



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 19

May 2021

Welcome to this edition of VI Link. Whilst we may not be 'COVID Free' just yet, and there continues to be news of variants, the level of cases does give rise to hope. Providing we all continue to protect ourselves, get the vaccine, and keep to the 'hands, face, space' mantra, we can start to look forward and make some plans.

The Centre has been closed for over twelve months now and it will be great to see familiar faces again. As we mentioned in our last newsletter, we are still taking a cautious approach with your best interest at heart.

We are delighted that a number of the 'virtual groups,' who have no more than 6 clients attending, have already booked slots at the Centre in the coming weeks. Details of all Group meetings are listed later on. From 17th May, the Centre is available to book for one to one meetings, or small groups of up to 6 in the Lounge area or outside in the Garden Area. The sessions can only be for two hours either morning or afternoon, to allow thorough cleaning and sanitizing in preparation for the next session. Our Drop In remains closed.

1-7 June is Volunteers' Week when we celebrate the fantastic work volunteers are involved in. This past year many people have helped to deal with challenges that have emerged with the pandemic. This includes supporting the Community Hubs by delivering essential items, food banks, regular phone contact with isolated people plus much, much more. We are so proud to be part of the Voluntary Sector and whilst many of our services have had to be paused, we are still celebrating our wonderful volunteers and looking forward to welcoming many of them back to the Society. Whilst we are still under restrictions, the Centre is operating with staff in 'bubbles' of 2 or 3 and occasional individual volunteers. Consequently, from time to time you may find the answer phone operating during the day. Please do leave a message and we will get back to you.

When you visit the Centre, you will find that there are a number changes including a one system, (in the Front Entrance, out via the Back Door), hand sanitizers throughout the building and temperature checks as you are signed

in. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information or if you would like someone to help you familiarize yourself with the new rules in shops, public transport, or simply coming to the Centre. We are here to help.

Coronavirus vaccination update.

The latest publication, 2 May 2021 shows a total of 96,901 first doses and 53,960 second doses of the vaccine have been delivered from Bury's four community vaccination centres, hospital hubs and regional vaccination centres.

Vaccination is by invitation and you will be contacted when it's your turn. Second dose vaccinations are being given 11 weeks after the first dose, if you haven't been contacted by 10 weeks after your first dose, please contact your GP Practice. For more information: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-vaccine

Getting tested

We have obtained a quantity of the self-testing kits for staff to test themselves prior to home visits. We have used this as an opportunity to feedback to the relevant authorities on the accessibility of the kits for a visually impaired person. The findings were, the kits themselves are not easy to use for a person with sight loss. The instructions are in very small print, however, we believe a large print version could be produced. To conduct the test, if you have little sight, a family member or carer would need to assist. If this is not an option, we do have a number of kits in stock and a member of staff would be happy to assist if you wish to have a rapid test. Don't forget 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 as soon as you can. For the latest information about testing and availability: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing or call 0161 253 5515.

Mental health support

Just as we look after our physical health, we mustn't forget our mental health too. 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. Call 0161 464 3679. Find out about other mental wellbeing support at: www.bury.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing. In addition, registered charity Shout is providing a free 24/7 confidential text support

service for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope. Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 at any time of the day or night. You will be connected to a trained volunteer.

Let's Get Physical! This month we are featuring 'Get Out This May – the 2021 GM Walking Festival'. The festival is using a range of activity ideas for the whole month of May to inspire, motivate and encourage as many people to get out and walk this month. For inspiration go to the following link.

<https://gmwalking.co.uk/festival/>. Or here's a couple of their ideas:

- Move for 5 minutes in a way that makes you feel warmer
- Take a stroll around the block
- Picnic in the park with family or friends
- Walk with a friend, neighbour or colleague. (or book one of our Confidence Buddies!)
- Why not play 'Nature Bingo' whilst walking? Make a list of things to spot during your walk eg. Something rough to the touch, the sound of a bird singing, something that makes a noise when you stand on it, a dog on a walk and then tick them off as you find them!

Scam Alert!

Are you receiving random phone calls from Amazon, BT regarding your computer etc.? It's so difficult to assess whether these are scam calls or genuine at times. Barry Grigg, one of our Trustees, is the Network Manager, North West Region, for HSBC Bank and we have asked him to provide a regular article highlighting the latest scams. We are hoping, when the Centre re-opens, to invite HSBC to one of our Monthly Sessions to expand on areas of banking and scam concern for members.

The Latest 'popular' scam is receiving a text message from the Post Office stating underpaid postage on an item. In it they ask you to enter your payment details to release it. The fraudsters then use this information to make a purchase of low value. They then call saying they are from your Bank and do you recognise this payment. This will lead you to believe that they are genuine. They will attempt to get you to release your digital Banking information passwords, codes etc and take over your account, to enable them to move money out, take out loan in your name and send the money away. Remember NO Bank will ever ask you for your passwords or passcodes over the phone or email. When in doubt – ring your bank separately and check it out.

Barry Grigg – Trustee.

Society News:

Councillor Yvonne Wright.

Yvonne has been on our Board as a Trustee for 21 years and during that time has played a major part in the development of the Society. Last month Yvonne decided it was time to step down from the Board to focus on other commitments.

On behalf of all at the Society, we would like to thank her so very much for all of her hard work, commitment and dedication. She has been instrumental in setting up and putting in place many of our now annual fund-raising events which still continue to raise much needed funds. Here are just a few - Christmas wrapping service, Christmas gift and craft fair, quiz night and the Summer shows.

Yvonne also was a huge part of the reorganisation of the Society, this included our purchase and move into Wolstenholme House. She was involved in the development of the befriending service, which many of our members have found to be invaluable; especially over this last year, when the phone befriending has been needed more than ever before. She has left an amazing legacy.

We would like to take this opportunity to pass on our grateful thanks to Yvonne, wish her luck in her future ventures, and look forward to seeing her, as promised, at future events.

Tracey Marno, Chairman.

'Letters From Lockdown'

Would you like to get involved in this fascinating project, which would make a nice change from normal 'Covid' routine! Engage 2 Stage, the Drama Group, are looking to recruit 50 members to take part in developing an audio documentary. As Elizabeth Wainwright from Engage 2 Stage explains: 'Each member will be invited to record a 'letter' on their doorstep (we'll explain how we do that safely if you'd like to be part of this group). Following on from this, when the weather gets warmer in the summer, an afternoon tea will be arranged providing an opportunity to share your letter with a couple of other members of the group. We are then going to capture your conversation and letters and create an audio documentary.

There are only 50 places so if you'd like to join please let us know as soon as you can and if you're not sure and have some questions please get in touch. We are really keen to make an interesting, funny and sometimes moving documentary about all our experiences during and coming out of lockdown.' If you would like to be involved with this project, please contact the office on 0161 763 7014 initially.

Eye Clinic Appointments – Gill Currie, Early Intervention Team.

If you are expecting an appointment at Fairfield Hospital and you have not received any correspondence about your next visit, you can check with the Booking and Scheduling telephone line.

We have been informed that due to Covid obviously, there is a backlog of patients, but should you feel you have been forgotten, please contact the Booking and Scheduling telephone line on 0161 778 2233.

Members Contributions:

It's Good to Share!

Sometimes the smallest change can make a big difference and we thought we would share some of the hints and tips that we've picked up along the way, as well as some member suggestions. If you have an idea to share -why not pass it on? Give us a call and we'll include in next month's edition.

Rubber Bands – a life saver! Do you struggle to distinguish between shampoo and shower gel, or tins of beans or peaches? Simply put a rubber band round one and then you'll know which is which!

Struggling with screws? Change from slot screws to cross heads. You'll find it much easier to keep them place and work with using a cross head screwdriver.

Stay safe in the garden. Do you have support canes by your plants? Purchase the polystyrene balls (egg size) from any craft shop/B&M/The Works and fix on the top of the cane. Now when you bend down to inspect your plant there's no risk of getting a sharp cane in your face! An additional tip is to place the little garden name tags by your plants so you can distinguish between plants and weeds!

Pitta Bread – rather than trying to split the bread lengthways, cut across and warm in the microwave for a minute. You should now be able to open the ‘pitta pocket’ easily with your fingers or the handle of a desert spoon.

Many thanks to Roy, Gill and Diane for their contributions.

What’s Your Preference?

Recently, one of our members, Tarnia, was listening to the ‘InTouch’ Programme on Radio 4. There was a debate regarding the terminology used when being registered. What do you prefer? Let us know. Blind, Severely Sight Impaired, Sight Impaired, Partially Sighted, visually impaired or just have a sight loss.

Group Activities:

From 17 May some of our smaller Phone Friend Groups are meeting in the Centre. We have indicated how each group is currently meeting in the listing below:

Retinitis Pigmentosa Support Group, Tuesday 18th May, 2-3.30pm: A welcome return to our RP Group. Meeting at the Centre.

Macular Support Group, Wednesday 19th May, 1.30pm: Via phone line. This month will include updates from a member of our Early Intervention Team.

Healthy Living, Thursday 20th May at 10.30am: Access via Zoom or phone line. Reviewing favourite recipes and daily living skills – and doing a few exercises too!

Knit 100: 24th May, 10.30-11.30am via Zoom phone facility. An ‘informal drop in’ to have a catch up and share ideas whilst knitting your squares for our 100 blanket target.

Music Group: Fortnightly, Monday 24th May, 1.30-2.30pm: currently meeting via Zoom, Mags and Michael would love you to join in the fun, no experience necessary!

Glaucoma Support Group: Wednesday 26th May at 2.00pm. Via Zoom or phone line.

Accessibility Review Forum: Friday 28th May at 1.00pm. Access via Zoom or phone line. If you have any issues you wish the group to review e.g. Potholes, traffic lights, cyclists, then let Kelly know to include in the Agenda.

Volunteers' Forum Session: Friday 4th June at 10.30am: Why not join us on Zoom for updates on the Centre re-opening and what opportunities are available as a result.

'Monthly Makes': Wednesday 9 June at 2.00pm: For the June meeting members are coming into the Centre and making Tissue Box covers. If you would like to join this group, please give us a call to book.

In line with COVID restrictions, places are restricted if held in the Centre. **For further details of how to book and join any of these sessions, just ring the centre and speak to a member of staff. 0161 763 7014.**

Monthly Prize Draw – '100 Club'. Our April winners were: No. 312, £110.70, No.18, £55.35 and No.207, £18.45. Thank you to all the people who have joined us recently. It's a great way to support the Society. 50% of the money raised is distributed in prizes and the other half contributes directly to provide services for local people living with sight loss. The draw takes place on the second Friday of every month, and to buy a number it costs just £1.00! Let us know if you would like an application pack.

Hamper Auction:

We have had a lovely food hamper donated by Jill Brady, Asda Community Champion open for auction bids over the next month. The hamper containing a selection of Asda's Extra Special Range products including savoury items, coffee, chocolates and biscuits has a guide price of £25.00. Simply ring in with your bid before 2pm on Friday 4 June. Winner will be informed by telephone and details given in next month's edition. Thank you to Asda and to you for your support.

We're Back! Come and check out our 'Pre-loved Items' and Craft Bags on Friday 25th June on Stall no. 27 located on Market Parade on the Open Market. Bargains to be had!

Plant Sale: More details in next month's edition of our planned 'Bring & Buy Plant Sale', so keep those cuttings safe!

Special Thoughts:

Both Viv Makin and Elisabeth Beverley have had a spell in hospital. We wish them both a speedy recovery.

We were sad to hear from Edna Southworth's son, Christopher, that Edna passed away earlier this month at the amazing age of 104! Many of you may recall Edna attending our Monthly Socials and we continued to stay in touch with Edna when she moved into Abbeywood Care Home in Tottington as her son would bring Edna in to visit us from time to time. A wonderful lady, full of interesting stories on Bury, she will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with Christopher and his family.

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

Answers first! April's Brain Teaser: Where does today come before yesterday? **The dictionary**

This Month's Brain Teaser: What is cut on a table, but is never eaten?

'Take 5' Quiz. Answers from last month:

1. What element is denoted by the chemical symbol Sn in the periodic table? **Tin**
2. What is the name of the 1976 film about the Watergate scandal, starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman. **All The President's Men**
3. What was the most popular girls name in the UK in 2019? **Olivia**
4. In what US State is the city Nashville? **Tennessee**
5. What is the currency of Denmark? **Krone**

This month's Quiz Questions:

1. Which country makes more movies than any other?
2. When Prince Charles becomes king, he won't be called Charles III, but he will likely become what?
3. Which human organ was the first to be transplanted?
4. Which pair of birds refused to go into Noah's Ark, preferring to sit on the roof and chatter?
5. What did the Irish adventurer Captain Thomas Blood attempt to steal in 1671?

Do remember, there is always a member of staff available to speak to during office hours for help or advice. Stay Safe and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Jill and all the Bury Blind Society Team

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