

Fair Shares News

Winter 2020

Stroud & Stonehouse

Stonehouse Community Allotment



Wayne Baker delivers the Fair Shares Mosaic, with Veronica, her dog Beau and Clare allotment organiser.

For many years Clare Sheridan, a Stonehouse Fair Shares member has organised a community allotment, this continued throughout the last lockdown, despite the complications and difficulties with Covid 19. Three times a week sessions ran on the allotment with social distancing and health precautions at all times. This gave invaluable support to some residents living with various difficulties. It became a small oasis, when services and community interaction was severely restricted. When lockdown restrictions were eased, students from the Apperley Centre for young people with special needs returned to the allotment with their carers and benefited from the supportive environment. Unfortunately as restrictions' increase under Wave 2 lockdown, students from the Apperley Centre will have to wait until things ease.

Some time ago a mosaic was made by the local Stonehouse Fair Shares art group and recently it was donated to the allotment and is on display there.



Ellie from Apperley Centre

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Stroud Fair Shares had to adapt during Covid 19

The Wynn's Café Coffee Group had several virtual 'get togethers', a virtual Chess Group is being set up and some individual or small Gentle Walks took place.

Many households were supported either by Fair Shares participants (volunteers) or staff collecting shopping or prescriptions or liaising with local volunteer groups and Community organisations to make sure provisions and medical supplies were delivered.

We offered advice about supermarket delivery services, navigating the complications of the government's vulnerable person website, offered telephone support to isolated and lonely people, supported family members struggling with vulnerable relatives, located and liaised with many community volunteer support groups that sprung up, offered guidance for those living with long term conditions and disabilities, helped with debt management and benefit advice, supported a disabled person with dog walking and offered emotional support to many individuals and families.

Could You Help?

- Could you be a walk buddy for someone or could you phone someone who's lonely?
- Would you like to join the chess group or a mindful photography group?
- Have you got any skills that you could offer online eg art, photography, storytelling, language skills,

Please contact us if someone you know needs help or support.

Contact Chris- stroud@fairshares.org.uk or 07902 100968

Fair Shares is no longer at the Exchange.



Roger and Chris enjoy a walk despite the weather

Virtual Coffee Group and Chess Group

Before the Covid 19 restrictions, Fair Shares organised a coffee morning in a Stonehouse café offering emotional and practical support for those who are isolated and vulnerable. This was altered to a virtual coffee group for a large part of the period, with people sharing a coffee through the medium of social media. This gave enormous emotional support to those involved and also practical advice about form filling, accessing food vouchers, approaching health organisations and sorting out shopping and other needs. We also managed one actual small coffee group with 5 people. Social distancing was observed, it was partially held inside a conservatory and outside in the garden, despite the rain. Health precautions were taken with arrangements and travel. The chat during this occasion sparked the idea for a virtual chess group, as a couple of members are keen chess players. This is in the process of being organised, contact Chris if you're interested.



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Memories of Eric by Clare Sheridan

I have known Eric ever since I joined Fair Shares in 1998. Any event in Stonehouse, whether Fair Shares, British Legion, Stonehouse Partnership or other, then Eric would be there helping, often with a high vis jacket, showing people where to go or to park. Eric was always willing to help other people and Fair Shares was a life line for many people, being put in touch with Eric who would gladly do their gardening, shopping or handiwork. Eric made many good friends through Fair Shares, and numerous people benefitted from his willingness.

Whenever I met Eric he was always keen to chat. He could chat for a long, long time on all sorts of subjects. I knew that he was a local lad but only learnt at his funeral that he was born and raised in Nupend and only moved to Burdett House with his mother when she needed extra care.

A fond memory that I have of Eric was when he joined our team for an "It's a Knockout" in Laburnham Park, Stonehouse. One part of it was to get from one side to the other of an area using two pallets, we were not allowed to step on the grass. Of course we ended up on the grass. There was a brightly coloured plastic covered sponge obstacle trail that we had to get round. Oh, we did laugh. Eric thoroughly enjoyed himself.

Whenever out and about on a trip, Eric always ended up in the pub and we would go and pick him up there when it was time to go home. More recently we went on a Fair Shares trip to Westonbirt Arboretum where we did some whittling. We had hazel sticks that we whittled with sharp knives to make small knives. Eric enjoyed the whittling so much that he kept going and whittled his stick to a point at the end. He gave it to me, and I have used it since to make holes in soil when I am potting up my seedlings.

The last few years, Eric has not been seen in Stonehouse so much. I was planning to visit him on his birthday but sadly, after a battle over many years against cancer, Eric died on the 29th September, just days before his 81st birthday. Our love goes to Georgina, his sister, and all his family and friends.

Eric Catchpole 2.10.1929 – 29.9.2020

Fair Shares says farewell to Eric Catchpole



Eric with his whittled stick at Westonbirt Arboretum

