

Note from the Editor

I have big news for you all! There will be a new Administrator for BOPAG and she's called Paula. I'll leave it for Paula to introduce herself in due course but suffice to say that I am confident that you will love having her on board and she will be a great addition to the team. Paula will be coming along to the BOPAG meeting in March and we will gradually handover various activities including responsibility for this newsletter. As I mentioned before, I will not be leaving BOPAG but will take a more background role looking after the website and being on hand to help if and when necessary so I'm not saying goodbye.

I had the pleasure of representing BOPAG at the Community Information Day at the Chalfont St Peter Health Centre in February and it was a delight to meet lots of local residents there. A big welcome to our new readers that have joined as a result. A similar event will be taking place at Chartridge in March (details on page 2). BOPAG will have a stand there too in addition to many other activity and service providers. The venue is a brand new care home who are very interested in letting local groups use their venue. If you attend, please come and say hello. It's always lovely to put a face to the name on our mailing list.

Everyday we are hearing that more people and places have been affected by Coronavirus. Although the official advice is still centered around people who have travelled to affected countries or contact with those people, this morning we hear of the UK's first case involving someone who had not travelled or been in close contact with someone who had. This is not surprising but official advice is yet to catch up with the wider risk that is now apparent. Page 3 contains the simple precautions that we should all take as well as some rather sobering data—sorry!

Quick mention that you are all welcome at our meeting in March. Should be interesting with TV Licensing attending! Lots of other information, activity and general interest articles too. As ever, I've tried to provide non-internet contact information in the details but where this hasn't been possible please feel free to contact me, my details, as ever, are on the back page

Stay healthy & keep smiling!

Andy

The new unitary authority is almost here

A Shadow Authority is currently working to deliver a smooth transition to the new Buckinghamshire Council, which goes live on the 1st April. The five existing county and district councils in Buckinghamshire will cease to exist on 31 March.

There will be 147 elected members on the new Buckinghamshire Council (this works out as three per current county ward). Elections for the new Buckinghamshire Council will take place in May this year, then May 2025 and then every four years. Town and parish elections will coincide.

This has all be done so that Buckinghamshire will be run by a single council that is more efficient and save money for taxpayers, helping to create a simpler, stronger and better value county-wide council. In future, there will be a single point of contact so you are not trying to work out if it's the county or district council responsible for a particular service and with that will come clearer accountability. The new council should also cost less and have increased buying power.

There will be no immediate changes to services so your bins will still be collected as normal, the streets will still be cleaned and everything else you rely on day-to-day will carry on.

From April 2020, 16 Community Boards will be set up across the county to help the new council build strong links with local communities. Community boards will give a voice to local people, giving everyone a chance to work with the council, local agencies and other community groups to make a difference in your community. They are a key part of the new council's commitment to keep it local and work with local communities to improve the lives of our residents. Read more about this on page 5





Free Legal Seminar at Buckingham Lodge, Aylesbury



We are holding a free legal seminar on Monday 30th March from 12.00pm and the event will be presented by Kathryn Sykes, Solicitor at Austen Jones Solicitors. Topics will include ;

- A general introduction leading in to Mental Capacity and the framework surrounding this
- Enduring and Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Acting as an attorney and issues which may arise in relation to this
- An overview of deputyships
- An overview of Wills
- An overview of Trusts and Statutory Wills
- A focus on "Later Life" and issues which arise within this experience

Places are limited for this event so if you'd like to attend, please don't hesitate to contact me, Craig Summers on 0300 123 7243

Buckingham Lodge Care Home, Culpepper Close, Aylesbury, HP19 9DU



BUCKS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Southern Group (registered charity 290335)

The Origins and Development of Surnames

A Talk by Les Mitchinson

When did Smythe become Smith and Ap Richard, Pritchard? The talk describes the development of surnames and how variants became established

Tuesday March 10th

The Community Centre, Wakeman Road,
Bourne End SL8 5SX

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



First Tuesdays Cafe

A lovely environment and a warm greeting awaits you at MMDF's brand new monthly memory cafe. First Tuesdays Cafe is a welcoming place for anyone who has been touched by dementia or memory problems, to come together in a really supportive and safe environment. Come and enjoy a chat or reminisce with like-minded and understanding people. Lovely volunteers will be on hand to serve you with drinks and a sweet treat and we can offer advice or guide you to the support you need.

Important - it is imperative that vulnerable or confused guests have a carer/loved one present at the cafe at all times. Whilst our volunteers are wonderful people they and MMDF cannot take responsibility for our guests

**First Tuesday of every month 2pm - 3:30pm
Starting 3rd March 2020**

The Pugin Rooms, St Peter St, Marlow SL7 1NQ
Please feel free to drop-in, however it's helpful if you are able to let us know you will be joining us or if you have any questions at all, please contact Oxford Aunts on 01865 986244, or email us at info@mmdf.co.uk or contact us via our contact form at www.mmdf.co.uk

Information Fair for Older People



PORTOBELLO PLACE

Come and find out about activities,
information, meet service providers and enjoy
refreshments

Free to attend

17th March 11am-3pm

At

Portobello Place, Chartridge Lane
Chesham, HP5 2SH

www.portobelloplace.com/

01494 937200



Coronavirus

It's impossible to avoid news of Coronavirus (also known as COVID-19) so it would be remiss of us not to include it especially with regards to its potential risk to older people. I've reviewed the latest advice from the NHS and World Health Organisation and tried to distill it here.

Let's start with some rather sobering data published in the Chinese Journal of Epidemiology last week. Based on 72,314 cases of COVID-19 confirmed, suspected, and asymptomatic cases in China as of the 11th February, they have found that the risk of death increases the older you are.

COVID-19 Fatality Rate by AGE:

*Death Rate = (number of deaths / number of cases) = probability of dying if infected by the virus (%).

AGE	DEATH RATE*
80+ years old	14.8%
70-79 years old	8.0%
60-69 years old	3.6%
50-59 years old	1.3%
40-49 years old	0.4%
10-39 years old	0.2%
0-9 years old	no fatalities

Patients who reported no pre-existing ("comorbid") medical conditions had a case fatality rate of 0.9%. Pre-existing illnesses that put patients at higher risk of dying from a COVID-19 infection are:

PRE-EXISTING CONDITION	DEATH RATE*
Cardiovascular disease	10.5%
Diabetes	7.3%
Chronic respiratory disease	6.3%
Hypertension	6.0%
Cancer	5.6%
no pre-existing conditions	0.9%

Because this is a new illness, scientists are still understanding how it is spread etc. However, we do know that it is spread from person to person and similar viruses are spread in cough droplets. It's thought that it is less likely to be spread by things like packages or food as viruses like coronavirus cannot live outside the body for very long.

Official advice has been and currently seems to be around taking precautions if you have travelled recently to affected countries but with new cases being reported daily all over the place, we all need to be vigilant to minimise the risk.

To avoid catching or spreading any germs, there are simple precautions you can take.

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately
- wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

There is currently no specific treatment for coronavirus. Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses so treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness.

You'll need to stay in isolation away from other people until you've recovered.

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- a high temperature & tiredness
- shortness of breath
- headache
- muscle pain

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness and the symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

If you are worried about your health especially if you have these symptoms do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Call [111](tel:111), stay indoors and avoid close contact with other people.



Elderly social care fees being charged by councils when they shouldn't

Councils across the country have been forced to apologise and pay compensation for the distress they caused by wrongly charging families for the care of their elderly and vulnerable relatives. An investigation by Newsquest's Data Investigations Unit has found 80% of the 152 councils with responsibility for adult social care have been criticised on at least one occasion by a government watchdog over their poor handling of charging for care services. More than 50% of the 972 complaints submitted to Ombudsman between 2015 and 2019 were upheld.

Many complaints related to top-up fees, while others were about delays in financial assessments being carried out, incorrect invoices and bills issued, and failure to provide clear information about care home fees. In many cases councils were ordered to apologise, pay compensation and refund any wrongly paid top-up fees. The Ombudsman said "People have a right to make informed decisions about care homes. A meaningful choice is not possible if they are not aware of the availability of placements not requiring a top-up. Councils can only charge a top-up 'where a resident explicitly chooses to enter accommodation other than that which the council offers them, and where that preferred accommodation is more expensive than the council would usually expect to pay'.

The Government are providing an extra £1.5bn for social care in 2020/21 to help meet rising demand and stabilise the social care system. Councils will also be able to raise a further £500m for adult social care through a proposed 2% council tax precept.

Anyone unhappy about the way a local authority carries out a financial assessment for charging can make representations through the council's complaints procedure and if the matter remains unresolved families can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate. <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Age UK are campaigning for an adequately funded care system. If you would like to sign the Age UK petition you can do so at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/campaigning/care-in-crisis/>



TV Licence Campaign

There are now less than 100 days to go until 4 million older people lose their free TV Licence. Age UK and many others are not giving up the fight.

Over 45,000 have contacted the Prime Minister asking him to step in, and Age UK have been meeting with new MPs and gathering support for the campaign in Parliament.

Age UK are also continuing to make the case on social media and other media outlets.

Since our last newsletter, the Government has announced two things

1. They, are launching a consultation on whether to 'decriminalise' the Licence Fee
2. They have also announced a new 'Simple Payment Plan' so people can pay their Fee monthly rather than in one lump sum.

Age UK however, claim that for those just getting by, the Simple Payment Plan doesn't go far enough – spreading out your payments doesn't make £157.50 extra a year any more affordable. And even if enforcement of the Licence Fee happens through the civil rather than the criminal courts, older people could still receive a visit from the bailiffs if they can't pay

TV Licensing will be coming to our BOPAG meeting in March so if you have questions about the changeover, the process of buying a new licence, support that is available etc, then feel free to come along to our meeting (details on the back page). And whilst they may be in some of the firing line on this topic, it's worth remembering that the decision makers are the government and the BBC.

Just in case you'd still like to drop Boris, his contact details are House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, Tel: [020 7219 4682](tel:02072194682) and email boris.johnson.mp@parliament.uk

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Baroness Nicky Morgan can be contacted at House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW [020 7219 5353](tel:02072195353)



BETTER HOUSING BETTER HEALTH

THE WARMTH AND WELLBEING SERVICE

The National Energy Foundation (NEF) believe that your home is key to your health and wellbeing and want to help you make it a warm, safe and affordable place to live. Better

Housing Better Health is a free service that makes it easy to access expert advice, support and funding to make improvements to your home and is available to all residents in Buckinghamshire via local charity, NEF.

If you would like some advice on lowering your energy bills, switching provider/ tariff or accessing financial assistance or would like to chat about any aspect of keeping warm and well then contact the free helpline [0800 107 0044](tel:08001070044) (Monday to Friday 9:00-17:00) or email bhbh@nef.org.uk.

Alternatively, you can visit their website and fill in your contact details there <http://www.bhbh.org.uk> and one of their trained advisors will contact you within 24 hours (excluding weekends and bank holidays). You can also refer someone else, whether you're a professional caseworker or a relation, friend or advocate.

Are you a Seenager?

I just discovered my age group. I am a Seenager (senior teenager)!

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 60 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a drivers licence and my own car. I have ID that gets me into bars and the wine store. I like the wine store best. The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant, they aren't scared of anything, they have been blessed to live this long, why be scared? And I don't have acne. Life is good!!

And there's more. Brains of older people are slow because they know so much. People do not decline mentally with age; it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains. Scientists believe this also makes you hard of hearing as it puts pressure on your inner ear!!

Also, older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for. It is NOT a memory problem; its natures way of making older people do more exercise.

Sent in by Stuart Parish

Community Boards

Delivering the new
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

Community boards will bring together Buckinghamshire Council councillors to work with local communities to help solve local issues. They will provide a vital link between the council, elected councillors and communities.

By working in partnership with local people, town and parish councils, community groups, police, healthcare organisations and residents, community boards will help the new council understand and respond to local needs more effectively. These local issues could include improving facilities for young people, tackling social isolation of older people or helping to set up a community bus.

The aim of the community boards will be:

- Enable councillors to take decisions on local issues, alongside key partners including other community representatives.

- Empower councillors and communities to influence service design and delivery on local issues.
- Bring communities together with councillors and partners to find local solutions to local issues.

Community boards want to involve everyone in the local area who wants to make a difference and work with the new council to do this. To be effective community boards will comprise of county councillors, people and groups from the local community as well as other public services such as fire service, police and health, residents, parish and town councils and young people.

So as you hear more about Community boards in your area, volunteer to get involved!



Travel insurance shake-up could cut the cost of cover for millions of holidaymakers with pre-existing medical conditions

Millions of travellers with pre-existing medical conditions should soon be able to find appropriate cover more easily thanks to new rules from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)

Many travellers with existing conditions find trying to obtain insurance difficult - some are declined cover, offered cover with exclusions for their condition or simply offered unaffordable premiums.

The FCA has told insurance firms that if they cannot offer a customer with a pre-existing medical condition cover, they must direct them to a list of companies that can help. These insurers will be specifically chosen as ones that are willing and able to cover those with medical conditions.

It is estimated that 14.1million consumers with pre-existing medical conditions search for travel insurance each year. Of those, 0.7% are declined cover whilst 11% purchase policies which exclude coverage for their condition, according to the FCA.

After concluding its consultation, it decided that firms will only have to direct a customers to another firm where they have a pre-existing medical condition loading of £100 or more. Loading is another name for the additional charge handed out because of underlying condition. It has also been ruled that signposting should be provided at the point the firm gives a quotation, on renewal of the policy, on annual eligibility statements, or if a mid-term adjustment results in a new quotation.

The directory will be put together by the Money and Pensions Service and is expected to be completed by the summer. It will be able to filter providers based on factors such as age, destination and duration of trip. Consumers will be shown information about all providers listed on the directory that may be able to help, based on these filters and can then decide which of the filtered providers they wish to contact.

Insurers will have to put the changes in place by 5 November 2020.

Patient/ Public Involvement Representatives wanted for NIHR Academy Advisory Groups

NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) is the largest funder of health and care research in the UK investing £1.3bn in research every year. They are looking for a patient, service user, carer or member of the public to be a PPI Representative on their NIHR Academy Advisory Groups. Typical activities include preparing for meetings by reading and assessing papers as well as attending advisory group meetings, willingness to undertake training, activities offered free that is relevant to the role. Meetings are either London or Leeds.

NIHR is committed to being as inclusive as possible and will consider adjustments required to enable you to fulfil the role. Full travel expenses (fares, food, accommodation) are paid in addition to carer costs, personal assistant costs, postage and printing costs as well as an attendance fee More info at <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/information-pack-patient-and-public-involvement-ppi-representative-of-an-nihr-academy-advisory-group/23672>

Technology is better than retesting for older motorists

A review commissioned by the RAC Foundation, found that it is difficult to devise a retest system for older motorists to prove they should still be behind the wheel. However, basic in-car systems such as collision warnings, lane departure alerts and fatigue detection are recognised by older drivers as being helpful as long as they are easy to use.

At 70, motorists must declare if they are fit to drive every three years, without having to take a driving or medical exam. There are currently 5.5 million British drivers over 70 .

The review suggested that in-car telematics systems could be used to highlight to older drivers their strengths and weaknesses. This could help older motorists to self-regulate their driving - such as staying off the roads at night or in the rush hour.



Health News

Organ Donation Law is Changing

All adults in England will be automatically enrolled as organ donors unless they choose to opt out, under a new law due to come into force in May. MPs are set to approve the system “deemed consent” on Tuesday (3rd March) in a bid to boost the number of transplants on the NHS. It is estimated that the opt-out method, known as Max and Keira’s law, will lead to 700 additional organ transplants each year by 2023 and cut down the list of 5,200 people waiting for life-changing surgery.

If parliament approves the change, from the 20th May 2020 all adults in England will be considered to have agreed to donate their own organs when they die unless they explicitly state otherwise or are in an excluded group. Relatives will still be asked for their opinion which can lead to donations being blocked if they object regardless of the wishes of the deceased.

Children under 18 will be excluded from the scheme, along with people who have lived in England for less than a year or have “lacked capacity for a significant time”, according to the Department of Health and Social Care. The heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas, intestinal organs, bone, arteries and nervous tissue will all be considered for routine transplants.

Patients who have previously declared that they do not want to donate some or all of their organs will not have to re-record their decision, according to the government.



Have you or someone you care for had a stay in hospital recently?

Healthwatch want to hear about people’s experiences of leaving hospital (discharge).

To let us know how things went for you or someone you care for please fill in our online survey which can be found at . <https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2020/02/have-you-or-someone-you-care-for-had-a-stay-in-hospital-recently/>

Your response will help us to find out what is working well and what is not working well. If you would like a printed copy of the survey sent out to you please contact us on 01844 34 88 39 or email info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk.

Smartwatch that could ‘revolutionise’ detection and treatment of dementia

A smart watch capable of spotting early signs of Alzheimer’s—that’s what a leading UK dementia charity hopes to develop off the back of a new research project, announced in February.

Alzheimer’s Research UK aims to attract one million volunteers from across the country to sign up to a programme which will collate and examine a range of clinical and digital data to be used in the early detection of neurodegenerative disease. Information on such areas as sleep, gait, speech and eye movement will be tracked and analysed by teams of specialists, looking to spot patterns which may signify evidence of dementia – including its most common form Alzheimer’s

From this, ‘fingerprints’ – or common traits – will be developed to highlight initial signs. The objective is then to design a wearable device capable of detecting the fingerprints to enable early diagnosis.

The project forms part of a new global initiative, launched today. Early Detection of Neurodegenerative diseases (EDoN) brings together a wealth of top health institutions – including the Alan Turing Institute, University College London and the University of Cambridge – to participate in the sharing of health data set to inform the research project.

It also aims to raise £100 million of investment by 2030 – £67 million over the next six years – to finance the research and development of the wearable technology and has already received funding from Microsoft’s Bill Gates and Iceland Foods Charitable Foundation.

Around 50 million people are affected by dementia across the world, with almost 10 million new cases emerging each year. Forms such as Alzheimer’s can start to develop in the brain two years before evidence of symptoms, and experts now believe any future treatments will prove most effective when administered at the earliest stage possible.



2020

Contact Details for the Bucks Older People's Action Group

Andy can be contacted on 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

18th March (TV Licensing)

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

Public Health Meetings

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

Bucks NHS Trust Board Meetings

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

Buckinghamshire CCG Board Meetings

12th March 10.30-12.30. Jubilee Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, the Gateway, Gatehouse Rd, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF

Cuddington Matinée Cinema

Bi-monthly Matinee Cinema for senior citizens in the Bernard Hall, Cuddington, HP18 0AP at 1.30pm. Comfortable chairs. Entry £5 includes tea and cake at the interval. For more information or to book phone 01844 291 526 or on the door subject to availability. Entry fee £5 includes tea and cake at the interval

Newsletter info

If you know anyone who would like to receive our newsletters, please get in touch. We can email or post them to recipients.

Dates for your diary

11th March 5:30 – 8pm or **12th March** 12-5pm at Chiltern District Council, Amersham. **Basic Principles of Safeguarding workshop.** To book your free place or find out more information contact Lynne Hunter : Active Communities Officer Tel: 01895 837220, Mob: 07593816023 or lynne.hunter@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk .

Wednesday 22nd April Information Fair for Older People 11am– 4pm. To be held at the Chalfont Community Centre, Gravel Hill, Gerrards Cross SL9 9QX . Free to attend. Details to be confirmed in the April newsletter

Wednesday June 10th 11am – 2.30pm, The Great Get Together inspired by the late Jo Cox returns this year at the Elgiva Theatre, Chesham. The event is particularly for those in the community in the Chesham/Amersham area, or nearby, who cannot easily get out and about. There are 50 spaces and transport can be provided. If you know of anyone who is socially isolated who would love an afternoon out, please contact Andy

Scam Amazon calls

People in Bucks have been receiving phone calls from an automated service purporting to be from Amazon Prime concerning subscription to this service. They are trying to get you to pay money to cancel a service that you have been mistakenly charged for by pressing 1 etc . Regardless of whether you are a legitimate Amazon Prime subscriber or not, this is a scam and just put the phone down. If you need to contact Amazon for any reason, contact them via their website or contact telephone numbers.

Stamps go up in price again !!!

Royal Mail has announced it will increase the price of first class and second class stamps.

First class stamps will rise 6p to 76p while second class stamps will increase 4p to 65p. These new prices will take effect from 23 March 2020. The increase comes less than a year after the Royal Mail increased the cost of first class class stamps by 3p to 70p and second class stamps by 3p to 61p.

Over the last decade, the cost of a first class stamp has increased 35p while second class stamps risen 33p.