



Annual Report, 2026.

This has been another good year for the group, but maybe in a different way. We have continued to use the year to streamline our procedures and processes, which is so important in a large organisation. With the help of Sarah Cawdell, we have managed to get our administration in a better order, and now use a shared drive for managing the day to day workings of the group. As our work increases this has helped massively in how efficient we are, and therefore volunteers on committees etc are seeing a reduction in workload. Thanks to Tracey who holds our website together, we now receive an large number of our inquiries through this. People say how easy it is to follow and how up to date it is kept, with even a monthly calendar on the front page to help guide people through it. This may also mean in the future the need for less paper copies, and that's always better for the environment. Children of clients use this to help them support their older parents and relatives from afar too.

This year we have also received a number of large donations from grateful customers. We thank them all.

All our services continue, and many have grown in numbers attending this year, so 14 walkers is not unheard of on a Wednesday walk, wheelchair car journeys are up, and so are Film show attendances, just to mention a few. We continue to listen to what people say, so that our services match local need, and this I'm sure is a big part of our success. We continue to be one of the only services in North Bucks for many of our activities.

An organizational challenge for us this year has been the transfer back to us of the whole Telephone Befriending Service, after the NHS partnership ended. We are grateful to the Patient Support Service for their help over the years. The transfer is now complete and the service continues to grow. Thanks to Georgina and Christine particularly for managing the transfer.

We have done some work on reviewing our In Case of Emergency cards (ICE), which people can carry with details of next of kin, medication etc on it. As our client group are vulnerable, this has worked well till now. But following a review of the card, we have just released a new version of these which we will be circulating to all our services to promote it. Keeping clients safe is a big priority for us.

We celebrated the 100th birthday of our dear Walter this year, an intrepid walker who delights so many of us. His daughter Anne and family who live in Kent are able to keep in touch with us at a distance, which has helped Walter to keep his independence at home. This celebration featured on the Buckinghamshire Council website.

As always none of our success could happen without help for our significant partners. The most significant of these are Winslow Library who provides the venue for free, as well as Winslow Lions who manage our film shows for us. We are so glad that our footfall at the library helps sustain the great service they offer, and the parents at our weekly Drop in always join the library and often use the opportunity of the trip in to exchange their children's books then. What a great partnership. A new partnership which has been of value to us is with

Fair Hive, the local Housing Association. We receive referrals from them often to the most deprived, and this enables us to reach those who usually don't even want to open their front doors.

Our committee as always works incredibly hard, utterly reliable and the best one I've ever worked on. I thank them all from the bottom of my heart for their dedication and enthusiasm, and I shall miss them when I stand down this year, but know it is in good hands. Particular thanks to Sarah Cawdell who has only been with us for a couple of years, but has achieved an amazing amount for us in this time. We shall miss her.

Thank you also to our near 130 volunteers who keep the show on the road every weekday. Without you nothing would happen, and I am always amazed at the stories I hear about the extra mile they go, that is certainly not part of their role. So for several people who were being supported during Covid, the arrangement continues to this day.

We have looked at how we keep supporting volunteers a bit more this year, and have run 2 very successful social occasions, a cream teas and a Christmas drinks social to this end. We hope to repeat this this year.

So, as I hand over the reins to a new Chair, I wish the Big Society all the best for its future endeavours, and to a commitment to further reduce the challenge of social isolation in our community.

Vron Corben,

Chair, Winslow Big Society Group,

February 2026.

