



# *Basingstoke & Deane* *Over 55s Forum*



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## NEWSLETTER – JULY 2017

Welcome to you all to this issue of your newsletter. Now that Wimbledon tennis has finished I should be able to give all my attention to making it interesting and informative for you all.

I am pleased to be able to report that Graham, our chairman, is making a steady but good recovery following his operation. I am also glad to say that he is now back in the chairman's chair!!

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we did visit Mottisfont in June to see the roses. Due to the very hot spell of weather a lot of them had just about finished flowering which was disappointing but they had obviously been very beautiful.

On the subject of hot weather, I have received an email from a member who has asked me to include this item in this letter.

### WALK-IN-MOLE-CLINIC

Camrose Medical Partnership, St Andrew's Centre, Western Way, South Ham are holding two events in September for all those patients registered at this surgery.

Victoria's Promise, a charity that supports young women battling cancer, will give a talk on skin care and sun safety. After the talk patients with concerns about moles will be taken individually to a consulting room to see a doctor. These ten minutes sessions will be arranged with Dr Western on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and Dr Partridge on 28<sup>th</sup> September. There will be coffee and cake on offer during the event. If you would like to attend one of these sessions you should contact the surgery – they need to know how much cake to buy!!

### REPORTING LITTER

I was walking through the Holy Ghost cemetery recently and was appalled at the litter that had been left scattered around on the grassy area in front of the ruins. It looked as if someone had had a picnic and just left it all there. I was so angry I rang the Gazette office to ask if they would take a photograph of it and put it in the paper. What I should have done was to ring the Council to report it as they are now asking people to report the many litter problems all around the town and housing estates but I don't know how they can catch the culprits. It seems to me that a lot of people just don't care about the environment: would they do the same thing in their homes? If you want to report litter you should ring the council on **01256 844844**.

### CYCLING MADE EASIER

Have you been a cyclist in your younger days? Well, you could still enjoy this pastime on an **Ebike!** There is a stockist of these bikes in Stroudley Road where you can visit their showroom and have a test ride. Owners of these bikes say how they've saved money by using the bike instead of the car; they are good for the environment, pedalling strengthens your legs and keeps you fit (going uphill is much easier!) If you feel confident enough why not give it a try. You can call on **01256 353465** or visit the website [www.espokes.co.uk](http://www.espokes.co.uk) or email [info@espokes.co.uk](mailto:info@espokes.co.uk). If you buy one you will be given a free helmet!

### MEMBERSHIP

Having reached our capacity of 653 members we do have an ever-growing reserve list with people very keen to join us.

Sadly, I have to report that our member, Mr Moore, is very poorly and is not able to walk or drive anymore.

Also, John Attwood and his wife Shirley were on holiday in Cornwall when they had an accident while getting off the boat. John sustained a broken hip and was sent to Truro hospital and Shirley was very badly bruised while attempting to stop her husband from falling. Gerald sent get well cards with all our best wishes to both these families, on behalf of the Forum.

### OPEN FORUM MEETING

Vice Chair Marian Wilson welcomed members and guests to the June meeting and explained that Graham was in hospital so she had the "honour" of chairing today's Forum Meeting. Marian went on to give the usual Health and Safety notices. She expressed thanks to the many helpers, especially the committee and their partners. She then announced the results of the monthly free prize draws for March and April, the winners being Mrs P Mitchell and Mr W Sample.

## **Housing Strategy Consultation**

The presentation was given by Kate Randell, Kathy Farr, Kerry Parr and Cllr Terri Reid from B&DBC. Cllr Reid introduced the session, explaining that B&DBC was seeking the views of the older residents on their housing needs and aspirations.

Kate Randell opened the presentation by saying they wished to understand the housing needs of the older generation, as there is a tendency to focus the younger generation. Older people have said that the Council does not understand their housing needs so they wished to expand on identifiable themes from their housing strategy consultation (2016). In particular, B&DBC wished to know the level of interest in low cost housing and to consider options for downsizing.

The last survey for the over 55s was carried out in 2005 and needs change, as demonstrated in the more recent consultation on Housing and Homelessness. The new survey runs from 5th June to 16th July and can be found on the web site at [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/over55-housing-survey](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/over55-housing-survey). The results will feed into ongoing work.

Kerry Parr outlined the stages in terms of reviewing the outcome, with particular reference to the types of homes and neighbourhoods that older people wish to live in. There will be a whole system approach on the wider environment to support the ageing population eg amenities, transport, access to service and social opportunities. Also, consideration will be given to the expansion of specialist provision such as Extra Care. Kerry asked the members to respond to the survey so that as much information as possible was available.

There were a considerable number of questions covering the following matters:

- More sheltered accommodation is required
- A great deal of concern was expressed on the provision of a site for Travellers on the Manydown development. It is proposed that there will be 2 small areas provided. It seems that a charge is made for using the facilities but the speakers were unable to give details. The Council has a duty to provide such sites. It was suggested that the Forum arranges for a speaker on the topic at a future Open Forum.
- There is a great need for more bungalows to enable older people to downsize and to remain independent as long as possible. This was reflected in the show of hands.
- Discussions are in progress on the provision of a surgery at Manydown.
- The Council is working with a number of agencies on the provision of roads, schools etc.
- Concern was expressed on the possible loss of the bus pass, especially as many members are dependent on the bus service.

## **Cuba - Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow**

Following refreshments, we welcomed back Iain Kennedy who said that he and his wife visit Cuba quite frequently - he noted that Mr Trump has not yet invaded Cuba! He added that you have to have some sympathy with Cuba as they have had some 500 years of poor government but they are still a great nation and, despite everything, they are very happy. Iain supported his talk with some great PowerPoint slides - the first being a tank which had no petrol nor ammunition!

Iain said that Cuba is 750 miles long and 150 miles wide and is very fertile. After discovery by Christopher Columbus it was colonised by the Spanish and governed from Havana. This provided a route to get gold back to Spain from Peru. In 1762 Cuba was briefly occupied by the British but was returned to Spain in exchange for Florida. The Spanish withdrew from Cuba in 1898 following the Spanish- American War and Cuba gained its independence in 1902.

In the years following independence, Cuba saw some economic development but suffered political corruption and a succession of despotic leaders. After the first World War, the mafia moved into Havana and, as a result, Cuba still suffers from drugs and prostitution. Following the overthrow of the dictator, Batista, Cuba has been governed by the Communist Party under the leadership of the Castro brothers. The country has been isolated by the USA since the revolution although this has improved in more recent times.

Iain said that Cuba is a gorgeous and beautiful place and it was his hope that will become more stable in the years ahead. Viva Cuba!

Following the presentations, Marian reminded everyone of the dates of the 2017 meetings and also the Annual Variety Show which would be on Saturday 30th September providing another great afternoon's entertainment. She also hoped that more members would come along to the fitness sessions and said that more members were needed for the choir.

Gerald reported that the Hospital had installed a new telephone system "Net Call" and outlined how it worked. There is also a new charging system for the car park with number plate recognition. Volunteer drivers will have a special pass and there are 9 volunteer bays.

Finally, Gerald outlined the current position on trips and said that the next Newsletter will have the trips for the rest of the year.

### **EVENTS FOR 2017**

Our trip to the National Memorial Arboretum was most enjoyable. It covers a very large area (150 acres) in the most beautiful, peaceful countryside. If you have not been there already I can highly recommend it.

There are 83 members who qualify for the FREE trip and have not yet requested a booking. If you want to join us, please phone Gerald to register. There will be two trips, Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September and Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October.

We will be going to Portsmouth where you can either visit the Royal Docklands or go shopping in Gun Wharf Quays.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October** – day trip to Glastonbury and the City of Wells with its magnificent cathedral and historic Centre. Price - £14.25

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November** – Day trip to Hastings for shopping or simply exploring – the old town and beach featured in the popular TV series "Foyles War". There is also the West Cliff railway. Price - £15.00

The **2017 SPECIAL trip** is the **Classic Christmas Carols at the Royal Albert Hall on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**. The performance will be at 14.30 and the seats are in the front arena, rows 6 – 13, most seats being centrally located. Several members have requested that we open it up to members and family so do not delay in booking as these seats will sell quickly. Price: members £33.00, non-members £35.00. The coach fare is £12.25 per person but need not be paid until November.

Our Forum is again celebrating the **2017 "International Day for Older People" on Saturday 30th September 2017 at Queen Mary's College, Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke, time 2pm to 5pm**. Performers taking part are the Alice Boyle O'Dowda Irish Dancers, Local Band, No Strings Attached, M.C and singer Zara King with Calyn Billings. Tickets will be **on sale early in August** from the Newbury Building Society, the BDBC Offices, Oakridge Hall for All and Shopmobility and will cost **£6.00 which includes Tea and Cakes**. Last year there were over 570 events/activities around the UK.

### **CARNIVAL CHORUS**

Our last session before the summer holidays will be on 25<sup>th</sup> July and we shall return on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September. We have already received a request for a Christmas performance at Tesco in Chineham so that will mean learning new Christmas songs and practising old carols on our return in September.

I would just like to say how sorry we are that one of our long-standing members, Hilda French, will not be continuing with the chorus due to health and transport problems. We shall miss her and her lovely voice and we all send her our best wishes.

### **MOVEMENT AND STRETCH**

Those members who attend these sessions continue to enjoy them and we have opened it up to non-members at a cost of £3.50 per session. If you are interested just come along to the Carnival Hall on a Thursday at 11.00 and join in. I'm sure you will enjoy it and feel the benefit.

### **OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST**

#### **SCAMS AND FRAUD**

The National Fraud and Intelligence Bureau and Action Fraud have recently noticed a rise in the reporting of pets, puppies and kittens particularly, being advertised for sale via popular online auction websites. The fraudsters will place an advert for a pet for sale, often claiming that the pet is currently held somewhere less accessible or overseas. Upon agreement for a sale, a request is usually made for an advance payment by money transfer or bank transfer. The pet does not materialise and a further request will be made for courier charges, shipping fees and additional transport costs. Even after these payments the pet still does not materialise as it does not exist. If you ever consider buying a pet via an auction site:-

1. Stay within the auction guidelines
2. If the seller requests payment via one method they will probably later claim that due to issues with their account they will need to take the payment via an alternative method such as bank transfer.
3. Research on line the information given by the seller e.g. mobile phone number or email address.
4. Research the courier company being used.
5. Request to meet face-to-face to agree the purchase and collect the pet. If the seller refuses this is an indication that the pet does not exist.
6. Be wary if the seller does not ask about the pet's new home.

7. If you think the price is too low and the pet is advertised as a pure breed, think again.
  8. The seller should provide you with the pet's history of inoculations and breed paperwork before agreeing the sale. If this is not available and the pet is a puppy it could mean that the puppy has been illegally bred on a puppy farm which has not undergone the stringent checks by the local authority.
  9. If you are thinking of buying a pet, go in person to a rescue centre or a reputable breeder.
- If you have been affected by any sort of fraud report it to Action Fraud by visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call **0300 123 2040**

### **Beware of the mystery shopper scam**

The mystery shopper scam has been stealing money from unsuspecting victims for years. It begins when you answer an advertisement or an email to become a "mystery shopper" - someone hired by a company to shop at a certain store and then report on the experience for quality control purposes. The tip-offs that these solicitations are scams can be immediate and obvious. Consider this copy of an email for a mystery shopper scam that I recently received, with its glaring grammatical errors and missing words:

**"Hello, We are a company engaged in the mystery shopper field.**

**We need a team filled some people with age, residence location, experience and other different.**

**"Description;**

"You will be assigned to visit the shop, store, bank, etc

You have to pretend to be a normal potential customers who're looking for a specific product/service

You will then complete questionnaires online to share with us your customer's experience

Get \$350/assignment, at least 2 assignments/week will be assigned.

**"Requirements;**

"18 years old or above

Can read and write English

Can speak the local language well"

And the registration part,

**"Registration;**

"If you are interested reply this email and fill out information below to get started:"

. . . Which asks for name, address, etc.

### **MOBILE PHONE SCAM**

Gerald was recently caught by a scam on his mobile phone by a fraudster claiming to be his niece Sarah who had recently been in hospital. The caller, using the name Sarah, said she had had an accident and was in hospital for a small op and could he get her a £20 pay-as-you-go voucher for her phone which she would pay back the next day. He then had another message saying that £15 had been deducted from the account for outstanding extras so would he get her another £20 voucher. That evening Gerald got in touch with his nephew to ask how Sarah was after her operation only to be told that Sarah had not had an accident or an operation and was absolutely fine! Report to ActionFraud

### **FRIENDS AGAINST SCAMS**

Friends Against Scams is an initiative set up by the National Standards. There is a genuine website linked to the Basingstoke and Deane Neighbourhood Watch website where you will find lots of useful information about scams and how not to get sucked into them.

As you can see by the examples given, how easy it is to be caught out. There are an awful lot of unscrupulous people in this world – **so beware.**

### **OVER 55s BADMINTON AT THE SPORTS CENTRE**

Two sessions of badminton for the Over 55s are run at the sports centre, one on Mondays and one on Thursdays. The Thursday session used to be very well attended but numbers have dropped recently. The Sports Centre is finding it difficult to recruit new members, particularly those who are new to the game. Starting in September they are going to offer a coached session for beginners and improvers. The session will be from 11.00 to 12.00.

If you are interested you can contact Simon Ellis on **01256 302224** or visit the website [www.mybst.org](http://www.mybst.org) or email [Simon.Ellis@mybst.org](mailto:Simon.Ellis@mybst.org)

### **BASINGSTOKE NEIGHBOUR CARE**

Basingstoke NeighbourCare is there to help those people who cannot drive or find it difficult to use public transport. This organisation is desperate for more drivers with their own car to help on weekdays. You choose

when and how far you go and they cover the cost of petrol (45p per mile). You will be fully supported by the friendly office staff. This is a great opportunity to make a fulfilling contribution to the community.

For more information you can contact NeighbourCare on **01256 423855** or email [volunteer@neighbourcare.com](mailto:volunteer@neighbourcare.com) or visit the website [www.neighbourcare.com](http://www.neighbourcare.com)

### **BASINGSTOKE DISABILITY FORUM**

The Disability Forum organises monthly get-togethers for anyone affected by any type of disability. You can go along for a chat and enjoy a free cup of tea/coffee and biscuits, meet new people and talk about issues that are important to you. The sessions are held at the Discovery Centre (library in Festival Place) with guest speakers.

1<sup>st</sup> August - a discussion on Dementia support. (You may not have received this newsletter by then).

5<sup>th</sup> September – Carer Support Worker

3<sup>rd</sup> October – Disability Access issues & Activities at the Discovery Centre

For more information you can ring **01256 423869** or email [info@bddf.org.uk](mailto:info@bddf.org.uk) or visit the website [www.bddf.org.uk](http://www.bddf.org.uk)

### **MAYOR'S VARIETY SHOW**

The tickets for the Mayor's Variety show are now on sale from the Anvil or on line [box.office@anvilarts.org.uk](mailto:box.office@anvilarts.org.uk) The performance takes place on 7<sup>th</sup> October and one of the performers will be Steve Hewlett the ventriloquist who was on Britain's Got Talent. This is one of the mayoral events to raise funds for local charities.

### **THANKS FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

I would just like to express my thanks to all those who sent "Get Well" cards and good wishes for my recovery. They were very much appreciated and I am pleased to say that, whilst not firing on all cylinders, I am well on the way to recovery and Marian is delighted that I will be back in harness for the August Open Forum.

### **OLD ROUND £1 COINS**

A reminder that the old £1 coins will not be accepted by shops etc after 15th October this year. If you do have any left after that date, you will have to take them to your bank for payment into your account. To avoid having to take this action, the best thing is to spend or exchange the coins now.

### **MEMBERS' CORNER**

Sadly I haven't received any contributions from members to include in this letter. As I call this section "Members Corner" I would appreciate it if you send me items such as a piece of poetry, funny things children say or interesting facts you come across .

#### **DID YOU KNOW:-**

The oldest living billionaire is Chang Yun Chung, a 98 year old shipping magnate with a fortune of £1.3 billion!!

#### **IT'S A FACT:-**

- a) The world's most valuable football shirt is the no.10 worn by Pele in the 1970 World Cup final. It sold at auction for £157,750!!
- b) In May, explorers found £13.5 million in Soviet-era roubles in an abandoned mine near Moscow. However, they're worthless!!

#### **JUST A COUPLE OF FUNNIES:-**

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher? He couldn't control his pupils!

The cat jumped into the washing machine the other day, but at least he died in comfort!

### **OPEN FORUM MEETINGS**

The Open Forum meetings are always held on a Wednesday and the dates for the next and following meetings are 9<sup>th</sup> August, 11<sup>th</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> December.

**Marian Wilson**  
**Editor - July 2017 Newsletter**