



# Beer and Curry Takeaway

ISSUE NO. 71, NOVEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024

## Notes from The Farm

In common with a lot of farmers we haven't grown oilseed rape for a number of years. One of the main reasons for the fall in acreage has been the banning of an insecticide that was used to coat the seed. The newly emerging rape plants have always been vulnerable to attack by a tiny but virulent pest called the Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle which can decimate crops before they have even got going, and a lot of people have decided that it is just not worth the risk and taken the crop out of their rotations.

I wrote once before about the decision to ban this chemical as there was a suspicion that it was more about sending a political signal than having a firm scientific basis on the threat to pollinating insects. If it was a political decision then it was one that hasn't really had any impact beyond farmers cropping plans; a few people may miss having vast displays of yellow flowers in mid-April, but there are other sources of seed oils and at the moment everyone seems to be cooking everything in air fryers anyway.

Here is the thing though. The active ingredient in these seed treatments was a chemical called imadocloprid and it is the same one that is used in dog flea treatments. One application on a medium sized dog is the same amount of active ingredient as was used in the seed for 2 and a half acres of oilseed rape. While it is true that your pooch that has stopped scratching and is now pushing you off the sofa is not likely to be a threat to the local honey bees you really really shouldn't be letting him jump in the river and wipe out all the aquatic invertebrates.

Justin Adams

## Christmas Carols at Park Farm Curry Mallet

You are warmly invited to join us for  
Carols with the cattle in the cowshed!

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 6pm

Carols, Poems, and Readings.

Followed by Mulled Wine, fruit juice, and mince pies

Please wear warm clothing and stout  
footwear, and bring a torch.

(Sadly, on this occasion – No dogs)

Parking on the farm



## News from Curry Mallet Parish Council

It is with great sadness that the Parish Council heard of the passing of Tim Smith. Tim was a Councillor for 2 years, but stepped down in early 2022. Tim was instrumental in starting the project to purchase and install additional play equipment beside the village hall. The Parish Council sends their heartfelt condolences to Tim's wife, Sarah.



When Tim stepped down from the Parish Council, Mike Whitman joined us and continued Tim's work researching new equipment and fundraising to finance it. The Parish Council should be in a position to evaluate the quotes in the next couple of months and the hope is to break ground in the spring.

You may have noticed that the Footpaths Liaison Officer, Gary Blinco, has been busy clearing footpaths and trimming hedges. The Parish Council would like to say a public thank you for the work he is undertaking in the parish.

Cllr Wilkes-Wood recently attended a meeting of the Somerset Bus Partnership regarding the potential curtailing of several bus routes out of Taunton. One of the affected routes is the 54 bus - Curry Mallet's closest bus to Taunton, Langport, Somerton and Yeovil, running along the A378 - which is unfortunately threatened with complete closure if ridership does not improve. The operator, FirstGroup, wishes to achieve an increase in ridership of 100 additional return trips per day across the route in order to safeguard the future of the route, but any increase at all would strengthen the case for the route's retention.

The Parish Council will be contacting Somerset Council to obtain posters advertising the route and printed timetables, but we can all play our part in promoting ridership to secure the future of this vital transport link. We invite anyone who is able to strongly consider whether their car journeys could be substituted for a bus - especially as the £2 fare scheme has currently been extended by 15 months after the cancellation of HS2. Anyone who feels especially strongly about the proposed cuts and cancellations can write to David Martin, the Director of FirstGroup PLC, at the following address.

FirstGroup PLC, 95 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5RP

And finally...

It's that time of year when applications open for the small grant programme that the Parish Council run. Any village group or Charitable Organisation based within Curry Mallet can now apply for a small grant from the Parish Council. The deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. For details of how to apply, please email [clerk@currymallet-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@currymallet-pc.gov.uk) or visit the Curry Mallet website: [www.currymallet-pc.gov.uk](http://www.currymallet-pc.gov.uk)

### Curry Mallet & Beercrocombe Village Hall



- . Kitchen with serving hatch
- . Separate meeting room
- . WiFi
- . Tables & chairs
- . Removable stage
- . Stage lighting and speakers



#### Bookings & Enquiries

Telephone: Michael Bawler, 01823 480 163  
Email: [cmbvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:cmbvillagehall@gmail.com)



Once again the year is moving fast and we are well into the season of autumn. The general colourful signs normally seen are less this year due to an incredible Indian summer in September. Garden plants seem confused by the late heatwave with bulbs showing their spring greenery already. Nevertheless, there is no confusion over the welcome given to all at WI meetings.

After an August break, we were privileged in **September** to see a presentation by **Ben Nicholson**, Chair of North Somerset branch of the **National Autistic Society**. Ben, autistic himself, provided an insight into autism and how it can display itself in many different forms. People with autism face a challenging world, needing to find strategies to cope with situations which can cause anxiety and distress. Ben's explained how he uses his running talents to fundraise for his local branch. Our book club chose *The Rose Code* by Kate Quinn in September. A good discussion took place which led to talk of a future visit to Bletchley Park. On the **24 September** 10 members met at **Greenhouse Kitchen** at **Blackdown Garden Centre, Wellington** for a **coffee and chat**. Various venues, dates and times are being trialled to ensure all who want to can join in when they are free.

The **3 October** saw our newly fledged **skittles** team lose their first match but a good time was had by all and the team are eager to play again. '**Anglo Saxon Art and Architecture**' was the subject of our **October** meeting the talk given by **Mary Chisholm**. Mary gave a potted history of Roman Britain through to the 10<sup>th</sup>C using fascinating slides of reconstructions and archaeological finds. **Somerset Federation** held their **AGM** at the **Bath & West Showground** on the **15<sup>th</sup> October** with speaker **Lesley Waters**, known for her TV appearances on **Ready Steady Cook**, **Good Morning Britain** and **Great Food Live**. Another guest speaker at this event was **Sally Mills, Conservationist and Author**. Sally had the opportunity to live and run a remote island nature reserve in the tropics with her partner. **HBWI** organised a **theatre trip** for members to see '**Into the Woods**' performed by **Yeovil Amateur Operatic Society** at **Westlands Theatre, Yeovil**. This on the **21<sup>st</sup> October** and, as is our habit, we had a delicious lunch before the show.

Coming up we have:

- ✓ **Coffee and Chat** on Wednesday **25<sup>th</sup> October** at **10.30** at **Seavington Community Café**.
- ✓ On **9 November**, '**Eat, Drink and be Merry in the 18<sup>th</sup>C**' (including Christmas traditions through the ages) with guest speaker **Mike Rendell**.
- ✓ At the **Farmers Produce Market** on **11 November**, **HBWI** will be running the refreshments in HB village hall.
- ✓ A **shopping trip** to **Cribbs Causeway** has been organised for **19 November**.
- ✓ **December 14<sup>th</sup> HBWI Christmas Social** with bring and share supper.
- ✓ Perhaps appropriately after Christmas indulgences our **11 January** talk '**Healthy Heart, Bones and Sleep**' by speaker **Jessie Bright**.

Throughout the year **HBWI** does a **food bank collection** at our meetings and Taunton foodbank keep us up to date to meet the shortfalls of required items. We also support the '**Shoebox Appeal**' providing items such as toiletries and Christmas treats to families struggling this time of year.

If you are interested in joining or just finding out more about us contact **Ann Norman, HBWI Secretary** on **01823 481843**. We meet at **19:15 on the second Thursday of each month** at **Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall**.

Val Dale

## Curry Mallet Community Activities

### Police Warnings of 'Phishing' Fraud and about Lithium Batteries

Avon & Somerset Constabulary have several initiatives underway to combat this type of crime:

For example, the potential victim will receive a text or email message from a recognised company to say that they have tried to deliver a parcel and that there is now a delivery fee for it to be resent. These "phishing" messages are sent to thousands of phone numbers, in the hope that someone is actually expecting to get a parcel and that they'll click on the link without thinking. If you click the link the fraudsters will request personal and bank or card details in order to rearrange delivery. The details you provide are then used to commit identity fraud or make fraudulent transactions. The link may also be used to download spyware or a virus onto your phone or computer. So please be wary.

The Constabulary also offer guidance regarding the charging of lithium batteries, - particularly for e-bikes and e-scooters; seemingly lithium-ion batteries also drive mobility scooter and smaller items such as e-cigarettes, electric toothbrushes, mobile phones and laptops. The guidance is as follows; -

- Ensure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, and in the room where you charge your (lithium-ion battery-powered) electrical items.
- Always use the charger supplied with the device or recommended by the manufacturer, and if you spot any signs of wear and tear or damage, buy an official replacement charger for your product from a reputable seller.
- Keep escape routes clear so you can evacuate quickly and safely.
- Avoid charging the battery overnight.
- Unplug the charger when the battery is fully charged.
- Plug the cable into a main socket rather than an extension lead.
- Have your e-bike or e-scooter serviced if it has been dropped or involved in an accident. This is particularly important if you notice a crack in the battery, where water may have got in.

### Remembering Gill Reed & Derek Yeomans



On September 21<sup>st</sup> several of us, - primarily present and former residents of Beercrocombe, gathered to bid farewell to Gill Reed, whose energy and dry wit had much enlivened several local communities. Jill had been a volunteer for the Round Window Club, a much-valued patron of the Village Shop, book club member and, until recently, an active participant in village life. Our condolences go to Tony, Sally, Antonia and the extended family for their loss, and our gratitude for Gill's contribution towards the general wellbeing of our communities.

Derek Yeomans, who sadly died at the end of July, was elected in May 2013 for the County Council's Division which includes Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe, having served on the County Council since 2001 for the adjacent Division to the east. He was also a long-serving member of South Somerset District Council, where I first met him at the then informative monthly Area North Committee meetings: Derek had trenchant views on most subjects, and memorably fought hard for remedial measures in the aftermath of the January 2014 flooding of the Somerset Levels, - particularly with regard to re-instatement of dredging the river Parrett, hitherto undertaken annually up to 1995. In his forthright manner, he was scathing of government cut-backs which materially impacted on the quality and quantity of services provided for local residents by the County and District Councils. His monthly reports greatly enlightened all those in his sphere of influence, with much foresight as to the financial implications of forthcoming government legislation. At his own expense, he participated in two of Curry Mallet parish council's 3-yearly First Aid Courses (see photo from 2015). During his time as our County Councillor, I was fortunate to have Derek's support for several grant applications, - invariably for flood mitigation measures. He expected grant applications to be clearly set out with demonstrably tangible benefits. He was no push-over, and woe betide any request that was poorly prepared. Godfrey



## Curry Mallet Church News

On a Sunday evening in September, Harvest Thanksgiving was celebrated at All Saints Church. Led by Rev Joanna



Porter, with participation of farmers and villagers in the service. Seed's, Bread, Milk, Apples, and vegetables were all presented for blessings. The congregation included some visitors from Northern Ireland who were visiting in the area. As always soup and bread was enjoyed by all at the end of the service.



A big thankyou to everyone who decorated the Church with flowers, corn sheaves and fruit & veg, and also to the providers of the soup & bread.



The collection of Non-Perishable foods were distributed between Ilminster food bank and Taunton food bank. There is a thankyou note in the Church porch from the Ilminster food bank, both were very grateful for the donations.

- Sunday November 12th Remembrance at Hatch Beauchamp war memorial.
- Sunday November 19th Worship 4 All at All Saints Curry Mallet. This service is now alternated with West Hatch every other month.
- Sunday 10th December 10am Holy Communion
- Friday 22nd December 6pm Christmas Carols at Park Farm.
- Christmas day 25th December 10am Holy Communion service all welcome.
- Sunday 21st January 7pm Plough service.
- Sunday January 28th 10am Holy Communion.

Mike Bawler - Church Warden

## Beer & Curry Takeaway

Have your say - let us all know what's going on in and around our villages the next quarter!!.

**Deadline for next edition is Saturday 20th January 2024.**

Email: [iberryorchard@gmail.com](mailto:iberryorchard@gmail.com)

Appropriate articles will be included subject to space and printing conditions.

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## Village Entertainment for the winter months

***Beat the winter blues with entertainment in the Village Hall. We have two Take Art events coming up and the return of our ever-popular Quiz and Ploughman's Supper. Put the dates in your diary and make sure you book your tickets.***

### Opa Rosa

**Friday November 24th at 8.00 pm**

Fast gaining a reputation as one of UK's most dynamic bands, Opa Rosa are an energetic acoustic ensemble sharing music from the Balkan, Greek, Klezmer & Roma traditions. With their lineup of violin, clarinet, accordion, double bass and percussion, their unique and refined sound consists of an explosive and grooving rhythm section combined with intricate melodies soaring over rich and nuanced harmonic structures.

Enjoy a collection of vibrant and soulful melodies played with fiery precision, and let Opa Rosa take you on a foot-stomping journey through the Balkans and beyond!



For a taste of Opa Rosa's music visit their website <https://www.oparosa.com/> or look for them on YouTube

**Tickets cost £12 and are available:**

- ❖ **By phone:** 07788817619 or email [patsyjwallace@gmail.com](mailto:patsyjwallace@gmail.com)
- ❖ **On-line:** <https://takeart.org/whats-on>

### Annual Quiz

**Friday January 12th at 7.30 pm**

Quizmaster – Chris Marks

Entry only £5 per person to include ploughman's supper

Bring your own drinks

Please register your 4-person team with either

Graham Harvey 01823 480791 or Chris Marks 07568 128493

## Blair Dunlop

### Saturday February 24<sup>th</sup> at 8.00 pm



Celebrated singer-songwriter Blair Dunlop is touring Somerset with an exclusive acoustic show. This is your chance to see this award-winning (BBC Radio 2 Horizon award, Premio Ciampi) musician in an intimate setting!

Blair has toured globally with his music that hits a deep personal note in audiences, earning him a wide international following. Masterfully accompanying himself on guitar, Blair's delicate vocals breathe life into self-penned songs that have a lyrical and musical maturity which sets him apart from his peers.

Touring material from his four studio albums, this is a rare chance to catch this charismatic performer at the height of his powers.

To hear Blair's music visit his website <https://blairdunlop.com> or find him on YouTube

**Tickets cost £10 and are available from:**

- ❖ **By phone:** 07787 148516 or email [dae1961@gmail.com](mailto:dae1961@gmail.com)
- ❖ **On-line:** <https://takeart.org/whats-on>

Opa Rosa and Blair Dunlop are promoted through TakeArt. For more information about TakeArt events in Somerset visit <https://www.takeart.org>

*There will be a cash bar at both music events, please note we are unable to process card sales.*

### News from The Manor House

As promised in the last Beer & Curry, we opened the Tea Room at the Manor House at the beginning of August, after having passed our environmental health inspection with the highest hygiene rating.

It was lovely to see so many of you come and enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the courtyard garden and the Elizabethan Panelled Room

Although numbers have dropped a little from the initial opening period, many are still coming and enjoying afternoon tea or one of our light lunches.

continued over.....



## News from The Manor House continued.....



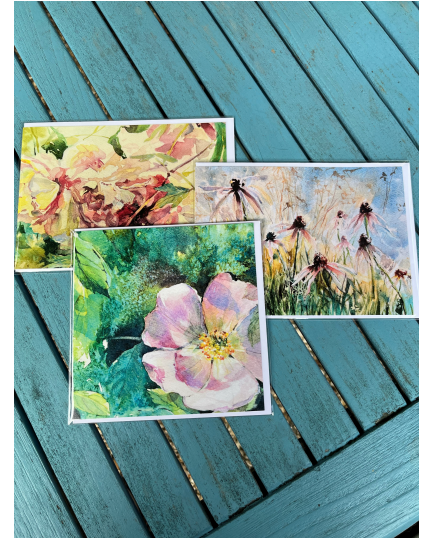
**The Elizabethan Panelled Room**

In addition to the ever-popular strawberry jam, we can now offer a wide variety of preserves made from fruits grown all around the village.

We have not only been increasing our food options for you but also introducing a greater range of cards, gifts and confectionery available for sale.

We have just added cards by our talented village artist, Carol Winsloe. We will be adding items by other village artists shortly.

The Summer Season has been very busy with our B&B rooms, but is quietening down now as we head into Winter.



Please feel free to contact us directly on 07931 751 553 if you have friends or family needing accommodation in the area.



It's been all go here at The Bell Inn over the last few months!

Our Sunday music sessions were well supported and made for a lovely way to round off those summer evenings in the sunshine – mostly! We've seen some great acts and we'll be inviting some of them back throughout next year!

Another success has been our Open Mic / Jam Nights which are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of every month. Who knew there was so much talent in our little village? ☺ If you haven't been along yet, please do come – it's a very entertaining and eclectic evening!

We received a 5 star Food Hygiene Certificate and I'd like to thank all the team here at The Bell who work so hard to maintain our high standards across the board – whether it is the spotlessly clean beer lines (resulting in many of our customers complimenting us on the quality of our Real Ales) or keeping our kitchen practices up to code, every team member plays a part!

The biggest news, though, has been that we won 'The Best Roast Dinner in Somerset' last month!

We were absolutely delighted to win our first (we hope of many) accolade, as voted for by our customers.

This has resulted in our Sunday Lunches being a sell-out every week and we are now booking tables up to 4 weeks in advance! We hate to turn anyone away so we do ask that you give us a call well in advance if you'd like to sample our award-winning lunch. We can accommodate larger groups if we have enough notice, so do get in touch if you'd like to celebrate a special occasion here with us. We also offer a special Small Roast, available either for kids or those with a smaller appetite.

There's lots to come over the next few months too!

The eagle-eyed amongst you will see that we have reinstalled the dart board!

We are now looking for teams of men and women to form a couple of darts teams to play friendly matches with the other pubs in the area – just pop in if you fancy having a few games to test your skill level – absolute beginners are welcome! Once up and running we'll hold match nights with food too.

We're planning more Games and Curry nights, our monthly quiz on the first Monday of the month will continue throughout the winter and into spring and we'll be starting up a regular Music Trivia Quiz night too! Our Bingo and Raffle night will be rescheduled from a Tuesday – it seems most people like to stay tucked up in the warm early in the week so we're currently looking into which night would be a more popular choice – do let us know your thoughts!

We have a little extra live music on 11<sup>th</sup> November with Dave -The Campervan Piano Man entertaining us and helping to celebrate my birthday – there'll be free drinks vouchers for our regulars on that night – a little gift from me to those who support us regularly!

Our regular music night is 25<sup>th</sup> November with one of our Sunday Sessions Singers – Phil Dewhurst is back by very popular demand! His vocals are sublime and he entertains with stories of his travels around the world which are the inspiration for many of his own songs.

To round off our live music year, we have the super talented Jack and Harriet back with us on 16<sup>th</sup> December! Phew!

We are opening on Christmas Day for a special lunch so no-one needs to be on their own or cook on Christmas Day if they don't want to! You'll need to pop in and enquire as spaces on this day will be strictly limited and will be offered to regulars and villagers first.

Opening times for the whole Christmas period are on display in the pub and will be posted on our Facebook page nearer the time.

We'd like to take this opportunity to let you know we are a pub that offers a safe space for those ladies in particular who may be on their own – we will always take the time to talk to you and even introduce you to others if you'd like some company so you needn't feel intimidated or alone. We've got your back!

As you can see, we are trying to put on something for everyone in the village and working incredibly hard to provide something for our community.

When I moved into the village nearly a year ago, I was so heartened when I met so many new faces, all of whom were really excited that 'their' pub was going to be re-opening.

Despite this, I am disappointed to say, many have not yet been through the doors.

I am aware of some malicious actions by certain people who may be spreading misinformation about us. I would just like to say that everyone is welcome in our pub – families, children, singletons, dogs etc. We have to set some boundaries for the safety and respect of all who come in, but we are not draconian with these measures and those that do bring their children and dogs into the pub regularly will almost certainly tell you they are made to feel as welcome as anyone else. Why not come and see for yourselves and talk to us directly to find out the real truth?

If you, the villagers, don't make use of the pub on a regular basis, then we will not be here in a year's time. Every drink, snack or meal sold helps to pay the wages of staff (many of them locals), and keep the lights on! Every entertainer that we invite to the pub is Free of Charge to you, the customer and I pay them from my own pocket. But there's not a bottomless pit of money to keep these events going – we need to sell drinks, snacks and food in order to pay for them and the pub needs to stand on its own two feet financially. So come on folks – you need to use it or lose it. We're doing our best to make sure you have something on your doorstep that not only gives you a safe place to socialise and be entertained, but also adds value to your home! Tell us what you'd like to see happening – what sort of event will bring you out on these dark evenings? What can we do better?

We need your support...

## THE FUTURE OF OUR VILLAGE SHOP

Most of you will be aware that the Post Office and Stores is for sale – by auction on 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 2.00 pm at the Shrubbery Hotel Ilminster through Greenslade Taylor Hunt. The particulars mainly focus on the residential part and garden. The shop and its use are referenced along with the need for a planning consent to change the shop area into residential.

Ironically the particulars also say this:

“The village of Curry Mallet offers an excellent range of local amenities, including a village primary school, **village shop** and a public house.”

My bold emphasis.

Will we get a shop back in Curry Mallet? Please read the Village Shop Working group page opposite for the latest news and complete the questionnaire if you wish. Non returns/responses will indicate no interest.

The short answer is it now falls to us if we want it badly enough. The sad fact is the Phil and Jayne had potential interest to take on the shop but the lease terms offered were so poor that no one could sensibly take the shop on.



Christmas past  
happy memories

.....and now Christmas yet  
to come



## **Setting up a community shop for Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe Update and commitment questionnaire**

Last year the Parish Council sent out a questionnaire to try and assess whether there was enough support in Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe to set up and run a community shop. About a third of the households in the two villages replied, most of whom were very positive about the idea.

A working group has been looking at how we could make this happen. We have investigated the costs and planning issues of setting up a shop in a container in the Village Hall car park and we have talked to other community shops in the area to see what is needed to run a successful business. We have also been in touch with the Post Office to see whether it would be possible to include a Post counter in a community shop.

This is what we have found:

- To purchase and install a container in the Village Hall Car Park, and to set it up so that it is ready to function as a shop, will cost somewhere between £30,000 and £40,000. This includes all the internal fittings, the stock, storage and an initial contingency fund. Some of this money can be raised through grants but we estimate that the villages would need to find about £10,000 – i.e. £40 per household if everyone contributed.
- If the shops opening hours are 9-5 Monday to Friday and 9-12 on Saturday, we would need 32 volunteers each doing a 3 hour shift every week. If the shop opened for longer, we would need more volunteers.
- We would need additional volunteers to go out and buy or collect goods for the shop and a pool of people who would provide holiday cover.
- We would also need a more committed group of people who would form the shop's management committee and who would be responsible for jobs such as volunteer rotas, stock control, purchasing, accounts and health and safety. We think we would need a management committee of 7 people.
- We are highly unlikely to get a Post Office counter in the shop now that we have lost the service. The best we can hope for is an outreach service that would operate for ½ a day a week – like they have in Fivehead. However the Post Office have given notice that they are closing the Fivehead outreach service due to lack of use.
- In order to make enough money to cover the running costs and to provide a fund for future maintenance and replacement of equipment we would need to make a 30% profit on all goods sold in the shop. This would mean that most (although not all) goods would be more expensive than the prices in the local supermarkets.
- To generate enough money to cover our costs and maintenance we need to have an annual turnover of at least £30,000 – that is the total value of goods sold that we would need to sell in one year in the community shop.

On the back of this page is a very short questionnaire. If you are not interested in either using a community shop, or in helping to make it happen, then you do not need to return the questionnaire.

Thank you for your time.

The Village Shop Working Group

The purpose of this questionnaire is to try and get a clear idea of what level of support there is. This is so that we can judge whether it is worth continuing with setting up a community shop. Please be realistic in what you are prepared to commit to. We do realise that people's circumstances change and nobody will be bound by the answers they provide here.

<b>Your name, address and email</b>	
<b>Question 1</b> How many adults in your household would be prepared to undertake a weekly 3-hour shift in a community shop based at the Village Hall?	<b>Answer 1</b>
<b>Question 2</b> How many adults in your household would be prepared to join a pool of volunteers who would provide cover for holidays or help out with purchasing and collecting goods for the community shop?	<b>Answer 2</b>
<b>Question 3</b> How many adults in your household would be prepared to be an active member of the community shop management committee, taking on a key role to help make the shop work?	<b>Answer 3</b>
<b>Question 4</b> Is your household prepared to commit to using the shop regularly?  We understand that your willingness to spend money in the shop will depend on what the shop stocks. Let's assume that there will be things you want to buy and that the shop's management committee will adjust what is stocked in response to customer feedback.	<b>Answer 4</b>
<b>Question 5</b> Is your household prepared to make a donation, or to buy a share (which may be refundable in the future – although this cannot be guaranteed), to help get the shop up and running? If you are prepared to please would you tell us the <b>maximum</b> amount of money that you could put towards this cause.	<b>Answer 5</b>

Please return this questionnaire by **Friday December 1st** to the post box at the Village Hall. Or you can email your answers to the address below.

If you would like to email your answers then please send them to [patsyjwallace@gmail.com](mailto:patsyjwallace@gmail.com)

Please put "shop questionnaire" in the subject box and lay your email out with a separate line for each answer.