



the Nibbler

Newsletter of Sound Bites
Derby's independent wholefood grocery
A not-for-profit workers' co-operative

WORKING UPDATE

Well.... Where to begin? At the beginning I suppose.

Last year was somewhat challenging with our floor refurbishment work as the floorboards at the front of the building were collapsing from damp. Our landlord refused to contribute anything toward the cost, and we were closed for just over 2 weeks, which made this a significant investment!

Now, this year! Things happened pretty wildly and quickly in March; the looming possibility of a lockdown created something of a boom for 2 weeks of folks stocking up on longer life staples (we've truly never seen so many people wanting dry beans....). The country just about ran out of toilet roll, followed quickly by hand sanitiser. We were inundated with delivery orders, more than 5 times the normal volume, so we took the decision to close the physical shop so that we could allocate folks to getting those orders picked and packed. My favourite statistic to mention here is that one person ordered 107 litres of soya milk in the space of 3 weeks!!!

We continued to offer door service throughout; we're an essential shop and many of our lovely customers rely on us being the only place they can find specific items, so we wanted to make sure we could still fill that role—but with such a small premises we just couldn't have people in at that time. As everything has calmed down significantly in the last few months we've been able to open the shop back up again, Thursday-Saturday 10am-4pm for anyone wanting to browse. We've asked that everyone that is able to will wear a face mask, and to use provided hand sanitiser at the door, while also limiting capacity—this is working well so far.

**Remember... Home Delivery
Veg Boxes & Bulk Discounts!**

It has been really nice to see our regular customers in person again, and catch up on things that have gone on over the last 5 months. We also know that many of our customers will be long term shielding at home for the foreseeable future, which is really sad for us and our friendships that have been built, but is absolutely the right decision to make.

The future is very much unknown, many small businesses have closed, many branches of huge businesses have closed. Derby high-street is getting bleaker by the month with empty shop fronts and the very obvious and important shift toward online retail as a health care measure, not just for convenience.

Thank you!
FOR SUPPORTING THIS
small business

So, where does that leave us? Well, we're trading a LOT less than we normally would, even with deliveries being higher. People working from home means our usual lunch time offerings are no longer required, and we've seen a big shift away from 'immediately consumable' items and toward longer life staples, even from people physically shopping in store. At some point we expect to be open 6 days a week again, but we're just taking that a week at a time and will keep everyone updated in due course. Like most of you, we're finding it difficult to plan ahead!

Small independent businesses will be affected more deeply than big businesses. We don't have big pockets from other stores or offshore banks to support us through the tough times. We're a not-for-profit so any surplus income has always gone back into reinvesting in the business, replacing equipment etc, we don't have a bonus scheme or shareholders, ALL our staff are paid the minimum wage hourly. We just hope to break even, so we can keep on existing. It is hard work, and we do it because we're passionate about there being somewhere for people to shop ethically in Derby. Organic, fair trade, locally made, cruelty free, vegan, these are our benchmarks, which obviously resonate with many of you too.



I'll leave you with the take home message that, where possible, try and support the little guy. Your friends that sell hand made jewellery on Etsy, your local bakers that have stalls at farmers markets, the charities you love which are not able to hold their normal fundraising events you buy cake at. It all matters, now more than ever ♥

What's.....New?

On the Shelves

It is really important to us to keep on top of the great new releases, so we can make sure our customers get to try out the super interesting alternatives, making zero waste, organic, and ethical living that little bit easier. Take a look:

- ◆ FINALLY, we have a replacement organic brown sauce from Biona, in lovely recyclable glass jars
- ◆ Humble bamboo toothpicks and toothy tabs with fluoride have been added to our zero-waste bodycare section
- ◆ While we've been reducing a lot of the 'shorter dated' chilled range, we also been enjoying some fresh new items, like sliced pepperoni, smoked cheese and hotdogs
- ◆ Booja Booja added Honeycomb Caramel and Mint Choc Truffle ice creams to their range of big tubs, and Naturli have a Raspberry Choc Chip tub now too
- ◆ Our incredibly popular range of cakes from Clemie's is currently found in the freezer—it remains super important for us to keep supporting indie businesses where possible, and this helps us reduce food waste. **Find new flavours!**