

West Sussex Mediation Service External Newsletter

Christmas Message

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Christmas
2014



External Edition

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West Sussex
Mediation Service.*

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The year has been one of building on the work of the previous year. We formally launched the Pan Sussex Alliance. This is a partnership with the other three mediation charities in Sussex. The aim is to work together to find ways where we, as the Alliance, might have greater visibility and success in promoting the mediation service than we would have had as standalone charities. In June, as the Alliance we were awarded a grant from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner. We might not have been so successful on our own as WSMS. The Alliance meets on a regular basis to explore other opportunities for collaborative working.

We held a very successful AGM at Littlehampton. It highlighted the need for WSMS to raise its visibility and promote the services to the whole West Sussex community that we serve. Therefore, as we are all ambassadors, we need to take the opportunity to raise awareness of our services whenever there is an opportunity. Increased activity with the Police was seen referrals increase from 28 in the whole of 13/14 to 27 in the first half of 14/15 alone.

We are also in the process of launching the Friends of WSMS which is aimed at widening our supporter base and hopefully providing source of additional revenue. The Friends is targeted at both individuals as well as corporate clients.

The family mediation service has been under great demand this year. With the changes in legal aid and court procedures Robert and Louise have been very busy. As a result the management team voted to extend the number of family mediators and the first new family mediator is currently being trained. We are confident that the demand will continue and are always interested in meeting suitably trained mediators who are able to assist in the delivery of this service.

Since the AGM, a small working party of trustees have been looking into workplace mediation and whether this a really a revenue opportunity for WSMS. We have redefined the service and are in the process of testing the concept amongst our supporters.

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Finally, we are going to be launching a new IT system aimed at improving the communication processes and case management procedures. This new system will hopefully be launched in early 2015 and WSMS will provide suitable training sessions for volunteers. Details are being finalised and I hope all will be able to attend and learn how to use the new system.

The success and reputation of the service is very heavily dependent upon the quality of service provided. To this end we have been very fortunate to have both a very dedicated team in head office and a network of quality mediators in the field. A very warm thank you to all of you who have given your time and expertise in supporting the charity.

A final thank you must go to all our supporters across West Sussex. Without your ongoing support we would not be able to meet the increasing demands of our community. Please remember that we are here to support the needs of your community as impartial and cost effective mediation services.

The trustees continue to provide their time and expertise free to the charity. I am as always very grateful for their support and ability to work for the benefit of WSMS. We still need additional trustees in the area of fundraising and new business development, so if you believe that you have the skills and experience and would like to work as a trustee, please contact Nick Handley.

All it leaves me to do is thank you all who have supported WSMS over the past year, ask you to continue to do so in 2015 as we work to provide a very vital service to the residents in West Sussex.

Very best wishes for
2015.

Peter Magness
Chair



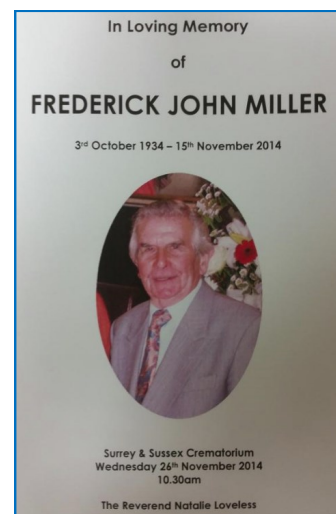
Snippets

> We have to report the sad death of our very good neighbour at Alphacom House, Fred Miller. Fred leaves his wife of 55 years- Ann plus a son, daughter and grandchildren. He had not long before celebrated his 80th birthday.

Fred was always a helping hand doing odd jobs for us throughout the year and keeping an eye on the premises.

In the winter months he could be found gritting on the ice and shovelling snow to make our lives easier and safer. Fred was a very skill carpenter in his working life, all of which was spent in Horsham.

Some interesting facts came out about Fred at his funeral. These included him spending his National Service in the RAF and enjoying some time stationed in Gibraltar. He flew on one of the last Concorde flights and was also stranded in the USA during 9/11.



> Our thanks go to **Worthing Homes** for including an article about our service in their latest edition of their residents 'Home News' publication. This is a quarterly magazine that reaches all customers/tenants in print and is also downloadable from their website:

<http://www.worthing-homes.org.uk/media/HomeNews-Winter-2014.pdf>



Nick also joined a recent 'Walk & Talk' session with Worthing Homes Housing staff, and others, in one of the Worthing neighbourhoods. Those involved included Steve Martin from Worthing Homes, WSCC Highways, the local PCSO – Graeme Foster, Lesley Heath from Worthing Borough Council and local Worthing Homes residents and tenant representatives. Issues discussed included lighting, signage, repairs, rubbish, cleaning and security.

> **Christmas Rejects** – if you get any howlers in your Christmas stocking this year which you wouldn't be seen dead wearing in public, have no useful purpose for, or downright hate the sight of the person giving it to you and would not keep it out of principal – don't worry, we have a solution! Donate the items to WSMS and we will either sell them on ebay, use them for a raffle/tombola prize or otherwise realise their worth for the good of the charity. We won't tell anyone – confidentiality is our trademark after all!



Christmas

Luckily the weather held for the Christmas Cracker Charity Market held on Sunday 30th November in the Carfax, Horsham. The event was organised by the Horsham Rotary Club and WSMS had a stall there. Our thanks go to Kim (Trustee) who turned out to assist Nick on the stall and Pam (Caseworker) for donating a good amount of Christmas stock to sell.



We raised **£159.25p** in total. We had a good pitch and shared a Gazebo with two lovely ladies from a group that supports disadvantaged children in Africa. They did well selling cakes and knitted Christmas decorations!



Here is Nick sporting the latest fashion! It brought a few smiles around our stall at the event.

We still have some of these Hessian Santa Sack available for sale. Medium size (51cm x 79cm) and Large (60cm x 109cm) for £5. They feature a Santa and the words 'Happy Christmas' on both sides. They can be used year after year and could be personalised at home with stencilled names.

If you wish to purchase any they can be collected from the office, or we can post

them out 1st Class.



Christmas Office Hours



We will close at **12pm on Christmas Eve** and reopen on **Monday 5th January 2015**. We will not have an office presence between Christmas and the New Year as Louise will be 'Down Under' and Nick and Pam will be using up their final Annual Leave and TOIL allocations for 2014. There are unlikely to be any casework appointments during that period, but, in case of any emergency

Nick will be available, on his personal mobile number— 07768 872676 (not for public disclosure) .



Other News

Friends of West Sussex Mediation is launched! Anyone can become a 'Friend' through subscription which will be an annual fee of £12 payable in January each year. Corporate membership will be at the rate of £100 per annum. There will be a separate bank account for the income generated from the group.

There is no obligation for our existing volunteers to join up. This scheme is not to be confused with Membership of West Sussex Mediation Service (which is free to all volunteers) and afford a voting right at AGMs or any Extraordinary Meeting.

Membership forms will be sent out by email or can be requested from the office, together with a Standing Order Form. We will also add them to our website in due course.

A Constitution has been created with the help of our Trustee and Mediator, James Craddock. The Objectives of the Friends of West Sussex Mediation Service (**WSMS**) presently are:

- > The practice, promotion and development of mediation within of West Sussex.
- > To provide funds towards the running costs of WSMS.
- > To provide funds for the training of WSMS staff.
- > To provide funds for the training of individuals to become WSMS mediators and future professional career development of inducted WSMS mediators.
- > To organise fundraising for WSMS to support such Objectives.



Nick recently attended the offices of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner in Lewes together with our Sussex Mediation Alliance colleagues to discuss future funding. There was also some discussions around future plans for Restorative Justice in Sussex and how our Services might be able to assist in those plans. There will be a further meeting held in January when the PCC has a clearer picture of funding from Central Government via the Ministry of Justice.



Christmas Social

A very pleasant evening was had on 10th December when we held our Christmas Social event at the Arundel Museum in Arundel.



Our thanks go to Carolyn Gray, The Museum Manager, who made the venue available for our event and was in attendance throughout the evening to look after us.

< - - - - - The Museum Reception area.

The early arrivals at the event gather in the side room where drinks and nibbles were served - - - - >



The cost of the event was offset by kind donations of food, drink and Raffle Prizes from various attendees. (The Raffle achieved £93 on the night).

The actual Museum displays were open for guests to browse, subject to leaving food & drink outside. Well worth a visit., if you didn't make it.



We are sorry that many of you who would have liked to attend were unable to do so due to other commitments. We hope to see you at a future event in 2015.



From All the Staff, Trustees and Volunteers of WSMS — we wish you a **MERRY CHRISTMAS** and a healthy and prosperous **NEW YEAR**.