

FISH VOLUNTEER CENTRE



Newsletter Issue No. 12

Spring 2020

Springhill, Kennylands Road, Sonning Common, RG4 9JT
office@fishvolunteercentre.org.uk www.fishvolunteercentre.org.uk
Tel: 0118 972 3986

*Registered Charity
No. 286318*

From the FISH Chairman

The FISH Volunteer Centre continues to support the local community with assisting the elderly and disabled with transport to essential appointments.

This is as well as the shopping and leisure trips on our minibus, and the befriending service we run for those living on their own.

We are affiliated to the Oxfordshire 'Good Neighbours' scheme and 'The National Council for Voluntary Organisations' which give support and guidance towards running the charity with good governance.

However, there are still people who don't know we exist or don't know what we do, or how to contact us for help. Please pass on our details to any-one you feel needs our help.

We are always fundraising but this year we have a great deal to do as you will read about in the following pages.

We have a fantastic group of volunteers and we raised over £200 at Christmas with our carol singing at the Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall.

Richard McQuillan
Chairman



Jonny Begood on guitar accompanying the FISH Volunteer carol singers

Home Visiting

It's almost 4 years now since FISH started to recruit Home Visitors, mainly for those who cannot get out much or find they spent too much time on their own. We have some super volunteer visitors, some of whom have been going to see their clients regularly since the service started. As you can imagine some strong relationships have been made over that time which have greatly improved the lives of some formerly isolated people. Many of these people are very elderly and sadly some have died or moved away into care homes outside our area in the last few months but as we get new referrals so numbers of people visited remains stable at about 20. I am delighted that long term FISH volunteer Judy Mihajlovic has joined me as a second Home Visiting Coordinator so we can share the referrals as they come to us.

Last year saw an increase in referrals as a lovely lady called Rachel from Age UK was working alongside the Health Centre and getting referrals from the GPs about people who needed a 'Social Prescription' rather than some kind of medication to improve their quality of life. Rachel was able to contact these people and point them in the direction of clubs, societies or other organisations which would benefit them. For some forming a one to one relationship with a FISH Home Visitor was just what they needed so she referred them to us, and we have seen people flourish once this has been put in place. Sadly, funding for the post of Social Prescriber in this area has not been continued into this year but we have not given up hope about a way being found to reinstate this service which was so good for so many people.

As each individual wanting a Home Visitor is unique so is the match with the volunteer which means we need a range of different people to volunteer as visitors. So, whatever your age or background we would like to hear from you if you might be interested in being a Home Visitor. You just need to be able to give a little time on a regular basis to another person and you will be rewarded by seeing the difference you make to that person's life.

If you think yourself, or a relative or someone you know could benefit by having a Home Visitor please call into the FISH office between 9.30 and 11.30 am on a weekday, or phone 0118 9723986 or email office@fishvolunteercentre.org.uk and leave a message and either Judy or I will make contact with you.

Sue Nickson & Judy Mihajlovic
Home Visiting Coordinators

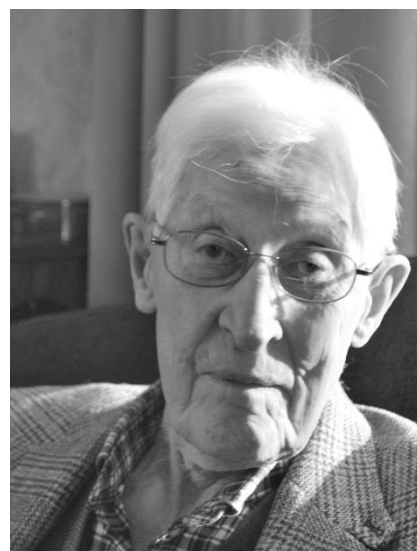
Dr. Peter Hemphill



Many of our readers will remember Dr. Hemphill, who founded the Sonning Common Practice and remained a GP there from 1949 to 1985.

Dr Hemphill, who has been a keen champion of our charity, will reach his 100th year on 9th April 2020.

We wish him a very happy birthday.



A Great Team of Volunteers

On Saturday 25th January we held our annual coffee morning (with cakes and much more) to update the volunteers on the Charity and thank them all for working hard as a team enabling FISH to be thought the very best in the area for the work it carries out in South Oxfordshire.

About 60 volunteers came along to meet old friends and make new ones.

Liam Proudlock, who this year ran the Henley 10k to raise money for us came along with his wife and mother. This was an opportunity to thank him for his wonderful support of our Charity.

The two main topics were:

1. Ambulance Patients Transport Services.

We heard about the need to improve the patient experience and the possibility of being involved with the ambulance Service in transporting patients' home from hospital.

2. The purchase of the old Police Office in Sonning Common.

The report indicated that if all goes well, we could be moving into our new office towards mid-Summer. (please read a further article about our new home on the back page of this Newsletter)

All agreed that the morning had been a great success

Clive Mills

FISH Trustee



Volunteers enjoying the refreshments

Volunteers listening to the presentations

(spot the young recruit)



Richard McQuillan, FISH Chairman, thanking

Liam Proudlock for his efforts in raising £500

Leisure Trips

The trips started as far back as 2008 when I was chatting to the late Reg Foster, our then Bus Manager, stated he was a member of the National Trust as I was and thinking a large number of Sonning Common people probably belonged too. As the bus was not used on Fridays, he invited me to set up outings once a month April to September to National Trust properties as the bus required funds for its upkeep. The trips continued that way for several years, but gradually other trips were incorporated for all year round and venue were gradually added taking leisure trips to two per month. Day trips are of course regulated by the miles we can travel there and back in a day, but we also undertake some half day ones.

Over the last eighteen months we have visited places such as Bletchley Park, Beaulieu, Lord's Cricket ground, Cotswold Wildlife Park, St. Albans, West London Museums, Wisley Gardens, Broughton Castle, Thames River trip, the Mini car plant at Cowley and Duxford to name but a few. Then of course we visit Kew Gardens 3 times a year, where admission is free as we have a community membership and not forgetting The Watermill Theatre near Newbury, again several times a year with its delightful surroundings wonderful productions and their lovely lunches.



So do join us soon in our new minibus. See our posters around the village and the dates from which the leisure trips are bookable usually a few days after the shopping trips. Should you have any ideas for trips please leave at the Fish office and it will be passed on to me

Sheila Maughan
Leisure Trips Organiser

FISH TEA PARTIES

Held in Sonning Common Village Hall on the second Monday of each month for residents in the local area.

Transport can be provided.

Do come along for home-made cakes and sandwiches to meet old friends and make new ones.

From 2.30 to 4.30 pm on any of the following dates for 2020:

April 13 th	May 11 th	June 8 th
July 13 th	Aug 10 th	Sept 14 th
Oct 12 th	Nov 9 th	Dec 14 th

Entry is free but donations to FISH most welcome. There is always some form of entertainment and a free raffle.

VILLAGE CHARITY LUNCH

In Support of
The FISH Volunteer Centre
and its move to a new office
Wednesday 29 April at 12.30 pm

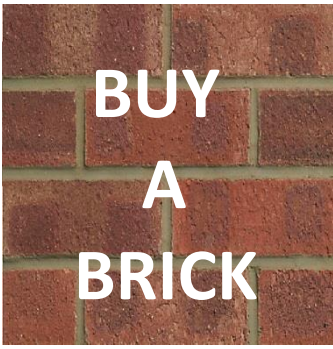
Sonning Common Village Hall

(Lunch menu: jacket potato,
fruit juice, fruit, tea/coffee)

Plus A GRAND DRAW

Tickets £12

from: THE FISH OFFICE, OCCASIONS
or Fred Nickson 07768 918501



We have the rare opportunity to buy our premises instead of paying rent forever. The Old Police Office in Lea Road, Sonning Common, will make an ideal location for us and allow for expansion in this ever-growing community.

BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

All supporters and friends can help fund this project with a donation.

BUY A BRICK (or more) IS AN IDEAL WAY OF DOING THIS

The names of all those supporters can be listed on a plaque in the building.

✂.....

I WISH TO BUY _____ BRICKS AT £10 Each Total £ _____

Name: Contact No:

Payment will be made by: (please tick appropriate box)

- Cheque (made payable to The FISH Volunteer Centre also use for bank transfer)
- Cash (Please pay at the FISH Office or to a FISH Volunteer)
- Bank Transfer (Sort Code: 09 01 29 Account No: 16346927 Use Reference: Bricks)

Thank you for supporting The FISH Volunteer Centre

.....and why not Gift Aid your donation at the same time

Charity Gift Aid Declaration

giftaid it

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK tax payer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ to The FISH Volunteer Centre - Charity Number 286318

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details:

Title: _____ First name or initial(s): _____ Surname: _____

Full Home Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Date: _____

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

.....

So, What Does FISH Actually Do?

We know from experience that there is often some confusion as to what the FISH charity actually does and who can use its services.

The name itself does not give many clues but the organisation has been running for over 40 years now with the same title so it would not be an easy task to change it to one which is self-explanatory.

What we offer:

- Car transport to appointments at hospitals, dentists, opticians also to visit family and friends in care homes or hospitals
 - Befriending the lonely who are housebound
 - Social outings and leisure trips in the minibus
 - Minibus shopping trips, vital for seniors who have mobility issues or who cannot easily access public transport
 - Handy persons to do small household jobs e.g. changing light bulbs etc.
 - Afternoon Tea Parties in Sonning Common Village Hall on the second Monday of each month
- and the Myths
- FISH is NOT a religious organisation
 - You do NOT have to be a member of FISH to use our services

What FISH does is probably best summed up by the phrase *'Support and Transport for the Community'*

Sheila Maughan
FISH Trustee

Our Proposed New Home – The Police Office, Lea Road, Sonning Common

Since the Autumn of 2019 a small team of Trustees have been working on this project.

After having our bid to buy the now vacant police office from the Thames Valley Police Property Services rejected, we have been discussing buying the freehold for the station from the developer, EXP Property Investments.

In principle this has been agreed and we are currently working on the internal layout plans.

The developer is a local company and is very supportive of our charity and the work we do. We have appointed a firm of solicitors to act for us.

We need to take this action since our lease on our current office at 'Springhill' expires at the end of 2020.



FUNDRAISING IS OUR NEXT CHALLENGE - WE NEED TO RAISE ANOTHER £50,000.....

..... and Fred Nickson (of FISH Tea Party fame) has agreed to head up our campaign.

In this newsletter we have included a 'BUY A BRICK' donation form which we are asking all in our community to support in order to allow our wonderful Charity to continue its great work **SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY**

Clive Mills
FISH Trustee