



Hello everyone,

Continuing our “walk through” of the various activities, groups and services that make up The Debenham Project, this month it is the turn of our volunteer transport service.

As we all know, living in a rural area, having access to a car has become a virtual necessity. We are fortunate in Debenham that we still have limited bus services to Ipswich, Stowmarket, Eye and Diss although these are being challenged by the cut-backs. Taxis can prove very expensive, the “Hospital Car Service” has all but disappeared, and although “Connecting Communities” offers a volunteer-based car and minibus service in this area it can be difficult for them to find a local driver. With this in mind, we set up our own informal transport arrangement specifically to support those who need to attend medically related appointments – hospital, clinics, physio, optician, dental, etc. The aim is to make it just the same as if it were a personal friend giving you a lift, staying with you while you attend your appointment, and then returning you to your home – someone you know and who knows you. Of course, if a relative or friend can be available, that is great but that is not always possible. As it is a voluntary service, the only cost is mileage and parking.

Our 10 volunteer drivers are wonderfully giving of their time but they all have their lives to live and their own appointments to keep. So we try to only ask when we really need them. So far there has only been one occasion when we were unable to help, although I have to admit that it has been quite difficult at times and I have to ask one or two volunteers to do more than I would wish. It would be great to have two or three more, especially ladies, so that I don’t need to call on anyone more than a couple of times a month. Over the last year we have taken over 20 local people to attend more than 80 appointments around the county. On behalf of all of them, and of course The Debenham Project, to all our drivers, thank you so very much.

Turning to other items, The Wolsey Theatre is giving a Relaxed Performance on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> at 1.30pm of the “The LadyKillers” - comedy farce. A Relaxed Performance is one which has been carefully adjusted to reduce anxiety or stress for those who might otherwise find the experience unsettling or difficult. I recommend it to anyone who looks after someone with dementia, mental health, autism, sensory and communication needs and/or a learning disability who might be reluctant for a variety of reasons to attend public theatre performances. Please click here to find out more - <https://www.wolseytheatre.co.uk/shows/the-ladykillers/>

Finally, I must especially thank dance artists Karen Louise Pratt and Anna Rowe for their two wonderful performances of “The Seedlings Dance Story” at Woodlands Gardens in Little Blakenham in aid of The Debenham Project.

And don’t forget that if you need to borrow a wheelchair, just ask.

With best wishes, Lynden

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[www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk)