

Case study 1: 'Establishing the need for a community building' Princetown Village Centre

The Princetown Village Centre was officially opened in September 2009 and serves as a single delivery point for a range of social, sporting and business support activities, as well as a wide variety of health and welfare services and facilities. The centre includes a doctors' surgery, sports and childcare facilities and a library.

The building is the culmination of nearly ten years hard work and proposals for a purpose-built community centre in Princetown had been circulating for some time when High Moorland Community Action (HMCA) Ltd commissioned a market study to establish the potential uses of the new centre.

The study was carried out by Force4 (SW) Ltd and the Social Research and Regeneration Unit of the University of Plymouth with the overall aim of investigating and quantifying the potential business opportunities available to the Centre, paying particular attention to potential uses of the Main Hall and associated meeting spaces as well as the potential for a kitchen/ catering social enterprise. The study also attempted to quantify the potential wider economic impacts of the centre on Princetown and its surrounding area.

The study included desk-based investigation to map and benchmark similar facilities and primary research - face-to-face and telephone interviews - with key public-sector organisations, voluntary organisations and community groups. The views and information from these organisations as well as case studies from other similar facilities provided valuable information on general space usage in the centre, with specific recommendations on size and design, storage space, the need for an IT suite and flexibility of some areas to accommodate more than one activity.

This study was a crucial factor in proving the need for the centre and meant that HMCA was equipped with the best information on how to maximise the potential of the new building for income generation as well as having the evidence to present to potential funders on its commercial viability.

For more information about the Princetown Village Centre, go to: <http://www.hmca.org.uk/>



Princetown Village Centre - under construction December 2008

