



Abingdon Mayor Making 2024

2023-24 Mayor's Awards

Awards are to be presented as follows. Please note that details are printed as supplied.

Mayor's awards

Roger Baker

Roger Baker is one of Oxfam's longest serving volunteers with 55 years of loyal and dedicated service to both Oxfam and the local community. The Abingdon shop, run entirely by volunteers, opened in May 1969 and Roger, then a full time Maths and Physics teacher at Abingdon School, offered to help after school hours with the shop's end-of-day cashing up. This role morphed into becoming treasurer when decimal currency was introduced in 1971. The shop moved location twice, with Roger being heavily involved each time.

When Roger retired from teaching, he was able and willing to devote more time to Oxfam. His role has expanded to include serving customers, making display equipment, maintaining the fabric of the shop and anything else required to make the shop a success, in addition to his financial role. He has unfailingly adapted to changing systems and requirements and continues to maintain the shop's financial integrity.

In many ways, Roger has been an unofficial deputy manager, and THE go-to person for any operational issues to do with the shop. Now in his nineties, Roger is likely to be found in the Oxfam shop for several hours most days of the week. In his own words Roger says, "It is my shop, and the friendship of all who work there is most important to me." We know how much Roger values the role he plays to promote and support this very worthwhile charity and is delighted when the shop does particularly well.

Judy Hashman

Abingdon Volunteer Drivers celebrated its 50 Anniversary in November 2023 and one of its longest standing volunteers was Judy Hashman who had been volunteering for over 20 years and was the backbone of the society.

Judy started volunteering in 2003, first as a driver and then, in addition to driving, taking on the role as committee secretary in 2013. She developed the secretarial administrative role to include interviewing and inducting new drivers, issuing drivers with paperwork and permits to park at various hospitals. She liaised with Oxford County Council to obtain an allocation of

blue badges for drivers to use and notified various hospitals of driver's car registration numbers so they could access free parking.

She was honoured to accept this award not only for the volunteering she herself undertook, but also for those past, present and all future volunteers. Sadly, since her acceptance, Judy has died and her posthumous certificate is being collected by her son and his family.

Frank Jordan

Frank began helping at Abingdon lock over 12 years ago, informally at first but within a year he was in official uniform and there every day. Our river and the lock have long been a beautiful place to visit but Frank's tireless hospitality elevated it beyond the norm. Every visitor whether new, passing through or every day is greeted by Frank with a friendly enthusiasm that is his trademark.

In the time Frank has been volunteering he has helped and supported so many members of staff and other volunteers. He has encouraged new volunteers to join and existing ones to continue. So many boaters on the river will tell you they started boating after a visit to Abingdon and even more travel the length of the river just to see Frank.

From providing lollipops for children who wear life jackets, biscuits for hundreds of keen canines, jokes and directions for walkers and boundless enthusiasm for boaters, Frank puts his heart and soul into every minute he spends at the lock.

Amongst boaters Abingdon lock has become known as the friendliest on the Thames. They just call Frank 'The Legend'.



DAWN – Didcot, Abingdon & Wantage Talking Newspaper

DAWN is a registered charity which provides weekly audio recordings of local news for the blind and partially sighted in the Didcot, Abingdon and Wantage area. DAWN is one of over 520 talking newspaper groups around the country and has been offering a continuous service to its listeners for 31 years.

Run and funded entirely by volunteers and the local community, news from various local sources is recorded every Wednesday at the Abingdon Wellbeing Centre. It is then distributed to its listeners on memory sticks via the Royal Mail free service for the blind. All recipients are given a free device for listening to the recordings.

The Mayors of Abingdon, Didcot and Wantage have been patrons of DAWN since 1993 and have given generous support over the years. The presentation of the Mayoral Award by Mayor Gwyneth Lewis is a great honour and recognises the dedication and enthusiasm of all the DAWN volunteers.



Abingdon Mayor Making 2024

Mayor's Charities

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Mayor's charity for 2023 - 2024



Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse works to strengthen our community's capacity to safeguard and support adults and children who are at risk in their own homes. Our core aim is the safety and empowerment of victims of domestic abuse and of the people who support them.

We have developed an approach that combines intensive one-on-one specialist support for victims and survivors at high-risk, support for victims attending court - this includes support through the criminal process, support to access a civil protection order i.e. non molestation or occupation order.

Support for professionals, businesses, and volunteers this is through a county-wide Network of over 1,800 Reducing the Risk Domestic Abuse Champions from a wide range of services across Oxfordshire.

We have recently introduced a community based Domestic Abuse Friends Project that gives community members the tools to be able to support friends, neighbours, and family members.

Mayor's charities for 2024 - 2025



One Planet Abingdon provides a vibrant community place where people can come together to promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical, natural, and social environments in the town of Abingdon for the public benefit of its residents and the wider community.

Builds community ties by working collaboratively with local groups and individuals to educate the public, local business and other local bodies on the impact and mitigation of, as well as adaptation to, climate, ecological and social challenges.

Developing understanding and creating a sense of purpose to act on the climate, ecological and social issues that affect us all in order to deliver positive changes within our lives and in the town of Abingdon leading to a sustainable, enjoyable and positive future.

Abingdon and District Volunteer Centre

The Abingdon & District Volunteer Centre started in November 1973, and received registration from the Charity Commission in January 1977.

The very first request for driving assistance was made on 20 November 1973.

Compared to 50 years ago where 274 requests for drives were received in the first year, we now take approximately 1,560 a year.

Demand for our services is far higher but we are constrained by the number of volunteer drivers we can recruit. Pre 2020 we had 26 drivers regularly volunteering for us, but currently we only have 13 drivers. Our main focus for the year is to recruit drivers. We have identified a number of new avenues for recruitment and the support of the Mayor will be crucial to our success. Once we have a larger number of drivers our future plans will include establishing a computer-based booking system for the office and drivers, and the facility to make electronic payment for clients.

We offer fixed charges for drives based on where the client lives and where they are going. Our charges are set at a level, which cover our overheads, and are reviewed annually. These charges are far lower than taxi fares and our clients have the added peace of mind knowing the driver will be waiting to take them home after their appointment.

We have widened our field of operation in recent times due to both NHS funded appointments in private facilities and the building of many housing estates in local villages. We now take clients from as far afield as Longworth and Kingston Bagpuize to appointments in Banbury, Reading, London, in addition to the local Oxford hospitals and other medical services.

We accept requests for drives to any medical appointment including GP surgeries, dentists, opticians, vaccinations, dementia clinics, chiropractors etc. We also take clients to hospitals for surgery. If their appointment is over two hours we return when they have been discharged. This does incur a double charge, but our clients are more than satisfied with the service we offer.