



Carers4Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

May—June 2021

By the time you read this newsletter, we will be on the penultimate stage of Boris' road-map to 'freedom'. Take care, but enjoy the hugs when you are able. Gradually, things are beginning to open up. I have to say, now the weather has turned wet, it will be good to have a cup of coffee inside. Last week, I had to go into Leamington and really needed a hot drink. I sat down at an outside table, looked at the sky and decided it wasn't worth the risk!



I know many of you are champing at the bit to meet again. The Village Hall in Kineton is not planning to open until after the June 21st date, assuming that that date does indeed mark the end of restrictions. We are looking at re-starting our meetings there in September but in the meantime we are planning two visits to Compton Verney. You can find the details we have so far on page 3 of this newsletter.

Last month, I sent details of the Healthwatch Warwickshire survey, "Carers—Understanding your health and wellbeing needs". Healthwatch have circulated a mid-way briefing which makes interesting reading and have extended the deadline to May 28th. They want to hear from as many carers as possible, but in particular from male carers, those from ethnic backgrounds and the digitally excluded. If you have not already sent in your responses, please do so. See the links section on the back page of the newsletter.

We frequently remind carers of the need to have a Lasting Power of Attorney in place. Last week, on Rip off Britain, we heard the difficult story of a woman who cared for her husband with dementia. Their utility bills were in her husband's name and when she needed to query a bill, she phoned the company who refused to speak to her. She explained the situation but they were intransigent. They had to speak to her husband. You can imagine the stress. Sadly, although she and her husband had talked about arranging a LPA, they had left it too late and his dementia was now too far advanced. The company, of course, should have known how to deal with this situation better and it is a poor example of customer service, but so sadly, it happens.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings, normally held on the 4th Friday of the month at Kineton Village Hall, are currently suspended. We hope to re-open later in the year.

SCAM WATCH

The list of scams I receive each month seems to get longer and the scams more devious. Do take care and if something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Have you received an email apparently from someone you know, asking you to buy some gift cards? A scammer has gained access to your friend's email account. You are asked to pass on the numbers of the gift cards which they then happily spend.

Some Warwickshire residents have received a recorded phone message claiming that fraudulent activity has been detected relating to their National Insurance Number. They are threatened with the suspension of their NI number and seizure of assets if they don't stay on the line and press a key to speak to someone. Those who do may be convinced to hand over money to sort out the problem.

Bogus text messages from Hermes and the Royal Mail have been well reported. The message requests payment via a weblink to pay for re-delivery and clicking on it can result in personal and financial information being stolen.

Census scams are still circulating. A message might be received stating that there is a £1000 penalty for incorrectly completing the form. A link directs the recipient to a scam site. Now Census Day has passed, the Government are sending out letters. If you receive any communication you're not sure of, you can contact a census adviser to check 0800 141 2021.

AN UNEXPECTED BENEFIT OF ZOOM MEETINGS

ZOOM meetings are a bit like marmite—you either love them or hate them. Might the following encourage you to join our virtual coffee morning? Researchers have discovered that older people who frequently use online methods of communication alongside the traditional, showed less of a deterioration in episodic memory. That is, the ability to recollect meaningful events, which can be a sign of major dementia.

Over a period of 15 years, the study found people who only used traditional forms of communication, such as face-to-face meetings and the phone, experienced steeper memory decline than those who engaged in social activity online and so enriched their experiences. The report has been published in the 'Journals of Gerontology'.



JOIN OUR VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNING

We had a bumper attendance last month. Will you join in too? It's a chance to see someone you've not seen for ages, albeit not in the flesh. It's good to talk and see each other. Remember, you're amongst friends so if something goes wrong technically, no-one will mind. You can join by phone if you are not on the internet.

I'm pleased to say that Colin Pearson, from Carers' Trust, hopes to be joining us for this month's meeting and it's an ideal opportunity to ask him any questions.

Please find the joining instructions in the letter or email accompanying your newsletter or phone/email if you can't find them.

The next coffee morning will be on **Friday 28th at 10.30 a.m.** I'll send a reminder as usual.

VISIT TO COMPTON VERNEY

We are arranging two visits to Compton Verney during the summer. Please note the dates are **not** the same as our usual monthly meetings. The first is Friday June 18th and the second one is planned for 20th August, but this date has to be confirmed. These will be outdoor visits and let's hope the weather has improved by then! As last year, we will subsidise the entrance charge for anyone who is not a member. Carers who are



accompanied by the person they care for are admitted free of charge. The accessible shuttle bus will be made available for us.

We still have to confirm final details but as it isn't long before the first date, we need you to let us know if you would like to join us. Please either email or phone as soon as you can and let us know:

- whether you will be coming alone or with the person you care for
- whether or not you are a member
- whether you will need the use of the shuttle bus.
- We will also need your mobile phone number for last minute communications.

Once we have details of final arrangements, we will contact you by email or phone.

Numbers will be limited and if the maximum is reached we will put your name on a waiting list. You will then take priority for the second date.

ACT ON ENERGY

Act on Energy is an organisation that advises on all aspects to do with home energy. A couple of years ago, they visited to provide information and advice. I've received a request to pass on the following to you. As we are hopefully going into summer, it may seem odd to be thinking about this, but this is absolutely the right time. Sort things out while it's warmer weather!

Are you struggling to pay your energy bills in these uncertain times? Is your boiler in need of a service, repair or replacement?

Act on Energy offers FREE support to all residents living within Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham.

- A specialist Helpline offering support and advice on keeping warm and ways to help reduce your energy bills: 0800 988 2881
- Support with understanding fuel bills, tariff rates and payment options

LINKS AND SIGNPOSTS

We aim to use this back page for links to items we have mentioned throughout the newsletter. They will then be easy for you to find. The links are also uploaded onto our website, so if you can't find your newsletter, you can find them here:

<https://www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk/Links/>



LINKS MENTIONED IN THE NEWSLETTER—they are all trustworthy

More about Trading Standards, scams and rogue traders: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers ; www.actionfraud.police.uk/. Report fraud directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133.

Healthwatch Warwickshire— www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk ; 01926 422823 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays) and email info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk

Carers Trust Heart of England—www.carerstrusthofs.org.uk; 024 7610 1040 Option 4

Warwickshire CRESS Service please email warwickshirecress@carerstrusthofs.org.uk or call 02476 258816 (Out of hours: 07979 503 133).

www.theguardian.com/society/2021/may/14/using-zoom-could-help-older-people-avoid-dementia-study-reveals

CARERS' WEEK 7TH— 13TH JUNE



Sadly, it seems that once again the majority of activity for Carers' Week will be online, much of it on Social Media. The theme this year is 'Making caring visible and valued'. During the pandemic, I really feel that unpaid carers have been invisible to the country as a whole.

Being valued is especially important. After all, you've saved the country £530m daily. You've stayed at home, looked after an extremely vulnerable loved one and in many cases with diminished support from family, friends and agencies. As a result many of you will have experienced a negative impact on both your physical and mental health. Thankfully many of the local community

volunteer groups have helped but where would the UK be without you?

If you don't use social media yourself, why not ask a younger member of the family to watch out for posts about caring. Hopefully there will be some items on TV news programmes.

POSITIVITY CORNER

Respect your body when it's asking for a break.

Respect your mind when it's seeking rest.

Honour yourself when you need a moment to yourself.

