

**Name:** Robin Henry Richfield Williams B.A. **Age:** 80 years

Robin's account of the lived experience during a pandemic in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Name:** Robin Henry Richfield Williams B.A. **Age:** 80 years

**Job:** Retired Aviation Manager currently Chinnor Parish Councillor (Chairman)

**Length of time in Chinnor:** 40 years, Wife Linda 55 years

**When did you become aware of the seriousness of the pandemic:**

Day one due to Emergency Plan implementation by Parish Council.

**How did it affect you mentally and physically**

Being aged 80 my wife, aged 74, we both self-isolated (although no real significant underlying health issues) relying on street friends and nearby family for individual shopping requirements although store delivery was used for weekly shop but slot availability of such was very much hit and miss – mainly miss! Mentally and physical not too much of an issue due to having a new dog, from the beginning of the year, which not only provided some additional company and comfort we were each able to take the dog out for exercise once a day providing some separation from each other too.

**What was the impact on your family ie level of lock down?**

With children's family living in the USA, Scotland and Essex we were well used to limited personal contact. One son was living locally with his family therefore was able to run errands for us and giving us some sight of him from a distance. Family Zoom meetings were held on several occasions where a Quiz was held as well as Whatsap and Skype uses for family living further away.

**How did you cope?**

I believed we coped rather well but did miss the various meeting groups we belonged to. In my case I used to meet with 9 chaps of similar age at the local pub on Tuesday night where individual update on the week's events, banter and laughter was exchanged. However with lock down Zoom came into play once again with a session on Tuesday night from 8 to 10pm where banter and updates was exchanged and a Quiz was conducted. Took opportunity to update my book which feature the story and experiences of my life.

**What did you lose and what did you gain from the experience?**

You need social contact and of course family contact. Modern Technology was an essential element so as to maintain contact with the outside world. Quizzes provided some educational aspects.

**What stayed the same and what was different during the experience?**

Normal household activities continued it was the trip to shops and travel to leisure locations which were missed. Travel wider afield was also missed however the family contact was still maintained through Skype, Zoom and Whatsap.

In terms of the Parish Council all meetings attendance were disbanded and Zoom meetings were conducted each Monday night for regular council meetings and ad hoc in the case of specific issues that arose (OKL problems for instant). Clerks worked from home and many telephone conversations were held with Councillors and other agencies thus ensuring council business continued.

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### **Did you find living in Chinnor was a help or not?**

Chinnor was definitely the best place to be during the Pandemic. That said there was a real issue for Old Kiln Lakes (OKL) residents that experienced horrendous happening when the estate was inundated with unwelcome visitors when over a 1000 persons from all around southern England, including London, descended on them during the week 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. This was due to the fine weather and the belief that the area, with the Blue Lagoon, offered an ideal leisure location which is not the case. The Lagoon is toxic and private property and as such duly fenced off however fencing was broken into and water activities took place (swimming and boating). Impact on the whole of OKL estate was beyond description with cars parked everywhere and toilet relief taken in gardens and surrounding shrubbery Inconsiderate parking also took place in OKL and throughout Chinnor as well as surrounds areas causing no end of access problems. Several Chinnor ParishCouncillors visited the area at that time and the Parish Clerks worked very hard and long in getting Taylor Wimpey, site owners ,Thames Valley Police (TVP), although limited powers due private estate, SODC and OCC so as to contain the situation. OKL residents did block the entrance to estate at some stage but were discouraged by TVP to do so. Come the inclement weather unwelcome visitors did not return.

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As Chairman of Chinnor Parish Council I would like to place on record just what a magnificent community exists in Chinnor, particularly during the ongoing Coronavirus Crisis. A few years ago the Parish Council adopted an Emergency Plan, as draw up by Fiona mantle and her team, which had been regularly updated, and as such it has come into its own during the crisis. This has resulted in the implementation of the Street Friends System for which the Street Friends response has been phenomenal with each village road being covered. Added to the Street Friends is Chinnor Good Neighbour Scheme, coordinated by Martin King and David de Val, a long standing village organisation supported by Chinnor Parish Council, which provides a variety of services through a network of volunteers. Many streets have also experienced the support of direct and indirect neighbours. Another aspect of the Village Community has been the local shops and takeaway restaurants who have offered economical delivery and reliable services whilst other shops continue to operate effectively within government guidelines. I would also mention the NHS, Carers and Doctor Surgeries who continue to provide excellent services plus other village organisations which have also played their part. Last, but no less least, the support from our Councillors, County, District and Parish has continued whilst the Parish Clerks, the mainstay of the Parish Council, have been untiring in their efforts - not made easy by working from home. The Parish Council Groundsmen also warrant a mention working throughout the crisis to ensure the streets of Chinnor remain clean and tidy as well

as grass mowed. Chinnor community overall has responded to the crisis in an exceptional manner which is a credit to all our residents.