

Chief Executive's Report 2025

James Alcock



99%

The five-year
survival rate
for community
businesses.

Plunkett's impact

We are the only organisation dedicated to supporting rural community-owned businesses across the UK.

At a practical level, our dedicated and expert team:

- Raise awareness of the community ownership model through proactive press, media and campaigns
- Provide practical support to people setting up and running community-owned businesses via specialist business advice, training, webinars and toolkits
- Represent our members' interests through policy, research and advocacy.



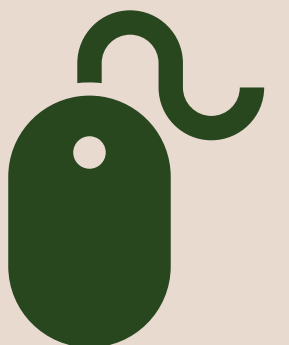
302

community groups
assisted with
community
ownership advice

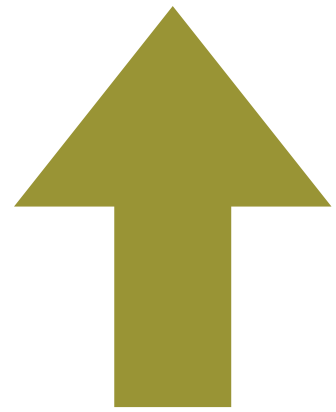


44

training events
and webinars
delivered



In 2024, Plunkett's support and advocacy resulted in:



287 community groups embarked on a **new community ownership project**.



30 new community businesses commenced trading.



Several community businesses were saved from closure resulting in **a 5-year survival rate of 99%**



73 groups registered a new community business using **Plunkett's model rules for a Community Benefit Society**.



A total pipeline of **797 community businesses**



A total of **828 community businesses** successfully trading.

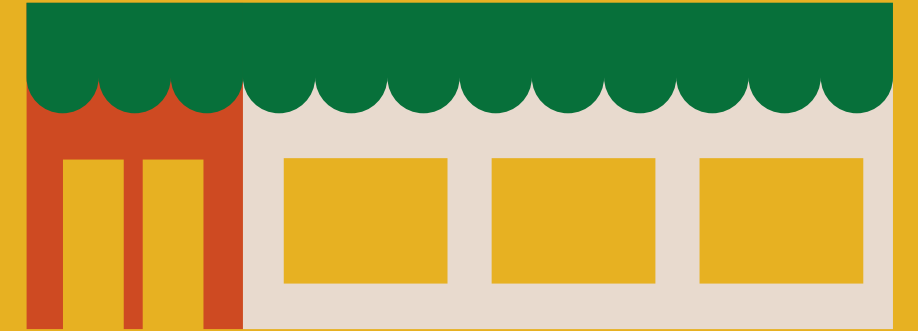
Impact 1

Safeguarding access to a wide range of good and services.

Community-owned businesses, supported by Plunkett, are thriving where others fail, and **offer more than basic services – acting as multi-service hubs** that proactively reach out to support those most vulnerable in a rural community.



500



residents in the **immediate population** are typically served by community-owned businesses

2,000,000

Estimated number of people that currently **benefit** from rural community businesses.

Impact 2

Boosting the local economy.

Community businesses tend to source goods and services locally, **creating a circular economy in the places they exist**, with many helping other new business start-ups such as bakers, brewers, distillers, and artists who used their local community shop as a first step to market.



In 2024, community shops sourced from an estimated total of:



Total reinvested into **local community projects** in 2024:

£1.4m



Impact 3

Creating opportunities for employment, training and volunteering.

Rural community-owned businesses boost local employment, training and volunteering in areas where such opportunities can often be limited and in decline. Volunteering is equally important for younger and older people – **it is an opportunity to be part of something and feel valued.**



On average, in 2024, each rural community business engaged 15 volunteers and 4 staff. That is an approx total of:



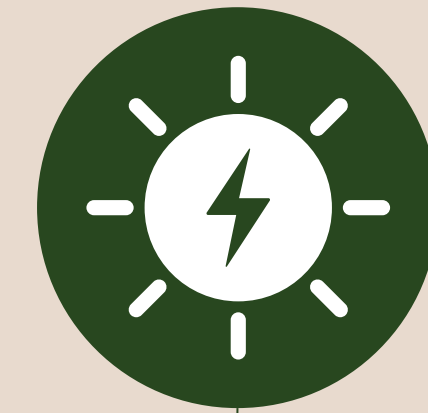
53%

of community businesses employ **young people**, aged 16-25

Impact 4

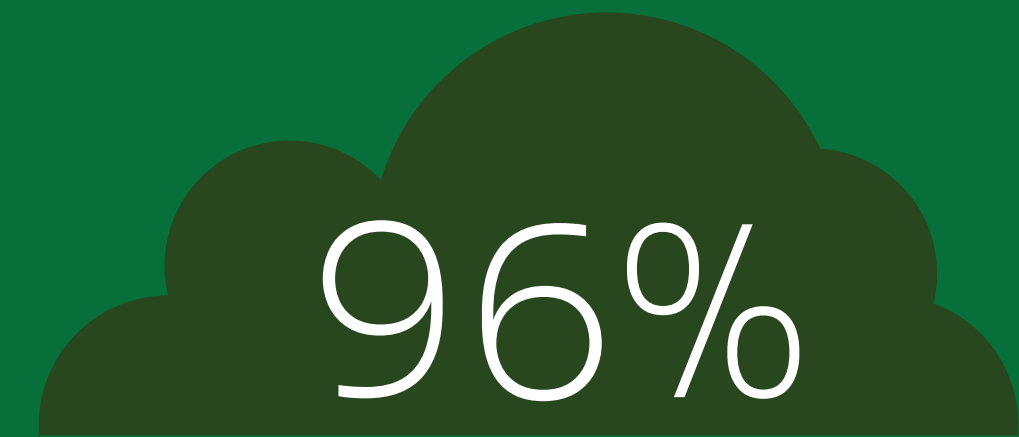
Tackling climate change.

With Plunkett's support, rural community businesses are **investing time and resources into initiatives that have a positive environmental impact**. It is integral to the way they do business, not an add-on, and they do it for the greater good, not because it translates to sales.



85%

of community businesses have either installed or are considering installing **energy saving measures**



of community businesses took some form of **climate action** last year

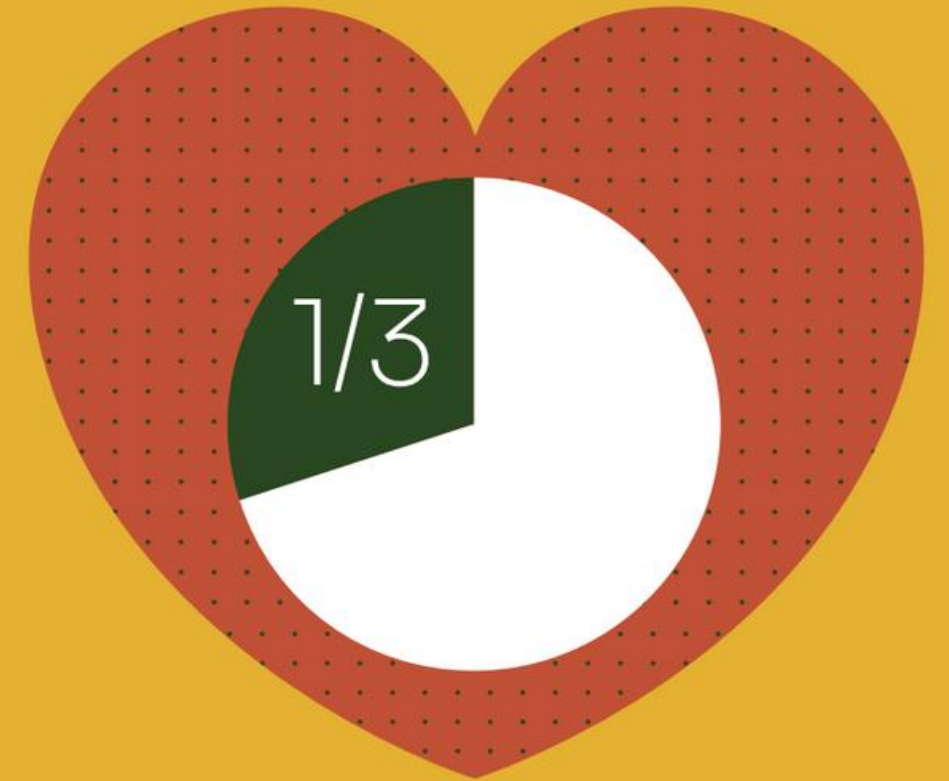
Impact 5

Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion by creating safe and welcoming spaces for all.

Asking the question, '**whose voice is currently missing?**', results in a diverse offering to a diverse customer base, often responding to the needs of underrepresented or vulnerable groups.



One third of community businesses partner with other charities and organisations to offer **volunteer opportunities** for people with additional support needs, a disability and/or long-term health condition



of community businesses offer **employment** for people with a disability or long-term health condition

Community Business Team

Mary Boullin, Head of Community Business

Mary.Boullin@Plunkett.co.uk



The Community Business Team

- Alison Macklin – Community Business Manager
- Diane Cameron – Community Business Manager
- Lucia Jesus – Community Business Officer
- Mary Boullin – Head of Community Business
- Misty Bower – Community Business Adviser
- Nick Comley – Community Business Adviser



Providing the best service to community businesses

We are here for community businesses at every stage – from early stage to trading. We provide a helpline, support from advisers, resources, webinars and training.

We listen to and action requests for support from community businesses and our network of advisers.

Please get in touch!



Resources and webinars

Reviewing and updating our current resources. Six updated key documents will be available on our website soon (in both English and Welsh).

Developing new resources and webinars based on feedback from community businesses and advisers.



Model Rules 7

Currently working with the FCA to get these approved and available for community businesses as soon as possible.

Updates are free for Plunkett members!



Supporting our adviser network

- One to one phone calls
- Skills audit
- Continuation of the monthly 'Chance to Chat' meetings
- More in-person meetings



Please contact us
if you need help
or advice



Thank you!

External Affairs Update

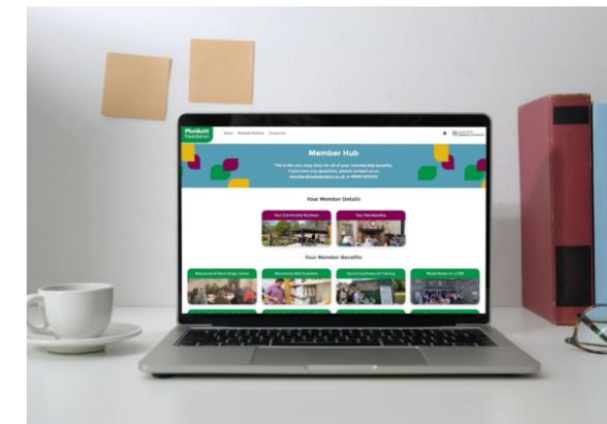
David Lydiat, Head of External Affairs

David.Lydiat@Plunkett.co.uk



Membership

- Future of Rural Retail Report
- Member Awards Evening
- Three more recommended suppliers in the immediate pipeline
- East of England Community Pubs Network event and film
- Successful initiation of Funding Options & Opportunities webinars
- New recommended suppliers: ByRuby, HomeCooks, Tabology, Sydney Phillips, Lantern Insurance
- Member Resource Library Review and Update
- Impact webinars and case studies
- Better Business Report work
- Redefined/enhanced membership offer
- Member comms/engagement
- Evidence impact and best practice – bank of case studies



On the Member Hub you can:

- ✓ Book a free annual health check with a Plunkett Adviser or contact our community business helpline for tailored support and advice for your business
- ✓ Find out about updating your Model Rules for free, to ensure you're maintaining best practice and good governance
- ✓ Access our extensive library of exclusive resources and webinar recordings
- ✓ Access our directory of recommended suppliers
- ✓ Access discounts on training courses and register for free member events and webinars
- ✓ Find out about our Corporate Volunteering Programme
- ✓ Stay up to date with events, suppliers' offers, funding and opportunities with our monthly Members' Update newsletter
- ✓ Contribute to sector research, reports and campaigns
- ✓ Get 25% discount on Plunkett's consultancy services, including Community Shares Standard Mark

Policy and Public Affairs



Plunkett UK

2,242 followers

2mo •

South Norfolk MP, [Ben Goldsbrough](#) recently asked the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) about support for rural community-owned businesses like those in Plunkett UK ...more



Written questions submitted by Ben Goldsbrough - MPs and Lords - UK Parliament
[members.parliament.uk](#)



Plunkett UK

2,242 followers

1d •

The English Devolution Bill, which contains proposed legislation for a Community Right to Buy, passed its second reading in the House of Commons yesterday (2 September).

[James Alcock](#), Chief Executive of Plunkett UK says: "The passing of the English Devolution Bill's second reading in Parliament is very positive and welcome result. It will unlock many assets that communities have strived to take ownership of."

"However, Plunkett UK reiterates its call on the government to re-open or replace the COF."

Read our full response in our latest news piece: <https://lnkd.in/e-JD7Zee>

"The passing of the English Devolution Bill's second reading in Parliament is very positive and welcome result. It will unlock many assets that communities have strived to take ownership of." However, Plunkett UK reiterates its call on the government to re-open or replace the COF."



James Alcock,
Chief Executive of
Plunkett UK



Comms and Media

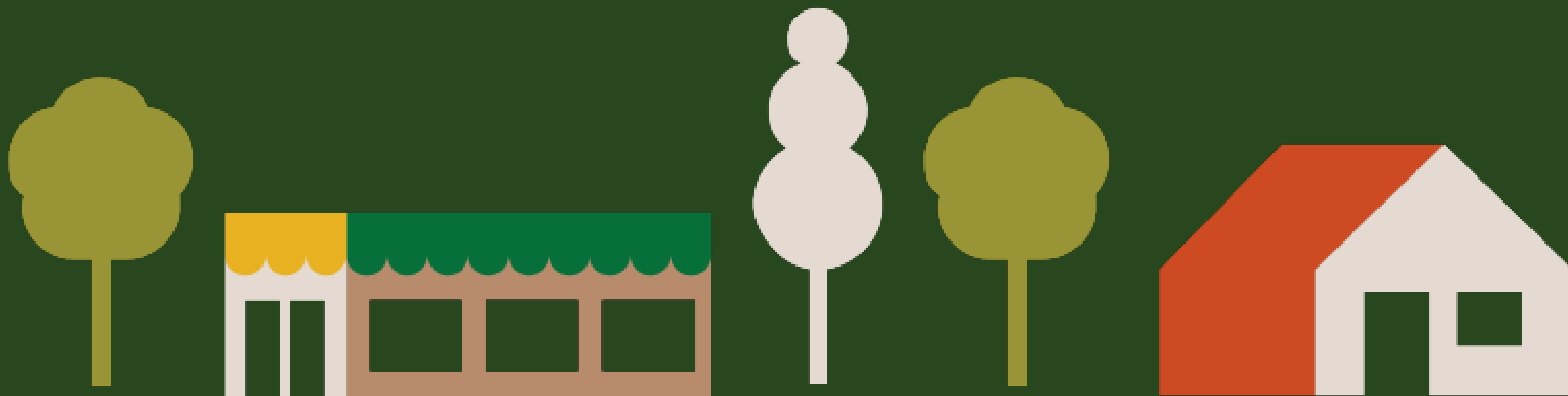
- Impact Report
- Managed the delivery of a successful communications campaign for the Future of Rural Retail Taskforce (FRRT) report and film
- Roll-out and manage the implementation of the enhanced Plunkett UK branding internally and externally
- Membership and E-Newsletter Comms
- Website and Social Media engagements
- Videos, photos, blogs
- Pro-Active comms strategy
- Building of press and media platform contacts
- Landing in BBC, Telegraph, sector and local press



Partnerships Team

Gemma Sills, Head of Partnerships

Gemma.Sills@Plunkett.co.uk



Welcome

- Who are Plunkett's Partnerships Team
- Why are we seeking to work with corporate partners?



Co-op Retail Society Network (CRSN)

- Supporting the co-operative sector to fulfill Principles 5 & 6 of the International Co-operative Alliance:



Cooperation among Cooperatives



Education, Training and Information



The Central Co-op team taking on The Three Peak Challenge for Plunkett

Working together

- Who we work with - partnering with a variety of different partners
- How we work together?



The Webmart team volunteering with Plunkett member, The Abingdon Arms community pub

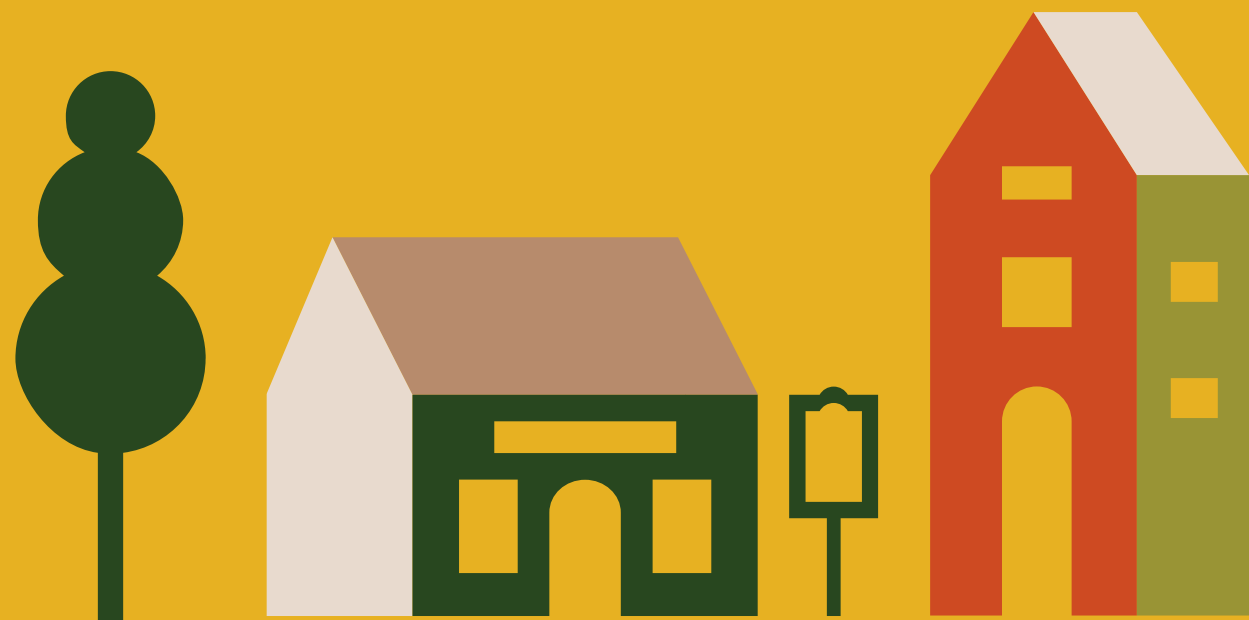
Looking ahead

- Gala Dinner
- Continuing to build an extensive network of corporate partners
- Developing a Hospitality Coalition
- Working with existing partnerships for mutual benefit



Could you support us?

- Does your company share Plunkett's values?
- Are they passionate about protecting rural communities?

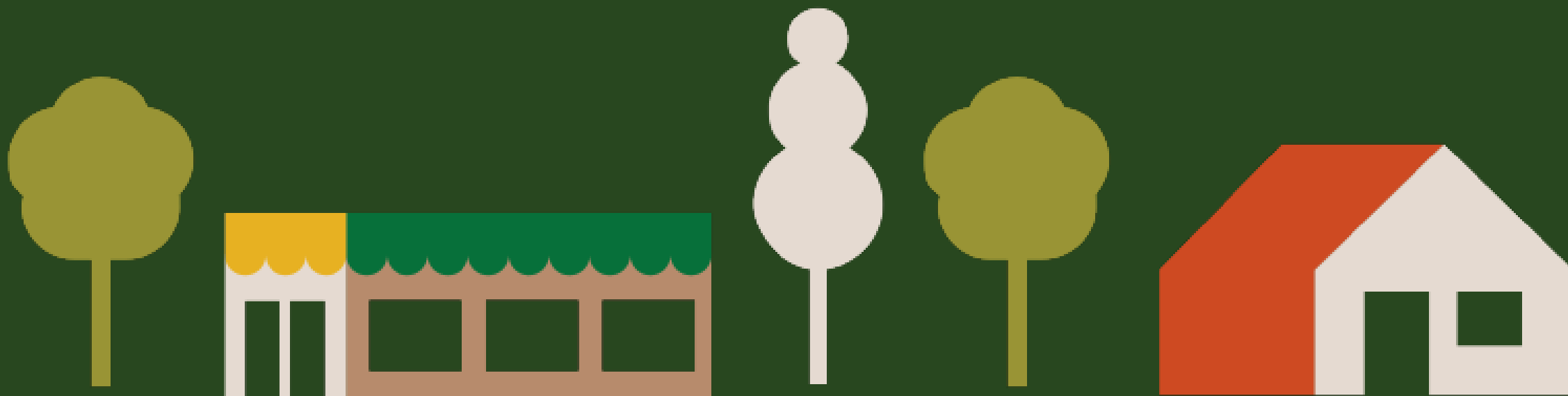


Thank you

Placemaking

Ben Holden, Placemaking Manager

Ben.Holden@Plunkett.co.uk



Expanding our placemaking services

- Strategic partnerships that advocate for the community ownership model
- Site-specific consultancy in new communities
- Look out for a big partnership announcement!



Government minister Alex Norris MP with representatives from Plunkett, Woodgate Community Shop, and Thakeham

Stay connected

We'd love to hear from you!

Membership@Plunkett.co.uk

