

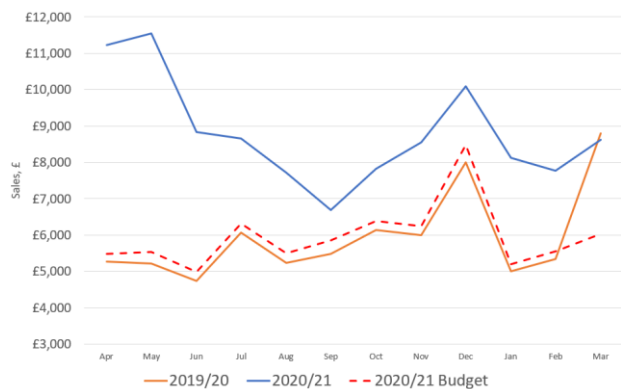
Introduction

Gorsley Community Shop is run as a Community Interest Company (CIC) and therefore operates for the benefit of the community. To make this happen the Shop and Post Office employs members of staff, has a significant volunteer base, and is overseen by volunteer directors. We realise it is important that the community is aware how the shop is doing, and this newsletter is intended to give a brief overview on how the shop has performed and decisions made by the directors over the past 18 months.

2020-21 Financial Year (ending March '21)

Lockdown and Record Shop Sales

Having set the shop's budget in Feb '20 unbeknown of what was going to happen to our shopping habits in 2020, the effects of lockdown on shop sales occurred rapidly. The shop came into its own with record monthly sales occurring in Apr and then May '20 – almost double our normal monthly sales. Without the fantastic efforts of volunteers and staff this would not have been possible, but it was great to see how a Community Shop can support the local community during such unprecedented circumstances.



Post Office Commission

The Post Office 'Local' model that the shop operates means the shop receives commissions for the Post Office services the customers purchase. During lockdown our Post Office remained open where other Post Offices reduced their hours. This extra effort from staff and volunteers paid off as our Post Office saw an increase in customers (especially in the online deliveries) which in turn saw our commission for the year being above £6,000, £2,000 above that we budgeted.



Grants

In Oct '20 our 2-year Princes Countryside Fund Grant of £12,500/yr came to an end. This grant has been fundamental in helping the shop to break-even during its start-up period.

Annual Turnover and Profits (Budget)

Total Income	=	£113,529	(£87,133)
Total Costs	=	£105,642	(£83,862)
Profits (before tax)	=	£7,887	(£3,271)

VAT Registered

With the sustained growth in Sales over the period of our financial year, the sales income went over the VAT threshold. This has meant that the shop became VAT registered at the beginning of 2021. This results in a slight reduction in profit but more importantly has put more demand on our accounts systems to manage the VAT and in preparing quarterly VAT returns.

Investments

With the increased sales in the shop we very quickly found we were unable to hold the level of stock we required. During the Covid lockdown we were extremely fortunate that Gorsley Baptist Church were able to temporarily lend us a number of their rooms for storage of our stock. Coming out of lockdown we took the decision to utilise the profits the shop made during lockdown to purchase a purpose-built insulated container as a new storage facility replacing the previous shed.



Not only does this provide the stock space we require but with its local position to the shop this also makes running the shop and re-stocking the shelves a lot easier for the volunteers.

May 2022

Staffing

Going into 2020-21 financial year, the shop employed our shop manager, Bianca Long, contracted to 28 hrs/week. Bianca's role split her hours across working in the Post Office and overseeing the shop and purchasing stock. All other duties in the shop were fulfilled with the extensive volunteer base that either work in the shop, Post Office or behind the scenes. This remained the case throughout 20/21 FY which was a fantastic effort with what had to be overcome.

At the start of 21/22 FY, the directors felt that the running of the Post Office was vulnerable as we were relying on using locums at least one day a week. In April '21, Liz Reesen joined the team as a Post Office Assistant on a casual workers contract, aiming to work about one day a week on average.



Bianca Long



Liz Reeson



Jacky Bentham

From the outset of the shop, one key legal responsibility was to have a named Postmaster to oversee the Post Office. Andrew Downing, a volunteer director held this position for 3 years. Andrew stood back from his position as a director but continued as Postmaster as we sought a replacement. In Nov '21, Jacky Bentham was appointed as our Postmaster, a paid position contracted to 7hrs /wk. This included working in the Post Office one day per week

Interested in Volunteering

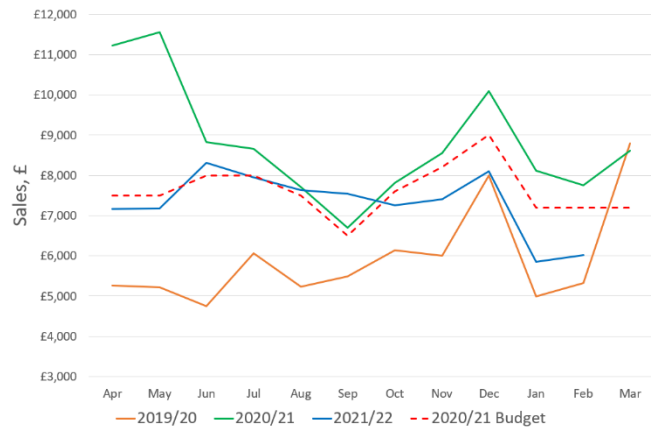
The shop is extremely fortunate to have a volunteer base of over 30 people. The fact is that the shop could not exist without them and the success of the shop is down to exceptional effort by the volunteers and paid staff.

We are always keen to hear from anyone that would like to join our volunteer team. This could be undertaking a 2hr shift in the shop or taking on some of the behind-the scenes admin roles which are extensive and often not obvious.

Current Financial Year (ending March '22)

It was obvious that the shop would not achieve the sales that were achieved in 20/21 due to Covid. The budget however was set in the hope that some of our new customers or buying habits would remain and therefore the shop turnover would be greater than it was before covid.

During the first 6-months sales were about on budget, but as covid restrictions have continued to lift we have started to see sales dropping to near pre-covid levels. This is a concern and we hope customers continue to remember what a community shop can offer and for that reason it is good to regularly support the shop during normal times.



The directors however have focussed on reducing our general overheads with reductions seen in banking, credit card and marketing costs

Estimated Annual Summary (Budget)

Total Income	=	£97,900	(£102,607)
Total Costs	=	£95,900	(£101,047)
Profits (before tax)	=	£2,000	(£1,560)

Current Directors

The shop can have up to 7 directors, our current 5 directors (2 vacancies) who are:

Shaun Cavanagh; David England; Andrew Gardner; Zena Geary; Rob Little; Peter Watts

Questions & Suggestions

Having read this or from using the shop we are always grateful for any suggestions you may have or happy to answer any specific questions you have about your community shop.