

Redbourn Care Group



Winter 2017



Seasons Greetings

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Another year is nearing its end and it only seems like yesterday I was writing in the spring edition - how time flies! It has been a busy year with our clients increasing from 265 to 277, our combined car and minibus journeys increased from 995 to 1099 but our car and minibus drivers down by four.

Notwithstanding these statistics we have been able to somehow facilitate almost all requests which are a tribute to the hard work of our office volunteers, drivers and couriers. As you can see we have been delivering more with less and because our client numbers are increasing we are in need of more volunteer drivers. We would like you to HELP in the recruitment process by talking to and persuading friends and neighbours to join us. All we need are names and contact details and we will make contact.

Highlights from the year include the provision of a defibrillator for the minibus, kindly donated by members; a superb needlework exhibition by Edna Lindfield which raised over £1000; a beneficiary from ticket sales at the Abbey Theatre production also raised over £1000; the promise of a new minibus in great part to be provided by The West Herts Charity Trust and very generous donations from members to allow the bus to be fitted out with all the extras we need. Our presence at The Redbourn Classics Motor Show and Fete (TRCMSF) in September offered an opportunity to gain a wider profile. Please refer to Steve's article on page 3 for further details.

We are delighted that TRCMSF will be held again next year and that we have been chosen as a beneficiary once more. Please note the date and time: **Saturday September 15th noon to 5pm.**

Volunteers

I have previously referred to several members who work tirelessly behind the scenes and in this edition Geoffrey Garrad-Cole has kindly contributed as you will see on the next page. His role provides a valuable contribution and ensures all car drivers (and their passengers) are properly insured, for which we are grateful.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank Annie Lowe and Bernie Penny for all their hard work this year. Steve Lillywhite, with assistance from Dennis Bigham, has been busy selecting an RCG gazebo for use at public events. If you visited the Christmas Market you will have seen it.

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Insurance Matters

As happens to so many people in this village I had not been retired long when some bright spark thought that I had nothing to do and I was therefore volunteered to join the Care Group to administer the car drivers' insurance and driving licences. This was a great surprise to me as up to this point I had only been dimly aware of the existence of the Care Group and I certainly had no idea of the extensive work that it does, backed up by so many volunteer helpers and drivers.

When I looked through the list of helpers it was very encouraging to find that a good few of these were people that I have known for many years through other village organisations and this certainly helps me feel part of the group whilst I gradually get to know the rest.

My background in insurance matters is pretty limited having had a career in civil engineering but there are similarities not least of which is a belief that one party to a contract will try to wriggle out of it when the going gets tough if the right pieces of paper are not in place. Insurance companies are probably no exception to this.

What I do is to check that all our car drivers are properly insured whilst driving for the Care Group and have a valid driving licence. Simple I hear you say, and you should be right, but there are some traps. Take driving licences, these expire when the driver is seventy and are renewed at three year intervals after that. The DVLA will write and remind you when renewals are due but they can only do this if they have your current address. Be sure to notify them if you move so that you benefit from their reminder as driving without a valid licence is not only an offence in itself but will also invalidate your insurance.



On the insurance front it is important that your insurance company knows that you drive on a voluntary basis and are paid mileage for this. Most policies will not automatically cover this and it will be necessary to obtain written confirmation in some form or another. This can either be by letter from insurers or by them noting on your insurance documents that you are covered for voluntary work. It is always best to notify insurers before renewing or taking out a new policy as adding this cover afterwards can be time consuming and will occasionally attract an additional cost. In all cases the various documents should have a common policy number to link them together. I will normally send each driver a reminder between two and three weeks before their insurance expires, but don't wait for me.

Although the above checks are time consuming and frequently frustrating they are very necessary and protect the driver as much as the Care Group as driving without being properly insured is a serious offence and will lead to prosecution.

We are always looking for more drivers and it is frustrating when some of our current drivers have to be 'parked up' until the correct paperwork is in place. This is usually an insurance problem and the best way to avoid this is to contact your insurance company well before the renewal date and make sure they list 'voluntary work' in your documents.

Whenever I am in the office I am struck by the dedication of those who field the various calls for lifts. Often they have to make twelve calls or more to find a driver available on a particular day and this task would be made a little easier if some drivers were not unavailable because of insurance problems.

That said we have, in the Care Group, a wonderful organisation which thanks to the many volunteers works well for the benefit of those who need it and I am grateful to have the opportunity to be a small part of the team which keeps it running.

Geoff Garrad-Cole

Car Insurance and Licence Administrator

Street Representatives

As 2017 draws to a close we can look back on a landmark year for RCG, but firstly I have to report unfortunately in the recent past we, for various reasons, have lost several Street Representatives from the team and 2018 will see a concerted effort to at least return our number to fifty plus from our current forty seven.

2017 has seen the first full year of the split charity Redbourn Care Group and Redbourn Care Trust meaning that we are able move into a higher fund raising gear. As you are probably aware we were fifty percent beneficiaries from the Classic Car Show in September where we had an extremely successful day promoting the Care Group and raised over £4,000. Grateful thanks are due to over twenty Care Group members who assisted on the day and some prior to the event.

During the afternoon it was particularly pleasing to have two young couples say how nice it was to be welcomed to the village with a New Resident pack and how useful the information had been in the early days of moving in. So please keep up the good work as these packs are appreciated. Also during the afternoon we ran a variation of a standard raffle "Spot the Care Bus" and thanks to three generous donors we had three excellent prizes which were all won by village residents.

Before closing may I just say "Thank You" to all the Street Representatives for your continued support and wish you all a very Happy Christmas a healthy New Year.

Steve Lillywhite



Our new gazebo!

...continued from the front page

We are again indebted to The Parish Council for their grant towards our minibus running costs as well as their financial and other assistance towards the running of TRCMSF.

A number of you kindly responded to our survey, the results of which have been circulated and were summarised at the AGM in October. This information is assisting Trustees to plan for the future in tandem with professional assistance from Hertfordshire Community Foundation (HCF) who provided a grant to cover costs. With the professional, the Trustees have so far attended two strategy meetings with the final one scheduled for mid-January. This is important work and we will look forward to letting you know the outcome in due course. In addition valuable work is ongoing in creating and updating policies which are now available to view in the office or electronically by request.

As another year draws to a close we celebrate all that you do in contributing to making our village a caring and happy environment for those residents who need our help - thank you. Best wishes to you all for the coming festivities as well as good health and happiness in the New Year.

Peter Robey

**97% of volunteers
said the work was
meaningful to them.**

**Thank you to all
those who
completed the
survey.**

Redbourn Care Group

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Registered Charity No. 297955



Regular Minibus Journeys

Monday	Swimming (Harpenden Pool am) Monday Club (Methodist Church pm)
Tuesday	Good Companions (1st Tuesday of month) Macular Society (2nd Tuesday of month)
Wednesday	Redbourn Day Centre (St Mary's) Supermarket shopping (evening)
Thursday	Village shopping and 'Pop In' (am) Outing (fortnightly pm)
Friday	Supermarket shopping (am)

Call the **Care Office** to request a place.

Car transport: volunteers transport clients to medical appointments. Payment towards costs: (45p per mile) plus parking charges is requested (but there is funding for those who genuinely can't pay).

Outings organiser: Annie Lowe 01582 794615
The dates for the 2018 programme have not yet been confirmed but do let Annie know if you are aware of any Redbourn resident who would enjoy an afternoon outing or maybe lunch in a local hostelry! The new minibus will have more seats so will allow a few more to join the regular outings.

Trustees: Barry Welch, Chair; Peter Robey, Vice-chair; Dennis Poole, Treasurer; Dennis Bigham, Care Bus Manager; Sally Bartlett, Secretary; Rev Will Gibbs, Pastoral Care Assistant; Peta Gunson, Safeguarding Lead; Steve Lillywhite, Street Representative Coordinator.

Local Heroes Needed!

- *Minibus drivers*
- *Car drivers*
- *Couriers*
- *Office staff*

Do you fancy being a driver on our mini bus or driving Redbourn residents to appointments in your own car?

Minibus drivers and couriers are needed for outings, supermarket shopping trips, to local clubs and organisations.

No minimum weekly commitment required, every journey agreed according to your availability.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like more information please do not hesitate to contact our office on 01582 794550 or email redbourncaregroup@btconnect.com