

# HOW TO SET UP A Community Pub



**Plunkett UK**  
Rural Community Business

# Contents

<b>What are community pubs?</b> .....	3
<b>Why choose the community pub model?</b> .....	5
<b>How can Plunkett help?</b> .....	7
1. Contact Plunkett UK as early as possible.....	7
2. How you can benefit from joining Plunkett UK .....	7
<b>How do you go about setting up or saving a pub as a community business?</b> .....	9
1. Consult with the community .....	9
2. Form a steering group.....	10
3. Select a suitable legal structure .....	11
4. Understand and develop your governance .....	12
5. The ownership model, staffing and volunteers.....	13
6. Work up a business plan.....	14
7. Raising the funds.....	15
8. Purchase and refurbish the pub .....	17
9. Preparing to trade.....	17
10. Publicise the launch date and open for trading!....	19

# What are community pubs?

Community pubs are owned and run democratically by members of their community.

Community pubs have an open and voluntary membership, giving members part ownership of the community business. Community pubs actively encourage individuals from their community to become members by purchasing membership shares, the cost of which are set at an accessible level that the majority of the community will be able to afford. Community pubs are set up on a 'one member one vote' basis rather than 'one share one vote'. This means that all members have an equal say in how they want their local pub to be run, regardless of the number of shares they purchase.

Community pubs are being established in both rural and urban communities, and the motivation for doing so will be much the same. For some, the main motivation will be to safeguard the only remaining pub left in a local community, or to save a valued asset from redevelopment. For others, it will be to establish a high quality service that meets local needs. The major benefit in all cases will be the creation of a community hub in which all members of a community can come together, interact and socialise.

Like any business, a community pub aims to be profitable. However, the primary trading purpose of a community pub is to provide benefits for its local community. Many community pubs, for example, host a wide range of additional services that benefit the community which may include;

- Essentials shop
- Post Office services / parcel hub
- Vegetable growing for the pub menu / gardening club
- Book exchange Dementia club
- Co-working package (e.g wifi, power socket, drink / lunch)
- Meeting room
- Hosting local group meetings Café, coffee shop
- Prescription drop off point.

There are a number of management options for community pubs. In the majority of cases, the community will purchase the freehold of the pub in order to retain community control of the asset. Once owned, the community have the option of leasing the operations of the pub business to a tenant or running it themselves with either paid staff or volunteers. A lesser number of communities for whom purchasing the freehold is not an option, will purchase the leasehold of the pub, to at least ensure the pub is run for community benefit in the short term, and possibly with a view to purchasing the property in the future.

There are a range of legal structures appropriate for community pubs, but the majority are registered as either Co-operative or Community Benefit Societies, which can reinvest profits in the business, donate their surplus back to the community, or distribute interest to their members.







# Why choose the community pub model?

Rural and urban pubs are closing across the UK at a high level. The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) estimate that pubs close at a rate of 18 per week.

The value of a pub to a community is often not fully realised until it closes or is threatened with closure. Increasingly communities have become more determined to take action in response to pub closures, and have turned towards co-operative solutions, which offer some real advantages for those looking to set up or save their local pub. Here are a few of those advantages:

- 1. The community model gives the community a better chance of raising start-up finance required to purchase the pub.** Buying a pub will be costly, regardless of where within the UK it is based. This is because you are buying premises with existing business space, residential accommodation, and often land with development potential. In many cases, the premises will also have 'hope value' attached to it for change of use from commercial to residential use, or even for complete redevelopment.

One of the advantages of the community model is that the start-up costs can be shared amongst the membership. The majority of community pubs, for example, raise significant start-up capital through community shares, with pub groups supported by Plunkett in 2021 alone raising almost £4m between them through community share offers. Co-operatives, with their social and community values, also have the additional advantage of being able to raise funds from donations and grants.

- 2. Once established, community pubs often have lower running costs.** Having received share capital towards the set up costs, together with grants and donations, not only helps secure the asking price and any refurbishment required, it also means there will likely be a much lower debt than a private sector operator would be facing. The benefits of this will be felt directly by the co-operative if they are managing the pub themselves, or can be passed on to tenants by setting a lower rent level.

The running costs of community pubs can also be reduced through the contribution of volunteer time. Co-operatives tend to find that members actively pursue volunteering opportunities – from serving in the bar to helping with the accounts – and because they are part owners, they are keen to do what they can to ensure the business thrives.

- 3. Co-operatives have purchasing independence and can support the local economy.** In most cases, community pubs will not be tied into purchasing contracts with breweries or pub companies. This gives them the flexibility to negotiate better terms and prices from the most competitive suppliers. Many community pubs choose to purchase from local and independent suppliers which again will give customers more choice and offer them a point of difference from other pubs. Purchasing from local suppliers of food and drink also helps to support other local businesses. Some community pubs buy their beer from a local brewery or microbreweries in the area and make it a point of pride to source menus as locally as possible, including growing food in their own gardens! Retaining pubs in community ownership also has a positive impact in retaining employment opportunities for local people, and helping to sustain opportunities for people to work in the areas where they live.



**4. Community pubs can have an asset lock safeguarding the building for the long term.**

Once a pub is in co-operative ownership, it should have an asset lock preventing the business being sold and the assets being distributed amongst the members. Instead, in the event of business failure or the business being sold, the assets must be given to another asset-locked organisation, usually with similar objectives. This will ensure the community have long-term control of the building, and that the building is retained for community benefit.

**5. Community pubs provide a better range of services.** Community pubs go well beyond their functional remit of selling food and drink; they are businesses owned by the community for the community, and as such provide a wide range of services for community benefit such as post offices, cafes, libraries, community shops, meeting rooms or IT suites. Additionally, after any debts are serviced and reinvestments into the business made, the majority of profits are allocated to community projects and initiatives helping to improve the local community.

**6. Community pubs provide better quality services.** As membership organisations where members have equal and democratic voting, community pubs have a culture that has customer feedback built in. This enables pubs to respond to the interests and demands of its customers, which in turn, builds loyalty and

a stronger chance of success. It is clear that communities are keener to support a venture that they feel they have ownership of and a say in how it is run – and once they feel it is their pub, they will feel more committed to using it and supporting it for the long term. If the pub is to be tenanted, the community can also determine the terms of the tenancy and shape the way the pub is run and the type of services offered.

**7. Community pubs stimulate community activity, and help to reduce social isolation.**

Community pubs become the hub of their community by being open long hours, open to all the community, and hosting a wide range of services in addition to the sale of food and drink. As a result of the through flow of customers, and their volunteer base and membership meetings and task groups, they stimulate social activity and help to create a sense of community. This social environment can give people an opportunity to be involved in community life, create support networks for the vulnerable, and for some people provide a sense of belonging, purpose and self-worth.

**8. Community pubs are a more resilient form of business.** As a result of all of the above points, the community model has a stronger chance of success. The survival rate of community pubs reflects this – at the time of writing the sector has an over 99% success rate.



# How can Plunkett help?

## 1. Contact Plunkett UK as early as possible

Plunkett UK has worked with the majority of community pubs currently trading and in the process of setting up. It is the only national organisation supporting the development of community pubs in the UK.

Our advice line can provide information and advice to communities at all stages of their journey setting up or running a community pub, and signpost to other relevant organisations and sources of support. Alongside the advice line, Plunkett can offer free support to any community within the UK via a dedicated staff team, network of regional advisers, mentors and specialist consultants. Plunkett also hosts an online community pub Facebook Group and a website with advice sheets and a range of resources. In addition to this, Plunkett holds networking and training events for community pubs.

By contacting the advice line at the outset, Plunkett will be able to advise you of the current support available, signpost you to the most relevant information and resources, and help to clarify the next steps you need to take to get your project off the ground.

## 2. How you can benefit from joining Plunkett UK

Plunkett UK is a membership organisation, and actively encourages the communities we work with to become members. This helps us to stay in touch with the community businesses we have helped to set up, and also to ensure that our support services remain relevant to all community businesses whilst they are setting up and when they are trading.

Becoming a member of the Plunkett UK gives pubs access to a number of suppliers which can significantly reduce running costs. Suppliers are selected on the basis that they understand the background and the bespoke needs of a community business and that they are able to offer tailored services and competitive prices. Membership will directly benefit the community business if they are running the pub themselves, or the benefits can be passed on to the tenant, helping them to be competitive.

Membership also provides discounts on Plunkett events and training packages, as well as additional advisory support including an annual business health check. More information on membership can be found at [www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk) or by contacting [membership@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:membership@plunkett.co.uk).









# How do you go about setting up or saving a pub as a community business?

## 1. Consult with the community

By consulting with the immediate community and surrounding area, you will be able to gauge the level of support there is for the project, and an idea of what the community would like the pub to offer. It will also help you to establish whether the community are willing to invest in the project, and if they are, how much.

By consulting with the wider community, you are creating the opportunity to get feedback on your ideas and the inclusion of new ones not yet considered. It will also give you the opportunity to identify people with relevant skills to get involved. This will give the pub venture much more ownership by the community, and therefore a stronger chance of being a success.

### Questionnaires

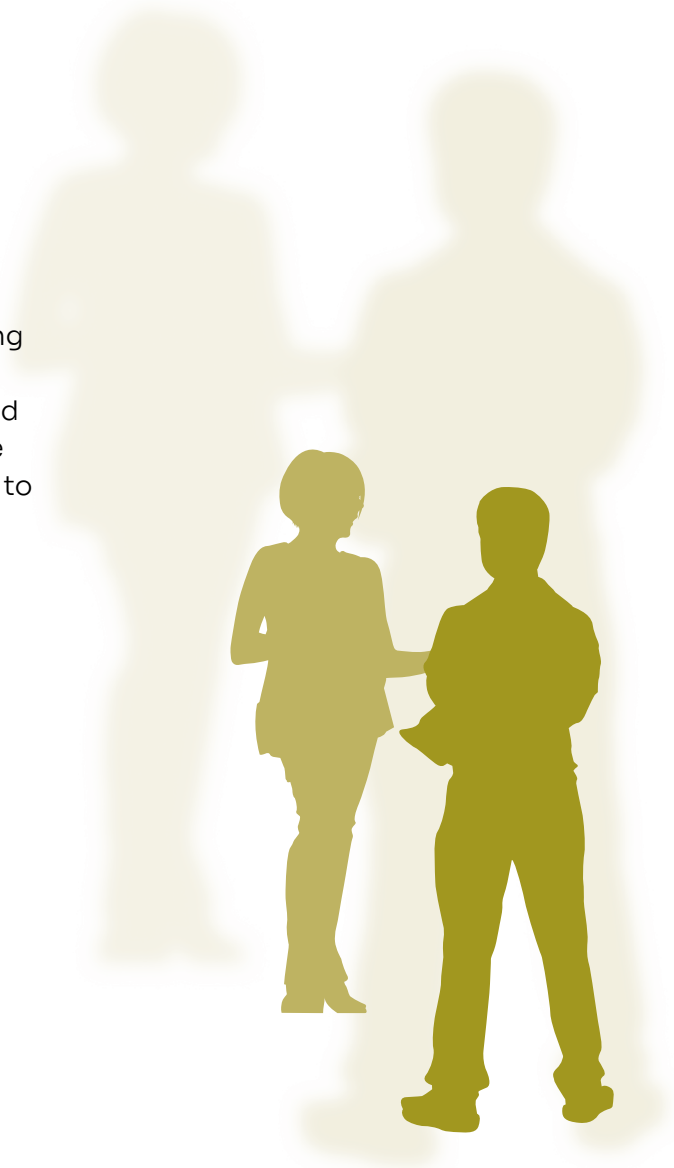
A questionnaire is a good tool for consultation as it means you can reach all households in your catchment area, and allow people the time to respond in their own way. Plunkett has a sample questionnaire that is a helpful starting point. Questionnaires should be hand collected to ensure maximum response, in addition to offering a collection point. The local press, community magazines, newsletters and websites can be used to publicise the survey and its importance to the community - you could even use these methods to deliver the questionnaire itself.

### Online surveys

Set up an online survey using the (generally free) online tools available, and publicise this through websites, Facebook pages, Twitter and any other social media available to you.

### Other ways of consulting the community

Alternatively, you could organise a doorstep survey or a public zoom meeting, an 'open day' in the community, perhaps in the community hall or local school. Many communities may already have undertaken a community planning exercise, sometimes known as a Neighbourhood Plan. This can be a useful consultative document to draw on to evidence the issues that are important to those living and working in your community.



## Other stakeholders

Ensure you contact other local businesses and community-led organisations as part of your consultation exercise. In addition to lending their support they may become valuable partners later on.

## Hold a public meeting

A public meeting can be held to gauge support and raise awareness of the project. It should only be held, however, when you have something to say, and when you are confident you know enough about the background of community pubs and your specific circumstances to be able to present the concept and the options to the wider community. Plunkett can help with this by providing presentation materials, facts and figures. It is also important to know exactly what you want from the meeting and that the chairperson knows what, if anything has to be decided at the meeting.

The public meeting is an ideal time to update the community on the results of your research to date (questionnaire results and other feedback) and so make sure you have some strong visual material to illustrate your data. Meetings should be held in a recognised meeting place with plenty of room – such as a village hall or school. Weekends can often be the best day to attract the widest section of the community. Where possible, meetings should last no longer than 90 minutes and an agenda/time-table must be prepared in advance. Some people might not wish to speak publicly during the meeting, so circulate forms for people to express their views, indicate whether they would like to get involved, or whether they wish to make a pledge.

Potential funding bodies will require you to have undertaken a consultation when assessing your applications for grants or loans and request evidence of it, so take the time to summarise, record and publicise the results of your research, including any outcomes from the public meeting.

## 2. Form a steering group

Whilst the idea for a community pub will often start with just one or two individuals, it is important to involve a wider group of people as soon as possible. This will give assurance to the community that it is a community project and encourage more people to take notice and get involved. This is known as the steering group, which has the task of gauging whether the project has local support or not, and its viability.

Steering groups usually form spontaneously, comprising those individuals who are the most engaged with the idea and who have been involved in the consultative process, but occasionally it is worth seeking people from the wider community by, for example, calling for people to step forward at a public meeting. A good mix of skills is important so it is best to make clear at the public meeting which additional skill sets are desirable or are not yet covered by the original members of the group, such as business management, financial e.g. accountancy, HR, fundraising and PR, writing skills (for business plan and any grant applications), legal, and communications/social media etc.

The steering group is likely to provide the founder members for incorporating the community business and will become the basis (with a few additions or subtractions) for the first management committee (or board). Founder members don't necessarily need to stay on the committee for the duration of the journey of setting up the pub, which can occasionally be a long one – others may be elected by members at the first AGM.

The first committee should set out its aims and objectives from the outset as well as allocating roles and responsibilities for its members in order to have a clear purpose, and a clear goal in sight. If there is to be a lengthy period before incorporating for some reason, and a more formal footing during this period is considered desirable, a 'Memorandum of Association' can be drawn up which can be used to communicate to the community at large the purpose and scope of the committee and the persons involved.

The committee will be required to assess the viability of a community pub in your community, explore all the possible options as to how it can be set up and managed and how it will work to represent the interests or concerns of the wider community.



Committees should consist of a minimum of three people, and a maximum of twelve. At the very least, a committee should consist of a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. It is also good practice to have 4-6 others with specific roles to lead sub committees, such as;

- **Business Planning** – set up the legal structure, develop business plan, start budgeting income and expenditure
- **Fundraising** – determine estimated set up costs, draw up a fundraising plan, open a bank account and commence fundraising
- **Operations** – decide whether the pub will be managed or leased, establish any terms or parameters for how the business will be run, consider what the pub will stock and sell and what other services it will offer
- **Communications** – keep the community involved and up to date with progress, recruit volunteers, and make the project fun! Social media can be an excellent tool for this.

In theory, the sub-committees, having spread the work load, then feed back into the main committee, but in reality, there will be cross over and dependencies across the sub-committee activity. For this reason, it is important to meet regularly and make sure that the correct information is presented and recorded at meetings so that committee members can make informed decisions.

### 3. Select a suitable legal structure

Community pubs can trade, employ staff, manage volunteers and enter into contracts and financial arrangements. They therefore require a legal entity to protect the individuals running the business by giving them limited liability, and they also require a legal structure to ensure that they are compliant with legal necessities such as tax, insurance, trading standards and employment rights.

The majority of pubs have incorporated as Societies. Other acceptable legal structures include the Company Limited by Guarantee and the Community Interest Company (large membership model), although these structures do not have the same ability to raise finance through community share offers.



There are two main forms of society: a

**Co-operative Society** is run for the mutual benefit of its members, and the **Community Benefit Society** aims to benefit the wider community beyond and including their members. The Plunkett UK sponsors Model Rules for a Community Benefit Society, which is essentially a template governing document specifically devised for community-owned enterprises. The advantages for using these rules for a community pub include following best practice and a quick set up with cheaper registration costs. The key characteristics of the Plunkett Model Rules are:

- They prioritise the interests of the wider community over the needs of their members or investors
- Voting control is vested in the members equally, not in proportion to their financial stake in the society: one member one vote
- They allow funds to be raised from community share offers (a successful form of fundraising)
- Any trading profit is reinvested for social or community benefit
- They include an asset lock.

Plunkett advises all communities to read Plunkett's **A Guide to the Essential Steps for Setting Up a Rural Community Business** and Co-operative UK's guide to legal structures **Simply Legal** to get an overview on the complete range of legal structures that might be appropriate for them, and to undertake the 'select-a-structure' exercise on their website. As well as Plunkett's Model Rules for a Community Benefit Society, Co-operatives UK and other organisations will also be able to supply Model Rules for community businesses.

## 4. Understand and develop your governance

Governance as a term means the internal process of how decisions are made to ensure the accountability and strategic direction of the organisation. These processes are set out primarily in the governing document and supported by any additional policies or secondary rules.

Ideally all community businesses will have a governing document (sometimes called a constitution, agreement, rules or articles) which clearly reflects and sets out what type of organisation it is, what the group want the organisation to do, who can be part of the organisation (members), how decisions are made, what happens to any surplus made during the year and also what can happen to the assets should the organisation close, merge with another or is sold.

Governing documents will also include or reflect any specific requirements of a particular legal structure, so it is important to choose a governing document and legal form that are compatible. For example if you want to have an asset lock in your governing document, you need a legal form that allows for an asset lock, such as a Community Interest Company or a Community Benefit Society.

### Governance and your membership

Member owned organisations such as Community Benefit Societies seek to provide benefits for their community. The benefits of a larger membership include:

- Having a larger number of people who have a financial interest in the running of the enterprise and who are more likely to use it regularly
- A greater number of people who attend AGMs and committee meetings and positively contribute to the overall direction of the business
- A more accessible pool of people to draw on when committee numbers are falling, or when more volunteers are needed to help run the business.

The Plunkett Model Rules require Community Benefit Societies to have their own membership strategy to ensure 'membership' remains at the heart of the enterprise, whereby the society continues to grow membership and engage its members.







The management committee needs to ensure that systems and processes around governance and membership are in place – from the very first collection of names and addresses, to the updating of share registers and issuing certificates, distributing interest payments, storing data and keeping abreast of data protection legislation. The committee always has to keep in mind its responsibilities with regards to the membership and ensure that its governing processes are transparent and accessible.

Good governance is critical to the success of a member owned enterprise and it is essential that members are included in decision making through the election of the management committee at the AGM. If a share offer has been issued and members are also investors, then the members may also need to vote at the AGM on motions such as payment of interest for the year, or the allowance or suspension of capital withdrawals.

## 5. The ownership model, staffing and volunteers

One of the first and most critical governance decisions that will be made by the steering group or management committee is which ownership model to follow – a tenanted model or community-managed model: in other words, whether to set up with a tenant running the pub independently and paying an annual rent to the community business, or to employ a manager reporting day-to-day to the management committee. The advantages of a tenanted model are that the community business can benefit from the experience of a seasoned tenant, especially as it is unusual to find committee members experienced in the pub trade, and the tenant will drive the business with a view to making a profit.

On the other hand, community groups opting for the management model may do so to ensure greater control of the business, to make sure that the pub serves its community purpose, and/or because there is insufficient accommodation within the pub building to suit a tenant. It can, however, create a significant workload for board members, plus finding the right manager can be a difficult task as, due to the nature of the pub trade, the majority of experienced management-level staff prefer to work on a tenancy basis.

Whichever model is chosen, it is really important that the management committee creates a good and mutually respectful working relationship with either the hired manager or tenant. This will require regular and open communication, careful agreement of roles and responsibilities, and a mutual understanding of both the social mission and the business aspirations.

Employing local staff is one way of fulfilling a community pub's "support local" brief and an emphasis on friendly customer service can overcome the possible inconveniences to customers caused by the slower pace of renovation within a community-owned business compared to a pub owned by a conglomerate.

The role of volunteers in community pubs ranges from help with a paintbrush or with trades skills at the refurbishment stage (it is very common for the local community to throw themselves into helping revitalise a newly acquired "saved" pub) to actually working behind the bar. After the set-up phase, the management committee may find it useful to call on local volunteer support with events management, fundraising for new equipment or refurbishment, or with IT and social media support such as running the website or Facebook page.



## 6. Work up a business plan

A business plan is a valuable tool for setting out your aims and objectives for your pub, defining what you want the pub to offer, and how the business will operate. Your business plan will also include financial forecasts for the pub, including the initial set-up costs and ongoing costs and from this, determine how much money the business needs to raise through initial fundraising and future sales in order to be a viable and sustainable business. You should see the Plan as a live document which you revise and amend as the business develops.

Your business plan will be needed to support any major grant applications and it will be important to show grant funders the kinds of social impacts your business will have, plus evidence that it will become self-sufficient. Likewise, should you be seeking loan finance, the business plan will need to evidence the fact you are confident that you can manage the repayments.

If you intend to issue a share offer to raise funds to purchase or refurbish your pub, your business plan also becomes the reference document for anyone considering investing in shares. To support your proposals in your share offer and to validate your claims, you should consider applying for the Community Shares Standard Mark which would involve scrutiny of your business plan, share offer and governing document by a licensed practitioner.

The Standard Mark is awarded to community share offers that meet the Community Shares Unit's standards of good practice, and is designed to protect the investor. A business plan that is to form part of a community share offer seeking the Standard Mark would need to demonstrate how and when the society will provide share liquidity to members and be in a position to pay interest (if interest has been promised). It would also need to provide evidence of market opportunity and customer base to justify sales forecasts and identify principal risks associated with the proposed business model, and provide credible contingencies to mitigate these risks. For more information on the Standard Mark see [www.uk.coop/support-your-co-op/community-shares](http://www.uk.coop/support-your-co-op/community-shares)



You may have someone on your committee or in the village who is experienced at writing business plans and will be able to help you. Plunkett UK can also help both with support from an adviser and by providing you with resources and examples from other successful community pubs. For more information see Plunkett's guide: **An introduction to preparing a business plan for a community business.**

## 7. Raising the funds

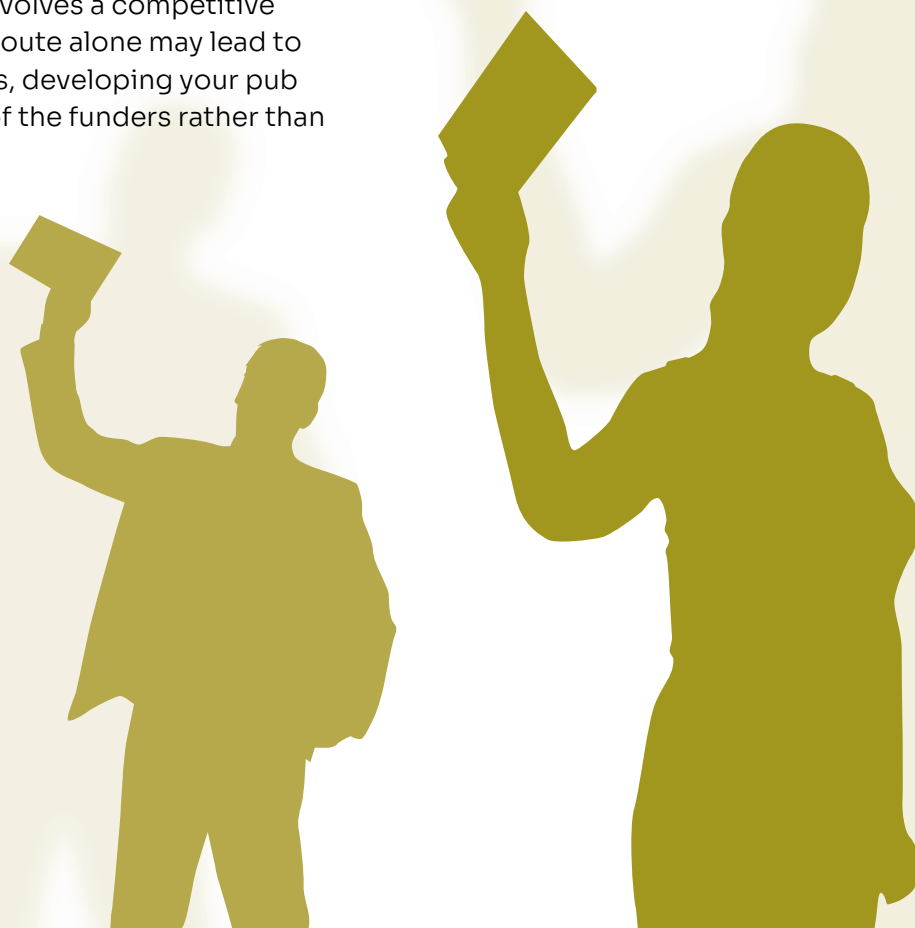
Plunkett encourages communities to consider a combination of funding mechanisms including; donations, grants, loans and shares (equity).

Community fundraising events and requests for donations do not normally raise significant sums of money, but they are an important way of engaging with the community and gaining their commitment to the project. However, it should be seen as complementary to other forms of finance raising and should be continued throughout the fundraising period to keep up the profile of the project.

Applications for grant funding are another traditional source of fundraising which can make more substantial contributions to the project. Grant funding, however, is becoming increasingly difficult to source, and involves a competitive process. Relying on this route alone may lead to delays, and in some cases, developing your pub according to the needs of the funders rather than your community.

Grant funders often wish to see match funding from the village, so ensure that you have looked at your local options first: Parish Councils, village groups and charities can be very supportive and proving that you have local support will be viewed very positively by national funders.

Selling shares in your pub is a good method of raising finance from within the community and an important way of recruiting members. Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies are the only legal forms able to issue "community shares" which are increasingly raising the highest proportion of start-up capital required for community pubs. They are effectively "withdrawable shares" whereby shareholders are encouraged to purchase more than one share, up to a maximum legal limit of £100,000. Regardless of the number of shares owned, each member has only one vote, so the democratic principles are protected. There are incentives for members to purchase more than one share including the potential for interest payments, tax relief, and the ability to withdraw shares once the business has stabilised, but the main incentive should always be social return.





Shareholder members, as well as financially supporting the start-up, are buying into the vision of the pub as a community business and are more likely to become your customers, your volunteers, and your longer term supporters who want to play an active part in its future. As with donations and local fundraising, the amount that is raised from your community in this way should be highlighted when applying for grants and there are now some specific grant programmes designed to match community shares.

Be sure to seek guidance before you issue a community share offer (Plunkett can offer support) as although the issuing of community shares is an unregulated activity there are plenty of recognised best-practice examples which can improve the protection offered to the investor and to the society, as well as improving the outcome of the offer. Plunkett sponsors Model Rules for a Community Benefit Society which are fully compatible with raising investment through community shares.

As trading organisations with a 100% success rate, community pubs are increasingly using loan finance to support their start-up costs. Plunkett work with a number of Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) who have specific knowledge and understanding of community pubs who can offer loans and support at an affordable rate. It is also worth considering liaising with your parish or town council who may be eligible for **Public Works Loan** finance which in turn can be passed on your organisation as a grant. A PWL is an affordable 'public' loan which can be made to local councils for exactly this type of initiative. A separate guide on how this works is available from the Plunkett UK.

Plunkett has two publications that can assist you with raising the finance you need: **Raising the Funds to Finance your Community Business** and **Funding a Community Business with Community Shares**.



## 8. Purchase and refurbish the pub

Once you have secured your premises and finance, you need to consider 'the look' of the pub as well as the practicalities of layout, equipment and furnishings. Whatever look and design you do go for, remember, this is a community pub and needs to appeal to the widest possible sector of the community.

In some cases the pub may need extensive renovation and this will be an opportunity to engage people further in the project, by employing local tradesmen, seeking volunteers support, holding milestone celebrations and fundraising activities along the way.

You also need to be considering the core range of services the pub will be offering – ultimately food and drink – but to what extent will you be prioritising space for other services such as: meeting rooms, cafes, post office, TV or games room? There will likely be different views within the community as to how much space should be retained for community purposes, and how much should be given to restaurant space to maximise income, but again, remember that this is a community pub and needs to respond to community needs.

## 9. Preparing to trade

### **Develop your profile**

Community businesses should look to set up a website, develop a social media presence, create an active Facebook page, join CAMRA, enter into Best Pub competitions, run community events, and form a range of partnerships – all the things that will make your community pub different from a privately owned pub can be outlined here with short examples.

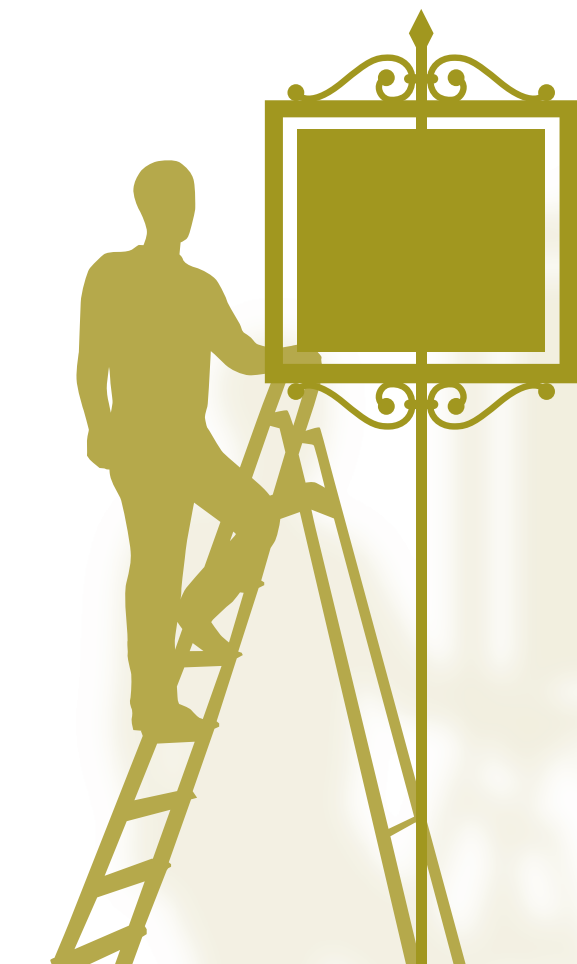
### **Policies and procedures**

If the pub is to be managed by the community then there will be a raft of procedures that you need to cover with a handbook, such as cash handling, security procedures, hygiene, cleaning and closing routines, licensing rules, and so on. Staff training procedures will need to be covered as well.

Policies will include staff issues such as lone working, dealing with disruptive customers, working with volunteers, and financial controls. The financial arrangements for accounting, AGMs and annual reporting to the FCA all need to be laid down before trading, as does the ongoing strategic role of the board in setting and adjusting policies. If the pub is to be run by a tenant then it has to be agreed what the responsibilities of the committee are and what the routes of communication will be.

### **Legal requirements**

Insurance policies need to be in place before trading. Make sure you have checked out what you need (depending on whether it is the managed or tenanted model) with regard to buildings/contents insurance, public indemnity and employers' liability insurance.



## **Ensure you have the correct licences in place for selling alcohol**

Any business that sells alcohol to customers must be licensed to do so and each country within the UK has different licensing laws. Local councils are responsible for issuing licences so it is advisable to contact them for the most up-to-date information and application forms.

Make sure that management committee and tenant/manager all have the same understanding of the terms of the licence particularly with regard to off licence sales, trading hours etc. and that you have complied with all the training and have the necessary designated premises supervisor (DPS) with a personal licence.

## **Ensure you are compliant with all legal requirements and best practice trading processes**

Health and Safety in the workplace is monitored by the Health and Safety Executive, but it is the role of Environmental Health Officers from the district council to visit pubs, primarily to advise and then to ensure that correct practices are being enforced and dangerous practices are stopped. It is recommended that early contact is made with the Environmental Health Officers so that they have the earliest opportunity to advise as your project develops.

All businesses that sell food need to be aware of, and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations. These need to be applied to food storage, display, handling and selling. The Food Standards Agency has produced a special pack for retailers to explain food safety regulations - 'Safer Food, Better Business for Retailers' and is free and available to order from the Food Standards Agency on **0845 606 0667** or via [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

## **Risk assessments**

When setting up the pub the committee will need to ensure all risks have been checked, such as a fire risk assessment for extinguishers, evacuation points and procedures, and that the wiring and electrical devices have been checked, gas certificates obtained, water checked, all alarms are in place and working, and so on. These are processes that have to be done regularly and so it is important to keep records carefully to monitor when updates are due.

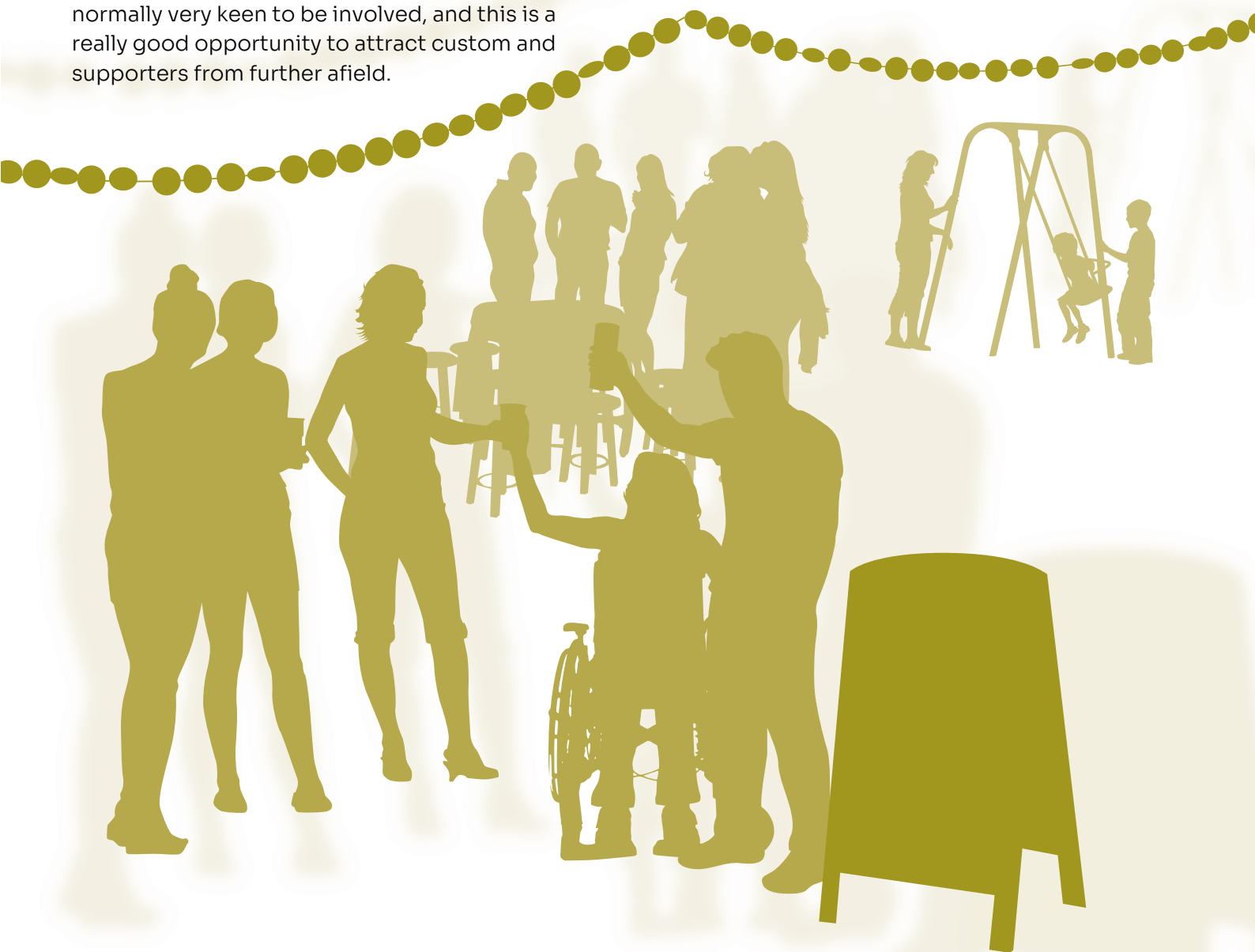


## 10. Publicise the launch date and open for trading!

The official opening day is a celebratory event that all of the community should be invited to and encouraged to attend. This is your opportunity to show off all the hard work that has been going on, and the ideal opportunity to market the pub to your local community and the wider services you now offer.

It is always worth holding the official opening some weeks after trading has actually commenced in order to give yourselves time to iron out any teething problems. To mark this event, consider inviting a celebrity guest or local MP to officially open the pub, and remember to invite any organisation that has provided funding or advice along the way. Also invite neighbouring communities who may also be considering setting up a community pub. The local media are also normally very keen to be involved, and this is a really good opportunity to attract custom and supporters from further afield.

A weekend is often the best time for an event in order to get maximum attendance from the local community. Make use of road signs directing people to the pub, put up posters, balloons and bunting to emphasize celebration and achievement, and organise music, entertainment, food tastings, and of course a drink! Do contact Plunkett when you are ready to open as we have a range of templates and materials to help you promote your fantastic achievement; and we will also share your success with our networks.

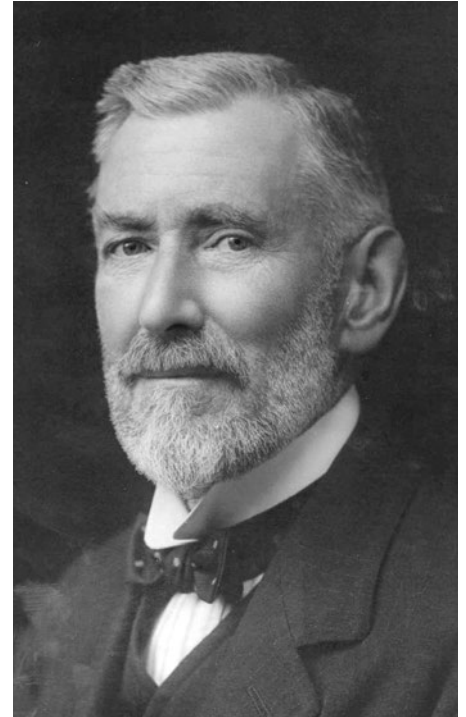




## About Plunkett

Plunkett UK is a national charity which supports people in rural areas to set up and run a wide range of businesses in community ownership. We do this to achieve our UK-wide vision for resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities. Community-owned businesses are owned and controlled by community members who have an equal and democratic say in how the business is run.

Plunkett has promoted the community ownership model for over 100 years because of its track record for delivering better businesses for people, communities, the economy, and the environment. Today, we represent 800 trading community-owned businesses and a further 500 in the process of setting up. Plunkett raises awareness of the community business model, provides practical community business support, and represents our members through networking, research and advocating with government, think tanks and funders.



### **Plunkett UK**

The Quadrangle  
Woodstock  
Oxfordshire OX20 1LH

+44 (0)1993 630022  
[info@plunkett.co.uk](mailto:info@plunkett.co.uk)

**[plunkett.co.uk](http://plunkett.co.uk)**   

Plunkett UK is the operational name of Plunkett Foundation a registered charity, numbers CC 313743 (England and Wales) and SC 045932 (Scotland). It is a company limited by guarantee, registered number 00213235 (England and Wales).

