

Carole Waterhouse – Memories of Lockdown

There are so many new words for us all to learn in 2020 ... Lockdown being one of them. Here are some of my memories of Covid 19 lockdown ...

I work at the Lowry as a VIP supporting the front of house operations. We all knew the pandemic was coming to the UK but I doubt anyone realised the impact it would have on every one of us in many different ways. There was the first confirmed case; the first death; Italy in lockdown then Spain then France and USA stopping all flights; schools closed. I was trying to behave like normal. I had a lovely birthday treat to the Gotham Hotel in Manchester and trips out and meals with friends. But this thing called Covid 19 was like Japanese Knotweed ... its coming to get you. And apparently there is no treatment and no way of stopping it. I am terrified I'm going to die.

Then we get the news that all theatres are closing and I work my last shift that night as the Lowry closes its doors.

I'm panicking and so are the rest of the population. Going to the shops is terrifying. There's nothing left on the shelves. There's a black market in toilet rolls; there's no chickens for some reason and when I visit there's no bread. I look for bread flour as I have a breadmaker but there's none of that either. There is a rising sense of doom.

Then the inevitable happens ... TOTAL LOCKDOWN. I live on my own and so I lockdown on my own.

I have been missing the Lowry dreadfully and I know there is at least another one VIP who once described herself as "I would be desolate if the Lowry closed" when she was interviewed on TV when we were awarded the Queen's Award. I doubt any of us thought it would close.....

Kate (the FOH manager) and her team have been trying to keep our spirits up and we have been receiving lovely emails. I especially liked Christine's recipe (I could almost taste the cakes!) and Simon's gardening article (I could almost smell the grass...achoo...sorry hayfever!)

I don't have any baking talent and even if I could, I live on my own and I'm already heading for the nibbles far too often and I'm not so sure I'm going to fit into my Lowry T-shirt when we are once again called up to serve.....oh is that a good way to get a new T shirt eh Kate??!! A friend reminded me recently about what I had said last year, a particularly bad year for me and at a time when I felt overwhelmed, I said "I wish the world would just stop for a while; let me have a bit of time to catch up; then I could hop back on when it starts up again". Yes really ... please be very careful what you wish for!

The weather been so good recently...sunshine after all the grey days of such a wet winter. And have you noticed how blue the sky has been...much like when world travel ended during the Ash Cloud crisis. There are no trails in the sky and when I notice a plane I get very

excited wondering who on earth is mad enough to want to fly anywhere. I did think it might be Harry and Megan returning home (oooooh ... too controversial).

There are so many sights and sounds seen or heard when you pop your head out of the window or ventured into the garden. The sweet sound of the blackbirds...the sounds of children playing ... I can even tolerate next door cutting the grass (achoo!! Sorry hayfever). No, where I live it's the sound of the jet washing ... there isn't a path other than mine that hasn't been blasted. The run off goes everywhere so on my daily walk its literally like walking through treacle! I presume seeing the bare paths that people have now realised B&Q have closed and they can't get the sand to replace in between the bricks!

A new event started to happen ... "clap for the NHS" (haven't they got enough infections at this time?!). I was amazed to see ALL my neighbours out. I am very lucky to live in a little patch of this wonderful city where I know all my neighbours in the 12 houses adjacent to me and quite a few a bit further along. But to see everyone out was a joy. We waved to each other and as I go on my daily walk around the estate people are smiling though windows, chatting in the garden at a safe distance and just generally passing the time of day. What a delight....

Last year was a very difficult year for me and my role as carer for my 2 elderly parents ended. So, I am still trying to sort out their belongings as well as dig myself out of years of paperwork and other ephemera. The lockdown has hastened my ability to do this in giving me the time but the inclination is a separate issue.

So sorting through boxes and files and throwing things out and shredding paperwork no longer needed. I have found things I had long forgotten ... picture of my childhood events, autographs I collected (who remembers Sandy Powell / Leslie Crowther / Matt Busby?) ,my first Balsa wood ruler from primary school, my project on "hospitals" from around the same time, school reports and pen friend letters. I'm still very lucky to still be in contact with one of them... we celebrated 50 years last year!

But, lifting and handling as it used to be known in my profession has its own hazards... and humping boxes...maybe not; I'm not that desperate yet ... moving boxes has caused my shoulder to dislocate and so I am in some degree of pain now.

I have been looking for a new bed for a few years; trying to get one which will actually fit up my stairs and not through the window as one company suggested (I told them I only have a window that's 12 inches square and if you can fit a bed through there I'll be VERY impressed). However, crisis came 3 weeks ago when a spring was almost jumping out of the mattress and so I decided a new mattress was a good start. I just got it delivered two days before the lockdown. I moved my old one and decided to clean under the bed. I can't get right under my bed as I am unable to kneel down but I try my best ... once I moved the slats of the bed frame I was horrified. Not so much as enough dust to knit a hat more like a jumper! That's something else I have to do now...spin the dust and start knitting ... The same firm wanted £40 to remove my old mattress which I refused and asked a neighbours' son to

help. "You won't get that in there" he said pointing at the old mattress and the back of my car. I will ... I'm determined! So ... I didn't know how difficult it was to fold an old mattress in half whilst he wrapped it round with insulation tape and both of us forced it into the car. "That's not coming out of there" he said walking up the path! Who needs a gym; that was worth at least one spinning class.

The following morning I was at the local council tip. A horrified official asked me why I was out ... Gracious I must look a lot older than I thought ... And I pointed to the mattress. I was so very grateful when he opened the boot and pulled it out and threw it into the receptacle. Job done and £40 saved.

I'm at the supermarket again trying to source some milk. There seems to be a shortage of skimmed. Achoo achoo ... sorry it's the dust ... cough cough cough ... no its definitely the dust although the queue at the supermarket seemed to disappear suddenly and maybe they didn't believe me.

Another week passes ...

Did anyone get caught out on April 1st this year? I think the fools were few and far between as I think people have more serious subjects on their minds. People are so worried and frightened. I doubt the security guards on the shop doorways saying "sorry there's nothing left" would go down well joke or not.

I'm feeling like a caged lion pacing up and down against the bars of my cage ... Wallace in action for those who know about Albert and The Lion. However even Wallace managed a snack (of Albert as he "swallowed the little lad whole"). I am still trying to avoid snacks but particularly difficult when one very sweet neighbour left me a cake box with delights on the doorstep. Who has a supply of cake boxes!!

At least the pacing up and down means I'm exercising doesn't it? Mr Wicks and his exercises are too strenuous for me. I've looked at Mr Motivator ... who hasn't ... but the Green Goddess in her green leotard and matching hideous tights was a step too far and my neighbours thought I was knocking for help but was, in fact, marching on the spot ... maybe not!

Shopping represents an outing these days although I have to say I never thought I'd turn up at Tesco in gloves and a mask and no one bat an eyelid, and the security officers not wrestle me to the ground and arrest me for robbery. I also never thought I would be shopping at 6.30am ... but it is quieter. So here I am in my fancy dress, washing my trolley before I start elbowing the elderly out of the way! Oh, sorry I didn't realise that was the new greeting instead of a handshake ... I thought they just wanted more toilet rolls?

I have learnt something about the psychology of shopping too. In deepest darkest Salford, there is plenty of fruit and veg but no chips fish fingers or burgers. There is no aubergine or

squash so sorry Jamie I can't cook your recipes, although some of his lockdown programmes, which are hilarious as he tries to corral his children, have given me some ideas as to how to use up leftovers in the fridge.

In trying to limit my risks I'm using local and smaller shops more. My local corner shop has instigated a one way round shopping experience, but he only has one large display unit. I follow the arrow markings on the floor. Then I reach the social distancing strips on the floor. I stand back on the last one before the counter ... but it's too far from the counter; I can't reach and almost fall over trying!

My friend and her husband are trying to self-isolate as they have serious health issues. They have regularly shopped on line with Morrisons and thought that would continue as "valued customers" but I'm afraid to say not. They now play a game every day, log onto the website and guess where they might be in the queue. Not only are there no delivery slots available but Morrisons now have a virtual queue to get onto the website. Last week she was 18,000 in the queue ... but on Saturday she was ... 46,027th in the queue! Where is this madness going to end? You can't get food delivered to your home even if you are so high risk you can't go out. You can't get milk and groceries from Creamline (other dairies are available I'm sure) as they are not taking new customers ... but I can get cardboard storage boxes delivered by Amazon in 2 days. Madness.

My parents, along with their parents, had lived through one or two world wars and knew quite a bit about food shortages. My mum had her nuclear bunker storage facility also known as the larder ... and no one messed with the stock. She knew what went in and most certainly what came out. When my grandma died, she had a whole cupboard stocked with sugar ... and she didn't even take it in her drinks. I tried in vain to persuade my parents they didn't need such a store cupboard and they could easily go out and buy what they wanted. I think they must have seen this coming. Don't know about other areas but my supermarkets now appear to be getting stock through ... even though I do have to shop at silly o'clock!

I have managed to buy toilet rolls and the local shop has flour although I haven't been able to buy yeast yet. There are eggs and bread and mostly milk is available so its easing. I have a chicken for this weekend and I will make a hot pot to stretch it a bit further. I have found a local farm shop too ... it should be selling gold plated meat with their prices but it tastes better than the supermarkets. In any case all food prices have gone up.

Another week further into Lockdown ...

Like the rest of us, I have no idea when the Lowry is going to be open again but please God let me get to the hairdressers first!

Which numpty in the Government thinks that hairdressers aren't key workers ... just look at my mop. There is no way Margaret Thatcher would have let that happen on her watch... "This lady's not for turning ... Into a hairy monster". Unfortunately, that was one thing I

didn't see coming and unlike my friend who saw her hairdresser the day before lockdown, I had an appointment booked for the day after lockdown started. Maybe if you live with a hairdresser or even a partner who is handy with the scissors you can get round it ... but trust me although I will try to trim my fringe there is not a hope in hell I'm trying to cut the back! And my friend who is struggling being in isolation with her husband ... give her scissors and I think we can safely say there will be a murder.

Then there's the colouring situation.

Well ladies ... and maybe some gentlemen ... now is the time to pin your colours to the mast!

Is this the time to go white with pride or try a home colour? If you can get them ... there appears to be a massive shortage of colourants in my supermarket.

I'm continuing to tidy and move and empty boxes and throw away things from my past life. Work competencies from 2007 have gone, but not before I read them and realised I really did have to have training in ... and sign I was competent to ... "work" with a thermometer and a fridge. There is nothing the NHS can't manage to complicate! I'm not knocking the wonderful NHS who are all doing some sterling work but I bet no one is bothering if someone is competent to use a fridge ... and the world is a better place for that.

The dusting and vacuuming continues too. It's not that I don't clean ... its just that I think there is more to life than dusting. I used to have a sign up saying "You can touch the dust ... but please don't write your name in it". When Christmas comes I have a good clean before any decorations go up and when I take my Christmas decorations down I clean again. So, can someone please tell me where on earth does that b****y piece of tinsel come from? And in another twist Christmas 2019 I didn't even have any tinsel up! So this year I have found 2 pieces of tinsel in 2 separate places. How? Why? So that's proof that my house is definitely cleaner than before lockdown. Shame no one can come into my house to see it.

Taking this time to try new things as I have more time, I have heard a lot about cauliflower rice and thought I should try it. I found a recipe and only used a couple of florets to try ... a lot less than if I had been making cauli cheese. I followed the instructions and had a very nice sweet and sour with some normal and some cauli rice.

Never has a cauli been so worthy of a weather forecast ... let's just keep it civilised and say that there were gale force winds approaching from the south with occasional precipitation. Thankfully the weather is now much better with sunny spells and a dry patch. Don't think I will rush to that in the future. On a brighter note I got some flour and yeast from my corner shop and so I have lovely homemade bread. I had forgotten how good it tastes.

What have I learnt this week ...

I have learnt about hazard tape. It doesn't mean there has been a murder...well not yet anyway unless you stand too close to me.

I have learnt that don't want the lockdown to end just yet ... I've cut my fringe too short!

Time moves on still in lockdown ...

I've made a decision this week ... I'm moving to Switzerland as they are allowing hairdressers to reopen ...!

I am struggling on with my hair not being cut; now even jumbo rollers won't fix this! But I have also noticed that as I am not washing it as often and not using my normal styling products, it's not as dry and brittle as it usually is. This might be a trend for the future? Maybe the time of year has come to get the tin bath out for my annual wash too!! I think there is going to be a mad dash to the groomers when this is over ... I have my hairdresser on speed dial!

As I am not going out I am also not using make up. That's also been a shock to the system and it's not pretty. I look dreadful without make up (and some might say with it too!) but at this present time I'm past caring. This is going to be good for my skin perhaps but definitely good for my pocket. I went to the shops recently and when I got back I realised that I hadn't got any make up on, but as I had a mask and glasses on probably no one noticed anyway! I'm glad the weather is better so at least I might get a bit of a tan to stop looking so pale.

Oh, my word it's so hard staying in at home. I'm knackered! Cleaning, moving furniture, vacuuming, gardening, more cleaning.

I have curbed some of the clearing out. There are no charity shops open and so there is nowhere to take the items we no longer want. Even the local tip has closed. I have 3 piles of clothes currently. One which fits me now, another pile I hope will fit me when this is all over, and one for charity. There may be a little fluid movement between the piles before I get there!

What time is it? Is it "wine o'clock" yet? I have no idea as my watch battery has failed and my local jeweller remains firmly shut. I'm trying not to drink every night to remain healthy, but it's difficult. At least I'm not drinking during the day like others I know. Especially stressful is trying to educate children at home. Poor access to internet packages from school, parents without the knowledge to help, children not motivated to try. Hit the bottle!!

On a recent walk I overheard a conversation between 2 middle aged men ... "I've not drunk this much since I was a teenager". So not only will the economy take some healing but I suspect so will our livers

I am also reminiscing for the nights we all clapped for the NHS and other key staff. These days that constitutes a night out. I have shared a virtual glass of wine with a friend – the sharing being virtual not the glass of wine. But I hear Aldi has sold out of wine. Hardly

surprising that figures announced recently stated we have spent an extra 22% on alcohol in these difficult times; this is an extra £200 million!!! This is as a country not just me personally you understand. I'll go onto gin I'm not proud. Then there's the sherry for Christmas (these are emergency times) the bottle of port with the seized up top and a bottle of Sable (from Australia). Oh sorry is it just me with stocks of alcohol ... if I don't drink them I can at least wash my hands! My recycling bin looks like I've had a party but I haven't m'Lord ... honest.

I am trying to walk every day. Just around my neighbourhood as we are not allowed to travel further. On my daily walk I am seeing more and more clean cars too. People with nothing to do are polishing their vehicles and then can't drive anywhere so they remain clean. I am also finding out that one side of my road is less level than the other side. I find I'm walking with a limp in a sort of "you can't park there" type of way! At least the treacle from the jet washing does seem to be less.

On a more sombre note I have lost a few of my friends recently. Several have died from different reasons but 2 have died from Covid 19. It's so tragic. Their loved ones not being able to be with them at the end as no visiting allowed in hospitals. Not being able to see them before the funeral. And funerals limited to 10 people only. I have been to the crematorium more times than I care to remember whilst I stand on the road, head bowed, tears spilling down my face. I can't even hug their relatives in sympathy and no one can comfort me. I cry even more. I have some dark days after the funerals; remembering my sadness last year.

This year was supposed to be "my year" with adventures that I have been unable to take over recent years. Myself and my friends had booked holidays and adventure. Nowhere exotic but at least away from home, with someone else cooking and cleaning for me. Several have been cancelled and we struggle, along with thousands of others, to claim back money from holiday firms and hotels. As Shearings (a coach company) now goes into administration, my neighbours are struggling to get back their payments. My 4th holiday has been cancelled this week. I'm clinging onto another few hoping they will be able to go ahead, but as the death toll rises and this terrible plague rampages through the country, I don't feel optimistic.

I'm sure I, like others, feel we all have a "Pre Covid" life.

Take my credit card bill ... The latest bill has arrived and the first half details days out and party payments; the second half shows just how my wings have been clipped ... supermarket, pharmacy, chiropody (all those daily walks) and things I wouldn't normally pay for by card just to try and beat the virus. Normally one page has risen dramatically to three pages but the bill is noticeably lower than normal. That's such a disappointment!

On the subject of gardens, mine is looking very glum ... no colour as there are no summer plants in there yet. I am carrying on preparing the ground in the hopes that I can get some

but with garden centres closed and many close to insolvency there may be no flowers this year.

I have very heavy clay soil ... it's a nightmare. I don't see many worms thankfully; they have hard hats on to try and get through the clay. Over the years I have tried adding grit, gravel, sand, fresh soil etc to the soil to try and make it a bit better but it doesn't work. This time I was advised to try well-rotted manure ... mmuumm!! I found a garden centre doing local deliveries and rang to ask if they included my address. I asked for manure and soil ... "Oh, you're in luck. We've just had a delivery which we need to get out today. We have 200 tonnes ... how much do you want?" Needless to say, not that much....

However, 150 litres of manure and 100 litres of top soil took a lot of spreading and digging in. It took 2 annual washes to get rid of the smell and the dirt! All I need now is some flowers... and some more flour wouldn't go amiss either.

Time marches on, but time seems to be going slowly, but then as I have so much time, why do I keep running out of it? I have a list, but as a friend said she is lacking the motivation to do the "to do" list. I have also found that as I am spending so much time at home I am noticing things I perhaps wouldn't normally notice. I know I have decorating projects to do but I have noticed, after having a bathroom renovation, that there are chips in the paintwork which need to be addressed. There is flooring needing replacement and either a new sofa or a re-cover. I had the bathroom done this year with my intention to do the kitchen next year, but who knows what will happen to that. And then there are the outside jobs; pointing and repairing paths. At this rate the economy will bounce back from my house alone.

I am learning new skills too. Not playing the guitar or speaking Italian but in my case grouting! I have managed to grout the tiles in my porch and it looks OK. At least it was something different to the routine.

We are all struggling with motivation. I have the attention span on a flea and I start one job but quickly get bored and have to move onto something else. One of my friends has been trying to make a pair of curtains since lockdown began. She's made one curtain ... it's finding the motivation for the other. I am trying to continue with the sorting but it's so overwhelming what needs to be done, and with no distractions of other adventures to cheer me, I am struggling. One friend has suggested one box at a time. I do one box and feel I have achieved something at last.

I really miss going out and about with my friends. I'm wondering if I can claim a refund on my calendar and diary? There can be as many "Zoom" meetings (there's another word we have all learnt – the computer-based programme allowing people to meet up virtually), facetime, and phone calls but the physicality of meeting up; the supportive hugs; the meals together or even a quick coffee is the part of life I am missing most. I feel cut off and isolated even though I have so many wonderful friends.

I have been joining in with zoom meetings with the guide unit I am attached to. The leaders are being really inventive in what they are trying to achieve from a distance. I have written a couple of meetings for them which they are adapting to use with the girls, and the resources they have at home. The funniest in my opinion was making butter by shaking cream in a jam jar and next week ... armpit fudge! I have asked do I have to shave first ...

This week is the 75th Anniversary of the end of the War ... VE day. One of my friends wants to break lockdown and meet up at a social distance in the garden. I join her! Its wonderful. Her husband died of Covid. We want to hug but can't. We do a virtual hug. It feels better. We sit at a distance in the garden. I have taken my own cup to drink out of. We eat cakes. We talk. This feels so civilised. It feels wonderful.

I come home and cry.

My neighbours sit at a social distance on our drives and talk (well shout really) and drink to celebrate VE day. There is music playing. It feels social and normal in a way ... maybe this is the new normal.

Another week passes ...

I hope we have passed the peak maybe. Another holiday cancelled.

Some restrictions are eased. You can now travel a bit further.

Now I can do what I was planning to do anyway. I cannot stand this constriction. I feel like I am going to suffocate.

It's coming up to my father's anniversary and I want to celebrate his life by being at the seaside. I can now do it legally. So, I set off to Blackpool. It's a nice day. It feels very odd driving along the motorway. I've only travelled to the shops and back so I feel unsettled. The feeling passes. I arrive with my picnic but I think my father has reached back from beyond and I find a fish and chip shop open for takeaways. It would be rude not to ... so I sit on the promenade with my fish and chips and tears roll down my cheeks. But it feels good. It feels like normal. It feels right for today.

As no one's driving anywhere petrol prices have plummeted ... I don't know when petrol was last below £1 a litre. It's a good side effect of this pandemic but I wonder how long it will last.

Although I miss my parents dreadfully, I know that if they had still been alive this year I would not have been able to cope. I was caring for my dad at home and my mum, who went into a nursing home. My dad would not have accepted that I couldn't go into see him and my mum would have thought we had all abandoned her as all the care homes have closed their doors to relatives. Having visited her every alternate day, she would have been alone, anxious and frightened. I could not have dealt with that. My heart goes out to all these people who are in the same dreadful position.

My godson's wedding and my friend's daughter's wedding have been cancelled. It's devastating. I have my outfit which was suitable for both. I don't know if my dress still fits

but my shoes don't! I have no idea why my feet have grown but apparently, they have done. We will have to see what happens for next year.

I don't do internet banking but avail myself of telephone banking. I am so grateful to everyone who has relocated to work from home. I spoke to one man in his bedroom as his children interrupted our call. It was so sweet. Another lady was in her kitchen and had to let the dog out when it was barking; full of apologies but unnecessary. I was just grateful they were available for me.

I still have to get up at silly o'clock to go to then shops when its quiet and no queues. I refuse to queue for my shopping. At least going early the shelves have been restocked and there are less and less shortages visible on the shelves. I still shop in my masks and gloves. I'm not taking risks just yet.

I have friends who come and sit in the garden, socially distanced of course, and we chat over a coffee and a biscuit. I love the company and makes up for the weeks of phone calls, which although valuable are just not the same. I have laughed too which seems to have been lacking in the early days.

One of my friends has been walking me around her neighbourhood with hidden forests and wild life. It's such a joy. We walk at a social distance and I feel a sense of freedom. Its not much but it makes me feel good. I don't walk around the roads as much now because the traffic is increasing day on day and it's not pleasant. And people riding bikes on the pavement are a nuisance and threaten my safety.

My friend thought that, as she was doing OK with her walks, she would try a little slow jogging. Clearly her brain and feet are not in sync and she went head over heels (her terminology was slightly different) and probably chipped a bone in her wrist, but she was too frightened to attend hospital for an x-ray. She put a splint on and it seems to be improving.

Although I am getting exercise I am not sleeping very well. I don't have insomnia like a few of my friends but I don't seem to get a full night's sleep. It's difficult to know what to do. Even during the physical activity of rebuilding my fountain and pond in the garden I was exhausted, I still didn't sleep well. But at least I'm not alone.

I have been waiting for a hospital consultation since January and was shocked when I received a call asking if I wanted a telephone consultation with the Doctor. I jumped at the chance and was really pleased with the outcome. This is a positive side effect of Covid. No allocating half a day for a 10-minute appointment. No struggling to park and sat in a depressing waiting room. All done and dusted from the comfort of my home!

Others are not so lucky waiting for the dentist. They are not open yet and although it won't be long they don't have the PPE for protection. One friend has lost half her front tooth and

another a filling put in just before lockdown and she's in so much pain. I feel for them so much as there is nothing worse than toothache.

So many people have "lost" birthdays and other celebrations. My shielding friend had his 70th birthday during lockdown and instead of celebrating in one of the world's greatest hotels (according to the TV series) he was stuck at home. I found out, by accident, that his favourite chippy was open for takeaways. So, I plotted with his wife and on the day of his birthday I arrived at their home with a take away meal for them! We all sat in the garden, in the pouring rain, eating my offering and he was kind enough to say it was the best birthday ever. The bonus for me was I found a farm shop on the way home and stocked up on supplies. I even got some flour for my baking neighbour.

Generally, I am struggling to decide what to eat. I am used to being out for a meal at least once a week. This has been such a shock to the system. Some days nothing appeals to me, with toast being the fallback option. I have never drunk so much tea and coffee; missing my meet ups with friends.

So as time moves on and the lockdown eases in slow stages, we can all hope for better times ahead. I will just be grateful for shorter hair. The shops are opening now although I am not going. I'm still too fearful of catching the virus. But the queues at general food type shops seems to have become less as Ikea and Primark queues grow longer. I still can't meet someone in a coffee shop or restaurant, and I still can't go on holiday; another 4 holidays have been cancelled.

There is no time scale for the reopening of theatres and I continue to miss the Lowry dreadfully. I miss the VIP's, the patrons and the shows.

So what have I learnt during lockdown ...

I've learnt that when something seems too big to attempt, do it one box at a time.

I've learnt that human physical company cannot be replaced by a phone call or a zoom meeting.

I've learnt that some peoples' cars are cleaner than mine ... give it two weeks and there will be no difference

I've learnt that I have the resources to cook 294 meals.

I've learnt not to cut my hair.

I've learnt that my legs are for walking and not just for operating the accelerator and break.

I've learnt that I have nice neighbours and if you smile at people, they will smile back ... well mostly.

