



Winslow Big Society Volunteer Newsletter

November 2020



Dear volunteers,

What a lot has happened since our last proper volunteer newsletter in February. Who would have envisaged a year like we have had? However, our aim all the way through lockdown has been to continue to try and meet community need wherever it is greatest, and to fulfil this in the safest possible Covid free way. Being a networked town organisation has helped us considerably, both in hearing about the need and then matching it. Some of our activities have either continued all the way through, or are now restarted, see table at the end of the newsletter. Please pass this information onto people who might find it helpful. Our AGM has been cancelled but our annual report is now on the website, so please read and comment via our general enquiry email address. My thanks to you all, and to all our new volunteers for responding so selflessly in the time of need. Vron

Covid Secure.

We have developed Covid risk assessments for all our activities, which are shared with volunteers and customers. We have also bought a non contact thermometer and check everyone's temperature for all our indoor activities.

Thank you to Winslow Town Council.

We sincerely thank the Council for being so accommodating in helping us get our activities up and running again, with the use of their Council Chamber. Without you, it would have been impossible. For those volunteers and customers anxious about returning, I would say that we could not be any safer in their premises, and following Covid guidelines.

Community Car Scheme.

Thanks to Diana and the Coordinators for not only keeping the Car Scheme going, but also being the general contact number for any enquiries throughout Covid. Having one number and one email has made communications much easier through lockdown and after.

Tribute to Fiona.

We were so sad this year to lose Fiona Holmes, after a long battle with cancer. She had been a coordinator of our Car Scheme as well as a driver, and was loved by all who knew her for her kindness and gentleness and constant smile, even when life was hard for her. It is wonderful that Phil her husband has taken on being a driver on

our car scheme, so her name will live on now through him.

New services.

Since lock down, we made a proactive decision to set up systems urgently to help those affected by the pandemic. This involved working with the NHS and Lloyds pharmacy to set up 5 day a week volunteers to deliver medicines from both dispensaries. We made 7000 deliveries in the 6 month period. We also set up a weekly phone contact service for 120 people, to check that they were OK, as well as a shopping service which serviced over 40 people with a weekly shop. My thanks particularly to the new volunteers who came on line as a result of being furloughed etc to help us. It was wonderful seeing volunteers so happy with being able to help others.

A happy customer.

"I would like to say a big thankyou to all those wonderful volunteers for delivering my prescriptions during lockdown. It was so kind and such a relief to me, I feel very grateful to them all."

Gentle Walks

Do you know anyone who would benefit from some fresh air with nice company? Please spread the word about our walks. They are such a joy at the moment, when life is dull. It is one of the few activities that doesn't need booking, just turn up, as long as you are fit and well.

New work with flu clinics.

More recently we have again teamed up with Norden House, and to a lesser extent Whitchurch and Wing surgeries to provide volunteers for flu clinics, to ensure people come in and out safely distanced. The practices have been so grateful for the happy volunteers who have made this service run so slickly. Thanks to Christine Dodds in setting these rotas up. It was good to work with Winslow Lions on this too.

Could you help in future with this role? We expect more clinics to be announced soon.

Accompanying others.

We have also developed an Accompaniment Model during Covid, which we have tested a few times now. A volunteer is matched with a customer who requires help to get out, eg to rebuild confidence, to get their muscles working again etc. With a risk assessment, DBS check and common sense, following an initial assessment by us, several people have had their confidence renewed and are able to start to manage independently again.

Could you help us with this, once a week for 6 weeks only?

Wheelchair car.

The wheelchair car has not been used over lockdown very much. However we are now able to use it for a disabled lady to get her to work. Without this, she would have had to lose her job, and our car would have deteriorated without use. So it's a win win all round. It is still available firstly for our own local use though.

House keeping jobs. We have used the time of lock down to help tidy up some of our processes. We have obtained our own public liability which means that we have far more cover for our volunteers and customers for all our activities. We have also developed a new volunteer application form to ensure our data is accurate and useful, but in line with GDPR regulations. We shall be sending this out to all volunteers to complete in due course. To date we have held very little data, and it has proved difficult to contact people when needed. We are also looking at our health and safety guidelines for volunteers, so all our activity is safer.

TSB closure.

We are trying to support the petition to stop the closure of TSB, with our very vulnerable customers in mind. If you or they would like to support this petition or write a letter, please see Parish news for details of how to do it.

Posts that need filling!

- **Flu clinic volunteer marshalls.**
- **Prescription collectors**
- **1:1 accompaniment on short walks for 6 weeks**
- **General one off tasks.**
Please let Vron know!

Current activities in summary:

Telephone befriending service: as usual

Car scheme, incorporating hospital and clinic visits too: Norden House patients and Winslow residents

Exercise classes on Zoom and face to face : book as usual

Gentle Walks : every Wednesday (no need to book)

Bookable events:

Cards and Games : 1st Monday of month

Memories : 3rd Monday and 3rd Wednesday of month (Dementia friendly)

Parkinson group: 1st Tuesday of month

Friendship Lunches: 2nd Tuesday of month (from Nov 10th), trial scheme

General contact email: contact@winslowbigsocietygroup.info

General enquiry phone number (same as Car Scheme): 07508 330750

Website:<http://www.winslowbigsocietygroup.info>