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CMKC Newsletter

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Our new shop!

By Dominic Hunter

Photo: Alex Fox

In our last issue we told you about our forthcoming shop project, well the wait is almost over, so we thought we would give you the full background and tell you about some of the wonderful new friends we have made in the process.

The shop has only come about with the very generous support of two key organisations and some good old fashioned luck. In 2011 MK Community Foundation celebrated its 25th Anniversary. We were lucky enough to be a beneficiary of a grant for £25,000 to fund the creation of our shop. MK Community Foundation has been a wonderful friend to CMKC throughout its 25 year existence and we were delighted to be awarded this grant. This was a fantastic opportunity for us and fuelled our enthusiasm to create the best possible experience for our residents, as well as the customers that we hope will enjoy visiting the shop.

However, to be able to deliver on what we wanted to achieve, £25,000 was not going to be enough money. We considered

other options and recognised that further fund raising may delay the project too far, so we were considering down-scaling our aspirations.

Meanwhile, our second stroke of luck occurred when a regular patron to our café, Lynn Lilley was discussing our shop project with our Café Manager Julia Funge. Lynn said that she may be able to put us in touch with some local businesses and retailers that may be able to help. One of these contacts was Sarah Lipscomb, a Senior Project Manager at EC Harris, a leading Built Asset Consultancy with offices here in Milton Keynes. Part of the international Arcadis group, EC Harris has a history of altruistic projects alongside their commercial ventures. Sarah came to visit CMKC and saw what we were trying to achieve. She saw how dedicated the co-workers and residents all were and how the shop

would be a project that could enrich the lives of those that lived and worked here, as well as benefiting the local community.

Behind the scenes, Sarah took her idea to her Managers, who in turn gave her authority to charm and cajole some of EC Harris's contacts to support CMKC's shop project. Sarah made us a wonderful offer: EC Harris would source suppliers and contractors to complete the project for us, these suppliers and contractors would in turn supply raw materials and labour and she would project manage this for us. She confirmed that EC Harris could carry out all of this work for us for free.

We were of course delighted and overwhelmed by this amazing generosity and gratefully accepted. Bridgford Interiors completed the strip out, Portview supplied all the materials and labour to fit the shop out including a new access ramp to the front entrance and a complete office space back of house and Nuttall provided all the shop fittings.

