

2015 ASHBY APM – 2014-15 ASHBY HEATING OIL SYNDICATE REPORT

This village-operated, community-based syndicate was introduced by Ashby St Mary parish council in May 2013.

As a parish council-led initiative to provide a service to its residents, it not only continues but is steadily flourishing. The Ashby Heating Oil Syndicate has no formal membership – it is completely free for parishioners to join and I currently am its organiser on behalf of the parish council.

The successful running of the syndicate is based on several factors - there are two which are worthy of mention.

The first is it relies on a measure of trust between the organiser and each syndicate member. The member trusts the organiser to obtain the best oil litre price possible, while the organiser expects the member to accept what he has negotiated on their behalf.

Secondly, the organiser does not handle or take payments from anyone. The syndicate member is in control of this. Payment for their individual oil order is carried out between the syndicate members and the company, direct.

Basically the syndicate organiser does everything for the members, except pay!

The syndicate has evolved into a successful operation that has made great savings for those parishioners who have kindly, and trustingly, supported it.

The first order was placed in May 2013 and there have been 8 since, of which 5 were in the last 12 months as the barrel price of oil fell. The most recent order was placed earlier this week.

Orders this year have ranged between 3,150-15,100 litres and totalled over 50,000 litres with the price per litre ranging between 49p to 36.7p. To date the price negotiated has always reduced – a record which will inevitably end one day soon.

My records show if any individual member had ordered the legal deliverable minimum of 500 litres of oil, the savings made by buying via our syndicate have ranged between 2.5p to 7.58p per litre – that's potential savings of between £25 and £76 per 1000 litres ordered. So the savings made from the average 3 orders per year are obvious and worthwhile.

I can report the syndicate membership has risen from 25 to 30 members this year, most of whom have placed several orders each. The existing members have been pleased with the savings benefits, so the message is please point non-member domestic oil users in the right direction as they will be warmly welcomed into the fold. As this is a free community service, as its organiser, I will be pleased to explain more to anyone interested, or a factsheet is available giving full details.

That concludes my 2015 Ashby Heating Oil Syndicate report.

Mark Rolph - Parish Councillor

- 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 an individual's oil order is carried out between each member and the company direct.