



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 20

June 2021

Hello! Here we are again with our latest edition of VI Link. As we rapidly approach Monday 21 June, a key date in our 'COVID' progress calendar, I am sure we all had hoped that restrictions and activities would be fully open. However, at this moment, case numbers are again on the rise, particularly in the Northwest, including Bury due to the Delta variant, and whilst we wait for the Government's announcement on 14th, realistically, here at Bury Blind Society, we will continue with our cautious approach. As this variant is highly transmittable, the key message is to encourage everyone, where possible to have the vaccine, as well as 'hands, face, space and air'. As you will read in the COVID update from Carrie Dearden, NHS Bury CCG, additional vaccination centres are available and all, including younger people are being encouraged to have the vaccine in an effort to minimise the impact of this virus.

Here at our premises several small groups (up to 6), have been booking into the Centre and feedback has been amazing. The Lounge area is well ventilated, set out to ensure appropriate social distancing, and screens are available for additional safety. Anyone attending has a temperature check and are requested to sanitise their hands prior to entering the group. Face visors and masks are available for use if required. After each session, the room is fully sanitised. This has all helped groups feel safe when attending, which we are delighted to hear.

We do not envisage the Drop In opening for quite some time, so if you would like to meet up with a couple of friends in the familiar environment of the Centre, then please do get in touch and book the Lounge. We can even provide you with a COVID safe brew!

It was lovely to see a number of our volunteers at the recent forum, particularly as it coincided with the sector celebrating 'Volunteers' Week'. More details of what our volunteers are up to later.

As always, don't forget if you need support to start getting out and about again, give us a call. And of course, if you, or a member of your family, are struggling with a sight loss issue and would like a member of our Early Intervention Team to visit, do get in touch. We are here to help.

Coronavirus update.

As of 9 June, Bury, along with the whole of Greater Manchester, has been put into an Enhanced response Area by the Government. This is not a lock down, but we are encouraging people to take the following precautions to reduce the spread:

Take advantage of the free testing kits. There are two main ways you can arrange a rapid test, booking an assisted test at a test centre or home testing with a self-test kit. Find out everything you need to know at: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing. Note, in BBS May VI Bulletin it was reported that the self-testing kits were difficult to access for anyone who was SSI. BBS have a number of these kits at the Centre and are happy to assist you to conduct the test.

Get the vaccine when it's offered to you and encourage others. Currently there are a number of options for eligible people to get vaccinated, including:

- Book an appointment locally: www.covid.nhsbookings.com/gmpcn
- Fairfield Hospital is running Pfizer vaccine clinics until 25 June – book at <https://srft.nhsbookings.com/v2/>. The Hospital Hub is located at the Education Centre (signposted on site).
- More walk-in Covid vaccination clinics will be set up in the coming few days following the success of weekend pop-up sites.

Hands, Face, Space and Air: Take extra care when meeting people outside of your household or support bubble.

Minimise travel to within the Bury area where possible.

Testing for when you have symptoms of coronavirus.

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 - get tested to protect yourself and the people around you. A range of testing options are available right across the borough including a no appointment walk-in centre, a drive through service and bookable appointments.

Find out more at: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing or call 0161 253 5515.

Self-isolation support

Bury's Community Hubs are supporting households who are isolating and do not have friends or family nearby who can help them to pick up necessities like food and medication. Call 0161 253 5353 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) for information or to talk to the team about what help you might need.

Emotional wellbeing support

Bury's Getting Help Line offers advice, guidance and signposting to local services, available Monday to Saturday, 8am to 8pm, you can reach the team on 0161 464 3679.

Covid-19 Community Champions

The Covid-19 Community Champion network is made up of volunteers from all areas of the borough and help residents to stay up to date with how to protect themselves and others against the virus. Currently monthly, Bury Public Health hold webinars and Q&As allowing you to ask questions to the Team and ensuring you are receiving, and communicating up to date, accurate information. Additional Covid-19 Champions are always welcome. Find out more and get involved at:

<https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16028>

Let's Get Physical!

We hope that you are now managing to get out a little more. However, you may find that you are not as mobile as you were. If you were someone who used to go out and about before the pandemic, it could just be due to the lack of regular exercise, so don't worry, your level of fitness will return. In the meantime, why not try this to improve upper body and back mobility?

Remember, wear loose clothing, appropriate footwear, and have water to hand. If you feel unwell at any point, take a rest and if it continues, seek medical advice.

To improve upper body and back mobility

1. Holding a stick or broom horizontally behind your head, stand with your feet hip width apart and your knees slightly bent.
2. If you don't have a broom, put your hands on your shoulders keeping your arms at 90 degrees.
3. Keeping the broom straight, turn to your right as far as comfortable, twisting through your hips.
4. Then slowly turn to the other side, building up your range of movement.
5. Repeat 10-20 times.

6. Perform this 2-5 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.

In July we are hopeful that our monthly walks will recommence. Initially Michael, Walk Leader, is planning some very simple, short local walks to build up stamina. If you fancy being involved, call the Centre for more details.

Scam Alert!

Here's the monthly contribution updating on scams from Barry Grigg, Trustee and the Network Manager, Northwest Region, for HSBC Bank.

Delivery scams:

Criminals are sending fake text messages and emails claiming to be from a delivery company. They say they tried to deliver a parcel to you and ask you to click on a link to find out more or rearrange delivery. Don't click on any links or give any information, especially personal or financial details.

If you think the message may be genuine, open a separate window and visit the company's website using an address that you know is safe. Once there, you can enter your tracking number to see if the message was genuine.

If you think the message isn't genuine, delete it.

Never give any information if you are contacted unexpectedly by email, phone or text. Contact the company separately using a phone number you trust.

Contact your bank as soon as you can if you have fallen victim to this scam.

Barry Grigg – Trustee.

Society News:

Volunteer News:

On Friday 4th June we held our Volunteers Forum and celebrated our wonderful volunteers. We also discussed some of the new volunteer opportunities that have emerged over the past year and have listed them below. Maybe you would like to be involved? Why not give Diane a call at the office? 0161 763 7014.

Society Communicator – sending out reminders, links via text/phone calls/letters for appointments, groups, and events.

Events: Our Fundraising Committee are always looking for new ideas for fundraisers and events as the world of fundraising has changed – why not come along to a meeting and have a chat & see if it is for you?

Computer based tasks: Are you comfortable with spreadsheets/database/word? We are looking for volunteers to help update spreadsheets, graphs, database cleansing.

Newsletter: Is there a budding journalist lurking inside you? Would you be interested in collecting articles/interviewing people? Or maybe you would prefer being involved in the preparation and production side of our newsletters, including recording, copying etc.

‘Letters From Lockdown’ We are still looking for willing contributors to join Elizabeth Wainwright from Engage 2 Stage in their fascinating project, putting together an audio documentary on what you’ve been doing, or not, during lockdown. This is a great opportunity to safely meet up with friends to share your thoughts. If you would like to be involved, please contact the office on 0161 763 7014 initially.

Financial Assistance.

Acting on behalf of Bury Local Authority, we provide rehabilitation support and provide a range of resources at no cost to the client. However, did you know that additionally, there are individual grants available to help you in certain circumstances? The RNIB offer grants of up to £500 for certain small items of technology to people who are registered blind or partially sighted, on a means-tested benefit and who have been unable to get statutory funding. There are also other organisations that can provide support. If you are interested in knowing more about this facility, we would be happy to help and support an application.

It’s Good to Share!

Last month we started a section to share hints and tips we have picked up along the way, as well as some member suggestions. This month we are featuring a tip for our members who also have a hearing loss. With thanks to Lenke Csaba-Ashton, Inclusion Officer, Bury Council.

Top tip for hearing loss and telephones

If you are struggling to hear on your cordless or mobile phone and you’re thinking about buying a new one, before you spend more money try this top tip. Try using the speaker phone or handsfree facility. This will enable you to hear the conversation with both your ears. If you still struggle to hear on

speaker phone, turn your telephone over so the back of the phone is facing you, this should make conversations sound a little louder and clearer.

Group Activities:

Just a little reminder that we do still have regular sessions occurring throughout the month, some now meet in the Centre, others virtually via phone or Zoom. Sessions are available to book for groups from 2-6 people, you would be made very welcome. For further details please contact a member staff at the Centre. 0161 763 7014.

Retinitis Pigmentosa Support Group, Tuesday 15th June 2-3.30pm: Meeting at the Centre, 2-3.30pm.

Macular Support Group, Wednesday 16th June 1.30pm: Via phone line.

Healthy Living, Thursday 17th June at 10.30am: Access via Zoom or phone line. A lively and informative group who review recipes, kitchen skills and a few exercises too!

Knit 100: Please note, this group are currently operating a 'Knit Buddy' scheme until further notice. If you would like to link with another knitter to compare notes whilst knitting your squares for our 100-blanket target, give us a call.

Music Group: Fortnightly, Monday 21st June, 5 July, 1.30-2.30pm: We believe we have a new recruit... a singing parrot! Obviously all welcome! Come and join the fun, meeting via Zoom with Mags and Michael. No experience necessary!

Glaucoma Support Group: Wednesday 23rd June at 2.00pm. Via Zoom or phone line.

Accessibility Review Forum: Friday 25th June at 1.00pm. Access via Zoom or phone line. This group look at how to resolve issues affecting people with sight loss. If you have anything you would like the group to review let Kelly at the office know to include in the agenda.

Volunteers' Forum Session: Friday 2nd July at 10.30am: At the June meeting, it was agreed, whilst there are so many changes, to meet monthly. Why not

join us on Zoom for updates on the Centre re-opening and what opportunities are available as a result.

‘Monthly Makes’: Wednesday 7 July at 2.00pm: Meeting at the Centre. If you would like to join this group, please give us a call to book as numbers are reaching capacity.

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 May winners were No. 245, £113.40, No.258, £56.70 and No.110, £18.90. Regular donations such as these are so vital at the moment so thank you to all the people who have joined us recently. 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:

Thank you to Jill Brady, Asda Community Champion for donating a lovely hamper for silent Auction. Congratulations to Roy and Jean Smithies for their very generous winning bid. We hope they enjoy ‘the goodies! Would you like to set up a fundraiser for the Society? Maybe at home or for us to promote in the Centre? It is a particularly challenging time for the Charity so any ideas or support would be greatly appreciated. Contact Jill Logan at the Centre to discuss.

Bury Market Stall – Pre-loved Items and Bric-a-Brac. Friday 25th June, Stall no. 27. Unfortunately, we’re still not sure if this event will go ahead with the current situation. However, if you would like to be involved in helping if it does go ahead, please do let us know. Full PPE will be provided.

Plant Sale: We have had a number of tomato plants and other cuttings donated. These will be on display in our Garden Area from 19th June for a small donation per plant. If you’re passing, why not pick up and donate.

Special Thoughts:

We are delighted to report that Elisabeth is now back home, and we wish her well. Viv continues to make progress, albeit far too slow for her! Our thoughts are with you both. If you would like us to send special thoughts to a friend or family member, please get in touch.

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

Answers first! May’s Brain Teaser: What is cut on a table, but is never eaten? **A deck of cards.**

This month our brain teaser is mathematical! Let’s give your brain a workout. Good luck!

A merchant can place 8 large boxes or 10 small boxes into a carton for shipping. In one shipment, he sent a total of 96 boxes. If there are more large boxes than small boxes, how many cartons did he ship?

‘Take 5’ Quiz. Answers from last month:

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

This month’s Quiz Questions:

1. The beer brand ‘Old Speckled Hen’ was acquired by which brewery in 2000?
2. Which animals’ name means river horse?
3. How many eggs does the average chicken lay per year?
4. Which country has the longest coastline in the world?
5. Who is the host of quiz show Tipping Point?

Stay safe and well and enjoy the sunshine!

Jill and all the Bury Blind Society Team

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