



# Stoic News

The Voice of older people in Southern Test Valley

Publisher STOIC

Volume No. 1

Issue No. 3

Date July 2009

## FEATURE ARTICLE

I intend to create a feature article in each of the two monthly newsletters, about institutions and organizations which have influenced the formation of STOIC so please keep an eye open for future newsletters and become better informed. We are featuring Anne Meader and 'Romsey and District Carers Forum' in this issue and in the future Paul Buxton and 'Age Concern', Dorothy Baverstock and 'Romsey Parish Council'; all these people are, of course, members of your committee. I would particularly like any reader, who has connections with an organization of interest to older people, to get in touch with me so that I can feature them and their organizations. It could possibly lead to new members for you and highlight your services. You will find my telephone number and email address in the Editor's Notes section. Veronica (editor)

### Anne Meader and 'Romsey and District Carers' Forum'

Carers support started in Southern Test Valley in 1989 with a monthly carers group for relatives, friends and neighbours of adults with physical, sensory or mental health problems or who were frail and elderly. It now runs twice monthly

As a result of consultation with local people it was identified that we could achieve better results for carers, disabled and older people by working together. Each local group stayed autonomous but formed a consortium, 'Romsey and District Carers Forum', to help us to develop other services requested by local carers, older people and other local citizens.

I was a founder member of the Forum which launched in December 1996 to support carers of all ages in Southern Test Valley, provide them with information, promote services to meet their needs, liaise and link with individuals and groups in Southern Test Valley and offer support to carers no matter who they are caring for. As 84% of carers are either older people themselves or caring for older people, the Forum has developed a range of services to support older people as well as carers. It has also set up 'Romsey

**WELCOME** to STOIC's (Southern Test Older Independent Campaigners) third newsletter. We will continue to give you news of the Forum activities, meetings, of which, are held every two months. The next meeting is on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> July at 2.00 pm.

The forums give an opportunity for over 55s to get together and discuss local issues important to them; to have a voice, a say in what matters to them in the areas of community, health, leisure, education, safety, housing, transport, benefits and age discrimination etc.

For more information on items raised at previous meetings ask Paul Buxton at Age Concern 24, Linden Rd Romsey (venue for the Forum meetings) on 01794 521398 for a sight of the minutes of previous meetings or visit the [www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm](http://www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm)

For more information about the forum or if you need transport contact Paul Buxton at Age Concern 01794 521398 or email him [carerssupport.romsey@virgin.net](mailto:carerssupport.romsey@virgin.net)

Young Carers Project' to support carers between the ages of 5 and 18. We are currently supporting a new initiative to link family carers.

The Forum has organized and taken part in events to promote the needs of carers and older people and to find out what they feel they need. These have included social events, outings, questionnaires, surveys, and 'Information and Consultation' Days to obtain the views of individual carers, disabled and older people about their own needs.

**Alzheimer's Information Point – September 2009**

**Expanding to include drop-in café for carers and cared for  
Relatives may be left while carers shop etc. by prior arrangement.**

**Activity afternoons for carers, disabled and older people which will include games, crafts  
and other activities**

**Please contact Delia or Rory on 01794 515908 or 515126**

The Forum runs or is involved in a range of support groups and networks including 'Romsey Carers Café', RAIN, RADISH, 'Romsey Come Dancing', the 'Alzheimer's Information Point', 'Internet Café' for Carers, disabled and older people', STOIC, 'Sitting and Companionship', 'Romsey Young Carers' and the 'Locality Health Forum'.

The Forum committee members are all carers, former carers and older people who are trying to ensure that carers and older people are heard widely. We are all volunteers and are continually seeking donations or small pockets of funding to enable us to continue meeting local needs. We welcome volunteers to assist at any of our activities and are always seeking new volunteers to work with us. If you are interested in supporting the Forum in any way please contact Diane or Rory on 01794 515908 or 515126.

I enjoy many aspects of the role but in particular the interaction with older people from all different walks of life who have such interesting and challenging life experiences to share.

**ACRONYMS**

STOIC – Southern Test Older  
Independent Campaigners  
HCC – Hampshire County Council  
TVBC – Test Valley Borough Council  
LINK – Local Involvement Network  
SUHT – Southampton University  
Hospital Trust

**THE LAST MEETING**

NON-CLINICAL SERVICES in Hospitals

The speaker was Peter Holloway, Head of Non-clinical Services for Southampton University Hospital Trust (SUHT). SUHT covers a total population of around half a million people in the

Southampton and South Hampshire area, including a wider population of some 3 million people. The Trust is also a major teaching hospital in association with Southampton University and the Wellcome Trust.

The Trust has recently applied for Foundation status which will give the Trust more autonomy and flexibility in terms of service management and the means to tailor these to better meet the needs of the local population it serves. The Trust is also a major employer in the area with more than 7, 500 staff, 115.000 inpatients and 350,000 outpatients per year. To fund all this costs, on average between, £800K - £900K per day to maintain the present level of service.

### Peter's Roles and Responsibilities

Cleaning Responsible for cleaning the wards and the hospital in general, priority being given to hygiene and infections.

Catering Around 6.000 meals are served each day which, while being nutritious, have a therapeutic and medicinal value. They also sign up to the 'Steamplicity Model' so that they can best suit individual patients' needs.

Wards The aim here is to create a pleasant, friendly atmosphere which includes matching curtains.

Car parking This is a very emotive, ongoing issue. Parking has to be re-arranged regularly in accordance with ongoing site development.

Other responsibilities Include Travel, Residency, Linen and Waste Management.

The Question and Answer session brought up many question from the audience it was a very lively discussion. These included parking at various services and charges, outpatients' appointments, arrangements for cleaning wards and special meals, help for older people while eating or have poor eyesight and hearing. Peter said the new Ward Hostess system would deal with many of these matters but that he would follow up many of our comments.

## **MEMBERS CONCERNS**

### Hampshire Now

Have you received your copy of 'Hampshire Now.' It is the free seasonal Hampshire County Council magazine. The 'Spring 2009' magazine contains several articles of interest to older people. I will highlight a few of these then you can find your copy and read more.

Helping you use a computer – The article guides you to the website [www.hants.gov.uk/silversurfers](http://www.hants.gov.uk/silversurfers). I had a browse and I found it very helpful and interesting. It can guide you towards courses and give helpful advice if you are new to computers or just seeking more information about software etc.

A Recession beating Budget – Is an interesting article on how the County Council's spend your money, it is written in a 'question and answer format', .e.g. 'Why is the council tax going up?' And 'How is the County Council responding to the Recession?'

Can you claim Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit? – This article speaks for itself.

Direct Payments deliver a better quality of life! – Direct Payments are funds paid directly to the users of care services, so that they can choose the support that is relevant and helpful to them. The article goes on to give examples of help received by various older people and seems to me to be a great step forward.

## EDITORS NOTES

Speakers are chosen with members concerns in mind and topics designed to inspire lively discussion. STOIC is about getting our moans and groans into the public eye and hopefully getting them resolved. The committee are in touch with those who know and can help with concerns e.g. the three councils Parish, TVBC and County, all doctor's surgeries, Romsey Hospital and care organisations. STOIC can act in liaison with these organisations. Unless we know of concerns, we are powerless to help.

The 'Newsletter' is aimed at the public in general and not for members alone. It does not set out to duplicate Paul's very professional and well recorded 'Notes on the last meeting' but gives a brief summary for the benefit of people not attending the meeting and is posted with this newsletter on the website

[www.romsnet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm](http://www.romsnet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm) We want anyone who has a gripe or praise to feel they can get in touch with the editor for inclusion in the next newsletter and perhaps inspire topic and speaker for future meetings. Please remember we are not just interested in health issues but in anything that interests you. **Please, see at the meeting or ring, Veronica on 01794 514609 or email ['oakbank21@talktalk.net'](mailto:oakbank21@talktalk.net)**  
Thank you.

## WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

The volunteers the STOIC committee need will have a very small job to do if we can get the right number. We need 6 volunteers each to be responsible for pinning a newsletter to the notice boards at various locations around the town and surrounding areas and leaving a small pile for people to take away. Each volunteer would have only 3 to possibly 6 locations to deal with and it would only be once every two months. **THIS IS DEFINITELY NOT DOOR TO DOOR DELIVERY.** Areas covered would be Hospital & Doctors' surgeries, Halls, Churches, North Baddesley, Retirement flats etc. and the villages. More details in Notes of last meeting or get in touch with Veronica details above.

**NEXT MEETING** – 10<sup>th</sup> July, speaker is Jenny Wells from 'Telecare' Test Valley Housing, and 15<sup>TH</sup> September speaker to be announced.