

Village Shop Campaign News

Newsletter for the local community campaign to keep a shop in Rushlake Green

Issue 1

Village Meeting 7th August

The meeting in the Dunn Village Hall was extremely well attended. An estimated 160 or more people from the village and the surrounding areas were there to learn more about the potential to create a community shop for Rushlake Green. The meeting was introduced by **Bryan Whitton**, on behalf of the Warbleton Parish Council, which is pleased to be leading and supporting this initiative.



Clyde Young, chairing the meeting, explained that Daws Stores is to be sold and will be auction in October unless a suitable buyer is found before that time. He emphasized that the hope is that a suitable buyer will be found, who will take over the shop in a way that will continue its role as a hub for the community. He then introduced the plan to explore the possibility of creating a community shop – as an alternative way for our village and the surrounding areas to continue to benefit from the important advantages of a local shop, serving and supporting the local community. To prove how it could be done, Clyde introduced **Ken Thomas**, Hon Secretary of the Etchingham Community Shop Association. Ken talked about how, when the local shop closed in 2000, the community went about creating a community shop through an Industrial and Providence Society (IPS) cooperative scheme through which the local community now owns the Etchingham Stores. He explained how the community bought the store and how the store is now run by a full time manager (Derris Hodgson pictured), an assistant manager and a strong band of local volunteers – all under the guidance of a store management committee drawn from the community.



Ian Collett then talked about the options for how people from Rushlake Green and the surrounding areas could raise the funds to buy Daws Stores. This would normally be done through a combination of shares, bonds, gifts, grants and commercial loans. The shares would be at a price that meant everyone in the community could have an equal share in the ownership of the shop, but without any further liability no matter what the long term outcome. Residents could then be offered the opportunity to make more substantial contributions through donations or possibly redeemable bonds or loans. It was also acknowledged that there would inevitably be the need to raise a significant proportion of the funds through commercial loans.

Jamie Fairbairn then introduced the idea that the village already has a community shop in the form of Daws Stores and that the intention would be to build on the community value already created by Lionel and his family. Jamie explained that the plan should be to sustain important services such as the Sub Post Office, local deliveries and the convenience and value of local shopping. A shop owned by the community, run by the community, for the community, providing services to the community and bringing the community together. We heard from Nigel McKeeman that of those who answered the survey, 100% felt it was important that Rushlake Green “continues to have a shop” and 99% feel the village would “suffer if it lost its shop”. This strong feeling was reflected in a vote, called by Bryan Whitton on behalf of the Parish Council, at the end of the meeting which showed an overwhelming majority in favour of the development of a plan to take over Daws Stores as a community owned and run shop.



For details of how to stay informed and get involved, please see the website:

www.rushlakegreenvillageshop.co.uk

or contact a member of the campaign group: Jamie & Catherine Fairbairn 01435 830 502; Ian Collett 01435 830 263; Jonathan Austin 01435 830 280; Clyde Young 01435 830 059; Nigel & Farideh McKeeman 01435 830 574; Andy Long 01435 830 164