age.

**Come to our free public event on July 24th (see page 4).**

## Reader's poem

Pensioners  
Can't see without their  
glasses  
Or chew, with a few back  
teeth.  
But can enjoy their 'Free  
Bus Passes'  
An assured mobility  
relief!

*Diana Ward Davis*



## Pensioner actions - social groups in Brighton in Hove

At our spring event, 'Bright and Healthy Minds' you told us that you wanted there to be one reliable source of information about social activities for older people. So we went away and looked into it for you. Did you know there is a **Brighton and Hove Local Information Service** for all kinds of publicly funded services? Visit the library and ask to look at BHLIS. It is a clearly laid out and simple to use guide.

However, BHLIS does NOT include social activities, so our search then took us to the **East Sussex Community Information Service (ESCIS)**. This is held in paper files in libraries, which you can leaf through at your leisure. It is also available via the website ([www.escis.org.uk](http://www.escis.org.uk)). ESCIS includes lots of social activities for older people in Brighton and Hove. We would recommend this source for anyone wanting a starting point to find more company. It is updated once a year and all groups are encouraged to submit their details for inclusion.

One example is a club for people over 50 called **Amity** (01273 720 603). There are lots of activities on offer, at different times of the day and week ranging from a simple cup of coffee in a member's home, to outings and trips. A Central Hove group member told us she returned to the UK as a widow after a life in Australia and knew very few people here. She has rebuilt her life by volunteering and by joining Amity, which has been a lifeline to her.

Or why not join our regular **Neighbourhood (60+) Groups** in West Hove, Moulsecoomb, Patching Lodge, or Craven

Vale? There is open and friendly discussion on subjects of relevance to older peoples' wellbeing. Pensioner Action provides a facilitator and a cup of tea, just bring yourself along, and your opinions! See page 7 .

Our sister service, the **Neighbourhood Care Scheme** (Tel 01273 775 888), is another good way to find people to visit you if you can't get out of the house easily.

If you want someone to enjoy a hobby with, then **Lifelines** (Tel: 01273 688 117) may be able to match you up with the right person.

For an up-to-date list of older peoples' lunch clubs, contact **Age UK** (01273 720 603). **The University of the 3rd Age** also has lots of activities for retired people all over the city, these are listed on their website ([www.brightonandhoveu3a.org.uk](http://www.brightonandhoveu3a.org.uk)).

Also **The Fed - Centre for Independent Living** is embarking on a new website called **The Embrace Information Project**. When the site is up and running it will list all the great activities in your neighbourhood, searchable by postcode. If you are involved in, support or attend a group such as a lunch club, coffee morning or arts club please call them on 01273 208 934 or enter your details on their website ([www.thefedonline.org.uk](http://www.thefedonline.org.uk)) and they will advertise your activity for free!

## Volunteers offer link to healthy ageing

In today's busy world it's easy for older people to become isolated. Many don't have family or friends living nearby who can give them support when they go to the doctor or hospital. With this in mind, LifeLines HealthLink, an exciting new project based in the Queen's Park, Craven Vale, Eastern Road, Kempton and Turner areas, provides volunteers who can accompany people to medical and health appointments.

Volunteers will travel with people to and from the hospital or surgery and may also be required to provide support and a 'listening ear' during appointments. With a HealthLink volunteer providing company and support older people will find these visits much less stressful. Hopefully this will help them access services sooner and stay fitter for longer.

If you are over 50 with some time to spare and would like to help an older person get to medical appointments safely you might like to become a HealthLink volunteer. You will receive full training, on-going support and out of pocket expenses to carry out this challenging, but very rewarding role. You don't have to give a regular time commitment – you can fit

your volunteering duties for HealthLink around your other commitments.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or are over 50, located in one of the areas listed in the first paragraph, and would benefit from the company of a volunteer at medical appointments, please call the office on 01273 688 117 or email [lifelines@csv.org.uk](mailto:lifelines@csv.org.uk).

*HealthLink is part of LifeLines, a volunteer-led project which aims to improve the lives of isolated and vulnerable older people by helping them access a range of activities and events that will benefit their health and well-being. Anyone over the age of 50 can volunteer with LifeLines and we particularly welcome those who are retired.*



## Older people's news & information

### The Pensioners' Association

by Diana Ward Davis

We meet at Patching Lodge, which is comfortable and easy to reach by bus. Tea and biscuits are available when you arrive. We have stimulating programmes, and speakers often give us an insight into what is going on in our city. In past months, we have listened and talked with Caroline Lucas; Green Party, Roger French; Brighton and Hove Buses, and Parks and Gardens - at which the speaker informed us how our public gardens are cared for and just how much work goes into making our city a colourful one. We have had a voluntary animal sanctuary speaker, poets, local councillors and other interesting talks.

Sessions are always the right length so as not to lose interest, giving time and space for members to put a question forward if they have one. On July 10th we are having 'a rant', where we air our views/gripes. All talks are watched over by our Chair, Isla Robertson, who adds zest to every meeting. Can't wait! 14th August brings a talk on Health Walks in and around our city, and how they can generally benefit the older person. September 11th will bring a speaker from RNLI.

As you can see the talks are varied and interesting.....I won't be missing any!

**All meetings are at Patching Lodge, 10.30 for 11.00am start.  
For enquiries, please contact Isla Robertson - tel: 01273 721655.**

### "We are all members of each other"

Isolation in old age is recognised as a growing problem. The obvious solution is to enable people to connect positively with each other. The **Neighbourhood Care Scheme (NCS)** tries to do this, supporting older people and adults with physical disabilities by putting them in touch with local volunteers, who provide them with neighbourly support. Last year the NCS enabled 224 volunteers to support more than 251 people, with benefits to those visited:

**"As I feel lonely part of the time, having conversation and company is lovely."**

and the volunteers said:

**"I enjoy supporting people and it gives me a purpose in my life. I feel I am doing something worthwhile."**

The quotation that forms the title of this piece is from one of our volunteers and reflects our philosophy that we are all in it together, and that mutual support is essential to a healthy community.

Currently, we work in ten neighbourhoods in Brighton & Hove. If you could do with some neighbourly support or think you could help a neighbour, why not phone us on 775888 or email us at [ncs@bh-impetus.org](mailto:ncs@bh-impetus.org) to find out more?

All NCS volunteers are CRB checked and receive ongoing support in their volunteering.

Sean de Podesta, NCS Project Leader

**Neighbourhood Care Scheme: tel: 01273 775888  
/ email: [ncs@bh-impetus.org](mailto:ncs@bh-impetus.org)**



### Direct Payments report

Brighton and Hove LINK, the health and adult social care watchdog for the city, have recently released a report about Direct Payments. The report used questionnaires, interviews and focus groups to gather feedback about what it's like to get direct payments, and why some had chosen not to use them.

The results showed that those who used Direct Payments were generally pleased with the service they had received. However, there was some room for improvement in areas like getting information about Direct Payments out to people who are eligible, and some specific parts of the application process that people were having trouble with.

Whilst some older people thought Direct Payments gave them more independence and control over care, others thought it was unneeded bother. For this reason our main recommendation to Brighton council was to ensure that everyone has information about the service so they can make their own minds up, without switching to something that might not be right for them.

For the full report please go to this website: <http://bit.ly/JyLM3N>, or to receive a printed copy please call 01273 810 236 or send your address to:

Kerry Dowding, Brighton & Hove LINK  
Brighton Junction, 1A Isetta Square, 35  
New England Street, Brighton, BN1 4GQ.



## Older People's Council news



by Jack Hazelgrove,  
Chair of the OPC

Your Older People's Council has been engaged in a range of work over the past few months. We held our quarterly public meeting in the Jubilee library on the problems facing the future funding of social care. For years successive

governments have failed to face up to the need for a long term solution for funding residential care; meanwhile life-time savings run out, homes are sold to pay for care. and family and carers are stretched to the limit in voluntary care at the expense of their own health.

To explain the local situation we invited the Cabinet member Cllr Rob Jarrett, the strategic Director, Terry Parkin, and Brian Doughty, Head of Adults Assessment. Against the background of a £20 million cut from national Government the Council have struggled to maintain local services. Although all elderly people are entitled to an assessment of their needs, like most authorities, Brighton

and Hove can only afford to fund those with 'substantial and critical needs' - not those with 'low or moderate needs'.

One of our visitors Kat Pearce, acting Director of the city's Age UK, explained the Care in Crisis petition which aimed to collect 100,000 signatures to present to Parliament. We also welcomed Sue Howley of Pensioner Action and Isla Robertson of the Pensioners Association.

Among recent developments is our project to have the City declared an 'Age Friendly City' by the UN World Health Organisation. The standard is set high and assesses services like transport, public seating, toilets and other amenities. This has been led by our Secretary, Mike Bojczuk.

We have also signed up to a research project of Kings College London looking at palliative care towards the end of life. I have just read an amazing book on this subject- 'Seize the Day - How the dying teach us to live' by Marie De Hennezel. She draws on her personal experience of working with the terminally ill in a palliative care unit in Paris.

We continue to meet with key Councillors and we are pleased that the Mayor Cllr Bill Randall is supporting our Age Friendly bid. We also welcome Cllr Geoffrey Bowden as our link Cllr for the OPC. We are very sorry to bid goodbye to Colin Carden who has had to retire for health reasons. Thank you Colin on behalf of all of us for your voluntary public service.

[www.olderpeoplescouncil.org](http://www.olderpeoplescouncil.org) / tel: 01273 296 427 / email: [olderpeoplescouncil@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:olderpeoplescouncil@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

# Your Local Mobility Experts...

Clearwell Mobility is the leading supplier of mobility and homecare equipment in Sussex with showrooms throughout the area.

Our focus is to ensure that you choose the best product to suit your needs. Our staff are trained as Trusted Assessors and do not employ pressure sales tactics - just helpful, friendly advice.

As well as showrooms to visit, we have a **free** home assessment service where we bring products for you to try at home. You can also order products for home delivery either by calling your local showroom or going to our website.

### BRIGHTON SHOWROOM

110 Warren Road  
Woodingdean  
Brighton BN1 1BA

**01273 692244**

9am-5pm Mon-Sat

### HOVE SHOWROOM

61 Boundary Road  
Hove BN3 5TD

**01273 424224**

9am-5pm Mon-Sat



**Clearwell**  
mobility 



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

**...Making Life Easier**

## Arts and activities in your city

### At Home this Morning

Are you aware that Brighton & Hove have a regular radio programme for older listeners? *'At Home this Morning'* is on RadioReverb (97.2 FM) every Tuesday morning at 11.00 and every Sunday morning at 10.00. You can hear online at the same time at [www.radioreverb.com](http://www.radioreverb.com). It is a 55 minute magazine programme which changes every fortnight.

It is made by a team of volunteer older people who operate under the title of 'Grey Matters Productions CIC'. This company was created by the Older People's Council, the then Pensioners' Forum and the local Age Concern some five years ago and had a programme on the first day's programming by the new community radio station. The company gained a £9,000 grant from the Lottery 'Awards for All' which enabled portable recording equipment to be bought and a state of the art recording studio to be created in Kemp Town.

The programme has interviews with active older people (sea swimming, gardening, writing and dancing) and

features local activities and matters of concern to older people (closure of an adult education centre, a weekly lunch club, community transport, looking after sheep, leasehold problems). Medical issues are covered, as are films, theatre productions and concerts of interest to us. The items are all linked together with appropriate music – the whole programme is produced by two retired professional ex members of BBC radio. The programmes are supported by the City Council.

Are you using your radio programme to publicise your activities? Are you interested in joining the team?

Learn more at our website: [www.greymattersproductions.org.uk](http://www.greymattersproductions.org.uk) or by emailing [hrry371@aol.com](mailto:hrry371@aol.com) or phoning 01273 419 723. Harry Steer is our secretary and he would be pleased to talk to you.  
*Bob Gunnell*



### Free 'rituals' event at Fabrica

The Arts and Heritage organisation 'Strike a Light' will be curating an event at Fabrica gallery on Thursday 6th September, from 11-4pm on the theme of Rituals. This will be part of the national Heritage Open Days events which are open to all, and free! Find out more about this national event by visiting [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk). It is a drop-in event and free transport can be arranged if booked in advance by emailing [info@fabrica.org.uk](mailto:info@fabrica.org.uk), calling 01273 778 646, or to find out more about the venue, visit [www.fabrica.org.uk](http://www.fabrica.org.uk).

We are really excited about the event which will feature a series of activities celebrating the role of ritual in our lives through a contemporary slide reel of memory and family rituals, a dance event, a talk, an armchair critics event, and drop-in workshops with two artists - Jane Fordham, and Clare Nias.

Historian Sarah Tobias will also be giving an interactive talk about Victorian Death & Mourning, apt given that Fabrica is based in an old church! Catherine Tajima Powell will be exhibiting her 'Traces' work. All washed down with free tea and biscuits! Now there's a ritual!

*Fabrica is a visual arts organisation based in a former Regency church in the heart of Brighton that commissions contemporary visual art installations specific to the building.*

See the NEW website here: [www.strikealight.org](http://www.strikealight.org)



### Better breathing singing groups

For older people and those with long-term health conditions. No singing ability required!

- Mondays - 1.45 to 3.15 pm, Patching Lodge, Eastern Rd, Brighton
- Fridays - 11.30 am to 1 pm, Elizabeth Court, 65 Wilbury Rd, Hove

Cost - £3. See the website at: [www.singforbetterhealth.co.uk](http://www.singforbetterhealth.co.uk)  
For info - Udita: 01273 556 755.



# Who Cares?

## Do you care for, or provide support for someone in the community?

Maybe it's part of your job to provide care, or maybe like many of us, you care for a family member, a relative or a neighbour. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service care for people. We care most about the people who we have yet to meet who most need our help. We hope to meet them before their need for help is desperate because help too late is almost as good as no help at all. We hope you will help us.

## Smoke Alarms

We know many people care and provide support for others and that they do their best to keep them safe from harm, but harm comes in many shapes and forms and not everyone knows the best way to protect someone from the risk of injury, or even, death from fire.

We are all different with different needs and people receiving care and support often have special needs. Being a carer you may have already checked someone's smoke alarm, or even installed one for them, but someone with reduced mobility or poor hearing, for example, may not be able to react to a smoke alarm warning like you. Maybe you've checked their smoke alarm because you know they have already experienced some problems, maybe they fell asleep while smoking, or accidentally burnt a tea-towel or some clothing, or just left an electric fire too near furniture, for example.

You may think a smoke alarm will help, but is it enough? It may alert someone to danger but are they able to escape from a fire in their home? As a carer or care agency, you may not know all that we can offer, we have advisors and expert help at our fingertips. We make free home safety visits to conduct assessments and have a range of measures that can improve the safety of the most vulnerable.

## Do you really care?

We know you do. But do you know how to protect someone from dangers of fire like we do? No? Well then contact us and then we too can care for someone before it's too late.

**FREEPHONE:** 0800 177 7069 / **FREEPOST:** The Community Fire Safety Team, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service SEA 12712, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 1BR

**Email:** [homefire.safetyvisits@esfrs.org](mailto:homefire.safetyvisits@esfrs.org) / **Minicom:** 01323 462002 / **Fax:** 01323 462044 **Website:** [www.esfrs.org](http://www.esfrs.org)

**Please quote ref:** The Pensioner\_12



**East Sussex**  
Fire & Rescue Service

## Brighton Male Voice Choir and Saltdean Bowling Club

Brighton Male Voice Choir (BMVC) has performed 17 concerts over the last 12 months; one of the most notable being a prestigious engagement at St. Luke's Church, Queens Park in aid of 'Brighton Take Heart'. This charitable organisation work hard for the welfare of heart patients to raise funds to continue with their work. The Lord Major, Anne Meadows and her husband Tony attended and a considerable sum was raised for their cause.

BMVC has worked hard at promoting these charitable events in order to arouse public awareness.

On Saturday 26th May 2012 we performed once again at the Saltdean Lido in support of its preservation as a social and historic site. On Saturday June 16th 2012, BMVC, in conjunction with Sussex Harmony Singers, held a concert at St. Lukes in Queen's Park. This fundraising occasion was in aid of Brighton 'C-Side Cancer Support Group'. Again, a considerable amount was raised for this cause.

On Saturday 17th November together with Soton Male Voice Choir, we shall be performing a similar concert at St. Luke's in aid of Marie Curie Foundation with whom we have a long standing fundraising commitment. Also, we have again been invited to sing in concert at Ovingdean Social Club on Saturday 14th July at 8pm.

BMVC extends an invitation for more singers to join us in rehearsing a wide range of popular and classical

arrangements. There is no requirement to read music to join. The atmosphere is extremely friendly and welcoming. We meet every Wednesday in the Hall of the Church of the Holy Cross, next to the Downs Hotel in Woodingdean at 7.30pm.

Any enquiries regarding tickets and concerts generally or should your organisation wish BMVC to perform for you in concert, please contact the Secretary Tom Ryan on 07899 874 969 or email [tommyryan2@btinternet.com](mailto:tommyryan2@btinternet.com) and/or: [brightonmalevoicechoir@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:brightonmalevoicechoir@yahoo.co.uk) or see our website at <http://brighton-male-voice-choir.clubbz.com>

Deryck Hanchett is also the secretary of Saltdean Bowling Club. The new season is upon us and the club is always happy to welcome new members whether they are old hands or total beginners. If you are interested please get in touch:

**Saltdean Bowling Club:** Tel: 01273 390 230  
Email: [saltdeanbowlingclub@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saltdeanbowlingclub@yahoo.co.uk) /  
Web: <http://saltdean-bowling-club.clubbz.com>



Members of Saltdean Bowling Club at a funday at Saltdean Lido

## Research into our later years

*Dignity and well-being in our later years – these are today's buzz words. A vast amount of medical research continues into the causes, prevention and cure of the illnesses that accompany ageing. We are living longer, but what is the quality of life in these extra years? Increasing frailty and dependence are, perhaps, inevitable, but we can avoid many of these attributes. On pages 14 to 18 we give some examples...*

## Research on well-being in old age

Over the last three years, researchers from the University of Brighton have been working with Age UK Brighton and Hove and older people to explore what well-being means to older people and how it is produced. They worked with a team of 11 Age UK volunteers in Brighton and Hove who conducted interviews with people aged between 67 and 97 to find out their views on how money, where they live, their health and their relationships affect their sense of well-being. The project report and a booklet for older people written by the older peer researchers were launched at an event at the Brighthelm Centre on 3 April. The launch was attended by local and national older people's organisations and those who provide housing, healthcare and social care services.

Professor Marian Barnes and Dr Lizzie Ward, from the University of Brighton's School of Applied Social

Science, presented key findings from the research and there was an opportunity for attendees to discuss these and reflect on their implications. There was also a presentation by Dr Beatrice Gahagan, senior manager at Age UK Brighton and Hove and the peer researchers on the booklet 'As Time Goes By'. The booklet was written for older people and to raise general awareness about issues that affect us all as we get older.

***The research report is available to download from <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/sass/older-people-wellbeing-and-participation/> or from Lizzie Ward by calling 01273 643 903. The booklet 'As Time Goes By' is also available by calling Jackie Duncan at Age UK Brighton and Hove on 01273 720 603.***

*Researchers at the 'As Time Goes By' launch.*



# Optimising palliative care for older people in community settings

A research study on the best way to provide palliative care to older people with increasing frailty living at home or in a care home is being conducted by Sussex Community NHS Trust and the Cicely Sanders Institute, King's College London.

A palliative care service focuses on promoting quality of life by preventing, detecting and relieving distressing physical, emotional, social and spiritual issues. Palliative care is recommended for older people to enable them to live as well as possible, to die with dignity and to support their carers, but uncertainty surrounds how best to achieve this.

The project is led by Dr Catherine Evans who works with the community trust as a nurse specialist in palliative care and at King's as a researcher, and by Professor Irene Higginson, a professor of palliative care at King's. Both are working locally with clinicians, older people and voluntary sector representatives to undertake the study.

They aim to develop and evaluate a new service for frail older people living at home or in a care home. The new service will be delivered through close working between specialists in palliative care such as a Macmillan nurse, and primary and community services like general practitioners and district nurses.

The study is in two parts. Part one develops ideas about the new service by understanding the services older people receive in the last three months of life and how they could better benefit older people and their carers during this time. Part one comprises two aspects: asking carers about their experiences; and consulting with older people and those involved in providing care about the new service. In September 2012 they plan to send a survey to individuals who cared for an older person who had died in the preceding 4-10 months to find out about what care they wanted, the services received and the support offered to them. A carer might be a spouse, a descendant or care home manager. They will consult with older people and carers about the findings, and those involved in providing care, such as community nurses, GPs, specialists in palliative care and care of the elderly. The survey and consultation will shape and refine the new service by helping us to understand when older people could benefit most from a palliative care service, how this should be



*Professor Irene Higgins, left and Dr Catherine Evans, right, of King's College, London.*

provided and in what ways the service could benefit older people and carers.

Part two looks at how the new service benefits older people and carers and the best way to provide the service. 52 older people with increasing frailty and health difficulties, and their carers, will receive either the new palliative care service or care usually provided by people like their GP. The new service is delivered by two palliative care teams working with community nursing teams in Sussex Community NHS Trust. They will see how well the new service compares with usual care in improving the older peoples' well-being, reducing carers' burden and any differences in the services and cost. From this, they hope to learn whether this new service could benefit older people and carers and how best to carry out more work to see if this is the best way to deliver palliative care in the community.

The research is funded by the NHS through the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR). The NIHR have agreed to fund part one through a clinical lecturer award held by Dr Evans. The colleagues have applied to the NIHR Research for Patient Benefit funding to complete part two.

*If you would like to know more about the study or how to get involved in supporting it, please contact Dr Evans (email: [catherine.evans@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:catherine.evans@kcl.ac.uk)) or the research assistant Katie Stone (email: [katie.stone@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:katie.stone@kcl.ac.uk)).*



## What does your Brighton & Hove look like?

Researchers Lesley Murray and Karolina Doughty at the University of Brighton (School of Applied Social Science) are asking Brighton and Hove residents of all ages to answer this question in a research study called 'Disruption'. This is an in-depth 2 year study about the way families move around the city as part of everyday life and what happens when 'normal' life becomes disrupted in some way. The research explores the ways in which 'disruption' impacts on the choices we make in regards to moving around the city.

The project is interested in all sorts of strategies that people employ to deal with both small and large disruptions in their everyday lives. This can be anything from road-works to health problems or life changes, and people at different stages of the life course are likely to experience disruptions differently and have different resources to deal with them. The reason for this interest in 'disruption' is partly because everyday life and the way people negotiate the city is arguably far less 'routine' or habitual than research usually assumes, and partly because understanding how people deal with being forced to re-think or re-plan activities and travel routes will help us understand how people use different travel options available to them.

The study also explores whether disruption can be seen as a 'window to change' and what this teaches us about the opportunities to change travel practices to reduce carbon emissions.

The study is contributing to a larger project primarily through gathering in-depth information about everyday mobility in a range of social and spatial contexts, exploring the myriad factors that influence how people get around. A parallel study of everyday mobility will be carried out by researchers at the University of Lancaster. The study uses an exciting and innovative range of methods to gather this information, and works with residents of all ages. Participants can choose how they work with the researchers to best capture their travel experiences and how these are influenced by different disruptions. The study is in its early stages and will carry on until summer 2014.

If you would like more information about the project, or would like to take part, please contact Karolina Doughty at the University of Brighton, 01273 643 904 or email [k.doughty@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:k.doughty@brighton.ac.uk).



## New dynamics of ageing

The University of Sheffield has recently published a report. 'Maintaining dignity in Later Life' based on interviews with over 30 older people over 80 years old. Highlighted were the nine factors that support or undermine their sense of dignity. Those interviewed said that what they appreciated were:

- Awareness of others of a need for help.
- Being offered help without having to ask.
- Awareness of the impact of illness on the person and their sense of who they are.
- Acts of kindness and thoughtful gestures.
- Respectful attitudes and courteousness.
- Being treated as an intelligent person with a part to play in treatment and care.
- Being treated as an individual with their own history, preferences, fears and beliefs.
- Being helped at the right pace. Not going too fast.
- Having someone help you make difficult decisions – with honesty and respect.

## Music for Life project

In another study, the role played by participation in community music activities was explained.



**To find out more about either of these projects, contact: NDA Research Programme, Department of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield, S10 2TU or visit the website at: [www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk](http://www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk), or email: [nda@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:nda@sheffield.ac.uk).**



## The Dance and Dementia project

The University of Brighton has recently published the findings from a pilot study run by the Dance and Dementia Project. The pilot set out to explore the role of dance in maintaining and developing relationships between people with dementia, and those who care for and support them. The project ran a series of dance movement sessions at a day centre in Brighton and Hove and researched the impact through observation and interviews with the people with dementia who took part, their carers and staff at the day centre.

The Dance and Dementia Project is collaboration between social science and dance researchers from the Universities of Brighton and Chichester with staff from Brighton & Hove City Council and a freelance dance

artist. Positive results from the pilot are being used to develop ideas and look for funding for a larger project.

The findings summary from the pilot is available to download at <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/sass/research/publications/Dance-and-Dementia-Findings.pdf>

**If you would be interested in hearing more about the pilot or our interest in this area of research please contact Naomi Smith, Research Fellow in SSPARC at the University of Brighton, telephone 01273 644 530, or email: [nms4@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:nms4@brighton.ac.uk)**



**University of Brighton**

## A Better Life – what older people with high support needs value

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has committed to a range of work which will increase understanding of what will really help some of the most marginalised, and least heard people in the UK. Conducted by a team from the Open University the research is based on interviews with 26 people with high support needs.

Early findings show that old age is not about 'them', it's about all of us. We're all heading in that direction. Some of us will need a lot of support, and many of us will experience real loss, difficulty and frustration, but we will always have our own personalities, stories, roles and relationships, likes and dislikes, hopes and fears, values and priorities. We are individual and very diverse, with hugely varying lifestyles, cultural backgrounds, expectations, financial circumstances, family composition, education, experience and resources. The things that make us all unique don't just disappear as we get older.

**To download the full report visit [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk) - or call on 01904 615 905 / email: [info@jrf.org.uk](mailto:info@jrf.org.uk) for other formats.**



**JOSEPH ROWNTREE  
FOUNDATION**

# The meaning of 'home'

by Pat Balbuena, PCT

**'Studies of Older People' by Pat Balbuena emphasises the importance of 'home' in their later years. It is the centre of domesticity, and provides the means of independence, solitude and intimacy.**

The Housing Minister recently launched new policies to help older people continue to live comfortably in their own homes, with particular support for those leaving hospital. With nearly one in five of the population expected to be aged 65yrs or over by 2020, Ministers are determined to ensure older, vulnerable people get the help they need to live independent lives.

Fifty-one million pounds has been made available towards help and support from agencies to provide:-

- *Housing advice, including help and support to relocate to more suitable accommodation if needed*
- *Handy persons to carry out small repairs, home safety and security advice*
- *Energy efficient advice*
- *Arrangements for adaptations, including stair lifts, grab rails and/or ground floor extensions*

These agencies also offer hospital discharge services, ensuring older people are given the care and support they require to recuperate, in their own homes.

The care which enables older people to remain in their own homes is informal or formal - informal being offered by relatives, neighbours and friends. Formal - when there is none of the above available, or where extra support is required and is provided by community agencies. These provide help with personal care, shopping, housework and the facility for outings to community centres etc. In previous years, older people who became too frail, or ill, to live independently in their own homes would have been admitted to nursing homes, or NHS ards specialising in care of older people. Entering in to any

kind of institution meant loss of motivation/independence and loss of identity and the ability to have control in day-to-day decisions affecting their lives. In many ways, the nurses/carers contributed vastly to this, as it was quicker and easier to 'take over' all activities of daily living, rather than allowing older people to carry out these tasks, at their own pace.

Maintaining older people in their own homes allows them to maintain their own level of independence, and their place in society. They can control their daily activities, maintain their social standing and make decisions which affect their personal environment.

With older people living longer, sustaining them in their own homes is putting increased pressure on community helpers, nurses, occupational and physiotherapists. The allocation of equipment to aid independence is also a financial pressure, as individual aids are required for each property. Unlike hospitals/care establishments, where single aids can be used by a number of people. As we strive to enable older people to remain at home, the financial and manpower burdens can only become worse.

Futuristic housing for older people should have easily accessible amenities, as close as possible to local facilities such as shops, libraries and local transport links. Intersperse with other community housing, as segregation is undesirable, but some 'grouping' would facilitate the provision of the community care providers.

I am part of an integrated nursing team whose role is primarily to prevent older people being admitted to hospital. We, along with other community professionals offer a 24 hour service, which is part funded by health and social services. We are available to support people in their own homes, where otherwise they would have been admitted to hospital. Your GP should have information pertaining to each area in which they are based.



# Reader contributions

Your submissions are welcome! To suggest an article or poem for publication, contact the Editor (see address details on page 2).

## The problem with time

by C.C Fraser

There's a problem with making a promise - I always feel obliged to keep it. Well, that shouldn't be that difficult as long as it's only one promise. But when two come close together and both involve using my writing skills in different forms (in any case, I have the bad habit of leaving things to the last minute) – well then, there can certainly be a problem.

Promise one was my annual poem written in celebration of Robert Burns' birthday – 25th of January, 1759. Having reminded myself of his details in a fat library book, I gave it some thought before making notes and finally completed the poem on the morning of the day I had to read it aloud. Fortunately, the captive audience had been well primed with solid and liquid lubrication and they showed their genial appreciation in the usual way. Promise one executed!

Now for promise two. I had been phoned to ask if I would write something for the next issue of 'The Pensioner'. 'Fine,' I said, 'no problem'... and mention of my proposed subject seemed to fit the bill. However...there was certain preliminary obstacles to be overcome.

Firstly, it was the extended jet-lag which always seems to follow the great splurge of Christmas and New Year. And then, no sooner had my mental marbles fallen back into place, Robbie Burns had needed my attention.

Well, the clever fellow is behind me now – 'written and read and put to bed' – and all I have to do is make a decent job of my chosen interview with two of the more senior members

of our Pensioners' Association. The trouble is of course – I hadn't yet told them about it – and now that I have, it's just a matter of choosing the meeting-place and the time and coordinating the three of us – always dependant on each of us feeling well enough to go ahead, and provided nothing extraordinary happens to the venue.

However, even if all that goes well, my promised article is due to reach the Editor in three days time – and no interview has happened yet. No questions have been asked, no answers given, no notes made. The plan is in my head and that's as far as it's got.

I toy with the idea of gaining a bit more time, at least to get the interviewing project started. Perhaps I might contact that bright young man, Professor Brian Cox, to see if he could pull some strings with the universe so that time could nod off for a bit, just long enough for me to...

But no, I doubt whether I could manage it. I don't have e-mail or any other of those technological aids. I have a pen and paper and a manual type writer, and Brian Cox must be a very busy fellow, even more pushed for time than I am.

So I shall send this letter to the Editor, with my apologies, I shall tell her that time behaves very badly these days. It just doesn't stop me from taking a nap when I should be 'getting my skates on.' I shall swear to the Editor that my interviewing article will be finished in time for the next edition of *The Pensioner* – but I won't make a promise...just in case.



## The Volunteer Waltz

I've laughed and I've cried and felt good inside,  
Sometimes thought I could have done better,  
Though at the end of the day they usually say,  
Call again love whenever you're passing.

There's a cuppa whenever you're passing.

The needs may be small, take no time at all,  
The difference can be quite surprising,  
A six inch gain on a lavatory chain,  
Can lessen the pain in an arm gone lame,  
Pop in love whenever you're passing.

There's a biscuit if ever you're passing.

Some people are haunted by thoughts of the past,  
And fears of the present and future.  
I am myself, and I know you are too,  
So take hold of my hand, and we'll soldier on through,

With a smile, and a kiss at the meeting.  
And a wave, and a tear at the parting.

And what I love much, is the warmth of your touch,  
As you stroke the back of my hand,  
But is this a bed in a ward for the dead,  
Or a tent in Samarkand?  
Whichever my friend, do come back again,  
Right now I have sand in my head.

And I think I have sand for my bed.

Hello my dear friend, you've come back again,  
How good it is just to see you,  
Go look for a chair and put it down there,  
And then I can tell you about it.

I can't wait to hear all about it.

Last night I dreamed I was in Samarkand,  
I was young and tanned, and lay in the sand,  
With blue lapis shells upon my nails,  
And a prince with his camel train.

A passing camel train.

He showed me a stone, in its heart was his home,  
He said I could live there forever;  
Then he took my hand in the burning sand,  
And gazed deep into my eyes.

Life passing before my eyes.

'Your time has not yet come,' he said,  
'I must no longer stay,  
I shall find you again, though you'll know not when,  
This passing is soon to end.'

Passing soon to end.

And passing we go, but where we don't know,

The only sure thing is The Passing,  
Hope to see you again, though I know not when,  
I promise, whenever I'm passing.

I'll see you as long as I'm passing.

*Clive Taplin (In praise of the Neighbourhood Care Scheme)*

*We apologise for accidentally omitting the last three verses of this poem in the last issue, hence the reprint of the full poem above.*



# Need extra help at home?



Care Outlook are a local Home Care Provider offering care and support to people in their own homes in your area.

Our caring, reliable and trustworthy staff will provide you with sensitive care and support in your own home, tailored to your individual needs, to enable you to live as independently as possible.

At Care Outlook we understand that some of the daily tasks many people take for granted can become challenging or restrictive. We are here to help you remain independent at home and continue to enjoy life to its fullest, without worrying about the things that are very personal to you.

All our staff are CRB/police checked and fully trained.

*Care Outlook is registered with the Care Quality Commission.*

- Personal Care
- Domestic Tasks
- Meal Preparation
- Support with Medication
- Re-Ablement
- Flexible Service
- Council Approved
- Fully Insured
- 24 hour Support Available
- Escorting Service Available

For a **FREE** no obligation home assessment

**please call: 01273 413 511**

or you can email us at: [brighton@careoutlook.co.uk](mailto:brighton@careoutlook.co.uk)

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