



**SOS PUB**

**HELP SAVE OUR STATION PUB  
KNEBWORTH**

## **Our Mission**

The Group exists in order to acquire the premises formerly known as The Station Pub as a business for the benefit of the community.

## **What is a community co-operative pub?**

A community co-operative pub enables the community to take control of what is important to them. They decide what they want, hence the term “more than a pub” as it provides “products, services and activities that improve the lives of many people in the community”. It will cater for all age groups from all walks of life, uniting for a common cause, to invest in our community for future generations and provides a meeting point for some of the most vulnerable groups in the community. Once the pub site is gone, it is gone forever.

It is well acknowledged that the local pub provides a meeting place for all, with members of the community meeting people they would not normally come into contact with, playing an important role in tackling social isolation. People who visit the pub have more friends and are generally much happier and healthier, due to the social contact.

## **Who are the Plunkett Foundation?**

The Plunkett Foundation was initially set up in 1919 by Sir Horace Plunkett, a philanthropist, to promote co-operatives. With a community focus the idea is that groups within the community can work together in order to achieve a common goal.

The more than a pub project is a community pub business support programme which will be triggered when the pub is up for sale. It includes a finance package made up of loans & grants, along with an advisor who will be assigned to us. One of the stipulations is that it has to be genuinely community owned and controlled within the local community. Therefore, the intention is to benefit the community as a whole, not individuals. The more than a pub project aims to increase the number of community owned pubs.

The questionnaire that you have answered is a requirement of the Plunkett Foundation to establish the feeling amongst the community and viability of a pub, which came out very strongly in the survey results. The opinions from the survey will form the basis of what is offered in the day to day operation of the pub site. Eventually, we will need to form a community benefits society but we are no-where near that at the moment, our priority at this time has to be on saving the pub.

Save Our Station Pub, Hollybank, Gipsy Lane, Knebworth, Herts, SG3 6PL

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## Our Vision

The survey demonstrated that the majority of the village have very similar views about what they would like to see from the pub, a welcoming atmosphere that we can all feel comfortable in. The services that you would most like to see are: food provision; a family friendly area; live music; a function room; big sports screen and a games room. We believe, that in order to achieve this the whole site would need to be acquired to run as a viable business. As well as enabling local groups to continue with petanque, the outside space would allow us to create a family friendly garden with a community garden (and corresponding gardening group) for all to enjoy. The garden area could also be used for BBQ's, summer fetes, Easter egg hunts, and the scarecrow festival etc. The former coach house could be used as a micro-brewery to help support the site and we would also envisage having a community office.

When asked what else you want from the survey, the most popular suggestions were: real ales; a nice garden; continuation of the popular weekly quiz; with additional suggestions being: Afternoon tea; Something of interest to the senior citizens; Collection point for parcels; Fine wines and tasting evenings; Snug; Dog friendly; Separate bar areas; and, a Library/reading room.

We also envisage that traditional pub games could take place and pub teams such as dominos, darts, pool etc. could be set up. The idea of a community pub is that it can be many things to many people. Having met so many people locally, I realise how many local groups used it formally and informally as a meeting place, such as the school, the hairdressers, the walking group, the book club etc. Many other groups tell us that they would like to use it in the future as a meeting place.

There is so much potential with the pub and selling alcohol and food is not the only way to sustain it. It would be possible to get additional business in if we want to raise funds, have themed evenings, such as a tapas nights for example, have poker nights, children's entertainers, hold workshops and activities in the garden room, coffee's and light take away breakfasts for early commuters, activities during the day for the older and younger population, to name but a few. There is so much that we can do with the pub. The pub has been very successful in the past and we believe it can be again. In other similar projects local tradespeople have volunteered their time in order to help refurbish the pub, thus saving the community money and this is something that we are currently investigating. For updates please follow Lisa on twitter @savestationpub.

## Volunteering

All work carried out is undertaken by a team of volunteers. If you would like to get more involved, however little time you have please contact Lisa as below, who can talk through the available opportunities with you of which there are several.

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