

## PARRACOMBE VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE QUESTIONNAIRE - JUNE 2017

### RESULTS ANALYSIS

#### AIM

To undertake a fact-finding exercise following Kevin and Jean's announcement of their intention to close of the village shop in November 2017.

#### Purpose

To assist the Parish Council in establishing whether the local community want a shop and post office facility to remain in the village.

#### Objectives

To enable the Parish Council to form an appropriate action plan based on feedback from the community and co-ordinate this with the current shop's proposed closure.

#### Methodology

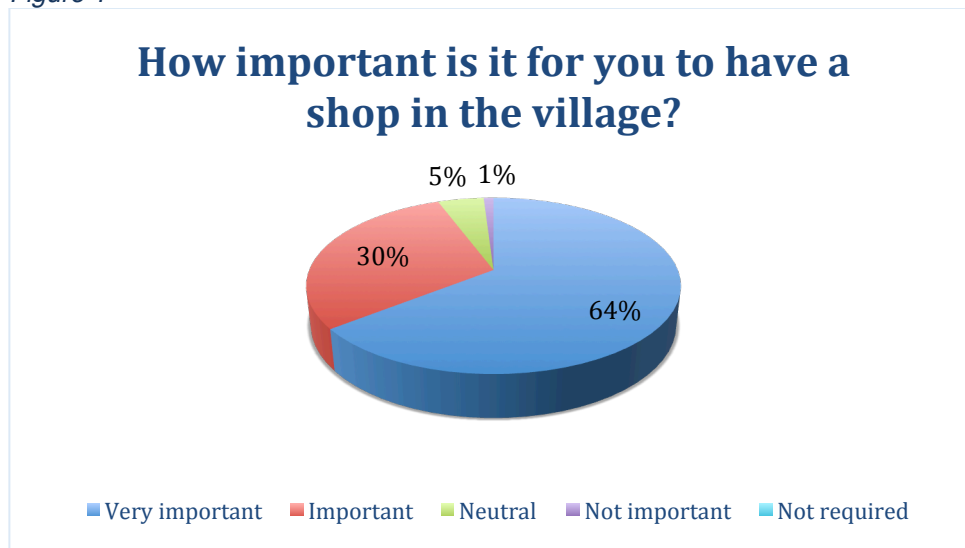
On 26/27 May a questionnaire was created (Appendix A) and circulated around the village, door-to-door, via the village website and an online link. Further copies were also made available at the shop, school and pub. Responses were collected on 9 June 2017.

#### Results

There were 64 replies from 130 questionnaires delivered around the village, around a 49% response.

**Question 1** – *Figure 1*. 94% of respondents viewed having a shop in the village as very important or important, 6% neutral or not important and 0% not required.

*Figure 1*



**Question 2** – *Figure 2*. 92% of respondents used the shop regularly or occasionally, 6% rarely, 0% unlikely to use and 2% never.

**Question 3** – *Figure 3*. 55% would be more likely to use the shop if it sold different food/drink while 31% would not and 14% were neutral.

Figure 2

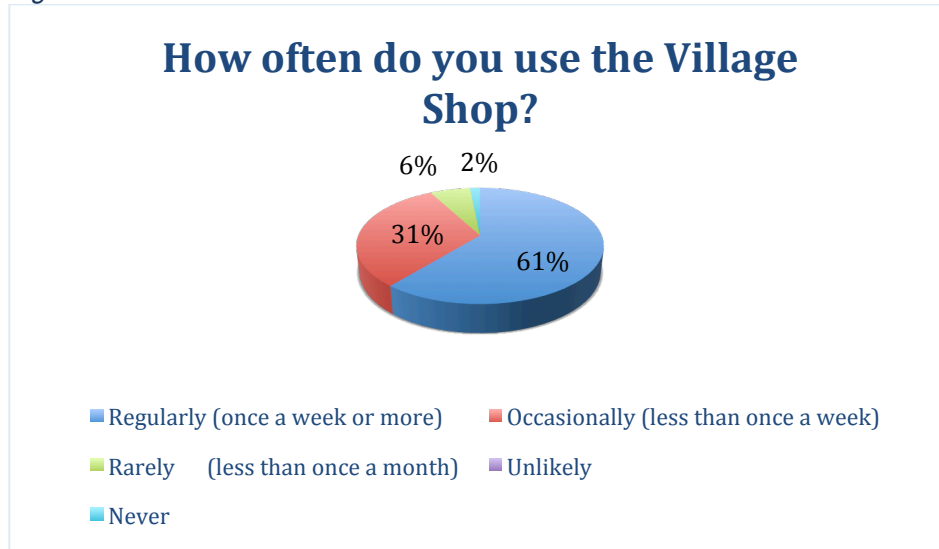
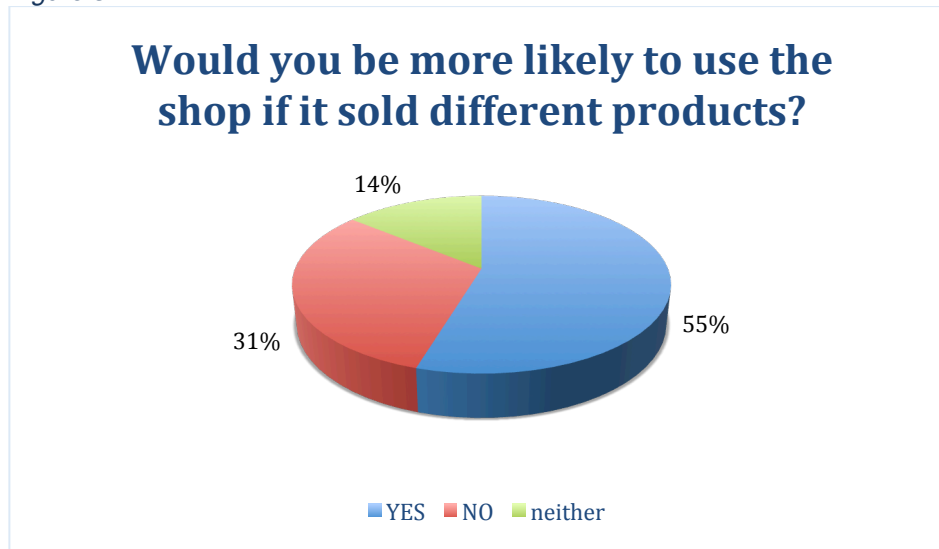


Figure 3



**Question 4 - Figure 4.** The 5 most popular items that would be bought from a village shop were basic items and groceries:

- 1 Bread and bakery 75%
- 2 Milk 63%
- 3 Newspapers 52%
- 4 Vegetables 47%
- 5 Fruit 39%

There were 8 further items which scored between 10% and 30% - Meat (mostly bacon), cheese, eggs, cards/postcards, sweets/chocolates, deli, local produce, wine.

An additional 44 suggestions scored less than 10% - biscuits, butter, potatoes, groceries, snacks, teabags, household items/cleaning products, coffee, wholefoods, cream, frozen food, jams/marmalade, magazines, honey, local cakes, homemade produce, soft drinks, ice cream, loo rolls, firelighters, stationery, medicines, tinned products, medicines, toiletries, items for the school, banking, order and collect lunches, value for money products, tobacco, porridge/cereal, other hot beverages/Horlicks, herbal tea, essentials, local crafts, maps,

organic fruit and veg, emergency supplies, bird food, soap, cosmetics, yogurt, pasta, salad, cake ingredients, pet food/dog biscuits.

Figure 4

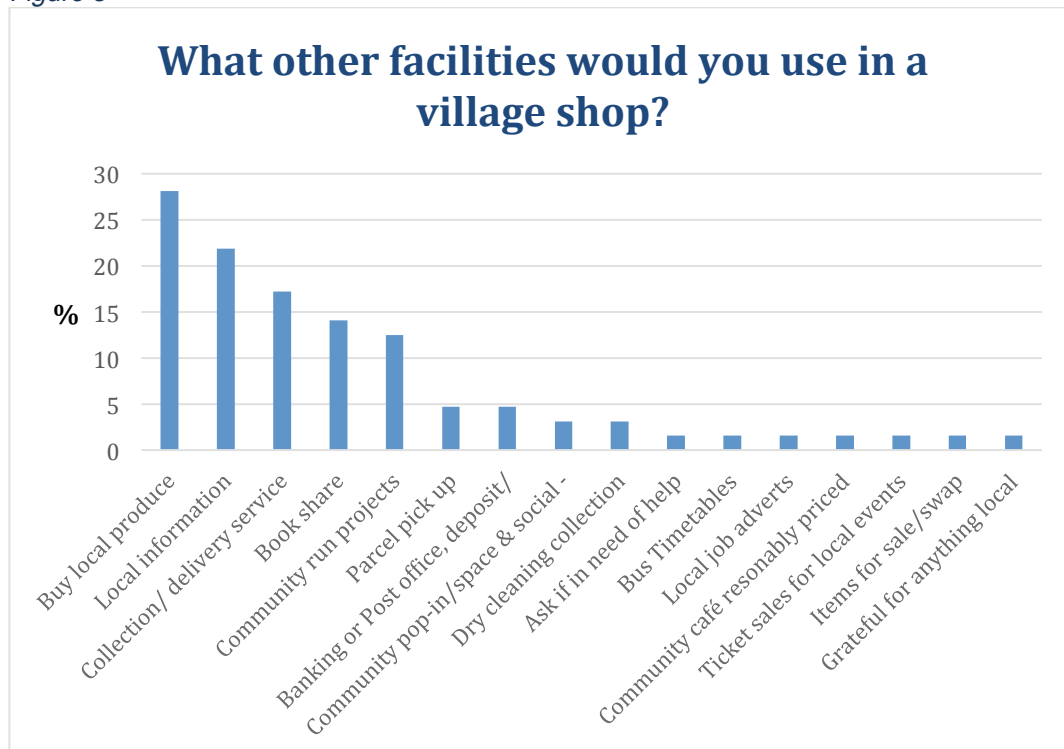


**Question 5 – Figure 5.** The 5 most popular reasons for using a village shop were:

- 1 Buy local produce 28%,
- 2 Local information 22%,
- 3 Collection/delivery service 17%,
- 4 Book share 14%,
- 5 Community run projects 13%.

There were 11 further suggestions scoring 5% or less - Parcel pick up, banking facilities, community space, dry cleaning collection, help point, bus timetables, job adverts, community café, ticket sales for local events, sale/swap items, grateful for anything local.

Figure 5



**Question 6 – Figure 6.** 90% of respondents viewed having a Post Office in the village as very important or important. 10% neutral, 0% not important and 0% not required.

**Question 7 – Figure 7.** 95% of respondents used the Post Office regularly or occasionally, 3% rarely, 2% unlikely and 0% never.

Figure 6

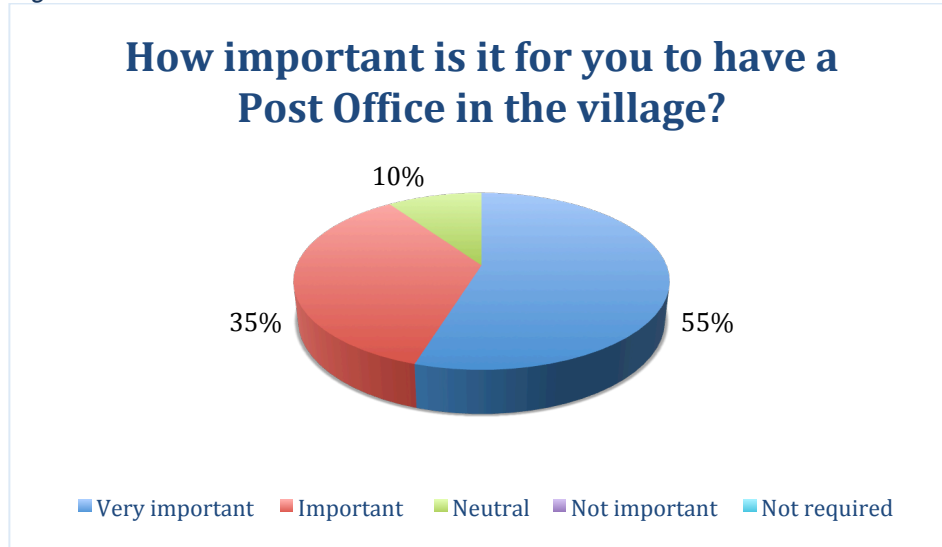
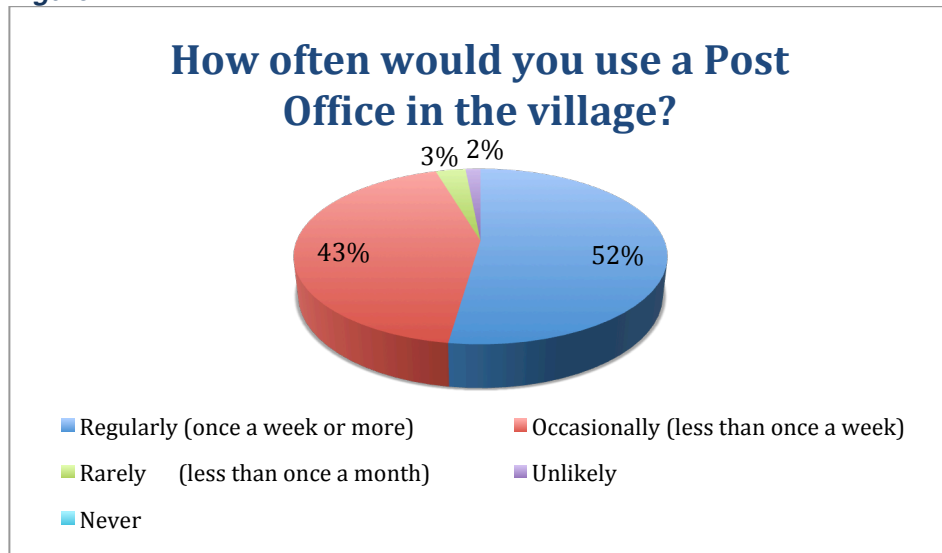


Figure 7

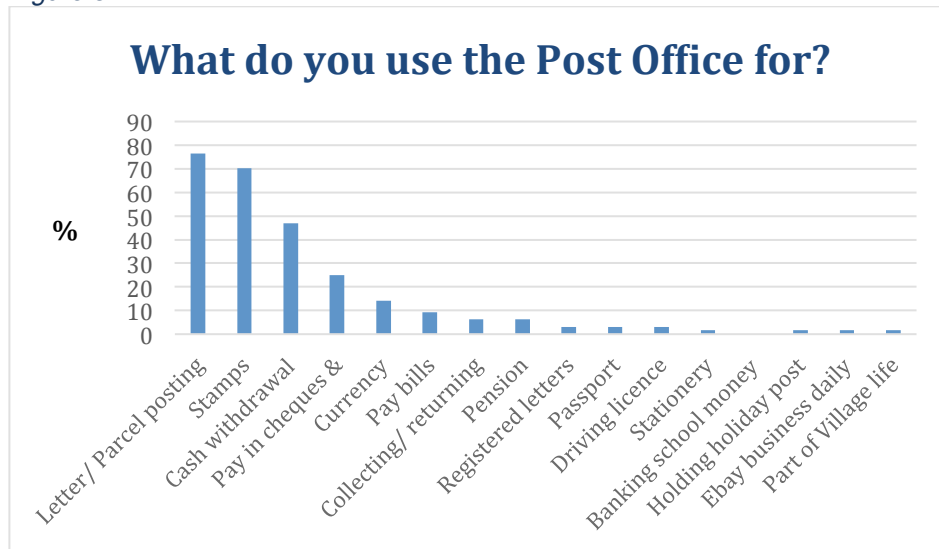


**Question 8 – Figure 8.** The 5 most popular uses of the Post Office were:

- 1 Letter/parcel posting 77%,
- 2 Stamps 70%,
- 3 Cash withdrawals 47%,
- 4 Pay in cheques/deposits 25%,
- 5 Currency 14%.

There were 10 further suggested facilities that scored less than 10% - pay bills, collect/return parcels, pension, registered letters, passport, driving licence, stationery, holding holiday post, daily ebay business sales, part of village life.

Figure 8



**General Shopping habits – Figure 9**

**Shopping destinations for food/essentials - the most significant results were:**

*Usual:* Unsurprisingly Barnstaple came top with 61%, followed by Local village shops 25%, Local independents 22% and Lynton 19%

*Occasional:* Local facilities fared better as occasional destinations with Local village shops 47%, Lynton 38%, Local independents 34% and Barnstaple 27%.

Online and Other destinations were generally used less frequently.

*Usually:* Online 8% and Other 6%

*Occasionally:* Online 16% and Other 8%.

Interestingly 27% of respondents would never use Online services for food/essentials.

**Post Office facilities - the most significant results were:**

*Usually:* Parracombe came out top with 67%, Other local villages 13%, Lynton 11% and Barnstaple 8%.

*Occasionally:* Lynton 20%, Parracombe 11%, Barnstaple 8% and other local villages 6%.

Online and Other Post Office facilities were again used less frequently.

*Usually:* Online 0% and Other 3%

*Occasionally:* Online 8% and Other 0%

Figure 9

Where do you shop for food/essentials?	Usually	Occasionally	Rarely	Emergency supplies only	Never
<b>Local independent producers</b>	22%	34%	5%	0%	3%
<b>Local village shops</b>	25%	47%	5%	0%	0%
<b>Lynton</b>	19%	38%	17%	0%	0%
<b>Barnstaple</b>	61%	27%	3%	2%	0%
<b>Online</b>	8%	16%	6%	0%	27%
<b>Other:</b>	6%	8%	2%	0%	8%

Where do you go for Post Office facilities?	Usually	Occasionally	Rarely	Emergency supplies only	Never
<i>Parracombe shop/PO</i>	67%	11%	5%	0%	2%
<i>Other local village shop/PO</i>	13%	6%	8%	2%	14%
<i>Lynton PO</i>	11%	20%	6%	2%	9%
<i>Barnstaple</i>	8%	8%	11%	2%	22%
<i>Online</i>	0%	8%	5%	0%	20%
<i>Other:</i>	3%	0%	0%	0%	16%

### Comments

Main themes emerging from additional comments were:

- The shop and Post Office were viewed as vital resources for the village, particularly as other local facilities were closing, such as the bank at Lynton.
- The shop was considered to be a lifeline for some, a social hub and a consideration when moving to the village. A big part of village life for many years.
- The Post Office provided a vital and efficient service for local businesses.
- Current opening hours suited some respondents but not others, as they were unable to use the shop due to working patterns.
- The size of the current shop space is not considered sufficient.
- There were suggestions that ideally facilities should be in a central location, with parking and storage. Possible alternative locations included the Village Hall, pavilion and church, although it was thought that security could be an issue in a more isolated location.
- Needs to be competitive.
- Needs imagination and an innovative approach. Could be an opportunity to provide other services.
- Would benefit from marketing campaigns to promote local services and produce.
- Would be worth looking at other local shops to investigate the potential.
- To be successful widespread support would be needed to ensure there is sufficient demand.
- There was support for and a willingness to be involved in running a community shop. Possibly run by volunteers on a rota basis.

### Conclusions:

- 1 The questionnaire results revealed a strong desire to retain a shop and Post Office facility in the village.
- 2 The comments suggested there was no appetite for anyone wanting to take up the business as an individual but there were several declarations of interest and offers of support for the concept of a community run shop.

- 3 The current shop site was considered restrictive due to size and being a part of a residential home. Possible relocation to a different site may offer opportunities to enhance the business with parking and storage.
- 4 While it is recognised that shopping habits are changing the results indicated that there would still be enough support for a local shop and Post Office to create a viable business.
- 5 At present regular use of online shopping for food/essentials and Post Office services was still relatively low.
- 6 There may be some scope to consider providing a greater range of products and services. However, it was recognised that being competitive would be essential and that some imagination, innovative ideas and marketing would be required in order to make it sustainable.
- 7 The results indicated a strong interest for local produce and for local community based services.
- 8 All shop purchase items were consistent with products you would expect to find in a convenience store except perhaps one suggestion of an 'order and collect lunch service'.
- 9 There was understandable concern that a successful business would rely on local support and to remain viable it would be essential that products and services matched demand.

**Recommendations:**

- 1 Explore potential options to relocate both the shop and Post Office within the village.
- 2 Investigate other similar businesses and community shops to discover what does/does not work.
- 3 If the project is considered viable, engage with local producers, businesses and agencies to investigate the potential for offering local products and services.
- 4 Continue to engage with the community for input to ensure that there is sufficient support for any proposals and that they would be appropriate to meet demand.