



MUTUAL AID STORIES

We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who offered their story for this newsletter. We hope it inspires lots more mutual aid in the coming months.

Mutual Gardening

"Many of us started doing more gardening in lockdown, particularly growing edible stuff so it was great when a neighbour offered chive plants. I took one & felt pleased & grateful. As it happened, a few weeks later I had some spare bean plants. The same neighbour wanted one of those. Happy all round!"

Plant sitting

"A neighbour finished her medical degree in early spring and went home to her parents for six weeks before starting work at Addenbrookes and didn't want to lose her plants. I love plants and was happy to help, especially a future NHS doctor."

The key word being 'Mutual'

"Late March to mid April, my wife and I went out only for a walk. Our neighbours, a couple of younger Spanish guys did all our shopping for those 3 weeks. We are 66 and 67 years old.

Outside that period, both before and after, we did about 15 fetches for those yet more vulnerable or isolating - usually 1-3 items. I'd post on our street Whatsapp group, but now only shop for one person, who is now herself beginning to emerge. Oh and, I borrowed my son-in-law's guitar, and we scoffed some unwanted but delicious turkey meatballs!"

Appreciation

"Since April I've been doing a weekly Asda shop for a neighbour - I think it's been well appreciated!"

Big and small

"Some neighbours on my road offered to do groceries for me and were happy to lend some ingredients when I ran out, and others down the road lent me some jigsaw puzzles to get engrossed in and keep my mind from churning during the more intense part of the lockdown. All of which I really appreciated.

As well as this, between uncertainty alongside hostile environment visas making it difficult to rent places, plus the job market being a mess, I haven't really had an income or anywhere to live. Several friends and friends of friends around Petersfield and Romsey have housed me for the last few months. I don't know what I would have done without them. I've contributed what little income I've had to them for bills and contributions to rent, but at the base of it they recognised I was in need and have opened their homes to welcome me in a really amazing process of community and mutual aid.

In the time I've lived in these various places, we've cooked and cleaned together, supported one another's mental



health, helped with odds and ends of work (such as editing documents) and so on. It's been a really powerful sense of solidarity in a really difficult time."

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