

**OPENING HOURS**

**MONDAY, TUESDAY,  
WEDNESDAY**  
09.00 - 14.00  
16.00 - 17.30 (closed Wed.)

**THURSDAY & FRIDAY**  
09.00 - 14.00  
16.00 - 18.30

# The Shop

At Bromsberrow

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY**  
09.00 - 12.30

**POST OFFICE OPEN  
TUESDAY & THURSDAY**  
9.30 - 11.30 am

## MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

### In this Issue

With most journeys, trips and explorations there comes a point, after the initial enthusiasm wanes, that a low point is reached! The plans for a new shop are no exception, certainly with me, as I recently reached a low point of one notch below despair – not sure what it is called but I stayed away from sharp objects! I had forgotten an important part of what I used to do with clients who were struggling to overcome drug or alcohol addiction. When you are climbing a steep hill or a never ending flight of steps, it is vital to stop, turn around, and remind yourself how far you've climbed.

So, there is quite a bit in this issue concerning our “low point”, in particular the need for more help. We have attempted to describe the help we need but it could work better if you are able to identify how your skills and enthusiasm fit our need. I have been involved with a charity called YANA (You Are Not Alone) and that is a fantastic message to hear when you are struggling!

It was George Bush Senior who said he didn't do “the vision thing” and I'm probably in that camp. However, if we take stock, by November we will celebrate 10 years of the shop a fantastic achievement that only a few stalwarts expected, which has provided enjoyment and strengthened our community. Unfortunately, the rental cost and more recently the hike in energy prices mean that we have not built up a reserve. If we can achieve a shop “across the park” where the sun shines and the waters don't drain we can be successful and build a reserve – as mentioned, if we all become members and use our account wisely, we can avoid(not evade!) paying tax. After 10 years, and if there is a more suitable site in Bromsberrow, we will have the funds we need to make a move. I say this as I'm aware the current site is not everybody's choice, but most people know where we are. Good things to look forward to even if by then I'll be operating on a different plain!

### Progress with a New Shop

As has been the case since the outset, we struggle to form a team to take this project forward (see separate article). In consequence we have a Working Group rather than a Project Team. The Group is being co-ordinated by Jackie Woodland and is currently evaluating building types to allow the Committee to decide. If we are to be successful, we do need to achieve significant progress this year; currently we view that the only feasible option is to reach agreement with John Gardiner, our landlord, to build on site.

John asked, “What do you want to build and how much space do you want?” We have to provide very clear answers to those questions before we have any chance of reaching agreement with him. We will need to add all our performance figures and projections for the coming years before we have any chance of financial backing. My assessment at this stage is that we'll need to raise £150,000. On a “good day” that could be £75,000 from the Community Ownership Fund (COF), which we match with £25,000 each from other charitable trusts, Members Shares and community funding. The “good day” has yet to dawn; indeed we have yet to start the work. Could you join a small team to set about this task? Could all be done without leaving home!

## A Pause for Breath!

It is almost a year since we started down the road to build a Shop. Two things have been consistent over that time. One is the support and appreciation for what The Shop provides both as a provider of supplies and as a strength in the Community. The other, less happily, is that we have struggled to get the support we need to achieve change. A number of the Committee only agreed to serve another year so that we had a chance to recruit a Project Team for the development. However, we have continually fallen short on numbers and whilst a substantial number attended initial meetings, we have eventually finished with a Working Group of three! Yet we have pushed on. Is there sense in trying to build a Shop if there is no Committee to manage it?

It is a decision for our Members and Supporters to make at the **Annual General Meeting in April** (date to be decided).

What can I do? Read the article below - "What sort of piece are you?"

## What sort of a piece are you?

You may recall that at the outset I likened the task of building a new shop to that of completing a jigsaw and wondered whether we have all the pieces? Well, we have located the missing pieces and one of them is **you!** Unless **everyone** gets involved we are not going to be successful.

You might for amusement consider what sort of piece you'd be – an edge, a corner, a bit with lots of connections or that piece that doesn't seem to fit but is the one that completes the puzzle? More practically, please consider what you can offer – could you write a proposal, co-ordinate activities, work on a spreadsheet, tell your friends, but most of all add your energy. As a first step, please put your name on a piece of paper, with your contact details and hand it in at the shop or give me a call (07977 521684). I'm well aware that one definition of madness is to do the same thing and expect a different result – seeking help in our newsletter springs to mind!

Just one more thing! Please come to our AGM (*the date will be well publicised*) and give us your support. This might be the last chance to confirm that we do need a shop and we are willing to do something about it.

Percy



## **Customer accounts**

Thank you to all those customers who have signed up as members of The Shop and run a customer account. The benefit of this to us is that we can inform HMRC of the total spend by members and this is offset against any tax we have to pay.

We do, though, need all our customers to pay off their accounts promptly, otherwise our cash flow is affected. We have started sending out customer reminders at month end about any monies owed which hasn't been cleared off within the four week period. So, if you get one of these reminders, please do pay at your earliest convenience. You can pay easily over the phone or drop in and pay it face-to-face.

## **Community Lunches**

We have been running our fortnightly community lunch service on Monday's since the beginning of the year. Kirsty and team produce excellent meals so if you are interested in giving yourself a treat or know someone who would benefit from having a hot meal delivered to them in the local area, just get in touch via [hello@theshopatbromsberrow.co.uk](mailto:hello@theshopatbromsberrow.co.uk) or call the Shop on 01531 650744.

Those of you who have had them for a while will have experienced our trials and tribulations with the delivery cartons. We are trying to be as eco conscious as possible, as well as using containers which can go in the microwave or fridge, but in doing so have discovered all sorts of drawbacks - leaks, dry food, wrong sizes and so on. Thanks for your feedback as we've gone through this experimental phase! We think we have now cracked it.

Jo

## **Shop Local**

We are enjoying fresh fruit and vegetables here at our Community Shop! Unlike British supermarkets, most independent retailers have plenty of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and lettuce, despite the shortages reported on the news. Our wholesaler supplying our fruit and veg, tells us there is no problem sourcing salad stuffs from the market, even though supplies have been affected by the recent cold snap in North Africa. The cost of heating greenhouses is another factor that has pushed prices up. The fact is that supermarkets operate fixed price tariffs and are not prepared to pay the farmers a going rate when times get tough. Smaller shops like ours can be a little more flexible, while still trying to offer good value to customers. Another reason to shop local throughout the year!!



## Events in 2022

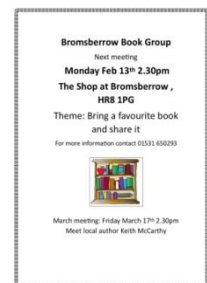
During the autumn we had great fun running a number of events. The H.Art Christmas shopping weekend saw quite a few people drop in and buy Christmas presents from the artists in our gallery. It was great to see some new customers as well as some familiar faces.

That was closely followed by a very lively Curry and Quiz night. There was a cash prize on the night and there was a lot of good hearted competition. We got immediate requests to run another one, and the spring Curry and Quiz night is on 17th March.

We love running and hosting events so if you've either got an idea for something or have an event that you'd like to take the lead in running, drop us an email at [hello@theshopatbromsberrow.co.uk](mailto:hello@theshopatbromsberrow.co.uk) or drop in and have a chat and we can see how we could make it work.

## Diary Dates at The Shop

The Book Club met on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February and the March meeting will be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30 pm. Local author, Keith McCarthy, will be joining the meeting so come along and meet him - all welcome.



And, back by popular demand, another 'Curry & Quiz Night' on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March – 6.30 – 10.00 pm. Booking essential so don't miss out.

Don't forget that special date in the diary for Mother's Day - 19<sup>th</sup> March. Do come down and have a browse - we have so many gifts for that special person in your life.



## Diary Dates at Bromesberrow Village Hall

### 'Coffee and Cake' Morning

A 'Coffee and Cake' morning will be held at the Village Hall on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March from 10.00 - 12.00. This is a new event, which the Hall would like to hold on a regular basis, so please do come along and make this a success.



## **King's Coronation**

The Village Hall Committee/The Shop are organising a celebration of the King's Coronation on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May to be held at the Bromesberrow Village Hall from noon onwards. The celebration will include a hog roast, licensed bar, children's bouncy castle and games for both children and adults. So please put the date in your diaries now and get ready to join in the fun! There is no charge for this event and further details will be available in due course.



## **"We Drive" - A New Community Service**

I am afraid that with so much going on I (Percy) have not progressed the idea of "We Drive" - a service (provided by volunteers) to get you to an appointment, train or bus pick-up etc. when nothing is available or convenient. I can only remember one person who offered (and I'll confirm with him) but I believe there were more of which I didn't make note. With apologies, could interested drivers contact me again? We already have volunteers with regard to Community Lunch deliveries and deliveries in general from the days, immediately after the start of the pandemic, when we did 50 deliveries a week! I will work with Jo Read to bring all the volunteers' list up to date and get a notice in the shop and on the website about this service.

## **Volunteering**

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, we have volunteer meetings every month in The Shop and that would be a great time to come along if you can to find out more. The meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of every month i.e.

30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	27 <sup>th</sup> April	25 <sup>th</sup> May
29 <sup>th</sup> June	27 <sup>th</sup> July	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug
28 <sup>th</sup> Sept	26 <sup>th</sup> Oct	30 <sup>th</sup> Nov

All meetings start at 2.00pm and you would be very welcome.

We know that mid-afternoon doesn't work for everyone, so please do get in touch by phone, email or dropping in at the weekend - we'd love you to join us.