

Note from the Editor

It was very disappointing to read about the bed closures that will happen within weeks at Marlow and Thame. A pilot that only runs in Spring and Summer seems difficult to understand when we are just coming out of possibly the worst Winter pressures that the NHS have ever faced. More than 40% of hospitals in England declared a major alert in the first week of 2017 as the health service came under increasing pressure. 65 out of 152 trusts raised the alarm as bed shortages intensified and A&E departments became overwhelmed. John Radcliffe cancelled all non urgent operations at this time. Stoke Mandeville A&E waiting times only hit NHS targets for 2 months in 2016 and Bucks Herald reported that the hospital was on Black Alert, running at critical capacity during January 2017. Bed shortages were cited as the major reason. If you want to voice your concerns, please read the article below and Ozma will be delighted to have your support. She is fighting hard on your behalf.

Thank you to all my contributors this month and for everyone getting in touch to add their activities and information to the BOPAG website. My details are always on the back page so please feel free to get in touch.

Apologies for not getting to Workaid in February and featuring them in this newsletter, I had the most horrendous cold mid month and kept myself out of everyone's way! I'll be there in March.

Andy

Hospital Bed Closures at Thame & Marlow

Marlow and Thame hospitals are to lose 'overnight' beds for a 6 month 'pilot'. The 12 beds at Marlow and 8 at Thame Community hospital are due to close from April. The proposals suggest that more diagnostics will take place in 'community hubs'.

Local health campaigner Ozma Hafiz said "I'm devastated to learn that we were right about the threat to community hospital beds. Unfortunately, we've heard the term 'pilot' used before when Ward 5B closed. Residents like Terry Price from Marlow have sacrificed so much giving to the community and campaigning for Wycombe and Marlow hospitals over the years. They darn well deserve to use overnight beds at their local community hospital should the need arise. This may be the case for Terry in the future when his wife goes in to hospital for treatment. Closure of these beds is in Terry's words 'absolutely disgraceful' and I completely agree with him. This essential respite care should be available to residents."

Terry added: "We have been consistently lied to. The NHS and BCC Overview and Scrutiny committee are not looking after the people of Buckinghamshire. All the Scrutiny committee are doing is agreeing with officials. It's about time our MPs woke up and started fighting for us."

Ozma said: "We took part in the 'Community Hub' engagement sessions last year and not once did we call for or consent to the closure of more beds. Our petition entitled 'No further downgrades to Bucks hospitals including community hospitals' reached its 1000 signature target in under two days. We await responses and it's high time our local decision makers, including our HASC Scrutiny committee spoke up for the people they are meant to be serving. I'm beginning to question the point of them (HASC) to be honest. When it comes to hospital services in Bucks, it seems that all they do is nod through downgrades. Having connected with other hospital campaigns, I've seen other council committees champion the needs of their communities and prevent downgrades. We deserve the same. Our petition asks that local decision makers speak up about funding constraints and ensure patients/potential patients' needs are put first.

Further downgrades can be expected if 'Sustainability and Transformation plans' (STPs) are not halted. These are based on the NHS being forced to find £22 billion worth of savings. We are already ahead when it comes to downgrades of services, having received less funding in Buckinghamshire for some time. "

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Movers & Shakers *The Pastures Style*
for the young at heart!

• Are you over 55? • Like to feel fit? • Socialise/make new friends?
(under 55s also welcome)

1 Activity or Talks 2 Exercise 3 Lunch
1 for the head 2 for the body 3 for health

Every Wednesday during term time
10.30 am – 1.30 pm

This is a new group starting on March 1st 2017
at The Pastures Church, The Pastures,
High Wycombe HP13 5RR
(Number 30 bus stops outside the church)

£4.50 including activity/ games/ talk, gentle exercise,
unlimited tea / coffee and a healthy lunch

NO NEED TO BOOK, JUST TURN UP

Further details from Mic & Rosemary Woodcock 01494 528738

Crafts & Coffee



Crafts & Coffee sessions take place in the HIVE at WORKAID in Chesham on the first Wednesday of each month 10am - 12noon. Everyone is most welcome to join us for a cuppa and a chat while working on their current projects. Bring a friend too and share ideas & skills. (£2.50 per session)

Crafts & Coffee demonstrations and workshops take place on the third Wednesday of each month 10am -12noon. These are led by experienced practising artists and crafts people to provide tasters in a wide variety of subjects - from wood sculpture to textiles, teddy bears, knitting, musical instruments, stump work embroidery, lace making, straw plating, crochet, card making, sewing and knitting machines, and many more exciting topics. (£6 per session)

There are a limited number of places available that can be paid for in Time Credits

Contact crafts@workaid.org for more information Workaid, The Old Boot Factory, 71 Townsend Road, Chesham, HP5 2AA

Driving Assessments for Buckinghamshire's Mature Drivers.

Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB) offer a range of driver training courses which includes a driving assessment specifically designed for the mature motorist. Since April 2012 TfB have delivered over 400 mature driver assessments, with 29% being medical referrals from GP surgeries and specialist clinics such as memory. The majority are drivers who take the assessment voluntarily to ensure they are still driving safely and 26% are drivers that have returned for reassessment once, twice or more,

Many of the drivers who have taken an assessment state that they want to ensure their driving skills are kept up to date on a regular basis, and that they value the feedback given during and after the drive. The aim of the Mature Driver Scheme is to raise awareness of the services available to drivers as they age and to support drivers through driving assessments to help keep them driving safely for longer.

Drivers aged 70 and over are increasing by over 10,000 a month and many older drivers face health challenges, such as deteriorating eyesight, hearing and mobility. TfB encourage drivers to have regular eye-sight tests and to take advantage of these voluntary assessments which can help to restore confidence or to identify areas of concern.

The one hour driver assessment costs £37 and is taken in the client's own car on local routes familiar to them and is based around the client's driving needs. This is followed up by a detailed written report which gives an overview of the drive and highlights any areas of the candidate's driving that might need improving.

For further details and an application form please email: roadsafety@buckscc.gov.uk or telephone 01296 382416 or log onto www.buckscc.gov.uk/beabetterdriver

Be a Better Driver

Older/Mature Driver Assessments

For all of life's journeys!





Your Library



We had a terrific response to our Love Your Library feature last month and here are some more events that we have since learnt about.

Tuesdays

Chesham Trace Your Family Tree 3rd Tuesday of the month 2:00—3:30pm.

Wendover Learn My Way on the 1st Tuesday of the month 2:15—3:15 and 3:30—4:30pm

Wendover Knit & Natter on the third Tuesday of the month 1:30—3:30pm

Thursdays

Chesham Puzzle, Games and Quiz afternoons, 4th Thursday of the month 2:30—4pm

Friday

Wendover Film Nights on the 3rd Friday of the month at 7:30pm. Tickets £5 and must be pre-booked at the library

One Off events at Wendover

7th March **Marlow** Susanna Beard Q&A and book signing at 7:30—8:30 pm

7th March **Beaconsfield** Sir Terry Pratchett plaque unveiling at 12 noon

23rd March **Wendover** Health & Wellbeing day 10am—4pm

27th March **Wendover** Quiz night at 6:30pm Tickets £12 includes fish & chip supper

20th April **Wendover** World Book night. Come & meet 3 authors, details from the library

Everything you see here is free (unless specified) and most you can just turn up to. The Learn My Way sessions (basic IT skills/brush up your online skills) and the Trace Your Family Tree support sessions must be prebooked as they are 1:1 support. You can do this by calling Bucks Libraries on 0845 230 3232 or 01296 382415

Hospital Bed Closures at Thame & Marlow *ctd from page 1*

The petition remains live and can be found on savewycombehospital.wordpress.com. People are welcome to leave comments there or email in to savewycombehospital@live.co.uk. They are also encouraged to use their voices by writing to their MPs and attending local meetings.

Next public meeting dates:

CCG Governing Body meeting March 9, 2017 @ 10:30 am - 12:30 pm Amersham
<https://www.chilternccg.nhs.uk/events/governing-body-meeting-in-public-2/>

Health and Wellbeing board 9 Mar 2017 2.30 pm
<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=710>

HASC 28 Mar 2017 10.00 am
<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=137>

NHS Trust board meeting Wed 29 March, 2017, 9.00am Education Suite, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Unit 2, Walton Lodge, Walton Street, Aylesbury
<http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/Downloads/Trust-board-documents-2016/a%20Trust%20board%20meetings.pdf>

Full details are on the back page and if you require any further help or info please contact Andy



Become a Community Champion



We have Community Champion, volunteering opportunities with Active Bucks Community Champions can volunteer in a number of different ways, by attending Active Bucks activity sessions to support and encourage participation, or by assisting with events or promoting Active Bucks in their local area.

Roles include (and there are many others not listed here)

Active Bucks Events such as hosting a coffee morning in your local community centre, helping at a stall at Community events such as Health Fairs, Library events and speaking to other residents and give out leaflets

Encourage others to become more active by attending an Active Bucks activity session with a local resident (Buddy Up) or promoting the benefits of physical activity or sharing your story of trying new activities

Speak to Community Groups

Support Activity Delivery such as support an activity instructor with a session e.g. a group walk or take the register and administration duties at a session for Active Bucks or support an individual to do more in their everyday lives e.g. support an older person to get more active by carrying their shopping so they can walk to the shops

I would be happy to visit and speak to members and groups regarding our volunteering opportunity if anyone would like more information.

Simon Clough, Tel: 01908 622897, Mob: 07811 303018
Volunteer Co-ordinator, Active Bucks



The BCC's TV Licensing Department are aware that there are a substantial number of older residents in the county who are eligible for a free TV licence but who have not applied yet and would like to publicise that concessions are available.

There are currently 6,309 individuals over the age of 75 years old in Aylesbury Vale alone who qualify for free TV Licensing.

If you are over 75 years old or if someone in your household is, you're entitled to a free TV Licence to cover your household. Although it is free, you do still need to apply for the licence.

Other concessions are available, if you, or someone in your household are registered blind or severely sight impaired, you are entitled to a 50% reduction on your licence

To find out how to claim your free TV licence or concession, please call 0300 790 6073 or visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Did you know that you can apply for the free licence when you are 74 so you get a partial refund as soon as you turn 75



Working in partnership
to make our community safer

Thames Valley Police are aware that there have been issues with parking in Beaconsfield on the chevrons down the middle of the carriageways in the Old Town.

They have been in contact with NSL, the civil parking enforcement company who have advised Thames Valley Police that they patrol 7 days a week 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday and to 4pm on a Sunday. They have issued 3880 tickets in the last year in Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross and Denham.

If you wish to complain about parking on single/double yellows, parking bays, disabled bays or anything similar across the county, then please call NSL and complain to them so that they can be made aware of the problem areas.

You can contact NSL on 01494 478826 or email them on transportforbuckinghamshire@nsl.co.uk.

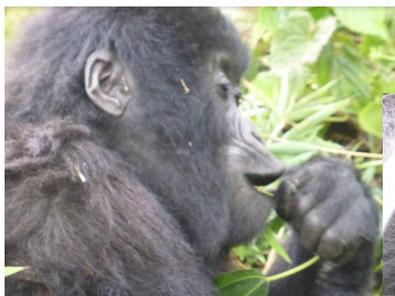


Still travelling the world at 81!

After Richard's death, I have travelled, mostly on my own, staying in cheap places and eating local food etc and have met wonderful people. I have now visited 97 countries and when I think about the memories I now have, it is the best investment I've ever made.

I knew very little about Rwanda but the big draw was the chance to go gorilla trekking. I never imagined that that there would be so much more to see and what an orderly and prosperous country it is. Many people think that Africa is backwards and corrupt. Yes, there are still poor countries in Africa with many problems but not all are like this.

Rwanda has a very good government and the President, Paul Kagame, is well thought of. It is a dynamic and forward looking country and Kigali, the capital, is beautiful. People commute in the city on motos, (riding on the back of a licensed motor bike where a helmet is provided). They are easy to use, cost between 50p and £1, and I enjoyed it. To travel around the country people use buses which cost about £3 for say a 3 hour journey. These small buses are always jam packed as everyone can afford to travel. The countryside is beautiful, very mountainous and green. They grow crops high up into the mountains and 3 harvests a year. The country is also very clean. People do not throw away rubbish and plastic bags are banned.



When people hear Rwanda, they think of the genocide. This happened in 1994 when 1million people in Kigali alone were slaughtered. The Hutu militia killed the Tutsis, who were the intellectuals running the country. This slaughter was planned over 3 years with the knowledge of the Belgians and French. I went to the Genocide Memorial Centre with the hotel receptionist, Teddy. She was 4 when her family were killed and a neighbour took her in. She has no photos of her family as their house was burned down. The slaughter happened throughout Rwanda and 295.000 are buried at the memorial.

On my 81st birthday, I set off at 6am with 7 others to see the gorillas. It took us 1 1/2 hours up a steep mountain 3000m high to find them. There were 9 in gorilla group we visited. The oldest male was 52 but he has handed over the job of protecting the group to his son. There was also a 2 month old baby. There are approx. 900 mountain gorillas in the world. All are guarded 24/7 and there has not been a single gorilla killed since 2002. It costs 750 US Dollars to see the gorillas for 1 hour and this money is used to protect them. Mountain gorillas can not survive in zoos so it is lowland gorillas that can be seen in some zoos. Lowland gorillas have decreased by 80% over two decades and as they are unprotected they are being hunted to extinction.

Karoline Lamb.



Health & Adult Social Care Inquiry — Hospital Discharge

Do you, or someone you know, have an experience of the hospital discharge system to share – if so please contact Debra via email on 07507399180 or email debra.robinson@suco.org.uk to discuss this further.

We want to hear about what happened and use this opportunity to help improve the service in the future.

The Inquiry Group have been undertaking some evidence gathering sessions with various health and social care professionals over the last week or so and some common “themes” are emerging which I would be particularly interested to hear about from a patient/carer point of view.

One is around experience of the Patient Transport Service and the other is around the Pharmacy service and how quickly the patient who is being discharged receives their medicines for taking with them.

We want to improve the performance around Hospital Discharge and to minimise delayed transfers of care across the whole system. As well as being of relevance to health partners in both the acute and non-acute settings, there are knock-on effects if the Hospital Discharge process is not carried out in a timely manner. Whilst there are a number of existing pieces of work that review and monitor the performance of the

Hospital Discharge process, value can be added by looking across the whole system which could inform the existing individual pieces of work. These include

- The County Council review of the Re-ablement service
- Bucks Healthcare Trust is leading a workstream entitled “Care at home”
- A&E Delivery Board which reviews performance across the whole system.

Data is reported by the Trust regularly and Healthwatch Bucks has kept a watching brief on the Delayed Transfers of Care data. Even the NHS Five Year Plan (Sustainability and Transformation Plans for Bucks, Oxon and Berkshire West) could impact on this issue in terms of any planned service redesigns.

The aim of this Inquiry is to review the existing pathways across the whole system in terms of Hospital discharge to better understand the reasons for delays in transfers of care and to suggest improvements.

We would like to involve service-users and the public in this inquiry, therefore we are conducting patient experience interviews to capture feedback from people who have been discharged from the acute Hospital setting to the non-acute setting

Debra, SUCO Development Worker
SUCO – Bucks Service User and Carer Organisation

Have your say on how to improve the Thames Valley NHS 111 service

A stakeholder engagement and feedback event will take place at the Kassam Stadium in Oxford on Thursday 9 March. The event is being hosted by The TV111 Partnership, which is led by South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS). The TVP 111 Partnership has been selected by the 10 clinical commissioning groups across the Thames Valley as the preferred provider to deliver an integrated urgent care service.

SCAS and the Healthcare Trusts have a combined vision to ensure that the service:

- offers the best quality patient experience
- is designed to continually improve, innovate and respond to emerging need
- becomes the pathway of choice for the people of the Thames Valley who have an urgent care need.

Please get involved and share your views and experience to ensure the improved Thames Valley NHS 111 service supports your role and most importantly meets the need of patients.

To confirm your attendance at the stakeholder event please email a.dellman@nhs.net

If you are not on email, contact Andy (details on the back page) and I will email on your behalf



Health News

NHS Health Check

The NHS Health Check is your chance to get your free midlife MOT. For adults in England aged 40-74 without a pre-existing condition, it checks your circulatory and vascular health and what your risk of getting a disabling vascular disease is.

If you're in the 40-74 age group without a pre-existing condition, you can expect to receive a letter from your GP or local authority inviting you for a free NHS Health Check.

Don't worry if you haven't got your invitation yet, as you will be invited for one over the next few years

What happens at an NHS Health Check?

The purpose of the health check is to assess your risk of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes, kidney disease, stroke and certain types of dementia. It will take about 20 to 30 minutes.

During the check we will:

- Ask you some simple questions about your family history and any medication you are currently taking
- Record your height, weight, age, etc
- Take your blood pressure
- A simple blood test to check cholesterol and sugar levels – in most cases results are available in just 5 minutes
- Calculate your risk of developing cardiovascular disease
- Give personalised lifestyle advice to help reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease

Health checks can be booked on line at www.buckinghamshire.nhshealthchecks.com and they are available at Amersham, Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Buckingham, Chesham, Wycombe, Iver, Marlow, South Bucks and the Chalfonts



Dementia Support Sessions

Free Dementia Information & Support Sessions are taking place at the Downley Community Centre, School Close, Downley, High Wycombe, HP13 5TR starting Wednesday 26th April and running for 6 weeks from 10.30 – 12.30pm.

The sessions are for people who are in the early stages of dementia and will last for approximately 2 hours each week. The workshops will include practical tips and coping strategies, group discussions, provision of information about dementia and how to live well and practical support to create and maintain a support network.

There is no charge for this service and places are limited.

Referrals for the service or to reserve a place can be done by contacting the Memory Support Service on 01296 331749 or email to

memorysupport@alzheimers.org.uk



Ladies only

Get Active with Lindengate



Active Vale Green Gym for ladies starts at Lindengate, Wendover on 5th April for 24 weeks.

Sessions are for any women to attend if they have mild to moderate mental health needs and would like to engage in some physical activity such as planting, construction and arts and crafts.

Sessions run every Wednesday from 1.15 – 4.15 pm and cost £10 per session. Email activevale@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk or telephone Lindengate direct on 01296 622443 for more information.

Dementia Awareness Week 2017

runs from 15th May to 21st May

There will be many events which we will include here and this is the first event to pop in your diary

Dementia Awareness Day at Buckingham
Tuesday 16th May from 10am to 1pm



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 22nd March 2017

(Speaker—New Leaf Project

Wednesday 17th May 2017

Wednesday 19th July 2017

Wednesday 20th September 2017

Wednesday 22nd November 2017

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

Please contact Andy Trueman on 01296 622122 for further information

Dates for your diary

March 9th CCG Governing Body meeting
10:30 am - 12:30 pm King George V House, Amer-sham. More info at www.chilternccg.nhs.uk/events/governing-body-meeting-in-public-2/

March 9th Health and Wellbeing board 2.30 pm at Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Ayles-bury More info at democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=710

March 29th NHS Trust Board Meeting 9.00am Education Suite, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Unit 2, Walton Lodge, Walton Street, Aylesbury More info at www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/Downloads

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



New £1 coin arrives this month

The new £1 Coin enters circulation on the 28th March. Make sure you have both old and new £1 coins available to deal with the gradual modifications to parking meters and shopping trolleys etc

Don't forget that the old £1 coins will not be accepted after the 16th October



Last orders for the old £5 note

The new £5 notes were introduced last September and we are all used to seeing them now. However, the Bank of England has warned British households that they need to spend or exchange old style £5 notes before they become worthless in a few weeks' time.

It estimates there are around 165million old cotton paper notes still in circulation – or nearly three for every Briton – and from 5 May 2017 they will no longer be legal tender and cannot be spent



Price of Stamps to increase this month

A first class stamp will go up by 1p to 65p and a second class stamp by 1p to 56p. Royal Mail said the changes were needed "to help ensure the sustainability of the universal postal service" but that it had sought to minimise the impact on customers.

The changes will take effect from 27 March.

For your specialist tool and craft needs

THE WORKAID SHOP

FORECOURT SALE!

SATURDAY 1st April, 2017

10am to 2pm

all types of tools

garden power tools

crafts & fabrics

...and much more

The Old Boot Factory, 71 Townsend Road, Chesham HP5 2AA
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