



# AGEING WE in East Sussex 2020

**September/October 2020**

Your programme of virtual events,  
stories and lifestyle advice

**YES**

For more information on any of the features  
or events in this brochure, visit Your East  
Sussex online at: [your.eastsussex.gov.uk](https://your.eastsussex.gov.uk)

Photo credit: Carlotta Luke



## Aged 40-74?

A few simple lifestyle changes can significantly reduce your risk of developing serious illnesses like stroke, heart disease and dementia

**Book your free NHS Health Check with your GP  
or One You East Sussex now**

**NHS  
HEALTH  
CHECK**

Helping you prevent  
diabetes  
heart disease  
kidney disease  
stroke & dementia

[oneyoueastsussex.org.uk/healthchecks](http://oneyoueastsussex.org.uk/healthchecks)

**ONE YOU**  
EAST SUSSEX



# Welcome to Ageing Well 2020

After years of celebrating Older People's Day with events across the county, it is time to shake things up, bringing a vibrant and empowering outlook on life after 50 with the all new (and for this year, virtual) Ageing Well Festival.

The Ageing Well Festival is here to celebrate all the wonderful things people over the age of 50 contribute to our communities, to inspire generations to live long and full lives, to show you're never too old to work on your health and wellbeing and above all have fun.

Following the COVID-19 guidance and advice from Public Health it has not have been safe to arrange physical events for this year's celebration - instead the event organisers have been quick to adapt, bringing the people of East Sussex a programme of virtual events and inspirational stories.

This is the 14th year East Sussex Seniors' Association and East Sussex County Council have brought together events with the older generation in mind. In previous years this has been under the banner of *Older People's Day* but this year we have renamed our celebration the **Ageing Well Festival**. COVID-19 has had a huge effect on the nation and with many restrictions still in place all events will take place online.

Next year, with luck, everything will be back to normal and we will look forward to meeting up with you all for our usual excellent celebrations.

**Lin Neeve**  
**Chair of East Sussex Seniors' Association**





# East Sussex Seniors Association: How it all began

The birth of the East Sussex Seniors Association and local seniors' forums began around 16 years ago. At the time East Sussex County Council (ESCC) wanted to know how they could improve services and initiatives that would benefit the lives of older people living in East Sussex.

They made contact with various organisations including Newhaven Community Development (now Sussex Community Development Association) of which Kate Davies, former Chair of ESSA and current chair of Meridian Mature Citizens Forum was a board member. Soon after Kate joined forces with other like-minded people and came up with the idea of a forum for older people, led by older people. Two of the first to be set up were Hastings Senior forum and Rother Senior forum.

In 2004 ESCC employed an engagement officer and tasked them with setting up seven forums across the county and many years later, after pressure from ESSA, Hope-G (Hastings Older Peoples Ethnic Group) was added bringing the total number to eight senior forums.

Friends were made at the many public meetings arranged by Adult Social Care who were getting a feel for how seniors forums felt about changes they wanted to make. The forums were able to represent service users and suggest different ways to do things.

It was natural progression that led to the formation of East Sussex Seniors Association in 2007 strengthening their voice as a collective.







Fast forward to today and ESSA is still going strong with around 5,000 members across the county. They have been coordinating Older People's Day, now the Ageing Well Festival, for 14 years and are still heavily involved in consultations with Adult Social Care and Public Health.

Kate Davies, former Chair of ESSA said:

*"Those pioneer days were great fun. Looking back - the issues we were concerned with then seem very simple compared with the issues today such as the austerity years and now COVID-19."*

*"Loneliness is still the hidden factor across the county. An ageing population has led to a shortage of volunteers and the new 'oldies' are still working or caring for grandchildren or elderly relatives."*

*"If you are interested in joining a local senior forum and having your voice heard, get in touch"*



Read Kate's story about how East Sussex Senior's Association began in full at [your.eastsussex.gov.uk](https://your.eastsussex.gov.uk)

It is estimated that fraud losses in the UK amount  
to **£190 billion** every year

## WE'RE TAKING A STAND AGAINST SCAMS

WE'VE JOINED PARTNERS ACROSS EAST SUSSEX  
IN THE BATTLE AGAINST SCAMS  
ANYONE CAN BE A SCAM VICTIM

In addition to the financial impact, scams can have a severe emotional and psychological impact upon victims. Anyone can be a victim irrespective of age, gender, education or economic background.

Our partners are dedicated to taking a stand against scams with the aim of making East Sussex a scam-free county. If you are interested in joining the fight against scams please visit our website for further information:

[safeineastsussex.org.uk](http://safeineastsussex.org.uk)



## FREE SMOKE ALARM & FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME TELEPHONE ASSESSMENTS



East Sussex  
Fire & Rescue Service

Do you have working smoke alarms?



Do you know what to do in the event of a fire?

Are you sure you are safe from fire?



**We are still here to help...**

To book a **FREE** telephone assessment  
please call 08001777069



# Meet Julia: Chairlady of Hope-G

Hope-G, voice of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) older people in East Sussex, has been chaired by Julia for the last decade.

Julia was born on the sunny isle of Trinidad in the West Indies. She has an impressive resumé of work within her home community including achieving Staff Sargent for the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade and training junior members, teaching at a local school, and helping local village children to improve their education in her spare time.

After seeing an urgent appeal for nurses, she settled in the UK, completed her training in Yorkshire and started a family.

When her daughter wanted to join the Brownies but they found there was no local group, Julia stepped up and trained to become a Brownie Guider and went on to do so for 15 years, even when her family moved south. Ever embedded in her community, she was also a PTA member of both her children's schools. Her nursing career continued with the NHS for 46 years, as well as volunteering as Treasurer for the local Diabetic Forum of Diabetics UK.

It was in her retirement that Julia became involved with the community forums, attending meetings for Hope-G which she quickly become an integral part of.

Chaired by Julia, Hope-G plays a vital role in helping to ensure services are meeting the needs of the older BAME community.

Contact details for Hope-G can be found on the back of this brochure.



A woman with a joyful expression is standing in the ocean. She is wearing a white swim cap adorned with white and black flowers, and a blue and yellow patterned swimsuit. In the background, a lighthouse sits atop a rocky pier extending into the sea under a clear blue sky. Decorative teal and grey circular shapes are visible in the top right corner.

# Meet the Seaford Mermaids

The intrepid all-year round swimmers who regularly take a dip off Tide Mills or Buckle Beach in Seaford.

*"The health sustaining value of the swimming is something I delight in."*

Photo credit: Ruth Rose by Carlotta Luke  
[carlottaluke.com](http://carlottaluke.com)



## **We spoke to leader of the group, 87 year old Ruth Rose, whose passion for swimming keeps her fit and healthy.**

### **What is the Seaford Mermaids?**

We are a group of sea swimmers who swim early every morning at the Seaford Buckle Beach or Tide Mills. Most of us are ladies in our late fifties, sixties and seventies up to the oldest, myself at age 87.

### **How did the Seaford Mermaids come about?**

I have always been an open water swimmer and have never felt the need to stop in winter. I was having my usual swim one morning when a lady came down to the beach and asked if she could join me. It wasn't long before two dog walkers asked to come along and they quickly got hooked on the thrill of swimming every morning. Soon others joined and we started a WhatsApp group, which gave an added social side of celebrating birthdays with cake and eventually Christmas parties and so on! There are now over 110 members.

### **What do you enjoy most about the group?**

Socially it's wonderful for someone of my age to be involved in leadership of such loyal friends doing something they all love. The health sustaining value of the swimming is also something I delight in. I consider myself to be very fit. I also know that no matter what my older age will be like, these friends will remain firm and supportive friends for the remainder of my life.

### **Where can the Mermaids be found?**

The Mermaids can be found from 7.00am every morning on Seaford Buckle Beach opposite the carpark. When wave conditions make Buckle unsafe, I direct those who are swimming to the safest parts of Tide Mills.

### **Is Seaford Mermaids open to members?**

The group welcomes all who wish to swim regularly in the sea. Some of our members bring their children, some accompanied by their dogs who also swim with us. We welcome members with disabilities and there is always a willing member to help those who need assistance getting in and out of the sea.

We have a core of daily swimmers, most of whom have been swimming for years together. They tend to be the hardiest, always turning up on cold wet mornings, challenging tough wave conditions in storms. These are the ones that generate the essence of comradeship that embraces all those who are less frequent swimmers.

# IT for You at home

from  
**East Sussex Libraries**

Need help or advice about using your laptop or tablet to stay connected to friends and family, use email, or access the latest information?

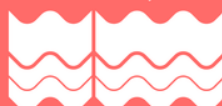
During September and October, as part of the Ageing Well Festival, our team of computer volunteers are here to help you over the phone with:

- Email and the internet
- Social media
- Accessing East Sussex Libraries free e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines and e-newspapers

Give us a call on the number below and we will arrange for one of our volunteers to call you at home.

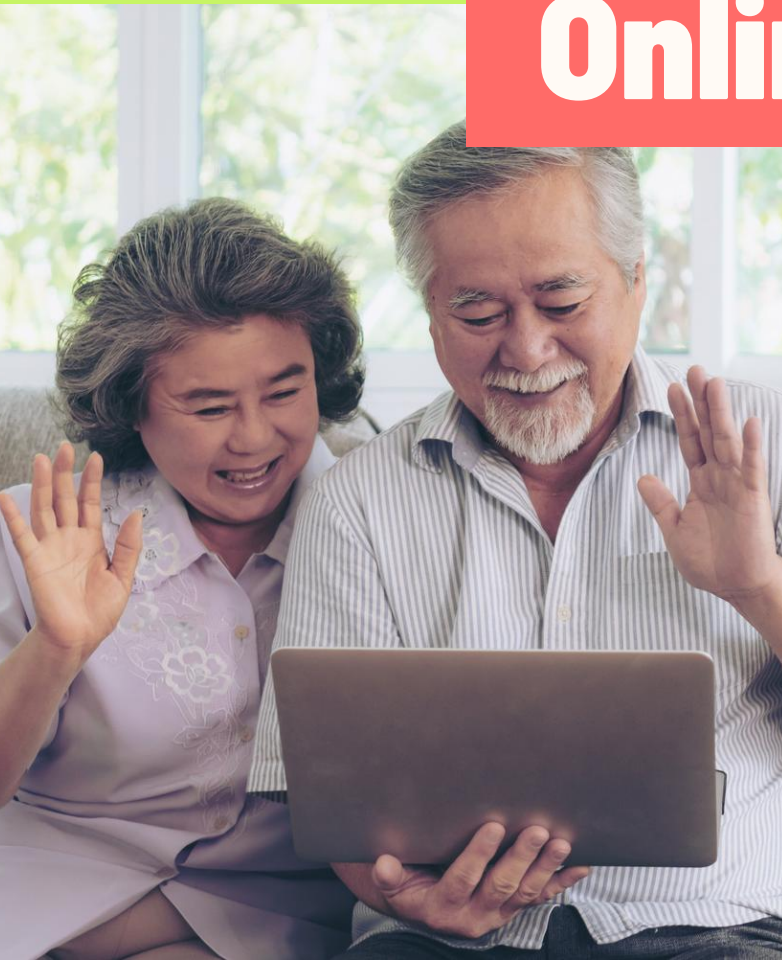
**0345 60 80 196**

East Sussex  
County Council





# Online events



In order to help keep everyone in East Sussex safe, this year we are providing a broad range of Ageing Well events that will all take place online - and for free!

To take part in any of these events please visit the links or email the contact in the event description who will send you a link and joining details for the video call. If you would like support in connecting please let the organiser know at the time of booking.

## **Singing and gentle movement for adults with cognitive problems**

**The Oyster Project**

Every Monday 2.00 to 2.40pm

A weekly workshop, expression through voice and movement, using vocal warm ups, simple songs and moving together to music.

This group is just as much for carers as it is for people with disabilities.

You are welcome to drop in for a session, or come regularly. Places are limited so book early.

Contact: Hannah Hill -  
foreststarhannah@gmail.com  
or 01273 476077

## **Well-being for adults with cognitive problems and family carers**

**The Oyster Project**

Every Friday 10.30 to 11.30am

A weekly online workshop, to learn mindfulness, relaxation techniques and gentle movement. At the end of the session you will be led on a journey to a beautiful peaceful place created in a mind visualization.

This group is just as much for carers as it is for people with disabilities. Limited spaces for this group, book early!

Contact: Hannah Hill -  
foreststarhannah@gmail.com  
or 01273 476077

## **When we're 64: A guide to a great later life**

### **A HAIRE Project Event**

Wednesday 16 September  
2.00 to 3.00pm

Join Louise Ansari, author, Director of Communications at the Centre for Ageing Better, East Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group board member and local resident, in conversation as we explore how to have a great later life. Who could ask for more?

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-WhenWere64](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-WhenWere64)

## **Kindness and coronavirus**

### **A HAIRE Project Event**

Wednesday 23 September  
1.00 to 2.00pm

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought enormous personal, social, and economic challenges to our lives. Through the upheaval of adapting to the virus, might more kindness be part of its legacy? Come and join the Carnegie Trust in conversation as we explore how we can be kinder.

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-kindness](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-kindness)



## **Technology tutorial**

### **Sussex Housing & Care**

Monday 28 September  
10.30 to 11.30am

Would you like to know more about social media? Ever wondered what a hashtag is and why people use it? Would you like to know about privacy settings on Facebook? This tutorial is a one-stop shop for exploring Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with demonstrations and a chance to ask your own questions.

Contact: Lizzie Gurr -  
[lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk](mailto:lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk)



## The Psychology of Loneliness

### A HAIRE Project Event

Wednesday 30 September  
1.00 to 2.00pm

Coronavirus has had a profound impact on our ability to connect with people. Understanding our 'internal' experience of loneliness and what we can do about it has never been more important. Join Kate Shurety, Executive Director, Campaign to End Loneliness, to discuss loneliness in later life.

Register online:

[bit.ly/AWF2020-loneliness](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-loneliness)

## Sing your Story

### Intergenerational Opera

Anytime throughout October

Singing makes you feel good! Just like exercise it releases the body's natural stress and pain relievers. When we sing together with others it promotes a sense of belonging and leaves us feeling connected with our community which, in turn, improves mood, wakes up the body and reduces anxiety.

Download a 30-minute singing workshop from

[intergenerationalopera.com](https://intergenerationalopera.com)

Contact: Charlotte Wicks or Charlotte Shaw - [intergenopera@gmail.com](mailto:intergenopera@gmail.com)

## Older people's day 2020

### Hourglass

#### Safer Ageing. Stopping Abuse

Anytime throughout October

Hourglass do vital work in supporting older people affected by abuse and exploitation but are also working towards a wider focus on safer ageing and a fairer society for all older people. Please join us to hear about the local community-based services we will be providing to help older people live well in Sussex.

Contact: Gail Shanahan -

[gailshanahan@wearehourglass.org](mailto:gailshanahan@wearehourglass.org)



## What is the CWGC?

### Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Friday 2 October  
10.00 to 11.00am

Are you interested in learning more about the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission? Megan Maltby, Senior Public Events Coordinator for the CWGC, will be giving a virtual presentation about the history of the CWGC and how our work continues today.

Contact: Megan Maltby -  
[megan.maltby@cwgc.org](mailto:megan.maltby@cwgc.org)

## Water palaver!

### South East Water & Southern Water

Friday 2 October, 10.00 to 10.40am

Advice on what your water companies offer in the way of financial & non-financial help including our priority services register – this service can deliver water free of charge to vulnerable customers in the event of a burst pipe or planned works.

Contact: Sheila Bowdery -  
[sheila.bowdery@southeastwater.co.uk](mailto:sheila.bowdery@southeastwater.co.uk)



## Dementia Friends information session

### Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance

Tuesday 6 October  
11.00 to 11.45am

Find out how living with dementia can affect a person and how you could potentially better help support someone in a more understanding way.

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-dementiafriends](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-dementiafriends)

## How to age

### A HAIRE Project Event

Tuesday 6 October  
6.00 to 7.00pm

As a culture, have we become 'anti-age', fearing frailty and loneliness, or denying the ageing process altogether? What would it mean to be 'pro-age'? Join award-winning journalist, writer and London Metropolitan University professor Anne Karpf in conversation on what it means to age, and how to do it well.

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-HowToAge](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-HowToAge)



## Virtual war graves cemetery tour

### Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Friday 9 October  
10.00 to 11.30am

Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission site in the UK. Join this virtual tour where we will explore the stories of some of the casualties buried here, why they are here and discuss the importance of remembrance.

Contact: Megan Maltby -  
[megan.maltby@cwgc.org](mailto:megan.maltby@cwgc.org)

## Virtual coffee morning

### Sussex Housing & Care

Monday 12 October  
10.30 to 11.30am

Enjoy using video calling to see other people on your screen. Have a chat and a coffee and learn about using software such as Zoom to keep in touch with friends and family from the comfort of your own home.

Contact: Lizzie Gurr -  
[lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk](mailto:lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk)



## Online over 50s beginners Pilates class

### Active Hastings

Tuesday 13 October  
10.00 to 11.00am

A class for over 50s who have not yet given Pilates a go. The session will be a gentle introduction to what a typical class would look like. Regular Pilates can improve posture, muscle tone, balance and joint mobility, as well as relieve stress and tension.

Contact:  
activehastings@hastings.org.uk  
or phone 01424 451051



## Finding purpose in later life

### A HAIRE Project Event

Wednesday 21 October  
6.00 to 7.00pm

Join internationally renowned writer, social entrepreneur, and leading later life expert Marc Freedman to discuss why older age can come with a diminishing sense of direction. Find out how we can find meaningful activity that serves our innate need for purpose as well as the greater good.

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-FindingPurpose](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-FindingPurpose)

## We all have something to offer: Are older people included in our communities?

### A HAIRE Project Event

Wednesday 28 October  
3.00 to 4.00pm

Being included in a community is about more than just living in it. Come and join the National Development Team for Inclusion to talk about whether older people feel they belong and what needs to happen so that people's lives reach beyond the four walls they live within.

Register online:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-SomethingToOffer](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-SomethingToOffer)

# LET'S GET CREATIVE!

## **Liberated observational drawing**

### **The Oyster Project**

Thursday 15 October 2.00 to 3.30pm

Whether you haven't drawn since childhood, or are an accomplished artist, this is a different way of experiencing drawing which can open your mind to the act of drawing and enable you to feel differently about it. Hannah is a qualified and experienced artist and workshop facilitator. Open to people with disabilities.

Contact: Hannah Hill -  
foreststarhannah@gmail.com  
or 01273 476077

## **Intergenerational musical line drawing**

### **The Oyster Project**

Saturday 24 October, 11.00 to 11.45am

Unlock the freedom of your own world by expressing yourself through mark making on paper, using music and visualization. Any artist welcome, experienced or new! This workshop is open to everyone over the age of seven, as well as people living with disabilities including cognitive disabilities such as dementia.

Contact: Hannah Hill -  
foreststarhannah@gmail.com  
or 01273 476077

## **Poets' corner**

### **Meridian Mature Citizens Forum**

Anytime throughout September and October

A chance for the talented (and not so) to share their own poetry, prose or favourite poems with others. Funny poems, poems related to COVID-19, limericks or haikus – let your imagination run wild! All entries will be shown on the Meridian Mature Citizens Forum website ([www.meridian-sf.org.uk](http://www.meridian-sf.org.uk)).

Submit your poems with the author's name and subject line "Poets Corner" to: [meridianseniorsforum@gmail.com](mailto:meridianseniorsforum@gmail.com)

# Quiz time!

Test your general knowledge with fun, light-hearted online quizzes hosted by local partnerships. These are a great way to meet new people, have a chat and play along with others as you give those mental muscles a stretch - all from the comfort of your own home.

To take part, please contact the organisers listed below, who will send you a video call link and login details for the quiz.

**Pens and paper at the ready!**

## **Host: Sussex Housing & Care**

Monday 21 September, 10.30 to 11.30am

Contact: Lizzie Gurr - [lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk](mailto:lizzie.gurr@sussexhousing.org.uk)

## **Host: Eastbourne Seniors Forum**

Wednesday 30 September, 4.00 to 5.00pm,

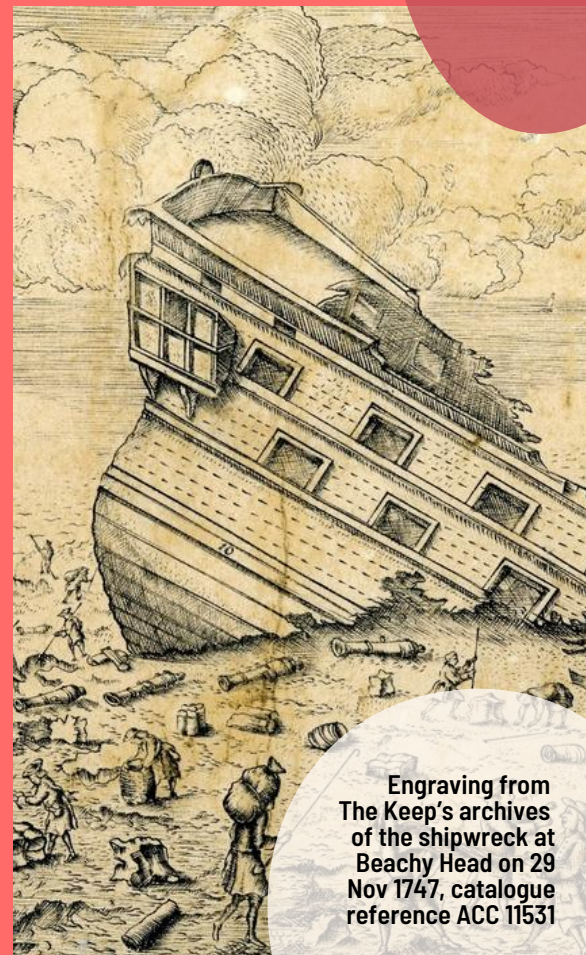
Contact: Judy Thurlow - [judythurlow@gmail.com](mailto:judythurlow@gmail.com)

## **The Keep: East Sussex Quarantine Quiz**

The Keep is the county's archive service, based in Falmer, and during the lockdown it was closed to the public. Looking for ways to engage remotely with residents, their archivists devised a series of quizzes inspired by the collections in their care. So, if you missed it first time around, now is your chance to give the East Sussex Quarantine Quiz a go!

Check it out online at:

[bit.ly/AWF2020-The-Keep](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-The-Keep)



Engraving from  
The Keep's archives  
of the shipwreck at  
Beachy Head on 29  
Nov 1747, catalogue  
reference ACC 11531





# Help at home you can trust

Support with Confidence is a directory of vetted and approved providers who offer a wide range of care and support services for adults in East Sussex. It is for people looking for services such as personal care, meal provision, gardening, home improvement and transport needs. Find out how the scheme can help you.

**Get in touch...**

[supportwithconfidence@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:supportwithconfidence@eastsussex.gov.uk)  
or call us on **01323 463440**

[eastsussex.gov.uk/supportwithconfidence](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/supportwithconfidence)



**Local groups  
and hobbies**

**Advice and  
information**

**Local services**

**Events  
calendar**

**Family  
information**

**COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ORGANISATIONS LISTED FOR FREE**

[www.escis.org.uk](http://www.escis.org.uk)

[info@escis.org.uk](mailto:info@escis.org.uk)



EAST SUSSEX COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

# Looking after your mental health

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health.

Health in Mind is a free NHS service for people experiencing emotional stress and symptoms of anxiety or low mood.

Our free NHS service could make a huge difference if you:

- find it hard to stop worrying
- feel nervous, on edge or more irritable
- have been feeling down or hopeless
- have lost interest in doing things

You can self-refer online, or if you need assistance, family or friends can also make referrals for you.

**healthinmind.org.uk - 0300 00 30 130**



## Community Emergency Response Team Veterans Project



**Do you need advice?**  
**A prescription collected?**

**Someone to talk to?**  
**Help with shopping?**

**Call our friendly team Monday to Friday, 9-5**  
**01273 476704**





# Our House of Friendship heroes

Over the last few months, we have heard a lot about our frontline heroes; nurses, doctors, carers, delivery drivers, postmen (and women!), dustmen, shopworkers and more – and we older ones are very grateful to them all.

But we wanted to share with you a story about our own unsung heroes at Lewes House of Friendship. Some of you will know the place on School Hill, a centre for older people in Lewes, providing a place to meet, have a cup of coffee, a well-cooked lunch, or join in an activity.

Like so many places, we had to close the doors on 20th March to keep everyone safe from coronavirus. Our cook, Keith, was very concerned about the members who rely on us for lunch every week – so Keith and our kitchen assistant Sophie, decided that they would come in to make and deliver meals for any member who signed up.

The meals are varied, tasty and are delivered hot to people's doors at lunchtime. Starting with orders from around 20 members, they are now serving 40 residents every week day, showing how members have passed on the good news to their friends

Keith and Sophie have had some help with the deliveries too.

Lucy, has come every weekday to deliver the meals for the centre of town. Dodie, delivers to those in Malling, and the lucky residents of one of the retirement complexes in Lewes have their meals delivered by their scheme manager, Melissa, in her lunch hour.

**We would like to say a very big thank you to these quiet heroes, who have brought comfort and cheer to many people in Lewes at this unsettling time!**



***"It's always lovely to see your smiling face"***

***"The meals are yummy! Lucky old us!"***

***"I really enjoy the lunches – I look forward to them very much"***



# Keeping safe from coronavirus: East Sussex, together

A message from Darrell Gale, Director of Public Health

It's my job to try and ensure as few of us as possible in East Sussex get infected with COVID-19 - but I need your help.

The good news is that, at the moment, East Sussex has low rates of the virus compared to other parts of England. But of course the virus *is* still there in our communities.

If there were a local outbreak, I or other public health leaders might ask you to avoid certain places or even to stay at home as the situation is controlled.

We'd let you know about this very swiftly, through local TV, radio and online. You can also sign up now for email updates which we'd send if anything new happens.

Subscribe online at: [bit.ly/ESCC-newsletter](https://bit.ly/ESCC-newsletter)

We can all work together to avoid outbreaks, so please continue to:

- Keep 2 metres apart from other people wherever you can
- Regularly wash your hands
- Wear a face covering in shops and other enclosed public places
- If you feel at all unwell book a test immediately and stay at home for at least 10 days. You can book at [gov.uk](https://gov.uk) or by calling 119
- If you are asked to self-isolate by the NHS test and trace team, please do.

On the county council website you'll also find latest details about the number of cases, our plan for how we'd handle an outbreak and lots of practical help and support. Our communities have already done amazing work to support each other through these tough times.

We can keep the virus at bay in East Sussex if we continue working together.

Thank you.





# Planning for a lockdown: Would you be ready?

A local lockdown isn't the only reason you might need to stay home. You would need to isolate if you or a household member developed COVID-19 symptoms and 10-14 days is a long time to be shut off from the world!

There's a lot to think about if you want to be prepared so to help we have compiled this handy checklist.

1

Make sure your prescriptions are up to date and that you have at least two weeks stock. Speak to your pharmacist if you aren't sure what you might need.

Check that you have enough food and essentials for everyone. Remember nappies, medicines, plasters, cleaning or sanitary products and pet supplies.

2

3

If you have a dog, is there someone you can call upon to walk it if you have to self-isolate or shield yourself?

If you pay your utilities using a pay-as-you-go meter, make sure your card is topped up and that you have a way to add credit if you need to.

4

5

Get a free library card. You may be able to get yourself set up so that you can borrow free ebooks and audiobooks from the comfort of your home. Call East Sussex libraries on 0345 60 80 196.

Check you have a good supply of activities to keep yourself entertained such as books, puzzles, games or craft activities.

6

7

Organise your friends and family to facetime/call you at regular intervals or think about playing games online with one another to keep in touch and so you still get to see their faces!

If you need to get food or medicine that you have run out of, who could you call? Many of us have friends and family around but for those that don't there are people out there that can help including your local Community Hub (via your local council) or NHS Volunteer Responders can be contacted on 0808 196 3646

8

# Be your own doctor

## Look after your mind

Many people worry about dementia. Help yourself to avoid it - do new things with new people. Make the effort to socialise. Most importantly, recent research shows that regular exercise prevents or slows dementia.

Volunteering is really good for you. It keeps you connected and feeling useful makes you feel good.

Keep your brain busy. Doing puzzles is fine but learning new skills is better. Challenge yourself, for example, learn Russian!

Dr. Elena Mucci, Consultant Geriatrician at Conquest and Spire Hospitals, has some common sense advice on staying healthy as you get older. Her presentation called '*Avoiding Frailty in Older Age*' was delivered to large audiences in East Sussex in 2019 but had to stop because of the pandemic. It is hoped it will return in 2021.

## Look after your body

Exercise really matters. All physical activity is good for you but anything that makes you breathe harder for a while is even better! Walk, join an exercise class, dance, garden, play with the grandchildren!

Get out of the house in all weathers. 30 minutes of brisk walking 5 times a week will not only help your heart and lungs but also helps memory.

Your bones need vitamin D to keep strong. Spend 5 to 15 minutes outdoors with the sun on your face and arms. Oily fish twice a week helps too!



# Just because you are getting older doesn't mean you will automatically become unhealthy!

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## Keep safe

Take a look at your home, what could you change to keep yourself safe and is easily fixed? Poor lighting, loose rugs, badly placed furniture, trailing cables can put you at risk of falls and fractures.

Falling over can do you much more damage than you might think. You don't want to finish up in hospital if you can avoid it. A stylish handrail in the right place can make a difference and helps you to feel safer.

Don't be too proud to use a stick. Ramblers and explorers use them all the time! (Get a colourful one - it needn't make you look old!) Use it indoors too, especially when away from home.

## And if you are unwell...

Talk to a professional. When talking remember you are a person, not just a "patient". Always ask questions, make sure you understand and remember what they say. Prepare a notebook with your questions and write down the answers. Have someone with you too if you think that will help.

If you have lots of different prescriptions, talk to your GP or pharmacist. Do you need all those medicines? If you are taking 4 or more you should have them reviewed at least every 6 months.

If you have continence problems, first make sure it's not a water infection. Too much caffeine will irritate your bladder and don't drink too much in the evening: if you are up a lot at night, try to cut down on drinking after 6pm.

If you would like to find out more and get help to develop your own action plan to stay healthy as you get older visit [your.eastsussex.gov.uk](http://your.eastsussex.gov.uk)



## Do you look after someone who couldn't manage without your help?



**We are here for you if you need advice, information or support.**

Care for the Carers offers a range of support for unpaid carers in East Sussex.

We provide free practical and emotional advice and help you access the range of services that are available locally. We also run support groups for carers across East Sussex, a safe place to relax and chat.

**If you need help or would like to join a carers group, please get in touch with us.**

**Visit:** [www.cftc.org.uk](http://www.cftc.org.uk)

**Email:** [info@cftc.org.uk](mailto:info@cftc.org.uk)

**Phone:** 01323 738390

**Text:** 07860 077300

**No one left to care alone**



# Respite care and video calls

A lot of people have become familiar with online video calls during lockdown. It has taken a lot of getting used to but has meant we can keep in touch with family and friends and has also proved very helpful for those working in care who haven't been able to have face to face visits due to social distancing.

We speak to Shirley, a volunteer at the Association of Carers, about her experience of using Facetime to keep in touch with the couple she regularly supports:

"Before lockdown my respite visit to K & R was on Thursday mornings so when it started, we decided on continuing to meet using FaceTime. It would not be possible to talk to K over the phone as his conversational skills are not very good, and a 3-way telephone call would certainly be very difficult.

It is lovely to see K smile when we start the meeting, and it is very comforting that he recognises me. After about 10 minutes he is fast asleep so that gives R a chance to have a chat. K has deteriorated quite a lot over the last few weeks, and I am very grateful that I have been able to continue the relationship via FaceTime. I'm fairly sure it would be difficult to rebuild it when lockdown is over if we hadn't been able to keep in touch in this way and it gives us all something to look forward to.

The main advantage of video conferencing is that it makes it possible to have contact with the cared for person as well as the carer. It has also enabled me to spot the signs of stress in R that I think I would have missed if we only spoke on the telephone. It has been a very positive experience, though I can't wait to get back to normal respite visits!

Read the full story online at:  
[bit.ly/AWF2020-ACShirley](https://bit.ly/AWF2020-ACShirley)



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