

Volunteer-run shop to offer free delivery



Monks Eleigh Community shop offering free delivery service for local residents, shop volunteers ready to deliver, shop manager Janet Mackie with volunteer Chris Eames. Picture Mark Westley ANL-160902-172247009

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A popular community shop is set to provide another new service, free delivery to anyone in the village.

Set up 12 years ago, Monks Eleigh's community shop sees on average 110 people coming through its doors each day.

This popular and important service for residents is now looking at even more ways it can help out the community, firstly by offering free home delivery.

"We have been thinking about it for a while. It was just a matter of finalising the plan," said store manager Janet Mackie. "We decided that we'd go for it.

"We need some people who are happy to do the actual deliveries and we are putting a list together."

Customers can now phone in and put in their orders, but so far the phone hasn't rung.

That may be because many of the villagers actually prefer the face-to-face contact they get from a daily walk to their very own shop.

Mrs Mackie explained she already delivered shopping for some customers who maybe bought more than they came in for or who couldn't carry their shopping, but it was now being offered out to everyone who needed a helping hand.

Run by an army of hard-working volunteers, the only paid staff member is Mrs Mackie.

Though well stocked for support Mrs Mackie said she would never turn down extra help.

There is, though, a need for new members on the shop's committee, with positions being vacated in May.

Anybody interested in helping out should call 01449 741331.

The shop has proved so popular Mrs Mackie explained that other communities had been in touch about setting up their own.

"It's often not commercially viable for shops to serve small villages," she said.

"The shop is very important. We get quite a few elderly villagers come in most days. They buy two or three bits and have a chat.

"For a while the village didn't have a shop and the village was almost dead with nobody walking around."

Mrs Mackie said it would be nice if at some point the shop could make enough to support projects in the village, having so far used proceeds to upgrade and improve the shop's services.