

Dear Member

PLYMOUTH & DISTRICT NEWSLETTER : SPRING 2024

Welcome to the spring newsletter of the Plymouth and District Group.

I hope you all had a very good Christmas, and that Santa Claus was good to you, so a very happy New Year to all.

2023 was not a particularly good year, we had another member pass away, at least two members unable to attend meetings due to poor health and one unable to attend due to an unfortunate accident, as for myself I had two cataract ops, plus bouts of flu and covid, we also had more storms in the last two months of the year than the whole of the rest of the year.

On the good news front, state pensions rose by 10.1% under the triple lock system last April and will rise by some 8.5% in April this year, also the Government have agreed to keep the Triple lock for the rest of this Parliament. Hopefully, organisations like ours will keep up pressure on MP's whatever their political affiliation to keep the Triple lock to ensure that we as pensioners are not left behind as we have been in the past.

As you will all doubt know there will be a General Election within the next twelve months, and it is my understanding that Voter photo ID will be required if voting in person at your local polling station, this could take the form of a Passport, Driving Licence, or possibly a Bus Pass, the object of the exercise being to eliminate voter fraud, whether it will do so remains to be seen, but be aware that when visiting the polling station, you may be required to produce some form of photo ID.

I have just visited my Dentist and Hygienist, total bill was £153:00, I believe, that the Government is reviewing Dental contracts, and as far as I am concerned it cannot come soon enough. The nearest National health Dentist to me is in Wadebridge, or alternatively Truro. I wrote to my MP, but all I got was a standard letter from someone in the Health Service. I should have saved the cost of the stamp.

Public Transport, in particular buses, is another sore point, Cornwall County Council was given £23.1 million to improve rural transport, and it is my understanding that it is being spent on electric buses for Truro. I hope the Council read the recent newspaper article about the electric bus in London which burst into flames whilst on the school run.

On the home front, our Chairman Mike Searle and myself attended the AGM at the Chesford Grange hotel, Kenilworth in October, results of which were include in the Pensioner magazine supplement, and you will no doubt be aware that a motion to dispense with the group structure in the 2022 AGM was referred back to the committee to have closer look at the whole structure. The outcome was to retain the current structure, but with more input from Area, no doubt more info will be forthcoming in the near future.

Our January meeting was not well attended, but pleased the Regional Rep Les Calder was present. I appreciate that the weather was cold, but it is a shame that makes it four times in the last twelve months that meetings have had to be cancelled due to lack of support. All members are very welcome and we would like to see you there.

The next meeting is on Tuesday March 12th and will be our AGM, it is imperative that as many as possible turn up, as we need to elect our committee for the coming year.

Dates for your Diaries of Meetings in 2024

14 May

9 July

10 Sept

12 November

We need as many as possible to turn up for these meetings to keep the group viable. Otherwise, unfortunately, I will have no alternative but to close the group down. It is unfair on those who attend and organise the meetings, it is also important that meetings take place as it is our opportunity to let CSPA HQ know what we think so we can put our thoughts and ideas over to them. Plus, it is a nice gathering and social event. Everyone is very welcome, and we would like to see some new faces at the next meeting in March.

End of rant.

Geoff Ferguson
Secretary

The funny bits

Be kind to everyone on the way up, as you may meet them again on the way down.

After a football match, when asked who she thought had played better, the Queen replied, "the band of the Scots Guards."

About the only thing that comes to us without effort is old age.

Anyone can get old, all you have to do is live long enough.

A lawyer is a person who writes a 10,000-word Document and calls it a brief.

Did you Know?

The Cannon at Mount Edgcumbe were used mainly to welcome visitors, namely 42 guns for a Monarch, 21 for a Prince, 19 for a Duke and 15 for an Earl.

The Ornate gardens at Mount Edgecumbe came about as a result of an order during the Napoleonic wars to clear the trees to allow the cannon a clear field of fire in the event of an invasion.

The last direct Heir of the Edgecumbe family was killed at Dunkirk, however his body was not identified until 2021.

Mount Edgecumbe is looked after by English Heritage and administered jointly by Plymouth City Council and Cornwall County Council.

A jockey named Frank Hayes rode to victory in a New York steeple chase, despite having a heart attack during the race. It was only after the race was over that he had died during the Race.

Stay safe everyone and keep warm.