

## Sustainable travel plan for East Boldre Post Office and Shop

### Introduction

East Boldre lies within a rural location in the New Forest National Park. Our community shop and Post Office will primarily serve the population of East Boldre, which has a population of around 840 people.

The existing privately owned village shop is at risk of closure as the owner is keen to retire. Our proposal to acquire and develop the Baptist Chapel as shop premises retains and safeguards this vital village amenity by establishing the business in community owned premises.

### Minimising the Travel Impact of Business Growth

To ensure the shop remains trading, East Boldre Community Stores (EBCS) needs to expand the business to make it financially viable. The existing shop has a floorspace of around 66 square metres, the chapel offers 187 sq. m (similar to the highly successful community shop at Woodgreen). It will achieve growth primarily by using additional internal space to expand the shop's goods and services, to increase the spend per customer rather than footfall.

Campsite deliveries will allow visitors to enjoy local produce and further grow turnover without a corresponding increase in traffic in our quiet village. This too will reduce the number of journeys made across the forest by visitors. We intend to use an electric van for this purpose.

The existing business closes for lunch with small peaks in traffic before and after this period. By remaining open over lunchtime, these peaks will be smoothed and these additional trading hours are expected to mitigate any increase in footfall with its attendant parking.

A focus on supplying local produce where possible will reduce food miles and delivery journeys.

### Reducing Travel By Car

Online shopping is not an alternative for accessing cash and convenience items. By preserving the shop and Post Office in the village journeys across the New Forest National Park for newspapers, convenience items and postal and banking services will be reduced. **This is the most significant contribution which the Community Stores' plans for the shop are making to assist sustainable travel.**

The distances involved are typically a 10-12 mile round trip. With over 50 customers/day at the shop, if say, 67% of customers made these extra journeys, that would equate to 130,000 car miles / year.

In the interests of minimising carbon emissions, EBCS does not want to significantly increase private car movements, or encourage residents to drive to the shop. They wish to create a welcoming, community environment where villagers can primarily walk or cycle to the stores.

Given the 12 square mile catchment area of the shop it is inevitable that some customers will drive, especially those who live further away or face mobility issues, but EBCS aim to minimise this.

The chapel, just 170m from the existing shop, has a similarly central location in our village that maximises the number of people who could walk or cycle to the shop.

The shop is within 100m of the bus stop although services are limited to just Tuesdays and Thursdays.



Red lines show properties within ½ mile walk of chapel = 210 homes (330 homes in this linear parish).

Green dot = bus stop

## Actively Encouraging Sustainable Methods of Travel

This proposal aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework and Hampshire Parking Strategy and Standards that seek to reduce dependency on the car and encourage more sustainable modes of transport.

### Walkers

For walkers, the new stores will carry across the existing provision of hot and cold snacks, sandwiches and a coffee machine.

The 'Old School Room' social space offers the opportunity for local walking groups to gather before or after setting off on a walk together or for walkers to seek shelter from rain.

### Cyclists

For cyclists, parking for three bikes will be provided along with a cycle repair station where people can use a free bike stand to carry out basic bike maintenance, for example to tune their gears or pump their tyres, either whilst out on a ride or as an amenity for locals to keep their bikes in good working order. These are located close to the shop entrance for convenience.

The shop will stock basic cycle accessories, puncture repairs kits, chain links and plans to offer occasional bike maintenance workshops.

## Conclusion

In conclusion then, the increase in shop floorspace is not going to equate to an increase in local private car movements as planned growth is not achieved by a corresponding increase in footfall.

The measures set out in this sustainable travel plan will be implemented, in order to ensure that the business runs sustainably and improves the viability of the enterprise, but without any greater impact upon the conservation area it is located in that the existing village shop and Post Office it will replace.