

Chairman's Report AGM 2021

I don't need to comment on the circumstances we found ourselves in during the last year, sadly the details are all too fresh in all of our minds.

From an MVP activity point of view initially this was all about cancellation and damage limitation than anything positive.

Reflecting back however we can point to 3 Activities/Events which seem to have taken on a new poignancy during a lock down year and one support role which helped underpin efforts to address some of the early worries of the community.

Firstly, it has been interesting that our Facebook page has played a significant role in maintaining some sense of community, in terms of sharing news and views and rallying support for things like the Clap for NHS or VE Day local street parties. The page also gave us some positive messages, like photos of our beautiful local countryside or acts of generosity from individuals, groups and local businesses. With the membership having grown to more than 4600 it seems the page is as popular as ever and for many an important lifeline to life outside of their own homes.

Both the delayed Spring Clean (in Sept) and the Scarecrow Trail, brought new challenges, making sure people remained safe during the events and that they were in fact permissible under government regulations. Whilst some concerns were voiced by a few individuals, which were largely satisfied once the full Risk Assessment had been explained, the general feedback was that they were both very welcome distraction from the pandemic and that it was wonderful to enjoy a little of "normal" Mortimer life..... little did we know that Lock down 2 and 3 were just around the corner.

With cancelled VE Day Event, Pantomime, FM Theatre Productions and most regrettably the suspension of Lunch Club which has been missed enormously; there was little more the MVP could do however it was great that we could step up to support the Mortimer COVID Helpline initiative which whilst not initially an MVP idea, provided some recognised tried and trusted branding for the scheme moreover provided a financial safety net for volunteers to ensure none were left financially exposed from shopping trips etc.

MVP was proud to add its name to the scheme but recognises the enormous contribution primarily from Belinda Hopkins Shaw, Andy Lavery, John Hannawin and Danusia Morsley and the many volunteers who supported the effort.

I think it would take a brave person to try to summarise 2020, I am not that brave, so I'll end on again thanking all MVP members for their continued help and asking you all to stay safe and we look forward to being able to start the fun stuff again later this year.

Doug Overett
Chairman

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