

Note from the Editor,

Hello everyone, another month has gone by and still we are battling the pandemic. This month's edition has up to date information on the new Bucks Council communities board and how to contact them. We have advice on current scams (which made me really angry whilst researching), and some interesting pieces on local community groups for you to enjoy. We also have follow ups on the TV licensing saga and online prescriptions ordering. I hope you have all managed to find suitable facemasks and have been confident in going out and about but keeping yourselves safe at the same time. Please be particularly aware of the banking scam that is currently doing the rounds in our area and don't trust anyone who calls you asking for personal banking information.

Keep smiling, stay alert and keep safe,

Paula



A new way to tackle the issues that matter most to our community

There is a new way to tackle the issues that matter most to our community through Buckinghamshire Council's new Community Boards. The boards will connect local people, organisations and groups with the council to improve and protect our environment.

The 16 Boards, which cover the county, held introductory meetings to start conversations and will encourage the community to become involved in shaping the key priorities ahead of their official launch in September. They welcome local residents to take an interest and find out more about what the board does, how it will work and how everyone can get involved.

Community Boards will focus on the themes and issues that most need to be addressed in our community and develop a programme of activity. Working groups will look at specific projects and identify creative solutions. The Board will also:

- * **Represent the voices of local people;**
- * **Capture thoughts, ideas and suggestions in new ways;**
- * **Enable local conversations about priorities;**
- * **Identify needs within local communities and work to find creative solutions;**
- * **Explore areas of interest;**
- * **Influence how decisions are made and public services are delivered.**

All boards have a Chairman and a Coordinator to help local people, groups and organisations feel connected with the boards and the council, ensuring information is shared and views are heard.

If you'd like to get involved or find out about your local Board, email;

localities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

or visit; www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-boards



Martin Lewis'
MoneySavingExpert.com

WARNING. Coronavirus scams to watch out for and how to protect yourself

NHS Test and Trace service; Do not trust any call or text that asks for money or bank details.

Text message scams; Do not click on Websites, or give any personal information out.

Email scams; forward dodgy emails to report@phishing.gov.uk. If you have a hunch it might be a scam, report it and help them to act quickly.

Fraudulent articles and coronavirus alert services; These include a link to a fake company website, don't click on them and ignore anything where they claim to infect your phone and block it completely until you agree to pay a specified amount of cash.

Fake 'HMRC' tax refunds or demands for tax payment; These emails direct you to a fake website that collects your personal and financial details, often displaying the HMRC or Gov.uk logo

Scam 'competitions' and 'free vouchers'; bogus emails offering a 'free voucher' or a fake competition, which usually claim to be from well-known supermarkets and household brands.

Fake 'TV licence' bills renewals and other subscriptions; If you aren't sure if an email you've received about your TV licence is genuine, do not click links in the email. Instead, independently get in touch with TV Licensing through its official website. <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/faqs/FAQ288> or call on **0300 303 9695**

Online shopping scams; People have ordered protective face masks and hand sanitiser which never arrived; Buy what you really need from credible retailers who have a presence in the UK.

Popular 'lockdown items' for sale that don't exist; if something doesn't feel right, or the price of a sold-out gadget sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Post-lockdown travel traps; Be sure to question any uninvited approach and if you do need to get in contact with the travel company,

independently research and use their legitimate contact details. Do not click the links in their messages or call the numbers they provide.

Door-to-door scams; Criminals offering to do shopping for elderly people, These scammers are sickeningly targeting some of the most vulnerable in society, claiming they'll go shopping on the victim's behalf. The thieves simply take money and never return.

Telephone scams; somebody pretending to be from your bank, selling fake items over the phone, or calling from a supposed Government body. If you have another phone, it's always best to call back from a different number – this is because some clever scammers calling landlines stay on the phone while you try to dial and trick you into thinking you're through to the real company.

Fake utility companies; These people say they are calling about your essential bills, in the hope that you'll fall for it if you think you might be cut off. If they seem to be pressuring you to stay on the line, they are almost certainly dodgy.

Bank money transfers; These come in the form of cold calls, emails, texts or WhatsApp messages stating that your bank is in trouble due to the crisis. They may push you to transfer your money to a new bank with alternative banking details.

If you're worried you've been scammed and need help, first contact your bank and cancel any recurring payments.

Report it to Action Fraud on:
0300 123 2040

Or Contact Citizens Advice Scams:
0808 250 5050

ActionFraud
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre
0300 123 2040



Free TV Licences for all over 75s in the UK, funded by the Government, came to an end this year. From 1st August 2020, anyone aged 75 or over who is not in receipt of Pension Credit (a benefit available to pensioners on low incomes) needs to pay for their TV Licence. Due to the challenges to the UK caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19), the BBC decided to wait until now before asking you to make arrangements for your next licence – and they're making it as easy as possible for you to do this from home. It's now time to apply for your free licence if you are receiving Pension Credit, OR to tell them how you want to pay for your licence if you now need to. You should receive a letter from TV licensing, a genuine one is available to view by clicking here; (Please check as there are scammers out there taking Advantage);

<https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/faqs/FAQ288>

The letter gives information about applying for a free licence for those receiving Pension Credit and the payment options that will be available for those who will need to buy a licence. This includes the new 75+ Plan which will allow people over 75s switching from a free licence to a licence they pay for, to spread the cost in weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments to make it easier to manage. However, no one will be expected to pay for a new licence until they have received their letter.

Please respond soon, to avoid your licence being cancelled. You are currently covered by a TV Licence. However, if they haven't heard from you within two months of receiving the letter, your licence will be cancelled automatically without charge. It's a legal requirement to be covered by a TV Licence if you watch or record live TV programmes on any channel or device, or download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer. If they cancel your licence this will mean you won't be licensed to do these things. If you contact them after your licence has been cancelled to tell them that you do need one, they would issue a new licence backdated to 1st August 2020. You would then need to pay the full licence fee over the duration of the new licence.

They recognise it may not be possible for you to leave your home at the moment. So they've included an information sheet – 'How you can set up your next licence safely' – which explains all the ways you can respond, to help you find the way that you're most comfortable with. The booklet has answers to some of the questions you may have. And for the latest updates, please visit

tvl.co.uk/75

If you no longer need a TV Licence, please let them know. If you never watch or record live TV programmes on any channel or device, and never download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer, please let them know that you don't need a licence by calling:

0300 790 6151.

They can then cancel your over 75 TV Licence.

Remember, it's a legal requirement to be covered by a licence if you need one.





NHS Prescriptions

Following a letter from the National Pensioners Convention, expressing concern over new guidance to GP surgeries to abandon taking requests for repeat prescriptions by phone with effect from 1 September. NHS England and NHS improvement has replied as follows; NHS England & NHS Improvement has not asked practices to stop taking requests for repeat prescriptions by phone. GP practices are required to ensure patients can access their medicines. Many practices have adopted new systems during the COVID-19 pandemic and have encouraged patients to request repeat prescriptions online where appropriate.

However, practices must have systems in place to enable patients to order repeat prescriptions without going online, and they recognise online ordering is not appropriate for everyone. They have spoken to the local commissioner about this matter who is following up with the practice's concerned.

Do contact us at BOPAG if you are concerned or finding it difficult to get your repeat prescriptions and we will try to assist you.



Lockdown isolation and loneliness

While some people will see lockdown easing as a welcome relief, many will be feeling anxious about how to stay safe. It's natural to feel this way. However, there are things you can do to help look after yourself mentally. Age UK have put together some information for you here:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/staying-safe-and-well-at-home/your-wellbeing/>

Looking after yourself and others as lockdown lifts;

They've also put together a handy sheet with top tips and helpful contact details for those that might be worried as lockdown is lifted too. You can also print it off for someone you think might find it useful.

https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/coronavirus/ia-coronavirus-info-sheet_final-3.pdf

Target Magazine

We would like to say a big thank you to the Editors at Target Magazine in Bourne End, Bucks, for including BOPAG in their September edition.

You can read it online here;
<http://bourneendcommunitycentre.org.uk/>

Or contact Barrie on **01628 525415** to have a copy of the magazine sent to you or you can call in at the Bourne End Community centre to pick up a copy.





Bringing our farm to your door.....

Albeit at a distance, their exciting Outreach Project is for you if you are a man who enjoys the countryside and outdoors or a carer of someone who does, you are feeling the effects of lockdown and would appreciate some support or you would just like some activities to help pass the time .

The team at Animal Antiks are taking some positive steps to support men and their family carers while lockdown is forcing their isolation at home and affecting their physical and mental wellbeing. Thanks to some funding from the national charity, Countrymen UK, they are launching an outreach project to connect with these men and their family carers. The men and carers can choose how much or how little support they require. So, if you or someone you know would like to receive; FREE countryside-based activities to do at home (these could be around woodwork, gardening or craft), FREE farm fresh eggs when available, FREE books from our library FREE friendly telephone support or FREE informative newsletters Please do get in touch with Emma Dearn.

Here's some information about summertime down on the farm.;

As always at this time of year there is a lot happening down on the farm. All the animals are blissfully unaware of the lockdown and are carrying on in their usual way. Animal Antiks is based on Manor Farm; a 230 acre farm in North Marston in the heart of the beautiful Buckinghamshire countryside. They are a mixed farm with grass crops and an array of interesting animals including; alpacas, donkeys, ponies, sheep, pigs, goats, chickens, ducks, rabbits, guinea pigs and of course; Digby, their majestic, if somewhat stubborn Clydesdale. Most of the animals are making the most of this lovely warm dry weather and are out in their paddocks. The alpacas and sheep are grazing well having been shorn earlier in the summer. They have a number of alpaca fleeces to card and spin in the Autumn, they plan to try out their new peg loom too. Their five pygmy goats have moved to their summer home in the old pig sty and are busy exploring their new area, complete with their own adventure playground. All the hay has been cut and bailed. While waiting for the second cut of silage, Farmer Nick Sear has been busy catching up with the ditching and fencing jobs around the farm.

Get involved with this wonderful scheme by contacting them on; **01296 670996**

Email them on info@animalantiks.co.uk

Visit their website at www.animalantiks.co.uk





2020

Contact Details for the Bucks Older People's Action Group

Paula can be contacted on 07753 987973 or paulawatts.bopag@btinternet.com

Andy can be contacted on 01296 622122

E-mail : info@bopag.org.uk

BOPAG, c/o Hunter Hill Cottage, Blind Lane, Bourne End SL8 5LF



The Tracy Trust's aims are to relieve the senior citizens and pensioners in need who are resident in the Parish of Hedgerley, Buckinghamshire and

now, in 2020, the charity

continues with its services and activities to the benefit of the older community in their village. Anyone who is 60 years and over, is no longer in full-time employment and has been resident in the ecclesiastical parish of Hedgerley for at least 1 year are welcome to join.

They host wonderful events for their members including Exercise classes, Tea parties and Fish and chip suppers!. They also offer help with services and transport links.

Call Helena Makowski on 01753 643663. or visit their website;

<https://www.thetracytrust.co.uk/>



Facemasks

The Holy Stitches group at St Peter's Church Burnham are making masks. All they ask is a donation of at least £1. towards church funds. Contact :

Pam Rogers, churchwarden. pam.rogers@stpetersburnham.org

or call on: 07800 801388



Dignity in Care

Buckinghamshire Council commissioned Healthwatch Bucks to visit care homes across the county. They reported what they saw and heard, looking at how dignity was provided.

During their visits, they looked at how people were treated and whether they could remain as independent as possible. Choice and privacy were also important as was their overall quality of life. They have made over 120 visits to places in Buckinghamshire where care is provided. They have produced a report for each home visited. You may find these reports useful when you are looking for care for yourself or loved ones.

See the full report here;

<https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/dignity-care-reports/>

The National Pensioners' Convention has called for an urgent inquiry after a new report revealed some care home staff were told to put blanket Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) orders on residents at the height of the pandemic. The NPC has written to Professor Alison Leary MBE, Dr. Crystal Oldman CBE & Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock. They are requesting that you ask your MP to raise the question of an urgent, robust inquiry into the imposition of DNR's without consultation.

For more information on this go to their website; www.npcuk.org or to find out who your MP is visit; <https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>



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