

SHOP TALK

Chairman's Greetings

I wrote in the Christmas edition of Shoptalk of my hopes for a significantly improved New Year: well, how wrong can you be!! Here we are some months later and at the time of writing (March 2021) at last we have a road map to follow towards 'normal'.

In the meantime, we have been obliged to reduce the shop opening hours as some of our valiant volunteers are having to shield themselves yet again, but I have to thank all of those volunteers and customers who have kept the shop going in these difficult times.

With the ongoing vaccination programme so efficiently being organised by the Bildeston Health Centre, let us hope that when the time is right, we can get back to the usual shop hours with a full rota of volunteers.

I see on our Facebook page that we are welcoming many new residents to our village and John Newton has written an article about the shop that shows the hard work that went in to getting it up and running all those years ago and thanks to the ongoing support we still have a thriving shop 17 years on.

If any of our new residents would like to pay a fuller part in village life, please go and see Denise our manager in the shop and she will, I know, welcome you and find you a job to do for whatever time you can spare. It is a good way to get to know your neighbours and find out village information and activities. Please keep supporting your shop. I look forward to the day we can un-zoom ourselves and see who we really are face to face.

 **Barry Charnley**


Post Office Window

As you will know by now, stamp prices increased in January. 1st class is now 85p and 2nd class is now 66p. Normal letters to Europe are now £1.70 up to 100g.

A reminder that all large letter and packet mail to Europe must have customs declarations. Personal and Business banking is available at your Post Office, offering cash withdrawals, deposits, and cheque deposits. This service is available to most high street bank accounts.

Mobile phone Top-ups, Electronic key Top-ups and Gift cards are just a few more services offered here. Post Office Savings and Insurance Products information can be picked up at the counter or just ask me.

eBay and Internet buying and selling, are all helping to make this a viable and incredibly busy post office, so I thank all my regular and new customers very much. I hope it will not be too long before we are back to normal operating hours and fingers crossed, normal life too. Once again, my thanks to all my customers. Keep safe and well.

 **Mandy Coll**

Twelve months on

Welcome to our first issue of Shop Talk for 2021.

I took over managing your shop in April last year and it has been an "interesting and testing" twelve months.

Despite all the problems created by Covid 19, a lot of hard work

and the efforts of our wonderful volunteers, has meant that despite restricted staffing and its effect on opening hours, we have been able to continue serving the village. I was especially pleased with the success of our promotions for Christmas and Valentine's Day.

I am putting on another promotion for Easter. This will feature a great selection of Easter eggs and gifts. From the end of the month, our local asparagus and strawberries will be available.

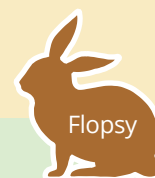


I hope that everyone will find something to their liking amongst the products on offer. As well as special promotions, please do not forget that if there is anything specific that you would like me to stock, whether as a one off or a regular order, please do not hesitate to ask.

 **Denise**



Mopsy



Flopsy



Why a Community Shop?

Why do we have a community shop and not an ordinary shop? For those villagers who have moved to Monks Eleigh in the past 17 years, the answer is that we did have an ordinary shop and post office for many years, that was located in what is now called The Telegraph Office, a short distance from the community shop.

That shop and post office was due to close in 2003, and when the news was announced, we did what residents are good at; we formed a committee. That committee, as well as many other villagers too numerous to name, and if I tried, I would no doubt miss somebody out, but they know who they are, immediately set about a rescue plan to keep some form of shop and post office going.

On the 19th of March 2003 the Monks Eleigh Community Shop Association was formed with the object being *"for the benefit of the community, sustain, encourage, provide, facilitate or resuscitate retail enterprises and in particular shops."* Membership of the Association was (and still is) available to all on payment of £1.00 for a share and a Management Committee was formed, charged with finding out how a community shop worked and equally as important where would it be: as a result of these efforts the shop and post office reopened in time for Christmas 2003.

Fast forward to 2021 and we are one of 372 community shops in the UK with a workforce of about 7000 volunteers with a long-term survival rate of 92% about double that of ordinary shops.

Our success is due to those villagers who 17 years ago worked tirelessly to get a replacement shop and post office together with the continuing support of the community as both customers and volunteers without whom no shop would exist.



If you are new to the village and want to get to know people and what is going on, what better way is there than by spending some time helping out and joining our band of volunteers. Go on, give it a go and you will be welcomed with open arms. In the meantime, here's to the next 17 years!

 **John Newton**

Invest in Your Shop

Your village Community Shop is a not-for-profit Registered Society (formerly known as an Industrial & Provident Society) that depends on the active support of the village both as customers and shop staff.

You can become a shareholder in your shop, which will give you a vote at the Shop's AGM. You can only have one share and that will cost you £1 but it will give you a sense of ownership of such a valuable village asset.

 **Peter McGill**



Easter 2021 Opening Hours

Current Opening Hours (During Lockdown Restrictions on Volunteers)

Community Shop

Monday - Friday	10:00am – 4:00pm
Saturday	10:00am – 12:30pm
Sunday	10:00am – 12:30pm
Bank Holidays	10:00am – 12:30pm

Post Office

Monday - Friday	10:00am – 4:00pm
Saturday	10:00am – 12:30pm
Sunday & Bank Holidays	Closed
Good Friday	CLOSED
Easter Monday	CLOSED

Note: All the above times are under constant review, and we intend to return to our longer opening hours as soon as possible.



Find us on Facebook

Are you reading this article on the printed version or on our Facebook page. If you haven't accessed our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/MonksEleighShop>

Please give it a try.

Whilst the printed version of *Shop Talk* can only be produced 3/4 times a year, our Facebook page is available 24/7.

During emergencies like Lockdown, it is a great way to keep up with shop developments like opening hours and safety requirements.

Please wear your mask in the shop



the newsletter for
Monks Eleigh Community Shop

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