

Update – 6th October 2021.

Following the fantastic response to the questionnaire (see the SOS Questionnaire response - 249 responses, of whom 186 indicated a willingness to contribute to the pub's purchase, either by purchasing shares or by donation), the Sarn Steering Group has decided that there is more than sufficient community support to justify progressing towards a bid for match funding via the Community Ownership Fund in December this year.

As you know from our previous posts on the campaign websites and Facebook page, our desire to purchase *The Sarn* has been primarily motivated, not by a desire to own a pub, but by concern that the building might be bought by somebody who did not want to open it again as a pub; we have always been open to it being purchased by experienced and enthusiastic pub operators who wanted to bring new life to *The Sarn* in the centre of our Community.

Some of you will have heard that we were recently informed by Admiral Taverns that they had accepted an (in principle) offer to buy the property. However, Admiral did not want to progress with the sale until they knew what our views were because, having successfully had the pub designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), we have a measure of control and can delay any sale for up to 6 months whilst we make a competing bid.

Last week members of the Steering Group met with the couple who have made the offer to buy *The Sarn*. They are presently tenants of a successful pub in Lancashire where they also have a busy restaurant. They now wish to own and run their own pub and feel that *The Sarn* would be an ideal opportunity for them. We found them to be an extremely friendly couple with just the right enthusiasm, energy, and experience who we would very much like to welcome into our Community as the new

owners of *The Sarn*. We have, therefore, advised Admiral Taverns that we do not wish to oppose their proposed purchase.

So where does this leave our own campaign?

We have previously explained how a similar situation arose earlier this year, when a bid was accepted and, having met with the couple, we indicated our support for them purchasing *The Sarn*. Consequently, we stopped work on our own bid as we waited for them to complete the purchase. Unfortunately, the deal fell through, and we found that we had in effect wasted three months. We do not want this to happen again so, this time, we intend to continue putting our proposals together with a view to being able to make a bid for match funding in December of this year. We emphasise that this will not involve us asking anybody for money during this period, although we will be asking for pledges in order to assess more accurately just how much money we would be able to raise.

Therefore, it is our intention to continue with preparing our bid in parallel with the current negotiations. Hopefully, the currently proposed sale will be completed, and we will then be able to bring our campaign to an end and welcome the new publicans into *The Sarn*. We are very hopeful they will make a great success of running the pub over the coming years. However, if this deal falls through for any reason, then we will still be able to make our own bid for funding in December and will not have wasted any time.

Whilst it may seem strange to be supporting the sale of *The Sarn*, and at the same time preparing a bid to purchase it ourselves, we hope you will see that this is a pragmatic approach which enables both options to be kept open and, as such, we hope you will continue to support us in our campaign bid.