**MARKET TO YOUR DOOR**

After spending lockdown delivering in and around the Newent area and chatting on the doorsteps of our customers, we (Sue & Charlotte) realised the lack of shops or bus services in any of the small villages we visited. The population also has a high percentage of older people many of whom live alone. The idea of a mobile shop began to immerge and when suggested to customers, received a very positive response.

We set about crowdfunding and subsequently purchased and converted an ex-library van with disabled access and Market to your door was born! We began trading in August 2021. We continue to offer a delivery service, send a weekly email detailing availability of produce and enabling pre-orders for those who want this. Or people can just drop in and shop!

We currently visit 7 locations with a total of 10 markets a month. Another location is just being finalised and we have had to turn down a number mainly too due to a lack of manpower.

This was always intended as a mutually beneficial venture. The village halls we visit provide refreshments allowing them to earn a revenue whilst bringing the community together and in turn, they allow us to park free of charge.

The service is run on an entirely voluntary basis with Sue & Char paying the same percentage as other producers to sell their own produce. We have a little bit of voluntary help too for some deliveries.

We support and procure produce and crafts from very small local businesses (50+ currently) who for the most part pay a small percentage which goes directly into the running costs of the vehicle. A few sell at trade price allowing us a small profit on those goods which also goes to the running costs. The latter are high. Insurance, fuel, maintenance and a hefty street trade licence fee all add up. We do not aim to make a profit whilst enabling individual producers to do so.

Procuring goods locally also ensures low air miles and as the majority of our goods are also plastic free, we aim to be as environmentally friendly as possible. We stock a large range of produce to include fresh fruit & veg, meat, cheese, eggs, preserves, bread, home cooked food and an eclectic craft range.

We have a fantastic and very loyal customer base and each week we have new faces arriving who both sign up to the email and become repeat customers. We believe this shows that this service is both wanted and is working and we’re extremely grateful to all those who continue to support us.