



Older People Active Lives

Driving on OPAL business

Information for Volunteers who;

- Collect and drive OPAL members to OPAL Club or to OPAL events



Aims of this information sheet

- To provide some guidance and practical tips for volunteer drivers.

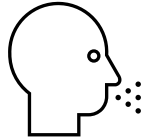
Please note

- It is each volunteer driver's responsibility to make sure that their car is in good working order, insured, taxed with a MOT if applicable.
- We ask that you and any passengers refrain from smoking in your vehicle before, during or while waiting to drive, because it can be unpleasant for members and could aggravate any respiratory conditions members may have.

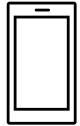


Older People Active Lives

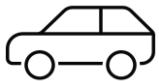
Some Useful Tips when Collecting a Club Member in your Car



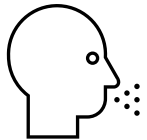
Please report to your Organiser any illness that might put your passenger(s) at risk and/or any medication that might affect your ability to drive.



Please carry your mobile phone (if you have one) charged and switched on. Let your Organiser know if you change your number at any point.



If you have to park on the street, please park your car if possible with the passenger door adjacent to the pavement.



When collecting a member from their home, please check how they are feeling. If they are unwell, do not bring them to the Club, but report this to your Organiser who will establish if they need any assistance, a doctor's appointment and/or inform a family member. If they are ill in transit, please report this to your Organiser who will decide the next action to take.



If your vehicle breaks down, or is involved in an accident, with a member on board endeavour to pull off the road as far as possible, let your Organiser know asap, and call the relevant recovery or emergency services. Try to offer as much reassurance to the member as you can.

Some Useful Tips when Collecting a Club Member in your Car

- Before escorting them to your car, please ask them how much help and support they would like. Check what walking aids they need and if this can be accommodated safely in your car.
- Before leaving their house please make sure the property is secure, that they have all they need for the day and a key to get back in. (Please note the onus is on the member).
- Members need varying amounts of support, but please escort them into the Club and make sure fellow volunteers have accepted them in safely, remembering any steps or doors that need negotiating.
- On returning home, please see the member to the door and safely inside their house, making sure they are happy and feel safe to be left. Report any concerns to your Organiser. Members may refuse any help but please wait and see they are safely inside.
- It may be useful to carry a chair seat cover with you for the unlikely event that a member has an accident. Hopefully this wouldn't occur, but has on rare occasions in the past. These seat covers can be machine washed if necessary, and can be provided by your Organiser.



Older People Active Lives

No reply at the door when collecting a Member from home

This can be a worrying situation, but it might just be that they have forgotten to let us know that they won't be coming to the Club that day. However we need to be sure. It is important to follow up and find out the whereabouts of a member who was expected and doesn't answer the door. Actions to take;



In these situations, please ring your Organiser or the Club and let them know. The Organiser may be able to contact the Member's family for further information.



Look through windows and letterboxes. If you can see the member try banging on the window as they might not have heard you knock on the door.



Try phoning the member.



Enquire with the neighbours.



Go round the back of the property.



In case of real anxiety, eg you can see the member but they are unresponsive, ring 999.



Older People Active Lives

Assisting members in and out of your car

Bear in mind members could have memory problems, sight or hearing problems, and/or have suffered a stroke, have balance problems.

- Ensure the path to the car is clear of obstacles.
- Where appropriate offer the arm of assistance and reassurance to and from the car.
- Assist the member by opening the car door and guiding them to sit down. Use the “sit first, legs second” technique by having them back up to the seat and sit down facing outwards before swivelling their legs in one at a time, supporting their weaker leg from behind the knee if necessary.
- Be aware that they don’t bang the back of their head sitting down in your car and that the skin on their lower legs could be delicate and prone to injury/ulcer.
- If required, assist the member with putting their seat belt on.
- Please read the Helping People Move Safely information sheet for further details.

Thank you for volunteering as a driver and assisting the members in such a vital way. Lack of access to transport is the biggest obstacle to older people and often prevents them from having a social life and seeing the outside world.