

## Transport



Over the years Royal Voluntary Service has provided transport schemes, putting volunteers in touch with people who had no other means of getting from A to B and back again. They have run a vital service keeping older people actively involved in their communities as well as taking them to medical appointments.

In July 1942 the Ministry for Homeland Security asked WVS to run the Volunteer Car Pool (VCP), by 1944 there were over 570 VCP schemes across Britain.<sup>1</sup> A lot of this work involved transporting people to hospital.

The VCP ended around May/June 1945 however WVS, with other organisations such as St John's Ambulance, started the Hospital Car Service (HCS), which began in Oxfordshire on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1945.<sup>2</sup>

In the late 1960s WVS ran campaigns for transport services such as Spare-a-Mile which provided vehicles to take older people shopping. The official Social Transport Scheme (Country Cars in Wales) was launched by WRVS in 1970.<sup>3</sup> Volunteer drivers in the 1970s would provide transport for any journeys other than trips to hospital which was still covered by the HCS.

By 1984, however, WRVS had moved away from HCS and the work was absorbed into the Social Transport Scheme. The scheme was renamed the Community Transport Service in 1995.<sup>4</sup> Over 60,000 lifts were given as part of WRVS services in 2009, in the same year the charity ran a 'Give us a Lift' campaign to recruit volunteer drivers.<sup>5</sup>

Royal Voluntary Service still provides transport for older people to hospital, doctor appointments, shopping and even sporting events through its community transport schemes.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RVS A&HC, Report of Ten Years Work for the Nation 1938-1948

<sup>2</sup> RVS A&HC, *ibid*, Letter 4 June 1945, HCS Oxfordshire Report for Three Months, October 1945

<sup>3</sup> RVS A&HC, 682, Headquarters Annual Reports, 1978-1986

<sup>4</sup> RVS A&HC, 682, Headquarters Annual Reports, 1978-1986

<sup>5</sup> RVS A&HC, Time Line the First 75 Years ..., Give Us a Lift Campaign 2009, *opt. cit.*, 2013. RVS A&HC, Time Line the First 75 Years ..., Give Us a Lift Campaign 2009, [www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/about-us/our-history/interactive-timeline](http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/about-us/our-history/interactive-timeline), October 2015.

<sup>6</sup> RVS website, Community Transport, <http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/get-help/getting-out-and-about/community-transport>, October 2015