

On the 22 April 2021, I posted a message to the
Nextdoor website:

.....
Hi neighbour,

*I am a university student studying MFA Photography
(Master of Fine Arts). I am working on a project. I won't bore
you with the academic details about concept, but broadly...
I am focusing on the representation of 'ordinary' people –
old, young, male, female, blah blah to illustrate the diversity
of our community.*

*What does this involve? I will come to your chosen location
(house, garden, workplace – the location must mean something
personal to you). I will ask a few questions and make a few
photographs. Once the photographs are edited, I will give you
the pictures to do with as you please.*

I may then submit your image as part of my university project.

*If you have got this far and are thinking “no one would want
to look at a photograph of me, I'm way too ordinary” you are
exactly the subject I am searching for.*

*Please don't be shy, I am easy to work with. If you would like
to take part, send a message.*

Best, Simon Peter Green
.....

This body of work represents a sample of the people who live
in the community of Test Valley, Hampshire, UK.

This body of work represents the state of the Nation.

*“Culture comes into play at precisely the point
where biological individuals become subjects,
and that what lies between the two is not some
automatically constituted 'natural' process of
socialisation but much more complex processes
of formation”*

Stuart Hall



KATIE GARWOOD

I was born in Andover and left when I was 18. I went to the London College of Fashion, completing a degree in fashion management, thinking I would stay there. You always get dragged back!

I returned to Andover after 6 fulfilling years in London, to have my son. My family were here and that's important to me. It was just about the quality of life really.

I was about 24 when I came back and my attitude towards Andover has changed a lot of over the last 3 years. Close friends have moved away from the area and dotted over the UK so I don't have that strong network close to me anymore. However, forming the group "Stand Together Andover" has brought a sense of community back to me. I've realised that without forming the group I wouldn't have met all the great people involved.

I'm grateful for the local people around me who I can lean on for support and guidance: we bounce off each other. I never thought I would come across such a good tribe. Having them around me is important. Collectively we are so strong.

I've realised that Andover's not quite so bad. There's lots of caring and kind people here who want to make a difference in a small town.

I want people to know how inspiring the younger generation are. Their understanding of the power of their voice, how they can make a difference and change things. We don't need to be waiting for that change, we can make it happen. There is power in the way young people come together as a group. They are more aware, more open minded.

The kids are bloody awesome.



AGNIESZKA KOSTECKA

I'm from Poland, down in the south by the mountains. I came for a holiday 15 years ago and never went home. I would like to stay.

It's really good and a really nice quiet area. I really like it here.

I don't have many friends because I have a social phobia, it's hard. I've got a few friends but they live in Southampton.

I was thinking I can get nice pictures with me, especially with me because I'm always doing pictures for the kids and I'm not there. I don't have many portraits of me. Thank you, I really appreciate this. Thank you so much, thank you.



SOPHIE WILLIAMS

My family live in Ludgershall and I came to secondary school in Andover. I've always had Andover as a base point; even when I went to university in Liverpool I would always come back to Andover.

I think it's lovely here. Everyone always slates Andover and how it's a terrible place to live and there's so much wrong with it. But it's what you make it, and as long as you know nice people it's a lovely area there's loads to do. It's a lovely place.

Don't stress about the little things. There's so much more to life, take a step back and look around and enjoy it.

Try to be less judgemental. You can be so judgemental, not necessarily about others but about yourself. You should really learn to appreciate everything you've got and love the little bits about yourself that maybe you didn't realise you had before.



MAC MCIVER

I worked for the MOD in Cirencester and my job brought me here around 1983. I was working for the United States Air Force and took a promotion board, passed it and was accepted to go to Netheravon with the REME.

Rather than commute everyday I decided to move to Andover.

The town is very unfriendly. I think there's four or five different factions within the town itself. You have the original Andoverians, the London overspill, people like myself who came to this area due to their jobs, and then you've got the military side. At times this causes some ill feeling within the younger generations.

The community always seemed more friendly in Cirencester. Coming here you could almost feel "hey, hey here comes an outsider".

I'd like to say I'm fed up with the Government's pettiness over whether there was a party in Downing Street or not. We've got problems with COVID, cladding, all this sort of thing. It's something that happened a year ago or perhaps even longer.

There must have been mistakes made during World War One, by the generals or the hierarchy, World War Two the same. Here we are harping on about a bloody party when you can look at it and think, you know we've got people dying right, left and centre?

Can't we do something better to sort this out? It's over and we can't rescind what has already happened.



SAM BENSON

.....

I came from London. I think London lacks community sometimes. I was sick of it so I tried to look at somewhere that has a bit of country, a bit of town, a bit of community.

We had to commute to London so looked at places on the train line. We came to see Andover and it already felt like home and the house prices were quite attractive as well. That's the reason why we moved here.

Andover is completely different from London. London is isolated and lonely. What I see here is friendly people. When I first moved here I was so surprised when people said good morning to me, which is a strange thing to say but it's something that is totally new to me. It's such a simple thing but it really makes your day. If you need help there is

always someone out there willing to help, this is not something you find in London.

One of the biggest things I love to do is walk around the countryside looking at the views. I like walking my dogs, I like meeting new people, I like coming home and being warm in my own environment. I like inviting people over to enjoy the warmth with me. I'm the hostess with the mostest and I really like having everyone around me.

I also like to have my own time and have a warm cup of tea.



NIGEL BEALEY

.....

I was born in a council house in the village of Hatherden.

My father was an engineer. I wanted to be an engineer too and here I am now.

I started photography back in the early 80's. A couple of mates were in the pub and they had these lovely prints of the Formula One at Brands Hatch. I had a Kodak Ektra 110 camera for Christmas and it was poor, really poor. I couldn't believe what they had, they had all these lovely, sharp, vibrant prints and I was amazed.

I bombarded them with questions. A week later I had an Olympus OM1 and it all started from there. I didn't have any money so I got it from a mate's catalogue, I paid more than I should have done but I could pay him a little bit every week.

Little acorns. And here we are 43 years later and I've got an ARPS from the Royal Photographic Society that I had to work really hard for and I'm very, very proud of that.

I want the world to be fairer. We should all treat people with trust, dignity and respect. I just want the world to be a great place to live in.

I speak as I find.



SUZY EBANKS

.....

I was born at Andover Hospital in 1958. I've lived here all my life.

Our Andover used to be a lovely little town. We had beautiful shops and now we have nothing.

We have to go elsewhere for shopping because we just haven't got any shops anymore. All we get is cafes, betting offices and hairdressers.

The council haven't invested in us. They need to lower the rates of the shops so we can get our shops back. Make the prices affordable for the retailers so they can make money. So they don't all shut down.



BEN BETTERIDGE

.....

I'm from Oxford. I met my partner Peta on Tinder and she moved up to be with me. We moved in together and started a family.

Childcare prices as well as mortgage and everything else got on top of us. Fortunately our in-laws were in a position to help with childcare. We made the decision to sell our property in Oxford and move to Andover for an easier and more sustainable family life really.

It's pretty cool here. Relatively quiet and it's got everything you need, especially if you need a haircut or a vape. There's a lot of opinionated people that like to talk and they believe whatever they are saying is correct, but I try to ignore them and stick to my own life.

We're not far from somewhere that may be that bit better. Basingstoke is half an hour away,

Bournemouth an hour, London only an hour and a bit away, nowhere is too far. It's good enough here, nice and quiet. A lot different to Oxford with regards to busyness but everything's on the doorstep if you need it.

Be who they want, do what they want. Don't push your ideologies onto anyone and don't let anyone push their ideologies onto you and your family.

There are stresses going on in everyone's life and we don't need to have the added hate from each other as well. If this could be printed on the front page of a newspaper and everyone could see it I think this would help things be happier in the world.

Mind your business, you live your life and let other people live theirs however they wish. Simply put, we should stay in our own lanes.



PAULINE BROAD

.....

When I finished college in 1962, all firms were run by men, all managers were men. Women were definitely secondary, usually working in secretarial and support roles.

I don't think equality will ever come because it's very difficult to combine a family with a responsible job. I'm glad I didn't have to make that decision. I didn't want to be the president of a company, chief executive or anything like that. It was bad enough sitting next to "him". It was always a man, there were few women on the board, one token woman perhaps to six or seven men.

I've worked overseas for small companies, big companies and been self employed. Being self employed as a French tutor was quite rewarding. It was all about helping people to pass exams and

get a job, which I liked. I don't like thinking about myself really.

Now I'm retired I like voluntary work, probably because I like to feel useful.

I gather that things have improved very slowly for women. I'm glad not to be working. I'm glad I lived when I did. We had the war and rationing for ten years afterwards. Things were drab. We played on bomb sites but everybody was in the same boat.

We were happy and those were the days.



DEBBIE EDGINGTON

.....

My parents moved down with the London overspill in 1967. We moved onto an estate, Cricketers Way, which was newly built. I grew up on the estate. I went to Shepherds Spring infant and junior school, then went onto Winton and further education at Cricklade and Salisbury college.

I wouldn't say there's a great deal of facilities here. I know they're trying their best to have a bit more but there's not enough. There's not enough for young children and I just feel that when we were younger there was a lot more to do. Well we done our own thing, we made our own games up.

Nowadays it's all children on their devices, obviously things have changed so much.

I feel that if we want to do anything as grown ups, we have to go out of town to find nicer places to

travel to. Which is quite nice to do as it gets you out, but actually in our own community there's not really much that offers us anything.

I want the retirement age to be lowered. So I can spend more time with my grandchildren. So I don't have to work up until 65 or 66 it will probably be by the time I leave work.

Everyone should all mix in as families, how they used to years ago and help out especially with the elderly. I do quite a lot for elderly people, it might be just a pedicure or something or to go around and do a bit of shopping.

Families seem to have drifted and we haven't got so much of that anymore.



LUKE M

I lived with Dad in Ireland years ago, when I was sixteen. He moved back to Test Valley to live with a lady in Stockbridge. She was the manager of a hotel in Leckford. So he got a job and as soon as I turned eighteen he got me a job working out of Andover. So I moved here and stayed until I was about twenty. Then I moved to America. I lived in California for seven years, got married, got divorced, came back, lived in London for a bit and then ended up back to Andover.

Andover is one of those places that's big enough to live in, get on with your own stuff, work, keep your head down and nobody knows you. It's also small enough for you to live in, not mind your own business and everybody know you: it's one of those in between. It's not like Basingstoke or London where nobody knows each other. It's all about what you make it.

If you want to surround yourself with idiots, you can. If you want to surround yourself with good people, you can do that too: there are plenty here.

Football is powerful. From grass roots to the Premiership, it can change lives. People getting up at 8am and dragging themselves to a cold pitch on a Sunday morning seems like a minuscule thing, but it might be the biggest part of their week. If they've got things going on in their lives, if they've got a weakness they are trying to get away from, football is a massive help. If anyone is going through tough times or needs a focus I recommend Sunday league football, or any kind of football, it really helps.

I was lucky to find this team, not a lot of big egos. Win or lose, we always support each other, on or off the pitch.



SUSAN WOODHEAD

People are always very generous if they garden and they give you cuttings of things they have grown.

The Hellebores which have just gone to a very green colour but were a rich burgundy about a month ago, they came from a friends garden. And another friend in Romsey, who's no longer alive, gave me a beautiful little plant, a Pulmonaria, a Lungwort which seeds and flourishes freely on the chalk and produces lots of plants. I had that in my previous house and brought cuttings with me and I've given lots of cuttings to other people. It's a wonderful plant because it comes out in the early spring and flowers in march. When I see it I think of her and that's a lovely memory to have.

And then my lilies of the valley, which again were a little tiny clump which somebody gave to me and this year I'm going to have about 50 lilies of the valley.

My garden is my sanctuary and it's the place that I find tranquility and balance in my life. It's the place where very often my heart is.

It's just a joy, it's just a joy.



SIMON PETER GREEN

I first came to Andover as part of the London overspill. My family uprooted from Brixton in Lambeth to Cricketers Way in 1968. Admirals Way had been finished, River Way had been finished and Cricketers Way was half finished. All the other estates were still open fields full of cows.

It's beautiful in North West Hampshire, I quite like the area. We are near some incredible countryside, especially out towards Chute, Avebury and Stonehenge, the Bourne Valley, the North Wessex Downs and South towards Winchester. It's quiet though, there's not much to do here, a bit of a one horse town. Luckily we are near London so when you get bored you can easily get up there.

I would like to call for equality. Equality is a fundamental human right the same as air, food, water, and shelter. The world we are living in is not

equal. There are millions of people in struggle, the poor, old people, marginalised people, minorities, blah, blah. Some people live a tough life, a lot tougher than others and some people live an easier life.

I want working class people to have much more control over how society is managed. Even though we do all the work, we haven't got much say with what happens. We need fundamental things like decent pay, a decent environment, decent schools, decent hospitals, decent diet, decent housing, dentists, increased family time to chill and relax, bread and roses.

If I had my way there would be more equality and working class people would play a much bigger role in how society is organised.



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SARAH JOHNSON

.....

My dad was in the army. We moved here when I was 12 and I started at Winton in what was the second year of secondary school.

Everybody else had gone through infants and juniors together and formed friendship groups. Then I come along and didn't fit in. I felt like I latched on. Those friendships aren't real friendships and when I left school I didn't see anybody anymore.

Then you go through life and you get to an age when you realise those friendships aren't real. I was there for them yet they were not there for me. I couldn't necessarily talk to them about any issues or problems I was having.

As you get older you pick your friends more wisely. You start to know the people who will be there for you if you need them in a crisis, or you are feeling down. You know you can just call and they will support you.

These are the friends you can count on.



JENNIFER PENNY

.....

In the mid-sixties we moved down with the London overspill because of my husband's job: he was a milkman. Andover Creameries was bought out by Express Dairies. It was fabulous because we had a brand new house. The locals in the shops weren't keen on serving us and would natter away and ignore you as a customer. I've walked out of lots of shops and sworn never to go back.

Things took quite a long time to change, they just couldn't see that we were bringing a lot of money into their town. That's all in the past now and things are better.

If you were growing up in the 50's and 60's you've had to work very hard to get any equality today. I had two kids and remember having to have my husband or a guarantors signature to buy a washing machine! It was horrendous. You couldn't do

anything without somebodies agreement.

Things have improved, it's so nice to be a single woman able to go and do what you want, when you want.

I'm very thankful for the National Health Service. I've had three years of quite bad health, including cancer. I'm thankful that I've had three extra years quality of life, God bless the NHS.



HELEN JEPHCOTT

.....

I moved to Andover in 1993. I love Andover, I absolutely love Andover.

I've worked here as long as I've lived here. I worked at the college and met a lot of people there. I also worked at the community hall on King Arthurs Way and got really involved in the community and met so many people. Everyone helps everyone out. Yeah, everyone knows everyone else's' business but if you keep yourself to yourself it's not really an issue. There's lots of green open spaces. It's a lovely place to bring your children up I wouldn't want mine brought up anywhere else.

My job in the funeral industry makes me appreciate my family even more. It makes me appreciate my kids, my parents, my friends because you do see the other side of it. Life isn't forever, it's for living, all that family and friends stuff and enjoying your time.

The funeral industry is very male dominated. To have females is just amazing because females have that caring touch. They look after people's loved ones, their care and attention is amazing. They are a lot more emotional about it so they want to do their best, they want to put the best into it.

On my team I have a female conductor who is absolutely fantastic and when people see her they always comment on how lovely it is to see, because it's not what you see everyday. It's becoming more everyday, and we are going to take over the funeral industry.

I think it's fantastic what you are doing. There are so many people under represented and everyone deserves a voice. I think it's amazing. Everyone needs that voice, everyone deserves that voice.



MARGARET WILLOUGHBY

.....

Confidence comes with age.

I've always wanted to have my nose pierced and up until now I've not had the confidence, but all of a sudden I have so I just went for it.

And the tattoos, I hated them when I was young but since I've been older I just love them, I see tattoos as an art form.

At the age of 21 I had my son. My mum had died previous to that and I was living with my younger brother in a caravan. When the baby came along we needed a house, so luckily enough I got a council house.

The house I'm living in now is not the original one, because when the council did the remedial work on

Pilgrims Way I applied to have this two bedroom house. I knew the garden got the sun all day and I wanted a house with the stairs in the hallway as opposed to the stairs in a room.

That's how I've ended up here and since then I bought it.

It's my own, it's all paid off. It's a nice spot.

I wish the world was a kinder place.



EVA WHEELER

.....

At 19 and 20 years old my parents left Spain to come here. Franco was just coming out of power. There was a massive economic depression and no work.

A couple of years later, after they'd worked and saved, they went back to Spain and found nothing much had changed. So they came back to Andover and decided to stay. They made friends, found jobs, learned the language and here I am 52 years later.

A lot more people from further away have come to live in Andover compared to how small it was. It's become a lot more diverse.

I enjoy going out, you see the same faces, its nice. You do get familiar with the people around you, everyone is super friendly and people help each other. It's a friendly community, everyone is willing to help if you need it.

I do like where we live.



KERRY GILLESPIE

.....

I was born in Buckinghamshire and grew up with my dad who unfortunately passed away when I was fourteen. That's probably the biggest thing that's shaped me in my life.

I moved to Hampshire in 1999 and lived in Gosport until 2009. I went to South Africa and spent seven years over there and then, in 2015 it was time to come home. I went to Nether Wallop, and then to Tangley and then to Andover. And here I am and here I will stay.

I had a very interesting work life. I had my own company in South Africa heading up a 50 seat call centre. Unfortunately, I came back and am now registered disabled.

I've got three kids, obviously all grown up and now my life is my furry children, I have three pugs.

It's great here. Close to town, easy. The communal gardens are nice, people are pleasant and we get on well with the neighbours.



TOBY PHILIP PEARCE

.....

I am me.

I am who I am and I'm OK with that.

I don't want to be seen as disabled or the child who has seizures.

I want people to see me as just a boy who does things differently. I want to be known as the boy

who smiles all the time, the boy who enjoys life and is a happy soul.

That's what I want people to see in me.



JOHN WHEELER

.....

It does make you angry that people take advantage of other people.

There's still misogyny, because people don't feel they are going to get support if they do say "look this happened".

Things are starting to improve because things are publicised more widely, information can become available and that's probably one upside of social media. People can see that if someone does make a stand they'll get support, other people will

actually stand up to the plate and say "this happened to me as well, I didn't say anything because I felt on my own". You get a bit more collective support.

There are signs of improvement but its frustrating that it's taken this long. Hopefully more people will stand up and not tolerate any form of abuse.



MILLY JEPHCOTT

.....

School is good, sometimes it can get boring.

This community is nice.

Men think they have all the power and think they can do what they want and get away with it. They think this because they do get away with it. This needs to be explained more.

I feel like most women don't feel safe in their area and workplace, they should feel safe everywhere but they don't.

Sexuality and stuff, race, people don't get treated the same. Treat everybody the same.

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