The North Marston Community Shop Association Limited crowned best in region for contribution to community.

The North Marston Community Shop Association Limited has been crowned the winner of the South East Award as part of the Rural Community Ownership Awards 2016, the only national awards programme recognising community co-operation around the UK.

**The Shop, North Marston**

**In 2008, 25 years after the last village shop closed, the results of a village questionnaire showed that 89.9% of respondents were keen to see a new shop in the village, particularly as travel costs were higher, the nearest supermarket was 7 miles away, the village had doubled in size and there was a growing older population who could not get out of the village. A group formed an Industrial and Provident Society, raised over £110,000 to build, equip and stock the Norwegian Log building adjacent to the village hall. The money came from local village fund-raising, The Plunkett Foundation, The Leader Fund, the Vital Villages programme, Aylesbury Vale Community Chest, Buckinghamshire Community Foundation and The Parish Council. ‘The Shop’, as it is known (being the only one in the village) was opened on 9th July, 2011 by John Bercow, MP, who gave a wonderful speech about the benefits of community shops playing a vital role in reducing isolation for rural people, acting as social hubs, and particularly, creating support networks for those who for one reason or another are disadvantaged. He spoke from experience. The Shop, gives many people a sense of pride in being a part of something that they helped to provide for the village.**

**The shop is run by a Management Committee in conjunction with an outstanding Manager and team of wonderful volunteers who give up their spare time to ensure the village shop runs smoothly all the time. The shop is open on weekdays from 7.00am to 7.00pm and at weekends from 9.00am to 12.00 noon. There is a large car park which encourages older people, from a local town, to shop here so they don’t need to carry heavy shopping far.**

**The Shop is well-known for its local produce and support for farmers, growers and local makers of food. Sales of local products now make up almost 49% of food sold. People come from several villages around to purchase local cakes, biscuits, bread, pastries, honey, wines, beers, ciders, apple juices, bacon, sausages, beef, lamb and pork, chutneys, jams, jellies, pasties, sandwiches, sausage rolls, pizzas, ready meals, ice-cream, chocolate, yogurts, eggs, and much more. Fresh fruit, vegetables and bread are delivered daily. Locally made from natural products: soaps, hand-creams & lotions can also be purchased.**

**The Shop, as a not for profit business, gives any trading surplus as donations to village projects and from when it became able to donate has given:**

**NMPC £ 200**

 **North Marston School £ 60**

**Customer Raffle Prizes £ 20**

**North Marston Village Hall £ 100**

 **Christmas Raffle prizes £ 100**

 **Roof Repairs 2014 £1000**

 **Supplies £ 58**

**St Mary’s Church & Fete £ 175**

**Marston Amateur Dramatic Society**

**Raffle prizes £ 24**

**Others £33**

 **Total £1570**

**Other donations:**

**North Marston Car park 2011 £11000**

**North Marston VH hedge plants 2013 £ 364**

**Sale of plastic bags 2015 £ 23**

**Repairs & upgrade to NM path 2014 £ 2130**

 **Total £13517**

**Grand total: £15,287**

**and all because villagers use The Shop! Please help us to donate more money to benefit the village in the future by using The Shop as much as possible.**

**If you wish to volunteer or do your DofE please contact the Chairman, Alison Finnemore, via email:** **alison@northmarstonshop.uk** **or mobile: 07817166989**