



West Sussex Mediation Service External Newsletter

Diary Dates

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New Year
2018



External Edition

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Funders and
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West Sussex
Mediation Service.*

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Here are a selection of events that are coming up in 2018, with many more to be added over the coming weeks. We expect the New Year to be busy in many respects.

15th January – ahead of a meeting of the Trustees, we are playing host to the High Sheriff of West Sussex, The Lady Emma Barnard. As she was unable to attend our AGM last September, she graciously accepted an invitation to visit our offices at Park House and we came up with the January date. We look forward to telling her all about our great work in the community, across West Sussex.



22nd to 26th January - Family Mediation Week.



Family Mediation is a vital source of income for our charity. The income that this area of work has created for WSMS, so far in 2017/18, amounts to over £16.5k. We will be taking the opportunity of promoting this service and to encourage the take up of family mediation as opposed to dragging matters through the courts, with its associated risks and costs.

2nd, 3rd & 4th February – Training course (in Henfield) for existing mediators to add Intergenerational Mediation to their portfolios. We are in great need of extra mediators in order to service increasing numbers of such cases.

8th February - we are hosting a Gdb (Gatwick Diamond Business) 'Elevenses and Networking' for members in the Wicker Room at Park House. WSMS is a member charity and we will again use the event to highlight our work, including Workplace and Commercial/Civil Mediation.

Watch out for more events/diary dates in our next Newsletter.

Review of 2017

Another year passes, at lightening speed, and WSMS still finds itself serving the needs of the community, in terms of conflict resolution, across West Sussex.

Our Thanks, once again, to all those involved in funding, supporting and volunteering for the charity. Here is a quick look back at 2017. Let's hope that 2018 is another successful year.



HIGHS

> Receipt of a significant grant from the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner in support of all the work we do in partnership Sussex Police, alongside our Sussex Mediation Alliance partners.

- > Awards For All (Big Lottery) funded four new computers for our office, which have been a godsend and made left easier for our staff.
- > We held a couple of great fundraising events – Our Barn Dance in April and Curry Night in September. We would love to repeat them in 2018 and add more events, if we can find the time to organise them (volunteer fundraisers please step forward!)
- > The addition of a 'Live Chat' facility on our website has proved to be hugely popular with potential clients and gives immediate contact to answer questions/queries.
- > Receiving some lovely testimonials from satisfied clients, which makes it all worthwhile. We even got a repeat Christmas Card, accompanied by a small donation, from someone who still thinks of us, from way back.



LOWS

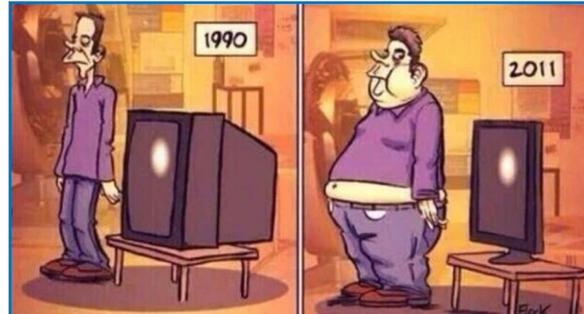
> Bad debts – a number of clients failed to pay their dues following use of our fee paying services. These included two civil cases and paperwork relating to Family Mediations we carried out. We now have to ask for payment up front for all our appointments, which is quite sad.

- > The loss of some very experience mediators such a Gerry, Paul and Mary and the notified retirement of our long standing Caseworker, Pam Chatterton.
- > The usual disappointments in terms of funding bids, to Trusts & Foundations, including the Henry Smith Charity, Comic Relief, WH Southall Trust, Hall & Woodhouse Community Chest, WH Smith Trust, etc, etc.

Snippets

> Brilliant Ads

New Year's resolution? Some clever advertising .



> **Boundary Dispute results in loss of £600k home!** - The Sun (Online) recently highlighted the case of a family in East Ham, London who took their neighbours to court over the building of an extension which they say extended 3” into their garden. They lost and were ordered to pay the costs from both sides. This has since lead the judge to order the family to hand over the keys to their house to the neighbours to cover the cost! How’s that for adding insult to injury? (Their house was estimated to be worth £600,000). When asked for a quote, the victor in the dispute had these wise words to say, “I don't want to talk about it. The time to talk about it was eight years ago, but not now.” (Should have gone to Mediation!).

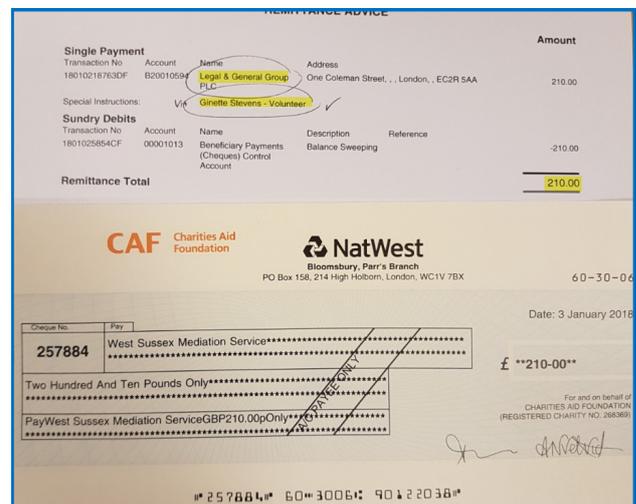
Read the full story here: <https://tinyurl.com/y72byldg>

> Corporate support -

Our thanks go to our Mediator, Ginette, who has managed to broker a Charitable donation, from her employer – Legal & General, to the tune of £210. This is much appreciated.

If you have an employer that is willing to support charities nominated by staff, do bear us in mind.

It’s surprising what networks we all have, that we may be able to tap into, through family, work, hobbies and social circles.



Pam's Farewell

Our thanks go to all those who managed to make it to Pam's Retirement Do in Steyning on 10th January. We were allocated a private part of the bar at the very pleasant White Horse pub and enjoyed some tasty bar snacks to avert hungry tummies. (The fat chips were great!)

Attendees included former staff member, Yvonne Helps, (who did make a detour along a dark farm track before she finally found the venue!) former Mediator Roger Toms, various members of Pam's family and a good number of current mediators, plus staff and trustees.



Pam was presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers, plus a well loaded Gift Card and several signed cards (including the one featured in the picture). We wanted to let Pam choose something useful to her and the One4All gift card can be spent with a huge number of retailers. If anyone has any more photos taken at the event, Nick would like to have them.

Testimonials

We recently received this lovely message: (Mediators Christine H & Rocky)

Dear *****,

I just want to thank you and ***** personally for the way you helped myself and my siblings to resolve our differences. You managed, by some miracle, to create an atmosphere in which we all realised that there really wasn't a whole list of things we had to resolve and that deep down once we had got over the one major hurdle we were still able to communicate extremely well. Somehow a huge cloud has lifted, which we are all really happy about!

Please thank ***** too - you both have an uncanny ability of being able to express calmly what was sometimes very difficult to put into words without just sounding angry.

We will in due course be making a donation to West Sussex Mediation Service - I can't imagine a better cause to donate to!

Kind regards,

Could do better

A recent review of our fundraising activity through 'Giveasyoulive' reveals that we could be doing a whole lot better.

We currently have **27** shoppers listed as supporting WSMS. Of these, only **8** have been active during the current financial year and many others will now be obsolete.

Of the **66** transaction registered between 1st April and 20th December 2017, **53** of those were down to Nick Handley.

We missed a trick again last year with many of us doing a fair percentage of our Christmas shopping, online. All is not lost however. We can make a New Year's Resolution to do better! **Opportunities:**

No. 1 – Valentine's Day (14th February).

No. 2 – Booking Summer Holiday, Easter break, Hotels, Car Hire, Travel Insurance.

No. 3 - Mother's Day (11th March).

No. 4 – Booking Theatre tickets, Festivals, Music Concerts e.g. via Ticketmaster.

No. 5 – Renewing Car, Home or Pet Insurances.

No. 6 – Comparing or changing your Utility Provider (s).

I know you are all busy and may, quite rightly, be supporting other causes dear to your heart and I know you give great worth in terms of your volunteering time. However, we are the type of small charity that has a very small, almost non-existent, external supporter base. Clients don't remain long term benefactors. We therefore have to try to recruit from 'within our ranks'.

As a recent example of our struggle to fundraise, we recently applied to one large organisation to become their Charity of the Year in 2018. They confirmed at that time that we were the only one having applied (very close to the deadline). We were still unsuccessful !

2018/19 is going to involve a lot of hard work to balance the books. If we didn't earn income from paid services (25% of our total income last year) I think we would be on a sticky wicket.

If you are able to join up and shop online in 2019, it would be very much appreciated:

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/wsms>