



Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 21

July 2021

Welcome to this edition. At the time of writing, whilst Covid cases numbers are increasing, the consensus seems to be that restrictions will be eased from 19th July. What does that mean for us? Well, many of us are still feeling anxious and we want to assist you in your journey to gradually revert back to everyday life at a pace that is comfortable for YOU. For that reason, whilst our Centre will re-open, it will still be in a controlled way to ensure your safety. We want you to regard the Centre as a safe place to visit and for that reason we shall continue with our controlled numbers, regular sanitising, protective screens and temperature checks, to minimise contamination. We have listed further on in the bulletin, what activities will be resuming, how and when. We are very excited to welcome you back but understand that there may be issues over the next few weeks that worry you both generally or in relation to visiting the Centre. If that is the case, do get in touch – we are here to help.

Here's the latest update on Coronavirus information from Carrie Dearden, NHS Bury CCG.

Coronavirus update.

In Bury over 78% of the population have received their first vaccine and 59.5% their second dose. The number of people testing positive over the past 7 days (as of 6 July 2021) is 703, which is actually a slight decrease. However, we need to encourage anyone who has not yet been vaccinated to do so to protect themselves. There is a vaccination clinic at Fairfield General Hospital with bookable slots every Tuesday-Friday. Also, there are a number of 'Walk In' clinics, go to Bury Council's website for more details.

Covid-19 vaccination clinics

All adults aged 18+ can now get their Covid-19 vaccination. Vaccination clinics are taking place right across the borough including both walk-in and bookable appointments. Fairfield General Hospital (Education Centre) have bookable slots, Tuesday-Friday. Find details of the latest clinics: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-vaccine and if you don't have access to the internet, the Vaccination Support Team can help you to book: 0161 983 2300, Monday – Friday, 9am - 5pm.

Regular rapid testing when you don't have symptoms.

An estimated 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus don't know that they do and could unknowingly be passing it on to their loved ones or work colleagues. Regular rapid testing twice a week helps to pick up cases that might otherwise not have been discovered, knowing this can break the chain of transmission, helping to protect people around us and safely get back to the things we enjoy. You can request an assisted test or take a test yourself at home with a self-testing kit – you can collect a supply from Bury Blind Society or have them posted to your home.

Access the latest information about testing, how to book and availability: www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing or call 0161 253 5515.

Support if you are feeling low

If you live in Bury and are feeling low, please call the Early Break Getting Help Line on 0161 464 3679. It doesn't matter how old or young you are.

This service offers non-clinical, non-urgent support for anyone experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing and is available Monday to Saturday 8am – 8pm.

Find out more about other mental wellbeing support available locally: www.bury.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing

Let's Get Physical!

A seated workout encompasses far more than movements. Chair based exercises will develop your cardio fitness, muscular strength, and flexibility. Here are a couple of simple exercises to try. As always, 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. Ensure you have an appropriate, steady chair, no wheels and preferably without arms.

1. Neck Stretch

Sit up straight, and slowly tilt your head toward your right shoulder until you feel a stretch. Hold this position while gradually extending your left arm down and to the side. You should feel a stretch on the left side of your neck.

Release, and repeat on the other side. Perform two to five repetitions per side. This stretch will warm up your neck and the group of muscles at the top of your back.

2. Shoulder Circles

In a seated position, place your fingertips on your shoulders. Circle your shoulders forward for fifteen repetitions. Reverse the movement, and circle backward for fifteen repetitions. This exercise will warm up your shoulder muscles and reduce the risk of strain.

Scam Alert!

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

'Action Fraud', the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber-crime, have made us aware of scam calls that appear to come from a number similar to the recipient's own. The calls impersonate well-known government organisation, or law enforcement agencies, and will ask you to 'press 1' to speak with an advisor or police officer about unpaid fines or police warrants.

Remember:

1. Government and law enforcement agencies will not notify you about unpaid fines etc by calling or texting you. Do not respond to any calls or texts you receive about these.
2. Always take a moment to stop and think before parting with money or your personal information, it could prevent you from falling victim to fraud. It is Okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests.
3. If you receive a suspicious text message, you can report it by forwarding the message to 7726. It's free of charge.
4. Suspicious telephone/mobile calls can also be reported to Action Fraud via their website using their online reporting tool, or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Barry Grigg – Trustee.

'What Did You Do?' We have been included in a funded project working with Extant, to look at recording comments people have made in respect of the past 14 months. Over the next couple of weeks, if you are part of a group, your Group Facilitator will ask your permission to quote a few of the comments that several of you have made e.g. Missing going to the Pub. Can't wait for a hug from my granddaughter etc, etc. or asking you for your thoughts. We do hope you will support this as we're hoping to record these comments and then get everyone together for a lovely afternoon tea to listen to them. If you would like to add your comments but are not part of a group, Elizabeth from Extant, will be helping out in the Centre week commencing 26th July so please feel free to have a chat with her or just give us a call and we will

record your comment. It can be completely anonymous if you prefer. Thank you for your support.

Community Hate Crime Event – July 6 & 7th. With the help of Sid Pritchard, Mags James and Gill Currie, I was involved in presenting a workshop, along with other organisations, to raise awareness, held at The Met Theatre. These workshops were attended by students for Year 7, Philips High School. It was a pleasure to meet the students and we were all impressed with the interest and engagement they displayed in our various workshops. Ours involved a whistle stop tour of braille by Sid, followed by deciphering a braille sentence, plus some other activities, including a word search with Simulation Specs on. Comments ranged from ‘I can’t see anything’ to ‘this is so hard’, ‘Wow’ but all came away with a new appreciation of the challenges faced by people with sight loss.

It’s Good To Share’

This month, our Health Living Group are sharing some hints and tips when cooking.

- If you struggle when peeling and chopping onions, frozen prepared and chopped onions are really useful. You can also just use as much or as little as you need. One measuring cup full is approximately the equivalent to one onion.
- If you want to grow your own herbs but are unsure if you would be able to distinguish between the different herbs. First, just buy one and get used to how the leaves smell, feel and taste. When you think that you would always recognise that herb introduce another one and repeat the process. Before you know it, you will have your very own herb garden.
- When using fresh herbs, the easiest way to chop them is to put them into a bowl and snip them with scissors and just keep feeling them until you are happy with them.

Eye Finance

Did you know we can assist with form filling and benefit guidance? This is a wonderful endorsement of the service received recently from the relative of a client. Well done, Paul, one of the team of volunteers who provide this support.

“I’m in the process of applying for Attendance Allowance for my very elderly mother-in-law with the help of one of your benefit advisors, Paul.

I have worked in the law, in voluntary advice and then for a social care charity since 1996 so have wide experience of front facing services. I am extremely impressed with the promptness, reliability, knowledge, patience and professionalism of your advisor. I can’t praise him enough.

This mirrors my experience of dealing with Kelly Marno.

You have reason to be very proud of the service you offer the community and my family and I consider ourselves very lucky to be able to access such a service and are incredibly grateful for all the help we have received so far.

I will make sure to make a donation in the next few days to do a little bit to ensure that other individuals and families can benefit in the same way.

Centre Information:

Providing the proposed easing of restrictions go ahead from Monday 19th, the Centre ‘Drop In’ will be open two mornings per week, where no booking is necessary. We will monitor numbers to ensure that anyone attending will be kept safe. This Drop In will be open, Monday and Wednesday mornings 10am-12pm to allow time for thorough sanitising prior to any afternoon activities. Some regular groups are still meeting virtually, but a number are back at the Centre. For up-to-date information please contact a member staff at the Centre. 0161 763 7014.

Focus Day - Low Vision Clinic:

Would you like to try the latest Low Vision technology? We are very excited to offer a one-to one 45-minute session with Optelec at the Centre on Monday 2nd August. Bookable slots between 10am and 4pm. Appointment only. Ring Freephone 0800 145 6115 to book or speak to a member of staff.

Friday Lunch Is Back!!

We are delighted to welcome back Carole Allen who is once again, on Lunch Duty. Given the current situation, Carole has decided to initially keep things simple by preparing one main course with dessert, and tea or coffee for £5. Places will be limited to 6 (plus carers if essential), to be booked in advance and on a rota basis to ensure everyone has the opportunity to attend. The

first date available is Friday 16th July, then Friday 30th July. For further details or to book, please ring the office. As previously, cut off is 10am on the Thursday before.

Retinal Dystrophy Support Group

The originally named RP support group is now changing its name to The Retinal Dystrophy support group. This is to enable us to be more inclusive to others living with a retinal dystrophy. The group meets bi-monthly either in the Society or for lunch in the Fusiliers Cafe. If you feel that you would like to come along and meet us please do so, we generally sit and chat in a very relaxed way. Or if you just want to know more, please get in touch with the Society. Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 17th August at 1pm in the Fusiliers Cafe.**

Monthly Walks

A little change of day with our monthly walks. Now being held on a Friday – the third Friday of each month, meeting in the garden, 10.30am, at the Centre. The first walk will be on Friday 23rd July and will be a short walk to build up stamina to Manchester Road Park, with a welcome brew at The Welly Café. For further details, ring the Centre to book on.

Regular activities:

Macular Support Group, Wednesday 21 July 1.30pm: Via phone line.

Healthy Living, Thursday 22 July at 10.30am: Access via Zoom or phone line. A lively and informative group who review recipes, kitchen skills and a few exercises too!

Music Group: Fortnightly, Monday 19th July, 2 August, 1.30-2.30pm: Meeting via Zoom, come and join the fun with Mags and Michael. No experience necessary!

Accessibility Review Forum: Friday 23rd July at 1.00pm. Access via Zoom or phone line. This group has been looking into issues that affect people with sight loss. Below is an update on a couple of items raised. If you have anything you would like the group to review let Kelly at the office know to include in the agenda.

You Asked – We Did:

On 25 January, a client asked us for help because she tripped on a dip in the pavement due to a broken flag. A member of our staff emailed Bury Council and was told a 'works order' would be raised to put it right but to give them 14 days to complete the work. We were informed on 8 February that the pavement was fixed.

Glaucoma Support Group: Wednesday 28th July at 2.00pm. This month meeting at the Centre.

'Monthly Makes': Wednesday 11 August at 2.00pm: This month the group are just having a 'meet & coffee' as Dot and Lynne are on holiday. If you would like to come along, please give us a call so we can ensure the numbers are comfortable.

In line with current 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 June winners were No. 375, £114.00, No. 223, £57.00 and No.61, £19.00. Your regular donations make a huge difference to the work of the Society, particularly at the moment, when funding is so vital. 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.

Special Thoughts:

We are pleased to hear all has gone well for Ron and look forward to seeing him back in the Centre soon. Congratulations to Heather Crozier, one of our Trustees on her recent engagement and special birthday wishes to Viv Makin for her forthcoming milestone birthday. Best wishes to all. If you would like us to send special thoughts to a friend or family member, please get in touch.

And a Fond Farewell but not completely!

At the end of July, Diane Webb is leaving her role as Admin Support at BBS. Diane has decided to take some well-earned R&R but is not leaving us totally

as is remaining with us as a volunteer, and of course, a client, so we will still see her! We want to take this opportunity to thank Diane for all her efforts over the past few years and wish her all the best. On behalf of all the staff team – we'll miss you Di!

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

Answers first! June's Brain Teaser: 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?

Tricky one this month – did you get it? Well done if you did! The answer was **11 cartons in total**. 7 large boxes (7 x 8 = 56 boxes), 4 small boxes (4 x 10 = 4 boxes)

July's Brain Teaser: More of a riddle this month: 'I have branches, but no fruit, trunk or leaves. What am I?

'Take 5' Quiz. Answers from last month:

1. The beer brand 'Old Speckled Hen' was acquired by which brewery in 2000? **Greene King**
2. Which animals' name means river horse? **Hippopotamus**
3. How many eggs does the average chicken lay per year? **260**
4. Which country has the longest coastline in the world? **Canada**
5. Who is the host of quiz show Tipping Point? **Ben Shepherd**

This Month's questions:

1. What colour are the seats in the House of Commons?
2. What was the name of Wendy's dog in Peter Pan?
3. Which new British military force was established in 1918?
4. Which TV detective lives in the village of St Mary Mead?
5. Who sang Unchained Melody?

Stay safe and well and we look forward to seeing you back soon!

Jill and all the Bury Blind Society Team

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