

Together as One

Newsletter of the Methodist Churches in Hungerford, Lambourn, Newbury and Thatcham during Coronavirus Pandemic

Verse for the week

Christ is the one who gives me the strength I need to do whatever I must do. Phil 4:13

One year on

It's a year since we first heard about Covid-19 and who could have known then how much our lives were about to change. The Bible verse above reminds us that however challenging or different our lives have been and continue to be, Christ can give us the strength to carry on. Instead of a "Thought" from me this week, I've asked three people to tell you about how they've looked after themselves during the pandemic. Pete & Sandra (members at Thatcham) write about looking after their physical wellbeing, whilst Anne (a member at Lambourn) told me about taking care of her mental and spiritual wellbeing. Thank you for your contributions.

With my love and prayers, Karen

You'll never walk alone

Pete & Sandra Sharpe

The pandemic has affected us all greatly, in a variety of ways. Confined to barracks, apart from essential medical and shopping trips and exercise, many have turned to new indoor pursuits, be it reading, jigsaws, crafting, singing – the list goes on. We decided to exploit the permission to exercise to the full, and what a joy it has been. Last February, I was rendered almost immobile by a sudden acute onset of arthritis in the knee. Faced with months, if not years, of waiting for surgery, I needed to exercise to keep the muscles in my leg from withering. In July I was still reliant on crutches, but after a few weeks of small steps, and with a lot of encouragement from Sandra, I was able to discard them and start walking further. Initially this was only a few hundred yards, building up to the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk to meet Sandra from work each day. Once the mile mark was achieved, we have increased distance and time, and now we feel lazy if we do not walk at least 5 miles a day – come rain, snow or shine. My Fitbit reliably informs me that I have walked 1,030 miles since mid-September.

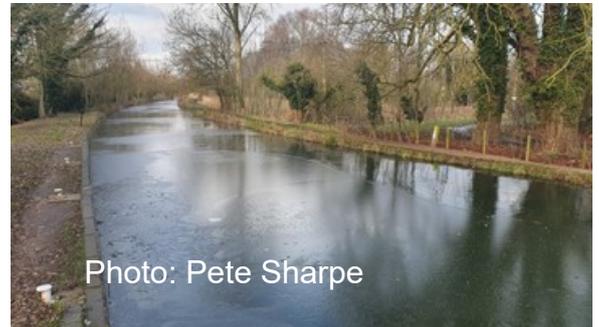


Photo: Pete Sharpe

I used to loathe walking anywhere, but now look forward to our daily stroll. In wet weather we stick to the streets. We have discovered countless streets, footpaths and cut-throughs in our local area. There's nearly always something new to spot, be it progress on building works or new growth in gardens. A favourite is a pyracantha bush lovingly trained and shaped into a huge Loch Ness Monster.

Our favourite walks though are in the country. In autumn, the colours of Bucklebury woods were glorious. Treks up to Greenham Common rewarded us with sightings of stonechats. The most rewarding walks are along the canal. We've watched as autumn colours have given way to February mists and, last week, frozen locks.

Continued...

