

## Note from the Editor

I had such a positive response to the lovely front page article last month that I feel the pressure to keep the front page positive, which is no mean feat when everything around us appears to be going to pot and I'm having to maintain a media blackout in the house to stop me from being permanently angry.

So on that note, it is lovely that there is another opportunity to recognise the wonderful unsung heroes of our communities in the Red Kite Neighbourhood awards (below) and if you are not on the internet, Bazgha will be only too happy to take your nomination over the phone.

There is also a new handyman service, Trust in Blue, where you can call upon retired police to help with those jobs around your home. There's good coverage in Bucks so give them a call (page 2) There's also Handy Helpers, run by Community Impact Bucks that operates in Aylesbury Vale & South Bucks.

The positive health news is that a tiny implant appears to transform glaucoma treatment and this relatively straightforward procedure has been approved by NICE (page 7)

The not so nice news is that there still appear to be plenty of people out there trying to scam us and I've highlighted those on page 5. If you are in the Chalfont St Peter area, Thames Valley Police have a pop up station this week so please do go along if you have any questions or concerns.

And finally, if you know anyone that could help either us or the local Chesham group as a treasurer, please get in touch. More details on page 8. Volunteers are the lifeblood of groups like us so please do get in touch if you think you can help.

The sun is shining and Spring is here! Health & Happiness to you all

*Andy*



## Neighbourhood Awards 2019



Red Kite Housing want to recognise and appreciate the members of the community who are helping to improve their neighbourhoods, and the lives of the people who live in them. That's why every year they hold our Neighbourhood Awards, so that they can give recognition to the people who really make a difference.

There are 4 award categories

1. Gardening Award to recognise the people who go the extra mile to make their gardens stand out and improve their local area
2. Good Neighbour to recognise someone who is always there for their neighbours either helping them with day to day tasks, checking on them and generally being someone, the neighbourhood couldn't do without.
3. Young Hero to recognise a person or

group of young people who have worked to improve the lives of those around them and made a real difference in the community.

4. Amazing Volunteer.

These awards are open to everyone in Bucks not just Red Kite residents. Please help recognise people in the community who are improving their neighbourhoods and the lives of the people who live in them. Great prizes to be won!

Closing date for nominations is **Friday 24th May**. The Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday 18th July.

For more information on how to complete a nomination form and the criteria can be found at :[www.redkitehousing.org.uk](http://www.redkitehousing.org.uk) Nominations can also be made by phone by calling Bazgha on 07767481855 or 01494 476276



## Retired local police officers in Bucks join forces to provide uniquely trusted and highly vetted handyman and decorating service with 'Trust in Blue'



Retired police officers with a passion for indoor and outdoor maintenance are taking up tools to bring peace of mind to people and businesses in Buckinghamshire, tackling the problem of finding a trusted and reliable handyman or decorator.

Police officers typically retire after thirty years service and many are eager to continue playing an active role in their local community. Trust in Blue work with individuals and families and particularly focuses on helping more vulnerable members of the community who are wary of who to trust in their home. They have also recently gained the required accreditations to work in environments where a higher level of vetting and trust is required such as schools, care homes and for local authorities.

Managing Director, Nick Orde-Powlett, hopes that the company's unique and rigorous selection process will bring security and peace of mind to people in the area: "Our vetting process is second to none. All of our handymen are friendly retired police officers with many years working in the local community under their belt – they understand people's' concerns and

fears better than anyone else and they genuinely care."

TIB handyman Jake Stevenson states, "Having served as a police officer I am aware there are a small number of trades people who are out to take advantage of clients and I understand it is sometimes daunting for them to allow a stranger into their home. We provide a professional and trustworthy service at a fair price that is agreed prior to any work being carried out. As a company we will do the smaller jobs that some tradespeople are not prepared to do. However for me it is not all about doing the work and rushing off, sometimes it's about sitting down and having a cup of tea and a chat. We are also able to offer advice on other topics such as crime prevention."

All Trust in Blue members are required to prove their skills and evidence their qualifications prior to joining and all are interviewed and Enhanced DBS Checked.

More information can be found at [www.trustinblue.com](http://www.trustinblue.com) and a free quote can be requested online or by calling freephone 0800 255 0 255.



## HANDY HELPERS

Handy Helpers is a service to help elderly, vulnerable and isolated local residents with small tasks around the home which they can't or aren't do for themselves. It provides a trustworthy service which offers visits and help from DBS checked volunteers to help out and offer befriending and social support.

The inability to undertake basic tasks around the house to prevent the deterioration of their property has meant that many older or disabled people have lost their independence and may have to be cared for in a residential setting.

Handy Helpers aims to help people stay in their own homes, independently, for as long as possible.

Handy Helpers will ensure that risks and hazards around the home are minimised, to help avoid the risk of falls and hospital admissions. It will also provide an additional layer of support to ensure elderly residents stay safe after a fall or hospital stay.

The work undertaken by the volunteer team includes small repairs, maintenance tasks, the implementation of safety/security measures and energy efficiency checks.

Handy Helpers runs in Aylesbury Vale and South Bucks and complements the Gardening and Befriending service also provided by CIB.

You can find out more by contacting Samantha Hardy at CIB on 01844 348823



## Gentle Exercise for Older Adults New Course Starting 1st May

WEDNESDAYS 12.30pm to 1.30pm  
6 Week Course - Cost £28.50

New participants are always welcome at this small friendly group. The key to feeling better and living better is staying active. Don't worry if you've not done much for a while, these strength exercises are gentle, can even be done seated if necessary.

Exercises for seniors can prevent cardiovascular disease, delay the onset of diabetes, diminish the symptoms of depression, improve mental health and relieve the pain from arthritis as well as diminish the risk of falling or if a fall occurs, speeds up the ability to recover from a fall.

Held at Methodist Church Hall, Bellingdon Rd, Chesham HP5 2HA. For more information please email [Elayne.hughes@gll.org](mailto:Elayne.hughes@gll.org) or call 07880 975 100

## South Bucks & Chiltern WFC Spring Walking Football Festival



Thursday, May 30th  
at Chesham Leisure Centre.

Entrance fee £5.00

Festivals are also great social events and so even if you don't want to play, you'd be very welcome to come along on the day to socialise and, hopefully, enjoy the event. For more information please contact Mike Tarrier [coach@silverfoxsports.co.uk](mailto:coach@silverfoxsports.co.uk)



BUCKS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Southern Group (registered charity 290335)

## Bread, Gruel and Suet Dumplings: Life in the Workhouse

A Talk by Ian Waller

This talk looks at life in the workhouse, what the alternatives were, what conditions were like, and discusses the many records available to find information about either an inmate or a staff member.

Tuesday April 9th  
The Community Centre, Wakeman Road,  
Bourne End SL8 5SX

Doors open 7.30 for a start at 7.45pm  
Every one welcome, members £2.00  
non-members £4.00. Ample free parking  
(after 7pm)

## Open Garden 21st June 2pm—7pm



One Day Farm,  
Blackwell Hall Lane,  
Ley Hill, Chesham,  
HP5 1UN

Tickets £12 (£14 on the door)

Price includes cream tea  
or cake & coffee

Andy's Ukulelians will  
provide musical  
entertainment

All proceeds go to Carers  
Bucks

Tickets can be obtained from  
[www.carersbucks.org/open-garden-tickets](http://www.carersbucks.org/open-garden-tickets)



## Living in a Retirement Community can be good for you

A new report shows older people benefit from improved physical and mental health in retirement communities, resulting in cost savings to the NHS. Findings from the independent study into healthy ageing carried out by Aston and Lancaster Universities showed that residents living within a charity's retirement communities:

- Are more physically active (75% increase in exercise)
- Benefit from a reduced risk of falls (18%)
- Are less anxious (23%)
- Have an increased walking speed
- Were "never or hardly ever" lonely (86.5%)
- Have improved autobiographical (24%) and memory (17%) recall
- Can delay or reverse the onset of frailty

The study was commissioned by the ExtraCare Charitable Trust, a registered charity that creates better lives for older people and operates 19 retirement villages and housing schemes including Hughenden Gardens in Wycombe.

It follows the charity's 2012-2015

research with Aston University, which revealed a 14.8% reductions in depressive symptoms among residents after three years and annual NHS savings of 38% per person.

This latest research has helped inform the development of a resilience tool to measure how resilient residents are in terms of physical and cognitive health. The tool will launch this spring. It will be used to reassess residents who have already been identified as frail to determine if personal goals and targets are helping them to become more resilient. There are plans to roll the tool out to other retirement housing providers later in the year.

Nineteen villages and schemes were included within the research assessments, with more than 160 residents involved. For the second report, data from the participants was collected at 24, 36, 48 and 60 months.

**Editor's note**—*Good to see such positive results. If you are considering a Retirement village, shop around as they vary significantly in their community facilities. Hughenden Gardens is particularly proactive*

### Dementia: Poor care and lack of diagnoses

The NHS is failing dementia patients across huge swathes of Britain, official figures reveal. Nearly half of England's health boards offer poor standards of care and figures suggest hundreds of thousands of people are not even diagnosed.

NHS England's ambition is for 2/3 of people (65+) with dementia to have a formal diagnosis to ensure that they have access to the right care & support. Latest figures show the national rate is 67.9%. In Bucks, the rate is 64.1% .

On a more positive note, Harvard School of Public Health research has suggested that while the overall number of cases is rising due to the population living longer, an individual's chances of having the disease is going down. A review of five studies including nearly 60,000 people across Europe and the US found that rates are declining by up to 15% every 10 years.

### Events at Gracewell



There are some great events this month that are open to all, if you know of anyone that would benefit or is looking for things to do then let them know. All of our events are free to attend with complimentary beverages.

**World Art Day** Monday 15th April 10am - 4pm. Come and create and a new art piece, whether you are a keen artist or looking to try something new.

**Tea Dance** Monday 29th April 2-4pm  
A chance to show us your moves or to spectate and enjoy some tea and cake

**Wills and Lasting Power of Attorney**  
Tuesday 30th April 10am-12pm

Everyone is welcome to come along. Call 01494 292 722 to book your place Gracewell of High Wycombe (Lane End), The Row, High Wycombe, HP14 3JS



## Scams & Frauds

### Bank transfer scam victims to be refunded under new rules

Authorised push payment scams happen when people are tricked by a fraudster into authorising a payment to be made to another account. The new code of conduct sets out that from 28<sup>th</sup> May providers will cover losses for people who have been tricked into transferring their money to criminals in this way.

Barclays, Lloyds, HSBC, Metro Bank and RBS are members of the initial 'steering group' to implement the new code. Other providers are also now being encouraged to sign up.

The code drawn up by the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) aims to reduce push payment fraud and give better protection to consumers. Unlike credit card scams, victims of authorised push payment fraud have not been

entitled to the same level of protection. Banks frequently refuse to refund victims of this type of scam on the grounds that they authorised the transaction. Under the new voluntary code banks will reimburse consumers for their losses provided they have taken reasonable care. It is estimated that in the first half of 2018 UK consumers lost £145.4 million because of authorised push payment scams, while just £31 million was returned.

Criminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated posing as someone who has been employed by the victim, such as a builder or solicitor. The criminals then send the victim a fake invoice to get them to send money to a bank account controlled by the fraudster.



### Pop Up Police Station

#### Chalfont St Peter

Church Lane Car Park

Pop Up Police Station

**Friday 5th April**

5-30pm to 7pm

Please come along and meet your local officers. In light of the recent spate of burglaries, they will be able to discuss any questions you may have and offer crime prevention advice.

### More scam emails

Action Fraud are warning Virgin Media customers of a new email scam that threatens automatic disconnection due to invalid billing information.

People are still falling victim to the TV Licence scam texts and emails.

Please let friends and family know to ignore these scams

### Beware the HMRC scam

A Daily Mail investigations has revealed the conmen behind a scam robbing UK taxpayers of millions of pounds. Working from an office in India, they pose as HMRC officials to attempt to scam thousands of people a day. Victims are told they owe tax and face arrest and imprisonment if they do not pay up instantly. Some have lost as much as £20,000.

HMRC staff dealt with 330 repayment fraud cases/day in the 6 months to January. Not all the victims will have come forward. The Mail has passed details of the gang to Indian police who have pledged action. HMRC investigators have also asked to see the evidence.

As well as unpaid tax, the scams included computer software service fraud and calls concerning loans and PPI refunds. Many of the calls are made to appear to originate from the UK with a British phone number often being displayed on the victim's home or mobile phone. Fraudsters request payments into British bank accounts including NatWest to make them appear authentic.

Contact Action Fraud, if you have been a victim of this or any other scam 0300 123 2040



## Money News

### Probate fee hikes of up to £6,000 ARE a tax, official statistics say despite government claiming otherwise

The overhaul of probate fees has caused fresh controversy after the new fee structure was referred to as a tax by the government in a new report, despite ministers saying it wasn't last year.

Probate fees are set to go up this month and could cost families as much as £6,000, raising around £155 million a year for the government. Ministers came in for criticism after classifying the rise as a fee and not a tax, which allowed the change to bypass a debate in Parliament.

In its accompanying report to the Spring Statement, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) said the Treasury is expecting the Office for National Statistics to classify probate fees as "tax on capital rather than a payment for a service". Usually, if a government creates a new tax it has to be introduced in a parliamentary bill, where it can then be debated and voted on.

Probate fees give legal control to the family over the estate of someone when they pass away. Currently a flat fee of £215 applies (or £155 if you use a solicitor) on estates above £5,000. The threshold is set to be lifted to £50,000 from April – exempting 25,000 estates annually from fees. However, if the estate is above this you will see a rise in probate fees. Estates valued between £50,000 to £300,000 will be charged £250, going up to a maximum £6,000 for estates more than £2 million.

Those with larger estates will see costs soar.

#### Probate fee changes explained

The new charges will be linked to the size of the estate and will be as follows:

- ✦ Up to £50,000: no charge
- ✦ £50,000- £300,000: £250
- ✦ £300,000- £500,000: £750
- ✦ £500,000 to £1m: £2,500
- ✦ £1m to £1.6m: £4,000
- ✦ £1.6m- £2m: £5,000
- Above £2m: £6,000

### Unclaimed Benefits

According to the DWP, there are 13 million state pension claimants, and latest figures show at least could be losing out on £1,058 a year because they haven't checked their benefit entitlements.

Age UK estimates as much as £3.5bn worth of support is going unclaimed by older people each year. If you're over 65 and qualify for the state pension, you could be entitled to hundreds to help beat rising prices and household expenses.

**Attendance allowance** : This is paid to people aged 65 or over who have care needs such as getting dressed, going to the toilet or needing help with groceries. You don't need to actually receive help, you just need to be able to show you need it to retain your independence. It's tax free and paid every four weeks - you can get anything from £57.30 to £85.60.

**Housing benefit** : This is a means-tested benefit based on how much money you have in savings (less than £16k)

**Pension credit** : If you're on a low income, pension credit could support you.

**Winter fuel payment** : Between £100 and £300 off bills over winter.

**TV Licence discount** : Free for over 75s.

Those aged 74 can also get a short-term licence which will cover you until you're 75.

**Free travel** : Free bus passes for those over 60 and you get discounts on railcards and coaches on top. In London, this also includes the tube

**Council tax** : If you get pension credit, you'll get a discount on your council tax. If you live alone you can claim a 25% reduction

**Free NHS prescriptions** : Medication and eye tests are both free for those over 60 - and you can get help on other medical costs if you claim pension credit.

**Grandparents' credit**.

To get advice on benefits you can claim, Age UK Bucks 01296 431 911 can give excellent advice as does Citizen Advice: HW 0344 499 4108, Aylesbury 0344 411 1444, Chesham 01494 775349, Amersham 01494 545 991, Buckingham, 01280 816 787



## Health News

**what**  
would you do?  
It's your NHS. Have your say.

### How the world's tiniest implant can stop you going blind due to glaucoma

An implant, little bigger than a grain of sand, is set to transform treatment for those who are at risk of blindness due to glaucoma. The £900 i-Stent – a hollow metal tube - is so minuscule it can only be implanted in the eye using a high-powered microscope. Once in place, it drains off harmful fluid that accumulates in the eyeball and which puts pressure on the optic nerve, potentially causing irreversible vision loss.

Hundreds of patients have already benefited from the implant, which takes less than 30 minutes to fit. Many people have since been able to discard the drops they took up to three times a day to keep their condition under control. Thousands more could now be in line for the microscopic implants after the devices were approved by the NHS spending watchdog, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Eye surgeons are hopeful the procedure could revolutionise glaucoma treatment.

Glaucoma affects at least 600,000 people in the UK and is responsible for more than ten per cent of blindness cases. One person in 10 aged over 75 suffer from the condition and this is expected to increase due to an ageing population.

Regular checks are crucial to detect it, and patients are usually given drops to help excess fluid drain away, or, in more severe cases, laser surgery to increase the drainage of fluid. Missing drops regularly, or even just delaying them, can increase the risk of glaucoma getting worse. Meanwhile, laser surgery is a fairly complex procedure not always suitable for patients, so the i-Stent could provide a simple and permanent solution.

It is normally carried out at the same time as patients have cataract surgery. Once doctors have anaesthetised the area, they make a tiny incision in one corner of the eye. Using an ultra-thin needle, they then inject a miniature stent into the Schlemm's canal – a tiny draining channel in the front of the eyeball. It's then repeated on the other side of the eye.

### Have your say on the future of Bucks NHS Bucks NHS needs your views on the NHS Long Term Plan

With growing pressure on the NHS – an ageing population, more people living with long-term conditions, and lifestyle choices affecting people's health – changes are needed to make sure everybody gets the support they need.

The Government is investing an extra £20bn a year in the NHS and the NHS has produced a Long Term Plan (which you can see at [www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2019/01/the-nhs-long-term-plan](http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2019/01/the-nhs-long-term-plan))

The Long Term Plan sets out what the NHS wants to do better, including making it easier for people to access support closer to home and via technology, doing more to help people stay well, and providing better support for people with cancer, mental health conditions, heart and lung diseases, long-term conditions, such as diabetes and arthritis, learning disabilities and autism, and for people as they get older and experience conditions such as dementia.

You can take part in the survey at [www.healthwatch.co.uk/what-would-you-do](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/what-would-you-do) You'll be asked about what it should do to make care better for your community.

- How should they help people live healthier lives?
- What would make health services better?
- How would you make it easier for people to take control of their own health and wellbeing?
- What do you think they should do to make support better for people with long-term conditions?

If you do not have access to a computer you can take part by calling Healthwatch Bucks on 01844 348839 [www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk)



**2019**

Contact Details for the Bucks Older People's Action Group

Andy can be contacted on

Tel : 01296 622122

E-mail : [info@bopag.org.uk](mailto:info@bopag.org.uk)

BOPAG, c/o The Hale Farmhouse, Hale Lane,  
Wendover HP22 6QR

## **Bucks Older People's Action Group Meetings**

### **2019 Dates**

**May 15th,**

July 17th

Sept 18th

November 20th

**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

## **Volunteers Urgently Needed**

### **Treasurer for BOPAG**

We are looking for someone to hold the position of Treasurer for our group. It is straightforward with currently an annual activity of income of one grant and outgoings of about 15 cheques written each year (there are 3 signatories currently and we are adding one more).

Whilst the main group meets 6 times per year in Wycombe, it is not necessary for the Treasurer to attend these meetings but we would need the financial report for those meetings. Finances are all up to date and will be very easy to handover.

### **Treasurer for Chesham Group (COPAG)**

COPAG are also looking for a Treasurer. Their finances are equally straightforward.

Both roles will involve less than a couple of hours per month. If you think you can help, please contact Andy (details above). Thank you

## **Dates for your diary**

**18th April Hoarder Support Group** 5.30-7.30 pm at Aylesbury Fire Station, Stocklake. Entrance Unit 7 This local peer support group will provide a safe place to speak to others with similar issues and get information and advice. The group meets monthly and light buffet refreshments are provided. No need to book, just pop in. Open to individuals, family members and carers in the community who are affected by hoarding. Further dates 16th May, 13th June. For more information call Elaine on 01296 585364. or email [ehassall@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:ehassall@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk)

**13th May Reminiscence Mondays** Amersham Museum runs a monthly reminiscence group to share stories and memories from the past. Suggested donation £2 per person, sessions run 10:30—11:30 and include refreshments. Email [jane@amershammuseum.org](mailto:jane@amershammuseum.org) or call 01494 723700 for more information. Future dates are 3 June, 1 July, 9 Sept, 7 Oct, 4 Nov & 2 Dec

**15th May Healthwatch Public Board Meeting** 14:00 at Lane End Youth & Community Centre Let them know you are planning to attend by calling 01844 348839 and if you would like to ask a question, these should be submitted at least 5 days in advance by phone or email to [info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

**11th—13th June Pensioners Parliament** The opportunity to be part of a united pensioners' movement, under the co-ordination and leadership of the National Pensioners Convention. It takes place at the Blackpool Winter Gardens. Tickets are priced **£10** or **£5** for a day ticket on 11th or 12th. To book visit [www.npcuk.org/events](http://www.npcuk.org/events) or call 020-7837-6622

### **Bucks Health Trust Board Meetings**

**Wed 29 May** 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

**Wed 31 July** 9am Education Suite, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Unit 2, Walton Lodge, Walton St, Aylesbury, HP21 7QY

**Wed 25 Sept & Wed 27 Nov** 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

**Wed 27 Nov** 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

### **Buckinghamshire CCG Board Meetings**

**Thursday 13 June 2019** Meetings take place 10.30-12.30. Jubilee Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, the Gateway, Gatehouse Rd, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF

Future Dates **12 Sept, 14 Nov 2019, 12 March 2020**