



Melksham & District Link 29th Annual General Meeting



Annual Report 2022/23





LINK SCHEMES have existed in Wiltshire since 1979 and can be found in most rural and urban communities.

The Schemes are set up in response to local people recognising a need for the service. They provide a safety net for those unable to access services in other ways, such as public transport.

Services offered by
MELKSHAM & DISTRICT LINK
Include:

TRANSPORT

For appointments to Hospitals, Surgeries,
Dentists and other Medical appointments.

TO BOOK TRANSPORT PHONE
07979 129 052
Between 9am and 4pm
Monday to Friday

Charity Registration No. 1044337

MELKSHAM & DISTRICT LINK COMMITTEE

2022/2023

OFFICERS

Chairman	Liz Rowley
Treasurer	Richard Clark
Secretary	Katherine Mills
Volunteer Recruitment and Support	Pat Cook
Welfare and Safeguarding	Ruth King
Webmaster	Ian Argyle

TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATORS

Ron Walby
Jackie Hislop
Ruth King
Gilleen MacDonald
Helen Romaine
John Rowley

WELFARE OFFICER

Ruth King

HEALTH & SAFETY

Pete Colegate

SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Peter Simmonds

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Phil Davis

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A very busy year for Melksham Link. In the first 6 months of 2023 we completed 1227 trips, driving over 32,820 miles; a 30% increase on the first 6 months of 2022. We have certainly returned to pre covid levels and, surprisingly, have not been significantly affected by the NHS strikes.

Having been voted in as Vice Chair at the last AGM I fairly quickly had to take on the role of Chairman due to Richard Bell's health issues. Unfortunately, in early January 2023 Richard felt it was necessary to resign completely from all his roles with Link, a great loss as he had been so dedicated to this Charity. Richard was instrumental in putting in place many of the good practices and policies which are so vital to running a charity these days. His partner, Dee Phesse, also decided to resign from all her roles which was a great shame because she had been a stalwart of Melksham Link for a considerable number of years. Both Richard and Dee had put a lot of time and effort into Link and made many good friends. I am sure we all wish them well. Welfare Officer Ruth King presented them with a card and gifts from Link earlier this year to thank them for their enormous contribution to the organisation.

Pat Cook is stepping down from her role as recruitment and support officer on the Committee. She has worked hard over the last three years in this role, interviewing new volunteers and dealing with all the paperwork. However we are grateful she is remaining as a driver and has offered her continued support to the new recruitment officer once appointed.

My aim has been to maintain the excellent good service we provide for our clients, and I hope that this continuity has been achieved. Demand for our services is increasing,

especially to the RUH. One big change appears to be an increase in the demand for short notice appointments being given out by hospitals and clinics. Despite the added pressure of these short notice requests, I am constantly amazed at the flexibility, generosity and spirit of all our drivers. I am also very respectful of the tasks our co-ordinators carry out. Believe me the phone often never stops ringing from 9.00am to 4.00pm some days!!

Amongst the many genuine requests we do get some very odd requests such as 'Could you take me to the Honda garage in Bath to test drive a new car?' Unfortunately, we had to say no, as we only do medical appointments – the person was not happy! It is uncommon for us to turn clients away but occasionally we just cannot match, even genuine client requests with an available driver.

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Another of my aims is to keep all volunteers up to date with all the work Link does. Melksham Link has over 40 drivers and 6 coordinators and comes under the umbrella of Community First who oversee and advise the 41 active Link schemes in Wiltshire.

The revamped quarterly newsletter has been well received and contains news and important advice for drivers. The website is kept up to date by our webmaster, Ian Argyle, and the secure Volunteers' section is full of detailed information for drivers, including downloadable expense

sheets. It would be good to see more volunteers signing up so that they can log on to the volunteers' section and make use of this facility. More recently a new Facebook page has been launched.

All drivers should now have the 2023 revised Drivers' Handbook. It was sent out by email in February with the offer of a hard copy for those who required it. There is a copy in the Volunteer section of the website that can be downloaded and printed.

We also brought together all the materials available to Coordinators in a Coordinator's Handbook during the year. Thanks to Ron Walby and John Rowley who put together existing materials and advice in a format that could be used to train new Coordinators.

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A Risk Assessment for volunteer drivers has recently been completed and added to the website which looks at potential worst-case scenarios whilst on a job. I am very confident that the procedures we have in place minimise the risk to all our clients and drivers and we all do our best to keep our clients and ourselves safe. This is the reason why we have compiled a list of emergency contacts for all our drivers (known as an ICE list) which is held by the Duty Coordinator and myself.

My overriding aim as Chairman is to maintain the excellent level of support we give to our local community. Our strap

line on our publicity - *'Making a Difference in Melksham'* - is not a hollow claim. We certainly do. We are a lifeline for many of our clients. It can be a challenge at times but I must express my very grateful thanks to everyone who has supported me this year, particularly the Committee and Officers of Link. Above all I am very proud to be Chairman of such a great group of volunteers. Thank you all.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This is my first complete year since taking over the role of Treasurer from Pat Graham. I continue to find this role very interesting and rewarding as it's always nice to know the finances of the organisation and to be responsible for paying all the drivers the money owed to them at the end of the month.

As per last year, it took a few times to balance the end of year accounts. It is always the small differences that take the time to find.

I have created a spreadsheet which quickly adds up both the monthly figures, which in turn adds up all the necessary information for the end of year figures and the various returns that Link have to submit. I have retained the manual books still which I complete each month. This is because it is easier to find faults and discrepancies when comparing two independent sets of figures than just leaving all to year end. It also helps the auditor at the end of the year.

During the past year ending 31 March, Link has gradually returned to normal as the pandemic eased. The income and expenditure has increased as the number of journeys

Melksham & District Link Scheme

Income and Expenditure Year Ending 31 March 2023

Income

Envelopes	£30,613.90
Donation Received	£297.77
Open Door	£0.00
Drivers Donations	£70.70
Interest Received	£321.58
Gift Aid	£0.00
Grant	£0.00

Total Income £31,303.95

Expenses

Motoring	£27,695.94
Administration	£702.48
Parking	£113.65
Refreshments	£443.63
Equipment	£914.27
Phone	£288.91
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Insurance	£254.30
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Web Design	£478.97
Donation to Marlborough Link	£50.00
Other Cost	£0.00
Community First	£26.08
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Miscellaneous	£2.81

Total Expenses £31,794.14

Expenditure Over Income -£490.19

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Expenses	£31,794.14


TOTAL £29,193.77

Coventry - Balance	£25,972.89
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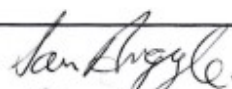
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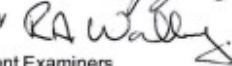

5/7/2023

Treasurer

Ian Argyle



Ron Walby



Independent Examiners

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Finally if you think you could take on the recruitment role ask me for more details at the AGM; it isn't a challenging role and for many weeks you won't need to do a thing.

PAT COOK

WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING REPORT

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At the time of the last AGM we had 11 registered users, most of whom were administrators or Committee Members. Following an active campaign by the Chair and others we

now have 30 active volunteers (including committee members).

We have enough capacity to support all our wonderful volunteers and it is easy to join. Simply visit melkshamlink.com on a smartphone, tablet or other computer then click on the “Head and Shoulder” shape. Fill in your email address, make up a password and click on REGISTER.

IAN ARGYLE



MISSION STATEMENT

WILTSHIRE LINK SCHEMES believe that local communities and volunteers can have a positive impact in maintaining the unique quality of life in rural areas.

Declining services and an increase in the population of older people and others, who need support, leave many people vulnerable and unable to access essential services and social activities that enable them to maintain an independent and enjoyable life style.

LINK SCHEMES draw on goodwill in communities to provide a voluntary good neighbour service, assisting to fill this gap. Volunteering has many benefits for individuals and communities and vulnerable residents receive a much-valued service.

LINK SCHEMES provide a friendly, confidential service welcoming donations from their users. All donations are used in the provision of the service which is run entirely by volunteers.

Charity Registration No. 1044337

Link -

***‘Making a
difference in
Melksham’***



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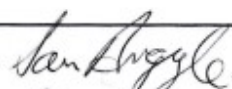
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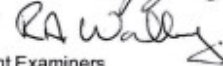

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Declining services and an increase in the population of older people and others, who need support, leave many people vulnerable and unable to access essential services and social activities that enable them to maintain an independent and enjoyable life style.

LINK SCHEMES draw on goodwill in communities to provide a voluntary good neighbour service, assisting to fill this gap. Volunteering has many benefits for individuals and communities and vulnerable residents receive a much-valued service.

LINK SCHEMES provide a friendly, confidential service welcoming donations from their users. All donations are used in the provision of the service which is run entirely by volunteers.

Charity Registration No. 1044337

Link - ***‘Making a difference in Melksham’***



Registered Charity No. 1044337

MELKSHAM AND DISTRICT LINK SCHEME
AUDITORS REPORT YEAR ENDING MARCH 31st 2023

As both auditors were new this year and both unfamiliar with the accounts, a very thorough examination took place.

Driver's trips, expenses and payments were checked, together with all the invoiced expenses.

The audited current and deposit accounts were 100% accurate, and the banking records were found to be 'spot on'.

In general, the accounts were presented in good order and are a credit to the Treasurer.

The auditors, Ian Argyle and Ron Walby, have no hesitation in recommending the acceptance of these accounts at the Annual General Meeting