

# Woodgreen Community Shop Newsletter

## Easter Opening

Good Friday (30th March)	6.30am – 1.00pm
Easter Saturday (31st March)	6.30am – 5.00pm
Easter Sunday (1st April)	6.30am – 11.00am
Easter Monday (2nd April)	6.30am – 11.00am

The Post Office will be closed on Good Friday and Easter Monday.

## 7 Up!

Did you know that 7 is the lowest natural number that cannot be represented by the sum of the squares of three integers? No? Me neither! We'll survive that one!

Or that a recent poll of 30,000 people confirmed that 7 really is our favourite lucky number? Possibly yours too?

Or that none of the various lists of the "7 Wonders of the World" include the Woodgreen Community Shop? Shocking!

Well, our amazing fact of the week is that we are now approaching 7 years of age, in our new location. Yes, it really is as long as that since the ribbon was cut and the doors opened for the first time (14th May 2011).

And what has the shop ever done for us in that time, you might well ask... well, we have:

- Survived, as village shops everywhere go under.
- Kept your post office going too, as local banks close.
- Offered you an increasingly wide range of quality products, more than doubling our sales.
- Supported over 50 local suppliers.
- Provided employment for villagers, and valuable work experience for our young people.
- Become the meeting and information point for the locality.
- Given you an opportunity to support a vital community activity.

Lots, lots more reasons too, but that's 7 reasons to celebrate our seventh anniversary.

Truly, we would like to thank each and every one of you for your support over our first septennial. Please stay with us. Luck isn't enough to keep us going. Your custom, help and love will be.

David

## The Managers' bit

Easter is early this year, so those daffodils will only just be out. It's good to see some sunshine and longer days. We will have plenty of yummy items in the shop for Easter, including hot cross buns and fresh



croissants for your Easter weekend breakfasts. There will be a range of cakes, including some individual Easter cakes.

We will have a lovely range of chocolate – the handmade chocolate eggs, small lollipops and other handmade chocolate, all from New Forest Chocolates at Hale. We will also have a selection of other Easter eggs. Don't forget the mini eggs and the cream eggs! Our selection of Easter cards will also be available, for you to send to friends and family.

The shop will also be stocking all the usual lovely local produce, including a wide range of meat from Hale Pig and Poultry and Prices, fish from the New Forest Smokery in Fordingbridge and great cheese from Lyburn. Our frozen ready meals from 'Love Food' are always worth a try – great when you are busy and want a good meal in a hurry.

We would like to wish all our customers a sunny and Happy Easter.

Julie and Sue



Easter Eggs!

## All Change at the Post Office

Yes indeed, it is all change again as we lose another member of staff. February this year saw us saying goodbye to Bob. He has hung up his Post Office keys for the last time and now welcomes retirement. After 11 years' service to the community, it really will be a change for him. Our thanks go to Bob for all his hard work and dedication during his time with us.

And so we welcome a new face onto the team and that is Cathy Hogg. Many of you will have met her in the shop as she has already embarked on training and is getting to grips with all our lovely procedures and ways of doing things. We ask for your patience and understanding at this time as there is a lot more to serving in the Post office than it might seem.

I am delighted to say that many, many customers are hot-footing it to our counter for their banking needs instead of undertaking arduous and unnecessary journeys to bank branches further afield. If you are not yet one of them, then please do join the happy throng who now bank cheques, deposit cash and withdraw cash from their bank accounts at the Post Office. There are no charges for doing this and these services are being increasingly used and valued: convenience at its very best.

At Easter time, our thoughts turn to chocolate gifts in the form of Easter Eggs. We offer a fantastic alternative and/or accompaniment with our One4All gift cards. These make a fabulous gift as they are not restricted to one store but can be used in loads of different High Street stores including M&S and online at Amazon.

At this time of year, we also turn our thoughts to planning summer holidays, city breaks and short getaways. We offer award winning PO Travel Insurance and Travel money. Also, we offer a Travel Money Card which can be pre-loaded with money in up to 13



*New recruit Cathy, with Nikki*

different currencies and can then be used around the world anywhere that accepts MasterCard: 36 million locations in over 200 countries. So it is a really safe way to take "money" abroad that is separate to your bank account avoiding any risk of identity theft. It can easily be topped up and the balance checked using a mobile App or the internet. For more details on this take a look at [www.postoffice.co.uk/travel-money/travel-money-card-faqs](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/travel-money/travel-money-card-faqs). This gives a list of frequently asked questions which will help determine if this product is right for you.

We think these cards are going to be very popular to complement "real" cash.

For now, may I wish you all a happy & restful Easter full of family, friends, fun, feasting and, of course, copious amounts of chocolate, I hope.

*Nikki*

## If King Canute could not...

We have been doing our best but just can't keep back the present tide of increases in the cost of wine any longer! The grape harvest in Europe in 2017 was one of the worst in history thanks to extremes in weather. Severe spring frosts, killing young buds on the vine; heavy localised hail in early summer, destroying developing grape branches, and then Anticyclone Lucifer, which took temperatures over 40°C, damaging many vines. There were severe droughts throughout most of the wine producing world, meaning that grapes left on the vine had less juice. And there were wildfires in South Africa and California...

So, 2017 was the smallest grape harvest in 50 years. Worldwide volumes are down 10% - that's over 3 billion bottles of wine fewer. France is 18% down on a five-year average – the smallest harvest since 1945. Spain is down 15% (Rioja by 30% on last year). Italy is 26% down (Prosecco only by 15%, Fran). What has been lost in Europe is the equivalent of the entire production of South America and South Africa combined and, to top it all, dare I mention, reductions in the value of the pound (much of the wine is bought in Euros) so sparking further Brexit arguments among our customers?

Is there any good news, Ron? Well actually, yes. Although the retail price of some of our present wines will have to rise we will absorb cost increases on many. Plus, with our wine merchant, Graham of New Forest Wines, we will continue to source good quality wines at very fair prices and when we get bin-end bargains these will be advertised immediately with any savings passed onto our customers.

Now for a glass of 'still' great value wine from our own shop to calm the nerves!

*Ron*



During 2017, the Shop's Marketing Team ran a Tasting Event to test the waters with a few new products and further build up rapport with our customers and staff. Initially, we decided to test out the growing interest in craft gins. This beverage was proving popular round the country but would Woodgreen take to it? There were those that doubted that there would be any great interest in 'mother's ruin', especially as some of the prices appeared to be a bit hefty.

We decided to hold a tasting in the Village Hall combining with it with a sampling of wines and beers sold in the shop. A huge number of you came along to do the sampling and the evening



*The first tasting event*

was a great success. In fact, it was so successful, the shop now stocks the locally produced, artisan gins that we tasted that evening.

With a number of folk asking (nay, pleading) for another event, we planned a second sampling for October. On this occasion, we offered a tasting of Ports and a range of the shop's good quality Table Wines. We also packed a wide range of goodies into picnic baskets to go with the liquid offerings and dubbed the event our 'Autumn Picnic'. The event once again proved to be a major success.

So when is the next great event, I hear you ask? Well, the Woodgreen Village Hall has been booked for Friday 27th April from 7pm.

Ron has been charged with finding some new wines for us to sample and we have invited one of our local brewers to come along to tell us about their beers. Julie and Sue and the shop staff will once again be charging the baskets with sumptuous food offerings. And that just leaves you, our valued customers, to once again come along to support us - we know you will. We can promise another enjoyable evening.

Tickets now on sale in the shop!

Reg

## TripAdvisor Reviews

Did you know that the Shop has been listed on TripAdvisor for 2 years? It came as a bit of a surprise to us as well! Apparently, the Shop is a 5 star attraction: "#1 of 1 things to do in Woodgreen"?!

There is a danger that we might start taking our shop, and all the benefits it provides, for granted. It's therefore good to get the different perspective of holidaymakers and see what they think. Here are some of the reviews from TripAdvisor:

### great little shop

"lovely local little shop, good food, and local produce, great service friendly all run by local people, wish my village had a shop like this."

### Lovely village shop

"Used this little shop a few times whilst we were on holiday , a good choice of local produce. We did buy some yummy sausages which were lovely. Also arrived to buy some teabags but the shop was closed but the lovely lady still opened up to serve my husband."

### A wonderful facility

"This community shop is a great place to visit and purchase a lot more than the 'basics'. It is well stocked with a good range of fresh foods. Drinks, ices, gifts are also for sale alongside banking and delivery services offered by the friendly and helpful staff. Well worth a visit and worthy of support. A great facility at the heart of this community."

### Perfect local community run shop! All you need under one roof, lively staff.

"Wonderful, fresh and locally sourced produce, friendly helpful staff all local also. Post office..... What more do you need! It's a delight. Situated on the New Forest, wonderful gifts and all the day to day stuff, ice creams, freshly baked bread and pastries..... And the list goes on! Great opening hours. Visit..... You won't regret it!"

### Great for all those bits of shopping you need

"Staying in Woodgreen we decided to top up the provisions that we had taken with us. We really hadn't needed to take anything with us as this lovely little shop has everything you need and more. Lots of local produce and homemade goodies. This shop is run by volunteers and they are all really helpful and cheerful."

### Wide variety of different assortments

"My partner needed a Sunday paper, so we decided to have a little 10 minute walk from our B&B. There's a great selection of foods from fruit to meat and also the little household nick-nacks as well as magazines, birthday cards, gifts etc. I must say very well run by the volunteers!!"

### Super Community shop

"Needed 'those things we forgot' and got 'em all here. Plus the range of local produce is excellent so bought some of them too. well worth a visit."

### Fabulous with a smile!

"Just returned home from a wonderful week staying in Woodgreen, New Forest and this community shop was great! We didn't need to shop anywhere else. My son cycled down in the morning and was met with welcoming smiles and friendly chat. I bought some fresh marinated chicken pieces which my children still talk about as being really nice (and they were - moist and full of flavour).

### Fantastic community shop in the heart of Woodgreen

We visited Woodgreen Community Shop to pick up a few things, and ask about the local area. To call this establishment a shop is an understatement. We could not believe how helpful and friendly the staff were, and what a fantastic selection of produce and goods are on sale, from newspapers and snacks to homemade cakes and freshly baked bread! They even provide coffee and a lovely seating area (indoors and outside) to sample the goods. The shop also doubles up as the local Post Office and acts as a New Forest local Information point. We loved it!

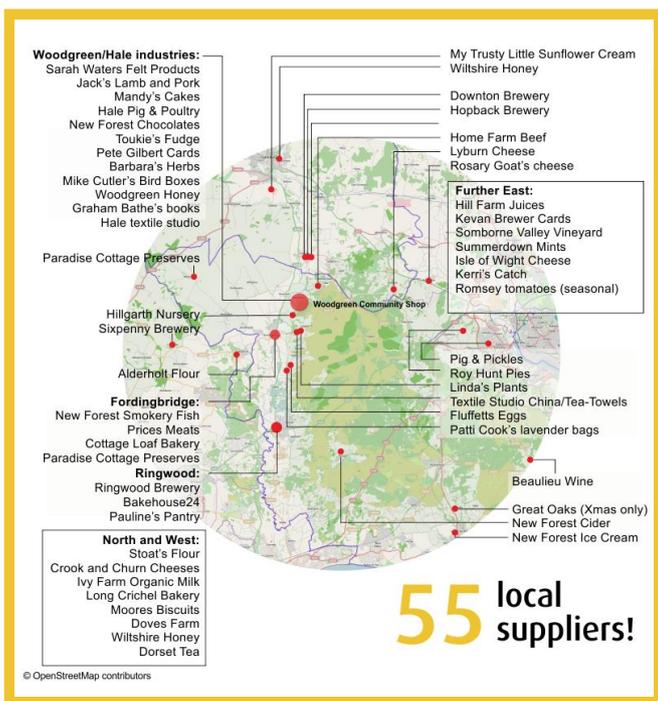
## Localness: the way to shop

If we are honest, we all use a wide range of shops to meet our various needs and the choice before us is sometimes too much to take in. Napoleon saw us as a nation of shop-keepers 200 years ago, and we have been refining the art ever since.

As Chairman Ron is ever keen to remind us, we operate in the most competitive environment going... so how on earth do we survive?

Well "localness" is our watchword. No road miles, more like yards, for you to clock-up as you pop in to visit us; as you browse our fantastic range of local produce to fill your basket. We source so many high quality products from local suppliers, some of whom live but a stone's throw away.

At the last count, we support 55 local suppliers!



All of this alongside your everyday needs, from toilet rolls to cornflakes to baked beans as well. Where else can you pop just down the road, park adjacent for free, meet your neighbours, pick up the latest local news and information, while you fill your basket with such fabulous produce, and at surprisingly good prices. Not forgetting, we are your nearest "bank" and Post Office as well.

So, do we pass the "localness" test? We think we do, and we like to think that more and more of you agree with your feet, and your shopping baskets. We are a truly unique shopping experience...worthy of a regular place in your shopping schedule... and if you haven't been to see us lately you are in for a pleasant surprise.

David

## Police Surgery

Our local PCSO, Stephen May, will be holding a police surgery here at Woodgreen Shop, every month on a Saturday at 11am. Please come along and talk to him about any security issues, concerns, etc.

The dates are :

24th March	21st April	9th May	16th June
14th July	11th August	8th September	6th October
3rd November	1st December	29th December	

These dates are subject to change, so please refer to the posters put up on our noticeboard and on the shop door.

## STORM EMMA: mentions in despatches (2/3/2018)

- Sue Harris walked down to the shop in the dark at 5am to open up. Amazingly, newspapers and vegetable deliveries awaited her.
- Kate Ratcliffe arranged deliveries to Hall House and a neighbour. Similarly, Chris Carroll also took shopping to a neighbour.
- Jack McNulty rescued our milk delivery, which couldn't get over the railway bridge from Breamore.
- Sarah Weston and David Vatcher drove up to Hale to collect our Hale Pig & Poultry meat supplies.
- Simon Manktelow and Stewart Hall cleared the paths.
- Sue and David Miller walked down to take over at lunchtime, the roads by now even more treacherous.
- Ron Trevaskis took the post to Fordingbridge when the PO vans couldn't get into the village.

Special thanks to the Post Office team and everyone else who went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure it was business as usual!

## Souvenirs of Woodgreen

A few months ago, we realised that there are no Woodgreen-themed souvenirs, such as fridge-magnets, in the shop.

Consider how often you head to the fridge in your own home. According to a recent survey, the average person visits a fridge 10 – 12 times a day. So for a family of 4 that means a Woodgreen-branded fridge-magnet would be viewed 300 times a week or 15,000 times a year. That's 15,000 views of our fridge-magnet in the heart of each customer's home.

But one of the most surprising statistics is that the average household will keep a branded fridge-magnet a staggering 6 to 8 years. People simply don't like to throw them away.

We already have a large stock of wonderful photos taken by Bill Shepley and used in Woodgreen calendars over the last few years. It seems a shame not to put them to work. We are therefore introducing a number of Woodgreen-branded items into the shop in time for Easter: fridge-magnets, tea towels, pens, and coasters. Keep a look out for them!

Carole



One of our branded Woodgreen fridge-magnet designs

## Woodgreen Community Shop & Post Office

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