



**MUSTARD SEED 28<sup>th</sup> AGM**  
**11 November 2022**  
 6.30pm: Barber Rooms

<p><b>Present:</b>          Sjoerd Vogt (Chairman)          Katie Foot (Manager)          Peter Foot          Rosalind Burns          Fr Claro          Liz Kilpatrick          Sue &amp; Keith Thrower          Dave Headey          Maurine Courtney          John Seedell          Jonathan &amp; Barbara          Mapley (total=13)</p>	<p><b>Apologies:</b>          Gaynor &amp; Nigel Archer          Brenda &amp; David Barber          Angela &amp; Mike Barrett          Lois &amp; Andrew Chell          Tim &amp; Sharon Gerry          Margaret &amp; Eric Gutsell          Jill Headey          Ann &amp; Derek Jerome          Geoff/Muriel          Loosemore</p>	<p><b>Apologies:</b>          Denise Monk          Jim &amp; Helen Mynors          Ruth Seedell          Libby/Michael Smedley          Malcolm &amp; Val Swift          Karen Vogt          David/Lyn Williamson</p>	<p><b>Apologies ( contd):</b></p>
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The meeting was opened with bible reading and prayer .

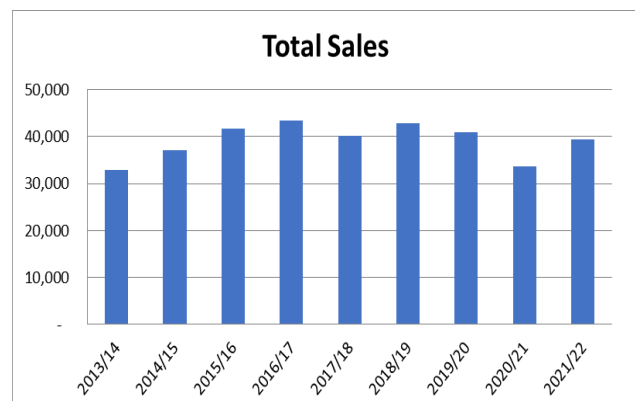
**Minutes** of the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM were signed as a correct record of the meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021 in Blessed Hugh Church Hall. No items outstanding that are not discussed below.



**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**MAIREAD – REST IN PEACE**

In this first AGM without Mairead, we remember with immense fondness her boundless contributions not only to the Mustard Seed, but also to the work of Churches Together. Mairead, your memory lives on! We thank Katie who is now managing to absorb the additional tasks of gathering together all the weekly takings and juggling the monthly staff rotas.



## FOOTFALL

What might have become “The Plum Tree Café” is now Tribe Zero Waste. Katie Herring – Welcome! A town centre that continues to evolve means that we can’t take anything for granted, and we thank our amazing team for their resilience and flexibility.

## SALES

Sales *have* crept up since lockdown ended – but certainly not to their pre-lockdown levels. Sales of books have been impacted in particular.

## CHARITABLE DONATIONS

We’ve been pleased to be able to continue to support the Faringdon Food Bank ( four separate donations over the past 30 months); Probus for AV equipment; Faringdon Learning Trust (Peace Garden); and Bromsgrove Day Centre.

## THANKS

We have Katie & Peter Foot’s generosity to thank for the **warehousing arrangements** (their garage!) - which have been in place for almost three years now, and are working remarkably well.

Special thanks go to our joint managers Katie and Karen; and our unflappable treasurer Lois.

We also thank Malcolm and Val from the Lighthouse Bookshop in Highworth for their unstinting support, helped by Keith at this end.

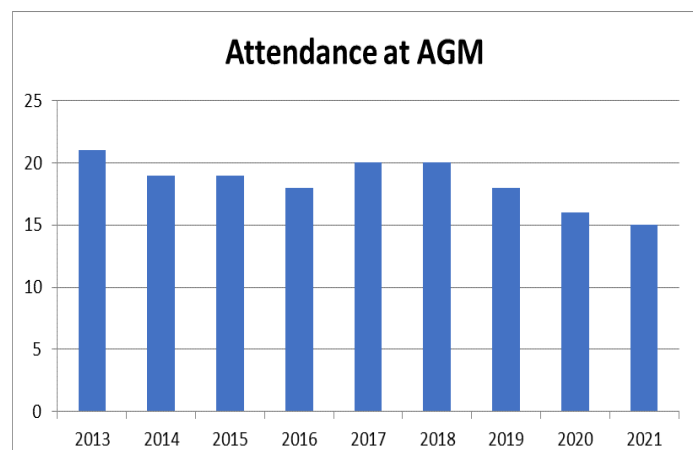
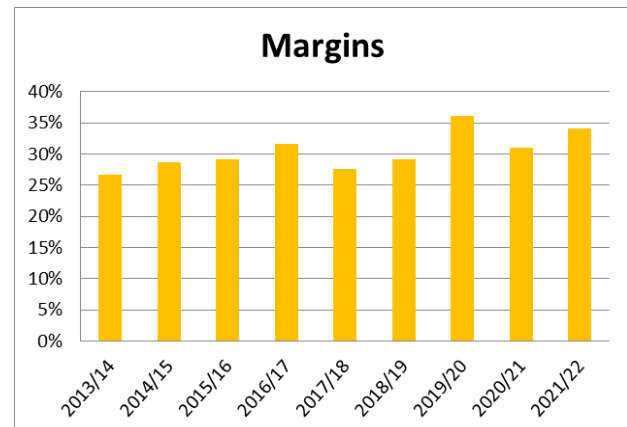
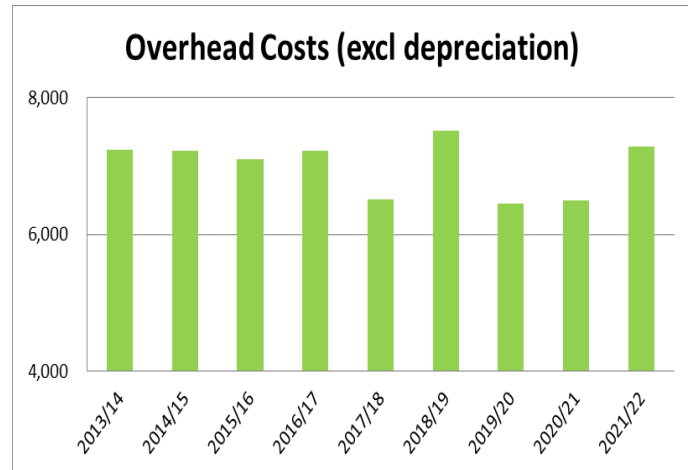
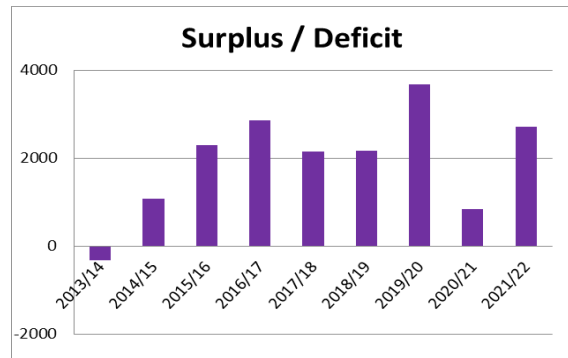
We thank the Committee, representing all the Churches Together.

And we also get support from the wider community, for which we are very grateful.

We have our annual accounts fully audited by Anthony Akers (from Alder Demain & Akers) free of charge. Thank you.

On behalf of the committee, our warmest thanks go out to all those volunteers and members of the community who support us in so many ways.

And last but not least, we also warmly



thank our loyal shoppers.

As always, the team of volunteers need your constant support and prayers.

*Sjoerd Vogt  
Chairman, The Mustard Seed  
November 2022*

## **MANAGERS' REPORT FOR AGM, 11th NOVEMBER 2022**

With the pandemic receding, we have been very pleased to have the shop open once again all this year, albeit still mornings only except for busy periods such as Advent and before Easter. There was a stall for the 2021 Christmas market and Karen also ran one on 1 March for Fairtrade Fortnight and again on 1 October for Faringdon's Big Green Day.

As you will see from our Treasurer's report and the summary graphs, turnover is climbing slowly back up from the lockdown low, but is still down compared to 2019. We are still just about holding our own, but that will only continue to be the case if we can all remember to remind our friends and neighbours to continue to visit the shop and buy even some small items regularly or make a regular monthly order (see below).

### Staffing

Thanks to all who have helped Katie with the rota this year from a standing start after Mairead's sterling efforts over so many years. We are very grateful to have such reliable and helpful volunteers. Katie has also taken on compilation of the weekly book-keeping spreadsheets which go to Lois, Malcolm and Karen, so it remains very important to have accurate information attached to Z sheets about items sold under TC Misc and SL Other, as well as all the book slips (or information about any book sold), to keep the accounts up to date.

### Window Dressers

Thanks are also due to the window dressers, led by Libby Smedley, without whom the shop would be far less attractive to passers-by, with the mix of Traidcraft, other craft and Seekers' Light goods. We love the creativity that each brings to the topic of the fortnight/month.

The window will be particularly important during the next month – our busiest time of the year normally, so we can't afford to let things slip. Please tell your friends and neighbours they are welcome to photograph any item they would like to buy (or find out more about) and send it by email to [karen@vogt.org.uk](mailto:karen@vogt.org.uk) or contact [katie.foot@btinternet.com](mailto:katie.foot@btinternet.com) if they can only shop after 1pm – by appointment, we can arrange to open the shop, or they can order online.

### Shop Maintenance

We are delighted that the flat roof at the rear has finally been repaired, and the WC and back lobby replastered and redecorated. We are having some difficulty pinning down an electrician to reinstate the light in the WC but hope that this will be completed shortly. The redecoration and new signboard on the front of the shop also makes a huge difference to the town centre appearance and we have had some new customers as a result of this.

### Orders

We still want to encourage customers to put in a regular monthly or occasional order for e.g. a bale of loo rolls, tea, coffee, cereal. In the present climate, please encourage friends and neighbours to look on the website and email or telephone Karen (details elsewhere in this report). Stamps and greetings cards can also be ordered and delivered.

Along with the order form for food and cleaning products, there is now an extra Christmas food and Advent calendar one on the website.

### Hampers

2021 was another great year for hampers! Once again, the Vale of White Horse Deanery (CofE) came up trumps (as they were unable to put on the usual lunch or tea party) and ordered one for each of the retired clergy in the Deanery. Usual choice available: standard (Karen chooses), bespoke (you choose) or specials – Chocoholics, Organic or Palestinian.

**N.B. Friday 11th November (AGM Day) is the deadline for hamper orders this year – order forms available on the website [www.mustardseed.org.uk](http://www.mustardseed.org.uk) or ring/email Karen at 01367 241707 or [karen@vogt.org.uk](mailto:karen@vogt.org.uk)**

### Outside sales

Outside sales at Blessed Hugh church have resumed this year but sadly not yet at St Denys', Stanford in the Vale. Again, online orders from some of these customers have helped us. There will be a market stall on 3 December, at the Christmas lights switch-on. Many thanks to those volunteers who are helping run them.

### Seekers' Light

We remain deeply grateful to Malcolm and Val for the very important contribution that Seekers' Light offers to making The Mustard Seed the successful Christian witness it is in Faringdon. Val comes over virtually every week to check the cards when the shop is open and Malcolm is always at the end of the phone for queries and orders of books. Keith Thrower has been instrumental in keeping the displays up to date at the Faringdon end, especially the Take Note offers through the year, and Sue keeps control of the regular orders of Bible study notes. The team who do the regular "Highworth run" on a Monday morning are crucial to this liaison. If anyone from other churches could volunteer to join this team, we would be extremely grateful – it's only about once every 6-8 weeks with a full team, just to take a box from The Mustard Seed to The Lighthouse and return with the new stock and any orders from the previous week – maximum an hour of your time, which can be reasonably flexible to suit your other commitments.

### Postage stamps

Sales continue to go very well. They are usually delivered to us within 24 hours of putting in the order, so if anyone wants a large number for any purpose, such as Christmas cards, just let Katie know. This year's Christmas stamps are now in stock, all with a religious theme so please take advantage and buy yours now.

### Free gift before Christmas

As has become traditional, we are offering a FREE jute bag to any customer spending £20 or more in the run-up to Christmas.

We both continue to be very grateful for everyone's support as we regain momentum after the pandemic.

Please do spread the word about ordering via the website, [www.mustardseed.org.uk](http://www.mustardseed.org.uk) or by emailing [karen@vogt.org.uk](mailto:karen@vogt.org.uk)

*Katie Foot and Karen Vogt*

### **Treasurer's Report for 2021/22:**

- Better than lockdown year – but still not up to pre-covid levels
- Seekers Light suffering in particular – book buying has gone out of fashion!
- Expenses under control
- Surplus up fm 0.7K to 2.7K

*Lois Chell  
Treasurer*

## **Election of Trustees, Directors & Committee Members**

**Trustees (Mustard Seed Oxon.):** Sjoerd Vogt, Richard Bolter, John Seedell

**Directors (Mustard Seed (Faringdon) Ltd.) :** Dave Headey, Katie Foot .

**Chairman:** Sjoerd Vogt ; **Managers:** Katie Foot/Karen Vogt ; **Treasurer:** Lois Chell

**Committee members:** The above four - plus Dave Headey, Richard Bolter, Malcolm and Val Swift, John Seedell. Total= nine . Keith also copied in on Meeting notes.

All existing officers and committee have agreed to continue in their current roles.

Proposed: Rosalind Burns. Seconded: Barbara Mapley . No dissent.

### **Appointment of Auditor/bookkeeper:**

Antony Akers from Alder, Demain & Akers have kindly agreed to provide their services as our accountants. Will be presented with their usual Christmas Hamper.

### **AOB and Open Discussion** ( will be taken forward to next committee meeting)

JP: Is there possibility of two-way flow between LTD & charity a/c? Answer: no. Only fm trading to charity.

JS asked if there's extra insurance on Bali stock? Answer: no. Stock value for reporting purposes is zero.

Need to rewrite till buttons (fading) .

KV worried about significant overlap between us and Tribe-Zero. Can't be helped.

Lots of TC items out-of-stock. Worried that there's something going on... Zoom calle end Nov – we may find out more. May need to find new suppliers.

KF: Repeat training needed on card machine.

KT: Books – real problem all over. Buying habits changing. Pple no longer buying books – and certainly not Christian books . Should we have fewer – and make bigger song & dance about them? Advertise them from the pulpit? Fr Claro listening... BM runs book stall at convent in Wantage – and gives discounts. But playing with pricing would NOT help in the shop – and set by Lighthouse.

BM: Security.... Is having one person in the shop enough?

SV: do we still need the covid screen? All agreed – should take it down now & be ready to put it up again if needed.

The meeting closed with the grace and this year was followed by shared supper.