



The Bedwyns LINK Scheme  
Registered Charity No. 1052579

## Information for Volunteer Drivers & Good neighbours

Thank you for giving up your time to drive for the Bedwyns' Link. Scheme (BLS) This is a valuable service offered to the residents of Great Bedwyn, the surrounding villages and people registered to Great Bedwyn Surgery. We hope you enjoy being part of it.

The following instructions are for your guidance. If you have any queries please contact the volunteer coordinator, or a member of the BLS management committee.

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All drivers are required to complete a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service) before driving for BLS. This can be done online via the Volunteer Coordinator. To complete this check, you will need to show the Volunteer coordinator:

- a current driving licence,
- national insurance number,
- passport (if you have one)
- a utility bill or bank statement.
- If you have lived in your current address for under 5 years, please provide details of previous addresses.

Once you have your cleared DBS check, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator so they can update their information and add you to the coordinator list.

We would also encourage you to register for the DBS update service within 28 days of receiving your clearance. This ensures you are contacted when your DBS form requires updating, every 3 years. This service is free to BLS drivers, via - <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service> .

### Car Insurance – informing your insurance company & age:

If you drive your car as a BLS volunteer, please inform your car insurance company that you are driving as a BLS volunteer. This ensures that your insurance company is aware that you are driving for BLS and that your insurance is valid. This should not affect the cost of your premium.

In the event of an accident, BLS has insurance to cover your insurance excesses for people aged under 80 and for over 80 people who have undertaken a Driver Plus Assessment. The Driver Plus Assessment is paid for by BLS for anyone reaching the age of 80.

### Car safety is your responsibility

It is your responsibility to ensure your vehicle is safe and legal, that it has an MOT, Tax, Insurance, your tyres are legal and is in good working order (serviced regularly.) The Volunteer Coordinator will ask to see these documents when you start driving for BLS and can ask to see them at any other time.

All passengers and drivers must wear a seat belt at all times

If you change your car, please let Volunteer Coordinator know the new details of your new car

### **In case of an injury or accident while on a trip**

Should an injury or illness occur to you or to a client in your care, seek medical assistance immediately if necessary. Please report the incident to the coordinator, who will ask you to complete a written report of the incident.

No driver should be required to manually lift the client into or out of their cars.

### **Driving competence**

Please be responsible for your own fitness to drive including your eyesight, effects of any medication you may be taking, alcohol and tiredness.

If you incur any motoring offences (fines or convictions) after getting your DBS, you must inform the Volunteer Coordinator or any member of the BLS Management committee. Any convictions acquired will be considered by the committee as to your suitability to continue as a driver for BLS.

If you would like an independent assessment of your driving the BLS will arrange for you to undertake a Driver Plus Driving Assessment. **If you are over 79 years of age you must to undertake this assessment before you are 80, for your own driving confidence and for the confidence of your passengers.** It should be repeated every 3 years after age of 79. The cost of this assessment, for our drivers is covered by BLS.

Private cars are subject to legislation regarding smoking, and volunteers must observe changes to legislation regarding smoking in a car with anyone under 18, which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. We request that you respect client's views if you smoke. Clients wishing to smoke in your car should ask your permission.

### **'Good Neighbour' support**

You may be asked to provide 'Good Neighbour Support' if there is volunteer capacity available and volunteers are willing to help. Volunteers may offer practical help for small tasks in the home or garden, and caring support. Medical and other essential tasks should take priority but if our volunteers have capacity, they could be asked to help with good neighbour type action (incomplete) which could include the following:

- Taking a client to see a friend or relative in hospital
- Assistance with shopping
- Befriending/ Companionship – having a cup of tea and a chat face to face or on the phone contact.
- Going for a short walk together
- Collecting a prescription
- Simple house keeping
- Simple administration or computer problem solving
- Simple housework eg Putting out the rubbish
- Reading
- And....

This should not include personal care (e.g. washing, assisting with toilet or administering

medication). If you are in any doubt about what a client asks you to do, please contact the Coordinator to discuss.

### **Donations (BLS envelopes provided):**

The BLS services, both driving and Good Neighbour support, are free but clients should be asked to make a donation to cover running BLS. You should hand the BLS envelope to the client at the start of the contact. Clients can put any donation they can afford into the envelope, which should be sealed. If clients seek guidance, we suggest they are told to give what they can afford and to explain that the journey costs the BLS scheme at least 45p/mile or about £10/hour.

### **Job Allocation**

There are about 10 -15 BLS coordinators who help on a rota covering weekday mornings ( 9am – 1pm), but phone messages can be left at any time on the BLS mobile 07717 006787. All jobs are received via BLS number and allocated via the BLS WhatsApp group.

The coordinator of the day will receive the message from the client and post it anonymously to all the BLS drivers, with a job number and date, time and destination. The coordinator will then message you separately with any further details such as client name, contact number and any specific information which you must not share (for data privacy reasons).

Please only respond to the What's App request if you are able to do the job requested.

### **Changing/cancelling a job**

If, after accepting a job, you are able to undertake it please let the coordinator know via WhatsApp.

If you arrive to collect a client and find they need more help than you expected, you can decline to take the client, explaining to the client that the help they require is beyond that the BLS service can offer. However, if you are willing to give the extra help required, you can go ahead with the journey. In either case, please advise the coordinator so that the client record can be updated to properly reflect their needs.

You should arrive at the client's house or pick up location at the appointed time and with plenty of time to meet the scheduled appointment. When they are settled in the car you should confirm details of the journey and we suggest you give the client a donations envelope at this time

When you drop the client off for their appointment you should agree how they will contact you to advise they are ready to be collected. You may choose to give them your mobile number for this purpose.

At the conclusion of the task the client should return the donations envelope to you.

### **Follow-on jobs:**

if the client requires a follow- on job on a different day this must be booked via the coordinator and not arranged privately, as this could invalidate the BLS insurance.

### **General issues**

All passengers and drivers must wear a seat belt at all times

Never give your home telephone number or address to clients. This is for your own protection and avoids you being approached directly by clients. If asked, give the BLS number 0771 700 6787.

If you are transporting a client, you should normally wait for them and bring them home again, unless the appointment is very long and other arrangements have been made for the return trip.

Volunteers are not normally expected to provide additional assistance, eg helping clients in and out of cars and into venues. You should only do this if you feel comfortable doing so. If this is required, the client should normally be accompanied by a carer. Volunteers are not expected to be first aiders.

Drivers should not accompany the clients into the clinic or accept instructions or prescriptions from hospital staff, though clients appreciate moral support and assistance in locating clinics they are attending.

### **Lone Working**

Volunteers should be aware of their own vulnerability when alone with a client. Except in acute emergency, volunteers should not touch clients without first seeking their permission to do so. A phrase such as 'How may I best help you?' may be useful.

### **Key Holding**

Volunteers should not retain client keys, although it is acceptable to collect a key from a key holder and then return it on completion of the task.

### **Shopping and Money Handling**

Volunteers should be aware of their vulnerability to false accusations when handling clients' money

### **Expenses.**

Mileage expenses are payable at the rate of 45p/mile. An Expenses claim form is available from the Treasurer who holds monthly drop-in sessions - details are advertised through the BLS Whatapp group.

**Please report any concerns to the BLS Coordinator.**

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