



Siop Llangors Shop Volunteer Newsletter

May 2026



Messages from the Manager, Jenni-Sue Freeland

It's been a month of change, growth, and plenty of good news at Llangors Shop & Cafe.

We recently said goodbye to Niki, and I want to thank her once again for all her hard work, dedication, and commitment over her years with us. She's been a huge part of our story, and we wish her every success in her new adventures.

At the same time, we're delighted to welcome Jonny into his new position as a paid member of staff. Jonny has been with us from the beginning and is another dedicated, hardworking, and genuinely lovely person to work with.

We've also invested in a new gazebo to create outdoor seating come rain or shine, and we're developing several new initiatives to help the shop and cafe continue to grow. Please keep an eye on the whiteboard in the office for updates as things progress.

Bike & Brew continues to bring in new faces, not just from far and wide, but also from people who've passed by for years without realising we were here. Also, a shout out to the Crafty Crew, so lovely to see this group on Thursday afternoons. It's really wonderful to see the cafe buzzing with fresh energy.

Please can I remind all volunteers make sure to complete the food hygiene course online at <https://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you. Your hard work, commitment, and kindness are what make this place special. What we do simply wouldn't happen without you. As always, huge thanks!

The Update

Rose Snowden, Chair of the Management Committee



We hope you are all well and enjoying the brighter days as we head towards summer. This Newsletter is an opportunity to keep everyone updated on what has been happening, share some exciting news, and most importantly say a huge thank you to all of you. Your time, commitment, and enthusiasm continue to make our community shop the success it is today.

We are delighted to share that in our fourth year we made a small profit — and to say we are chuffed is an understatement! This achievement belongs to every one of our volunteers. Without your support, energy, and willingness to help, none of this would have been possible.

The last six months have brought some fantastic developments for the shop and café. One of the biggest highlights has been employing Jonny Demanuel. Jonny is a real asset to the team, and having a member of staff on more shifts has provided valuable support for volunteers. We are also very grateful to Johnny for taking on the role of Volunteers' Representative.

Another positive step has been the recruitment of three new Committee Members and two additional Rota Team members. (More details later in the Newsletter.) Once again, the community has shown what it does best — people coming together to support local projects and each other. Thank you to everyone who has stepped forward to help.

We have also joined the Bikers' Passport Scheme which has already proved to be a great success, with bikers travelling from far and wide to support local cafés and collect stamps in their passports. It has been wonderful to welcome so many new faces through our doors.

The Management Committee now shares an abridged version of the monthly Committee Meetings with volunteers. We hope these help you feel more connected with what is happening behind the scenes.

Our new three-year Business Plan is available on the website, and speaking of the website, it has recently had an upgrade too. Looking ahead, we continue to focus on the long-term sustainability of both the shop and café. Increasing footfall remains one of our priorities, and we are reviewing the Customer Survey feedback for ways to improve our café facilities for example by expanding the seating and service areas.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who completed the recent Volunteer Survey. Your feedback is incredibly valuable and helps us ensure we meet the needs and expectations of our volunteers. We are reviewing the results and identifying areas where we can improve.

We will also continue carrying out our skills audit, which has already proved to be a useful tool in helping us achieve many of our goals. If you have not yet completed one, please ask JS.

Thank you once again for everything you do for the shop, café, and wider community. Every shift covered, every smile shared, and every hour volunteered helps make Llangors Shop and Café a truly special place.

Meet the Management Committee



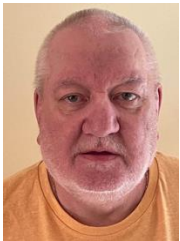
Rosemary Snowden - Chair

Rose moved to Llangors 11 years ago after living in France for 4 years. She is a retired driving instructor running her own business. Previous employment of 18 years was in the regulatory sector working for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) overseeing regulations governing commercial and private aviation.



Colin Preece

With 42 years' service within the Electricity Distribution Industry, Colin is now self-employed, advising on Health and Safety matters and managing environmental projects. He is actively involved in various local groups, including many years' experience as a Community Councillor.



Alan Williams - Treasurer

After graduating from Imperial College, London Alan trained as an accountant and is a Fellow Member of both CIMA & ACCA. Also did an MBA with the Open University. Recently retired from working for Powys Health Board as a Business Partner Accountant. Also, treasurer of Llanfihangel Village Hall.



Cat ??????

Cat moved from Brecon to Llangors in December 2024 with my husband, Bill, and two teenager boys, Ben and Sam. After such a short time, she feels very much at home here and is keen to do her bit to contribute to the wonderful community. She's looking forward to working with everyone and is really excited to join the Management Committee.



Robert East

Born and bred in Llangors, Robert has been a University law lecturer for over 40 years, working at a number of universities, including the University of South Wales, Cardiff University and the Open University. He is a retired Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of the West of England in Bristol.



Tony Raikes

Tony is a Chartered Civil Engineer and spent 38 years working in the Construction and Facilities Management industries, both in the UK and abroad. As part of his business training, he also completed an MBA with the Open University. Tony spent much of his childhood in the Llangors area and has recently moved back to live permanently in Llangasty.



Jonathan ??????

Jonathan moved to Wales in 2017 with his wife and two children, having sold a garden business in London. He is now semi retired having moved to Llangorse in December 2025.

Jolanda Sidler is also a member of the Management Committee and meetings are attended by JS as Shop Manager, Jonny Demanuel in his role as Volunteer Representative, and by a member of the Rota Team.

A 'Hello' from Jonny Demanuel

Hopefully most of you know me already. I have been a volunteer, and luckily an occasional part-time employee at the Siop since our opening in November 2021. As of June 2026 I will be joining the Management Committee with a focus on representing our volunteers. My experience should put me in a good position to do so but I will need my fellow volunteers' input too. I may also be gathering your opinions on issues that might arise and will be able to provide some relevant feedback to you too.

If as a volunteer you have any queries or comments you wish to be passed on to the Committee don't hesitate to contact me. You can email me directly at shopmanager2@llangorsshop.co.uk or I'm always happy to chat in person (on or off shift).

As always, looking forward to working with and hearing from you, and the Committee.

- [photo of Jonny awaited]

How are we doing ? Alan Williams, Treasurer



Firstly a few facts and figures.....The café continues to contribute the majority of our gross profit, with sales around a quarter of the total. In a typical summer month we sell around 1,000 cups of tea and coffee, 250 slices of cake and over 450 welsh cakes!

Provisional figures for the first half year of 2025/26 show that sales have been sluggish over the winter period and only around 1% up on the previous year, lower than we budgeted for. However, April and May look promising and hopefully we can turn this deficit around in the summer period – the current forecast shows a smaller 3% increase on sales year-on-year. Ice cream sales should make a big contribution!

Even though the sales are forecast to be down, our margin is holding up at around the 35% budgeted level, and with some saving in overheads the forecast is still a break-even in this financial year. As you know, we are not here to make big profits and try to keep our prices as low as possible while continuing to cover the essential overheads. We try to provide much needed services in the area - a newspaper service with around 500 papers per month collected from Talgarth by our volunteer team . Bread and snack items are collected by another volunteer team from St. Mary's Bakery in Brecon. We now have an In-Post Parcel Locker located outside the shop and very importantly create much-needed local employment opportunities, particularly for young people

Finally, many thanks to you, our shop volunteers. Without your day-in-day-out hard work the shop would just not be viable.



Outcomes of the Volunteer Survey 2026



Jane Brown

Firstly, a big thank you to all those who took the time and trouble to complete the survey in March and April. The survey's purpose was (a) to gather feedback on the experience of volunteering and how it might be improved and (b) to gather ideas for improving the services offered by the shop or café. With this in mind, the survey asked open-ended questions about the shop and café so there were no easy tick-box answers! A total of 23 forms were returned, representing 48% of the 48 active volunteers.

Emerging Themes

Overall, we are a very happy band of volunteers who enjoy their shifts in the shop and café. Typical comments were “I absolutely love working here, such a lovely place!” and “It is a positive and rewarding experience in the company of good people”. No comments were strongly critical of any aspect of volunteering, operations or communication, though there were numerous suggestions for small improvements to the volunteering experience and services. These are being considered by the Shop Manager and Management Committee over coming months.

A strong preference emerged for *written* materials/checklists for training and guidance. Volunteers like documentation which can be referred to easily on shifts, understandable given that some may be volunteering infrequently.

The most valued aspect of volunteering in the shop and the café was the opportunities it offers for social interaction with customers and other volunteers and thereby enhancing feelings of being part of the community. Several volunteers mentioned enjoying being able to advise visitors to the area, and others said they found satisfaction in working with stock.

Regarding rotas, some issues were highlighted around the need to accommodate the individual circumstances of particular volunteers. The Rota Team would encourage any volunteer to contact them at llangorsshopvolunteers@gmail.com if they would like to make requests about their shifts.

On the communications front, clearly there is a wish for more frequent updating about changes to procedures and about shop performance. We hope that the information in this Newsletter and the abridged versions of Management Committee minutes circulated to volunteers will assist with this.

If anyone would like a copy of the full results of the report, please contact me at jagawthrope@btinternet.com.



Volunteer Voice:

Ann Baynham

I moved to Llangorse in June 2018 having previously lived in Worcestershire for 28 years. I've volunteered previously mostly with Pre-school and school age children.

The first two years were relatively uneventful, I met my immediate neighbours but wasn't involved in village life. The pandemic in 2020 changed this. A volunteer group "Llangorse Together Covid 19 Support Group" was set up and I volunteered and ended up collating information on behalf of the group's organisers. I knew lots of names as a result but since volunteering at the village shop I've been able to put faces to those names which has been great.

I've been volunteering since the shop opened and I enjoy meeting such a variety of interesting people both visitors and other volunteers. It's a lovely way to get to know people of all ages, to learn new skills and become part of the community.

Supplier Profile

Raise a glass to the Left Bank Brewery!

Simon Poffley, Head Brewer and Managing Director, writes...

The Left Bank Brewery recently celebrated 7 years of brewing real ale and craft beers in Llangors, but this was neither the beginning for the brewery or of brewing in Llangors. I started the brewery in the kitchen of a community café in Walthamstow, London in 2013, before moving to the Blackhorse Workshop in the Blackhorse Road area where the last of the Victorian breweries had closed decades before. Meanwhile, Llangors has played a role in reviving and maintaining brewing traditions in the National Park with several breweries opening (and closing) since 2009.

We brew a changing range of traditional styles such as pale ales, blondes, golden ales, bitters, stouts and milds, as well as continental styles such as wheat beers, saisons, pilsners and fruit beers and always like to try something new. Large commercial breweries produce beer which is filtered and often pasteurised, then artificially carbonated, but we use the traditional method of secondary conditioning in cask and bottle, which means that a small portion of yeast is carried across into the vessel and creates natural carbonation which retains more flavour – you will see there is a slight sediment at the bottom of the bottles which is part of the natural process and a sign that you are enjoying a live product. We are a member of SIBA – the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates which promotes independent breweries in the UK. Last September we took part in the Indie Beer Festival in Haverfordwest, where our Zhyto-Rhyg Rye IPA won silver in the cask IPA section and our Rodeo Double IPA took gold in Cask Beers over 6% and went onto represent Wales in the national finals.

It is wonderful to have the opportunity to brew in sight of Llangors Lake, but the general economy for brewing is very difficult – there have been price increases in everything from malt, hops, yeast, bottles, boxes, electricity and there are fewer pubs selling cask conditioned beers locally. Our beers are always available in the Llangors shop but when our sign is up at the top of the track opposite the church then we can sell direct from the brewery. We can provide beer for parties, run bars for events and even brew to order and are always open to collaborations.



Volunteer Voice:

Cath Quarrel



Having lived in the village for most of my life, I've seen first-hand how things have changed over the years, from a time when we had two thriving shops and a butcher, to the sad reality of them all eventually closing. Because of that, I was a huge supporter of the idea of setting up a village shop and was delighted to be involved from the early days.

Many years ago, I was a paper girl for Margaret Hancock at Central Stores, back when most of the village had a newspaper delivered to their door – I certainly got my steps in during those days! It feels very special to still be contributing to the village in a different way all these years later.

My role in the shop has grown over time and I've recently become a key holder. Alongside this, I manage our social media, using my creative skills to share updates and highlight all the great things happening in and around the shop, helping to support its ongoing success.

I love volunteering. As someone who works from home, it gives me a valuable social connection with members of the community that I wouldn't normally see in my day-to-day life. I also really enjoy interacting with visitors to the area and making sure they receive a warm, friendly welcome that reflects the openness and spirit of the whole community.

Our shop is so much more than just a place to pick up a pint of milk – it's a key part of our community. We work in harmony with other local businesses and link closely with local artists and suppliers, helping to ensure the shop always reflects what's so wonderful about the surrounding area. One of the other aspects of volunteering that I really value is working with the young people employed at the shop, watching their confidence grow and seeing them develop skills that will be essential for their future.

And then there were four.....

Alina Evans and Jane Brown have welcomed with open arms two new members of the Rota Team: Wayne Humphries and Ann Reese. This means that the tasks of compiling the monthly rota, sending out the weekly rotas and dealing with ad hoc issues are spread a little more thinly, although we now have an additional rota for organising the work of the rota team! Wayne and Ann are already introducing some new ideas which are making our processes more efficient. Alina, Jane, Ann and Wayne – A JAW-dropping Rota Team!



photo of
Wayne
awaited

This Volunteer Newsletter is produced twice a year by Jane Brown who welcomes suggestions and items for the Autumn issue (jagawthrope@btinternet.com). Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Dates for your diaries....

Volunteers' Summer

Get Together

plus ukulele band!

2nd July 6pm-8pm

Llangasty Village Hall



The Shop's 5th Birthday

16th November

This anniversary will not be allowed to pass without at least a balloon and a piece of cake! If you have any ideas for how we should celebrate, we would love to hear them.

