

# VILLAGE SHOPS NEWSLETTER WINTER 2016

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oxfordshire  
Helping communities help themselves

As you maybe already aware, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council has recently changed its name to Community First Oxfordshire. We have also launched a new logo, website and moved to smaller premises. We believe that these changes will help reinforce our new scope and direction.

Like all charities we are facing reductions in funding from our grant providers and have therefore restructured the organisation and reduced costs including moving to smaller premises.

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New contact details can be found overleaf.

## Getting it Right: Selling Fruit and Veg



Whilst we all know the benefits of consuming our 'Five a Day' and are aware that customers want to be able to buy fresh produce, selling fruit and vegetables successfully can be quite a challenge for the small village retailer. Issues such as finding a supplier that will deliver small enough quantities of stock; displaying the goods to give maximum impact and retain freshness; pricing the goods competitively and yet maintaining a good margin, and managing the inevitable wastage can all deter the village shopkeeper from stocking the healthy option.

Yet customers say they would like to be able to buy more fresh food from their local shop, so here are some tips for success:

- Start with a core list of must-haves and then add to the range, depending on what's on offer through the seasons
- Always have something on promotion and frequently change the promotions
- Display fruit and veg altogether in one place for better visual impact
- Keep the products fresh —no one wants to purchase damaged or tired stock
- Correct storage of products in the stock room is necessary to reduce wastage from product deterioration
- Good product rotation is essential—last in, last out!
- Highlight local or British produce
- Offer a choice of varieties of apples, potatoes etc if possible
- Be aware of how much wastage there is and look at buying patterns if it is more than 4%
- Wastage requires a good margin to cover costs: look for 50% on short life products e.g. salad, mushrooms and 33% on more robust items e.g. potatoes, apples
- Use refrigerated displays when appropriate to keep items as fresh as possible
- Clearly price the produce either by kilo, by 100g for more expensive lines, or by individual item
- Link to other purchases such as salad dressings, children's lunch box items
- Promote through advertising, signage, recipe ideas, tastings etc.
- Link to local school, playgroup to promote children to eat healthy
- Don't be too cheap—check out competitor pricing to ensure that you are pricing at the right level
- Be patient—establishing customer demand can take time

## Fairtrade Fortnight 29 February—13 March



Many village shops are now stocking Fair Trade products in response to customer's requests and a general interest in ethical trading.

Fairtrade can make a huge difference to farmers and workers' lives. Buying Fairtrade products means farmers receive a fairer price for their work and a little extra to invest in their community or business. And it's more important than ever that we continue to wake people up to Fairtrade in communities around the UK, so more and more people choose Fairtrade products when they shop.

Fairtrade Fortnight is an excellent opportunity to introduce new goods to your store or make a feature of the fair trade goods that you already stock.

The Fairtrade Foundation has plenty of resources, including images and other digital assets to help you plan and promote Fairtrade Fortnight.

For more information visit

<http://fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight>

## Rural Shops Alliance

We have enclosed a copy of the Rural Retailer, the FREE quarterly magazine from the Rural Shops Alliance (RSA). Please note that this will be the last hard copy that Community First Oxfordshire will distribute to rural shops within Oxfordshire.

We appreciate that it is full of interesting and relevant information for rural shopkeepers, so recommend that you sign up to receive weekly emails and also download the magazine from their website.

[www.rural-shops-alliance.co.uk](http://www.rural-shops-alliance.co.uk)

My Perfect Shop successfully launched its first Pilot programme aimed at helping retailers to stock the right products, gain access to rewards and display material from leading brands and encourage shoppers into their store via social media. If you want to try it download the app for free at the App Store or Google

**Large print and alternative formats  
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### This Project is sponsored by:



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advises and supports village shops throughout the county.

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