

On the SE section we still help a client of many years to go each week to Shopmobility; another volunteer continues to be a faithful friend to a client whom we have had virtually since the scheme started.

Some of the help given remains unaltered for quite a while, whereas other arrangements are shorter term due to client frailty or changing needs. We are watchful, glad of volunteers' feedback, and we need to make sure the help needed can be met by our Good Neighbour scheme.

A big "Thank you" is due to all the volunteers for their willingness to help, and for their offers of kind and thoughtful caring.

Mary Forrest

There have been six referrals during the year: one was for a home visit which has now ended, three for 'shop for' which are no longer required, one for shopping which was not actioned and a weekly shop to Waitrose which has been linked with another client at the same address. A request by a client to help her "declutter her wardrobe" has also been actioned.

Pat Place

My section has been relatively quiet. Several of my clients are no longer well enough to go out shopping and so rely on volunteers to shop for them. Others want to go out but need to be accompanied all the time as they would not cope without a supporting arm.

My grateful thanks to all volunteers who shop for and shop with these clients in my area, and to those who transport them to and from their many doctors' and hospital appointments.

Elizabeth Pearce

#### Membership and Publicity.

Both these sections are ticking along at the moment. Pam has recently had another interview for a prospective volunteer and Jane is hoping that with our new publicity we can persuade the Maidenhead Advertiser to run another article for us.

Pam Breen & Jane Crowhurst

## MAIDENHEAD CARE

### Annual Report 2011/2012

This year has again been one of change. July saw us saying a fond farewell to Jean as she moved away from Maidenhead to be near her daughter. I feel very privileged to now be Chairman of Care. I joined and had a steep learning curve to understand the workings of the organisation. I am very fortunate to have a professional and hard working team to support me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their continuing hard work. I hope that all the volunteers and users of the service have found the transition a seamless one.

As Jean mentioned last year, our publicity has now been updated and we now have the task of distributing it to all appropriate venues. Today I attended the launch of Carebank in the Borough. This is a new volunteer service offering free and practical help to older members of our community. The WRVS is leading the service. I was quite concerned that we may lose potential volunteers to this service but it may be an opportunity for Care to work in partnership. We will obviously need to discuss this in the coming months.

We are receiving a lot more calls from Social Services regarding our remit with clients. The pressure on services is changing in the current economic climate and it will be interesting to see how these pressures transfer to Care.

I missed most of the annual Commissioning Service at St. Mary's Church but I understand that it was inspiring. I am looking forward to working with Sonya, our chaplain, on this year's service. We have already met to start the planning process.

We did much better than anticipated with our stall at the Combined Charities Fair but the street collection and Waitrose was down on the previous year.

I was particularly pleased to meet and talk to many volunteers at the Christmas party. St. Mary's hosted it and Katie did a great job with the catering. I look forward to the summer party. I feel strongly that these social gatherings are an important part of the work of Care.

I would like to thank you all for your hard work and devotion to Care, however great or small that contribution is. Care would not be able to function as it does without you.

Alison Napier  
Chairman

## Duty Officer Report

Continuing from the report last year I can say we did have a Duty Officer's meeting after six months of use of the mobile phone. There was an overwhelming feeling that we should remove the message facility from the phone and replace it with instructions to call back later without leaving a message. However, some of our clients and volunteers still try to leave messages which can cause concern if they are not picked up promptly. On the whole though, the phone system is working well. I have had to purchase another handset to facilitate diverting the number to those duty officers who cannot receive a signal. This is now affecting three people with another two having a problem with an intermittent cutting out of signal, but overall things are going more smoothly.

We have recently had another two resignations from Duty Officers, and one new recruit (Colin Jackson has kindly stepped up to the plate ...). Out of a team of 31 there are currently three members unavailable for varying reasons and one member is only available for six months of the year. Nine members are offering half a day a month, three offering two half days a month, and 15 nominally offering a full day a month. This has led to increasing problems filling the rota. Coincidentally, a recent spate of illness and short notice cancellations of duties has made life particularly difficult. I raised this at the last management meeting and am in the process of drawing up different scenarios hopefully to alleviate a crisis situation. These do include the possibility of employing people as I feel we have exhausted the usual routes for finding more Duty Officers. I will present my first thoughts at the management meeting and hope they give a basis for subsequent discussion. We cannot afford to lose the Duty Officers we have and I am determined to consult with them fully as we explore the way forward. I would hate to see the ethos of the scheme change after so many years.

We have had a new computer during the year as the previous one developed a large crack on the lid which was making the screen liable to break. With so many pairs of hands using the laptop I am always impressed how long the machines withstand the constant use. Yet again, Mike Moss deserves our thanks for recommending which machine to buy and downloading and printing the filmsies each week. My final thanks, as always, go to all the Duty Officers for their co-operation and patience with me as I do the rota. I often have to call for extra sessions from them to fill the gaps and hope they do not think I twist their arms too much.

Hillary Simpson

## Transport Section

May I start by thanking all the volunteer drivers for their time, care and effort over the past twelve months. We regularly get complimentary comments from those we transport who also say what a valuable service Maidenhead Care are offering. I would also like to thank Bill Swan who compiled the statistics and, of course, the Duty Officers for their patience in finding drivers even at quite short notice.

During this year we completed 3,120 journeys compared to 2,808 in 2010. Of these 1,584 were to hospitals compared to 1,516 the previous year. St. Marks 508, Windsor 469, Heatherwood 184, Wexham Park 272, Upton Park 26, Bracknell 28, London 30, Reading 32, Oxford 4, High Wycombe 22, Mount Vernon/Harefield 9 and 9 others. This shows an increase to St. Marks of 25% and London by 50%.

We continue with requests for transport to doctors and dentists surgeries, opticians, shopping and visiting close relatives in hospital, nursing homes and residential homes, as well as taking people to Shopmobility. We have in addition tried to take people to Day Centres in special cases but limiting it to once a week. Despite increasing the mileage allowance to 45p last April, the donations overall cover the potential costs of most journeys.

Parking at most hospitals now is very congested but with the exception of London hospitals is just tolerable. London hospitals, apart from Charing Cross, can be considered to have no parking, so the use of disabled badges where possible is recommended in order to avoid the very high cost of parking meters. Parking in Maidenhead is being monitored very carefully by the parking wardens which can be a problem picking people up behind Tesco due to virtually no disabled parking spaces there. Disabled parking at King Edward VII has improved by the addition of twelve extra blue badge places but is still congested at times. Parking in 2012 will cease to be free to blue badge holders at Broadway car park (including Shopmobility) unless the blue badge and car registration number are registered with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Where requests have come in from new clients in the main we have been able to offer a service, sometimes sharing the workload with the reduced Maidenhead Voluntary Services. The requests that have had to be turned down are in the main where we were being used as a cheap alternative and reasonable public transport was available, or where more than two trips in a week was regularly required. We will continue to monitor this to make sure we can offer our services to those most in need, particularly those relating to radiotherapy and cancer treatments.

Colin Jackson

## Help in the home light and visiting

In the NW section we currently shop for two clients each week: one is covered by two volunteers shopping on alternate weeks, the other by a rota of three volunteers. During the year we have continued to help a lady now in residential care by changing her library books every three weeks.

We provide supportive transport for two elderly clients who not only need transport to the shops but help with taking their shopping into their homes. We also take a gentleman with very limited sight to visit his wife each week in the Larchfield Care Home.