

It has now been a year since the start of the first lockdown and there has been much to reflect on - our Minibuses lie idle, our volunteer Medical Car Service drivers have been left at home and the new Men's Shed was completed but couldn't open.

Nevertheless, since last March we have:

- Shopped weekly for up to 70 households
- Kept in touch via our Telephone Buddies with 120 clients
- Distributed Goodie bags from the local branch of Waitrose & Partners to all our shopping clients
- With the support of Sainsburys and The Co Op, put together and distributed Activity bags to all our clients
- Used a minibus to distribute food parcels for ESCC to vulnerable households
- Set up a Book and Jig Saw Swap bus
- Run a hugely successful Knitting Project
- Made record sales of the Men's Shed wooden reindeer and snowmen
- Received funding and donations from a number of organisations and clients
- Funded private taxis to ensure our clients could get to their vaccination appointments

An impressive list of achievements, which we are so proud of and which are made all the more special by the support of our wonderful team of volunteers and clients.

So, what next?.....

With the Vaccine developed, we can begin to look forward to the future with optimism and getting back to a new 'Normal', one that we all want and hopefully where we can spend time with our families and friends.

The easing of lockdown restrictions is likely to be gradual and once again we will have to adapt. Working with other local organisations and the Parish Council will continue to be important.

For our Minibus services, we have recently donated our oldest one to the Young at Heart, a local Group who support the elderly. We are reviewing our remaining buses and investigating options for the purchase of a further vehicle to meet the changing needs of our organisation.

Hopefully we can get our Medical Car Service drivers back out and about as soon as it is safe to do so.

Getting the Men's Shed open and busy.

**The future does look brighter, at the heart of all our services is the support we can provide and most importantly the social aspects that Age Concern Heathfield offers. We are all looking forward to 2021 with renewed hope and optimism.**

Dawn Brock and Alan Hale- Co- Chairmen



### Heathfield and Waldron Rotary Club

We are delighted to announce that we have received a generous donation of £1000 from the Heathfield and Waldron Rotary Club, in recognition of our outstanding work during the Covid pandemic and to support us with future projects.

We have always enjoyed working with the Rotary Club and we have been well supported by them in the past. Indeed, several of their members joined our team of volunteer shoppers and have been shopping weekly with us ever since.

We are very grateful for this donation and shall look forward to working together on joint ventures in the future.



We would also like to thank the Heathfield branch of Waitrose & Partners who awarded us £166 from their Community Matters Fund.

Finally, of course a very special thank you to each of you who sent in donations as a way of showing your appreciation for our support. We really do appreciate your kindness and can ensure you that your money will be put to good use either subsidising current projects or to go towards the reopening of our transport services as soon as it is safe for us to do so.



It is with great sadness that we report the loss of our dear friend and colleague, Carol Ewart, who lost her battle with Covid at the end of January. Carol was a keen supporter of Age Concern, having previously been a Minibus Driver,

co-ordinator of the Medical Car Service, Minibus Escort and more recently member of the Executive Committee. She was also involved in both the local lunch clubs and was a keen bowler at Cross-in-Hand bowls club.

She will be greatly missed by us all. Our thoughts are with Carol's family and of course with her very good friend Mary.

As well as the loss of clients and colleagues, we are also aware of an increasing number of you who have lost close family members and friends - our thoughts and best wishes are with every one of you too.

## Knitting Project



A magnificent total of £75 was raised through the sales of the lovely poppies that some of our knitters created. The money was donated to the Royal British Legion towards their annual poppy day appeal. Well done!

Needles have not stopped clicking, and our enthusiastic team of knitters have produced squares to complete some wonderful blankets and fiddle muffs for our local nursing homes. Below is just a selection of some of the beautiful creations:



In total, 66 blankets and 21 Twiddle Muffs have been donated to the residents at our three local nursing homes- Heffle Court, Oaklands Court and Millcroft. A huge thank you to our team of knitters for all your hard work and outstanding effort!

If you would like to take part in our knitting project please phone **866960** for further information.

---

### Medical Car Service

As our car service is still unable to run, we are offering our regular clients who have no family member, neighbour or friend to help take them to their vaccination appointments, the use of a taxi through French and Sons. We felt it was vital that nobody should miss out on the opportunity of receiving their vaccination just because of transport difficulties. Please ring **866960** for further information or to see how we might be able to help you.

### Shopping, Phone Buddying, Jigsaw and Book Swap Services

All our lockdown services are continuing to run and will do so for as long as they are needed. If you or anyone you know is in need of help with their weekly shopping, would enjoy a friendly chat with one of our phone buddies or would like a visit from the book and jigsaw bus, please telephone **866960** for further information.



### Getting your Pet to the Vets

Did you know there is a local lady who has been offering this service since 2003?

Her name is Debbie and she is DBS checked as she works regularly with elderly people.

Debbie will collect your Pet, take it to your vets and return them home with any medication they require and an invoice from the Vets, so you can pay them over the phone.

She charges £15.00 per hour for this service and will also collect medication from the Vets, just £5.00 to cover her costs.

**Ring Debbie, Pets to Vets, on 07742 585768 and discuss it further.**



### Heathfield Men's Shed

During the current lockdown, progress on the completion of the Shed facilities has obviously been put on hold, but we have been working hard to put policies and procedures in place to ensure that we can operate safely once we are able to open. We may need initially to limit the numbers attending at any one time, depending on Government guidance, but we will do all we can to allow as many Sheddors as possible to use the facilities pending a return to some sort of normality!

We are looking forward to the opportunity to welcome Sheddors back and to working more closely on projects with the Little Tinkers staff and children as soon as we can, or just to sitting and chatting with a cup of tea and a biscuit/doughnut or two!

If you would like to find out more about the Men's Shed or about becoming a member, please phone Nic Stenhouse, membership secretary on **07850 992059**