



NEWSLETTER

WITTERINGS COMMUNITY FORUM AND CARE SHOP

A friendly first point of contact for local support, guidance and community connections

A new community hub has opened its doors at the **Witterings Care Shop** in Shore Road, East Wittering, offering residents a friendly and accessible place to find information, guidance and reassurance. The hub is being developed as a first point of contact for people who may not know where to turn, whether they are looking for practical help, local information, support with everyday challenges, or simply a conversation with someone who can point them in the right direction.

The planned **Witterings Community Forum** will build on the successful neighbourly approach of **the Selsey Community Forum**, where local people, voluntary groups, charities, community organisations and statutory services work together to identify needs and provide joined-up support. By bringing this approach to the Witterings, the Forum aims to strengthen existing community links and make it easier for residents to access the right help at the right time.

The Witterings and surrounding villages are made up of eight parishes along the South Coast, each with its own character, strengths, needs and local knowledge. This area includes communities with a strong tradition of looking out for one another, but residents can still face difficulties that are hard to manage alone, from isolation and health concerns to financial worries, housing issues or uncertainty about available services.

By creating a central place for information and support, the new Forum will help make sure residents can find guidance before small worries become bigger problems. It will also give organisations a clearer way to share knowledge, work together and respond to emerging local needs, helping to build a more connected, informed and resilient community for the Witterings and neighbouring villages.

What the Witterings Community Forum will do



The Forum will work closely with local voluntary groups, charities, community organisations and statutory services. It will offer a welcoming place where residents can drop in, ask questions, receive practical guidance and be directed to the support that best meets their needs.

Practical help, close to home

Residents from East and West Wittering, Bracklesham, Earnley, Almodington, Highleigh, Birdham and Itchenor will be able to access information, guidance and practical support through the **Care Shop**. The aim is to make help feel nearby, straightforward and approachable, especially for people who may be unsure which organisation to contact or who may feel overwhelmed by forms, appointments or online information.

Support may include help with understanding benefits, finding appropriate advice, connecting with local services, and discovering groups, activities and opportunities that can improve wellbeing. For some residents, this may mean being guided towards specialist help; for others, it may simply mean finding out what is available close to home and having the confidence to take the next step.

The **Care Shop** will also help local groups and services work more closely together, reducing the risk that people are passed from one place to another without clear guidance. By listening to residents and sharing local knowledge, the Forum can help identify gaps, respond to changing needs and strengthen the network of care that already exists across the Witterings and neighbouring villages.

By working in partnership with housing, employment, health and voluntary organisations, the **Care Shop** will help residents navigate challenges, reduce isolation and strengthen links across our communities.

- Free and confidential guidance
- Information about benefits, services and local activities
- Connections to voluntary, health, housing and employment support
- A welcoming place to ask questions and find the right next step

Thanks to those making it possible



The **Care Shop** has been made possible through the steady commitment of trustees and volunteers who understand the value of practical, local care. Their guidance, good governance and willingness to respond to local needs are helping turn the idea into a service with real purpose.

We are especially grateful to **The F.G. Woodger Trust**,

Witterings & District Care Shop

8 Shore Road, East Wittering, West Sussex PO20 8DZ Tel: 01243 962008

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm

Email: mail@witteringscommunityforum.uk **Web:** <https://witteringscommunityforum.uk>

whose generous financial support has financed the new building. Its charitable commitment to local causes reflects a strong belief in strengthening community life across the Witterings and surrounding areas, and has helped give this project the confidence and foundation it needs to move from aspiration to action.



Come in and say hello



As plans progress, the **Care Shop** will benefit from the interest, goodwill and support of residents, organisations and businesses alike.

It is a reminder that when trustees, charities and local people work together, we can create practical services that make our villages kinder, more connected and better equipped to help those who need it most.

We very much hope you will come in, say hello and learn more about who we are and what we can do. We are open 9am – 4pm Monday through Friday.

We look forward to welcoming you soon at the: Witterings and District Care Shop

8 Shore Road, East Wittering, West Sussex PO20 8DZ

A Month in the Life of the Care Shop

News and updates from Witterings Care Shop

As you read this, the **Witterings Care Shop** will have been open for a month. By now, we hope our furniture and equipment are in place, our signs are up, and our official opening day on September 11th has taken place.

Welcome Through Our Doors

So far, we have welcomed over 350 people from the Witterings and District through our doors. Some have come simply to look around the building and remember its past life as a bank, while others have visited for support with Blue Badge applications, Attendance Allowance, care enquiries, personal alarm systems, council tax bills, finding out about local clubs and activities, and much more.

We have also received deliveries of biscuits and gifts of plants, which has been so lovely and has made us feel very welcome.



Support in a Private Space

We have two lovely conversation rooms available if you need a more private space when you come in. Please just ask, and if a room is available, we can accommodate you or make a booking for a later date. We can also offer wellbeing support, giving you time and space to talk about any worries or concerns.

Our staff and volunteers are busy registering service users, providing a listening ear, offering support and guidance, and, where required, helping people apply for benefits or services.

Staying Connected Locally

We have been able to support people to join local groups, including Chatty Café and the Good Morning Group, among others. Being socially connected is especially important as the shorter days arrive.

We hope many more of you will find your way to us in the coming weeks, giving us the opportunity to offer a listening ear and explain how we can support you.

Coming Soon

In the coming weeks and months, we plan to offer short-term loan equipment, such as walkers, toilet frames and shower chairs, once our store in the car park is erected. We will also look to develop a carers support group, providing a space for unpaid carers to talk and support one another.

Could You Be Eligible for a Blue Badge?

You do not need to drive to apply for a Blue Badge – passengers may be eligible too.

If you are disabled or have a health condition that affects your mobility, a Blue Badge could make getting out and about easier. It allows you to park in disabled parking spaces, at pay-and-display meters on the street, and on yellow lines for up to three hours where there is no loading ban.



Who can apply?

You may be able to apply if you are registered blind, receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Attendance Allowance, or have long-term difficulties walking or going to places. This can include problems caused by stress, anxiety or other mental health conditions.

If you have a terminal illness and have a medical form from your doctor or consultant, your council will usually fast-track your application. We can support you through this process too.

What you will need

- Your National Insurance number
- Details of your medical condition
- Proof of identification, such as a passport or driving licence
- Proof of address from the last 12 months, such as a council tax bill or driving licence
- Recent passport-style colour photograph

How we can help

If you would like to apply for a Blue Badge, or would like more information, please pop into the **Witterings Care Shop** or call us on 01243 962008 to arrange an appointment. We are happy to complete the online form with you, upload your evidence, and take a photograph for the application.

Tuesday Club help callout!

Volunteers required to support the Tuesday Club, serving refreshments and joining in the fun and games. In addition, we need drivers (under 70-years old) to bring our clients to the club.



Pop into Downview Hall any Tuesday between 10-12 to see what it's all about.

Call **07949 704175** to speak to one of the organisers or email **mail@witteringscommunityforum.uk** for more information.

The Royal British Legion welcomes new local care group

Wittering RBL looks forward to working with the new Witterings Care Shop and supporting the wider community network.



Wittering Royal British Legion is delighted to be associated with the new **Witterings Care Shop**, which opens this month. The club welcomes the growth of local support and community services across the Witterings and is looking forward to playing its part in this wider network.

Supporting the Witterings community

As an established part of local life, Wittering RBL is excited to work alongside the Witterings Community Forum and Care Shop. Each organisation shares a commitment to the area and to the people who live here, helping residents feel welcome, supported and connected.



A warm welcome for everyone

Membership is open to all — you do not need to have served in the Armed Forces to join. There is always something happening at the club, with regular entertainment and activities including indoor curling, darts, pool leagues, bingo, crib, social meetings, quiz nights, line dancing and live bands.

Pop in and find out more

If you have not visited before, why not pop in and see what the club has to offer? Whether you are looking for entertainment, new friendships, a friendly place to meet people, or simply a little goodwill and company, you will be made very welcome.

To find out more, call **01243 670305**.

Meet Barry Faust, your local Community Warden



Barry's role in the community

Barry acts as a friendly link between Chichester District Council, Sussex Police, housing providers and other key partners. While he does not have enforcement powers, he helps ensure local concerns are heard, reported and passed to the right people.

Supporting residents and tackling local concerns

Barry plays an important role in identifying and reporting issues such as low-level anti-social behaviour, environmental concerns and animal-related matters, often working alongside organisations such as the RSPCA. He also supports vulnerable residents across the Witterings and surrounding areas, offering a reassuring presence and helping to build a safer, more connected community.

Local projects and activities

Barry is involved in a wide range of local projects, from cooking classes with the Community Youth Club to close partnership work with the Council's Wellbeing scheme. He also organises a regular walking group for people of all ages and abilities, lasting around an hour and finishing with a friendly café stop — a chance to socialise while supporting local businesses.

At the end of the summer and winter terms, Barry supports families through Road Safety Pop-Ups, where schoolchildren and parents can pick up useful safety advice and bike lights.

Coffee mornings and community connection

Barry also hosts popular coffee mornings in partnership with UKHarvest and East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish Council. These relaxed gatherings are especially valued by residents who may feel isolated or lonely — and, as well as tea and coffee, Barry is known for serving delicious, often home-made, cakes and biscuits.

Get in touch

To contact Barry, call **07825 681547**, email **community@chichester.gov.uk**, or write to Foreshore Office, East Bracklesham Drive, Bracklesham Bay, Chichester PO20 8JH

Birdham Amblers

Birdham Amblers are a walking group that meet every Thursday at the St James Centre at 10am for a short walk around our lovely local area and occasionally travel further afield.

They return to the Centre for a welcome coffee and biscuits. It helps physical and mental health and provides a warm lively social atmosphere.



Faith, Friendship and Community

Spotlight on St Anne's Church

Our parishes are full of people and organisations working to bring neighbours together, lend a helping hand and create a real sense of belonging. Local churches are an important part of that community spirit. In each edition, we'll shine a spotlight on the



people, activities and partnerships making a difference locally—starting with St Anne's, the Anglican parish church serving East Wittering.

A Church at the Heart of the Village

St Anne's has stood in the centre of East Wittering since the late 1950s. Its foundation stone was laid on 6 June 1958, and the church was consecrated by the Bishop of Chichester on 14 May 1959. It succeeded the village's original parish church—the 12th-century Church of the Assumption of St Mary the Virgin—which was declared redundant in 1983.

More Than a Sunday Service

There's plenty happening at St Anne's throughout the week. Younger members of the community are warmly invited to join the Sunday school, which meets during term time every Sunday at 10.00am for a 10.15am start. The church is also a welcoming and accessible community hub, with a side chapel available as a meeting room, an accessible toilet, a hearing loop and level access throughout.

For anyone with an NHS hearing aid, the free "Hear Here" clinic takes place from 11.00am to 12.00 noon on the fourth Wednesday of each month. There are also plenty of opportunities to come together at St Anne's social events, including the Hoe Down on 21 November and the Christmas Festival Weekend from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 December. The festive weekend will feature a Christmas Tree Festival and Christmas Fair, finishing with a Christingle service on Sunday. Look out for posters at the church and around the village for further details.

Meet St Anne's Historic Neighbour

Just a few minutes from St Anne's, the Grade II* listed Earnley Church is another treasured part of parish life. Its nave dates back to the 13th century, with the chancel added a century later. Worship has taken place here for so long that its original dedication has been lost to history, and it is simply known as Earnley Church. Why not pay a visit? A warm welcome awaits at both churches. Together, St Anne's and Earnley are welcoming places where local people can meet, build friendships and support one another, helping to keep community spirit thriving amongst the local community.

Find Out More

Discover services, events and the latest parish news at: <https://stanneseastwittering.org.uk>
Or their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stanneschurcheastwittering

A Wonderful Community Event

A New chapter for community care



The **Witterings Community Forum** held its inaugural trustees' meeting at Bracklesham Barn on 19 August 2026. Just over three weeks later, on 11 September, the Witterings Care Shop officially opened its doors.

We were delighted to welcome local MP Jess Brown-Fuller, who cut the ribbon and declared the **Care Shop** open.

Guests at the grand opening

Joining the celebration were Woodger Trust trustees Maxine Thompson, Rosamund Champ—granddaughter of F. G. Woodger—and Stuart Dobbin, together with Jess Brown-Fuller MP. Also pictured are Mike Nicholls, Chair of the **Witterings Community Forum** Board of Trustees; June Bevis of the Good Morning Club, kindly supported by Vitale; Karen Pirks, Operations Manager; and Alison Goodrham, Development and Project Lead.



It was a pleasure to see so many people at the opening. Fine weather allowed guests to gather both inside the new building and outside on the street, while everyone enjoyed

wine, soft drinks and a delightful selection of cakes. Thank you to everyone who helped make the occasion such a success.



Our dedicated staff are there to welcome visitors seeking help, guidance and information.

From left to right: Alison Goodrham, Bev Downie, (Jess Brown-Fuller), Kaz Skellett, Jacqui Evans and Angie Williams.

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