

Note from the Editor

Well, the election is over and everyone seems to be trying to make sense of what it all means. With the help of information from the National Pensioners Convention and Age UK, I've pulled together on page 2 what we know so far but suffice to say, it is a fluid situation which may well have changed by the time you read it! I can only hope that all our politicians work together for the good of our country rather than opportunistic point scoring.

The article below is one of the saddest things I've read in a long time for what it says about the times we live in. People like Peter live in our streets and yet are invisible, forgotten. It doesn't take much to make the world of difference to their lives and it doesn't have to be through an organised scheme. If there is something that we could all do this month, is say hello to someone you know is alone. Even if it's to knock on their door and offer to pick up a pint of milk if you are off to do your own shopping.

I wonder how many people have really looked at their water bill. There is a chance that you are paying too much especially if you live alone. Please do pass on the information on page 3 to as many people as possible as it only takes a quick call to see if you are on the wrong tariff.

Bucks now seems to be one of the areas where Accountable Care Systems will develop from Sustainable Transformation Plans. What does this mean? I honestly don't know yet apart from more change. Our Clinical Commissioning Groups are offering to come and talk at your groups (page 7), get them along and ask them questions. On the 19th July, Dr Tina Kenny, Medical Director, and Carolyn Morrice, Chief Nurse will attend our BOPAG meeting (page 8), you are welcome to join us.

I'll sign off with a nod to Terry Price, one of the feistiest, passionate campaigners I have ever met. It was a privilege to have known him.

Andy

The Plague of Loneliness

In the middle of May, I was asked as a volunteer with Chesham Good Neighbour Scheme, if I would cover for John who was taking a two-week holiday. He visits Peter in the Chalfonts once week.

John takes him to pick up his pension at the Post Office, his weekly shop at the Coop, and calls at the corner shop for his pipe tobacco and TV magazine, John usually stays and has a chat. I did the same.

Peter has lived in the same street since 1933. At that time, it was a lively street. All the kids went to the same school and everyone knew everyone else in the street. Now, I would probably be only person he will see to talk to until I call next week.

Neighbours either side of him are from other countries. He did have one fellow kindly cut his grass front and back. He has family not far away in but they don't visit.

He has a TV, what do you watch I asked. He said he doesn't turn it on till 6pm for the news,

cannot stand cookery programmes and quizzes. Just smokes his pipe which he told me several times that he knew it was bad for him, and looks at a blank wall.

What I did notice when I took him out on those two days in May is walking about in the Coop and along the street, plenty of people seemed to know him, Peter whispered in my ear that no one had ever offered him a lift into town.

As I said only visited him twice I don't know too much about him, but plague is the right word for loneliness in this day and age.

Contributed by one of our readers. The names have been changed

If you feel that you would like to make the world of difference to someone, you can find out if there is a Good Neighbour Scheme or equivalent in your area by contacting Prevention Matters on 0300 666 0159



Post-Election Round-up

The result of June 8th's General Election and the subsequent Queen's speech has raised a number of important issues for pensioners.

Who are the key Ministers

The government has appointed Guy Opperman, the MP for Hexham as the new Pensions' Minister replacing Richard Harrington. The situation in social care is more complicated. The former care minister, David Mowat (who suggested families needed to do more to provide care for their loved ones) lost his seat in the election, but the government has yet to appoint his successor. Moreover, in Theresa May's first period as Prime Minister she has downgraded the role from Minister of State to Under Secretary of State. Given the crisis in social care, the issue should be dealt with at Cabinet level.

Policies

As a result of the Conservative party failing to get an overall majority in the general election, it now seems likely that a number of proposals in the election manifesto will be dropped. For example, the plan to remove the triple lock from the state pension in 2020 and to means-test the winter fuel allowance away from up to 10 million pensioners now seems unlikely to happen.

However, in the Queen's Speech on 21 June it was announced that over the next few months the government would consult on the future funding of social care. On the same day, Damian Green MP, the deputy Prime Minister told the media there would be a cap on the amount of money that people would have to pay for their care – but declined to say what that might be.

Campaigners are concerned that this consultation must not allow the government to introduce this discredited and unpopular policy through the backdoor. Either a consultation is open – or the government has already made up its mind what it wants to do, and is simply going through the motions. The NPC plans to take a leading role in this issue and continue to press the case for a tax-funded social care system.

Jeremy Hunt retains his role as Secretary of State for Health. NHS England had recently announced sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) and now it appears that

these are to evolve into 'accountable care systems' (ACSs). Most of us had hardly got our heads around what STPs were going to mean let alone these newly announced ACSs. Eight areas of England have now been identified to lead their development, Bucks is one of those areas.

What we do know is that the development of ACSs draws on experience from health systems on the United States and other countries and comprise of three core elements.

First, they involve a provider or, more usually, an alliance of providers that collaborate to meet the needs of a defined population. Second, these providers take responsibility for a budget allocated by a commissioner or alliance of commissioners to deliver a range of services to that population. And third, ACSs work under a contract that specifies the outcomes and other objectives they are required to achieve within the given budget, often extending over a number of years.

Perhaps the only thing that is clear at this time, is that there is more change ahead for the NHS.

The Energy Bill makes no mention of tackling fuel poverty and cold homes.

Buses Bill provides the option for combined authority areas with elected mayors to be responsible for running their local bus services. However, rural areas which have seen reductions in bus services, will not benefit from this bill.

As well as the keeping the triple lock pension and winter fuel allowance, the government has committed to protect free bus passes, TV licences and free prescriptions for pensioners. At least for this parliament anyway.

Opposition

Labour has retained Alex Cunningham as shadow pensions' minister and Barbara Keeley as shadow care minister. Jon Ashworth is the shadow minister for Health



No Water Meter? Living Alone?



If so, you are probably paying too much for your water.

If you don't have a water meter fitted at your home, Thames Water work out your charges by multiplying your properties chargeable value, by a 'rate per pound.' There's one rate for water and one rate for wastewater. The rate per pound for your home will be worked out depending on where you live.

Ways to reduce your bill

1) Water usage

If you live alone, tell them. This will bring your bill down significantly as you will qualify for the single occupancy rate. You don't even need a meter fitted.

If there are only 2 of you in a property, you are very likely to be better off with a water meter. Phone Thames Water and request one. Only 28% of Thames Water customers have a meter.

If a meter cannot be fitted (for technical reasons), Thames Water offer a different charging rate called the assessed household charge based on number of bedrooms, which is again cheaper than the standard formula.

2) Wastewater

If your property only has surface water drainage, (e.g. you have a septic tank etc.) you don't have to pay rate based wastewater charges and instead pay a fixed fee of £43.72 a year.

If your home isn't connected to surface water drains, you can claim a reduction of £24.00 on the fixed wastewater charge, bringing it down to £29.00.

You can contact Thames Water on **0800 980 8800** and you will need your billing details



Kiddleydivey Friends

Come and join our friendly music and singing group every Thursday afternoon and Beaconsfield

Enjoy songs from days gone by, watch clips from old films and maybe even enjoy a dance

Kiddleydivey Friends meets in the Guide HQ in Beaconsfield in Malthouse Square every Thursday afternoon from 2:00pm – 3:30pm.

Tea, coffee and cake are provided.

Sessions have a suggested donation of £5 per person, with carers free of charge!

For more information contact Sally Murphy at email info@kiddleydivey.co.uk or call 07740 679054



Try out guitar, string and woodwind instruments
At Buckingham Library, Verney Close,
Buckingham, MK18 1JP
All ages welcome



Staying Safe

Scam Watch!



Email “*Your Tax Return Refund Overdue*
We noticed that your tax refund remains unpaid, if you are the rightful holder of the account and you must update your account! We also require you to create a Six Digit Phone Identification Code this will gives you access to you account over the phone any time you call Us. Your Identification Code can only be any 6 numbers you like.” etc

Don't click on the links. Flag the email as spam and then delete

Phone A new one for me but I have personally had 6 or 7 calls, all pre-recorded messages telling me in a slightly threatening way that I owe money to the tax office and either I, or my financial advisor, has to call the number provided, immediately.

Ignore the call and if you have a blocking service, block the number



Working in partnership
to make our community safer



Post thefts

Police have been investigating reports received during the month of May and early June, of two men visiting homes in the villages and towns to the north of Aylesbury Vale purporting to be delivering leaflets.

Residents have raised concerns that mail and other items have been stolen from their letter boxes following these visits, especially where letter boxes are located on external walls or gateways.

Witnesses describe two men, both black and in their 20s wearing fluorescent jackets, driving a white, Vauxhall Corsa derived van. Investigating Officer Det Con Lucie Roberts from Aylesbury police station said, “I'd encourage anyone who may have seen them during the last few weeks, or has information about their activity, to please call us on 101.

“Personal details taken through mail box theft can be used for fraudulent activity. It is always advisory to check your accounts or credit sources to ensure all is in order.”



Who are Nottingham Knockers?

Please warn your neighbours, particularly elderly or vulnerable neighbours, not to open the door to strangers or buy or sell on the doorstep. The sellers may say that they are on a “rehabilitation course” arranged by probation services or other organisations trying to find people work. This is not the case and often they are known criminals. Probation services do not run such schemes.

They may show a card which claims to be a “Pedlars Licence” or work permit. The above is an example of one that has been frequently seized by the police. This is not valid and they are breaking the law if they are using anything like this. They may also hand over a card saying they are deaf or dumb.

They will try to sell the homeowner poor quality household products at inflated prices. When money is exchanged, the doorstep seller will be assessing the likelihood of more money in the house/ worth breaking in etc. The address is then sold on to unscrupulous tree workers/ tarmac companies / roofers etc.

A good rule of thumb is to never buy anything on the doorstep.

If you are at all worried about a recent visit to your home by a salesperson, call Trading Standards on 0300 123 23 29





Your Library



Marlow Library, Highlights of the National Gallery

Wednesday 12th July, 10:30—11:30 am Join author Susanne Carr for a special talk entitled "Highlights of the National Gallery". Mrs. Carr's guide books are fun, informative and original and readers will never look at a painting in the same way again after her guides, noticing things they would never have noticed if not pointed out.

Cost: FREE but advance booking required

Facilities: Hearing loop available, Wheelchair access, Parking nearby

For more information please call 0845 230 3232 / 01296 382415 or email: lib-mar@buckscc.gov.uk

Beaconsfield Library 'Red Lipstick & Revelations' Poetry Reading by Jan Moran Neil

Thursday 13th July 2:30pm

Cost: FREE but advance booking recommended

Beaconsfield Library, Reynolds Road, Beaconsfield, HP9 2NJ

Facilities: Hearing loop available, Wheelchair access, Parking nearby

For more information please call 0845 230 3232 / 01296 382415 or email lib-bea@buckscc.gov.uk

Coming soon...

Buckinghamshire Libraries are launching new scheme to support people living with long term conditions. Launching on Monday 3 July, Reading Well for long term conditions is a recommended reading list of 28 books that were selected by health experts and people living with long term conditions. The list includes health information, memoir and self-management titles and covers conditions such as diabetes, stroke and heart disease, as well as common symptoms such as fatigue, pain, wellbeing and sleep problems.



Soft Ball Cricket Festival

Festivals are all about celebration. A Women's Soft Ball Cricket Festival is no different. It's all about getting together to enjoy the game. The colourful bats are perfect for smashing boundaries. Leaving you with pure cricketing fun: bowl, bat, catch, laugh.

Beaconsfield Cricket Club

London Road, Beaconsfield, HP9 2HZ
All ages welcome
Sunday, July 9, 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Cublington Cricket Club

The Orchard Ground, Stewkley Road
Cublington, LU7 0LR
All ages welcome
Sunday, August 13, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM



Afternoon Tea at the Holiday Inn, Weston Turville

An event to bring people together. For those that are older and would like to meet others to make friends or just have a reason to have some fun.

Held on the following Thursdays,
20th July 2017, 2.30pm to 4.30pm
19th October 2017, 2.30pm to 4.30pm
25th January 2018, 2.30pm to 4.30pm
26th April 2018, 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Carers are available and there will also be a live performance, courtesy of The Aylesbury Performing Arts Centre.

Spaces are limited so please call 3 weeks in advance to book your space on 01296 410029
We can support you to get to and from a car or cab.





Health News



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN YOUR LOCAL NHS?

Over the coming months, the Clinical Commissioning Groups are keen to speak to people about developments in healthcare and community based practices and what they will mean for you.

They would really like to come along to local groups to hear if you think that there are any changes needed in community healthcare services.

To invite them along to one of your meetings please contact them at ccgcomms@buckscc.gov.uk

GPs 'bribed' to take drugs away from elderly patients in care

Financial incentives offered to GPs to save money by reducing the number of drugs prescribed to frail elderly patients in care homes have been labelled a "bribe" by critics.

GP surgeries in Oxfordshire have been told they will receive half of the cash saved by a scheme to cut costs by handing out fewer prescriptions to frail patients. The initiative aims to save the area's NHS bosses a total of £1.45m – or £2 per patient – of which at least £1 per patient will be returned to family doctors who help the plans succeed, reported Pulse magazine.

All of the county's GP practices are invited to review how many drugs are prescribed to frail care home residents over 70 "without impacting on the quality of patient care".

The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire local medical committee is advising its GPs not to sign up to the scheme, which doctors have said should focus on improving patient care rather than reducing costs.

The full article can be found on the Independent website



Marlow community hub open day

Thursday 6 July from 2pm to 4.30pm

Bucks NHS are piloting new ways of providing care to people outside of hospital making it easier to get the right support at the right time.

Come along to the Open Day at Marlow Community Hub at Marlow Hospital on Thursday 6th July 2-4:30pm to find out about community treatment and assessment services.

There will be

- Free Health Advice
- Free refreshments
- Free NHS health checks (call 0800 781 4737 to book your appointment)

For more information, call 01494 734 959 or email communications@buckshealthcare.nhs.uk



Buckinghamshire Healthcare
NHS Trust

South Central Ambulance Service looking for new Governors



South Central Ambulance Service are looking for new Governors to represent local communities in Bucks. Anyone can become a governor and you don't need any specific skills or experience because training is provided.

The only requirement is an interest in the Trust and a willingness to get involved. So if you have an interest in your community and health in general, this could be for you.

For more details go to www.scas.nhs.uk/about-scas/council-of-governors/governors-election/ or contact them on 01869 365 000



Terry Price (1935-2017)

Terry Price, a prominent health campaigner who fought to save Wycombe Hospital's A&E services as well as Marlow Community Hospital from closure, died at home on June 20, aged 82.

Whilst I only met Terry in his latter years when he was Chairman of the Marlow group and a member of BOPAG's steering group, it wasn't long before I discovered that Terry had quite a background.

In his youth, Terry served in Korea in the 5th Royal Tank Regiment and in the Fire Brigade and was a founding member and secretary of the British Korean War Veterans Association (BKWVA). As recently as April this year, Terry was presented with an award for his work by members of the Korean Embassy.

What I never knew was that Terry founded a search and rescue charity called the International Rescue Corps in 1981 alongside Thunderbirds creator Gerry

Anderson. He was Corps Commander at the charity's birthplace in Medmenham before it moved to Scotland.

Terry was also a key member of many other groups including the Retired Firefighters Association and always wanted to help other people, stepping up to fight their cause.

Despite his own failing health due to pulmonary fibrosis, he never stopped fighting to save NHS services and was even interviewed by the BBC about the closure of Marlow Community Hospital in April.



A special man who will be missed. *Andy*

Memory Pathways

11:00 - 14:00 on the last Friday of every month.

If you or the person you care for has memory loss, confusion or dementia come along and enjoy our healing gardens. Meet up with people in similar situations who enjoy nature and gardening, make new friends, have a relaxing and stimulating time and get support

At each Memory Pathways session there are seasonal indoor and outdoor gardening activities, arts and crafts, cooking, singing, reminiscing, poetry and more

Next Session:

Friday 28 July sowing winter crops, harvesting fruits to make jam, picking herbs for drying

Lindengate

Aylesbury Road

Wendover, HP22 6BD



Voices & Choices

Safe and Sound at Home



**Do you have spare time?
Could Volunteering be for you?**

Help people find the practical services they need to stay

Safe and Sound at Home

Provide the support they need when talking to professionals like GPs and solicitors, or maybe their own family.

Our volunteers receive an accredited induction course and on-going support; they visit people in their own homes to discuss their needs and find the help they need.

Would you like to find out more?

Visit our website

www.voicesandchoices.org.uk or call us on 01494 784566



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 19th July 2017

**Dr Tina Kenny, Medical Director, and Carolyn Morrice, Chief Nurse
NHS Community Hubs**

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

London Fire Brigade issues warning over skin creams deaths

Fifteen people have died in London over the last three years after flammable skin cream caught alight on clothing, London Fire Brigade (LFB) has said.

It is believed the creams, which contain paraffin and petroleum bases, can act like a wick if ignited. Medicine regulators say emollient creams should carry warnings.

Dan Daly, LFB's assistant commissioner for fire safety, said: "It's a horrific reality but if you're wearing creams with flammable ingredients and you accidentally drop ash or a match, you are literally setting yourself on fire.

"Dropping cigarettes or matches onto clothing is dangerous but when flammable creams are involved, this really increases the chance of a fire starting and becoming much more intense."

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which regulates medicines and medical devices in the UK, said all creams containing paraffin should carry a flammability warning. The creams "are important skin treatments used by many patients" and it was working with companies to ensure safety messages are included in product information.

Wycombe Philharmonic Choir Concert



"Sing a song of..."



Saturday 8th July at 7:30pm

Christ the Servant King Church, Sycamore Rd, High Wycombe HP12 4TJ

Tickets: £14 (Concessions £12) available from Choir members, on the door or contact 01494 638599

Parking available

Funding for voluntary and community sector organisations in AVDC



Are you a not-for-profit organisation delivering services in Aylesbury Vale for older people and or vulnerable people? Does your organisation have a management committee, formal constitution or set of rules and a bank account requiring at least two signatories?

If you have answered "Yes" to these questions, you may be eligible to receive a one year revenue project grant from the council's voluntary and community sector grants fund which will be open for applications in July and closing at the end of September for funding from April 2018.

Please note that this funding does not support capital projects.

For further information about the funding available, criteria and how to apply please visit the AVDC website at:

<https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/grants-voluntary-and-community-sector>