

22nd September 2017



Dear Out & About Club Member

Over the past five years we have been delighted to have served the community with the provision of the Go Out & About Club. Our volunteer drivers and escorts supported by the team in the office have run over 443 trips, provided outings for over 3,746 passengers.

There has been no local authority grant aid to help run this service so we have always depended on the generosity of local and national charitable trusts, local fundraising activity and corporate sponsors. However, they appear to prefer to help support our core services, Ring & Ride and Shopmobility which they consider “essential” services rather than “social” outings.

Of course, we believe in the benefits of this type of service which is ideal for those who are socially isolated or living on their own. It provides an opportunity to meet and talk to others which helps to reduce problems such as anxiety and depression. We know lots of new friendships have developed between clients who were at risk of becoming isolated within the community due to their mobility/transport difficulties.

The Management Board started this service because they really believed it met a need, but unfortunately, we have been forced to consider the future viability of this service. We do not have enough income and we have had ongoing difficulties in recruiting volunteer drivers. We have been running the Out & About Club service at a loss for the past 3 years, drawing upon our limited reserves to cover an annual deficit. We cannot afford to continue to draw on these reserves and so after considerable debate within the Board and with great reluctance I want to let you know ***The Out and About service will finish on October 31st.***

I am sorry to be the bearer of such disappointing news. However, we are considering some alternative, more efficient options (subject to funding) to provide new opportunities for socialising early in the New Year and we will keep you informed of any developments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Netherway', written over a white background.

David Netherway
Chairman