



**Bucks Older Peoples Action Group Meeting
(BOPAG)**

10am Friday 22nd September 2023.

Meeting Minutes

Christ The Servant King Church, Sycamore Road, High Wycombe.

Attendees:

Alan Barnard – BOPAG Chairman Marlow Bottom Valley Plus (AB)
David Whittaker – BOPAG Vice Chairman (DW)
Heather Wilde– BOPAG Assistant Administrator (HW)
Lesley Ball – Imperial NHS (LB)
Linda Richards – BFAB (LR)
Elizabeth Connell – LEOPAG (EC)
John Betts – STOPAG (JB)
Marian Mulady – Local resident Marlow (MM)
Ian Gronbach – Memory Partners (IG)
Sue Stuart – Memory Partners (SS)
Agata Stepien – Ashridge (AS)
Elizabeth Aylward – PROBUS (High Wycombe) (EA)
Janet Kenny – EX-OASIS (JK)
Barbara Richardson – COPAG (BR)
Phil Folly – COPAG (PF)
Lisa Downes – Pheonix PCN (LD)
Derek Mitchell - Pheonix PCN (DM)
Chris Frith - Pheonix PCN(CF)
Karen Blagojevic (KB)– Horizon Rehabilitation Ltd (**HR**)

Apologies:

Paula Watts – Hoot Editor and Administrator
Jo Boake – Extra Care Hughenden Gardens Village
Larissa Goff -Hub Care Support
Marilyn Green – Hub Care Support
Wendy Healy – Avery Care Beaconsfield
Richard Chalmers - Oasis BG/South Bucks Hospice
Michelle Bewley – Senior Social Prescriber ARC PCN
Jane Osborn - Lane End LEOPAG

1. Introduction: AB welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the attendees that we would be recording to make it easier for HW to write up minutes.

2. Main Speaker's:

AB introduced our main speaker: Karen Blagojevic from **Horizon Rehabilitation Ltd.**

KB described her team of 12 physios and occupational therapists and nurses who make up **Horizon Rehabilitation (HR)**. They use their expertise to help people, especially older people, reach their potential when challenged with recovery from illness, surgery, or dementia related conditions. They are a private company started by KB

KB described the Five Pillars of Ageing Well – this was part of The Open University Take 5 Pledge introduced last September. <https://wels.open.ac.uk/research/projects/take-5/actions-pledge>. The 5 pillars being: Nutrition, Hydration, Social health, Physical Health, Cognitive Health. Her positive message to us all is that each one of these areas can be improved and changes can be as easy as substituting a cup of water for tea to improve hydration.

KB continued her theme of ageing well by introducing us to a condition called **Sarcopenia**, (age-related loss of muscle mass). Biggest myth is that you **do not** get weaker as you get older – it is just harder to stay strong. Thus, it is important to do more exercise to maintain our strength as we get older. **HR** work to find patients internal motivation to inspire them to do their required exercises.

KB described the 5 aspects of physical health that are vital to maintain: Heart, Balance, Bone Health, Flexibility and Strength. KB asked which we thought is most important? **Strength**, it turns out is the most important

KB introduced their **Pathway to Participation** and the various classes that **HR** have available It is challenging to get started on an exercise plan. One can get assessed via your surgery but it can take time so **HR** can do a bespoke assessment and signpost you to services in the community or provide bespoke help or get you to one of **HR's** classes. Her message KB wanted to convey is that whether it is NHS or **HR**, it's important to get assessed by a health professional and that you do something that you enjoy as this will motivate you.

AB thanked KB for her informative presentation.

3. Questions and Answers

DW: feels very tired at the thought of all this exercise! KB pointed out that you must overcome feelings of tiredness – go out and get fresh air and thereby release endorphins.

JB: asked about brisk v slow walking. Is it beneficial? KB said that the best thing is to get out and walk whether it is slow or brisk. Maybe try and walk a bit faster if you can!

EC: asked if someone with COPD could do the classes that they hold. KB answered that she would be individually assessed by the team and could easily work at a different level to others in the class as they have a ratio of 1 staff member to 6 participants. How much? £20 per class at Court gardens, Marlow. A course of 6 would be cheaper at £100. Call **HR** to book and have an assessment over the phone.

IG: How do you market your services to the general public? KB: They advertise classes in BOPAG magazine (p15 of this month's issue) to spread the word. They are official sponsors of The Hoot. **HR** try their best to link in with surgery staff and social prescribers but mainly it is word of mouth.

PF: enquired about his wife who would be coming back home after a hospital stay. **HR** can provide backup if needed although she should have the help of an assigned NHS OT. KB said **Age UK** also provide a support service.

JK asked if **HR** would come to a dementia related group in Amersham. KB gave an example of how they work with Dementia Action Marlow group and that they could provide a similar service. Costs are approx. £65-75 per hourly session

HW asked about the benefits of seated exercise. KB explained that seated exercise has its place but vertical exercise is preferential to get us stronger as it complements balance, core strength etc.

A lively discussion ensued, regarding the benefits of the developing options available at surgeries after AB remarked that his surgery is increasingly directing patients to physios and he used his own experience to demonstrate this fact. LD from Unity had the final word, explaining how her group of

surgeries are changing and redirecting patients using different health professionals rather than the age old solution of only the GP.

Speaker: Sue Stuart. Memory Partners (MP) was inspired by research that came out of Australia. Tai Chi has proved to be so beneficial to those with dementia. Basis of Tai Chi is breathing so everyone regardless of status can participate. MP practice in the environment of a social café. They have 2 cafes – 1 in Totteridge on a Thursday and the second is in Beaconsfield on a Monday morning. There is no cost but a donation to the charity would be appreciated. Their aim is to set up more Memory Partner cafes and get more volunteers. She praised the excellence of **The Golden Years Dementia Event** on 1st September.

AB asked how many came to the event and there was a healthy show of hands. Both AB and DW thanked PW and Kim from the Princes Centre (in their absence) for such an excellent event and the hard work they had poured into it. All agreed it was a huge success.

4. No matters arising from last meeting

5. Any Other Business/Notices

AB invited participation from around the room:

LR pointed out need for support for train station ticket offices to remain open and to support the Triple Lock for pensions. She is part of an action group -NPC: <https://www.npcuk.org/>

AB/EC: Cheque for £542.18 has been given to BOPAG from LEOPAG as they do not have sufficient members to continue and this cheque represents their remaining balance. AB thanked EC

JB: Suggested that LEOPAG members come to STOPAG as not so far away. He brought up the subject of transport difficulties and AB reminded the group that we hope to have the transport minister at the 24th November meeting.

MM: recounted the difficulty she'd had with being scammed despite the installation of TRUE CALL. It has been a good system but is not infallible. MM asked AB about subject of Parkinsons clinics now only in High Wycombe since the Marlow Parkinsons nurse Liz Scott has now retired and the new nurse will not go to Marlow. AB has reported this and is trying to get a change enforced.

EA: wanted to make members aware of an excellent outing to Wren Davis Organic Farm of which she had recent excellent experience: <https://wrendavisfarm.co.uk/school-events/>

PF and BR: said they are still struggling to get members and to make people aware that COPAG have their 20th Anniversary.

HW reminded the group that there were still places available for the Eden Silver Monday event on October 2nd and a nudge for the free Shared Stories event at Hughenden NT. Posters were passed round for both events.

AB thanked all for coming and networking continued in the meeting room.

Meeting closed at approx. 12:15

Next Meeting will be on the **24th November 2023**