

Skydive for hospital home

A WOMAN is planning to jump out of a plane in aid of disabled ex-service personnel.

Tracey Dunne, a healthcare assistant at Queen Alexandra Hospital Home, is hoping to raise more than £600 for the care of residents at the home, in Boundary Road, Worthing.

The 49-year-old will fall 10,000ft in the parachute jump at Headcorn Parachute Club in Maidstone, Kent, on Saturday.

A charity spokeswoman said "We are very grateful to have passionate employees such as Tracey who are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to raise funds for the residents they care for."

"We need to raise over £1 million each year to continue providing those that have served their country with the quality of care, comfort and independence that they deserve."

Blaze at flat

FIREFIGHTERS were called out to a flat blaze.

Retained firefighters from Horsham went to Sheppey Close, Crawley, at 8pm on Monday because Crawley firefighters were at a training exercise.

Although initial reports indicated an arson attack, fire investigation officers later discovered the fire in the ground-floor bedroom was caused by a candle being knocked over.

The blaze was put out before fire crews arrived.

Gastric band procedure is win-win, says top surgeon

Obesity op supported

by SIOBHAN RYAN

OBESE patients facing premature death, disease and disability could have their health problems solved by gastric band surgery.

Top surgeon Chris Pring said a report published today shows the success the operation can have in treating a whole range of illnesses.

This includes an 85.5% reduction in the number of patients with late onset diabetes brought on by their weight.

Mr Pring, who contributed to the audit of UK bariatric centres carried out by the Royal College of Surgeons, said having the operation was a win-win situation both for the patient and NHS finances.

Mr Pring, a consultant surgeon at St Richard's Hospital, Chichester, said: "This type of surgery is not about weight loss, it is about health gain."

"The operation improves a person's life expectancy and reduces their demands for NHS treatment in years to come. As well as improving their health, it also has a knock-on effect on their

quality of life in terms of finding jobs, relationships and making a contribution to society.

"I recently operated on a 38-year-old truck driver who was so overweight he couldn't fit into his cab and he had developed diabetes.

"It meant he was unable to work and was claiming benefits. In a year's time he will be back on the road and his diabetes is more than likely to be gone."

The specialist unit at St Richard's carries out about 600 operations a year on people across the South East and three-quarters of these are NHS patients.

The number of people being admitted to hospitals in Sussex for weight loss surgery has increased by more than 40% in the last year, from 232 to 333.

Primary care trusts say gastric surgery should be used as a last resort and recommend alternative measures such as psychological support and weight-loss groups first.

Workers donate £5,000 to charities

STAFF from Lloyds TSB have handed over their contribution to a fundraising appeal for two charities.

A team of workers helped out on the Santa bus at Christmas which toured various streets around Brighton and Hove to raise money for The Argus Appeal and the Martlets Hospice in Hove.

The company agreed to match the money raised on the nights its team were on board and have now

PICTURE: TERRY APPLIN

TA1411B-1



FANTASTIC TOTAL: Lloyds TSB staff hand over their cheque

donated £5,045, which will be divided between both charities.

Hospice fundraiser Antonia Shepherd said: "We are very grateful for the support

Lloyds TSB gave us."

The Argus Appeal supports good causes across Sussex and the hospice provides end of life care for people in Brighton and Hove and surrounding areas.



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