

# Senior Citizens Forum Newsletter August 2020

## Message from the Chairperson, Celia Steventon

Hello again, even though we have been going through and hopefully, slowly coming out of lockdown, the Forum has been busy supporting our members by phone and thank you to all the volunteers helping with this.

We'll be taking on some of the council's Keep in Touch calls, so would like to ask for more members to help with this. if you are interested please contact Chris Fox, 07932 828333.

We'll be looking at whether we can get activities going again maybe later in the year, ensuring we comply with social distancing and Covid 19 hygiene conditions.

I mentioned that I never receive a letter in the last newsletter. It shows people read my message, as a friend sent me a lovely letter!

We will continue to keep you up to date through our magazines, letters, website and Facebook. Hopefully you find the updates useful.

Meanwhile stay safe and alert and hope to see you soon.

## What's new in August

Please be aware that as things are changing day by day, by the time this magazine reaches you, some of the information be out of date.

### **If you have been shielding**

The government has said that extremely vulnerable people who are most at risk from becoming ill from coronavirus, no longer need to shield. However, they have also warned that restrictions may have to be re-imposed if infection rates continue to rise.

So what should you do if you have been shielding? The advice is still to stay at home as much as possible, and to follow social distancing guidelines (staying at least one metre apart) and washing hands regularly.

Whether you venture out or not is your own choice, but consider how much benefit you might feel from going out and meeting friends and family. You may feel uncertain about going out again and meeting others, but if the distancing measures are followed and face coverings worn, the risk will be very low. Experts assure that brushing past someone quickly will not have any effect.

If you do have coronavirus symptoms - such as a high temperature or continuous cough, you should ring 111 and self-isolate at home.

## Face Coverings

It has become essential to wear a face covering in shops and other settings. See our Face Coverings guide on pages 8 & 9.

## Food Deliveries

Free government essential food boxes are no longer being delivered, but most priority services offered by supermarkets will continue, provided you are already registered with them.

If you still require help getting deliveries of food and medications, call:

Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin offer help with collecting and delivering shopping through their Help at Home service. Charges will apply. 01743 233 788.

NHS Volunteer Responders - 0808 196 3646

T&W Council Community Support Team - 01952 382030

## Meeting Family & Friends

(Taken from very useful guidance in Heart Matters Magazine, [bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk))

Many friends and family members have stayed apart during lockdown. Seeing loved ones face to face is a great way to boost your wellbeing, and is especially important if you've been shielding alone, but you might find it feels strange at first.

If it's been a while since you had a gathering, try having a trial run with one person to build up your confidence. Discussing the steps you'll take beforehand might reassure you, for example, how far apart you'll sit, whether you'll wear a face covering, and a plan for how to avoid touching shared surfaces.

Try these steps to keep the risk as low as possible:

- Meet outdoors rather than indoors
- Meet in open spaces rather than crowded areas
- Limit the number of people you meet
- Wash your hands before and after meeting someone
- Don't share items like cutlery or food

## Should I hug my family?

Whilst science is still uncertain about when friends and family should share a hug with each other again, some experts have suggested that if people take a few simple precautions, hugs may be a relatively low-risk and high-reward activity.

## Time to get out walking

Are you looking for a gentle way to ease yourself back out for some regular exercise, joining with others but maintaining safe distance?

Walking for Health, Telford & Wrekin have restarted some of their walks.

Gentle, short walks to get you started include:

Tuesday from Asda, Donnington, 10.30am

Wednesday from Wellington Leisure Centre, 2pm

Visit [walkingforhealthtelfordandwrekin.org.uk/our-walks](http://walkingforhealthtelfordandwrekin.org.uk/our-walks) to view all available walks, or telephone Lynne on 07512 123995.

Interested in volunteering outdoors and getting your exercise at the same time? Walking For Health is looking for walk leaders. To find out more, call Lynne on 07512 123995.

## Forum Telephone Support Service

Telford Senior Citizens Forum is continuing to offer telephone support. (Email and messaging support available too)

Would you like to receive a regular call? Our volunteers will call you at agreed intervals to have a chat and check that you're coping OK. We are also offering help with computers, tablets and smartphones - whether a problem or learning something new, we'll try and help over the telephone or by email.

If you'd like a regular call, contact us on  
07932 828333 or 07552 975676

Mon - Fri, 10am - 4pm (leave a message outside of these hours)

or email: [enquiries@twseiors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@twseiors.org.uk)

## We need your help

The Forum plans to continue offering the telephone support service throughout and beyond the pandemic period.

However we cannot continue to provide this much needed service without enough volunteer support. Would you be willing to be one of our telephone befrienders? Could you spend a little time every week supporting others with a friendly phone call? We have some simple procedures in place to hide your number and to enable to claim for any out of pocket phone expenses.

If you're not sure, one of our volunteers will happily call you to tell you about their own experiences.

If you'd like to help, or find out more, please call:

Chris 07932 828333 or Wendy 07552 975676 or email:

[enquiries@twseiors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@twseiors.org.uk)

## Forum AGM 2020 & Xmas Parties

The Forum's Annual General Meeting, normally held in September or October, will be postponed until November or December. As with everything else, it's impossible to know what sort of a meeting we will be able to hold, whether in person with safety measures in place, or a virtual online meeting. Hopefully we'll be able to let you know in our next edition in October.

It's unlikely that we'll be able to hold our Xmas Lunch parties this year. If not, we hope to compensate with an early spring 2021 party instead.

## Wearing a Face Covering

### **Where do I get face masks?**

You should be able to buy masks at chemists and some supermarkets, as well as online, eg Ebay or Amazon. You can also use a scarf, bandana or religious garment or you can make your own re-usable mask.

If you'd like to make your own mask but are not sure how, call us on 07932 828333/07552 975676 and we'll send you instructions in the post or by email.

### **Wearing it correctly**

It should fit snugly, covering the bridge of your nose and chin. Don't share masks, or touch the front of it while wearing it. If you'll be taking masks off and on, put your used one in a plastic bag and swap to a fresh one the next time. If it's reusable, keep it somewhere separate until you're able to wash it, which you should do after each wear.

You must wear a face covering by law in the following settings:

- public transport
- airports, bus and train stations
- shops and supermarkets
- indoor shopping centres
- banks, building societies, and post offices
- hospitals, GP surgeries and care homes.

You are expected to wear the face covering immediately before entering these settings and keep it on until you leave. You are also strongly encouraged to wear one in other enclosed public spaces where social distancing may be difficult. (Telford & Wrekin Council has made it mandatory to wear a face covering in Telford Libraries.)

### **You do not need to wear a face covering if:**

- You are a child under the age of 11.

- You are not able to put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability.
- Wearing a face covering will cause you severe distress.
- You are with or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading to communicate.
- You need to avoid harm or injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you.
- It's reasonable to remove your covering briefly if you need to eat or drink (eg on a long train journey) or take medication.

### **Exemption Cards**

Some people may feel more comfortable showing an exemption card which says they do not have to wear a face covering. This is a personal choice and is not necessary in law. Those who have a reason for not wearing a face covering should not be routinely asked to show any evidence.

Templates for making your own exemption card, along with the guidelines, can be seen on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

If you're not online, get in touch with us (phone numbers at foot of page) and we'll send you a card in the post.

### **Wearing a face covering if you use hearing aids or a cochlear implant**

Face coverings that tie around your head and do not touch your ears will help keep your hearing aids or cochlear implant processor secure.

If your mask has elastic straps, try a mask extender, which you use to link the mask straps at the back of your head. You can buy these, make your own, or just add an extra piece of material to tie the straps together at the back of your head.

Try to only remove your face covering when you are in a place where your hearing aid or cochlear implant processor could be easily found if it falls out. You can buy safety lines and retention cord from the Action on Hearing Loss online shop - [www.hearinglossconnevans.co.uk](http://www.hearinglossconnevans.co.uk)

### **For people living with dementia**

They could carry the Alzheimer's Society Help Cards that gently explain they have a memory loss/dementia and includes an emergency contact number. Visit: [www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/helpcards](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/helpcards)

For details about the Sunflower Lanyards that people with dementia can wear to signal they need more help, visit: [www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/hidden-disabilities-dementia-sunflower-lanyard](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/hidden-disabilities-dementia-sunflower-lanyard)

Hidden Disabilities also has information on masks, lanyards and provides their own exemption card for 55p to cover postage. [www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com](http://www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com)

If you're not online and need assistance with any of the above contact us on 07932 828333/07552 975676

## Environment & Transport Action Group, by Dave Wright, ETAG Chair

Fuel does not come cheap, but you can get more for your money with these simple driving tips.

### **Maintain your tyres**

Having the right type of tyre depending on seasonality and ensuring the tread and pressure meet the legal and recommended limits, can mean you are using fewer litres per mile.

### **Keep up with servicing**

Maintaining your vehicle is not only important for the safety of yourself and other road users, but it can also save you money too. Simple problems such as blocked air filters can make running less efficient, costing you more in fuel and potentially damaging your vehicle in the long run.

### **Remove unnecessary weight**

The heavier your car, the more fuel will be required to move it. So if you have a roof rack, for example, make sure you take it off when it's not needed. Similarly, make sure you declutter your car regularly. You'd be surprised by the amount of extra weight you're carrying around in the shape of old bags, sports equipment or just plain rubbish.

### **Drive smoothly**

Harsh acceleration and braking can guzzle up fuel more than you'd think, so relax behind the wheel and try to keep driving as steadily as possible. Not only will it save you money, it also makes for a much nicer road experience for you and your passengers.

### **Air con vs open windows**

Air conditioning can get through your fuel pretty quickly, so be selective about when you use it. But remember, at high speeds, an open window can cause a large amount of drag on the car, meaning you could end up using more fuel. The general rule is to use fresh air via an open window at lower speeds and air con when driving at high speed.

The old saying, watch your pennies and the pounds look after themselves applies when saving fuel in your vehicle.

## TV Licences – how happens now?

About 5 million people in the UK over the age of 75 are losing their automatic right to a free TV licence and many will have to pay the full amount. There are some exemptions and a new payment plan for those who find the initial bill too much.

The BBC's plan was for over-75s to pay from the start of June but this was delayed for two months by the coronavirus outbreak. The new payment regime began on Saturday 1 August.

### **How much is it?**

The fee is £157.50 a year, payable as a lump sum annually or in weekly, fortnightly or monthly instalments (no extra cost to pay in instalments).

### **How do I pay?**

TV Licensing says it will write to all over-75 licence holders starting in August. "This letter will let you know what action you'll need to take for your next licence," it says, adding: "We'll give people plenty of time to set up a payment plan or to apply for a free licence if they are eligible."

Some people paying for the first time will be worried about going into the Post Office to pay during the coronavirus pandemic. But you can make a payment online with your debit or credit card at [tvlicensing.co.uk](http://tvlicensing.co.uk) or call the 24/7 payment line on 0300 555 0298 instead.

### **How do I get a free licence?**

Some over-75 households can still obtain a free TV licence. To qualify they need to be receiving pension credit. But lots of people fail to apply for pension credit— it is estimated that of the 1.5 million over-75s eligible, about a third do not receive it.

Age UK can check your entitlement to pension credit. Call them on 01743 233123, or call the pension credit claim line on 0800 99 1234.

Anyone registered as blind (severely sight impaired) receives a 50% concession. But there is no discount if you are partially sighted.

You don't need a license to listen to BBC radio, nor do you need one to watch Netflix or Amazon Prime, however you do need a licence to watch TV online, such as BBC iPlayer or Sky.

(Based on an article in the Guardian, 31st July 2020)

## **Beware the TV Licence scammers!**

Inevitably, older people will be targeted by fraudsters pretending to be from TV Licensing.

### **Texts**

TV Licensing says it won't ever text a customer to ask them to set up a payment plan or for their bank details, or to say that they are due a refund, so ignore any you receive. If you have already set up a payment plan, it may text you to ask you to make a payment – log in through the website, rather than clicking on a link.

## Emails

The official messages will include your name and part of your postcode and will come from this address: donotreply@tvlicensing.co.uk. As with texts, the safest way to respond is by going directly to the website, rather than clicking on any links you are sent.

Beware of copycat websites. People have in the past been duped into paying extra for their TV licence from sites that purport to be official. Only go to tvlicensing.co.uk.

## Phone

Put down the phone on anyone who says they are from TV Licensing. If you're not sure, you can give them a call, on 0300 790 6165.

## Track and Trace Scam

A potential victim had a call from someone purporting to be from the Track and Trace system. This is a transcript of that call:

Scammer - 'Good morning, I'm calling from the NHS track and trace service. According to our system, you are likely to have been in close proximity to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This means that you now need to self-isolate for 7 days and take a COVID-19 test.'

Victim - 'OK. Can you tell me who that person was?'

Scammer - 'I'm not able to tell you that. That is confidential information. But you do need to be tested within the next 72 hours. So can I just get the best mailing address so that we can send a kit to you?'

Victim - 'Ok (gives address)'

Scammer - 'Thank you - and I just need to take a payment card so that we can finalize this and send the kit to you.'

Victim - 'Sorry - a payment card? I thought this was all free?'

Scammer - 'No - I'm afraid not. There is a one-off fee of £50 for the kit and test results. Could you read off the long card number for me, please, when you're ready.'

Victim - 'No - that's not right. This is part of the NHS so there's no charge.'

Scammer - 'I'm afraid there is. Can you give me the card number please - this is very important, and there are penalties for not complying.'

Victim puts the phone down.

Action Fraud 0300 123 2040

The following article is an advertisement:

## Make sure everyone's dancing to your tune.

Book a free 20-minute Q&A session with our solicitors today to discuss Advance Decisions, Making a Will or Powers of Attorney.

Fodens Solicitors

fodens.co.uk

01952 726111

## Memories of Blackberry Picking by Wendy Mitchell

I grabbed the basket filled with plastic bowls off the table ready for picking the blackberries, 'Off now Mom', I said eager to get out.

'Now don't get eating them Wendy, they have to soak first overnight.'

'Ok Mom'

'Don't go far!'

'No Mom I won't,' crossing my fingers behind my back. I knew where there were some lovely blackberries. I was there the other day when I sneaked out.

The sun was warm on my face. I stopped to look up but then I couldn't see for a while until my eyes adjusted. I walked down country lanes, the warmth of the sun on my back, singing as I went on my journey swinging the basket with the empty plastic bowls jiggling about inside. The smell of cut grass hung in the air, butterflies looking for flowers to rest on. A bee flew past me, which put me in a sprint hoping not to get stung. Not a sound except birds singing in the trees. How beautiful the world is.

Ahead I could see loads of blackberries ready to pick, I set about putting two in the jar, one for me, yummy so sweet and tasty. Mom won't know, there're plenty here. All the bowls filled up so I started to head home, still eating the blackberries, pushing them around so the jars looked equal. Nearly home, feeling a bit hot and bothered, very thirsty, my stomach rumbling, oh dear perhaps I've eaten too many.

As I entered the side door into the kitchen I shouted, 'Mom, I'm back!'

'Oh Wendy look at all the blackberries,' said Mom. She looked at me strangely, 'Did you eat any?'

'No', I said. Mom sighed and went to grab the mirror, as I looked into it, I was shocked. The face I saw was stained with blackberry juice all around the mouth. I looked up at Mom then ran to the toilet as pain ripped my stomach. Mom came into the bathroom.

'Drink this, it will make you feel better.'

Next morning, I ran into the kitchen. Mom had been soaking the blackberries in the bowl. I was horrified to see a few little maggots floating on the top. Mom looked at me, 'That's why I said don't eat any!'

I never did again!

### **Blackberry Picking**

While we can't venture too far at the moment and we still need to keep away from busy places, it's a perfect time to go blackberry picking.

You will find blackberries in hedges, roadside verges, in the woods and possibly even your garden. The berries should be a deep, purple-black when picked. Blackberries are at their best towards the latter half of summer, peaking in August and early September.

They're good for you too! Packed with vitamin C and antioxidants, they're high in fibre, and contain vitamin K and manganese.

### **Blackberry Folklore**

One of the most famous English folk stories states that blackberries should not be picked after Michaelmas Day as the devil has urinated on them, angry after he fell from Heaven onto a blackberry bush. The legend has some truth as wetter and cooler weather in late October often allows the fruit to spoil, but it should not be taken literally – blackberries picked in late October can still be very tasty!

The Greeks enjoyed blackberries and believed them to be a cure for mouth and throat diseases. According to Greek mythology, the hero Bellerophon was thrown into brambles after he dared to ride Pegasus to Mount Olympus. He was blinded by the thorns in his fall and wandered alone and outcast thereafter.

## Easy blackberry cobbler

### Ingredients

Serves: 4

60g butter, melted

100g caster sugar

65g self-raising flour

90ml milk

150g fresh blackberries

### Method

Prep:10min › Cook:45min › Ready in:55min

Preheat oven to 180 C, gas 4.

Pour the melted butter into the bottom of a 20cm square baking tin. Mix the sugar, self-raising flour and milk together until moistened; pour the mixture over the butter. Do not stir. Spread blackberries evenly over the batter. Bake in the preheated oven until the top is browned and the cobbler is bubbling, about 45 minutes.

## Old Sentinel Returns Home

Nowadays local bus services in the Telford area are almost exclusively provided by Arriva. However, prior to 1978, they were provided by Midland Red and, particularly in north Telford, a number of small local operators mostly grouped together under the Shropshire Omnibus Association banner. Amongst these operators, H Brown and Sons, trading as Browns Coachways, operated a small network of services based in Oakengates to destinations mostly in Muxton and Donnington. Their cream and green vehicles, including a fleet of Sentinel buses, were a familiar sight in these areas. They also ran less frequent services to Childs Ercall, Market Drayton and even a weekly service to Manchester.

Almost seventy years ago, in November 1950, a gleaming new single deck bus left the Shrewsbury premises of Sentinel Ltd to begin its service as a demonstration vehicle for the company. GUJ 608 was typical of the buses produced in Shrewsbury at the time and was initially used to entice operators to add Sentinel buses to their fleets. Unfortunately, the anticipated orders did not materialise in sufficient quantities to be a viable proposition and production ceased by 1955.

For those technically minded, the bus is a Sentinel STC4/40 with a 40 seat Sentinel bus body on Welsh Metal Industry frames. Fitted with an underfloor Sentinel-Ricardo 4 cylinder diesel engine.

After a short period as a demonstrator, it was sold and passed through a couple of operators before being purchased by Browns Coachways early in 1959, which fitted in well with the seven Sentinel buses they already operated. It was pressed into service still in the dark green livery of its previous owner but soon repainted into the familiar cream and green.

It became a common sight around the Donnington and Oakengates areas for many years and remained in regular service until 1971. Shortly after withdrawal it was sold to a bus enthusiast for preservation and restored to its original dark blue livery. It was exhibited at the Aston Manor Transport Museum in Birmingham where it stayed until the museum was forced to vacate the site, then remained in secure accommodation for eight years.

Now, almost 70 years later, GUJ 608 has returned to Shropshire. During 2019 the owner reluctantly negotiated its sale returning it to Telford in the care of three local enthusiasts for continued preservation. Towards the end of the year GUJ was moved by low loader to her new home where initial work was started to prepare for repainting into the cream and green livery of Browns Coachways.

Work so far in 2020 has obviously been restricted because of the lockdown but once painting is completed, attention will pass to returning it to running order for display at local events. Progress can be viewed on the Facebook page "Friends of GUJ608 Sentinel Bus".

Thank you to Mr A Busby for sharing this clever poem -

Coming at us constantly  
On every single front  
Ruining our daily lives  
Our lost ones took the brunt.  
National Health's brave people  
And all front liners too  
Victory over virus  
Is what they help us do.  
Resistance to the COVID  
Until the battle's won,  
Stand solid with heroes

Three cheers for everyone!

The following is an advertisement:

## Barklife

Friendly, caring and reliable dog walker. Fully insured. All areas of Telford. Experienced with dogs of any size. Call Kate on 07539 471865 or visit our Facebook page, barklifepetcare.

## Charity continues hearing aid support through the Covid crisis

A Shropshire charity that supports those with hearing loss is calling for Telford and Wrekin residents who need help with their NHS hearing aids to get in touch.

Shropshire Rural Communities Charity's (RCC) hearing loss support service helps people to adapt to new-fitted NHS hearing aids, gives advice on using them and conducts minor repairs on the devices.

The charity's volunteers, who have been trained by the SaTH Audiology department, typically deliver this support through face-to-face clinics and home visits, which are currently unavailable.

However, an adapted service has been able to continue throughout the crisis, with volunteers following strict social distancing guidelines and provided with cleaning and protective equipment so they can collect NHS hearing aids and conduct repairs away from people's homes.

The Audiology team is also advising patients over the phone and operating a postal service for more complex repairs.

Susann Mitchell, Development Officer for Shropshire RCC, said: "The current crisis is challenging for everyone, but if you're hearing impaired and having difficulty with your aids it can cause even more anxiety and confusion. That's why we worked hard with the SaTH Audiology team to come up with a way to continue offering support.

"We have managed to implement changes which put people's safety first, and so we're encouraging anyone in Telford and Wrekin with an NHS hearing aid to get in touch with us if they are struggling."

If you're an NHS hearing aid wearer based in Telford and Wrekin in need of help with your aids, please contact Shropshire RCC.

Tel: 01743 360641 or email: [shls@shropshire-rcc.org.uk](mailto:shls@shropshire-rcc.org.uk)

A member of the Hearing Loss Support Team will discuss the issue, offer advice and attempt to resolve it over the phone. Then if necessary, they'll assign a volunteer to visit as long as it is safe to do so.

## Keeping spirits high at Wheatlands

When the virus first started and speculations of lockdowns and social distancing started to appear, we had to very quickly adjust to a new way of life here at the home.

Residents were asked to stay apart and everything from mealtimes to our activities has been affected. However, the staff and residents are amazing here and we have managed, for the most part, to keep spirits high and maintain as normal a life as we can.

Activities in particular have been finding new and exciting ways to stay connected in the local community, from virtual church services to letters and postcards to lots of the local children. We have enjoyed keeping families in contact with the residents as much as possible, with postcards, letters, and video calls. We managed to hold a large Zoom gathering on one of the days where family were able to pop in and out of the call, and speak to residents and staff, creating a party-esque feeling which was wonderful for all.

We are so pleased now to be able to open up our gardens and offer family allotted times to visit their loved ones that live here in the home. It means face to face visits are able to take place whilst maintaining social distancing and keeping everyone safe. We can't wait for life to return to normal, but are so grateful for the support of the local community, the hard work of our staff and of course, the patience and understanding from our residents.

Wheatlands' ethos and heart remain at the centre of the community and as a home we have managed to find new ways to connect to those around us. One of the new initiatives introduced by the Wheatlands Knit and Natter group is the making of pom poms by residents. These have since been shared around the local community, individuals have spotted them on their walks and found the note attached to share a moment of joy and happiness.

Wheatlands provide residential care, and dementia care and is proud to be accredited in the 10.60.6 programme for this. Wheatlands have 46 beds and can support with respite care to long term stays.

Tel: 01952 728 497

Visit [www.barchester.com/home/wheatlands-care-home](http://www.barchester.com/home/wheatlands-care-home)

## Just Listen!

I have recently been experiencing probably, the most difficult year of my life to date. I realise that a number of people are also feeling the same due to Covid, of course. As a result, I have needed the support of my friends, family and colleagues. I am extremely fortunate in that I have a large support network.

Due to my sharing, I thought it important to write this blog as I realise, in talking and sharing my difficulties with others that 'listening' can come in many guises. It's interesting as people often tell me that they are good listeners, actually talking and listening are often confused. People sometimes think that because they are good at offering advice or are a good problem solver that they are good listeners, this is not always the case.

Of course, I understand for me it is slightly different as I have undergone so much training on active listening and motivational interviewing etc. And, I wouldn't expect everyone to be fully versed in these techniques, however I'm sharing a little bit of knowledge on this so that you might be an even better listener!

So, what makes a good listener? Well, to start with it is as simple as 'just listening'! Mostly, what the 'talker' is needing is an empathic ear. Someone who will allow the talker to talk without necessarily saying anything however, the odd sympathetic nod or gesture is always a good plan.

Secondly, it's really important not try to rescue them from their situation or 'fix' them. Often, when a person gets upset or is sharing some strong feelings the listener feels uncomfortable, this is of course natural as none of us like to see anyone in distress. However, it's good for anyone of us to vocalise our feelings, particularly when we are vulnerable or upset so, do try not to butt in with things like: 'I know how you feel' or 'don't feel like that'. It can be very frustrating when the talker is sharing their inner most thoughts to hear phrases like this, it not only makes them feel they can't share but also makes them feel that they shouldn't be feeling the way they do.

Validating our feelings and thoughts is very important, especially in times of distress. It's also a way of internalising what's happening and perhaps, coming to terms with the situation. We all have feelings and to not have them validated can lead to frustration and low mood.

So the next time someone shares their feelings, no matter how difficult it maybe .....JUST LISTEN!

Visit: [www.smart-lifecoach.co.uk](http://www.smart-lifecoach.co.uk)

Email: [dianne.srsmart@gmail.com](mailto:dianne.srsmart@gmail.com) Tel: 07896 955 911

## Coping with grief during the coronavirus pandemic

Dealing with a bereavement is one of the most challenging things any of us will ever go through. And during lockdown, it has potential to be even more gruelling than it would be under normal circumstances. Whether your loved one died of coronavirus itself, or from a different cause, the rules around funerals and social distancing might seem like an additional twist of the knife. If you can't meet with friends and family members, or hold a 'proper' funeral, you may feel cheated out of the normal grieving process.

Lucy Nicholas, a bereavement counsellor at Sue Ryder, says "For the recently bereaved, the inability to have physical contact with people can be so very difficult. Having to stand two metres away from a loved one who is sharing your grief can feel particularly cruel and difficult to bear."

Lianna Champ, a funeral director and grief counsellor, says the present restrictions around funerals have been heartbreaking for all concerned. "We are denied the physical support, human closeness and instinctive reaching out to touch one another that soothes us in our darkest hours," she says. "I can see people struggling with overwhelming emotion, and they don't know what to do. No-one can approach them, support them or just give them a hug. It just pushes our grief further down inside and turns it into this huge ball with nowhere to go."

She adds that when you allow yourself the freedom to express your grief, is where healing begins. "The ability to experience and to share our emotions is all part of being human," she says. "If you find it hard to reach out, choose one person to be your listening buddy, someone you feel safe sharing your honest emotions with and who will just listen without offering an opinion." This is also a good time to take advantage of the free specialist online support services that are available and you could access support via your GP.

Sue Ryder offers a range of free online bereavement support services, including a free Online Bereavement Counselling Service delivered through trained bereavement counsellors, at [www.sueryder.org](http://www.sueryder.org)

Bereavement Support Service, recently launched free bereavement support offer for Shropshire residents: 0345 678 9028

Cruse Bereavement Care: 0808 808 1677

The Good Grief Trust: 0800 2600 400

The Bereavement Trust: 0800 435 455

Taken from an article on [patient.info](http://patient.info)

The following article is an advertisement:

### Choose Newport

Did you know that there are over 200 businesses in Newport?

Newport Town Council are actively engaged in promoting the High Street and all the towns businesses and would like you to use Newport High Street for all your purchases.

Here's our reasons why:

You can get married, buy a dress to go to the wedding in, buy the rings and book your honeymoon and get a taxi to the airport, then get the wedding dress dry cleaned!

You can buy a house, carpets and beds, a kitchen and white goods and electrical items as well as art for your walls and knickknacks for decorations. You can also buy a bathroom and hardware for those odd jobs.

Perhaps you need to renew a computer or get one fixed or upgrade your mobile phone.

How about having your teams rugby shirts embroidered then buy a prize for the team and have it engraved?

Would you like to play tennis or go to a fitness class or gym?

We have a butchers, a bakers and a candle selling shop.

On the High Street you can have your poorly animal treated and take up a hobby with crafts or listen to music.

Brighten things up, get your party accessories and have your hair and nails done.

Buy food for your dog (or horse, or sheep), in bulk. Or buy the building materials for a house extension OR just borrow a book and read the book in the Institute.

Home deliveries available from:-

Matthews Butchers  
Star Pizza & Kebab  
Lily's Tea rooms  
Subway  
Kings Head  
Taste of Paradise  
Newport Kebabs  
The Shakespeare  
Spice Island  
Wok'n'Roll  
Turner & Pooch  
Masala  
Waitrose  
Ocean Fish Bar  
Peking House  
Shimla Tandoori  
Rajas  
Tea on the Cobbles

Please help us to keep Newport a vibrant, welcoming town.

Thank you to all the businesses who have supported our community. It has been very much appreciated.

Follow CHOOSE NEWPORT

## Great War – After the Fighting

by Dave Wright

After the Armistice of November 1918, all countries who had taken part in the Great War now needed to come to terms with the world after 4 years of fighting. This process was started in January 1919 when the Allied leaders, (UK, USA and France) invited diplomats from 32 nations to work out the international agreements that would be needed to keep world peace. None of the defeated nations were invited to the talks nor were they consulted.

The aim of the three main leaders, Prime Ministers David Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau and President Woodrow Wilson, was to stop Germany from starting another war. The UK and France wanted to punish Germany whilst America just wanted to stop Germany starting another war.

So, the Treaty of Versailles, a very uneasy compromise of several agreements was agreed and signed at the Palace of Versailles, just outside Paris. During the conference Wilson had a plan to set up a League of Nations, a diplomatic organisation in which international disputes could be discussed and resolved PEACEFULLY. This agreement was carried but had very limited success as members couldn't agree. Even though it was the US President's plan, ironically they never joined. The League of Nations was, after the Second World War, replaced by the United Nations Organisation.

Another part of the Treaty of Versailles was to limit German power by forcing her to make huge cuts to her military and hand over her colonies and some of her territories in Europe conquered during the 18th and 19th centuries. Germany would also have to give up areas occupied during the war in France, Belgium and Russia.

A much more controversial area was the "War Guilt" clause stating that Germany was 100% to blame for starting the war. The allied nations demanded they pay £6,600,000,000 to compensate for all the damage done. Germany said the amount would take them to 1984 to pay, not allowing them to rebuild their own country.

Although no Germans politicians or diplomats had been invited to the talks, they were summoned to sign the treaty. The German politicians and diplomats attending Paris were shocked by the harshness of the terms and refused to sign it.

Back in Germany the people, having heard of the terms of the treaty, took to the city streets to protest about the "War Guilt" cause, the German population believing that they had played only a part in starting the war.

The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary by 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip in 1914 started the biggest human tragedy in Europe, with countries from around the world soon dragged into the war. 65 million men were called to arms, over 21 million personnel were to be killed, nearly 13 million of these were civilians. This war toppled once-great empires and changed the political map of Europe. It was the most destructive war ever fought on planet earth, impacting every corner of the globe, provoking revolutions and toppling empires.

On 28th June 1919, Germany very reluctantly signed the Treaty of Versailles, five years to the day Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated. The result of the signing of the Treaty was seen as a compromise that left no one satisfied and especially Germany neither pacified nor conciliated and as history proved, nor was she permanently weakened. The treaty is sometimes cited as the cause of World War 2.

## Join us today! Become a member of The Forum

To become a member of the Senior Citizens Forum, either phone 07932 828333 or 07552 975676 or email us at [enquiries@twseniors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@twseniors.org.uk) or follow the link 'Contact Us' on our website [www.twseniors.org.uk](http://www.twseniors.org.uk)

Membership is free and open to people resident in the area, in middle and later life, or anybody with a particular interest in older people's issues.

As a member you will, unless you notify us otherwise, receive our newsletter every two months by post or email.

Postal address:

FREEPOST RTGZ-UAGU-TXHJ

Senior Citizens Forum

Box 7, Unit D

Stafford Park 9

Telford TF3 3AF

## How we handle your data

The Senior Citizens Forum is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected by using your data fairly, lawfully, securely and solely for the purposes for which it is required.

We collect data to allow us to register you as a member of the Forum so that you may receive our newsletter every two months. If you choose to receive it by post, we pass your name and address to a mailing company. We sometimes use the data for statistical purposes. We will not sell, distribute or lease your personal information to third parties unless we have your permission or are required by law to do so.

If you believe that any information we are holding on you is incorrect or incomplete, or you wish to have your details removed from our records, or wish to stop receiving any correspondence from us, please contact us at the address above, or by calling 07932 828333, email [enquiries@twseniors.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@twseniors.org.uk)

The Senior Citizens Forum is a registered charity and has no regular income. Don't forget that you can help – if you get the opportunity to nominate a charity for funds please do think of us; or if you would like to make a donation, it would be much appreciated. Cheques, made payable to the Senior Citizens Forum, can be sent to our freepost address above.

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