



Woodgreen Community Shop Newsletter

Christmas Open Evening

Once again we will be hosting our famous Christmas Shopping evening. This year it will be on Wednesday 7th December from 6pm – 8pm.

There will be lots of yummy nibbles and live festive music from Roger Clements and his Combo and Hale's Angels.

Tom Sheldon will be here with his friends to serve up his fantastic mulled wine.

The shop will have a wide range of goodies for your Christmas table to purchase on the night. Our beautiful 2017 calendar will be for sale, along with the last few Shop recipe books.

Join Julie, Sue, Nikki and the team, bring your friends and neighbours for a couple of hours of festive community spirit.

Christmas Orders

We are taking orders for your turkeys, meat and all other items as follows:

Turkey/Meat Orders by:	Friday 2 nd December
Fruit/Veg Orders by:	Wednesday 14 th December
Bread Orders by:	Wednesday 14 th December
Milk/Cream Orders by:	Thursday 15 th December

Christmas Opening Times

Friday 23rd Dec	6.30am – 7.00pm
Saturday 24th Dec	6.30am – 1.00pm
Sunday 25th Dec	CLOSED
Monday 26th December	CLOSED
Tuesday 27th December	6.30am – 11.00am
Wednesday 28th December	6.30am – 7.00pm
Thursday 29th December	6.30am – 7.00pm
Friday 30th December	6.30am – 7.00pm
Saturday 31st December	6.30am – 4.00pm
Sunday 1st January	CLOSED
Monday 2nd January	6.30am – 11.00am
Tuesday 3rd January	6.30am – 7.00pm

There will be no newspapers on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The Managers' bit

Well, Christmas is fast approaching again. We have lots to offer you for your Christmas celebrations, including turkey and other meat, a wide range of cheeses, bread sauce, a fantastic selection of wine, great local cheese..... and where would Christmas be without those lovely Brussel Sprouts?



The turkeys this year will once again be from Hale Pig and Poultry as well as Great Oaks Farm at Boldre, so put your orders in before 2nd December. We will also have a range of other meats from Prices Butchers and Hale Pig and Poultry.

Other popular items for Christmas include the local New Forest Smokery range – trout pate, honey and smoked fillets as well as fresh whole trout. We also have a wide range of other goodies, including dressings, sauces, local preserves, savoury and sweet nibbles.

Items from the New Forest Chocolate range always make a great present and we will have plenty in the shop this year.

Our beautiful Woodgreen calendar makes a fantastic present (and don't forget to buy one for yourself!) and we have just a few Locals Recipe Books left, so get them before they sell out.

There is a wide range of lovely Christmas cards – those special individual ones as well as great boxes of cards, all at a good price and offers when you buy in bulk.

Please support us this Christmas. We look forward to seeing you on the Christmas Shopping Evening, as well as throughout December. Then don't forget us in January, when we welcome in a New Year.

A huge THANK YOU to all our shop team and their partners, volunteers, committee and our loyal customers. Together you keep the shop going!

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year to you all.

Julie and Sue

Post Office News 2016

Great news! We've got Christmas all wrapped up for you in the Post Office – every need is catered for, so we hope to see you all over the next few weeks as we turn our thoughts to all things festive.

This year's Christmas stamps went on sale at the beginning of November and they are already selling well. This year they feature bright designs of classic Christmas items to include the Christmas Tree, the Christmas Pudding, the Christmas Lantern, the Christmas Stocking and of course the Robin Redbreast and the Snowman.

Let's get those important last posting dates noted:

International Standard (formerly Airmail) & all International Tracking and Signature services

Sat 3 rd Dec	Africa, Middle East
Wed 7 th Dec	Cyprus, Asia, Far East (including Japan), Eastern Europe
Thurs 8 th Dec	Caribbean, Central & South America
Sat 10 th Dec	Greece, Australia, New Zealand
Wed 14 th Dec	Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland
Thurs 15 th Dec	Canada, Finland, Sweden, USA
Fri 16 th Dec	Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland
Sat 17 th Dec	Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg

UK

Tues 20 th Dec	2nd Class & 2nd Class signed for
Wed 21 st Dec	1st Class and 1 st Class signed for
Thurs 22 nd Dec	Special delivery guaranteed

For real emergencies you could still post Special Delivery Guaranteed with Saturday Delivery on Friday 23 Dec. Items posted this way will arrive on Christmas Eve. This is your very last chance but could be a lifeline for anything forgotten in the rush.

Parcelforce Worldwide

Wed 21 st Dec	Express 48
Thurs 22 nd Dec	Express 24

So a few top tips to help things run smoothly...

Make sure your items are packaged securely. We sell an extensive range of packaging materials in the shop including brown paper, sticky address labels, parcel tape, padded envelopes, bubble wrap, posting bags and posting boxes.

Always write the recipient's address clearly. If you are unsure of the postcode for your item, look it up at www.royalmail.com/postcodes-finder or with us. And write a sender's name and address on the item too.

Remember if a card or letter for the UK is larger than 240mm x 165mm x 5mm, you need to pay the Large Letter price. And it is recommended to have cards for international services weighed to ensure the right postage is applied.

The regulations to identify items that are prohibited from posting, known as Dangerous Goods, have been with us for some time now and you should be familiar with us asking you about the contents of your parcel. Many everyday items including perfumes, nail varnish, aerosols and items with lithium batteries eg phones & tablets, come under these regulations. It is important to know the contents of any packages you are posting, particularly if you are posting on behalf of someone else. We have leaflets in the shop that explain the detail or visit www.royalmail.com/prohibitedgoods for more information.

As well as all the lovely temptations in the shop, the Post Office also has some gift ideas.

Check out our fabulous Post Office Gift Cards. These are not limited to one High Street store but can be used in a multitude of different stores and on line. These are ideal as they are not store specific and so really give the recipient choice. Something for everyone....Perfect.

Also available, we have iTunes vouchers in £15 and £25 values. And for a fantastic stocking filler or to pop inside a card, we have National Lottery Scratchcards including a £5 Christmas themed one.

We know we are going to be very, very busy through December and we will be looking forward to putting up our "CLOSED" sign on 24 December at 1pm. We re-open for business at 9am on 28 December, we push through until New Year's Eve at 1pm and then "normality" resumes on Tuesday 3 January.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your custom, your conversation and the entertainment that you have brought us over the last year and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and happy & healthy New Year.

Festive Wishes from all of the Post Office staff, Claudia, Roger, Bob and myself.

Nikki



That busy person in our midst: Sue Allpress

At our shop AGM in September, **Sue Allpress** stepped down from her role as Company Secretary of Woodgreen Community Shop Association Ltd after 10 tireless years' service. In fact, along with Andrea Finn and Char Garrett, Sue was a founding member of the Association when it was inaugurated in December 2006 to save the existing village shop from extinction and embark upon the project of building the shop we have today. Sue is not disappearing from the community. Far from it! She remains a Parish Councillor and President of the Woodgreen Women's Institute.

Born in Slough, Sue's family soon moved to Ramsgate where later Sue trained as a Therapy Radiographer at Kent & Canterbury Hospital. At the age of 21 Sue moved to London and worked at Charing Cross Hospital until having her family. They all moved to Sittingborne where during her time at home with two children Sue did a variety of part time jobs, picking and packing spring onions, thinning mangelwurzels, sewing up machine knitted garments, hand knitting garments, making and selling children's clothes, helping in a private nursery school(including ironing) and acting as PA to an interior designer. Sue also took an audiotyping course at College, Oh! and worked as PA for a dentist (finding to her horror that she had to help in his dental surgery as well!)

In the early 80's Sue moved to Fair Oak, near Southampton and returned to Radiotherapy at St. Mary's in Portsmouth, working there until taking early retirement in 2003.

In 1997 Sue and Alan moved to Woodgreen and after retiring Sue worked in Help the Aged (now Age UK) in Fordingbridge both as volunteer and as a paid Saturday person. Sue then became Parish Clerk to Woodgreen; a role she carried out for nearly 10 years. It was during this period that Sue organised a local committee to work on the Parish Plan. It became clear while working on the plan that the shop, very much valued by the community, was probably facing closure. This got Sue and Andrea Finn thinking about the possibilities for the village shop. Sue helped set up a meeting in the village hall with the intention of saving the shop and before she could blink found herself, in December 2006, as both a founding member and Company Secretary of the newly formed Shop Association.



Sue (2nd left) at the launch of the Woodgreen Community Shop Association.

The work that followed over the next few years was time consuming and absorbing for her. As Company Secretary and a member of the new build sub-group, Sue was involved in all aspects of the project; from research for the project brief, selection of architects, planning, grant applications, leasing



Sue with Ron, Jim and Andrea (photo © 2013 Brian C. Platt).

the land; formally representing the Shop Association with the New Forest National Park Authority, New Forest District Council, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Highways. It never stopped and yet Sue still found time to work as a volunteer in the old shop on Saturday afternoons!

Meanwhile, there was further talent yet to be revealed by Sue Allpress: Showbiz !! At the fundraising Woodgreen Talent Show, Sue & Andrea gave the audience a lovely rendering of the Toothbrush Song made famous by Max Bygraves. Then, the final act, the grand finale of the show: Woodgreen's very own Val Stearne, Char Garrett and Sue in all their sparkle, on stage as the three friends from Mamma Mia performing Super Trouper and Dancing Queen to a frenzied standing ovation as the audience clapped and stomped out the beat from start to finish. It nearly did bring the roof of the village hall down.

When the new shop opened, Sue felt so proud to see all the hard work come to fruition and to this day enjoys hearing the admiration for the shop as expressed by visitors and locals alike. Sue continued as company secretary until Sept this year when she finally stepped down from the Management Committee after 10 years of total dedication.

Over the years, Sue has acquired 3 grandchildren and 4 step-grandchildren and loves spending time with them. Her children live in Southampton and so are very close in more ways than one! Alan, her husband, is now retired and would like to see more of her (his constant refrain over the years has been "she is never here"). They have 2 Golden Retrievers and one cat (at one point they had three cats) which keep them both active.

For the, almost, 20 years that Sue has been in Woodgreen she has been part of the Women's Institute. Joining when she retired, Sue was soon asked to serve on the committee. She then became secretary, a job she did for 8 years before deciding that was enough of paperwork. So they made her President and she can now spend more time on promoting the small branch in the hopes of it surviving to its Centenary in 2018.

If this is not a tale of nearly two decades of dedicated and continuous service to our community, then I don't know what is. How fortunate we are to have this busy, talented person in our midst. Sue, you have our utmost gratitude. Many, many thanks.

Ron

Wine...

Well, look no further than our wine shelf. I've consulted Graham our wine merchant (New Forest Wines) for recommended wine/food pairings. Already on our shelves, we have two lovely Chardonnays falling over themselves to compliment your roast turkey. That classic white Burgundy **Macon Prié** at £12.99 and the **Domaine de la Motte** Chablis at a special price of £12.99 (recommended selling price (RSP) is £14.99). Now don't over chill these!

If you prefer red, go for a Pinot Noir. The lighter tannins of this grape perfectly match your roast turkey and there on our shelf is the **RARE** Pinot Noir. It definitely punches above our selling price of £7.99.

Now, Boxing Day beef or venison (from our shop of course)? Being a Cotes du Rhone man myself, I'm already hooked on our superb **Boutinot Cotes du Rhone Villages** (£8.99), but Graham has come up with **La Cote Sauvage**, from the hills above the village of Cairanne and next door to Chateaneuf du Pape. Usually selling at £13.99 we can let you have it at £10.99. (*You're giving it away again Ron – Ed*).

For your pudding, Graham has come up with **De Bortoli Botrytis Semillion**, a great value rich and concentrated dessert wine made in the same method as Sauternes but with more depth of flavour: a bargain at £8.99 for the half bottle.

Don't miss out on our wine offer at the Shop Open Evening Wednesday 7th December: **10% off any 6 bottles or more** of our wines if ordered on the night. Includes free delivery with a smile.

...and Cheese

As we approach the festive season, those of a literary bent turn of course to Charles Dickens for guidance. Sure enough, just about all of his great works mention cheese of some sort or other: *"with his complexion like a Stilton cheese and his eyes like a prawn's"* (*"Dombey and Sons"*).

Even Scrooge, in *"A Christmas Carol"* couldn't resist a cheesy line: *"You may be a bit of undigested beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of underdone potato.....whatever you are."*

Toasted cheese was very much a favourite of Charles; a good, aged cheddar melted with wine and butter and served over toast, with a green salad as the final course of a festive dinner was his personal choice. I must try that one!

Your favourite shop has always majored in cheese, as have our cheesemakers who have many an award to their names. Consequently, cheese has always been one of our best sellers.

Most are local too, made in the New Forest and nearby Dorset and Somerset, and all guaranteed for top flavour! We have a variety of Cheddar cheeses: cave-aged, vintage, smoked and ranging in taste from extra-mature to mild. The "Blues" include Dorset Blue Vinny, Stilton and Blue D'Auvergne. Dorset Red, Somerset Brie and Red Leicester add more variety, as does our range of Goat and Sheep milk cheeses.

We mustn't forget our European friends: Edam, Manchego, Grana Padano, Gruyere, Feta and Mozzarella. Do not fret, we are in negotiation right now to ensure continuity of supply post-Brexit!

Just for the Festive Season, we also have some special delights: possibly a truckle of Blue Vinny or Farmhouse Cheddar, and a Rosary goats cheese log. What a lovely present these would make, if you can bring yourself to part with them.

We hope you will pay our cheese shelves a visit soon and, on your way to the till, select your bottle of Port or favourite wine to go with it... and not forgetting our lovely breads, biscuits and chutneys. Oh, and the grapes and celery!

Ron and David

Love Food

We installed the Ready Meals Freezer in February and are delighted with its success to date. It has been challenging to find the right suppliers and I don't think we are quite there yet, but I am pleased to say through this process we discovered **Love Food** from Chichester.

A dynamic, young team, their ethos is to make high quality meals which provide all of the nutrition and flavour of a home cooked meal, but with the convenience required for challenging lifestyles. They use as many locally sourced ingredients as possible and only use British meat. They believe in good food and honesty, so you won't find any artificial or chemical additions to their meals, just delicious food made with the same ingredients found in your own kitchen cupboards.

Most single portion meals are £3.99 and, to encourage you to try them, for the rest of the year we are supporting the launch on a multi-buy, so for **3 meals you pay just £10**, so hurry and stock up before the offer closes or stock runs out! Most of the committee members have sampled the new range so feel free to collar them in the shop for their opinion.

For those that need further indulgence, we've added two new puddings from Nikki's Little Cake Company, a delicious light & moist sticky date pudding that comes with lashings of rich toffee sauce and an indulgent chocolate brownie with roasted pecan nuts, drenched in a moreish salted caramel sauce with even more roasted pecan nuts..mmmm! They both contain two servings and once defrosted they can be warmed either in the microwave or in a conventional oven still in their original container.

There's plenty to get your teeth into - and don't forget the meal deal on Love Food!

Jon

Customer Survey 2017

It's important that we keep up to date with our customers & shareholders and seek latest feedback, needs and requirements. We are aware that our customer base continues to expand and change and as our last Customer Survey was completed in February 2013, we are keen to understand your current experiences.

During February 2017, we will be conducting another Customer Survey through a number of activities including questionnaires and focus group sessions and your contribution is essential.

Our focus groups will work with approximately 8 customers and/or shareholders per session spending up to 2 hours with us for in-depth review, research and discussion.

More information on this will follow soon.

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