

BROADWINDSOR IN LOCKDOWN 2020

Nature, you were never lovelier,
when the world stopped, but the Earth kept spinning.
And then the world turned upside down, freedom could not be found
We all became experts at social distancing - no grandparents would be visiting.
Sunshine, birdsong, a much quieter life but life still went on.
Thursday night clapping for our hard-pressed carers,
a ripple of applause from one end of the village to the other.
The Sound of Music every day at one o'clock.
Business booms at the community shop
as sales of fruit, veg and alcohol go pop.
Takeout drinks from the pub
and Vikki's quiche and coleslaw in the shop.
The Tuesday night chip van at Comrades Hall,
Friday morning Post Office, chairs six feet apart.
Anxiety calmed by WhatsApp and Zoom, meeting family and friends by the touch of a button.
People chatting with new friends while standing next to bollards in the shop queue.
Heart attacks, cancelled operations, masks, gloves and Perspex screens.
Food deliveries for the vulnerable.
Our church went blue for the NHS.
The Sound of Music every day at one o'clock.
And we had time to just be with the one we love without duty or obligation stealing the day.
Doing all that we can to keep a company viable,
sorting wages and furlough staff, all reliable.
Farmers cut the fields for silage and tractors trundled through the village.
Up on Lewesdon Hill, bluebells didn't know about coronavirus.
VE Day flags and afternoon tea outside our homes.
Socially distanced wildflower planting – digging, sowing and watering.
A beautiful sight to welcome visitors to our village when all this has passed.
The Sound of Music every day at one o'clock.
Lock down with the family - fantastic at the start, learning through the struggles, stresses and
worries, tears, laughter and love.
Dusting flour from my hands, I pick up my book;
to bake or read, my lockdown dilemma.
There's only one village in the west for me, Broadwindsor is the place I love to be.
It's music at one and clapping at eight to rid us of the virus we love to hate.
Virtual Bananagrams, with gin, on Skype; virtual birthday parties on Zoom; virtual running - for
medals - on Strava.
Virtual life.
The village roads, now used much less, speeds traffic onward faster;
too fast for the slowworm outside the shop, who is now not just slow, but flatter.
The sun beckons and mocks. Enjoy what you have, count your blessings.
The Sound of Music every day at one o'clock.
The church buildings are silent, dusty, locked, empty, paused.
God is active, loud, renewing, unrestricted, present, recreating and filling us every day.
Time to listen to the birds, watch the flowers grow, to smell the air, walk up the hill and to be still.

The warmth, love and friendship uncovered and blossoming as we all work together through this
strange, uncertain time.
House quiet, headphones on, five laptops glowing, each immersed in our own virtual business and
learning,
waiting for the next punctuation point in days we can't name.
Then kettle on, frisbee out, meals prepared, conversation flows, reconnected again.
The Sound of Music every day at one o'clock.
Free loo rolls from the village shop. The kindness of strangers.
And then a huge blue ball hurtles down the road, like the ever-present Rover bubble in *The Prisoner*.
A small army of tireless volunteers, stacking, selling, delivering.
Painting, writing, reading, decorating - my furniture has never been so upcycled.
The village phone box becomes a book exchange, tales of a community bound up on donated
shelves.
Take-outs from the pub, food and drink, got to keep it going.
The call of rooks from their satellite rookery at the Old George,
while the parish councillors discuss village affairs over Zoom.
The space station goes over, the sun's fading light makes it glow for all to see.
Endless sunshine, we will never see this blue a sky again.
The Sound of Music on the World Service and Desert Island Discs.
Slippers or flip flops worn all day.
The garden glorious in all this sun.
A tank of petrol lasts for months.
A time of reflection for the things that really matter. The birdsong and beautiful countryside.
Teaching the children, online bitesize that doesn't bite back.
A fish van arrives in the Square at half past eleven, a shoal of customers in single file down the road.
Gardens and allotments provide solace and colour.
The Sound of Music at one o'clock
Afternoon briefing, highlight of the day.
What day is it, by the way?