



## Village Shop News Update

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We said in the February newsletter that we soon hoped to be seeing signs of a return to normality. We are relieved that, for once, our hopes seem to have been justified and there is a general feeling that the situation is gradually improving. In view of the significant fall in the number of new COVID cases nationwide, the Shop Management Committee, with the agreement of the volunteers and shop supervisors, decided that we could reopen the shop for face-to-face shopping. Although the order and collect system worked after a fashion, many customers missed being able to peruse the shelves and the feedback since reopening our doors suggests everyone is very happy that we are a proper shop once again. For customers who would prefer to order and collect, you can of course still do so, and we continue to offer a free delivery service to vulnerable customers in Sulgrave.

Somehow the letter from the Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, the High Sheriff of Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire County Council awarding the shop a Rose of Northamptonshire award didn't get attached to last month's shop report – so we'll try again.

In a further effort to help the local community, the shop is about to set up a link to a local food bank which is operated by our vicar, Father Nick Leggett. The Shop has made an initial donation to get the project off the ground and, as from 1<sup>st</sup> March, customers will have the opportunity to make payments into the food bank account if they so wish, the fund will be used to buy items from the shop that Father Nick decides the food bank needs. There is absolutely no obligation to do so, but any contributions, however small, will assist in helping those less fortunate than us during these difficult times.

In response to requests from customers, the shop will be trialling quality sausages from Smith and Clay (formerly 'Brackley Butchers'). These are more expensive than our usual range, but the consensus seems to be that they are delicious and worth the premium. If they prove popular, we shall keep them as a regular line.

We have recently had a new delivery of greetings cards including a range of wonderful abstract animal cards by the brilliant Daniel Mackie and some fabulous semi-abstract bird cards from Alison Ingram. Our card selection remains the best in the area.

With Mother's Day (or, if you prefer Mothering Sunday) falling on 14 March, we anticipate a big demand for chocolates, so we are hoping to get a delivery of the absolutely delicious Russell and Atwell Fresh Chocolates straight off the production line in good time for you to treat your mum.

The smooth working of Sulgrave Shop and Post Office is the end result of continuous cooperation between our two supervisors, our many volunteers and, of course, members of the management committee who guide the whole operation. From time to time, committee members retire so we are always on the lookout for new blood. If anyone feels that they would like to play a part in the management of shop activities, please have a chat with any member of the committee or contact the secretary (Alison) on [alisonmalewis@icloud.com](mailto:alisonmalewis@icloud.com).

It is with great sadness that Sulgrave will shortly be saying goodbye to Peter Pollack who is moving to South Wales to be nearer to his family. Peter has been a shop volunteer for many years and, in the past, has also served on the management committee. Good luck Peter - we shall all miss you.

Let us hope that we shall soon be able to meet one another without having to wear hazmat suits and that, by the time spring arrives, we can once again invite friends around for a coffee or glass of wine (both of which, of course, the shop can supply). Astronomical Spring begins on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March so not long to wait.

Digby and Alison