

York Older People's Assembly

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Spring 2021



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VACCINATION IN YORK – BRILLIANT

A survey undertaken by the Assembly of its members has resulted in very favourable comments about the experience of receiving their first jab: “Highly Professional” and “Well organised” “Brilliant”.



The vast majority had their vaccination at the Park and Ride site at Tadcaster Road during January and February. Most were in their 70s and 80s and fell within the top 4 groups set by the Government. There were very few or no side effects reported by the majority. However, when one person had unusual side effects, and did not have access to the internet, they found no way of reporting them.

Positive comments were noted in respect of the Haxby Group Practice who arranged site visits to Hartrigg Oaks the Retirement Village at New Earswick.

The overall take up of the vaccine was over 96% for those over 70 or older. 60% received the Oxford AstraZeneca and 40% the Pfizer vaccine.

There were some delays in accessing the Park and Ride site in the early stages, but these seem to have been resolved subsequently. There was a varied response from those receiving their initial invitation by phone, text, letter or by more than one method! Indeed, some letters arrived after the vaccination had taken place!!

We received some comments about the “user friendliness” of the website when booking online. For those of us who are “casual” users of IT - there is scope for improvement. Where queuing was experienced, the availability of chairs for those with mobility difficulties would be an improvement. However, overall our respondents wish to convey their appreciation to all the staff and volunteers who made the experience memorable.

VACCINATIONS IN CARE HOMES

Should staff working in care homes be required to be vaccinated? This is currently a matter of considerable debate. Those who favour this course of action believe that those who have close personal contact with their relatives in a care setting demand the highest level of care and safety from their staff.

The contrary argument centres around the freedom of choice exercised by us all since vaccination is not mandatory in this country. Interestingly NHS staff, as a requirement of their employment, have to be vaccinated against Hepatitis.

Barchester Health Care the seconded biggest Care provider in the UK have told all their 17,000 staff that if they choose NOT to have the vaccine, despite being eligible, they will not be offered work from the end of April. What are your views? – do let us know.

OAKHAVEN – 5 YEAR SCANDAL

Oakhaven residential home in Acomb owned by the City of York Council, has now been empty for 5 years! It was judged unsuitable for older people, lacking many of the amenities that are present in “state of the art” residential homes. Despite attempts at working with Care Home providers, very little progress has been made to redevelop the site.



Back in 2017 a scheme was proposed for 56 extra care apartments to which the Council would have nomination rights. This was firmly supported by both the Assembly and Age (UK) York. However planning approval was refused on the basis of the height of the building and closeness to Acomb Road. Finally, the potential developer, Ashley House, who are the developers of Mossdale, the new scheme at Burnholme, withdrew their interest.

Further attempts have been unsuccessful, and the Council decided in November to sell the site to another prospective organisation, Burlington Care Homes, based in Bridlington who currently run 30 homes in Yorkshire and the North East. Discussions continue – while the property remains empty!!

HIP FRACTURE AND FALLS

The Royal College of Physicians through a Falls and Fragility Audit Programme have created a number of publications for patients, families and carers about the standard of care and treatment they are entitled to receive.

These are:	Your hip fracture	Strong bones after 50
	Staying in treatment	Falls Prevention in Hospital

To access these documents put the name of the document followed by FFFAP into your search engine, which will lead you to the website. Also try the Royal Osteoporosis website for more information.

NEW LOOK LINCOLN COURT

Lincoln Court, Ascot Way in Acomb has been modernised and extended to offer 35 high quality one bedroomed apartments to rent for those aged 60 or over.



In addition to the apartments themselves, the scheme offers a large lounge and dining area, a hairdressing salon, laundry facilities on both floors, a buggy store and a guest suite.

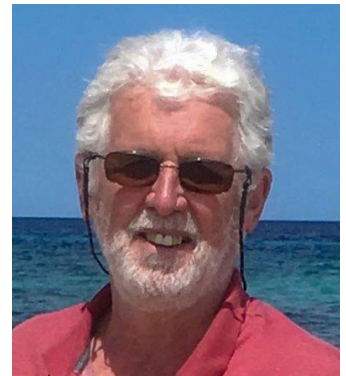
This independent living scheme with your own front door, allows you to come and go as you please with opportunities to socialise and take part in activities when it suits you. Yet you are in a safe and secure environment, giving peace of mind to you and your loved ones.

STEREOTYPING OF OLDER PEOPLE BY THE BBC

Phil Heaton, an Assembly member, has formally complained to the BBC about the “Ageist” representation of older people in a recent newscast. Those over 75 were represented by a person with a Zimmer frame and those over 70 by a person bent over a walking stick.

The BBC have replied “we agree with your sentiment and the image shown was quickly changed for the News at Ten report. The concerns have been fed back to the programme teams”.

If you spot anything similar on any news channel, do let us know and we can make representations to the organisations responsible.



Phil Heaton

OPEN MEETINGS

Our first Open Zoom meeting of the year was held on 18th January when **Steve Reed** who is responsible for Adult Community services at York Hospital spoke to us. The pandemic had brought a lot of pressure and the service had to respond to change. This included speeding up the discharge of patients from hospital and the working together of the different teams dealing with discharge together with the Council and the voluntary sector. Steve said it had all been brilliant. A major benefit is that money had been made available through the National Discharge Fund to smooth the process.

He highlighted the key benefits of closer working together, improved use of digital facilities which saved travel to meetings, more support for patients discharged home and increased liaison with council services. A full range of questions covering home support, the need for Health and Social care to work more closely and the progress of the vaccination programme were raised.

Steve said some 8500 hospital and care staff had been vaccinated in the hospital and the centres at Askham Bar and Haxby were making good progress. We were advised to wait to hear from our GP practice since they were coping with the national priority list. York Wheels and Age UK York are both offering support to people to travel to the centres. A well-received and informative discussion was greatly appreciated by those attending the meeting.

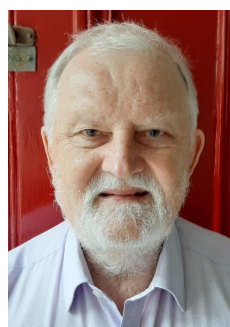
February 15th saw our second meeting of the year and our guest speaker was Big **Ian Donaghy**. Ian has a varied background and was leader of a York band called Huge which participated in various fund-raising activities. Ian was a teacher of people with learning difficulties and had also been involved in supporting the Dementia awareness programme.



Steve Reed



Ian Donaghy



Jim Cannon

He has published 3 books and now spends his time helping to train staff in the care sector amongst other things. Check out his website – bigian.co.uk

Ian spoke to our gathering about the needs of individuals and for kindness. He touched on his experiences of dealing with a wide range of people with different aspirations and hopes. His tale of

how he helped a 94-year-old man suffering from dementia to achieve his aim of scoring a goal for Notts County can be watched on film. His talk generated a lot of questions and comments.

One common theme was about how we can help each other cope with loneliness and isolation. A suggestion of using theatre groups to help was supported and the use of It led to a debate about digital inclusion. For many this is still a key barrier and help from individuals in providing support is important. A special offer to buy Ian's book at a discount has been followed through but please let us know if you wish to take advantage of the offer – each book is available for £10.

The Zoom sessions have been well supported and we are planning a full programme for this year although face to face meetings may be possible later in the year. Our next session will be on Monday 19th April from 2 -3 pm. Check our website for details closer to the date – www.yorkassembly.org.uk.

Jim Cannon, Chair

ABOUT TIME TOO!!

Relatives have finally been allowed into care homes to visit their loved ones – but only under strict conditions. Only one named person will be allowed to visit and will be required to take a Covid test beforehand and be required to wear “personal protective equipment” (PPE).



*The Rt Hon Lord Mayor of York, Cllr. Janet Looker
opening Mossdale*

The visitor will be able to hold their relatives' hand although any closer contact like hugging and kissing will be discouraged. Visits at windows, outdoors or through screens should be a thing of the past.

The Assembly believes that all staff in care homes should be required to have a Coronavirus vaccination since they have daily personal contact with their residents. We also believe there is little valid reason for restricting visiting to one named person only. Surely, both the son and daughter should be allowed to visit their relative.

A few thoughts from Tom McGuffog, a member of the Executive Committee and our spokesman on Mental Health.

LOOKING FORWARD

We hope to be free from Lockdown soon. What should we be doing with this freedom?

1. Draw up a plan in your diary. What do you want to do, when, with whom? Contact a friend/relative and agree to develop a plan together. What places, events, meals, people have you missed most?
2. Get more exercise. Get more fresh air. Who do you need to help you? Who needs your help?
3. Find out when theatres, concerts, exhibitions are beginning in each location. Agree with friends what tickets you want. What transport will you need, and by whom?
4. How much TV will you want to continue watching – enough but not too much. You will continue to watch government announcements, and also the News. You need music, drama, sport and humour.
5. In relation to humour, watch Lee Mack – “Would I Lie to You?” and “Not Going Out”. Of course, we all have a different sense of humour. One of my favourites was Bob Monkhouse. I remember him saying that he was fed up with people coming up to him in the street and saying “You’re a comedian – tell me a joke. You would not go up to a politician in the street and say ‘You’re a politician, tell me a lie!’”.
6. Enjoy your reading. Discuss with friends the best of new and old books. Plenty of websites sell books for home delivery. Two books I enjoyed reading recently are “Lockdown” by Peter May – a pandemic thriller, and “Messiah” by Jonathan Keates – how Handel came to write his masterpiece in a few weeks to raise money for a Dublin charity. This book is beautifully written and illustrated.
7. Many more ideas are available on key websites, including BBC.co.uk.

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