

NOTICEBOARD October 2025

Welcome to the 2025 Autumn Notice Board. Yes it is October already, clocks go back and daylight time is shorter. But we do have the glorious autumn colours of the trees to cheer us up.

It is also the time of year that the pigs are released in the New Forest for the annual [Pannage](#)

from Monday, November 28. This commoners to release acorns, beech mast, protecting ponies and of too many abundance of fruit and there should be some pretty full and happy pigs!



season, This year it runs September 15, to Friday, tradition allows their pigs to eat fallen chestnuts or other nuts, cattle from the toxic effects acorns. With the nuts we have had this year

AND NOW OUR NEXT BIG DIARY DATE

Not long to wait. Our next meeting is on the 30th of October 2025. We are going to be joined by a very interesting Speaker, Chris Lynn who is an expert on the history of Andover. I am sure his talk will be of enormous interest both to long standing residents of Andover and to those who have recently moved to the area - so spread the word. It is an open meeting, no booking or entrance fee and all are welcome. There will be our usual packed Agenda together with refreshments and a Raffle so put the date in your diary now. Here are the details

AOPF GENERAL MEETING, ANDOVER COMMUNITY CHURCH

Charlton Road, Andover

30th October 2025 Doors open 2.00pm. See you there.

Full of Life

Our yearly event to celebrate the International Day for Older People was held on 2nd October and what an event it was. This year's event, entitled "Let's Talk" was focused on the importance of talking and communicating to deal with some of the problems that can affect our mental health such as depression, social isolation, caring for loved ones and numerous others. It was opened by the Mayor of Test Valley, Councillor Gordon Bailey who attended with Mayoress Mrs Karen Hamilton and was welcomed by the Chairman of AOPF Mrs Jenny Kay.



The event showcased the mix of support available in the area with both statutory and voluntary organisations represented ranging from those who specialize in community mental health care, to that provided by churches, helplines such as the Samaritans and home visits, to voluntary organisations focusing on the importance of keeping active and engaged with their communities.

Andover MIND gave an excellent talk and slide presentation as did Dr Romilly Hegli from the Andover Primary Care Network who talked realistically about when you should approach your GP about mental health concerns. The private sector also attended to give out information about home nursing / social care available and of course the need for residential care.



The whole occasion was brightened up by 24 pink tee shirted students from Andover College who are undertaking a health and social care course. They demonstrated CPR and took blood pressures of public volunteers as well as giving out information. It was a great intergenerational experience and they impressed everyone. We are also grateful for the Councillors Grant awarded to us by Councillor Gillies and Councillor Matthews towards the costs of this excellent and meaningful event..Many pictures and the presentations will be available on the [AOPF](#) website shortly.

We're being robbed!

In our last Notice Board we reported on the loss of buses and the new Connect Services brought in by Hampshire County Council. The response from our readers expressed (to put it mildly) great concern. For many The Connect Services were found to have many disadvantages. Firstly one having to register, secondly the bookable aspect, not user friendly, the pick-up points were not as convenient as for the buses that had been taken off and of course by calling themselves a "Community Bus", no concessionary passes accepted.



The loss of through route buses (eg the Andover/Newbury bus for one) leaves the villages in between, Enham, Hurstbourne Tarrant etc. stranded - and there are other examples. As at the 1st October more buses were to be taken away. Many people have been affected, but particularly older people. It is written in law that Older People should be in receipt of a Bus Pass. It is there to enable Inclusion, independence, ease loneliness, get to see friends, medical appointments, attend social groups (like ours). When

the bus pass was introduced it was proved to be financially viable. The huge benefits of wellbeing and health, both mental and physical, spoke for themselves and it enabled pensioners to contribute in the volunteer sector saving the country a fortune in unpaid work. Without changing the law the universal bus pass cannot be taken away. BUT by removing our buses the ability to use it and the benefits to society that went with it is taken away. A huge sector of our community is becoming excluded and isolated. Ironically, here is a case in point when referring to our Full of Life day as reported in this Newsletter. Many of the excellent initiatives on show there were aimed to improve the well-being of older people but without the means of transport they simply cannot be taken advantage of. It is a crying shame.

Motability



Still on the subject of getting from place to place if you receive a benefit because you have a disability or illness that makes it hard for you to get around, you can use it to pay for a vehicle from a charity called Motability. You can choose from lots of different vehicles, for example cars, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs. You'll only be paying for the lease of the vehicle - it won't belong to you. If

you stop receiving your benefit, you'll have to return it.

You can get a Motability car or vehicle if you've been awarded:

- the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP) or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Adult Disability Payment
- the higher rate mobility component of Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance
- the higher rate of the mobility component of Child Disability Payment

It is not possible to join the Motability scheme unless you are in receipt of one of these benefits.

Volunteers

HELP! AOPF is looking for a Volunteer! We are in need of a minute taker for our meetings. It isn't too onerous. It just involves attending the meetings, taking the minutes, sending the Draft out to the Executive Committee and printing copies of the final version for ratification at the following meeting. We are sure someone reading this would be interested or knows someone who might be. Please get in touch - Email andover.opf@gmail.com or telephone 01264 737251



Do you have an Occupational Pension Scheme? Apparently Pension scams are on the rise and becoming increasingly sophisticated. According to Liverpool Victoria between August 2023 and August 2024 1 in 7 UK adults experienced an attempted pension scam. Some 14% of people received unsolicited calls, texts and emails to transfer or release money from their pension in the past 12 months and almost 4 million adults lost money to a purchase scam over the same period. So be careful of cold calls often from someone pretending to be from an organisation such as a pension provider or bank, or emails from someone you are affiliated with such as your bank or your pension company. These emails often contain a clickable link.

Always double check the full email address from the sender. Never click on the link as doing so could download viruses into your computer or steal your passwords.

Remember if you are suspicious report the fraud at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

On a lighter note

With the abundance of fruit and nuts this year here is a tasty cake recipe you might like to try. Delicious hot as a pudding or cold for afternoon tea and can be cut up and frozen to eat later.

Ingredients

250g (8oz) plain flour
2 teaspoons mixed spice
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
½ teaspoon salt
300g (10oz) Caster sugar
1teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons water
150ml light oil
3 eggs, lightly beaten
3 apples, peeled, cored and quartered
125g (4oz) chopped walnuts



Here's one we did earlier!

Preparation method

1. Preheat oven to 190C/Gas mark 5. Grease a 9inch (23cm) cake tin
2. Sift together the flour, mixed spice, bicarbonate of soda and salt.

3. Add in sugar, vanilla, water, oil and eggs; mix well until well-blended
4. Stir in apple quarters and chopped walnuts,
5. Pour into tin and bake for 50 minutes or until a knife inserted into the middle comes out clean
6. Cool on wire rack before serving.

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Congratulations go to Bluebird Care Winchester, Eastleigh & Romsey who have been named Homecare Provider of the Year 2025 at the Hampshire Care Awards.

This prestigious accolade was awarded for “consistently delivering exceptional, person-centred care, demonstrating excellence in service delivery, innovation, and community impact,” and builds on their third consecutive five-star Outstanding CQC rating which was achieved this summer. Wow! And did you know Bluebird Care is a proud supporter of AOPF as well?

...and finally,...

Question: I can't get my child to eat meat. What can I replace it with?

Answer: Get a dog, dogs love meat,

But honestly, aren't animals amazing! I just passed the hospital and there was a sign saying, "Guard dogs operate at this hospital"



The AOPF Members Noticeboard is for all of us to enjoy, read and stay connected with news, with activities, ideas, campaigns and with each other - which affect those of us over the age of 55. Please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with us to keep our Notice Board interesting. Please send your thoughts to us at andover.opf@gmail.com or by mail to The Editor, Notice Board, 22 The Dell, Vernham Dean, Andover SP11 0LF.

Take care and stay safe and well.

With very best wishes from your AOPF Executive Committee.