

Making Stinchcombe Social Again

Thank you

Last week I posed a question to you, "[What is Stinchcombe Social for?](#)"

I had mild expectations of receiving one or two replies. So I am pleased to have to inform you that a surprising number took the time and trouble to email, text and phone me with their considered responses. So **thank you** from me to all those who did. It seems that my post broke the dam gates on the communities feelings.

My first shock was that in most cases, somewhere in the communication was a "**Thank You**" to me!

The phrase usually went somewhere along the lines of "**Thank You for raising this matter**". It seems that many people in our community have been feeling that Stinchcombe Social has lost its way somewhat.

Time and time again

Things that came up time and time again were:

Birthdays. Messages for Birthdays go on and on all day. It's a classic example of where a message should **GO PRIVATE!!** I think that we would all be happy to be notified of a Birthday, but greetings and wishes should then be sent **DIRECTLY to the person.**

Comments of a personal nature. Stinchcombe Social is not the platform to attack people, institutions, government or indeed the Parish Council. About half said they had thought of coming

off because of the personal nature of some of the posts.

One person wrote *"Some days the feed feels quite toxic"*, another *"I have personally felt very uncomfortable at times when comments have appeared to get very personal in nature and have also spoken to other people who find it distasteful "*

There was much more in this vein, but I would like to give you one more quote which I feel sums it all up ***"gossip about other people in the village on a large platform reflects poorly on the culture of the community; it's not a very welcoming signal to relative outsiders, regardless of prior misdemeanours of the subjects of gossip. I personally value kindness, inclusion and non-judgement very highly "***

A Reflection of the Community

So, to sum up,

- I would like everyone who uses Stinchcombe Social, to think before you post. What you post, **reflects on the community of Stinchcombe and also on you.**
- Wherever possible, reply to a person **DIRECTLY**. Unless the information benefits us all. (Good: Safari Supper starts at 7.00pm Bad: I live in No 13 with red door) If you don't know how to reply directly, **LEARN!**
- No, the **ADMINS** don't want to **ADMIN** the Group. The Community of Stinchcombe should be able to have a WhatsApp group that reflects all that is good in Stinchcombe. It's positive attitude, it's willingness to each other and it's caring for others less fortunate.
- **No Late night posts** There are night owls and early risers out there, but if someone rang you at 12 midnight for a chat, would you be happy?
- **Social Media.** Please re-post relevant post from other Social Sources onto Stinchcombe Social. However **YOU** are

responsible for **FACT CHECKING** them and making sure they are relevant, true with **no other hidden agenda contained within**. We live in a world where it seems that facts are bent by all, from Prime Ministers to Opposition Leaders, from Journalists to Newspapers. People have learnt how to use Social Media to spread hate and untruths. Make sure that you are not an unwilling accomplice. Is any repost, the truth the whole truth, and not just supposition. Example: Today's repost links the POW with a sexual assault with no proof whatsoever. I call this malicious and I feel it should NOT have been reposted until it was re-written.

- **Free Speech.** We DO have free speech in our country. The right to hold strong opinions, to receive and impart information without interference by public authority. Send me a written article under your name that is well researched, fact checked and even contentious and I will happily post it onto the website. But keep the Rants off Stinchcombe Social.

In conclusion

Stinchcombe Social is still very, very much appreciated. One person wrote *"I am grateful for the group's existence as it is easy access to the local network"* another *"I think the group is very useful"* and yet another *"It was great that this group started during Covid, and I'm glad it has continued. I think it has helped us get to know more people in the village and to have a greater awareness of what's going on"*

Stinchcombe Social is OURS, the Community's, so let's all just mind our P's & Q's, remember we are talking to 100 other people, and keep the **SOCIAL** in **STINCHCOMBE SOCIAL!**

Richard

What is Stinchcombe Social for?

It's a good question and requires a little navel gazing.

Recently, I have received complaints about posts on the platform and I also know at least three people who have left the group because they did not like the way some posts were attacking others. (people, institutions, government and even others etc)

So, I ask what is Stinchcombe Social for?

- Is it a platform for people to rant?
- Is it a platform to tell jokes at others expense?
- Should we be proud that people have felt the need to leave?

At present we have 108 people in the group, but probably only 25 people who post regularly. So what **DO** the silent majority think?

Remember how it started

Stinchcombe Social started as a self help group to help neighbours and keep up morale at the start of Covid. Has it lost it's way? It's never had any rules, but should the Administrators now be taking a more active part?

Stinchcombe Social has been a great force to bring the

community together, the last thing we want is it to now drive members of the community apart.

People, who know me know I am the last person to have much political correctness or belong to the woke community, but even I think we should have standards on how we converse with each other on Stinchcombe Social.

I would love to hear your views.

- Should there be “rules on speech”? – I’m personally not in favour of this as I feel that we should all know how to act.
- How about “guidelines”? – maybe, but what guidelines should there be? The only “guideline” at present is if talking to someone individually – TAKE IT PRIVATE...but no-one seems to follow this
- Should the administrators take a more active role? – If someone complains with reasons, I will.
- Is Stinchcombe Social the forum for expressing strong views on any topic? Especially when you have an open invitation to write a concise, thoughtful, well researched article for publication in our own eNEWS!

Please email me, talk to me or speak to me if you would like to express an opinion on the above and if not me, perhaps ***Caroline Marshall*** or ***Jessica Milliner*** or ***Roger Batty***

Sincerely, [Richard Bartlam](#)