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| NEWS RELEASE  | # |

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| 23 September 2024  |
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| **West Sussex Libraries Host Free Events to Support Positive Ageing**  |
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| The first West Sussex Positive Ageing Month takes place this October across West Sussex, with a series of free events for residents offering information and advice on healthy ageing.A joint initiative between West Sussex County Council’s Library Service and Public Health, designed to promote healthy ageing, Positive Ageing Month is being hosted in libraries offering events to help you live healthily and happier for longer. Free events will be held at selected libraries, with all 36 libraries offering information and book displays on healthy ageing. The events will feature health and wellbeing checks, hearing tests, physical movement assessments, and expert talks on maintaining wellbeing as you grow older.In addition, there will be drop-in sessions, stands from local organisations, and curated displays of books on positive ageing. West Sussex Wellbeing advisors will also be present in some libraries, offering advice on healthy eating and habits along with the Prevention Assessment Team who can offer advice on staying independent.A ‘Slipper Swap’ initiative will take place at selected libraries, where residents can pick up a free pair of non-slip slippers designed to help prevent falls. Participants can recycle their old slippers at their [local textile bank](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/waste-and-recycling/recycling-and-waste-prevention/what-happens-to-your-waste/textiles-waste/).Positive Ageing Month will kick off with a ‘Drop-In’ event at Littlehampton Library on Tuesday, 1st October. This event will feature a Slipper Swap, health and hearing checks, and representatives from organisations including the Alzheimer’s Society, U3A, and Age UK will be available to provide information and support.For those living in rural areas or who have difficulty accessing public transport, community transport providers may be able to help. To find local services, search for community transport in your area, email transporthub@westsussex.gov.uk. A new book-a-bus service is also available in some rural locations. Call 01243 858854 to book.**Councillor Bob Lanzer, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing said:** "I’m delighted that we are able to offer this new initiative to our residents, supporting our communities and older adults to stay healthy, independent, and live fulfilling lives. The decline in health associated with ageing is not inevitable and can be reduced by keeping positive and becoming more physically, mentally, and socially active as we age.""Getting a hearing check and musculoskeletal check are two of the most important steps we can take to reduce disability as we age, and we would encourage everyone to try and attend their local library during the month and take advantage of the free health checks, talks, advice, and information on offer. For those who prefer to take a hearing check at home, a 3-minute hearing test can be taken online by visiting the [RNID’s website](https://rnid.org.uk/information-and-support/take-online-hearing-check/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIgNqtgZSuiAMVh5tQBh34KiJmEAAYAiAAEgIRvvD_BwE).**Councillor Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Community Support Fire and Rescue said:** “Positive Ageing Month is the first of its kind, but throughout the year our libraries already offer a variety of free activities for older people, including Knit and Natter groups, board game sessions, and dementia-friendly singing groups. Libraries also provide services such as Home Library Direct for those unable to visit, as well as resources like reminiscence packs. The best way to find out what’s available is by visiting the [libraries’ website](https://arena.westsussex.gov.uk/welcome).”For general information about Positive Ageing Month, participating libraries, useful tips, and links, visit [www.westsussex.gov.uk/positiveageing](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/positiveageing).For event details and booking information, please visit the [Positive Ageing Month page](https://arena.westsussex.gov.uk/events#/?tag=positiveageingmonth&tag=ageing%20well) on the library website.**Note:** All events are free to attend, although some may require advance booking**ENDS** **For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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