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Town awards for pandemic volunteers & Rotary stalwart



Dougie Brown
from Active
and In Touch



Dot Cretney

THE winners of Frome's Group of the Year and Person of the Year 2020 have been revealed!

Local charity, Active and In Touch have been awarded Group of the Year and Frome Town Rotary stalwart, Dot Cretney, has been chosen as Person of the Year.

The winners of the competitions, run by *Frome Times*, were chosen by Frome's mayor cllr Anita Collier and *Frome Times* editor, Ian Drew following nominations made by local people.

Group of the Year winners, Active and In Touch, who will celebrate their 10th anniversary this year, were nominated for their efforts to combat loneliness and isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The charity, with the help of its 200 volunteers and Frome Community Drivers who they recently merged with, has offered vulnerable and isolated residents with befriending services - both over the phone and in person when restrictions have allowed, help with shopping trips and getting to medical appointments, picked up and delivered prescriptions, and have recently helped ferry the elderly to the surgeries for

their Covid-19 vaccinations.

They have even helped people living abroad, who have contacted them concerned about a friend or relative living in Frome.

"They have really stepped up in this time of lockdown and isolation," explained one of their nominators. "The workload of the trustees and volunteers has increased phenomenally in the past year, but they have stepped up to it and kept a big smile."

"This charity does wonderful work every year, but in 2020 they have been a lifeline to so many people in Frome."

Accepting the award on behalf of the charity and its volunteers, director of service, Dougie Brown told *Frome Times*, "The Frome community has really stepped up to help vulnerable people during this pandemic and we are humbled to win amongst other very deserving groups."

"I have been utterly amazed (but not surprised) at the commitment of our volunteers this year. Everyone has found this year difficult in some way and has probably experienced themselves, times of isolation and loneliness, but all our volunteers have still found the

time to help those more vulnerable."

Person of the Year, Dot Cretney, was nominated for her volunteering and fundraising efforts in and around Frome and abroad, which includes her membership of Frome Town Rotary Club, her help leading on various Rotary projects including the Father Christmas float and Kids' Out, her work to raise awareness of the Rotary project to eradicate Polio from the world, her work preparing to open the Rotary charity shop in the Westway Centre, and her support for two elderly ladies through the pandemic, helping them with their shopping every week.

Speaking to *Frome Times*, Dot, who was also the first female president of Frome Rotary said, "I am in shock! Whether I am volunteering locally, or travelling abroad to deliver aid, I do it for the people out there, not for the recognition. So I was really surprised when I heard that someone had put my name forward."

"I think that there are so many people within the town who are so worthy of this award, Frome is such a great town to live in. But thank you,

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TOWN AWARDS FOR PANDEMIC VOLUNTEERS & ROTARY STALWART



Flashback to October 2019 - the Active & In Touch team

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I shall have to go and lie down to let the news sink in!"

Dot's nominator said, "The adage "if you need anything doing, ask a busy person" couldn't be more apt when it comes to Dot's selfless acts of kindness and charitable deeds."

Runners up

The other nominees for Person of the Year 2020 were: **Amy Maughan** for the support she has given new parents and pregnant women through her Facebook group 'Frome Babies 2020'; **Chloe May**, a learning support assistant and play leader at Christ Church First School, for her work coordinating 1,000 food packages to families during the pandemic; **Tony Hodges** for his efforts decorating his house for Christmas to raise money for Cancer Research UK; **Ian Williams** for his efforts to support the Hanover Gardens community during the pandemic and his work with the

Memorial Theatre and the Frome Shed; **Terri Pitts** for her co-ordination of the community fridge and larder throughout the pandemic and for leading the Neighbourhood Chaplains in Edmund Park, which supports people who are isolated; **Patrick Abrahams** for ensuring Frome Shed members were safe and not isolated or suffering during the pandemic; Frome Town Council's town ranger **David Krzyzosiak**, for his support of community groups and for his help to coordinate the ShopForMe service during the pandemic; **Tracey Eames** for her "relentless" litter picking across the town throughout the pandemic and beyond; Senior Partner at Frome Medical Practice, **Dr Helen Kingston**, for her on going dedication to support patients and her work to support the community in the pandemic; **Gina Fry**, owner of Body Basics, for her ongoing charity work and her efforts during lockdown to ensure people have

the opportunity to maintain good physical, emotional and mental well-being through exercise in their own homes; vice-chair of trustees of Fair Frome, **Karen Stewart**, for stepping in at "every opportunity" to cover food bank shifts, manning the office, sending emails and managing projects, throughout the pandemic, helping to keep Fair Frome open every day; and **Alice Starr** of Starr Fitness Frome who has adapted her classes to keep many people in Frome exercising through each lockdown.

The other nominees for Group of the Year 2020 were: **Frome Community Drivers** who throughout the

pandemic have supported residents get to hospital appointments, make shopping trips, and picked up and delivered prescriptions; **Frome Town Council staff** who have "worked tirelessly" through lockdowns and tier restrictions to ensure that the town was looked after; **Frome Medical Practice** who have adapted their services and been on the front-line throughout the pandemic; and **Frome Community Hospital** who have continued to provide the "best level of care" to all patients despite the Covid pandemic and continue to do so "with resilience, loyalty and dedication to their individual roles."

Easthill pledge

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future would be decided at a public meeting.

Councillor Helen Kay raised the issue at a virtual meeting of the council's cabinet on Monday evening (January 11)

going to do.

"I'm slightly disquieted [sic] by this continual [notion] that 'it's going to happen behind our backs, it's going to happen in a private meeting'.

"We were very clear and