

Chair's report for July 2020

We have all been through an experience that if somebody had told us just 6 months ago how life was going to be we would not have believed them; not allowed out except for a few specific reasons, no meeting up with friends and family, 'social distancing'...a whole new way of life.

Most of us were fortunate and, apart from the restrictions imposed on us, were not directly affected by the virus but some have had their lives changed forever by the passing of friends and loved ones - our thoughts are with you.

Now, as life begins to move towards a 'new normal' I, on behalf of the Parish Council, would like to say a huge THANK YOU to the Community Support organising committee and volunteers without whose efforts things would have been a lot worse. The Community Support scheme was set up quickly with no indication of what level of support would be required but our community rallied round; hundreds of shopping and 'medicine runs' have been carried out, leaking taps and burst shower hoses attended to and for those jobs requiring professional help a tradesman found. In addition, pastoral support was provided by "phone volunteers" ready to lend an ear.

The Community Support Group's main purpose was to support people without immediate support. Outside of this scheme many residents of Shrewton and Orcheston looked after neighbours and friends, every volunteer and helper can be proud that they put themselves forward to support those in need.

As the Government have set 1 August as the date those shielding can start to resume their normal lives the volunteer network will be stepping back but not disbanded, all the volunteers have been asked if they wish to remain available if required, by adopting this approach if there is a second wave of COVID-19 the help and support structure will already be in place.

Suggestions have been made on how to commemorate the ending of this unprecedented event. Although it is still too early to make definite plans as to 'when' the Shrewton Village Hall Committee is looking to have a 'Picnic in the Park' and plans are well advanced for a Grand Art Exhibition and Sale of Artwork produced during Lockdown. It is not intended for these events to be a celebration but a marker on the road back to normality and a recognition of how well our community has responded and looked out for each other.

This concludes the Chair's report.