

Mr Alan Butcher  
The Parish Clerk  
Priddy Green House  
Priddy  
Wells  
BA5 3BE

Dear Mr Butcher

**Re: Background Paper - Access to Services and Facilities in the Rural Areas**

Thank you for letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and for clarifying the current position regarding the village shop in East Harptree.

The information initially available led to some confusion regarding the status of the village shop. From the parish response to the latest request for a survey update in October 2017 we understood that there is a convenience shop albeit run part time by volunteers but with restricted hours and unreliable opening times. The information on the public website (which suggests to the wider public regular opening hours and existence of wide range of convenience products) gives the impression that the position had changed since the formulation of the Placemaking Plan. We understand now from your response the shop can only open when volunteers are available to run it and the hours further restricted during the school holidays and therefore the position remains the same as that recorded in the Placemaking Plan. This will be reflected in the next update of the Rural Facilities Audit and background evidence for future stages of the Local Plan.

Just as way of further clarification, the Background Paper is intended to represent a high level audit of facilities and services at this stage and the benchmark indicators are intended merely as a starting point for grouping settlements according to the level and range of local services and facilities within or immediately adjacent to each settlement. As the Paper states, this in no way is intended to indicate a settlement's suitability for further development. The Paper also recognises that the audit may well need to be reviewed following the Issues and Options consultation and the Rural Facilities Audit 2015 republished. This will provide an opportunity to take account of the position regarding East Harptree's community shop together with other responses on the Background Paper we may receive. We will then need to consider what this means for the spatial strategy for the District.

I hope this explanation helps and we look forward to working further with the Parish Council on the new Local Plan. I wonder, however, whether it is worth updating the community shop website to clarify the shop can only open when volunteers are available for the benefit of the wider public who may wish to shop there.

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Johnston*

Sarah Johnston  
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Planning Policy