



Bury Society For Blind and  
Partially Sighted People

## Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 24

# October 2021

Welcome to this month's edition of VI Link. As many of you know, we introduced this monthly bulletin, initially fortnightly to keep you updated on support and developments during the pandemic. Whilst Covid has not disappeared, the immediate threat has reduced significantly and we are all slowly learning to live with the virus. More details on this in Carrie Dearden's update. So, now we need your views! Should we return to the brief, one page weekly 'Eye Chat' for quick news issued in the Centre and via email, and the quarterly newsletter 'Out of Sight' which included more in-depth articles or continue with the monthly update with slightly altered content. Over the next four weeks we will be contacting you to get your opinion. Alternatively, why not give us a call or email, with your thoughts. We hope you have found this bulletin useful and we will continue in the current format until the end of the year to ensure we capture your views and ideas. Would you like to be involved in producing these updates? This could be in a variety of ways, a reporter, researcher or production layout. If so, we'd love to hear from you. We already have a great team of volunteers who help to copy and send these letters but currently it is just one member of staff putting the news together so more hands would be very welcome and provide a variety both in content and recording! We look forward to hearing your comments and feeding back.

*Jill Logan, CEO.*

### **Coronavirus information from Carrie Dearden, NHS Bury CCG.**

#### **Covid-19 booster vaccine and flu vaccine - your questions answered**

##### **When will I get my vaccinations?**

Your GP practice will contact you six months after your second Covid-19 vaccination.

You will also be offered the seasonal flu vaccination at the same appointment. People will be vaccinated in the same priority order as was used for the first and second Covid-19 vaccinations, with the oldest and most vulnerable done first.

Please wait to be contacted by the NHS. You will be sent a weblink or phone number to book an appointment and will be able to choose the most convenient place for you to attend.

## **Getting tested**

Regular rapid testing when you don't have symptoms helps to pick up cases that might otherwise not have been discovered. You can collect home testing lateral flow kits locally from Bury Blind Society, or have them posted to your home by ordering them online or calling 119 (7am to 11pm).

If you have a general enquiry or need support call 07971 799991 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Testing when you have symptoms of coronavirus - If you have any of the three most common symptoms - a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - get tested as soon as you can to protect yourself and the people around you. A range of testing options are available right across the borough.

- Visit [www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing](http://www.bury.gov.uk/coronavirus-testing)
- If you need some support to book call 119 (7am to 11pm).
- If you have a general enquiry email: [buccg.covid19testing@nhs.net](mailto:buccg.covid19testing@nhs.net) (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

## **Emotional wellbeing support**

**Shout - support by text:** Shout aims to make it easier for people to find and receive mental health support, anytime, day or night. Advice is available for anyone struggling with a host of issues, including anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, abuse or assault, self-harm, bullying or relationship issues. The service is confidential, free, and won't show up on phone bills. Communicate with trained crisis volunteers (supported by clinical supervisors) by text message, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, simply by texting **GMBury** to **85258**.

**Early Break Getting Help line (0161 464 3679):** The Getting Help line is a confidential service for residents of all ages in Bury who are experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing.

Run by the voluntary sector organisation Early Break in partnership with Bury Council and NHS Bury CCG, experienced call handlers offer support for non-urgent issues by giving advice, guidance and signposting to local (non-clinical) services to meet your needs. To access the service:

- Phone 0161 464 3679, Monday to Saturday (8am to 8pm)

**Bury Live Well Service:** The Bury Live Well Service offers a broad range of support services to help keep people well, in the best possible health, physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. The team offer support to help

people to get more active, eat well, quit smoking, sleep better and much more. You can find out about the Bury Live Well Service by ringing the following numbers:

At any time: Phone 0161 253 7575 to leave a voicemail and your call will be returned.

9am-5pm, Monday to Friday: Phone 07583 003378 or 07811 428395 to speak to a Live Well Service team member.

**Greater Manchester Bereavement Service:** Support is available to anyone within Greater Manchester, bereaved or affected by a death. No one needs to feel alone as they deal with their grief.

If you've been bereaved and need support or advice, call the Greater Manchester Bereavement Service on 0161 983 0902.

### **Let's Get Physical!**

The Monthly Walking Group meet on the third Monday of the Month. This month they are off to The Burrs Country Park, meeting at 1pm in the garden at the Centre. If you could let us know if you are joining Michael and Jonathan, we can ensure appropriate support is available. Ring the office for details. Anyone interested in becoming a sighted guide for these walks, please contact Jill Logan for further details. Full training given.

### **Steps for September:**

Well done to all who participated in this challenge of 15k steps throughout September. So far, we have raised over £400 but money is still being counted! Exercise and fundraising – thank you!

### **Walk 4 Sight, Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October:**

Together with Bury Lions, Jill, Glynis and five other intrepid walkers tackled the 8-mile round trip starting at Burrs Country Park. All sponsor money and donations will directly contribute to the work Bury Blind Society perform supporting people living with sight loss. If you still wish to donate, you can do so via the Donate button on our web site ([www.buryblindsociety.org](http://www.buryblindsociety.org)) or simply call in or send your donation marked 'Walk 4 Sight' to the Centre. As always, thank you for your support.

### **Centre Update:**

We are so pleased to see that many of you are now attending our weekly Drop In sessions. Following current guidelines, we are going to stick with the timed sessions as people have fed back that they feel comfortable and safe utilising

the whole of the Lounge area with appropriate ventilation. Going forward, currently our regular activities are as follows:

### **Monday:**

**Weekly Drop In: 10am-12pm:** Monday Morning Blues? Join Margaret and co. for a Monday 'weekend review' at our weekly Drop In.

**Monthly Walk: Third Monday of the month, 18<sup>th</sup> October,** meeting in the Garden at the Centre, 1pm. This month's walk – Burrs Country Park.

**Weekly Music Fun sessions: 1.30pm-2.30pm.** Join Mags for an informal music session – no experience necessary.

**Fourth Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> October: 1.30pm-2.30pm: Music Afternoon with a guest performer.** Open to all, visiting artist will provide a musical afternoon when you just listen, or join in. Contact the office for further details. Booking essential as places limited due to Covid restrictions.

### **Tuesday:**

**Weekly Drop In: 1pm-3pm,** an afternoon Drop in with Paul and Sue. All welcome.

**Third Tuesday: Retinal Dystrophy Support Group:** A welcome return to our RD Group. 19<sup>th</sup> October, meeting at the Centre at 1pm.

### **Wednesday:**

**Weekly Drop In: 10am-12pm:** Sid and co. welcome you to join them for a brew and biscuit every Wednesday morning in the Centre.

**Monthly Makes! Every second Wednesday at 2pm:** 10<sup>th</sup> November session the group are making Advent Calendars – why not come along? December session will be a Christmas get together and making Festive gift boxes. Please ring and book on to ensure materials are available for you on the day.

**Third Wednesday: 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1.30pm: The monthly Macular Support Group:** This group is accessed by a land or mobile telephone line. All welcome.

**Fourth Wednesday: 27<sup>th</sup> October, 1.30pm-2.30pm, Glaucoma Support Group:** Bernard and the group provide a warm welcome at this monthly group. Please note the revised times. Meeting in person at the Centre.

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### **Thursday:**

**Third Thursday: 21<sup>st</sup> October 10.30am: Healthy Living:** Currently accessed via Zoom or phone line, join this friendly group to review recipes, learn hints and tips on how to prepare safely and even do a few exercises whilst you talk!

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## **Friday:**

**Weekly – Friday Lunch Club:** 11.30am-1.30pm. Carole and Mags, alternate weeks, are providing a delicious meal ranging from Fish and Chips, Chicken Paella or home-made soup and sandwich. Ring the office for menu details and to book your place. All welcome. Book by the Thursday before meal date.

**Fourth Friday: 1pm: Access Forum:** A forum providing an area to voice concerns ranging from support in Supermarkets to uneven pavements and overhanging foliage. Currently only available via Zoom and phone line. Contact the office for details to join.

**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.**

## **New and Upcoming Events:**

**From Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October** – Dougie (qualified foot practitioner) will be holding a weekly clinic at the Centre between 10am and 3pm. This will be open to all. Every appointment made, Dougie is donating £7.50 of the £20 fee to the Society. So, please do promote to friends, family and neighbours as not only will they have their feet pampered, they will be helping to raise vital funds for Bury Blind Society. To book, ring the Centre on 0161 763 7014.

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 10am-12pm: First ‘Eye Hear You’ workshop.** Gill Currie, along with a qualified audiologist, is holding a series of one-off workshops to help clients with sight loss who also have hearing aids. If you would like to attend a session, family members are also welcome, please contact Gill.

**World Sight Day - Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October. 10am-2pm.** We are celebrating World Sight Day with an Open Day and AGM. Margaret’s Table Top will be available as well as a card and book sale, refreshments and displays depicting the last year’s achievements. VisionAid are holding one to one bookable appointments demonstrating a range of magnification equipment – there are just a couple of slots still available. We are also delighted to welcome The Mayor of Bury, Tim Pickstone, to the event, due to arrive at 11am, and look forward to introducing him to some of our members and gain an insight into the challenges facing people living with sight loss. The formal AGM will start at 12pm and you are welcome to attend or continue browsing in the Lounge area.

**Annual General Meeting:** At our forthcoming AGM, we will be presenting the accounts for 2020/21 and confirming the appointment of three new Trustees to the Board. The new trustees are:

**Cath Harrop:** Cath is an excellent role model for any young entrepreneur. Despite on-going sight loss issues, Cath has built up her own successful, award winning Hair & Beauty business based in Bury, teaches a range of training sessions and is involved in performing arts.

**James Sweeney:** Is Performance and Partnership Manager for a Manchester based organisation dealing with Social Prescribing so is well versed in the value of our sector. James also has first-hand experience of the sight loss pathway both as a child and now as an adult after being registered blind at an early age. His experiences, both good and bad will be invaluable in supporting BBS to help address the needs of young people entering an adult world.

**Deborah Podmore:** Recently retired from her role as Community Eye Service Co-ordinator & Partnership Officer for Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, BBS has had a close relationship with Deborah and the Low Vision Aid Service. Well aware of the important role BBS performs in supporting people living with sight loss, Deborah's wealth of knowledge and experience will be a great asset going forward in the on-going pursuit to improve the pathway for clients dealing with Health and Social Care professionals.

Over the next few months we are looking to reinstate our Volunteer Coffee Mornings and User-Led Forums. All our trustees, established and new, are keen to introduce themselves and hear your views to ensure the Society is addressing the issues that matter to you. If you are unable to attend any of these forums but would like the opportunity to meet any of the trustees, do let Jill Logan know and an alternative session can be arranged.

**Christmas Craft & Gift Market – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November. 11.30am-2.30pm.**

This year we are unable to hold our usual event at Ramsbottom Civic Hall but we will not be defeated! Instead we are holding our own 'Covid appropriate' Christmas Market outside in the Garden and Car Park area of the Centre! A number of our regular stall holders will be attending including Helen Reid's Crackers, Marilyn Green's Quilting and Patchwork items and Jackie Barton's amazing crafted paper and card items. We shall have our own stalls with crafts and gifts plus games and table top. Carole will also have a selection of 'winter warmer refreshments' including hot chocolate, Christmas Ginger bread, mince pies and a selection of hot snacks. Who knows, maybe Father Christmas may make an appearance? Make a note in your diary to visit after you've been to the Remembrance Service!

**Future Plans:** We're Back! Christmas Wrapping has been booked again in the Millgate Shopping Centre from Friday 10<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December. In addition,

we are also offering our luxury gift wrapping service at The Nationwide Building Society on The Rock and Tesco, Bury in December. Plus, throughout December you can drop off your gifts for wrapping at The Centre and collect at your leisure.

**Hot off The Press:** During this month we will be sending our Christmas Collection leaflet out, detailing a variety of hand-crafted items and products you can purchase. Can't make it to one of our Gift-wrapping stations? Don't worry, you can purchase a beautifully decorated gift bag, or a selection of toppers to make your gifts look amazing! There's handmade gift wallets, cards and Christmas cakes available too. Just send your order in and we'll do the rest!

**Holy Trinity School:** We are delighted that Year 2, Holy Trinity School in Bury have chosen Bury Blind Society as their charity for this academic year. Over the next year we will be working with the children to raise awareness through a variety of activities. If you, as a person with sight loss, would like to be involved in any of the activities please contact Jill Logan for further details. We are also hoping to arrange for the children to help design our 2021 Christmas Card to be included in our Christmas Collection and available for sale at our Christmas Market, if not before!

Whilst it is unlikely we will be in a position to hold our usual Christmas events, we are looking to have a Carol Singing session in December, and Christmas lunches on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 11.30am-2pm. Further details, along with any other Festive events will be given in our next bulletin.

**Calling All Volunteers!** As we gradually return to some sort of normality, we are inviting you to a Coffee Morning on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October 10am-12pm. It will be a great opportunity to catch up and review what roles are currently vacant. Jane and Steph from Age UK Bury will also be attending to update on their Befriending Scheme and how it links with our telephone befriending. This session would be of particular interest to volunteers who are currently, or have been, telephone befrienders during Covid. If you could let us know if you are able to attend it would help with monitoring numbers. Thank you.

**Bury Pipeline:** We believe Bury Pipeline are hoping to resume their service very soon and are in the process of contacting current clients. We look forward to welcoming them back as we know many of you have missed their weekly news updates.

**Engage 2 Stage:** On behalf of Engage 2 Stage, who have recently received funding for a Heritage Project 'A Century of Seeing', Tracey Marno has asked if anyone would like to be involved in answering a number of consultation questions relating to the project. The aim of the project is to explore the scope of currently existing heritage within the Bury Borough which represents the historical legacy of blind and visually impaired people. If you would be interested in being involved in this consultation, please contact us and we will forward Tracey's contact details. *Thank you.*

### **It's Good To Share:**

Last month we mentioned a sticker for a thermostat dial. Our apologies, we didn't clarify that this related to a room thermostat, not a thermostatic radiator valve.

Thanks to Steve Troghear this month for passing on this useful contact.

VI Friendly Smart Washing Machine? Are you in the market for a new washing machine but wonder if any of them out there are accessible to blind people? Madleen Bluhm from RNIB's Technology for Life team might just have the answer. If you'd like more information on products like these or just general technology support for your gadget contact the team via RNIB's Helpline – 0303 123 9999 – or email the team directly – [TFL@rnib.org.uk](mailto:TFL@rnib.org.uk)

### **Special Thoughts:**

September has been a particularly sad month as we bid farewell to three members well known to the Society.

Freda Coldrick on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Margaret Harney on 23<sup>rd</sup>, a key member of our Macular Group and the Whitefield AMD Group and, suddenly, on 27 September, Debra Southwood. All will be greatly missed and our prayers go out to their families at this difficult time. Our thoughts are also with any of our members or their families who have lost loved ones during this month. We would like thank members families for thinking of us at such a sad time by requesting donations for the Society. These donations will enable us to continue providing support for future members.

### **Monthly Prize Draw** – '100 Club'.

Our September winners were No. 56, £120.00, No. 405, £60.00 and No. 203, £20.00. 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.

### **Just for Fun – Give your mind a workout with this month’s brain teaser.**

**Answers first!** September’s Brain Teaser: What 3 letters can frighten a thief away? **ICU!**

**This month’s Brain Teaser:** I have keys, but no locks. I have space, but no room. You can enter, but you can’t go outside. What am I?

### **‘Take 5’ Quiz.**

Our Virtual Fun Quiz was very well received on 1 October. A big thank you to Michael for putting it all together. If you enjoy a quiz, our Virtual Quiz sessions are particularly ‘VI friendly’, so why not join us for the next one in the New Year? Now, answers from last month:

1. Which fashion designer reportedly had a relationship with Winston Churchill? **Coco Chanel**
2. What’s a baby rabbit called? **A kit**
3. Who did Anne Hathaway play in Les Misérables? **Fantine**
4. What fruit takes the scientific name *Mangifera indica*? **Mango**
5. What did Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone and Evan Williams collectively create? **Twitter**

### **This month’s Questions:**

1. Europe is separated from Africa by which sea?
2. Which Coronation Street character has been married six times?
3. How many countries still have the shilling as currency?
4. What is the Chinese New Year animal for 2021?
5. Which year was the Premier League founded?

Stay safe and well and we look forward to seeing you in the Centre.

**Jill and all the Bury Blind Society Team**

Registered Charity No. 1102525



**Bury Society for Blind and  
Partially Sighted People**

# **Bury Blind Society's Christmas Market**

**Sunday 14 November**

**11.30am — 2.30pm**



**.Unique Christmas Crafts &  
Gifts**

**.Mulled Wine, Mince Pies, Hot  
Chocolate and so much more  
available...**