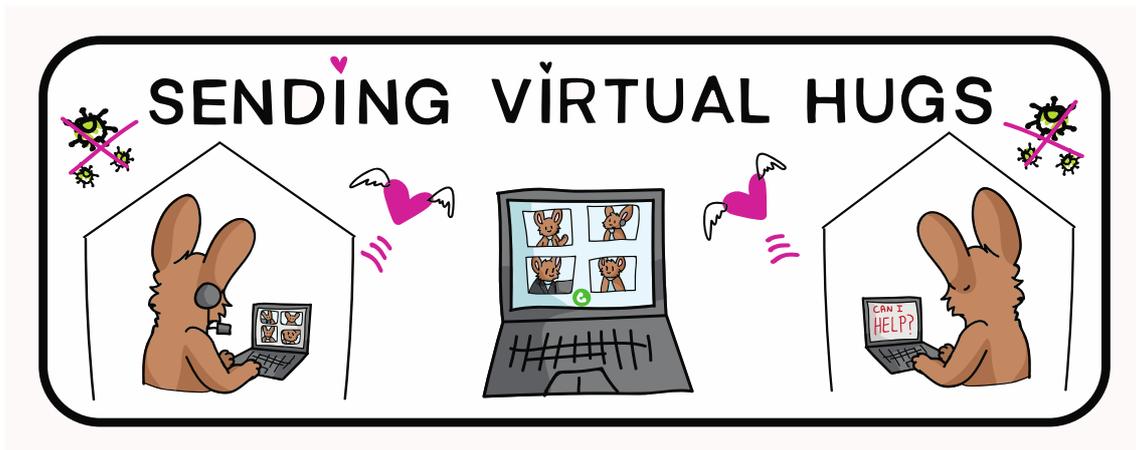


The Avening Community Coronavirus Team

Neighbourhood Network Newsletter #5



Hello!

Is it my imagination, or is our Clap for Carers getting louder? Saying ‘thank you’ to those on the frontline – and there are so many in Avening – has become an important part of village life. Meals are planned around it; TV programmes paused; spoons and saucepans dug out of cupboards. This week, **Jim Hill** also cued in those within ear-shot to sing Happy Birthday in recognition of the wonderful Captain Tom Moore’s 100th birthday.

Saying ‘thank you’ and recognising the incredible efforts of people doing remarkable things during lockdown is important. From the start these newsletters have acknowledged the outstanding job that the village’s frontline workers are doing in hospitals, care homes, supermarkets and the services they are providing from collecting rubbish to keeping The Bell open. At the outset of the crisis, many people in Avening stepped up to volunteer to help those less able to cope with the likely restrictions, or dusted off skills and used them in new ways. This community spirit was recognised this week by our Cotswold District Councillor **Richard Morgan** who interviewed **Tony Slater**, **Elizabeth Buchanan** and **Gerald South** for a blog about life under lockdown in his ward. You can see the blog here: <https://www.facebook.com/369104503510182/videos/638309936750187/>

Recognising the many different ways people are making a difference inspired **Katy Upton** to search out six home-grown ‘Lockdown Heroes’ to receive one of her beautiful handmade cards. There was no shortage of nominees, recognising what Celia Carter writing in the Villager, describes as the ‘thousand acts of kindness at this dark time’. But difficult choices were made, and cards sent. **Sarah Mulligan** is an NHS Paramedic re-deployed from Cirencester hospital to Brockworth Covid testing base and got her card in recognition of the

part she plays in getting NHS heroes back to work. **Phoebe Carter** was thanked for ‘taking us into the outside world’ with her Facebook site Wild About Avening and ‘giving us the opportunity to take joy from nature’. **Avening School** was recognised for its work serving the community especially the children and families in most need. And our postman **Rich** got his very well-deserved pat on the back for continuing to deliver our letters and parcels during lockdown – and perhaps more importantly, for being such a friendly and cheerful face!

Your editor was also lucky enough to receive one of Katy’s cards. I don’t save lives or do anything truly heroic, but like so many people in the village am just trying to do my best during the crisis. On behalf of all the nominees, thank you for recognising our efforts. It means the world to us.

Around Gloucestershire

As we stagger from April into May, many of are coming to terms with the cancellation of our summer festival fixes. First the serious stuff.... Citizen’s Advice has put together some advice, which is worth reading if you’re having difficulties claiming refunds or unsure of your rights when it comes to rescheduled performances:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/somethings-gone-wrong-with-a-purchase/if-you-want-a-refund-because-of-coronavirus/>

The government’s Competition and Markets Authority has launched an inquiry into cancellation policies. It is focusing first on weddings, holiday lets, and childcare and nurseries but is inviting anyone struggling with cancellation policies to share their experience:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-cma-to-investigate-cancellation-policy-concerns>

Enough of the money matters. What about the holes in our diaries that these cancellations have left? The world might be just a click away, but don’t forget performers and events closer to home:

None nearer than our own musicians. Such a treat last Sunday to walk into Sandford Leaze and catch **Tom Fryer’s** ‘garden set’. Then there’s **Brian Jones** on the harmonica; **Jim Hill** on his trombone; sax-player **Chris Redpath**; and **Emma Hetterley** playing Over the Rainbow on her flute. So much talent!

The **Tetbury Goods Shed** is running a #Shutdown Showcase, which includes live events such as a performance by blues guitarist Keith Thompson last Wednesday (it even has a button where you can tip performers). <https://shed-arts.co.uk>

The **Cheltenham Jazz Festival** and **WOMAD** have put together Spotify playlists featuring their now-cancelled 2020 line-ups. Not the same as live performances, but much better than nothing! Cheltenham Jazz festival playlist:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/48hmDSZZkxgmJFqh1DqeCL?si=j9EmFWJTQ7y6HnhW6hHrhw>. WOMAD 2020 playlist:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7k9qL1PFa4W8YrNIKaSw8D?si=fucKgWOHRua497mY4SOqnQ>

Our hearts go out to **Gifford's Circus**, <https://www.giffordscircus.com> which is not only coming to terms with Nell Gifford's death last December but also the postponement of their summer programme. One of their most popular performers, Tweedy the Clown, is featured on Cirencester's **Barn Theatre's** website:

<https://www.facebook.com/theBarnTheatreCirencester/videos/936785696757250/>.

Bath Festival is cancelled for May, but rescheduling many events to later this and into next year. It is also involved with the Big Book Weekend – the world's first virtual literary festival – which is completely free: <https://myvlf.com>.

And if you want to experience the first ever festival curated by an artificial intelligence curator (AIDA) look no further than the **Cheltenham Science Festival**, online on 2-7 June. <https://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/news/2020/04/announcing-cheltenham-science-festival-home/>

Finally, the Forest Live performances at **Westonbirt** this year have been cancelled, but a quick check of the Forestry England website suggests other – potentially much needed - ways of engaging with the arboretum:

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/wellbeing-activities>.

After all this rain there you'll easily find patches of mud around the village to wallow in if you want the full festival vibe. Or sit outside in the car for an hour if you want to recapture the whole 'getting-out-of-the-Westonbirt-car-park-after-Paul-Weller' experience. Enjoy!

Around the Village

A growing number of residents are getting stuck into plans for the Stay at Home Street Party VE Day celebration on May 8th. Homes in Sandford Leaze, Point Road, West End, Woodstock Lane and Powis Lane are getting out the red-white-and-blue bunting; **Mel Young** ([music_mel@yahoo.com](mailto:mel@yahoo.com)) is burning celebration CDs; and the Community Café's **Sandra Hetterley** (sandrahett06@gmail.com) and **Clare Bebbington** (ccbebb@gmail.com) are using precious supplies of flour to bake cheese scones and cupcakes for the occasion for anyone ordering by noon on 7th - with all profits going to the Café charities.

The May edition of **The Villager** has one of the most tranquil images of life under lockdown we've seen. **Marion Leach** describes her photo of **Jim Hill** playing We Shall Overcome as 'a very moving and a wonderful example of fellowship in Avening.' Congratulations to the editors for creating such an entertaining read and a great record of this strangest of months.

Mel Scotford, whom many will know for her work behind and in front of the bar at the Social Club, completed 2600 skips for the 2.6 charity challenge this week. The final four minutes were captured by her employer Randall and Payne.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=224175732145885>.

The Villager shared news of another 2.6 Challenger, **George Hookham** of Nags Head, who ran 2.6 miles every day for 10 days to raise money for Longfield Hospice. George smashed his target on 26th April and has raised £1339 already, but if you'd like to donate, you can do so via his Just Giving page. <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/georgehookham>

After the success of their Tuesday Zoom coffee mornings, the **Community Café** has branched into afternoon teas, with their first Crafty Café Zoom on Thursday. **Lil Adams**, who has hosted some very popular craft sessions at the Café, guided participants through a very happy 90 minutes carving bars of soap. Lil will return with – we hope – an origami afternoon in the near future. For all things Café-related check out their Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/aveningcafe/?modal=admin_todo_tour

Some of us might be getting to grips with Zoom and the like, but **Atlanta Rayner** continues to champion the joy of the written word with a lockdown pen pal scheme for the village, aiming to link younger and older residents. Her own daughter **Lola** has been in regular correspondence with **Celia Carter** – with both getting tremendous pleasure from the exchange of letters. If you'd like to join in, please send your name, address and any drop off point for the letters to Atlanta and she will do the matching! Contact atlantarayner@gmail.com.

Christine Howell delivered the latest tray of cookies to Avening School on Tuesday. Chocolate and vanilla pinwheel biscuits we hear....Every week one of the brilliant Café bakers bakes a treat for the staff and kids thanks to **Mandy Slater** who organises the 'Cake Bank'!

The last cuddly toy looking for a good home disappeared from the book box outside 6 Old Hill on Sunday. Thanks go to **Chandy Rodgers** for bringing so many happy surprises to children out on their daily exercise. We are sure that the Rodgers family's teddies, rabbits and rag dolls have gone from one good home to others.

All you beautiful people have helped raise over £200 for the two Avening Community Cafe charities at the plant and seed stall outside Number 14 High Street, run by **Elizabeth Buchanan**. The Mark Townsend Trust <https://themarktownsendcharitabletrust.com> and Stroud Women's Refuge <http://www.stroudwomensrefuge.org> are doing incredible work during the Covid crisis, helping some of our most vulnerable people in and around our community and we're pleased that this is being recognised by 'customers' of the stall.

With so much daily exercise happening on the highways and byways of the village, the Parish Council is encouraging you to share your **favourite lockdown walks** as it's some time since those on their website have been updated: <https://www.avening-pc.gov.uk/avening%20walks.htm>. Do report any problems with public footpaths and please

note that Powis Lane (or rather the lane linking Old Hill with Hampton Hill that passes the back of Powis Lane) will be closed for essential repair works from this week for up to a month.

As ever, **Avening Church** itself is closed but worship of God and care for others continue. To keep in touch with the Church please go to:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14317/. On Wednesday evening at 7.30pm there will be a short evening Zoom service led by **Derrick Pierce**. To receive the link for this please email derrickcompline@gmail.com. Some of our church community are making regular phone calls to other villagers. If you would like a call or know someone who would please let Gerald South know on 01453 883456 or gp.south@btopenworld.com.

Any comments and suggestions for the newsletter, please contact Clare Bebbington (ccbebbbs@gmail.com). In the meantime: Stay safe, stay home and stay in touch.

With best wishes and thanks for everything you're doing,
Avening Parish Council

Neighbour Network News #1 included information on safeguarding, how to support older residents, details of food vouchers available from the Mark Townsend Trust and helpful links to authoritative sources of information about coronavirus, especially how to look after your mental health.

*NN #2 included information on support for those experiencing domestic violence, how Gloucestershire Police were interpreting the lockdown requirements and some information about local pharmacies. **UPDATE:** Boots, Minchinhampton has recently extended its opening hours.*

NN #3 included information on utility companies and their responses to coronavirus, resources in Gloucestershire for parents and children and a Lockdown Lowdown on food companies delivering to Avening.

NN #4 covered sources of support to small businesses, an update on the local foodbank and the Lockdown Lowdown focused on garden suppliers.

The Lockdown Lowdown

Each week we compile a handy list which will make life under lockdown a bit easier

This week: pet rescues

We're not sure about busy maternity wards in nine months' time, round here there's been an outbreak of puppies! There have been some very good reports of the availability of veterinary services in the area, and some recent experience of calling wildlife refuges. This list isn't comprehensive, so please share tips and advice with Clare on ccebbbs@gmail.com

A trustworthy source of information about pets and the coronavirus is the PDSA, which has put together a Vet Q&A addressing some of the most commonly asked questions: <https://www.pdsa.org.uk/what-we-do/blog/vet-qa-can-pets-catch-coronavirus>

If you are taken ill, or have to isolate, and are unsure about how to look after any aspects of your pet's wellbeing, please contact covid19@avening-pc.gov.uk. Chandy Rodgers is just one of our volunteers who have specifically offered to walk dogs, for example and we can find numerous others in this pet-friendly village in an emergency.

Muttley's Dogwalking and Petcare on Tetbury Hill closed when the lockdown was first put in place but is now exploring ways it can reopen safely and responsibly. Call 07837 171020.

The George Veterinary Clinics in Nailsworth and Tetbury have had good reports about the way they're managing social distancing. Appointments are necessary, only one patient is allowed in the clinic at a time and payments are taken over the phone. https://www.georgevetgroup.co.uk/georgevets/images/latestnews/Coronavirus_update_Hospital2403.pdf. They are coordinating all appointments from Malmesbury and can be contacted on 01666 823165.

Clockhouse Vets in Nailsworth and Stroud has adapted its services too: <https://www.clockhousevets.co.uk/covid-19-update> and can be contacted on 01453 752555.

Generally, the natural world has brought much pleasure during lockdown <https://www.facebook.com/Wild-about-Avening-108807527428528/> is a case in point. But occasionally it needs a helping hand as the residents of Sandford Leaze found out this week when the **Oak and Furrow** wildlife refuge helped care for a blind hedgehog found wandering around at daytime. Their website is: <https://www.oandf.co.uk/about-us/>.

Fears about the availability of pet food have largely been unfounded. **Chalford Farm Supplies** is a specialised local supplier which has remained open for telephone orders: 01453 88618.

Next week the Lowdown will be on Takeaway Treats so if you've had a great experience at a local eatery, please share with Clare on ccebbbs@gmail.com