



CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

NEWSLETTER NO. 1



For the past two years, the committee has organised an Autumn Get-Together so that members can get to meet one another. We did not manage it this year but hope to contact more people by producing a newsletter. Usually about half the volunteers manage to attend either a get together or the A.G.M. In this way we hope to contact you all to remind you of vital dates, AND we can also contact our customers/clients !

First the committee :

Chairman	Peter Vallance
Secretary	Pat Rawlings
Treasurer	Jill Rumble
Vice Chairman	Richard Heyes - also deals with recruitment and training of volunteers

Jean Sawyer

John Martin - looks after our statistics and has been overhauling the card system

Vacancy - (Margaret Rose had to stand down during the year)

Lorraine Vallance acts as a link between the "Visitors" and any new person they visit, but is not a member of the committee.

What has your committee been doing ?

This year at the A.G.M we created and approved a new constitution. This sets out more clearly what the Charity does and how it does it.

Armed with a constitution we have applied to HMRC for recognition as a Charity. We can do this without having to go to the Charities Commission, because the sums we raise are less than £5000. If we secure recognition, it means that we will be able to reclaim the tax element of any donation, providing that the donor does pay tax. In most cases anyone with a pension in addition to that provided by the State is likely to find themselves paying some tax. It also means that those Drivers who currently do not reclaim their mileage allowance, could instead donate it to the charity so that the taxable element could be reclaimed.

Anyone in this situation would simply fill out a "once and for all" Gift Aid Declaration, allowing CGN to record donations received over the year, and then reclaim the tax element the following year. We have revised our recruitment procedure, both to operate good practice in dealing with potentially vulnerable people who use our service; and to meet our legal obligations with respect to the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Authority (although the latter is currently under review by the new coalition government).





We have been trying to raise the profile of the charity, so that more people know that we are there to help them, and also to recruit more volunteers, so that we can, more easily, meet the demands for our services.



As part of this activity:-

- a. One of the volunteers has improved the design of our advert in the Caversham Bridge
- b. A few volunteers attended the Church Fete at Caversham Court in July;
- c. All the Residents Associations have agreed to promote the charity in Newsletters or on their website;
- d. We may soon have our own website, thanks to an offer from someone in the Warren R.A.,
- e. Finally Andrew Cumpsty, Reading B.C's Council Leader, has offered his good offices to link us to other organizations which may be able to help us.

With the help of John Martin and Pat Rawlings, we have contacted all our volunteers to confirm that they are still willing and able to help, and any limitations on the help they can offer. Then armed with this information, they have overhauled the record cards in the office so that drivers can best be matched with the needs of the person seeking help (space for wheelchairs, walking frames or an accompanying passenger).

Following the proposal at the A.G.M we sent a donation to the Haiti Earthquake Appeal on your behalf.

I would not like to end, without thanking all those volunteers who were able to help during the year, with a special thank you to those who went the extra mile to provide transport or help in the office, when we got short handed during the summer.

I am pleased to say our "publicity" efforts led to a number of extra recruits. Those for the office are already "under training" and our thanks to those providing the training. Adding to available drivers has been a bit slow as the CRB has been tardy in responding to the paperwork we submitted. There are some in the pipeline!

Finally we are still short of Home Visitors, we realize this is much more of a commitment, but if you, or anyone you know, might be able to help, in this, or any other capacity, please contact us. Equally if you know of people who could benefit from our activities, make sure they know how, and when, they can seek our help.

Finally some dates for your diary:-

The office in Church House will be closed from the 22nd December 2010 to 4th January 2011.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.30pm on Wednesday 19th January in Church House.



Finally, may I wish everyone, on behalf of the Committee, a very Happy Christmas, and a Happy New Year, and express a wish to see as many of you as possible at the A.G.M.

