



A New Year emerging from the Pandemic

A message from our Chairman

For Volunteer Action, 2022 has been a year of transition from the world of Covid. We started the year by confirming that our Face-to-face Befriending service would be enhanced with the popular Telephone service which was created during the lock-down period. We are also introducing regular group events to the service in an attempt to reduce rural isolation.

Following lockdown we saw many of our long term volunteer drivers had decided to retire. An increase in new drivers has been seen this year however, I am afraid to say, we have still found rebuilding a team to match pre-pandemic levels very difficult indeed. The unexpected rise in the cost of fuel earlier in the year brought about the need to increase the mileage rate to 45p per mile to help.

One of the items that has been on the trustees' mind for some time has been our reliance on the Drives booking system which has served us well, however requires updating. As I write this we have chosen a new operating system and are preparing to go live. Carolyn has done most of the work in getting us to this point and I'm very grateful for her input.

Liz Holland has now left us to be closer to her family and I would like to thank her for her time at VA. She will be missed. If you haven't already met her, I'm happy to introduce Rachel Dixon our new manager, who I'm certain will bring her own talents to the job.

After having to cancel last year's Volunteer Recognition and Supporters event due to Covid, I'm delighted that we were able to have not just one but two events on the same day! It was the first time we were able to hold the event since 2019 and was good to see everyone together again.

Making the books balance, as most charities are finding, is proving to be increasingly difficult. We have therefore, with much reluctance, decided to introduce a £1 booking fee for each completed drive. Details of the charge are within this newsletter.

Finally, I would like to mention the Trustees. 2022 has seen an alteration early on, with both Maureen Weston and Diana Charles resigning their posts and David Cashmore and Lloyd Martin joining us. I would like to thank Diana & Maureen for their support and as many of you will know when calling to book, Maureen has continued her support as an Office Volunteer.



Stuart Anderson
Chairman



Supporter recognition
event 2nd November 2022

Hello from our new Manager Rachel Dixon

My background has most recently been as Commercial Manager of a charitable trust and I hope to bring this skill set, alongside my experience within Marketing (both digital and traditional) to best support Volunteer Action and the invaluable work of it's volunteers and staff. I very much look forward to 2023 and strengthening the services Volunteer Action provides to our rural community.

Rachel



Car Scheme - Booking Fee 2023

Volunteer Action has been providing community transport for over 25 years. In that time we have only charged our passengers for the mileage to and from their pick up point, this charge is currently 45p per mile. Volunteer Action incurs a mileage cost reimbursing the volunteer drivers fuel costs in reaching the members pick up point and back. This extra mileage adds up, costing Volunteer Action in excess of £5000 per annum, this is in addition to the running costs of an office and the staff required to support our volunteers. We have done our best to keep increases at bay for our members however like many other charities we are finding that costs are increasing faster than income. Therefore, we have reluctantly taken the decision to introduce a Booking Fee for each completed booking of £1.

This £1 will contribute towards the daily running costs associated with Volunteer Action and a little towards the mileage expense incurred to provide our much needed services to our rural community.

From 1st January 2023 there will be a £1 booking fee for each completed drive:

This will apply to bookings made after 1st January 2023

Bookings already made before 31st December 2022 but dated in 2023 will not incur the charge.

If you book and cancel, there will be no charge.

Supporter Recognition Event

Thank you to all who attended this year's recognition event on 2nd November - great to see so many of you attend. We very much look forward to next year's event.

Congratulations to the winners of our Long Service and Outstanding Contribution certificates this year!



Call out for drivers - Thrapston

We are looking for new Volunteer Drivers within the Thrapston area - we have seen a large increase in members here - which is great news! If you know of anyone who has some time they can donate to VA, please do ask them to get in touch for more details on - admin@volunteeractionoundle.org.uk

We are also looking for more drivers within Oundle and surrounding areas too - please do get in touch to find out more.





Befriending in Oundle and surrounding areas

The Befriending Scheme has been very busy this year. Many of our long-term partnerships continue and we have lots of new members and, luckily, a steady stream of new volunteers to support them. A warm welcome to everyone and thanks to our new volunteers. We are currently supporting 82 members, with 6 more people going through the assessment stages for the scheme. 66 volunteers support our members and we have 2 new volunteers going through the induction process.

If you know anyone who could be a Befriender or if you feel you would benefit from using either of our Befriending Services, please contact the office.

Group Befriending Events are being organised for the end of 2022 and throughout 2023, to which all members of either our Befriending Scheme or Car Scheme are welcome. It's a chance to get out of the house, meet new people and experience some new activities in a safe environment. Please see the enclosed flyer about these regular events and do come along. We would love to see you there and will be varying the activities so that, hopefully, there will be something to interest all tastes.

Next Date: 5th December at St James Hall, Thrapston - Christmas Concert!



Welcome to our new Trustees A little more about us...

David Cashmore

I have lived in Oundle and Glapthorn for over 30 years and am married to Anne; we have two grown up daughters with our first grandchild on the way!

My entire career has been in clothing retail working for major High Street multiples and latterly running a retail business based in Leeds, which kept me away from home travelling throughout the UK and Europe.

On retiring, I was keen to engage with the community and offer my experience to local organisations. So, I became a Councillor for Glapthorn Parish Council three years ago and started driving for VA last year.

I have been very impressed by the invaluable service provided to our rural community and the commitment of staff and volunteers at VA. As a Trustee I look forward to working with the VA team in ensuring the ongoing success of Volunteer Action.



Lloyd Martin

I am delighted to have become a Trustee of Volunteer Action. I first joined VA as a driver in 2011. The opportunity to become a Trustee coincided with my retiring fully earlier this year. I look forward to devoting as much time as I can to this most worthy and vital local organisation. My wife Jacqui and I have lived in Oundle for over 30 years and we moved to Polebrook in 2014. We know how important Volunteer Action's services are for everyone, but particularly for those villages without any public transport. Jacqui also drives and is a befriender too, so I have an understanding of all aspects of VA's services.

I hope to bring some of my work skills and experience (business development, project delivery and Plc Board governance) to bear on VA's operations and management and I'll be an enthusiastic advocate for VA across the local community.



How you can support us



Thank you!

We really appreciate the support we receive, both in time given by our volunteers and in terms of financial contributions. With increasing uncertainty regarding local authority funding, it is vital that we develop other sources of financial support. Please consider the following ways in which you could help to support us.

Become a Friend of VA

Become a Friend of VA by setting up a regular donation to help support the services we provide to the local community. You can sign up to receive our monthly emailed newsletter giving you regular updates on how your donation is helping, plus an invitation to occasional get-togethers throughout the year. Please contact Rachel in the office for details on setting up a standing order to make your contribution.

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Are you a UK taxpayer? If you are, this means we can claim extra money from HMRC on top of your donations (with your completed form). An extra 25p for every £1 you donate! Gift Aid forms are available for collection from our office - please call us for more details.

Legacy Donations

If you, or your loved ones, have benefited from the support and service that Volunteer Action provides, why not consider leaving us a gift in your will? By doing this you will continue to help local people in need to benefit from the driving or befriending service.

Whatever the size of your gift it will make a huge difference to the community we support. If you would like to help others in this way please contact Rachel at our office for more information.



Don't forget to renew your membership by paying for 2023 - Payment details on the membership form enclosed
Not a member of 100 Club?
Join us today and help support VA!



A new and simple way to raise funds for Volunteer Action

Please remember to use easyfundraising every time you shop online! Over 7,000 brands will donate, so you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying. These donations really help us out, so please sign up if you haven't yet. It's easy and FREE! You can get started at:

easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/volunteeraction



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When you shop using AmazonSmile, you'll find the same Amazon storefront you know and love, with the added bonus that AmazonSmile will donate a portion of the eligible purchase price to the charity of your choice, at no additional cost.

Below are the steps to get started on your desktop and mobile devices.

How to use AmazonSmile on a web browser:

- Visit smile.amazon.com
- Sign in with the same account you use for Amazon.com
- Select 'Volunteer Action' as your charity
- Start shopping! Remember to checkout at smile.amazon.com to generate donations for your chosen charity.