

Case Study

Friends of Fairfield and Lechlade Communities

Friends of Fairfield and Lechlade Communities charity supports the care and wellbeing of people in their community by bringing healthcare as close to home as possible and working against loneliness and isolation. It is a volunteer-led charity providing health and social care to its local Gloucestershire community.

Its team of community nurses provide an end-of-life nursing service, and its volunteer drivers provide transport to medical appointments, and run a prescription collection service. The charity hosts a Bereavement Café, lunch club, and a range of community and fundraising events throughout the year. Friends of Fairfield's (FoF) charity shop was opened to provide regular income to support the charity's services, as well as providing an additional retail outlet for local shoppers.



The challenge

The charity shop previously used a basic till that was donated in 2021, which relied on volunteer's imputing figures manually, and was overseen by a manager at the end of each day. Card payments were taken on a separate device, and sales figures were recorded, by hand, on paper, which was then transferred to a spreadsheet offsite each week and shared electronically. This was a time-consuming process that relied on volunteers recording data accurately.

Income from Gift Aid was increasing rapidly, however it was at the detriment of hours being used for admin and accounting and was impacting on the time necessary to keep up with the work that needed to be done using a paper-based system. This admin-intensive process was timely and complicated for the team.

The charity researched ways of making these processes more streamlined and simpler for the customer, volunteers and staff, and an EPOS system seemed the obvious solution. A new electronic system would not only refine the Gift Aid process, but it would also remove a huge amount of paper-based admin, enabling the whole retail team to access sales figures from any location – identifying performance and sales trends, maximising income and increasing Gift Aid sign-ups.

Managers at FoF wanted to make the running of the shop easier, use time more efficiently and make processes simpler for volunteers, staff and customers. To do this, a more modern approach was needed, and it was recognised that a charity retail system would be of huge benefit to the charity in achieving these aims, as well as making sales and gift aid data more accurate and reliable for accounting purposes. However, budget constraints meant that the charity was unable to invest in the calibre of system that they required. That was until they spotted Kudos' 'Free POS' initiative - offering one small charity the chance of a free charity retail system for three years.



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Registered Charity Number: 1180059

Free POS Initiative

The charity put together a comprehensive application form, which was reviewed by the judging panel comprising Sarah Dodd from Kudos, Anna Phillips from Foot Anstey LLP, and Susan Meradith from the Charity Retail Association. The shortlist selection process was rigorous, and the three finalists were anonymised for the judging panel. The judges found it incredibly challenging to compare the applications, as all the charities were doing exceptional work, and each application was deserving of support. But in the end, the judges agreed that The Friends of Friends of Fairford and Lechlade Communities were worthy winners.

Kelly Smith, FoF General Manager said 'I started 3 years ago and knew there was room for improvement but never had the financial funding to invest in the improvements. There are so many financial overheads associated with running a charity shop and it is wonderful to save the money we would have spent on a system. More of the proceeds from the shop can be used for the charity, and services won't be affected by the loss of income.'

'It is a golden ticket to be gifted a retail system and not have to pay for it. For over 10 years our shop has been the same. Using Kudos will modernise the shop operations and everything will be swifter and better for the shop team and customers. Volunteers' lives will be made easier, and their workload will be lighter because of using Kudos.'

The solution

After the initial paperwork was drawn up, FoF were introduced to the Kudos project implementation and training team. The team was quickly able to identify the hardware and system configuration suitable for FoF. The next steps were to go through the process of training and onboarding the retail team, ready for the simple system implementation.

Linda, Shop Manager said *'We received a remote introduction session from the training team, which was a useful overview, and then we set up the system just before Christmas. I was surprised how simple it was to set up and install. The Kudos trainers provided simple instructions, and all the hardware was labelled, which made it easy to unbox and install. It was surprisingly easy to set up the system myself.'*

The shop team started using the system on 2nd January 2025 as they wanted to begin the new year with Kudos, which was also in line with their accounting period. The whole team came together to sort stock, pricing and labelling and in a very short amount of time they had over half their stock labelled for gift aid.

The Kudos support team were on-hand to guide and support FoF with any queries they had. Shop Manager, Linda, was delighted by the support her team received, saying *'The Kudos tech support team is amazing, we only had to call them a few times at the beginning as the system was really easy to use, but when we did call to double-check some details, they were really great at helping us.'*

Some of the volunteers were concerned that the system might be complicated to use, so FoF set aside some time to familiarise them with the system, practicing labelling and using the software, but they needn't have worried, Kudos is very straightforward and volunteer friendly.

Linda said *'I've worked in retail for 25 years and found the till very simple to learn, but what is great is that our volunteers, of all ages and experience, have also commented on how easy it is to use. One elderly volunteer was concerned he may have to retire as he thought Kudos may be too complicated for him to use, but his mind was soon put at rest when he started to use the system.'*

Happy volunteers and customers

Linda was delighted that the system is so simple to use and improves accuracy.

'We've already seen fewer mistakes, for example we've had no instances of cash/card discrepancies, which saves admin and accounting time. Kudos has made life simpler for me, our volunteers and back office. I can't fault Kudos; the tech support team are amazing.'

With the introduction of the Kudos system, the customer journey has also improved because FoF can now scan and input items, rather than doing everything manually. For example, customers now get offered a receipt for the first time, and donors will start to receive 'thank you' letters making their experience so much better than before.



The time Managers previously used for admin can now be used for other tasks. For example, FoF are now able to share business intelligence and can use data to boost sales and target areas, including stock analysis, pricing strategy and processing, refunds and donations. This analysis facilitates better floor layouts and displays, and stock management, giving volunteers more time with customers, and, on the administration side, improving data management - identifying where they can increase sales and focus on other charitable services, which is something they struggled to do before.

Kelly said 'The team are thrilled that there will be less paperwork - we can modernise and upgrade the processes we use and become more professional and businesslike in what we do, we pride ourselves on doing well, and this is a huge bonus. Kudos will transform the lives of our managers, volunteers, back office and customers and we are looking forward to seeing the difference the system makes.'