



**2012 has been a very busy year for all of us at the Barbara Bus Fund and the following is a round up of the various things we have done. We would like to take this opportunity of wishing all our friends and associates all the best for the festive season and for the coming year.**



**Vehicles** Early in the year we replaced 'Beth' with a new Volkswagen Caddy, very similar to 'Sue', which has slotted easily into the fleet. And then in May we took delivery of a Volkswagen T5, a departure from our usual vehicles. It can accommodate 2 wheelchairs side by side, along with 4 passengers and provides a compact solution for Care Home outings, families with more than one wheelchair user and even those with just one wheelchair but the need to take additional equipment or luggage. Initial reactions to this vehicle were mixed but it is gradually gaining in popularity. Ask for 'New Charlotte' if you want to try this one out. 'Old Charlotte' is now up for sale, so if anyone is interested please contact us in the office.

**Volunteer Drivers** have been brilliant again this year, really putting themselves out to help as many people as possible, but we really need to recruit more willing and helpful people who enjoy driving and have a little spare time. Do you know anyone who might be able to help us? Are you the person we are looking for? Please call us on 020 8416 0733 for a chat if you think you can help.

**New Charges** – the cost of fuel has been rising and falling throughout the year and we have decided to keep our mileage charge at 40p per mile for as long as we can. However, after much discussion the Trustees have agreed to introduce a minimum charge of £5 per trip when you use a volunteer driver, and additionally we will now ask passengers to pay £5 if they have to cancel the trip after the driver has set off to collect them. After all, no matter how short the drive we have to remember that the drivers have to travel from their homes to collect the vehicles before going out to pick up the passenger and fuel is used up on even the shortest run.

**Drivers Handbooks** are now issued to all drivers registering with the Fund. If we have not given you one and there is not one enclosed with this newsletter, please give us a call in the office and we will make sure you receive a copy. These handbooks are to make sure that all drivers are fully aware of the conventions and procedures of the using the Fund's vehicles.

**Barbara Buses around the UK** – our other locations – North Wales, Wakefield and Stoke Mandeville Hospital continue to grow and thrive, offering the familiar Barbara Bus service to an increasing range of disabled people. If you know of anyone in those areas who might benefit do call us at Stanmore and we can give you more information.

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**New Publicity Material** – in our newsletter last year we introduced the new logo for the Fund, which now appears on all our forms, leaflets and letterhead. All new vehicles have signwriting which incorporates this new logo and in the New Year we hope to update the existing vehicles with similar signwriting. We spent some time during the year producing new leaflets for the main fleet here at Stanmore, and our latest acquisition is a stunning Barbara Bus banner featuring a picture of Linda Liebenberg, one of our Trustees alongside the newest vehicle. If anyone is a member of a group that would like to know more about the Fund, we are happy to give a short informal presentation.

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**Donations and Gift Aid** Firstly a brief message of thanks to all the individuals and Care Homes who have made donations to us this year. Also to Waitrose in South Harrow who donated £200 via their 'Community Matters' scheme. Some of you may not be aware that there is a painless way to increase the value of any donation you make to the Fund, as long as you are a UK taxpayer. Just by completing a simple form (available from our website or from the office) you can give us another 25% at no extra cost to yourselves – you just give us a cheque for, say, £20 and we claim this 25% (ie the tax you have paid on the money) back from the Department of Revenue & Customs – making your donation worth £25 to us. So if you have not completed a form please ask us for one next time you make a donation – you only have to complete it once and it can be applied to donations in the future. As you can imagine this makes a big difference to the donations we receive over the year.

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**Quiz Supper** On a wet and windy October night about 70 people converged from far and wide on the



Flash Musicals Theatre in Edgware, where we held a very successful quiz supper evening. 11 teams enjoyed some challenging questions and the results hung on the last round, with three teams very close. The eventual winners were the 'Also Rans' – a team which just happened to include two of our Trustees! A plentiful Ploughmans Supper was served and a raffle and tombola completed the evenings entertainment. Our grateful thanks must go to Steve Pryor, the Quizmaster, Richard & Sue Holland who did all the marking and scoring, Terry from

Flash Musicals, Irene, Mel & Julia who organised the food, tombola and raffle, all those who kindly donated prizes and of course everyone who came along and supported the Barbara Bus Fund. The evening raised around £670 – fantastic considering it was the first time we had organised such an event. We hope that we might be able to organise a similar event next Autumn so let us know if you are interested and we will notify you of the date.

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**Gowrings Mobility** held a Mobility Roadshow in the autumn at the RAF Museum at Hendon, and the Barbara Bus Fund was invited to take part as a local charity – sadly the attendance was a little disappointing, but it gave us good practice setting up our new banner and laying out our new leaflets and we met some other interesting charity representatives too.

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**The Barbara Bus website** has had a makeover this year, thanks to David Bunting. The information is now presented in a clear up to date way which is more user friendly. Keep an eye on it for news and updates throughout the year at [www.barbarabus.com](http://www.barbarabus.com). E mail is [office@barbarabus.com](mailto:office@barbarabus.com) and you can now also follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

And for those of you who prefer to contact us in the traditional way, call us on **020 8416 0733** or write to us at **Barbara Bus Fund, Louis Fleischmann Building, RNOH, Brockley Hill, Stanmore HA7 4LP**.

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