

Village Shop Survey Results

Thirty two percent of the households in the Parish have completed survey forms. In statistical terms this is considered a very good response. Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to complete and submit the forms.

Of the 113 returns ONLY ONE person was against the idea of a village shop.
55 people offered to help in the shop. (East Budleigh operates with 30 volunteers.)
Only 9 objected to the idea of using the Village Hall.
80 offered to buy £50 bonds and some offered to buy several bonds.
28 offered specialist help.

I think you will all agree that this is a very positive result !

However you will all have seen by now the statement put out by the Village Hall Committee in the current Parish News. It would appear that the Hall Committee have made the decision to refuse use of the Committee Room before hearing any proposal and before learning the result of the survey which was organised specifically at the request of the Hall Chairman who wished to know whether the shop suggestion was backed by the Village.

We must emphasise that the Village Hall Committee has not received any firm proposals from the ad hoc group (there is as yet no official Shop Committee) regarding use of the Committee Room. The ad hoc group had simply come to the conclusion that this room was the only available option and were considering whether it would be viable. The Hall Committee has not asked for any specific representation or proposal.

The reasons given by the Hall Committee for refusing to consider use of the Committee Room as set out in their statement in the Parish News do require response:

No viable business plan for the proposed Community Shop has been available to date - We obviously could not prepare a business plan before ascertaining whether premises were available and at what cost.

Pedestrian/road safety concerns over access to Fore Street from the Committee Room - Pedestrian access has been discussed with our advisor from the Plunket Foundation and he was in full agreement with our proposal to block the current access to the road edge with a non-opening gate which could, however, be lifted off in case of use of the Hall Fire Escape door.

Customer parking ie. Added congestion within Fore Street from potential customer's vehicles - The whole idea for the shop would have been to serve the local residents not to draw in people from outside the Village. Parking was not an obvious problem when the shop was across the street.

Deliveries - where will lorries/vans unload - This has not yet been discussed and would have

been considered, if there had been an official proposal.

Seeking approval from residents within Ropers Lane and Fore Street whose properties neighbour the Hall - All residents were provided with the survey and the subject was on the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting to enable any one concerned to raise problems. In addition the one property directly backing on to the Hall has already been contacted.

Provision of separate utilities, nominal rent, etc. - It has always been accepted that rent would be paid for use of the premises and that we would have to provide separate metering for the utilities.

The statement from the Hall Committee also suggests the outbuildings behind the Hall could be utilised for a shop however we had already considered this area and concluded that it was not big enough and that access would certainly not meet Health and Safety requirements.

It would appear therefore that, following the Village Hall Committee decision, the idea for setting up a Community Shop in Otterton has no future. Unless YOU think differently and would be prepared to be part of an official "Shop Committee" which could consider, and perhaps act on, the wishes of the Village. If this idea interests you, then please contact Viv Price on 568189

Viv Price
John Edmonds