

Note from the Editor

We were delighted to welcome His Honour Christopher Tyrer DL to our meeting in March to tell us all about the New Leaf Project. It's fair to say that our knowledge of the great work that they do was fairly non-existent before his talk and to help share their story, you'll find more information on page 5.

I often publicise council and NHS meetings that are open to the public to attend, observe and ask questions but it had been a while since I had done so. With the bed closures pilot causing much concern, it seemed a good time to put that right. On page 2, I share my personal thoughts on what it was like to attend 3 public meetings in March. I did so as a member of the public, not representing BOPAG and so I have deliberately excluded my thoughts on what was said and by whom. However, I have come away feeling stronger than ever that it is so important to attend these meetings and challenge the very people that are there to represent us. Talking of which we have county elections next month so an opportune time to ask yourself if the incumbents do a good enough job representing us.

On the subject of the Community Hubs Pilot, NHS Bucks have a booklet which gives information on what they are doing and more importantly what you can expect. I have taken key points from it and you'll find this on page 7. For those of you who receive this newsletter by email, I am able to send you the booklet with this newsletter. I expect to receive physical copies of the booklet next week and if you would one for yourself or some for members of your group, please let me know.

If you have any comments, thoughts or ideas for either the newsletter or the website, please get in touch. The website is attracting lots of visitors so if you would like your group to be included, send us the details.

Andy

Bucks County Council Elections 4 May 2017

Elections for all 49 county councillors in Buckinghamshire will take place on Thursday 4 May 2017.

The elections give local people across Buckinghamshire the chance to choose the 49 councillors they want to represent them and to make the important decisions about millions of pounds of public services. These include county-wide support for vulnerable children, adults and older people, education, roads and transport, waste disposal and a whole lot more. These councillors are the people who sit on council committees and have the opportunity to define the services you receive, scrutinise, challenge and hold providers to account.

There will be over 300 polling stations open on May 4th and it is anticipated that there will be several hundred candidates contesting the 49 divisions. In addition, it is expected that as many as 60,000 postal votes will also be sent in.

The closing date for nominations is the 4th April and more information can be found on the district and county council websites

Aylesbury Vale Community Trust (AVCT) Grants



Aylesbury Vale Community Trust (AVCT) is giving away grants of between £300 - £10,000.

Grants are for projects taking place in Aylesbury Vale which involve community participation to promote, develop or educate within areas of health and wellbeing, heritage, recreation, arts, culture and sport.

Most grants are expected to be in the region of £2000 or less. To be eligible applicants must be:

- a registered charity,
- a formally constituted not for profit organisation, or
- a non-profit making club.

Closing date is **24th April**. To apply or find out more go to

www.communityimpactbucks.org.uk/news.php/764/aylesbury-vale-community-trust-grants-available



Attending Council & NHS Public Meetings

Many Council and NHS meetings are open to the public but the sad fact is that few people actually take up this opportunity. So in March I observed 3 meetings and below is my personal experience of doing so.

The Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) states that it will be the key partnership for promoting the health and wellbeing of residents. Its focus will be on securing the best possible health outcomes for all local people. Attendees include county and district council representatives and clinical directors. The public can submit questions by the preceding Friday and if accepted by the Chairman, they are given a 3 minute slot. The questions will either be answered then or at some other point in the agenda. If you just want to attend the HWB meetings, you just report to County Hall reception. Alternatively you can listen to the meetings by a live feed via the BCC website and in this case, that is what I did.

There are several advantages to observing via the live feed. The link is easy to use and doesn't require you to download any software. It saves physically going to Aylesbury and you can also dip in and out depending on specific interests. But, there are downsides too. It feels hard work watching via the feed (peripheral noises like coughing make it difficult to hear the speaker). You also cannot see the slides being presented as the camera focusses on the speaker. I think that the physical presence of the public sitting in the room is good for the attendees. At this meeting one member of the public asked a question about the Sustainable Transformation Plan.

The role of the **Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)** is to hold decision makers to account for improving outcomes and services for Buckinghamshire. It has the power to scrutinise all issues in relation to Health and Adult Social Care. Moreover this Committee has responsibility for the scrutiny of health matters holding external health partners to account. Attendees are county and district councillors. The meeting took place on the 28th March at County Hall and this time, I decided to attend in person particularly as the bed closures pilot and public petition were on the agenda. This meeting can also be watched on the live feed. Theoretically questions can be submitted but this has to be done via an online form and if you have access and click through, it puts you through to a planning committee form.

I was also unimpressed when I signed in at

reception to be told 'I'm not sure what to do with you, can you sit over there while I phone someone?' Good job I am not easily put off! I was collected and escorted over to the meeting waiting area as HASC has a pre-meeting which the public are not allowed into. I don't know what the purpose of the pre-meeting is but it didn't fit with the spirit of having meetings open to the public. At 10am, I took it upon myself to go in. Councillors looked over while I sat myself down at the back. I was the only member of the public there and no questions from the public had been received.

A written response had been prepared in response to the bed closures petition and so there was no discussion entered into. The next item on the agenda, the pilot itself, was also not discussed with an action to put it on the agenda in September. Both items were over and done with in no more than 2 minutes

I stayed for the remainder of the meeting and saw no evidence of scrutiny or holding providers to account.

My final meeting was the **NHS Trust Board Meeting**. This meeting moves location and this one was in Aylesbury. Attendees are the Trust Board members and other key personnel. The public can ask questions and they don't need to be pre-submitted.

On walking in, I was welcomed by Board members and there was genuine warmth (and surprise) that I was there as a member of the public. There were 2 of us (a regular public observer and me). There is an opportunity to ask questions at the beginning and as mine related to the bed closure pilot it was decided that I should put my question during that part of the agenda. When the time came, I had the chance to put several questions and concerns to the Board and received what I believe to be honest answers (not necessarily answers I liked).

During the break and at the end, several members of the board came up and thanked me for my input and encouraged me to come again. It felt that they genuinely welcomed public attendance.

My overall experience was very insightful. I felt dismay at what I observed at the HWB and HASC but perhaps to judge on one meeting each is unfair. The NHS Board Meeting had a completely different approach to public attendance and perhaps BCC and councillors could learn from their approach.



WALKING NETBALL

Walking Netball is a slower version of the game; it is netball, but at a walking pace. The game has been designed so that anyone can play it regardless of age or fitness level.

From those who have dropped out of the sport due to injury, to those who believed they had hung up their netball trainers many years ago, it really is for everyone.

Women the length of the country have begun playing Walking Netball for the fun, laughter and camaraderie the social session brings, as much as the health benefits on offer.

Stoke Mandeville Stadium

Tuesdays 6.00-7.00pm

Starting 2nd May 2017

FREE Taster on 2nd May

Prices from 9th May onwards: £4 per session

All ladies welcome!

No booking required

Sprinters Leisure Centre, Prestwood

Tuesdays 10:30—11:30 am

18th April—23rd May

£18 for 6 sessions

All ladies welcome

Contact 01494 866688 to book your place

The Harmony Club in Long Crendon



If singing on a Tuesday morning sounds like your kind of thing, then the Harmony Club is could be the perfect place for you!

The club meets on the last Tuesday of every month in Long Crendon, from 10.30am until 12 noon. Anyone can come and sing and there's the opportunity to stay for a home-cooked lunch afterwards!

If you are interested in coming along, please ring 07833 615694 to book your place.



New place to spend Time Credits



Waddesdon Manor is now officially a SPICE Time Credits Partner which means that volunteers can visit the Manor using Time Credits. Waddesdon Manor will be implementing this scheme over the next month, so if you are interested, check out their website or call 01296 820414 to find out when this opportunity goes live!

Grounds Admission will be 1 Time Credit (available all year round) and House Admission will be 2 Time Credits (excluding the Christmas period). Volunteers can book tickets online and collect them from the ticket office on the day, in exchange for Time Credits.



Monday 50+ Mornings at Court Garden Leisure Complex, Marlow

9:00- 10 & 10:15- 11	Keep Fit
10:20- 11:30	60p Swim
11:00-13:00	Table Tennis
09:00– 13:00	Badminton
09:00– 13:00	Squash

Call 01628 405 200 for more information

Court Garden Leisure Centre
Pound Lane, Marlow, SL7 2AE



Staying Safe

New 5 Year Police & Crime Plan For Thames Valley

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Anthony Stansfeld, has launched his new five year Police and Crime Plan for the Thames Valley. The document sets out the 5 priorities for policing and other crime reduction organisations.

- **Vulnerability** – Managing demand on services through working together with a focus on mental health, elder abuse, hidden abuse, and the criminal justice experience for victims
- **Prevention and Early Intervention** – Improving safeguarding in both the physical and virtual space including tackling cyber crime, road safety, hate crime and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- **Reducing Re-offending** – Targeting and managing harm and risk with a focus on substance misuse, violence involving weapons and offender management
- **Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism** – Improving the local response including increased public awareness, promoting a ‘dare to share’ culture, and preventing violent extremism
- **Police Ethics and Reform** – Increasing the pace of change with a focus on improved support for victims, uptake of new technology, and improving the perceptions of police among young people

The Plan was informed by the views of nearly 5000 residents, who took part in the PCCs policing & Crime survey in 2016. For more information and to view the full Police and Crime Plan visit www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-events/

Help if you are caught up in a potentially dangerous situation

The recent events in Westminster has served to raise awareness of a useful app called CitizenAid. You can download it FREE from either Google Play, Apple App or the Windows store. It contains simple advice on how to act in various situations (for more info go to citizenaid.org/)

One of the first instructions it gives if you find yourself in an unsafe situation is to “TURN YOUR PHONE TO “SILENT”. If you have been forced to hide somewhere to protect yourself, it may not occur to some that a ringing phone would immediately disclose the whereabouts of an individual.

Don’t forget about “ICE” on your mobile (In Case of Emergency) and to list under “ICE” in your contacts, the phone numbers of next of kin or close family members to be contacted in case you are involved in an accident. This can be particularly valuable if you are travelling alone. There are free ICE Apps which can be installed on your phone. Check the reviews first though as some are restrictive

My thanks to Wendy for sending this information in



Working in partnership
to make our community safer



Watch out for

TrueCall, the manufacturer of call-blocking devices, often used by older people, has advised that some people have received calls from a company portraying to be TrueCall and persuading them to part with money for a yearly subscription to the service.

TrueCall never cold-calls customers or sells any of its products over the phone. Anyone who receive these calls should contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

Pre-recorded Prank Calls There has been a recent rise of prank calls in Thames Valley. The calls are pre-recorded generated responses giving the impression that recipients are actually speaking to someone. Sometimes a mobile phone number shows and other times the number is withheld. It appears that these calls predominantly target the elderly and young and can cause alarm and distress to the call taker.

Call Protect Some positive news is that BT has launched its own call blocking service called Call Protect which is free to use and available to all BT home phone customers.



Coming to a Street Near You!

The Hughenden Street Association has launched and requires local residents to become the eyes and ears on their street.

The launch event in February attracted over 30 residents in the Hughenden Parish with more than half signing up to become members covering areas such as Widmer End, Great Kingshill, Naphill and Hughenden Valley. Stan Jones, Chair of Hughenden Street Association, said 'The interest so far has been fantastic although we're a long way from covering the wider Parish. Long-term, we intend to sign up every street and create a sustainable Street Association where residents feel they are part of a safer and stronger community.'

The initiative aims to create friendly and supportive streets where people belong, have friends and look out for one-another. It requires residents to sign up as members and pass on information to those who might be

vulnerable, encouraging neighbours to stay safe and well.

Residents who sign up receive an information pack covering important issues affecting people in the area, as well as details to direct individuals to the right organisations for support.



For an information pack to help your street, please contact: HughendenStreetAssociation@gmail.com or call 07392 683 500

This initiative has been led by Hughenden Neighbourhood Action Group which has worked with Thames Valley Police, Trading Standards, Neighbourhood Watch and the Parish, District and County Councils to complement what is already in place.

Providing Support to Offenders



Social disadvantage and exclusion is a major issue for many ex offenders. Often, after imprisonment, their already difficult situation deteriorates, and many find it hard to reintegrate successfully with their families, friends and the community in general. Finding somewhere to live, getting a job, and overcoming their personal problems can be major obstacles.

Prisoners have a high likelihood to re-offend. Approximately 68% of adult offenders re-offend within two years of release. Evidence suggests that appropriate support, can reduce this re-offend rate significantly. New Leaf, established in 2010 and with only 4 staff and 30 volunteers, supports people through the challenging first few weeks after their release, and to help them address any issues and obstacles they might have which stand in the way of effective re-settlement

New Leaf provides fully trained volunteer mentors to work on a one to one basis with clients. Mentors help clients to plan and work towards their goals, and to overcome problems they might have along the way. They offer non judgemental support, encouragement and advice. Mentors meet with clients before release, on the day of release, and then weekly to review progress and help put plans into action. They also signpost clients towards specialist help for problems such as homelessness, debt, drugs, alcohol and relationships. Mentors are available by telephone at agreed times, to offer support and advice between meetings.

Help also comes in the form of Community Packs. Most offenders leave prison with less than £50 to support them and the packs make a huge difference. They contain items such as a washbag with deodorant, toothbrush & toothpaste, shower gel, shampoo, small towel, plastic cutlery and a tin opener as well as other small items that we all take for granted.

Volunteering with New Leaf is open to anyone who feels they have the time, character, energy and commitment to support an offender through the challenging first weeks after release.

To find out more and ways that you might like to support New Leaf, they can be contacted on 01844 202001 or 07848 037 749 or you can go to www.newleafproject.co.uk



Health News

Hospital Discharge Report

Bucks County Council's Health and Adult Social Care Committee (HASC) have presented a report on the hospital discharge process in Bucks. It has highlighted a number of ways to improve the process including closer joint working between health and social care teams and better sharing of information with patients and their families.

Delayed discharges are not only frustrating for patients but also cause significant issues with bed blocking.

Healthwatch Bucks who are a member of HASC were pleased that there has been a commitment to undertake a more in-depth piece of research to better understand the patient and family/carer experience and to help with targeting the improvements; a measure which Healthwatch Bucks considers integral to improving the discharge process and something we will be working hard on over the coming year.

The Inquiry Group also wanted to encourage families to have discussions around care planning and securing the relevant legal paperwork. This would mean that families, carers and patients would know what to do if a crisis did happen.

The full report can be read at www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk and Healthwatch welcome all feedback on hospital discharge experiences

Can you help?

Are you musical, can you play the piano or guitar? We desperately need a musician to volunteer at Singing for the Brain at the Community Centre in Buckingham to help lead the group singing and joining in with familiar and favourite songs. This would be for approximately 2 hours on a Tuesday afternoon, twice a month. There will always be a member of staff present and other volunteers to support you. If you think you could spare a few hours, please contact Heather Donnelly on 01296 331722 or aylesbury@alzheimers.org.uk

Thank you.



World Health Day—Depression

Buckinghamshire Libraries are proud to be supporting WHO World Health Day on Friday 7th April. This year the theme for World Health Day is Depression.

Libraries are a great place to find resources to help and guide you through dark times or learn how to support those closest to you. There are 'self-help' books called Reading Well Books on Prescription which are full of strategies to help you and your friends and family cope with difficult times and issues. The books in this collection are free to reserve both online and in any Bucks Library.

There are also special events

Aylesbury Library 10am– 2pm Chance to meet local support groups including Men in Sheds, Aylesbury SPACE, Live Well, Stay Well, MEND, EYEH Pandalas, & Healthy Minds Bucks

Buckingham Library 10am– 1pm Drop in to learn how to use one of the community's Automated External Defibrillators. There are also free Armchair Exercises taster sessions and the opportunity to chat to representatives of many local services. Free refreshments will be available.

Diabetes Awareness Event

Sunday 21st May 2017 from 2 to 5 pm
Quarrendon and Meadowcroft Community Centre Meadowcroft Road, Aylesbury HP19 9HH

Everyone is welcome to come along to find out more about living with Diabetes. You will meet experts and other people who live with diabetes to share similar experiences and help you manage your condition effectively. Local Politicians, Health Professionals, and Islamic scholars will be there to talk to.

Diabetes UK will be carrying out individual risk assessments, for anyone interested, to predict your risk of developing Type2 diabetes in the next ten years. If you have lived with diabetes for some time and need some fresh ideas on the daily management of your condition, then please come along.



Community Hub Pilots

Editor—A copy of the new brochure can be found on the bopag.org.uk website and we will receive physical copies shortly. Below, is the key information from the brochure that you should be aware of

Some services have been joined up already. For example:

- Community nurses and therapists are available round the clock to help you stay at home or get home again quickly if you have been admitted to hospital. They can provide intravenous antibiotics or wound care at home and they have the technology to monitor improvements, access the right support for you (such as ordering equipment) and review your clinical notes.
- With long term conditions (eg COPD or diabetes), specialist nurses can support you to manage your own condition. They work closely with hospital consultants to keep you independent and at home should your condition worsen.
- If you need specialist stroke care, the early supported discharge team will work to provide your therapy and nursing care at home.

Plans for expanding out of hospital care

The following will be tested in communities before plans are finalised. From April 2017, the following will begin to be introduced:

- **Locality integrated teams:** community and specialist nurses, therapists, social workers, GPs and relevant voluntary organisations will be brought together to provide 24/7 cover to manage those patients identified as needing the greatest health and care support in their homes.
- **Rapid response intermediate care:** therapists, care staff and community nurses, working as part of an integrated team, will provide short-term (up to six weeks) packages of support to those back to independence. Available 8am – 9pm, 7 days a week, these teams will support people at home and avoid a hospital admission, or get people home quicker from hospital. The team will visit as often as required and provide a range of support.

Community care coordinator: this will provide GPs, hospital clinicians and other health and social care staff with 24/7 phone and email 'single point of access' to organise specialist community services for patients.

Community hubs: The hubs will provide a local base for community staff and will help patients to access prevention services (Live Well, Stay Well), primary care services (as appropriate) and hospital services (such as outpatient appointments, wound care or diagnostic testing) that people may have previously had to travel to. Commencing first in Marlow and Thame to test these ideas for six months, the following services will be provided in these hubs:

Frailty assessment clinics: GPs can refer patients to specialist clinics in the community to help frail older people to stay at home and avoid an A&E visit or hospital admission. They will be available 9am – 5pm, five days a week across Marlow and Thame where a team of elderly care consultants, nurses, therapists, paramedics and GPs will provide expert assessments, undertake tests and agree a treatment plan with patients and refer, if required to the other teams to provide on-going support or treatment. These clinics are already available at Stoke Mandeville and Wycombe hospitals.

Outpatient clinics: Five more clinical specialties – palliative care, orthopaedics, care of the elderly, falls and oral surgery with a focus on supporting people with long term conditions.

Voluntary sector and signposting: We are working with Prevention Matters, Carers Bucks and the Citizen Advice Bureau to offer a range of advice, support and signposting services in the first step of creating a single point of access to health and care services

How will we monitor the pilot?

We will look at how well things are working on a daily basis including how many people we have helped to stay independent and not admitted to hospital, and the patient experience of the new services. The medical director and chief nurse will oversee this pilot to make sure the quality and safety of care to patients and staff is maintained. During the pilot, discussions will continue with staff, GPs, social care, other health and care providers, patients and the public in order to learn from their experiences of these new services and to further develop care in the community.



2017

Contact Details for the Bucks Older People's Action Group
Andy can be contacted on
Tel : 01296 622122
E-mail : info@bopag.org.uk
BOPAG, c/o The Hale Farmhouse, Hale Lane,
Wendover HP22 6QR

Bucks Older People's Action Group Meetings

2017 Dates

Wednesday 17th May 2017

Wednesday 19th July 2017

Wednesday 20th September 2017

Wednesday 22nd November 2017

All are welcome. Meetings run 10-12.30 and are currently held at Christ the Servant King, Sycamore Road, High Wycombe, HP12 4TJ

Please contact Andy Trueman on 01296 622122 for further information

**Great Missenden Choral Society
150th Concert Programme**



Saturday 29th April, 7:30pm

At St Marys Parish Church, Old Amersham, HP7 0DB

Milly ForrestSoprano

Fiona JoiceMezzo

Stefan KennedyTenor

Nicholas MoggBaritone

Thomas BennetBass

St John's Chamber Orchestra

John CotterillConductor

Tickets £15 (students and children £7.50)

Tickets obtainable from:

www.gmcsonline.co.uk or The Wye Partnership, 36B High Street, Great Missenden Tel: 01494 864 225

Dates for your diary

May 4th Last day to spend the old £5 notes

May 6th Lindengate Spring Fair A chance to find out more about the work they do. Runs 12pm to 4.30pm at Lindengate, Wendover, HP22 6BD

15th May Action on Hearing Loss / Bucks Integrated Sensory Service Open Day. More information to follow next month

18th May 2 – 4pm. Memory Information

Session. For people worried about their or a loved ones memory. Information includes understanding memory, tips and coping strategies, access to information. To be held at Rectory Meadow Surgery, School Lane, Amersham, HP7 0HG

22nd May 10.30 – 12.30pm. Memory Information

Session. For people worried about their memory. Content as above to be held at Buckingham Library, Verney Close, Buckingham, MK18 1JP.

June 12-18th Carers Week Events to be confirmed

Aylesbury Vale Community Bank (part of Swan Credit Union) New Savings Account

A new savings scheme is open to anyone living in postcodes HP19/20/21. Anyone who saves £5.00 per week or £22.00 per month (min saving of £65 over 3 months) starting from April and saving in April, May & June will receive £25 paid into their Credit Union savings account

For further information please contact Diane Butler (Aylesbury Vale Union) dbutler@swancreditunion.org.uk

AVDC housing grants to help you stay in your own home

New housing grants have been introduced for residents who need some support in making improvements to their homes. The funding can help disabled people, older people and vulnerable households. For more information Call AVDC on 01296 585 605

YOUNG IN SPIRIT'S

COLLAGIN

Anything that comes with the suggestion of rejuvenation in the form of a gin & tonic has to be worth a look. New to the rapidly expanding gin market, Collagin uses anti-ageing botanicals such as star anise, pink grapefruit and orris, with the addition of pure collagen.

Www.collagin.co.uk if you fancy a tipples!