

They think websites are where spiders go

RE: Last week's letter from Esther Rantzen, on behalf of the Turn2us charity, outlining how pensioners were missing out on benefits.

CONGRATULATIONS, Esther on your letter pointing out that thousands of pounds in unclaimed pension credit have accumulated due to the difficulties pensioners have 'with a terribly complicated system which deter them from claiming'. Then you go on to give a www. address for pensioners to check their entitlements.

IS IT ME?? to quote another well-known broadcaster. Surely anyone can see the cause and effect here? Not everyone, particularly in the older age bracket is computer literate and there are thousands of pensioners who think a website is where spiders congregate!

Give those eligible for pension credit a break and let them know where they can TALK to a real person about their entitlements or before we can turn around, the Government will earmark the mounting sum of unclaimed money for some other less worthwhile scheme.

Shirley Read (Mrs)
Wethered Park, Marlow

Editor's note: Pensioners without internet access can call freephone 0800 802 2000 – the Turn2us helpline, open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm

Condemn any revenge

THE untimely and brutal death of anyone is a cause of sadness, even if, as in the much publicised case of Osama Bin Laden (pictured), the deceased was an evil, satanically inspired, psychopathic murderer, who was responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent people.

As a Christian, I would have much rather that he had realised the awfulness of what he had done and asked for God's forgiveness in the name of The Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Saviour of all who believe in Him. He would have received forgiveness, for our God is a God of forgiveness of all who recognise their sin and truly repent of it.

One obvious consequence of Bin Laden's death, which political leaders and commentators have already been warning of, is that some of those who followed his wicked ideology will attempt to revenge his death by committing another of the murderous acts which he planned, promoted, encouraged and financed. This of course would be an absolute tragedy for us all, not just for any innocent victims of such an attack.

Bearing in mind two Muslim men from High Wycombe, Assad Ali Sarwar and Umar Islam, are currently in prison for their parts in the planning of Bin Laden-type attacks, may I invite the leaders of the Muslim community in High Wycombe to publicly state their abhorrence of any such attempt at revenge and to do all they can to dissuade any misguided individuals who may be in their congregations, from taking such action.

G R Hargrove, Fennels Farm Road, Flackwell Heath



What justice is there for a loss of a life?

IN the Bucks Free Press (May 6) you report that a 20-year-old speeding driver, responsible for the death of a pensioner – my condolences to her relatives so cruelly robbed of her – has escaped a jail sentence.

His punishment, apart from having to live with his conscience, is a paltry 200 hours community service, £1,500 costs and a ban from driving for 18 months.

In the same paper another driver 'drove a vehicle when above the alcohol limit' and was fined £650, disqualified from driving for 28 months with costs of £100.

Justice, what justice for taking a life? Time for a sentencing review and fast.

Richard JC English, Earl Close,
High Wycombe



BEREAVED: Fred Croft, 82, above, mourns the loss of his wife Jean, a pedestrian who was knocked down by a car in Marlow. Thomas Pearce, 20, of Flackwell Heath, pleaded guilty to causing the death of Mrs Croft by careless driving.

Response to knife crisis was amazing

I WOULD like to give a great thanks to Thames Valley Police, C Shift at High Wycombe Station.

I was thoroughly impressed with their amazing response during the very stormy evening on the 23rd April 2011, following an incident on Tom Burt's Hill, near the Poets Estate.

Me and my partner were approached by a male, clearly very distressed and potentially dangerous to himself, us and others. He mentioned he was carrying a knife and was asking us to stab him. Once me and my partner got away, he started screaming and crying, shouting at us not to ring the police.

As soon as my partner got on the phone to the police they instantly took details of the male and came within minutes.

The male set off into the woods. On arrival, four cars turned up, and all members of the police were very polite and considerate, clearly very concerned for welfare and safety.

I'm very happy with how quickly they turned up and handled the situation. A special thanks to the PC and her crewmate for being first on scene and being so pleasant.

She even offered to drive us home, we accepted a lift down to the station but not all the way home as to let them carry on with their team for the search of the male in question.

I was very impressed with how they kept me updated and how thorough they searched the area, even bringing out a dog support unit. I would also like to apologise for how standoffish I appeared to be, I was just a bit upset but I still could've been a bit more appreciative.

I have a lot of faith and trust in the police and respect their duties (especially in a town like this) – their policing is fantastic. This has boosted my confidence in the police which had been previously let down by police mainly in the West Midlands).

Simon Clarke, Priory Road,
High Wycombe

Don't blame the victims

I WAS surprised and disappointed to read in a recent issue the reported comments of Superintendent Gilbert Houalla, placing the blame for fuel theft on service station retailers.

The oil industry and its retailers take the matter of fuel

theft extremely seriously and are very conscious of crime prevention measures.

BOSS, the British Oil Security Syndicate, has been operating highly successful crime fighting schemes at service stations throughout the UK for many years in conjunction with major oil companies and partner agencies. We are active in the Thames Valley Police area – having participated in a successful Automatic Number Plate Recognition trial in Beaconsfield last year, we are now preparing to launch a new crime reduction scheme in Wokingham in conjunction with police.

With more than 70 of our Forecourt Watch schemes operating in police force areas around the country, we have seen crime levels fall by up to 55 per cent in areas where close, productive relationships exist between retailers and police.

The benefits are not only a reduction in forecourt crime incidents, with efficient monitoring and reporting networks easing demand on police time, but the creation of a safer environment for staff and customers.

Our pioneering debt recovery scheme also gives retailers a robust procedure to help them recoup financial losses incurred when drivers fill up, claim to have no means to pay and subsequently fail to return. Retailer feedback for this scheme, which was launched last year following successful trials, has been overwhelmingly positive.

We have recently met Superintendent Houalla, (pictured), to explain in more detail how BOSS schemes could prove beneficial to crime reduction performance in his command area by forging positive, streamlined relationships between his force and local retailers who, rather than holding the blame, fall victim to fuel thieves who are often the tip of a far larger 'crime iceberg'.

We are pleased to say that Superintendent Houalla has agreed to give consideration to our proposals and are hopeful that we can introduce a Forecourt Watch scheme for the benefit of retailers, police and the community.

Kevin Eastwood, Executive Director & Company Secretary, British Oil Security Syndicate Limited, Warwick



Respect both our war memorial and graves

LIKE many other people, I too was disgusted at the recent vandalism of Muslim graves in High Wycombe. I see no point or satisfaction in disturbing the resting place of the deceased.

I am also disgusted at the disrespect people show to our War Memorial in the church grounds. At the moment the poppy wreaths are stacked four or five high round one side so that the other side can be used to sit on while people eat their lunch. This memorial, while not a grave, is a symbol and reminder of the many lives lost in two world wars to give us the freedom we now have. Please keep off of this memorial and give it and all graves, regardless of colour or breed, your respect.

Mrs J Little, Healey Avenue, High Wycombe

Leave Booker alone

WITH all the furore over the new stadium at Booker air park, and also with the local Lib-Dem prospective candidates against this, why did they [Lib Dems] not also make a real fuss over Bucks County Council's proposal for a Waste Transfer Station operating five and a half days a week at High Heavens Tip and a Composting Facility?

This will have a profound increase in traffic congestion and not just at weekends or the odd match in the week.

Back to the stadium, however – why cannot the proposal for one of the original sites be used ie Abbey Barn? There are cut-outs ready in this area, on the M40 as this was going to be a motorway service area! There will then be no need to spend extra money on infrastructure at Booker! Think again! Because most people do not want the stadium at Booker air park.

Den Biscoe, Elm Road, High Wycombe

AV result wasn't all bad

THE coverage of the No to AV campaign is unduly pessimistic. 30 per cent support is a substantial result for the Lib Dems in an area of politics that was not always clear to the electorate. Lib Dems and their Labour allies on the issue should not be too downcast. It was a significant first step. PR may be the next.

ML Grey, West Wycombe Road, High Wycombe

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

WITH COLIN BAKER

I thought Waddock was rushing to me

HERE was jubilation all round at Adams Park on Saturday. Well I say 'all round' – one curmudgeonly 'supporter' nearby did mutter 'They'll be straight back down' and was firmly put in his place by the rest of us. There's always one, isn't there?

But despite doing it the hard way far too often, by conceding an early goal and then battling to a victory or draw, the Wanderers did a magnificent job of keeping at bay the several teams snapping at their heels over the last few nail-biting weeks of the season.

They beat two very good teams in the last couple of fixtures, including doing the double over Bury who finished second, to gain promotion by the slimmest possible point margin – one!

So huge congratulations to Gary Waddock and his entire team, on and off the pitch, to Nikki Bull the best goalie in the division who was rightfully named the Player of the Season by both players and supporters and to Mr Football himself the indefatigable legend that is Gareth Ainsworth.

With a certain degree of shamefacedness, I have to share with you a personal moment of high comedy. As the players did their lap of honour, the manager, Gary Waddock, leaped over the advertising boards ran up the steps of the family stand and along the back row where I was standing with my wife and daughter.

He manoeuvred past half the row and stopped when he got to me and for a millisecond I confess I allowed myself to wonder why, at his moment of triumph he wanted to share his pride and delight with me. Doh!!

Without looking at me, he interposed himself between me and the wall behind me, leaning over to where, sitting in the posh boxes, were what transpired to be an ecstatic group of his family and friends. He exchanged brief triumphal and well-deserved hugs and returned to the pitch.

My daughter said: "You thought he was coming to see you, didn't you?"

I indignantly denied it at the time, why would Gary Waddock even know I existed, let alone where I sat?

But I must admit to the hopefully human failing of allowing my surprise to lead me to wonder for the briefest of brief moments whether he might have been a closet Dr Who fan, before I rejected the notion as preposterous.

Now I know how the Who fans feel in similar circumstances.



● Colin Baker is best known as BBC's Dr Who. He lives in High Wycombe with his family. See his archive of columns on our website bucksfreepress.co.uk

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO: STEVE COHEN, BUCKS FREE PRESS, LOUDWATER MILL, STATION ROAD, HIGH WYCOMBE, HP10 9TY Or to bfletters@london.newsquest.co.uk Include your name, address and telephone number. We reserve the right to edit letters.