

Age Concern Heathfield & District

# NEWSLETTER

Summer 2018



Combatting loneliness in Heathfield and surrounding area

## Welcome

Welcome to this Summer edition of our newsletter, which features all the latest news and, as always, the regular events taking place in and around Heathfield. In this edition Bill talks to Roma Sharpe in "Chairman's Chat". We do hope you enjoy reading it.

To ensure that we continue to deliver what you want to see, please do let us know of any new or different services you learn about that might be of interest to others. We also want to hear about any areas of interest or concern that you would like us to investigate which could benefit our readers.

Remember - you can read or download digital copies of our newsletters via the Age Concern, Heathfield & District website [www.ageconcernheathfield.org.uk/newsletters](http://www.ageconcernheathfield.org.uk/newsletters) where you can also subscribe to receive digital newsletters by email.

## Day Care Provision at Christ Church, Horam

Many of you will have heard of the recent sudden, shock decision by Age UK to close the day care provision based at Christ Church in Horam. This decision has left clients, their families and staff distraught and now means this group of vulnerable, elderly people have been left with nowhere to go.

Through sheer determination, quick thinking and hard work Maureen Distin, organiser of this day care provision, and her dedicated team have managed to renegotiate the rental of the hall, gained the help of Dementia Support East Sussex and with our continued support in providing minibus transport now aims to reopen early in September. We wish Maureen and her team every success.



Anyone interested in attending the day care provision or requiring further information should telephone Maureen on 07710 143198.

## Calling All Minibus Users...

Can we please remind you to phone and let us know if you are unable to travel on one of our regular minibus runs!

We have had several occasions where time has been wasted trying to collect passengers who aren't coming or, worse still, we have used an extra bus, only to find we could have managed without it. *Thank you!*

**The number to phone is: 01435 866960**

## A New Addition to the Fleet

As many of you will by now know, our oldest minibus which was getting a bit 'long in the tooth' at the grand old age of thirteen, has recently been replaced. The new bus is larger than our others and has an extra row of seats so that it can accommodate fourteen passengers. It is equipped with all the latest mod cons, including air conditioning, an underfloor tail lift and a reversing camera. It has removable seats and anchorage straps to enable it to accommodate three fixed wheelchairs, rather than the two we can take in the smaller buses, making it perfect for our regular outings, which are becoming more and more popular.

We are extremely grateful for the generous legacy to our charity by the late Mr Geoffrey Cadle of Punnetts Town, which, together with some other sizeable donations, has made the purchase of this new bus possible.



## Goodbye and Thank You, Tom

Tom Heffernan, who for some time edited this newsletter, has regrettably had to retire due to ill health. We are extremely grateful for everything Tom has done for us over the past three years and will miss his “Something to Make You Smile”. We send our best wishes to Tom and to Moira, his wife.

Mandy Jarvis has kindly agreed to ‘take up the reigns’ and her contact details can be found on the last page of this publication.

## We Miss You, Mark



We are sad that Mark Bostock, a regular driver on both our minibus and Medical Car services, has left us as he and his family have moved away from the area to live in Fairlight. I know that our passengers miss him and his jolly banter, and we would like say a big thank you for all he has done for us. We wish him, Helen and Emily happiness in their new home.

But, who knows, he may not be completely gone as he has said that he might be available to help out from time to time, so watch this space...

## Sara Hedger



We also say farewell to Sara Hedger who, for the past year, has been one of the Booking Co-ordinators for our Medical Car service. Her friendly, reassuring voice, familiar to those who use this service, will be sorely missed. We wish Sara every success in her new role with the Co-op.

Margaret and Geoff Thomas have kindly volunteered to help with the administration of the service, following Sara's departure.



## Age Concern Heathfield Office

Our significant growth in recent years now means that an office is a must. It will provide a base from which to operate and a place for meetings with our volunteers. We were fortunate to secure funding from the Co-op Local Community Fund with your help last year, which will be put towards this. Plans are well underway and we hope to have something up and running very soon... watch this space!

## The Heathfield Shed Project

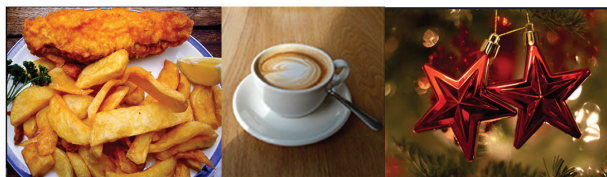


As reported in the Spring edition we are itching to get this project underway but are still looking for a building or site from which to operate. It should ideally be as near to the centre of Heathfield as possible, to allow easy access. Despite a positive response to our proposals at the Parish Assembly meeting, and requests to various members of both the Parish and District Councils for their support, we are still no further forward, so after a meeting with Huw Merriman, our MP, he is now “on the case”, and hopefully something will be forthcoming.

Whilst we don't yet have anywhere to base the Shed, we now have a nucleus of twelve enthusiastic ‘Shedders’ who are keen for the project to progress, and we are taking a stall at the forthcoming Le Marché to promote it further.

It is encouraging that the interest in the project has meant that there have already been two meetings with potential ‘Shedders’ and a further one was held recently, in readiness for their involvement at Le Marché.

If you or a family member would like to find out more or join our Shed, or could help in anyway with a suitable site, we would love to hear from you, so please telephone Peter on 01435 863656.



If you live in the TN21 postcode area, are over 60, like to meet people and enjoy going out this could be the thing for you! All our Winter trips will include a stop for tea/coffee and cake or a lunch!

### **Wednesday 28th November**

Scenic drive and lunch at the De la Warr Pavilion, Bexhill.

### **Thursday 13th December**

Christmas at Hillier's Garden Centre, Stone Cross

### **Friday 18th January 2019**

Scenic drive and lunch at the Sussex Country Garden Centre, Mark Cross

### **Friday 22nd February**

Spring drive and fish and chip lunch at the Wheel Inn, Burwash

### **Friday 22nd March**

Spring time at Wyevale Garden Centre, Lewes



*Clients pay for their own choice of food and drink at the various stops*

**New dates for  
Autumn/Winter  
2018-2019**

Chase away those Winter blues with a trip out!

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Pick ups will start from 10.30am returning approx. 3.00pm

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Door to door service in one of our fully accessible minibuses

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For further information or to book a place please ring:

**01435 866960**



## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Our latest training event on 16th May, saw twenty-four of our volunteers gathered together to receive the latest information on the changes that have come into force relating to Data Protection.

Many of you who use the Medical Car Service will have heard the new message which explains that by leaving your personal details (such as your name, address and telephone number) you are consenting to allow us to hold your information securely on our database. Equally, regular users of our minibus service have been asked to give their consent by signing a registration form. All your personal details will be held securely and only used in connection with providing you with one of our transport services or sending you information about our Heathfield Shed Project.

Your information will never be passed on to anyone else or used for any other purpose. Your personal data will be deleted from our records when you stop using our services, but you can ask for your information to be deleted at any time by contacting:

**Bill Philps, Chairman**  
**Age Concern, Heathfield & District**

Tel: 07387 809366 or email:  
[bill@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk](mailto:bill@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk)



The training session provoked lots of thoughts and ideas about the ways in which we can ensure all data is not only handled in accordance with the law, but also with your safety and best interests at heart. We hope you will feel reassured that we are taking this matter seriously and are doing all we can to provide you with an efficient and secure service.

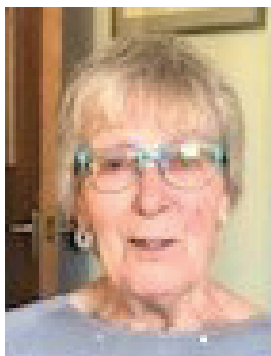
We are so fortunate to have a team of such dedicated and caring volunteers and can't thank them enough for the time they give up to attend these training events in addition to the time they already spend providing transport - we hope you will agree that they all do Age Concern Heathfield and District proud!

## Calling all Swimmers

We have recently been asked whether it might be possible to run a weekly minibus service to Hailsham to take people swimming. To do this we need a minimum of five people to make it viable. If you live in Heathfield or one of the outlying villages and would like to do this, please call 01435 863656 and leave your details.

## Chairman's Chat

**In this edition, Bill Chats to Roma Sharpe**



Roma, a familiar face on the Thursday Heathfield shopping bus, often sporting pink highlights in her hair, is an extremely interesting and fun person, as well as a most talented artist.

I met her on very hot day in July and whilst I see her regularly, didn't appreciate what an amazing and fulfilling life she has led in the world of theatre and art.

She was born on 5th June 1928 in Wiltshire, so has just celebrated her 90th birthday. During her early life she lived in a number of

places, and in her teens moved to Weston-super-Mare. She left school at fourteen and by the time she was fifteen was a Fire Watcher during the Second World War. She was responsible for looking after three houses, one was occupied by a mother and her new born baby, and despite the German bombers dropping magnesium flares to light up the night skies during the air raids centred around Bristol, when the sirens sounded, she crept along in the shadows of a wall to ensure that the young mother and baby came to no harm.

During her time in Weston-super-Mare, Roma, who from a very early age, had always had a keen interest in art, started at the local Art and Ballet school. However, it seems that this was short lived, as by the age of eighteen she had moved on once more and was now living in Bromley. There she attended the College of Art where the foundation work for the artist she is today began. She also joined the Bromley Players and appeared in many local productions performed by the group.



Sadly, the art training was temporarily halted when Roma's mother, now married to a farmer from Wiltshire, became ill and Roma returned home to look after her. Life and work on the farm were good, but she didn't get on with her stepfather, so ran away and joined the Women's Land Army based nearby in Pitton, where, she recounts she had a most enjoyable time.

Roma recalls how life is so strange in the way that things have a habit of going full circle. During her time at Art College she was taught by a Mr Wilson who she greatly respected and is certain had a serious influence on the way she was to paint throughout her life. Decades later while at an Art Workshop with the Burwash Painters she met a gentleman, who had been in the same year as her at the Art College, and had also been taught by Mr Wilson, and this experience had had the same impact on his life.



At the age of twenty-one Roma moved to Wisbech in Cambridgeshire where she spent the next fifty plus years of her life. This move came about from a chance meeting whilst on a short break in a Holiday Camp while she was in the Land Army. There she met an electrician from Wisbech by the name of Pete who proposed to her after they had only known each other for three days. From the outset she knew he was the man for her and once married, they went on to have two children, a son John, and a daughter Linda.

When the children were older, Roma, who by then was a well-known local artist and had been teaching art up to 'A' Level at the Queen's Girls School, where her daughter was a pupil, was offered a place at the Kesteven Teachers Training College in Peterborough. In order to take up this place she must gain the necessary qualifications, so as she was keen to do more with her life, at the age of thirty-nine became a mature student and studied for GCSE exams.

She passed with flying colours and was then able to enrol at Kesteven College where she qualified as a teacher. The following years were then spent teaching at Leverington Primary School in Wisbech.

Her passion for the theatre continued and Roma joined the local drama group and performed in many well-known plays and musicals at the Empire Theatre in Wisbech. To this day she still has copies of the programme for each one. She is an accomplished singer, and also does a wonderful impression of Pam Ayres and has used this to the full, on stage, presenting poetry readings. In recognition of her immense creativity and artistic talent she was also commissioned to design and paint the sets for "Half a Sixpence" and "Showboat" for the Wisbech Operatic Society, which she tells me were enormous projects.

Roma, who sadly lost "her Pete" in 1975, just after their twenty fifth wedding anniversary, moved to Heathfield in 2007 to be closer to her son and two grandchildren, and despite her failing eyesight continues to paint in both oil and watercolour.



Roma proudly exhibits her work not only locally, but further afield, and recently held a stunning exhibition, which I went to, at the Trinity Arts Theatre in Tunbridge Wells.

If this wasn't enough, she is also an accomplished sculptor and her work in this medium can also be seen at various exhibitions around the country.

Her apartment is a delight, the walls are adorned with a number of wonderful works of art she has produced over the years, and when I came to talk to her, the dining table was strewn with memorabilia for me to see, in the form of photographs and programmes from the many theatre productions she has appeared in.

Thank you, Roma for sharing your amazing life with us. You are an inspiration to us all!

**To advertise your business in the Age Concern,  
Heathfield & District newsletter, please contact:**

**Bill Philps**

**Tel: 07387 809366**

**or email**

**[bill@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk](mailto:bill@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk)**

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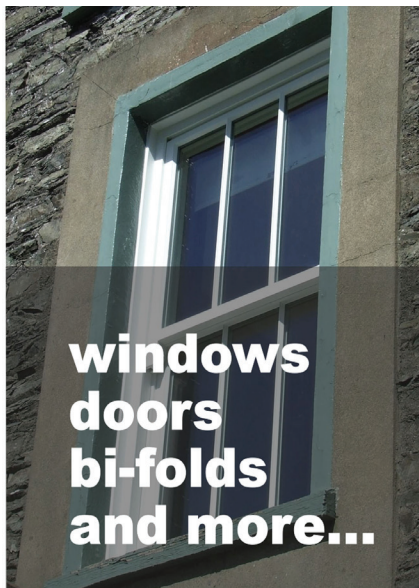
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## REGULAR EVENTS

### Please note:

Items for publication in our next issue, or updates relating to dates, times, venues and fees for services shown in the Regular Events section, should be submitted by **Friday 2 November 2018**

## Monday

### Every Monday

**Extend Exercises** (gentle movements to music) are held at the State Hall, Station Road, Heathfield, courtesy of the Kings Church, between 11.15am - 12.00noon. These classes are run by Alison Salters, a qualified instructor.

Please call 01825 766293 or 07774 543645.

The cost is £5 per person and includes refreshments.

## Tuesday

### 1st Tuesday of the Month

**Carers Information and Advice Group** **NEW, FROM SEPTEMBER**

2.00pm - 4.00pm in the Parish Room, St George's Church, Burwash Road/Halley Road, Broad Oak.

The Information and Advice Group is aimed at people new to the caring role or just starting to find out the kind of support that is available locally. This group is facilitated by Susanna, the local Carer Support Worker. It gives carers the opportunity to meet other carers, provide carers with information, invite speakers from relevant services to inform carers about what is available to them, and support carers to have their say on issues important to them.

For more information contact: Susanna Wallace, Carer Support Worker

Tel 01323 738390 Ext 206 or email: [susannaw@cftc.org.uk](mailto:susannaw@cftc.org.uk)  
(Please note Susanna works Tuesday to Thursday)

### Every Other Tuesday

**Tuesdays Together** From 2.00pm - 4.00pm you are invited to the Union Church Hall, Heathfield, for coffee or tea and cake and to have a chat, play a board game, and meet people of all ages. Pop in for a while, or stay for the whole two hours. Door to door transport can be arranged thanks to Welcome Baptist Church and volunteer drivers. For further information call Sue Fletcher on 07940 627285.

### Every Other Tuesday

**Senior Citizens' Lunch** at the Union Church Hall, Station Road, Heathfield, from 12.30pm, £4.00 for 2 courses followed by tea or coffee, there's always lots of "friendly chat". For a place at the lunch please call Jean Plummer on 01435 883483. Minibus transport from and to your door is also available, please ring: 01435 866960 to check availability.

### Every Other Tuesday

**The Heffle Tea Group** in amalgamation with St. Richard's Craft Group meet at St. Richard's Church Hall, Park Road, Heathfield from 1.30pm - 3.30pm. Why not come along and bring a friend for a cup of tea, a piece of cake and a chat. You can also join the ladies and gentlemen in the Craft Group to learn or practice a craft: knitting, crochet, decoupage, quilting, cross-stitch, painting etc. Open to all. For further information, please contact Lorraine on 01435 865789.

### Every 3rd Tuesday of the Month (September to May)

**Heathfield & District Philatelic Society** meets in the Ian Price Room, Heathfield Community Centre at 2.00pm. Anyone with an interest in stamps, postal history or postcards is invited to join us. Annual subscription is £10, and visitors are welcome. The first meeting of the new season is on Tuesday 18th September, when members will be displaying "Something from my Collection".

For further details please contact Chris Maughan, on 01435 864634 or [chrisw.maughan@outlook.com](mailto:chrisw.maughan@outlook.com)

### Every 3rd Tuesday of the Month

**The University of the Third Age (U3A)** have launched a new group in Heathfield, meeting in the Community Centre, Sheep Setting Lane. The idea is that people meet and exchange their knowledge. Sometimes you may be the student and another time the teacher. Cost £15.00 p.a. For more info contact: Lyn Plant on 01435 862449.

### Every 3rd Tuesday of the Month

#### **Carers Wellbeing Group NEW, FROM SEPTEMBER**

2.00pm - 4.00pm. This group meets in the Parish Room, St George's Church, Burwash Road/Halley Road, Broad Oak - although it sometimes meets out and about, so it is best to check first if you are planning to attend this group.

Carers Wellbeing Groups are the 'next step' after a carer has attended a Carers Information and Advice Group for 12 months. They are aimed at carers who have been caring for a while and are aware of services available to them. Carers Wellbeing Groups are led by carers, for carers, with Susanna, the local Carer Support Worker attending every 3 to 4 months to support the group. There are also often speakers, a chance to support each other, find out about local services and support, and to do activities that the group feels would improve their wellbeing.

For more information contact Susanna Wallace, Carer Support Worker  
Tel 01323 738390 Ext 206 or email: [susannaw@cftc.org.uk](mailto:susannaw@cftc.org.uk)  
(Please note Susanna works Tuesday to Thursday)

## Wednesday

### 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the Month

**East Sussex Hearing Resource Centre** volunteers undertake maintenance of hearing aids and provide new batteries at Heathfield Fire Station, between 10.00am and 12noon. For further help or information please telephone them on 01323 722505.

**Please Note:** *Parking is not permitted on Fire Station property*

### Every Other Wednesday

The established and very popular **Country Lunches** at Punnetts Town Village Hall, £4.00 for 2 courses followed by tea or coffee. An Age Concern minibus can pick you up to get you there for a 12.15pm start and take you home at 2.00pm. To book a place please contact Ann Kenward on 01435 862618 or call 01435 866960 for the minibus.

### Every 3rd Wednesday of the Month

Volunteers from the **Rest Christian Centre** in Punnetts Town welcome visitors to a cooked lunch - £4 for 2 courses including tea or coffee. For the lunch please call Barbara Lovett 01435 882241. A minibus may be provided if sufficient people are interested.

## Thursday

### Every Thursday

Free **Hearing Aid Maintenance**, cleaning and re-tubing can be carried out at the Action for Deafness Clinic, 92 High Street, Heathfield (adjacent to Heathfield Surgery) from 10.00am to 12.00noon.

### Every Thursday

'**Extend**' (gentle movement to music) exercise sessions is held at the West End Room, Christ Church Centre, Horam between 2.00pm and 3.00pm. The cost is £2.50 per person, which includes tea and biscuits, plus a 50p donation towards the upkeep of the Hall. For more information, ring Jane Morris on 01323 483529.

### Every Thursday

'**Out and Abouters**' are looking for some new players to come and enjoy a friendly game of Whist at Mary Burfield House, Thorny Close, Heathfield. Starting at 7.00pm, the cost is £3.00 per head. It doesn't matter what standard of play, everyone is welcome. For further information, ring Sue on 01435 862577.

### Every Thursday

For residents of Heathfield, Broad Oak, Old Heathfield, Cross-In-Hand and Horam, the **Age Concern, Heathfield Shopping Bus** is on the road morning and afternoon. It will pick you up at your door and deliver you to Heathfield. You may like to do your shopping and then make your way to the Union Church 'Do Pop Inn' where you will receive a warm welcome any time between 10.00am and 2.00pm. You can enjoy a cup of what you fancy, a snack or light lunch and a chat. Call 01435 866960 to book a seat on the minibus.

### Book a Minibus for Your Own Outing!

Did you know that, as well as our own Age Concern trips and regular bus runs, our fully accessible minibuses are available for groups to book for their own outings?

To find out more information telephone 01435 866960





### Every 2nd Thursday of the Month

A **Market** is held at Holy Cross Priory, Cross in Hand, between 11.00am and 1.00pm. The Priory is situated on B2102 Lewes Road between Cross in Hand and Blackboys. There is free, easy parking. The Market incorporates a drop in centre offering free coffee and biscuits and the chance to purchase homemade cakes, biscuits, crafts, preserves and knitwear. For more information contact: Roy Wilkinson at 01435 812931.

A minibus could be provided for a minimum of 8 people. If you would like to put your name forward, and if enough people are interested, we will consider providing transport. Please contact Age Concern on 01435 866960.

### Every 3rd Thursday of the Month

Welcome Baptist Church, Alexandra Road, Heathfield. Cedars are offering an **Afternoon of Live Music and Chat**, plus a free tea normally every 3rd Thursday of the month from 2.00pm 4.00pm. Come along and join in the fun. For more information please call Phil Brierley on 01435 864646.

## Friday

### Every Friday

**Chair-based Exercises** in the lounge at Mary Burfield Court, Heathfield, from 11.00am - 12.00noon, £3 per person including refreshment. Open to non-residents. Everybody welcome, but please call us to let us know you are coming. For more information please call Ann on 01424 774764.

### Every Friday

**Art and Craft Coffee Morning** at Kings Church Heathfield 10.00am - 12.00noon. Enjoy art, knitting, quilting, card making, etc. All welcome. For more information contact 01435 863786.

### Every Friday

**Citizens' Advice** sessions are held at the Parish Council Offices, High St, Heathfield from 10.00am to 12.00 noon. No prior appointment is necessary.

## SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS



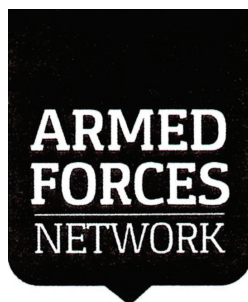
### **The Wealden and Eastbourne 'Lifeline'**

Emergency Response System is a combined telephone and alarm unit which is programmed to call a Control Centre automatically when a red emergency button is pressed. Once alerted, Control Centre staff quickly summon assistance. The system is ideal for those living alone who may occasionally need help. Ring Eastbourne Control Centre on 01323 644422 for details.

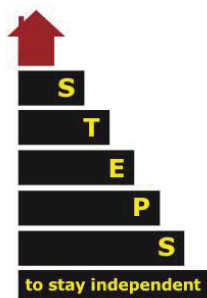
Wealden Senior  
Citizens' Partnership



**The Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership** is a member of ESSA - The East Sussex Seniors' Association - "The Voice of Older People" See website: [www.essaforums.org.uk](http://www.essaforums.org.uk) or telephone Linda Graham on 01892 770487 for more information or to get involved.



**The Armed Forces Network** If you, or a close member of your family, have served, or are serving in the UK Armed Forces there is help and support available. Support is available at:  
Email: [scdt.admin@nhs.net](mailto:scdt.admin@nhs.net) / Tel: 01273 403693  
Email: [sussexarmedforcesnetwork.nhs.uk](mailto:sussexarmedforcesnetwork.nhs.uk)  
[www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)/tel 08001699060  
Blind Veterans UK (Brighton)  
Tel 01273 307811 or write to: Blind Veterans UK, Greenways, Ovingdean, Brighton, BN2 7BS



If you are aged 65 or over **STEPS** can support you to stay living independently. STEPS can visit you at home and help you work out what support you personally need to keep living independently. STEPS is funded by East Sussex County Council and provides a free, confidential, short-term service. If you want to find out more about STEPS, call 01323 436414.



**East Sussex Hearing Resource Centre** in Eastbourne provides Information on aids and equipment that can help you with your daily life. They can offer a variety of advice and training for coping with deafness. Telephone: 01323 722505.



**East Sussex Association of Blind & Partially Sighted People** provides information on aids and equipment that can help you with your daily life.

They can offer a 'Try before you Buy' scheme for some equipment. Contact Steve Saunders on 01323 832252.



**The National Accessible Library** is a free online library for visually impaired readers, who are unable to enjoy reading a printed book because they are blind, visually impaired, have print blindness due to dyslexia or are physically impaired. Books are available in a variety of formats, including MSWord, plain text and Braille. For further information go to: [www.accessiblelibrary.org.uk](http://www.accessiblelibrary.org.uk)



**Wealden Talking News** provides a weekly memory stick of local news plus one magazine memory stick per month for the blind or partially sighted. The memory sticks are free and are also mailed at no charge. A memory stick player can be supplied on loan. Call 01435 862304 for details.



**The Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support**

The North Wealden Dementia Support Service offers information, advice and support to people living with dementia and those who care for them. For further information please contact Sarah Burchett, the Dementia Support Worker, on 07525 403854 / email [sarah.burchett@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:sarah.burchett@alzheimers.org.uk)

## **Dementia Supper Clubs for Carers and People with Dementia**

(Supported by East Sussex County Council)

Meet other people with dementia and their carers across East Sussex. Share experiences, increase your support network, get together, meet new friends, have a meal or just a drink and a chat - the only charge is the cost of the meal.

Enquiries about Heathfield and surrounding areas call: Lynn Leeves 07749 338120 or 01323 432340



**The Silver Line** aims to combat loneliness in the over 65s by providing friendship, information and advice through calls to trained volunteers. Tel: 0800 470 8090



## **British Red Cross Carers Support Service**

Our volunteer visiting service provides free, short term emotional and practical support to unpaid Carers in East Sussex. We can offer up to 6 weeks of support through:

- providing 2 hours a week companionship/sitting/ respite service
- assistance with shopping, light housework or meal preparation
- support to access community/social activities
- signposting to other sources of support

*Please note: The service does not provide personal or domestic care.*

Contact: Independent Living Service Coordinator  
Tel: 01273 227800  
Email: [EsCarerssupport@redcross.org.uk](mailto:EsCarerssupport@redcross.org.uk)

# Age Concern Heathfield & District

## SERVICES

MINIBUS TRANSPORT

MEDICAL CAR SERVICE

UNION CHURCH SENIOR  
CITIZENS' LUNCH

COUNTRY LUNCHESES

HEATHFIELD SHED PROJECT

WEBSITE & NEWSLETTER  
For additional copies of the  
newsletter and website enquiries  
please phone, or email: [info@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk](mailto:info@ageconcernheathfield.org.uk)

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

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