

TVSA Management Committee Report to the A.G.M. 29th June 2017

The TVSA Chairman, David Easthope, read out the following report:-

Good evening everyone and thank you for coming. Judging by the few people here this evening I have to assume, once again, that people are generally happy with the shop.

We are now at the end of our tenth year as a community shop and I'm pleased to say that we are still collecting new customers. I think we offer something that is getting harder to find these days - personal service with a smile.

Much of my annual report is, as usual, thanking people. I make no apologies for this as I feel that acknowledging the hard work that goes into running the shop deserves to be recorded.

More than ten years ago when the Masseys gave us a fortnights' notice that they were going to move out of the shop I was vice chairman of the shop committee. On hearing the news I looked around and discovered that everyone else had resigned and I was actually the only member of the committee. My first inclination was to speak with Nigel Moore who had been on the committee but had resigned due to pressure of work. Actually, that's not exactly true – the first person I turned to was Pat and, although she immediately did everything that was necessary she refused to be a member of the committee, but more of that later. I approached Nigel and also Uday Phadke, also a former committee member, and together with Pat we agreed that we would do our best to run the shop and that the way forward was not to find more tenants but to run it as a community shop with ourselves as volunteers but paying staff to do the day to day work. Both Nigel and Uday immediately agreed to come back onto the committee and Nigel has been a member ever since. Unfortunately he can't be with us tonight but his common sense approach and very knowledgeable advice on employment matters is invaluable.

The next person I spoke to was Alison Starr. Although she had not been in the village very long she immediately volunteered to take on the role of treasurer and has done so ever since. Although moving out of the village some two years ago she has continued to provide the annual accounts for which we are extremely grateful. Now, unfortunately for us, Alison has taken the decision that she can no longer provide this service. She lives in Milton Keynes, has a full time job and a young daughter, so her decision is entirely understandable. I would like to record our sincere thanks to Alison for everything she has done for the shop over the past years.

After about a year of running the shop I was approached by Kevin Clarke. He told me that he had lived in the village for some 14 years and during that time had been entirely focussed on his job, however, he had now retired and wished to put his energies into the village that he lived in and enjoyed so much. Since that time Kevin has been tireless in his activities and support for the shop, and indeed for a number of other organisations in the village as well. Kevin is responsible for staff training and sends out our regular shop newsletters. He also organises the wine club and the 150 Club, both of which continue to run successfully. He is also the first person we generally call on if the computer, or indeed any of the other equipment in the shop, goes wrong and he usually manages to sort out the problem.

Hanna Roberts has not been in the village for very many years but immediately became a firm champion of the shop, volunteering with Brian to join our Sunday volunteer rota. Hanna is always around when work needs to be done and she joined the committee at the beginning of 2015. Hanna does the daily balancing when Pat is away. I'm not sure she enjoys it but she does a good job and Pat can go away without worrying. Earlier this year some of you may have noticed Hanna in the shop on Saturday or Sunday afternoons cleaning the shop from top to bottom – almost single handedly. Hanna also looks after our little bit of garden. Thank you Hanna, your hard work doesn't go unnoticed and is very much appreciated.

Some 4 or 5 years ago Margaret and Kit Jackson moved into the village and they very quickly became part of our Sunday volunteers team. Margaret also joined the committee at the start of 2015 and soon took over the organisation of the Sunday volunteer rota from Pat – I can assure you it's not an easy job. Margaret also does a brilliant job in collecting the annual subscriptions which are now due again. I'm sure if anyone would like to pay their subs this evening Margaret will be very happy to receive them. Thank you Margaret for all you do.

Turning back now to Pat, it was some years before she finally succumbed to being a member of the committee. Of course, in all that time she had carried out all of the general secretarial work and did just about everything that needed to be done that wasn't covered by anybody else.

Pat also agrees the shop accounts each day and carries out the day-to-day treasurers duties. Pat has also been working with Alison on the VAT returns, Pat lists all the invoices paid each month, which can take a whole morning, takes a VAT report from the shop computer then every quarter forwards all to Alison who finalises the VAT return. Alison is going to show Pat what to do when the next return is due so that Pat can take over all of the VAT work. Pat also calculates the staff salaries and sends the information to our payroll provider who works out the taxes, NHI, PAYE, pensions, etc. then sends the final figures back to Pat who makes the salary payments. As

you may guess – the end of the month is quite a busy time in our house!! Here I must stress that none of the committee or our Sunday volunteers get paid for any of the work they do. If we had to pay for the hours worked voluntarily our accounts would present a very different picture.

In addition to being members of the committee Margaret, Hanna and Pat are also on the list of Sunday morning volunteers and, along with Kevin can often be found in the shop at other times covering for staff illnesses, holidays, etc.

I, for my sins, am still chairman but I couldn't do this job without the sterling support of every committee member. Pat & I can also go on holiday knowing that the shop is in left in the safe hands of the other committee members and staff. So my thanks, and I am sure yours, go to them for the large amount of work that they do to keep everything running smoothly.

You will, by now, have gathered that we will be looking for another treasurer. As Pat does the day-to-day work we really need someone who can prepare the annual accounts. Please pass the word around and if you know of anyone who may be willing to take this job on please let us know.

As ever, I would like to say a special thank you to the team of volunteers who continue to give their invaluable support by manning the shop on Sunday mornings. As well as our 7 teams of Sunday volunteers Judy Murch is a mid-week volunteer, helping to put away the Booker order or sometimes she can even be persuaded to man the till. Our volunteers demonstrate the true spirit a community shop – individuals giving up some of their time for the benefit of the village in general.

Now it is time I mentioned our regular staff. Helen continues to do an excellent job as our manager. Jenny Heinzemann, started the year working the very early shift on Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, however due to other commitments Jenny finally resigned at the end of September 2016.

We then found ourselves looking for a replacement for Jenny and also for Keith Trigg who would be finishing in December. I am delighted to say that good fortune was certainly with us when Maureen Harness applied for the job. Maureen had previously worked at both Foxton shop and the Co-op in Melbourn. She has taken over all of Keith's Thursday and Friday hours and also Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from Sue and has proved to be a valuable addition to our staff.

Sue Whitmore had a spell of illness and wanted to reduce her hours so now works until mid-day on Mondays and until 10 am on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We are delighted that she has recovered. We also have to thank Sue for organising the annual Christmas raffle which is always a success.

Dan Parsons is still our Saturday man, with his mum, Caroline, sometimes covering for him if band duties prevent him from working. This arrangement works well and we are grateful to them both.

Our thanks go to all of our hard working staff who ensure the smooth running of the shop on a daily basis.

Thanks also to all staff and committee members who worked so hard in the shop during Daffodil Weekend 2016. The weather wasn't wonderful – I think hot soup sold better than ice creams - but Helen had ensured that we had a good stock of Thriplow goods to sell and it was another good weekend for the shop. What has been a great success is the shop offering cash back over Daffodil Weekend. This has brought more footfall into the shop, consequently increasing sales during the weekend.

With the aid of subscriptions, donations, grants and fund raising the shop has again made a profit this year. You will see from the accounts that it is a little larger than last year which is encouraging. However, we are committed to paying at least the living wage, which increases yearly, together with other annually increasing costs such as insurance and electricity. We do always get competitive quotes for all services to ensure that we get the best deal we can. The accounts will be presented shortly so any questions you may have regarding them can be made then.

Each year I suggest that paying annual subscriptions promptly helps the shop and we are delighted that so many members do so. The proposal will be for the subscription to remain at £10 per member but, as in previous years, I would stress that this is per person and not per household.

We are very grateful to those members who make a donation in addition to their subscription – these really do help.

My final thanks, as always, must go to the customers of the shop. Our customers are the most important people - running the shop would be quite a useless endeavour without anyone to serve.

Thank you very much.

David Easthope