

UGBOROUGH SUSTAINABLE

SATURDAYS – AGM

Monday 15th September 8pm
The Anchor Inn

In Attendance

Committee: Detha Sanders (Chair), Charlott Fletcher (Press/Marketing), James Scanlon (Treasurer), Vici Hemming (Secretary)

Members: Jenny Boulton, Juliette Collis, Eric Cowsill, George Fletcher, Joan Fletcher, Steve Fletcher, Clive Hart, Helen Hart, Heather Long, Sarah Scanlon, Chris Weaving, Jenny Weaving

Apologies: Kate Brampton, Mike Holman, Val Mulcrone

Reports: from the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Press/Marketing Officer attached.

Election of Committee Members:

Having experienced the development of our neighbour scheme ESS, Mrs Weaver suggested that if none of the committee wished to stand down that they should be re-elected as a whole as it was felt important for the continuity of the organisation to keep the Committee intact for the first few years. Those present agreed with this suggestion. The Committee agreed to re-stand and were voted to stay in post unanimously.

Matters Arising:

Publicity – attracting more buyers in particular

There are a lot of people in the community who have never come to USS

Chris Weaving has experience of ESS and suggested that personal canvassing is the best way to get people to come along. Suggested a list is drawn up and members actively talk to individuals to see what it is they would like to see to bring them along.

Heather Long noted that we do get new people in the village but not some of the older residents. We need to find out why. Felt that many people are tied to activities with their children on Saturday mornings and perhaps this is why they do not come.

The goods on offer are seasonal which is part of their appeal but too many people may be hoping to be able to buy everything all year round as per supermarkets. We should encourage our suppliers to be regular participants so that they build up a clientele and people can rely on getting certain products each week. Obviously this is not possible with fresh produce.

Worth noting that at times there are a glut of vegetables etc and fortnightly is too infrequent to distribute these so perhaps we could have a stall outside a house (Charlott volunteered this) with an honesty box to sell surplus produce.

Jenny Boulton felt that as we have involved the turn-around of over £22k in the parish we should not be too worried as we are obviously doing something right.

Suggestion of making a 'Welcome Pack' for people moving into the village to show what we have on offer and encourage them to come along.

Food Safety Certificates

George Fletcher was concerned that some producers have not had the basic food safety hygiene training. Sarah Scanlon organised some training in 2013 with the support of the school (ICC). Helen Hart can offer training through her company GHQ for around £30 but participants would need to go there - there are also online courses available.

Agreed we can only encourage our suppliers to be aware of this and that we would return to having Producer Profiles for each participant that would show whether or not they had the certificate as well as other information. We will amend our supplier information to say that it is preferable to have the certificate and also look at subsidising training for existing producers.

Maintaining a variety of producers

Joan Fletcher was concerned that we had lost a variety of producers this year and we need to attract and keep more fresh produce suppliers.

Agreed we need Producers to work together if they are making similar products – competition is what you expect in the market place but also we should encourage them to talk to each other to keep a variety of produce on sale at each event.

Steve Fletcher said that we need to make sure our terms of business for the producers are clear so that the committee does not need to be involved in issues about what is produced.

Courses

Cheese making course very popular and hopefully some cheese will soon be produced in the village. George Fletcher wondered whether it was something that needed funding but it is time consuming and no-one has had time to commit to it this summer.

Suggested that we also put on seasonal craft courses to appeal to the community – Felt Making, Flower Arranging suggested as we have people in the community who can do this. Also need to look at something that might appeal to younger members of community and possibly tie in with Youth Group.

New Programme

We urgently need to find a graphic designer to come up with our programme for 2015. Charlott is looking into this.

Comments

Juliette Collis thanks the USS committee for setting up the organisation prior to funding being received to get it off the ground.

Chris Weaving felt that what USS had achieved in 14 months was 'sensational' and he was delighted to be part of it feeling deprived if he was not able to attend.

Detha also thanked Eric Cowsill for supporting her in her role as Chair.

The formal meeting ended at 9.05pm

Attached: Reports

REPORTS

CHAIR (Detha)

USS launched 14 months ago in July 2013.

What USS has achieved:

- Feedback from others include: 'putting the heart back in the village'. USS has become a focal point, an essential meeting place that helps bond the community and ensure vital communications are preserved
- Cafe particularly successful and popular
- Provide trading and business opportunities for all, particularly young and retired people, and unwaged
- Contributed to the local economy, generating around £22k in the last 14 months
- Funded some initiatives – more from Charlott later
- Found that attracting sellers seems to present no problem
- Found that we need to make constant effort to get punters along
- Gained a fabulous large article in the WMN thanks to support from Steve Haywood
- Bids to Sustainable Community Locality Fund (SHDC); Devon County Council Locality Budget Funding; Prince of Wales Award
- We've laughed and cried. We lost one key supporter – Liz Lloyd, and been thrilled to see James back with us after his dreadful illness. We have had a huge amount of fun. We have been proud to serve the village and our community.

Introduce committee: Detha, James, Vici , Charlott

Key volunteers: Sarah, George & Joan, Clive & Helen, Anita, Jane VanGothem, Philomena, George B.

Very special thanks to our tea ladies: Kate Brampton & Jenny Bolton

Thanks also to the Parish Council, and SHDC for the grant funding which we received to get the initiative up and running.

Future plans and issues to overcome

Encourage more punters to attend on a regular basis

Work in-conjunction with our hosts, the village hall to resolve

- Lack of storage
- Facilities in need of upgrading and furniture and fixings in need of replacement
- H&S issues particularly with regard to moving kitchen and other equipment up the stairs

We have raised some funds for a new coffee machine and a trolley to be used in-conjunction with storage space to be allocated at the village hall. Both of these purchases are currently on hold awaiting developments at the village hall.

There is lots of scope – USS is a great vehicles for a variety of community initiatives, for example:

- Linking in with the Youth Group to see if they might like to run a youths only cafe alongside our event
- Making computer facilities available to older people

A great year ahead. Thank you Ugborough for making this all happen.

TREASURER (James)

This has been a very successful first year for Ugborough Sustainable Saturdays and I can report that our present financial situation is very healthy.

At the outset of the venture we started with no funding and all the initial costs of the setup were bourn by the committee members. The awarding of grants by the local Parish and the SHDC cleared our personal debts incurred and we have kept a good working bank balance since.

Besides ourselves on the committee we have support from a great number of villagers for which we owe the success of the USS.

This past year we have made small donations to Devon Air Ambulance and our local village Newsletter.

We have funded the promotion of local vegetable growers by providing funds for the purchase of seeds for their use with the hope of supplying the market.

A cheese-making course was subsidized by our funds with, again the hope of encouraging a local supply of cheese.

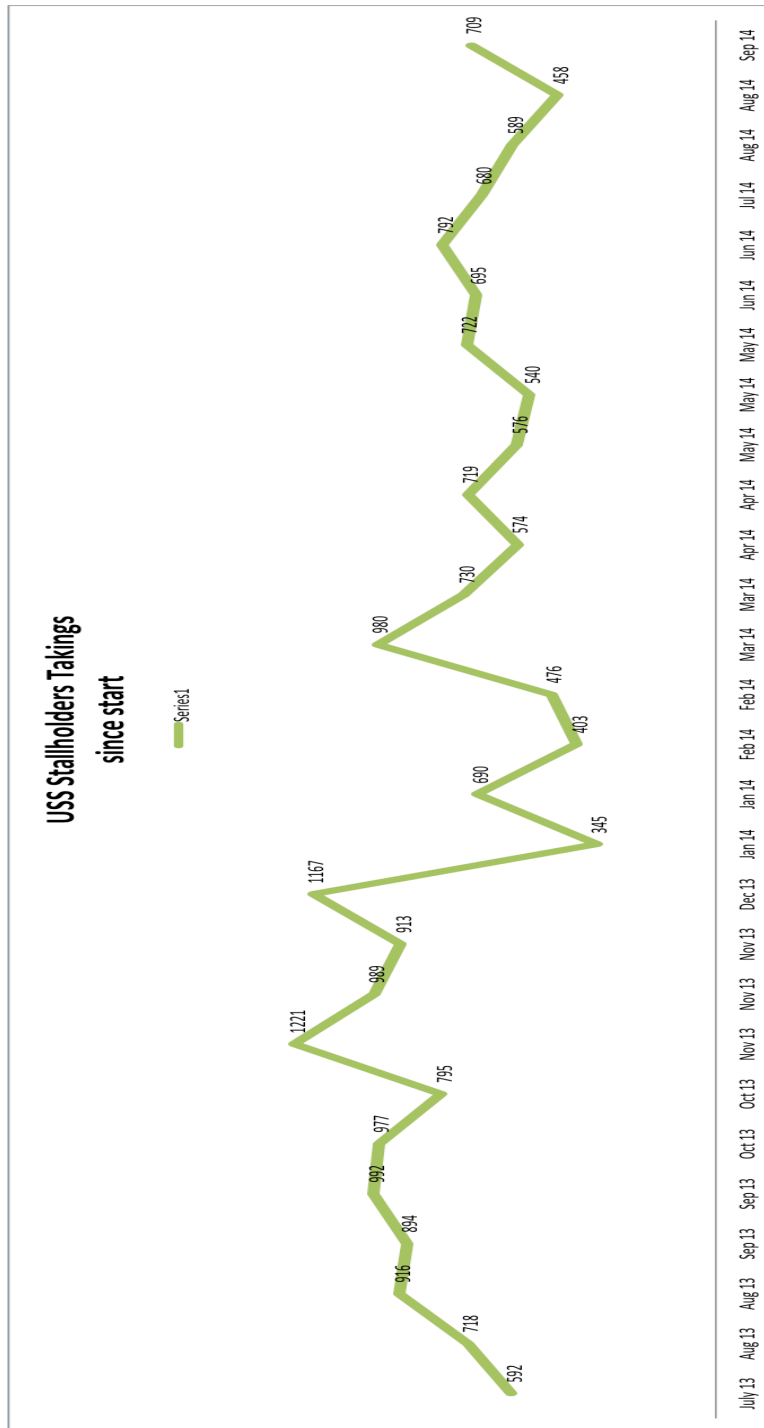
Our USS café is a resounding success and we maintain a very affordable product in our coffee and tea costs and at present no plans exist to change that. I am looking at the use of Owens coffee as a local supplier and hopefully will get that underway soon. I am also looking at changing the crockery for the café to a more commercially robust type and will be doing that soon.

At each market we, (USS) , like to know how each of our stallholders have performed financially and this gives us an indication of the effectiveness of the whole concern.

The information we gather we keep confidential and is purely for that purpose and to display to all how well an enterprise this is.

At present The USS finances are £1710 in credit

A copy of my accounts spreadsheet is available for all to see and is attached to this report.



SECRETARY (Vici)

Having attended most of the USS events during the last 14 months it is great to see so many people come along each week to take part in one way or another. On a

personal note it has been a great for my daughter to get involved in a community event and has helped boost her confidence. Many thanks in particular to Detha who does a wonderful job of organising our meetings and also in applying and getting funding. Also to Charlott who organises the stalls each fortnight and constantly works on improving our public profile.

PRESS & MARKETING (Charlott)

Including a brief report on producers/produce and volunteers

Advertising:

Since the Launch of USS the event has been advertised fortnightly using 4 banners going up on the Wednesday before the event. They are displayed next to the Bittaford bus stop, outside the village hall and on the walls of two properties at each end of the village.

Two flyers have been published since the Launch. The 2013 flyer was designed at no cost by Laura Sargent. The 2014 Flyer was designed again at no cost by Ashley Todd and saw ESS and USS join forces creating its first joint flyer.

Flyers have been distributed in neighbouring villages, parishes and some holiday homes and published in the local Signpost magazine. This was undertaken by committee members and volunteers.

We are grateful to Steve and Becky Haywood for the March 2014 feature in the Western Morning News.

USS events have also been advertised in the Parish Newsletter as well as short articles that have been produced by volunteers and committee members.

We are currently on the lookout for a 'graphic savvy' volunteer to design the joint USS & ESS flyer for 2015 with the option of a version for free magazines like the Signpost that would be more legible at credit card size.

Social Media:

Since the Launch USS has been on **Facebook**, currently having **93 likes**, and on **Twitter** with **104** followers.

Our Web presents could be widened by posting photos on Instagram which can interlink with Facebook and Twitter giving USS the opportunity to include more images of produce and events on Social Media. We should also consider creating a USS blog which would provide a great platform for write-ups on producers/produce and events. This can be achieved at no cost using a platform such as Wordpress.

Mailing Lists:

We have two mailing lists run via our gmail account ugboroughss@gmail.com and contacts have been collected at our village fair events. I would like to point out that not all collected emails are valid and any that bounce back have been removed from the mailing lists.

Our **producers mailing lists** currently holds **43 contacts** and aims to invite/remind producers to book a space at forthcoming USS and they also receive our fortnightly mail-out.

Our **general mailing** list holds **53** contacts which have been attained at our village fair stalls in 2013 and 2014. These contacts receive an email fortnightly inviting them to USS and informing them on what produce will be on offer.

In order to give more people an opportunity to sign up to the mailing list we should consider a permanent location for this at USS.

In order to make our mail-out more enticing I will aim to include more produce images in the future.

Events:

USS has taken part in and run events since it's launch to not only promote USS but to also inspire, educate and give back to the community.

Ugborough Village Fair 2013 saw the launch of USS. Our aim was to promote the event and to find, producers, volunteers and punters. We did this by putting on a free raffle where for the exchange of registering ones interest and signing up to our mailing list, a hamper filled with kindly donated local produce could be won.

At **Ugborough Village Fair 2014** we provided stalls under the USS banner for our producers; These got taken up by five of our producers. We repeated the free produce hamper raffle, once again kindly donated by our brilliant producers, entry was again by signing up to our mailing list.

The **Grow for USS** event was organised in order to inspire people in the community to grow their own veg and share some of their produce at USS. Tucker seeds kindly donated a whole box of seeds for the Grow for USS seed swap on the 8th of March which was followed by a free vegetable growing talk by Roy Halsey, NVS speaker and judge. USS funded 5 packets of free seeds for 8 individuals who signed up to Grow for USS. We have since seen some of the produce at USS this year.

The **Cheese Making Course** on the 7th of June was run in order to inspire and educate locals to make and sell cheese, aiming to fill the gap at USS. It was part funded by USS only leaving the cost of material and lunch to be paid for by attendees. Run by Sarah Style -Power from Shebbear Cheese, kindly hosted by Shelley Hutcheon at Oakenham and with a delicious lunch provided by Sarah Scalon. Attendees of the course are currently in touch with each other to share the cost of ordering equipment & ingredients. Hopefully we will see local cheese at USS in the near future

Thorough our Events we aim to build community resilience, ability and skill sharing as well as promoting education and training for parishioners which are important objectives of the USS constitution.

A few suggestions for events have been made to me over the last year such as:

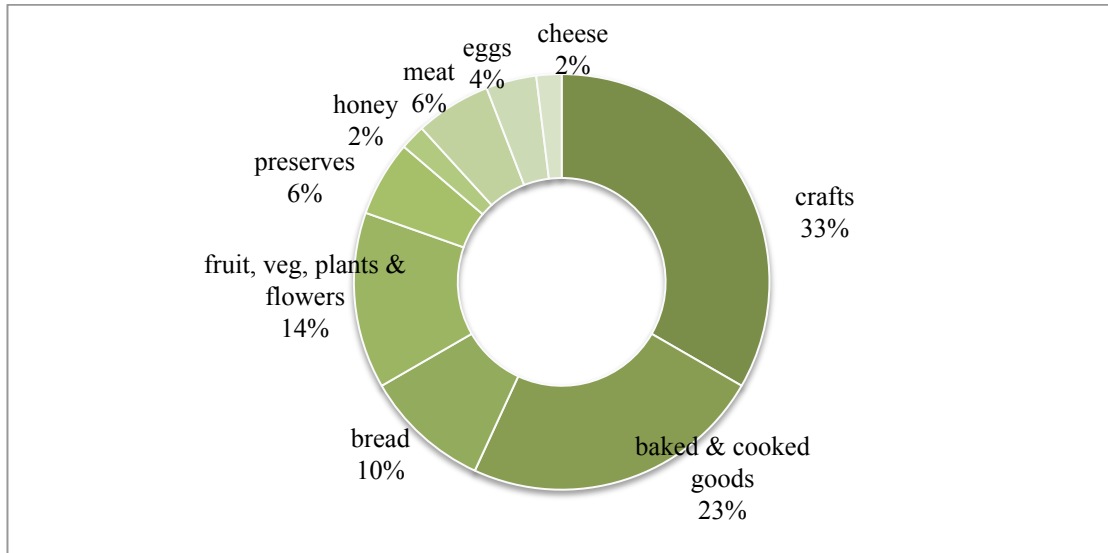
An Apple Festival celebrating Ugborough's orchard heritage, with community apple pressing, cider making, and talks.

Seasonal bring a dish lunches to collect recipes for a USS cookbook and enjoy local food and each other's company.

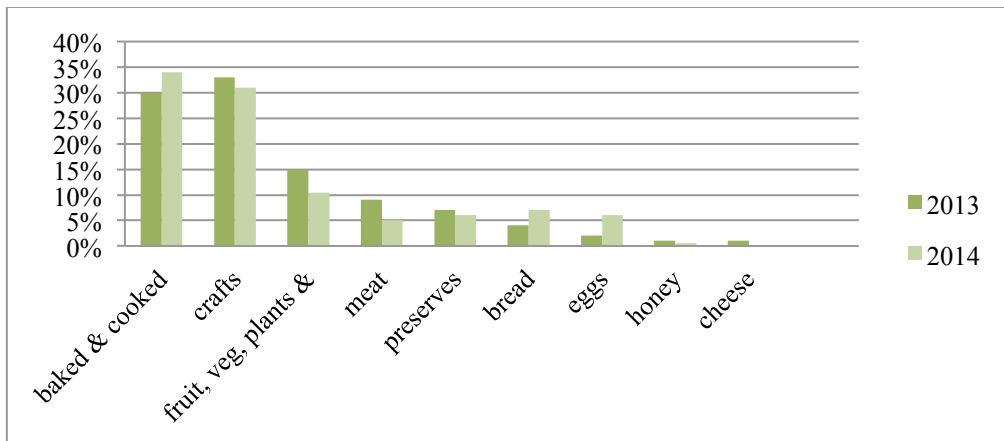
Producer of the year award or/and young producers of the year award both offering some sort of advice and financial grant.

Producers/Produce 2013 & 2014

Since our Launch 43 individual producers have attended USS. The graph below shows the percentage by type of produce they offer.



In 2013 an average of 20 producers attended each USS event compared to an average of 17 producers so far in 2014. The Graph below compares the average percentage of the type of produce on offer at USS in 2013 and so far in 2014.



Looking at the current produce on offer we should look into encouraging more fresh staple produce as this could potentially bring in more visitors. We don't manage what type of produce can be sold as long as it meets our sellers terms and, if we have space, everyone is welcome.

It is vital to ensure that new producers, even if selling similar produce to existing producers, are welcomed and given the same opportunities. I would like USS to encourage producers to work together if selling similar goods and therefore offering more variety which can only appeal to our visitors and make USS more successful.

Volunteers:

USS would not be possible without the continuous commitment of our volunteers. We currently have two volunteers Kate Brampton and Jennifer Bolton who make and sell teas and coffees with the support of committee members purchasing supplies and helping out.

We currently have 9 dedicated volunteers who set up and break down all the equipment needed at each USS with the help of committee members.

This is managed by a simple rota issued twice a year.

In the future we should consider getting producers more involved in this process and taking some of the pressure of our volunteers who often help out despite not being on duty.