



Everything may be shut down but we have been busier than ever in the Over Hulton Community Group.

Initially we felt the priority was to get as much accurate information on local amenities for residents as we could, to find out who could help and to identify who needed that help. Both our churches had procedures in place very quickly so our role was to facilitate.

One volunteer who stepped out of the shadows has proved to be a major signing for us. Mike Barlow, long time Over Hulton resident with a young family said, 'We just adore what you do in the community and we would love to be involved.'

We quickly identified that he is a technical whizz and he offered to build a website for us which we thought was crucial for the current crisis. Our Facebook page is extremely useful and very popular but is not ideal for making large amounts of vital information readily available.

Around the same time, we received the weekly eBulletin from Bolton CVS sharing information about Bolton's Fund Covid-19 Resilience Grant. We applied and in a quick time we received a grant of £368! This was going to help us to buy the required website domain. Mike is donating his time and expertise for nothing. Brilliant stuff! We can't thank the Bolton's Fund for their support and their promptness.



In chatting about the website, I asked him what he and his wife Lisa would like to see for Over Hulton in the future. He had a list that he reeled off but one thing just jumped out. He said 'Lisa and I always go to a Scarecrow Festival each year.' We both paused and said simultaneously 'let's do one now - The "Scare Off Corona" Scarecrow Festival.'

The Festival has taken off! In just over a week there are over sixty scarecrows dotted around Over Hulton. Straightaway, we received sponsorship from local businesses and donations of prizes for

the best scarecrow. We decided to ask people to donate £5 to enter the competition, with all proceeds going to the NHS Fund. It has been great to see everyone in the village to get behind this.

All the scarecrows are on display in residents' front gardens and windows so people are using their exercise time to walk round and view them. To date we have raised an amazing £540 for the NHS Fund and we are already talking of making this an annual event!

All this came about because of the grant from Bolton's Fund!

