

METFIELD STORES Co-operative cic

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER 5668382

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am delighted to report that Metfield Stores has enjoyed another successful year primarily due to the tireless efforts of the Volunteers and the support of an able and hard-working Board. Also we have adjusted to the vagaries of some local suppliers and maintained a positive balance sheet.

However one of the prime reasons for our continuing success has been the great good fortune we have had in being able to employ the tremendous services of our new manager, Sue Mead. Sue has brought a real enthusiasm and wide base of experience to the role and the fact that she resides above the shop has given her a valuable insight into what makes us

tick, even if she is too convenient for her own good on occasions!

The shop continues to serve the needs of the local community and endeavours to be an outlet for local produce wherever possible and it was intriguing to have a visit from two Japanese sociologists who were studying the role of Community Shops and had been aware of our own store from their base in the Far East.

We have also benefitted from our membership of the Plunkett Association which supports community shops in rural areas and have been part of an initiative to bolster independent rural shops. We continue to be dependent upon the goodwill and selfless service of our volunteers and, once again, I repeat my invitation for those in the local community to join us either as counter staff and/or Board members.

Tessa Harding has retired from the Board after many years unstinting and wise counsel to the shop and I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Gill Kingsley has joined the Board and brings a great deal of retail experience as well as enthusiasm and energy.

We look forward to growing from strength to strength and if not quite reaching the heights of an Aldi or a Tesco we will continue to provide for the local shopping and social needs of the village.

P.K.Smith



From our Company Secretary

Over the past year we have increased our co-operative shareholders by 4 giving a total of 73, each holding a £1 voting share and our equity shareholding remained constant at 23,909 shares. In total, we have 220 shareholders (both co-operative and equity) which is remarkable for a small village store! Only co-operative shareholders are entitled to vote at the AGM but the AGM on Monday 26th June is open to all shareholders and other members of the community to attend – we hope you will do your best to come and support this valuable community resource. Refreshments will be available from 6.30pm and the formal proceedings commence promptly at 7pm.

During the year 2016-17, we have had a few changes to the Board of Directors. Lynda Austin stepped down as a Director last summer but is still very much involved and a familiar face in the shop. Tessa Harding has also decided to retire from the Board in order to concentrate on her other interests but we know she will still take a keen interest in Metfield Stores. We miss them both and their contribution to the strategic decision making. Bridget Morley has again stepped up as a Director after a short period to recharge her batteries and we have a new face at Board meetings – Gill Kingsley – whose

extensive retail experience is already proving to be invaluable.

If anyone is interested in making a contribution to the running of Metfield Stores, either as a volunteer or as a Director, please chat to any member of the Board or ask in the shop for contact details.

Barbara Bailey
Company Secretary

A new broom

They say a new broom sweeps clean and it is certainly true that our new manager Sue Mead has made Metfield Stores sparkle, as many of our customers and volunteers have remarked. We are hugely grateful to Mike Mead (who lives in the flat above the shop) for meeting Sue whilst holidaying in Spain and bringing her to our door! As she has achieved so many changes since she joined us in June 2016, you may be surprised to learn that Sue is employed for just 25 hrs a week. Sue has a great deal of experience in retail management, including having worked as a branch manager for Kwik Save, run her own Deli on the Isle of Wight and more recently managed a restaurant as well as rental properties in Spain. She has brought us much needed fresh energy, ideas and enthusiasm.

The current Board of Directors is –

Paul Smith – Chair	Bridget Morley
Wendy Abbott	Chris Osborne
Gill Kingsley	Jan Rusted

Sue says...

Having been back in England and settled into village life, I was starting to think about a part-time job. So I was very interested to apply for the store manager job when it came up. No travel expenses had great appeal, as well as the prospect of meeting lots of new people. I have always been very much a 'people person' and I like to be active within the community (you may have seen me working as a volunteer in the Meadow Bar of the Village Hall).

I have great admiration for the dedication of the shop volunteers and it is a privilege to work alongside them. I have worked in retail since I left school and enjoy direct contact with customers very much. I hope to be able to keep this job for many years.

I hope, with the agreement of the board, to continue to improve the layout of the shop. The area behind the counter will be next in line, with the spirits on shelves above the sinks. In the back room, I would like us to invest in more upright freezers, as they display goods so much more effectively. We have recently increased our sales of sandwiches. Now that I make them in our own kitchen it is easier to respond to customer demand. I hope to expand our snack range, popular with tradesmen, by baking off good quality sausage rolls, pastries and pies. Nice cooking smells promote sales!

I also want to expand the hardware range, it is one way of saving people that trip into Harleston or Halesworth!

I want all our volunteers to enjoy their shifts at the shop, it should be a pleasant way to spend a few hours each week.

Volunteers

Our numbers continued to fluctuate over the course of 2016/17 with too many of us suffering or being affected by various health problems. As we are mostly of mature years then this is inevitable and points up the fact that we will always need new helpers. We honour the memory of Flick Price who served the shop over many years both on the board and behind the counter. We were sorry to hear of the death of Tony Brown who brought a smile to many faces whilst on shift with Malcolm. Jenny Beckwith has retired after 10 years service and we wish her well. Recently we have been pleased to welcome Fiona Denny and Kathy Abrahall to the team.

Newcomers to the area be aware,
Your Community Shop needs YOU!

If there are any shareholders out there who have been too shy to join us, please do reconsider and bring a friend along; not only does the experience build confidence, it is also a great way to meet people and feel a part of the community. Training is provided.

Stock

This year Sue has expanded our product range sourcing from far and wide. We lost a major and valued supplier, The Metfield Village Kitchen and Pie Company. Consequently we have been recruiting new cake and pastry suppliers – sausage rolls from The Tudor Bakehouse in Harleston, pastries from Hollybush, delicious traybakes from our 'real bread' supplier, Ravi of The Breadwinner, Reydon. Like Kerry's wonderful cakes, these are also made from the best ingredients. We now stock cakes



Traybakes from Ravi, The Breadwinner's real bread maker, are made with top quality ingredients. His range includes brownies, treacle tart, millionaire's slice, and frangipane tart, all shown here, as well as lemon polenta cake, flapjacks, scones, stem ginger shortbread, coffee and walnut cake and much more...



ABOVE, the reorganised back room with a new upright freezer and small range of frozen foods. BELOW, it's spick and span in the main shop room.



ABOVE, Katherine's Cakes, made by Katherine Green in Harleston are delivered on Fridays. BELOW, the new hallway display of greeting cards, and wrapping materials. This was masterminded and created by Sue, assisted by Mike.



from a number of suppliers, in particular Katherine Green who has built up quite a local following.

Bread The Breadwinner (Reydon), our artisan bread supplier, delivers on Fridays. If you would like a loaf saved please order by midday Wednesday.

The Olde Barn Bakery continues to deliver daily Monday-Saturday. Please place any orders before 3pm the day before. We normally have a selection of both types of bread available frozen, at reduced prices.

Meat We continue to stock locally produced meat from **K W Clarke** of Bramfield – chicken thighs, chicken breast fillets, saddles of wild rabbit when available, game pie mix, partridge, and pheasant, shin of beef, stewing steak, lamb or calves liver, lamb chops, minced lamb and minced steak. This arrives at midday each Thursday, along with bacon and cooked meats.

If you have any future stock requests please contact Sue or a member of staff. We are happy to place bulk orders for you at a reduced markup.

Compliance

Best practice is for Hygiene Certificates to be renewed every three years; they can be obtained and updated online at <www.highspeedtraining.co.uk>. If you have not worked in food retail this is a good and easy way to learn about hygiene, food handling and storage – the correct temperatures for storing chilled, frozen and ambient stock, as well as how to keep a clean and safe environment. A Level 2 Certificate costs £20 + vat, if your tasks at the shop require it, we will reimburse you.

Our chillers/freezers are serviced once a year and upgraded as required. Small electrical equipment is PAT tested annually. We are very grateful to all our volunteer staff for helping us to keep safe and clean premises which has once again won us the top hygiene rating of Five Stars – keep up the good work!

Finance

The figures on the right are extracted from our unaudited Annual Accounts for 2016/17 prepared for us by Peter Hatchman. As you can see, even though our turnover was about £5,300 down on last year we have achieved a profit of £483 rather than a loss of £1,188. We think this might be described as an efficient performance and you may be wondering quite how we achieved it. So thanks to everyone involved and in particular to Sue, who has worked extremely hard and obviously extremely effectively too.

This was our eleventh year of trading and we are pleased and proud to be hanging in there in these difficult times. Our peak turnover was achieved in 2013/14, since that time the major supermarket chains have had very strong competition from Lidl and Aldi and have been forced to cut their prices, forcing wholesalers to drop their prices too. This means that we are now selling some goods at lower prices than ever before. Over that period we have also drastically cut our turnover of tobacco products, this is partly due to decreased demand but also a deliberate attempt begun by our previous manager Jacqui, to reduce sales of these high cost/low profit items

Metfield Stores c.i.c. Detailed profit and loss account for the year ended 31 March 2017

	2017 £	2016 £
Sales		
Sales	136,686	142,029
Cost of sales		
Purchases	107,864	112,815
Decrease in stocks	298	1,215
Other direct costs	-	715
	108,162	114,745
Administrative expenses		
Employee costs:		
Wages and salaries	8,505	8,335
Motor expenses	-	10
	8,675	8,345
Premises costs:		
Rent	9,010	8,581
Rates	405	414
Service charges	590	660
Light and heat	2,993	3,297
	12,998	12,952
General administrative expenses:		
Telephone and fax	456	433
Postage & Stationery	211	77
Bank charges	776	1,259
Insurance	708	679
Repairs and maintenance	1,630	2,586
Depreciation	939	961
Sundry expenses	198	201
	4,918	6,196
Legal and professional costs:		
Advertising and PR	375	582
	3,335	3,378
	29,926	30,871
Other operating income		
Other operating income	1,850	2,396
SUMMARY		
Sales	136,686	142,029
Cost of sales	(108,162)	(114,745)
Gross profit	28,524	27,284
Administrative expenses	(29,926)	(30,871)
Other operating income	1,850	2,396
Operating profit/(loss)	448	(1,191)
Interest receivable	35	5
Interest payable	-	(2)
Profit/(loss) before tax	483	(1,188)

AVERAGE DAILY TAKINGS 30 April 2006 – 31 March 2017

YEAR 1	June 2006 – £426 Best month – July – £478 average over year – £396
YEAR 2	June 2007 – £390 Best month – August – £470 average over year – £369
YEAR 3	June 2008 – £379 Best month – August – £429 average over year – £359
YEAR 4	June 2009 – £410 Best month – August – £460 average over year – £360
YEAR 5	June 2010 – £367 Best month – July – £475 average over year – £359
YEAR 6	June 2011 – £431 Best month – Aug – £473 average over year – £411
YEAR 7	June 2012 – £398 Best month – Aug – £427 average over year – £395
YEAR 8	June 2013 – £434 Best month – July – £484 average over year – £420
YEAR 9	June 2014 – £429 Best month – Aug – £481 average over year – £415
YEAR 10	June 2015 – £456.85 Best month – Aug – £467 average over year – £414
YEAR 11	June 2016 – £444.05 Best month – Aug – £501 average over year – £407

(they only have a 5% – 7% profit margin). This policy change also contributes to the lower turnover figure – but it improves our profitability hugely – as we are so small we profit much more from good margins than high sales volume.

As a “convenience store” many of our customers might expect our prices to be higher than the large grocery chains, but, as a community-run project, we always aim to price competitively on as many items as we possibly can.

Please remember that the best way to support Metfield Stores is to shop here – if 100 of us spend an extra £10 each week the resulting £1,000 could increase our turnover by about 40% and assure our continued viability.

Refurbishments

Sue has masterminded, and with the help of partner Mike, created a bright new card display area in what was the dingy hallway connecting the two shop rooms. Thanks to Chris Osborne for cleaning the awning (again). Thanks to Jan Rusted, Chris O and Margaret Robert for caring for and replanting the terracotta pots

which brighten up our frontage.

Last autumn we bought a very smart new upright freezer which displays our small range of frozen foods much more effectively and has increased turnover. Sue has re-organised the layout of the back room so that stock is now better displayed and more easily accessed.

If you are a keen DIYer and/or have related professional skills and would like to help us or have any suggestions for refurbishments, please do contact Sue or a board member.

In conclusion Our priority is to continue to provide this unique service to our community, so do please encourage your friends, neighbours and relations to shop here and/or become a volunteer.

At Metfield Stores you can chat, catch up on local news, find out about local events, borrow a book or photocopy a document. It is a social hub which we hope brightens the daily lives of customers.

Newcomers to the area may like to know that Co-operative and Equity shares are available to buy at £1 each. A Co-operative share carries voting rights.

METFIELD STORES c.i.c.
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER 5668382
run by the community for the community
THE STREET, METFIELD, HARLESTON, NORFOLK IP20 0LB
www.metfield.co.uk telephone **01379 586204**

OPENING HOURS
Monday–Friday, 8.00am–5pm
Saturday, 8.30am–2pm
Sunday, 10am–12.30pm
Bank Holidays, 10am–12 noon

**You need us
and we need you...**

**To become a volunteer, just
contact the shop and leave
your name and address and
other contact details.**

**Slots are usually 2hrs long
during opening hours.**