



Press Release – immediate release – London Colney Parish Council

Bringing a smile to shielding residents in London Colney

London Colney Parish Council has delivered welfare gift bags to isolated residents in London Colney.

London Colney Parish Council set up the London Colney Good Neighbour Scheme in March to support residents in the village who were advised they needed to shield and/or stay home due to being in a high-risk group. 85 households signed up to the scheme to get assistance with shopping and other essential tasks. There was an amazing response from volunteers and a team of over 40 volunteers have been working to make lockdown more bearable for those who have been shielding.

We noticed that many of our isolated were stating they were feeling low, struggling with their mental health, and felt increased loneliness, especially since lock down measures started to relax from most of the population. We received a grant from the Old Peoples Trust to deliver a gift to 150 elderly residents containing puzzle books, mindful colouring, a house plant, games, antibacterial hand gel, and moisturiser. The packs also contained a Small Acts of Kindness bag, which aims to keep the elderly warm in their home and provided hats, gloves, socks and blankets. The gift bags also contained information for residents about local organisations who offer support services such as meals on wheels.

The smiles and joy that the gifts brought residents as they were delivered was truly heart-warming with several residents sending messages and thank you cards. One resident wrote:

“Thank you so much for the surprise gift, it was so thoughtful and couldn’t have arrived at a better time, when things are wearing me down. So grateful.”

Councillor Malcolm MacMillan, Chair of the Events and Community Committee said: “The good neighbour scheme is a wonderful example of our caring community in action and was coordinated by our own community officer. Now, the final act of kindness has been the distribution of 150 welfare packs. As shielding ends, there needs to be some ongoing support, for those remaining in need.”

St Albans Old People’s Trust provides free goods and services for people aged 60 and over across St Albans District, as well as providing grants to groups that support older people. Over the last 10 years the Trust has helped over 500 local residents by paying for a wide range of items e.g. cookers, fridges, washing machine, recliner chairs, carpets, beds, heating bills and services including annual boiler services, meals on wheels, care alarms and cleaners that, for all sorts of reasons, the person couldn’t afford to fund themselves. . As an independent charity the Trust does not have to use the same strict criteria as the Council or the NHS and is keen to help more new clients. For information contact 01727 260 701 or 07541 659 442 www.staopt.org

Small Acts of Kindness is an award winning, high impact, charitable organisation working in partnership with over 90 other organisations from the voluntary, corporate, and statutory sectors and over 250 community volunteers. Their aim is that every older person feels warm in their home

and connected to their community. They do this by sourcing and distributing practical gifts that reduce the negative impact that feeling lonely and isolated can have on older people's physical and mental wellbeing. They have a special interest in helping older people who are cold in their homes and seek opportunities to connect communities with kindness.

"For many older people, lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic has brought about a huge increase in social isolation. They have been unable to see their friends and family or simply do the everyday trips that we all take for granted, like popping to the shops. These wellbeing activity and gift bags have clearly been a source of happiness to local older people for whom lockdown and isolation is taking a big toll. Not only are they useful, they are also a little and welcome reminder that people care - something that matters so much to an age group who have been hidden from view for so many months and are beginning to feel forgotten. We are proud to have been a part of this project with London Colney Parish Council and delighted that it is reducing isolation and loneliness and connecting communities with kindness." Lynne Misner, CEO, Small Acts of Kindness.



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