

Below is a Press release from Deborah Slater at 'Helping Whittlesey'

I have on several occasions sent a thank you to Deborah and her team,
Today I sent to all who was in the copied e-mail ;-

Deborah/Joe and all,
Thank you.....

It is well done to everyone who is supporting our area past, present and future.
Whether it be organised groups the many individuals and neighbours.
I hope that at the end of all this we can all have a BIG BIG Party.

Stay safe,
With regards,

Roy G.
Chairman Whittlesey and District NHW

Cllr Roy Gerstner
Whittlesey Town Council
St Mary's Ward South.

'Although the business forum is having a bit of a break, many of our members are still actively involved in making a difference and supporting our town!

As the Chairperson of the forum I could not be prouder to see how individuals and local businesses join together for the greater good.

Further proof of what an amazing town we live in, Helping Whittlesey is a group that was set up 3 and a half years ago to help local people over the Christmas period. We have utilized the connections we have from the group and used it to benefit people during the very unusual times we find ourselves in.

We have been privileged to receive support from our local Councillors, and the wider community.

We started delivering shopping and medication to our residents. The Fens magazine placed a free advert in their last hard copy to alert everyone that this service was available to them. More recently our volunteers have delivered leaflets to every house in the town and surrounding villages. All of our volunteers wear gloves and a face shield.

It became obvious that many of the people calling in for help also needed a friendly ear to chat to which led us to set up a telephone chat group. We have had to raise concerns to the correct authority for 2 people we are calling.

We are also giving books to beat the boredom.

Some of our care homes and individuals were struggling for face shields so we coordinated collecting material and elastic and handing it to volunteers to make face shields. We have given out over 250 so far with more planned this week.

Colin Wilson from the Falcon asked about providing a meal for people in need (he had no idea how big this would become) week 1. was 70, week 2. 110, week 3. 154, week 4 will be in excess of 200 we now need to provide these meals in 2 sittings. Susan Harrison from Chippy sue has the job of rumbling 4 bags of potatoes every week ready for Colin to cook.

Last week volunteers made brownies as a treat, next week the chef from Sir Harry Smith Community College will cook Bakewell tart for everyone. The muffin oven will then take over making deserts every week.

We have 15 Volunteers from the community delivering the meals every week. Many of those we are delivering to are unable to cook and with no relatives allowed to visit this is their only hot meal. It has been very emotional for the volunteers as they can not offer a hug of support.

On 8th May as a VE day special we are providing all those on our list with fish and chips cooked by Chippy Sue. Our local cycling group Whittlesey Wheelers are going to deliver them, and Tracey McIntosh from the Muffin Oven is making a VE day special desert. This will become a monthly extra treat.

Ingredients for the meals has been provided free from Local Farmers EC Brown and Sons, Stevens farms, Freemans Butchers and Jamie and Anish at NISA. We are thankful for the gift of free ingredients but could not expect them every week. McCain's have now offered to provide the potatoes every week.

Obviously to remain sustainable we needed to raise funds, this has been made easier by the generous donations from Spott Creativ, Calm Accounting, St Andrew Church and Hall, Vesuvio, The Round Table, The Rotary Club, the lions, also the Just giving account that I set up and local donations.

One more thing for us to be proud of.

P.s If I have missed anyone from the above, I apologize and thank you, there is only so much info my old brain can retain x