



Melksham & District Link
E-Newsletter
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Committee Members

Chairman: Richard Bell

richard.d.bell@btinternet.com

Treasurer: Pat Graham

patigraham@blueyonder.co.uk

Secretary: Heather Newman

newman279@btinternet.com

Recruitment Officer:

Support Officer: Pat Cook

cook.pat@btinternet.com

Coordinator Rep & Training: Dee Pesse dee.icloud@me.com

01225 Mobile

702838 07505 433811

708938 07847 635025

708696 07914 059018

702652 07543 681673

703823 07790 144704

Committee changes.

Sadly, Danny Holland has decided to step down from the role of recruitment officer due to pressure of work, family and other activities such as bowls and not least his frequent driving for Link. Our thanks to Danny for taking on the role.

However, Danny is continuing driving and with his role as webmaster.

Until a replacement is found, Dee will take on the role of recruitment officer and will work with Pat C to try and increase the number of drivers.

Chairmans update

The last few months has seen a steady increase in clients, who now number around 40 per week. A few of our older drivers have now returned from 'Furlough', whilst others have decided it's the right time to retire. Our thanks to all of you.

Advertising on local social media has brought us 4 new drivers (Mick Ambrose, Anthony Frith, Anthea Penhallow and Martin Elson) and two, additional coordinators (Jackie Hislop and Lesley Allen), as well as one (Frances O'Donohoe), whose induction was delayed by Covid, and who have now completed their training and joined the rota. Welcome and thank you.

Our long-term treasurer, Pat Graham, has decided to retire at this year's AGM and fortunately one of our volunteer drivers, Richard Clark, has agreed to take on the role and is currently familiarising himself with the intricacies involved. We will now be looking for an assistant treasurer to help Richard. (Any Volunteers??).

For the moment, expense claims and client donations should continue to be delivered to Pat. If Pat is unavailable, then they can be delivered to my house.

We have very largely stopped using paper, with the majority of coordinating now being carried out on the Link database. We progress but at a manageable pace.

The Melksham Link website is live at www.melkshamlink.com

For the future we will be looking more closely at how we do things to see if we are compliant and as modernised as possible, whilst keeping the personal contact that is so important.

There were high hopes that with the removal of restrictions we could restart our 'Open Door' tea & coffee mornings, but the rapid increase in Covid numbers will undoubtedly delay this.

I hope to see as many as possible at the Link Summer Lunch on 14th August.

Covid

With a change in the law in England recently, it is no longer a legal requirement to wear a mask in specified circumstances.

With the rapid increase in the number of cases there is still a risk to both our drivers and clients. For that reason, Link recommends that drivers continue to wear masks or visors when taking clients and that we continue to insist our clients do the same, unless medically exempt, and sit in the rear passenger seat of the car.

Please contact the duty coordinator in the first instance if any issues arise relating to this guidance.

Email Notifications of Clients and Trips

As some of you already know, we are now using a database to store client details and their trips. This database has a facility to send out an email to drivers with details of the client and the trip. These can be a bit confusing as they show that they have come from

hugh@linkscheme.uk rather than from Melksham Link. Hugh is the designer of the database and all emails for all Wiltshire Link schemes show they originate from him, whereas in reality they are system generated. Any responses should be directed to

melkshamlink@gmail.com, which is where any return emails will arrive. You may also be confused by the W3W (What 3 Words) map reference, which defaults to Oxford. We are not using this system as it is really only of use in rural settings rather than towns. Hope this clarifies any confusion.

Business Cards

Many thanks to Ron Walby who suggested having the business cards printed for the drivers to hand to clients, this was a superb idea and has gone down extremely well with the drivers. I have never had so much feedback from you, it is good to know your views. Spare supplies can be obtained from either Pat Cook or Richard Bell.

Open Door

This will resume again at some point in the future. The committee decided to wait until covid cases are lower and also we are allowed in the Church foyer again. Unfortunately, one of our hostesses, Tessa Missen has had a nasty fall and broken her arm and shoulder.

Drivers Handbook

Hopefully the drivers have found the drivers handbook useful. We are very open to suggestions for any additional information that you would like to see to any future editions. Already one driver has requested a page containing all the postcode for the main hospitals

to be included. Any comments and suggestions please forward to either Heather Newman or Pat Cook

Drivers Availability

We are having more and more requests from clients who have weekend appointments. To assist the coordinators, particularly the new ones, please could you advise your availability for the whole week and not just weekdays.

For those drivers only available evenings/weekends, please can you also advise your availability.

Thanks to those drivers who do already provide their availability on Monday mornings for the following week, for those that don't please remember that it's just one message (call/email/text) from each of you, which makes life a lot easier for coordinators than them having to contact each of you in turn.

Summer Lunch Party

The Summer Lunch party for all Volunteers and partners is almost upon us now scheduled for Saturday 14th August from 1200 to 1500 at Richard's, 52 Lowbourn. If you haven't already replied please let Richard know ASAP if you are going to attend. Let's hope the sun will shine. Looking forward to chatting to you on the day.

AGM & Social 2021

The date for the AGM is Thursday 28th October at 7.30pm. This year the committee has decided to make this more of a social evening. We will just have a very quick AGM (normally only 15 minutes) with no speaker. We will then have cheese and wine evening afterwards. The Riverside Club has now been booked so please save this date.

Starters and Leavers

A big welcome and thanks to the following new volunteers who have started recently

- Mick Ambrose – Driver
- Anthony Firth – Driver
- Lesley Allen - Coordinator
- Jacqueline Hislop – Coordinator
- Anthea Penhallow – Driver
- Martin Elson - Driver

Farewell and thank you to these volunteers who have resigned recently.

- Michael Crabbe – Driver
- Netta Hemmins – Coordinator
- Jennifer Johnson - Driver