

Redbourn Care Group
Advisory Committee Meeting
10 July 2018



Minutes are 'Draft until Signed'

Members present: Barry Welch (Chair), Sally Bartlett (Secretary), Dennis Poole (Treasurer), Dennis Bigham (Bus Manager), Rev Will Gibbs, Steve Lillywhite (Street Co-ordinator), Margie Johnstone, Pauline Allcroft, Annie Lowe (Outings Organiser), Martin Howe, Bernard Penny (Mobility Equipment Coordinator), Connie Crawley, Rebecca Jenkins, Ann Mundy and Janet Lang, Tina Brown, Donna Pritchard, Tony Barr, Brian Gunson and Tracy Witterick.

Barry welcomed everyone to the summer meeting with a special welcome to new attendees.

1. **Apologies** were received from Peter Robey (Vice Chair), Claire-Louise Lawlor (Office Manager), Mollie Williams, Peta Gunson, (Safeguarding), Graham Lawrence, Sheila Seabrook, Alan Gibson, Rosemary Ross, Caroline Snook, Rosemary Hinde, Geoff Garrad-Cole, Lucky Lewis and Peter Jewell.
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** on 10 April 2018 were approved as correct; proposed by Dennis Bigham and seconded by Pauline Allcroft.
3. **There were no matters arising from the minutes.**
4. **Reports:**
 - a. **Treasurer.** Dennis circulated the financial statement and his report:
 - The financial position is more positive since several bequests have made a difference to the income. The surplus this year to date is £7K.
 - Vic French's bequest of £6,000 has been received.
 - However, although we have no immediate cause for concern these are not reliable sources of income.
 - b. **Office Manager.** In Claire-Louise's absence, Sally read her report:
 - The new website <https://redbourncaregroup.co.uk/> is a great way for people to find out about the Care Group, with plenty of familiar faces, showing how it can help people in the village and how volunteers can come forward.
 - The GDPR project has been time consuming but has achieved its aim in that all clients and volunteers have been contacted. The database is now almost UpToDate which from an administrative point of view has increased efficiency.
 - The new computer system Charitylog is now live and database is steadily growing, with detailed work going on to ensure it is accuracy and fit for purpose. The computer system will complement the paper-based routines for some time to come yet.

- Several new volunteers have recently come forward and are in process of completing applications.
 - We currently have 289 clients – less than reported at last meeting as the GDPR process identified clients who were no longer in the area.
 - Similarly, the number of volunteers is reduced, 104 are currently active although we are waiting to hear from several others to confirm their intention to continue. Recently 6 car drivers, 3 minibus drivers, 2 couriers have stepped down due to various personal reasons.
 - There remain 14 office staff including Geoff Garrad-Cole,.
 - Since the last meeting the office has organised 159 car journeys, 82 scheduled minibus journeys plus 11 minibus loans and year to date the total is 793.
 - There are currently spaces on the Wednesday evening shopping trips to Woodall Farm, please make this known to potential clients.
 - Parking at hospitals continues to be of concern to car drivers who take clients to medical appointments. The St Albans Stronger Together transport group recently discussed this issue with reference to Blue Badge holders. A member of board of the West Hertfordshire Trust was at the meeting to discuss the challenges followed by with a statement:” the Trust Board has confirmed that it is ruling out parking charges for Blue Badge holders at this current time. Our focus is on improving access for disabled patients and visitors. We have increased the number of spaces for disabled patients and visitors and are making sure that all car park users are aware of the wide range of concessions available to help with parking costs.” West Herts Trust.
 - This Trust is also working on plans for a new multi-storey car park at Watford General Hospital which should significantly improve car parking for all hospital users. This is only the response from West Herts and doesn't include Luton and Dunstable Hospital.
 - On the 13th June the Care Group had a stall at the Community Central Fair in St Albans Arena. This was a useful as a networking exercise between charities, however didn't prove very fruitful for recruiting volunteers.
- c. **Minibus Manager.** Dennis informed the meeting of the following:
- No date yet for the arrival of the new bus; but it should be soon as the DVLA have now allocated a registration: LK18 HBX so awaiting receipt of log book.
 - The minibus recently had problems with the steering lock and tail lift, so the AA were called.
- d. **Street Co-ordinator.** Steve reported the fact that:
- Nine Street Reps had not yet returned the GDPR consent form which meant it was unclear as to whether they will continue in the role.

- Follow up with each person is underway.
- e. **Wheelchairs/scooters.** Bernie informed the meeting that
- f. The loans of scooters, rollators and wheelchairs continues according to need.
 - g. There is an electric scooter available if requested.
 - h. All items will be serviced late July.
- i. **Outings Organiser:** Annie presented the following information:
- Late start for outings this year due to the long cold winter.
 - The lunch planned for May 8th went ahead with one minibus rather than two due to unavailability of minibus drivers, however a second lunch was organised in June so in the end everyone was able to go.
 - Summer planned trips include a special trip on the River Thames, seaside trips to Bognor Regis and Brighton.
 - There are currently 28 clients who like to go on the outings.
- j. **Chairman.** Barry reported the following:
- Delivery of the new minibus is imminent and long awaited. Thanks to Dennis Bigham for his continued involvement with West Herts Charity Trust.
 - Thanks to all those involved in the GDPR process and in working on the new computer system Charitylog. Thanks also to a recent volunteer Tony Barr who is assisting with IT support and advice.
 - The quiz night at The Cricketer's (24 June) raised £396 for the Care Group.
 - Volunteers are requested for help at Redbourn Classics Motor Show on Saturday 15 September. RCG will benefit from proceeds (as will Friends of St Mary's). Help during the day with the RCG Gazebo and with marshalling for the car parks is very much required. Application forms are available on the Classics Car website: <https://www.redbournclassics.co.uk/>
 - Redbourn Senior Forum is on Monday 17 September in the Parish Centre 10.30 – 2.00pm. RCG will have a table, so volunteers are welcome.
 - Redbourn Christmas Market on Sunday 2 December 2018. Again, a request for volunteers to help with car parking and / or in the RCG gazebo. <http://redbournchristmasmarket.com/stalls/>

5. Follow up discussions on ideas raised at last meeting

Attendees were divided into four groups and spent 15 minutes discussing the two topics:

A. Volunteer Recruitment

- a. Is an open evening a good idea if so how would we plan, organize and publicise this – what are the practicalities?
- b. Expand advertising – where and how: target audience, content, social media, print, cost implications?

Points raised

- What is the object of an open evening?
- What age group are we aiming for – 40-50 to recruit younger members?
- Organise an open evening in a pub, or garden centre or local venue where people gather for another reason, e.g. doctor's surgery, dentists, Herts Garden Centre, Aubrey Park Hotel, Parish Centre, Leisure Centre
- Leaflet drop, posters in village hall, fliers, Facebook, local Facebook groups, newspaper, radio, talk to groups, senior forum
- An open evening is a good idea – not after dark maybe in afternoon
- The message and style are very very important, ensure publicity fits the target volunteer, make an incentive to attend the open evening
- IDEA – investigate this – is there a nationally recognised training scheme for volunteers that RCG could get involved in? Awards for volunteers?
- Stress the advantages of volunteering – rewards, giving back, meeting people, when you might need RCG yourself,
- Numbers of volunteers are decreasing – national picture
- Try using personal stories of clients to advertise the value of RCG

B. Village Awareness

- a. Explore **active** (rather than passive) participation in village events i.e. is a gazebo enough – how should we 'engage' with people i.e. competitions, activities for the children/families?
- b. What else can we do that is feasible for the limited number of volunteers we have available to us?

Points raised

- Success breeds success
- Is RCG more than just bus lifts, hospital visits, trips out – this is wonderful but what more is needed by our elderly sick, lonely
- Get hold of the village calendar and incorporate events further afield e.g. Verulamium, Harpenden
- Audit all the village activities, put into planner, analyse all 'add-on' opportunities/synergies. Agree actions.
- Audit all local media – print/websites/internet/social media/broadcast and analyse stats on readership/followers/demographics.
- Originate series of volunteer stories 'Why do I do it for RCC?'. Utilise as potential for editorial/blogs/presentations to other organisations/schools/sponsors.
- Compile into a 'living booklet' for recruitment and include stories on RCC website.
- Originate thematic/copy/visual for high quality poster(s) (A4) and scaled down leaflet(s) (A5), with space for demographic messaging. 'We Need You'.
- Alternatively use the 'Why Do I Do it for RCC' volunteers profiles and edited quote from their story.
- Design and print t-shirts with one of the 2 themes above for events/meetings.

6. AOB

- Safeguarding is an issue that needs to be continually monitored. Janet Lang and Peta Gunson will attend an update training session in October and report back to the next Advisory Meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm

NEXT Advisory meeting 9 October 2018.

AGM is 18 October 2018 at 7 for 7.30 in the Village Hall.

Signed..... Chair

Dated.....2018

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