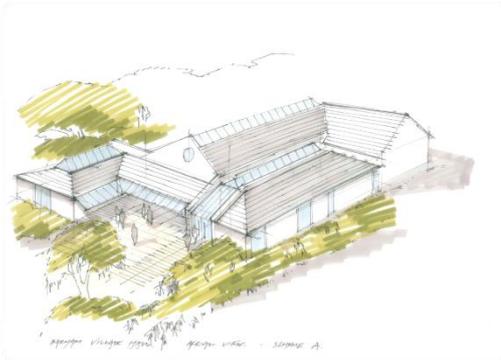


# Barham Village Hall Newsletter

Issue 8

Summer 2014



Dear Residents,

from **Simon Cavalier – Chairman of the BVH**

Since our last newsletter in January, we have been busy preparing our third and final stage application to the Big Lottery which has involved us in producing a thorough and detailed Capital Development Plan and Business Plan. This submission, made in May, has been followed up by a site visit from the Lottery's Funding Officer in June, to go through our plans in detail.

Reports will be now written up on our project application for a decision to be taken at a Lottery meeting to be held in late July. Now this would normally be the final part of the process but because we are now asking for a sum in excess of £500,000, because of the effect of inflation, it has had to be referred to their Central Committee for approval at their next meeting which, unfortunately, will not be until mid-September. So we still have to wait awhile.

Also during these past six months, we, together with our architect, have drawn up detailed drawings and specifications to produce a tender document for the building work, which was sent out to four building contractors to price up. The quotes that were received back from all four were very significantly higher than our estimated calculations. We have had, therefore, to value-engineer the project, taking out any cost that could not be justified. A revised tender document has had to be put together and sent out for re-quotation with replies expected back in mid-July.

As far as other funding is concerned, although we have secured £123,000 of the estimated remaining £178,000 needed, we are still working to secure the shortfall and we await replies from two of our significant applications, both due in July. Only this last week we received an exceptionally generous gift of £5,000 from a Barham resident, which makes such a difference and goes a long way to confirm our optimism about being able to fully fund the project.

We are now turning our attention to what is the main purpose of the project and that is to provide more services and activities with the involvement of the community. The Nailbourne Community Store Association is already working to provide improved retail and Post Office facilities, which includes a community café – see later on. The hall's management committee is now setting up a number of sub-groups to develop and introduce additional services and activities run from the Hall, such as:-

- **Health services** e.g. chiropody, prescription collection, advice, appointment lifts, etc.
- **Adult Education** e.g. computer training, photography, language lessons, etc. and
- **New Activities** e.g. short mat bowls, 'before and after' club for young families, table tennis, etc.

We need help from people with experience, ideas and skills in these three areas and would very much welcome some support. Please contact us if you are able to help and would like to get involved - or even better, if you would like to run a group or arrange a service for the community.

So, we are still on track for a starting date for the development work to begin sometime in late October. We still remain very optimistic about the success of the project but there still remains much to do. We're not there yet!

## Hall Appeal

The function of the Hall Appeal is to raise funds to provide and improve facilities at the Village Hall, both now and in the future, that are not funded by the grants raised to carry out the hall redevelopment programme.

There are three types of fund raising event:-

1. On-going events such as the "Hundreds Club" whose new season starts at the beginning of October (£12 for 12 draws contact Jim Barling on 831796 / [jmb@vfast.co.uk](mailto:jmb@vfast.co.uk) or Liz Rowe on 831623 / [lisrowe@btinternet.com](mailto:lisrowe@btinternet.com) ) and the "Buy a Brick" campaign (£5 per brick / £25 for a "Hod" of 6 bricks contact David Wood (see below) or Patti Earl on 832638 / [patti.earl@gmail.com](mailto:patti.earl@gmail.com)).
2. The 50-50 programme where village clubs and societies have organised events normally with half the proceeds going to the organisation and the other half to the Village Hall. To date this has included events such as a public talk by the History Society, an auction of promises by the Friends of the Church, a talk given by David Starkey organised by the W.I. and the "Cluedo" evening by the Kingsbourne Players.
3. Events organised by the Appeal Committee including a puzzle night, two boot sales and a family games evening. To date over the last 3 years local events and individual donations have raised over £20,000 for the hall but, as always, more needs to be done.  
An outline future programme is being developed which includes a Family (Walking) Treasure/Scavenger Hunt, for teams of up to 6, followed by a Bring-and Share Supper, which is provisionally diarised for the afternoon and early evening of Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August. We are intending to organise a Family Fun Run for all ages with sponsorship being divided between a charity of the runner's choice and the Appeal.  
However, most of these and other proposed events will only be possible if we can receive help both to organise and, more particularly, operate an event on the day. We can only do this with support and help from people who can, on occasion, give some of their time. Anyone prepared to give some time when possible to help on the day of an event or in organising one or more events do please contact David Wood ([dw4746@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dw4746@yahoo.co.uk) / 832430).  
It is only with your support that we can make this work ..... and it is fun too!!

## THE SHOP

from **Michael Pearson – Chairman of the NCS**

In our last newsletter we said that we, the NCS management committee were setting about the task of providing a new shop of which the village would be proud. So what have we been up to? The answer is - a lot of hard work and wide ranging research. A little more detail to follow but in a nutshell the result following unanimous approval at the NCS annual general meeting last month is that this in the spring of next year we expect to have in full swing a community shop, a shop and post office which provides what you have said you would like to see and lots more besides.

### **So what is a community shop and why is it any different to the usual convenience store?**

Its primary aims are:

1. To be a 'not for profit' enterprise run for the benefit of the community. Surplus revenue will be applied towards community projects and charitable assistance.
2. To bring together members of our neighbourhood in pursuit of a common cause and thus create a convivial community spirit.

## So how do we put these fine words into practice?

- **in addition to the standard items which everyone needs we will introduce additional attractive product lines and services which will also appeal to visitors from outside the immediate vicinity.**
- The existing post office will be transferred to NCS Ltd. This reduces the risk of losing it in the future as it is not dependent on the success or failure of a commercial tenant. We had this experience before when the owner of the old post office and store decided to retire. The Post Office authorities are keen to have us on board and have assured us that 97% of existing services will be retained. We will still be able to draw cash and have the current banking facilities apart from restrictions on how cash can be deposited for external bank accounts.
- **The shop and post office will be managed by an experienced post office trained manager. He or she will be salaried and incentivised with a profit share. This is where the volunteers come in. From the recent questionnaire, to which about half our households responded, we already have over 60 people who have said they would be prepared to volunteer. Apart from the savings made by not hiring extra staff, it has proved elsewhere to be a wonderful way of bringing people together. Also it will give us the opportunity to offer valuable work experience for younger members of the community whose options are currently limited in the village .**
- As soon as the hall is fully open, we will add a cafe/coffee shop alongside the shop. Again, this idea found much favour with the respondents to the questionnaire.
- **Local produce is also something you have asked for. Simon Rowan's wonderful bread will be back as will locally grown fruit and veg. However we will also stock some local crafts, gift items and home-made treats. Wine will come from Manor Wines in Adisham and from Charles Simpson's estate in France. Charles has recently planted 47,000 vines off Rectory Lane and in a few years' time we will be stocking his finest English fizz.**
- There are many other ideas in the pipeline such as, for instance, the possibility of providing a delivery service for residents who for one reason or another are housebound and unable to get to the shop.

**Comments from interviewees from an academic research programme involving a community shop in Northumberland<sup>1</sup> are interesting and relevant**

*I think there is a feeling that people are meeting each other and seeing each other for the first time. You might say good morning to them but if you have a chat with them in the shop or work (volunteer in the shop) with someone you get to know them better "*

*"There are so many people that I now have a strong bond with that I didn't have before and I'm sure it is the same with other volunteers."*

## Where's the money coming from and will it be profitable?

The management committee has carried out lots of research, looking at several other similar shops and taking advice from specialists in the field, the Plunkett Foundation, the Rural Retail Adviser for Kent and from the Post Office Ltd itself. Our treasurer, Sarah Adamson, is a Chartered Accountant with a strong track record in commercial operations. She has produced conservative predictions which show a profit even in Year 1. Much of this is because of our community status. Not only does it make us eligible for grants but already, following the AGM, we have had generous offers from local people. John Parsons' son-in-law, who has a degree in website design, has agreed to create ours at no cost and Les Stevens, a relative newcomer to the village, is an architectural designer with shop fitting experience and has offered his skills. The most magnificent contribution of all, however, comes from Nicholas Showan who has offered the services of his company, Jali, to make all the wooden content of the shop --shelving, counters, cabinets etc. This is a tremendous saving as is the fact that the Post Office will pay for their fittings and equipment.

## Why the change from the present situation?

We believe the time is right. The extension of the village hall coincides with the expiry of the present tenant's lease, as was the intention from the outset. It also coincided with changes in Post Office policy which has resulted in new sub-post offices being reclassified as locals whereby the salary element of their remuneration is removed but to sweeten the pill, entitles the sub-postmaster to resign and receive generous compensation. This is conditional on a successor being appointed and in our case we have the assurances from the Post Office mentioned earlier.

**So, altogether an exciting venture which together we can turn into something very special for Barham but togetherness is the key.**

Here are some photographs of community shops we have visited to give you a flavour of what our new shop could look like.



## Last Question:

### What would you like the shop to be called?

Barham Stores, Barham Village Shop,  
Nailbourne Community Store ,  
The Village Shop or  
something similar, original or inspired.

E-mail your suggestions to:-

[mapkent@btconnect.com](mailto:mapkent@btconnect.com)

and enter a **Prize Draw**

*(closing date 31st August)*

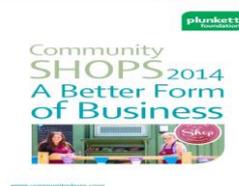
## Some hard facts about community shops

Since records began in 1992 only 15 have closed indicating a long term survival rate for community shops of 95%. The 5 year survival rate of community shops is 99%. This compares with estimations for UK businesses which have an estimated 5 year survival rate of 45% (Office for National Statistics)

The majority of community shops are run by the community. Only 6% of community shops are managed by a private tenant, with the majority, 94%, being managed by a management committee – who themselves will recruit either paid staff, or volunteers, or a combination of the two.

At one end of the spectrum, there are community shops that are entirely run by paid staff (11%) and, at the other end, there are those entirely managed by volunteers (24%). However, the majority (65%), fall somewhere in-between.

Volunteers help add to the vibrancy of community shops. By their very nature they involve large numbers of people who are front-of-house. Having volunteers is a very visible way of demonstrating that the business is community, and allows all those involved to feel a sense of ownership and contribution. In total, 89% of community shops use volunteers to support the running of the business. These community shops engage an average of 30 volunteers regularly. This equates to 8,250 people nationally with an estimated total saving of £5 million, or £18,388 per shop.



If you would like to read more about community shops in general visit <http://www.plunkett.co.uk> and for particular shops try

[www.kirdfordvillagestores.com](http://www.kirdfordvillagestores.com) or

[www.chiddinglyshop.org](http://www.chiddinglyshop.org)