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**Welcome to the**

**Summer 2023**

**Focus Newsletter**!

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**Matt Cliff – Director of Bradbury Fields**

Matt Cliff, Director of Bradbury Fields Services at CBI welcomed everyone to the latest Newsletter.

The biggest piece of news for us at CBI is the long awaited sale of Christopher Grange Care Home, which has now completed. The Care Home has been transferred over to Excellency Care Limited, part of the NCC Group and they are now fully operating the Care Home, which has retained all the Home’s residents and all the jobs of the Care Home staff. So, this has been a great piece of work by our senior leadership team and our Trustees, really good news so we are very excited to be able to share that with you.

Today Matt wants to take the opportunity to say farewell and good luck to Carol Byrne, one of our longstanding rehabilitation officers for our Liverpool team. Carol has been with us for some twenty-seven years and left to take on a new challenge in a similar role with a new organisation, so we wish her well and good luck for the future. A massive loss for us but a huge gain for the new organisation, so we wish her well, fond memories being had by many.

We’ve had a number of changes within our Knowsley team and I hope that by the next edition of this Newsletter to be able to introduce to some of those. Just by way of an update, we still have Marie our Senior Rehabilitation Officer, a stalwart of the Knowsley team.

We also still have Emma who transferred from being the admin at the Knowsley team and will now be our Rehabilitation and Technical Assistant for that team. She’s also going to be starting her rehabilitation qualification, so we are very excited and wish her well with that.

In terms of new people on the Knowsley team, we are going to be joined by Lesley who will be our new Rehabilitation Officer. We will also be joined by Loraine who will be the new Administrator for the team and we have been joined by Freya who will be our new Habilitation Specialist, coming over from our friends at Guide Dogs.

A great new team at full strength at Knowsley and hopefully we can introduce you to some of those new faces at the next Newsletter.

A couple of other things to keep an eye out for. We are doing a little bit of work in the background around communication, looking at how we can maybe introduce text messaging, emails, how we can get this wonderful Newsletter out to more of you more quickly and in the way that you want to hear about it.

If there are any preferred communication methods, maybe some way that you normally listen to newspapers or news articles, let us know. If you hear from one of our staff or volunteers, any opportunity to let us know how you want to hear, please do let us know. It might be that you listen to the news or read the news through a particular podcast, or through a particular platform, just give us a shout. I’ll provide the contact details at the end of the Newsletter.

In today’s Newsletter we are going to be joined by the wonderful Margaret Guppy doing her usual articles on gardening and cookery. Something exciting to look forward to, this being the right time of year for a bit of gardening for those green fingered amongst us.

We are going to be joined by Donna, who is our Rehabilitation Services Manager, talking a little bit about her role, the Rehabilitation Team, the rehabilitation service, such a key part in what we do improving the lives of blind and partially sighted people. Please do listen to Donna.

There will be an article by Louise our Community Fundraising Coordinator talking about all things fundraising. It isn’t all about getting the begging bowl out when it comes to fundraising. We are a charitable organisation and we need to generate funds to make sure we can continue to run all of these services.

Actually, a lot of what Louise will talk about is not necessarily about getting people to put their hands in their pockets. There are things that we can do just a little bit differently that will help this organisation.

Just to use one example would be the Easy Fundraising app. If you do your shopping a different way using this app, it actually generates funds for Bradbury Fields with no cost for yourself, so please do listen to what Louise has to say, it really is worth listening to.

We are also going to be joined by Darren, talking about all things Health and Wellbeing. Various different taster days we have coming up and also social events that we’ve had or have coming up. They’ve all been very popular and well received and we have things in mind for the Volunteers Week.

We also have two special guests, one of these being Pam Clarke from the Merseyside Police Safeguarding Team. She’s here to share information about financial abuse, potential fraud and scamming. We actually had a talk about this in a recent staff meeting. Very informative and useful and we think it is really important to think about what is being said in your own environment, not just for yourself but also for the community around you.

Financial abuse, scamming, fraud, they are up on the increase and it happens in ways that we wouldn’t always think about. These people who do this are getting clever, getting smart, so please be vigilant and do listen to what Pam has to say.

Our final special guest is Laura Needham who is the Bus Strategy Programme Manager from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, and she is coming to talk about the bus services which are obviously important to us visually impaired people.

As always, if you’ve got any questions, queries, or suggestions of what we could put on the next Newsletter, or we can help at all, just give us a call at the Bradbury Centre, pop in, come and say “hello”.

You can get in touch through our website, which is [www.bradburyfields.org.uk](http://www.bradburyfields.org.uk) through social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram.

We have email [info@bradburyfields.org.uk](mailto:info@bradburyfields.org.uk).

The phone number, as you should know but just in case, **0151 221 0888**.

Our prerecorded information line, which is updated regularly, is **0151 221 0889.**

Or just pop into the Bistro, have some of Karen’s wonderful food, come and say “hello”. We are always here and happy to help.

Enjoy the Newsletter!

**Darren Holloran**

**Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator**

Darren’s role is to get involved in putting on as many activities as we can for people with sight loss.

On a regular basis, from Monday to Friday, we have things like our Braille Club (beginners and advance); a selection of support groups aimed at different aspects of support such as a Coffee Morning on Mondays for those people who just want to get together and have a little chat, no agenda, just meet and talk with other people who are impacted by sight loss, listen to each other’s stories, coping strategies and how people get on with their lives, etc. This is a new session that’s just started and we’d love to see more of you come along and join us.

Another of our support groups is the Let’s Talk Group, which is a bit more established, on a Tuesday, we often get guest speakers involved and have certain subjects, topics and themes that we talk through.

For those of you who are interested in getting into the workplace, looking at volunteering or training opportunities, we have our Wellbeing In Work Forum which meets monthly. Through this network and support group you may be able to get access to things like assistance with your work curriculum vitae, assistance with one-to-one coaching and maybe some networking, looking at different places to volunteer. Also, IT skills, opportunities, etc., and this is a locally run support group with some funding in the Liverpool area so if you are looking at that kind of thing, please get in touch with us and we can get you involved.

From a sporting perspective, as well as our support groups you can get involved with a bit of activity and we have our regular gym and swimming groups. We have our inclusive yoga, and we also have our in-house stretch and tone exercise class which runs throughout the week so no excuses for not getting active and involved with some of the things we do.

There’s also a multitude of sporting opportunities around the area if you just want to get involved in some more recreational sports, things like Goal Ball, football, cricket, there’s a visually impaired baseball team, to name but a few. There’s plenty going around Liverpool and Bradbury Fields if you want to get active and get involved.

From a social perspective, please keep a lookout for our party nights and other events that take place. Our last party night was the Coronation Party Night back in May and we are hopeful that we’ll put something on during the summer, when we’ll have the bar open, with live music and entertainment. Just a great way to socialise in a safe environment where you know people are there to support you if you need it. We look forward to seeing many of you there as we put more of these on. The more popular they are, the more we’ll put on for you, so if you want to get involved then get in touch and we’d love to welcome you.

From a volunteering perspective, just an opportunity to say “thank you” to all of our volunteers and if volunteering is something you are interested in, then give us a shout. We have volunteers from all backgrounds, all abilities and with different sets of skills and we are happy to talk to anybody who is interested in offering their support as a volunteer, so whether you want to drive a minibus or whether you just want to come in every now and then and help make some teas and coffees, whatever things you want to get involved with, then give us a shout! We can look at that, work with you and utilise the skill set you have.

So if you are not wanting to volunteer yourself, spread the word, let people know there are opportunities here and to get in touch with Darren and we’ll take it from there.

Some of the new activities we are looking at now are things like shared reading, crown green bowls, and as we are developing these we will try to give you more information, but you know where we are, you’ve got our details and we hope to see many more of you coming through the doors soon.

Take care!

**Laura Needham**

**Bus Strategy Programme Manager**

**Liverpool City Region Combined Authority**

Have your say on how your buses are run.

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (Combined Authority) launched its consultation into how buses should be run in the Liverpool City Region on Friday 12 May 2023.

Buses are the backbone of our region’s local transport network, with 8 in 10 public transport journeys being taken by bus. Half a million people across the Liverpool City Region use the bus every day, to get them to work, to school, to the doctors, to visit friends and family, or to have a day out. Buses are key to keeping our city region moving.

They are also important for reducing the number of cars on the road and in improving congestion and air quality. However, the current bus network is not doing as well as it could. Passenger numbers are declining, from 118.8 million journeys in 2009/10 to 105.9 million in 2019/20.

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has new powers to improve bus services by taking greater public control of the network – either through an enhanced partnership with bus operators or by introducing bus franchising.

After undertaking an assessment of these options, the Combined Authority has reached the conclusion that franchising would be the best option to reform our bus services. Before any final decision is made, we want to know what the people who live and work in the Liverpool City Region think.

Anyone can take part in the consultation. You do not have to live in the Liverpool City Region or be a regular bus user. Even if you do not use buses, you can still take part – we want to hear from everyone. You can answer as a member of the public or on behalf of an organisation.

To take part we would like you to fill in a questionnaire. The short version contains 8 questions, and the long version contains 34 questions. You can answer either version of the questionnaire and you do not have to answer all the questions. The deadline for responses is 11.59pm on 3rd August 2023

If you have any questions or need any help, you can contact us at:

[movingbusesforward@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk](mailto:movingbusesforward@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)

or if you can’t get online, you can call us on

**0151 330 1249** and leave a voicemail with your name and contact details – one of our team will get back to you as soon as possible.

We will also be holding a series of engagement events and roadshows across the Liverpool City Region for you to come and talk to us throughout the consultation period. Details of these can be found at:

[www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/movingbusesforward](http://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/movingbusesforward)

- where you will also find copies of all the consultation materials. Or visit one of our travel centres for more information.

For additional information for article go to –

[Liverpool City Region Bus Franchising Consultation (liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)](https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Leaflet-ACCESSIBLE.pdf)

**Margaret Guppy’s**

**Gardening Corner**

Margaret hopes you’ve been out in your garden, whether it’s a big or small garden, or just a yard with pots. We can all do a little bit to make it nice outside, even though we might not be able to see what we are growing very well, but other people can and our gardens are for other people’s enjoyment.

At the moment all the roses are coming out.

Margaret hopes you have been feeding your plants. If you put some blood, fish and bone pellets around March to April, it’s not too late to do it now, and sprinkle this round your garden or pot, do the same around September. In the meantime, feed your plants maybe once a fortnight. When you are watering them, put a capful of tomato feed in the watering can. Tomato feed feeds all plants, not just tomatoes, except ericaceous, acid loving plants such as magnolias, don’t like tomato feed, you have to get their own feed.

It's important that if you have a plant that you buy in the garden centre and it is an acid loving plant but you don’t have acid loving soil, put it in a pot because otherwise it won’t do well at all and maybe it will not flower.

So don’t forget at this time of year when the flowers are coming out, the roses, deadhead the roses as they die off and will come back again.

When you are buying roses, at whatever time of the year, you can get roses that only flower once and we don’t want that, we want them to keep coming up, so you deadhead them, talk to them nicely – there’s nothing wrong as King Charles has been speaking to his plants for a long time and it works. They did a survey a long time ago about this theory about talking to your plants and it was proved that if you talk nicely to your plants they grow better, and if you start being nasty and grumpy, they don’t grow half as well.

So, this time of the year when there’s lots of plants in the garden centre and you go out looking for things like Busy Lizzies, Primroses and Nasturtiums. Nasturtiums grow about three to four feet tall and you can eat their leaves and flowers if you want to put them in a salad. You’ll impress your guests giving them a salad with whatever!

Try growing spinach which is good for you and is very easy to grow. If you grow the cut and come again spinach, put the odd leaf with a salad and the iron in it is good for you.

Did you know that if you grow fennel – you need to have a certain type of taste with fennel – fennel tea is very good for stress and if you have difficulty sleeping. It has an aniseed taste to it so if you don’t like aniseed, it’s no good for you, but that’s a nice plant that grows every year, you just keep it in the ground.

Try to find plants that smell nicely so that we, as visually impaired people, know roughly where in the garden we are going because we can smell or feel the plants if they are big enough.

Margaret grows a lot of Japanese Maples in her garden and they are looking particularly nice at the moment.

Also grow something like Buddleia. This is something you cut back every year, down to about two feet, and then the flowers and new growth come up. You can get different colours such as pink, white and yellow.

Get your gardening gloves out and start potting. Even if you can’t see much, you can still get a lot of pleasure out of gardening.

Margaret’s been doing some gardening at the Bradbury Centre with visually impaired people helping to put things into pots, dealing with cuttings and bringing plants on like Pansies. It gives a great deal of pleasure – better than sitting in the house watching the telly, get out there in the sunshine and enjoy.

Good gardening!



**Introducing**

**Donna Healey-Sharpe**

Donna Healey-Sharpe is one of the Rehabilitation Officers at Bradbury Fields. She’s been with Bradbury Fields since November 2021.

In November 2022 Donna took up a second role, working part-time with Nicky as one of the Service Managers for the Liverpool Region.

Donna took a move from Derbyshire to lovely Liverpool and has been working as a Rehabilitation Officer for the last ten years. Before that she worked in hospitality but has to say that she has moved to Liverpool to keep going with her rehabilitation career and the service that we are offering in Liverpool is very different to what she has worked with previously, and Donna is enjoying a more rounded service here at Bradbury Fields.

With regards to what rehabilitation is, we are here to support you with regards to maintaining or developing your independence skills in what areas of your life are important to you.

Unfortunately, like everybody, we have a waiting list here at Bradbury Fields for people to be seen which is long and over six months at the moment.

But that doesn’t mean that any concerns that you have aren’t important to us – if you have any worries or needs that you feel need relooking at if you’ve already been seen by us before, please give us a call here at Bradbury Fields and we’ll certainly do our best to get back to you.

The areas we are looking at covering with rehab are you getting out about, being able to look after yourself at home and making sure you can access all information, correspondence and communication materials that you need to.

That doesn’t mean that we can’t guide you in the right direction with anything else that’s not necessarily direct us.

Here at Bradbury Fields, we’ll always be happy to help you. If it’s not us we’ll find you the right person.

**Fundraising Events**

**Bradbury Bazaar**

Saturday 12th August

12 noon - 3pm

Free Entry

Come along to the Bradbury Bazaar for a fun filled day! We’ll have lots of stalls, games and live music to keep you entertained.

The bistro will be selling hotdogs, pizzas and loaded fries along with a selection of ice creams.

Or simply arrange to meet friends at the Kennels Bar for a drink.

**Tech for Life**

We all know quickly technology can change; a lot has happened since we last held a tech event.

Pencil in your diary Friday 29th September 2023 as a possible event. Once our team get a plan together, we’ll let you know!

**Christmas Market**

Sunday 19th November 23

1pm - 4pm

Free entry

**Margaret Guppy’s Cookery Corner**

Don’t think that because you are visually impaired that now you can’t do anything or can only do limited things. It’s not true. If you tell yourself that you can’t do it, then you won’t.

Try the simple things to start with. As long as you have an oven and a pair of talking scales, then you can do pretty much most things. Not the complicated stuff, but if you have a recipe that you’ve done for many years, there shouldn’t be anything to stop you from doing it again.

Margaret now has an electric oven as she decided a number of years ago that gas is not good when you are visually impaired – you could set fire to your eye lashes and you don’t want that! So learn how to use an electric oven. Put bump-ons on the different temperatures or get somebody to do it for you and you’ll be alright.

Margaret still cooks for herself. She also buys the occasional ready meal for when she’s been busy, but have a go at the simple things.

Margaret said she bought a slow cooker recently and it’s ok for convenience but she doesn’t think it tastes half as good as something you put in the oven because the flavour is much better.

When you are making cakes, we can’t do complicated any more. We don’t want to. But you can still make a nice cake when you can’t see very much of what you are doing.

A Victoria Sponge is very easy.

Six ounces of self raising flour

Six ounces of caster sugar

Six ounces of soft margarine

Three eggs

A teaspoon of baking powder

The trick is to put it all in a bowl, beat it like fury. That teaspoon of baking powder saves you just beating – as we used to in school or when our mothers taught us – just to beat the fat, the sugar and then the egg. No! Put it all in a bowl together and just beat it with an electric whist for two minutes. Put it in the oven for 25 to 30 minutes on electric 180. Turn it once when it’s in the oven. And put it in two tins with some greaseproof paper on the bottom and you’ve got a Victoria Sponge!

All you do is get it out, let it go cold and put jam in.

And yes, a Victoria Sponge – you don’t put cream in it. Queen Victoria wouldn’t have liked it. It’s only got jam in. If it’s got something else in, it’s a different sponge.

If you want to do a Coffee Sponge, just add a teaspoon of coffee mix.

If you want to do a Chocolate Sponge, you take half an ounce of flour out and put half an ounce of cocoa powder in. Put buttercream in the middle.

It’s so easy really and you’ll be amazed how pleased you are with yourself when it comes out nice and you think, well I did that, I can still make a cake!

Occasionally Margaret makes little fairy cakes and puts icing on the top but because she can’t see what she’s doing, the icing goes all over the place but the cakes tastes alright! It doesn’t matter and if people are going to pick at the look of things, well say you try doing it with your eyes shut!

Casseroles are easy to make. Just cook part of it on the cooker for about an hour and a half and with your meat, onion, carrot and potato. For the other hour and a half, put it in a dish in the over on a low setting, say 120, for a hour and a half and you’ve got a casserole. If you do enough for two or three days you can freeze some of it and you’ve already got it in the freezer for when you’ve gone out on the razzle and you come back and want something to eat! Nothing simpler, so don’t think that you can’t cook any more because you can. Even if you make a mess of it for the first or second time, it’s ok, practice makes perfect and don’t be afraid to have a go.

Margaret gets a great deal of pleasure out of cooking and she’s sure you have in the past and will in the future.

Good cooking!

**Financial Abuse Safeguarding**

Pamela Clarke is one of three Financial Abuse safeguarding officers who cover the Merseyside Force area.

They help and support vulnerable victims of fraud and safeguard them from becoming repeat victims.

They also try to educate our communities about the most current fraud trends and provide members of the public with the tools to keep their money safe.

Criminals worldwide are tricking millions of people into parting with billions of pounds every year. These criminals are called scammers. Scammers are cunning and clever, and they use various ways of collecting people’s personal information. They will contact victims by post, phone, email, text and in person.

Some of the most common methods of defrauding the public are as follows:

**ROGUE TRADER SCAMS**

Rogue traders often cold call at victims’ houses offering to complete odd jobs such as gardening services, guttering, general house maintenance, roofing, jet washing etc.

Please beware, they may come across as being friendly and helpful and offering special discounts on the day and saying that they have been working in the area, they usually spot a non-existent problem with your home which will escalate further and end up with the victim owing an extortionate amount of money for a job that did not require doing and that no work or shoddy work has been completed.

**REMEMBER**

Display a no cold calling sign in your window or door.

Keep your front and back door closed

If anyone knocks at your door, simply tell them that you are not interested and close the door.

If you spot a vehicle, if possible, make a note of the colour make and registration.

If you do need work on your property, then ask fiends family or use recommendations.

**COURIER SCAMS**

The scammers will call the victim claiming to be someone official like their bank, police officer or law enforcement and very often they will have spoofed the number to trick you.

They will then aim to panic you into believing that your money is at risk and there has been fraudulent payments made on your card.

The scammer will sometimes ask the victim to hang up and call their bank or police, but they will stay on the line making the victim believe the call is genuine.

They may ask for your pin number and say that a courier will come to collect the card and pin.

They may also say that a worker at the bank is corrupt and ask you to go into branch and move all your money to a safe account that they have created.

They may also ask that the victim lie to the bank about what the money is for.

They will say that you are assisting in the investigation and helping police or the bank by doing this.

In some cases, they may ask that a large sum of money is withdrawn and get the victim to send this in the post or hand over to the courier.

**REMEMBER**

The bank or police will **NEVER** ask for PIN numbers, send couriers to collect bank cards: ask people to move money to another account, ask for help with an investigation or ask for cash or goods to be handed over.

These scammers can be intimidating but don’t panic, slow down and take time to think. Do not continue to engage in conversation but hang up!

If you wish to confirm a number is genuine call back using a different device and use a trusted number.

**ROMANCE / FRIENDSHIP SCAMS**

Scammers will use dating websites using stolen identities to trick the victim into believing they are genuinely looking for love or companionship.

They often claim to work abroad. Once confident they have won the victim’s trust and they have built up a relationship and with the victim they will then begin to come up with various excuses to ask for money.

Tactics often used are they really want to meet you but need money to pay for a visa or flights.

Sometimes they will use emotional tactics and play on the victim’s good nature and say that they need money to pay for a family member’s operation or medical treatment. The excuses will continue.

Some scammers trick their victims into using their bank accounts to launder money which is a serious criminal offence.

**MUM / DAD FRAUD**

A recent scam is one where a text or WhatsApp message is sent on mass saying “Hi mum and or dad, I have lost my phone, and this is my temporary number can you message me back please I need some money urgently”.

The victim will just be concerned for their child and will frantically message back not realising this is a scam and at this point the scammer asks for money to be sent as they are desperate.

**REMEMBER**

The easiest way to avoid becoming a victim of this scam is to simply call the number or call the original number you had for your child and speak to them. The scam will then unravel.

**BANKING PROTOCOL**

All high street banks are signed up to the banking protocol which is an agreement between banks and trading standards to protect customers from becoming victims of fraud. They are trained to spot if a customer is under any duress and if they are sending large, unusual payments. They are trained to ask questions of the customer to ascertain if the transaction is genuine. If they are in doubt, they will contact police to attend and freeze the payment to protect the customer’s account.

**REMEMBER**

If you are moving money or making transactions, then it is not out of the ordinary for the bank to ask you questions…**DO NOT LIE TO THE BANK**. They are trying to protect you and your finances.

**‘Little Red Riding Hood**

**or**

**How Green Was My Granny’**

**By Margaret Guppy**

Once upon a time there lived a not so little girl called Red Riding Hood. She lived in a semi-detached house with two cats, a dog, a gerbil, a tropical fish tank, three gnomes and a mother and father.

Her grandmother lived in a little cottage at the edge of the woods, just a short bus ride away.

Grandma was a bit of a grotbag, always going on about the younger generation and how it was different in her day.

So Red Riding Hood did not visit Grandma very often. Actually, Red was feeling just a little bit guilty. For days Mummy and Daddy had been asking her to visit Grandma, who had been ill in bed. She was taking a long time to recover from Bosnia Herzegovina Flu.

This evening would be no different from any other, Red was sitting in front of the TV, watching her favourite soap opera when Mummy entered the room for her nightly nag.

Red, darling, you just have to go and visit Grandma this weekend. She hasn’t been able to get out to the shops for ages. Her cupboard must be quite bare! Daddy will be too busy putting solar panelling on the roof. I have promised to do some canvassing for the Green Party.

After just a token display of defiance, Red decided she would visit her Grandma. After all, she did want that ninety-two gear mountain bike for her birthday!

Oh, alright I’ll go but it’s someone else’s turn next time.

Mother was delighted at the news.

Thank you darling, Grandma will be so pleased that you have made an effort just for her. I’ll pack the shopping trolley in the morning and you can catch the early bus.

And so it happened on a bright Saturday morning, Red helped Mummy prepare all manner of goodies for Grandma, from organically grown fruit and vegetables, a few containers of ready made vegetarian meals, a paperback book on homeopathy, lots of vitamin tablets and a jar of oil jelly. And to keep Grandma occupied, a video entitled Aerobics Made Easy from the Soapbox by John Major, and a do-it-yourself hit replacement kit.

The trolley was quite full when they had completed the task. There was just enough room for a portable telephone and some sweets for the journey.

Mummy saw her daughter safely to the bus stop, telling her to speak to no one and to use the alarm whistle if she was at all worried.

The journey did not take long and soon Red Riding Hood was walking down the little lane that led to Grandma’s cottage.

She could not help noticing that buds looked very pretty, the bluebells and wild orchids were in flower and the trees had their spring overcoats on.

In no time at all, Red was at the door of the tiny cottage. She rang the doorbell and a gruff voice spoke through the intercom “Who is it?”

This did not sound like Grandma but Red thought perhaps Grandma had a sore throat.

“It’s me Grandma, Red. Mummy sent me with some food and a present for you”.

“Alright dear, press the door and come right in” said the voice. “I’m upstairs in the bedroom”.

So Red did as she was told, pushing the door she entered Grandma’s cottage. She put the trolley in the kitchen and made her way upstairs. There in the bedroom with the bedclothes tucked up around her chin was a very strange looking lady.

“Grandma dear, I am sorry you are so poorly. You don’t look very well. Your eyes look very big. Has your thyroid been playing up again”?

“Oh, my dear child, I am all the better for seeing you said the voice from under the big woolly hat”.

Red did not like to mention to her Grandma that she seemed to have grown rather a lot of whiskers since the last time she had seen her but perhaps that is what happens to ladies when they get old.

“Grandma, what a funny hat you have on. You don’t seem to have much hair underneath!”

“Well deary, this illness has made a lot of my hair fall out, but never mind, it’s less money for me to spend at the hairdressers”.

“But Grandma, what funny teeth you have got. It looks like it’s a long time since you paid a visit to the dentist”.

Red Riding Hood was beginning to get very suspicious at this point. Grandma didn’t sound like a frail old lady and just as she decided that the strange smell she’d noticed when entering the house was tobacco, something Grandma would not have allowed in the house, out of the bed jumped this little fat man who grabbed hold of Red’s arm very roughly and said “You’re just to clever by half little girl. I think you should join your Granny”.

Now not so Little Red Riding Hood was not the timid helpless young lady that she looked. What a good thing she had taken a crash course in self-defence at school.

Without a second thought for the danger she was in, she quickly gave the unsuspecting little fat man a swift kick where it hurt most. While he was groaning on the floor, she gave him a quick whack on the head with Grandma’s walking stick which just happened to be handy.

Whilst he was out cold, Red set about tying up the horrid little man. She tied his hands and feet together with Grandma’s crepe bandages.

Next thing to do was to try to find Grandma and hope she was safe and unhurt.

Running quickly downstairs, she heard a muffled sound coming from the cupboard under the stairs. There sure enough was Grandma, gagged and trussed up like a chicken.

With some difficulty, Red dragged Grandma from out of the cupboard and then she ran to the kitchen for a glass of water and a sharp knife, on the way collecting the portable phone.

After she’d cut the distressed old lady free and made her comfortable, she rang the police and then her parents and told them of the excitement of the day.

When Grandma was sufficiently recovered and the police had taken the nasty man, Red asked what possessed a normally sensible old lady to answer the door and let in such a horrible man.

“Well dear”, said Grandma, “he said that he’d been sent from the Government to fill in a form so that I could have a big rise in my pension”.

“Well”, said Red Riding Hood, “this traumatic day should teach you a lesson, Grandma. Don’t go opening the door to strange men selling fairy stories”.



**Disclaimer**

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If you want to receive a fuller version of this newsletter, please contact reception on

**0151 221 0888** and you will be sent the audio version.

We hope you’ve enjoyed this Newsletter and look forward to meeting you again when we present our next Newsletter.