



SIBFORDS

COMMUNITY PLAN

2012



FOREWORD

“In this era of Localism the producing of a Community Plan is the first step for the Sibfords to be able to tell the County & the District Councils what the residents need and wish for. It also gives the two Parish Councils the green light to pursue the aims set out in the plan.

This will be especially useful now Cherwell District Council’s Local Development Plan is nearing adoption but it also opens the door for many future projects to enhance the already delightful villages you live in.

This is your plan for the future of Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop put together by the Steering Group supported by Working Groups and will need to be updated as time goes by.

It has my full support and I will try to push its aims every chance I get at both County & District level.”

Councillor George Reynolds

October 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Sibfords are fortunate to have a wide range of community facilities notably the Village Hall, the Sibford Stores and Post Office, Sibford Surgery with its dispensing facility, the Primary School and Sibford School, and a Public House. There are three places of worship and the villages are also served by a regular bus service between Banbury and Stratford upon Avon. A Mobile Library also calls at the villages every fortnight.

Question 52: How often do you use the Sibford Stores?

354 of the total of 517 responses stated that they used the village shop at least once a week. The 23% of the respondents who only occasionally or never use the facility may include young persons.

These figures are supported by the response to Question 39 where 26% of those responding use the stores for some form of food shopping - a surprisingly high number in comparison to the national usage of village stores.

With only 20 respondents never using the shop this is a clear demonstration of the importance of the shop's role and its benefit to the local community. The shop also provides a daily household newspaper delivery round in the Sibfords and neighbouring villages.

As the Sibford Stores and Post Office is a privately owned business there is little scope for community initiatives. Nevertheless, the dedication of the Sibford Stores and Post Office owners to the local community was demonstrated during the recent winter snows, when they were publicly thanked for remaining open as a vital source of supply throughout the period when the villages were cut off.

Question 53: How often do you use the Post Office in Sibford Stores?

A much smaller number of people use the Post Office on a weekly or more regular basis. The largest proportion of those responding (189) only visited occasionally. This may be due to the reduction in the use of post office services rather than other Post Offices being used in preference.

Neither Question 52 nor 53 considered the use of the shop and post office by Sibford School (during the school term it becomes the students' Tuck Shop); local businesses; and people from nearby villages. These are a significant part of the business.

General comments received also acknowledged that the community was very fortunate to have a Shop and Post Office and that continued and regular support for these services was essential if they are to achieve commercial success and remain as a vital community facility.

Question 54: How often do you use the Wykham Arms?

Of the total of 535 responses, a surprisingly low number of respondents (71) use the Wykham Arms once a week or more, with 71% using the facility occasionally or never. This follows a national trend towards less frequent use of Public Houses in rural communities for local social and drinking and their appeal, based on good food, becoming wider than their local community.

Question 55: If you visit the Wykham Arms, how do you use the facility?

55% use the Public House for food with the remaining seeing the facility as a drinking/ socialising location. This supports the general feeling that the Wykham Arms serves a joint role within the Community.

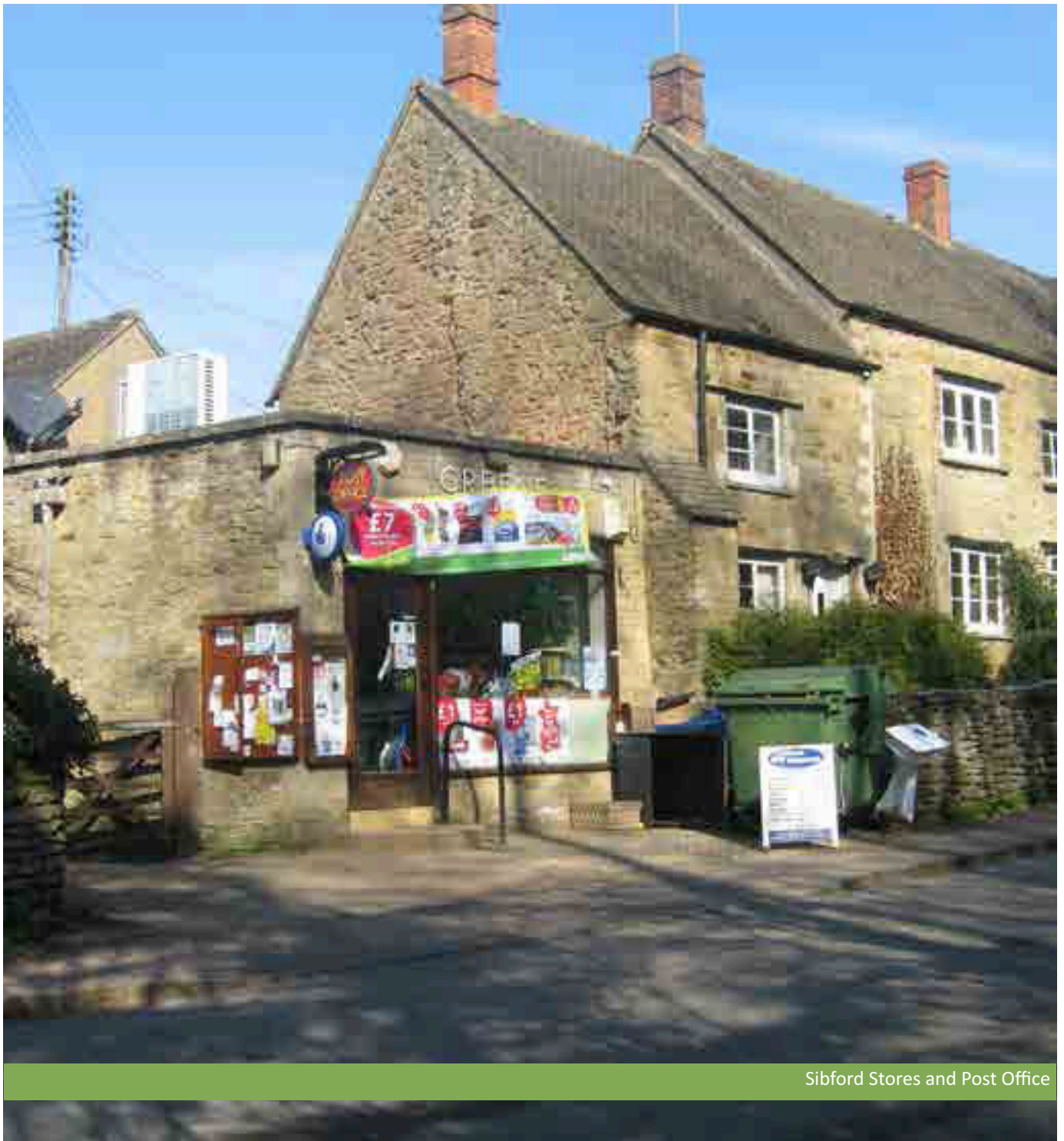
Question 56: If the Bishop Blaize were re-opened, how often would you use the facility?

Responses indicate that the Bishop Blaize would, if open, be used more frequently by customers; this indicates that the facility was seen more as a drinking/socialising venue within the Sibfords.

Many responses from the community supported the general view that such a facility needs to be welcoming and engaging.

Question 57: How often do you attend events open to the public at Sibford School?

Nearly 60% of respondents have attended events at the school. A number of comments noted that people were unaware of events taking place and that they were open to the public. These comments are replicated elsewhere in the questionnaire where respondents are not aware of functions and activities in the community. There were also some comments on the opportunity to use some of the community facilities available at the School.



Sibford Stores and Post Office

Question 58: If Sibford School provided evening classes, what would you be interested in attending?

This question prompted a wide range of responses from art and pottery classes through to languages and computer training. There is a clear demand for these classes and should be considered alongside the range of other clubs and activities that the village is keen to pursue as a vital community facility.

Question 59: Is there anyone in your household that is housebound or has mobility problems?

Only 24 respondents confirmed that mobility was an issue for them. Of those responding who did have a requirement, (Question 60) there was no specific identified need for additional services beyond those currently offered.

Question 62: Do you attend any of the following places of worship in Sibford: Holy Trinity Church, Methodists and Friends Meeting House?

Over 90% of those completing the questionnaire either did not answer the question or indicated that they never attended any of the places of worship.

NEXT STEPS

- Sibford School could possibly offer more evening classes and be active in informing the community about what they offer;
- Voluntary groups must decide how best to publicise their activities through the Sibford Scene, Sibfords Website and Parish Notice Boards. The Groups should also consider which facilities are most appropriate for their activities, subject to availability ie Members' homes, Village Hall, Wykham Arms and Places of Worship.