

Report on Hallbankgate Hub survey results.

1. Summary.

Four hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed to households in and around Hallbankgate. 234 were returned and analyzed. There was a very high level of support for a continuing shop in Hallbankgate (71% of responses said it was 'Very important' to have a village shop in Hallbankgate).

Valuable insights were obtained as to the patterns of use of the shop, what the shortcomings of the present shop were seen to be and what goods and services people in the area feel it would be useful for any continuing shop to provide.

2. The purpose of the survey.

1. To give people living in and around Hallbankgate an opportunity to give their views on the shop and its future.
2. To find out how much support there is for a continuing shop in Hallbankgate and what additional facilities/services might increase its use.
3. To ask why some people do not shop at the current Co-op and what changes might encourage increased use of the shop.
4. To find out what goods people are most likely to buy from a future shop.
5. To find out the ways in which people might be able to help in the development and maintenance of a community shop in Hallbankgate

3. How the survey was carried out.

A questionnaire was adapted from a suggested template provided by the Plunkett Foundation. This is an organisation that provides practical support for people wishing to set up community shops. Volunteers hand-delivered 450 questionnaires to the surrounding villages, hamlets, farms and cottages. The main areas covered were Hallbankgate, Kirkhouse, Farlam, Talkin, Forest Head, Howgill, Tindale, Midgeholm, Halton Lea Gate. It is hoped that most of the homes in the shop's local catchment area were covered. A total of 234 forms were returned ie 52 % of those distributed. This was all carried out over a period of ten days at the end of January 2015.

The responses to each questionnaire were recorded and any patterns or trends noted.

4. Results

4 i Use of the current Co-op in Hallbankgate.

The shop is used by 82 % of respondents. The frequency of use of the shop is shown below:

- More than twice a week – 36%
- Weekly / fortnightly - 18%
- Occasionally - 28%
- Not at all - 18%

There seems to be some relationship between the frequency that the shop is used and the distance of the respondents' home to the centre of Hallbankgate.

80 people use the shop more than twice a week. 83% of these live within 2 miles of Hallbankgate. 43 people do not use the shop at all. 65% of these live more than 3 miles from Hallbankgate.

We did not ask people where they lived, but as areas were allocated to the people who distributed the questionnaires and these were then returned in bundles relating to that area, it is possible to get a sense of where many of the respondents came from. It appears that people are more likely to

use the shop more frequently, even if they live further away if they live south or east of Hallbankgate. Those who live west or north are more likely to focus towards Brampton and Carlisle and do not tend to come through Hallbankgate on a regular basis. [“It is not on my route, I work in Carlisle and only rarely go through Hallbankgate” a respondent 1-2 miles west of Hallbankgate].

Respondents who said they do not use the shop were asked why they don’t use it. Responses fell into five broad categories:

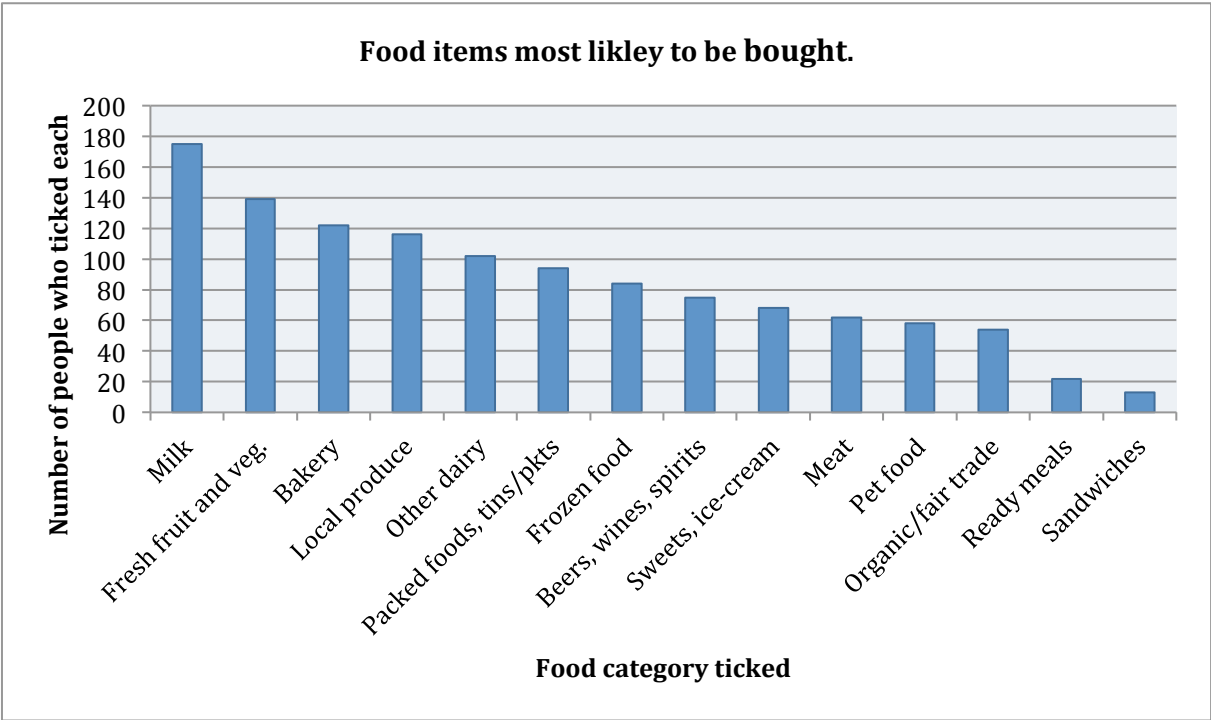
1. People whose routines or work patterns do not take them through Hallbankgate. Examples were: “Go the other way”, “ We pass through Haltwhistle regularly so tend to shop there”. [31%]
2. People who say the opening hours do not suit them. “ Closed at lunch when I come back from collecting our son from Nursery”, “The shop is closed when I drive home 6.30-7pm so I use Brampton instead”. [27%]
3. People who find the shop too expensive. [5%]
4. People who cannot find what they want or have found goods are not consistently in stock. “Doesn’t have what we use and over priced”, “Higher costs and more limited stock”, “Cannot rely on products being in if need stuff on way home. So to be sure I get them in Brampton”, “Use (the shop) less now than previously as poorer quality products, and things are not always in stock”. [16%]
5. There were also several comments about the poor upkeep of the lane and parking area and the difficult access back out onto the A689. [10%]

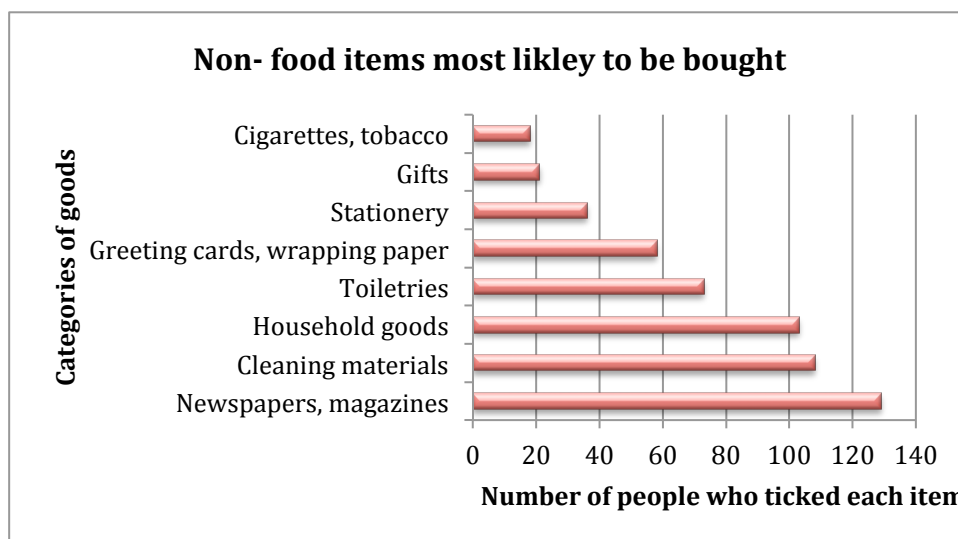
A further 3 people who live in Tindale/ Midgeholm/ Halton Lea gate do not have transport.

4 ii Support for a shop in the future.

71 % of respondents said they thought it was ‘Very important’ to have a village shop in Hallbankgate. A further 14 % thought it was ‘Important’.

The questionnaire asked people what products, from a given tick list, they would be likely to buy from a future shop. For ease of analysis items have been divided into food and non-food.





Other products that were suggested by respondents included (in order of popularity):

- Locally produced, fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables
- Locally made fresh bakery bread, [wholemeal, seeded]
- A good basic range of goods, that is consistently in stock, at competitive prices.
- Meat from a local supplier, inc. Cumberland sausage – the return of Steven Wilson Butchers
- Organic foods
- A range of both local and non-processed cheeses
- Fish
- Local honey
- Whole milk in larger containers (4/6 pint)
- ‘Ecover’ or similar range of cleaning products.
- Jigsaws and things for hobbies.
- Basic haberdashery items.

It was also suggested that people might be able to preorder and prepay for goods that it is recognised might not be big sellers, but could be got in once or twice a week for those who ordered them eg organic milk, - similar to newspaper orders.

There appeared to be two strands to these requests. The need for a good range of everyday grocery items at prices comparable with Brampton and Carlisle and requests for a range of what might be seen as more specialist goods. The words ‘local’ and ‘fresh’ were used by 25 of the people who were making suggestions of goods they would like to see in any future shop.

The range of items that people might be interested in buying and the distance they live from Hallbankgate was also looked at. Predictably there appears to be a relationship between the numbers of categories of items people might buy and how close to Hallbankgate they live.

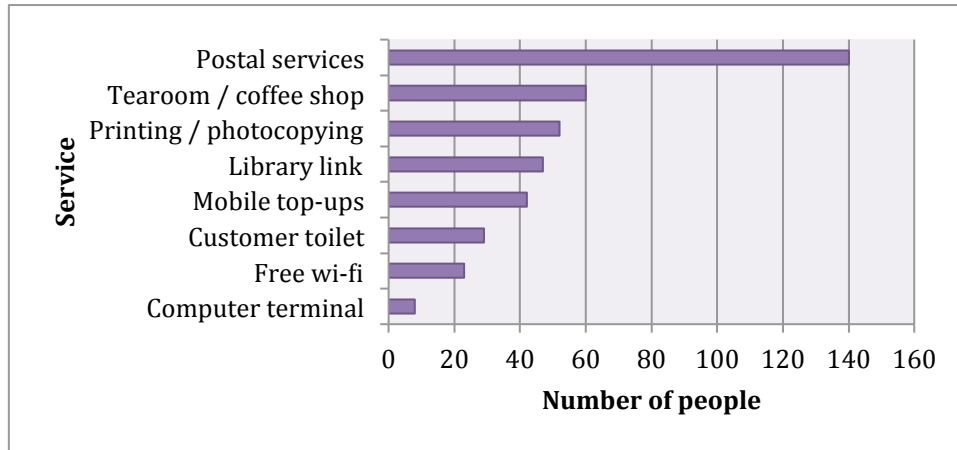
	Lives within 1 mile of the centre of Hallbankgate [82]	Lives more than 5 miles from Hallbankgate [36]
√ 7 or fewer listed goods	29%	64%
√ 8 or more listed goods	71%	36%

While the above information does not provide information on the amount people are likely to spend in the shop, nor the specific brands that they like, it does give information which will complement that which Scotmid have said they will share on current spending patterns and lines that do and don’t sell at the Co-op in its present form. While the size of the range of goods cannot be increased to compete with Carlisle, the quality of the products on offer can be improved and the community could be regularly consulted on what goods they want the shop to sell.

4 iii Additional services and facilities that might be provided.

A tick list of possible additional services was set out and people were also asked for their ideas on what further facilities shop customers might like. The Post office was very clearly the most valued service (140 √s) with several people adding that they depended on it or that it is the reason for them using the Co-op currently.

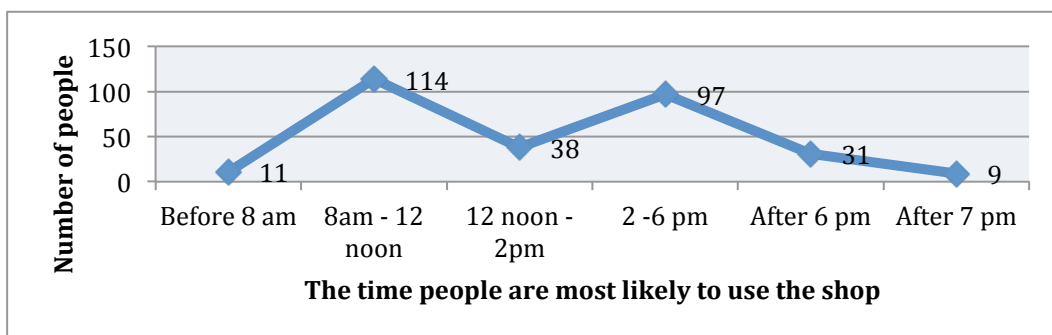
The numbers of people who thought they would use the listed services was as follows:



There was a very wide range of other facilities suggested by respondents. Not all of these would necessarily bring in revenue to support the shop, but, if popular, would bring people onto the premises where, hopefully they would make purchases that they might not have done otherwise.

- Ideas related to passing traffic: a coffee shop, information on local businesses, tourist information including maps, walks, RSPB leaflets etc. better signage so people realize the shop is there.
- Cyclists could be specifically targeted by providing information to the local cycling clubs
- An exhibition/ craft area with work by local people for sale on a commission basis.
- Services such as a parcel collection and delivery point for Hermes etc., a cash point, lottery ticket sales. Dry cleaning pickup point.
- Community services such as a notice board, a base for a lift share system, eg for people needing to get into Carlisle for work in the morning or for shopping trips etc., a Skill Exchange system within the area using tokens [Like a baby sitting circle]. Links to the school / pub etc. Involve young people to help with deliveries or other jobs for older, less mobile people.
- It was suggested that Brampton Surgery might be asked if we could have a nurse based in Hallbankgate for one afternoon a week for patients who could access it more easily.

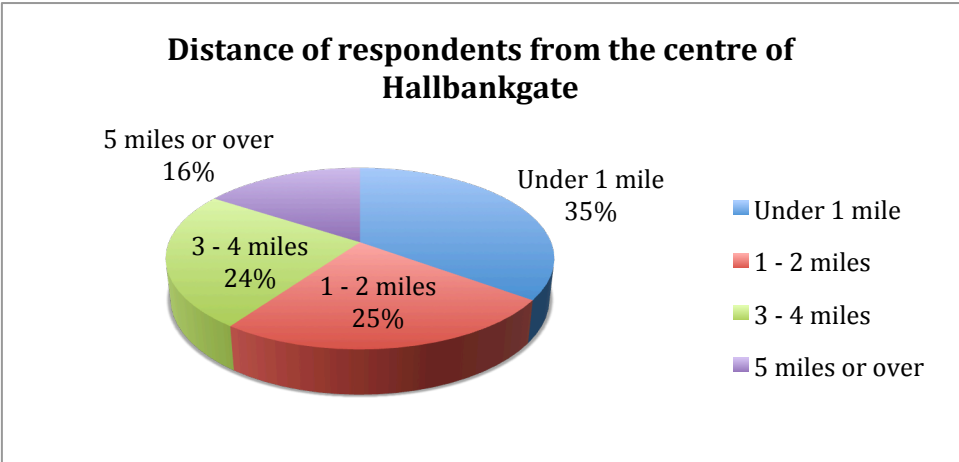
4 iv The time of day when respondents would be most likely to use the shop.



The opening hours make it difficult for a number of people who, potentially, might use the shop more. ie they do pass through the village regularly, but this tends to be early on their way to work

or after the shop closes on their way back home. Others, who did not complete the above question, mentioned it as the reason they do not use the shop. Extending the opening hours, at least in the evening, might be worth considering in order to maximize the use of the shop by those who do pass through Hallbankgate regularly.

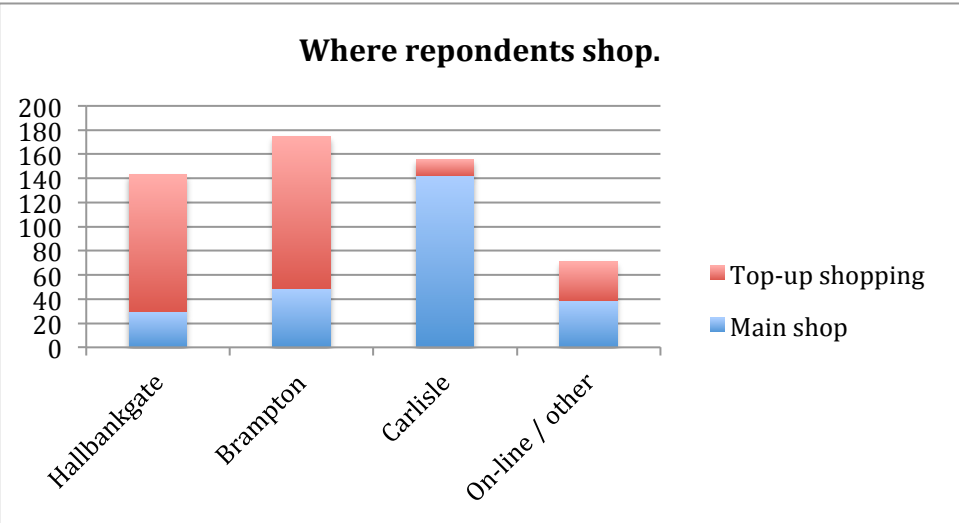
4 v The distance that respondents live from the centre of Hallbankgate.



The further people live from the village the less likely it is that the routes they routinely take lead them through the village. Once people live beyond walking distance, work routines and opening hours become increasingly important factors influencing the degree to which the shop is used. (An interesting aside, people from within the same village/hamlet would sometimes judge their distance from Hallbankgate differently if they shopped there or not: closer if they did, further away if they did not! I corrected this when I entered the data.)

4 vi Where respondents shop currently.

Many people do not shop in the pattern presumed by these questions. They do not do a main weekly shop supplemented by top-ups. They shop when and where they happen to be. Many people ticked more than one place for either 'main' or 'top-up' shopping. Having said that, Carlisle receives the most ticks for where a main shop is done and Hallbankgate for top-up shopping. On line was less popular than had been anticipated. 30 people do their main shop in Hallbankgate.



4 vii Offers of help for the community shop project.

Seventy-six people gave their contact details having expressed an interest in helping the project in some way. Many offered help in more than one of the areas listed. This is really encouraging.



5. Conclusion

A response rate of 52% is high for a questionnaire survey of this sort and this in itself indicates the degree of concern and interest among the local community. There is clearly strong support from those who responded for a continuing shop in Hallbankgate and also for it to incorporate some extra facilities and services. These would both improve the quality of life for people living in the area and also, hopefully, bring in some extra revenue. Supplemented by data on the current shop's pattern of sales expected shortly from Scotmid, these results will enable us to build on the evident enthusiasm of local people for a community shop in Hallbankgate.

5th February 2015

Appendices with the raw data are available from Rosefoster@phonecoop.coop