

# Camberley Care Trust

[www.camberleycare.org](http://www.camberleycare.org) | Tel: 01276 707692

Registered charity number: 298419



## Chairman's Chatter

As we transition towards Autumn from one of the hottest summer seasons for decades and daylight hours become noticeably shorter it seems timely to look back at a couple of significant changes to our charity's operations.

One of the biggest challenges we have faced for some time was ensuring our operations met with the requirements of the new European data protection law. Understanding the new legal requirements and changes necessary to meet them was no easy task.

It generated a significant additional workload for the office team and involved working through computer records and data for more than 600 individuals.

Trustee Angela Barnatt led this activity on behalf of the Board. She worked very closely with office administrator Sue Pearson to ensure we not only met the new legal requirements but had everything in place ahead of the deadline for completion and at minimal cost. An outstanding achievement, for sure.

In the same timeframe, following an independent review of our operations, it became clear that under the Health and Safety at Work Act, we could no longer carry the risk of volunteer drivers undertaking journeys for clients in wheelchairs.

The risk of injury to driver or client when lifting out or into a wheelchair was one which would not have been adequately covered by our insurance, unless specialist training was given to drivers, with regular refreshers.

Unfortunately, this option was neither practical nor possible.

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## Camberley Care by numbers

### Number of car trips Jan-Jul

1,800

### Volunteer drivers

56

### Total number of volunteers

76

## Hot, hot, hot.....

A huge thank you to all volunteer drivers, duty officers and our office team for their perseverance during the recent heatwave, which is thankfully now behind us.

With the temperature inside our office exceeding 33C (91F) during June and July, we were forced to adjust operational hours, from time to time.

With all credit to the team, this was done with no service disruption. A great result!

Well done to all involved.

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The Board recognizes this decision was not universally popular but, given potential legal implications, we had no choice but to end our service for wheelchair bound clients. It was a decision taken with a heavy heart.

While Camberley Care Trust can no longer accept the risk of arranging trips for clients in wheelchairs, it is pleasing to note that in addition to our partnership with Surrey Heath Community Transport, a number of our volunteer drivers continue to provide a personal service to clients they know well, in a personal capacity and at their own risk.

The audit of our operations highlighted that there was room to improve the way that license and insurance details for volunteer drivers is checked and maintained.

In line with best practice operated by other similar charities in this region, office manager Natasha Foster is in the process of updating our records and has been reaching out to all. Thanks to everyone who has already provided the information required.

Please be assured that each of these changes has been to ensure the duty of care Camberley Care Trust is legally required to provide for volunteers and clients alike is provided.

If our Board of Trustees was found to be negligent in this regard, the consequences could be severe.

Understandably, it is a risk that none of our Board could be expected to take.

## Finance update – a steady ship

As you will recall, after a period of uncertainty last year our charity started this year in a strong financial position.

It's pleasing to report that, although no room for complacency, eight months into 2018 this continues to be the case.

In the absence of a full-time treasurer, stewardship of our finances has been undertaken by Bryan Dunsford, who took on the role in a temporary capacity at the end of last year.

Our search for a full-time treasurer continues.

In the meantime its 'Well Done Bryan' for his continued support.



## Step into Christmas...

OK, so it's August 17 and we still have 129 days until Christmas, but office manager Natasha is already thinking ahead and preparing for the season of goodwill.

Following the success of our Christmas card sale last year, specially designed Camberley Care Trust festive cards will again be on sale soon.

Please consider buying at least one pack of our cards this year and encouraging your family and friends to do likewise.

Our target is to exceed the £300 made in 2017. With your help this should be easily achieved.

Christmas celebrations can never be complete without plenty of food and drink and we have an early opportunity for all volunteers to enjoy both.

Our annual Camberley Care Christmas afternoon tea will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 12.

Please saved the date and stand by for further details.

## Bank holiday reminder – office closed

Please be reminded that our office is observing the autumn bank holiday and will be closed on Monday, August 27. Normal service will resume on Tuesday, August 28.

## Care canes still available – a great helping hand

Care Canes help anyone with mobility problems get in and out of a car with ease. They are a strong, portable handle which securely hooks onto the car door latch to provide extra support and leverage.

Simple to use, they can easily be stored in the glove box when not in use.

Volunteer drivers can collect a car cane free of charge from the Camberley Care office. Strong, and sturdy, it does what it says on the tin! We thoroughly recommend them.

## A little help from our friends

With more than 65% of all UK citizens now said to be doing some form of online shopping the rise and rise of internet-based services provides an excellent opportunity to boost Camberley Care's funds.

Did you know that, for little effort on your part, each time you order groceries or other goods online funds can be raised to support our work? Did you know that booking a holiday or travel online through brands that are household names, can similarly raise funds?

We would like to double the number of our supporters using a service known as Easy Fundraising by the end of this year.

It's a great way to raise funds for our charity and requires little effort, beyond initial registration. Every time you shop online, Camberley Care will benefit.

As we approach the season where online shopping reaches even higher levels, please encourage your friends and family, no matter what age, to support our charity and in doing so help us sustain our ability to support independent living in Camberley and Frimley.

Every little helps 😊

## High Visibility Vests

This year's strangest fashion trend seems to be high visibility vests!

While at times it may feel like you would stand out from the crowd more by not wearing one they do obviously provide a simple means of ensuring personnel are clearly visible.

Recognising the potential benefit for clients to more easily spot our drivers, Camberley Care holds a supply of hi-vis vests in our office.

Please contact Natasha, Sue or any of our duty officers if you would like one.

## Admin Changes – update to IT system

Continuous improvement to our IT system will see the category 'special requirements' changed to 'trip information' which will contain all relevant details and be included with the confirmation email sent to all volunteer drivers.

A new section 'client information' will be populated when clients first register and be updated as required. This general information will help us remember specific client preferences and enhance the personal service provided by Camberley Care.

## Handyperson Service – work in progress

We are still rolling out a new handyperson service thanks to funding received last year from Surrey Heath Carers, when it ceased operations. It is already clear that demand will exceed our ability to respond unless additional support can be secured from local handy-people.

This work, which is paid for not voluntary, would be ideally suited to a retired or semi-retired individual with relevant experience.

We are currently advertising through social media channels, local churches and other networks as well as by word of mouth. An appeal through local media will also be launched.

Do you know of anyone who may have suitable experience and have an interest? If so, please contact office manager Natasha who can provide more information, as required.

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## Caring for the community - preparing senior citizens for Autumn

Autumn is upon us, and with the change of the season comes beautiful colours and cooler temperatures.

With all the beauty that the Autumn brings, there are also inherent hazards with the change in season. It is important that elderly members of the community begin to plan for colder temperatures ahead.

Keeping appropriate heat levels inside the home is an integral part of elderly care. For senior members of the community living by themselves, we should consider reminding them of the benefits of having a professional check their heating systems before the onset of winter.

With changing temperatures comes an increasing risk of infection during the cold and flu season, which can be particularly problematic for the elderly. Pointing out the benefits of getting a seasonal flu vaccine early, can help prevent unwanted illnesses.

Of course, all of us should be mindful of the need to remind elderly clients that the onset of autumn brings an increase in season-related falls. The combination of rain and falling foliage creates slippery surfaces, often leading to more risky walking conditions.

The above examples of seasonal risks are particularly important considerations for senior citizens living alone or in assisted living communities. As frequent visitors into the homes of clients, our volunteer drivers can help ensure the safety of elderly, disabled and vulnerable members of our community by reminding them of the risks and highlighting the services available from organisations such as Age Concern, should they require any additional advice or counsel.