

SPELTHORNE VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Newsletter No. 03



Spring/Summer 2017

SVD - A Brief History

Back in 1977, Barbara Hill of the Staines branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau had the idea of starting up a volunteer car pool to help the elderly and disabled of Spelthorne. This was to become the Spelthorne Volunteer Bureau Car Pool, organised by Jean Woolley, who sought drivers and raised funds to support the group based in a room in Staines library.

The first duty officer taking calls and booking drivers was Barbara Beaumont, now one of the clients of SVD.

The Volunteer Bureau and Car Pool later moved to Community Link in the Council Offices on Knowle Green under the direction of Dennis Darby. There was the need for a permanent co-ordinator to receive requests for transport and allocate these jobs to the drivers. This job was given to Betty Nowak, an ex-nurse who, through illness had recently become housebound. She was the ideal choice as she was both reliable and had a great capacity for developing telephone relationships. She continued to do the job for over 25 years, until her death in 2005.

Dennis Darby retired in 1999 and in 2000 the Council decided to transfer the majority of its support funds to Spelride and the members of the Car Pool had to choose between disbanding or setting up on their own.

They chose the latter and a small committee was formed from among the drivers. With Margaret Morell as Chairman, Chris Taylor as Treasurer and Judith Hopkins as Secretary they formed the SVD, got charitable status and continued with the valuable work for the elderly of Spelthorne.

There is currently a client base of more than 400, with around 1,500 drives undertaken each year.

Hospital Car Parking

The Board at Ashford & St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have taken the decision to charge blue badge holders for parking from 1st May, 2017. Whilst affecting blue badge holders at Ashford and St Peter's hospitals, current blue badge benefits will be fully maintained at all other hospitals that SVD drivers attend.

The good news is that SVD's yellow 'Driver on Duty' badges will still enable all our clients to continue to have free parking at all hospitals, including both Ashford and St Peter's.

SVD Committee:

Chairperson: Anne Grigg

Secretary: Gill Peters

Treasurer: Sheila Sawyer

Members: Evelyn Lawrence, Stuart Surriddie

Surrey Community Action Advisor: Vicki Turton



SVD Driver Profile

This edition's Driver Profile features Sheila Sawyer, who is also our Treasurer.

Name: Sheila Sawyer

Husband: 1 :-)

Children: 2 (1 boy, 1 girl) and a grandson

Joined SVD: 2010, and persuaded to be Treasurer two years later

Favourite Foods: Steak, roast and meringue

Hated Foods: Curry

Dislikes: Shopping with husband

Favourite Sports: Love watching all sports, except cricket

Hobbies: Genealogy, History of London, Needlework. I enjoy driving for SVD and meeting interesting people



SVD Annual Party

On 10th January we, once again, held our Annual Party at Laleham Village Hall.

Drivers may spend many hours doing work for the SVD, but often never come across each other. This event gives the opportunity for drivers and duty officers to meet up and talk together, to share experiences and opinions. It's proven to be an important social occasion.

Each driver received a raffle prize on the evening, as a Thank You for their work during the year.



Driver's Log Sheets Submission

We are at that point of the year when our Treasurer, Sheila Sawyer, will be asking all SVD drivers to submit their completed Driver's Log sheets (up to 30th April).

Therefore, could all drivers ensure their Log sheets are sent to Sheila as soon as possible in May.



SVD Contact Details:

Duty Officer Tel No. 07817 926736

Hours: 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon, Mon to Fri

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