

Outline address for SOS meeting – Maureen Madill

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021, Tallern Green Village Hall.

Welcome – brief resume of what we have done to this point and a summary of the feedback received so far.

Back in the early part of the year a group of friends and neighbours formed the Sarn Steering Group with a view to seeing what we could do to save the Sarn. Our number comprised folk from engineering, planning, financial, insurance, marketing, hospitality, property and general business backgrounds. If we were lacking in knowledge in a particular area we sought out individuals who came and gave us the benefit of their experience.

We share a huge reluctance to witness the demise of the Sarn on our watch, so to speak. There has been a pub here for over two hundred years and for much of that time it has been the focal point for the residents of Tallarn Green and Threapwood. With many of our residents living alone these past lockdowns have brought it home to us all how vital it is to have a friendly community hub and pub where we can all gather. We couldn't let that opportunity go by without a fight.

One of the first things we did was apply to Cheshire West & Chester Council for an ACV for the Sarn. This has since been granted and means the pub has Asset of Community Value status. This should make it extremely difficult for a purchaser to be successful in a Change of Use application. It also means that the vendors, Admiral Taverns, have to give the community six months to raise funds and put in an offer for the pub, although they are under no obligation to sell to us.

In the March budget the Government announced they would be operating a Matched Funding scheme aimed at saving local pubs. This came on stream in July and a successful application means the Government will match every pound raised by the community up to a maximum of £250,000. We have received invaluable help and guidance in this area from The Plunkett Foundation, a charitable organisation who help communities save local assets, whether that's a pub, a local shop or a sports club. They assist communities like ours to negotiate the twists and turns of such applications.

Community engagement is vital in order to drive the campaign on and this is where we come to the questionnaires which many of you have already filled in and returned. Thank you for that.

We will be posting an up-to-date summary of the results shortly.