



## The Donheads Community Benefit Society Limited

(application for incorporation in progress)

### **PUBLIC MEETING**

*November 15th 2025*

*St Andrew's Church Donhead St Andrew*

#### **Present**

##### Management Committee

*Simon Barkham, Miranda de Bellaigue, Natalie Everest, Peter Dawson, Nick Martin*

*Apologies for absence - Alistair Stoker*

Audience - total 132

*A list of names is available.*

#### **Presentation**

- First 25 slides of '20251115 STF 1st Public Meeting - 1st draft edited (4)' presented.
  - Slides 1-7 Simon Barkham, opened the meeting, introduced the Interim Management Committee and described the project to date
  - Slides 8-13 Peter Dawson outlined how the Change of Use application was being countered, and described what a Community Benefit Society (CBS) and an Asset Of Community Benefit are.
  - Slides 14-22 Miranda de Bellaigue presented the results of the questionnaire and the resultant Vision for The Pub. She then commented on the success rates of community owned pubs.
  - Slides 23-24 Simon Barkham reported on what the next step was, to approach Supporters for an indication of how much they would be willing to invest so that an informed business plan can be prepared and closed the presentation by acknowledging the tremendous support received and the professional serves that the community had given.
  - Simon Barkham opened the floor to any questions regarding the Community Benefit Society prior to the Vote. He then asked the audience to show their hands in support of the formation of a Community Benefit Society to be used as a mechanism to secure and run the pub; the audience gave a unanimous response, with no opponents. The audience was then asked for a show of hands to approve the interim Management Committee; a unanimous response was given with no opponents.

## **Open Floor**

John Glenn MP – commended the presenters for a well-structured, professional and impressive presentation. Probably the best he had seen.

Q.1 Will the slides will be distributed

A. They will. Attached to these minutes.

Q.2 How will we overcome the challenge of staffing and finding a tenant?

A. Simon acknowledged this is an issue recognising that Chris & Lizzie found staff from Shaftesbury & Tisbury and helped with transport. We know that finding the right tenant will be critical. We will be discussing with Plunkett and seeking professional advice.

Q.3 What are the likely total costs?

A. In addition to the capital cost of the pub there will be Stamp Duty, possibly VAT, refurbishment costs of £100-150k, professional fees, working capital and more. We are currently refining and compiling these costs and a detailed breakdown will be made available once completed.

Q.4 Does all the refurbishment need be done now, could we raise more while trading?

A. We prefer to raise all the money now rather than keep asking for more, work needs to be done to attract a good tenant and to make the pub a welcoming space. But the actual work required may be done in stages.

Q.5 What loans and grants might be available?

A. There was a government grant scheme, but this closed in March. It is possible that it will re start, plus John Glenn mentioned the 'Rural Hubs' scheme. Any grants are likely to be very small, so at this stage we assume we will raise 99% of the monies from the community.

Q.6 Will there be a drinking friendly area in the pub?

A. Yes that area of the pub is being redesigned to be a cosy drinking only space.

Q.7 Have we factored in working capital?

A. Yes, we are building working capital assumptions into our plans.

Q.10 Would we try and buy the pub competitively?

A. No. We would only pay the Red Book price as prescribed by the CBS. Should someone else end up owning the pub, we would share all our learning and market research and support a new owner as much as we can.

Q.11 What do we know about the scale of success of community pubs and how this was achieved?

A. We don't have that granularity, Plunkett may have it. We have a list of community owned pubs in the south/south west and plan on visiting as many as

possible. We will learn from CBS management teams, tenants, customer, villagers and suppliers and to understand what drives success. (List below)

### **Further matters arising**

- The team will stay close to changes in legislation regarding 'Right to Buy' **PD**
- A very simple, short 'pledge letter' will be drafted, approved and emailed to the community asking for an indication of how much people are prepared to invest.

#### **Mgt Committee**

- **Everyone in the Community** will continuously spread the word about the project asking members of the community ....
  - 1) to register their interest by sending their email addresses to [cllrbarkham@donheadstandrew-pc.gov.uk](mailto:cllrbarkham@donheadstandrew-pc.gov.uk)
  - 2) to complete a pledge form
- John Glen offered guidance and help with our CBS application to the FCA.
- John Glen recommended looking at the 'Rural Hubs' programme. **Mgt Comm**
- Peter Miskin from the Fox & Hounds, East Knoyle reported that they too are forming a CBS and at similar stage. We will share knowledge and support each other.
- Offers of help were kindly forthcoming from:
  - 1) Marcus Shepherd, estate agent/surveyor
  - 2) Mimi Shepherd, Gerald Tagg, Mike Farewell, Jane Mcarthy & David Curless – all with website building skills
  - 3) Hamish Sherlock

Thank you all!

### **Community owned pubs**

- Relatively Nearby:
  - The Cockerel Gussage AS, Dorset
  - The Anchor Inn Shapwick Blandford, Dorset
  - The Hop Pole, Limpley Stoke Bath, Somerset
  - The Elm Tree, Langton Herring, Dorset
  - The Waldegrave, Chew Valley, Somerset
  - The White Lion, Broadwindsor Beaminster, Dorset
  - The Fox & Hounds, East Knoyle, Wiltshire
  - The Black Dog Chilmark, Wiltshire
  - The Plough, Longparish, Hants
  - The New Inn, Halse, Somerset
- Well Documented Examples:
  - The Brewers, Malvern, Worcs
  - The Boot Inn, Orleton, Herefordshire