

Note from the Editor

It might just be me but the madness of Christmas doesn't seem to be so bad this year. Perhaps people are wising up to the idea there are more important things in life than unwrapping gifts on Christmas day. We can only hope! But the true spirit of Christmas is still alive and wonderful people across the county give up their day to provide Christmas lunch for those who would otherwise be alone. I have listed the events that I know about on page 2 but if you know of others, please get in touch and I'll circulate the details. If you would like to volunteer at one of these lunch events, please do get in touch with them, they'll be delighted to hear from you.



Last month, we had a bumper meeting where we heard about the MediSOS Grab-bags (below). We also had guest speakers from Bucks NHS (MUDAS at Wycombe Hospital and the CATS service at Marlow and Thame Community Hubs), Oasis Bereavement Service and Caring for Older Carers Service all of which will be included in the January newsletter.

Instead this month we have information on Power of Attorney refunds that still remain unclaimed by 90% of those who are eligible and many who are not claiming the pension credit. Details for both are on page 6. Karoline has also contributed a fascinating article on her recent robotic knee operation (page 5)

I've also included information on how to stop all that irrelevant junk mail that the Royal Mail deliver with your post. For a long time, it's irked me how I sort my post and immediately throw all of that paperwork into the recycling bin. Little did I know that you can stop it. (page 3)

So as 2018 draws to a close, my thanks to you all for being part of our network and for all your support this year. I will leave you with my best wishes and most importantly, stay warm and safe.

Andy



The Medi-SOS Grab-Bag



MEDI-SOS is a small charity based in and working on behalf of residents in Bucks. They can supply Grab-Bags which are designed to be 'on hand' at home in case of an emergency hospitalisation as they can be taken with you to A&E. It's large enough to hold glasses, hearing-aids, dentures, medication and the © Medi-SOS tri-fold form that contains the vital information about you in an easy-to-read format. With its large looped handle it can be easily slipped over a wrist to keep your items safe in transit.

They also have a MEDI-SOS mobile wallet which can be carried with you in a purse, handbag, pocket and gives only basic information that can be accessed easily in the event of an accident or emergency. Ideal for anyone who is out and about everyday.

The aim was to find a simple way to help the emergency services quickly and efficiently find the information that they need and

help the elderly person to (where possible) communicate their problem successfully, with as little stress as possible.

Through the generous support of Chiltern District Council, Tesco Bags of Help, Aviva Community Fund and Heart of Bucks, the Grab-bag is free of charge to all elderly residents of Buckinghamshire although if you order via the website, they have to charge postage. The most cost-effective way to get these distributed is to contact them and through your groups distribute the bags to those who want them.

They currently have 400 bags available and Medi-SOS can be contacted via medisos999@gmail.com or PO Box 904, Amersham, HP6 9JA or 07900 577298 and the website is www.medi-sos.com



What's On- Christmas Lunches



Christmas Day Party

Tuesday 25th December 2018

11:30am to 3:00pm

McMinn Centre, East Street, Chesham

Will you be on your own this Christmas?
Do you have an elderly or isolated neighbor
who lives on their own?
Nobody should be alone at Christmas unless
they want to be

This is a chance to meet up with old friends
and make new ones, creating bonds in the
community that last well beyond Christmas
Day.

This is a free event open to anyone living in
Chesham, Amersham and Little Chalfont who
may be on their own on Christmas Day this
year.

To find out more information, book a place
or add a name to the invite list, please con-
tact Chesham Town Hall via phone 01494
774 842 or email admin@chesham.gov.uk

Aylesbury

St Mary's Free Christmas Lunch, 12 noon—
3pm. Come and enjoy a 3 course traditional
Christmas dinner followed by games, enter-
tainment and presents. All free.

The Parish Church of St. Mary's in St. Mary's
Square, Aylesbury, HP20 2JJ

Transport can be arranged for those in the
Aylesbury area who cannot get there inde-
pendently, but we must have prior notice if you
need to make use of this service. Please call
us on 07598 316126.. Unless you need
transport there is no need to book but if you
have any questions or would like to volunteer,
please contact Kim on 07714 246 593 or
Pwalter01@aol.com

High Wycombe

St Andrews Church, Wycombe
Booking required, transport available
Volunteers needed. To find out more details
contact them on 01494 529 668 or
office@standrewshw.co.uk

Newton Leys, near Bletchley

Lakeview Lodge Care Home offer Christmas
lunch to elderly people from the local commu-
nity of Newton Leys and surrounding villages,
who would otherwise be on their own on
Christmas Day.

You'll enjoy a traditional home cooked
Christmas lunch in the company of their resi-
dents residents and family members. Anyone
wishing to enjoy Christmas lunch with us, or if
you know someone that would benefit from
this, please get in touch. Places must be
booked in advance by calling Maria Moore,
Customer Relations Manager for the home, on
01908 641 200

Various locations

Abbeyfield Care Homes open
their doors on Christmas day to
welcome those who would otherwise be at home
to come and celebrate Christmas with them and
their residents.

Booking is essential and can be done so by
calling 01727 857 536



Thame

Volunteers collect guests on Christmas
morning and bring them to the Masonic Hall
where we all enjoy some entertainment and a
traditional, freshly cooked lunch.

If you would like to join us at Thame as either
a volunteer or a guest then please call our
phone number (01844 217413)
or contact Kathy who will be your hostess.



How do I opt out of receiving any leaflets or unaddressed promotional material?



Royal Mail are legally obliged to deliver all addressed mail, which includes mail that is addressed "To the Occupier" (or with any other generic recipient information), as well as mail that is personally addressed to you by name.

Opting out from Royal Mail Door to Door stops all unaddressed items from being delivered by Royal Mail (although Government mailings seem to be exempt from this opt out under the guise of national interest).

Things you need to know before choosing to 'opt out':

- It is not possible for Royal Mail to separate material you don't want from those you do want. For example: advertising offers or leaflets from material from Central and Local Government and other public bodies.
- Opting out means that no one at your address will receive unaddressed mail items.

To exercise your right to opt out, you need to fill in a form on the Royal Mail website which can be found at https://personal.help.royalmail.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/293/~/how-do-i-opt-out-of-receiving-any-leaflets-or-unaddressed-promotional-material%3F Royal Mail will action your request within 6 weeks of receiving your completed form and the opt out will last 2 years. At the end of the two year period, in order to continue with your opt out, you will simply need to repeat this process and complete a new application form to confirm that you are still resident at the address and wish to continue opting out of Door to Door deliveries.

If you have any questions or you don't have access to the internet to print off your form, you can call Royal Mail on 03457 740740 and they should send you the form. Unfortunately they are not able to accept opt out instructions over the phone and will still require you to post a completed form to them.

Opting out from other unaddressed mail deliveries

To opt out from deliveries from other unaddressed mail distributors you can register with the 'Your Choice' preference scheme run by the Direct Marketing Association.

They can be contacted at:

'Your Choice' Preference Scheme
Direct Marketing Association (UK) Ltd
DMA House
70 Margaret Street
LONDON
W1W 8SS
Telephone: 0207 291 3300
Email: yourchoice@dma.org.uk

If you would like to stop any other unwanted communications please visit The Mailing Preference Service www.mpsonline.org.uk which provides details on all other preference services, or call the Mailing Preference Service on 0845 703 4599

Opting out of receiving charity appeal communications

The Fundraising Preference Service is a website-based service that can help members of the public control the communications they receive from charities. By registering your details with the Fundraising Preference Service you can choose to stop email, telephone calls, addressed post and/or text messages directed to you personally from a selected charity or charities.

To find out more and register please visit the FRS website www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints/fundraising-preference-service or call their helpline on 0300 3033 517.



Whats On



This brand new class provides an opportunity for seniors to have fun, keep fit and be social. No previous experience is required and all shapes, sizes and abilities welcome



Lane End Village Hall, Lane End, High Wycombe, HP14 3EY.

All equipment is provided, please bring a drink
For more information contact Sue Stuart,
01494 532 088 or sastuart@globalnet.co.uk
Also if you go to the Active Bucks website
www.activebucks.co.uk you can get the first session free for you and a friend

Nordic Walking

An exercise suitable for everyone



The workout for the whole body

Nordic walking uses 90% of your major muscles, uses 40% more calories than regular walking and it lowers body mass in 12 weeks. It is a low impact exercise that reduces stress on the joints by 30% It improves posture – it's sociable – and it's a safe outdoor exercise.

A 4 week course of lessons costs £20 and once you have completed training, come and join our Nordic Walking Club in Chalfont St. Giles. (Cost per walk £1.00) Contact Karoline on 01494872589 or email lambkaroline3@gmail.com

GLL

Two new Yoga classes

Yoga – Suitable for beginners

A class that teaches whole body fitness with a relaxation element

Day – Mondays, Fridays

Time – 2.30-3.30pm, 11.30-12.30

Venue – **New Denham Community Centre**, Oxford Rd, UB9 4DW

Cost - £3 per session,

To book or for further details contact – Leon
01895 837 334 leon.popplewell@gll.org

Extra info – mats provided

BETTER
the feel good place

Christmas Market

Red Kite
Community Housing

Come to our Christmas Market on Wednesday 5th December from 11.30am-2pm at our offices in Kingsmead Business Park There will also be a FREE mince pie and mulled wine for everyone attending and you can shop for some lovely Christmas gifts including .

- Hand crafts
- Bath bombs and soaps
- Hand painted silk items
- Jewellery
- Wooden items
- Indian and vegan food
- Plus lots more

Red Kite Community Housing
Windsor Court, Kingsmead Business Park
Frederick Place, High Wycombe, HP11 1JU



My Robotic Knee Replacement

Years ago, I injured my knee but over the years I just ignored it. Last October, coming down a mountain in Morocco, I injured my knee really badly. I could hardly walk for weeks and started to limp. My cartilage/meniscus had been torn to shreds and every step I took was painful.

When I saw an Orthopaedic Consultant, I was told a knee replacement was the only solution. I was referred, firstly to Stock Mandeville hospital but they informed me in January that I was being transferred to Horton hospital in Banbury because they were too busy to do the operation. Then in April I was transferred to High Wycombe hospital only to be told in May that as I could still walk, they could not offer me an operation and I should see the consultant again in 3 months' time.

I spoke to my niece in Vienna, Austria and she told me about her very successful robotic knee replacement in a hospital in Vienna. It was a big Orthopaedic Public and Private hospital where all the knee replacements are done by robotics.

I had to have various tests, scans and x-ray. All this information was then sent off to a firm in Switzerland where a model of my knee was constructed. They also supplied the

tools. During the operation infrared beacons were attached to the leg and to the tools. My surgeon told me that if the instruments were to just go out of predefined marked area by more than 1 millimetre, the tools automatically stop. This is in fact a major advantage as only the unhealthy sections of the knee are removed and the replacement parts fit exactly. Other benefits are that the operation takes about half the time and the blood loss is less. The recovery is also shorter.

In the UK, only one private hospital does this robotic knee operation. I was told it takes a lot of training and about 200 operation under supervision.

It is a big and painful operation and is not a quick fix. The recovery is slow. The amount and variety of exercises one must do are painful and very time consuming. The aim is to be able to get back to the same mobility as one had before. My operation was 4½ months ago and I am still not quite there. However, I am pleased walking is pain free and my walking speed is also getting better. Cycling is becoming almost easy, but I know I must keep up my exercises because my knee becomes stiff after resting.

Karoline Lamb

HMRC Scam

Fraudsters are phoning victims to say an arrest warrant has been made in their name because of unpaid taxes or outstanding debts. But even more sinister, the fraudsters are cloning phone numbers used by HMRC so that it appears as if the phone calls are actually coming from HMRC. The number is usually displayed on a person's phone as 0300 2003300 – the official HMRC number. On some phones, when the call comes through HMRC appears on their screen as if that is the genuine caller.

The automated message asks people to press a button on their phones to speak to someone, warning that if they don't they could face serious legal consequences.

Be warned, this is a scam. Any questions or concerns, please contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 20 40

TV Licence Scam Emails

If you get one (or several) of these emails, please ignore, it's another scam

**OFFICIAL NOTICE FROM
ENFORCEMENT DIVISION**
expiredcontract.tvlicensing.co.uk

Please read carefully

You are in violation of Communications

Act2003 if you :

- * **watch or record liveTV programmes on any channel or device or,**
- * **download or watch BBCprogrammes on iPlayer.**

Stop enforcement action

This is your last chance to stop this investigation. We can help you check if you need a licence and choose the best way to spread the cost if you need one



Money Matters

Power of Attorney refunds remain unclaimed

Just one in 10 eligible for Power of Attorney refund has claimed - make sure you don't miss out. A recent Freedom of Information request show that of 1.9 million people eligible for a refund, just 203,000 had claimed up to August this year.

Refunds are owed to those who paid for a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) between April 2013 and March 2017. This is because in this time period the Office of Public Guardian reduced its operating costs and became more efficient, but failed to reduce the fees until April 2017.

When you paid the fee	Refund for each PoA
April to Sept 2013	£54
Oct 2013 to Mar 2014	£34
April 2014 to Mar 2015	£37
April 2015 to Mar 2016	£38
April 2016 to Mar 2017	£45

Claims can be made easily using an online claim form at www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney-refund or by calling the claims help-line 0300 456 0300. Refund claims can be made by the donor who set up the lasting power of attorney or any attorney appointed by the donor.

The online form takes around 10 minutes to complete and you will need to provide details of the donor's bank account number and sort code.

If the donor doesn't have a bank account, has died or you are a court appointed deputy you will need to call the refunds claim line on 0300 456 0300 (choose option 6). Claims will take up to 12 weeks to be paid.

Pensioners missing out on up to £2,500 in Pension Credit:

More than £3bn went unclaimed for third straight year, as people again fail to take Pension Credit. New figures show almost 40 % of families entitled to receive Pension Credit did not claim the benefit, losing out on around £2,500 per year.

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit that provides top-up payments for retirees on low incomes.

It comes in two parts;

Guarantee Credit, which tops up your weekly income to a guaranteed minimum level of £163 if you are single, or £248.80 per week if you are a couple, and

Savings Credit which is extra money on top of savings, or if your income is higher than the basic State Pension.

Pension Credit is only available to people who have reached State Pension age before April 6, 2016, and can give you up to £13.40 extra per week if you are single, or £14.99 if you are couple.

To make a claim for Pension Credit or find out more call the claim line on 0800 99 1234.

Changes to Probate Fees

The probate fee structure is changing, and for many it won't be for the better. Fees charged for probate are currently fixed at £215 (£155 for those who use a solicitor.)

But the Government announced that the charges will be linked to the size of the estate. Under the proposed new system, estates valued at £2m+ will now pay £6,000, while those worth £1.6m—£2m will pay £5,000 and those between £1m and £1.6m £4,000. Estates worth £500,000 to £1m will pay £2,500, while those in the £50,000 to £300,000 bracket will pay £250. Those valued at less than £50,000 will be exempt.

According to estimates, one in five families who pay fees will need to find at least £2,500. Aside from the soaring costs, executors will also have to pay the fee up front before reclaiming it from the estate once probate has been granted.



Health News

healthwatch
Bucks

Healthwatch Bucks Celebrate 100 Care Home Visits

In November, Healthwatch Bucks completed their 100th care home visit as part of the Dignity in Care project.

Healthwatch Bucks is commissioned by Bucks County Council to run this project. The main aim is to use the voices of those in care to make recommendations to care homes for improvements. This way, Healthwatch Bucks can make sure that the dignity and needs of the residents are at the forefront of any changes being made in care homes. The reports also inform the public to help them make the right choices around care.

Healthwatch Bucks is immensely proud to have made 100 care homes visits in 30 towns and villages across Bucks county. This work would not have been possible without their volunteers who have given over 6000 hours to the Dignity in Care project.

Do you have any feedback on a care home in Bucks? Let Healthwatch Bucks know at www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk, or by calling 0845 260 6216.

Pensioners are more likely to hide any mental health conditions than younger people

Pensioners are 3 times more likely to feel uncomfortable admitting to a mental illness due to old school 'stiff upper lip' according to a YouGov survey of over 2,000 adults for older people's charity Independent Age.

They found that 24% of respondents felt uncomfortable with people knowing they were depressed but data suggests the elderly are more likely to bounce-back from poor mental health.

If you would like to talk to someone about mental health. You can :

- Talk to your GP
- Call an emotional support helpline like Samaritans (116 123) or the Silver Line (0800 4 70 80 90)
- Call a specialist mental health helpline like Rethink (0300 5000 927) or Mind (0300 123 3393)

Are you interested in finding out what people think of health and social care?

Healthwatch are looking for people to join their Enter & View team. Enter & View is the activity when Healthwatch Bucks visits a place like a hospital or care home to see how a service is delivered. They talk to the people who use the service and their families and carers. In care homes, they also talk to visitors and often staff too. They talk to these people to get a picture of what is done well and what could be done better. They then share this learning with others to improve the service.

Enter & View volunteers work with a member of staff on each project. You would go out in pairs or sometimes groups of four.

Are you interested in talking to people and listening to their views? Would you like to help improve the way health and social care is delivered in Bucks? Healthwatch will train you and ask that you commit to one visit every four months. The visit will last about 3 hours. Afterwards, you would need to spend a small amount of time commenting on any report by e-mail.

If you would be interested in finding out more about this, and other volunteer roles please visit www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/how-we-work/volunteer/ . The next Enter & View training date will be January 9th. If you want to know more about this, please e-mail Ali-son@healthwatchbucks.co.uk.

Health Minister Matt Hancock considers 'age tax'

Everyone over 40 may soon be taxed to cover the cost of later life care if proposals are given the go ahead.

Matt Hancock, the Health and Social Care Secretary, said he was 'attracted to' a cross party plan for a compulsory premium deducted from the earnings of the over 40s.

The proposals are based on the German healthcare system where all workers over 40 pay 2.5% of their income into a pot formally reserved for social care.



2018

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

2019 Dates

Jan 23rd

March 20th,

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

Burglary Prevention Advice



Thames Valley Police are reminding residents to check their home security. You can reduce the risk of becoming a victim of burglary by taking a few simple steps:

- When going out, remember to light up your home using timer switches or a TV simulator.
- Don't leave valuables or cash on display and store your house and car keys away from your letterbox.
- Move bins away from any side gates to prevent easy access into your property.
- Lock any tools away to prevent them being used to break into your home.
- Consider fitting a motion activated external light or installing a CCTV system.
- Finally, mark your valuables using a UV pen and register them on the national property register at www.immobilise.com.

Burglaries should always be reported by calling 999.

For more burglary prevention advice, please visit our website at www.thamesvalley.police.uk/burglary

Dates for your diary

Wed 5th Dec Knit & Natter £2.50, Workaid, Chesham

Sat 8th Dec 10-2 Craft Open Day Be inspired by crafts in action also at Workaid, Chesham The Old Boot Factory, 71 Townsend Road, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 2AA 01494 775220 crafts@workaid.org

Saturday 15th December Great Missenden Choral Society, 7:30pm at St Peter & St Paul Church, Gt Missenden, HP16 0AZ Tickets £15 available from www.gmcsonline.co.uk or Wye County, 36B High St, Gt Miss, 01494 864 225

Bucks Health Trust Board Meetings

Wed 30 January 2019, 9am Education Suite, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Unit 2, Walton Lodge, Walton Street, Aylesbury

Wed 27 March 2019, 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

Buckinghamshire CCG Board Meetings

The final 2018 Governing Body meeting will take place on **Thursday 13 December**

2019 meetings are

Thursday 10 January 2019

Thursday 14 March 2019

All meetings take place 10.30-12.30. This meeting will be in public at Jubilee Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, the Gateway, Gatehouse Rd, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF

The **Buckinghamshire Primary Care Commissioning Committee** next meeting will take place on the **6th December** 3pm – 5pm, Bevan Room, 2nd Floor The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 8FF

Closing Date 10th December :

Bucks County Council consultation on new charges for Adult Social Care services 2019/20

This is the consultation on increasing charges for people who qualify to pay the full or part cost of their care. Residents directly affected by the changes will be sent detailed information about the proposed increases in charges, along with a postal survey to give their views.

Anyone can take part in the consultation via <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/>

If you have any other questions about this consultation, please call them on **01296 387904** or email bussupteamafwnorth@buckscc.gov.uk