

Annual report by the Chair of the Radley Village Shop Association

May 2010

I took the role of Chair of Radley village shop Management Committee in May 2009 in the wake of two previous extremely effective Chairs, Barbara Ellis and Graham Steinsberg. This year Graham's contribution was appropriately acknowledged in the Vale Unsung Heros' Awards, along with the contributions of other Radley Village Shop volunteers.

On joining the team I soon realised that in just two short years, one full time employee and a highly effective and dedicated team of volunteers had transposed a small, compact unit into a viable and vibrant village shop. Just how many people give of their time, some 66+, came as a huge surprise to me, and demonstrates the level of community spirit that exists within the village. This has been further demonstrated throughout the year by a small but steady stream of villagers wishing to become shareholders, or increase their shareholding in the shop.

With so many volunteers, the role of rota coordinator is no mean feat, but the Committee members that have taken on this role have done so with gusto, and dealt expertly with this logistical challenge.

Between them the Management Committee has many years of skills and experience that they have used to great affect to ensure that the shop operates every bit as efficiently as a commercial enterprise. And I realised too, how lucky the village was to attract John as our shop manager and only full time employee.

The turnover in the shop has been pretty regular over the last year, with a boost to income in the extended period of snow over the winter, when it was less easy for residents to venture too far from home for their shopping. It is surely at times like this when the true value of community facilities comes into focus.

The work of the volunteers, the skill of the management team, and the success of the shop venture was further acknowledged in achieving 3rd place in the Village Shop of the Year award.

The big news this year though has obviously been the proposed purchase of the shop lease. The management team has kept a firm eye on the finances over the last 3 years, enabling us to identify reserves that could be put towards the £90,000 purchase price. We are hopeful that the substantial amount of work done by Lynda Pasquire in researching the possibility of a significant grant towards the purchase and a mortgage on the remainder, should come to fruition shortly, enabling us to progress the purchase.

So, it's been quite an eventful year! And next year? One thing's for sure, with the skill and expertise of the management committee, the continued support and contribution of John and the volunteers, and the patronage of the villagers, it can only get better.

Mike Sadler
Chair of Radley Village Shop Association