



Gravesham
Friendly

People, Community, Environment

Newsletter – March 2026

2026 AGM

**The 2026 AGM will be held on Friday 1st May at 7pm at
Cyclopark, Watling Street, Gravesend, DA11 7NP**

The 2026 AGM will be held in accordance with Society Rule 24.1 and take place at Cyclopark, the same venue as 2025. Ample car parking is available to delegates attending the AGM and is offered free of charge.

Civica Election Services will once again administer the electronic and postal voting. Members who have registered an email address, or reside in a property where an email address has been registered, will be invited to vote electronically. Postal votes will be sent to members who have not registered an email address. To be invited to vote, members must be over the age of 18, have been a member for 12 months and reside in the UK.

The steps for voting will be outlined in an email from CES Civica which will be sent on Monday 30 March. If you do not receive an email and are eligible to vote, please contact Dee on dee@graveshamfriendly.co.uk

The option to vote in person is available if you are planning to attend the AGM in person or by zoom. A £1 donation to charity will be made for every vote cast so please help by attending the AGM and voting. As always, a Newsletter will be produced after the event, emailed to members and placed on the website.

Please take the time to read the Chairman's letter and Information Booklet that will be included on the voting website or sent by post. The latter contains the Chairman's summary of 2025 and financial details including the solvency surplus, income, management expenses and the number of members. Statistics on Discretionary Benefits paid in 2025, the number of discretionary benefit claims processed and the number of members claiming are also included and show the level of support offered to members.

You can view the AGM Notice by clicking the button below.

AGM Notice

Increased Payment Runs



From March 2026, increased payment runs were introduced to shorten the waiting time for members to be reimbursed for approved claims. Please note the dates for the increased payment runs which are based on when claims are received.

- Claims received between the 1st and 10th of the month will be paid on the 20th of the month
- Claims received between the 11th and 20th of the month will be paid on the last working day of the month
- Claims received between the 21st and the last day of the month will be paid on the 10th of the month.

If the 10th, 20th or last working day of the month fall on a weekend, payment will be made on the last working day prior to these dates.

These enhancements have been made to provide faster payments to members.

**COMBINED
DISCRETIONARY**

BENEFIT CLAIM FORM



To assist members submitting discretionary benefit claims via email, post and in person, a new form has been compiled that covers dental, optical and medical (Miscellaneous Medical Expenses, Maternity/Paternity and Hospital Stays). Discretionary benefit claims submitted via email, post or handed into the office personally are sometimes submitted on the incorrect form which highlighted the process needed to be simplified. The single claim form for the above discretionary benefits hopefully achieves that and is available to use now after logging into your account and scrolling to the Useful Documents section at the bottom of the page. Alternatively, you can access it directly from the link below. The combined claim form also acts as a useful reminder of the categories available to claim.

Claims submitted via the website and email are consistently over 80%. It is quick and easy to use, support is available to members who have internet access and a guide can be accessed from the home page of the website.

Separate claims forms for Home Energy Efficiency, Education, First Time Home Buyer and death grants should continue to be used.

[Dental, Optical and Health Discretionary Benefit Claim Form](#)

Several enquiries have been received regarding the amount shown against Hospital Stay when logging into your account on the website. Unlike all other discretionary benefits, Hospital stay does not have an individual limit but replicates the total amount of your annual discretionary benefit pot. After a discretionary benefit claim is paid under any category, the limit for Hospital Stay will reduce and replicate the remaining balance shown at the top of the page.

CLAIMS PROCESS UPDATE

IMPROVING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF MEMBERS

Professions



Teacher



Doctor



Lawyer



Plumber



Engineer



Police

A new field will shortly be introduced into the online claims process to help us improve our understanding of members. Occupation and employment status will now be captured and used to enhance products and services applicable to members. Thank you for your understanding and help with this.

MEMBER DIRECTORY OF LOCAL TRADES



Please accept our apologies for the delay in launching the new Member Trades and Services Directory. This will contain details of local firms used by the Society to manage and maintain the 116 residential properties, split into categories of services offered.

It is important to note that the directory is not a recommendation or endorsement. The Society has no financial interest in whether members use these firms, and members are not required to advise if they choose to use any of the listed providers.

Requests have also been received from members who own their own business or are involved in local businesses to be included. This is a positive and community-focused step to include members businesses where appropriate. If you own, are part of, work for

or know a local business that would like to be included, please let us know. Further details on how to be included will be circulated shortly.

HEALTH & WELLBEING PROVIDERS



As part of our ongoing commitment to enhance member benefits, we are planning to extend the Member Directory of Local Trades to include local providers linked to discretionary benefit services such as dentists, opticians, physiotherapists and other eligible healthcare and wellbeing providers.

To enable this, an additional field will be added to the claim form for members to add the name of the provider. This will help members and strengthen local community connections.

FREE WILL WRITING FROM SQUIGGLE CONSULT



Details of the Free Will writing service offered by Squiggle Consult were circulated to members on Thursday 5 March 2026. To reiterate, this is a saving of £250 and is available to members who are either writing their first will or updating an old one. The process is simple and stress free and allows you to:

- Book a face to face consultation (in your own home or at the Evegate office – TN25 6SX) by telephoning **01233 659796**
- Speak to a specialist via Zoom.

No confusing jargon, just straightforward support to help you plan ahead with confidence so book a free consultation today (available to members in England, Wales

and Scotland).

- You can book a consultation at a time that suits you – [CLICK HERE](#)
- Remember to quote 'Gravesham Friendly' in the comment section or when calling

Member uptake will continue to be monitored to review if it is of benefit to members.

WELCOME TO PARVINDER

On 6 February 2026, Parvinder joined the team as an apprentice.

Parvinder is learning all aspects of the business and being mentored by Ollie. He has quickly become an important member of the team and will be at the AGM to meet members. Please come along and meet him.



Enjoying all the Benefits of Your Membership?

Then recommend Us to Your Family and Friends to earn £100 by the end of 2025.



Receive

£100

for every new member
you recommend.

If there are members of your family, friendship group or work colleagues that you think would benefit from becoming a member of Gravesham Friendly, introduce them today and, once they have taken out a Sickness and Benefit Plan, we will send you £100. Thank you!

The Feelings Mutual, Share Something Special!

You can still claim £100 for every member you refer who takes out a membership which applies to individual and group membership. More companies are offering limited

sickness pay, and in some cases no sickness pay, to employees. The sickness policy is an excellent way of ensuring money is still received if you are too sick to work and provides peace of mind that some income will be received. It is also especially relevant to self-employed people.

If you own a business employing up to 10 members of staff, or know of one, please contact the office for a quote. The group sickness policy is also a great way for business owners to attract and retain staff as they will receive all the benefits that current members enjoy, after a qualifying period. For every successful group sickness policy referral, £100 per person will be paid so the more employees in the company, the higher the reward.

It is easy to apply and the Society has a very high record of paying claims. If you have any queries, or require clarification on any aspect, please contact the office and one of the team will be happy to help.

CONTACT US

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any help or have any suggestions of what you would like to be included in future Newsletters, using any of the following methods:

Post: The Old Rectory, Springhead Road, Northfleet, DA11 8HN
Telephone: 01474 567050
Email: info@graveshamfriendly.co.uk



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