

BROMLEY PARISH CHURCH

ST. PETER & ST. PAUL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRAIDCRAFT STALL 2017

I have continued to run the Traidcraft Stall at the Saturday Coffee Morning and on many Sundays after the Service. Alec Thompson, who enrolled the church as a Fairtrader, has retired to a residential home and I miss his faithful encouragement and practical help and alone am sadly not able to guarantee a weekly Saturday stall.

Total sales are down year on year but were a healthy £4,823.57. Saturday sales at £1,589.50 far exceed those on Sunday with many customers from Bromley College or from outside our own congregation. They buy mainly cards and crafts, coffee and biscuits. Sunday sales (£943.55) continue to decrease to the extent that it has become less viable to stock a number of perishable items. Some Sundays I sell nothing at all and, while that does not concern me personally, it does mean that I have failed to convey the message outlined at length in last year's Report**. It is ironic that this decline has come as supermarkets are stocking less and less fairtrade products or are changing to their own less rigorous schemes.

On the positive side the request to sign a letter to Sainsbury's regarding their change in policy was immediate, which shows that we do care when challenged. The other positive thing was that four or five people placed orders for clothes and gift items which, with other orders, amounted to £1,789.72. Some orders were generated at the Open House event which brought in £300 sales. I am also aware that some members of the congregation order online (despite Traidcraft's current website problems). It is also good to have the active support of our clergy, which is a great encouragement.

We have divided our surplus each year between Christian Aid and Traidcraft's charity Traidcraft Exchange. The high level of orders plus a reduction in the amount of stock carried, enabled me to send £500 to each of these charities at the end of the year.

Margaret Elves

**I am sure that some of our generous customers believe they are supporting a charity. Of course, any surplus we make does go to the charity. However, Traidcraft is about something far more radical. It is about creating a trading environment which treats everyone in the supply chain justly, which is transparent and sustainable, and in which customers too know that they are getting a fair purchase. This is radical stuff. As radical as the Gospel we aspire to live by.

One of the founding principles behind Traidcraft was, and still is, to demonstrate that it is possible to trade ethically in a commercial market. For this to happen, consumers have to have a different mindset than one which looks for the cheapest product regardless of the cost to producers or the environment. This mindset has infected us all and indeed it is difficult to shop ethically as most supply chains are far from transparent. There are just a handful of super-multinational companies which control everything.
(Annual Report 2016)