



**ABBOTTS ANN VILLAGE SHOP ASSOCIATION  
Annual General Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**Monday 1st July 2019**

**Abbotts Ann Village School at 7.30pm – 38 people in attendance**

	DETAILS	ACTION
1.	<b>WELCOME</b>	
2.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Received from Lynne Lucas, Margaret Veale, Jon Deacon, Sally Coffey, Tim Tayler, Sue Hancock.	
3.	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> Minutes from AGM held in 2018 were approved. Proposed by Peggy Ellis and seconded by John Barlow.	
4.	<p><b>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</b></p> <p>Overview</p> <p>The Village Shop is an increasingly rare feature in communities around the country. Our unique shop partly defines our village and our community. Those of you who have lived here for a few decades as I have, will know that at one time most of the neighbouring villages also had a shop - Upper Clatford, Ampport, Grateley, Anna Valley etc. But no longer.</p> <p>2018 has been a year of change and continuity for the Association. Both of course are needed in the life of an institution. We have had changes of staff but the backbone of the shop has remained strong through the dedication of all who work there. There have been challenges from outside but we continue to move forward.</p> <p>It has been a time of great sadness to see our good friend and staff member Carol develop such a serious illness and pass away last year.</p> <p>Thankfully Carol was just well enough to attend the Volunteers BBQ last summer. We were therefore able to give her a big thank you which none of us will forget. We now have a photo of Carol on the wall above the till in the shop.</p> <p>Trading</p> <p>A brief look at our accounts over the last few years shows that our turnover significantly reduced in 2018. We can speculate as to why this occurred, but it is likely that the new Coop in Salisbury Road and the vagaries of the weather were contributing factors.</p> <p>However thanks to good management Tim has ensured that our trading margins increased and overall these are now about where we would like them to be. So the average difference between what we buy our products for and what we sell them for is on target for shops such as ours. These figures are what we earn from selling stock and do not take into account all the expenditure we have.</p>	

The Treasurer will be able to give you more details in his report.

We have most recently had the challenge of our our wholesale supplier attempting to demand larger weekly orders from us or risk being dropped from deliveries by them. We have managed to get them to change their mind on this.

The Association has as a whole made a profit. But as in previous years the contribution made by the rent from flat has ensured the Shop's survival. The Post Office which is so popular and vital for the footfall into the Shop does continue to cost us money since Post Office Ltd do not pay us what we pay the staff.

As we have made a clear profit we are bound by the rules of our Association which say that we must state how we are going to use that money, choosing from a few options which I will outline later. Therefore with your agreement we wish to put the excess we have made into a reserve which will be there for future use when the shop needs it. You will see from your agenda that later in the proceedings we will be asking you to back a motion proposing exactly that.

#### Staff

#### Management

For four years now we have had good solid management and direction in the shop from Tim. But he has decided that he needs a new challenge and is sadly leaving us in two weeks' time. In the few years he has been with us Tim has transformed the shop in terms of its products, its physical appearance, and the information which we now have available from our computer to keep us on track. He has always been a professional and because of his skills we are now in a very much better place than where we were four years ago. He has also been adept at cooking pizzas. So thank you Tim. We will greatly miss you and wish you all the best in your new enterprise in town. Tim was presented with a gift.

As you will remember from this meeting last year we welcomed Julia as our new Deputy Manager. Julia has proved to be a first class member of the management team and so her promotion to manager when Tim moves on later this month, has been an easy decision for the Shop Committee to make. Julia has been quick to accommodate to all the shop procedures and has worked so well with the volunteers. I guess most of you also know what a good cook she is with the wonderful cheese scones that sell so well in the shop. It is also great to know that pizza night will continue.

Thank you Julia.

We are currently in the process of recruiting a new Assistant Manager now that Julia has been promoted.

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#### Volunteers

My impression is that we continue to be strengthened by new people offering their services and also those like Margaret Veale who have stepped up to be a volunteer manager thus increasing our ability to function well when the paid managers are not present.

Weekends and indeed the early morning baking shifts could still do with more volunteers to spread the load. Don't be shy in offering your services!

#### Committee

I would as ever like to thank

Beth, Mike Bird, Lynne, Ann Hopwood, Andrew Norman and Elisabeth for their regular attendance and contribution to the committee. Beth has decided to stand down as from this meeting.

In the background a vital contribution has also been made by Martyn Startup who as an accountant is able to organise and check through our accounts at the end of the year. This saves us a great deal of money on auditors.

## Equipment

Over the last year we have started using Boomerang bags in the shop which have been made by Mel. The staff are also sporting Shop aprons she has made. The aim of Boomerang bags is to reduce the number of plastic and disposable bags used by customers as the bags are brought back to the shop at the next visit. Thank you Mel.

We have purchased a new printer for the back office with funds given us from the Eagle Quiz Group.

There was an unwanted spate of the alarm being activated, on occasions at the crack of dawn. Maureen pursued it being checked over by the firm that services it and hopefully it will now continue to function as it should.

Our energy bills are much larger than we would like. We believe the air conditioning is a significant cost in energy terms and we are looking at the possibility of venting the warm air produced by the freezers and fridges externally. This should reduce the need to be cooling the atmosphere down in the shop when it has just been warmed up by the outlets from the freezers.

We are about to purchase our coffee machine for the first time after renting it for a period and we hope this will lead to savings.

The floor is in need of replacement and we are getting quotes for this to be renewed

## The flat

Our tenants in the flat have been excellent. One or two problems have occurred with the heating which we have attended to. Our thanks to Neil Palmer whose company continues to oversee the tenancy agreements for us.

We are currently looking at quotations for repainting the wooden window frames and the door at the front of the building.

## The Post Office

I will give a report from Maureen shortly as she is unable to be here. The demand for our P.O. service is substantial hence the queues on a regular basis. We continue to benefit from this essential service without which the shop would probably not be able to survive.

## Funding

Thanks to a grant from the Eagle Quiz group the shop has a new printer in the back office.

### -debentures

We still have a few debenture holders on our books but the total figure for them all is now £6400. Many have been written off thanks to the generosity of families where the debenture holder has passed away.

### - friends

At our AGM last year we discussed the possibility of raising money for the Shop by creating a new arrangement called 'Friends of the Shop'. After much debate on the Shop Committee we decided to keep the process as simple as possible by suggesting to people that they set up a standing order for a minimum of £15 a year to become a 'Friend'. So far this has contributed £510 to our funds. I do hope if you have not yet become a Friend you will do this by taking action today. It guarantees the Shop an income and helps to minimise the cost of the P.O.

### -emails

We know that it is best to be keeping in regular touch with our customers wherever possible and so we continue to encourage you all to sign up to our email list. Again can I ask you to sign the

	<p>list here if you are not already on it.</p> <p>-Website Andrew Norman has managed to get a website for the shop set up, which you will find by googling it. The address is under 'Hugo <a href="http://fox.com">fox.com</a>.</p> <p>The Future</p> <p>We have many strengths in our Shop Association and we know the Shop provides a vital retail and social contribution to the village. It has been good to see the Men's Group meeting in the shop each week. Our bands of volunteers provide an excellent service as well as getting to know all sorts of people they did not come across in the community before.</p> <p>We have confidence in our excellent management.</p> <p>However as we will see from the treasurer's report shortly, our turnover and footfall can change rapidly and so we can never sit back and assume our customers will continue to come tripping through our door week in week out.</p> <p>So do keep thinking of the shop as a regular port of call and encourage others to do the same. Where else round here can you sit outside on a lovely day and drink a coffee and eat a piece of cake while in the centre of a fantastic village ?!</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>TREASURER'S REPORT</b></p> <p>Trading in the shop for 2018 have been difficult. The turnover in 2018 has decreased over 2017 whilst the cost of sales has increased. We have managed to maximise our margins to minimise the impact of the rising prices from the suppliers resulting in a larger gross profit for the year. However this has still led to a trading loss of nearly £6,000 being made. (2017 £11,173).</p> <p>We are fortunate in having the flat above the shop which has provided much needed income to offset the shortfall in the shop trading.</p> <p>Our continued efforts in reducing the running costs and overheads and our small profit of £870 in 2017 has increased to over £5,000 this year.</p> <p>As a non-trading organisation, we are obliged not to make a profit and because we have been fortunate in having very little maintenance and capital expenditure in 2018 the committee have agreed to set this money aside in a reserve fund with which to fund future repair and replacement of aging equipment or refurbishment projects.</p> <p>We have taken the opportunity to write back some of those debentures of which we have been advised no further call will be taken. This does not provide any extra cash or profit, but does reduce our future liability.</p> <p>We have been fortunate in receiving a few grants and donations during the year and are grateful for any help we receive in this area. Without this support, the picture would be less positive and we hope these will continue..</p> <p>Having sufficient turnover is fundamental to the future success of the shop. We are grateful to our customers and villagers whose support is vital to the continued viability of the store as further savings in our operation are unlikely to achieve the same levels as gained in 2018. Please take every opportunity to spread the word to villagers old and new, and to outlying villages as well.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>MOTION TO ACCEPT THE 2018 ACCOUNTS</b></p>	

	<p>Unaudited accounts were presented for the 2018 financial year.</p> <p>Proposed by John Barlow, seconded by Pam Lytle. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
7.	<p><b>MOTION TO ACCEPT SURPLUS BEING HELD IN GENERAL RESERVE FOR THE CONTINUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABBOTTS ANN VILLAGE SHOP</b></p> <p>Proposed by Donald Sorterup, seconded by Gordon Howard. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
8.	<p><b>MOTION TO ACCEPT UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR 2019</b></p> <p>Proposed by Alan Burt, seconded by Rosemary Johnson-Ferguson. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
9.	<p><b>POST OFFICE REPORT</b></p> <p>Abbotts Ann Post Office continues to be as busy as ever. For the second year running <b>Post Office Ltd</b> has declared a profit although that has not yet been reflected in our monthly remunerations. The vast majority of the post office network is made up of private businesses including community businesses, as here in Abbots Ann, run by sub postmasters. We all appreciate that in rural communities, post offices and village shops are an important hub. They are more than a link to essential services; they further social interaction. However, the fact is that many post offices face increasing challenges and uncertainty with regard to their long-term viability. Post Office Ltd present business model does expect the retail side of the business to subsidise the Post Office.</p> <p>On a more positive note Post Office Ltd has confirmed that there will be increases in the monthly remuneration later this year and in comparison to other post offices our Abbots Ann community traditional style post office does well in financial terms. The parcels and banking sides of the business are growing and I hope that extra work will be reflected in a better remuneration. Post Office Ltd is responsible for installation and maintenance costs of the alarm system, pays for the main telephone line and the shop does sell a lot of stationary. Most importantly the Post Office brings footfall to the business and for the present both sides of our business, shop and post office need each other.</p> <p>The Post Office team is in good heart and continues the important job of providing excellent service and bringing customers to our community business. We have welcomed Judeth Dashwood to the team of Gail, Hazel and John. My thanks to our Shop Committee: (all of whom are volunteers) for their support, to the Post Office team and to all our customers who contribute so much to the success of our business.</p>	
10.	<p><b>GENERAL QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>Q. Jill Else asked if it is possible to apply to TVBC for an increase in the precept as the shop benefits everyone in the village, and as the shop in Goodworth Clatford has done. A: Chris replied that this request would need to go direct to the Parish Council. It had been considered by the Committee and would continue to be kept in mind. Jackie Stanton added that the situation in Goodworth Clatford is different because their building is not owned by the Shop Association and they pay staff to service the Post Office.</p> <p>Q. David Read asked if the staff are paid enough. A: Chris replied that staff pay has been increased because of the living wage being brought in, but the committee has to balance the financial issues so that debt is not incurred. Staff pensions are also available, which adds to the cost for the shop. Jackie Stanton said that the staff work for the shop because they love the village, and that earning money is a secondary consideration.</p>	
11.	<p><b>ELECTION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b></p>	

	<p>Beth Deacon has resigned as Secretary of the AAVSA. 7 nominations were received for the Management Committee:</p> <p>Mike Bird Chris Davis Elizabeth Howard Lynne Lucas Andrew Norman Ann Hopwood Dee Howarth</p> <p>All seven were appointed to the committee without the need for an election.</p> <p>Acceptance of the committee was proposed by Polly Whyte and seconded by Beth Deacon.. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Graham Whyte asked if pizzas will continue to be made on the second Friday of the month once Tim Abram leaves. Julia Rowling has agreed to continue cooking pizzas as long as she can get the tomato sauce recipe from Tim.</p> <p>There was no further AOB so meeting concluded.</p>	

Ann Hopwood  
3 July 2019.