

A force to be reckoned with



[www.espopf.org](http://www.espopf.org)

# EASTLEIGH SOUTHERN PARISHES OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM

NEWSLETTER 53

March 2010

## ARE YOU LOSING OUT?

The coldest winter weather for almost 30 years may have meant major problems on the roads, but the power supplies to our homes were never affected and, just as importantly, over three million pensioners received up to four Cold Weather Payments of £25 a week to make sure they kept their heating on, if they were receiving the Winter Fuel Allowance.

But what about those pensioners unable to claim the payments? Well over a million more pensioners (in fact estimates vary between 1.2 and 1.8 million) could have received Cold Weather Payments – if only they had applied for the 'passport' benefits to which they are entitled, including *Pension Credit*.

Each week, the Department of Work and Pensions receives tens of thousands of calls, and makes 13,000 home visits to help people apply for *Pension Credit*, and, to make it as simple as possible, there is just the one, **freephone** number to call: **0800 99 1234** and that includes mobile phone calls.

*Pension Credit* means no-one aged 60 or over needs to live on less than £130 a week, (£198.45 for couples), rising to £132 in April. Many pensioners on *Pension Credit* will also be entitled to additional support through Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit – which itself can be £15 a week. A pensioner with the guarantee element of *Pension Credit*, with average rent and Council Tax liabilities, could have a weekly income equivalent to around £220 a week.

So, are YOU claiming what is rightfully yours? Many people assume they won't be entitled – but you won't find out until you ask. You just have to be 60 or over to claim. This is the same for men and women, and it doesn't matter if your partner is under 60. Having some savings or another pension doesn't rule you out – around three quarters of people who get *Pension Credit* have saved something. The Pension Service will ignore the first £10,000 of your savings.

Those on *Pension Credit* are also eligible for

help through the Warm Front scheme, which could give you a grant of up to £3,500 (or up to £6,000 if your home needs oil central heating), to better insulate and heat your home. And that too will cut huge amounts from your heating bills. It has to be worth investigating!

**Telephone 0800 99 1234 TODAY.**

*'Mature Times'*

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## GENERAL ELECTION HUSTINGS

**Come and hear what all the prospective parliamentary candidates of political parties in Eastleigh have to say at our next Open Meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Please send brief questions to ESPOPF's Hon. Secretary by phone, email or letter:**

**Diane Andrewes Tel.02380 403311**

**[diane.andrewes@espopf.org](mailto:diane.andrewes@espopf.org)**

**Orchard Hill Old Bursledon SO31 8DH**

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## WHAT IS ESPOPF?

ESPOPF is a completely independent, voluntary group of over-55's living in the six villages that form Eastleigh's southern parishes. Its aim is to achieve quality of life for older people by representing their concerns to national and local statutory and voluntary organisations and the general public and by encouraging members, themselves, to take measures to maintain their independence and community involvement.

ESPOPF receives financial assistance from a wide variety of sources, which support our objectives without imposing conditions that limit our freedom of expression.

**HAMPSHIRE & I.O.W.COMMUNITY FUND  
SPONSORS ESPOPF NEWSLETTERS**

# ESPOPF COMMITTEE PAGE

## MEMBERS 2009/10

Chair: Patience Sambrook (Hedge End) 01489 782552

Vice Chair: Jackie Charles (Hamble) 02380 453296

Hon. Sec./Newsletter Editor: Diane Andrewes (Bursledon) 02380 403311 [diane@espopf.org](mailto:diane@espopf.org)

Hon. Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Betty Lawrence (Netley) 02380 453680

Web Master: David Andrewes (Bursledon) [david@espopf.org](mailto:david@espopf.org)

Consultation Officer: Judith Cam (Hound) [judithcam@hotmail.com](mailto:judithcam@hotmail.com)

John Taylor (Butlocks Heath) Susan Moody (Botley) Margaret Phippard Gloria Bowles (Hamble) Pat Rose Jean

Purchase Shirley Driscoll (West End) June Watson (Hedge End) Peggy Budd (Netley) Jean Norton (Bursledon)

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## **JANUARY OPEN MEETING**

Unfortunately, the icy weather caused us to cancel the meeting. The Officers decided that it would be reckless to encourage older people to brave the elements. The good news is that all the speakers booked to attend the January meeting will come in May, when we plan to have a HEALTH day.

The 100 Club draw was held at the February Committee meeting. We are glad to report that over 100 members applied for membership this year. The January winners were:

£50 Eve Osman (83) Hedge End

£25 Val Ritchie (24) Hedge End

£25 Peggy Budd (40) Netley

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## **COMMITTEE NEWS**

Jean Huggett has resigned because of a clash of meeting dates, so we need another Botley representative to join Susan Moody. We shall miss Jean who has been an increasingly active member for many years. She has agreed to continue to represent us on two groups.

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## **INFORMATION RESEARCH 2010**

Researchers have been busy with interviews with members and providers of information and the Report is beginning to take shape. We thank Netley Blind Club (Open Sight) members for agreeing to form a Focus Group to contribute to the research.

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## **ESPOPF's AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Presentations have been given to Hamble and Botley Parish Councils and to Netley Royal British Legion Ladies Group. It would appear that most people recognise the urgency of ensuring that older people's needs are catered for by their communities and we look forward to exploring how our members can become more involved in prioritising and seeking improvements in their own villages.

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## **DISABILITY AIDS/ADAPTATIONS**

As we get older, we find that we need a range of adaptations to our properties - if we are to remain in them. These vary from hand-rails and ramps and showers to stairlifts, furniture and fittings. Even if we are able to afford these, we may have difficulty in locating them and often pay more than we need to, as a letter reveals on the *You Write* page. The Committee has become concerned about the time it takes to be assessed for a grant and then to get the work done. We feel that ESPOPF should seek to improve this situation and we should welcome information and evidence from members to start a campaign. In the meantime, members could consider dispensing with baths, which are increasingly difficult to exit and clean and waste water. Showers are cheaper, more accessible and make hair-washing much easier. Think ahead. Think INDEPENDENCE.

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## **ORGANISATIONS WITH ESPOPF REPRESENTATIVES**

- 1 **HCC Safeguarding Adults from Abuse** – Patience Sambrook Diane Andrewes
- 2 **Hampshire Association of Older People's Forums** - Patience Sambrook (Chair)
- 3 **HCC Eastleigh Passenger Transport Forum** - Patience Sambrook Diane Andrewes
- 4 **BHH LAC Community Safety Action Group** - Jackie Charles Jean Norton
- 5 **HEWEB LAC Community Safety Action Group** – Jean Huggett
- 6 **ESP Practice-based Commissioning Group (NHS)** – Jean Huggett
- 7 **New Dynamics of Ageing Older People's Reference Group** – Diane Andrewes
- 8 **Hampshire Independent Equalities Forum** – Diane Andrewes
- 9 **British Association of Gerontology** – David Andrewes
- 10 **Hamble Valley U3A** – Patience Sambrook
- 11 **Hamble Culture Club** – Judith Cam
- 12 **Beacon Good Neighbours** – Betty Lawrence

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**NEXT OPEN MEETING: MAY 18**

# NOTICE BOARD

## HIGHWAY ISSUES

The recent weather has caused more potholes to appear wrecking wheels, tyres, suspension components. The *Daily Echo* has published details of how to report highway matters online (Tel. **0845 6035633** for emergencies):

Online you may log:

**Highway Defects:** potholes, flooding, blocked gullies, overhanging trees

**Street Lighting:** faulty, broken or damaged street lights

**Traffic Lights:** faults/ problems

**Traffic Management:** speed limits, waiting restrictions, road closures, road markings, traffic and pedestrian signing, cycling issues.

You can also check the progress of reported problems

For all these things, use Hampshire County Council's website: [www3.hants.gov.uk/roads/online-](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/roads/online-facilities/allforms.htm)

[facilities/allforms.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/roads/online-facilities/allforms.htm).

This website also gives details about road conditions during severe weather and other emergencies.

## SAGA MANIFESTO

- fairer finances
- abolish ageism
- age balance in Parliament
- support for carers
- intelligent retirement
- better, safer streets

## EDF ENERGY PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER

Customers of EDF Energy, who rely on electricity for medical equipment or have other special needs, may join a Priority Services Register. The service is free and means that, in the event of a power cut, they can offer additional help and support. You can register by phoning

0800 169 9970 or email: [psr@edfenergy.com](mailto:psr@edfenergy.com)

Perhaps your own energy supplier has a similar scheme you could join.

## OPEN DAY & HEALTH FAIR

Take this opportunity to visit the Blackthorn Medical Centre Satchell Lane, off Hamble Lane on **Saturday April 17** 10am – 4pm. It is the newest one in Eastleigh Borough.

## SOUTHAMPTON TALKING ECHO

The *Talking Echo* is a compilation of news from the *Daily Echo*, which covers Southampton, Eastleigh and district. It is supplied fortnightly on a free audiotape. The charity was started in 1974 and now offers versions of newsletters, magazines and leaflets to people throughout southern England. It has recently returned to its original home in the Southampton Hospital Radio studios in Tebourba Way. ESPOPF is making enquiries about the possibility of their supplying our Newsletter to our members with sight problems.

## NEW COACH SERVICES

National Express is responding to the new Greyhound Bus service to London for £1, by launching new direct routes to Central London and Heathrow Airport from Harbour Parade Southampton for **99p**:

**First service to Heathrow:** 1.30am; **last:** 7.35pm.

**First return from Heathrow** 12.55am; **last:** 10.30pm.

**First service to London Victoria:** 3.55am; **last:** 8.25pm

**First return from Victoria:** 7.15am; **last:** 11.30pm

## GOOD NEWS FOR CARER MEMBERS

Eastleigh Carers' Centre invites carers to drop in and meet them and other carers at the Blackthorn Medical Centre on 17 March and 21 April (Tuesdays) More details from Angie and Jo on **02380 902400**

## ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTS

Tel. the HCC special "blanket" line on **01962 833358** and leave name and tel. number.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

Members living in Hedge End, West End and Botley are asked to contact Jean Huggett on **01489 785851 453296** if they have any worrying incidents to report, such as vandalism, drunken behaviour, graffiti, or any other anti-social behaviour. Jean is our representative on the HEWEB Community Safety Group and she is able to report incidents if she is told the details of incidents and whether the PCSO or Parish Clerk have been informed

## WESSEX VALE CREMATORIUM

Opened in December in West End. Charges £525 for a cremation with organist and a £25 discount for an early morning service.

## 'HAMPSHIRE NOW'

Get free copies of the Special Editions for older people, Tel. **0845 603 5638** or email [hampshirenowspecial@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hampshirenowspecial@hants.gov.uk)

## COUNCIL WEBSITES

[www.eastleigh.gov.uk](http://www.eastleigh.gov.uk)  
[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

## YOU WRITE...

*Dear Editor*

I am delighted to tell you that following the meeting of the Equality and Human Rights Commission Bursary Fund Panel in December, we are awarding your organisation a bursary of **£2,963** towards the project you submitted in your application. The Panel felt that your project will make a strong contribution to both the delivery of, and learning about, engagement and empowerment of under-represented older people's groups within this region and we look forward to sharing your experience and outcomes.

*Olu Alake*

*Equalities & Human Rights Commission*

*GOSE*

*(The application was for our current research. We record appreciation of assistance by Jane Mielniczek, a member of the HCC Wellbeing Team. - Ed.)*

*Dear Editor*

Out of the blue, a woman phoned me recently to ask whether I needed disability adaptations. I thought she was social services. She said she could send a man to call on me and he came a few days later. He had an identity badge, but I couldn't read it all. I remember it said *Social* on it. He told me about all the adaptations there were and I said I needed a bath lift.

Immediately, he offered to fetch in one from his car. He assembled it and put it in the bath. I tried it. It was very good. Then he said it would cost £1,295. I said that was too much and he said he would call his boss on his mobile and get him to talk to me. The boss offered to reduce the price by £200 for immediate purchase, which made me suspicious. I said I would need to consider it. After he had gone, I looked up the bath lift on the internet and

found exactly the same lift for £339.25, including VAT, with a lifetime guarantee. I ordered it online and it came two days later. It is wonderful, easy to use and gets the seat down to 2 to 3 inches off the bottom of the bath. The make is Bellavita Bath Lift from Mobility Freedom Direct. A very helpful woman called Carol Sanderson dealt with me on the phone (Tel. 0800 3166525). I recommend it.

The lessons from this are:  
1 Be suspicious of telephone callers. (How did they know I was in the market for disability adaptations?)

2 Never let people into your house to sell things.

3 It is worth getting on the internet to find the right price for things. Make sure you are not being robbed.

*Huck Humphrey*

*Hamble*

*Dear Editor*

The Hampshire Macmillan Citizens Advice Service is available to anyone living in or receiving treatment in the County Council area of Hampshire and affected by cancer.

When you or someone close to you has been diagnosed with cancer, money might not be one of the first things you think about but having cancer can be expensive: you may have to pay for a special diet, higher heating costs or travel to hospital. You may need help to find your way through the complex benefits system or to deal with debts. If you are struggling to cope with the financial effects of cancer, there is help available.

The Hampshire Macmillan Citizens Advice Service can give you free, confidential, impartial welfare benefits and money advice. Just ring us. The telephone will be answered

by a caseworker, who will help you over the telephone and may arrange a face to face appointment. The number is **0844 847 7727**.

*Sally Collier Eastleigh CAB*

*Dear Editor*

With reference to your letter dated February 11 2010, in which you request assistance towards the cost of a *franking* machine, I have pleasure in forwarding herewith a cheque to the value of £1,000. May I, at this time, wish you continued success and happiness within your organisation?

*B J Davies*

*Bonhomie United Charity Society*

*(We are most grateful to Bonhomie for their regular grants - Ed.)*

*Dear Editor*

Your Newsletter is always a welcome piece of reading. I just wish I was a bit younger and mobile, so I could help take EBC to task over things they seem to think is more significant than the older generation. I suppose all our travel tokens went towards the cricket ground. It seems they do not have to answer to anybody and are a law unto themselves. Carry on the sterling work you do trying to make our cases heard.

*J Wyeth (Mrs)*

*Hedge End*

*Dear Editor*

Thank you for posting your Newsletters to me during the last two years. The information is interesting and useful to ancient members of the community such as me. My good wishes to all at ESPOPF for 2010.

*Desmond Flight Netley Abbey*

*Contributions may be edited -Ed.  
The ESPOPF Newsletter Editor*

*diane@espopf.org*