

BHVSA PLAN 2007-12 **REVIEW OF 2012 PROGRESS**

Introduction

The financial fortunes of the project have seen an upturn in 2012 for a number of reasons. A much delayed payment of £7000 was received from our insurers following two years of negotiations after the May 2010 attempted break in. The success of the children's play area has brought many more customers into the shop and café causing an increase in turnover. Although more difficult to quantify, there has been an increase in tourist trade following the winning of the BBC award and the Times nomination. Overall turnover has increase by well over 10% compared with 2011.

Progress Against Objectives

Objective I: Making a Surplus in the Shop

Progress during 2012:

- 1.1 There has been an increase in footfall in the shop, both from the playing field users and from tourists and a small number of villagers who had not used the shop previously – as a consequence, turnover is up by 10%.
- 1.2 Despite not entering for any awards, we have been highlighted in both The Times and The Independent.
- 1.3. The stocking in the shop is continuing to respond to customer requests.
- 1.4. Labelling, pricing, and shop layout have all improved markedly.
- 1.5 We have a better product range in frozen foods and now have a selection of ready meals as well as budget frozen foods suitable for young families.
- 1.6 No progress was made in reducing costs of mail collection with the Post Office, but the Parish Council gave a small grant of £100 towards the provision of postal services
- 1.7. The pizza night initiative has been successful.
- 1.8 We now have a shop sign in the village pointing up the hill.

Objective II: Using the Building Effectively and Efficiently

Progress during 2012:

- 2.1 We have now implemented or are in process of implementing all the commitments in the energy action plan we drew up with SWEA.
- 2.2 After careful consideration it was decided not to increase shop security with a metal roller blind and bars but to rely on the additional measures put in when the doors were mended.
- 2.3 We have made arrangements with a green oak specialist for 6-monthly reviews of the condition of the building.
- 2.3 We have agreed that the kitchen is going to be refurbished in January 2013 and divided into three work zones so that volunteers will not have to work across each other.
- 2.4 Back office organisation has been improved, as has the Loft and the storage facilities for documents and the staff work stations.
- 2.5 The rear of the shop has been improved and, for health and safety reasons, we have ceased stocking gas cylinders.
- 2.6 We have erected new signage in the car park to reinforce the message that the area is primarily for the use of shop customers.
- 2.7 There have been a number of recent instances of vandalism and we have agreed further measures to protect against this.

Objective III: Supporting Local Producers and Suppliers.

Progress during 2012:

- 3.1 The number of local producers and suppliers has continued to increase and customers are able to see where items have come from, in most cases.
- 3.2 We organised a Village Meal in July to publicise local food and to celebrate our winning of the BBC award for Best Local Food Retailer. Unfortunately, owing to the weather, the event had to be held indoors instead of on the playing field so did not result in additional custom at the shop on that day.

Objective IV: Developing the Cafe

Progress during 2012:

- 4.1 The ordering and storage of café consumables has improved so that there are rarely any shortages impeding trade.
- 4.2 Seating on the terrace has been increased and the cafe boundaries have more clearly established: the café and terrace have been working at capacity at weekends and during the school holidays.
- 4.3 We have received more practical support from the Playground Committee.
- 4.4 Café prices have been increased without any noticeable effects on trade.
- 4.5 In consultation with a group of volunteers, plans have been drawn up to invest £3,800 in improving the layout of the kitchen to enable three volunteers to work together at exceptionally busy times.
- 4.6 Some new volunteers are cafe orientated.
- 4.7 Various options have been tried to deal with extra demand from the playing field.

Objective V: Developing the Loft

Progress during 2012:

- 5.1 We have explored many alternative uses for the loft with the help of a comprehensive report from the Business Manager and a community consultation.
- 5.2 The appearance of the Loft has been greatly improved by the removal of rubbish and the improved storage arrangements, but there is still some way to go.

Cross-Cutting Issues

6. Buildings and Maintenance

Progress during 2012:

6.1 Steve Downes has brought expertise, skills and labour to the maintenance of the shop although the list of jobs is seemingly endless. Plans are being developed to establish a Maintenance Group.

6.2 Kevin Fiander of Bespoke Oak Buildings has given his services as a building surveyor to keep an eye on the building with 6 monthly checks.

7. Finance

Progress during 2012:

7.1 Profits remain small and the financial situation has been monitored monthly at each committee meeting. Monthly profit and loss accounts are now available enabling a budget for 2013 to be drawn up based on predictions of growth in shop turnover, inflation and attendant profit and loss.

7.2 The mortgage has been repaid, together with the vast majority of bonds.

7.3 Expertise in using the Sage accounting package has improved.

7.4 The bookkeeping role has consolidated and developed during the year resulting in smoother operation of financial systems.

8. Sustainability

Progress during 2012:

8.1 The educational events in The Loft were well-attended and judged a great success by the attendees.

8.2 The new freezer is extremely efficient and has good green credentials.

8.3 We have switched electricity supplier to achieve 100% green electricity. However, our consumption has increased, which requires investigation.

8.4 The Plunkett Foundation awarded us a grant of £300 for achieving our Greener Together targets.

9. Health and Safety

Progress during 2012:

9.1 Paul Williams, ex Fire Service, has produced a fire safety report which has been implemented leading to improved fire safety.

9.2 Further training in First Aid and Food Safety has been provided in situ for volunteers.

9.3 We have improved training for new volunteers and updated the volunteers' guide.

9.4 We have improved storeroom practices.

10. Staffing

Progress during 2012:

10.1. Advertising the need for volunteers in the Village News and outside the Shop has been very successful in attracting new volunteers. This is necessary as a number of volunteers would like to work fewer shifts.

10.2 The manager and the book keeper have continued to refine and demarcate their roles and the volunteer rota is now managed by one of the volunteers.

11. Communications

Progress during 2012:

11.1 The volunteers' meetings have been better attended, especially when the agendas have been published in advance.

11.2 The management file, setting out all the systems in use, has been put into circulation, although there is still some work to do to make it comprehensive and user friendly.

12. Quality

Progress during 2012:

12.1 Ordering systems, stocking and pricing have improved although there are still occasional glitches.

12.2 The general appearance of the shop has improved and customers have commented on it.

12.3 Standards of food and service in the café have been maintained in spite of the difficulties of working at full capacity in such a small space. It is hoped that the options considered under 4.7 above will be implemented before Easter 2013 so as to achieve the necessary improvements.