

Surviving lockdown together



We could all learn from retirees helping others, keeping busy and getting creative, says **Cheryl Markosky**



Undeterred by the Coronavirus lockdown, retired salesman Howard Embury has kept the book club at Tregolls Lodge in Truro going via Skype, Twitter and e-newsletters. Attracting bestselling authors, such as Robin Hanbury-Tenison, Raynor Wynne and Jane Cable, the monthly meetings keep Owners informed and entertained.

As well as running the book club, Howard, 67, also organises the on-site library, book sales and a writers' group. As some events have been temporarily put on hold due to the virus, Howard

believes it's important to have things to occupy the Owners.

"It's about being aware of everyone, especially those living on their own. If we don't see or hear from people we give them a ring," he says.

Relief Lodge Manager Sandra Rose says she's proud of the Owners at Tregolls Lodge that have helped others out by walking their dogs, collecting prescriptions, and like Howard, run bridge and book clubs. *"This is a small, flourishing neighbourhood in its own right."*



Val Elphee and friend Jenny



Carla Ashdown

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Val Elphee, 78, who previously lived in Paignton, says a key reason she moved to Tregolls Lodge was because of its strong community spirit. *“Last night, my neighbour dropped off a bowl of stewed apples. The fruit came from his allotment.”* She also looks forward to weekly fish and chip suppers – an Owner goes in his car to fetch the order and is aided by others to deliver it to people’s doorsteps.

Carla Ashdown, Lodge Manager of Neville Lodge in Peacehaven, is the driving force behind activities Owners can enjoy in their apartments while the Owners’ Lounge is out of bounds due

to Covid. She organises regular quizzes, word searches, mindful colouring and even food parcels, all delivered with a smile to people’s doors. *“She has kept my brain going by delivering quizzes and books,”* says grateful Owner Keith. *“She always goes out of her way to help and I can’t praise her highly enough.”* Owner Jan also admires Carla’s diligence in keeping everyone safe and amused during lockdown. *“Interesting trivia, treats and information have kept coming through our letterboxes,”* she says. *“We have even had mince pies and sherry, cream teas and fish & chips – though not all at the same time!”*



Howard and his wife Jean with published author Liz Fenwick (second from left) and Lodge Manager Cheryl (photo taken pre-Covid)