



## **Village Shop News Update**

**Shop Telephone – 01295 760066**

**Shop opening hours:** Monday 8 am – 1 pm      Tuesday to Friday 8 am – 6 pm  
Saturday 8.30 am – 3 pm      Sunday 9 am – 12 noon

**Post Office opening hours:** Tuesday to Friday 9 am - 1 pm

Firstly, a big hand to Mac Macdonald who is standing down from the Shop Management Committee after a number of years of sterling service. Many thanks from all of us for your input in promoting SVS and for penning the monthly shop newsletter in Sulgrave News.

I am sure that most of the customers who visit the shop don't fully appreciate the huge amount of effort that goes in to keeping everything running so smoothly. The duck analogy is very apposite – apparently effortless when viewed from above, but the legs are paddling like mad below the surface. Jeanette at 'front of house' and Michael in the 'back office' have injected new life into the shop over the last six months. Displays have been smartened up, stock management is now much more ordered and the whole operation has a feeling of smooth efficiency. If only we had a bit more space! Our brilliant volunteers are of course the lifeblood of the shop and without their input the whole enterprise would surely collapse. What is particularly pleasing is that we have a number of youngsters who regularly do shifts for no gain apart from the satisfaction of serving the community. You know who you are – and be assured – your contribution is greatly appreciated. Thanks are also due to our dynamic management committee who put in a huge amount of effort behind the scenes. Without them the shop could not survive.

Watch out Costa – your days are numbered! Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous benefactor, Sulgrave Village Shop now has a fantastic new coffee machine and can provide you with a Cappuccino, Latte, Americano, Espresso, Café Mocha, hot chocolate or tea to go with your freshly baked croissant, cup cake or chocolate shortbread. At less than £1.50 a cup, it is probably the best value coffee in Northamptonshire. Demand has been high from the first day and feedback very positive.

Shop trading figures are still heading in the direction that we like. The annual 'sales to date' figures are up over 4% on last year and November got off to a cracking start with one day showing our largest EVER daily takings figure.

The management committee has just initiated a programme to spread the word about our shop to surrounding villages and flyers have been distributed in Culworth, Eydon, Thorpe Mandeville, Morton Pinkney, Wappenham, Weedon, Weston and Helmdon. To provide an irresistible attraction to the punters, free croissants have been offered during November to customers who bring in their fliers. It is early days but we have already had folks from the targeted villages calling in to have a look around and, we hope, evangelise to their neighbours about the wonders of SVS.

The shop has been gearing up for Christmas and there is plenty of festive fare on the shelves. The luxury Belinda Clarke milk and dark chocolate stir in spoons are very popular and there is a good range of stocking fillers such as Maltesers and Smarties that kids expect Father Christmas to bring.

Our new chiller has enabled us to increase the range of ready meals that we stock and we have just introduced a new 'home made' selection from Lodge Farm Kitchen in the freezer.

Christmas order forms are now available so be sure to pick up a copy from the shop and get your orders for hams, Stilton, smoked salmon and all the other Christmas essentials in nice and early so that you won't have to make that last minute dash to Tesco. Christmas order forms can also be downloaded from the Village website – [www.sulgraveshop.co.uk](http://www.sulgraveshop.co.uk).

Digby has found some super wines for the Christmas season and hopes to make another trip to his secret supplier in early December to see if he can snap up any last minute Yuletide bargains - so keep your eyes on the shelves as the wines are constantly changing. And don't forget – if you buy 6 bottles you get a 5% discount.

I gather that Jeanette's Sulgrave Village Shop Facebook page is now buzzing (if that is what Facebook pages do) and is updated almost every day. This is a great way of promoting the shop and will be of interest to everyone apart from those of us who still don't understand what Social Media means.

You may have noticed that the shop sign at the end of Magpie Road had, over the years, become very grubby. So many thanks to Ian Cherry for firing up his digger and taking it down and then putting it back up again for us. Digby spent many happy hours scrubbing, scraping, de-rusting, touching up and resealing. It was worth the effort and now looks as good as new.

The smart and very tasteful Sulgrave Village Shop bags are proving popular and will, we hope, reduce the demand for plastic bags. Remember that if you spend over £25 at one time, you are entitled to a free shop bag.

The Post Office is now selling "One4all" multi-store gift cards. The cards, which can have a value ranging from £10 to £400, can be used in dozens of outlets including John Lewis, Debenhams, Gap, Mothercare and many, many others. It is a great idea. Just buy a card for whatever value you want, get it swiped at the Post Office counter and your problem about what on earth to get Auntie Nellie for Christmas is resolved.

Please remember that the continuing success of the shop is dependent on how many people use it. We already have a healthy customer base but the more this can be expanded and the more money people spend in the shop, the more secure our future will be. So if you have not visited the shop for some time – stick your head round the door and have a look around when you next walk past. I guarantee you will be pleasantly surprised.

A very merry Christmas to you all.

Alison and Digby Lewis