



Basingstoke & Deane

Over 55s Forum



Assisted by
*Basingstoke
& Deane*

NEWSLETTER – JULY 2015

Welcome to the July issue of the newsletter and I hope you are all enjoying the sunshine but (there's always a "but") the poor gardens are not having much fun and the water butts are running dry!!

Since the introduction of the suggestion box, several members have submitted ideas for future events. As I said in the last Newsletter, your thoughts and ideas on what the Forum can do within the community are always welcome. For those members who are not aware of the box, it is on the table where Gerald sits.

The invitation issued by Axa Wealth for senior members of the community to a tea party at their premises was well attended. There were only a few of our members there as we didn't get the invitation in time to circulate it to you all. I went along with my husband and we enjoyed a delicious selection of savouries and cakes with tea or coffee. We were shown their roof garden where they grow a selection of vegetables and flowers which are distributed to the hospital and care homes. There were several members of the staff on hand to give advice and help on IT problems, using mobile phones, iPads etc. My husband was in his element with several young ladies helping him with his mobile phone!! It was a very pleasant afternoon and they hope to organise more in the future. If you look on the leaflet table when you come to the Forum, you will see some useful information about using Social Media etc, safely and responsibly

MEMBERSHIP

Our total membership remains at 652 but the waiting list is growing longer. As I have said before, visitors are always welcome but we have to ensure that our members are seated first. Don't forget to inform Gerald of any changes to your circumstances so that the database can be adjusted.

JUNE 2015 OPEN FORUM

Graham opened the meeting and thanked the committee and all the other helpers without whose support the meetings could not take place. He thanked Marian for another interesting Newsletter but reminded members that it is THEIR letter and we welcome all contributions.

Recycling in Basingstoke

Our first presentation was given by Borough Councillor Hayley Eachus who explained that recycling within the borough was part of her portfolio for the environment and was a major issue. Hayley was accompanied by Sarah Robinson from Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.

Each borough is different but it is important to ensure that **proper** recycling takes place and new policies are required to ensure that as many items as possible are recycled. In Basingstoke, anything not recyclable is incinerated to avoid the use of landfill.

Currently, many things are put in the black bins which should go into the green bin to be recycled. From the 1st April, a new policy was introduced. If items are found in the black bin that should be in the green bin, a notice will be attached to the bin. If this happens 3 times, the bin will not be collected.

A weekly collection is offered for the black bins whereas some areas only collect every two weeks and 95% of people are happy with the collection/recycling service. Garden rubbish is collected but it would be too costly to offer this as a free service. The current cost of £30.60 per year for two sacks compares favourably with other areas. Green boxes are used for glass collection and an additional box can be requested, if required.

In future, only 140 litre black bins will be issued but you can have 240 litre green bins.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Kevin Jones opened the presentation by explaining how the service works as an on-call 24 hour search & rescue volunteer operation up to 100 nautical miles from the coast of the UK and ROI. It is Independent of the coastguard service and 93% of funds are from donations.

Things have changed considerably since the service was formed in 1824 and Kevin outlined the changes to the boats and equipment, especially how the boats are launched and taken out of the water. He also described the 3 main types of inshore lifeboat, inflatables, RIBs and hover and the special craft used on the River Thames.

There are 351 lifeboats, 236 lifeboat stations (8 on inland waterways) with 4,600 crew members covering 19,000 miles of coastline. In 8,300 launches, 8,384 have been rescued and 325 lives saved. There are also 16 boats with 300 crew making up the Flood Response Units.

The RNLI Lifeguards are qualified in lifesaving and casualty care but a good lifeguard rarely gets wet – 95% of a lifeguard's work is preventative. The service also runs coastal safety, research and education programmes, with emphasis on youth education. The Support Centre stores and distributes 750,000 items needed to run every lifeboat, station, lifeguard unit and fundraising office in the UK and ROI.

Basingstoke Aquadrome & Golf Centre

Clare Wareham is the Community Health & Wellbeing co-ordinator at Serco and her aim is to encourage healthy lifestyles. She was keen to gain feedback on the sort of activities that people would like, with the aim of offering suitable programmes.

The 3 facilities owned by Serco are the Aquadrome, the Golf Centre and the Tadley Swimming Pool, all offering different types of activity. The Golf Centre has instructors available providing caching sessions and Tadley has a 25m pool and a health suite.

Claire would arrange for groups to tour the facilities, if they were interested.

EVENTS FOR 2015

The trips to the Supreme Court in London proved to be very successful and most informative. For those of you who were not able to come, the following is just a brief insight into its history.

The building was originally built as a Courthouse or Guildhall and was then used by the old Middlesex County Council. When this authority was disbanded some 50 years ago, after the creation of the Greater London Council, the Crown Court took the building over. As many as possible of the original features were retained but, when the building was chosen to become the Supreme Court, a major renovation took place to restore the building to its original grandeur. The café in the basement used to be the cells when it was a Crown Court. The height of the tower outside matches the height of St Margaret's Church opposite.

There are 3 courtrooms and the Justices hear appeals from the lower law courts around the country and, in some cases, the Commonwealth. Once a judgement is made, this then becomes law. These appeals used to be heard in the House of Lords but this was deemed to be too unwieldy and the public were not able to go and see them. The much publicised case of the couple with the B&B business, who refused a gay couple a room, was heard in this court. The Court is open to the public from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday throughout the year, except Bank Holidays. There are some weekend openings which you can find on their website www.supremecourt.uk.

The trip to **De Panne, Belgium** was enjoyed by all the 43 in our party, despite the hold-ups! Everyone had just over 4 hours to relax and explore the town in brilliant hot sunshine (which was with us from start to finish), and the miles of sandy beach with wooden walkways down to the sea, for mobility scooter or pushchairs. You could hire tables, chairs, parasol etc for 1 euro for a few hours. There were several pedal cars, horses etc for the children to hire and use.

Felicia Bradbury supplied the CD music for the outward journey and Gerald for the homeward journey. Eileen (Gerald's wife) arranged a General Knowledge quiz; there were two winners, Wendy Lee and Paul, one of the drivers. Paul said to give the prize to Wendy Lee. The prize that Gerald purchased was a small decorated glass with De-Panne on it. After a very long and tedious journey home, we did not arrive back until about 2 in the morning!! Those who went suggested they would like to go back next year but staying overnight because there is so much to see and do.

Adam Henson Cotswold Farm; There were 2 trips, one on the 16th July and one on the 20th July. Reports back state these trips were very successful, both interesting and enjoyable. On the 16th, they enjoyed lovely sunshine for the day. On the 20th, there were a few very short and light showers. Also, on the 20th trip, Adam Henson was there filming with the BBC and several of our members, including Gerald, were able to talk to him. Gerald spoke to Adam about the farm. Adam said his father bought the farm and put it in a 3 generation trust but one of the family must live in the tied cottage, which Adam does with his wife and 3 children. Gerald spoke to Adam about our visit and also took photographs. He informed Adam Henson about our group, stating this was the second coach in 4 days. Adam was very interested and wanted to know how we got to hear of his farm; he wished us all well and a safe and enjoyable journey home.

Sherborne Castle and Shaftesbury – Thursday 30th July. 2 coaches booked.

Monday 24th August – Country Market, Kingsley near Bordon. This is only a short trip, leaving mid morning and arriving back mid to late afternoon. If you like all kinds of shopping then don't miss this trip as there is lots to offer. Cost £10.25 (**Places still available**)

Friday 11th and Friday 25th September - The Forum are running a "Do As You Please" trip to London on each of these days. We will take you to London, you will be able to do what you want and we will pick you up and bring you home. £11.75 - Non Members £13.75

Sunday 25th October – Thames cruise from Windsor to Bray and back. Lunch will be served during the cruise consisting of Shepherd's Pie, fresh vegetable and gravy followed by home-made apple pie and cream with tea or coffee to follow. Cost - £34.50 each. (**Places still available.**)

Sunday 22nd November – Blenheim Palace, "Living Crafts for Christmas". Cost £24.75. which includes coach and entrance fee. (**Places still available**).

The FREE trips to Oxford are on the **19th and 26th September.** If you are not sure if you qualify then please contact Gerald.

CARNIVAL CHORUS

By the time you receive this letter the choir will have finished meeting for a month. We have been rehearsing the two hymns we will be singing at the War Memorial Park Cenotaph on the 17th September in the morning, for the Battle of Britain commemoration, why not come along and support your Carnival Chorus. Once we have done that, we shall then start on our Christmas repertoire and hopefully introduce some new material into that programme.

I, once again, appeal to our male members to come along and give us a try – we won't bite!!! Any ladies who would like to join us are always welcome. We meet Tuesday afternoons from 1.30pm until 3.00pm at the Carnival Hall.

MOVEMENT & STRETCH

We are pleased to announce that we have been successful in finding a new trainer, who comes to us highly recommended, so we propose to run 4 sessions in September, commencing on 3rd September, in the Carnival Hall. We do hope that you will be able to join us.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

HEARING PROBLEMS

In the May newsletter, there was an item about hearing problems. This is just to confirm that, if you are experiencing problems with your hearing, you should see your Doctor. You should ask to be referred to the hospital, not Specsavers or other opticians. Once you have become a patient at the hospital, you are then able to contact the Audiology department yourself for further consultations when needed. If you see an optician first, you cannot then go back to the hospital, you have to go back to your doctor if you have further problems. Don't forget, you can go to the Discovery Centre on a Thursday morning if you need batteries or any other help with your hearing aids.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Hampshire Trading Standards have issued the following scam warnings:

You should be wary of cold callers claiming to be from Talk Talk, telephone and broadband provider. Members of the public have received calls from this organisation offering to either make, or wish to make, refund payments into their bank accounts as there is a problem with their line requiring rectification work. This means they will need personal account information. Hampshire Trading Standards are advising that you should not agree to any work as a result of a cold call.

Trading Standards Service have been receiving reports of cold callers offering free bird baths. The caller attempts to visit and fit the bird bath the same day. After installation, a fee is requested. This is obviously a scam but is also a possible distraction burglary tactic as the intention is to gain access to the property. Once again, you are advised not to agree to any work on your property as a result of a cold call.

DISABILITY GYMNASTICS

We have been sent some information from the Basingstoke Gymnastics Club, based at Stephenson Road, Houndmills, about gymnastics for the disabled. This is probably not something our members would be interested in participating in but we felt that younger, perhaps disabled members, of your family could maybe benefit from this. They are holding a taster session on Sunday 2nd August, which may be too late by the time you get this letter. There are two sessions on this day at 9.15am and 10.15 am and is open to all ages of 11 and over.

If you are interested you can call Alexandria Campbell on 01256 352858 ext1008 or email Alexandria.campbell@basingstokegym.co.uk.

NATIONAL EXPRESS

National Express offer a senior coachcard if you are 60 or over. You can save 1/3 off standard fares with no peak or off-peak restrictions. They recommend Tuesdays as being a great day for travelling to anywhere in the country and offer a £15 return fare if you buy three days in advance. You get a free return journey if your coach is delayed by an hour and you can claim a refund if you don't save the cost of your card in the first year. To buy your card call **08717 818181** or visit www.nationalexpress.com/seniors

SHOPMOBILITY BASINGSTOKE

Shopmobility Basingstoke is introducing Shopmobility Overton to allow people with restricted mobility improved access around Overton village centre and local facilities.

This service will be available on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and all you need to do is phone **01256 476066** to make a booking (24 hours notice is required) The scooter is then sent out on the bus and can be collected from the bus driver at the number 47 bus stop in Overton High Street at 9.30am and returned to the same place at 1.30pm. This will give you ample

time to do your shopping, visit the hairdresser, go to the doctor or meet with friends for coffee etc. You can also collect and return the scooter to Harveys Field in Overton.

There is an annual registration fee of £6.50 to join Shopmobility and this allows you to rent equipment at 12 centres across the Wessex Group. Additionally there is a rental charge of £3.50 per booking.

Don't worry if you've not used a scooter before – they will show you how to use it so that you are happy and safe before your first booking.

Open Sight

The Hampshire Association for the care of the blind holds a Social Club for people who are blind or partially sighted fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon at Kempshott Village Hall.

Members rely on volunteer drivers to transport them to and from the meetings. If you think you could help as a volunteer driver please contact Terry Smith on 02380 646377 for further information.

MEMBERS CORNER

The following was sent in by a member:-

An elderly gentleman was driving his brand new BMW Z3 convertible out of the car sales room. Taking off for the motorway, he floored it to 90 mph, enjoying the wind blowing through what little hair he had left. How "Amazing" he thought as he flew along, enjoying pushing the pedal to the metal even more. Looking in his rear view mirror, he saw a police car behind him, blue lights flashing and siren blaring. I can get away from him – no problem thought the elderly nutcase as he floored it to 110, then 120 then 130 mph.

Suddenly, he thought, "what am I doing? I'm too old for this nonsense". So he pulled over and waited for the police car to catch up with him. The police car pulled in and the officer walked up to the car, looked at his watch and said "Sir, my shift ends in 10 minutes. Today is Friday and I'm taking off for the weekend. If you can give me a reason why you were speeding that I've never heard before, I'll let you go". The man looked very seriously at the policeman and replied, "Years ago, my wife ran off with a policeman and I thought you were bringing her back"!!

"Have a good day Sir" said the policeman.

IT'S A FACT

Alaska residents get an annual bonus from
A State-run fund of oil profits. The last payout
Was £1,189 per person!!!

Just thought you might like to know that!

OPEN FORUM MEETINGS

All open Forum meetings are held on Wednesdays and the dates are subject to change: 12th August, 14th October and 9th December including AGM.

Marian Wilson

Editor July 2015 Newsletter