



## Village Shop News Update

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At this time of the year, we should be working on our designs for the village advent windows, ordering Christmas trees and oversized turkeys for family gatherings and generally spreading goodwill amongst our fellow men. Instead, we have to stay at home and are more concerned about the spread of Corona-virus than goodwill. But cheer up - a vaccine is just around the corner so perhaps things are about to look up and Covid-19 will soon become a distant, if unpleasant, memory. The Shop will, as usual, be doing its best to create a festive atmosphere and generate a little Christmas cheer and Natasha and Jeanette have promised to don Father Christmas outfits - and may even sing a verse of Jingle Bells if you are nice to them.

This year, the Shop will not be preparing individual Christmas orders, but if there is anything you would like us to get in for you (sides of smoked salmon, game pies, whole Stiltons etc) please let us know as soon as possible and we shall do our best to attend to your needs.

The observant amongst you may have noticed that, much to the delight of the residents of Stockwell Lane and the users of the footpath and bridleway, the Shop has purchased and installed a dog-waste bin at the top of the lane. A doggy-poo bin is of little use without doggy-poo bags so the Shop now stocks biodegradable bags supplied by the Coacoara Foundation ([www.coacoara.co.uk](http://www.coacoara.co.uk)) who's aims are to reduce reliance on single-use plastics by providing biodegradable and compostable alternatives, thereby protecting the world's oceans and coastlines from plastic pollution. Andrew Elliot, having kindly offered to regularly empty the bin, has been formally appointed Shop Doggy-Poo Officer. We are currently working on an appropriate badge. The Shop also stocks bamboo toothbrushes and biodegradable food-waste bags from the same company and may well be stocking more of their products in the future.

As the Shop aims to be as eco-friendly as possible, we are phasing out the issue of free plastic bags but, if you have a senior moment and leave your shopping bag at home, we can now sell you a large bio-degradable bag for 15p.

Those customers of a certain age may well have had a Proustian moment when they spotted the sherbet lemons on the front counter. As we recall, they cost 6d a quarter when we last bought some - but that was rather a long time ago.

As a special treat for chocoholics, the Shop now stocks Russell and Atwell FRESH chocolate truffles. These are made from the highest quality sustainable cocoa, fresh organic cream and butter, a minimal amount of sugar, wildflower honey, a touch of sea salt and absolutely no palm oil or preservatives of any kind. They will keep in the fridge for 4 weeks - but, frankly, that is academic as they will all be eaten long before that. Russell and Atwell truffles are available as milk, dark, and for chocolate connoisseurs, extra dark. Salted caramel will be added to the range in December. We think you will agree that they really are rather special - if dangerously moreish. The company specialises in mail-order and Sulgrave Village Shop is only the second retail outlet in the country to stock their products. If you are trying to cut down on your chocolate intake - we strongly advise you to avert your eyes from the chiller when you visit the shop!

Additional Christmas fare includes a range of luxury flavoured gins to complement our already extensive range of standard gins (much appreciated by the G&T brigade), Christmas cakes and fresh organic walnuts from Sulgrave's Windmill orchard.

As many of you will already know, David and Joy will, very sadly, soon be leaving Sulgrave. For the past few years, David has prepared and overseen the volunteer rota for the shop while Joy has managed all the administrative tasks that come under the catch-all title of 'facilities' and

she has also assisted in the Post Office. They will both be sorely missed and we would all like to thank both of them for the effort they have put into maintaining the shop's success.

Their departure leaves two big holes in the shop operation and we urgently need to find replacements so that everything continues to run smoothly. Paul Shanley, who has just joined the Management Committee, will replace Joy as facilities manager but we need to recruit someone as soon as possible to take over the preparation of the weekly volunteer rotas from David. If you think you can help – please let us know. We also need another volunteer to join Sally Elliott in assisting with the running the Post-Office so, if there are any Postman Pat wannabees out there, please put your hand up.

Please take note of the Shop opening and closing times over the Christmas - New Year period.

<b>Christmas Eve - Thursday 24 December</b>	<b>8.00am - 1.00 pm</b>
<b>Christmas Day - Friday 25 December</b>	<b>Closed all day</b>
<b>Boxing Day - Saturday 26 December</b>	<b>Closed all day</b>
<b>Sunday 27 December</b>	<b>9.00am - 12.00 noon</b>
<b>Thursday 31 December</b>	<b>8.00am – 1.00pm</b>
<b>New Year's Day - Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January</b>	<b>Closed all day</b>

A very Happy Christmas to one and all (the fresh chocolates and flavoured gin may help) and many thanks to our two supervisors and all the volunteers who have worked tirelessly to keep everything up and running throughout this very difficult year.

Digby and Alison