

Forum News



March 2026

This copy of Forum News forms the notes of a meeting held at
The Academy School at 4.15pm on 11th March 2026
If you would like to know more about any of the items, please contact us at:
mail@selseycommunityforum.uk.

➤ **WELCOME**

Mike Nicholls welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for that change of date from previously noted at the meeting in November. This was due to two funerals being held on 18th February.

➤ **The Academy News**

In the absence of Matt Tyman Mike updated us with recent events. Last Saturday, International Women's Day, the folk at The Bridge hosted a programme of 3 hours with various agencies and this was for young people aged between 13 and 19. Approximately 10 young people attended. Usually, the young people we work with at the Bridge are aged between 13 and 15 and it was good to see older Teens attending. The increase in numbers of ages attending has been replicated in The Witterings where the Youth Club numbers have doubled. Half the numbers attending are in their mid to late teens as well as the younger age groups. Mike explained he has been counselling a lad of 17, who lost his mum last year, and he has a sister of 18, and Mike has been supporting them both. It's just been nice to have this sort of breakthrough with mid and older teens, as well as the younger age groups. Mike said if Matt were here, he would just say that the work in the school continues successfully and the work towards the exam period in the Summer is underway.

➤ **Pavilion News - Keith Batchelor**

After a hiatus with the Building Inspector. The idea for the Small Hall is to have step free access. We finally start work again on the small Hall at the beginning of March and the concrete which was laid before Christmas had to be dug up because the drains for the toilets were not attached to the sewer. This has now been done. Steel roof Ties are coming in soon. The disabled toilets are taking shape.

Thanks to local organisations, John Coates Trust at Sidlesham and Ferry Farm Community Solar who have made donations recently for which we are grateful. Some of this money will help us become more environmentally. We are hoping to open the Small Hall later this year. We are hoping to hold an exhibition to commemorate two fires which took place in Selsey. In 1926 there was a fire in The Pavilion and in 2016 a devastating Fire at The Academy and both were on 21st August. Chris offered the collection of photographs which were used in the event "Out of The Ashes" and some of the Artwork is on display in the School Foyer. The Pavilion Trust needs about another £900,000 to complete the work and there is no opening date yet, but they are hoping towards the end of the year.

➤ **Youth News**

The Scouts and The Guides continue to do well in Selsey and Karen Pirks who is unable to attend has been working hard with a lot of young people in the age range of 15 to 18 mainly with their parents in terms of getting funding for some special conditions. We're getting lower referrals for families, with children who have special conditions and it's linking in with The Care Pod, who were called The Buddies. They are in the process of developing

a programme to provide some kind of specialist work and support for 16 to 30-year-olds who have various conditions, for them and their families. They will be giving a presentation at The Annual Town Meeting, on Tuesday 17th March doors open 6.00pm.

➤ **Arts Dream**

Chris Butler was keen to tell us about all the projects and events planned for this coming year. January 31st year was their End of Year. Following the death of Gary Sharp, who ran the Art Group on a Tuesday and was also a Trustee Chris was pleased to say the three Art Groups are continuing. The following events are planned during this year:

- Art Workshops with Brushes and Beyond and other artists are planned.
- Sing Your Heart Our will commence again, following Belinda Gannon recovery from an injury.
- Chamber Choir and Gramophone Society both run by Martin Elliott who is a new Trustee
- Arts Dream has been asked to carry out some Outreach work in Littlehampton.
- Florrie a Musical Play by Gillian Ploughman March 19th to 22nd is already sold out
- Linking with the Chichester Festival Theatre in June and July Martin Elliot "By the Sleepy Lagoon by Eric Coates"
- Art Exhibition in August displaying the work of talented local artists.
- A Puppet Show is planned for 5 year olds in October.

Mike said that fourteen years on its remarkable the number of events which have been produced in Selsey and thanks Chris for all her input to make it such a success.

➤ **Good Morning Calls and Befriending**

Amanda and her volunteers make 111 Good Morning calls during each week. Last week they celebrated the birthday of a lady who was over 100. Amanda was asked when the Friendship group started. Amanda told the meeting how the group started to meet before Covid and then following the lockdown that it took a while to get going again because people had lost their confidence meeting in groups and also their communication skills. The group continues to be as fun as ever, with a Quiz etc. and with a mix of men and women ranging from a young man of 22 who helps with the group and a gentleman of 98. Friendships are made and some meet outside the group. One gentleman comes from Pagham is brought by his wife, who now feels confident to leave him at the group and this gives her a little time on her own. Amanda also works in The Care Shop and people of all ages come in with different types of problem which we hope to help to overcome, for example a gentleman wanted to renew his car tax but the Post Office do not do that anymore, so he came to The Care Shop and Amanda helped him do that over the phone.

➤ **Town Council**

Phillip Grocott explained that the Annual Town Meeting was taking place next Tuesday 17th March at The Selsey Centre, doors open at 6.00pm.

There will be a number of presentations by The Academy, Foodbank, Community Warden, and The Care Pod and other organisations.

Phillip was asked about the work on Sea Defences. He explained it is going ahead starting at the end of West Street along a sea wall behind Sea Grove, the wall will be knocked down and rebuilt rather than repaired and will take about 2 weeks. Chris added she supplies the workforce with Teas and Coffees.

The upgrade to the Kitchen in The Town Hall has been completed. A new consultation, is planned to "Shine a Light on Selsey".

➤ **The Shop – Derek Allchurch**

The Shop continues as a Warm Space where people can meet for a cup of Tea or Coffee and Arts and Crafts are on display around the walls. These are for sale and the artist gives a donation to help run the Shop. The Shop has been going for 15 years now. The Care Shop uses The Shop in the afternoons for a number of their events and meetings and it's a

very pleasant place to meet. The Shop has been running for 15 years now and is run by volunteers.

One gentleman Mike has been counselling through a difficult time, has found a network of friendship and attends The Beacon Church on a Wednesday morning where a new group called Open Arms meet for breakfast.

➤ **Local Shops and Business News**

Neil Kimber is in close contact with local Businesses and Shop Owners and they are having a hard time at the moment. Neil is keen that we shop locally because if we don't use the shops we will lose them from the High Street. The 2 Butchers are both closing and the nearest one is East Wittering. There will be a new Indian take-away where Endicotts Bakery was. Stone Baked Pizza have now permanently closed. Rollies has opened in East Street and serves Pie and Mash and are open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from lunch time to 6pm. The High Street seems to be Charity Shops, Café's and Hairdressers at the moment. The Joy has a new landlady and of course Luc continues as Landlord with all the same bar staff. Stephen Carson, locally known as Pops, Landlord at The Neptune sadly passed away recently and will be sorely missed by his family and regulars. The Crown are okay at the moment but changes may be made later in the year. Brew Burgers seem to be doing well. The betting Shop will be closing down and the reasons given it was not making money. As from the 14th of July, High-House Insurance became part of a JMG group. The Manhood Builders have been approached about their premises but the rent is £1800 a month. The owner of Selsey Cars sadly lost his wife recently.

➤ **Selsey Medical Practice**

Nicola Collins explained the DNA's (missed appointments) have reduced since the surgery stopped allowing appointments to be booked too far ahead. Request for appointments are now triaged and appointments offered and the process is reviewed. The phone queues have reduced and therefore it is easier to contact the surgery by phone. We have a new GP contract coming out soon so we will see what that entails. There were three new doctors who joined the Practice last year. Neil asked about a post on social media which stated that a 93year old went to the surgery to book an appointment but was turned away and asked to phone instead or book online. Neil pointed out on the Facebook post that anyone with a problem can always go to The Care Shop and someone there would always help them make an appointment. Nicola was concerned about this as no one should be turned away and there is always someone available in the back office to come out and assist a patient and was unhappy to hear someone was turned away. Some of the elderly patients are able to make their own appointments and there is an Ipad available in Reception for patients who cant do that and need help. Nicola said if a patient is turned away then that patient should feed back to the Practice so that the problem can be addressed.

➤ **Dementia Awareness Week**

Linda Edwards shared some leaflets with the meeting about details of Dementia Awareness week which commences on Monday 18th May until Sunday 24th May. Leaflets will be distributed to the shops and businesses in Selsey and in Wittering encouraging shopkeepers to "Turn their Windows Blue" and there will be a prize for the best window in Selsey and in Wittering. Please see at the end of these notes for a copy of the leaflet.

➤ **Care Shop**

Each of the 10 sections run by the Selsey Community Forum including the Care Shop is running at maximum demand, and we are meeting those needs with the resources we have. Because of that we are holding a major review of our insurance to ensure everything we do is covered. Also, we are having discussions with the bank to ensure that we way we handle money is correct. We now run 14 Help Hubs across the Peninsula and the latest one is at Paghham and the furthest is at Bosham, and they are increasingly busy with Later Life, in terms of form filling, for attendance allowance, blue badges, range of facilities, quite a lot of people wanting help with lasting powers of attorney, because of

the advertisements that have been about being ready for the end of life. On June the 1st, we shall start recruiting staff and volunteers for the new care shop in East Wittering to open on 1st September. That is by invitation of the Woodrow Trust, who are taking over the old Lloyds bank building there, and are sharing the office space with us. And it will be a Crae Shop modelled on what's happened in Selsey over the last 8 years. That's just a summary of what's going on now. If Paul was here from the Hidden Garden, he would want me to advertise the open gardens event, which I think is June the 8th this year. We are hoping for about 25 local gardens to be open and hoping to raise £10,000 for local charities during that day. Sometimes we need to stand back, don't we, and just survey the good work's going on, and the challenges of the shops, and be grateful for that.

➤ **Any Other Business**

- Derek asked with so many shops closing and turn to being residential. Philp stated that Chichester District Council who are responsible for planning will cease to exist in less than 2 years time due to the devolution of West Sussex County Council proceeds. Until new policy is set there is not an answer at the moment. Neil added that currently planning is allowing shops to be turned into residential and it is quite likely that it will be the trend will continue.
- Mike is supporting a 48-year-old Mum who has 2 boys aged 4 yrs and 8yrs who both have ADHD. The mum has a neurological condition which means she cannot drive. Her husband works away quite a lot and therefore mum takes the boys to school and rides her bike on the path which pedestrians do not like, the boys are all over the place. When she tries to cross at The Joy crossroads no one will stop and both boys are not always responsive to commands. She is posting on Face Book to respectfully ask that people are more considerate to pedestrians crossing the road and Mike is writing to the Council. Apparently when Pontins was demolished and the housing estate was built, change of priority was temporarily changed for the building contractors with the premise it would change back when the estate was finished, but this never happened.

➤ **Next Meeting – Please note this will be Wednesday 20th 2026 at 4.15pm at The Academy.**

Dementia Awareness Week – leaflet attached



Turn your Town Blue for Dementia Awareness Week

Mon 18th May - Sun 24th May

If you are a shop owner in Selsey, Bracklesham or the Witterings we would love you to decorate your window to raise awareness and understanding of this disease. Prizes will be awarded!

Windows will be judged on:

1. Impact- does it draw attention?
2. Messages shared - does it get key messages across?
3. Creative use of materials?

To enter email: Karen Pirks, Ops Lead
operations@selseycommunityforum.uk
or text: 07824 376 760 by 14th May 2026

Look out for other activities will be taking place during the week- so keep an eye on our website: www.selseycommunityforum.uk and social media

