

# Community Drivers - Volunteering in your area

**In West Berkshire we are lucky to have 11 Volunteer Car Schemes, each of them serving their communities by engaging local people with the detailed knowledge of every corner of West Berkshire.**

What all of the car schemes have in common is a desire to help those people who are unable to use public transport to get to appointments of all kinds such as to the doctors, clinics, the opticians, dentists, hospitals, day centres, visiting a friend or loved one or just to get out to do a bit of shopping. Each of the volunteer car schemes listed here have a band of merry volunteer office workers and volunteer drivers all ready willing and able to help members of their community. Each of the offices have their own operating times and days which is based on their knowledge of the needs of that particular community. They are all located in the heart of their community and they are all set up as charities or community groups with management committees of their own.

Volunteer Drivers are always required to be able to meet the needs of their village, town or hamlet. If you are reading this and thinking - what is it that these drivers do? well read

on to see if you too could make a really valuable contribution by becoming a Volunteer Driver in your area. Here are a few examples of the questions that you may have before you would agree to becoming a volunteer driver. You might have other questions and no doubt your nearest car scheme will be happy to answer them.

**I'm only free on certain days, can I still volunteer?** Before volunteer drivers agree to start they usually want to know what sort of time commitment they should be prepared to give. That's an easy one, you tell the scheme what day or times of the day that you would prefer to offer. For instance you might say you would be happy to offer Tuesdays or Thursdays, but that you would be happy to be called on for other times and would be happy to help if you were free. It is important to note that the car schemes book you in advance of the job so you are not waiting by the phone for a job to come in.

**Will I have to drive to places I don't like?** Not if you don't want to, a note would be made on the system to say that you would prefer local jobs only. Some drivers prefer longer jobs to hospitals in Oxford, Reading or if you are in Hungerford and Lambourn to Swindon. All of the car schemes have holi-

day lists so they know when you are away or looking after children or have other domestic, work, employment or voluntary commitments.

**Am I too old to drive?** Each of the car schemes have their own driver age policy, in Newbury for example the upper age limit is 80.

**Arrh! what about my insurance?** That's an easy one too. Your insurance company will acknowledge that you are 'not driving for gain or reward' and they are usually happy to write to you or the car scheme to confirm this. Only in very rare instances do they seek an additional premium for volunteer driving.

**What about the extra fuel I'm using?** Obviously all of the car schemes are aware that petrol and diesel is expensive. All car schemes offer out of pocket petrol expenses. They use a simple claim form so that you are not out of pocket.

**Will my bad back mean I can't help?** Volunteer drivers are not - as a matter of policy - allowed to lift their passengers. Voluntary car schemes don't want you injuring your own back or your passengers for that matter. So before a car scheme accepts a request for transport they will make sure that the passenger is able to walk, albeit with

a gentle helping hand sometimes, or if they are in a wheelchair they must be able to self transfer from wheelchair to car.

Retired project engineer Angus Macdonald is married to Sandra they have two grown up daughters. Angus who lives in Newbury took his pension a couple of years ago. He wanted a really good reason to get out of bed following retirement but stressed that he did not have any high motives to do good work but just wanted a nice voluntary job where he could choose his hours.

So if you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver in your area then call your nearest scheme who will be pleased to hear from you. Or if you or someone that you know may benefit from the help that these car schemes offer please give them a call.

Garry Poulson – Volunteer Centre West Berkshire

## Could you benefit from transport assistance?

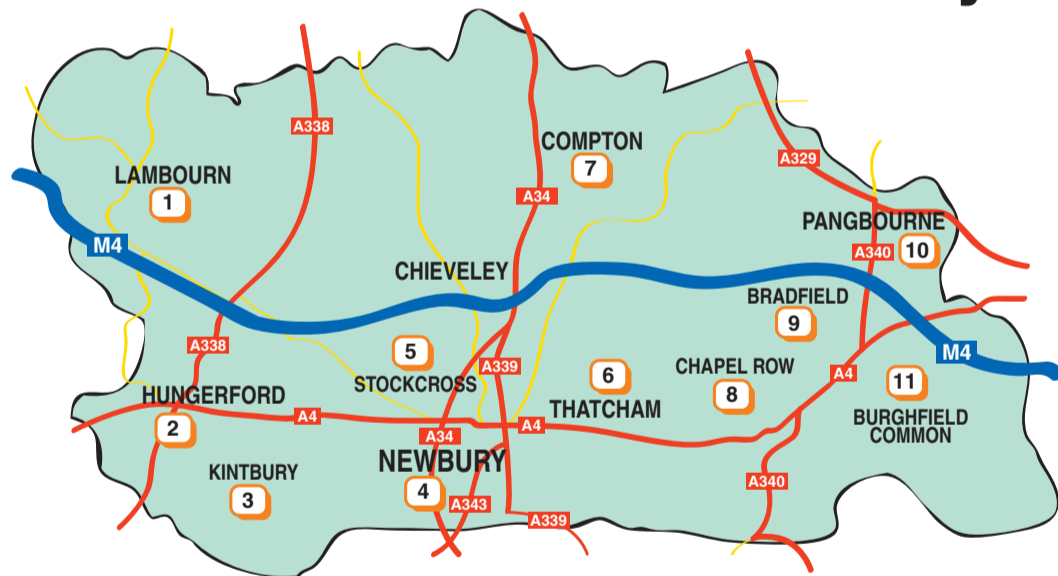
Community Car Schemes are here to help you. Understanding, flexible and ready to help.

Contact your local Scheme from the list below to discuss your needs.

## Could you be a volunteer driver?

If you could be, or even if you would just like some more information please contact your local community car scheme listed below, and they will be able to help.

## West Berkshire Community Car Scheme Operators



Angus Macdonald  
Volunteer Driver

### 7 - Downland Volunteer Group

**Contact:** Susan Leman, The Surgery, High Street, Compton, Newbury RG20 6NJ

**☎ 01635 578394**

Open Monday to Friday 10am - Noon

**Area covered:** Aldworth, Ashampstead, Beedon, Boxford, Brightwalton, Chaddleworth, Cheiveley, Compton, Curridge, East Ilsley, Fawley, Farnborough, Frilsham, Hampstead Norreys, Hermitage, Leckampstead, Peasemore.

### 8 - Chapel Row Community Service Group

**Contact:** Georgian Cardy, Chapel Row,

**☎ 01189 713334**

Open Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.30am - 11.30am

**Area covered:** Bucklebury, Woolhampton, Midgham, Lower Padworth, Brimpton and Beenham

### 9 - Bradfield Standby

**Contact:** Fred Syrett, The Surgery, Cock Lane, Bradfield RG7 8HR

**☎ 0118 9744972**

Open Monday and Wednesday 10am - 12noon

**Area covered:** Bradfield, Theale, Satnford Dingley, Englefield and Calcot

### 10 - Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre

**Contact:** Stan Palling, The Village Hall, Station Road, Pangbourne RG8 7DY

**☎ 0118 9844586**

Open Monday, Wednesday to Friday 9.30am - 11.30am

**Area covered:** Pangbourne and surrounding parishes to include, Purley, Tilehurst and Sulham

### 11 - Burghfield & Mortimer Volunteer Bureau

**contact:** Maria Lambourn, C/O The Post Office, Recreation Rd, Burghfield Common, Reading RG7 3EN

**☎ 01189 831814**

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am - 11.30am

**Area covered:** Burghfield and Mortimer, Sulhamstead, Ufton, Silchester and surrounding area

### 1 - Lambourn Valley Volunteer Group

**Contact:** Jane McCarthy, Gordon House, High Street, Lambourn, RG17 8XL

**☎ 01488 71536**

Open: Monday and Thursday 10am - 12noon

**Areas Covered:** Lambourn, Eastbury, Great Shefford, East Garston, Shefford Woodlands, Woodlands St. Mary & vicinity.

### 2 - Chain

**Contact:** Jeanette Kersy, Unit 9, Kennet House, 19 High Street, Hungerford RG17 0NL

**☎ 01488 683727**

Open: Monday to Friday 9am - 11am

**Area covered:** Hungerford Surgery Area and district

### 3 - Kintbury Volunteer Centre

**Contact:** John Head, 2 Thatchers Yard, Church Street, Kintbury RG17 9TR

**☎ 01488 657119**

Open: Monday to Friday 9am - 11am

**Area covered:** Kintbury, West Woodhay, Inkpen, Stockcross and Wickham

### 4 - Volunteer Centre West Berkshire

(Newbury Community Car Scheme)

**Contact:** Garry Poulson, 1 Bolton Place, Newbury RG14 1QL

**☎ 01635 49004**

Open: Monday to Friday 10am - 1pm

**Area covered:** Newbury, Shaw, Speen, Donnington, Greenham

### 5 - Newbury & District Cancer Care Trust

(Transport for cancer patients only)

**Contact:** Deanwood Park Golf Club, Baydon Road, Stockcross, Newbury RG20 8JP

**☎ 07717 783811** (this number for transport only)

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm

**Area covered:** Newbury and District

### 6 - Thatcham Volunteer Bureau

**Contact:** Sue Whiddett, Flat 20 Gilbert Court, Bath Road, Thatcham RG18 3AG

**☎ 01635 862306**

Open Monday to Friday 10am - Noon

**Area covered:** Thatcham and District, Cold Ash, Cookham and vicinity