

The following petition, supported by 40 signatures was received on 24 January 2013:

“Re: Draft Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Consultation

Further to your letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> December 2012 and received on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2013, we hereby list our reasons for objecting to any loss of rate relief for our Charity:

- We offer a meeting place for the over 50's in and around Hastings and East Sussex.
- Many of our members would become totally house-bound if they couldn't meet up with friends in the Town Centre.
- We are a long established Charity serving the Town and have ensured that we are totally **“inclusive to all colours, sects and diverse members”**, we regularly meet with other groups such as HOPE-G (Hastings Older Peoples Ethnic Group), HPA (Hastings Pensioners Association) and The Monday Club.
- HPA and The Monday Club use our premises as their base and postal address.
- We have a full and varied notice-board used by ESCC, NHS and other Groups in the Town to publicise their events and literature.
- Our funding is through annual subscriptions of just £3.50 per and we have been subsidising the Café since it opened to an average of £6,000 per annum, until we increased our prices and menu some two years ago but are still faced with a great subsidy.
- If the rates are not in receipt of any relief then we would be faced with a possible closure.”