

2014 ASHBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 2013-14 ASHBY HEATING OIL SYNDICATE REPORT

Parishioners may recall that at last year's Annual Parish meeting it was reported a locally-operated system was to be run on behalf of Ashby's parish council to replace the AF Affinity scheme run by the Norfolk Rural Community Council. Hence the Ashby Heating Oil Syndicate was formed. There is no formal membership of this community-based syndicate. As a Parish Council-led initiative, it is free for parishioners to join and become a part of and on behalf of the parish council I am its organiser.

This is a summary of how our local system operates.

- First a parishioner needs to join the syndicate by providing me with their name, full address, both landline and mobile numbers, and an email address.
- Depending on the amount of demand for heating oil by syndicate members, I give notice by email to the whole group of when a bulk-buy oil purchase is imminent.
- Any member wanting to order oil advises me by email how many litres they wish to order.
- On a previously notified day, I negotiate the cheapest bulk-buy price per litre I can. Not surprisingly this is usually dependent on the total amount of litres required.
- I then telephone members who have ordered oil with the price I have negotiated, check they are content to proceed and advise which company (and the name of its representative) members need to telephone and contact.
- I do not handle or take any payments from anyone. Payment for their individual oil order is carried out between each member and the company direct.

By the date of last year's APM in May the scheme was in its infancy with its first order having already taken place. As of today I am pleased to report it has evolved into a successful operation that has made great savings for those parishioners who have kindly, and trustingly, supported it.

Three orders have been placed in the last 12 months. The syndicate has risen to 25 members who, since it started, have placed 2, 3 or 4 orders each. Bulk orders have ranged between 5,600-10,100 litres. My records show if any individual member had ordered 500 litres of oil (the legal minimum amount that tankers can dispense now) the savings made by buying via our syndicate have ranged between 3.2p to a staggering 7p per litre. Those figures equate to potential savings of between £32 and £70 per 1000 litres ordered.

If this has persuaded parishioners using oil to join our growing syndicate the Parish Council will gladly welcome them on board - since the larger the order, the greater the potential savings. As the organiser of this parish council service, I will happily explain more to anyone who wishes to know about the syndicate, or a factsheet is available giving full details.

It is clear the Ashby Heating Oil Syndicate has been of benefit to many of its community and therefore a success so far, and more members will be warmly welcomed.

Mark Rolph - Parish Councillor