

Peter Davey Ltd

architectural services

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Rustington
West Sussex BN16 3DY
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Marketing Statement (including community and employment):

By:

Mr & Mrs Fryer

Site at:

**The Post Office Stores
Church Street
West Chiltington
RH20 2JW**

Oct 2025

Rev A. 16.04.2026 (see highlighted parts)

1. Introduction

1.1. This statement is submitted in support of the application for Planning and Listed Building Consent for a partial Change of Use application at The Post Office Stores, Church Street, West Chiltington, RH20 2JW. The application comprises the following documentation:

- 1.1.1. Drawing 0457 / 100, 101 & 102
- 1.1.2. Design, Access & Heritage Statement
- 1.1.3. CIL Form
- 1.1.4. Marketing Statement
- 1.1.5. Viability Statement

2. Proposed Change of Use

- 2.1. The property known as The Post Office Stores is a mixed use building consisting of a small retail store and post office with associated storage, attached to a four bedroom dwelling.
- 2.2. In recent years, particularly since the covid pandemic, the financial viability of the store/post office has reduced significantly. The current owners wish to retire and have attempted to market the whole building as a going concern since December 2021, without success.
- 2.3. The proposal is for a Change of Use to convert the Store and Post Office into residential accommodation for the benefit of the current dwelling to make the building more marketable.

3. Marketing

- 3.1. The applicants are looking to retire. Since 21st December 2021 to date, they have sought to market the property.
- 3.2. Nestled in the village of West Chiltington, the property presents an exceptional Grade II listed historic house offering an opportunity to own a piece of local heritage along with a Post Office and stores business presenting a unique blend of residential and commercial space, the property was initially marketed from 21st December 2021 by Trigg & Co. but without success.
- 3.3. The property was then marketed by Cracknells of Hove between January to July 2023. See email correspondence in appendices from the Agent.
- 3.4. The property has been further marketed through Trigg Homes and Henry Adams, both finally being removed from the market in February 2025. See appendices for sales brochures and emails from Agents.
- 3.5. There were viewings, but unfortunately none led to a sale.
- 3.6. The applicant had considered marketing the commercial space separately, along with other ideas, but was advised by agents it would be extremely difficult to separate the two.

- 3.7. Due to the historic construction and juxtaposition, it would be tremendously complicated to separate the properties and maintain a working solution for maintenance, liability and particularly with day to day use.
- 3.8. There would need to be a flying freehold, as Bedroom 1 sits above a large section of the shop.
- 3.9. There is no parking on the property for the occupier/owner of the shop.
- 3.10. There is nowhere out of the weather to accept newspaper delivery at 5:30am, without altering the external of the building.
- 3.11. There are no toilet or welfare facilities within the shop/post office area for the owner/staff/customers. These would have to be added.
- 3.12. Internal access to the post office is through the lounge door. This would have to be modified.
- 3.13. Lighting and power are currently combined. These would have to be separated.
- 3.14. Water supply and heating are currently combined. These would have to be separated.
- 3.15. Whilst consideration should be taken by HDC in trying to maintain the vibrancy of the village hub, some alternative use ideas such as coffee shop, pharmacy etc, will all suffer the same main issue, lack of footfall and lack of parking. The store is remote from the main West Chiltington village centre and safe pedestrian access is incomplete.
- 3.16. Although serving a very small hub, it is estimated that less than 30% of the nearby residents use the store/post office.
- 3.17. The store/post office currently has Class E use, which would cover all of the previously suggested uses, and yet no interest came forward in years of active marketing.
- 3.18. Any restriction placed upon the store/post office, would seriously hamper the retirement plans of the applicant, plans that have already been delayed by years due to the lack of commercial interest. Due to the health of the applicant, retirement plans can be delayed no longer and it is extremely likely that the store/post office will close this year in any event. If sale of the property remains unsuccessful, then this will lead to potential financial harm to the applicant and the right to a decent future.
- 3.19. Once the post office shuts, The Post Office have indicated the licence will not be reactivated for any future owner. This will reduce the financial viability even further, as the post office has basically subsidised the store.
- 3.20. The property is not fully accessible under the provisions of DDA. Any future use or intensification will require substantial alteration for level access to the prominent frontages, changing the street scene significantly. Internal alterations are needed to provide Part M toilets, lighting, security lighting, etc. Any use which includes the provision of serving hot food and drink, will also require further means of mechanical ventilation. One agent has recently
-

suggested that even if they could find a buyer, they would need to make substantial renovations to bring the commercial part 'up to standard'. Any of these could cause potential harm to the historic fabric of the Listed Asset, compared to the simple renovation to convert the space to residential.

- 3.21. It is very unlikely that anyone will wish to purchase the house if the commercial part is under separate occupancy due to noise, privacy, fire separation etc.
- 3.22. Therefore in summary, any attempt to create a satisfactory separation of the buildings will, in our opinion, be harmful to the historic fabric by requiring significant changes to frontage on East Street to provide level access to the shop; substantial alteration to the internal planform to create new toilets and welfare facilities; separation of services and access; significant changes to improve sound and fire separation.
- 3.23. In addition, there will be significant harm to local amenity caused by lack of parking.
- 3.24. With regard to privacy for a potential residential use in the area previously occupied by the store, the situation is no worse than the existing lounge window and further improvements are be easily achieved with internal shutters/blinds,
- 3.25. The applicants have made strenuous efforts to sell the building. Despite the loss of a community hub, there is plenty of local support for the applicants.
- 3.26. Earlier this year, the applicants sought local help to examine whether there was an opportunity to seek a community buy-out. This also involved West Chiltington Parish Council to see if they could coordinate and assist in any way.
- 3.27. A news article was published in Sussex World on 17th July 2025. A copy of the article is included in the appendices.
- 3.28. Although we have a number of emails to and fro from various parties, for the purposes of privacy we cannot include them within this application documentation, but a brief appraisal of the correspondence is attached to the appendices.
- 3.29. Ruth Simmonds has been instrumental in coordinating support and communicating with the Clerk to West Chiltington Parish Council. However, despite all efforts, there was insufficient local support to garner a realistic hope of a community buy-out.
- 3.30. The Parish Council had spoken to Horsham District Council who looked into the matter but reported that by virtue of the Post Office part, the building was exempt from being listed as an Asset of Community Asset due to its status as 'operational land' as defined by the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

4. Employment

- 4.1. The following extract is taken from the Horsham District Planning Framework Policy 9:

4.1.1. *Redevelopment of employment sites and premises outside Key Employment Areas, must demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer needed and/or viable for employment use.*

4.2. Due to the reduction in turnover, there are no meaningful opportunities for local employment at the post office store and the business is mostly run by the applicants Mr & Mrs Fryer. Therefore, the closure of the store will have no significant impact upon local employment.

5. Loss of Community Facilities

5.1. The following extract is taken from the Horsham District Planning Framework Policy 43:

5.1.1. *Proposals that would result in the loss of sites and premises currently or last used for the provision of community facilities or services, leisure or cultural activities for the community will be resisted unless equally usable facilities can be conveniently provided nearby. It will be necessary to demonstrate that continued use of a community facility or service is no longer feasible, taking into account factors such as; appropriate marketing, the demand for the use of the site or premises, its quality and usability, and the identification of a potential future occupier. Where it cannot be demonstrated that such a loss is surplus to requirements, a loss may be considered acceptable provided that:*

a) an alternative facility of equivalent or better quality and scale to meet community needs is available, or will be provided at an equally accessible location within the vicinity; or

b) a significant enhancement to the nature and quality of an existing facility will result from the redevelopment.

5.2. The lack of opportunities from both the sales marketing and discussions with the local community and parish council lend weight to the argument that the post office store no longer provides a meaningful service that could not be provided elsewhere. An almost identical service is provided by Nisa Local, Haglands Lane, West Chiltington, RH20 2QR, less than 1 mile away and nestled centrally within West Chiltington.

5.3. It is therefore reasonable to predict that Nisa Local would be an ideal alternative facility, suitable to pick up any business lost through the closure of the Post Office Stores without detriment to the local community.

Appendix 1

Evidence of Marketing

Peter Davey

From: stewart cracknell [info@cracknellsofhove.com]
Sent: 06 March 2025 12:58
To: Post Office Stores
Subject: Re: The Corner House and Post Office

Hello to you both,

I believe I did suggest that as an option to you at various times.

We advertised between January and July 2023 at a guide price of Offers Over £700,000. We had six viewings.

Wishing you the best of luck,
Stewart

On 06/03/2025 12:49 GMT Post Office Stores <postofficestores@btinternet.com> wrote:

Dear Stewart

We hope you can help provide some background for us from the time we advertised with you, to sell our house/post office stores as a going concern

As you may be aware, we have been unsuccessful in selling, and may be looking to apply for a change of use back to residential.

To support the application we need proof that we have marketed the property correctly.

We would be really grateful if you could write a short report showing when it was advertised, how much it was on for, and how many viewings it generated

Very best regards

Judy & Bruce Fryer

--

Judy & Bruce Fryer

Post Office Stores
Church Street
West Chiltonington
01798 813209



Virus-free. www.avg.com

Peter Davey

From: christina.bearryman@henryadams.co.uk
Sent: 11 February 2025 14:43
To: postofficestores@btinternet.com
Subject: Your sales listing has been withdrawn

 Right-click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of this picture from the Internet.

Dear Mrs Fryer,

We can confirm that we have withdrawn your property at Post Office Stores The Corner House, Church Street, West Chiltington, RH20 2JW.

Listed below are the applicants we introduced to you whilst we listed your property.

Any future purchase involving these parties would incur a fee owed to us.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for instructing us in the first instance and I hope you will contact us again, if you feel we could be of assistance in the future.

Kind Regards

Stephen Maslin

01903 742535

Our mailing address is:

Henry Adams LLP, Mulberry
House, 8 The Square,
Storrington, West Sussex,
RH20 4DJ

Tel: 01903 742535

Email:

storrington@henryadams.co.uk

Improve
your moving
experience
by
downloading
the
Street.co.uk
App:

 Right-click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of this picture from the Internet.

 Right-click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of this picture from the Internet.



Useful information

Here to help guide you through the buying process we have listed below some useful websites that provide relevant information regarding the property and location before making any decisions.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk
www.landregistry.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures
www.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.ukradon.org
www.fensa.org.uk
www.hesbld.co.uk
http://list.english-heritage.org.uk

CONTACT US

Ground Floor, Trigg House
Monks Brook
St Cross Business Park
Newport
Isle Of Wight
PO30 5WB

01983 525710

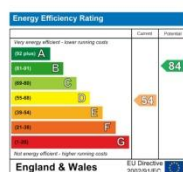
These particulars do not constitute part of an offer or contract. You should not rely on statements by Trigg & Co in the particulars as being factually accurate. Trigg & Co do not have authority to make representations about the property. The measurements shown are approximate only. Potential buyers are advised to check the measurements before committing to view or any expense. Trigg & Co have not tested any appliances, equipment, fixtures, fittings or services and buyers should check the working condition of any appliance. We have not sought to verify the legal title of the property and the buyers must obtain verification from their solicitor. Any reference to alterations or use of any part of the property does not mean that any necessary planning, building regulations or other consents have been obtained.

Book a viewing

There is no substitute to seeing the real thing!
To arrange a viewing contact one of our team on

01983 525710

triggiov.co.uk



Offers Over
£700,000 Freehold

Post Office, The Corner House Church Street, West Chiltington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 2JW



- Grade 2 Listed historic house with thriving Post Office & Stores business
- Rarely available due to retirement
- An outstanding lifestyle opportunity
- House and Business being sold together
- Located in a beautiful downland village
- 2 Reception rooms & 4 bedrooms
- Private parking & Cottage Garden
- Post Office salary attaches to the business



Call 01983 525710 to view this home, or visit www.triggiov.co.uk for more details



Post Office, The Corner House Church Street, West Chiltington, Pulborough, West Sussex,

AGENT'S COMMENTS

This Grade 2 listed house and Post Office Stores lies in the downland village of West Chiltington in the lee of the South Downs. It is a hidden treasure, full of charming cottages, winding lanes, friendly pubs, with a 15th century Norman church and a quiet charm. Truly a tranquil retreat from the pressures of modern living. This Sussex village was mentioned in the Domesday Book and still enjoys the friendliness of the past without losing to grip on modern times.

The Post Office Stores is truly the heart of the village with the shop having been open on this site for at least two hundred years. The present owners have lived in the historic house for the last 19 years and have built up a thriving local business. This is indeed a rare opportunity to acquire both a house, a business and the historic character or many people are now seeking in an ever-increasingly scarce and the after effects of the pandemic. The house and business are being sold together. Full audited accounts are available to support turnover of some £200,000 per annum including the associated Post Office salary. The current owners are retiring and believe there is considerable scope to expand the business further. Although the vendor currently operates the shop and post office, it could be possible to let the shop separately, therefore providing a rental income. Alternatively, there is the possibility of separating the house and shop as two freeholds. Any interested buyers should satisfy themselves by contacting the local Council Planning Dept.

First listed in 1986, the house dates from the 17th century or earlier and is believed to be originally a timber framed building, later infilled with brick and stone and now painted. Set over two storeys it has a hipped tiled roof, casement windows plus a modern shop window and stone fronting the road.

On the ground floor are the two reception rooms, kitchen, lobby and cloakroom. The shop is accessed either from the ground floor of the house through the secure Post Office counter or via the main shop door. There is a large rear store to the back of the shop plus further self storage.

The stairs rise from the second reception room with four bedrooms upstairs, three of which face to the front elevation with bedroom four to the rear overlooking the garden. A modern family bathroom with bath and shower is also on the first floor.

The windows are leaded lights throughout, with the exception of what is believed to be a Victorian window to the main bedroom in the oldest part of the house. With thick walls, tiled window cills and good sized rooms, the house lends itself to characterful modernisation by the new owners.

The cottage garden has a paved patio area in addition to the main garden lawn, planting and with access to the rear store and the gated side access.

The Post Office Stores sells a wide range of everyday goods and groceries alongside provision of the range of Post Office services. It has been established on this site for over two hundred years with photographs from the past showing its incredible history. The stores are fully fitted with all the necessary shelving, equipment and displays and has a large storeroom at the rear with overflow freezers. There is further space in the rear store for the preparation of newspapers and other speciality of trade. There is a significant opportunity to further increase trade and expand the range offered. The Post Office and its associated services business is especially attractive in a village setting. A positive side effect of the pandemic has been to increase awareness of local shops and businesses, which are especially highly valued in village communities like West Chiltington. There is a good mix of families and retired people in the village who use the shops and the Post Office and a very well-regarded Community School for ages 3 - 11 whose pupils naturally also frequent the shop.

Pulborough and Bitchingham Stations are within 4 miles and Horsham is within 12 miles, all with services to London Victoria/London Bridge (Pulborough about 36 minutes/75 minutes respectively). Gatwick is within 30 miles and there are many excellent schools in the area including Christ Church, St Mary's, St Andrew's, St Peter's, St John's, St James' and St Mary's.

Freehold. Heaps gas, electricity, water and drainage are all connected. Council tax band C. The Post Office is classed as a community branch and the business is exempt from payment of business rates. COUNCIL TAX BAND C.



Accommodation

MAIN HOUSE

GROUND FLOOR

Entrance Reception/Dining Room 16'5 x 13'

Lounge 16'5 x 13'

Kitchen 16'7 x 9'8

Lobby 5'7 x 4'7

Cloakroom

FIRST FLOOR

Landing

Bedroom 1 17'7 x 14'3

Bedroom 2 13'6 x 13'2

Bedroom 3 8'2 x 9'5

Bedroom 4 11' x 8'5

Family Bathroom 8' x 6'5

OUTSIDE

Gated driveway

Enclosed rear garden

Patio Area

Garage/Rear Store 18'8 x 9'1

POST OFFICE & VILLAGE STORE

Main Shop frontage 35'7 x 16'

Post Office Counter

Office 12'6 x 8'8

Rear Storage Area 17'3 x 16'6

Bruce and Judy Fryer

Post Office, The Corner House, Church Street, West Chiltington, West Sussex, RH20 2JW

Best Price Guide

The best data and local market trends to help you understand how to price your property based on the following:



Area of interest	Properties marketed between	Properties marketed by
RH20 2JW	10 Dec 24 - 10 Mar 25	Any Agent

**Trighomes, Newport**

Trigg House Monks Brook St Cross Business Park Newport Isle of Wight PO30 5WB

Phone: 01983 525710

Email: lead-importer+29993@homeflow.co.uk



Trigghomes, Trigg House Monks Brook St Cross Business Park Newport Isle of Wight PO30 5WB
Phone: 01983 525710 | Email: lead-importer+29993@homeflow.co.uk

Introduction

The Best Price Guide provides comparable property information selected by Trigghomes to help establish the best market price.

Your property



NO LONGER ADVERTISED

4 bedroom cottage

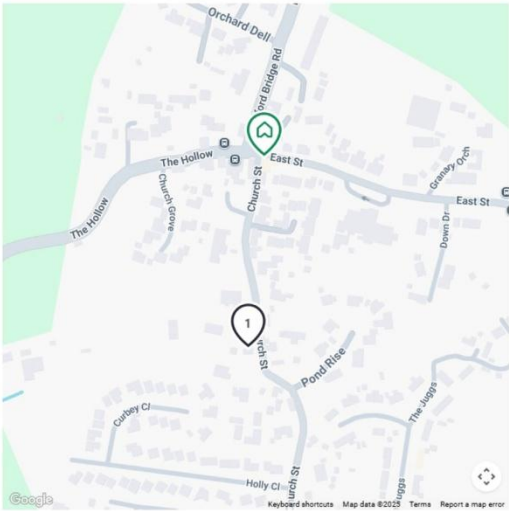
West Chiltington, Pulborough, West Sussex

- Grade 2 Listed historic house with thriving Post Offi...
- Rarely available due to retirement
- An outstanding lifestyle opportunity
- House and Business being sold together

Marketed from 9 Dec 2021 to 4 May 2023 (510 days) by Trigghomes, Newport

SOLD PRICE HISTORY

16 Jun 2003	£383,498
7 Apr 1999	£238,000



Map of properties included in this report

The icons indicate the centre of the postcode and not necessarily the exact location.

* Legal information present on page 3

The properties in this report were advertised on Rightmove during the dates specified. These properties were not marketed by Trigghomes unless otherwise stated.
Page: 1/4





Trigghomes, Trigg House Monks Brook St Cross Business Park Newport Isle of Wight PO30 5WB

Phone: 01983 525710 | Email: lead-importer+29993@homeflow.co.uk

GROUND FLOOR



1ST FLOOR



Made with Metropix ©2021

* Legal information present on page 3

The properties in this report were advertised on Rightmove during the dates specified. These properties were not marketed by Trigghomes unless otherwise stated.
Page: 2/4





Trigghomes, Trigg House Monks Brook St Cross Business Park Newport Isle of Wight PO30 5WB

Phone: 01983 525710 | Email: lead-importer+29993@homeflow.co.uk

Comparable property



NO LONGER ADVERTISED

4 bedroom semi-detached house for sale

Post Office Stores, Church Street, West Chiltington...

- Property offered for sale with no forward chain
- Grade II listed historic house with Post Office and Stores...
- A unique lifestyle opportunity, rarely available due to reti...
- Located in beautiful sought after Sussex village
- Steps from street level to the large entrance dining hall
- Kitchen with double oven, hob and access to a rear lobby...
- Sitting room
- Four double bedrooms and family bathroom

Marketed from 14 Aug 2024 to 11 Feb 2025 (180 days)

The sold price history information is provided by HM Land Registry (for properties in England and Wales) and the Registers of Scotland (for properties in Scotland). It is matched to Rightmove properties by house number and full postcode. There is not always a match. HM Land Registry data covers the period from 01 January 1995 and the Registers of Scotland data covers the period from 18 October 1996 and is updated on a monthly basis therefore is correct as at the end of the last calendar month. The dates shown relate to the property's registered date, not sold date. ©Crown copyright material originating from HM Land Registry is reproduced with the permission of HM Land Registry under delegated authority from the Controller of HMSO. Contains public sector information licensed under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#). Material originating from the Registers of Scotland is reproduced with the permission of the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland and contains data compiled by THE Registers of Scotland. If you have found an error with the data, please contact the HM Land Registry for properties in England and Wales, or the Registers of Scotland for properties in Scotland.

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The properties in this report were advertised on Rightmove during the dates specified. These properties were not marketed by Trigghomes unless otherwise stated.

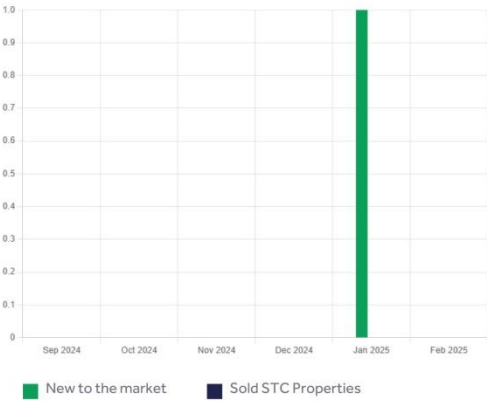
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rightmove



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Phone: 01983 525710 | Email: lead-importer+29993@homeflow.co.uk

Market Information



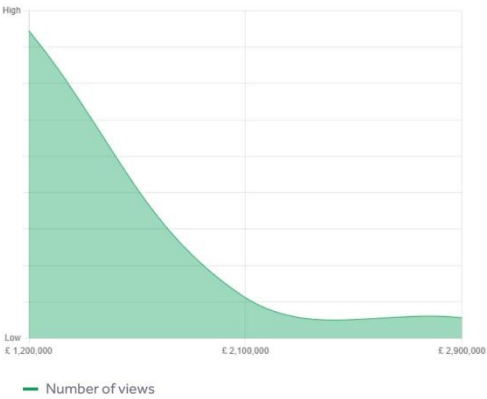
New vs. sold subject to contract (STC) properties in RH20 2JW

This graph shows the number of new properties vs. the number of sold STC properties listed by all agents, over the last 6 months on Rightmove. It's a good indicator of the recent supply and demand levels for properties like this.



Average prices of properties in RH20 2JW

This graph shows the average asking price and final selling price of properties in this area, listed by all agents, over the last 12 months on Rightmove. The Land Registry sold price data is usually only available 2-3 months after a sale is completed.



Number of property views in the last 6 months for your selected property types within RH20

This graph shows the amount of searches on Rightmove over the last 6 months for properties like this, at various prices. It's an indicator of the price point(s) that will generate the most interest for similar properties in this area.



Post Office Stores, The Corner House, Church Street
West Chiltington, West Sussex, RH20 2JW

Guide Price £700,000

Grade II listed historic house with Post Office and Stores business

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 4 | 1 | E |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Rarely available due to retirement ▶ A unique lifestyle opportunity ▶ Located in beautiful sought after Sussex village ▶ Steps from street level to the large entrance dining hall ▶ Sitting room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Kitchen with double oven, hob and access to a rear lobby and ▶ Four double bedrooms and family bathroom ▶ Post office with 35ft village shop, rear store and large loft store ▶ Private parking and cottage garden | | |

Nestled in the heart of a picturesque Sussex village, this exceptional Grade II listed historic house presents a rare opportunity to own a piece of local heritage along with a Post Office and stores business. Boasting a unique blend of residential and commercial space, this property exudes character and charm, offering a coveted lifestyle that is as rewarding as it is distinctive. With its convenient location and a host of possibilities for entrepreneurial endeavours, this property is a true gem that seldom comes to market, making it an unmissable investment for the discerning buyer.

Step inside this inviting property and be greeted by a spacious entrance dining hall, a perfect setting for welcoming guests and hosting gatherings. The ground floor features a well-equipped kitchen with a double oven and hob, while the cosy sitting room provides a relaxing retreat. Ascend the stairs to discover four generously sized bedrooms and a family bathroom, offering ample accommodation for a growing family or visiting guests. The property also includes a fully operational Post Office with a 35ft village shop, a rear store, and a large additional storage space on the first floor. Outside, residents can enjoy the convenience of private parking and a charming cottage garden, providing a serene outdoor sanctuary for relaxation and recreation.



To arrange a viewing call 01903 742535 View details online at henryadams.co.uk

Residential / Commercial / Rural / Development / Auctions



Approximate Area = 2725 sq ft / 253.2 sq m
 Limited Area Use(s) = 184 sq ft / 17.1 sq m
 Outbuilding = 176 sq ft / 16.4 sq m
 Total = 3085 sq ft / 286.6 sq m

For identification only - Not to scale



Agents Note - Our particulars are for guidance only and are intended to give a fair overall summary of the property. They do not form part of any contract or offer, and should not be relied upon as a statement or representation of fact. Measurements, areas and distances are approximate only. Photographs may include lifestyle shots and pictures of local views. No undertaking is given as to the structural condition of the property, or any necessary consents or the operating ability or efficiency of any service, system or appliance. Please ask if you would like further information, especially before you travel to the property.

To arrange a viewing call 01903 742535 View details online at henryadams.co.uk

Residential / Commercial / Rural / Development / Auctions

Location

West Chiltington is an attractive and thriving village and has so much on offer, a busy village hall, tennis club, croquet club, cricket club along with the historic St Mary's Church which dates back to the 12th Century and also the village junior school, along with another parade of shops offering a village store and post office, butchers, hairdressers and beauty salon. The surrounding villages of Pulborough and Storrington offer various supermarkets and a range of independent shops. There are numerous walks near the local vineyards and onto various watering holes or an abundance of public footpaths. Rail links to London Victoria and London Bridge and the South Coast are in the neighbouring village of Pulborough.

The area around provides a wide range of sporting and recreational facilities with West Sussex Golf Club and other golf clubs further afield at Cowdray Park and Goodwood. Of special note is the RSPB nature reserve at Wiggonholt Brooks. The area has rugby, bowls and cricket clubs, and there are leisure centres at Storrington and Billingshurst. There is gliding at nearby Parham, theatres at Chichester, Horsham and Worthing and sailing centres all along the coast.



To arrange a viewing call 01903 742535 View details online at henryadams.co.uk

Appendix 2

Sussex World News Article

The following story was published on Sussex World on 17th July 2025:

Residents in bid to save West Sussex village post office from closure

By Sarah Page

Published 17th Jul 2025, 11:42 GMT

Residents in a West Sussex village are banding together in a bid to save their local post office from closure.

The Post Office Stores in Church Street, West Chiltington, has been in business for the past 150 years. But now current owners Judy and Bruce Fryer are planning to retire.

But so far they have been unable to find a buyer for the 400-year-old Grade II listed property which includes the post office shop and adjoining four-bedroom house.

However, local residents are now trying to save it. West Chiltington Parish Council has circulated a survey asking villagers if they can help.

Judy, 64, and Bruce, 72, have been running the post office since 2003 but have been trying to sell it for the past three years with the aim of retiring to the Isle of Wight.

"We've tried three different estate agents over the three years with little viewings," said Judy. "It became apparent that people didn't really want to run the little village shop any more."

Now they are hoping that the local community will take it on. It is expected that the parish council will discuss the matter again at a meeting next month.

"It will be a shame if the post office has to close after 150 years," said Judy. "It would be a big loss."

The Post Office stores, as well as dealing with royal mail services, also acts as a convenience store, selling foodstuffs, household items, newspapers, gifts – and more.

Anyone interested in buying the property or finding out more can email postofficestores@btinternet.com

Appendix 3

Appraisal of local support and communication with West Sussex Parish Council

This is a summary of the communication between Ruth Simmonds/other volunteers, and the Parish Council to investigate to possibility of a local buy-out:

The email communications were marked solely for the recipients and therefore we are prohibited from copying or distributing and therefore we cannot include the actual emails as part of the documentation, however, we can summarise the unsuccessful outcome as follows:

Pre-September 2025:

Ruth Simmonds has coordinated and contacted the local community to seek volunteers with a view to arranging a local buy-out of the property and continue the business.

At this stage only three residents have come forward to actively collaborate to see what can be done and to investigate the possibility of obtaining an Asset of Community Value designation.

18 September 2025:

A meeting is sought with West Chiltington Parish Council (WCPC) to discuss the collaboration further.

There is disappointment at the lack of support and the fear that matters may not progress.

22 September 2025:

WCPC report there are further residents who expressed an interest, but that they only wish to be kept informed of progress.

24 September 2025:

WCPC offer to further publicise the appeal in their newsletter to seek more support.

10 October 2025:

The WCPC report that ahead of any future meeting, the WCPC has some concerns to their being involved in any capacity other than sharing information and using their communication channels to aid reaching the community.

WCPC report that Horsham District Council have previously communicated their view that The Post Office Stores cannot be listed as an Asset of Community Value.

Further to a meeting in late October 2025 between Ruth Simmonds, Ben Alcott, and the Chair and Parish Clerk of WCPC, Ms Simmonds emails the residents who had offered support, to report the following:

She thanks the residents for their support.

Confirms a meeting with WCPC has taken place but sadly all paths lead understandably to the same decision.

WCPC set out their concerns, as a Parish Council body, being involved in any capacity other than sharing information and using their communications channels to aid reaching the community, which may aid our discussions.

- *Horsham District Council have previously communicated the below (June 2025)*
 - *The team have looked into this and found that if the Post Office part of the building is still functioning as a Post Office – or even if it's not and its use is*

still classed as a Post Office, then it is exempt from being listed as an Asset of Community Value due to its status as 'operational land' as defined by Section 263 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This Town and Country Planning Act defines 'operational land' in relation to the Post Office as land used for the purposes of the Post Office/Royal Mail. Therefore, a Post Office is not of community value when considering it as an Asset of Community Value and may be excluded from being listed as such.

The Parish Clerk also linked Section 3, Schedule 1 (clause 4) of The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 for reference.

- The valuation is not current*
- The property includes a residential property*
- It would be inappropriate for the Parish Council to promote residents making private investments/commitments where there would be risks*

There is also not enough community interest either in keeping the PO open - just 6 residents have come forward.

We have chatted with Judy (the applicant) and they hopefully have a retirement plan which is the main thing for them and know that they have explored many avenues in trying to keep the shop open. Sadly, nothing is forever.
