



Bury Society For Blind and
Partially Sighted People

Monthly V.I. Link – Issue 28

February 2022

Last weekend I spotted my first snowdrops. What a welcome sight. I always view this as a small indication we are coming out of winter. Here in the office we were commenting on how much lighter it is in the mornings, a positive sign that longer and, hopefully, warmer days are on their way.

Whilst the coronavirus is still around, it does seem, following the vaccination programme, that it may eventually be viewed more in the 'winter flu epidemic' category, with an annual vaccination being available. So, maybe it's time for us all to take some careful steps forward. Here at the Society we are pleased to say that our Centre is now open every weekday, with the Drop In back on during Monday and Wednesday mornings and Tuesday afternoons. We are hopeful that by March our wonderful volunteers who help out at the Centre, will all be back and we can fully open. More details of sessions that are taking place in the Centre are given later in this bulletin. Staff are still available Monday to Friday 10am-4pm if you are experiencing any issues relating to your sight and we are happy to help. Do ring or call in and speak to the member of staff on duty. Please note, staff are still following Covid guidelines by wearing masks, sanitising and lateral flow testing prior to any visits.

There are certainly some great events coming up to look forward to including our Monthly Music Afternoon on Monday 28th February with Geoff Kenyon and Sid Pritchard entertaining us. On 10th March we have Lora Fachie, gold medal Paralympic cyclist joining us for afternoon tea at The Masonic Hall, Bury. Lora has had sight loss all her life but has not let it be a barrier to both her sporting achievements and her cookery skills! Why not treat yourself and a friend and come along and be inspired and motivated – something all of us have been sadly deprived of over the past two years! Tickets are on sale from the Centre priced £15 for VI's, £20 guests. You can also order on line via the link on our website or phone 0161 763 7014. It would be great to see a good turnout for our first 'external' Centenary celebration, so please do promote and encourage friends and family to attend this fantastic afternoon.

I hope you enjoy this bulletin but do let us know if you have any comments, positive or negative, to help us prepare future editions. Happy Reading! Jill Logan – CEO.

Coronavirus Update

Including information from Carrie Dearden – NHS Bury CCG

Hospitalisation of covid cases are dropping in the area and the vaccination programme take up continues to remain steady. Do encourage relatives, friends to take advantage of the vaccine as it appears to reduce the symptoms considerably. From the end of February, in England, the restrictions regarding social distancing and mask wearing are to be by choice. Remember, if you are feeling anxious, do what you feel comfortable with, continue to follow the maxim 'hands, face, space', i.e. sanitize hands, wear your face mask and social distance – you can't control what others do, but you can keep yourself as safe as possible, just as you would with any virus. If you feel unwell, stay inside, and look after yourself until you feel better.

If you have not had your booster yet, or a vaccine, these are available at vaccination sites in Ramsbottom, Bury, Radcliffe and Prestwich who are offering first, second and booster vaccinations for people that are due and eligible on a walk-in or booked basis. Specific walk-in or bookable clinics are available for those aged 12 to 15 and due their first or second vaccination.

Four pharmacies are now offering assisted lateral flow (LFD) Covid tests for people who feel they need help to do them.

A further seven pharmacies are due to join them soon, in the effort to stop the spread of coronavirus.

This free service is available to everyone, and would particularly benefit people who are not confident in administering their own tests, with your test being supervised and processed by pharmacy staff.

NB: This service is only available to people who **DO NOT** have any Covid-19 symptoms.

The four pharmacies are:

- IQ Pharmacy, 14 Princess Parade, Bury. Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.15pm. Saturday, 9am to 3pm.
- Manor Pharmacy, 367 Brandlesholme Road, Bury. Mon to Fri, 9am to 6pm. Sat, 9am to 1pm.

- Forman’s Chemist, 12 Park Hill, Bury Old Road, Prestwich. Mon to Fri, 9am to 6pm.
- Fishpool Pharmacy, 14 Parkhills Road, Bury. Mon to Fri, 9am to 6pm. Sat, 9am to 1pm.

Tests are available until 45 minutes before closing time.

The results of your test will be sent to you by NHS 119 via text or email. If you don’t have access to these your pharmacy will be able to give you your results.

Emotional wellbeing support

Bury’s Getting Help Line is a confidential service run by the voluntary sector for people of all ages who are experiencing difficulties with their mental wellbeing. Access advice, guidance and signposting to support by calling 0161 464 3679 (Mon to Sat, 8am to 8pm), you can also email the team: gettinghelpline@earlybreak.co.uk

Good To Share:

Energy News – with thanks to our friends at Age UK Bury for this article.

With energy bills soaring from April, it's an uncertain and anxious time for many older people on a low fixed income, who already struggle making their payments.

Age UK Bury are offering **FREE Home Energy checks** to make homes more energy efficient and warmer in the winter. Their advisors will discuss energy saving equipment with you and if suitable, these will be installed by their Handy Person service free of charge. They are offering equipment up to the value of £30. To benefit from this programme, contact **Ruth** on **07547 400142** or email ruth@ageukbury.org.uk

Martin Lewis, of Money Saving Expert, does his best to explain the energy crisis in his weekly email: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/latesttip/>

Age UK Bury’s national partner, Age UK is continuing its campaign to call for more support to help older people with energy bills.

If you are not eligible for Age UK Bury support, have you considered contacting Bury Council? Details in the following article.

Let’s help tackle financial hardship - Bury Council press release.

The last 18 months have brought significant challenges to our communities and there are increased financial pressures for many people.

Free, confidential, and independent advice and wider support is available.

Bury Council may be able to provide immediate support.

- If your household has a low income and you are struggling with your finances.

To check eligibility and apply visit:

www.bury.gov.uk/adviceandbenefits

- If you are experiencing temporary difficulties, a discretionary payment may be available to you. For more information and to apply go to

www.bury.gov.uk/discretionarypayments

- We may also be able to support through the provision of vouchers to help with food, fuel and essential winter provisions. Support is flexible dependent on need. To talk through your options in confidence please call 0161 253 5858

- If you are a Six Town Housing tenant you can also talk through support in relation to your circumstances. Please contact 0161 686 8000 or email

enquiries@sixtownhousing.org

Bury and Bolton Citizens Advice Bureau

There is a freephone Adviceline: 0808 278 7804 available Monday to Friday between 10 am and 4 pm.

News and Upcoming Events:

We are delighted to confirm our weekly 'Drop Ins' are back, as well as the majority of the specific groups. If you are interested in attending any of the groups, please just give us a call and we can let you know when they are meeting. Details of regular sessions are listed at the end of this bulletin.

Eye Talk 22: Our popular Eye Talk Support programme is back, with a twist! As a newly diagnosed client you may well wish to attend all 5 modules covering: emotional impact and eye conditions, daily living skills, digital and specialist equipment, transport and benefits, visual awareness training and other support services, but we want to ensure that current clients have the opportunity to

attend individual modules if they feel they need a refresher. The sessions will recommence in March so if you are interested in attending any or all of the sessions, give Gill Currie a call and Gill is happy to discuss your requirements. Don't forget this is also open to volunteers and family/carers who are impacted by relatives losing their sight.

Hearing and sight loss: At the end of March we are looking to hold a 'Focus day' with our colleagues from Communic8te where pre-owned and display equipment will be available to purchase at discounted prices. We will also be demonstrating various equipment for you to 'try before you buy'. For further details, ring Gill Currie who is also taking bookings for another 'Eye Hear You' workshop for people with both sight and hearing loss.

A World of Touch (Diane Webb): You are probably well aware of the things you enjoy to touch, like a cat, nurturing plants in the soil or a favourite garment, but there is useful information to be had through your fingertips. In most lifts, even if the floor numbers are not in braille, the print ones are generally raised. Also, I use a cash till through headphones where the instructions refer to shapes on the keypad, such as a cross, an x, a dash or a circle; and in my experience, the circle tends to be the enter key on card readers, so when the assistant asks you to enter on the green button, try feeling for the hollow round raised circle instead. How useful could a little basic braille be to you as well? Why not come along to a light-hearted taster session at the Centre to find out a little more about touch and braille? The session is open to non-sighted and sighted for a small donation. Come along and have a go, even if just for fun. The first taster will be on Wednesday 2 March during the Drop-In session, 10am-12pm.

Monthly Walk: 21st February, meeting at the centre 1pm. This month Michael will be taking the group to Hollingworth Lake and then a trip to Entwistle Reservoir is planned for March. Sighted guides accompany you on the walk or you are very welcome to bring a sighted friend. Please check prior to attending as the walks are dependent on the weather. Office: 0161 763 7014.

Monthly Makes: 2nd Wednesday of the month, next meeting 9th March 1.30-2.30pm. The group are planning to make a Desk Tidy in March and some glass painting in April. All welcome. Please ring to book your place the week before to ensure enough materials are prepared.

Café Crawl: This month Diane commences her quest to find the best Café in Bury! She is starting off on Thursday 17th February with Tina's Tea Rooms. Why not join her and suggest which café you think she should try next. Meeting initially at the Centre for 10am, leaving at 10.30am for Tina's Tea Rooms based at the Art Gallery.

Lunches Through The Decades! Friday 25th March marks the first of Carol and Mag's 'themed lunches' celebrating our Centenary. The first meal is typical 1920's fare starting with vegetable soup, steak and kidney pudding with duchess potatoes, cauliflower and cabbage. Followed by trifle. All for just £8.00 (not quite 1920's prices!). A prize for the best dressed 1920's customer to the café! Please ring to book your place. Deadline Monday 20th March.

Foot Practitioner: We are delighted to welcome Dougie back for a regular slot in the Centre. Appointments for footcare will be available on the second Friday of every month from 10am. The next session will be: Friday 11 March. Book through the Centre on 0161 763 7014.

Our Centenary Year – Don't forget we're hoping you will help us celebrate our special year. Let us know if you have any ideas, maybe as a group or individual – we'd love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in hearing your memories of people associated with the Society in years gone by, how the Society has changed from when you first met us, and stories of events and activities. We received a wonderful photograph from Jean Spencer, formerly of Pipeline, who has been associated with BBS for many years. The photo features members of the Committee of the time at the Annual Christmas party and included Mr Fred Dawson Chief Education Officer and a Mr & Mrs. Haddock from Connaught Street, Bury. Do you remember what year it was? Sid Pritchard has also put together some anecdotes from years gone by. Can you help build up the picture? We would be happy to visit you and make notes if coming to the centre is difficult. Do get in touch.

If you do come up with an idea, we are happy to support with our 'Centenary Pack', providing sponsor sheets, promotion, designing posters. Call 0161 763 7014 and leave your details with Alex and one of our 'Centenary Planners' will be in touch to discuss further.

Afternoon Tea with an MBE: As mentioned in last month's bulletin, Lora Fachie MBE – Gold medal, Team GB para-cyclist will be joining us as our keynote

speaker on Thursday 10th March. Lora is blind and with the assistance of her guide dog Kai will be coming to talk to us about her cycling, life's struggles and achievements not to mention her love of food with her 'Blindly Good Food' website and vlogs. We would love for you, friends and family to join us. The event is on **Thursday 10th of March 1.00pm -3.30pm at Bury Masonic Hall, £15.00 VI and £20 Guests, Afternoon tea included.** Limited tickets available. We have carefully chosen the Masonic Hall given its light, airy and spacious room. Plus, Afternoon tea will be individually boxed. Please ensure we are aware of any dietary requirements prior to the event as this cannot be changed on the day. For tickets, call: 0161 763 7014, Centre, pop in for tickets; Online buryblindsociety.sumup.link (link on website).

Wednesday 23rd February: Stall 27 on Bury Outside Market. We're back on the Charity Stall in Bury Market. Come and visit to pick up a bargain.

Spring into Bury East! Along with a wide variety of community groups, we will be at this Family Fun Day being held at Hoyles Park, Huntley Mount Road, Bury. The event is taking place on Sunday 20th March, 1pm-4pm. Come and join the fun!

What Have We Been Up to?

We recently gave a talk about our services and activities to the members of Radcliffe Rotary. We included the impact Covid has had on our clients, very well presented by Michelle Chadwick (client) and Terri, her guide-dog.

Earlier this month, during Hate Crime Awareness week, client, Paul Forrester represented us on the Hate Crime Stand in the Millgate Shopping Centre. As we are a Third-party Crime Reporting Centre, Jill Logan and Gill Currie went along to a meeting at Bury Police Station for updates on the service. The evening was really useful and particularly the update from Victim Support.

If you've been affected by crime, call your local victim care team in Greater Manchester on 0300 303 0162. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am-7pm and Saturday 9am-5pm. If you need support outside of open hours, call our [Support line](#) for free on [08 08 16 89 111](tel:08081689111) or [request support via our website](#).

Valentine's Wrapping: Another big thank you to Wendy at Tesco, Bury and Kelly at The Millgate Shopping Centre, for letting us have our stall at their

premises for Valentine gifts and wrapping. We're now planning for Mother's Day.....

Funding News:

A big thank you to all who have donated to us during this month and a quick reminder of the various ways you can support us:

- **Amazon Smile**
- **Text via your phone.** Just use your phone and Text to: **70450**, with the message **BURY** to donate £5. You will also receive details to make a regular donation if you wish.
- **Co-Op Community Fund:** we are a nominated charity. If you are a member (just £1.00 to join), go to the Co-op website and nominate us to be your local cause.
- **Facebook:** We now have a 'Donate' button on our Facebook page.
- **Regular donation:** direct into our Bank. For more details, contact Jill at the Society. jill.logan@buryblindsociety.org or 0161 763 7014
- **100 Club:** Our Monthly Prize Draw. Just £1.00 for a number and you can 'purchase' as many as you like! 50% of the money raised is distributed in prizes and the other half contributes directly to BBS. Application packs available from the office. January winners were, no. 422 - £120.90; No. 190 - £60.45; No. 125 - £20.15.
- **Wills:** Why not remember our Charity in your will? Your donation will help local people living with sight loss access our services in the future.

Special Thoughts:

Thank you to Constance Crook, who celebrated her 90th birthday in December and kindly asked for donation in lieu of gifts to the Blind Society. Our very best wishes to you Constance on such a special birthday.

Also, to Kathleen Parkinson's family for remembering us at such a sad time, by requesting donations to our Society.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Harry Johnson, Ron Goulden and Tania Canham, all of whom have had a bit of a spell in hospital but hopefully are now on the mend. We would also like to wish Ron belated birthday wishes for January. Hopefully Ron will soon be in a position to celebrate his special day with us, albeit a little late.

Our condolences to any of our members or their families who have lost loved ones during this month. We would like thank members' families for remembering us when requesting donations for the Society. These donations will enable us to continue providing support for future members.

Just for Fun.

Brain Teaser: Answer to last month's: 'It stalks the countryside with ears that can't hear. What is it? It was, of course, Corn

This month's: First, I threw away the outside and cooked the inside. Then I ate the outside and threw away the inside. What did I eat?

'Take 5' Quiz.

This month's answers:

1. What country has the highest life expectancy? **Hong Kong**
2. Where would you be if you were standing on the Spanish Steps? **Rome**
3. What year was the United Nations established? **24 October 1945**
4. How many faces does a Dodecahedron have? **12**
5. Queen guitarist Brian May is also an expert in what scientific field? **Doctor of Astrophysics.**

February's Quiz:

1. Which bird can fly backward?
2. Who was the first female Prime Minister in Australia?
3. Who was the only British Prime Minister to be assassinated?
4. Who was the only musician ever to have been awarded the Nobel prize for literature?
5. In tennis, which piece of fruits found at the top of the new Wimbledon trophy.

If you've enjoyed our 'Just for Fun Quiz', make a note on your calendar to come along to our annual Fun Quiz Night with Yvonne and Carl on Friday 29th April at the Elton Liberal Club, 7 for 7.30pm start. Tickets and details next month.

Keep safe, keep well and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Jill and all the team at Bury Blind Society.

Regular Centre Activities for 2022 - ring 0161 763 7014 for details.

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, meet at the Centre 1pm.

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

Fourth Monday: 1.30pm-2.30pm: Music Afternoon with a guest performer. Booking essential as places limited.

Tuesday:

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

Third Tuesday: Retinal Dystrophy Support Group: Meeting at 1pm. Contact the office on 0161 763 7014 for meeting place.

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 Workshop- Every second Wednesday at 2pm: Please ring and book on to ensure materials are available for you on the day.

Third Wednesday: 1.30pm: The monthly Macular Support Group: Please contact the office for confirmation or if require assistance with transport.

Fourth Wednesday: 1.30pm-2.30pm, Glaucoma Support Group: Bernard and the group provide a warm welcome at this monthly group.

Thursday:

Third Thursday: 10.30am: Healthy Living: The group are looking to try out some of the recipes and exercises they regularly discuss! Watch this space!

Friday:

Weekly – Friday Lunch Club: 11.30am-1.30pm. Ring the office for menu details and to book your place. All welcome. Book by the Thursday before meal date.

Monthly – Foot Clinic: 10.00am-3.00pm. Second Friday of the month. Dougie (qualified foot practitioner) holds a clinic at the centre. Ring to book an appointment.

Fourth Friday: 1pm: Access Awareness Forum: Contact the office for details to join as currently via Zoom.