



West Sussex Mediation Service External Newsletter



Manic Month



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Day 2019



External Edition

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January has proved to be our busiest month ever.

Here is part of a Press Release that Nick circulated, straight after the end of the month, which gives some insight into why we achieved record referrals:

“‘Divorce Day’ is a term used by the legal profession to typically describe the first working day of January when they receive a surge in new enquiries from couples seeking to divorce. This year it fell on 7th January.

One local charity, West Sussex Mediation Service, would dub it ‘Divorce month.’ They report experiencing an exceptionally busy January for referrals from individuals in need of their mediation skills. They were so busy that all previous records for one month were broken. The total of **52 new referrals** exceeded their previous high of 45, registered in January 2018. **26** of those referrals were from divorcing/separating couples wishing to dissolve joint finances and/or formalise child arrangements.

There are lots of reasons why January is seen as ‘Divorce month’. The stress of trying to create the perfect Christmas, financial troubles made worse by festive spending, or just wanting a new partner for the New Year all contribute. Throw in all the intense time spent together, extended family bickering and unrealistic expectations and it can all spell disaster for some relationships. According to data analysed by divorce support service Amicable, more than 40,500 people will have searched 'divorce' online during the month of January - a hefty 25 per cent higher than the usual traffic.

A word of caution is offered to those thinking about splitting up - previous research by Relate has shown that 1 in 10 divorcees say that with the right support they would have been able to save their relationship and stay together.”

It still means that we got a good number of community (13) and intergenerational mediation (11) referrals (+2 Workplace and 1 Civil case.)

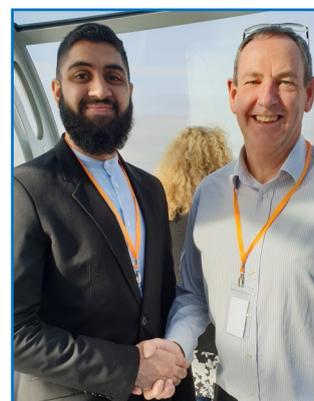
News

> **Training** – a Training week-end for mediators has been arranged for 13th and 14th April. The Saturday will teach Conflict Coaching skills. This is being held at the Billingshurst Community & Conference Centre. The topic for the Sunday is Motivational Interviewing with this sessions taking place at the Henfield Hall in Henfield. The training is already fully subscribed. We are grateful to our volunteer mediators for giving up a whole week-end to enhance their skills.



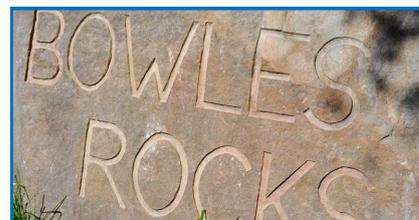
> **Talk** - moving from Motivational Interviewing to a Motivational Speaker. Nick recently attended a Charity Conference in Brighton where one of the keynote speakers was Musharaf 'Mushy' Asghar, who you may remember from the 'Educating Yorkshire' series on Channel 4's. Mushy was the young lad with a serious stammer who was assisted by his teacher, Mr Burton to speak at assembly using music on headphones. See the video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHKa1vQro_g



Mushy is now 22 years old and training as a journalist at University. He hopes to become a TV presenter. He took a year out to spread the message about facing and overcoming challenges, through public speaking. He now has an agent and is in big demand as a public speaker, which he does with aplomb. Meanwhile, Mr Burton became the Headmaster at the featured school. Mushy and Mr Burton remain friends but Mushy still refers to him a 'Mr Burton' not his first name, Matthew. Educating Yorkshire won Documentary of the Year in 2014.

> **GDB Charity Challenge** - WSMS is a member charity of the Gatwick Diamond Business group. We benefit from the charity fundraising that they do each year. They are proposing to hold another event in 2019, which may take place on 5th July at Bowles Rock (<https://bowles.rocks/>) - 'Bowles is a unique and beautiful place on the Kent/ Sussex border. They have their own majestic sandstone outcrop, some lovely facilities and amazing activities.' GDB are seeking some 'significant' prizes for their charity raffle with the proceeds being divided between the charity members.



If you are able to source such a prize, through your contacts, do let Nick know.

More News

Group Meetings – one of our mediators, James, has kindly started to organise get togethers for mediators based in the west of our county. James himself lives on Hayling island, just across the border into Hampshire.

The first one was held in the newly complete Annexe attached to Donnington Parish Hall on 6th February.

The group will now be meeting on the 1st Wed. of each month (6th March, 3rd April, 1st May, 5th June, 3rd July, 7th Aug, 4th Sept., 2nd Oct, 6th Nov and 4th Dec.)



< ----- Here is a 'selfie' involving James, Fiona, Lynne and Liz—taken at the meeting on 6th Feb, as Nick had asked for photo to use in our newsletter.

> **Forgetting the vital art of constructive disagreement** - Nick recently saw an interesting article online, written by Timandra Harkness: (<http://www.cityam.com/273148/we-forgetting-vital-art-constructive-disagreement>)

It's linked to a series of Radio 4 interviews. Episode 2 includes Liz Stokoe and others and uses an example of a neighbour issue over a large shed. Check it out here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b0bf59rx>

Repeats will occur on BBC Radio 4 at 9.30am every Wednesday until 6th March. You can listen online or via BBC Sounds. There are some useful pointers for mediators.

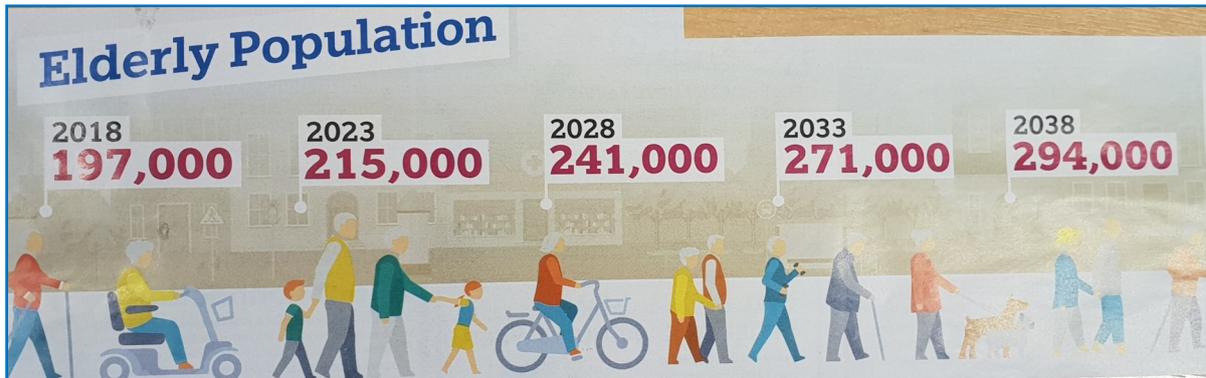
> **Promotional Pens** — using funds from our Friends of WSMS account, Nick recently ordered some promotional pens from a national company. Wishing to save the charity money, he chose the cheapest quote out of five obtained. Perhaps that is not always the best decision. When the order arrived and was opened, Nick was disappointed to find that a good percentage of the pens he would describe as 'rejects'. Here is an example ----- ->

Nick has requested a refund and will be shopping elsewhere.

No naming and shaming, as yet!



Ageing Population

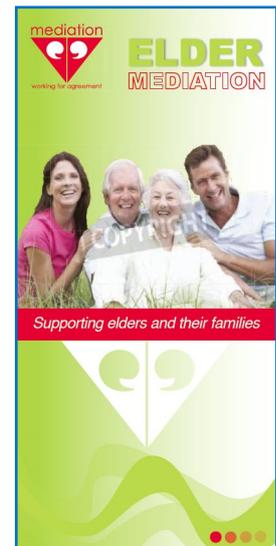


The above graphic was included in the recent WSCC ‘Connections’ magazine and highlights the issue of our ageing population in West Sussex. The projection over the 20 years between 2018 and 2038 suggests that the numbers of ‘elderly’ in the county will increase by around 100,000. This would suggest that our Elder Mediation service will be much more in demand in the future.

The debate as to when individuals should end their driving careers was highlighted again following the road traffic crash that involved Prince Philip, on 17th January near to the Sandringham Estate in Norfolk. Nick published a Press Release on the subject and as a result had a radio interview which was edited down to a very brief mention on Heart Sussex radio, during their news slots.

Our service leaflet lists the ending of driving careers as one of the issues that families face and which can cause disputes.

Prince Philip has actually given up his licence, possibly due to representation from the Police and the Royal Family not wishing to see a prosecution.



Fundraise for us throughout the year—on all occasions: <https://tinyurl.com/yafs3tko>