

Senior Citizens Forum Newsletter October 2020

Message from the Chairperson, Dave Wright

Here we are again the last Forum of the year, and from all the trustees, staff and volunteers of The Senior Citizens Forum we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Let's hope that 2021 will be a much better year than 2020.

Talking of 2020, what a year it has been – lockdowns, COVID-19, no Forum Christmas dinners and all of us living in the hope of a vaccine so that we can get back to normal. That's if we can remember what normal was?

2021 will be a very important year for the Senior Citizens Forum because our Lottery funding will finish and we are now working very hard to look at our funding strategy for the next year and beyond. We have enough to keep going until next summer, hopefully we will be successful getting the funds we need.

Well over 3000 members have given The Forum their support over the last 5 years and we have been delighted to keep you informed, provide opportunities for you to keep active, entertain you at our events and support your concerns through our action group work.

I know from working with the Forum for just over 3 years, that the staff and trustees work hard on your behalf, along with our very dedicated telephone chat volunteers who are helping to tackle loneliness and isolation through these challenging times. A big thank you to these volunteers, feedback is showing that the calls are very important and are making a huge difference.

As always stay safe and a very Merry Christmas from the Forum.

Tier 2 rules for Telford & Shropshire

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be aware that as things are changing day by day, by the time this magazine reaches you, some of the information may be out of date.

These tier 2 rules took effect in Telford and Shropshire, from 2nd December and will run until further government review.

You can't meet indoors with anyone you do not live with, or who is not in your support bubble.

You can meet in a group of up to six outside - including in a garden, or a public place.

Shops, leisure centres and personal care services (such as hairdressing) can reopen (if Covid-secure)

Pubs and bars can only open if they serve substantial meals and alcohol served only with the meal. They will stay open until 11pm, with last orders at 10pm.

Collective worship, weddings and outdoor sports can resume (with restrictions)

Non-essential foreign travel is allowed, subject to quarantine rules.

Moving between tiers (not applicable 23 - 27 December.)

People are advised not to travel to and from tier three areas except for work, education, to receive medical treatment, or because of caring responsibilities. You can travel through a tier 3 area as part of

a longer journey. If you live in a tier 2 area, you must continue to follow tier 2 rules when you travel to a tier 1 area.

Ensure you check restrictions for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The full government rules can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know

Bubbles explained

A support bubble is a close support network between a household with only one adult and one other household of any size. One adult and one or more people who were under the age of 18 on 12 June 2020 in the home is classed as a single - adult household.

Once you're in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as being in a single household with people from the other household and have close contact with them as if they were members of your own household. You cannot change who is in your bubble.

Understanding the Christmas Rules

Between 23 and 27 December, three households can form a "Christmas bubble" and can mix indoors and stay overnight. Bubbles will be allowed to meet in each other's homes, in an outdoor public space, or garden and at a place of worship. You cannot visit a pub or restaurant in your 3 household group.

The bubbles will be fixed, so you will not be able to mix with two households on Christmas Day and two different ones on Boxing Day. Those in your Christmas bubble cannot form another bubble with anyone else. It doesn't matter how many people are within each household within the bubble, although the guidance says it should be "as small as possible".

If you have already formed a support bubble with another household, that counts as one household, so you can join with two other households in a Christmas bubble. You can travel between tiers and UK nations for the purposes of meeting your Christmas bubble.

People who are self-isolating should not join a Christmas bubble. If someone tests positive, or develops coronavirus symptoms up to 48 hours after the Christmas bubble last met, everyone will have to self-isolate.

You will still be able to see other people who are not in your bubble outside your home, (up to a maximum of 6 people outdoors for Telford & Shropshire).

The full government rules can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family

So how can we make the best of Christmas without taking too much risk?

If everyone takes this mixing to the limit, or beyond, coronavirus infections will no doubt rise in the New Year. Do we best express our care by meeting up - or by not meeting until it is safe to do so? Do we show our love with a hug, or are we being more caring by not hugging?

Read more on page 6 about how we might help keep ourselves and others safe over Christmas.

To mix or not to mix, keeping safe this Christmas

The best way to stay safe would be, of course, to avoid indoor mixing altogether. We could keep in contact by phone and video calls and maybe make plans for family reunions when restrictions have been lifted. But maybe many of us will decide that the risk of meeting indoors is worth it. After a difficult year, spending an enjoyable Christmas with family or friends could be the uplifting tonic that we all very need.

If you do decide to get together, there are things we can all do to make it safer, including limiting the number of people we see. This applies not just during Christmas but in the fortnight before, and perhaps avoiding overnight stays if possible and resisting the urge to add one more household to the mix of 3.

We could spend time with family and friends outdoors. Many of us may go out less during the cold winter months, especially during the pandemic, but wrapping up warm and walking with family or friends is a wonderful way to get the exercise we need while enjoying the freedom from the confines of our four walls.

While indoors, we can take precautions such as opening windows during reunions to let air circulate, which is fine while the dinner is cooking but by evening may require turning up the heating and swaddling ourselves in layers and blankets. We need to think carefully about cleaning surfaces, washing hands frequently and not sitting too close together. Another idea is to avoid eating from shared dishes and self-serve buffet tables.

How do families decide who to see?

Many people may prefer to go without the family gatherings, opting to not only minimise the risk of infection, but also avoiding the difficult family choices and possible hard feelings.

Spare a thought for those on their own....

...and also a little time to make those phone calls, video calls or brief doorstep chats with those we know are going through Christmas alone. Let's try to keep alive the goodwill and compassion of Christmas, while looking forward to, hopefully, better times next year.

Forum Telephone Chat Scheme

Will you be alone over Christmas?

The usual festivities and events have all been cancelled this year. Your family may have chosen to protect you by not including you in their household mix, or you may have chosen to stay away yourself, or you might live alone and have no family contacts. Either way, many of us will be without company over the Christmas period. While we may be thankful of keeping safe and secure in our own homes, the festive period can be a very lonely time for many people.

If you would like to receive a friendly telephone call, either just over the Christmas holiday period, or afterwards too, call us on the numbers below and we'll arrange for one of our friendly volunteers to call.

Very positive feedback from our telephone clients

Of the telephone clients we have asked so far, 100% have reported that they very much enjoy receiving their calls. They have said that their callers help to ease loneliness, and greatly contribute to them coping better with their current circumstances.

“We have a good laugh”,

“It lifts my spirits”

“It helps me feel that somebody cares and is interested in what I have to say.”

“We put the world to rights!”

Befriending Volunteers

The Forum has a constant need for volunteers for our Telephone Chat Scheme, as our client list grows by the day.

Could you spend a little time every week supporting others with a friendly phone call and maybe make some new friends? (We'd very much welcome more male volunteers.)

We have some simple procedures in place to hide your number and to enable you to claim for any out of pocket phone expenses. If you're not sure, give us a call to have a chat about how it works.

Contact us on 07932 828333 or 07552 975676

Census 2021

Add your voice to the 9.2 million over 65-year-olds who filled in the 2011 Census

Households across England and Wales will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021.

The census, run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives the most accurate estimate of all the people and households. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Understanding the needs of the nation helps everyone from central government to organisations such as councils and health authorities plan and fund public services across England and Wales. Census outputs inform where billions of pounds of public funding are spent on services like transport, education and health.

It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. However, paper questionnaires will also be available for those who need them.

Census Engagement Manager Nicola Mewis said: “Knowing what your needs are helps the government and a wide range of organisations plan and fund services for you, in your area, such as healthcare, transportation and housing.

“The census has the power to improve all our lives and by taking part you'll be helping make sure you and your community get the services needed now and in the future.

"If you don't feel confident online or you don't have access to the internet there will be local support centres that can help you get online to complete your questionnaire. Paper forms will also be available for those who want one."

Census day will be on March 21, but households across the country will receive letters inviting them to take part from early March.

The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. For the first time, there will also be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces.

Operating in line with the Government's latest Covid-19 guidance, field officers will be deployed across the country to contact those who have not responded from the end of March and will offer help and advice to those who need it.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations. Only then, can future generations view them. The 1921 records will be available for the public to view in early 2022.

For more information about all the help available, visit www.census.gov.uk or phone for free, from March, on 0800 141 2021. Keep an eye on the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens Forum website for information about the census.

Census Facts

The word 'census' originates in ancient Rome from the Latin word 'censere' meaning 'estimate'.

The first known censuses were taken by the Babylonians nearly 6,000 years ago.

Luke Chapter Two, Verses One to Four describe Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem to take part in the census while Mary is heavily pregnant with the baby Jesus.

The first thorough survey of England was in 1086 when William the Conqueror ordered a detailed list of land and property known as The Domesday Book.

The first UK census was taken in 1801, partly to ascertain the number of men able to fight in the Napoleonic Wars.

The 1841 census was the first to record names of all individuals in a household.

In England's 1871 census, categories of 'lunatic' and 'imbecile' were added to the 'list of the infirm'.

A census has been held every decade since 1801 except in 1941 because of the Second World War. A mini-census was held in 1939 so that everyone could be issued with a National Identity Card.

1971's census didn't include an unpopular question on income, tested in 1968 and 1969. The tests showed it could undermine response rates.

The census of 1911 included questions on marriage and fertility, as the birth rate had been falling since 1870.

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

Due to COVID-19, ETAG has not been meeting, however that does not mean that we are not looking at your concerns. Several of you have recently told us that you are worried about air pollution, although during lockdowns the air quality around Telford appears to have improved due to fewer cars on the roads.

When you improve air quality you create a cleaner and healthier environment, and we know that over a number of decades we have seen improvements in air quality in the UK. According to government stats, levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) – particles or liquid droplets in the air which present the greatest risk to public health – have reduced by 9% since 2010, and levels of nitrogen dioxide from vehicles are now at their lowest levels since records began and with the electric cars on the roads today this should go down even more.

Councils like Telford & Wrekin can bid for money from the Air Quality Grant scheme which can be used by projects benefiting schools, businesses, and the community by reducing the impact of dirty air on our health. Cleaner air is part of a strategy to halve the harm caused by air pollution by 2030. The Government believes that local authorities are in the best position to address the issues in their local areas and we look forward to hearing about ideas to reduce emissions and promote cleaner, greener alternatives.

The Government has stated the need to develop long-term solutions around increasing people's awareness and encouraging behaviour change. Another issue is how to raise awareness around domestic burning and the dangers of using harmful fuels such as coal and wet wood.

There is also a much wider UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations. The plan for cleaner transport includes the uptake of low emissions vehicles, getting more people to cycle and walk, and encouraging cleaner public transport. Your views are always welcome via our address given in the magazine or via email.

Merry Christmas from the ETAG team and we hope Lockdown has finished by 2021.

CHRISTMAS STORY

Thank to Mr AMJ Busby for sharing his delightful Christmas poem.

The story of Christmas is lovely to hear
It tells of a wonderful thing
How a tiny cute being was placed in our midst
In a stable - No room at the inn

The first ones to know were the poorest of men
They came in from the fields with their sheep
Rich kings came in also. They followed a star
Bringing gifts for the small child to keep

Mary his mother and Joseph his dad
Were quite overwhelmed by the fuss
Over this little child who'd been given to them
To grow up and save all of us

What this story means if you think of it right
Get all the facts in their place
Is a lesson to learn, a message for all
Rich or poor, of the whole human race.

The meekest of folks can be leaders of men
The richest may not have a say
Whether born in a mansion or in a small hut
Makes no difference how one walks his way

The poorest of people have hearts that unfold
The sorrows of famous and rich
So never look down on anyone else
Look up, lend a hand, help to pitch

Do this, then know for sure that little child
Who was born all those long years ago
Will guide you and keep you, whoever you are
Make your life and your happiness flow.

Why do we eat turkey at Christmas?

More than 10 million turkeys are eaten at Christmas every year in the UK but how did it become the popular choice for our festive meal?

Turkeys were first brought into Britain in the 1520s. Henry VIII was said to be the first person to eat turkey for Christmas, before that people would eat boar's head, goose, and peacock. Although turkey was gaining in popularity, goose and capon remained favourites until around 1615.

In Victorian times, turkey was more expensive than the alternatives. In the north, roast beef was the traditional choice while in the south, goose was still favoured – though poorer families often made do with rabbit.

It wasn't until after World War II that turkey overtook goose as the most popular Christmas roast – partly due to the widespread adoption of the fridge in family homes.

Turkey Facts

Only male turkeys make a gobbling sound. That is why they are called "gobblers". Females are "hens", babies are "poults".

The dangly appendage on the face of a turkey is called a "snood".

Turkeys were introduced into England in 1526 by the 16th-century navigator William Strickland.

Turkeys got their name as they were commonly brought to the UK by Turkish merchants. The word "turkey" referring to the bird, was first seen in English in 1555.

According to a survey by London Cleaning System, UK Christmas waste includes throwing away the equivalent of two million turkeys.

How do I thaw my frozen turkey?

With many of us shopping early for Christmas this year, a frozen bird or joint may be an option. The best way to thaw a turkey is in the refrigerator. Allow one day for every 2.25kg of turkey.

Can I roast my turkey the day before and reheat it?

You can carve the bird, and layer the meat in a baking dish for re-heating. To prevent drying out you could cover it with gravy, or perhaps a small amount of turkey stock.

Never partially roast a turkey the day before to save on cooking time the next day. This creates the perfect environment for bacterial growth that can result in food poisoning.

How do I freeze cooked turkey meat?

A lot of left over turkey is thrown away every year, however cooked turkey is perfectly safe to freeze and later used for soups, pies, curries, pasta dishes, salads and much more.

Turkey that is sealed airtight can be frozen for up to four months. Freezing turkey with gravy will help it retain moisture. Thaw frozen turkey overnight in the fridge, or use the defrost setting on your microwave. When thawing foods in the microwave, they should be cooked immediately afterwards.

You can freeze the turkey bones and carcass separately and using them later to make delicious turkey stock for soups and stews.

Quick Leftover Turkey Recipe, Curried Turkey & Apple Pitta

Serves: 1

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
75g sliced onion
1 tablespoon lemon juice
120g cooked turkey, cut into chunks
Half tablespoon curry powder
Half medium apple, cored and thinly sliced
1 - 2 pitta breads
60ml plain yoghurt

Heat oil in a pan over medium-high heat. Stir in onion and lemon juice. Cook until onion has softened. Mix in turkey, season with curry powder and continue cooking until heated through. Remove from heat. Stir in apple. Stuff pittas with the mixture. Drizzle with yogurt to serve.

Planning on travelling from the UK to continental Europe after January 2021?

What will change?

With the end of the Brexit transition period on 31 December, some major changes for anyone travelling to the EU – either to holiday, work or live, have been confirmed but others are dependent on what sort of deal, if any, is agreed on.

UK Pensions

If you are planning to move to the EU after 31 December, you will still be able to claim your UK state pension, but how much you get will depend on the outcome of the talks.

Reciprocal healthcare - EHIC (European Health Insurance Card)

After the transition period, an EHIC issued in the UK will not be valid. This also applies to EU nationals living in the UK. Some groups will definitely continue to benefit from free healthcare, including Irish citizens moving to the UK and visa versa, students studying in the EU, and people who hold an S1 form from the UK, which is for non - UK pensioners and people receiving certain state benefits.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance will be essential, and probably more expensive without the EHIC. If you have an annual policy, check whether it's affected.

Driving in Europe

If you are planning a trip to Europe that involves driving your own vehicle, you will need to have a green card from your car insurer. Make sure you ask for it a month before you plan to travel. You may also need an international driving permit in some countries.

Pet passports

The current pet passport scheme is to end, and you will need to get an animal health certificate when you want to travel overseas. This will involve waiting three months after a blood sample has been taken from your pet, so journeys will involve a lot more planning.

Roaming charges

After January, UK customers will not be covered by the EU law prohibiting mobile phone providers from charging customers extra for making calls from a different country. Three, EE, O2 and Vodafone, have all said they have no plans to introduce roaming charges, but could change this if they wished. The only protection from it changing will be a financial cap of £45 per month on mobile data usage overseas.

EU Settlement Scheme

Charities, local authorities and voluntary organisations across the UK are being funded to provide help and information to vulnerable EU, EEA and Swiss citizens applying to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Practical support is available for a range of needs including those who are elderly or isolated, disabled people, children, those with severe mental health conditions, victims of domestic abuse, and those without a permanent address.

Find support near you. www.gov.uk/help-eu-settlement-scheme

Find out more about the EU Settlement Scheme including how to apply.
www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families

Tackle condensation in your home

To tackle condensation, first you have to understand it. It can get pretty complicated, but we're going to keep it simple.

Air can "hold" different amounts of water vapour depending on how warm it is. This is known as relative humidity. As a rough guide, a cubic metre of air at 20°C can hold about three times as much moisture as the same volume at 5°C. Therefore, even if it's damp outside, the water will probably be less than in a room where people have been going about their daily lives — so open a window! If you air a room for about 15 minutes a day, you'll get a reasonable exchange of air without cooling the house too much.

Five simple ways to reduce condensation:

Keep lids on pans when you cook

Install extractor fans in the kitchen, bathroom and utility room

Tumble-dry clothes, or hang them outside, instead of drying them inside the house

Keep the bathroom/kitchen door shut as much as possible

Cover stone floors with carpets or rugs (make sure you have attached them securely so they don't slip)

More extensive options include installing double glazing or secondary glazing throughout, installing underfloor heating, insulating your external walls and converting to an electric hob/oven.

Taken from directline.com

Taking Care of your Joints

Your joints have to go through a lot every day – the spine, hips and knees take the load of your whole body weight. And if we don't look after our joints, we can experience pain and reduced mobility.

When the weather gets colder, many people with joint and bone problems often feel like their condition gets worse, but does the weather have any impact on the severity of conditions like arthritis?

"People who experience joint pain may feel it more in the cold, but the reason for this is not specifically known. It might simply be because the cold means people are less active which causes stiffness." says Dr Fiona Chikusu. "When the temperature drops, it can make people's pain receptors a lot more sensitive".

Winter's lack of daylight and poorer weather conditions are associated with lower mood. It is also a stress on the body's nervous system as it has to keep itself up to temperature. These effects are likely to have a much larger impact on pain levels than the cold directly upon the joints. It's important to remember, however, that weather will have no impact on the severity of a person's arthritis, only the pain they may experience.

How to manage the pain

Wear suitable clothing - thermals or layers of clothing work better at trapping the heat than thicker clothes and wearing thicker socks or two pairs not only helps to keep your feet warm but also provides extra cushioning under your soles.

Hot-water bottles, electric blankets and taking a warm bath or shower will also help to ease stiff and painful joints.

Keep your house warm. The NHS recommends that you should heat your home to at least 18°C if you have reduced mobility, are aged 65 or over or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease.

Take mild painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. But you should always consult a pharmacist before taking them for an extended period of time.

Keep active, and get plenty of sleep. Reducing excess body fat, especially abdominal, and not smoking also help to keep the body's resting level of inflammation at a lower level, factors that are more strongly associated with higher levels of pain.

Keeping your joints mobile is key

That can be easier said than done if every movement hurts, but regular exercise helps to reduce stiffness and pain, as well as improving balance, and reducing the risk of falls. Exercise will also improve your circulation and help to keep you warmer. The weather might put you off doing long outdoor walks but there are many indoor options for low-impact, weight-bearing exercises, like yoga, tai chi and Pilates.

Dr Chikusu says, "Simple stretching exercises, like stretching your arms in the air, keep your joints moving properly. They are designed to help ease aches and pains by stretching the joints and muscles in your body. Strengthening exercises help your muscles to support your joints".

Gardening is great, getting out into the sunshine can lift your mood and boost your vitamin D levels, guarding against osteoporosis. Take precautions such as getting up and stretching several times, using a knee pad, lifting loads with knees bent and back slightly flexed but never twisting, and not straining your back with heavy loads.

Swimming is perhaps the ultimate way to mobilise your joints while keeping strain to a minimum, because the water supports your joints.

If you have a specific problem such as restricted range of motion or muscle weakness then consulting a physiotherapist is a great option to get some individualised advice.

The NHS recommends we get 30 minutes of exercise five days a week, but if that's too painful to begin with try breaking it down into sessions lasting 5 -10 minutes. Any amount of movement to keep your joints supple will be beneficial.

Based on article at patient.info

Improve your health & wellbeing

The Telford & Wrekin Healthy Lifestyles Team are now booking phone and video call appointments to support people to make sustainable changes for a healthy lifestyle.

Offering a FREE and CONFIDENTIAL 1-2-1 service of sessions over a 12 week period, areas include healthy eating, weight management, increasing physical activity and exercise, emotional health and wellbeing, family lifestyle and giving up smoking.

Go to: www.telford.gov.uk/healthylifestyles
or email: healthylifestyles@telford.gov.uk Tel: 01952 382582

Struggling with what might be ahead?

Di Smart, Life Coach

I am speaking to a number of people who are struggling with the prospect of Covid being with us indefinitely. Understandably, this is causing them anxiety and stress and severely (in some cases) affecting their mental wellbeing. With this in mind, I thought it might be helpful to write up a few tips that might go a little way to helping in these difficult times.

Try to take things a week at a time and not read into whether you'll be back at work in a week or a month, just try hard to live week by week. Every time your mind races to 'what if's' bring it back to a week at a time. You might want to write up those words on a post it!

Try to not mindread what might happen with the general opening up of services and entertainment venues. Of course, we are eager for this to happen, however it is not helpful to live from one news article to the next. This is also true of vaccine updates and R numbers.

Try to watch or read the news once a day. Tricky I know as phones are often geared up to tell you the latest headlines. You can arrange that so you don't get every update...simple! By doing this, it helps to bring down your anxiety levels and will mean that you may only get anxious once a day and not every time your phone 'pings'.

Try to keep things as normal as possible. So, you can't go to the gym, however you can choose to do a workout at home. Failing that, a brisk daily walk will help enormously. You could even choose to do a workout with a friend online! Or, speak to a friend whilst each of you walk.....something I do regularly.

Try to keep the friends (who love telling you the latest bad news) at bay and encourage conversations with the friends who are balanced and as positive as they can be.

Eat and drink well, this goes such a long way to keeping our minds well-nourished and healthy.

And, above all.....TALK! It's so important to allay fears by talking. It can help out both parties as in turn, you both help each other. Talking builds resilience, something in great demand at the moment. It also allows us to digest things - in speaking about our fears or concerns (especially out loud) we allow our brains to start processing. Very important for helping us to departmentalise issues and giving us the space to calmly put our fears into perspective.

These above tips are simple in their approach but in my experience are extremely effective. They boost mental wellbeing, nourish our questioning minds and most importantly build resilience. A word branded around considerably in these unprecedented times.

Stay safe and well.

www.smart-lifecoach.co.uk

dianne.srsmart@gmail.com Tel: 07896 955 911

Walking for Health

Organised walks are allowed under current rules, provided safety measures are in place. Walking for Health Telford & Wrekin have restarted their walk programme, the only pre-lockdown walks that are not restarting are Stirchley on a Tuesday and Town Park on a Thursday.

Website:walkingforhealthtelfordandwrekin.org.uk Tel 07512 123995

Computer Training

Opportunity to gain computer skills, free online or over the phone, computer sessions are being held by Tech with No Limits in partnership with Citizens Advice Telford.

Sessions are perfect for both beginners and those looking to improve their skills.

Browse the internet

Evaluate which websites to trust

Fill out an online form

Identify and delete spam

Search for jobs

Sending and receiving emails

Set privacy settings

Use search engines

Call Andy on 07842 906098 to chat about the course and to book your first session.

Cryptic Christmas Food & Drink

Can you name the Christmas related foods and drinks suggested by the following clues?

1. It's not what it seems and it sounds like it hurts.
2. And I trust fun is sorted!
3. December 25th, December 27th and January 1st.
4. Only half a board game?
5. I'm not for life, just for Christmas.
6. Cockney eyes?
7. Confused g..g..gone.
8. This can be found in Paddington Bear.
9. That's an odd sort of hit!!
10. Comes before bumps and berries.
11. A nutter.
12. Has it been pinched?

Christmas Song Anagrams

These anagrams once solved will lead to the titles of Christmas carols or songs.

1. THIS WARM ETHICS
2. FLASHY ASTRONOMER FROM LEG GEL
3. SONIC GAS KNOWLEDGE
4. THY LION HOG
5. HID HEALTHY NOVELTY
6. TINSEL TWO
7. THE CHALK SLED
8. MANAGE RAIN WAY
9. EARTH SHAKING DANGER SHELL
10. SWEET GHERKIN
11. LIFT SHELTER NOW
12. JILL BEGS LEN

Answers

Cryptic Food & Drink

1. Champagne
2. Fruit & nuts
3. Dates
4. Gammon
5. Turkey
6. Mince Pies
7. Eggnog
8. Stuffing
9. Rum punch
10. Goose
11. Fruitcake
12. Stollen

Christmas Song Anagrams

1. White Christmas
2. Angels from the Realms of Glory
3. Good King Wenceslas
4. O Holy Night
5. The Holly and the Ivy
6. Let it Snow
7. Deck the Halls
8. Away in a Manger
9. Hark the Herald Angels Sing
10. We Three Kings
11. The First Noel
12. Jingle Bells

Why are friends so important?

Our society tends to place an emphasis on romantic relationships. We think that just finding that right person will make us happy and fulfilled. But research shows that friends are actually more important to our psychological welfare as they bring more happiness into our lives than virtually anything else.

Friendships have a huge impact on your mental health and happiness, relieve stress, provide comfort and joy, and prevent loneliness and isolation. Developing close friendships can also have a powerful impact on your physical health. One Swedish study found that maintaining a network of friends can add significant years to your life.

Although many of us struggle to meet people and develop quality connections, whatever your age or circumstances, it's never too late to make new friends or reconnect with old ones, and greatly improve your social life, emotional health, and overall well-being. A friend is someone you trust and with whom you share a deep level of understanding and communication. A good friend will:

- Show a genuine interest in what's going on in your life, what you have to say, and how you think and feel.
- Accept you for who you are

- Listen to you attentively without judging you, telling you how to think or feel, or trying to change the subject.
- Feel comfortable sharing things about themselves with you
- As friendship works both ways, a friend is also someone you feel comfortable supporting and accepting, and someone with whom you share a bond of trust and loyalty.

The most important quality in a friendship is the way the relationship makes you feel - not how alike you seem on the surface, or what others think. Ask yourself:

- Do I feel better after spending time with this person?
- Am I myself around this person?
- Do I feel secure, or do I feel like I have to watch what I say and do?
- Is the person supportive and am I treated with respect?
- Is this a person I can trust?

The bottom line: if the friendship feels good, it is good. A good friend does not require you to compromise your values, always agree with them, or disregard your own needs.

Taken from helpguide.org

The Rotary Tree of Light

The Rotary Tree of Light gives people the opportunity to commemorate the names of their loved ones which are then displayed around a Tree in the Telford Shopping Centre. They are also printed in the Telford Journal, and on the website at www.telfordtreeoflight.org.uk.

In addition to commemorating the names of loved ones, applicants are requested to donate a minimum of £5 per name to local charities. This has remained the same since the Tree of Light was launched 25 years ago. Last year it raised £42000 for local charities and remembered over 5000 loved ones.

Chair of the Tree of Light Trustees, Rotarian Peter Seaward said, "This year is our 25th year of running the Telford Tree of Light. It will be displayed in the Town centre. And whatever the problems we will do our best to ensure that it will be shining its lights across Telford to remember loved ones and to support local charities.

"Unfortunately we will not be able to meet you around the Tree this year. Please stay safe when viewing the display which you will again find in New Row."

Rotarian Frank Curry, Chair of the Tree of Light organising committee said, "The environment that we are operating in during 2020 presents significant challenges but the committee is confident that with a positive and practical approach many of the difficulties likely to be caused by social distancing can be overcome."

Commemorate

You can send in a commemoration via the website, however by the time this magazine reaches you it may be too late to guarantee that the names will appear around the Tree. However donations can still be made and the names will appear on the website, and hopefully in a special section of the Telford Journal.

The Journal normally has lists of those remembered each week, however it is not being published at present and is unlikely to be published again before Christmas. Once it is back in print we hope to have a supplement printed with all the names included, but as yet nothing has been finalised.

Visit the website at:

www.telfordtreeoflight.org.uk

Figures issued on 28th November show that the public have been very generous in their donations. With 1447 applications submitted remembering over 3000 names, almost £27000 has been donated to the Rotary Telford Tree of Light, with every penny donated by the public going to the nominated charities.

Telford plaza supports this year's Telford tree of light appeal

Telford Plaza has become the Principal Benefactor of this year's Tree of Light campaign.

"Telford Plaza is delighted to again be involved as a supporter of the Tree of Light now in its 25th year," said a director of Telford Plaza.

Telford Plaza is a leading locally based company that is committed to a presence in Telford and shows its support for the local community by supporting the Tree of Light" said a spokesperson for the Tree of Light. Adding "for a leading business such as Telford plaza to want to forge a close link with us is very good news and we are incredibly grateful for the continued support of Telford Plaza"

The Great War by Dave Wright

Talbot House, today a museum, was called an "Every Man's Club" during the Great War, where all soldiers were welcome, regardless of rank or wealth. Toc H is an abbreviation for Talbot House, "Toc" in the signals spelling alphabet used by the British Army in World War 1 signified T (today we use Tango).

By autumn 1915 it was recognised that the soldiers needed a rest and recreation centre and a large house in Poperinghe, Belgium owned by a wealthy brewer, Monsieur Coevoet -Camerlynck, was used for this purpose.

In the early summer of 1915, some German shrapnel shells had damaged the rear of the house. Having removed his family and all his belongings, M. Camerlynck was pleased to offer the empty house for rent to the British Army for 150 Francs a month. The house needed to be re-furnished, so to make it more homely soldiers quickly acquired all sorts of furniture including a piano.

Gifts of soft furnishings were donated by people in England and books arrived by post or were left by soldiers to fill the shelves of the library. A soldier's cap badge was to serve as a pledge for borrowing a book from the library.

The loft, which was previously used for drying hops, was converted into a chapel and became known as the "Upper Room". Soldiers soon furnished the chapel with an altar made from a carpenter's bench found in the garden shed, the candlesticks were from bedposts and a portable organ known as a "Groan-Box" was used for the musical accompaniment.

The property was named Talbot House in memory of Gilbert Talbot the son of Edward Talbot, Bishop of Winchester. Gilbert had been killed at Hooze in July 1915. His elder brother Neville Talbot, a senior army

chaplain along with the Reverend Philip (Tubby) Clayton had the aim to promote Christianity within a club for everyone.

So on the 11th December 1915 the house at number 43 Gasthuisstraat opened its doors for the first time, welcoming British soldiers to a new club. A notice was hung by the front door bearing the message:

“All rank abandon, ye who enter here.”

TOC H became their home away from home. "An oasis of serenity in a world gone mad".

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 or follow the link 'Contact Us' on our website 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.

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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

We welcome contributions from members and readers. Send in your articles, letters, stories, poems, photos, artwork and we'll publish what we can.

This magazine is available in a text only format, sent by email. If you would like to receive a text only copy, please contact us.

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Due to Covid-19, we are currently not able to deliver a batch of magazines to community venues, housing schemes, care homes, medical practices.

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