

Note from the Editor

I have decided that this edition will be an election free zone bar the encouragement that you do go out and vote. In my lifetime, it certainly feels more important than ever to make your voice heard.

Now onto festive things, there is the annual round up on page 2 of those amazing organisations that throw open their doors to those who would otherwise spend Christmas alone and if panto is your thing, Emma, at Wycombe Swan would love to hear from you as she has some great offers for matinee performances.

Now that Winter is upon us, page 7 has some useful advice on those seasonal aches and pains as well as where to see advice should you start feeling unwell and it is important that you reach out right away before any illness gets worse.

I love positive stories about older people who defy age stereotypes and just go for it so with the new year just round the corner, I've featured 3 such people (page 5) that I found in the news in the last couple of months who really do demonstrate that age is absolutely no barrier. My personal favourite is kick boxing Jean aka the Beast!

For those of you in the Chiltern area, please take a look at the information on the Chiltern Dial a Ride service on page 3. An amazing team that I got to know this year who provide a critical service for those who would otherwise struggle to get out, including those in wheelchairs.

And finally, my apologies for the lateness of this newsletter. I mentioned last month that most of the last 4 months has been taken up with my daughters renovation project in London. She moved in last weekend and that came with the inevitable last minute rush of painting, cleaning up and making sure that the builder sorted the snag list. Still making daily trips down there but the end really is in sight now!

Festive wishes to you all and my heartfelt thanks for being such wonderful and supportive readers. Have fun, be good & stay safe.

Andy



Special Offers for Trips to the Theatre & Cinema

WYCOMBE
SWAN

Emma Coffill, group sales supervisor at Wycombe Swan theatre, has got in touch to let us know that they have some great rates for the matinee performances of their current pantomime Dick Whittington, on 2nd and 3rd Jan. There is great availability for both shows, and she would be delighted to help organise a trips to the theatre for any groups. She has some great offers including free tickets for the volunteers/organisers.

If panto is not really your scene, they also have some great shows coming up next year, all with offers and if travel is an issue, Emma can organise a door to door service. She would love to welcome you to the Wycombe Swan so if you are interested in booking please get in touch with Emma on ecoffill@wycombeswan.co.uk or her direct phone number is 01494 552875

There can also be some great offers for matinee performances at cinemas too. Odeon offers dedicated silver screenings for over-55s who can enjoy tea and biscuits with friends before a film for just £3. There is an Odeon in Aylesbury and these screenings tend to run on Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 11am. You can find the screenings at www.odeon.co.uk/silvercinema. Empire cinema, in Wycombe, also offers a seniors screenings for £3.75 every Wednesday morning with a free hot drink and biscuit (https://www.empirecinemas.co.uk/seniors_synopsis/). If you've never been to the Rex at Berkhamstead, it's an absolute nostalgic treat and their matinee prices are £5 (upstairs) and £6.50 (downstairs tables). Booking office 01442 877759



What's On- Christmas Lunches

Aylesbury

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

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

There is no need to book but if you have any questions contact Kim on 07714 246 593 or kimwalter01@gmail.com

High Wycombe

St Andrews Church, Hatters Lane, Wycombe
Booking required, transport available
Volunteers needed. To find out more details contact them on 01494 529 668 or marion@lyon.uk.com

High Wycombe

Hope Community Christmas Lunch
Hope community church
Chapel Lane
Sands, High Wycombe HP12 4BY
[07851 352 138](tel:07851352138)
info@hopesda.org.uk

Chesham

The Mayor's Christmas Day Party at the Douglas McMinn Centre, 106A High Street Chesham, HP5 1DG
11:30 to 15:30

Meal with music entertainment and a visit from Father Christmas.

Booking is required and this can be done by contacting Maria McGwynn.



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

All events are free.

If you would like to volunteer, please get in touch with the organisers of the events, they will be delighted to hear from you

December Events



Christmas Gift Wrapping Service

Take the pressure off Christmas and support Scannappeal at the same time.
Back for the 3rd year running come along to our Christmas gift wrapping service at the Eden Shopping Centre, High Wycombe.
Thursday 19 December – 10am – 7pm
Friday 20 December – 10am -5pm
Saturday 21 December – 10am – 5pm
Sunday 22 December – 11am – 5pm
Monday 23 December – 10am – 5pm
Tuesday 24 December – 10am – 3pm
We will be located outside Poundland, opposite Boots.
Wrappers needed- If you have any spare time over this festive period to volunteer and you can wrap, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch. We are also looking for donations of Christmas wrapping paper, ribbons or gift tags for this wrapping service. Please contact us if you are able to donate supplies.

New Years Eve Concert

The Amersham Polish Club present its annual New Year's Eve Concert with the 20/20 Party Band in aid of Scannappeal. Dance, sing and party the night away to the 20/20 Party Band, a group of top-class musicians and 5 vocalists.
Doors open 9pm Tuesday 31st December and ends at 1am.
Tickets are £15 and can be purchased from The Record Shop Ltd in Amersham 01494-433311 (credit card bookings available).

More information/ booking etc and future events can be found at www.scannappeal.org.uk or call 01494 734161



THE CHILTERN
Dial-a-Ride
helping you get around

THE CHILTERN DIAL -A-RIDE (CDAR)

Charity No 1161606

CDAR is a charity that provides a **door to door, there and back (two way)** transport service with trained, caring drivers using our bespoke minibuses, all with wheelchair access. We serve those in the community who have difficulty getting out and about.

Individuals (2019/20) pay an ANNUAL membership fee of £20 to cover admin costs

Fares are £5 for the first 3 miles and £1.50 a mile thereafter.

No charge is made for an accompanying carer.

No extra charge is made for wheelchair users.

And we collect you at the time agreed to take you home again.

Journeys preferably should be booked at least 4 working days in advance.

The fares you pay are subsidised - and for short journeys are comparable or lower than a taxi and for longer journeys, certainly so.

Two examples, say, for someone living in Amersham-on-the Hill.

1. Ride (door to door) from Amersham to *Wycombe Hospital*, Driver waits or returns to collect you 2 hours later to return home. 18 miles. CDAR fare £28, taxi fare £40.

2. Ride (door to door) from Amersham to *Stoke Mandeville Hospital* and picked up 2 hours later to return home. 30 miles. CDAR fare £46, taxi fare £58 (with wheelchair, minimum £70).

Wheelchairs: Local taxis will generally only take a wheelchair user provided the user can sit in the vehicle with the wheelchair folded up. Commercial entities that do have wheelchair access (as CDAR does) charge a considerable premium for the privilege.

Group outings: Ring CDAR to discuss, get a quote and arrange.



To call CDAR, ring **01494 766123**



Events at Gracewell



Gracewell of High Wycombe have the following events in December and are all open to the community and are free:

Saturday 7th December 1-3 pm – Christmas Fair Join us for a family fun packed Christmas afternoon – Christmas Market, Tombola, Various craft and gift stalls, Kid's Christmas crafts, Santa's Grotto, Guess how many buttons?, Delicious hot filled rolls from the carvery, mulled wines, mince pies plus a chance to win a luxury Christmas hamper.

Saturday 14th December 3 pm – High Wycombe Choral society Carols service – Mince pie and mulled wine

Sunday 22nd December 11 am – Holy Trinity Church Choir Carol Service – mince pie and mulled wine

Forever Friday Café 2-4 pm - A chance to bring, buy or just socialise. Every Friday we open our Bistro to the whole community. We invite you to come and join us for complimentary tea/coffee and cake. Local sellers will be invited to sell their items each week as well as our own collection of books, puzzles and bric a brac available for you to buy. Donations are welcome. Please contact if you have items you would like to sell

Gracewell of High Wycombe, The Row, Lane End, High Wycombe, HP14 3JS. Contact Hayley on 01494 412252 to find out more about these and future events

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

Whatever cancer throws your way, Macmillan Cancer Support are right there with you Macmillan based at High Wycombe Library

If you or anyone you know is affected by cancer and you would like some information or support please drop in and speak to one of Macmillan's Information and Support Volunteers based at High Wycombe Library on the 1st floor.

The drop-in sessions are available at the library on the following days:

Tuesday's 10am – 1pm
Wednesday's 11am – 2pm
Thursdays 12pm – 3pm



Bonnie Day

INSPIRATION IN CARE SINCE 2012

Drawing on their experience from years of teaching, Gill & Marilyn wanted to provide interesting and engaging activity sessions for older people in care home and other settings and created The Bonnie Day Way.

They have now moved beyond running sessions and want to pass on what they have created to care and nursing homes, Activity Co-ordinators, carers, relatives and friends everywhere. They have created a number of resources for use and they can be used in group settings or on a 1:1 basis.

These resources include poetry books with accompanying activities and a DVD, for you to use either in a family setting or wider sessions with older people. They have also made available a free pack of reminiscence images which can be found at bonnie-day.co.uk/about



In The News

90-year-old woman graduates and proves it's never too late to study

One inspiring lady has proved that you're never too old to pursue your dreams. Lorna Prendergast graduated from the University of Melbourne last week, at the age of 90.



Perhaps what's even more impressive, is the fact that Lorna completed the course entirely online – defying the stereotype that older generations struggle with technology. The former telephonist and librarian turned to academia in her late 80s, following the death of her husband Jim of 64 years. She hoped university would help her to keep going with her life. She said: 'Nobody is too old to sit down and say "I'm too old, I can't do it". There's no such word as "can't" in the dictionary.'

Grandad crowned fastest 84-year-old in world

An amazingly athletic OAP holds the title of the fastest 84-year-old in the world - despite having two heart attacks.



Silver sprinter Tony Bowman represented team GB at the European Masters in Italy in September and came away with three medals after competing in the 80-84 age category.

The octogenarian grabbed the gold in the hurdles, where he sprinted along an 80m track jumping two-and-a-quarter feet hurdles in only 16.8 seconds. Tony also got the silver medal in the 400m relay, bronze in decathlon and came fourth in the 100m and fifth in the 200m.

He staves off ill health by training every other day, dancing and playing hockey. Tony also recently cut down on alcohol and chocolate to help him in his ambition to run 100m at 100, and living to 120.

Gran, 76, with arthritis and two replacement knees has become UK's oldest boxer

A pensioner with arthritis and two replacement knees has ignored the pain to become Britain's oldest kick-boxer. Jean McKenzie Baldwin, 76, has been nicknamed 'The Beast' by trainers because of her fearsome reputation in the ring.

The Scots-born gran took up the sport on the advice of her son following the death of her beloved husband Peter. She has built up her confidence in the gym and is now set for her first charity bout - against a woman in her 60s. Her trainer says Jean, from Smisby, Derbys, goes into "beast mode" when she steps into the ring.

She says the sport has given her a new lease of life and helped her get through the grieving process. Jean, a gran-of-three, said: "I love kick-boxing. It's so invigorating. Even though I'm full of arthritis I feel absolutely great. It's will-power more than anything, and pride actually." The sprightly pensioner is urging others to follow in her footsteps by getting into the ring. "Just get out there," pleaded Jean, who trains three times a week. "Stop sitting in the house all day long and get out. "Even though you've still got all the wrinkles and grey hair, you'll feel about 20 years younger. It's a new lease of life."





Money Matters

State Pension set to rise

State pensions are set to rise by 3.9% from April, the biggest increase since 2012. This means that those receiving the old state pension (ie, those who reached state pension age by April 6 2016) will see their basic payment increase by £5.05 a week to £134.25. Those receiving the new state pension (those who reached state pension age after this) will see an increase of £6.60 a week to £175.20.

State pensions are protected by the 'triple lock', meaning the amount paid is increased every year in line with inflation, average earnings or 2.5% – whichever is highest. While the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation measure for September was 1.7%, average earnings increased by 3.9% in the three months leading up to July, so this figure will be used.

The increase will come into force from April 2020, assuming it is approved by Parliament as is expected

Better-educated pension savers more likely to fall victim to scams, says regulator

“Scams can happen to anyone, so before making any decision about your pension, take your time, be ScamSmart and always check who you are dealing with.” says Pension regulator (TPR)

Being overconfident could also lead to savers missing the signs of a scam, with better-educated people thinking they were too intelligent to get caught out.

In the survey of over 4,000 people, despite six out of 10 saying they are confident to make a decision about their pension, the same number would trust someone offering pensions advice out of the blue – one of the main warning signs of a scam. Those with university degrees are more likely to fall for a pension scam. The survey found that those with a university degree are 40% more likely to accept a free pension review from a company they've not dealt with before and were 21% more likely to take up the offer of early access to their pension pot. Both common scam tactics.

Disabled older people not claiming Attendance Allowance

More than 3.4 million disabled pensioners could be missing out on up to £4,500 a year in help towards the costs of their care, a national debt charity has warned. If you think you may be eligible for the attendance allowance benefit, here's how to check.

Attendance allowance is for people over pension age who need assistance with their care, due to a mental or physical disability, or terminal illness. But while 6.41 million people aged 65 or over need help with daily activities, only 2.98 million claim according to charity Turn2us.

The allowance is paid at two different rates: £58.70 a week or £87.65 a week. The lower rate is for those who require care during the day OR night, and the higher rate is for those who require care during the day AND night, or are terminally ill. By claiming attendance allowance – which isn't means-tested – you could also be eligible for pension credit, housing benefit or a council tax reduction.

To be eligible you need to have reached state pension age and have a terminal illness, or a physical or mental disability – this includes a sensory disability such as blindness, or learning difficulties. The disability must be severe enough for you to need help caring for yourself and you must have needed that help for at least six consecutive months. However, it doesn't matter if no one actually gives you this help, as long as you can show you need it.

To claim, you can call the attendance allowance helpline on 0800 731 0122 or use the textphone service on 0800 731 0317 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm). You can also phone the Disability and Carer's Service to arrange a claim form to be sent to you on 0800 587 0912, or use the textphone service on 0800 012 1574 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). If you need help in making a claim or deciding what benefits you're entitled to, you can contact your local Age UK or Citizens Advice office.



Health News

Coping with winter aches and pains

Joint pain can occur anytime throughout the year, but can feel worse and harder to cope with during the cold winter months. Some common causes of winter aches and pains

Osteoarthritis The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis. As we age, the cartilage that cushions our joints can gradually waste away, leading to rubbing of bone on bone.

Rheumatoid arthritis This occurs when your body's immune system attacks the joints. The joints and inflamed tissues then become stiff, painful and swollen..

Raynaud's Phenomenon (or Raynaud's)

Raynauds Phenomenon is a common condition in which the blood vessels under your skin go into a temporary spasm in reaction to the cold, cutting off normal blood flow.

Vitamin D Vitamin D is synthesised in the skin as a result of UVB exposure from sunlight. A low level of vitamin D can result in joint and muscular pain. As the strength of the sunlight reaching us weakens from October to March, the government's advice is to take 10mcg of Vitamin D per day.

Tips for dealing with aches and pains

1. Keep moving to prevent stiffness keep muscles strong. In fact remaining active is vital to keep joints mobile and your muscles strong.
2. Don't let cold weather put you off normal physical activities and errands. Wrap up warm and wear appropriate footwear to prevent you from slipping if it's wet or icy.
3. If you're new to exercise, don't overdo it. Slowly build the amount you do.
4. Whatever activity you choose, remember good posture. Every activity can be done differently, so think about which positions put the least strain on your joints.
5. Pain isn't just a physical sensation, it can have emotional effects too. Pain often makes us feel upset and tired and if stops us getting out and about it can make us feel lonely and isolated too. Pain can exacerbate a low mood, but the reverse is true too. It's a vicious circle so If you feel that you're not coping – with pain or your mood – reach out to your GP.

Staying well this Winter

Buckinghamshire health and social care partners would like us all to be aware of their Winter campaign so that if we need help and advice, we know where to go

Know what to do

- Call NHS111 if you think you need medical help and it's urgent, or are unsure what to do. It's free and available 24/7. Trained staff can connect you with a nurse or doctor, give telephone advice, or book an appointment with a GP or the Urgent Treatment Centre in High Wycombe, if that is what you need. NHS111 is also available online: 111.nhs.uk
- Pharmacists are a great first port of call, offering clinical advice and over the counter remedies as well as the flu jab. Seek advice or help right away for any illness before it gets worse.

How to stay well

Everyone can play their part this winter and take practical steps to help stay well as possible.

- Make sure you have your flu jab. Flu can be life-threatening to vulnerable people.
- Many people find winter especially challenging to their mental wellbeing. If you have concerns about stress, anxiety or depression talk to a GP or go online: to Healthy Minds, an NHS service for talking therapies, and practical support for adults with a Bucks www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/healthyminds/ or call 01865 901600. In addition, Every Mind Matters offers practical advice www.nhs.uk/oneyou/
- Be a good neighbour to older people to make a real difference to someone who may be lonely or vulnerable, especially in icy weather so they don't struggle out and risk a nasty fall.



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

Bucks Older People's Action Group Meetings

2020 Dates

22nd January

18th March

20th May

15th July

16th September

18th November

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

Dates for your diary

Monday 30 December Big Conversation Café at Thame Community Hospital 1:30-3pm Drop in

Tuesday 31 December Big Conversation Café at Marlow Community Hospital 1:30-3pm Drop in

Public Health Meetings

These are meetings that members of the public can attend and ask questions

Wed 29 January 2020, 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

Wed 25 March 2020, 9am Education Suite, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Unit 2, Walton Lodge, Walton Street, Aylesbury HP21 7QY

Buckinghamshire CCG Board Meetings

5th December 2019 12th March 2020.

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

Health Secretary, Matt Hancock visits Wycombe Hospital

Health secretary Matt Hancock visited High Wycombe last week after he was urged to come to the town to discuss the future of the hospital by MP Steve Baker. *(By the time you read this their roles may have completely changed!)*

Previously Steve Baker has referred to Wycombe Hospital as an "increasingly tired 1960s tower block" and asked the health secretary to come and see it for himself and discuss Mr Baker's plans to encourage the development of a new "blue light hub" which could potentially see police, fire and the ambulance service all working together on one site. One is currently being built in Milton Keynes, costing £14 million.

Mr Hancock's visit comes amid claims from Bucks Healthcare Trust's CEO Neil Macdonald that the county's hospitals are relying on "ageing" technology - and they have had to put off maintenance to their buildings - because they need more funding.

Distraction Burglary



A distraction Burglary took place in the middle of the day in Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury

Three males gained entry to the rear of the victim's property under the pretence of un-blocking drains. They had been allowed through the house to the front of the garden and then back through the house again when they were asked to leave.

Description of the offenders are as follows; the lead male was described by the victim as white, 30-40 years old, about 5ft 10, with stocky build. He had light brown wavy hair which was quite curly, clean shaven. He was going by the name Dave and he wore a dark coloured pullover, puffer jacket and dark trousers.

The other two males cannot be described in detail except one similar in height and one slightly taller than Dave. They all had local accents.

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