



Tesco Plans Surprise Expansion

TESCO is to extend its store dramatically this year, if ABC agrees. The facts:

- Floor space increased by 15000 sq feet
- Delivery vehicles increased from 4/5 per day to an estimated 6/7
- About 60 extra parking spaces to be provided on land previously identified for housing, plus extra for mother and baby provision. According to the TESCO literature there will be 278 parking spaces in total, compared with 218 at present.
- A wind turbine in new car park is proposed. Tesco states that they have no plans for a filling station
- Up to 90 jobs (including part time) in addition to the current 150
- Reconfiguration of the access road to make extra parking on the right as you enter. There will be no change to the junction with Smallhythe Road and no need for extra signage.

The intention is to improve food provision including more convenience food. This reflects priorities identified from an in-store survey that highlighted demand for a wider range of produce, improved availability of stock. Non-food items including clothing were a low priority. The extension will be of a similar style and profile as the existing building. Work is planned to start in the spring at the earliest and be completed this year.

Questions To Be Answered

Is this scale appropriate to a small country town? It represents almost a doubling in size (83%) or the equivalent of adding a store bigger than Waitrose.

If there is an 83% increase in the size of the store will there be a significant increase in traffic movements? How is that to be managed?

What will the proposals mean for residents in Smallhythe Road? Will traffic the High Street/West Cross junction be affected?

The 83% growth in floor area is to be serviced by less than a 30% growth in parking spaces. Already, according to TESCO's own survey, "the car park is too congested" Even if shoppers buy more on each visit, is there really going to be sufficient parking? Will that have a knock on effect on parking elsewhere?

"95% of the expansion will be for foodstuffs," stated a TESCO representative at the consultation meeting. Why then does TESCO highlight demand for more "household and clothing products" in its publicity leaflet?

What will be the impact on independent shops in the High Street? Will the expansion "give the local economy a further boost", as TESCO claims, by encouraging more local shopping?

TESCO claims that 50% of their customers linked their store visits with shopping in the Town. Do our local traders see that benefit and has TESCO asked them?

Some of these issues will undoubtedly be answered in the Retail Impact Assessment, the Landscape Survey relating to Smallhythe Road and the Traffic and Environment Assessments that will be required by Ashford when considering the planning application.

We would welcome your views on this proposal.

Comments please to:
Tim Ball at planning@tdra.org.uk

or by post to
Nigel Webb, Secretary TDRA, Webbs, 51 High Street Tenterden TN30 6BH

Crime Rates – How Does Tenterden Compare?

Ashford Borough is the sixth safest of the 13 districts in Kent with 68.8 crimes per 1000 people. This is according to recent annual figures provided by Kent Police. Two of the six safest areas in the Ashford Borough are in Tenterden: Tenterden West with 24.2 overall crimes per 1000 and St Michaels with 28.6. The worst areas in the Borough of Ashford were about ten times that level.

Opening Up the Gateway

"It's light, bright, accessible and inviting" were some of the immediate reactions to the opening of the Gateway facility on the former Co-op site in Manor Row.

The project is the first of its kind in Kent with such a range of services. These include the library, Post Office, Ashford Borough Services (formerly at the Fairings), the Registrar Services (Thurs pm) and Tourist Information, and HI Kent for hearing impaired services (Friday am).

Facilities include free Internet access, council services for council tax, housing and planning and social care. The library has new books and modern shelving is provided for better display.

Staff are rapidly becoming multi-skilled to deal with the greater range of queries.

Calls have already been made for a pedestrian crossing for residents using this "one-stop" provision located at the widest part of the High Street.

One benefit of the new arrangements is the extended hours: Monday-Friday, 9am to 5.30pm and Saturday 9am to 4pm. Phone 762558 or 08458 247 200

Musical Chairs on the High Street

This past year has seen major changes of High Street. The closure of two estate agents and Woolworths reflects the national economic downturn. In a blink of an eye Café Uno disappeared almost overnight (together with many of its staff) to be replaced by a spanking new restaurant Brasserie Gerard. Adin Coates has downsized and located more centrally in the town and in turn has been replaced by Tenterden House Interiors. Now Orvis is moving to the larger premises vacated by

Tenterden House Interiors. We hope that the presence of this upmarket national chain at the west end of the town will encourage more shoppers to explore the Greens to the benefit of our small independent retailers located there.

Join An Enthusiastic Team of Volunteers

CARM (Caring All Together on Romney Marsh) provides support to older and vulnerable people in Tenterden and on Romney Marsh to reduce social isolation and improve access to services. "We run a Befriending Service that links up volunteers with people who are housebound for a cuppa and a chat. At West View, we run reminiscence sessions that improve well being through sharing memories and life stories."

CARM is looking for volunteers to deliver their services. If you are a good listener, empathetic to older people, and friendly, please contact Benedict Potts or Wendy Weidner on 01233 758122

Notice of a Special General Meeting

to be held on Thursday 27th February at 7.30 p.m. at the Tenterden & District Day Centre in Church Road

For some time, your Committee has been concerned about the inequality of the contributions paid by members to the Association.

The Association's costs fall into two broad categories, namely those of a general nature and those directly relating to the production and distribution of the Resident and the quarterly Newsletters. The publications represent more than 50% of the total costs and only one copy of each is distributed to a membership household. In spite of this, households with only one resident member have paid less than those with two or more.

The Committee does not consider this to be fair and is proposing that the recommended annual voluntary donations to the Association that members are asked to contribute each year should be set at £3.50 per household in the future. In giving consideration to these proposals, it should be noted that the rates of contribution paid to the Association have remained unchanged for over twenty years!