

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT

SENIORS ACTION FORUM

Working together in the interests of people aged 50 plus

Newsletter 31

April 2018

2018 AGM NOTICE EDITION

The Committee of SDSAF formally gives notice that the AGM will take place this year on
Wednesday 23rd May at 2 pm
Indoor Bowls Club, Hilda May Avenue, Swanley, BR8 7BF

Dear Members,

This year's AGM is probably the most important one we have had in the ten years or so of our existence. During this time, we have built a strong organisation well placed to influence those people who make decisions that affect the lives of older people. We are over a thousand strong and have grown consistently. But times change and as you know money has been scarce. **Kent County Council has given us a grant each year of just over £2000 to help us with our work but they are looking to change what happens.** Your committee is not particularly happy with what is being suggested and we have to consider the possibility of breaking away from new rules that the County Council want to place on us. We may be able to negotiate an agreement that will respect our independence and value our contribution to all decision makers but we are not interested in accepting any plans that tie us up in knots and stop us from being free. There is no point to SDSAF if we are not allowed to be effective.

Come along to this year's AGM, listen to our guest speaker, Gillian Shepherd Coates who is VERY knowledgeable on the issues that are important to older people, and hear what Kent County Council have been planning.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND STRENGTHEN YOUR PLACE IN OUR COMMUNITY

A new survey by Independent Age says;

About 1.2 million (11%) people aged 65 and over don't expect to have the money needed to pay for their funeral.

An estimated 798,000 (7%) of older people expect a relative or friend to pay for it

Our AGM is for Members only and we would be grateful if you could let us know in advance that you will be there but don't forget you can just turn up AT the door. As last year, we will have refreshments during the afternoon (if we know the numbers) with something better than just biscuits!

Let our Membership Secretary, Roger Bryan know you are coming – see the last page for his contact details.

A new survey by Independent Age says;

The biggest financial worry for 23% of people aged 65 and over is that their savings will run out.



TOO EARLY FOR POPPIES? Sevenoaks Town Council is inviting knitters to help commemorate the end of WW1. If you would you be prepared to knit a red poppy or two, please email osl@sevenoakstown.gov.uk for a pattern. On 11th June, the poppies will be used to adorn The Vine Gardens to celebrate the ending of the First World War in 1918 and will form part of the commemoration from June to November 2018. Please drop your poppies into the Sevenoaks Town Council Offices by the end of May. **Call Bonnie Tarling on 01732 459 953 or email osl@sevenoakstown.gov.uk**

BAT AND BALL STATION Sevenoaks Town Council is restoring the Listed Victorian Building at Bat and Ball Station with a generous Heritage Lottery Fund grant. There will be exhibitions of railway memorabilia from 1862 including luggage, tickets, ticket machines, maps ,photos, pictures and more. If you would like to donate or lend any items to this interesting project, please contact Linda Larter on 01732 459953.

MEMBERS' LETTERS One of our members writes; Thank you for your informative and helpful Newsletter (*Thank you, Margaret*)

I recently found out by accident that people who've make an Enduring Power of Attorney over the last couple of years potentially paid too much and may be due a refund. In my case this amounts to £90. Rebates can be claimed on line or by phone and I thought this might be helpful information for some of your members to spread the word about as it is mainly older people who have made these.

On another point, health, I have contacted Michael Fallon about my concerns regarding the CCG supporting the appointment of an Accountable Care Officer which could lead to further NHS Services being privatised. He advised me he was meeting with the CCG and would raise the matter. Additionally I have been appalled at the lack of progress and information regarding the Sustainable Transformation Partnerships and am sure things are afoot regarding the future of Sevenoaks Hospital, which coupled with the closure of in patient beds at Edenbridge, has great implications for the area, and I think Sir Michael's advice to keep an eye on what the CCG are supporting was well-judged.

Kind regards

Margaret

PUBLIC TOILETS Did you write to your Parish and District Councillors to ask for better public toilet facilities? There was a paragraph in the last newsletter on this. If you had any replies, please let us know what they were. It will help.

A new survey by Independent Age says;

The biggest financial worry for 23% of people aged 65 and over is that their savings will run out.



INDEPENDENT AGE is a charity founded over 150 years ago to help older people. Their Moneywise leaflet pictured here includes several extremely helpful suggestions to help you make sure you are getting a good deal. It can be ordered for free by calling 0800 319 6789 or via www.independentage.org/moneywise.

Independent Age did a survey after the March 2016 Budget, and found that:

Excluding mortgage debt, a quarter (25%) of people aged 65 and over are in debt - the average debt is over £1800.

About 912,000 (8%) older people have debts of more than £5000

On average, among those aged 65 and over, men have more debt than, men owe £2287, women owe £1250.

There are 11.4 million people over 65 in the UK.

1.6 million people of them live in poverty.

900,000 people live in severe poverty.

Many pensioners do not claim the benefits they're entitled to, they miss out on £41 a week or £2,100 a year on average (this is the difference between being able to pay for a typical dual-fuel bill or struggling to heat their homes)

£3.7 billion of benefits for older people goes unclaimed each year

An estimated 4.4 million (39%) of people have never checked to see if they would be eligible for benefits such as Pension Credit or Council Tax Reduction.

Almost half (48%) didn't know they could get a 25% discount on Council Tax if they live alone

21% of people aged 65 and over do not have any money saved for unexpected costs such as repairing a broken boiler or paying for a dental emergency.

26% of older people would turn to family and friends if they needed financial advice but an estimated 684,000 (6%) wouldn't know where to turn.

Independent Age can help you with a FREE benefits check on 0800 319 6789.

A new survey by Independent Age says;

One in 13 (8%) worry most about paying for help and support if they need it, including care costs



BUSES This problem is not going away. SDSAF Action Group leader, Alan Dixon, has recently sent a letter to KCC asking them for an update on bus cuts. It seems to us that KCC, having backed down on cuts of £2 to 4 million, have now slid in a cut of over £400,000 or is it £900,000? Quite frankly, we don't understand either how their figures add up or what their Press Releases mean. So, we've asked them for an explanation that can be understood by normal people.

OUR MEMBERSHIP is 1087.

CONTACTING SDSAF MANAGEMENT PEOPLE. (Please note some changes);



Chairman	Frank McConnell	frank@frankmcconnell.com
Vice Chair:	Merilyn Canet	01732 461397 merilyncanet@talktalk.net
Secretary	Derrick Bateman	bateman.derrick@gmail.com
Treasurer	Brian Gasson	briangasson36@gmail.com
Membership	Roger Bryan	07470 201703 roger.bryan@me.com
Action Leader	Alan Dixon	
Action Group	Eileen Murray Giles, Jean Bentley	

Write to us; Roger Bryan, 10 Greenside, Swanley, BR8 7ER Email us via the website

PLEASE COME TO THE AGM AND HEAR ABOUT THE FUTURE OF SDSAF AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH KCC

AGM 2018

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