



Swale Seniors Forum

Sittingbourne, Sheppey,
Faversham and surrounding villages

Issue No.21 October 2015

How to stay young

- Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down
 - Enjoy the simple things
- Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath
- The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person, who is with us our entire life is ourselves. Be ALIVE while you were alive
- Surround yourself with what you love, whether its family, pets, keep-sakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge
- Cherish your health; if it is good preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help
- Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, even go to the next county; to a foreign country but NOT to where the guilt is
- Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity
- Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

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 on 01795 473828

and ask staff there to pass on your message

You can E Mail

swaleseniorsforum@hotmail.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 10th December, 2015

11.30-13.30, Phoenix House, Sittingbourne

Speaker from the Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Thursday 17th March, 2016

Faversham

Venue and speaker to be confirmed

Thursday 30th June 2016

Castle Connections, Queenborough

Speaker to be confirmed

Thoughts from the public meeting

It is a fact that at some stage we have to give thought to what will happen to our property and possession when we depart this life. Also some of us will need to give consideration to what should happen if there comes a stage when someone needs to take charge of our affairs or to manage our money or property, particularly if we are worried about losing our ability. It was appropriate for the Forum to examine these matters and your committee decided to provide an open forum for members and non-members devoted to Wills and Trusts, Inheritance Tax, Powers of Attorney and Capacity and Gifting.

An excellent and highly informative presentation on all those matters was given on 17th September at Castle Connections, Queenborough by Aaron Spencer, Partner to the highly regarded firm of solicitors, Furley Page who have offices in Canterbury, Chatham, Whitstable and London.

Mr Spencer dealt fully with every topic in a most lucid and understandable manner and provided all those attending with a folder containing explanatory notes, a Will information pack and a summary of Health and Welfare Power of Attorney as well as Property and Financial Affairs Power of Attorney. All those matters are a potential minefield for the unwary but, thanks to Mr Spencer, all those attending came away with a full and easily digested understanding and knowledge. Several members had submitted questions in advance and Mr Spencer answered these along with questions posed by those attending.

It was a most rewarding and worthwhile experience.

It was a pity that more members did not take up the opportunity to attend particularly when members were informed that transport would be provided if they needed it. They would have gained much for their benefit – all completely free of charge.

Many thanks to the Management committee for arranging such a practical and worthwhile event.

Your committee is at pains to provide events and information which meet your needs and requirements and would like to hear from you accordingly. The Forum is not a social Club for organising day trips, visit to the seaside, entertainment and the like. It is in the nature of a Senior's Parliament for dealing with issues and community information in accordance with the Aims and Objectives in its Constitution. The Committee needs to hear from you. With the best will in the world they cannot be mind readers.

Blue Badges

You can apply online to www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge or by post to:

The Blue Badge Service
Kent County Council Contact Centre
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XX

Phone Number:
0844 463 0213



For a form, you can email bluebadgeteam@kent.gov.uk. It can take up to eight weeks to process an application and the cost is £10.00. Accompanying the form, you have to send identifying documents and medical evidence of your disability. You may automatically qualify if, for example you are blind or receive one of many disability allowances.

Street Lighting

In the past year or so KCC has turned off some street lighting after midnight, but is now changing to a new kind of lighting which will enable them to be dimmed. A consultation document is now available either in booklet form in the public library or online at kent.gov.uk/streetlights. The options are to continue to switch off during those hours completely or to leave them on all night with the option of dimming their light levels which would save KCC money. The consultation is between 21 September – 29 November, pick up your copy at your local library or go online to have your say!



PARKING ON PAVEMENTS

Parking on the pavements is a great problem across the borough of Swale. A prime example is in the end of lower Borden Lane facing the A2 where vehicles are parked en masse on a daily basis so that their drivers can catch buses to London. This coupled with the fact the local authorities (either Swale Borough Council or Kent County Council) never cut back the overgrowing vegetation makes it virtually impossible to pass along the pavements and is in fact a danger to many people, not just the disabled and partially sighted.

The committee feel very strongly about this subject having received complaints from members and have written to Gordon Henderson MP about this problem. Our MP has kindly offered to take up the campaign on our behalf and has contacted the government as well as Swale Borough Council.

A letter concerning this issue has now been received, via Gordon Henderson MP, from the Department of Transport who have advised that local authorities have the powers to introduce footway parking restrictions where appropriate – as indeed a general ban is already in force in London.

So watch this space
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CANCELLATION OF HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS

Have you recently had a hospital appointment cancelled at short notice?

It has been brought to the attention of the Forum that cancellation of hospital appointments at short notice has been a regular occurrence – causing distress and inconvenience to many people. In order that the committee could research this in more detail, we would like to hear from members who have had personal experience of this and how it affected them. Please write into the Forum at the following address with your experiences:

Swale Seniors Forum, c/o Swale CVS, Central House, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4NU or phone Julia Watling on 01795 473828 or email swaleseniorsforum@hotmail.co.uk

“Disabled” public toilet



If you are a Blue Badge holder or have a letter of a disability entitlement you are entitled to purchase a “RADAR” key from any council office in Sittingbourne, Sheppey or Faversham. These keys (which are rather large) cost £3 and entitled the holder to use specially designed public toilets anywhere in the UK.

Call the council: 01795 424341

Look after your belongings

- Only take with you what you need for a trip out– leave your valuables at home.
- If you have a bag, keep it fastened and to the front of your body.
- Keep valuables out of sight, spread around your person (for example keep your phone in your bag, your house keys in a pocket and your money in a jacket).
- Use a purse chain if you can.
- Never leave your belongings unattended or in easy reach, for example on the top of a pram, a shopping trolley or a mobility scooter.
- Secure-mark your valuables so that they can be more easily identified if lost or stole. Marker pens are available at the police station.

From Kent Police



Hi Kent

After all the problems finding a new venue in Sittingbourne for the drop-in service we can announce that the new permanent home is at the Memorial Hospital. It will be held every Wednesday Morning from 9:30am – 11:30am and will operate as before. Collect the ticket from the reception desk, go to the waiting area you will be directed to and you will be seen as before. Services at Age UK Sittingbourne, Riverbourne Court will continue as before.



' I waited impatiently in the passenger seat of the car for my husband to come out of the supermarket. "Dawdling as usual" I thought. I was just about to go in search of him when I remembered that he was at work and I'd been shopping alone.'

Married Tax Allowance

You can claim the married couple's allowance only if one of you was born before April 6, 1935. It could cut your tax bill by between £322 and £835.50 a year. The new, less generous marriage allowance is available to those born on or after April 6, 1935. It allows one partner to transfer £1,060 of their unused tax allowance (£10,600 for this tax year) to the other – saving them £212 in tax. The "giver" must be a non-taxpayer and the "receiver" on the 20% basic rate. To enquire further ring HM Revenue and Customs on 0300 200 330 ask for marriage allowance who will talk you through the process or go online www.HMRC.gov.uk/incometax

Overgrown Hedges

Overgrown hedges are a real hazard for those people who have impaired vision, wheelchair users and families with push chairs or buggies. Check any of your hedges, shrubs or trees which overhang the pavement and ensure that they are trimmed back to your boundary.

If you have neighbours or relatives who need theirs attending to but are unable to do it themselves, why not offer to do it for them and help your community.



Don't delay– check yours today!

TRAIN SERVICES FROM SHEERNESS

Good News! South Eastern trains are now running two trains at peak time in the morning and evening direct from Sheerness to London Victoria. Thus providing a much needed faster service for those living on the Island and no worries about missing your connection at Sittingbourne.



Get Insured

- If you have home contents insurance you know that stolen belonging can be replaced, however an insurance claim will never compensate for the loss of items of sentimental value.
- There are many home contents insurers on the market offering different levels of cover and affordability.