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Village Shops and Post Office Survey

Action in rural Sussex is a long established charity that works with rural communities to improve the quality of life and economic wellbeing of rural people and local communities. We have a long history of providing support to both village shops and post offices and to communities where the closure of the shop or post office is threatened. We are always seeking to improve the support provided to local shops and communities to make it relevant and useful. We firmly believe that village shops and post offices are crucial to the future of rural communities.

The imminent closure of 2,500 post offices across the country as announced by Post Office Ltd means that we are probably facing a time of uncertainty and change within rural retailing. We are therefore seeking to update our own information on village shops and post offices and also seeking community views on rural retailing. I attach a copy of a questionnaire that has been sent to all village shops and post offices in the County. The aim is collect and collate information so that we can identify particular issues and priorities which will help us to safeguard the future of village shops/rural post offices.

We are also through the Parish Council, as part of this exercise, seeking the views of rural communities on the future of retailing in their village. Obviously we are most interested at this time in those communities which have only one facility but would like to hear from all parish councils about their local shop(s) and post office.

For the purposes of your response we would like to know:-

- Whether there are close links between the parish council and the local shop or post office (s) which means that the parish council is likely to be aware of any viability or closure issues;
- Whether the community would be prepared to help keep retail and post office facilities in the village in the event of there being a threat of closure of one or both facilities. In our experience this would mean the development of a community company that would secure the future of retailing in the village;
- If there is no shop or post office at present whether the community would be interested in developing such facilities;



Sussex Rural Community Council is a charity
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Charity Reg N° 1035401
VAT Reg N° 587 4943 79
Company registered in England N° 2907172

Presidents:

Mrs Phyllida Stewart-Roberts OBE,
Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex and
Hugh R Wyatt, Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex
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Member of the ACRE Network



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- Whether there is the potential for the development of community shop facilities in any community at the present time either because of an immediate threat of closure or because of previous closures;
- Whether your Parish Council would be interested in attending a seminar or workshop organised by Action in rural Sussex about rural retailing. If there is enough interest we will hold this in March or April.

I would be grateful if your Parish Council could discuss this and provide us with a written response. This will help us to identify where to focus our services. I would be grateful if we could receive a response from you by the middle of March. If you wish to discuss anything further please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

Simon Kiley
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Action in rural Sussex

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