



The Bedwyns LINK Scheme
Registered Charity No. 1052579

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A Link Scheme provides a 'Good Neighbour' service to those in need in their local communities. It is, therefore, impossible to tightly define those able to use the service due to varying local conditions such as access to public transport. Each request for a service will be dealt with on its own merits by the co-ordinator responsible for the day-to-day operation of the scheme.

BLS is dedicated to helping as many persons as possible within the community, however, safety of volunteers is a primary concern so the following principles will be taken into account:

Transport - by volunteers driving their own cars, may be provided for those who:

- a) are unable to access public transport due to infirmity
- b) have no reasonable alternative transport due to lack of public transport
- c) are not eligible for the ambulance, car/medi-car service for health related journeys
- d) consider the ambulance car/medi car service to be inappropriate for their personal needs
- e) can get in and out of a private car safely with a minimum of assistance

It is often necessary for co-ordinators to prioritise requests, normally journeys for clinical appointments are given priority and any request accepted is subject to the availability of a volunteer.

The service is not restricted to a particular age group or those with a physical or mental infirmity. It is advised that Link Schemes do not carry children due to the legislation around child car seats.

Help and support (but not personal care) may be offered to those in the community who need the services of a 'Good Neighbour'. This is subject to the capacity and skills being available within the volunteer group to carry out the request.

Handling Link Volunteers are not trained in manual handling techniques and therefore clients must be able to manipulate themselves in and out of the volunteer's car. They may bring another person who is able to help them and takes liability for the procedure.

Wheel Chair users. A helping arm does not constitute manual handling. Common sense must prevail in all circumstances keeping in mind the safety and liability of both client and volunteer.

Transport can only be offered to wheelchair users if they are accompanied by another person who:

- a) takes responsibility for transfer to and from the car and for folding the wheelchair and lifting it into the volunteers' car.
- b) The coordinator has been informed that the client is a wheelchair user and will be accompanied.

Clients with Mental Health needs Support for clients with mental needs including dementia must be decided on a case by case basis. It is quite possible to offer support if the client unless the client is prone to violence, tantrums or other behaviour which compromises the safety and liability of volunteers. Clients who have their own carers can be offered support provided it is clearly understood that the Link Scheme is only providing transport or other specified service.

Behavioural problems In general terms any behaviour by the client or the accompanying person which endangers the safety of the volunteer or is deemed offensive or abusive to the volunteer should be reported to the coordinator for possible removal from the client data base. It may be possible to redress the issue if the matter is raised and discussed with the client and or carer. Future trips would only be undertaken if an accompanying person is present. This allows assessment of the behaviour for final deletion from the data base.

This document must be read in conjunction with the Risk Management Policy. For further detail please refer to the Good Practice Guide for Link Schemes published by the Link Project Office, Community First, 2021.

<https://www.communityfirst.org.uk/transport/link/link-scheme-gpg/>