



Village Shop News Update

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At long last we appear to be returning to some semblance of normality. By the time *Sulgrave News* hits the streets, the shop will have re-established face-to-face trading (albeit with strict social distancing rules in place) and will once again be baking sausage rolls, pasties and baguettes, serving coffee, selling newspapers and accepting dry-cleaning. We hope that within the next few weeks the shop and the Post Office will be back to normal operating hours, though we shall have to follow government guidelines and, for the time being, only one customer at a time will be allowed into the shop. This will inevitably mean some queuing at busy times so, if there is a queue, please be as quick as you can and, if you want to browse through the greetings-cards, choose a time when the shop is quiet. The shop is still accepting orders so, if you don't yet feel ready to come into the shop, you can complete a form or phone your order in and collect it when it is ready.

Understandably, the rules on self-isolation meant that a number of our regular volunteers, many of whom are in the "at risk" age group, were unable to take up their usual stints behind the till or on baking duties. Now that we have protective measures in place in the shop, we are hoping many of our older stalwarts will re-join the team and ease the pressure on our two supervisors and the brave volunteers who have selflessly kept everything running through the crisis. Many thanks to those who have already come forward and we look forward to welcoming back more of our regulars over the coming weeks. If you are willing to return to duty, please contact David Walker who will be only too pleased to allocate you a slot. Clive Nicholl's handicraft skills are again on display in the shop and the till and post office areas are now enclosed by Perspex screens - so shop staff are well-protected from the coughs and sneezes of customers. Antiviral hand gel is on hand for all customers to use as they enter the shop - so we are as well protected as we possibly can be.

The shop is well stocked at the moment and we once again have a range of Wessex Mills flours, a wide variety of Grumpy Mule coffees, and a good selection of wines and beers. Our fruit and vegetables now come in fresh every day (thank you to the volunteers who do the Helmdon run to collect them) so are always in tip-top condition. New lines include crisps in some interesting flavours (wagu beef & honey, serrano chili and honey, truffle & rosemary); to go with all our extensive range of cheeses there are Farmhouse crackers (cranberry & pumpkin; black olive), Peter's yard sourdough flatbread, Military pickle and cheeseboard pickle and - for those with a sweet tooth - millionaire shortbread, granola flapjacks, Dundee cake, Cotswold butter fudge and strawberry & Chamapage conserve.

The shop management committee continue to hold Zoom meetings every week to discuss how to improve our service and keep everyone safe while still adhering to the government guidelines. As things are constantly changing, be sure to keep up to date by referring to Nextdoor, Facebook and the Village website.

We hope that all the customers who we supplied over the peak of the lock-down when they couldn't get to supermarkets don't desert us now that regulations are being relaxed and we trust that they will continue to patronise the shop. We need your support during the good times as well as the bad.

Let's hope that we shall soon be able to meet in gardens to enjoy a glass of wine, a summer salad or a barbecue - though maybe the hugging and kissing will have to wait a while.

Digby and Alison