

Parish Council survey on a community shop/pub

Please read the notes overleaf before completing this form. The form should be completed one per person of 16 or over. Further forms available from website or shop, or use online version at tinyurl.com/yardycny

Shop *Assuming reasonable prices, and stock and services responsive to community needs...*

1) How strongly would you support the plan for a community shop and café?

VERY SUPPORTIVE | SUPPORTIVE | NEUTRAL | UNSUPPORTIVE | AGAINST (ring one)

2) How often, on average, would you expect to visit it?

DAILY | 2-3 TIMES/WEEK | ONCE A WEEK | ONCE A FORTNIGHT | OCCASIONALLY | NEVER

Pub *Assuming no other pub in the village, a thorough revamp, warm friendly atmosphere...*

3) How strongly would you support the plan for a pub owned and run by the community?

VERY SUPPORTIVE | SUPPORTIVE | NEUTRAL | UNSUPPORTIVE | AGAINST

4) How often, on average, would you expect to visit it?

DAILY | 2-3 TIMES/WEEK | ONCE A WEEK | ONCE A FORTNIGHT | OCCASIONALLY | NEVER

Volunteering

5) Would you be prepared to give any time working as a volunteer in the shop (or pub) on a regular basis?

YES | NO

6) Would you be interested in being a member of the steering group?

YES | NO

7) Would you be able to offer any trade or professional skills needed to refurbish or run the business (building, accountancy, legal etc)?

YES | NO

If yes, please specify:

8) Would you be interested in supporting the pub and/or shop as a "member" by buying shares?

YES | NO

Shares would attract social investment tax relief, and should be repayable in time. The amount has not been set, but probably in the region of £50 to £100 each. More information is available on the website.

Name.....

Address.....

Email/phone.....

Although we are asking for names, we are only looking for indications of support: you will not be committing yourself to anything. If completing on behalf of a household, please state number of people:

The completed forms will be collected roughly a week after they have been delivered. You may also return to the Village Stores, to any parish councillor, or by email. Thank you for your help with this survey.

We would welcome any comments or suggestions for services to be included in a community enterprise. Please add them on an attached sheet, or email grahiamgleed@gmail.com or nick@curloadfarm.co.uk

The case for a community pub and shop in Stoke St Gregory

At present we have two pubs and a shop in Stoke, but the owners have been trying to sell for years. In the current economic climate this is becoming increasingly difficult, and the situation cannot continue indefinitely. A village with no pub or shop would be a much diminished place, and we fear that the loss of these services would mark an irreversible decline in the fortunes of Stoke St Gregory.

The proposal

If the existing businesses do not sell, one option would be for the Parish Council to buy the Royal Oak, to refurbish it to include a village shop and a café staffed by volunteers, and to run it for the community. A number of other facilities could potentially be included over time. The opportunity to do this is unlikely to come again.

Another option would be to set up an independent community shop. In order to plan for either outcome, we need to have a clear idea of the demand in the village, and of people's willingness to volunteer.

The challenge

A community shop/pub can only become a reality if a majority of the village wants it and can offer support on many levels: we need a number of individuals who are prepared to put time and effort into setting up the enterprise and managing the finance etc. Secondly, although the majority of the startup money might have to come from long-term public works loans and grants, in order to secure these we would need some financial support from the community in the form of shares.

Next we would need a large number of volunteers (50+), offering a few hours here

and there to share the staffing of the shop. The pub could be staffed by volunteers but more likely by a tenant landlord. Finally we would need customers: enough people have to come in and buy stuff to make it work.

The benefits

It is a major challenge to establish a community business, but once it is under way it tends to remain successful. Of the many community shops that the Plunkett Foundation has helped to set up over the last 25 years, 96% are still trading. Co-operative pubs are a more recent trend, but 100% are still trading since the first opened in 2004.

The experience for volunteers is also very positive. People can work as much or as little as they like, and many who might otherwise feel isolated can find themselves having an important role in the village, and a say in how the shop is run.

If the attempt to buy the Royal Oak is successful, we ensure the survival of the pub and a home for the continuation of the shop, and we have a permanent focus in the centre of the village, adaptable to whatever the future may throw at us.

The survey

We need as many people as possible to complete the survey realistically, whether or not you approve of the proposal, and whatever support you feel able to offer. The project will only be able go ahead if we can show a strong positive response. *Thank you very much for your help with this survey.*

The text on this page is a shortened version of a page on the village website which gives more detailed information: look for links on the News page of www.stokestgregory.org.