



# Stoic News

The Voice of older people in Southern Test Valley

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## LAST MEETING NOTES

### **NOTES & INFORMATION Age Concern Hall, Linden Road Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010**

The theme of our meeting this time was '**benefits and entitlements**'. We were delighted that Elspeth Watson from the DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) attended as our guest speaker. In her business development role for the DWP, Elspeth looks after Hampshire, including Romsey and the Test Valley area, from her Basingstoke office. The main objective of the talk was to raise awareness of the different types of benefits that are available to help older people, and to provide advice and guidance on how to go about claiming for them. Your local Pension Service can give further advice on eligibility criteria and assistance in completing the application form. They can arrange home visits by request if you don't want to apply over the phone. The first step in the process is to carry out a 'financial health check' on prospective claimants, then take into account any underlying health issues and any other things people may need from other service providers.

Elspeth covered the following types of benefits:

- Pension Credit
- State Pension
- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefits

Pension Service National Phone Number: **0845 60 60 265** [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

STOIC Forum meetings are held every two months at Age Concern 24 Linden Rd, Romsey. The next meeting is on Friday 14 May at 2.00 pm. Speakers from Hampshire County Council (Older People's Well-Being strategy) and from the newly formed Romsey Community Innovations Team.

#### **Membership of £5 began in November 2009**

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

If you need a transport you can ask Paul Buxton at Age Concern 24, Linden Rd Romsey on 01794 521398 or

[carerssupport.romsey@virgin.net](mailto:carerssupport.romsey@virgin.net) for a sight of the minutes of previous meetings or visit the Website

[www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm](http://www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm)

**Future Meetings - 14<sup>th</sup> May, 9<sup>th</sup> July,  
10<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> November.**

## Update on Scams

This follows on from our November meeting when our speaker from Hampshire Trading Standards spoke about protecting older people from doorstep crime, rogue traders and scams. Paul Buxton gave a brief update on scams and the fact that February 2010 has been designated 'Scams Awareness month' by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to raise peoples' overall awareness of these. Locally this initiative is supported by Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards Service.

An excellent booklet - 'Scambuster', Your Guide to beating the Scammers' has been produced by the OFT and copies were given out at the meeting. Please contact Paul on 01974 521398 if you would like a copy of the booklet.

### **A.O.B. included**

- **Vacancies of our Committee**, Anne mentioned that we still have a couple of vacancies and would appreciate any volunteers i.e. for a new Vice-Chairman or Treasurer and a fund-raiser.
- **Older Peoples' International Day – 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010.** At our previous meeting we agreed that it would be a good idea to have our own 'STOIC event' to coincide with this International Day. The Crosfield Hall in Romsey has now been booked and we are holding an initial planning meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> January to agree the best way forward and feedback progress be made at our next meeting.
- **Test Valley Transport Forum** A volunteer(s) is invited to attend meetings on behalf of STOIC. Meetings alternate between Romsey and Andover. Meeting dates are Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March and Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September. Please contact Anne Meader for details.
- **Hampshire Association of Older Peoples Forums** It's hoped that the recently appointed Development Worker (Jane Mielniczek) will be able to attend our March or May Forum. Feedback from the 15<sup>th</sup> January country-wide workshop indicated that Jane is initially concentrating efforts on those areas currently without a forum and working towards setting them up.
- **Possible Campaign Issue** Contents instructions on food packets and containers are far too small to read and may be a possible issue for action that STOIC, as a group, could champion and take forward.
- **Raffle Prizes** A gentle reminder to everyone...please bring a small raffle prize to our meetings. This is a perfect opportunity for fund-raising.

**Our next STOIC meeting will take place on Friday 14 May 2010 at  
the Age Concern Hall, Romsey from 2.05 to 4.00pm.**

### **EDITOR'S SLOT**

I said two months ago I would update you on my downsizing project. There has been little progress so far for various reasons.

The project has made us aware, however, of the problem of older people finding reliable workmen for our little jobs. Yellow pages and the like are not to be recommended, the information is quite often out of date as the businesses have often ceased to exist. 'Age Concern' has a few people they can recommend but they might not be what you need. It has occurred to me we could use this newsletter as a means of recommending reliable tradesmen that members have used and could recommend to other members. Members could cut the box out and save it for future reference. I am going to start the ball rolling by unashamedly recommending my son Jeremy for the laying of any type of flooring. Please see the box below.

Veronica Lakey

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## **KEEPING FIT AND HEALTHY INTO A GOLDEN OLD AGE**

I have recently come across two items in the media which have interested me. The first was on 'BBC Breakfast'. They interviewed someone who had persuaded their local council to build a 'children's playground' for the over sixties. It consisted of walking machines, running machines, cycling machines and other exercise machines; all for the elderly, very strongly built and to be used completely free of charge. How can we persuade our TVBC to do the same? It would be great to walk to the Romsey Recreation Ground and for a small charge use the machines of our choice for as long or short time as we wished and at the time of day we wished. Why should children have all the fun? The second item in the 'Romsey Advertiser' concerned a lady called Eileen Monday, Test Valley Health Coordinator who took a North Baddesley group nordic walking for a taster session. I am in the process of trying to track her down to start a group in Romsey. I personally have Nordic walking sticks and find walking with them very beneficial. They help your balance, make you walk upright and increase your walking speed, but there is a technique to be learned. It would be great fun to join a group. Anyone interested get in touch with the Editor details in the 'Letters to the Editor' section. Eileen Munday can be contacted at: 01794 527920 or Email: emunday@testvalley.gov.uk

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Dear Editor

As a concerned resident I wish to bring to STOIC'S attention the state of the roads and pavements. I feel at the moment any elderly person is leading a charmed life whilst walking on the pavements, riding a bike or driving a car. Is there anything you can do about it?

A Concerned Citizen.

Anyone with any comments or concerns, good or bad, about matters raised at the current or past forums, or who have suggestions for future meeting topics, are invited to write to the editor by post or e-mail for inclusion in 'Stoic News' Mrs Veronica Lakey, 21, Tadfield Crescent., Romsey SO51 phone 01794 514609 Email: [oakbank21@talktalk.net](mailto:oakbank21@talktalk.net)

The 'Stoic News' 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 also posted on the website

[www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm](http://www.romseynet.org.uk/STOIC/index.htm)

**Please remember we are not just interested in health issues but in anything that interests you.**

## **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**

The Stoic committee needs volunteers to fill vacancies in the committee, namely a Vice-Chairman or Treasurer and a fundraiser.

Also distributors for the following areas

- All the Churches except The Abbey and St Swithins, Crampmoor
- North Baddesley – Village Hall, Churches, Surgeries and Shop
- All villages except Lockerley and Nursling
- Retirement home except Linden Court and Wakeford Court

Volunteers will each be responsible for pinning a newsletter to the notice boards at their chosen location around the town and surrounding areas and leave a small pile for people to take away.

This is definitely not a door-to-door delivery. Please get in touch with Veronica details above.

### **Member's attendance at the Test Valley's Transport Forum**

A volunteer is needed to attend 'Transport Forum' meetings which meet variably and alternately between Romsey and Andover. See Anne Meader for details.

Meeting dates 2010 – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March and Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September (both starting at 10.am.) The first meeting will be looking at Transport to Hospital/Health Transport.

## **OLDER PEOPLES DAY**

**1<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

**STOIC plans to hold a big all-day event in the Crosfield Hall to celebrate this day.**

**Put the date in your diary and tell your friends and relatives.**

**Plans and discussions are taking place – any ideas, suggestions or offers of help would be appreciated**

**Contact Paul Buxton on 01794 521398**

## **DON'T FORGET 2010 STOIC MEETING DATES**

**14<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER.**