# Inline image Swindon Seniors Forum

**A voice for Swindon Seniors Citizens**

**Patron: Lord Joffe**

**Summer & Autumn 2016**

**Summer & Autumn 2016 Newsletter Issue 17**

A warm welcome to Swindon Seniors Forum (SSF) Newsletter. The content of this Newsletter is a mixture of Swindon Seniors Forum and South West Seniors’ Network information. SSF is a current member of South West Seniors’ Network.

SSF has a membership of almost 200 and membership is free to anyone 55 and over in the Swindon area.

**Annual General Meeting/Open meeting will be held on 20 October 2016**

**at Broadgreen Community Centre, Salisbury Street, Swindon**

**Registration 1.30-1.50pm for 2.00 pm start**

**The world is your oyster - Making the most of your freedom in retirement**.

If all you have been dreaming of since you retired is globe-trotting to the countries or places that you have not yet managed to visit, you are not alone. Why not have a look at Fred Olsen 10% discount off leaflet.

*10% discount for South West Seniors’ Network with Fred Olsen*

Fred Olsen Cruises announce a 10% discount for the members of South West Seniors’ Network (SWSN), available on top of their current cruise sale offers.

To redeem your 10% discount quote code SWSC10 on the booking hotline **0800 0355 108** to validate your membership claim.  This code entitles you to a personal 5% discount; SWSN will receive 2.5% and SSF 2.5% of the value of your booking.

Make sure that you do have the correct travel/ medical insurance.

**Campaign to End Loneliness**

Swindon Seniors Forum actively supports the Campaign to End Loneliness and is working with Age UK, our local MP and other partners to tackle loneliness and isolation among older people.Bottom of Form

**Speak to a health worker if you feel very lonely.  Long term loneliness could contribute to later depression and other health problems. Your GP should be able to direct you to local services that can help.**

**To find out more about anxiety and depression visit the NHS Choices website:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**South West Seniors’ Network AGM and conference**

“Surviving care” conference was held in Taunton and attended by Norma and May.

“Henergising older people’s lives”. Attendees at the Taunton Conference heard how hens were helping to 'henergise' older people through a project funded by the Big Lottery. Henpower helps vulnerable older people gain a sense of purpose by being part of something worthwhile. A presentation was given by Equal Arts.

Quote: from an 88 year old “Loneliness is the worst thing you can have, it is a big affliction. It can destroy a lot of people, I know because I have been through it. At 88, hens are the biggest thing in our lives”

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

**Free to be me in care.**

The Real People Theatre Company is a women's theatre company founded in 1999 by Sue Lister and Anne Murray.  Their performance 'I am x years old, when will it be safe for me to come out', looks at why so many women hide part of themselves for fear of prejudice and social exclusion when going into care. It is as if they wear paper bags which mask the 'shameful parts'.

Anchor care homes have successfully initiated national Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) residents meetings; the vision is to change culture, to change people’s attitudes; to be accepted for who they are. A positive note was the ending “secret love” sung by Doris Day

**Hearing dogs for Deaf People.**

Attendees were also entranced by a presentation on Hearing Dogs and how they are such valuable companions to those with hearing loss, which helps also with loneliness and isolation. The Conference raised over £100 on the day in donations to assist Hearing Dogs.



**Message from Commissioner**

Eddie Lynch commissioner for older people in Northern Ireland.

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|  | “I am delighted to have taken up the role as a commissioner for older people for  Northern Ireland in June this year. As Commissioner, I have unique legal powers  and duties that enable me to safeguard and promote the interests of older People  During my term of office, I intend to use these powers and duties to celebrate ageing,  Protect and defend the rights of older people and press Government for changes to  the law.”  You can read the full report on our website, [www.swindonseniorsforum.org](http://www.swindonseniorsforum.org) |

**Outreach activities**

Bluebird care celebrating older peoples’ services - members of SSF Management Committee attended two events held by Bluebird Care Swindon.

Chair has attended Swindon 105.5 radio station monthly for interviews and recordings to raise awareness of SSF and publicise the forum.

**Meetings with Robert Buckland MP QC**

Members of the Management Committee met with Robert Buckland on two occasions. Robert has a keen interest in the issues of loneliness and members of the SSF management committee meet with him to discuss challenges facing people over the age of 55. Included in those challenges are loneliness and isolation, social care, transport and universal benefits.

**Survey Questionnaire**

Swindon Seniors Management Committee is conducting a survey on loneliness and isolation to gather information so that decisions can be made about the topic of interest. The form is attached with the newsletter please fill in and bring with you to the AGM or post to Swindon Seniors Forum, c/o Voluntary Action Swindon, 1 John Street, Swindon SN1 1RT

The survey can also be filled in online ([www.swindonseniorsforum.org](http://www.swindonseniorsforum.org)), via email, Swindon105.5 Radio Station or at the desk at Voluntary Action.

**Transport**

Government spending cuts are having a devastating effect on our bus services. Across the country vital buses are being axed by local authorities as they make financially difficult decisions of where to cut spending. Swindon Borough Council must find savings or reduce the rising cost and demand of future services by between £70m and £80m.  This means it must review the way it provides its services, including public transport services.

Affected services are: **6, 7, 8, 9, 11A, 12, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 46, 46A, 48, 48A, 51, 65, 70A, 71, 72A, 90** and **Dial a Ride.**

The Bus Services Bill is new legislation planned to improve bus services from May 2017, but only if your transport authority can be persuaded to use the new powers.

The bill holds out enormous promise for England’s bus passengers, giving local authorities new powers to set standards and plan joined-up bus networks.

**Donation**

We were delighted for our patron Lord Joffe’s support and generous donation. His commitment to helping the Senior Citizens in our community is sincerely appreciated**.**

**May’s challenge**

May was born in Swindon and has lived in the area all her life. Her working life was mainly in factories in jobs as diverse as a welder, quality inspector and clean room operator. May has been an active volunteer for many years first with Contact the Elderly as a driver, Age UK as a gardener and at a nature reserve as a farm worker.

May joined Swindon Older Peoples Forum, as it was then known, as she has an interest in the welfare of older people.

After May retired she joined U3A (University of the Third Age) and took up archery, where she has progressed from beginner to first class and is now practicing for Bowman level. Last year she won a rose bowl in a tournament.



**Your right to complain**

A recent report showed older people are often not complaining about poor service.

You should complain to the organisation and give them a chance to put things right. For help with complaints about the NHS in England contact your local Healthwatch Swindon [www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk), Tel: 01793 497777) in the first instance.

For help with complaints about a government department or service contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau ([www.citizensadviceswindon.org.uk](http://www.citizensadviceswindon.org.uk), Tel: 8444994114)

**Watch out for scams**

As technology changes and we all have more freedom around it is important to keep an eye out for new scams. Fraudsters are becoming more sophisticated – they

may do their homework and find personal things out about you so that their contact looks convincing, or they may promise something appealing, offering you a refund for example. If anyone cold calls or contacts you out of the blue about your money, just hang up - put the phone down.

**Support Group in Swindon for Alopecia**You are not alone, look no further for information on dealing with the emotional effects of living with alopecia please contact Jeanette on 07833 768693.

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**Joining our Management Committee**

If you should like to join our Management Committee (MC), please email us at any time, after becoming a member of the Forum.  We welcome all applications from members. New MC members are initially "co-opted", until the election of a new committee at the AGM, when they can stand for full election for another year.

**Next Newsletter**

The next edition of our newsletter will be 2017 - should you have any articles/ news of interest, please get in touch.

**Our website**

Our website has been updated offering topic-relevant forms to collate opinions from members of the public on contemporary issues: <http://swindonseniorsforum.org>

Norma Thompson Chair Swindon Seniors Forum

[chair@swindonseniorsforum.org](mailto:chair@swindonseniorsforum.org) [secretary@swindonseniorsforum.org](mailto:secretary@swindonseniorsforum.org)

**Suggested Reading -** there are newsletters and sources of information relevant to older people that are produced and circulated at intervals more frequent than SSF newsletter.

**Publications and Newsletters**

**Age Action Alliance**

Website: [www.ageactionalliance.org](http://www.ageactionalliance.org) Telephone: 0207 449 7008

**Age UK Improving Later Life**, publication (2011)

ISBN 978-0-9568731-1-8

**CSV – Publication: Volunteering in retirement: new beginnings**

Telephone: 0800 374 991 Website: <http://volunteeringmatters.org.uk>

**English Forum on Ageing (Agenda Newsletter)**

Website: [www.agenda-efa.org.uk](http://www.agenda-efa.org.uk/)

**International Longevity Centre-UK**

**Publication: Ageing, longevity and demographic change.**

A fact pack of statistics, July 2013

The Centre is a think tank for addressing longevity, ageing and population change.

Telephone: 0207 340 0440 Website: [www.ilcuk.org.uk](http://www.ilcuk.org.uk/)

**Later Life Newsletter**

To subscribe contact Email: [simon.wilkinson1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:simon.wilkinson1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

**Mature Times**

Website:[www.maturetimes.co.uk](http://www.maturetimes.co.uk)

**South West Seniors Network** Website: [www.southwestseniors.org.uk](http://www.southwestseniors.org.uk)

**Useful Links from Swindon Seniors Forum**

**Swindon Seniors Forum**

Website: www. swindonseniorsforum.org

**Age Action Alliance**

Telephone: 0207 449 7008 Website: [www.ageactionalliance.org](http://www.ageactionalliance.org)

**Age UK Swindon** (advice and information)

Telephone: 01793 687017

**Age UK Website Forum pages**

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved/older-peoples-forums](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved/older-peoples-forums)

**Ageing Well Legacy**

Website: [www.local.gov.uk/ageing-well](http://www.local.gov.uk/ageing-well)

**Beth Johnson Foundation** A charity championing positive ageing

Telephone: 01782 844036 Website: [www.bjf.org.uk](http://www.bjf.org.uk/)

**Elders Council**

Website: [www.elderscouncil.org.uk](http://www.elderscouncil.org.uk/)

**Healthwatch Swindon** Ensuring that public views on local health and social care services are heard

Telephone: 01793 497777 Website: [www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk/)

Offices: Sanford House, Sanford Street, Swindon

**Mature Times**

Website: [www.maturetimes.co.uk](http://www.maturetimes.co.uk)

**Pensioners Campaign Forum**

Website [www.pensionerscampaignuk.org.uk](http://www.pensionerscampaignuk.org.uk)

**Pensioners Forum**

Website: [www.pensionersforum.co.uk](http://www.pensionersforum.co.uk)

**Royal British Legion – Swindon**  
contact Samantha Baker

Telephone: 08457 725725 Email: [sbaker@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:sbaker@britishlegion.org.uk)

**SEQOL Directory of Services**

Information and Advice relating to health and social care

Telephone: 01793 463333 Website [www.swindondisa.co.uk](http://www.swindondisa.co.uk/)

**South West Seniors Network**

Website: www.southwestseniors.org.uk

**Swindon Circles**

Community friendship, help and support for older people in Swindon - Paula Harrison

Telephone: 01793 466418 Email: [swindoncircles@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:swindoncircles@swindon.gov.uk)

**Swindon Citizens Advice Bureau**

Sanford House Sanford Street, Swindon SN1 1QH ·

Telephone: 01793 618781 Email: [advice@swindon.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:advice@swindon.cabnet.org.uk)

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

National Advice Line Telephone: **08444 994 114**

**Swindon Health Walks**

Website: [www.walkingforhealth.org.uk](http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk)

**United for All Ages**

Website: [www.unitedforallages.com](http://www.unitedforallages.com)

**Voluntary Action Swindon**

Telephone: 01793 538398 Website: [www.vas-swindon.org](http://www.vas-swindon.org/)

**Wiltshire and Swindon Users Network**

Telephone: 01380 871057 Website: [www.wsun.co.uk](http://www.wsun.co.uk/)

Swindon Seniors Forum is currently funded by Swindon Borough Council

And supported by Santander and Age UK

  



**Swindon Seniors Forum**

Survey – Loneliness and Isolation

Below is a short survey aimed at understanding the scale and impact of loneliness and isolation. It would be really helpful if you could complete as much of this as possible – deleting as appropriate. Thank you.

**1:** Do you sometimes feel lonely? Yes No

**2:** How often do you see family and friends? Daily/Weekly/Monthly/Rarely

**3**: Do you have any health issues that stop you

from leaving the house? Yes No

**4:** Would you feel comfortable talking to someone

about feeling isolated and/or lonely? Yes No

**5:** Do you know where to seek help or advice if

you feel isolated and/or lonely? Yes No

**6:** Other than going to work, how often would

you say you leave the house? Daily /Weekly /Monthly /Rarely

**7:** What means of transport do you use to go out? Bus/Car//Taxis/Other

Age: 55-65 years of age / 65 – 75 years of age / over 75 years of age

Marital Status: Married / Single / Widow/Widower

Gender: Male / Female

Any other comments: