

Woodcote Volunteers



Woodcote Winter Wheels: Driving Health and Happiness!

We are excited to be launching a new initiative to help our clients over the winter months.

With winter fuel payments being withdrawn for many, the cost of fuel increasing and the general cost of living rises over the last year, we were looking for a way to give some financial support to our clients.

Due to the generosity of both the Co-op Community Fund and Woodcote Rally, we are able to provide drives over the three winter months of December, January and February completely free of charge to our clients. This is a new scheme for us and one we hope to be able to offer each winter in years to come, funds allowing.

Our drivers will be paid their expenses from us instead of directly from our clients.

It is especially problematic for clients to get to their medical appointments over the winter months – in some areas of the country, there are no volunteer drivers available and people are simply not able to attend. We are aware that in winter months we all tend to stay in the comfort of our homes but getting out to socialise is vitally important, especially for those that are to some degree housebound due to lack of available transport. We are therefore committed to providing a volunteer driver to take people out to social/recreational activities and advertise many local activities on our website. All our drivers have a printout of those activities, so do ask them for a copy if you are a client reading this and would like to know more.

It may be useful to reiterate here our criteria for accepting requests for a drive: clients should live in the villages of Woodcote, Ipsden, South Stoke, Crays Pond, Whitchurch Hill, Goring Heath and Checkendon. In addition, clients should have no means of transporting themselves to where they need to go. In practice this normally means they don't have their own car, they are unable to drive and public transport is not an option. Our range is generally about 20 miles radius of Woodcote – which means we can take clients to Oxford, Abingdon, Reading, Wokingham, Henley, Thatcham to name a few. If in doubt, please phone us to ask! We have a friendly and helpful office team who take calls between 9.30am and 11am Monday to Friday and our answerphone is checked each day for messages left.

Tea Parties for our clients

Our December Party, with a Christmas theme, was on Wednesday 4th December, when clients were entertained by a Elizabeth on her keyboard and we sang some carols!



Our next Tea Party will be on **8th January 2025** – not the first Wednesday of the month this month, as the first Wednesday falls on 1st, which is a bank holiday.

Tea Parties are held at the Community Centre in Woodcote. We provide tea and home-made cakes and there is no charge. You can enjoy a new activity each month and will have time for a chat to other clients and volunteers. Please give us plenty of notice if you need a lift.

New Volunteering opportunities with us

We are looking for people to join us to help in the following roles:

- Communications Lead – circulate information on our web page, Facebook and newsletter articles
- Safeguarding Champion – ensure our safeguarding duties are carried out
- Volunteer Coordinator – recruit, induct and support our volunteers
- Client Liaison – keep in touch with our clients and be their voice on our committee

Please go to our website (shown below) for detailed information about each role and how to contact us for an informal chat if you are interested in knowing more.

