

## **WORTON & MARSTON LINK SCHEME**

**Annual General Meeting 11-April-2022**

### **Chairman's Report**

There are 42 Link Schemes in Wiltshire with 1500 volunteers driving three quarters of a million miles which is down from the million miles in supportive journeys a year Link Schemes normally carry out, this has been reduced due to Covid. Worton&Marston Link which is one of the smallest had a similar reduction and only undertook 98 journeys in 2021, an increase from 78 in 2020 but still not up to 2019 levels. These 98 trips entailed over 4200 miles. These findings are passed on to Wiltshire Council's Community First who liaise with the elected officials and also the NHS via the Clinical Commissioning Groups. This will hopefully ensure continued support from these bodies. We are indebted to Wiltshire Council for their support of Community First who assist with our back office requirements and keep us within our legal requirements. Community First is essential to our operating in a safe and efficient manner.

We endeavour to keep everyone safe and with Community First's help we now have a Safeguarding policy to use when someone may need help and also a Risk Assessment system for when a precarious situation presents itself. Both documents have been sent to drivers to use when necessary, further copies are available if required, the importance of keeping our clients and ourselves safe cannot be over emphasised. We also have a General Data Protection Regulation, known as GDPR in place which guarantees any data you share with us is not passed on to third parties and is only kept for as long as is necessary to carry out our duties.

We have 14 households on the books to carry out driving duties, it may seem like a large number but with holidays, illness and other commitments, at any one time there is only less than 6 available to be telephoned. It can be difficult to fulfil our obligations so please ask your friends and neighbours if they would like to join. As you know it only entails on average an hour or two a month. Petrol costs are reimbursed at 45p/mile, they cannot be increased without incurring tax and car insurance complications. We only require drivers time, without them entailing any extra expenditure. We like to help people not to worry about reaching medical facilities when ill and ensure older people do not need to move away from home due to transport difficulties.

All our drivers are asked to undergo a DBS check before joining us, Wiltshire Council still charges for DBS checks administration, although the actual police check carries no charge. However as with last year a grant from another part of the council is given to Community First to cover the charges. For those around 79, if you need some reassurance of your own driving abilities there is an advice programme available called Drive Plus. The Link project will provide finance, please let me know so I can organise it. Further details may be found on line at [roadsafetydriving@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafetydriving@wiltshire.gov.uk).

I know most insurance companies now allow the vehicle to be used for charity purposes but please make sure you have informed your insurer that you do, to ensure there are no difficulties. Please emphasise that this is unpaid work otherwise, your insurance could increase. Our expense forms include a line asking that the Car Tax, MOT, and Insurance are up to date, please check your details before signing. Remember that if a driver's license has been changed, such as for new addresses they only last for ten years and three years for those over 70 and will need to be renewed.

Obviously there has been no fund raising recently however we have signed the charity up to two sites. The sister company of amazon called [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk) will donate 0.5% of the purchase price if you use that site as opposed to the main site and put Worton&Marston Link as your charity. The other is Give as you Live if you go through them to use high street shops at [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com) and specify us as the charity you would like to support, then funds will trickle our way. The accounts show that we are in a comfortable position financially but it is a shame to let this money go to waste.

I would like to thank the committee members for their support during the year and give my appreciation to the volunteers for the hours they put in. A special mention should be made for Lyn as co-ordinator for the time she puts in and also Malcolm Powell for devising a new accounting package that has been a great help to Chris our new treasurer.

For further information please email; [wandmlink@gmail.com](mailto:wandmlink@gmail.com)