

GOOD NEWS! We are delighted to advise you that we have been granted planning permission for construction of the community hub.



Due to the sensitivities associated with this project requiring consultation with a large number of authorities and protracted by Covid restrictions, it's taken over three years to reach this important milestone.

Along the way, numerous meetings were held with various authorities over a two-year period to reach a suitable design, minimising light pollution, avoiding impact on the SSSI land, protecting the grazing animals and finding a solution to their negative reaction to an upper floor meeting room to provide the space required for the Hub.

While the designs were taking shape, feasibility studies and business plans were drawn up to support our application which was finally submitted in May 2020 with the fourth design (see above).

There are conditions attached to the planning permission which we fully expected and are confident we can meet.

THANK YOU!

The hub team and I would like to express a HUGE thank you to everyone who has made this key milestone possible either by writing to support the application, by donating to our initial crowdfunding campaign back in 2018 to get the initial surveys done, by volunteering or by offering your expertise along the way.

I also wish to thank Guy McNair-Wilson for designing the Hub and completing the planning application and Rebecca Gabzdyl for her extensive work, particularly on our business plans. I am also grateful to Stephen Antczak, Mike Upton, and Richard Ashmead for their steady and continual support to me through this lengthy planning process and members of the Village Hall committee. I especially thank Ian for keeping the shop trading since the SOS East Boldre campaign launch in 2017. Finally, our MP, Dr Julian Lewis has given outstanding support to the project.

It would not be unreasonable to ask, why has it taken so long, as applications should be resolved in 13 weeks! Belatedly in the consultation process Natural England asked a series of questions specifically about hydrology, the car park and about how we plan to manage the impact of the construction on the surrounding SSSI land. We replied in October 2020, but it was only in March 2021 that Natural England provided their response to the National Park planning authority.

Mike Husband
Hub Chairman

PUBLIC MEETINGS

By Zoom

8th July,
7pm

Meeting ID 890 6916 9662

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89069169662>

All WELCOME
please come along!

Village
Hall

11th
July, 7pm

Please call Andy (01590 612997)
to book (limited places).

The results of our work over the last year and changing circumstances have led to a change in our plans but not to the community benefits we aim to deliver (see over).

We'd love to share our thinking for the community shop and village hall and hear your views on our plans!

Contact us

VILLAGE HALL Steve Antczak 01590 626368; email web.manager@eastboldre.org Midsomer Cottage, Rows Lane, SO41 5SU.

SHOP Rebecca Gabzdyl 01590 611176; email gabzdyl@btinternet.com Dane End, Heath Lane, SO42 7WF.

Why is the plan changing?

Key challenges

- Our plans indicate that it will take two-three years to complete the Hub (with detailed design, fundraising, build and fit out stages still ahead of us).
- The biggest challenge right now to the success of the proposed community shop is that its financial viability relies on retaining the existing salaried Post Office contract. *However, to keep this more favourable, old-style contract we must provide continuous service through the handover.*
- Ian Evans, owner and keeper of East Boldre Post Office & Stores, is keen to retire and has now found a buyer for his property – but the buyer intends to convert it to residential use only.
- We have explored every possibility we can think of to find a temporary shop site – so as to be able to provide the necessary continuous service required for the Post Office contract – but our approaches have all been unsuccessful.

At this point our aim to develop a combined Hub, Shop and Post Office for the village seemed impossible, so we went back to the drawing board. We have since agreed a plan with Ian to run the community shop in the existing premises, separate to the Hub development.

The proposed solution

The Community Shop

- Purchase a 125-year lease for the whole ground floor of the existing village shop. *This would put the shop ownership in community hands, with good security of tenure and giving the community an additional asset.*
- It almost doubles the size of the existing shop allowing the broader product range, better accessibility and financial viability we have always wanted to achieve. *Prior to 1987, the shop occupied most of the ground floor so the changes should be fairly easy to implement.*
- We set up East Boldre Community Stores Ltd (EBCS) as a Community Benefit Society last year. EBCS will manage the shop project and run the shop once it is trading.
- Ian will work with us through the transition to share his knowledge and ensure continuity of services.
- Funding – share offer, community business sources.

Target opening date – April 2022

The Village Hall

The village hall trustees will develop the hall to achieve the proposed improvements to the facilities it offers:

- Improved appearance of the village hall.
- A cinema and enhanced theatre facilities.
- A permanent historical exhibition space.
- Better facilities for fitness classes, dance, drama, training, meetings, etc.
- The layout of the recreational facilities will be improved as everything is on one level.
- The new community shop proposal would mean there is no longer a need for an expensive basement and the associated risks it entails, nor to find land for the rights swap to get the shop licence on the hall site.
- The National Park planning authority has indicated that permission for building the hub without a basement would probably only require a minor material amendment rather than a new planning application.
- Funding – heritage and recreational sources.

Target opening date – Autumn 2022

The benefits

- The combined cost of both projects is likely to be similar to the hub estimates and this approach mitigates some key risks.
- The existing Post Office contract is retained – vital to the financial viability of the shop.
- Aim is for the new community shop to be trading by Spring 2022 removing the imminent risk of losing it forever.
- No need for a shop licence on Crown land or interim shop solution while hub is built.
- It allows us to diversify our funding streams for the shop and hall.
- In the future, if a shop were no longer needed, selling the lease would release money for other community causes.
- Although this is a significant change, much of the hard work we have done will be reused.

The Hub team



Mike Husband
Chair, Village Hall Trustee



Steve Antczak
Secretary, Village Hall Trustee



Guy MacNair Wilson
Architectural designer



Richard Ashmead



Mike Upton

The Shop team



Andy Brennan
Shop Chair



Rebecca Gabzdyl
Shop Secretary



Mike Hawker
Shop Treasurer



Libby Duignan