

Radley Village Shop AGM - Chairman's report – May 2012.

I would like to welcome you all to the 4th Annual General Meeting of The Radley Village Shop Association. Today we are celebrating the 5th anniversary of the opening of the shop. I have now completed one year as Chairman of the Radley Village Shop Management Committee. During the year I have quickly understood the demands and responsibilities associated with being part of a dedicated team running a local village shop. As you are all aware Radley Village Shop is a community enterprise run almost entirely by volunteers for the benefit of the community. We are fortunate to have John Goodenough as our shop manager. He has built up a good relationship with our customers and with the volunteers. We have a loyal band of some 60 volunteers without whom the shop could not survive. Whether they work an occasional shift, regular perhaps multiple shifts, they may be a volunteer manager, collect the meat and eggs, look after the IT, monitor our energy consumption or are a member of the management committee with additional management responsibilities, all are an important ingredient to the success of the shop.

The shop has enjoyed another successful year with our weekly takings maintaining an average of around £5000 per week. You will shortly hear a detailed financial report from Lynda, our treasurer.

Stock levels have been maintained over the year with a few lines being discontinued and new lines being introduced according to demand and to add variety. John Goodenough regularly monitors sales and is constantly on the look-out for items that might appeal to our customers. We continue to offer a wide range of local products such as fresh meat, eggs, sandwiches and honey. Our prices are carefully monitored and comparisons are made with the local supermarkets, the results of which prove that we are competitive and sometimes cheaper. The added benefit to the customer is the convenience of being around the corner therefore reducing travel time and costs.

The management committee is aware that the equipment we have in the shop does have a limited life-span so we have considered, and investigated the possibility of replacing the cold storage equipment in the shop with a new single large chiller. This would involve a major re-organisation of the layout of the shop and would not result in making significant financial savings. For that reason it was decided to keep what we have and to be prepared to replace individual items as the need arises.

Market research was carried out to consider whether or not to install a hot drinks machine in the shop. The result of the survey made us decide not to proceed.

Legislation is something that we are constantly reminded of. Daily, weekly and monthly checks have to be carried out and logged to ensure that we comply with the current and, occasionally, changing Food Hygiene and Health and Safety regulations. We were recently inspected and, after addressing some minor issues,

we were given a rating of 4 out of 5 for our food hygiene which we were very pleased with.

The shop was highly commended in the Oxfordshire Shop of the Year competition. We have now been shortlisted every year since the shop was opened.

You may have noticed that we now have a bank note checking machine alongside the till. Unfortunately the shop suffered a loss when a counterfeit note was allegedly accepted. The machine is not perfect but it does at least send out a message to anyone knowingly trying to pass a counterfeit note that it will not be accepted.

We have very recently needed to replace the safe in the shop as the original one suffered a second breakdown of the locking mechanism and could not be repaired.

We are now looking forward to the time of year when our Fresh Produce stand will reappear so that local produce from gardens and allotments can go on sale.

I have so far not mentioned anyone by name because there are so many who deserve our thanks but I think it is appropriate to single out Sue Ward who will be standing down from the role of Rota Manager in December, having served for three years. We are optimistic that a suitable person is considering taking on this important role. I am sure that you would like to thank Sue for all the work that she has done as rota manager and to say that we will look forward to seeing her behind the till and on the shop floor as a volunteer.

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.

Bob Earl