

August 2020



Woodgreen Community Shop Newsletter: SPECIAL EDITION

STOP PRESS: From August 9th, we will be opening on Sunday mornings, 8am-11am.

THANK YOU, JULIE!

Julie was due to retire in April but she stayed on to help the shop through a difficult time. Now, hopefully with the worst behind us, Julie is finally managing to retire on August 12th.

Starting in the 'old shop', she has been with Woodgreen shop for over 13 years. Julie worked tirelessly to set up the new shop and everything there today is down to her hard work. She led a growing team of staff and volunteers, training them up and supporting them.

Always cheerful, kind and with endless energy, she knows all the customers so well, knows exactly what they want, and always makes sure we are stocking their favourite items. She will be so sadly missed by staff, volunteers and customers and we are all hoping she will be back to visit us regularly.

Now she will have some time for her beautiful garden and time to spend with her family and friends. We all wish her the best of luck in her retirement and hope to see her again really soon.



Julie leads the way to the turf-cutting ceremony in 2010, celebrating the start of construction of the new shop.



Julie with a small selection of the staff and volunteers in 2016

Bottling the essence of Julie

When our new shop opened in 2011, someone had the bright idea of inviting the retail experts from the Plunkett Foundation to advise us on how to create and run a successful community shop. Well, they arrived, spent a couple of hours investigating and observing... their verdict: "If we could bottle this and take it with us, we would!" We all know who was responsible for that, don't we?

As the shop has grown bigger and busier it has never lost that look and feel of your friendly and well-run shop. That's the continuing essence of our Julie. Long may it continue.

David Mussell

A bag of swedes and a fit man

During the early days of lockdown, we were working so very hard behind the scenes. Each evening, the Shop Operations team (Julie, Sue, Katy, Carole and myself) met to address the latest crisis and plan the coming day's activities. We had to find times to smile and laugh and who better to fuel this than Julie!

One evening, Julie mentioned she had concerns about whether we would sell a large bag of swedes she had bought; I suggested that if they were tall, blonde and bronzed we might get a better price for them. Julie said they did not fit that description - but she had another offer to consider.

She told us of an email received at the shop and seemed very excited by it – a gentleman was offering his services to do 'almost anything' and his CV read well – fit, healthy, age 35 and with his own transport to boot! There followed detailed banter, which is best not repeated here.

That evening's exchanges made me laugh so much I had tears running down my face. It made me realise how lucky I was to be working with such a lovely lady as Julie. She truly has been dedicated to the shop but absolutely knows how and when to have fun too and this is a huge part of the success that Julie has made of her role as a shop manager for Woodgreen Community Shop. I will miss her so much and wish her all the very best in her retirement.

Julia Harding



Julie interviewing two prospective handymen

Julie and the old trout

Julie and I had been challenged by a customer because we had sold out of the fresh, whole trout. We had both explained that we only stocked a limited number as we didn't sell that many but the customer had not been happy.

Afterwards, Julie and I had been talking about the incident in the office and our conversation was overheard by a member of the shop team. This person then went home but phoned the shop posing as a difficult customer and repeatedly asking why we didn't have any fresh whole trout.

Julie explained to the 'customer' why we didn't have any and told her about all the other fish products we sold. The 'customer' was very persistent and poor Julie had to repeat herself several times, keeping her calmness and professional manner. After quite a long conversation, Julie suddenly said 'You cow!' as she realised she was being wound up and had been well and truly had!!!

Sue Harris

Bric-a-Brac - a surprising speciality!

I am one of the few remaining members of staff who have worked with Julie from the inception of the community shop.



After a short time, Julie was coerced into the manager's role.

Back then, she was humble and timid, a bit green, a pushover some might say, just too darned nice I'd say. She had big shoes to fill, those of the infamous Meryl Corby! Julie was easily charmed by smooth talking salesmen, persuading her to try new lines and to take more product than we would sell. But not for long. Just as the little shop grew into its new premises, so Julie grew into the role and toughened up.

She coined the phrase "That's nice" which did not mean that something was nice at all, in fact it meant anything but. She developed a fair but firm approach. She learned to say "No" when pundits pushing their wares tried to push their luck.

However, there was a chink in this newly formed armour. Whenever anyone asked "Do you take in..." Julie's answer was undiscerningly "Yes". That may be OK if the question is "Do you take in old egg boxes?" or "Do you take in collection boxes for charity?" or "Do you take in leaflets about this community event / local fundraiser?" but when Julie answered "Yes" to being asked "Do you take in 2 old pre-owned table lamps?", wasn't that a step too far?

So my advice to Julie in her retirement is this: if you happen to find yourself with time on your hands, from what I've seen, you could confidently start a fine line in bric-a-brac.

Nikki Coots

A night at the ballet

Julie loves going to the ballet and, afterwards, is great at giving full and detailed descriptions of what the male dancers looked like, what they were wearing and what caught her eye throughout the whole performance.

This information was truly fascinating for my then 14 year old daughter who now has very high expectations for the future!

Carole & Anya Stevenson

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