

East Budleigh Community Shop

FSA IPS ACT 1965 Register Number 30475R

ANNUAL REPORT – 1st October 2019 to 30th September 2020

2020 has been an extraordinary year and presented the shop with a number of challenges. However, the shop has continued to support the community by remaining open and ensuring people living in the village had access to essential supplies when even the large retailers were struggling.

Firstly, I want to thank our management team of Mel Ferrers, Anne Davies, and Liz Dearsley. Their dedication, commitment and hard work during the first lockdown was exceptional. I know that their efforts were greatly appreciated from the positive feedback we have received from many of our customers

During the first lockdown we suffered an attempted breakdown which was demoralising given the problems we were already facing. Shortly afterwards the EPOS system (till) died and had to be replaced. Despite these set-backs we managed to maintain a collection and delivery service throughout the first lock down.

In this financial year, our sales totalled £203,375 (£218,557 last year) a remarkable result given that there was a significant drop in sales during the first lockdown. However, since lockdown finished, sales have been very buoyant as our many customers have supported us by doing more of their shopping in the village. The average sales per transaction has doubled and sales have averaged over £20,000 for the last 3 months. Gross profit has been significantly lower this year £32,259 (£43,528 last year) giving us a profit margin of around 15.9% (19.9% last year). Last year we had profit levels that lead to a significant increase in our cash reserves. To avoid continuing to generate too much surplus cash it was decided to absorb price increases thereby benefitting customers. We continue to monitor gross profit levels with the aim of keeping our cash reserves between £25-30,000.

After meeting all our overheads, we achieved a small deficit of £1,718 (profit of £6,973 last year). We were fortunate to receive a small business Covid grant from East Devon Council for £10,000. This enabled us to cover the increased cost of running the shop during lockdown and make the necessary preparations to re-open.

Since the last AGM Judith Venning has stepped down from the committee. As many of you will know, Judith is now the Clerk to the Parish Council has had to give priority to this role during the pandemic. Judith has been on the committee for many years including a spell as Chairman and has always been a valued and valuable member of the team. Her contributions managing the IT for the shop and paying suppliers has been essential for the smooth running of the business.

I am please that Stuart Laws has agreed to join the committee and use his expertise to provide us with much needed It support.

As always a big thank you must go to all our volunteers without whose help and support we wouldn't have a viable village shop. I know many were frustrated by not being able to help more during lockdown but we had to prioritise the safety of the management team to ensure we could continue to remain open. Some of our volunteers are still shielding but hopefully the vaccination programme will, in due course, enable us to welcome them back.

Last year I reported that we were discussing plans with the Village Hall as to how we can work together to improve our facilities and create a space where people can meet informally. Understandably these discussions have stalled but we will start again when circumstances allow.

Paul Smith, "Chair" of the Shop Management Committee

Feb 2021