



Chairperson's Annual Report

Dobcross Village Society Ltd

Annual Members' Meeting 13 September 2026

Executive Summary: The Heart of the Village

Another year on, and Dobcross Village Society continues to go from strength to strength. Last year we reflected on our journey of formation and transformation: securing the future of our village store and Post Office, establishing our community co-operative and transforming the shop into something the whole village could be proud of.

This year, our focus has evolved and we have a new mission: **To be the heart of the village.**

That means being more than simply a shop and Post Office. It means creating a welcoming place that brings people together, supports village life and provides something of genuine value to the whole community.

Our membership has grown, our volunteer team has increased, our customer base continues to develop, and the shop continues to improve. Most importantly, the community continues to support what we are doing. There is still plenty of work ahead, but we should be very proud of how far we have come.

Trading Overview: Building a Sustainable Community Business

Trading remains positive, with annual revenue now reaching approximately **£227,000**.

This is another encouraging result and reflects the continued support of our customers, members, volunteers and the wider village.

Our focus is not simply on increasing turnover, but on building a strong and sustainable community business. We continue to look at our product range, local suppliers, customer service and the overall standards within the shop to make sure that we offer the best possible service to our community. Our Post Office remains an essential part of village life, providing convenient access to important services alongside the shop.



Dobcross Village Society Ltd

The 'Dobcross Village Society Ltd' is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration no. 9169. Trading as the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office. A member of The Plunkett Foundation.



**Funded by
UK Government**

We have also enjoyed another successful **Whit Friday**, with the shop and our volunteers once again playing their part in one of the biggest days in the village calendar.

Our **Taste of Christmas** event was another highlight and demonstrated what can be achieved when the shop, local suppliers and community come together. We hope to build on its success and hold the event again this Christmas.

Volunteers: At the Heart of What We Do

Our volunteer team has continued to grow during the year, including a number of helpers who contribute their time and skills in different ways. This is hugely important to the Society. Volunteers enable us to do things that simply wouldn't otherwise be possible and bring an enormous range of skills, enthusiasm and experience.

We have also refreshed the **Management Committee**, welcoming new people while retaining the experience, knowledge and support of members of the existing team. This combination of new ideas and established experience gives us a strong foundation for the next stage of the Society's development.

To everyone who has volunteered, helped at an event, joined a working group, supported the committee or simply stepped in when something needed doing: **thank you**.

Refurbishment and Shop Standards: Continuing to Improve

The major refurbishment may be behind us, but improving the shop certainly isn't. We continue to make changes and improvements to the space, learning from our experience and responding to the needs of customers, staff and volunteers.

A particular focus now is on standards — ensuring the shop is consistently welcoming, well presented, well stocked and somewhere that people enjoy visiting. The transformation gave us a fantastic platform. Our job now is to maintain it, improve it and make the most of it.

Media and Communications: Keeping the Village Connected

Our social media continues to perform well and remains an important way of communicating what is happening in the shop and across the Society.

It allows us to promote products and events, celebrate our volunteers and local suppliers, share village news and, importantly, show the personality behind our community-owned business. The shop is at its best when it connects people, and



Dobcross Village Society Ltd

The 'Dobcross Village Society Ltd' is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration no. 9169. Trading as the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office. A member of The Plunkett Foundation.



**Funded by
UK Government**

our social media and wider communications help us extend that connection beyond the shop itself.

Co-operative Benefits: Part of a Bigger Picture

Dobcross Village Society Ltd remains a Community Benefit Society, meaning the business is owned and controlled by its members. That principle remains as important today as it was when the Society was formed.

Community ownership gives local people a genuine stake in the future of an important village asset. It also means that our success is measured by more than financial performance alone. It is measured by the value we create for Dobcross and the people who live here.

The strength of the Society comes from the involvement of its members, customers, staff, volunteers and Management Committee — people working together for the benefit of their community.

Membership and Loyalty: Turning Support into Ownership

One of the clearest signs of the support for the shop has been the continued growth of our loyalty scheme.

We now have more than **800 loyalty card holders**, compared with almost 600 at the time of last year's report. Loyalty card use has increased steadily, although that growth has plateaued during the summer season. This gives us an opportunity to look at how we can re-engage existing card holders as well as encourage new customers to participate.

We have also welcomed some new shareholders during the year. Our next challenge is to build on the very strong loyalty card membership and encourage more of those supporters to take the next step and **become share members of Dobcross Village Society**.

A loyalty card demonstrates support for the shop. Becoming a member means becoming an owner and having a genuine stake and voice in its future.

The Future: Being the Heart of the Village

We have achieved a great deal in a relatively short period. The first stage was about securing the shop and Post Office for Dobcross. The second was about transforming it. **The next stage is about making it the heart of the village.**

That means continuing to improve the shop, maintaining high standards, growing our membership, strengthening our volunteer community and creating more reasons for people to visit, participate and get involved.



Dobcross Village Society Ltd

The 'Dobcross Village Society Ltd' is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration no. 9169. Trading as the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office. A member of The Plunkett Foundation.



**Funded by
UK Government**

It means continuing successful community events such as Whit Friday and Taste of Christmas, while looking for new opportunities to bring people together. And it means converting the enormous goodwill towards the shop into greater participation and ownership.

With more than 800 loyalty card holders, a growing volunteer team, new shareholders and a refreshed Management Committee, we have a fantastic platform from which to do that.

Appreciation: Thank You

None of this happens by itself.

Thank you to our staff, who keep the shop and Post Office running day after day – with special mention to Tim Newbold who stepped down from his role as shop manager, and who was instrumental in getting the new business up and running.

Thank you to our growing team of volunteers and helpers who give their time so generously.

Thank you to the Management Committee — both those who have recently joined and those whose experience and support continue to be invaluable.

Thank you to our members, customers, local suppliers and everyone who attends our events, uses the shop, collects a parcel, buys a pint of milk, recommends us to a neighbour or simply calls in for a chat.

Every one of those little things matters.

Dobcross Village Society belongs to its community, and its continued success depends upon that community choosing to be part of it. Our ambition for the coming year is simple: **To be the heart of the village.**

And together, we are well on our way.

Nathan Beckwith

Chair, Dobcross Village Society Limited

September 2026



Dobcross Village Society Ltd

The 'Dobcross Village Society Ltd' is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration no. 9169. Trading as the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office. A member of The Plunkett Foundation.



**Funded by
UK Government**