

Albram Secretary report July 2021.

My report will focus on the monumental effort made by our volunteers who marshalled the car parks, Roadways, and pavements to ensure that the high safety standard was achieved to all users both whilst parking their cars and walking to and from the surgery to the hall and back to their cars at the end. Plus, to the observers inside the hall that gave valuable reassurance and care to all those that received a vaccination.

More drivers wished they could have volunteered but the severity of Covid 19 prevented them from helping in either protecting themselves or another.

The Band of volunteers started off in January when it was dark in the morning at around 7.30am and was dark when they finished at 6pm. Pouring rain, sleet, hailstones snow blizzards and freezing cold temperatures could not stop this band of committed volunteers. The first group of patients to attend the centre were over 80 years of age who had been isolating for all most a year. Vulnerable, some with poor mobility arrived braving what lied ahead but in good character soldiered on, even arriving some 30 minutes or so early. They queued in the inclement weather, but many simply wanted to talk to strangers not for reassurance but to chat away and begin that long road to what became know as the new normal. Some seemed not to want to leave and return home to carry on sheltering. They were full of smiles, laughter, and huge amounts of thanks to everyone helping.

Over the next 6 months the work continued and the volunteers tirelessly committing to their roles no matter how long a shift or which post they took on. Towards the end the volunteers bonded to the task and did not need instruction, just turned up and marched to a post and got on with it carrying that smile and banter with all patients arriving regardless of the circumstances. The last few weeks the sun lotion was required or a large broad brimmed hat to shelter from the sun. Hot tea and coffee changed to cool drinks and water. Yes, they did it all.

Every volunteer gave maximum hours they could afford, always informed me if they could not make their commitment and sometimes arrange for another in replacement. No one wanted to let the side down. When I used to phone them to fill up the next schedule. I got an instant answer or as normality began to appear on the horizon the mobile phone came to use and text message became the preferred contact method.

Many thanks to the surgery staff supporting the volunteers with beverages, biscuits, and cake.

Thanks to Tony Farrow for coordinating and creating signage and maintenance to the ground markings.

17 Albram volunteers gave their time and gave a total of 1054.5hrs