

Plunkett's Feasibility Study for Grindleford Community Shop Ltd

We're very pleased that a summary of the Grindleford shop feasibility study is now available on the shop and village websites, and via email to members who have provided us with an email address.

We're very sorry that costs prohibit us from sending out the 12-page summary in hard copy to members where we haven't got an email address. If you'd like us to send you an electronic copy please contact Nancy or Sarah: *nancy.detchon@peaknet.com* or *overgrindle@yahoo.co.uk*.

Otherwise copies of a shorter summary are available in the church, the Gallery or the Sir William for you to look at.

There will be a meeting on 24 April at 7.30pm in the Sir William to discuss and agree next steps. You can come and look round the displays there during the day, too. The displays will tell you about some possible options for the shop. If you can't attend the evening meeting, any member can vote on their preferred option at any time on 24th.

If you would like to see the full study, please check the website or email Sophie *sophie.hunter@metronet.com* or Sarah (see above) who will be happy to forward you a copy. If you are not on email, contact Sarah or Sophie and we will get a copy printed off for you. It's a bulky document so for cost reasons, we would be glad to email wherever we can.

Meanwhile this leaflet sets out the main points from the feasibility study but do read the longer summary if you can, it has lots more detail in it for you to think about.

- Plunketts are a national organisation advising communities on setting up a shop. They are confident that we can succeed. Community shops have a very high survival rate – only 13 out of nearly 300 have ever closed.
- Many people in the community feel that there is a need for a local shop, and many more have volunteered to help out in it, and so keep costs down.
- The aims of the community shop are many and include a SPAR type store, sales of local goods, home made bread, a community hub, tea and coffee, cash back and much more besides. We also want to set up a Post Office Local which will offer 95% of the services you might expect from a sub post office.
- Opening hours are planned to catch people when they need the shop – we are aiming for 8.00am to 7pm weekdays, and weekends

Our short-term options are:

- The vestry at St Helen's. The church has been very helpful and we are submitting a proposal for them to discuss with the archdeacon and Diocese. There may be some planning issues, but this is a low cost low risk option while we see if we can trade successfully.
- More uncertain (but still being pursued), rental of Country Choice. At the moment, the rent asked for by the current owner is, from Plunkett's experience, not sustainable for a village shop and café.
- There is a further issue with Country Choice outside the scope of the feasibility study, which is the application for change of use to a **fast food takeaway**. This has been temporarily blocked by the Peak Park Planning Committee but is likely to be approved on reapplication unless interest is shown in setting up a commercial shop in the interim. Some of the shop committee met Mr Peckett, the owner, and Mr Ahmed who would like to rent the shop and open a takeaway. Mr Ahmed has said that he would be prepared to provide convenience store-type goods as part of his takeaway and has offered to show committee members round his fast food outlet in Chesterfield. As, however, there were nearly 100 objections to the change of use, we feel this is an issue for discussion at the General Meeting now called for 24 April.

Our longer-term options:

- An affordable option would be to embark on a **new build on community owned land opposite Mount Pleasant Road - the 'bonfire field'**. A two storey new build could be designed to accommodate both a shop and café, or other community facilities. The planning authority may seriously consider this option and we are investigating funding options.
- Were we to consider buying the **Country Choice premises**, Plunkett's believe that the burden of borrowing and raising funds for a market price purchase would be a big challenge. Unless a solution can be found to the rental issue, or a business angel, donor or grant funder found to purchase the property, their evaluation is that rental or purchase of Country Choice is not a sustainable option for Grindleford Community Shop.

What else did we look at?

- Local planners will look favourably on the proposition of a building adjacent to the Pavilion but at present the Playing Fields Committee felt unable to contemplate development at the Pavilion. The committee were also offered the opportunity of developing a new build on the land to the west of the bonfire field but the planners would not consider such a site as they see it as a valuable green space in the village.
- There is already a finance and funding working group set up and you will start to see some of their ideas bearing fruit as the warmer weather arrives. Please support all their ventures with enthusiasm, they are working very hard! There are also a range of funding opportunities available, including grants and options for the Parish Council or Local Authority to raise or loan money through a Public Works Loan – more on these funding opportunities in the longer summary.

Recommendations

While Plunkett's haven't presented us with a stand-out option, they have presented the pros and cons for each to help us reach a decision.