

The Quarterly Horse

Issue number 1 - October 2011

The Sorrel Horse, Hollesley Road, Shottisham, Suffolk

www.thesorrelhorse.com tel: 01394 411617

Key numbers: 159 shareholders, shareholder funding £360,500
721 shares issued, 179 shares/£ 89,500 still to be sold



Hi and welcome to the first newsletter for The Sorrel Horse public house, the aim of which is to keep you as a villager, shareholder and/or customer up to date with events, company business and cries for help with our pub.

If you're a visitor to the pub for the first time, a quick heads-up:

On 25th August 2011 The Sorrel Horse pub was purchased by more than 150 shareholders, most of whom have a local connection, or saw our publicity and very kindly rallied to our cause...not to save a failing pub but to take advantage of a unique opportunity to participate in the 'community led' purchase of this traditional public house.

In the 10 weeks from the first informal meeting in May, over £330,000 was paid into an account by prospective shareholders, and with the help of a loan with generous (to the company) conditions, the pub purchase was duly completed at the end of August.

The speed at which the purchase has been accomplished is remarkable particularly given the size of Shottisham, and we now have the distinction of being only one of a very small number of pubs in the UK to have completed a community-led freehold purchase. Punching above our weight springs to mind !!

We've still got a long way to go, and if we felt that the hard work was behind us, we all have a pub to run and support, so please keep encouraging anyone you know to participate either as a customer and/or shareholder.

For more info: www.buythesorrelhorse.com

Pub surgery - Mon 14th Nov at 6pm

An opportunity to come to the pub to meet the directors informally and bring up any questions you have, suggestions or offers of help.

Remember remember the 5th Nov at The Sorrel Horse

A bonfire on the Pightle, fireworks from the field, kids' games in the barns, car parking at the campsite, sparklers for the kids and a barbeque to boot, why bother with Ipswich or Woodbridge, especially when we won't be charging an entrance fee or for car parking !!

Bring your family and friends to The Sorrel Horse Fireworks evening, from 7pm onwards on Saturday 5th November.

Acoustic musicians needed

We'd like to put on regular music sessions on Monday evenings and are looking for anyone who's interested in playing to come forward - ideally you should be able to play an instrument! Please call Jim on 01394 411617.

Fish 'n' Chips Thursday - £6.75 each

If you haven't been before, every Thursday from 6-9pm, either eat-in or take-away, £6.75 each. Get there early as it's always popular.

Halloween Pumpkin Competition

Always wanted a go but thought it was for kids? Adults and kids please bring your pumpkins to the pub at 7pm on Sat 29th Oct and the kids can judge whose is the best and who wins a meal for 2.

Billiards Ladder on Tuesdays

Not played bar-billiards before, stick your name down on our ladder and join the pubs mini-league.

Starts Tuesday 1st November from 8pm onwards. Don't worry Derek 'The Bandit' Broome can't thrash everyone unless he's going to make the special trip up from 'the smoke' !!

Ring Jim on 01394 411617 if you're interested, otherwise just show up.

Pub opening hours

We have reviewed the opening hours both from a point of view of the best operational efficiency but also as how best to serve the village and our visiting customers.

Please make a note of the pub's new opening hours which will carry through until Spring 2012 (Christmas menu & times to follow).

	Food	
Monday	12.00-14.30	18.00-21.00
Tuesday	12.00-14.30	18.00-21.00
Wednesday	12.00-14.30	18.00-21.00
Thursday	12.00-14.30	18.00-21.00
Friday	12.00-14.30	18.00-21.00
Saturday	12.00-15.00	18.00-21.00
Sunday	12.00 all day until 20.00	

	Bar	
Monday	12.00-15.00	18.00-23.00
Tuesday	12.00-15.00	18.00-23.00
Wednesday	12.00-15.00	18.00-23.00
Thursday	12.00-15.00	18.00-23.00
Friday	12.00-15.00	17.00-00.00
Saturday	12.00 all day until 00.00	
Sunday	12.00 all day until 22.30	

Wednesday is Quiz Night

Every other Wednesday night starting at 8.30pm; 26th Oct, 9th & 23rd Nov, 7th and 21st Dec.

Join the regular teams such as The Shining Wits, Blockheads and Grey Gardeners (to name but a few) and pit your wits against some of the best brains in Suffolk or like most of us sit there and scratch your head muttering 'it's on the tip of my tongue'.

Ask not what your pub can do for you but

Clichéd perhaps but we're looking for all the help we can get. We know that there is an able and willing body of people who have already put themselves forward for all sorts of jobs and tasks. Disappointingly for some the bog snorkelling in the septic tank has already gone to Derek Hewitt. He's hoping to find a more rigorous composting material for the allotment, Janet has said "yes..<sighs> as long as you take your slippers off beforehand."

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A Rogues' gallery, but at least they're our rogues !!

Jim Wedderburn - Pub Manager

Jim seems to have worked at the pub forever, somehow managing to avoid ever going to Hollesley Post Office himself for change.



James Blowes - Head Chef

I bet I know someone who is happy that the Indian Summer has come to a close - that kitchen is roasting hot. **James' new menu starts being served from Friday 28th October.**



Alice Taylor - Assistant Bar Manager

I bet working at the pub has its moments but Alice appears to have found a Shangri-La, what else could explain her tolerance of us all.

Steph Good - Assistant Chef

The pub's newest recruit, you may have seen Steph behind the bar at times but she's now covering for James on his days off and working over the weekends.

AGM - Sat 24th Sept 2011. The Most Reverend Tony's outgoing lesson

Just to repeat a small part of what I said in the church a fortnight ago, I can't thank everybody enough for taking part in this brilliant enterprise!



As shareholders, you believed in the project. You believed in those of us who were promoting it. You supported us and you put your money where your mouth is. The result today is something we can all be very proud of, a village pub, owned largely by the people of the village. There are not yet many of those in England, although I'm sure it is the way forward for many small villages. It took a great deal of trust. That means a great deal to me and I know it does to the others involved too. Without you it could not have been done.

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Ask not what your pub can do for you but *continued*

James has prepared a new menu which will be served from 28th October onwards.

Please use this new menu as an opportunity to come down to the pub and honestly review not just the drink and food offering, but make comments on what you would like to see changed - comment cards will be on display and handed out with each meal so that we can collect and assess as many views as possible.

Tony and Claire will be forming a committee to review the restaurant decoration, if you'd be interested in joining this then please email: admin@thesorrelhorse.com with your details and one of them will be in touch.

In case you hadn't realised, opposite the pub car park is a field somewhere in the region of 2 acres. Over the long term we need to find a use for the area which should serve both the pub and the village. Current ideas that have been mooted include: a cider orchard, wildlife area, pub allotment, overflow car parking.... Please let us know if you've any other ideas?

Incidentally a path has been hacked through the undergrowth so that you can now get up onto the field - the path is just by the 30 mph sign which is opposite the car park entrance.

From the top of the field is a wonderful view across to St. Margaret's Church and the top of the village.

Volunteers are being sought to help keep the grassed area in front of the pub attractive, plus the hanging baskets always are in need of attention. Derek Hewitt has been volunteered to manage this, so either get in touch with him in the pub or email admin@thesorrelhorse.com and your details will be passed on accordingly.

If you've got a skill or interest that you think would serve the pub well, then please let us know.

We've a happy band of helpers and are gradually getting to know who's who and what they can do, but you may have a completely left-field idea that hasn't occurred to anyone.

Upcoming projects

A new gas tank will be sunk into the Pightle at the end of October. This has been necessary since the existing tank is in breach of Health and Safety guidelines. On the positive side the space will allow for a couple of extra car parking spaces.

At the same time as installing the gas, the rear banking of the sheds will be lightly landscaped to remove a build up of soil. We'll also create a walk-way so that the Pightle can be accessed from the left hand side of the barns as you face them - **hopefully just in time for Fireworks on 5th November.**

At the end of August a mass clear out of the barns to the rear of the pub was carried out. In spite of over-filling the skip, a huge amount of rubbish was disposed of.

But don't worry if you missed out on the 'fun' we're planning to set up a working party for the Pightle behind the barns so that this area can be used during the summer as a traditional pub garden, making it more attractive to families - more to follow in due course but put your name forward if you'd like to be kept informed of any help that's needed.

One critical issue for the pub to have resolved is the Ladies toilet. We have our best (and only!) Director of Building, Denis Roberts working on a cunning plan to quickly give the ladies what they want: he's the only man for the job so Leslie tells us.

Any offers of building help would be very much appreciated but bank on the work being completed during November if you're offering.

Plans are at an early stage to review and put in place a schedule to re-thatch the pub, hopefully for early Spring 2012.

It is expected that the work could take 2-3 months to complete (depending on the weather) which inevitably means that the building will be partially surrounded by scaffolding for much of this time. What is critical is to plan thoroughly to ensure that disruption to the pub is kept to an absolute minimum - but it is not envisaged that the pub will have to close for any period, particularly over the busy Easter holidays.

Anthony's in the chair (mine's a ...)

Jean and I arrived in the village only two and half years ago but already feel a part of the community. It's not just the beautiful countryside and cottages that makes Shottisham such a wonderful place, it's the welcome.

I remember spending time in The Sorrel Horse before we bought our cottage. People talk to each other, stop to chat, open up a conversation with strangers. In many communities this is rare, something we should treasure, and the pub naturally provides the centre for spending time together.

When the chance to create a community-led pub arose I was very keen to play an active role, listening to what everyone was saying, and pulling together a business plan to achieve our ambitions. Being elected to serve as a director on your Board is a privilege (?!). The Board's role, on your behalf, is to steer the overall development and operation of the company, and to look after your investment. As Chairman my role is to act as ring master and sometimes be the voice of the Board. We are very fortunate to have such a diverse range of skills and experience on the Board and each director is volunteering their time to take an active role. But my vision is not of the directors being the only ones giving their time. To be a really successful community-led venture we are very keen that many people get involved helping in whatever ways you can.

We want to make sure you know what's happening and that you get regular opportunities to contribute your ideas and views. This newsletter is one part of that process and we are very happy to hear from you at any time. We have also decided that we will hold periodic meetings in the pub for shareholders who can attend, where we will talk about current issues, answer your questions (if we can!), and listen to your suggestions. The first of these will be held on **14th November at 6pm** in the pub and will last no longer than an hour. Meanwhile we still have to sell the remaining shares ... so tell your friends, encourage your colleagues, and bring more people to the pub to enjoy that special Shottisham welcome.

Anthony Levy, Rose Cottage, Church Lane

Your board of directors

On Sat 8th October the inaugural Annual General Meeting took place at St. Margaret's Church in Shottisham. Vicar Judith Andrews and District Councillor Christine Block very kindly oversaw the counting of votes.

The following directors were appointed (left to right in the photo below); Philip Bouscarle, Denis Roberts, Paul Venediger, Linda Pinfold, Tony Pinfold, Claire Norton and Anthony Levy



Financial Times

We're going up in the world, the Financial Times have run a brief article on their website 'How to spend it', dated 18th Oct. If you'd like to see the article in full go to the Media tab on: www.thesorrelhorse.com



The Most Reverend Tony ...continued

And so The Sorrel Horse Shottisham Limited will continue to trade for many, many years to come, owned by over a hundred and fifty people and directed by an elected body of seven directors, owning its own freehold and trading as a free house. I like to think of it developing over the years to become even more of a focal point for the village, gradually incorporating far more activity than just a typical pub, but always keeping its essential Sorrel Horseishness.

So what we have here is an usual form of investment. The board will strive to make it profitable so that it will pay us all dividends in due course. But it is also something which we can all help to make prosper and something which through our own efforts, will contribute hugely to the fun and vitality of the village in years to come. TP