



Houghton & Wyton Community
Shop
Staff and Volunteers'
Handbook

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

1. Introduction

Welcome to Our Shop!

We hope that you will have a long and happy association with us. We are owned and run by Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Limited (H&WCS) which is an organisation run on behalf of over 300 shareholders, (members) who mostly live in the village. The shareholders elect a management committee to act on their behalf.

Our organisation, a Community Benefit Society, works for the benefit of our community, and it is vital we all understand our role to provide excellent service and make a real difference. We are part of a growing family of Community Owned shops, there are now 400 in operation. As a community shop, Our Shop relies on volunteers working alongside paid staff to deliver our aims and objectives. Our staff and volunteers are essential and the most important asset of our organisation.

This handbook is to help all our staff and volunteers become acquainted with H&WCS policies and procedures to do with you as an individual. Sitting alongside this document is the Retail Operations Manual which is designed to guide you through all the retail operating policies and procedures.

As a member of staff this handbook forms part of your terms and conditions of service with us and every heading related to employment is shown in **blue** however you will need to be aware of those section printed in black, which also apply to volunteers. You are asked, therefore, to read the information provided carefully and if you are in doubt about anything in it, or if you want further clarification or wish to see any agreement or document referred to, do not hesitate to ask your manager or a member of the Management Committee.

The master copy of this document resides in electronic format which is accessible on H&WCS website <https://hwcommunityshop.org/community/> and may be accessed from a home computer. One printed copy of this document is held on the shop premises. However please refer to the electronic version for the most up to date version of this document and the latest policies.

Details of your employment or volunteering are maintained by our Data Controller and such information is treated in strict confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (as amended) and the General Data Protection Rules that came into force in May 2018.

As an open and friendly organisation if there is something you do not understand please ask. Equally, if you have suggestions about your role or the organisation, we'll be delighted to hear them.

We look forward to welcoming and working with you in Our Shop.

H&WCS Management Committee

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

Contents

2. About 'Our Shop'

- 2.1. Our Vision
- 2.2. Our Values
- 2.3. Expecting the Unexpected

3. About Your Employment with 'Our Shop'

- 3.1. Your Employment with Us
 - 3.1.1. Statement of Employment Terms and Conditions
 - 3.1.2. Employment Pre-Conditions
 - 3.1.3. Our Relocation Policy
 - 3.1.4. Your initial induction
 - 3.1.5. Probationary Periods
- 3.2. Your Attendance at Work – Planned Absence
 - 3.2.1. Annual Leave
 - 3.2.2. Maternity Leave
 - 3.2.3. Adoption Leave
 - 3.2.4. Paternity Leave
- 3.3. Your Attendance at Work – Unplanned Absence
 - 3.3.1. Sickness
 - 3.3.2. Drugs and Alcohol
 - 3.3.3. Time off for Dependants
 - 3.3.4. Bereavement
 - 3.3.5. Jury Service

4. Standards of Performance and Behaviour at Work

- 4.1. Appearance
- 4.2. Company Premises
- 4.3. Personal Property
- 4.4. Telephones, Messages and IT Equipment

- 4.5. Smoking and Other Substances at Work
- 4.6. Receipt of Gifts
- 4.7. Fair Behaviour at Work
- 4.8. Use of private vehicles
- 4.9. Trade Union Membership

5. Information

- 5.1. Managing Personal Information/Data (including CCTV images)
- 5.2. Changes in Personal Information
- 5.3. Managing Information
- 5.4. Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information
- 5.5. Use of CCTV in Our Shop

6. Valuing Our Colleagues and Customers

- 6.1. Safeguarding Those at Risk
- 6.2. Valuing Diversity Statement

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

- 6.3. Dignity at Work
 - 5.3.1. Statement
 - 5.3.2. Team Working

7. Pay, Benefits & Pensions

- 7.1. Salary Arrangements
- 7.2. Overtime
- 7.3. Income Tax
- 7.4. Business Travel
- 7.5. Sickness Pay Provision
 - 7.5.1. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)¹⁴
- 7.6. Pension Scheme

8. Health and Safety Statement

9. Training and Development

- 9.1. Training and Development Policy
- 9.2. Responsibilities and Arrangements

10. Leaving Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd

- 10.1. Exit Interviews
- 10.2. Other Conditions on Leaving
- 10.3. Retirement
- 10.4. Volunteers Leaving Our Shop

11. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

- 11.1. Introduction
- 11.2. Mediation
- 11.3. Disciplinary Action
 - 11.3.1. Investigation
 - 11.3.2. Breach of Discipline
 - 11.3.3. Serious Breach of Discipline
- 11.4. The Process
 - 11.4.1. Person to Take Action
 - 11.4.2. Formal Proceedings
 - 11.4.3. The Disciplinary Meeting
 - 11.4.4. After the Disciplinary Meeting
 - 11.4.5. Disciplinary Action – Stage 1
 - 11.4.6. Disciplinary Action – Stage 2
 - 11.4.7. Disciplinary Action – Stage 3
 - 11.4.8. Appeal
 - 11.4.9. Suspension
 - 11.4.10 Probationary Employees
- 11.5. Grievance Procedure
 - 11.5.1. Introduction
 - 11.5.2. Mediation
 - 11.5.3. Counter-Grievance

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

11.6. The Procedure

- 11.6.1. Invitation to the Grievance Meeting
- 11.6.2. The Grievance Meeting
- 11.6.3. Grievance Appeal

12. Inspections of Our Shop

- 12.1. Introduction
- 12.2. Managing Inspections

13. Security

- 13.1. Statement
- 13.2.. Support for Staff Members and Volunteers

14. Using Our Shop Building

- 14.1. Electrical Equipment
- 14.5. Building Defects

15. Sustainability

- 15.1. Statement
- 15.2. Reducing Waste
- 15.3. Improving Our Sustainability

16. Serving Our Community

- 16.1. Supporting Our Community
- 16.2. Helping the less able customer
- 16.3. Listening to Our Customers

2. About 'Our Shop'

There has been a shop on the site for over one hundred years! Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Limited was set up to retain the valuable village asset of a profitable village shop for the benefit of residents and visitors and purchased it from the retiring owners in April 2017. The overall ambition of Our Shop is to pass all surplus profits to a charitable fund will help the community to help itself by supporting individuals and projects and by being good neighbours.

Over 300 shareholders bought shares in Our Shop. Their interests are represented by the Management Committee who are elected annually by the members to run the shop. We are governed by our Model Rules and are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Ensuring the shop is profitable is one of three key aims for a successful shop. We rely on our fantastic pool of volunteers to help deliver this objective.

Feedback from existing customers and members tell us that Our shop is more than just a mere shop it is the beating heart of our community – this is another key aim. Whether it is offering valuable services, delivering goods or just being a friendly face or ear to our customers who live alone.

In addition to the two aims mentioned above, Our Shop strives to do its bit to save the planet through actively seeking out local suppliers, encouraging residents to support the village shop rather than getting in a car to visit a supermarket and we actively promote recycling.

2.1 Our Vision

We want to run Our Shop as a thriving, profitable shop and provide a focus for community life for Houghton and Wyton and the surrounding villages. We want to help current and future residents to manage some of the real challenges facing rural communities today, such as the lack of services and isolation. Visitors to Our Shop also value our friendly approach and range of goods and services we provide

2.2. Our Values

Core Values:	The way we work together:
We are friendly	We try to make everyone welcome and happy to shop We have time for people, are familiar, and approachable. We are part of this community providing a social and community hub.
We are trusted	We are open, honest, fair and dependable, always acting in the best interests of the Society and our community. We recognise we are much more than a mere shop and a rare facility which needs to be treasured.
We care	We care about each other and our planet and will act to help
We listen	Everything we do is based on the experiences of those who live locally and use our shop and Post Office
We inspire	We may be a little quirky, but our energy, determination and success inspire those around us.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

We are appropriately commercial	We do not try to make profits at any cost, but neither are we embarrassed by running a sustainable venture where surpluses can be distributed for the benefit of our community.
---------------------------------	---

2.3. Expecting the Unexpected

Our Shop is prepared for the unexpected through our planning process that identifies potential impacts that threaten Our Shop and provides a framework for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its customers, staff, volunteers, shareholders and reputation within the community. The actions we need to take are built-in our service-recovery systems, making it part of the way that Our Shop runs its business, rather than having to 'firefight' any emergency. We aim to offer 'business as usual' in the quickest possible time. Members of staff, volunteers and the Management Committee work together to provide that re-assurance to our customers.

3. About Your Employment with 'Our Shop'

3.1. Starting your employment with us

3.1.1. Statement of Employment Terms and Conditions

We have sent you terms and conditions of service as they relate to your specific role (if you haven't received this, you will do so within 4 weeks of your start date).

Further policies and procedures, which may not be covered in this handbook (but which still form part of your conditions of employment), can be accessed through your line manager. This handbook also summarises the main terms of your employment. If we need to make a contractual change to your terms and conditions, we will let you know in writing.

We have a policy of assisting staff to balance their work and home life. We are willing to consider requests to vary working hours or work pattern and will consider the needs of the individual, shop and colleagues when assessing requests.

3.1.2. Employment Pre-Conditions

Before we can employ you, we need:

- evidence of your right to work in the UK (e.g. valid visa and work permit, and other documentation which may be required by local laws and regulations)
- certificates or other official documentation to confirm academic and professional qualifications
- satisfactory references

It is a legal requirement that we see these documents and without them, we cannot employ you.

In addition, we will require next of kin details in case of an emergency, bank details, National Insurance number and details about any student loans or other deductions made directly from your salary.

3.1.3 Our Relocation Policy

Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd does not offer a relocation package.

3.1.4. Your Initial Induction

Our employees and volunteers are our greatest asset and we are committed to your development whilst you are working with us, starting with an induction when you join us.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

Our aim is to support and develop you so that you feel confident to undertake your responsibilities and ultimately can contribute to the success of the community shop.

Induction will be spread over your first few weeks with us. The content and duration will depend on the scope and complexity of your job. On your first day with us, your line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator will discuss with you your induction programme.

3.1.5. Probationary Periods

All new employees have a probation period. You'll have an informal review with your line manager after 3 months, and a formal review after 6 months. During this probation period, we will offer support and development opportunities to help you reach the required standards. If appropriate, we can extend the probation period to give you time to meet the required standard. Failure to do so at the end of that extended time could result in termination of your employment.

The Volunteer Co-ordinator will have an informal chat with volunteers to make sure they are happy and progressing well.

3.2. Your Attendance Our Shop – Planned Absences

In order that we can plan to cover your shifts, if you wish to take leave, tell your line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator as far in advance as possible so they can find cover for your shift.

3.2.1. Annual Leave

Your annual entitlement will be detailed in your offer letter. Holidays must be agreed with your manager as early as possible. Where possible, we will accommodate individual preferences but the needs of the business may have to take precedence, particularly where short or inadequate notice is given.

- The holiday year runs from 1st January to 31st December.
- Some leave may be carried over into the following January with the express permission of your line manager but must be taken before the end of January.
- Leave for employees joining after the start of the leave year accrues at the rate of one twelfth of the annual entitlement for each complete calendar month of service
- Leave for employees who terminate their employment is calculated on the same basis, however, if the annual leave entitlement has been exceeded, a deduction calculated on the same basis will be deducted from the final salary payment.
- Holiday pay in lieu of accrued leave will be paid only on termination of employment and will normally be subject to a maximum of 10 working days.

The 8 statutory UK Bank Holidays form part of your paid annual leave entitlement.

3.2.2. Maternity Leave

Our Shop follows the statutory arrangements for Maternity leave. Some of the key elements are listed below:-

- Pregnant employees will be entitled to take 26 weeks' Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks Additional Maternity Leave, irrespective of their length of service or the number of hours worked each week.
- You should enclose a MAT B1 certificate with your written notification signed by your registered doctor or registered midwife to confirm the expected week of childbirth. You may

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

change the date you start your maternity leave providing you give at least 28 days' notice in writing of either the new start date or the original start date (whichever is earliest).

- Within 28 days of receiving your notice, we will notify you in writing of the date when your maternity leave will end. A meeting will be arranged with your line manager prior to your maternity leave starting, when your questions will be answered.
- Your line manager may also offer you up to 10 days work during your maternity leave. It is up to you if you wish to work these days. The rate of pay for the work will be agreed in advance with you. Your right to maternity leave and SMP will not be affected.
- You will continue to accrue holiday.
- You must still give notice in accordance with your contract of employment if you want to leave.
- You will not be asked to undertake tasks that have been identified as hazardous. If you have concerns about your own health and safety at any time you should consult your line manager immediately.
- You do not have to notify us separately of your return date.

3.2.3. Adoption Leave

Parallel arrangements apply to maternity and paternity leave. Please speak to your line manager.

3.2.4. Paternity Leave

Statutory Paternity Leave is a maximum of two weeks' leave, following the birth of a child, taken in order to support the mother or care for the new child. It can be taken as a single week or two consecutive weeks. It cannot be taken as odd days or as two separate weeks.

Statutory Paternity Leave must be taken within 56 days of the birth. If the baby is born earlier than expected, it must be taken within 56 days from the date the baby was due.

To qualify you must have worked for us for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the expected birth week.

3.2.5. Shared Parental Leave

This leave entitlement is designed to give parents / adopters more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. If you are eligible you can share up to 50 weeks leave, you and your partner can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child.

3.3. Unplanned absence

3.3.1. Sickness

If you cannot work, for example for sickness, you will need to call your line manager directly, the shop telephone or the Volunteer Co-ordinator as soon as possible before your normal start time on the first day of your absence and give an indication of when you think you will be well enough to return. If you are unable to call, please arrange for someone else to do so on your behalf. During prolonged periods of absence, your line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator, should be kept informed of progress on a weekly basis and be given an expected date of return.

If you have an illness lasting seven days or fewer, you do not require a doctor's sickness certificate. If you have been ill for four or more days in a row, you will be required to complete a self-certification form SC2 which is completed on line from the HMRC website. (www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-sick-pay-employees-statement-of-sickness-sc2)

Your line manager will need a copy if you want to claim SSP. If your sickness lasts seven or more days, you will require a statement of Fitness for Work from your G.P. You may qualify for Statutory Sick Pay.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

An employee who has been absent due to sickness and is found not to have been genuinely ill will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

3.3.2. Drugs and Alcohol

The effects of drugs or alcohol can have a serious impact on your health, safety and wellbeing and that of others and Our Shop, so you must follow these key principles:

- You will always come to work fit to do your job. That means you won't work or come to work having misused drugs or alcohol. Persistent absences due to the mis-use of drugs and alcohol is unacceptable.
- You will not bring drugs to work (this doesn't include prescribed medication/over-the-counter medicine like paracetamol).
- You won't bring alcohol (if you plan on drinking it) to work.

If you do not follow these principles, we may take disciplinary action against you.

3.3.3. Time Off for Dependants

You are legally entitled to take a reasonable amount of time of unpaid leave off to deal with certain emergencies involving certain of your dependants, for example, if they fall ill or are injured, if care arrangements break down, or to arrange or attend a dependant's funeral. Any time taken off must be necessary and reasonable in the circumstances. Time Off for Dependants is not paid.

3.3.4. Bereavement

Our Shop acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways. Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when an immediate member of their family dies. Two days paid leave will be given to help arrange and attend the funeral, for example. Not all employees will need to take the full allowance, however and some employees will need additional time, depending on the circumstances. Your line manager will discuss this with you and offer the appropriate support.

3.3.5. Jury Service

You will be given unpaid time off for jury service, however, you can claim a loss of earnings allowance from the court. Your manager will complete the certificate of earnings form that will come with your letter requiring you to undertake jury service.

4. Standards of Performance and Behaviour at Work

4.1. Appearance

Please dress appropriately when at work and ensure that your personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to before starting work. We will give you a Houghton & Wyton Community Shop apron or tabard to be worn whilst you are at work.

When at work and whilst you are wearing your apron/tabard if you wish to smoke, please do so out of sight of the general public. There is a designated smoking area at the rear of the premises. Although they fall outside the scope of smoke-free legislation, H&WCS prohibits the use of e-cigarettes and "vaping" in the workplace.

If you have any queries about what is appropriate, please ask your line manager.

4.2. Company Property

We ask that you treat our property and equipment with care and respect. Please do not remove

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd property unless you have authority from your line manager to do so.

If anything is lost, damaged or faulty, report this to your line manager as soon as possible. Secure items, which might easily be removed from the premises, by storing them properly when not in use.

4.3. Personal Property

Any personal property such as jewellery, cash, credit cards, clothes, cars, motorbikes or bicycles etc. left on Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd premises is done so entirely at your own risk. You are strongly advised not to leave any valuables unattended, either on our premises, or in your own vehicle. Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd does not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal property whatsoever.

A locker is provided for bags and other smaller personal items while you are working.

4.4. Telephones, Messages and IT Equipment

Our Shop has a telephone, computer, laser printer and an iPad for the use of the business. These must not be used for private purposes without prior and express permission from your line manager. If, for any reason, personal use is made of these items then arrangements must be made to pay the cost price of all services used. Abuse of these facilities will be considered a potential disciplinary matter.

Personal telephone calls, messages and email should not disrupt or interrupt your work and should be managed outside of working hours.

Personal mobile telephones should be set to silent mode during normal working hours, unless there is a specific emergency or urgent reason. Likewise, unless there is an emergency, personal telephones should ideally not be used in a customer facing environment, such as on the shop floor

4.5. Smoking and Other Substances at Work

Legislation makes it illegal to smoke in enclosed public spaces. Smoking (**including e-cigarettes) is therefore strictly prohibited on Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd premises. This includes all tobacco products, electronic cigarettes & vaping products.

Smoking is prohibited inside at any time and must only take place in the designated area outside.

The designated smoking area for the shop is located to the rear, outside the back door. Please dispose of cigarette butts in the designated container provided. Reasonable breaks for smoking will be permitted during the working day.

As a food retailer it is essential our employees wash their hands thoroughly after smoking so as not to contaminate the products.

4.6. Receipt of Gifts

Your work may bring you into contact with outside organisations where it is normal business practice or social convention to offer gifts. Offers of this kind to you or your family can place you in a difficult position. Therefore, no employee or any member of your immediate family should accept from a supplier, customer or other person doing business with Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd payments of money under any circumstances, or special considerations, such as discounts or gifts of materials, equipment, services, facilities or anything else of value unless:

- They are in each instance of a very minor nature usually associated with accepted business practice up to a maximum of £10.
- They do not improperly interfere with your independence of judgement or action in the performance of your employment.

In every circumstance where a gift is offered, the advice of your line manager must be sought, and appropriate action taken.

4.7. Fair Behaviour at Work

Our Shop reserves the right to take an interest in employees' personal lives in circumstances where those personal lives may impinge upon the performance of Our Shop duties and responsibilities. In particular, Our Shop must protect itself against actual or perceived security risks or allegations of favouritism. Where a relationship with another employee leaves an employee reasonably open to allegations (true or not) of actual or potential preference, favouritism, breach of security or other conflict of interest, then Our Shop must reserve the right to take action necessary to remove that problem. No action of this sort will be taken without prior discussion with the parties concerned. Ultimately, however, Our Shop reserves the right to take action to separate employees in this position.

4.8. Disclosure in the Public Interest

Our Shop, as a learning organisation, is committed to being open and honest about how the shop is organised and need to learn from our employees and volunteers when things can be improved. There may be an occasion where a member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that there is or could potentially be, or has been, a serious problem. This is commonly called 'whistleblowing', however, any such allegation or disclosure must be made in the public interest. The issues could include

- A criminal offence
- The breach of a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above.

The employee or volunteer must first raise this with their line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator who will ensure that their concerns are discussed with the appropriate members of the Management Committee in order that a full investigation is carried out. Our Shop takes seriously any breach of good practice as this has the potential to damage Our Shop's reputation and that of those connected with Our Shop. The employee or volunteer will be kept informed when the investigation is complete, and a meeting held with them to inform them of the findings and the remedial actions that will be taken.

If the route through their line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator is not appropriate, the employee or volunteer should raise it directly with a member of the Management Committee. However, if the employee or volunteer feels they cannot disclose the matter of concern to any representative of Our Shop or if the employee or volunteer is unhappy about the decision made, they should contact a prescribed person or body (guidance is available from the website GOV.UK - Blowing the whistle: list of prescribed people and bodies).

4.9. Use of Private Vehicles

The conditions of use by employees and volunteers of the private vehicles on Our Shop business are that:

- the owner of the vehicle covers the car by a comprehensive insurance policy issued by a reputable insurance company;
- the insurers have been informed that the vehicle will be used on Our Shop business;
- if the vehicle is used to carry goods for Our Shop, the owner specifically advises their insurance company;
- confirmation has been obtained by the owner from their insurers that the third-party cover indemnifies Our Shop against all liability;
- the vehicle can be legally used on public roads;
- the vehicle is properly maintained according to the manufacturer's specification;

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

- the employee/volunteer driving the vehicle has a current driving licence appropriate to the vehicle being used.
- In claiming expenses for the use of a private car on Our Shop business, the employee is confirming that the above conditions have been fully met.

Our Shop reserves the right to inspect an employee's documents relating to vehicle use at any reasonable time to ensure compliance with the above.

4.10. Trade Union Membership

You may choose to join a Trade Union such as the GMB or USDAW which is completely of your choosing.

5. Information

5.1. Managing Personal Information/Data (including CCTV images)

Our Shop collects, stores, uses and deletes a range of personal information in order to pay salaries or contact next-of-kin, for example and which can include the following :-

- Name
- Address
- Contact numbers/e-mail
- Bank account details
- Changes in pay notifications
- Tax details for payroll and pensions processing –benefits, family circumstances, total income, student loan
- Details relating to work place pension and/or benefit schemes
- National Insurance Number
- Next of kin details
- Evidence of your right to work (for example: copy of your passport photo page)
- Appraisals and Disciplinary records
- CVs and interview notes
- Induction, training, support and individual rota/working arrangements.
- Medical details
- Accident records

Employees and volunteers are asked to sign a Privacy Notice (PN) which sets out the information we hold. This ensures that you know what personal information we hold for you and why we hold it. This is required by the General Data Protection Regulations that came into force in May 2018. Our Privacy Statement is on Our Shop's website.

5.2. Changes in Personal Information

You must notify your Line Manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator immediately of any changes to the following as appropriate:

- Name
- Home address
- Telephone number
- Next of kin/emergency contact details

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

- Bank account details
- Examinations passed/qualifications gained
- Criminal charge, caution or conviction
- Conflict, or potential conflict of interest

5.3. *Managing Information*

Our Shop is entitled to collect, store, use and delete the information if we ensure that

- consent of the data subject is freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous
- it supports performance of any contract with the data subject relating to it
- complies with a legal obligation
- that the vital interests of the data subject are protected
- that the data that is collected and held is needed for the performance of the tasks and services performed by Our Shop
- that the legitimate interests of the data subjects are protected

5.4. *Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information*

One of the conditions of your employment or appointment as a volunteer is that you have a duty of confidentiality with regards to Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd. This means that if you find yourself in possession of sensitive information, the disclosure of it could be construed as a breach of confidentiality. You must not discuss any sensitive or confidential matter with any outside organisation including the media.

Any such breach of confidentiality would be deemed as gross misconduct and could lead to your dismissal.

5.5. *Use of CCTV in Our Shop*

(CCTV) is installed at the Shop premises for the purposes of the safety of customers, staff and volunteers and for premises security. Cameras are located at various places on the premises, and images from the cameras are recorded and stored for 31 days before being automatically deleted by the system.

Viewings of recordings directly from the system are not to be permitted for data subjects or disclosed to others. The secure viewing room will only be used by the Processor, Controller and shop staff/volunteer if required for identification purposes.

6. Valuing Our Colleagues and Customers

6.1. *Safeguarding Those at Risk*

‘Our Shop’ has a range of customers who may require assistance. Houghton & Wyton Community shop Ltd has produced a safeguarding policy that promotes the dignity, wellbeing and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. (Vulnerable adults could include adults with learning difficulties or physical disability, frail, elderly people and their carers.)

Our Shop offers the following extra services to all customers including those who may need additional support:

- Carry to car services
- Home delivery service +

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

(+ Please note that due care should be taken to ensure the customer and their home is treated with the utmost respect. Please speak to your line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator if you have concerns)

6.2. Valuing Diversity *Statement*

Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd is committed to valuing diversity and seeks to provide all staff and volunteers with the opportunity for work, career and personal development based on ability, qualifications and suitability for the work as well as their potential to be developed into the job. Our policy

- Supports the promotion of a culture of equality of opportunity and diversity within H&WCS and our community.
- States that all staff and volunteers will have a duty to comply with and support the policy and to report instances of discrimination to the shop manager at the earliest opportunity.

6.3. *Dignity at Work*

6.3.1. Statement

We believe that everyone connected with Our Shop should always treat other customers and colleagues at work as they would like to be treated.

6.3.2. Team Working

Members of staff and volunteers are always expected to act in the best interest of Our Shop so that the community benefits from a strong, committed and loyal team. This means that members of staff and volunteers are expected to treat each other with dignity, respect and fairness.

If you feel that you are not being treated as described, you should bring it to the attention of your line manager or the Volunteer Co-ordinator in order that proper actions can be taken.

7. Pay, Benefits & Pensions

7.1. *Salary Arrangements*

- Your salary will be paid monthly in arrears as close as practicable to the 20th of each month by transfer to your bank account.
- Your basic pay was outlined in your letter of appointment / statement of terms and conditions. Any changes to your basic pay will be given to you in writing.
- Part-time employees will be paid on a pro rata basis for the hours they work.
- If you have any queries about your pay, speak to your line manager immediately. Unless agreed otherwise, any pay errors will be rectified in your next salary payment.

Appropriate deductions will be made from pay including income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs), student loans and child support, which are subject to each employee's earning level, family status and the number of hours worked.

7.2. *Overtime*

Overtime will not normally be paid but if agreed in advance with your line manager can be taken as Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

7.3. Income Tax

If there are any changes in your personal circumstances, which will affect your tax status, you should notify the Inland Revenue, who will automatically inform us of any changes to your tax code. Addresses of local offices and enquiry centres can be found here:

<http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/menus/officesmenu.htm>

7.4. Business Travel

Mileage rates when travelling by your own private transport will be the current HMRC rate. (45p per mile for a car as at February 2019) Any other travel and subsistence expenses incurred by you and previously approved by your line manager will be paid.

7.5. Sickness Pay Provision

7.5.1. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Most employees have a right to statutory sick pay (SSP) if they earn above the lower earnings threshold. SSP is paid in the same way as ordinary pay and is liable to tax and National Insurance contributions.

7.6. Pension Scheme

In order to be eligible to join the H&WCSLtd workplace pension scheme, you must satisfy the following:-

- you're classed as a 'worker'
- you're aged between 22 and State Pension age
- you earn at least £10,000 per year
- you usually ('ordinarily') work in the UK

If appropriate, you will be automatically enrolled in the H&WCSLtd Pension scheme, details of which you should have received when you started (if you have not yet received this please speak to your line manager). You may elect to opt out of the scheme if you so wish. Please note that no member of the H&WCSLtd staff, volunteer or committee can advise you on whether you should join or not. If you are unsure, you should seek independent financial advice.

8. Health and Safety Statement

Our Shop is committed to protecting, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of members of staff and appointed volunteers. The Management Committee has a general duty of care to those that are affected by what H&WCSLtd does or fails to do.

H&WCSLtd employs more than five people and is therefore required to set up a full health and safety management system, including the provision of written risk assessments.

The Shop will follow best practice and adopt supporting arrangements to provide a practical framework that will enable H&WCS Ltd., to comply with the principles set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (H&SWA) and other work place health and safety legislation.

The Health and Safety arrangements are contained in full within the Retail Manual.

Reporting on health and safety matters will form part of the discussion of the retail report discussed at every meeting of the Committee in order to ensure that significant hazards are identified, suitably assessed and appropriate, timely, action taken to remove or reduce those risks.

9. Training and Development

9.1. Training and Development Policy

Our Shop aims to provide training opportunities which include a scheme to enable staff and volunteers to develop relevant skills and acquire knowledge to underpin their current role.

9.2. Aspirations

Opportunities may be identified for employees and volunteers to undertake additional, non-mandatory training to develop their potential and add value to the service provided by Our Shop. This will be discussed with the employee/volunteer during their appraisal or other meeting with their line manager. While every effort will be made to assist with additional training, serving customers and keeping the shop well stocked and tidy must remain our priority.

10. Leaving Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd

10.1. Exit Interviews

When a member of staff gives notice of their intention to leave, (set out in your terms and conditions of contract) an exit interview will be arranged. A form has been designed to help both interviewer and interviewee to focus on several key questions and to give them both an opportunity to consider peripheral questions that may arise from the discussion. A copy of the signed form should be given to the member of staff and one held on their personnel file.

10.2. Other Conditions on Leaving

On leaving, we will deduct any money you owe from your final salary payment. If you leave without giving notice and without our agreement, you are in breach of your contract and you may forfeit some or all of any salary due to you.

10.3. Retirement

In line with current legislation Houghton & Wyton Community Shop Ltd does not have an age limit where it expects employees to retire. If possible, it would help the planning process if you could inform your line manager as soon as you have decided to retire.

10.4. Volunteers Leaving Our Shop

Volunteers play an essential part in the success of Our Shop and therefore it would be helpful if the Volunteer Co-ordinator has much notice as possible of your decision to leave. You may be asked to attend a short exit interview with the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

11. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

11.1. Introduction

The purpose of the Our Shop's Disciplinary Procedure is to help and encourage all employees to achieve and maintain required standards of conduct and work performance. The aim is also to ensure that our services are maintained and effective while all staff are treated fairly and equitably.

This procedure sets out the action that will be taken in response to alleged misconduct or poor work performance.

The full procedure does not apply to employees within their probationary period. See section ***11.4.10***.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

The shop manager will ensure that their staff are aware of general and specific rules, standards and procedures covering work and conduct. Employees must familiarise themselves with these standards and procedures and follow them.

In line with ACAS guidelines and good practice, in appropriate cases of minor misconduct or unacceptable performance or behaviour, the shop manager will use informal action before formal disciplinary action is taken. This may include setting clear targets and expectations, monitoring progress over a reasonable time period and providing additional coaching or training. A quiet word with a staff member or asking for support from a line manager may be all that is needed.

11.2. Mediation

Some workplace disputes can be resolved through the support of an independent third party or mediator.

Mediation does not decide on who is right or wrong. Nor can the parties be forced to undertake mediation – it must be a purely voluntary process. However, if the issue cannot be resolved informally, formal action might be necessary.

11.3. Disciplinary Action

No disciplinary action will be taken until a case has been thoroughly investigated. When starting an investigation into an allegation of misconduct or poor performance, there shall be no assumption that disciplinary action will automatically follow.

11.3.1. Investigation

The investigation is a crucial part of the disciplinary procedure. Where a serious level of disciplinary sanction is being considered, particularly if a potential dismissal is being considered, the investigating officer should ideally not be the same person as the person or people who make the disciplinary decision.

In some circumstances, organisations may decide that they want an external HR consultant to undertake the investigation, but ultimate responsibility for the nature of the investigation still lies with the employer.

The aim of the investigation is to establish the facts before taking any disciplinary action. This will require an open mind as the investigation must be fair and without bias. The investigation should be carried out without unreasonable delay. A fact-finding meeting with the employee and any witnesses may be necessary, or it may just involve collation of evidence, whatever is appropriate for the case. Without some means of establishing the facts through an investigation, any subsequent decision on dismissal may be unfair.

If an investigation meeting is required with the employee, they will be warned in writing and allow them time to prepare.

11.3.2. Breach of Discipline

Employees will not normally be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will be dismissal without notice and without payment in lieu of notice. A note will be on the staff member's file, however, to describe the breach (for example, repeated unauthorised absence), the action taken, and a verbal warning given.

11.3.3. Serious Breach of Discipline

Sometimes when misconduct is so serious or could have such serious consequences it would be appropriate to dismiss someone without notice, for example, theft or a breach of licensing laws.

With a case of suspected theft, a search, respectful of privacy, will be carried out of the employee's bags and they will be asked to voluntarily show everything they have on or about their person, such as pockets. If this is not forthcoming, it will be noted as part of the investigation report. The search will

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

be carried out in the office by a member of staff of the same gender and with another member of staff or volunteer as a witness.

Our Shop will still follow a fair procedure with an investigation, an opportunity for the employee to put their side of the case at a meeting and the right to appeal as well as the right to be accompanied at the disciplinary meeting and appeal meeting. It should be made clear to the employee before the meeting takes place, that dismissal is a possibility. After careful consideration, a short period of suspension with full pay may be appropriate whilst the investigation is taking place. See section **11.4.9** for information on suspension of an employee.

The procedure may be implemented at any stage if the alleged misconduct or poor performance warrants such action.

11.4. The Process

11.4.1. Person to Take Action

The line manager will take any informal action/first warning or improvement note/final warning. The dismissal will be managed by the Chair of the Management Committee or other designated member or members of the Management Committee.

11.4.2. Formal Proceedings

If informal action fails to achieve the required improvement in performance or behaviour, then a formal procedure will be taken that applies to all employees, once their probationary period is completed.

- Following an investigation, the employee should, without unavoidable delay, be given a letter detailing the allegation, the possible consequences and inviting them to a disciplinary meeting and be accompanied by a colleague or Trade Union representative. This person can speak at the meeting on behalf of the employee, but they cannot answer questions on the employee's behalf. The invitation will also include the possible consequences such as dismissal.
- The meeting should ideally be arranged within five to ten working days of the alleged misconduct or poor performance issue, allowing reasonable time for the employee to prepare their case.
- Where possible, a note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case, will take down a record of the meeting.
- Any reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled employees
- At the same time as being given the invitation, the employee will be provided with copies of all documentation and supporting evidence to be presented at the meeting.
- The employee should receive details about the problem in advance of any formal meeting to give her/him time to read and digest the information.
- It will be unusual for witnesses to give oral evidence at a disciplinary hearing but if witnesses are to be called the employee should be notified
- If an employee fails to attend a disciplinary meeting, Our Shop will try and rearrange the meeting at least one more time. If the employee continues to be absent but has a good reason such as sickness (including stress--related illness), it may be appropriate to rearrange the meeting more than once. If appropriate, arrangements may be made to hold the meeting at a place or time more convenient to the employee or allow them to provide their response in writing or via their representative.
- Ultimately, Our Shop can go ahead with the meeting in the absence of the employee and decide to act based on the information acquired, if the employee has been given every opportunity to participate and put their side of the case. The employee should be warned that this will happen

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

should they not attend again. Our Shop will also consider any written representations made or representations made by the representative if they attend alone.

11.4.3. The Disciplinary Meeting

- If there are any witnesses, they should not be present throughout the meeting. They should be called in, one by one, to give their evidence and asked to leave once they have done so without communicating with other witnesses.
- The chair of the meeting will open the meeting with an explanation of its purpose and will read aloud the allegations.
- The employee and their representative can ask questions including of any witnesses called.
- The chair will then ask the employee if they wish to take the opportunity to respond to the allegations or concerns or if there are any mitigating circumstances to be considered.
- The chair may question the employee and any witnesses called.
- The chair will summarise the main points of the discussion and ask the employee if they have anything further to say.
- The chair will then consider the details heard in private. They must decide whether the case against the employee has been established on the balance of probabilities, i.e. whether misconduct has been proved or the employee's performance is found to be unsatisfactory. If this is the case, when they are considering appropriate disciplinary action, they should also consider any special, mitigating circumstances, the employee's previous disciplinary or performance record, how Our Shop has dealt with similar cases in the past and whether the proposed action is reasonable in view of all the circumstances.

11.4.4. After the Disciplinary Meeting

- The chair shall give the employee written confirmation of the decision normally within five working days of the meeting. This will include notifying the employee of her/his right of appeal and the procedure to be followed.
- The employee should be informed in writing of any decision on whether disciplinary action is appropriate and how long the penalty will last, the improvement expected, the time period for improvement, and the procedure and time limits for appeal.
- If the decision is to be dismissal, the employee should be notified as quickly as possible, explaining the reasons for the dismissal and the date when the employment will end.

11.4.5. Disciplinary Action - Stage 1

If, following the disciplinary meeting it is decided to act, one of the sanctions below may be applied.

- **Written Warning** - If conduct does not meet acceptable standards, the employee will normally be given a written warning by his/her supervisor/line manager. The employee will be advised of the reason for the warning, that it is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure and of their right of appeal. A copy of this written warning detailing the complaint; the change in behaviour required; and dates for review will be kept in the employee's personal file but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 6 months.
- **An Improvement Note** can be given to the employee by their line manager for Unsatisfactory Performance. The employee will be advised of the reason for the note and of their right of appeal. A copy of this note detailing the performance problem; the improvement required; the set timescale for improvement; and dates for review will be kept in the employee's personal file monitoring and reviewing performance but will be considered spent after 6 months—subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory performance.

11.4.6. Disciplinary Action - Stage 2

- Final Written Warning - If performance is still unsatisfactory or if a further misconduct occurs, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning but insufficiently serious to justify dismissal (in effect both first and final written warnings), the employee will be given a final written warning.
- This will give details of the complaint; the improvement required; the set timescale for improvement; and dates for review. It will warn that dismissal may result if there is no satisfactory improvement and will advise of the right of appeal. A copy of this final written warning will be kept on file but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months (in exceptional cases duration may be longer) subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct or performance. However, if the case is particularly serious, a decision may be made to specify the period for keeping the final written warning on file.

11.4.7. Disciplinary Action - Stage 3

- Dismissal - If conduct or performance is still unsatisfactory and the employee fails to reach the prescribed standards, or if the offence constitutes gross misconduct, dismissal will normally result. The employee will be provided as soon as reasonably practicable with written reasons for dismissal, the date on which his/her employment will terminate and be advised of the right of appeal.
- An employee with at least two years' continuous service has the right, on request, to have a written statement of particulars of reasons for dismissal. Any employee who is dismissed while pregnant or on maternity/adoption leave must be given a written statement of the reasons for dismissal, regardless of length of service.
- The employee will be informed in writing of the reasons for dismissal as soon as possible.

11.4.8. Disciplinary Action – Appeal

- An employee may appeal against the decisions of the disciplinary meeting taken under this procedure to the Chair of the Management Committee or if the Chair has already been involved in an earlier stage of the procedure, to a member of the Committee who has not been involved in any stage of the disciplinary procedure.
- The employee wishing to appeal against a disciplinary decision, must do so in writing within five working days of receiving written notification of the disciplinary action, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached.
- Arrangements for the appeal meeting will be made by the Chair of the appeal panel who will ensure that a note-taker is present.
- The appeal meeting should be held without unavoidable delay. Where possible, at least two members of the Committee will constitute an Appeal Panel and excluding any who line-manage the employee and who made the decision which is the subject of the appeal.
- Ideally the manager or Board members who will deal with the appeal, should not have undertaken the original investigation or made the original disciplinary decision. But this may not always be possible for small organisations, in which case they should try to approach the appeal in as unbiased and open-minded a manner as possible.
- The decision following the appeal meeting should be given in writing to the employee.
- The decision of the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal shall be final.

11.4.9. Suspension

- Suspension without pay is regarded as a form of penalty once a disciplinary decision has been made. It is expressly mentioned in the employee's contract of employment. Suspension with pay for a reasonable period will not be in breach of contract where the allegation is of a serious

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

nature. It must be made clear that this is part of the disciplinary procedure, but it is not a penalty. The suspension period should be kept to a minimum and the investigation will be carried out speedily.

- Suspension is not a disciplinary action and will normally be on full pay. It should only take place where it is considered that the employee may impede the disciplinary investigation or commit further offences if they remain at work.
- The Chair of the Management Committee will inform the employee in writing that they are to be suspended immediately, stating the nature of the alleged offence, the purpose of suspension, and its anticipated duration.
- Suspension in these circumstances should be no longer than required to complete the investigation. If, on completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure, the organisation is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

11.4.10 Probationary Employees

- The line manager of a probationary employee will assess the employee's performance through the probationary supervision and review process. Should there be concerns about performance or conduct, warnings will normally be given to employees before any final action is taken
- Where dismissal of the probationary employee is considered due to unsatisfactory performance or conduct, or in cases of gross misconduct, the employee will be notified in writing of the problem, the time and venue for the probationary review meeting, their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague of her/his choice and the potential dismissal outcome.
- A meeting will take place and the findings confirmed. If the findings are against the employee, they will be entitled to appeal. If the employee wishes to appeal against the dismissal, they must do so in writing to the chair of the review meeting within five working days of receiving written notification of the dismissal, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached.
- Arrangements for the appeal hearing will be made by the chair who will ensure that a note-taker is present if possible.
- Where possible, at least two members of the Committee will constitute an Appeal Panel and excluding any who line-manage the employee and who made the decision which is the subject of the appeal.
- The employee may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague of his/her choice at any appeal hearing.
- The decision of the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal shall be final.

11.5. Grievance Procedure

11.5.1. Introduction

- The aim of this Grievance Procedure is to settle grievances or complaints fairly and it is intended to operate simply and quickly. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at the earliest possible stage, and at each stage efforts will be made in order to avoid proceeding to the next stage and to settle the issue amicably.
- If an employee has a problem with any other member of staff, and is unable to sort it out informally, the matter should be referred to his/her line-manager. It may be possible to agree an informal solution between them. Often a quiet word or asking for support from a line manager may be all that is needed to resolve an issue.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

11.5.2. Mediation

- In certain circumstances it may, with mutual agreement, be helpful to consider using an independent third party to help resolve the problem. In some cases, an external mediator might be appropriate. Mediation does not decide on who is right or wrong. Nor can the parties be forced to undertake mediation – it must be a purely voluntary process.
- If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the employee should be provided with the opportunity to raise a formal grievance.

11.5.3. Counter-Grievance

- In the case of a grievance being taken out as a counter-grievance, or in response to the start of disciplinary action, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues at the same time. If appropriate, the disciplinary procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

11.6. The Procedure

- The employee should raise a grievance with their line manager without unreasonable delay, normally within one month of the incident (or final incident) which gives rise to the complaint. If the grievance is against the line manager, the matter should be raised with the Chair of the Management Committee, unless they are the subject of the grievance, when the matter should be raised with a member of the Management Committee. Whoever deals with the grievance at the meeting, normally members of the Management Committee, will normally be excluded from hearing any appeal.
- The employee must detail in writing the specific circumstance or circumstances which constitute the grievance, with dates, times, witnesses, etc. as applicable. Employees should stick to the facts and avoid insulting or abusive language.
- Where employees have difficulty expressing themselves because of language or other difficulties they may like to seek help from trade union or other employee representatives or from colleagues.

11.6.1. Invitation to a Grievance Meeting

- The line manager will invite the employee to attend a meeting, without unavoidable delay to discuss the matter.
- The meeting should ideally be arranged within five working days of receiving the written grievance.
- The line manager will also state that the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the meeting.
- The employee has a statutory right to be accompanied at any grievance or appeal meeting by a fellow worker, a trade union representative or official employed by a trade union. This companion can speak at the meeting on behalf of the employee, but they cannot answer questions put directly to the employee.
- Our Shop will also consider whether any reasonable adjustments are required for disabled employees, such as allowing a support worker or sign language interpreter to attend the meeting.
- Where possible, a note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case will take down a record of the proceedings.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

11.6.2. The Grievance Meeting

- The line manager or chair of the grievance meeting will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds of the employee's grievance, ask the employee if they are correct and require the employee to provide clarification regarding details of the grievance if unclear.
- The employee will be given the opportunity to put forward their case and say how they would like to see it resolved. The employee may call witnesses and refer to any documents previously provided to the line manager or chair.
- The line manager or chair may question the employee and any of the employee's witnesses. The employee/companion will be given the opportunity to sum up but may not introduce any new material.

The meeting may be adjourned by the line manager or chair if it is considered necessary to check facts or undertake further investigation. This allows time for reflection and proper consideration. It also allows for any further checking of any matters raised.

- Any necessary investigations will be carried out to establish the facts of the case. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.
- The person who is investigating the issue will not be the person making the final decision, particularly in serious grievance cases such as allegations about bullying and harassment.
- Having considered the grievance, the line manager or chair will give their decision regarding the case in writing to the employee which will normally be within five working days.
- If appropriate, the decision will set out what action the employer intends to take to resolve the grievance or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons. This will also include notifying the employee of her/his right of appeal and the procedure to be followed.
- It is understood that actions taken to resolve a grievance may have an impact on other individuals, who may also feel aggrieved. Any employee who is the subject of a grievance should be provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaints made against them.

11.6.3. Grievance Appeal

- If still unresolved, the employee may refer the matter, in writing, to the Chair of the Management Committee or a member of the Management Committee who has not been involved in the case.
- The employee wishing to appeal against a grievance decision, must do so in writing within five working days of receiving written notification of the grievance decision, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached.
- Arrangements for the appeal meeting will be made by the chair of the appeal panel who will ensure that a notetaker is present if possible.
- The appeal meeting should be held without unavoidable delay. Where possible, at least two members of the Management Committee will constitute an Appeal Panel and will have had no direct involvement in the case.
- The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the appeal.
- The meeting may be adjourned by the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal, if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.
- The decision of the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal shall be final.

12. Inspections of Our Shop

12.1. Introduction

Our Shop must follow a number of rules in order to trade as a retail outlet. We may receive visits from a number of inspectors from statutory organisations including:-

- Environmental Health
- Trading Standards
- Local licensing authority for alcohol and tobacco (Huntingdonshire District Council)

In our experience, inspectors are keen to give advice and help us to remain a viable, safe and productive support to the local community.

12.2. Managing Inspections

If you are on duty when an inspector visits, please notify the shop manager or senior member of staff on duty. They will check the person's identity and make the necessary arrangements for any inspection.

Although Our Shop has sound systems in place to follow the necessary rules and regulations, every member of staff and volunteer plays a vital part in ensuring we are given a 'clean bill of health' by following the guidelines and training they have been given.

13. Security

13.1. Safety Statement

Every employee and volunteer working in Our Shop has the right to feel they are in a safe place, however, there may be a rare occasion when an unpleasant or potentially violent incident may occur. You are not expected to put yourself in danger at any time. These guidelines are there to help you manage the incident, however remote the possibility.

Incidents could include shoplifting, armed robbery and burglary. CCTV cameras cover the whole of Our Shop and act as a very effective deterrent. We also have arrangements to bar someone from Our Shop because of their unacceptable behaviour.

Security arrangements that set out what you should do in that unlikely event will form part of your induction. If you are concerned, please speak to your line manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator.

13.2. Support for Staff Members and Volunteers.

If a member of staff or volunteer is a witness to any of the above incidents, they will receive the support and assistance they need. It is important that the member of staff or volunteer lets the shop manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator or a member of the Committee know that they require help to return to normal duties.

14. Using Our Shop Building

Our Shop occupies an old and very much treasured building in the centre of the village of Houghton, which also contains a separate first floor flat which is rented out. It is the responsibility of the Management Committee, together with members of staff and volunteers who are users, to take great care of this asset.

Our Shop Staff and Volunteers' Handbook

14.1. Electrical Items

All portable electrical appliances owned by Our Shop will be checked periodically but at least every two years after purchasing and a record maintained by the shop manager within the Health and Safety File.

Members of staff and volunteers should not use or cause to be brought into general use any piece of electrical equipment which is unsafe, or which has not been approved by the shop manager. Electrical equipment must be used, stored and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

14.2. Building Defects

In order to ensure the safety of members of staff, appointed volunteers and customers, any defects which are considered to be hazardous and which are related to the fabric of the building must be noted in Our Shop's diary and immediately reported by the person noticing the defect to the shop manager, or senior member of staff on duty, who will arrange for repairs to be made or the item to be isolated to avoid danger.

15. Sustainability

15.1. Statement

One of Our Shop main aims is to support the reduction of waste, the use of recyclable packaging and the more efficient use of resources, including energy by encouraging people to change the way they think and behave. We also want to be able to show that we 'do what we say'. Our Shop relies on members of staff and volunteers to support these principles by reminding customers about the opportunities provided for them to participate. Our Shop is already pro-active by

- recycling packaging wherever possible using a fortnightly collection by the local authority
- recycling of ink cartridges, batteries, crisp packets and stamps
- making available filtered water to customers for refilling of re-usable water bottles
- improving the range of goods and services offered to local residents to avoid unnecessary driving
- reducing waste through re-use and recycling of products and materials where these are available, for example reusing clean plastic bags and bags for life, together with the 'Close the Door' campaign to save energy
- Encouraging customers, staff and volunteers to cycle whenever possible

15.2. Reducing Waste

Members of staff and volunteers need to undertake daily checks to ensure wastage is minimalised. All wastage is recorded in the wastage book and this allows Our Shop to monitor how well we are doing and report this in our Annual Plan.

Food that is out of date but still considered safe to use is available for members of staff and volunteers to take home free if they wish at their own risk. Our Shop will not be responsible for any harm that may result from consuming these products.

15.3. Improving Our Sustainability

If you have any ideas about recycling or reducing waste or conserving energy in Our Shop, please speak to your line manager or the Volunteer Co-ordinator. You can also refer to our Sustainability Policy available via our website.

16. Serving Our Community

16.1. Supporting our Community

Our Community Corner is a wonderful facility that provides a comfortable seating area for the residents of the villages and for visitors. Our Shop also support village clubs, societies and events such as Feast Week through our notice board and window displays. Our Shop also offers volunteering opportunities for the older and younger members of the community

16.2. Helping the Less Able Customer

Members of staff and volunteers of Our Shop contribute greatly to an important service to the local community, especially for those who are less able, for one reason or another. You can offer these customers a variety of help such as the carry to car service for heavy or bulky items and a home delivery service. Our Shop is also part of the 'Standing Up for Sitting Down' campaign and seats are available for the less mobile, as are trolleys. Our customers very much value the thoughtfulness of members of staff and volunteers, that is so important in remaining a successful community shop.

16.3 Listening to Our Customers

It is so important to know how we can improve Our Shop and the services and goods we provide, so we need to encourage customers, members of staff and volunteers to give us feedback. To achieve this, Our Shop relies on the friendly and helpful relationship that grows between our members of staff, volunteers and our customers.

In a more formal way, we carry our periodic customer surveys however, we learn so much from always encouraging customers to write in the customer comment book and give face to face feedback to our members of staff and volunteers. We want to celebrate the good news that Our Shop is playing a huge part in supporting the villagers and those who live in the small towns and villages in the area and learn from their comments.

Other information for members of staff.

Job Descriptions for the following area available from our website.

- Shop Manager
- Post Office Manager
- Retail Assistant