

Note from the Editor

A few of you will be aware that one of the activities that has taken me away from BOPAG has been helping my daughter renovate a Victorian terrace house in London. I am exhausted! Travelling in most days, making so many decisions about everything from fixtures & fittings to the joys of dealing with Openreach. I now have a new found respect for all those brave and crazy souls that feature on Grand Designs! The end is in sight but I wanted to let people know that I haven't been able to be as proactive on BOPAG stuff the last few weeks. Sorry, I'll catch up, promise!

So onto business! I've just seen that there is a new Buckinghamshire Council consultation to give your views on the priorities and 2020 budget. The consultation can be found at <https://shadow.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/consultations/budget2020/> and will be live until 25 November. Local councils up and down the country are all facing the challenges of a growing demand for their services and balancing their budgets - this will continue to be the case for the new council so make sure that you have your say. No info on how you can do so if you are not on the internet so please call me and I'll endeavour to get you a paper copy should you wish to take part.

I've heard from a couple of you that managed to get a place on the RAF Wycombe tours in October. They sounded an absolute treat and I'm sure that Simon will keep us posted when more tour dates are arranged for those of you that didn't manage to get a place.

There's been a lot in the news over the last month although you'd be forgiven for thinking that nothing was happening bar Brexit, so I've gathered up what has crossed my path and deposited it here. Money, scams and health all had plenty of articles. The toxic clauses in new build purchases made national news and featured a development in Buckingham (page 5) and if anyone is worried about medicine shortages (page 7) there are a myriad of completely unrelated Brexit reasons as to why this is happening and remaining or leaving, deal or no deal will have no impact on these current shortages.

Have fun, be good & stay safe.

Andy

London Luton Airport Expansion Consultation Now Open

London Luton Airport Ltd. (LLAL) has now opened the statutory consultation period for its proposals to expand the airport from present limits of 18m passengers per annum to 32million passengers per annum. There will be a huge increase in air traffic flying over our communities and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The airport operator (LLAOL) has no statutory restriction over night flights so such expansion is of great concern for increased scheduling of night flights, particularly in the holiday seasons, and at the key shoulder periods, when most of us are either settling down for a much needed good night's sleep, or starting the day peacefully without the pollution of aircraft engines overhead.

This application is of such magnitude and with significant impact, that it is required to be considered by the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Control Order (DCO) and by the Secretary of State for Transport, who will make the final decision.

Details of the full consultation documents can be found online at : futureluton.llal.org.uk or can be obtained by calling 01582 548782

Consultation events are being held in the Chilterns as below:

Wendover - Sat 2 Nov 11am-3pm Wendover Memorial Hall. HP22 6HF.

Berkhamsted - Fri 8 Nov 3-7pm Civic Centre. HP4 3HB.

Aylesbury - Thurs 14 Nov 4-8pm. The Gateway, Gatehouse Road. HP19 8FF.

Tring - Weds 4 Dec 2-8pm. Nora Grace Hall. HP23 5PA.

Copies of the consultation documents can also be found at Aylesbury, Wendover & Tring libraries

The consultation closes on the 16th December and feedback can be made online (above link) or to the freepost address given in the consultation document



Helping Bucks' mature drivers to keep driving safely for longer



The number of over-70s holding a driving licence exceeded five million for the first time in 2018 and there are now over 200 centenarians still driving.

Driving is an important part of life for many residents of Buckinghamshire, enabling independence, especially for those living in rural areas - but as we age, driving can become more stressful.

To support mature drivers, TfB has developed an online e-learning module. The module contains all the information you need to retain independence and continue driving safely for as long as possible.

The module covers:

- Fitness to drive
- Ability - recognise if and how your driving is changing
- Medication
- Improving your skills
- Vehicle - choosing a car
- Licencing and DVLA rules
- Driving assessments

The module can be accessed at www.buckscc.gov.uk/olderdrivers



BUCKS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Southern Group (registered charity 290335)

The British in India A Talk by Michael Gandy

The India Office Records and Private Papers are held in the British Library and their most extensive archives (14 kilometres of shelves!) relate to the East India Company and the British Empire in India but there is also much complementary material in other British Library archival collections and the oral history recordings.

Tuesday November 12th

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)



November Events

House Histories – 'If Walls Could Talk'

Friday 8th November at the Fitzwilliam Centre, Windsor End, Beaconsfield HP9 2JW, 2.15pm to 3.45pm. £15 in advance to include tea and cake

Find out how to uncover the history of a property using some of the key documentary records available and learn tips for discovering more about any home, irrespective of age. Cathy Soughton is a professional house historian and accredited genealogist who researches the history of properties for private home owners and property professionals. She has written articles for many publications and was one of the 'Ask the Experts' at the Who Do You Think You Are Live Show and Family Tree Live Show.

Jo Scott Photography

Saturday 9th November at Green Acres Chiltern, Potkiln Lane, Jordans, Beaconsfield HP9 2XB 10.00am to 3.30pm. Tickets: £60 to include light lunch and afternoon tea

This workshop will offer a interactive master-class for all abilities, to empower your photographic skills whether on your phone or the latest digital photographic equipment.

Festive Floral Workshop

Sunday 24th November at Green Acres Chiltern, Potkiln Lane, Jordans, Beaconsfield HP9 2XB, Tickets £65 in advance and includes all floral produce and accessories/equipment as well as light lunch and afternoon tea

Renowned Chelsea award winning florist Soulla teaches a festive Christmas floral workshop, inspiring beautiful fauna and flower pieces to adorn your home for your Christmas festivities.

Seasonal Swing with the BBO Big Band

Saturday 30th November at Hazlemere Community Centre, Rose Avenue, Hazlemere HP15 7UB 7.30pm. Tickets: £15 in advance to include welcome drink

Get your festive season off to a great start and dance the night away with the fantastic BBO Big Band performing classic festive and swing music.

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



Call for volunteer drivers for Community Transport schemes across Bucks

Many people who cannot drive themselves or can't catch the bus rely on volunteer transport services - often to get to important medical appointments.

In fact, over 25,000 journeys are made by Community Transport car and bus schemes across Buckinghamshire each year.

Since the closure of Red Cross and Royal Voluntary Service transport schemes in Bucks, demand for help from those unable to take a bus has risen significantly.

Could you help? We are looking for volunteer drivers to join an existing car or bus scheme, or to set up a new group, to help provide an essential service in your local community. Volunteers are particularly needed in Aylesbury and Wycombe where there are no existing schemes.

As one Community Transport bus volunteer stated: "The best thing about our scheme is that we can offer a service around our villages that means people can get out.

Our bus group helps not only to tackle loneliness but also helps people be independent for longer."



Volunteer drivers can claim 45p per mile for all journeys undertaken on behalf of the scheme, plus any parking costs. All you need is a car, driving licence, references and agree to a DBS (police) check.

For more information on existing Community Transport Schemes or to volunteer, go to communityimpactbucks.org.uk/projects/community-transport/, or contact Community Impact Bucks' Transport team by emailing transport@communityimpactbucks.org.uk or phoning 0300 111 1250.

Chartridge Ward, Amersham Hospital—Latest information

A Community Hospital Workshop took place on the 9th October to discuss the options regarding the Chartridge ward. Attendees were NHS staff, BCC council, volunteers, voluntary groups and members of the public

Three possible options were presented for discussion with the idea that positives and negatives of each would be teased out. Options included ranged from reopening the ward, to keeping it closed and putting in a Community Hub there.

Despite the data presented being limited, feedback was given. David Williams, Chief Strategy Officer for Bucks NHS Trust then summed up and said that the outputs would be analysed and reported on.

The following day at a Community Hub meeting in Thame, comments were made that suggested that the Community Hub option at Amersham was underway. You can imagine my surprise and so I raised concerns with David and Ben Collins, Dep Divisional Director Integrated Elderly and Community Care that

this was all a done deal.

We've had a response from Ben but there is still more to understand and further questions to ask. However, with regards to Chartridge Ward, he did say that Amersham Community Hospital already offers a wide range of outpatient clinics and diagnostic facilities as well as inpatient wards. As part of the additional services put in place during the temporary closure of Chartridge, to ensure that people are helped from being admitted to hospital in the first place, a two-day a week community assessment and treatment service has been introduced. The aim of this service is to identify problems before they become a big issue and result in a hospital admission. This service is currently located at Chartridge ward

We will find out more about these additional services, what specifically they cover and whether it is a drop in or referral service.

I'll brief members more fully at the November meeting
Andy



Events at Gracewell



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

Wednesday 6th November 2:00pm Oh! Carol Musical Show - Expect to hear all the well-known hits Neil Sedaka and Carole King wrote and sometime sang like 'Laughter in the Rain', 'The Locomotion', 'Breaking up is Hard to do' and 'You've Got a Friend' taking you back to the sixties and seventies.

Tuesday 19th November 2:30pm International Men's Day - Race Afternoon To celebrate international Men's day you are invited to join us for a race afternoon. Complimentary bar snacks and a beverage in the new bar. Limited spaces please book.

Friday 22nd & Saturday 23rd November 10am—4pm Open Home. A chance to come and meet our team, tour our beautiful home and find out all you need to know about living with Gracewell.

Saturday 24th November 11am—2pm Shazazz Jewellery Stall. Sharon will be selling upcycled costume jewellery, Christmas earrings, bracelets, bookmarks keyrings, sparkly angel window charms and more at great prices.

And don't forget the **Café 'Forever Friday'**, every Friday 2-4pm – Bring, Buy or just socialise, there will be items to buy such as puzzles and books, you can bring any items you would like to donate, all proceeds will go to Alzheimer's Society, Complimentary tea/coffee and cake. All are welcome.

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

The New Buckinghamshire Council

Plans for the new Buckinghamshire Council, which will be replacing the five current councils (Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe district councils and BCC) on 1 April 2020 are continuing.

There will be a network of new 'Council Access Points'. These new access points will be in existing buildings like libraries and council offices and will spread across the county from Buckingham to Burnham.

You'll be able to get information, advice and support on a range of topics at a location close to where you live or work. Staff will be on hand at each council access point to provide face-to-face help, signpost people to the right places to get help and offer support with online services.

The five current council offices in Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Amersham and Capswood will become 'Access Plus' centres, offering extra services for residents who have more complex enquiries. The locations of the other access points will be confirmed soon.



November Craft Classes

- Make a mosaic mat 2nd Nov 10.00-15.00
- Drawing & Painting 6th Nov, 13th Nov, 20th Nov or 27th Nov 13:00-15:00
- Christmas rocker cards 7th Nov 13.00-16.00
- Crochet clinic 9th Nov 10.00– 12:30
- Art Journalling 16th Nov 9:30– 12.00
- Lacy Scarves with soluble fabric. 21st Nov 10:00-15:00
- Sewing Bees 22nd Nov 10.00– 13.00
- Print your own Christmas cards & paper 23rd Nov October 10:00 – 13.00

For further details about these and other workshops, please visit www.workaid.org/workshops or call 01494 775220

Workaid is based at The Old Boot Factory, 71 Townsend Road, Chesham, HP5 2AA



Money Matters

The sale of toxic leaseholds has been banned but property firms are now using costly clauses in freeholds too

Up to 1.3 million homeowners could be trapped in freehold contracts that tie them to rising and unregulated fees. Many new-build estate residents who already pay council tax are being charged uncapped 'management fees' if their local authority does not take on the upkeep of the area.

Campaigners are calling it 'the new leasehold scandal' and say homeowners are now struggling to sell or remortgage. Developers say the charges — which can be as high as £1,800 a year, according to a campaign group — are necessary to cover the cost of maintaining roads and green spaces on the estates because local councils can no longer afford to do so. But councils say many developers are simply trying to make more money. MPs, campaigners and residents are now all calling for the charges to be capped and regulated.

Buying a freehold property ordinarily means the homeowner does not pay ground rent and service charges that leaseholders face. Earlier this year the Government banned the sale of new-build leasehold houses to protect families, who were being forced to pay toxic ground rents that doubled every decade. But now, an increasing number of newbuild buyers are being hit with escalating fees and charges despite buying their property outright and owning the freehold. Others have to pay up to £2,000 in 'permission fees' if they want to make improvements to their home. Some developers are adding 'covenants' to property deeds that ban the owners from parking vehicles such as vans or motor homes on their own driveways.

So if you or someone you know, is looking at buying a new build property, check the paperwork very carefully. This is happening in Bucks with well known developers. The campaign group is HorNet and their website homeownersrights.net

Barclays has reversed its decision to ditch Post Office cash withdrawals

Barclays recently decided to withdraw the facility for its customers to withdraw cash from Post Offices, in a bid to save £7 million a year. Around 15m transactions were carried out last year – 41,000 a day – yet the bank planned to end the vital service from January.

A cross-party group of 124 MPs wrote to Barclays denouncing the decision and Barclays were widely criticised in the press. Of 3,312 bank branch closures since January 2015, 481 were Barclays branches.

Barclays made £3.5billion profit last year and Group CEO, Jes Staley has been paid £7.2million in the past two years.

Government scraps planned probate fees hike

The Government has reversed its decision to change probate fees, which would have seen some bereaved families pay almost £6,000 extra.

Last November, the Government announced plans to alter the charging structure for probate fees – which are paid when administering someone's estate after they die. The current flat fee, £215, was to be replaced with a sliding scale, meaning higher value estates would have been charged higher fees. And whilst estates less than £50k would be fee free, estates worth £50-£300k would have been charged £250 with a maximum charge of £6,000 for estates worth £2 million or more.

The changes were due to come into force in April, but were delayed indefinitely – and the Government has now reversed its position, saying probate fees will instead be reviewed as part of the annual assessment of charges in family and civil courts. For the time being, fees will remain at £215 for estates over £5,000, or £155 if families apply through a solicitor.



Scams and Frauds

Amazon Prime Subscription Con

A new Amazon Prime scam is doing the rounds. The scam starts with unexpected phone call that claims you've just been charged for an Amazon Prime subscription. The recipient is told fraudsters have hacked their account to authorise the transaction, but the payment can be cancelled if they press 1.

People are told this will either offer you more information, or connect you to an "account manager". These are fraudsters. A report in the Guardian said one elderly victim was conned out of £25,000 last month.

What actually happens is that pressing 1 connects you to a premium rate number you then start paying for.

Amazon say "If you receive a phone call claiming to be from Amazon and asking for payment or offering a refund you do not expect, please do not share any personal information, and disconnect immediately."

Hoax email from PDS (Parcel Delivery Service)

Action Fraud is reminding people that a chain email circulating warning about a postal scam that could leave you £315 out of pocket is a hoax.

The hoax email reads:

"Can you circulate this around especially as Xmas is fast approaching - it has been confirmed by Royal Mail. The Trading Standards Office are making people aware of the following scam:

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a Premium rate number). DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £315 for the phone call.

If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 020 7239 6655."

If you receive this email just delete it and do not to forward it to anyone.

Free NHS prescriptions end after Brexit - No they don't!

A crook conned an 86-year-old man out of £18,000 by telling him he needed to pay for his -medicine after Brexit. The scam started in July when the elderly gentleman had a phone call from a man who announced himself as being from the "NHS Brexit Team". The caller asked if he could confirm what medication he was being prescribed.

The caller then informed him that two of the items he had listed were on the "warning list". He explained this meant there would be shortages of these -medicines as soon as Brexit happened. The elderly man was immediately alarmed and asked what he could do at which point the caller explained that the NHS was able to "advance order" these medicines from Europe but this would need to be paid up front but the NHS would pay him the money back in three instalments in November, December and January. The caller explained it was the only way the NHS was allowed to advance order medicines for individuals. The elderly gentleman agreed and asked how much he needed to pay.

The caller then asked him to confirm what the cleared balance was of all his bank and building society accounts and explained that he had to note this to satisfy his bosses that he was not taking too much money from patients.

A total of £18,000 was transferred and he has never heard from the caller again and, of course, has not -received any medicine.

For clarity, the NHS are not running any such scheme and -certainly would not ask you to pay money like this.

Unfortunately there are too many false Brexit scare stories in the media and there are medicine shortages (explained on page 7) but these have nothing to do with Brexit.

If you are concerned about possible fraud, please contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or contact the non emergency police number which is 101



Health News

Crisis at chemists: Dozens of popular medicines run short leaving patients in the lurch

Pharmacists have warned of shortages for every major type of medicine – including painkillers, HRT, diabetes, statins, eyedrops, blood pressure medications affecting hundreds of thousands of patients in the UK.

Pharmacists said they are living ‘on a knife-edge’ due to the mass shortages, which are caused by a perfect storm of manufacturing problems. The nationwide survey revealed a shortfall was reported across all 36 major categories of medicines.

Experts say the reasons for the shortages are complex and there are several interlocking causes. These include the introduction in February of a new EU regulations, supply lines being stretched due to globalisation and manufacturers prioritising more lucrative markets particularly in the far east. The Department of Health has stressed current supply issues are not linked to Brexit.

If one of your medications appears to be in short supply, go back to your doctor and ask for a different brand / equivalent alternative

First drug 'that can SLOW Alzheimer's is ready to bring to market after 'promising trials', company claims

Drugs giant Biogen unexpectedly released results in October suggesting it has developed the first effective medicine for the disease. Crucially, the company said trial data for drug aducanumab is strong enough to apply for medicine licences in Europe early next year.

That in itself is a huge milestone. It would be the first real treatment for Alzheimer's disease, which affects 500,000 in Britain. Although drugs are available that control certain symptoms for short periods, no new treatment has been approved for 15 years, and there are no drugs at all that target the underlying cause of Alzheimer's.

This drug targets ‘amyloid beta’ – a toxic protein which causes plaques to build up in the brain. These plaques, or clusters of amyloid protein, interfere with the function of brain cells.

Government set to scrap paper prescriptions to save NHS £300million

The traditional green paper prescription will no longer be issued as of November. Instead, a new digital version will be used to issue medicine to patients. Regulations that prevent GPs sending prescriptions to pharmacies digitally in some circumstances will be dropped. Matt Hancock, the health and social care secretary, said the move would also be far more convenient for patients, while also saving staff crucial time.

Primary Care Minister, Jo Churchill, announced this new initiative will be entitled the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS). The EPS will be rolled out nationally after a trial run in 60 GP practices and hundreds of pharmacies. Under the new system, patients can get their medications by either nominating a pharmacy that will receive the details directly from their GP or receive a paper prescription with the digital barcode. The medical information is held on a secure NHS database called Spine and will allow a patient's medication to be accessed quickly by GPs and pharmacies.

healthwatch
Bucks

Healthwatch Bucks receives highly commended recognition at national awards

Congratulations to Healthwatch Bucks! They were recognised as highly commended in the outstanding individuals who've made a difference at the 2019 Healthwatch Network Awards.

The work done by Mike Etkind in reviewing health and social care leaflets, discovering that only 1 of the 15 documents were easy to read, despite being available to the public and his recommendations to improve readability by making words and sentences shorter were received by all service providers and improvements made.



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

2019 Dates

November 20th Safety in the Home, Alison Still, Bucks Fire Service

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

Unlocking history and heritage for millions of people affected by dementia

The National Trust is joining forces with Alzheimer's Society to make all of its 500 historic and countryside sites dementia-friendly, in the first project of its kind for the Trust.

For people with dementia and their carers, historic spaces, collections and stories can prompt and stimulate discussion and connection, encourage outdoor exploration, and offer a vital connection to the world around them, with day trips recognised as one of the most likely and regular activities for people living with the condition and their carers. In comparison to other visitor attractions, people living with dementia also view heritage sites as 'safe' and familiar spaces.

The new partnership, which will see

- Upskilling the 74,000 people who work and volunteer for the National Trust
- Improving the accessibility of National Trust sites for all visitors

It will also see improvements at some properties, from improved signage, facilities and modifications to developing dementia services (such as cafes, tours and events), taking heritage to local care homes, hospitals, day centres and community groups.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 7th November 10.30–11:30 Dementia Friends Session The Harrow, Warrendene Road, Hughenden Valley. Open to all residents. Call 01296 382345 to find out more

Monday 11th November, 10:30-12 Free Scams & Fraud Workshop for residents to help identify the types of scams & harm that can happen behind closed doors. Harding Room, Chesham Library, Elgiva Ln, Chesham. If you'd like to attend call 01296 382345

Thursday 14th November 2.30pm Large Meeting Room, Aylesbury Library, Walton Street, Aylesbury Behind Closed Doors Street Association offering a free workshop for residents to help identify exploitation & other forms of abuse. To find out more call 01296 382345 or communities@buckscc.gov.uk

Monday 25 November Big Conversation Café at Thame Community Hospital 1:30-3pm Drop in

Tuesday 26 November Big Conversation Café at Marlow Community Hospital 1:30-3pm Drop in

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 27 Nov 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

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

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