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Grassington and District Helping Hands started life in 1986 – 36 years ago this September. The object of Helping Hands, as in our constitution, is to “bring help and comfort to those in need in Wharfedale and the adjacent areas”. That help includes transporting the sick to hospitals and medical centres, opticians, dentists, chiropodists.

In 2018 we successfully completed 406 journeys enabled by 40 volunteers. Broadly speaking our aim is to not to call upon a driver more than once a month.

As we all know, life has been very different these past two years. This has also impacted on Helping Hands and we have been unable to offer our services as previously.

Moving forward, there are a number of changes: -

- We have a new chairman (Norman Cooke) and Treasurer (Andy Thornton).
- Our secretary Babs Peacock remains in post and her husband Geoff (who resigned his position to Norman Cooke) is now vice-chairman enabling a smooth transition.
- THE NUMBER OF DRIVERS HAS SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED as we try to resume our objectives. To this end (and at this stage) we will only offer assistance to those needing support to medical appointments. Furthermore, we are struggling (for a variety of reasons) to offer assistance to those who require transport further afield at present. The limit of our assistance at this time will *only* include Grassington Medical Centre, Skipton Hospital, Airedale Hospital, Yorkshire Clinic and Ilkley Medical Centre.
- Choosing to live in a rural community – as I have chosen to do – brings many advantages to quality of life. Unfortunately, and for any number of reasons some people can struggle to get to medical appointments. This is what our current focus is trying to address.

This is an appeal to anyone who is reading this document. If you live in Wharfedale or Littondale, between Burnsall/Rylstone and Beckermonds/Halton Gill and feel you could offer or might be interested in offering your services as a volunteer driver we would very much like to hear from you. The more drivers we have the fewer requests we should receive as individuals.

If you should feel able to support us please email me and I will arrange to come and discuss this further with you. All drivers are reimbursed for mileage charges (from your home) and any parking charges. All drivers have to be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) checked before they can work for Helping Hands (this is paid for by Helping Hands).

Thank you for your time in reading this document, if you feel you can help please do get in touch with me.

Thank you,

Norman Cooke.

Chairman, Helping Hands.