

DEVIZES & DISTRICT LINK
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at the Wyvern Club at 8:00pm on May 23rd, 2024

Present

Lewis Cowen (President)
Peter Evans (Chairman)
Norman Minty (Treasurer)
Val Elmes (Secretary)

George Royle, Chas Stonestreet, David Hows, Barbara Glover, Martin Houghton, Jean Altree, Sheila Martin, Dec McSweeney, Ann Sainsbury, Mike Knock

1. Lewis Cowen opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He thanked Ian Hopkins, the mayor, for attending. He was interested in the issues raised during the preceding drivers' meeting, saying some had been issues since the start but he accepted that the Link role is changing.

We are taking more responsibility for the clients' welfare, and he felt that this is the way charities are going. He thanked the Link drivers for all the extra time and commitment involved and praised the work that they do.

Apologies: Lesley Mills, Peter Martin, Andy Potts, David Bell,

2. Minutes of last AGM. These were adopted. Proposed by NM Seconded by SM

3. Matters arising: none

4. Chairman's Report:

Verbatim report follows:

Good evening to you all and a special welcome to our new Devizes Town Mayor for 2024/5 Cllr Ian Hopkins who joins us for our AGM.

At the start of this year the committee and I attended the Health and Wellbeing event on the Devizes Green many thanks to the committee members who joined me on that day .

We have signed up some new drivers during the year, not as many as we would like, and my thanks go to Barbara for her hard work in obtaining the required certification from Wiltshire Council for the new and renewing certificates for existing drivers.

During the year we have been blessed with two large donations which will assist with our running costs over the next periods, but we still need additional donations to enable us to continue the service we provide for the residents of the Devizes and local area.

A Wiltshire Link System was demonstrated to the committee by Martin Houghton and after discussion with members it was decided to continue with the present system as we could see no benefits in a major change to our present method of operation again thanks to Martin for his time in the demonstration.

Peter Martin organized a Sunday Lunch for all drivers and partners together with all committee members and their partners but unfortunately at present we have only 22 confirmed who have booked for the lunch and the number required to make it viable is 25 so let's hope that we can get the extra numbers to enable the event to take place thanks Peter for your effort to organize it.

We have with us Cllr Ian Hopkins the newly installed Mayor of Devizes who has nominated Devizes Link as one of his Charities for the coming year which we thank him and wish him a very successful year ahead.

My thanks to our coordinator Ann and Vera for the continuous hard work in matching requests from residents and matching them up with available Drivers your work and customer care with the public is outstanding.

I must thank my fellow Committee members for their help and assistance over the past year, especially my Treasure Norman Minty for his work with not only our accounts but also running the 100 club and sorting out parking issues at various hospitals.

5. Treasurer's Report

Verbatim Report follows: -

The full 2023-24 accounts are currently with the accountants for verification and will subsequently be submitted to the Charity Commission. I am pleased to inform you that the accounts are in a very healthy state, and in lieu of the account, I have supplied you with a printout of the income and expenditure throughout the last financial year.

The opening balance for 2023/24 was £21510.74. This includes the money that is held in the Hampshire Trust Bank in two separate accounts: a 90-day Business Notice Account and a 1-year Business Bond. On the maturity, after a further 12 months, those investments provided the link account with interest of £402.82 bringing the total invested to £15966.55. With the increase in interest rates changing substantially during 2023 the committee decided the better investment option was to consolidate most of our investments into the 1-year Bond account. This consolidation happened in December of 2023.

The 90-day Business Notice Account now stands at £2237.8 with an interest rate of just 0.25% per annum and is there as a safety net in case the current account needs to be topped up. A withdrawal from this account will not affect the percentage interest for the year.

The one-year business bond which was boosted by the transfer of funds from both the 90-day account and the Current Account now stands at £26144.62. This has an interest rate of 5.15% which is forecast to pay £1340.97 pence on the maturity date of 06/12/2024.

Donations amounting to £15799.37 have been received during the year. You will see a list of those on the printout I have supplied for you. Particularly notable is the £7K from the closure of the Combined Charities, the £5K from the estate of Barrie Barrett and the £1.5K from the sponsorship of The Wyvern Club. You will, I hope, be pleased to hear that we were selected, alongside one other charity, to be supported by the Wyvern Club again this year.

During the year, Volunteer drivers have completed 1044 journeys covering some 40839 miles and giving a total of 2948 voluntary hours of their time. There is always a need for new drivers but the recruitment of Volunteer Drivers is still slow and any help in recruiting more drivers by any of you would be most welcome.

I believe everyone is aware that Ann Sainsbury now holds the coordinators mantle, and is ably supported, when necessary, by Vera Oram. The telephone situation has been resolved and the cost of calls and landline connections have been rationalised. However, we will soon have the issue of loss of land lines to deal with when we all must move to the Voice over Internet protocol by the end of 2025. Watch this space.

In summary, 2024 has seen us return to the pre-Covid levels of support to the community and everyone has stepped up a gear at least for us to meet the demand. As I have said in previous years, there is never room for complacency! We need to keep ourselves in the public eye and let the local people see that it is only with their backing and generous support that will ensure we continue well into the future.

I would like to thank JS Weeks & Co, who very generously scrutinise the Charities Accounts free of charge. I do have my digital copy of the account with me, and you are welcome to come and ask any questions you might have. I will attempt to answer those questions and if I do not have the answer to hand, I will investigate and get the answer to you.

Thank you for your attention, and I request your approval of my report.

PE informed us that the move from land line telephones to 'Voice over Internet Protocol' (VoIP) has now been deferred until 2027.

6. Election of New Committee:

- Lewis Cowen continues as Hon. President.
- Peter Evans continues as Chairman
- Re-elected committee members were as follows:
Norman Minty – Treasurer
Val Elmes - Secretary
Barbara Glover - Driver Recruitment
Roger Short,
Peter Martin

These were voted in unanimously by a show of hands

7. Any Other Business:

Lewis Cowen thanked the mayor for choosing to support Link as one of his charities for the year and invited him to say a few words.

Ian Hopkins said he was impressed with the esteem in which Link is held in the town. When he was previous mayor, in 1995/1996, he also made Link his charity and was pleased to do so again. He thanked everyone for their hard work in providing a much needed service for the community.

8. 100 Club May Draw

1. £20 Lewis Cowen
2. £15 Audry Pink
3. £10 Lewis Cowen

9. date of Next meeting - Monday June 24th

The meeting was closed at 8:25 pm

Devizes and District Link Drivers' meeting May 23rd, 2024

SM: **Link drivers' roles are changing**, and we are being requested to be much more than drivers – often giving care and support to lonely people.

MH: we are regularly asked to give more assistance.

PE: Clients needing assistance should be able to bring a friend or relative along, but some have no one they can call on.

DM: We need to ask in detail exactly what assistance is required before accepting the journey.

AS: we had agreed at a previous committee meeting that we would not accept anyone requiring a wheelchair unless they were accompanied by a carer.

DM: Liability issues need to be considered when giving any form of assistance. NM assured us that Link has liability insurance.

PE any client can ask the surgery for assistance in getting to appointments.

SM felt that Community First should issue some health and safety guidelines for all Link drivers.

PE: the committee will draw up a list of questions for the coordinator to ask each client.

AS: at the end of the day, we are a charity and can only do our best.

Hospital Parking

Salisbury:

MH First time you need to register your car at reception & then receive a ticket valid for 3 months.

DM there are spaces allocated to Link but these are often full.

Chippenham

NM: Input your car reg at reception & this authorises your stay. If you leave and come back you must reregister.

GWH

No letter now needed. Your car reg is recorded on entry to the carpark. Go to reception and enter your name and car reg on the list and you will get a ticket for the barrier. The system here appears to change frequently so best to check at reception.

Hospitals put their information into a central point and Community First should then distribute.

PE has had dealings with CF for several years. The personnel change a lot and effectiveness seems to be limited.

PE At the last drivers' meeting the issue of clients on benefits claiming back the cost of their journey was raised. The amounts vary and can be minimal. They have said if an invoice is produced this will be honoured. NM has created a blank invoice which he will include with envelopes to drivers in future. They can then complete this with the current mileage allowance and submit to the hospital.

AS has been contacted and asked to verify journeys for this purpose.

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK

Accounts report for the year ended 31 March 2024

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK

ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 MARCH 2024

[Faint signature]

THE ACCOUNTS GROUP LTD

CHARITABLE ACCOUNTANTS

10 Water Lane

1st Floor

Widmore

SN10 1TH

March 2024

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK**Accountants' Report for the year ended 31 March 2024**

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared, without carrying out an audit, the accounts on pages 2 and 3 from the accounting records of Devizes and District Link and from the information and explanations supplied to us.



**THE ALANBROOKES GROUP LTD
T/A JS WEEKS & CO**

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

10 Market Place

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 1HT

Dated:- 9 September 2024

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

		2024	2023
	£	£	£
General Account			
Income			
Contributions		22,667	12,262
Fund Raising		1,035	845
Donations		15,799	2,576
Interest Received (Elizabeth Pickering Trust)		416	131
		-----	-----
		39,917	15,814
 Less:- Overhead Expenditure			
Co-ordinators Fees		4,900	4,400
Insurance		360	331
Fundraising		695	996
Postage, Stationery and Advertising		-	162
Telephone		1,140	536
Volunteers Expenses:- Motor and Travelling		17,778	10,275
		-----	-----
		24,873	16,700
		-----	-----
Surplus of Income over Expenditure/(Expenditure over Income)		15,044	(886)
		=====	=====

Note:-

The funds of the Elizabeth Pickering Trust are now incorporated into the Devizes and District Link.

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current Assets		
Natwest - General Account	7,662	5,021
Hampshire Trust – 90 Day Notice Account	2,238	5,225
Hampshire Trust – 1 Year Bond	26,145	10,742
Cash in Hand	94	107
	-----	-----
Total Assets	36,139	21,095
	=====	=====
 Represented By:-		
Capital Account		
Opening Balance at 1 April 2023	21,095	21,981
General:- (Deficit)/Surplus of Income over Expenditure	15,044	(886)
	-----	-----
Balance as at 31 March 2024	36,139	21,095
	=====	=====

DEVIZES AND DISTRICT LINK**Accountants' Report for the year ended 31 March 2024**

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared, without carrying out an audit, the accounts on pages 2 and 3 from the accounting records of Devizes and District Link and from the information and explanations supplied to us.



THE ALANBROOKES GROUP LTD
T/A JS WEEKS & CO

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

10 Market Place

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 1HT

Dated:- 9 September 2024