

Kirkhill & Bunchrew Community Trust

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Village Shop – Community Survey

1. Background

In May 2015 Kirkhill and Bunchrew Community Trust (KBCT) undertook a community consultation in the form of five group discussions with a broad cross-section of local people to gauge their level of interest in a village shop. Feedback from the consultation exercise was then used to inform the design of a questionnaire to survey the views and opinions of people from across the community.

The village shop survey took place over the summer months and was undertaken by means of face to face interviews conducted at Gala Day and via the distribution of an electronic link to a survey monkey version of the questionnaire which was posted on the community website, the school newsletter and distributed to KBCT members. By mid-August 2015, a total of 191 completed questionnaires had been returned.

This paper summarises the main findings from the survey. Please note that in some charts percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2. Summary of survey findings

- The research suggests that a local shop would be used by almost everyone in the community (94%).
- A very large majority of respondents thought they'd use a local shop at least once a week (89%), including around two thirds who thought they'd use it more frequently (64%).
- Respondents' anticipated level of weekly spend (an average of £19) suggests that most people expect to use a village shop to 'top-up' during the week or for one-off purchases rather than for a larger weekly shop. The actual level of spend would, of course, be influenced by a number of factors including the range of goods available and perceived value for money, but the fact that as many as 31% of respondents expected to spend more than £20 a week suggests that there is potential to attract higher value business.
- In terms of stock, the most important 'must haves' identified by respondents were basic groceries (e.g. bread, milk, butter, tea, coffee); newspapers and magazines; sweets, confectionary and soft drinks; locally grown or produced products (e.g. fruit, vegetables, jam, chutney); and fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Amongst the other services which respondents would like to access locally, a community notice board was perceived as most important, followed by WiFi, a PayPoint, a parcel delivery/collection point and a small café.

- Most people indicated they'd be willing or able to walk up to half a mile to get to a local shop (67%). Those with access to a car or bike would be willing to travel a bit further: 76% of respondents would be willing or able to cycle more than half a mile and 73% would be willing to drive more than a mile to get to a local shop.
- In terms of opening hours, the greatest proportion of respondents expressed a preference for 8am opening (48%) and most people opted for 7pm closing (61%). Opinion was fairly evenly divided on the subject of weekend opening (Saturday only versus both Saturday and Sunday).
- Finally, the research also indicated that a local shop has the potential to bring a range of other benefits to the community. The most important of these was perceived to be the creation of a 'social hub', a place where people could bump into each other and catch up with friends and neighbours. There is also potential for economic benefits (through savings made on fuel and bus fares), carbon savings (as a result of the expected reduction in car use) and improvements to health and well-being (through an increase in walking and cycling).

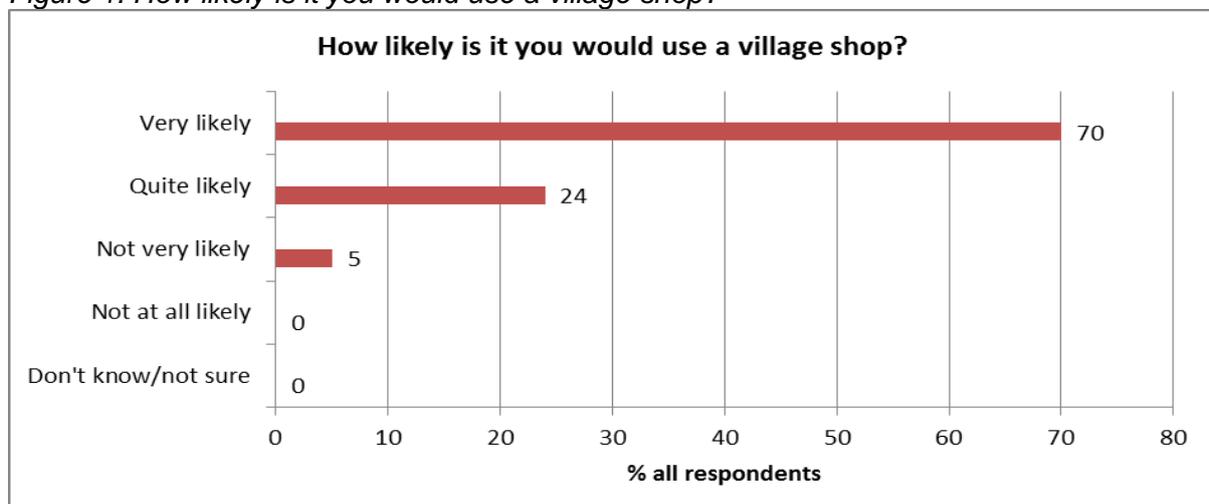
3. Detailed survey findings

3.1 Level of interest in a village shop

The research findings suggest that a village shop would be very much welcomed by the community. Almost all respondents thought they'd use a shop (94%), with 70% claiming they would be very likely to do so.

Among the small proportion of respondents who thought it not very likely they'd use a village shop (5%), the main reasons were related to convenience – either because it was more convenient to shop elsewhere (for example, on the way home from work) (mentioned by 11 respondents) or because a shop located in Kirkhill would be too far from home (mentioned by 10 respondents). No-one thought it completely unlikely that they'd use a village shop.

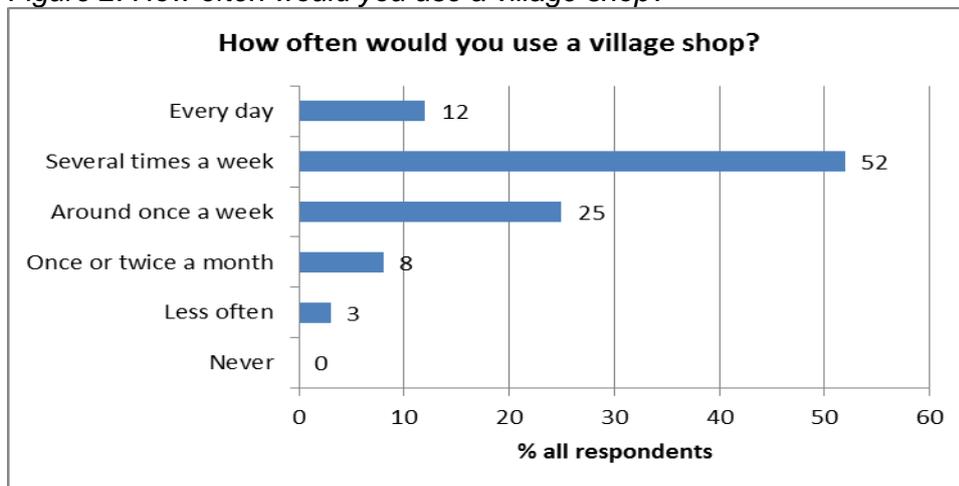
Figure 1: How likely is it you would use a village shop?



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q1

In terms of use, most respondents thought they'd use a shop at least once a week (89%), including 64% who thought they'd use it more frequently.

Figure 2: How often would you use a village shop?

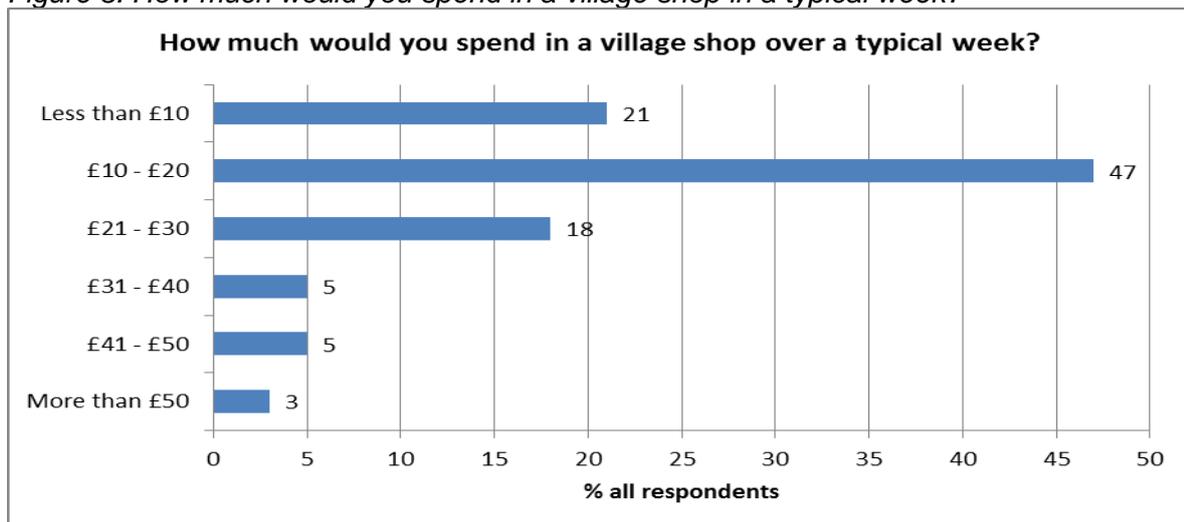


Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q4

The community consultation exercise suggested that many people expected to use a village shop for 'top-up' shopping or one-off purchases and this is reflected to some extent in anticipated expenditure: a fifth of respondents thought they'd spend less than £10 a week in a village shop (21%) with around half expecting to spend between £10 and £20 (47%). A minority of respondents did, however, anticipate spending more than £20 a week (31%), suggesting that if the range of stock is wide enough, there is some potential for weekly as well as 'top-up' shopping.

The average anticipated weekly spend per respondent was £19¹.

Figure 3: How much would you spend in a village shop in a typical week?



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q5

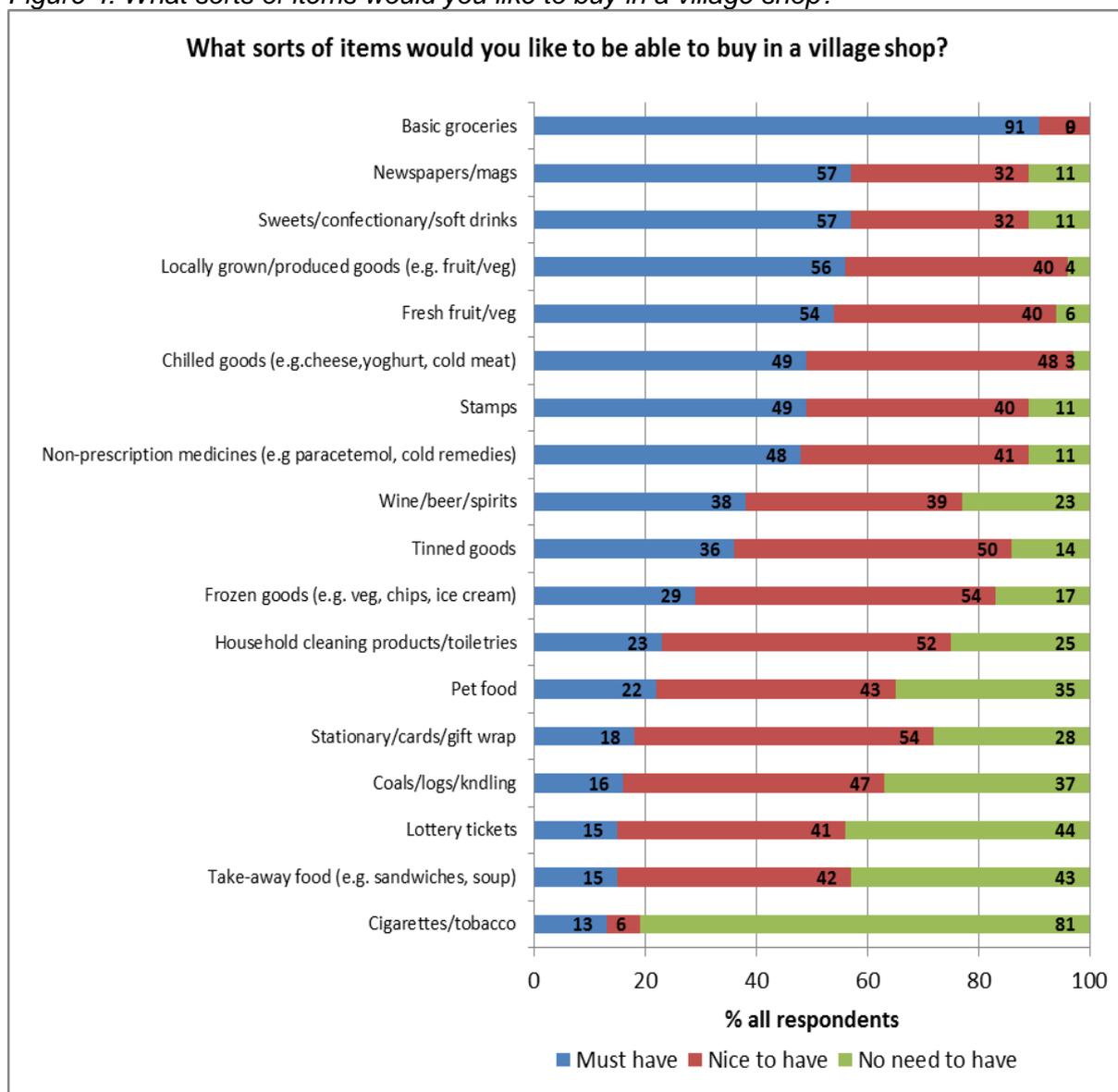
¹ Mean spend was calculated by using the mid-point in each range (e.g. £15 for those indicating they'd spend £10 - £20, and £55 for those saying they'd spend over £50).

3.2 What do people want a village shop to stock?

The main items that people want to be able to buy in a village shop are basic groceries such as bread, milk, butter, tea and coffee: 91% of respondents indicated that these were 'must have' items. Other 'must haves' selected by more than half of all respondents included newspapers and magazines (57%); sweets, confectionary and soft drinks (57%); locally grown or produced goods, such as fruit, vegetables, jam or chutney (56%); and fresh fruit and vegetables (54%). Chilled goods (49%), stamps (49%) and non-prescription medicines such as paracetamol and cold remedies (48%) were 'must haves' for around half of all respondents.

There was also interest in a range of other goods, such as frozen and tinned food and wine, beer and spirits although these were more likely to fall into the 'nice to have' than the 'must have' category.

Figure 4: What sorts of items would you like to buy in a village shop?



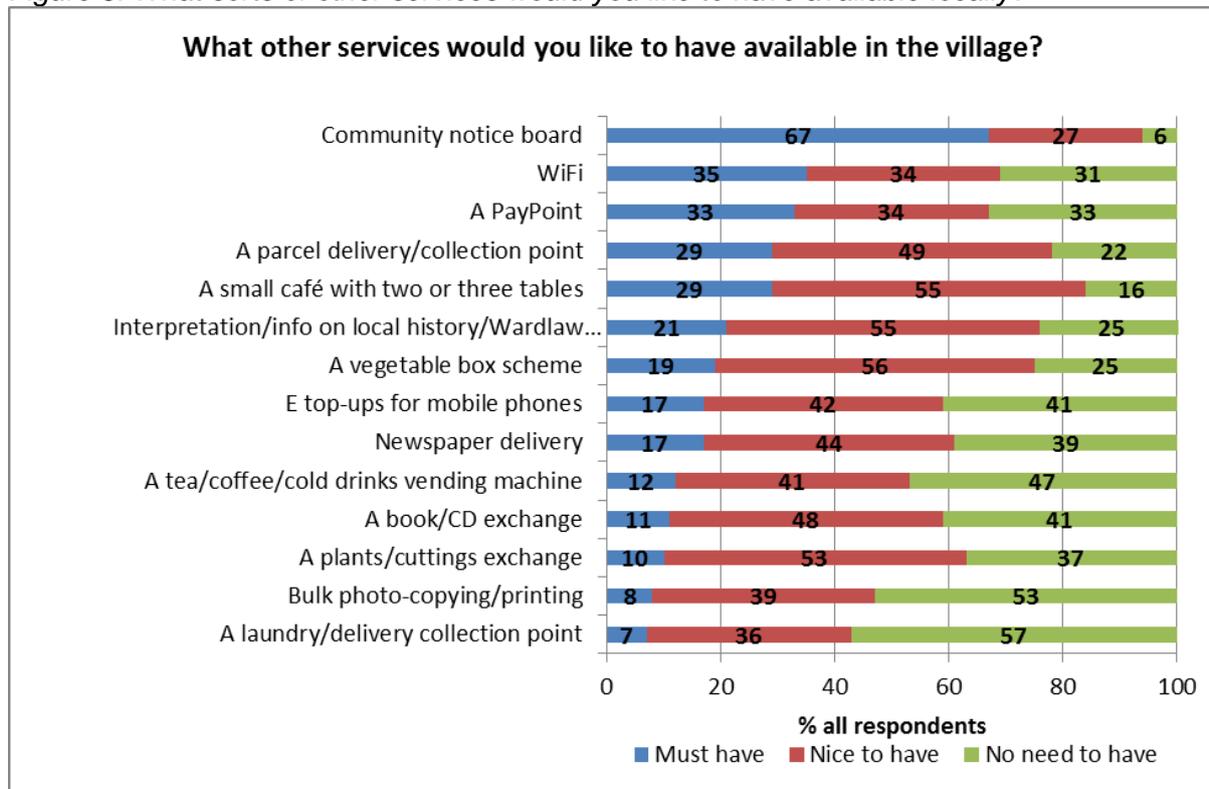
Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q2

3.3 What other services would people like to access locally?

In terms of other services which people would like to have available locally, a community notice board was perceived to be most important, designated a 'must have' by two thirds of respondents (67%).

WiFi and a PayPoint were 'must haves' for around a third of respondents. A parcel delivery and collection point, a small café with a couple of tables, interpretation and information on local history, including Wardlaw Mausoleum, and a vegetable box scheme were of interest to more than half of respondents overall although these services were more likely to fall into the 'nice to have' than 'must have' category.

Figure 5: What sorts of other services would you like to have available locally?



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q3

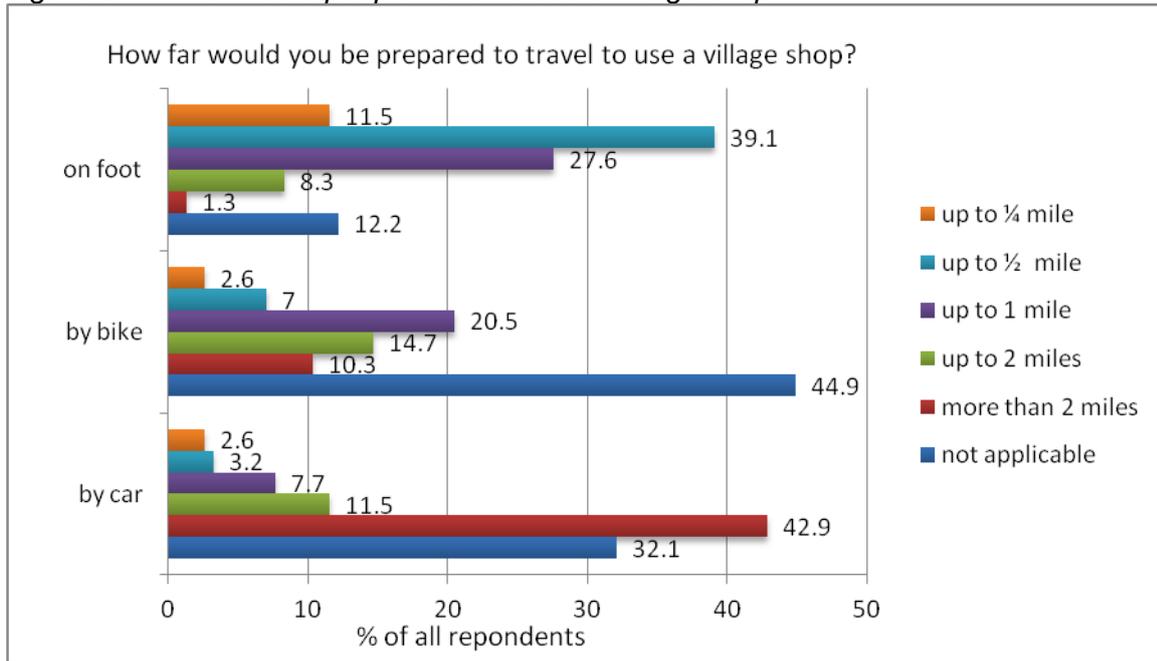
3.4 How far would people walk or travel to use a village shop?

Over three quarters of respondents would be willing and able to walk over quarter of a mile to get to a village shop (76%). Nearly 10% would walk more than a mile, while 12% would not or could not walk at all.

Over half of respondents (55%) would cycle to a shop. Of those, 83% would be prepared to cycle more than a half mile.

Almost a third of respondents (32%) would not or could not drive to a shop.

Figure 6: How far would people travel to use a village shop?



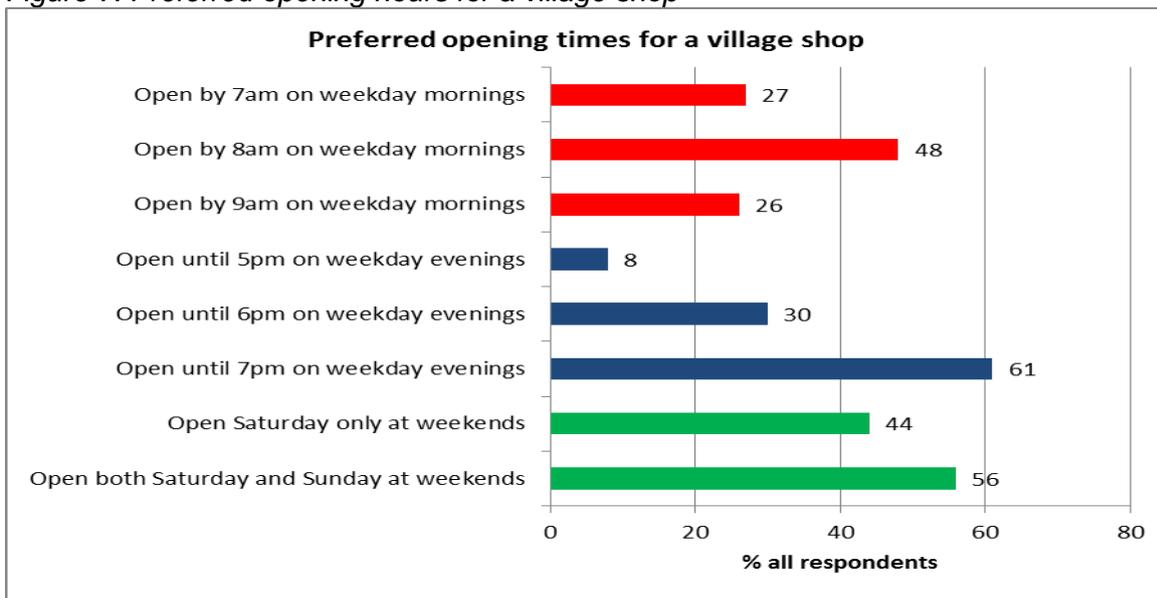
Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q7

3.5 Opening hours

Given 3 choices of opening times, nearly half of respondents opted for 8am opening (48%), with roughly equal proportions preferring earlier 7am opening (27%), or content with a 9am start (26%). When asked to indicate a preference for closing times, a majority of respondents chose 7pm, the latest option available (61%).

Opinion was fairly evenly divided regarding weekend opening times, with 44% of respondents indicating that they'd be content with Saturday only opening compared to 56% who would prefer both Saturday and Sunday opening.

Figure 7: Preferred opening hours for a village shop



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q8, Q9, Q10

3.6 Attitudes statements

Finally, respondents were presented with a list of statements and asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each one.

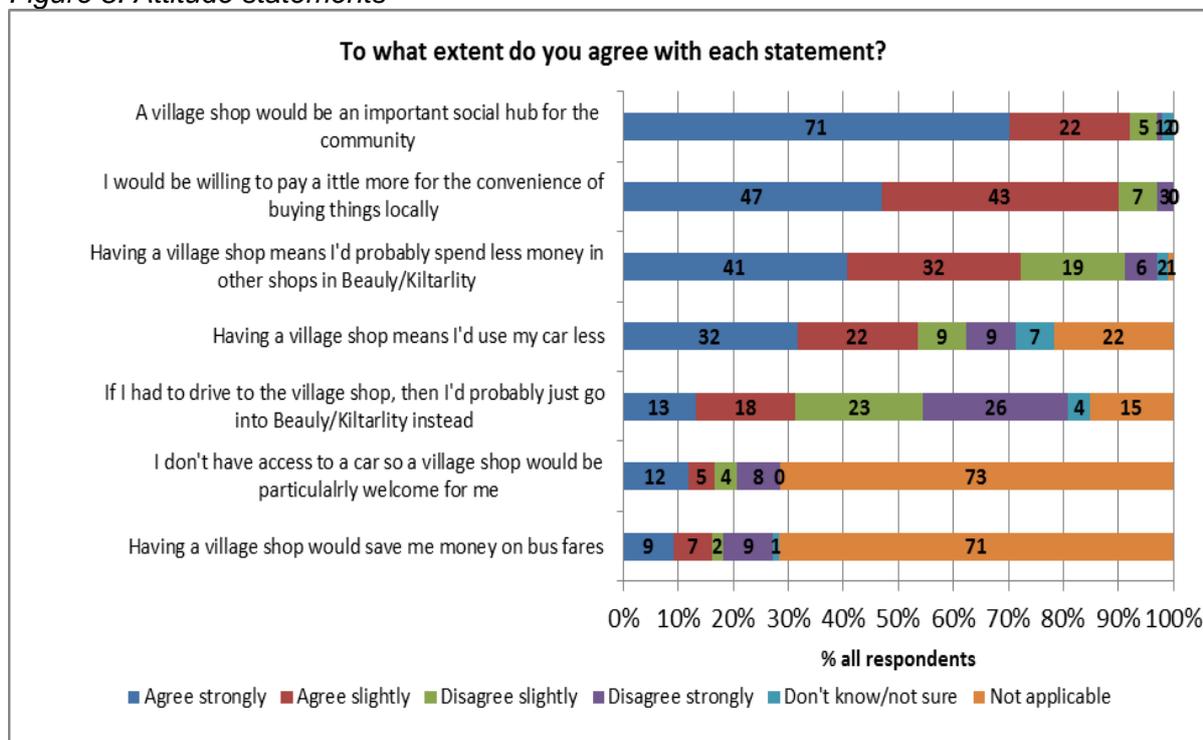
In terms of social cohesion and helping to create a sense of community, the majority of respondents believe a village shop would have a positive impact: 93% agreed that it would provide an important social hub (a place to meet or bump into people), including 71% who agreed strongly.

Most respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay a little more for their shopping in return for the convenience of being able to buy things locally (90%). Around three quarters, however, anticipated they'd spend less in other local shops in Beaully and Kiltarlity if there was a shop closer to home (73%).

A minority of respondents said they would continue to drive into Beaully or Kiltarlity for shopping if they could only reach a village shop by car (31%). More than half of respondents, however, thought they'd use their car less if there was a local shop (54%) and a minority expected to save money on bus fares (16%). This suggests there could be some economic benefits as well as potential for carbon savings. Less car usage also implies an increase in active travel (walking and cycling) which could deliver improvements to health and well-being.

Overall, almost a fifth of respondents indicated that a village shop would be particularly welcome as they had no access to a car (17%).

Figure 8: Attitude statements

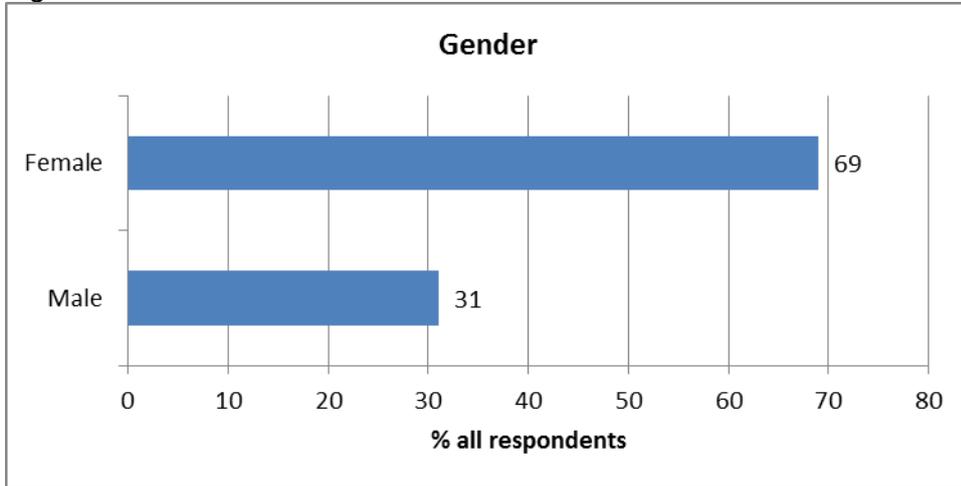


Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q11

3.7 Profile of respondents

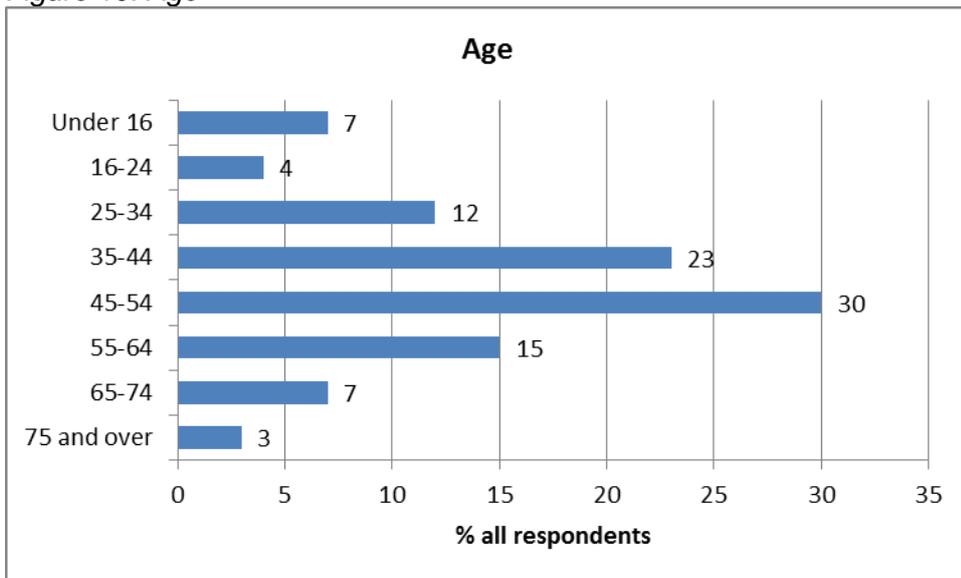
In terms of gender and age, around two thirds of survey respondents were women (69%), with a broad cross-section of age groups represented.

Figure 9: Gender



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q13

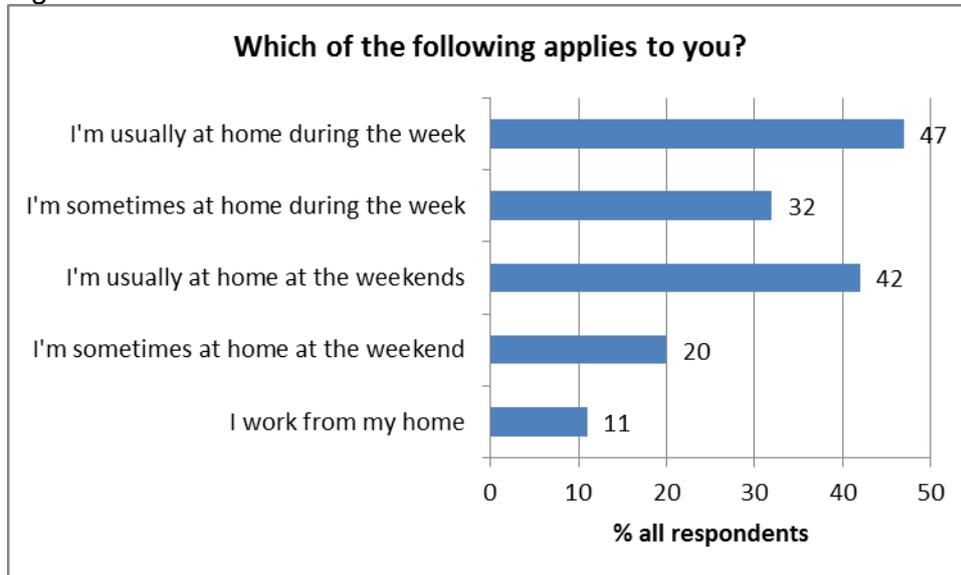
Figure 10: Age



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q14

Almost half of respondents indicated that they were usually at home during the week (47%), with a similar proportion usually at home at the weekend (42%). A minority of respondents worked from home (11%).

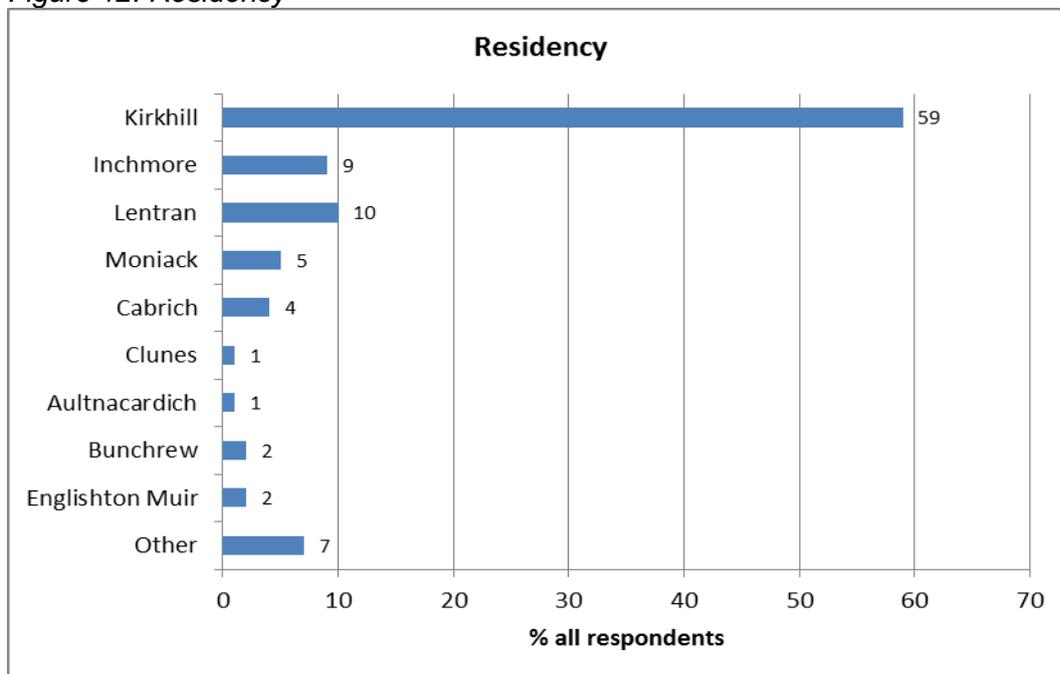
Figure 11: Time at home



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q12

In terms of residency, the greatest proportion of respondents lived in Kirkhill (59%), with 34% resident in the smaller communities which make up the remainder of the area represented by KBCT.

Figure 12: Residency



Source: KBCT Village Shop survey, Q15

Appendix 1 – Additional comments

Q2 Other suggestions regarding shop stock

- Nappies, pull-ups, baby wipes, baby products – 3 respondents
- Locally sourced, hand-crafted goods/gifts – 2 respondents
- Anything grown or made locally* – 2 respondents
- Fresh bakery products/deli France – 2 respondents

Other suggestions, each made by 1 respondent:

- Gifts
- Crisps/snacks*
- Baking goods
- Cakes
- Tea/coffee to sit in or take away*
- Publications about the local area
- Calor gas
- Bulbs/matches/candles/torches
- First aid supplies*

Q3 Other suggestions regarding other local services

- Public toilets – 2 respondents
- ATM – 2 respondents

Other suggestions, each made by 1 respondent:

- School breakfast club
- Access to computers
- Coffee machine*
- Services exchange based on points system, e.g. for babysitting, gardening, ironing etc.
- Local map showing local addresses

Q6 Reasons given by people who think they wouldn't use a village shop

- It's more convenient for me to shop elsewhere – 11 respondents
- A shop in Kirkhill would be too far from my home – 10 respondents
- A shop in Inchmore would be too far from my home – 7 respondents
- The prices in a village shop would be too high – 7 respondents
- The range of goods in a village shop would be too limited – 7 respondents
- I prefer to get all my shopping in one place – 6 respondents
- I'm not usually at home during the day/at the weekend – 6 respondents
- There are other shops I would prefer to use – 3 respondents
- Too far to walk to and if I had to use a car, I'd continue as at present and shop wherever I was going – 1 respondent

* These suggestions were already included in the questionnaire.

** Altogether 32 respondents answered this question, several giving more than one reason.

Any other comments

Each made by 1 respondent:

- Very good luck! I've got my fingers crossed!
- Can't wait!
- Kirkhill desperately needs a convenience store, spending a fortune on fuel to buy milk etc.
- A shop is most definitely needed, the children in the village would benefit too.
- Good luck, a village shop would be very handy.
- This would be very welcome. Please!!
- The sooner the better - a necessity.
- Hurry up with it.
- People in Kirkhill talk about the need for a shop and café every day. It would be great to have these in the village.
- Agree strongly there should be a shop.
- The village needs a shop and a service hub would be great.
- As long as it's not run by Tesco.
- Proper shop.
- Locally grown produce, or locally produced good/services, would appeal to locals and tourists, whilst helping to support the local economy. Also consider social enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise may be able to assist.
- A shop in the village would be quite handy but it would really depend on what is stocked and the prices which would decide on how often I would use it. Somewhere to stop and have a cuppa when you are out walking would also be nice.
- I'd appreciate a village shop that sold local food that I couldn't get anywhere else. I see many village shops that have a drinks machine and are good for travellers etc.
- Suggest having an eBay package drop off point might attract users.
- Local-ish produce would be the biggest draw for me. Cycle route location may support cafe suggestion.
- It would be nice to walk to a village shop at weekends, smaller pocket money items would be good e.g. 10p mix, magazines etc. More likely to use shop for paper, bread and milk though the week.
- I wouldn't like to see too many fancy products in the shop.
- A bog standard village shop would be perfect. No need for it to be an ego trip for the local community councillors flogging their utopian and unrealistic visions of greatness. No need for free range, tree hugging visions. Be realistic. Quite frankly, give us a Spar.
- Would like if possible more café space.

- In the longer term I would like to see shop and café facilities with our outreach work associated with Wardlaw Church (Rev Jonathan Humphrey, Kirkhill Minister)
- If you provide services in a hub you are likely to get people buying using multiple services.
- I would like a village shop instead of having to drive to Beauly or Muirtown. However, it can be a difficult balance to strike between getting /stocking the right goods to meet everyone's needs and overstocking which could be wasteful if not sold.
- I think that the shop will need volunteers to support it and would be happy to be involved if commitment was small - however think for sustainability it would be better, if possible, to have employees who may also be linked in with supporting mausoleum opening as well.
- A good opportunity for a local business and paid staff in shop (not volunteers).
- Cooperatively run.
- Could you consider a social enterprise organisation to own/run and staff a village shop? It is so desperately needed!
- I think it would be a good idea to have the shop open for more than an hour on a Sunday, as a lot of people will expect it, especially the tourists.
- My worry would be litter.
- Having a local business, I would encourage our customers to use it too.
- I've answered questions based on living in Balloch village but same would apply for Kirkhill.
- Could the Doctor's shed be updated and used?
- Doctor's surgery a good site
- Shop should be in Kirkhill.
- Location at the Community Centre with a small café with a play area for children.

Appendix 2 – Copy of survey questionnaire