

Moreton Pinkney through Lockdown

What strange times these are. Who would have dreamt that we would have spent the last 5 months the way we have. We are even becoming accustomed to our social distancing way of life.

I believe that most, if not all, inhabitants of Moreton Pinkney will be feeling how blessed we are to live here.

A most amazing community spirit exists and I would like to relay to you some of the ideas and events which have taken place as proof of that opinion.

Very early in lockdown the Parish Council, who have continued their meeting through 'Zoom', gathered some volunteers who were happy to give a contact number, which was then distributed to every home in the village. I have recently found out that very few calls were ever made to those numbers because there were already in existence some 'What'sApp' groups who were lively in looking after some very elderly and vulnerable neighbours.

One couple volunteered to deliver all medications from our local GP Surgery, so that no one needed to venture out for those.

One lady forester cut many branches of Ash when she was working: to give to neighbours as a reminder of what 2 meters actually looks like.

There is a very lively Facebook page which gave many the opportunities to ask, when shopping, if anyone needed anything.

The Garden Club, which most people in the village belong to, has been extremely busy. They have a Facebook page of their own and have been busy, through that, swapping plants, seedlings and ideas.

One Garden Club member came up with the idea to grow 'Sunflowers for Solidarity' and two seeds were delivered to every home. The final results, put out to the front of our houses last weekend, were amazing. Well over 100 sunflowers could be seen as you walk through the village. Several were marked out with names of individuals to be thanked or simply solidarity with the NHS.



Several children joined in with this initiative, or their own, which was prettily painting rocks with messages of thanks etc. These were left around the village for people to spot whilst out walking.



The aforementioned Garden Club, in their regular weekly update, also took the initiative to send out recipes, which caused great competition within the village. Similarly they asked for Limericks to be composed and sent to them. There were so many entries that it was necessary to put one or two on to Facebook every day for several weeks.

Many were very amusing.

We've got a pet rock, ain't that sweet?
I've spotted a few down our street.
He sits by our arch
He's been there since March.
Come and see, but do mind your feet!

We had really big plans at the start
Learnt Italian! Bake bread! Take up art!
But we sat on our bums
And Zoomed all our chums
And all of our plans fell apart.

We live far away from the coast
Do I mind? Not a jot, less than most
So happy to be
In Moreton Pinkney
So sad for the rest, mustn't boast.

Food collections have been made throughout lockdown and beyond. Donations were left in the church porch, and each week being taken to the Hope Centre in Northampton to help vulnerable and homeless people.

Two ladies in the village decided to make face masks which were sold within the village and beyond. The money that they raised also being donated to the Hope Centre and Medicines Sans Frontieres. The amount raised so far is almost £900 and still rising. Very well done ladies.

Not to be outdone by Covid, the villagers organised their own 'stay at home' street parties to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day in May. Wandering through the village that day was a joy to see bunting and parties everywhere, all distanced, of course.



Once again, thanks to our lively village Facebook page (Moreton Pinkney Matters) a villager suggested a particular day that we should leave out a gratuity for the post lady and another for our dustmen. They were extremely touched to see envelopes left out for them.



We all sent in photos of our 'personal best' flowers and plants and a collage was made up each month.



Our 'Spring Garden' competition took place 'virtually' this year with photographs of entries. However not wanting to sacrifice our annual Horticultural Show (the 78th uninterrupted show) it went ahead last weekend with over 270 entries of flowers, fruits, vegetables, handicraft and cookery. As always judgements were made behind closed doors but during the afternoon over 70 villagers arrived with masks to view the products with a one way system adhered to and limited numbers. A great success.



Many of us had a very pleasant outing, again for the many gardening enthusiasts, to Admington House, about 40 minutes from here. The original plan was for a coach trip there, but all having to make their own way didn't distract from an enjoyable afternoon with tea and a private viewing of a lovely garden.

A book exchange seemed to form all by itself in the bus shelter. A blessing to many, I am sure.

The wonderful spirit in Moreton Pinkney was obvious to see every Thursday evening at 8.00pm when we all stood outside our front doors to applaud the NHS. A huge turn out each week and a chance to wave to our neighbours from afar.

We are fortunate to have a regular mobile shop making a weekly visit. Based in Culworth, a few miles away, it is easy to phone in an order and have fresh produce delivered to your doorstep. Similarly a fresh fish man arrives weekly from Grimsby, so we want for nothing in Moreton Pinkney.

A monthly visit from the fish & chip van completes the service, always popular, so a socially distanced queue forms.



We are planning another social gathering before winter sets in. This coming weekend we are having a 'Village Picnic'. Asking neighbours to bring their own refreshments and a blanket, the field will be marked out to respect distancing. Another chance to chat to friends and neighbours with one or two socially distancing games to enjoy. Hope the weather is kind to us.

All in all Moreton Pinkney has stepped up to the challenge that Covid-19 has thrown at us. With our beautiful surrounding countryside and pretty villages, I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

Jane Wheeler
August 2020