

Stay Safe at home

Breath Easily - Get your gas appliances checked every year by a registered engineer and protect yourself with a good quality audible carbon monoxide alarm. Contact Age UK to see if you are eligible to have them fitted for free.

Stop Slips and Trips - Rearrange furniture to create clear routes through rooms and keep the floors clear of trailing cable. Secure loose rugs or carpets with double sided tape and fit a letterbox cage.

Beat Bogus Callers - Ask people to make an appointment and then always check ID. Consider getting a door bar or chain fitted.

Fight Fire - Ensure you have correctly fitted working smoke alarms. Never leave cooking unattended or combustibles near the cooker hob. Turn off electricals before bed. Many fire brigades offer free home checks for vulnerable people call them on **0800 9237000**.

Step Up - Never balance on chairs use step ladders or a sturdy stool.

Safer Stairs - Keep them uncluttered and well lit. Consider a low energy nightlight.

Extra Peace of Mind - A personal alarm can keep a user connected to a dedicated response centre that alerts their chosen contact, giving reassurance that help is at hand. For more information on

If any Members would prefer the newsletter in a large print version please ring Swale CVS to request this for the future

Contact Us. We always value feedback

You can write to us

SSF, C/O Swale CVS. Central House, Central Avenue,
Sittingbourne ME10 4NU

You can telephone Swale CVS

01795 473828 and ask staff there to pass on your message

You can E Mail swaleseniorsforum@hotmail.co.uk



Swale Seniors Forum

Sittingbourne, Sheppey,
Faversham and surrounding villages

Issue No.16 February 2014

Chimney Awareness

If you use an open fire or wood burner Kent Fire and Rescue Service are currently running a chimney awareness project especially concerning the knock on effect of tar build up or how specific logs need to be used in a wood burner. For the safety of your home follow these simple instructions:

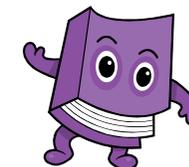
- Make sure the appliance gets enough air for fuel to burn properly
- Have your chimney swept at least once a year - more frequently if you burn wood
- Burn only suitable fuels
- Do not overload the grate/appliance
- Maintain your appliance to the manufacturers' instructions
- Use a fire or spark guard to prevent accidental fires
- Inspect your chimney breast, particularly in the roof space. Make sure that it is sound and that sparks or fumes cannot escape through cracks or broken bricks

By doing these things, not only will you keep your family safe, but you'll also help the environment.

Renew your library books from home

Do you need to renew your library books but don't want to visit the library?

You can now do this by calling **0300 414141**
or emailing libraries@kent.gov.uk



Swale Seniors Forum Annual General Meeting

The Swale Seniors Forum AGM will be held on 23rd May 2014 from 11am to 1pm at Phoenix House, Sittingbourne.

There will be an interesting guest speaker (To be confirmed) followed by a buffet lunch and social networking.

Please put the date in your diary and watch the local press for confirmation of the speaker.

Helpful Hints

Tangled Cables

To keep lengths of cable and extension leads tidy fold each cable separately and slip through an empty toilet roll holder then label it.

Crispy Lettuce

Soak soggy lettuce in a cold bowl of water which has the juice of half a lemon added then refrigerate for an hour before serving.

Reduce Energy Bills

You can cook up to four different foods, saving money, energy and space by using a four-way divided saucepan with a vented glass lid from "Great Ideas By Post" starting at £18.99

Call them on **0844 3303315** for a catalogue or go to www.greatideasbypost.co.uk

Dementia Friendly Market Place

There will be a free informal market place to discover more about dementia and dementia care on Thursday 24th April from 10am to 3pm at Augustine House, Christchurch Canterbury College.

(Next to the police station on the A28 ring road)

For more information please call **01227 863530** or email

katy.puss@canterbury.ac.uk

Senior Moments (Yours Magazine)

"While in the Queue at the supermarket my little granddaughter yelled grandma your magic shoes can change colour. As customers turned and stared I realised to my horror I'd put on one a black shoe and a royal blue shoe in the same style!"

"I couldn't find my new reading glasses so I put on my old ones but I still couldn't read properly, then I realised I was wearing both pairs!"

Lynda's Diary (Yours Magazine)

After discovering the joy of Perudo on holiday I was completely hooked. It is a dice game often called "Liars Dice" suitable for any age and had us in hysterics. I'm just glad I was able to bluff my way through the games. It's good for the memory and might find itself in a few Christmas stockings this year.

Share a Cuppa (Yours Magazine)

Tea and coffee are great social lubricants but there's evidence they benefit physical health too, helping us stay hydrated they also contain antioxidants to help prevent cell damage to the body.

Coffee Morning



Our last coffee morning took place at the Sheppey Healthy Living Centre on 14th February and was again a great success. The next meeting will be held in Faversham at a venue and time yet to be confirmed.

Submit an Article

If you have any relevant and interesting articles or information that you think would be useful to include in a future newsletter please contact us and let us know.

Call **01795 473828** Email swaleseniorsforum@hotmail.co.uk

Faulty Good Checklist to get results

Find out who to complain to

Contact customer services and follow the complaints procedure

What do you want

Ask for a refund, replacement, compensation or an apology

Be methodical and polite

Keep record of who you speak to, when and key points, Stay calm and courteous

Follow up in writing

Be clear and concise using reference numbers, set a reasonable deadline and send letters by recorded delivery

Attach evidence

Copies of receipts, statements, photos or witness accounts

Still not happy

Consider bringing a claim through the Ombudsman Service Scheme or small claims court.

For more information visit www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights

Nuisance Marketing Calls

Nuisance calls from claims management firms are still prevalent despite regulations designed to stop them.

A report by AXA UK reveals that 1 in five people surveyed had been cold called by these firms within the last 24 hours and two thirds felt angry as though their privacy had been invaded.

David Fisher of AXA UK stated that the age of the smartphone makes us easier prey "phones are just the 21st century letterbox for junk mail. As whiplash claims fall and PPI mis-selling claims subside expect firms to move into fresh pastures".

To reduce these calls receipts never reply to spam text and don't put your mobile number on social networking sites. Also when completing online forms for goods or services always tick the box requesting that you not be contacted.

Report suspicious numbers to regulator PhonePayPlus on

0800 500212 or phonepayplus.org.uk

If you have lots of silent calls contact Ofcom

on **0300 1233333** or ofcom.org.uk

For more guidance visit Which.co.uk

Faversham Minor Injury Unit

A decision has been made to continue running the minor injury unit until September 2014. A further public meeting was held on 13th February and it is anticipated the review will be completed by April.

Sheppey Community Hub

The Sheppey Community hub is based at the Healthy Living Centre in Sheerness and is working across Swale on a variety of health and well-being projects.

You can pop along and see the new changes or find out more by contacting Sheppey Matters on **01795 585335** or

outreachsheppey@yahoo.co.uk

Care Funding Changes

Millions of elderly people could be denied vital care under a government shake up of the funding system. Older frail patients who can not get out of bed on their own may be refused home help as they are not deemed dependant enough.

Age UK claims that funding cuts could leave many elderly people reliant on "Flying 15 minute home visits"

Ministers are planning a national system to decide how much state funded care is given and a draft of the plans is expected in May. It is feared that the state may only pay for people with critical or substantial needs who need help with eating and drinking and those deemed to have moderate needs will have to pay the costs themselves.

Age UK warned "Too many older people would be shut out of the system, unable to access the help they need".



Murston Community Bank

This month we launched the Murston Community Bank in partnership with the Diocese of Canterbury. The community bank, located in All Saints Church, Murston nr Sittingbourne, is possibly the first in the country, and the launch received [extensive press coverage](#) in the South East and also featured on national TV and on Radio 4.

[Murston Community Bank](#) is the first branch of Kent Savers where new and existing members can find out about Kent Savers, join us, and make enquiries and payments on their savings accounts and loans. The community bank is open from 10am to noon Monday to Friday.

The community bank was [launched on Monday 20th January](#) by the Bishop of Dover who became the first to open an account.

The community bank is located in the church and in addition to offering financial services through Kent Savers, there is an opportunity to stay for a hot drink and a chat, use the free wi-fi, or arrange to meet other agencies providing help and support such as the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Rogue traders

Trading standards officers in Kent are warning residents that [rogue traders are leaving unusual markers on properties](#) to signal they are a good target. In the past, markers have included a cement mark on the building, but recent reports suggest unusual objects are being left in gardens or next to the front door. KCC Trading Standards says it is a signal to rogue traders these properties are a good target. This might be due to an elderly or vulnerable person living there.

Anyone with concerns or who has seen such items left by a property is asked to contact Trading Standards via Citizen Advice consumer services on **08454 040506**.

Hard Sell Security Systems

Please be aware of a security company (LHS) cold calling, offering free security system for qualifying households

They are connected with Land Mark Security who use very aggressive sales tactics and target the older population. If you receive a call from this company do not enter into conversation but simply hang up. If they persist calling please report it to the police on 101.

If you are interested in getting a new security system then contact a reputable company from Trading Standards and Consumer Direct listings or by personal recommendation.

SSAFA

Were you in the armed forces or a dependant of someone who served and in need of help?

SSAFA (Soldiers Sailors and Air Force Association) may be able to offer advice or assistance.

Ring Sue Hendry on **01795 590180**

Benefits Appraisal

Are you getting all the benefits you deserve and worked for?
Why not ask Age UK for a benefits appraisal.

They have trained benefits advisors that can offer information as many benefits are based on need and are not means tested.

Pop in to your local branch or phone to book an appointment

Faversham	01795 532766
Sheppey	01795 662562
Sittingbourne	01795 471600

