



17TH MAY has now been confirmed as the next stage in lifting COVID restrictions. This is positive news for everyone and will help OPAL with our plans for opening some services, albeit in smaller sizes, as soon as possible. We will keep you updated as plans progress.

CENSUS UPDATE - the ONS have issued an update on the Census, stating *'The response to Census 2021 has exceeded all expectations with households across England and Wales making sure that they count when it comes to local services such as school places, GP surgeries, housing and public transport'*. They plan to release the first set of census outputs to the public in Spring 2022.

REACH TIP

Did you know that to prevent overcrowding in **A & E** departments, you can **ring 111** and book a slot?

If your **mental or emotional state** quickly gets worse or deteriorates, this can be called a 'mental health crisis'. For urgent support call **0300 303 3972**

If it is a **life threatening emergency, 999** is still the number to ring.

TECH TALK **ANIMAL WATCH** GARDEN TIPS THIS MONTH IN HISTORY TECH TALK **ANIMAL WATCH**

TECH ANIMAL WATCH British summertime is a time where new life is in an abundance and also a time for the swallows to return, most likely to the place where they were born. They make their cup shaped nests from mud and generally settle in buildings or on the side of buildings, unlike many other birds.

They arrive in England from Africa around April time after a long flight of around 200 miles a day. During this journey of up to six weeks they don't take a break or stop to sleep or eat; they do all this while they are flying. They have around 2 to 3 chicks during their time here. Once they have all grown old enough and our summertime is coming to an end, they will all set off on their flight back. Farmers used to say "swallows bring the summer but 1 swallow doesn't make a summer".

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This week is **Mental Health Awareness Week** and the theme is "nature". Over the last year, Reach has regularly reported the benefits of being connected to nature and the boost to wellbeing. The Mental Health Foundation is suggesting that people try connecting in a different way this week and notice the positive impact. Here are some of the ideas:-



◇ *Use all your senses to experience nature to find a sense of calm and joy – **hear** the bird song or buzzing of insects, **feel** the soft green leaves that are starting to transform the stark branches, **smell** the flowers and shrubs in blossom, **taste** the wild strawberries just starting to ripen and **see**, by watching, the first butterflies or acrobatic movements of swallows.*

◇ *Combine nature with creativity – increase your sense of connection by taking photos, writing, drawing or painting pictures of landscapes, plants or animals.*

Visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk for more ideas.

Here is one of the completed spring pictures from the last activity pack, please do share your creativity, especially if you are inspired this week.



Relaxing Tip—by Bob Wheat

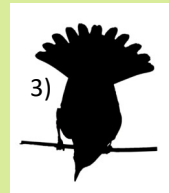
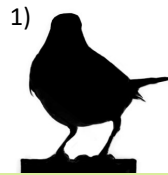
Take a step out into nature, your garden, park or countryside. It brings a quiet to the mind and can be re-energising to your body.

FUN & QUIZZES

- 1) How many noses does a slug have – 2 or 4?
- 2) What is a group of pheasants called - Bouquet or parliament?
- 3) Which is England's fastest land mammal - fox or brown hare?
- 4) What is the smallest mammal in the UK - field mouse or pygmy shrew?
- 5) A snail can sleep for how many years- 3 or 10?
- 6) How many pairs of wings does a bee have - 2 sets or 3 sets?
- 7) Which of these animals does the Queen own - Mute swans or porpoises?
- 8) There are red squirrels living in Cheshire – true or false?

Who Am I?/Where Am I?/What Am I

Can you name these birds?



Can you work out the missing letter?

1	3	5
2	4	?

In The Spotlight...

BOB WHEAT - MINDFULNESS COACH

Where were you born?

I was born in Cheshire and lived in Hale until I moved over to Warrington for work in the 1970s.

What's your earliest memory?

Playing and working in my Grandfather's garden and having rides in a large wooden wheel barrow and shelling peas.

Where is one of your favourite places to be?

The Lake District, I'm looking forward to leading a weekend retreat in Grasmere this July.

Who makes you laugh?

Most things, good or bad, I particularly like children's logic.

Tell us something we might not already know about you.

I enjoy gardening particularly growing plants from seed, or cuttings, like roses, bay trees and camellia's.

Did you have a career – if so what did you do?

I worked in the leisure industry for most of my life. Taking early retirement, I started my own business as a hypnotherapist, a Tai Chi instructor, a Mindfulness Teacher, a Reiki Master. I am still working for myself after 11 years. Mindfulness and Tai Chi are great ways of improving our health and wellbeing, helping us to calm the mind and to appreciate the present moment. They can also reduce stress and help to improve the quality and quantity of our sleep.

How are you involved with OPAL?

I was delighted to be able to contribute to the last OPAL Activity Pack and a number of OPAL volunteers and members have attended my Tai Chi courses and Mindfulness sessions.

Do you have a favourite quote or poem?

"I am old but I am forever young at heart. We are always the same age inside. Know that you are the perfect age. Each year is special and precious, you can only live it once. Do not regret growing older, it's a privilege denied to many" By Richard Gere.

For further information on Bob's courses visit www.mindfulnessmatters1.com



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS : WHERE AM I?: The Roman Bridges, nr Tarvin. CHESHIRE QUIZ: 1)Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Flintshire and Wrexham 2)Warrington 3)True 4)True 5)Daniel Craig 6)1,000,000 7)1930, 8)True 9)Chester

OPAL thanks the following sources in this edition : mentalup.com, rspb.org.uk

For comments, articles & info contact your Organiser or opalreach@opalservices.org.uk

Think about me, not my age