

## **Award Winning Richard !!!**

At the recent Devon Community Transport Awards, Blackdown Support Group volunteer, Richard Jeffery was presented with a Volunteer Car Driver award, presented to those who are deemed to go 'above and beyond' in the world of volunteer driving.

The citation which resulted in Richard's award reads as follows:

*In his quiet and unassuming way, Richard epitomises all that the Blackdown Support Group stands for. He has been working for us for 7 years and drives most days, he often does multiple trips in one day to several appointments as well as fitting in trips to our local daycare centre and regular lunch clubs. He is thoughtful and kind and nothing is too much trouble for him: he always brings lovely cooking apples into the office for us in the Autumn!*

*He transports some passengers who have complex needs and they feel comfortable and confident that he will take good care of them. Many passengers request him specifically. He is always top of our list when we need to get someone to the doctor at short notice and we would be lost without him.*

*He does so much more than driving though, he offers friendship and support beyond driving that is so vital in the isolated rural area we cover.*

*One of our passengers describes how he helps her:*

*"Richard is always punctual and skilled at getting me up the four difficult steps from my home, into the lane and somehow into his car – he is strong and I completely trust him not to let me fall. If I have to visit the nurse it is a long walk from reception – Richard walks with me without me having to ask for help. On returning home he gets me out of the car, opens up the house and doesn't leave until he sees me safely into the kitchen and sitting down.*

*Richard always brings in my milk so I don't have to wobble out to get it and he always sees that my recycling is put out into the lane and the bins are back in place so I can reach them. Even as an inpatient at my local hospital, I was staggered to see Richard's smiling face bringing me the Sunday papers!*

*Without Richard's help I would not have been able to manage" – Susan, 92*

Very well done and many congratulations Richard, and thank you from all of us at the Blackdown Support Group!