



From the Chairman

The FISH Volunteer Centre has been operating in the community in one form or another for over 35 years but we are still aware that many people have misconceptions about what FISH is and what it does. So I thought I would devote this Chairman's report to answering some frequently asked questions.

What does FISH mean?

When FISH was first set up it was originally called The Good Neighbours Scheme and a little time later it was decided to adopt the title FISH and link it to the Christian fish symbol to encompass the ideals of good neighbourliness. The current organisation is not linked to any church or faith, and the current FISH logo is rather different from the first one, but aims to continue the values of the original scheme. A previous Chairman devised the acronym 'Friends In Sickness & Health' to satisfy those who wanted the word FISH to actually mean something.

What does FISH do?

FISH is a charitable organisation exclusively run and staffed by volunteers. It provides a range of support services and community transport for senior residents and others in need within the community. A network of volunteer car drivers provide door to door transport to medical and other appointments for those with transport or mobility issues. The FISH minibus runs shopping trips every week and offers leisure trips several times a month. Volunteers are also available for home visiting. Also not forgetting the popular monthly tea parties held in the Village Hall. The motto 'Support and Transport for the Community' best describes our work.

I cannot use FISH because I am not a member

FISH has no membership requirement or to put it another way if you live within our community area you are able to access our services. The area FISH covers is similar to that of Sonning Common Health Centre.

I am not old enough to use FISH

It is true that most of FISH clients are seniors but younger people are also welcome if they need our help because of specific access or mobility issues. That is the key to FISH it's about helping people who need our assistance.

How can I contact FISH?

This FISH office is based on the corner of Kennylands Road and Wood Lane (the doctor's old surgery) and has volunteer staff on duty every weekday from 9.30 to 11.30 a.m. Please call in or telephone 0118 972 3986, an answerphone will take messages 'out of hours' and we will call you back the next day.

Do you need extra volunteers?

Yes, we are always looking for additional help and if you can spare some time, whether as a driver, office staff or home visitor then please contact the office and leave your details – we will call you back. You will decide how much time you can give. For more information please visit our website: www.fishvolunteercentre.co.uk

Well I hope that may have cleared up any misunderstandings you may have had about FISH and its work in our community. But if you are still uncertain about anything please give us a call.

Fred Nickson
Chairman

Happy Recollections of FISH 1977 – 1986.

I drove the minibus for nearly nine years. At that time it was called SCOPE – Sonning Common Old Peoples Enterprise, and was run by Mrs Muriel Buckner. There was also a group of ladies knitting to raise funds for the next bus. Joy Green, John Cutts, Jack Cocker, Wally Thurston and myself were five of the drivers.

In 1984 I got the first blue badge for the bus and two for the volunteer car drivers, with the help of the local GP Dr Hemphill.

Thursday afternoon was my regular run to Reading town centre for shopping. We parked outside the back of Marks & Spencer, had tea and a rest from shopping at Platters Coffee Bar in Cross Street (now sadly closed) and then collected fish and chips on the way home.

Monday and Wednesday mornings were trips for pleasure for the residents of Abbey Crest and Dysons Wood care homes. Sometimes a run to Binfield Heath to collect patients, also a bucket full of prescriptions, and bring them to the Health Centre and then take them back after lunch.

Pleasure trips to Chiltern Chase Lodge which is now Woody Nook Restaurant in Woodcote for Christmas dinner for the Kidmore End Royal British Legion and a couple of times to the Working Men's Club (now the Village Hall & Club) in Nettlebed for a darts tournament were all enjoyable outings.

On one occasion I had to return the bus by 1.30pm for a Miss Whittington, of the Dick Whittington family fame, because she was taking her mother, a JP in Henley, for afternoon tea at Benson.



A quote from the Royal British Legion group meeting minutes edited by Barbara Butler 'Returning from a group meeting at Shiplake we met with a torrential thunderstorm. Ann Richardson who nobly drove us through country lanes that were more in keeping with an Indian monsoon than a June evening in England!'

On a lighter note I recall asking Mr David Smith, the canteen manager at the BBC Monitoring station at Caversham Park, if I could take my passengers for a morning coffee. He agreed and we parked at the back for the canteen. Unknown to me he had discussed this with my husband who was a member of the security

staff. He agreed as the average age of my passengers was in excess of 70 years it was decided that they posed no security threat. Unfortunately, the Head of Monitoring spotted the minibus and rang my husband and demanded to know why a minibus was parked at the back for the canteen. When my husband explained that it was being driven by his wife there was a pause and then all that was said was THANK YOU.

Happy days

Ann Richardson

The Trustees of the Fish Volunteer Centre are very grateful for a grant from **Chiltern Edge Community Association**. This helps with the cost of running the monthly tea parties. CECA are able to help locally where there is a need in social and educational development. Their contact number is: 0118 9723586

Living Advent Calendar 2015

A first for FISH when on Tuesday 22 December we were involved in the above event held in Henley to fundraise towards a new minibus. Again despite a wet and cold evening a group of gallant FISH volunteers met in Henley to sell raffle tickets and collect donations from the people either passing by or gathering for the entertainment in the Market Place. The star attraction was a vocal trio called 'Some Swell Sisters' a close harmony group (Andrews Sisters style) who performed a number of uplifting 30's style songs like 'Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy'.

Some delicious Indian cuisine was provided by the CookCurry Club who were the Partners for the evening. In all a successful evening with FISH collecting £225 and we very much hope to be included in the programme in 2016. Our grateful thanks to the Henley Advent Calendar Trust.

Introducing our New Website

On the Saturday 23 January at a get together for all FISH volunteers we were able to launch our much awaited new website www.fishvolunteercentre.co.uk

The aim of the site has been to include all the information that our clients and their relatives, friends or carers will need to make the best use of our service provision. Contact details for the office along with details of bus trips, donation giving and much more will be easy to find.

Volunteers have not been forgotten and we will have a dedicated section where all the forms you need together with maps are easily located and available for downloading.

The website will hopefully continue to grow in both size and usefulness and if you have any material that you feel could be added e.g. pictures of events etc. please contact Clive Mills through the FISH office.

A 'Jazz' Tea Party

The FISH Tea Parties always have some form of entertainment but at the March event there was a special treat when members of **The Sunshine Band** from Sonning Common Primary School entertained the 60 plus gathering of



local people with a selection of jazz melodies and accompanying songs. The band is composed of year 6 pupils who attend the school's Jazz Club. With only a limited time for learning and rehearsal they put on a very competent and entertaining performance much appreciated by the audience.

As usual there was an ample supply of cakes, scones, sandwiches and buns provided by FISH volunteers who also served several rounds of tea to the guests. The refreshments were enjoyed amongst the chatter and whilst the usual very generous free raffle was being held.

FISH would wish to thank the Jazz Club pupils and teachers for contributing to a very successful afternoon enjoyed by all who attended.

DON'T FORGET YOU ARE MOST WELCOME TO COME ALONG TO THE TEA PARTIES IN 2016

THEY ARE HELD ON THE SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 2.30 IN THE SONNING COMMON VILLAGE HALL

Advanced Notice - FISH Volunteer Centre

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 9 June Sonning Common Village Hall

12.00 p.m. Lunch & 1.30 p.m. Meeting All Welcome

Charity Gift Aid Declaration – multiple donation

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Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK tax payer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ _____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:

Name of Charity: **FISH VOLUNTEER CENTRE – Charity Number 286318**

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details

Title: _____ First name or initial(s): _____ Surname: _____

Full Home Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Date: _____

Please notify the FISH Volunteer Centre if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.



New Standing Order Instruction

Please complete your bank name and sections 1 and 3 of this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS** and in black ink and leave section 2 blank.

To: _____ Bank / Building Society

Please set up the following Standing Order and debit my/our account accordingly

1. Account details

Account name Account number

Account holding branch Sort Code

2. Payee details

Name of person or organisation you are paying

Payment reference – please enter donor’s name
this will appear on the bank statement of the FISH Volunteer Centre

Sort Code - the bank code of the person or organisation you are paying

Account number - the account of the person or the organisation you wish to pay

3. About the payment

How often are the payments to be made (please tick one box) Weekly Two weekly Four weekly Monthly
 Quarterly Half yearly Yearly

Amount details
Date and amount of first payment (please allow 3 working days for receipt) £

Date and amount of ongoing payments (If different from the first payment) £

Choose one of the following two options

1. Date and amount of final payment £

2. Until further notice (please tick) (payments will be made until you cancel this instruction)

4. Confirmation

Customer signature(s): _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____