

**The Annual Parish Meeting for Cleobury Mortimer
Monday 26th April 2021, 6.15 p.m.**

Report: Cleobury Compassionate Communities (CoCo)

The last year has of course seen many new challenges, from which several positives have arisen.

At the start of 2021, CoCo was an 11 year old, 30 strong project, of volunteers who each support their client in a variety of active ways. The crux of our scheme at this point was face-to-face, one-to-one companionship and support, to maintain well-being and independence at home.

Lockdown meant we had to quickly revise the way we work and suddenly resort to telephone contact alone. Over the course of the year, we have at various times been able to make garden visits and some volunteers went so far as to join the Community Car Scheme. This enabled them to take their own client to appointments safely, within guidelines and under County Council insurance. Otherwise we re-instated the CoCo Newsletter, the delivery of which gave reason for a doorstep welfare visit, to many of the most vulnerable on our radar. With the support of CoCo volunteers, this worked well and was welcomed by recipients. In conjunction with the Parish Council and Cleobury Mortimer Primary School, CoCo also delivered 60 Christmas gift bags to those in our Community, most likely to appreciate being remembered, at this potentially lonely and very isolated time. This was very well received.

In March 2020, CoCo was also heavily involved in the Covid Community Response to lockdown, which saw volunteers join with those of the Pastoral Care Group, as well as many individuals who came forward from the public, to make up a total body of 150 volunteers. This army of willing people was added to a data base that could be accessed by a team of coordinators, to be called upon daily for support with food and medication deliveries, dog walking and befriending. Across the first lockdown, the team responded to over 580 requests for help, including many daily home deliveries on behalf of the Co-op. Further lockdown's did not see this need as people now had other plans and online slots in place.

Over the coming year, CoCo plans to initiate two further projects under it's umbrella. It is hoped that from July onwards, a 'Good Grief Café' will meet in a closed space at the Hub, on a once monthly basis. This will be a gently positive place for anyone suffering the loss of a loved one, to be amongst others who have experienced that loss and to be supported by this mutual understanding, in a relaxed, café type environment.

We also hope to see something akin to a 'Spare Chair Sunday scheme' take off in the town, once logistics have been worked out of matching a lone person safely with another person or family, for a weekly meal at their table.