

# Grampound Village Store at One Thousand Days

**On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017 Grampound Village Store reached its 1000<sup>th</sup> day of trading. The support of the many friends who became shareholders back in the winter of 2013-14 was the main reason why it proved possible to set up our community shop in Grampound.**

It seemed appropriate to the current Management Committee that a report should be made to all the shareholders at this time. What follows is our appraisal of the present position of Grampound Village Store.



## **Historical Background**

The idea of setting up a community shop in the village was a response to the closure of the former Hollies Store and Post Office in 2013. The principal source of finance was a community share offer that raised over £20 000. On the basis of this demonstration of local support, other large sums were raised from the Prince's Countryside Fund, the Grampound Community Fund financed by Airvolution, The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Grampound with Creed Parish Council. The Plunkett Foundation provided expert professional help throughout. The TV personality Alex Polizzi opened Grampound Village Store and Coffee Shop on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2014.

## **The Business Plan**

The Steering Group that set up Grampound Village Store took a lot of professional advice and gave careful thought to the long-term sustainability of the venture at a time when many village shops are closing. The conclusion was that the venture did have a good chance of long-term success because:

1. Over half the households in the village became shareholders and would presumably therefore use the shop regularly.
2. In responses to a questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of people in the village said they wanted a local shop and would use it at least weekly.
3. A large number of people said they would be willing to volunteer to help to run the shop; this might include serving, helping with management or helping with other essential work.

## How it has Worked Out

Grampound Village Store and Coffee Shop is valued and used by many local people; visitors boost trade noticeably in summer. A pool of loyal and committed volunteers ensures that GVS is open for 60 hours a week. The Manager is excellent and combines a grasp of business management with the need for a community shop to work closely with local people. The Management Committee comprises a small group of hands-on individuals who give a lot of time every week.

All this shows that GVS is viable and sustainable for the moment. The longer-term position is less certain:

- The business covers its costs but it does not make a significant profit.
- GVS has a financial reserve but this is not increasing.
- The availability of sufficient volunteers is often a problem.
- The current Management Committee reaches the end of its 3-year term in 2018 and recruiting people to replace retiring members is likely to be difficult.

The expectations of the Business Plan have been partially fulfilled but:

- A disappointingly large number of shareholders rarely or never use the shop or use it only to a very limited extent.
- Many local people never use the shop or use it too occasionally to provide a strong customer base.
- The amount of volunteer time forthcoming is not as high as originally hoped or as high as we need.

After the AGM there will be an opportunity to discuss informally the future of GVS. We hope shareholders will be able to attend.

## So Where Are We?

Grampound Village Store and Coffee Shop is a sustainable business that covers its costs and provides a valued service to many local people. It has become an established part of the community of Grampound and its immediate future is secure.

In order to make it secure in the longer term though we would need to see:

- More local people spending more at the shop more often.
- More shareholders making greater use of the facility they helped to finance initially.
- More people coming forward as volunteers in the shop or in its management.

Those of us who are involved with running the shop are very positive and optimistic about it. We all gain a lot of enjoyment and satisfaction from what we do. We hope that just as the local community rose to the challenge of replacing the Hollies in 2013-14, they will rise now to the challenge of making Grampound Village Store and Coffee Shop secure in the longer term.

**2017 AGM – Village Hall – Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup> – 3.00 pm**

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