



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

COMMUNITY



Polesworth Parish Council

Polesworth Volunteer Support Group

The Covid-19 pandemic brought the Polesworth community together to help one another in the most difficult of times. As the country locked down, Polesworth stepped up. Within a matter of days of the first national lockdown, a call was put out for volunteers and one by one, over 70 people turned up in masks to register at the Parish Council's Tithe Barn with their ID and volunteer sign up form.

Within a matter of a couple of weeks the Tithe Barn had been transformed into a community shop – The Polesworth Food Hub. This wasn't the council doing something, it was the council, the community and local businesses cooperating that made this happen. Volunteers used their contacts and connections to find fridges, freezers, suppliers, and volunteers to help run a weekly food hub. Users were asked to pay what they could afford with the Parish Council providing the venue, businesses providing goods and the Borough Council contributing thousands of pounds in grants to make it all happen.

Thousands of people were fed at a cost they could afford with safe access to fresh and tinned produce available in a socially distanced environment. It provided more than just food though with it providing a great opportunity to help with other challenges as well. Relationships were built, trust was established, and friendships were made. Referrals happened to help people secure mortgage breaks, council tax support and even new white goods supplied by a local charity.



The volunteer group set about helping support people in every way they could think of. A meals on wheels service fed hundreds of elderly people with a hot meal each week and socially distanced events were put on to bring the community together when lockdown restrictions eased.

You might think that a 2022 case study about a 2020 problem is a bit outdated, but the support group hasn't stopped. The Food Hub may have closed in late 2021 but the group continues to put on events and provide support to the vulnerable members of the community and of course, the friendships that were built will last a lifetime.

For further information contact:

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