



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 17

March 2021

Hello and welcome to our latest V I Link. Amazingly we are already fast approaching Easter and the clocks go forward an hour on 28th March! I'm sure we are all looking forward to lighter evenings and warmer weather ahead. All the signs seem to indicate we are moving towards an easing of restrictions and with that, hopefully getting to see friends and family, at least by the Summer.

Last weekend, I had the good fortune to meet one of our members when I was out on my 'Sunday morning walk'. There, up ahead, was a face I recognised, and a guide dog who I had greatly missed. I hadn't seen either of these individuals face to face for twelve months. With appropriate social distancing, we chatted for about 20 minutes and afterwards I walked away, feeling happy. It felt like something normal had happened. Between us, we had set the world's to right, made a point of not talking about Covid and vaccinations and just for a moment, life was as it always had been. It gave me hope, knowing that we will get to this point again. As restrictions ease, don't worry if you are feeling a little anxious about going out again. Yes, things have changed, but help is at hand. We have sighted guides who are more than happy to accompany you for that first outing and talk you through what's happening around you. Give us a call if you would like to know more.

This month we have Margaret's Tabletop wares on sale, details of groups to join and a talk from Vision Aid on magnification equipment to name just a selection.

COVID Update: First though, let's look at where we are up to with Covid. The following information is with thanks to our monthly NHS Bury CCG contributor, Carrie Dearden.

Whilst numbers in Bury are still high in comparison with the average in England, as at week 27 February to 5 March, Covid cases recorded in Bury were 166, down by 163 from the previous week. A total of 65,203 people

registered with a Bury GP have received their first vaccination against coronavirus. A growing number of people are now receiving their second dose of vaccination – currently in Bury 683 people aged under 65 and 1,482 people aged over 65 have had their second jab.

Remember:

- Vaccinations are given to people in the priority order set by the Government.
- Vaccination is by invitation only and you will be contacted when it is your turn. Depending on the priority group you are in, you may be contacted by your GP practice (by letter, phone or text message which will include a link to book an appointment) or you may receive a letter from the NHS. At no point will you be asked to pay for your vaccine – if you are asked for any bank details or payment, terminate the call.
- For more information visit: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-vaccine

Getting tested: If you have any of the three most common symptoms of coronavirus - a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - please get tested to protect yourself and the people around you. For the latest information about testing and availability visit: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing or call 0161 253 5515.

Support in the community: Support for clinically extremely vulnerable residents who have been asked to shield, other vulnerable residents and those who need to self-isolate continues through Bury's Community Hubs. The hubs can help with food shopping and collecting prescriptions as well as telephone befriending. Call 0161 253 5353 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Update on Changes in Restrictions:

Since the last bulletin, a controlled relaxation of restrictions (Stepped approach) has been developed by the Government, based on case numbers continuing to fall.

Step 1: From the 8th March:

Children, students can return to school and registered childcare has resumed.

Social Contact: People can leave home for recreation and exercise outdoors with their household or support bubble, or with one person from outside their household. Care home residents are allowed one regular visitor.

From 29th March:

Social Contact: Outdoor gatherings (including private gardens) of either six people (the Rule of 6) or 2 households, will be allowed.

Business & activities: outdoor sports such as tennis and open-air swimming allowed to re-open and people will be allowed to take part in formally organised outdoor sports.

Travel: The 'stay at home' rule will end on 29th but many restrictions will remain in place. We should all still try and minimise the number of journeys we are making. Holidays abroad still prohibited.

Not Before 12 April. Step 2: Details of Step 2 will be expanded on in our next issue, but proposed headlines are the opening of:

- non-essential retail, personal care premises (such as hairdressers!) and public buildings including libraries and community centres. Indoor leisure such as gyms for individual use and most outdoor attractions.
- Hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors.

We're Here for You.

No one can say that the past twelve months has been easy. For some, it has been particularly challenging. We have listed below information on certain areas of support that may be of assistance. Please do contact us if you require help in accessing any of these organisations.

We are fortunate to have developed many useful relationships with partner organisations and community groups over this period so, if we don't know, we probably know someone who does! Also, whilst the centre maybe closed, all the staff team are still working and available for advice or to arrange a referral.

Mental health support: Bury's Getting Help Line is a confidential telephone service run by the voluntary sector for people of all ages who are experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing. For advice, guidance and signposting to local services call the Getting Help Line on 0161 464 3679, find out about other support at: www.bury.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing

Domestic Abuse: Disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse than non-disabled people. Domestic abuse is not always physical, it can include financial, emotional/psychological and sexual abuse, as well as coercive and controlling behaviour.

We would encourage anyone with a disability who may be experiencing domestic abuse to reach out for support through a specialist service, and we would like to provide reassurance that these services are still operating during Covid-19 lockdown. For further information or support please contact the **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** (for women) on **0808 2000 247** or **Mankind** (for men) on **01823 334244**. Alternatively, you can contact **SafeNet Bury** on **0300 3033 581** or contact@safenet.org.uk for local support and advice.

The free **Respect Helpline (0808 802 4040)** can also provide support if you are worried that you are harming your partner or family member.

Online Sleep Survey: In partnership with the Blind Veterans UK, Circadian Therapeutics is conducting a research study to explore the sleep and circadian disruption experienced by vision impaired individuals.

The study aims to improve treatment pathways and provide informed feedback to the Visually Impaired community about improving sleep and circadian rhythms. Circadian Therapeutics are actively recruiting individuals with vision impairment for an Online Sleep Survey.

For further information on how to join in with Cicadian's Sleep study, go to www.blindsleepstudy.com to register your details and a researcher will contact you.

Fairfield Eye Clinic: We have heard from a number of clients that they have been waiting over 12 months for appointments. We have contacted the hospital who have acknowledged that there are considerable delays in appointments. The advice given was to encourage clients to ring the Booking/Scheduling Centre – 0161 778 2233.

Let's Get Physical!

This month we thank one of our members, Tracey Marno, for submitting these simple exercises for your feet! We all expect our feet to work, support us and carry us about. So, let's show them a little 'me time'. Remember, if at any point you feel unwell, stop, and seek medical advice (dial 111) if you continue feeling unwell.

These can be done each day while you are sat in a chair, stood in the kitchen or when brushing your teeth; find a time that fits in with you but at a time that you will remember on a daily basis. In time, this will help strengthen your feet giving you better stability and, as our feet are the farthest away from our hearts, this can help to stimulate blood flow around the body and can also help to keep our feet nice and warm. The exercises are best done in bare feet/socks but no shoes and hold onto something for support if standing.

- Raise each heel up in turn off the ground and place back down again, next time when your heel is raised, roll your foot across the ball of your foot from side to side.
- Raise each foot up in turn and rotate the ankle in both directions.
- Making sure that your feet are flat on the floor, raise all 10 toes as far as you can and then place them back down, next time when your toes are raised try just lowering your big toes. For the last set, try lowering just your other 8 toes leaving up your big toes.
- Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with and all of these may need some practice, especially the last one, but you will soon find that you get better at them after some time.

Census 2021: By now, you have probably received your notice about the National Census due in by Sunday 21 March. It is important to have your say and help to inform decisions on services that shape your community, such as healthcare, education, and transport. However, this time, people are being encouraged to complete online. This is not always the best option for people with sight loss and/or no internet access. RNIB and Thomas Pocklington have been working with the Government to ensure the form is accessible for people with a visual impairment. If you are unable to go online personally, there are a number of options. You can ring in and ask for the form in an alternate format or, as one of our clients has experienced, book a guide to complete the form for you over the phone. You will need the reference number from your letter, then phone free on 0800 141 2021 for help.

Alternatively, we are also offering to support you in completing the form by utilising our internet and a member of staff. We can complete over the phone or arrange a one-to-one session in the Centre with appropriate PPE. This service has also been utilised by one of our clients, so don't worry, you've got plenty of options enabling you to have your say.

Thoughts

We are sorry to report the news that Bill Kempton passed away on 22 February following a battle with cancer. Bill was one of the original group who formed 'Eye Openers' and is known by many of our members. Our thoughts are with Jenny, family, and friends at this sad time.

We also regret to inform you that Sarah Webster, a member, and mother to Carole Allen who many of you know, passed away peacefully on 2nd March. Sarah was a regular at the Society and we have many happy memories of her helping at events including the infamous Christmas Meals. She will be greatly missed. We send our thoughts and condolences to Carole and family.

We send our best wishes and thoughts to anyone who is suffering ill health or who has lost someone dear to them recently.

Virtual Quiz: Thank you to all who supported our first 'online' fundraising event. The Quiz was attended by 22 teams and raised £250! All agreed, it was a great evening and good fun. A huge thank you to Michael Johnson who put it all together. Word is, he's happy to do another one.....so watch this space!

Margaret's Table Top: As we are still unable to come into the Centre in groups, Margaret has put together a lovely selection of items for you to review and hopefully, purchase! Attached is a sheet displaying the 'Tabletop Selection. Simply phone in with which item/s you wish to purchase, we can arrange local delivery and collection of payment.

What's On This Month:

Third Wednesday: 17th March 1.30pm: The monthly Macular Support Group. This group is accessed by a land or mobile telephone line, no internet required. Each month there is a guest speaker who briefly discusses a topic and for the rest of the session, there is an opportunity to ask further questions and share experiences and advice with peers. All welcome.

Third Thursday: 18th March 10.30am: Healthy Living: Come along to share cooking and exercise tips that have been specifically adapted to people with visual impairments. Access is via Zoom or phone line.

Fourth Wednesday: 24th March 3.00pm: Glaucoma Support Group. We are delighted the Glaucoma Group are holding their first session via the Zoom phone line facility.

Thursday 25th March: 2pm Monthly Conversation: Vision Aid. This month we are delighted to welcome Vision Aid who will be demonstrating and talking about magnification equipment. Please note, this is open to all, including family and carers. Via Zoom – contact Centre for joining details.

Last Friday: 26th March 1pm: Access Forum. Despite a couple of technical issues initially, this group proved to be a lively and productive forum voicing concerns ranging from potholes to reviewing equipment for effectiveness. In the future, we intend to provide an update report 'You Asked – We Did'. The group is led by Kelly Marno, our Early Intervention Officer. Through her work Kelly has developed links with transport, the Council and other official bodies to highlight issues for people living with sight loss.

Fourth Monday: 29th March, 10.30am. “Knitting 100”. Following our appeal for knitters, we are delighted a number of people have joined the knitting fun! Aiming to produce 100 blankets by all knitting a variety of squares, we have knitting packs and knitting buddies available. Why not join us, meeting virtually at the moment, via Zoom phone facility. Contact the Society for details.

Friday: 9th April 10.30am: Virtual Volunteers Forum. Meeting up every other month, all volunteers are welcome to come along for a catch up. This month we will be updating on the work of our Early Intervention Team and events coming up. Accessible by Zoom – internet or phone line.

Second Wednesday: 14th April 2pm: Monthly Makes. This group made their debut in March and had a great time. For the April session they are connecting with Spring with a Sunflower theme. Activity includes paint and

decorate plant pots, seeds and more. Contact the office to book your place. All welcome.

For further details of how to join any of these sessions, just ring the centre and speak to a member of staff. 0161 763 7014.

Just for Fun – Give your mind a workout with this month’s brainteaser.

Answers first! February’s Brain teaser:

What is unusual about the following words: revive, banana, grammar, voodoo, assess, potato, dresser, uneven?: **If you move the first letter to the end of the word, it forms the same word backwards! Banana = ananab, dresser = resserd and so on.**

March Brain teaser: Without it, I’m dead. If I’m not, then I’m behind. What am I?

‘Take 5’ Quiz. Answers from last month:

1. In What year was the first PlayStation console release? **1994**
2. What is the strongest sense in humans? **Smell**
3. How old do you have to be to stand for US President? **35**
4. What percentage of the human body is water? **average 60%**
5. How many world titles has Phil Taylor won in darts? **16**

March Quiz – with an ‘Easter Theme’ to it!

1. Located in the Leith area of Edinburgh, what is the name of the home ground of Hibernian football Club?
2. True or False – The Easter egg represents ‘new life’
3. Which 1948 musical film starred Judy Garland, Fred Astaire and Peter Lawford?
4. Once married to Denise Welch, which English actor played Pat Hancock?
5. Which remote volcanic island in Polynesia is Chilean territory and has nearly 900 monumental statues called Moai?

Stay safe all and we hope you have a very Happy Easter.

Jill and all the Bury Blind Society Team.

Registered Charity No. 1102525

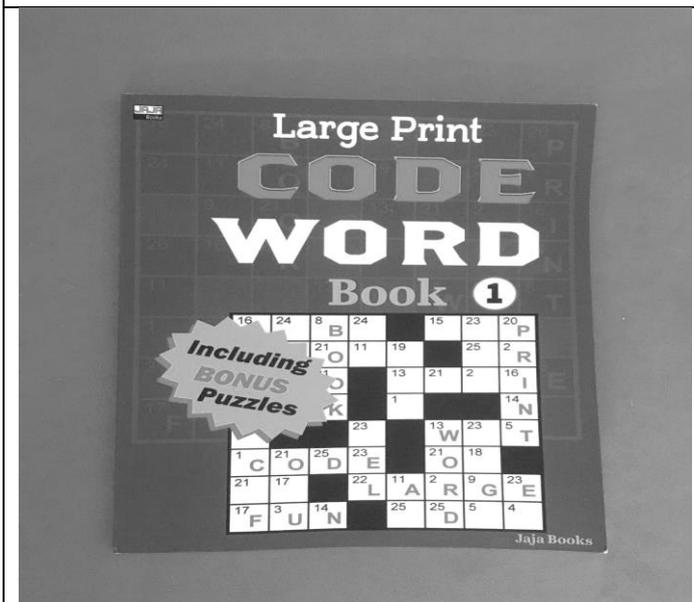
Margaret's Table Top Sale



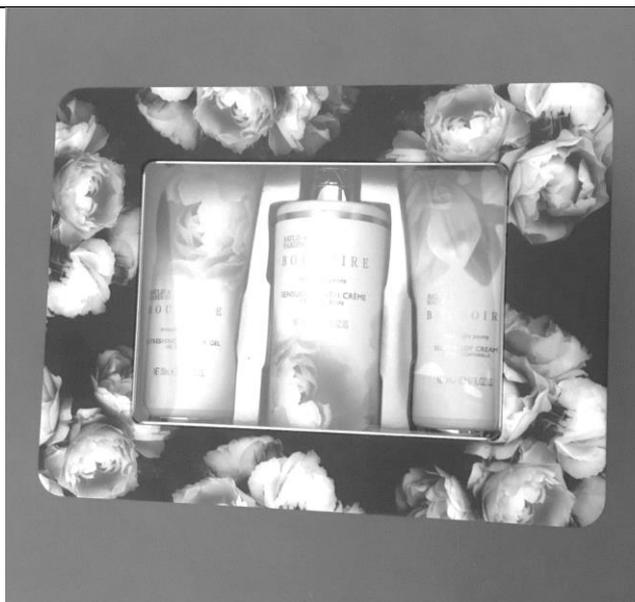
Pack of luxury hand and nail creams with fragrances of Magnolia, Rose and Lavender. £3.00



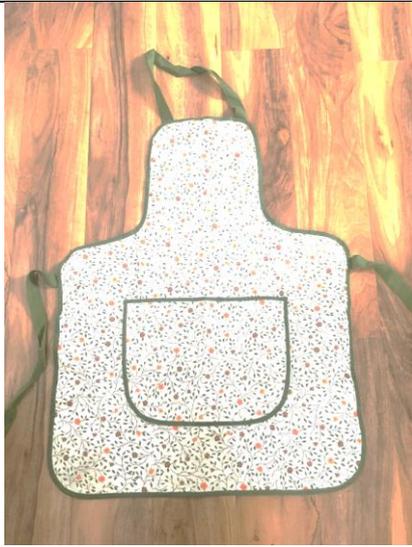
Glamorous and cosy, fine knit long silver and grey ladies scarf.
£4.00



Challenging Large print Code Word puzzle book. £3.00



Boudoire Boxed set of Shower gel, Bath and Body crème. £5.00



Flower patterned cotton apron with handy front pocket. £3.00



Quirky plastic claw tipped green garden digging gloves. £4.00



Beautiful hand-crafted, multicoloured bead necklaces. Set of 3 for £5.00



Cozy flower pattern slip on mule style slippers with a cute button bow, size 5/6. £3.00



Boxed jewellery - shimmering rhinestone Peacock brooch £6



Black and white polka dot plastic shower mac neatly folded in own handy bag. size M £3.00



A perfume for every day of the working week! Boxed set of 5 aromatic Jeanne Arthes perfumes £5.00



Can't travel? Bring Highland memories home with this packet of fragranced draw liners £4.00