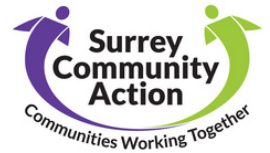


GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEMES NEWSLETTER



December 2024

WELCOME



Hello to you all

I have been in my new role for just over a year and the time has flown by!

I have really enjoyed getting to know so many of you and attending your committee meetings, AGMs, launches and celebrations. You have all been so welcoming, kind and patient - thank you!

Over the last month, our website developer has been making the improvements to the good neighbour schemes listing function. This will enable each scheme to have a 'page' and provide a better experience to visitors to our

website who are trying to find their local scheme, whether as a client or as a volunteer.

I also hosted five meetings for schemes across Surrey to come together during October and November.

Meanwhile, the battle for hospital parking continues...as do my woes with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

I'm talking to a new organisation about their database for good neighbour schemes and how this could be developed to support schemes who want to move their admin online, and those who are online and would like a new system.

There's lots more on my to-do list for the new year, but in the meantime, I'd like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

Justine

UPDATES

Good Neighbour Schemes Annual Survey



Each year, we carry out a survey to find out how you have operated, adapted and changed over the year.

This helps us to evaluate what support you might need and to demonstrate the value you provide, which also helps to secure funding for our support and advice, as well as funding to provide accessories such as car canes, hi vis vests and lanyards and develop initiatives such as volunteer recruitment drives and databases.

This year, I'm reformulating the survey so that in the future you will be asked the same questions, in the same format every year. This helps you to plan for the information that I will be asking you to supply and also allows me to benchmark changes. There will be a short section on any topical information that we might need to collect, which may change depending on the information we need .

Last year, 41 schemes completed the survey which was over 50%. It would be so helpful if more schemes could take part (even if you can't answer all of the questions) as the information is always extremely useful - I know that many of you find it interesting too.

Thank you for your help!

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE PART](#)

UPDATES



BBC Morning Live

You may remember that a few months ago the BBC approached me to see if I could assist with a short film they were making for a series on community transport, as part of their Morning Live programme.

Care Farnham agreed to help with the filming and the BBC filmed some of their drivers and clients in August. They also visited Astolat, to chat to me about good neighbour schemes and how people can get involved.

You can see the footage here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000nxkq>

Surrey Adult Social Care Research

Revealing Reality have been commissioned by Surrey County Council to understand the experiences of individuals who:

- currently receive support from Adult Social Care or community organisations in Surrey, such as good neighbour schemes
- and who might need any support now or in the future

They want to hear from your clients as their perspective will help Surrey County Council to improve support services.

People can register their interest in taking part in a research interview (for which they will receive £70) [here](#), or by calling Revealing Reality at 020 7735 8040.

BOROUGH MEETINGS



In October and November, I held a series of meetings to share information and bring good neighbour schemes together. Speakers attended from Waverley Hoppa, Woking Community Transport, Friends of the Elderly and Southwark Against Modern Slavery.

Thank you to everyone for coming along. It's tricky to run the meeting and take notes too, so here's a brief overview of what was discussed:

- **Hospital parking.** Issues around parking spaces, the withdrawal of the Yellow Driver on Duty card from some hospitals and Blue Badge parking (see below). It appears that the Royal Surrey and East Surrey hospitals have not told all of their parking wardens that the card has been withdrawn from use, so some drivers are still using their cards but they do risk a fine if they do this.
- **DBS checks.** The DBS department is still in disarray and paper forms are still being returning to me, marked as invalid and not processed. The quickest way for me to process checks now is to do these online, until the issue with the paper forms is resolved. Another alternative is to set up your own account with an online provider so you can process your own DBS checks.

More schemes are now doing this. If you would like further information and/or would like to be put in touch with a scheme who has set up an account with an online DBS service, then do let me know.

- **Safeguarding.** If you are concerned about an adult with care and support needs who is at risk of/or is being abused or neglected, then you need to report it. You can find more information here: <https://www.surreysab.org.uk/>. If you are interested in safeguarding training, please let me know and if enough people express an interest, then I will arrange some training.
- **The group discussions** covered a wide range of topics including:
 - WhatsApp – more of you are using this to contact your drivers about jobs.
 - Moving your record keeping online – I have spoken to a number of potential providers and will keep you updated.
 - Blue Badges – drivers can park for free in hospital car parks in Blue Badge bays if the client has a badge, or if the scheme has a badge *and* the client would probably qualify for their own badge. Some private and council run car parks require you to book a Blue Badge bay in advance (even if there is no charge) so if your driver is visiting somewhere new, then it is always best to check. We talked about applying for an organisational Blue Badge and I have reattached the presentation I gave in the summer to the email with this newsletter.
 - Next of kin details – it is useful to keep next of kin details so that you have someone to contact if you can no longer transport a client, if you notice a decline in your client's mental or physical health or have other concerns about your client (where there is a safeguarding concern, this should be reported to Social Services – see above – and of course in an emergency, call 999). You do not have to seek permission from the next of kin to keep their records on file as you have a legitimate interest in keeping these (your client's welfare), but you must follow the same GDPR rules as you do for your client and volunteer details.

SURREY CONNECT



On-demand buses are now available in East, Central, North and Southwest Surrey to help more residents get around the county, at a time that suits them with Surrey Connect.

Rather than being restricted by traditional bus timetables, the accessible mini buses are available for travel for everyone, when they are needed. Buses also operate out of the areas to enable residents to access other key locations including town centres, supermarkets and train stations.

Surrey Connect is funded by Surrey County Council to help improve access to sustainable travel.

Buses run Monday to Friday from 7am to 7pm and on Saturdays from 8am to 6pm. Journeys can be booked with 30 minutes notice or up to 7 days in advance. Fares are charged based on how many miles are travelled starting from £2 for adults.

Journeys can be booked online at www.surreyconnect.org.uk or by telephone:

- Central Surrey: 0300 123 7751
- North and Southwest Surrey: 01483 744807
- East Surrey: 01883 701278

DRIVER ON DUTY CARDS



New Driver on Duty cards have been delivered! The current cards are valid until December 2025, so there is no rush to replace these for existing volunteers. I have added an issue number for you to use if you wish to keep track of your cards.

Unfortunately I do not have the budget to send these out in bulk to you, so I will be bringing them with me to committee meetings and AGMs to give to you, and if you're passing Astolat do let me know so that I can leave some out for you to collect.

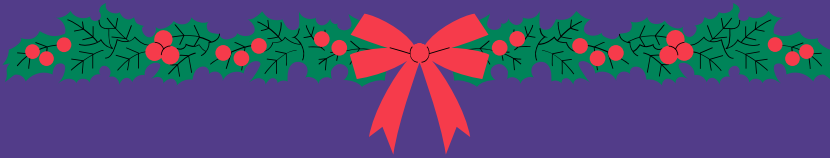


OUT OF OFFICE

Please note that I will be out of the office between:

**Wednesday 18 December 2024
- Monday 6 January 2025.**

I will be back in the office on Tuesday 7 January.



**Wishing you all a Merry
Christmas
and a very
Happy New Year.
(I hope Santa brings
lots of new volunteers!)**



CONTACT

The best way to reach me is via email: gns@surreyca.org.uk.

You can also call me on 01483 447101

I work Monday-Thursday.