

Radley Village Shop AGM – Chairman’s report – 10 May 2017

Good evening and welcome to the 10th Annual General Meeting of The Radley Village Shop Association. This year the shop passes a milestone as it celebrates its 10th anniversary on 22 May. For this reason we welcome shop volunteers, who may not be shareholders, to attend this meeting and enjoy refreshments in each other’s company afterwards. I must remind those who are not shareholders that they are not entitled to vote on any of the motions and resolutions that are discussed here tonight.

I am pleased to report that we have had another successful year of trading. You have the full details of our financial situation in the accounts prepared by, our treasurer, Lynda Crowley and will hear more from her shortly in her report.

I know that I have said this in each of my annual reports but once again, on behalf of Radley Village Shop Association, I would like to record my sincere thanks to all of the volunteers, in whatever capacity, who have given their time freely and willingly during the past year to keep the shop open. Once again we have experienced a fall in the number of volunteers which has put more of a strain on those who are still able to give some of their time to work in and for the shop. This does mean that some of our volunteers have, without coercion or pressure, worked additional shifts to cover the gaps left by others. To them and to all of the volunteers, thank you. During the year we had a poster campaign to try and encourage more people to become volunteers. Unfortunately this was not successful so I am now asking that if you or you know of anyone who might like to join our team, please come and have a chat with us either after this meeting or in the shop. A lot of progress has been made during the last ten years. As you will shortly hear when awards are presented many of our volunteers have freely and willingly given some of their time since the shop first opened. Without them and all other past and present volunteers Radley Village Shop would not be able to exist for the benefit of our community. Imagine the worst scenario – no shop. It is too early to predict what impact the new housing developments will have on the village but it is certain that our shop will be needed as a vital resource to old and new. So please think about it. It is a great way of giving something to the community and, at the same time, making new friends and acquaintances and getting first-hand local news. The work of the volunteers covers all aspects of running the business and goes beyond the face of the person working behind the till. The future of the shop appears to be secure, but will only remain so with the continued commitment and support of the volunteers and customers.

Again I would like to record our thanks to our shop manager, John Goodenough, for all of his hard work throughout the year and, indeed, since the day the shop first opened. He continues to work well with the volunteers and has a good relationship with our customers irrespective of which football team they support. He makes sure that the shop is well stocked and is always on the lookout for new items. He chooses our suppliers well and has built up good working relationships to ensure that we get the best deals that are available.

In my last report I informed you of our future plans for further internal alterations and improvements to the shop. The new upright freezer was installed and some of the shelving displays were altered. These changes have proved to be popular and have given more space for additional stock items.

Having been given permission by Covenant Management who look after Catharine Court to take over the small piece of ground by the entrance to the car park we are in the process of creating a paved fine weather seating area and a small garden which will be planted with herbs for anyone to help themselves.

Our fresh produce stand is available again for anyone to donate surplus fruit and vegetables from their gardens and allotments. The proceeds from these gifts are kindly donated to the shop.

At the AGM in 2016 it was agreed that £1,000 should be set aside for grants for which village organisations could apply. There were six applications which were all considered to be worthwhile, and were therefore allocated a share of the fund. Grants were made to:

Dolphins Disabled Swimming Club
Radley Flower Show
Radley News
Radley Youth Club
1st Radley Brownies
Radley Guides

You will hear later in the meeting that the management committee is recommending that grant funding should be set aside once again this year.

The one committee change that I have to report is that Sheree Beckingham, who has been our Rota Manager since May 2014, has resigned from that demanding role so that she can spend time working as a volunteer within another organisation. However Sheree would like to remain on the committee and, if approved, her title will be Policy Advisor. We thank Sheree for the work that she has done over the last three years and are pleased that she is willing to remain on the committee and in her regular Tuesday morning shift. We are very pleased to welcome Judy Tams who has agreed to become our new Rota Manager. We are grateful for her willingness to take on this task and wish her well in whatever lies ahead.

I am pleased to report that all of the other members of the management committee have agreed to continue for the forthcoming year if that is the wish of this meeting.

I am sure that many of you will be aware that the Parish Council is considering developing the allotment site in Church Road. They have approached the management committee to ask if we would consider re-locating to larger premises within that development. Joyce Huddleston and I have had several meetings with Scilla Dudding from the Parish Council and with West Waddy Architects to discuss this matter. West Waddy Architects have produced a concept layout which would include a shop much larger than ours. The management committee held an extra-ordinary meeting to discuss this single matter and concluded that, although the proposal was tempting, issues concerning access, visibility, cost and potential additional responsibilities for our shrinking pool of willing volunteers made the idea unacceptable. If any shareholders present who are currently not volunteers would like to consider joining the team then, if numbers were to increase substantially, who knows, in the future we may be able to expand into larger premises and provide even more services to the community.

In conclusion I would like to thank all those who are committed to the shop whether as a volunteer or a customer and ask that you continue your support to ensure that the shop remains successful for the benefit of everyone in the village for many years to come.

That concludes my report for this year.

Bob Earl

Chairman

10 May 2017