

Redgrave Community Society Limited



“working for the community”

19 October, 2018

Dear Shareholder,

It is with regret that we have to inform you that Georgina Earland and Naomi Miller-Howard have tendered their resignation as employees of Redgrave Community Society Limited. They will remain in post up to, and including, Sunday 18th November. They have been fundamental to the re-launch of the Cross Keys as a community pub and we are greatly indebted to them for all their hard work and commitment over the past nine months.

At this crossroads in time, a decision has to be made on whether to look for another employed management couple or to offer the Cross Keys as a tenanted free house. Whichever direction is chosen, there are considerable implications and this is a decision which must be taken by Shareholders. An extraordinary Shareholders' Meeting will be held on **Saturday 24th November at St Mary's Church, Redgrave, IP22 1RJ at 2:00pm** to discuss and vote upon the future pathway.

Since there will inevitably be a gap between the departure of Georgina and Naomi, and the arrival of new tenants or a management couple, we are already looking at contingency plans to ensure that the pub remains open for business in the interim period. Although plans for the Christmas period will need to change, we are determined that the pub will remain open. We are already exploring ways to offer food, but are confident that we should be able to keep the bar open, even if the trading hours have to be reduced temporarily. Unfortunately, the assistant chef who was appointed two months ago didn't live up to expectations and has since moved on.

As we focus on plans for the future, we have invited Bernard Lee who has a consultancy firm, Intuition, which specialises in all aspects of the pub trade including management and training, to give us the benefit of his advice. Many of you will remember Bernard from the meeting we held in the Amenities Centre last May at the very start of our journey. Bernard has worked in the pub trade for the past 40 years or so, so clearly has a wealth of experience we can draw upon. If possible, he will be attending the Shareholders Meeting.

Since the summer it has become clear that the takings are well down on the first two quarters of business. Whilst to a certain extent this is only to be expected with the honeymoon period being over, takings are still considerably less than anticipated. This period before the build-up to Christmas tends to be notoriously quiet so I would urge you to please give our pub the extra support it needs at this time. We cannot survive without customers and, while it may not currently be delivering your “ideal” in the way of a pub, please bear in mind that it is still a very new venture and is still evolving. The alternative solution is unthinkable.

We also need your feedback on improvements you believe could be made to see our pub thrive.

There are several changes to the Management Committee of which we must make you aware.

Neil Smith and Andrew Dickson, both founder members of the Committee who have been key to the successful purchase of the pub are now wishing to give up the positions of Chairman and Treasurer respectively.

Neil has worked tirelessly for the pub and the community from the outset, but is finding it increasingly difficult to manage in addition to his full-time job which regularly takes him away from home. He therefore wishes to step down from the position of Chairman but to remain on the Committee. His leadership has been outstanding and, even after a hard week at work, he has regularly been busy refurbishing the pub on a Saturday morning. Rosie Brenton, previously Vice Chairperson, is now assuming this rôle.

Andrew would, ideally, like to step down from the position of Treasurer at the end of the accounting year, which is 31st January. Many of you may know that Andrew had a bit of a health scare last summer and was advised that he should be spending rather more time in the 'slow lane' than he currently is. Nonetheless, he wishes to remain on the Committee, and in an advisory capacity if required. We are enormously grateful to him for all he has done over the past eighteen months to help get the pub up and running. Julie Moore has been working alongside Andrew with the accounts, and will continue to manage the day-to-day aspects. A Treasurer is obviously crucial to the business so if you, or someone you know, might be interested in taking over this vital role and would like to discuss the possibility further, please let us know.

Sam Smith has expressed a wish to stand down from the Management Committee. She was co-opted onto the Committee shortly after we purchased the pub and it is largely due to her that we now have the benefit of such an attractive building – both inside and out. It has been a hard balancing act for Sam over the past nine months or so, with two young children to care for as well, so we are exceedingly grateful for all her input during this time. Additionally, she has her own studies to focus upon now, as she trains as a veterinary physiotherapist.

Kate Andrews joined the Management Committee with a view to supporting Georgina and Naomi in their roles. She has worked very hard at this but, since Georgina and Naomi have now tendered their resignation, Kate has chosen to stand down as a Committee member. Her support for the Redgrave Community Society is undiminished and she will continue to work in the Cross Keys as one of our regular volunteers.

Despite these changes, and with all of your help and support whether it be as a volunteer, committee member or customer, or all three, we can and will succeed.

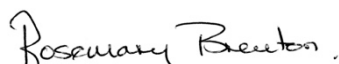
We will keep you fully informed and involved in the changes to the pub and events as we head towards Christmas. Quizzers will be pleased to hear that our monthly quiz which, once again, Ian Shepherd is kindly organising for us, will be taking place on 31st October – Hallowe'en. You are encouraged to dress for the occasion, if possible! If you have not already done so, do get yourself booked in soon.

Despite these changes which we had not anticipated, we have a very fine pub which belongs to the shareholders outright, and of which we can be exceedingly proud. What we have achieved as a community is astounding and has just been recognised as such at the Stars of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Awards 2018. We were advised a short while ago that we had been chosen as finalists and an invitation was extended for six of our community to attend the awards ceremony last night. Two committee members and four volunteers represented us. We were announced as the winners of the Mid Suffolk "Community Spirit of the Year" award and, as a further accolade, received the "Overall Star" award for Mid Suffolk – the top award of the evening for Mid Suffolk.

We are now looking for new volunteers and committee members to help us carry the pub forward. This is your opportunity to nominate potential committee members who are keen to get involved and make a positive contribution. If you would like further information on what this might involve, please email info@redgravecommunitysociety.com or speak directly to one of the committee members. Details of nominations will be required in writing and should be sent to The Treasurer, Fox Cottage, The Street, Redgrave, Suffolk, IP22 1RW. Please ensure we receive these as quickly as possible.

We are expecting to send another letter to shareholders shortly with further information and a formal notice convening the shareholders meeting will also follow.

With kind regards,



ROSEMARY BRENTON
Chairperson
On behalf of the Redgrave Community Society Limited