



Stoic News

March 2009

WELCOME

Welcome to STOIC's first newsletter (**Southern Test Older Independent Campaigners**). In it we intend to give you news of the Forum activities and meetings which are to be held every two months. **The next meeting** is on the 29 May at 2.00 pm at Age Concern Hall.

The forums give an opportunity for over 55's 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.

For more information about discussions at any meeting or for a sight of the Minutes you can ask Paul Buxton at Age Concern, 24 Linden Road, Romsey SO51 8DB or call 01794 521398

For more information about the forum, or if you need transport also contact Paul Buxton at Age Concern or email carerssupport.romsey@virgin.net or visit the STOIC website at <http://www.romsnet.org.uk/STOIC/index.html>

THE LAST THREE MEETINGS

15th September 2008

The first meeting was held on the 15th September 2009.

28 people were present. The meeting was chaired by Anne Meader who agreed to be chairperson at the inaugural meeting on the 15th August. The acronym STOIC, a suggestion from John White, was voted for and formerly adopted as our new name. The Constitution was reviewed and after one or two changes accepted.

Dick Hewett then gave a talk on community transport in Southern Test Valley, mentioning Romsey Dial-A-Ride - a pre-booked, door-to-door service and the Romsey Good Neighbours door-to-door scheme for hospital visits etc. TVBC also run a group transport scheme for the Stroke Club, Hearing Concern Romsey and various other groups.

Several issues brought up by members included getting to the General Hospital by bus - there is no direct bus route; and a shuttle service from the bus station to the Romsey Show. Dick also confirmed fare passes throughout England could only be used between 9.30 and 18.00. A suggestion was made that more funding should be allowed for volunteer drivers' expenses. Other issues raised were the Podiatry Service at Romsey hospital, pavements, transport to and from meetings, publicity, newsletters and funding.

14th November 2008

The second meeting was held on the 14th November 2009. Our speaker, Dr Peter White spoke of his determination to improve and deliver a more efficient health service within the Romsey and District Health Service. He spoke of facilities for patients in Romsey Hospital, for example X-Rays. Questions following the talk ranged from not always seeing own doctor and long waiting times at the General Hospital, to lack of parking, mixed wards, hygiene and community care.

The second speaker was Amanda Hames, LINKs officer for Hampshire, an organisation for individuals and community groups to work together with Health and Social Care services for the benefit of all. LINKs has power to enforce changes if necessary. Anyone can join LINKs and everyone's views matter.

For more information contact Amanda at: amandahames@hapuk.co.uk

23rd January 2009

The speaker was Councillor Mark Cooper who replaced Peter Holloway who was unfortunately unable to attend. Mark is a Romsey Town Councillor with experience of all three Councils that oversee Romsey - Romsey Town Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. He explained the responsibilities of all three Councils and their interaction with each other. He gave a breakdown of how the council tax money is apportioned:

County Council	75%
Police Authority	10%
Test Valley	8%
Fire Authority	4%
Town/Parish	2%

Councillor Cooper's major work comprises dealing with enquiries about roads, lighting, drains etc. Questions arising from the talk: were 'Conflict of interest between his three roles'; 'Political nature of TVBC and HCC'; 'Romsey Good Neighbours'; 'Housing developments'; 'Rules for driving electric scooters'; 'Purpose of the Senate (Southampton) in Hampshire-wide issues' and 'Roles and growth of unitary authorities in Hampshire'.

Anne Meader ended the meeting by answering a question on 'reimbursement for voluntary drivers' brought up at a previous meeting. The reimbursements are not taxable

IDEAS FOR CAMPAIGN ISSUES

- Rights of Grandparents to have a say in the upbringing of their grandchildren taken into care. (Daily Mail 29.01.2009)
- 'Pills and Perils' a research leaflet into prescribed drugs available from Parish Council offices. See website <http://www.espopf.org/>
- Closure of local Arthritis Care Group (Romsey Advertiser).
- Specialist Solicitors join forces (Do You Care? Winter 2008).
- 'FAST' Stroke Awareness Campaign to save lives (in the News + Do You Care? 2008)

ACRONYMS

STOIC – Southern Test Older Independent Campaigners

HCC – Hampshire County Council

TVBC – Test Valley Borough Council

LINKs – Local Involvement Networks

FUTURE MEETINGS

Next meeting: 29 May 2.05 – 4pm.

The topic will be 'non-clinical services' in hospitals e.g. cleaning, catering, portering etc. Our guest speaker will be Peter Holloway from Southampton General Hospital.

Further meetings to be held on 10th July, 11th September and 13th November.