

**On June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau was delighted to be awarded a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS 2016). This was out of 194 awarded in the UK as a whole of which 9 were in Berkshire.**

***The citation given was: "for helping elderly and mobility-restricted residents attend medical and social appointments using volunteers' own cars"***

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was created in 2002 in celebration of Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee and announced on the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. Its purpose is to recognize groups of individuals who give their time freely for the benefit of others. It is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon groups of this kind and is equivalent in status to the MBE. As such, the Queen's Award not only serves to provide recognition of volunteer groups, but also demonstrates the high respect in which volunteering is held.

**The Official Presentation Ceremony** took place on the 28th September 2016 at Shaw House in Newbury. **HRH the Duke of Gloucester** presented the nine Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service in Berkshire. Each group received a certificate signed by Her Majesty the Queen and a domed English glass crystal. We also have permission to use the QAVS logo insignia on all our publications.

Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau (EVDB) was represented at the ceremony by Volunteers from the management committee: Elaine Spratling, Jan Walshaw, Rittu Pawar, Sue Gatenby, Pam Meens, Christine Hallett and Mary Blustin. After the formal presentations we were able to chat to the Duke, as well as the Lord Lieutenant, his Deputies and the Borough Mayors. Earlier in the Summer Elaine (Chairman) and Mary (Secretary) had also been invited to a Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace. Both occasions were most enjoyable.

Well done everyone!. We were all very proud to represent our Volunteers, present and past, in receiving this prestigious reward.. EVDB first came into existence in 1982 (initially called Earley Volunteer Care Bureau), so this Award recognizes the efforts, kindness and goodwill of the many volunteers who have been involved.

Earley Town Council originally nominated us for the award. We greatly value the the appreciation we have received from so many clients and others in the community over the years. This support is very important to volunteers for their continued enjoyment and motivation in carrying out a vital service.