



Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
Email: office@hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01273 833264

Village Centre
Trinity Road
Hurstpierpoint
West Sussex BN6 9UY

Notes from the Community Forum held at Court Bushes Community Hub on 4th November 2025

General Welcome – Councillor Claire Majsai, Vice Chair Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council

General housekeeping and welcome to attendees. Set out the format for the event which is an initial more formal session with the opportunity for some groups to speak for a little longer about their group or project, followed by an informal networking session.

Attendees were then invited to introduce themselves and the group they were representing and give one thing they hope to get out of the event, responses included learning about other services in the area to signpost to or network with, recruiting volunteers and identifying gaps in local provision. Representatives were present from the following groups and organisations:

Community People
Neighbourly Care
Raise your Voice
Hurst Festival
NHS Sussex community NHS Foundation trust
Woodland Flora & Fauna
Age Concern Hassocks
Promedica24
Hassocks Parish Council
Sussex Vale Rotary
Age UK
Hurst Life
Hurst Village Cinema
Hope Building Confidence
Social Prescriber – Mid Sussex Health Centre
Befriended
The Melting Pot Café
Holy Trinity Church
Keymer Hall Care Home Burgess Hill (Boutique Care Homes).
Carers Support West Sussex

The following groups then provided a more detailed overview of their services and current projects:

Community People - Nicola Brewerton

<https://communitypeople.org.uk/>

Community People provide free support to local voluntary, not for profit and CIC organisations. They represent the views and needs of smaller local groups who may not otherwise have a voice at larger strategic meetings. It is free to be a member and the support offered includes:

Services

- Match volunteers with volunteering opportunities – attendees were encouraged to register volunteer vacancies on the online database as they have many registered volunteers actively seeking roles.
- Source of online information including template policies that can be downloaded and relevant national and local reports.

- Supporting the initial set up of new groups, providing advice on how best to structure – this can be done digitally or via face to face meetings.

Events

- Themed forums, including mental health, older people, eco & children, young people and families
- Networking events
- Volunteer fairs

The next Community and Volunteer Fair will be on 24th January 2026 from 1pm-3pm at Haywards Heath College.

Sussex Community NHS Trust

<https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/>

Paul Sommerville – Deputy Trust Secretary: Organisational Structure and purpose

Sussex Community NHS Trust is the largest community trust in the UK with a budget over £350m for care in the community. It is the main provider of community NHS health and care across Sussex, providing essential medical, nursing and therapeutic care for adults, children and families, including end of life care. Community services are provided in clinics, GP surgeries and schools as well as in hospitals and in patients' homes, where support can also reduce the requirement for admission into acute hospitals. The Trust also operates urgent treatment and minor injury units and 300 in-patient beds, providing short term recovery & rehabilitation for those discharged from acute hospital.

In addition to the Board of Directions, the Trust also has a Council of Governors:

- **Purpose:** To hold the non-executive directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the board. Represent the interests of the membership of the Trust and the interest of the public, comply with the NHS Foundation Trust Code of Governance.
- **Structure:** Formed of 27 Governors; 15 public governors, 5 staff governors, 4 governors appointed by the Trust representing specific groups (2 for Children and Young People, 2 for Volunteers) and 3 further appointed governors, one each for Higher Education, Brighton & Hove City Council and West Sussex County Council.

Jurgen Gainz – Public elected governor for Mid Sussex: Governor's View

First joined as a "member" of the NHS Community Trust. Membership is free and available to anyone aged 12 years or over living in West Sussex, Brighton and Hove and the High Weald Lewes and Havens areas of East Sussex. Members can select their level of membership:

- **Be Informed:** Newsletters and updates, invitation to the Annual Members Meeting
- **Be Involved:** As above plus: participate in surveys, questionnaires and consultations; participate in focus/discussion/advisory groups; be involved in volunteering for the Trust
- **Take a lead:** As above plus: encourage new members, invitation to stand for election as a governor to represent the views of your constituency, raising views collect and feedback the views of your constituency, attend formal meetings of the Council of Governors

The Trust are looking for more local people to show their support for their local NHS services by joining as public members. Application forms were available on the day, or applications can be made online:

<https://secure.membra.co.uk/Join/SussexCommunity>

Carers Support West Sussex - Karen Polie

<https://www.carerssupport.org.uk>

They cover the whole of West Sussex, offering support to all unpaid carers over the age of 18 from parent carers, young adult carers, those caring from someone suffering with memory loss, long term health or mental health

issues, disabilities, or drug and alcohol abuse. Challenges carers face include stress, managing their own physical and/or mental health and social isolation.

The organisation currently has over 31,000 unpaid carers registered, but there are many more who are not yet aware of the service or do not identify themselves as an unpaid carer. Registration is free and can be completed online or by telephone.

Services include:

- Carer Assessment: All unpaid carers can have a carers assessment, many are not aware of this right
- Health: including counselling
- Welfare & Benefits: including help with forms
- Grants, household support fund and help with equipment.
- Rest and Respite: signposting to services and funding available via the well-being fund.
- Hubs, drop ins and carer groups
- Carer Coaching Project: National Lottery funded. Group or 1-1 training/support for carers.
- Energy project: providing energy advice and information.

Carers rights day 25th November: Raising awareness of the rights of the UK's 5.8 million unpaid carers, helping them get the support they need and the recognition they deserve. More information:

<https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/carers-rights-day/>

Befriended - Gail Millar

<https://befriended.org/>

Befriended was set up in 2017 with the mission of ending loneliness and isolation among older people living in Mid-Sussex and currently has c.150 volunteers and 1200 clients.

The organisation now offers 18 activities weekly, including the Befriended Choir, Grief Café, Cafe Neuro (supporting those with memory loss and their carers) and a Balance and Fall Prevention exercise class. They also offer chaplaincy in care homes, taking a service once a month.

Befriended run Sunday afternoon Tea Parties, which are often the initial point of access for other services. In Hurstpierpoint, a tea party runs on the 3rd Sunday of the month at Court Bushes Community Hub and regularly has between 60-70 attendees. Social circles are formed when taking part in activities like quizzes, and volunteers signpost to other Befriended events and services.

In addition to their regular program of events, they also offer bus trips, for example to the theatre, pantomime and to garden centres. Their next big project is a coach holiday to the Isle of Wight.

Finally, Gail spoke about the Hurstpierpoint Befriended Christmas Day Lunch taking place in the Village Centre again this year. Last year over 90 people attended.

Boutique Care Homes - Carl Roberts

<https://www.boutiquecarehomes.co.uk/care-homes/west-sussex/keymer-hall/>

Karl spoke about the new care home, Keymer Hall, which has been approved for opening on 8th December. Their aim is not only to form a community within the care home itself, but from the home to be part of the wider Mid-Sussex community. They have attended today to identify gaps in local provision and to network with other services and groups that they can signpost their residents to. There will be rooms/communal spaces available for use by local community groups, and they are very keen to bring activities into the care home, including linking in with local schools to encourage multi-generational activities.

Boutique care homes have started or become involved with many community initiatives in other areas where they have a care home, and they hope to repeat their success here.

AgeUK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove- Svetlana Dinkovski

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/westsussexbrightonhove/>

They support approximately 180 patients plus their carers, providing advice and information, and by signposting to other local support organisations. Local services include the drop in memory cafes, run in partnership with Sussex Vale Rotary, Promedica24 and (in Hurstpierpoint) the Parish Council. These now have around 75 registered participants and run once a week across three locations.

Svetlana also spoke about their Daybreak Respite Service for people living with dementia. These provide stimulating and meaningful activities to promote confidence and social interaction, providing much needed respite to carers. All refreshments and a two-course lunch provided. Daybreaks must be pre-booked and require membership.

Final Comments and Invitation to Network

Cllr Majsai thanked everyone again for attending and for the valuable work they do within our community, noting that there is now a lot of support locally for the elderly and those living with dementia but still very little for young people, particularly teenagers. Those attending are requested to feed back to the Parish Council if they have any information about projects and services.

Linked in with this, Gail highlighted that she has become aware of a lack of local provision for “NEETS” (young people not in education, employment or training). Some of these young people have gravitated towards Befriended and they are keen to signpost them to other avenues of support locally.

The formal part of the meeting was closed, and attendees were invited get further refreshments and remain to network with other groups present.
