

# North Molton Community Shop

Public meeting 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023

North Molton Community Shop Limited



# Agenda

- Introduction
- Community shop group formation
- Project research
- Public survey results
- Options
- The way forward



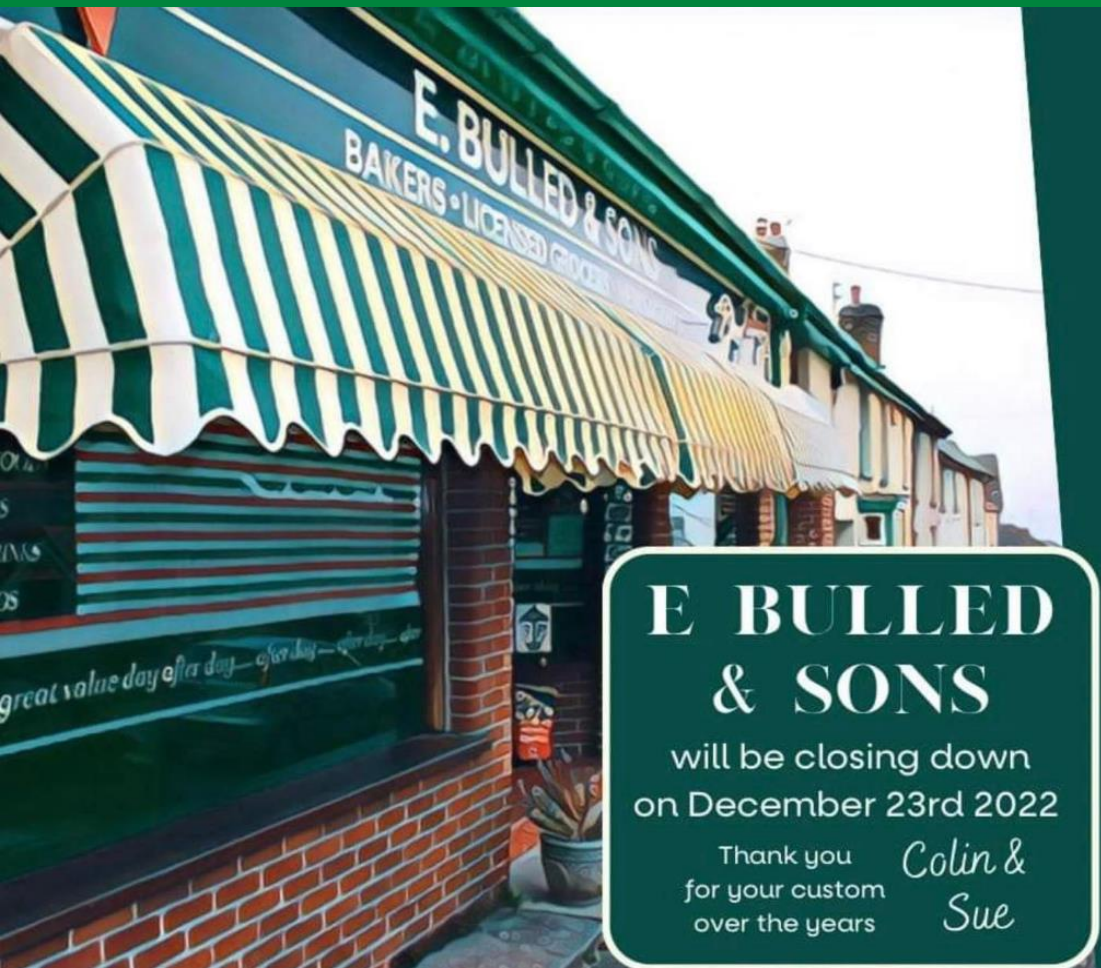
# North Molton

The village & parish has a population of 1,159 (2021 census)

Benefitting from a primary school, garage, hairdressers, public house, 2 churches, a well-resourced sports and social club and until the end of 2022 a general store and post office.



# Introduction



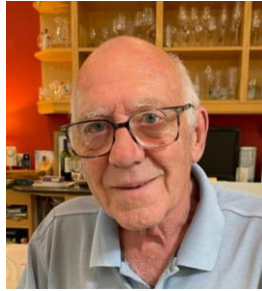
- Bulled's had been in North Molton since the 1850s. First in Sladers Cottage, and then in 1951 it moved into its new premises in East St on the site of the old police station.
- Colin, Sue & the team provided more than provisions & a Post Office, they offered support & provided a vital place where parishioners and visitors could find company, information and participate in a centre of village life.
- With an estimated 300-400 village shops closing every year, community ownership is helping to preserve vital outlets and services for rural communities. The past five years have seen an average of 13 shops open under community ownership per year.

# Village Shop meeting 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Initiated & facilitated by North Molton Parish council

- Open meeting attended by 12 people
- Identified 3 key goals
  - A shop service for essential items
  - A place where people can meet
  - The venture must be sustainable
- These aims to be provided for at least a few hours a day, 6 days a week
- Going forward the provision of a far wider selection of services, a café, longer opening hours
- Core team identified to manage the project going forward

# Community Shop Core Team



**Andy Milne**  
Village resident for 33 years  
Former RAF pilot & retired  
business owner. North Molton  
School Governor



**Hugh Jennings**  
Village resident for 6 years  
Over 30 years experience in  
multi site retail & operations  
management. Parish Councillor



**Andy Radley**  
Village resident for 3 years  
Born in North Devon,  
associated with the village for  
20 years Retired vet. Parish  
Councillor



**Amanda Adams**  
Village resident for 15 years  
Experienced in retail including  
with E Bulled & Sons



**Anne Johnson**  
Village resident for 10 years  
Experienced in retail including  
The Poltimore Inn & E Bulled &  
Sons. Parish Councillor



**Dave Heath**  
Village resident for 2 years.  
Regular visitor to the village for  
12 years. Former salesman,  
publican & business owner.



**Gary Nickels**  
Village resident for 9 years  
30 years experience in  
operations management.

# A community shop – where to start?

## Initial research carried out by the group

- Local community shops outreach
  - Bishops Nympton
  - Parracombe
  - Combe Martin
  - Rackenford
  - High Bickington
  - West Down
  - Bratton Fleming
- Consult with the community
- Available support & funding sources
- Premises opportunities
- Services provision
- Formal organisation options



# Support Network

## The Plunkett Foundation

- Established in 1919
- A national charity that supports rural communities across the UK to tackle the issues they face through community business
- Provide practical advice, support and training to help communities establish and run successful community businesses with long-term survival rates
- Membership based organisation
- Has links and alliances with a broad range of charitable, parliamentary and corporate organisations
- Provide a road map for establishing a community shop





# Consulting with the community

Based on a template supplied by the Plunkett Foundation

- Provides our group with the vital information it needs to formulate a sound business plan
- What products & services do the community want?
- Does the community want additional facilities such as a café?
- How often are people likely to use the shop?
- What hours do we need to open for?
- Is there support available within the community?

**North Molton Community Shop Project**

1. If a new village shop was opened in North Molton would you or any member of your household use it?

Daily  
 2-3 times a week  
 Once a week  
 Once a fortnight  
 Occasionally  
 Not at all

2. What products would you be most likely to buy?

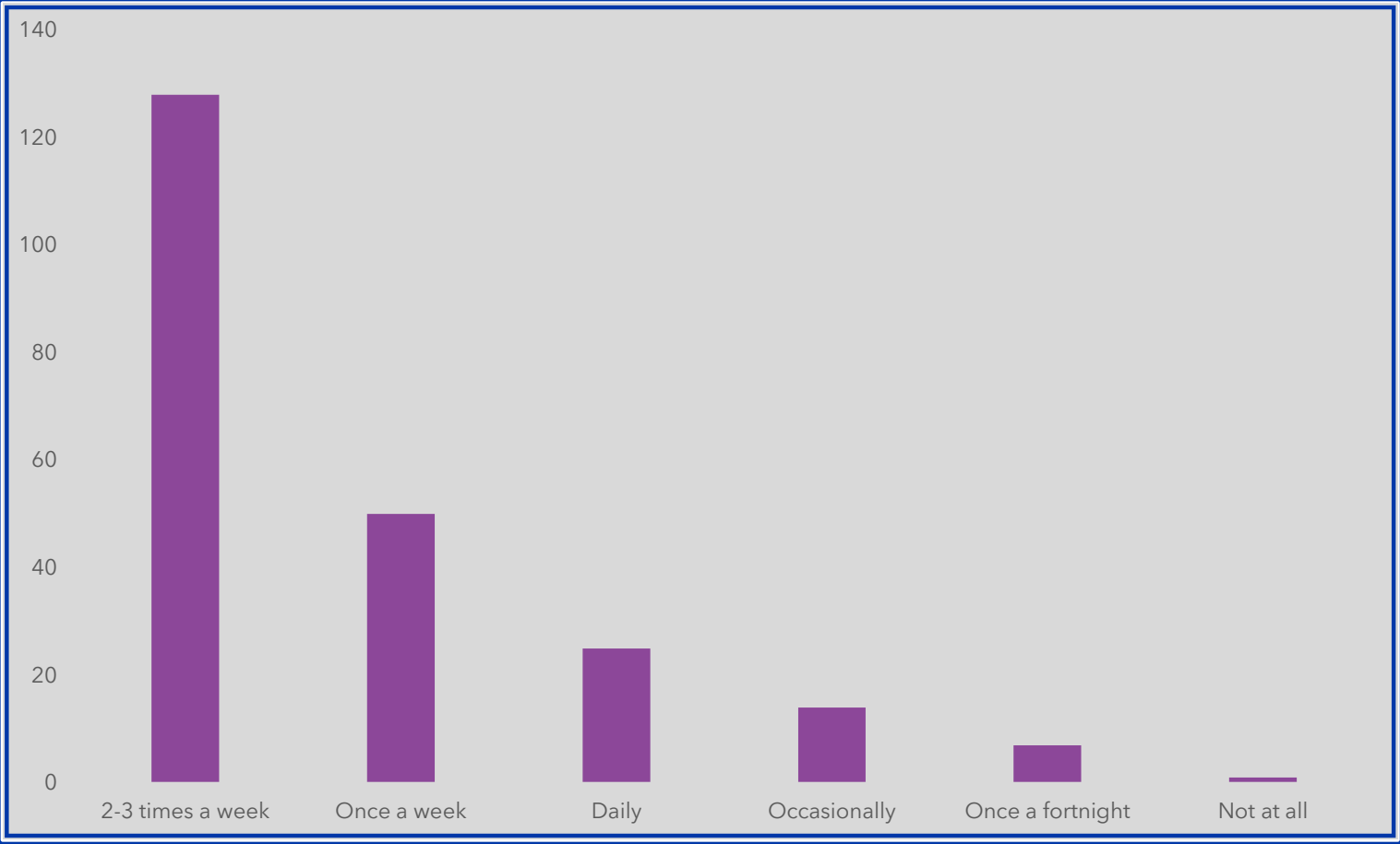
Newspapers/magazines  
 Ready meals  
 Local produce  
 Frozen food  
 Fresh fruit & vegetables  
 Ready meals  
 Meat and dairy  
 Greeting cards/wrapping  
 Bakery  
 Pet food  
 Sweets/ice cream  
 Household goods  
 Beers, wines & spirits  
 Stationery  
 Packed groceries - tins, packets  
 Craft items  
 Cigarettes/tobacco  
 Gifts  
 Cleaning materials  
 Coal/logs  
 Toiletries  
 Sandwiches  
 Organic/Fair Trade products  
 Other (please list as many as you like below)

# Your input

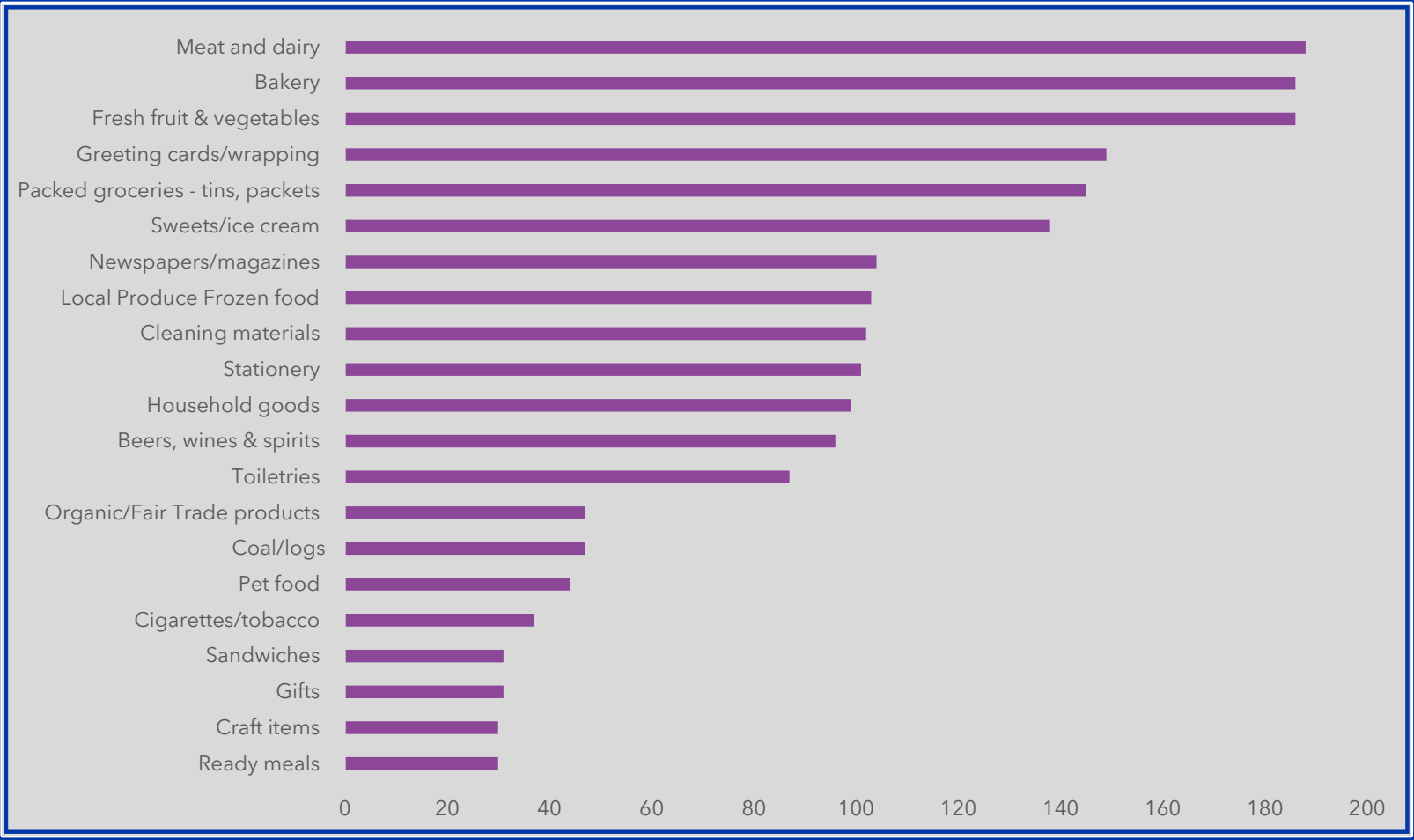
## These are the results of the survey

- 497 survey forms distributed in the village and surrounding areas
- The group recognises that we did not cover the whole parish which totals approximately 520 households
- 251 completed forms returned
- A huge thank you to all of you that completed the questionnaire
- Additional ideas on products and services that you would like to see
- Provides the insight to ensure that we deliver what **YOU** want
- Enables the creation of a sustainable business plan

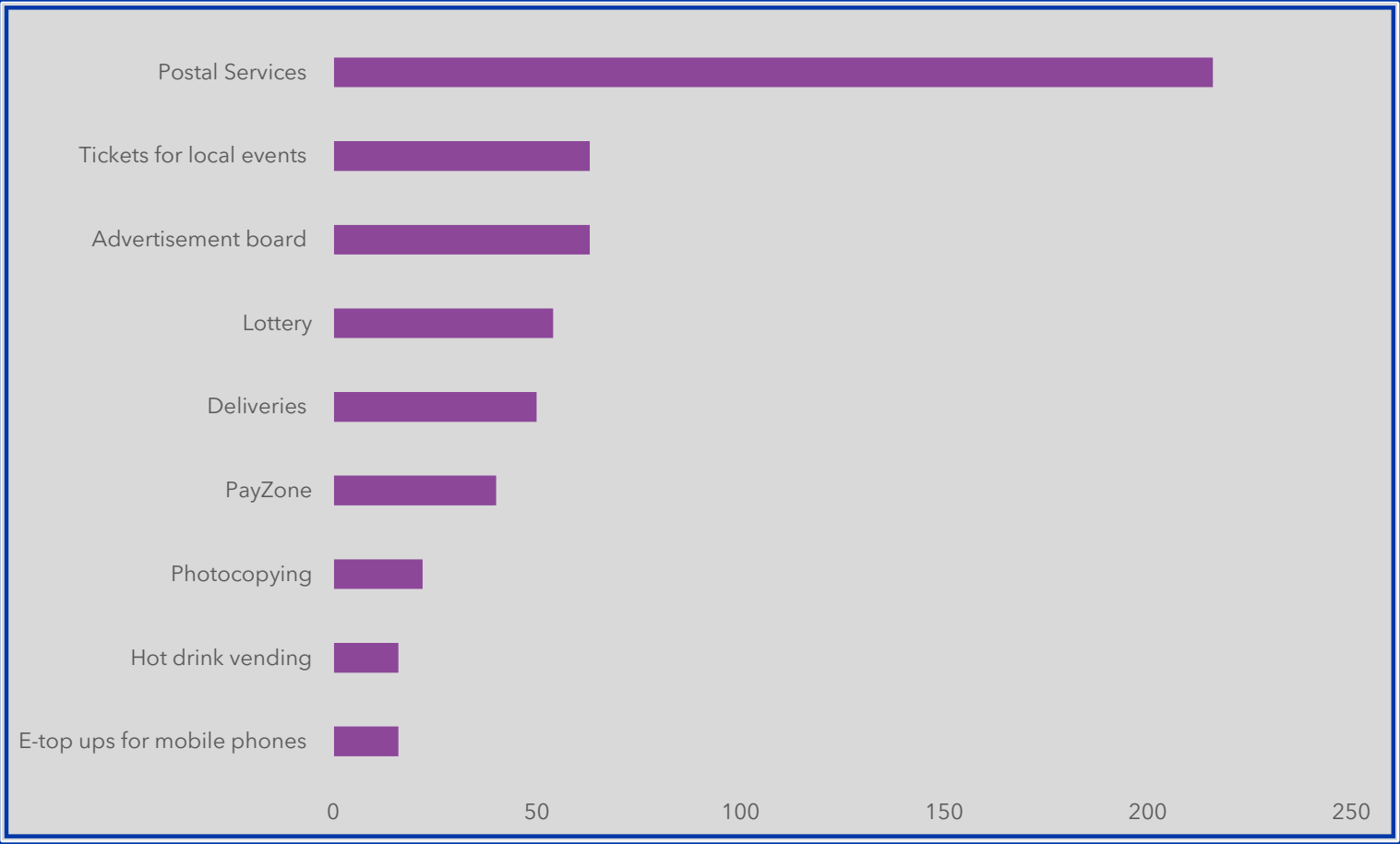
If a new village shop was opened in North Molton would you or any member of your household use it?



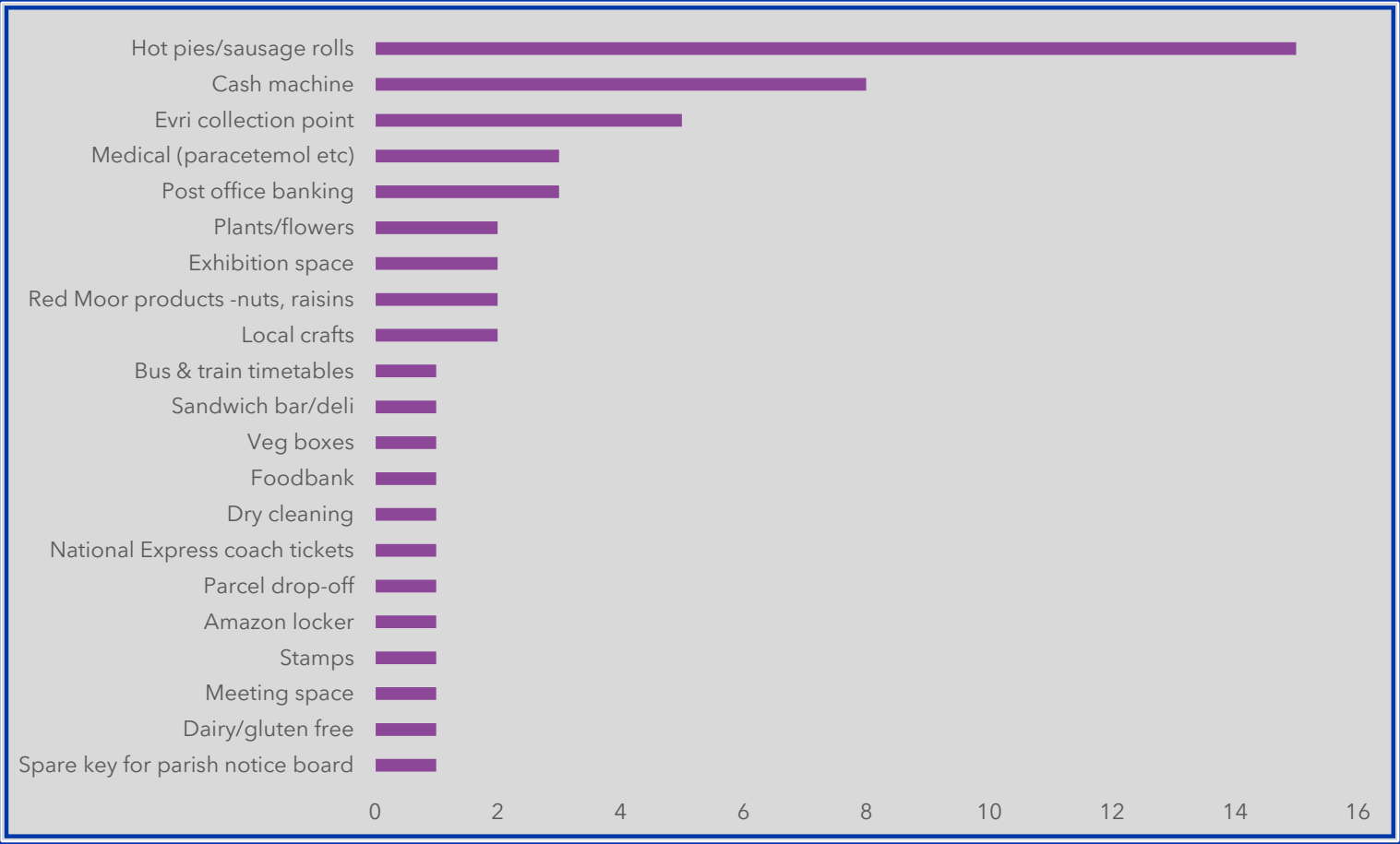
What products would you be most likely to buy?



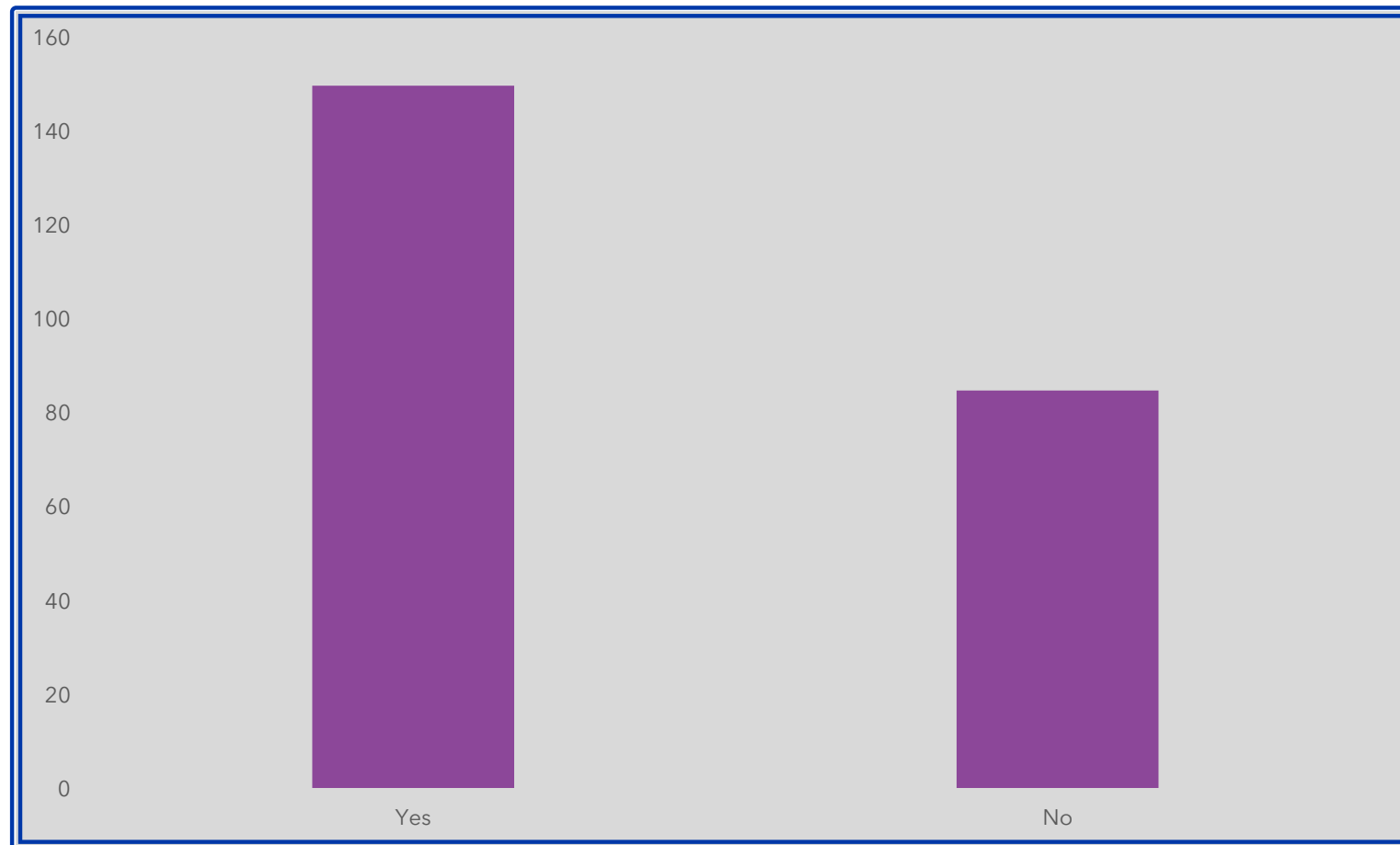
What services would you be most likely to use?



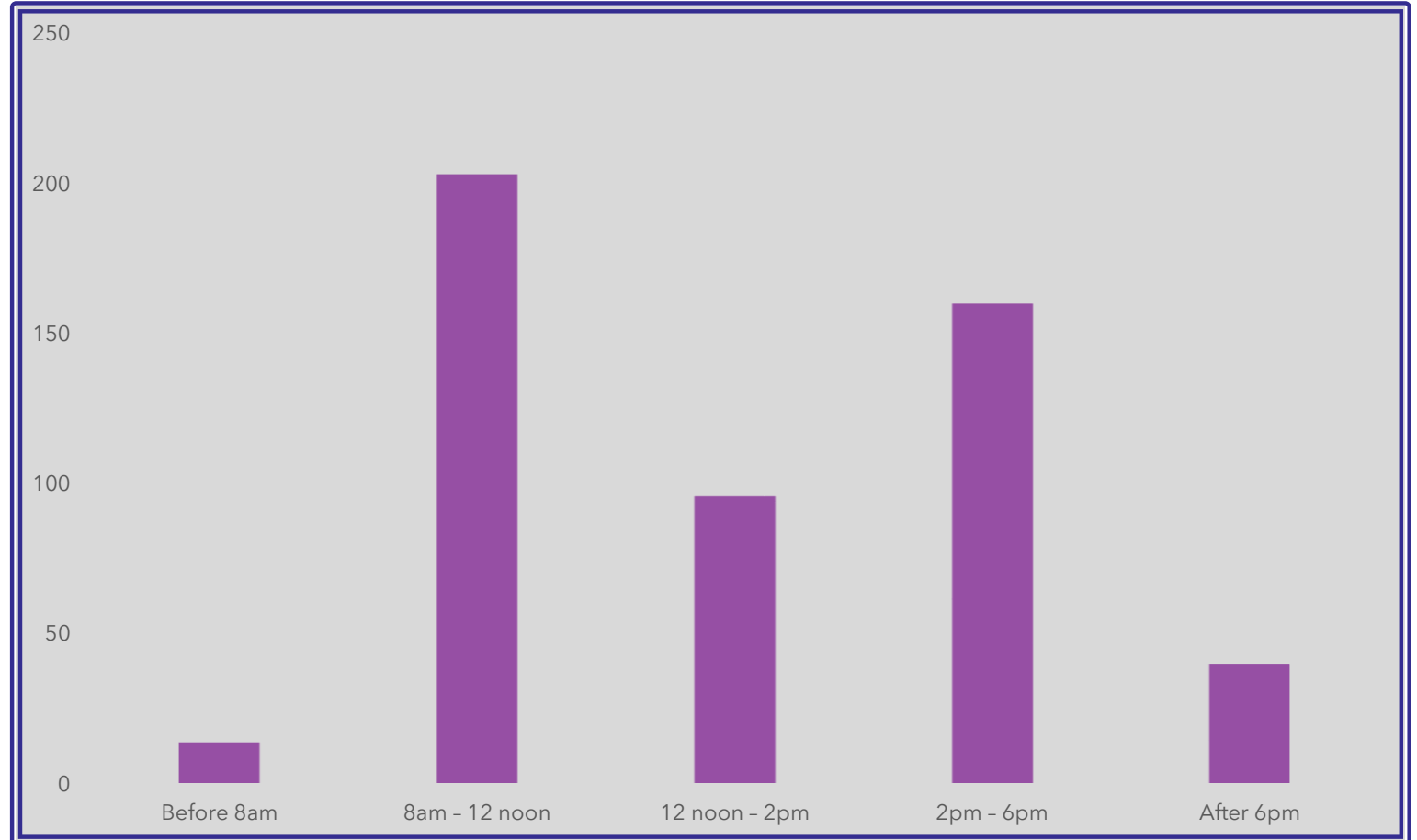
Are there any other products & services you would like to see on offer?



If the village shop were to incorporate a community café, is this a service you would be likely to use?

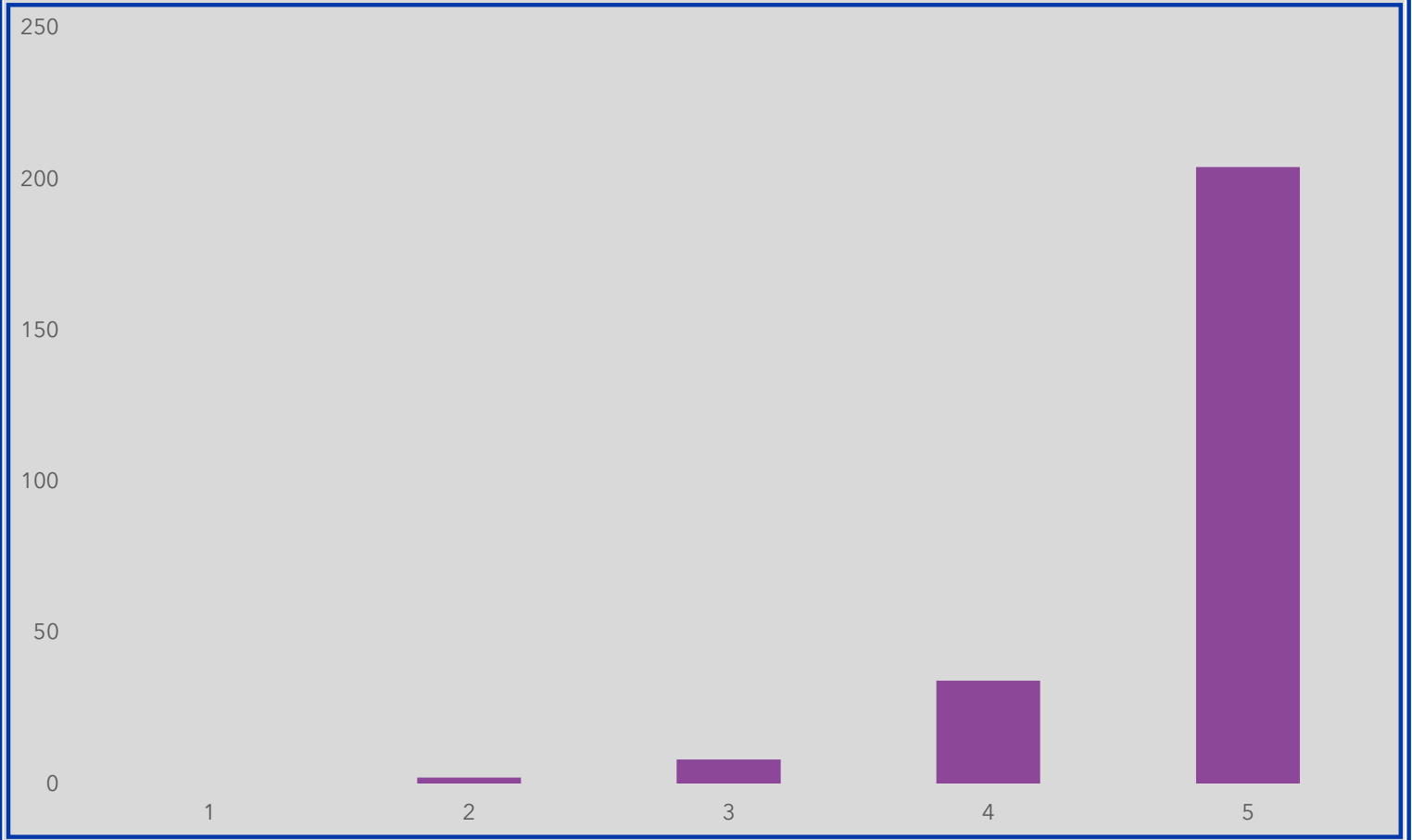


At what time of day would you be most likely to use the shop?

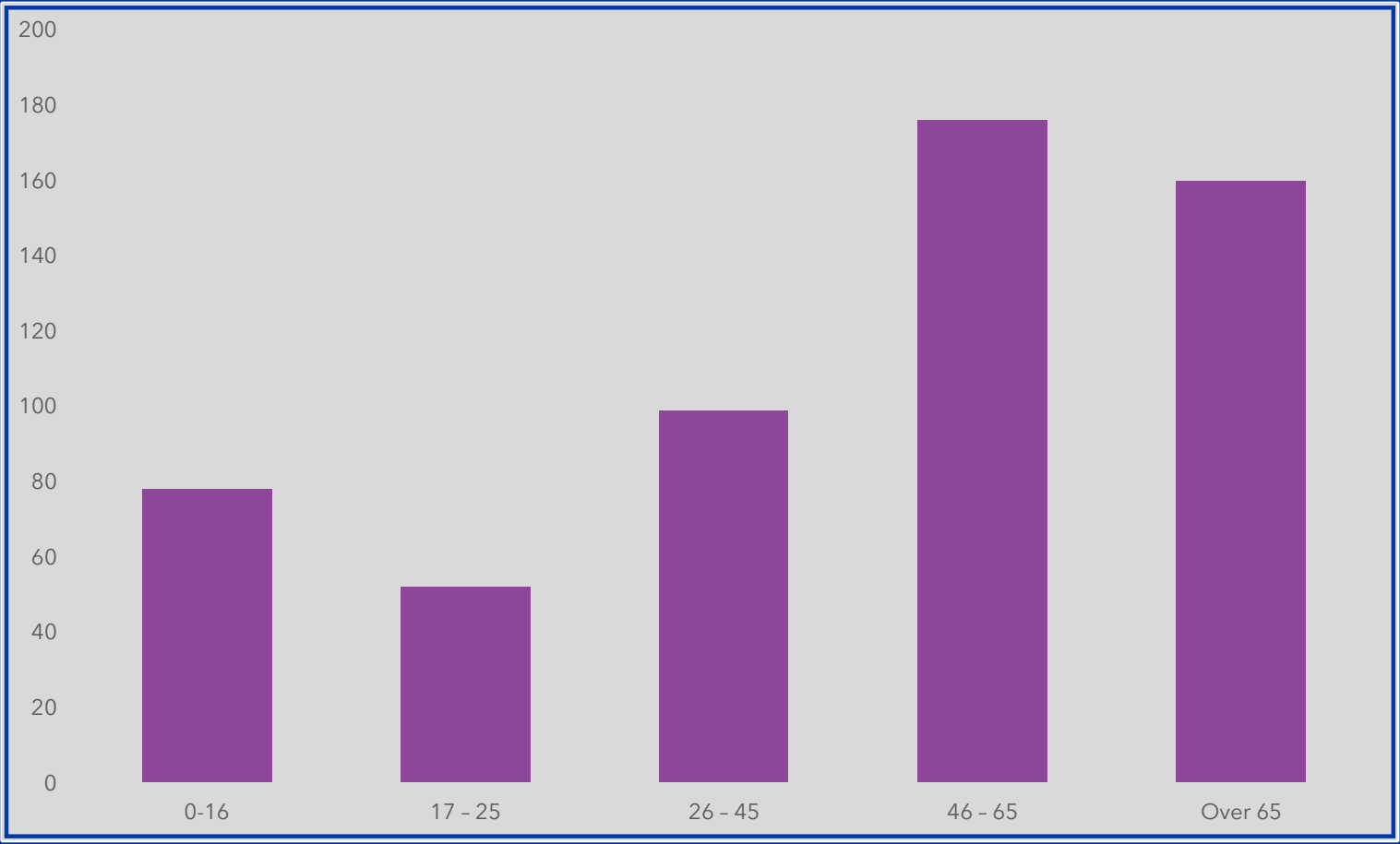




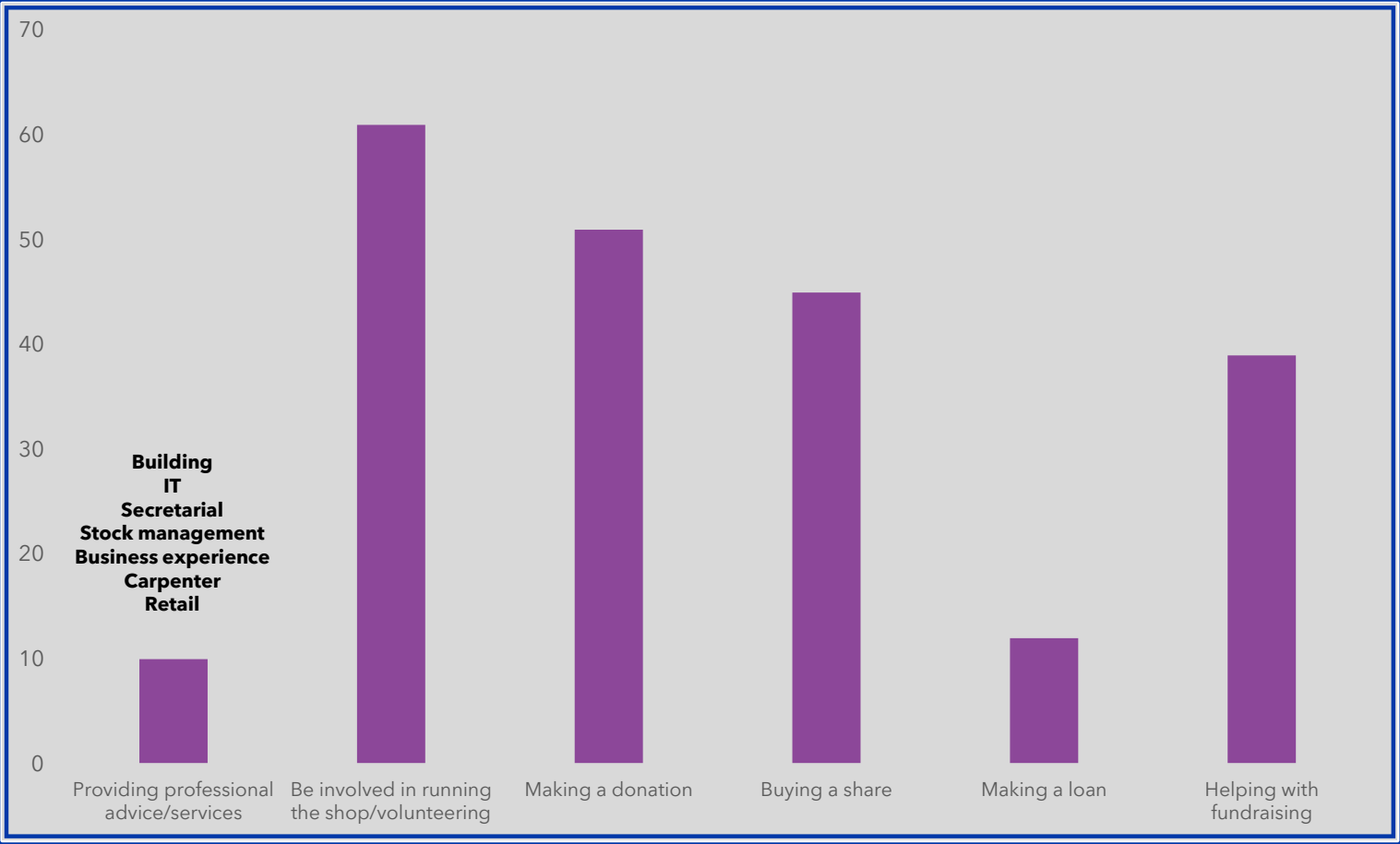
On a scale of 1 – 5 (where 1 is not important and 5 is very important), how important do you think it is to have a village shop in North Molton?



How many people in each age range there are in your household



Would you or anyone in your household be interested in helping a community shop project in any way?



# Survey response

The returned forms also provided us with

- Offers of help with volunteering
- Support with specialist skills & experience
- Confirmation that financial support is available
- Comments about the types of services wanted
- Many encouraging remarks and suggestions to build a successful enterprise
- All contact details will be subject to General Data Protection Regulations

Good luck we really need a shop, well done!

Thank you for getting the show on the road!

Good Luck. 😊

Thank you x

5. Are there any other products or services not listed above you would like to see on offer?  
LOCAL ATTRACTIONS LEAFLETS FOR VISITORS.

# Summary of results

## Initial 'shopping list' for our Community store

- Primarily offering a range of affordable, quality day to day essentials
- Provide a selection of premium local goods
- Postal services
- Hot snacks
- Café / community element
- Shopping available between 8:00am – 6:00pm
- These are our initial objectives, we will make changes based on feedback as the shop matures

# Post Office services

A number of approaches were made to the Post Office

- The Post Office will not offer a full-time service due to insufficient volume of trade in the parish
- Unable to secure an outreach service from South Molton post office
- No mobile service available
- Potential to offer some Post Office services is still under investigation



# Further research

## Investigation into other services required

- Supplier selection
- Banking services
- Internet provision
- Cash point options
- PayZone
  - is a vital service for some residents
  - can provide a number of Post Office services



# Potential premises

A number of options have been considered using the following criteria

- Location – central
- Space – to provide services wanted by the community
- Utilities – enable services wanted by the community
- Access – for ALL
- Parking - for customers and suppliers
- Impact – on the village



# Premises with potential

## A short list potential choices

- The old school
  - The shop
  - Porta cabin
- 
- Each has pros & cons
  - Sustainability for the future is a core objective
  - The final selection will be driven by the business plan



# Premises proposal

## The old school

- Location – central ✓
- Space – to provide services wanted by the community ✓
- Utilities – enable services wanted by the community ✓
- Access – for ALL ✓
- Parking - for customers and suppliers ✓
- Impact – on the village ✓
- We are currently carrying out a feasibility study



# Organisation structure

Why must a community enterprise have a recognised legal structure?

- Community shops trade
- Employ staff and manage volunteers
- Enter into contracts and financial arrangements
- A legal structure ensures that they are compliant with legal requirements such as tax, insurance, trading standards and employment rights

# Which structure?

There are several options that are available falling under three broad headings

- **Co-operative**

these need to meet the co-operative principles as laid out in the Statement of Co-operative Identity by the International Co-operative Alliance

Profits are shared by members of the group

Regulated the Financial Conduct Authority

- **Community enterprise**

a general term for a business trading for a social purpose with profits reinvested into the enterprise

Profits must be reinvested into the enterprise or into the community

Regulated the Financial Conduct Authority

- **Charity**

the purpose of the organisation must be recognised by law as charitable, and it must benefit the public or a section of it

Regulated by the Charity Commission

# Community Benefit Society


The structure adopted by the majority of community enterprises

- They are set up with social objectives to conduct a business or trade
- They are run and managed by their members
- They must submit annual accounts
- They can raise funds by issuing shares to the public
- Membership is organised on the principle of one-member, one-vote
- Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority
- Members are considered to have a 'share' of a society, but they do not receive any dividend

# North Molton Community Shop Ltd

A society has been created and key positions appointed for a temporary period

- A management team drawn from the project group
- They have enabled the creation of the entity
- Membership is open to any person or corporate body that meets the society membership criteria
- The society must hold Annual General Meetings
- The Management Committee is elected by the membership
- The Management Committee can co-opt members when appropriate


 **FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY**  
12 Endeavour Square  
London  
E20 1JN  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7066 1000  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7066 1099  
www.fca.org.uk

**Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014**  
*Registration of new society*

The following society has today been registered by us under Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a Community Benefit Society:

Society: **North Molton Community Shop Limited**  
Registration number: **9080**  
Registration date: 26 May 2023  
Address: The Cottage, East Street, North Molton, Devon, EX36 3JQ  
Financial year-end date: 31 March

Date: **26 May 2023**



# What will it cost?

To launch a viable community shop will cost in the region of £40,000

- Rent for premises
- Purchasing shop fixtures and fittings
- Leasing of assets such as terminals
- Utilities & services
- Legal charges
- Staffing costs
- Purchasing initial stock offering
- Support the first months of trading
- We have already incurred costs of around £1,000 to get this far



# How will these costs be met?

## The funding options for the project

- Fundraising in the community
- Community donations & loans
- Fundraising events
  - Band & raffle in June
  - Auction in July
- Grant applications from local & national bodies
- Potential society share scheme
- Parish council have kindly committed £500





# The way forward

## Next steps

- Public meeting – your feedback & comments
- Premises – identify sustainable location
- Scope and cost the creation of a community shop
- Draft business plan
- Secure funding to establish the business
  - Fundraising events scheduled for June & July
  - Submissions to funding bodies
- Define initial range for shop products and services
- Create and deliver project plan



# A thank you

A huge thank you from the project team for the support shown at the meeting