

2019 Christmas newsletter



Dear Friends of the Barbara Bus Fund,

A very warm welcome to our 2019 Christmas newsletter.

I wondered how we'd follow our 50th anniversary celebratory year and newsletter so following discussions with the team and the board we concluded the only way is to share the news of what we and our users have been up to over the past year.

Since 1968



Greetings from the Chairman – Richard Holland MBE



It is nice to be able to have this opportunity to thank all involved with the on-going success of the Barbara Bus Fund. We have seen again another year of increased usage, fleet size, service coverage and a continuation of our policy to replace ageing vehicles. This only continues to be possible due to the large number of people all providing invaluable support and services in so many different ways and places.

We continue to strive to ensure we provide vehicles that make the experience for users and drivers the best we possibly can. Obviously all this comes at an increasing cost and we endeavour to maintain what makes the BBF so unique by not setting fixed charges. This is why the support we receive and fantastic fund raising completed on our behalf is so appreciated and important.

I would however like to encourage and remind users to continue to make affordable donations – especially those regular users benefiting from the service that the BBF provides. This will ensure that we can continue to help as many people as possible across the country.

Thank you and best wishes to you all for the forthcoming year.

Greetings from the Coordinator and BBF office team

We have had another fun and interesting year, time to reflect on the 50th year celebrations.

We held our regular 'coffee and cake' get-togethers with our volunteer drivers, promotional days at ASPIRE and our annual drivers meal in January which this year we again held at Zaza in Bushey.

Unfortunately there was no Buttercup Walk and we were unable to attend the QEF Mobility Event.

We are sad to say goodbye to two of our very long-term volunteer drivers Linda Hunt who is moving out of the area and thank her for her dedication, humour and unrivalled quizzing ability; and Jim Whillis who is retiring for personal reasons and thank him for his kindness, reliability and hilarious stories. We are delighted to welcome new drivers Steve Flanagan, York-Sea Liu, Peter McCabery and Phil Kerstein who are valued members of our little team.

We are also delighted to re-welcome Eric Sanger who has returned having had a few years away pursuing other activities.

As we always say, but never tire of hearing, we could not provide this service without the support of many people including the volunteer drivers and board of trustees, all of whom freely give of their time to keep the BBF wheels smoothly turning.

We also thank the supporters at our other branches including Pauline Cato and the NHS staff at the NSIC Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Sarah Coates and the NHS staff at the PRSCIC Northern General Hospital, Sheffield; Peter Hanley at SURF Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield and David Thomas who due to ever increasing demand, has managed to double his fleet of vehicles in Wales. The Wales branch is rebranding to 'Barbara Bus North Wales' to accommodate the expansion. We also thank Kendell Cars of Kings Langley, Zoomm of Kenton, PK Motors of Aylesbury, Passenger Tail Lift Servicing of Northolt, Auto Image of Kings Langley and Motor Mates of Sheffield for keeping our fleet of vehicles safe, operational and clean; Brotherwood and WarnerBus for supplying our Barbara Buses.

And of course we thank you all of you for so wonderfully giving us the work to happily and effectively fill our days. With very best wishes,

Maxine, Irene and Melanie

At a time I thought I wouldn't ever get out of hospital, use of the Barbara Bus helped me to get even better and get home. Thank you to you all for making that happen and get me home.

Thank you for the wonderful work you do!

Thank you for the kind use of your Barbara Bus in May and August enabling us to be able to take our residents out. As always they had a great time on the trips to Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Birdworld, Cotswold Wildlife Park and Boulton's Lock. Last week 25 different residents went on the trips and this is only thanks to your great charity.

My son and his team "Aspire" won all their games again!!! It is such a joy to watch them play!! May thanks.

We wanted to say thank you so much for letting us use your transport, it is really helpful.

My passenger who I looked after for nearly 35 years sadly passed away. Without Barbara Bus Fund there would be no way of supporting her, and her dear friend around so we would like very much to thank you and all concerned who work so diligently to provide this wonderful and uplifting service.

Thank you for loaning the bus to us. It made my holiday very comfortable.

On behalf of the family I would like to thank you for the special service you offer which enabled us to take many happy days out with mother over the last year or so. She really enjoyed these days out and would talk about them with the carers and other residents at her home for many days afterwards.

Following a major stroke my mother was chair bound spending over 20 hours a day alone in bed. Your amazing service allowed her to get out of her nursing home. Your facilities allowed her to spend Christmas with her family, attend grand child engagement, be present at multiple grand children birthday parties, , trip to the sea at Southend and more. I write to thank everyone involved at Barbara Bus for allowing my mother her greatest pleasures during those years. Your staff worked hard to ensure a car was available. Our family is grateful.

Such a great charity. My father was able to come to my house for the first time in 3 years thanks to this charity.

Thank you to this wonderful charity for enabling me to take my partner out for the day for the first time in 7 months. Very special.

Thank you!!!! The bus enabled us to have our first family day out since my daughter's accident.

A big thank you to everyone at Barbara Bus for helping to get my dad out and about.

Thank you so much for making it possible for my dad to leave home without an ambulance for the first time in two years - The Barbara Bus Fund is a lifeline and deserves great support.

Thank You Osborn Unit: Barbara Bus Sheffield. This bus was fantastic for getting my husband on much needed visits home and general out and about.

Great service . We wouldn't have been able to go on holiday without it . Thank you.



We were ever so excited to take Delivery of the new CHARLOTTE in March. This is a new type of vehicle for the Barbara Bus Fund and has been in high demand since its arrival on the fleet. It is a Renault Traffic converted to carry 2 wheelchairs and 4 passengers. The configuration is the same as ROSE and GEORGE which makes it much easier for drivers using different vehicles.

One of our volunteer drivers Peter McNulty organised two fundraising quizzes for the Barbara Bus Fund. One at the Three Crowns in Bushey Heath where a huge £800 was raised and a second in September at the Blue Check Restaurant in Bushey where over 100 quizzers attended and a whopping £1531 was raised. We would like to thank Peter and his wife Janet for organising and hosting these events but also all the supporters who took part, donated raffle prizes and continue to support the Barbara Bus Fund



Peter having a well-earned rest at the end of a very busy evening

We were extremely grateful to receive a cheque from The William Low Trust for £1000 which was raised at their 2018 Christmas ball. The Barbara Bus Fund is honoured to have supported William and his family during his final months.



<https://www.thewilliamlowtrust.co.uk/>
Maxine, Irene and Melanie accepting the cheque from Richard Green

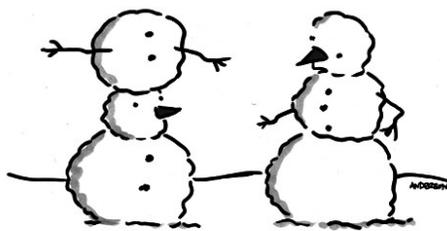
In June, a little later than hoped, we took delivery of the new BETH. This is a Ford Tourneo Connect converted to carry 1 wheelchair and 3 passengers. It is an updated version of the existing Fords and comes with keyless ignition.

This year from November 2018 to October 2019 we saw 1047 volunteer drives carried out by our volunteer drivers and 1822 self-drives. We also carried out 133 vehicle demonstrations

We attended the 4th RNOH Open Day held in the Herbert Seddon Teaching Centre. Thank you to everyone who helped on the day. <https://www.rnoh.nhs.uk/research-innovation/stammore-open-day>

We would like to remember those passengers and friends who have died this year; we have lost some long-term and very much respected friends and users, some who have been associated with the Barbara Bus Fund from the very beginning and who over the many years of their connection with the Fund became good friends.

As ever, demand for services continues to grow so if you, or someone you know, would like to support the Barbara Bus Fund by way of volunteer driving or becoming a trustee, please contact coordinator@barbarabus.com for further information. We look forward to hearing from you.



"You should see someone about that."

Please continue to send us photographs of your journeys out and about. We display them on the office walls throughout the year and at the end of the year they are put into a folder and a new display is started.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and best wishes for the new year

Contact

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<https://www.facebook.com/Barbara-Bus-Fund-1248706611874500/>

You can donate by:

Sending a cheque to the BBF Head Office at RNOH

Making a donation via www.justgiving.com/bbf