

Pitton Community Store

Update and Next Steps

August 2025

Plan and progress

- We plan to build a new community shop and Post Office next door to Pitton village hall before the current shop in Pitton closes.
- We have completed most of the planning and legal work to design a shop and agree the lease of village hall land, with help and support from the management committee of Pitton Village Hall, Pitton and Farley Parish Council and Firsdown Parish Council.
- The tendering process has completed, and we have a builder lined up to start the work.
- Work so far has been funded by several small grants and the generosity of local residents through donations and a community share scheme.

Where we are now

- Applications for larger grants have not been successful. The Community Ownership Fund closed a year early due to a change in government.
- Recent applications to the Lottery and Booster Funds were rejected as they did not feel that our project sufficiently targeted places or communities experiencing higher levels of poverty, disadvantage or discrimination.
- **In a nutshell, the local areas are perceived as wealthy enough to fund their own shop.**



Our overall aims:

- Keep a shop and Post Office for residents of Pitton and surrounding villages
- Provide a community meeting place encouraging interaction between villagers
- Facilitate employment experience for local young people
- Provide an outlet for local suppliers
- Reduce isolation and loneliness through volunteering opportunities and a small community cafe

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Our options

As we have not been successful with large grants we have limited options going forward

1. **Raise funds from within the community** to build a shop extension to the village hall as per approved plans. We will need to raise at least £210,000 to achieve this.
2. **Scale back our aspirations**, with a view to a smaller and less costly solution with fewer facilities, bearing in mind that the shop needs to be big enough to maintain financial viability. Revisiting some aspects of the planning process is likely to take around 3-6 months.
3. **Close the project** and reconcile to the fact that we will no longer have a village shop or Post Office in Pitton.

Our conclusion

- **It is premature to think about scaling back or cancelling the project until we explore how much we could raise within the community.**
- **We need to engage with the community to assess how much we could raise.**

What we aim to do

- We plan to have a public meeting on 13th September at 3.30 in Pitton Village Hall to talk about next steps, assess the amount we could raise from the community and answer any questions you may have.
- We will be immensely grateful for any contribution towards our fundraising and will also outline other ways you can get involved in the development of the shop going forward.
- If you are able to support us financially, we will provide you with a pledge form and ask you to pledge what you can afford. Pledges are needed to help us determine whether we can progress at all, and to gain approval for tax concessions for contributors from HMRC. We have already received £100K in pledges, which is near to half of our target.
- There are financial benefits such as potential tax relief of 50% of the amount invested, and an offset against capital gains tax. All benefits will be set out in more detail in a formal prospectus.
- If we receive enough pledges we will progress quickly by developing the formal share scheme and moving rapidly to the build stage.
- If the £210K is not achieved, we will assess whether the pledges are enough to give us confidence that we could fund a smaller or less permanent structure.
- If at the end of the process, the amounts pledged will not cover the cost of a viable alternative design, we will close the project.

If you would like to find out more please visit our web site <https://pittoncommunitystore.org>. If you are not able to attend the meeting but would like to discuss making a financial contribution or ask questions please contact Brian Cudby by email briancudby8@gmail.com.