



MUSTARD SEED 31st AGM
14 November 2025
 6.30pm: Blessed Hugh Church Hall

Present:	Apologies:	Apologies:	Apologies (contd):
Sjoerd Vogt (Chairman)	Gaynor & Nigel Archer	Denise Monk	Liz Kilpatrick
Katie Foot (Manager)	Brenda & David Barber	Jim & Helen Mynors	Maureen Courtney
Karen Vogt (Manager)	Angela & Mike Barrett	Ruth Seedell	Mark & Suzanna
Sue & Keith Thrower	Tim & Sharon Gerry	Libby/Michael Smedley	Greenwood
Dave Headey	Margaret & Eric Gutsell	David/Lyn Williamson	Jess Duarte
Lois Chell	Jill Headey	Jonathan & Barbara	Jill Bolter
Helen Jackson	Ann & Derek Jerome	Mapley	Taiye Ojo-Osagie
Richard Bolter	Geoff/Muriel	Maria Jukes	Peter Foot
Fr Claro	Loosemore	Jenny King	Rosalind Burns
John Seedell	Bruce & Carol Garfield	Emily Smith	Jason Cooke
(11 attended)	Ann White	Andrew Chell	Sarah Shewring

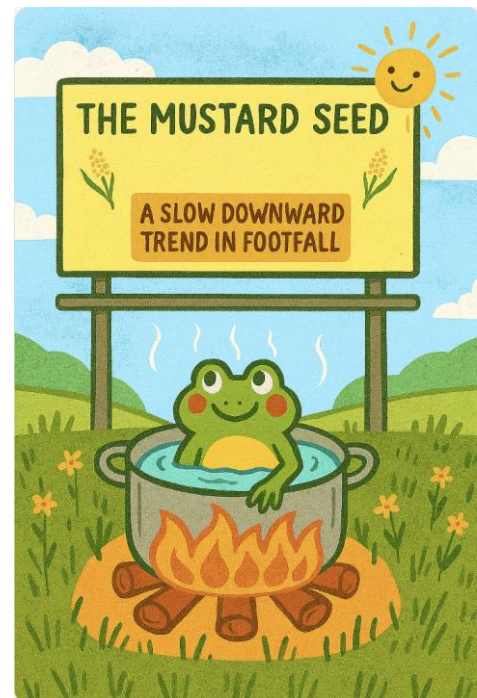
The meeting was opened with reading and prayer .

Minutes of the 30th AGM were signed as a correct record of the meeting held 15th Nov 2024 in the Barber Rooms. No items outstanding that are not discussed below.

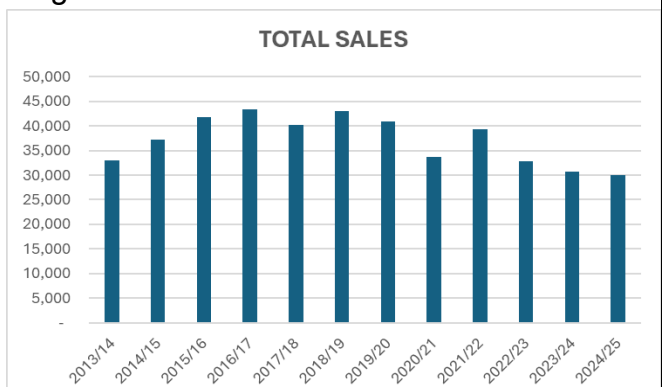
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CHALLENGES

Even though we're now a full three years out of lockdown, we continue to face a raft of challenges. Instead of having a single reliable supplier for our fairtrade goods (previously Traidcraft) we now have to work with more than a dozen suppliers – ALL of them less reliable - meaning significant frustration and extra work for Karen, and empty shelves in the shop. Basic goods such as sugar or coffee can be impossible to get hold of for months on end. Lower footfall in the town generally still means mornings only for most of the year; and inflation/increased prices translate to increased customer cost-sensitivity. And yet – we continue to survive! This is perhaps all the more surprising when we see what's happened to other fairtrade shops in Oxfordshire. The closure of all three FT shops in Oxford (including Fairtrade at St Michaels) over the past two years makes us acutely aware of the many challenges that we continue to face.



In May 2026, we will be celebrating an amazing 40 years since we first opened our doors on the other side of the Narrows. This makes us the third oldest shop in Faringdon (only Pat Thomas & Lilian's are older) . We all need to continue to rally together to ensure that the Mustard Seed will still be around for another 40 years!



FOOTFALL

Faringdon is much better off than many Market Towns of similar size – with new retail businesses continuing to take the plunge. It's a town centre that continues to evolve and we can help in steering the direction, but we certainly can't take anything for granted. We thank our amazing team for their resilience and their flexibility.

SALES

Very slightly down on previous year, but margins are up and costs are down. Therefore, we are still able to pay our bills and our cash flow remains healthy.

Nonetheless – we cannot be complacent.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS – see Managers' Report

THANKS

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

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

We thank the Committee, representing all the Churches Together.

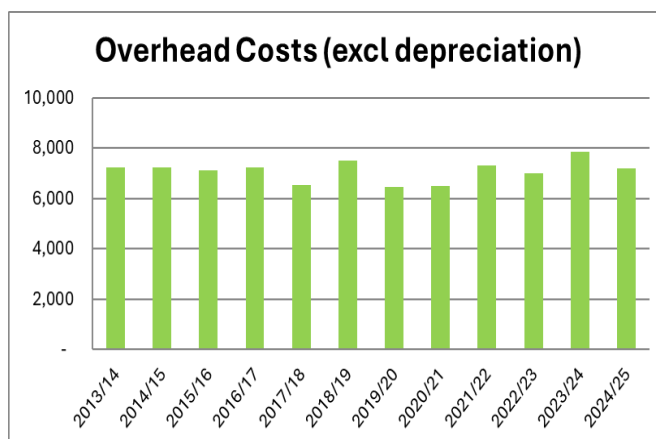
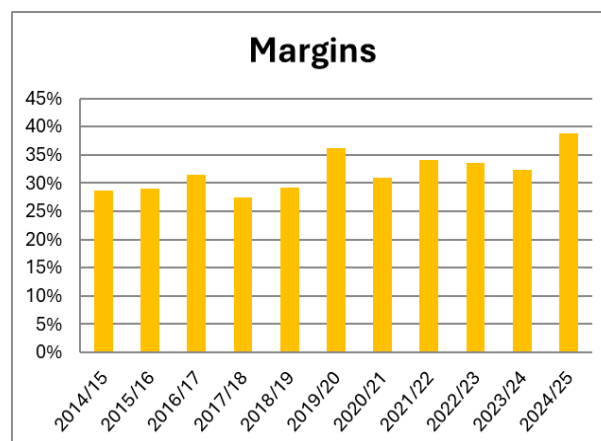
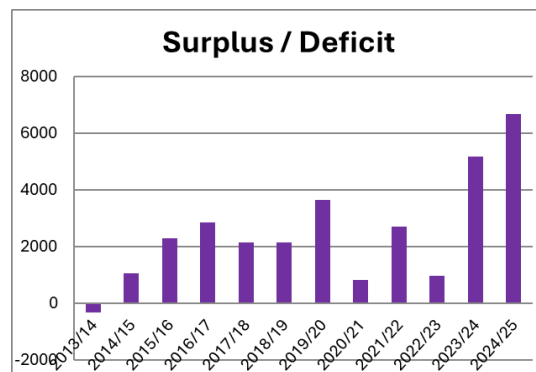
And we also get support from the wider community, for which we are very grateful.

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 2025

Managers' Report – Katie Foot and Karen Vogt

Once again, the shop was open all year, from 9am to 1pm Mondays to Saturdays, and in December we were also able to remain open until 4pm Tuesdays to Saturdays, thanks to our wonderful team of assistants. Denise has had to step back from her second Saturday (but does all Fridays instead) but Katie has been able to take that on. Jim remains as our stand-by which is most helpful.

Sarah Shewring, at Cornerstone Christian Centre in Grove, has been incredibly helpful during the year, ordering books, providing cards, calendars, diaries and other items for us, and Katie, Sue and Karen have been able to go over when the card reps come every few months to help order new stock. Unfortunately, as Cornerstone are registered for VAT, it is no longer practicable for them to order fairtrade goods through us, as the mark-up has to be too high.

Keeping the shop supplied with fairtrade foods continues to be a challenge, but crafts and gifts are easier to source. Toilet rolls can be ordered in boxes of 45 and now also in bags of 4.

A stall was held in the Corn Exchange on Faringdon's Big Green Day in June and at the Farmers Market during Fairtrade Fortnight in October. Blessed Hugh church also has a sale after Mass on the first Sunday of each month, although St Denys, Stanford in the Vale have not been able to have any this year as no volunteers have come forward. The Big Bali Bonanza in the Corn Exchange last November was not quite the success of the 2023 one, owing to a smaller selection of items, but we still made a good profit.

As agreed by the Management Committee, grants were given from the charity account to Faringdon Day Centre (which celebrated its 40th anniversary this year) and the MavkaFest Ukrainian cultural weekend in May, so well organised again by Anastasia Nemchuk.

We are also very appreciative of our window dressers for their attractive displays throughout the year and were pleased to have Anna Greenwood join the team recently. Lois Chell is to be highly praised and thanked for her hard work keeping the books in order and arranging for the accounts to be audited by Alder Demain Akers free of charge. Thank you to all our volunteers!

We remain very grateful for the support from members of all the churches and community in Faringdon and the Vale, both as volunteers and customers – long may that continue!

Katie Foot and Karen Vogt

Treasurer's Report for 2024/25: See separate Year-End P&L

- Expenses under control – and cashflow fine.
- Income very slightly down – but margins healthy – primarily due to move from Lighthouse to Cornerstone
- Still able to show a surplus. This year 2.2K – slightly less than last year – but this difference is simply due to stock levels

*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: John Seedell. Seconded: Helen Jackson . 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)

Charitable donations summary on noticeboard very useful; impressive 54K .

Leaflet explaining the MS – that we're a charity and that all profits also go to local charities.

KF will circulate and produce copies.

"Last Shop Standing" presentations in the various churches seem to be having an effect...

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