

## PARISH MEETING 13.5.26

### VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE

Shop sales of £75k were up by just £2,000 on the previous year and gross profit rose from 13.4% to 14.9%. This allowed us to cover our increased overheads in the year, which rose from £7.5k in 2024 to just over £9k in 2025. The main elements of the overhead increase were:

Wages were £458 higher due to the minimum wage rise and extra hours from the weekend staff

Repairs and miscellaneous costs were £1,356 higher due to several 'one off' costs in the year, mainly the new step at the shop entrance, catering for Chips' retirement party, and the purchase of new display stands.

Overall, this year we have achieved a modest surplus of £440, compared to £709 last year, but we met the aim to cover the Shop's costs and therefore to be a sustainable business.

The Committee thanks all those who submitted entries for this year's calendar which produced a profit of just over £125 for the Shop. We also raised £436 from raffles with the proceeds being donated to Weldmar.

Regarding the PO, following Chips's retirement in September 2025, Julie Shorter took over as Post mistress. She says that it has been a learning curve for her but one that she is certainly enjoying. The run-up to Christmas was very busy and kept all the volunteers on their toes. Although the New Year has not been as busy as the Christmas period it has been steady. The PO offers several services such as postage stamps and other postage services, paying money and cheques in to your bank and paying bills to mention a few.

With the coming of the New Year, we were saddened to hear that one of our volunteers, Pam Taylor, had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and she sadly died in March.

We are always eager to recruit new volunteers to help in the Post Office and anybody who may be interested can find Julie behind the counter on Monday

and Wednesday mornings or you could let anybody in the shop know and ask them to pass a message to her. Julie looks forward to many more years serving our community.

In common with many other volunteer organisations both the shop and PO are having continual difficulty in recruiting new helpers and this has meant more work falling to fewer people. The Committee is very concerned that this is not sustainable. So far, we have been able to continue to maintain the opening hours and days for both the shop and the PO. It would be the start of a slippery slope if we find we have to unexpectedly close on any day due to no volunteer being available. We would ask residents to seriously consider offering to help with the many jobs that have to be done to keep the train on the rails.

Finally, we hope that the community will continue to support the shop and the Post Office, both as customers and as volunteers. We aim to provide a convenient way of buying day-to-day items but, just as importantly, the shop and PO provide a social hub which is valued, particularly by our more elderly residents. By using the shop now residents help to ensure that it remains open in the future.