

**Weston SOS Limited**

**Community Share Offer  
Launch Meeting**

6<sup>th</sup> November 2023





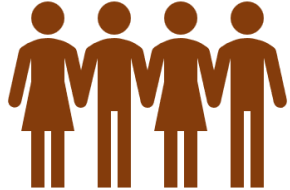
# Introduction

- Outline the Weston SOS Limited vision for community ownership of the Weston Pantry
- Progress since July
- Challenges & risks
- Our community share offer
- Questions & answers



Thank-you to our community for all your support so far!

# Our Vision for the Shop & Post Office



## **Owned by the local community, for the local community**

Not just Weston-on-the-Green – but also Bletchington, Kirtlington, Chesterton, Wendlebury etc.

Considerable support from outside the village (45% of survey responses)

Support other community ventures and projects (e.g. Friends Produce)

Ensure long-term status as a community asset



## **Continue the successful ‘recipe’ of the current shop, but identify and capitalise on opportunities for improvements**

Maintain the Post Office

Maintain current staff

Shop selling essential groceries, hot food, tea & coffee, local produce, arts & crafts

Community hub – additional seating for coffee & chat, touchpoint for isolated/vulnerable residents

Flat – providing long-term rental accommodation\*

*\* Following renovation works*

# Progress (since July!)

## Application complete

Your reference number  
[REDACTED]

We have sent you a confirmation email and a copy of your answers to [chair@weston-sos.org](mailto:chair@weston-sos.org)

### What happens next

Your application to the Community Ownership Fund has been submitted.

We'll email you to let you know whether you have been successful.

Property valuation report completed and quote for flat renovation works obtained

Welcomed four new committee members – including new treasurer & sub-postmaster

Incorporated Weston SOS Limited as a Community Benefit Society

Awarded £9,950 pre-application grant to cover legal costs and standard mark assessment

Letters of support received from Parish Council and Local MP John Howell

Completed and published first draft of our Business Plan

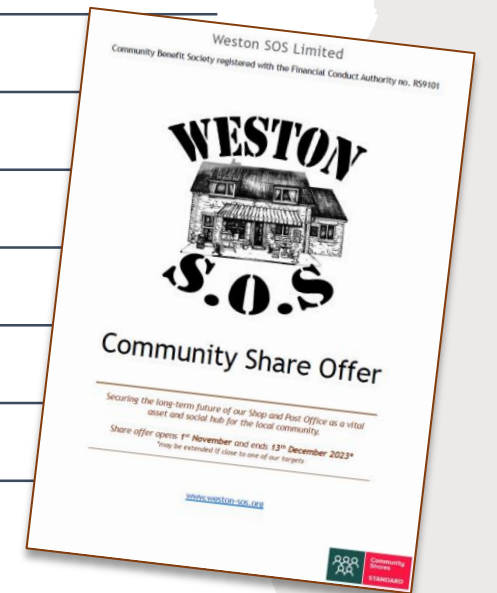
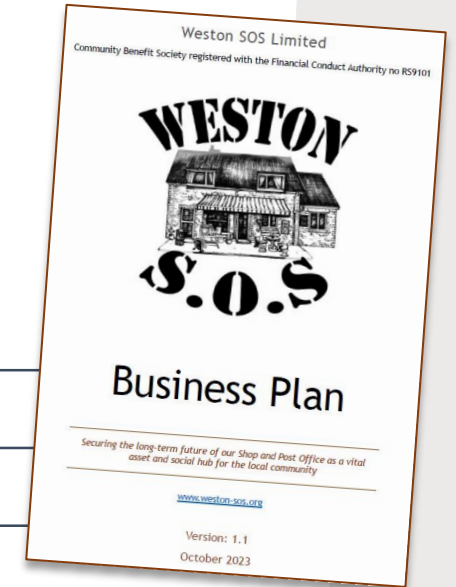
Community Ownership Fund application for £250,000 capital + £31,000 revenue grant

Completed and published our Community Share Offer Prospectus

Assessed and awarded for the Community Shares Standard Mark

Submitted application to the Community Shares Booster Fund

Launched our Community Share Offer on 1<sup>st</sup> November



# Challenges & Risks



## Unable to raise sufficient funds

- Community ownership fund outcome
- Securing the required commercial mortgage/financing
- Booster fund result
- Share offer result



## Sub-postmaster

- No-one identified to take over from incumbent
- Could be a member of staff, volunteer or member of management committee
- Support from management committee (e.g. business plan, financials etc)



## Initial management committee

- Gaps in expertise
- Committee size – only 5
- Need to recruit additional members to continue and put the plan into action



## Timescales

- Must be a timeframe acceptable to current owner
- Targeting end of year



## Post Office Application



- Work with 3<sup>rd</sup> party application support service
- Experienced postmaster on committee
- PR issue for Post Office if successful community bid fails due to Post Office



We do still need a company secretary/administrator!

# Business Plan Outline

- Establish Community Benefit Society (CBS) and raise funds through grants, donations, community shares & other funding sources
- Purchase Shop/PO/Flat freehold, fixtures & fittings from current owner
  - Offered to exchange value of stock (at time of purchase) for community shares – reducing our up-front funding requirements and maintaining an interest
- Transfer of sub-postmaster role to CBS to maintain existing PO contract – committee member volunteered
- Renovation work(s) to flat - additional income source
- Maintain current employed staff
  - Use volunteers to support with bookkeeping/accounting, holiday cover, restocking
- Maintain shop product & service offering – with improvements where feasible
- Overseen by elected management committee
  - Support of shop manager & staff
  - Accountable to CBS members & local community



# Community Benefit Societies (CBS)



## Legal Structure

Business entity regulated by Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)



## Owned by the community

Membership through issue of community shares  
Governed by elected management committee



## Asset lock

Profits/proceeds from profits & sale must be for the benefit of the community



## Profits reinvested into the Shop & PO or other community projects

Cannot pay 'dividends' – but we are targeting to pay interest on shares at a level to attract and retain investment



## Proven business model

Over 350 CBS in the UK with a 95% survival rate

# Funding Requirements & Sources

	Minimum Target - £105k	Optimum Target - £250k	Maximum Target - £405k
<b>Funds Required</b>			
Purchase of business & premises	£605,150	£605,150	£605,150
Flat Renovation Expenses	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000
Mortgage Fee (1%)	£14,470	£15,920	£17,470
Share Platform Fee (average 5%)	£2,835	£1,450	£0
<b>Total Required</b>	£5,250	£12,500	£20,250
<b>Total Required</b>	£657,705	£665,020	£672,870
<b>Funded By</b>			
Community Shares	£105,000	£250,000	£405,000
Community Ownership Fund	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000
Donations & Other Grants	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Mortgage Finance	£283,500	£145,000	£0
<b>Total Funding</b>	£658,500	£665,000	£675,000

## Purchase Costs

Freehold Purchase Price (confirmed by valuation)	£525,000
Stock, Fixtures & Fittings (estimated)	£10,000
Goodwill	£45,000
Stamp Duty	£15,750
Legal Fees	£9,400
<b>Total Purchase Requirement</b>	£605,150

# Financial Forecasts

## Profit and Loss - £250k Community Shares

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Turnover</b>					
Shop	179,000	192,425	206,857	217,200	228,060
Post Office	27,400	28,770	30,209	31,719	33,305
<b>Total Sales</b>	<b>206,400</b>	<b>221,195</b>	<b>237,065</b>	<b>248,919</b>	<b>261,365</b>
<b>Cost of Sales</b>	<b>(127,090)</b>	<b>(136,622)</b>	<b>(146,868)</b>	<b>(154,212)</b>	<b>(161,922)</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>79,310</b>	<b>84,573</b>	<b>90,197</b>	<b>94,707</b>	<b>99,442</b>
(Total Overheads)	(82,296)	(74,782)	(78,521)	(82,447)	(86,569)
Additional Income	66,585	31,335	31,335	31,335	31,335
(Total Depreciation/Amortisation)	(16,835)	(16,835)	(16,835)	(16,835)	(16,835)
(Interest total)	(8,630)	(8,755)	(8,864)	(21,456)	(21,092)
(Day 1 costs)	(16,200)				
<b>Net Profit before Tax</b>	<b>21,934</b>	<b>16,036</b>	<b>17,812</b>	<b>5,804</b>	
(Tax)	(6,416)	(6,246)	(6,583)	(4,301)	
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>15,518</b>	<b>9,791</b>	<b>11,229</b>	<b>1,502</b>	

*See our share offer document or business plan for full financial forecasts*

## Balance Sheet - £250k Community Shares

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Total Fixed Assets	614,215	597,379	580,544	563,709	546,874
Total Current Assets	45,762	57,213	66,553	67,097	57,801
(Total Current Liabilities)	(253,703)	(242,284)	(226,424)	(220,365)	(203,810)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>(208,941)</b>	<b>(185,072)</b>	<b>(159,872)</b>	<b>(153,268)</b>	<b>(146,009)</b>
(Total Long-Term Liabilities)	(139,756)	(136,999)	(134,135)	(131,151)	(128,031)
<b>Net worth</b>	<b>265,518</b>	<b>275,309</b>	<b>286,538</b>	<b>279,290</b>	<b>272,834</b>
<b>Reserves</b>					
Retained Earnings	15,518	25,309	36,538	38,040	40,334
Community Shares	250,000	250,000	250,000	241,250	232,750

*Start of share interest & withdrawal payments*



Community  
Shares

STANDARD

# Community Share Offer

- Your opportunity to ‘own’ the Shop & PO and have your say in how it is run
- One member – one vote
  - Anyone who owns shares, regardless of how many, has one vote at member’s meetings
- Shares can be withdrawn
  - Held for minimum of 3 years
  - After 3 years – at discretion of management committee (targeting 3-5% of shares/year)
- Interest paid on shares – targeting 5%
  - No interest paid for first 2-3 years
  - Subject to good performance and member vote
- Donations are also welcome
- Minimum shareholding - **£100**
  - Possibility for ‘joint’/‘household’ ownership
  - Companies can purchase shares
  - Shares ‘bought’ during initial share offer
- Maximum shareholding – 10% of the total amount raised (£10,500 - £40,500)
- Runs 1<sup>st</sup> November until **13<sup>th</sup> December**
  - Option to extend if just short of a target
- Shares are non-transferrable and cannot increase in value, can decrease in value
- Tax relief – not eligible
- As with all investments – capital is at risk



**Guest Speaker –  
David Sweetnam**

# Total Raised

• Community Shares: £41,650

• Donations: £3,600

• Total: £45,250

• 43% of our minimum target of £105,000

• 18% of our 'ideal' target of £250,000

### Weston Pantry 'Save Our Shop' (and Post Office)

by Sam Sharp in Bicester, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom



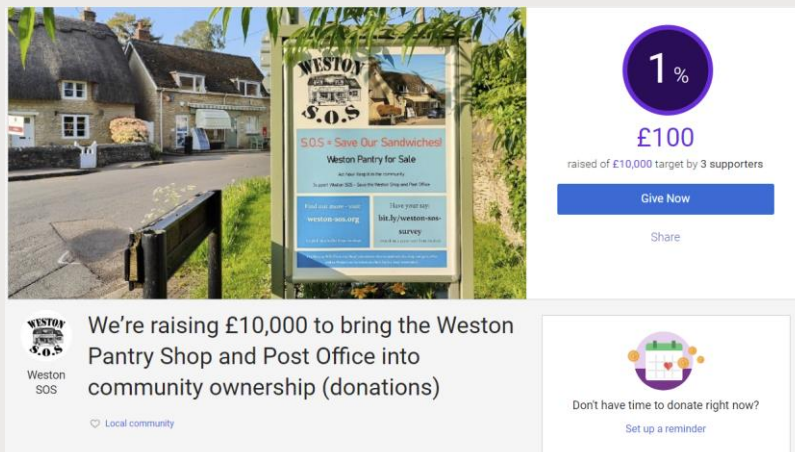
To purchase the Weston Pantry Shop and Post Office, bring it into community ownership and secure its long term future as a community asset.

**£41,350**  
£250,000 target 36 days left  
16% 25 investors

Invest

Keep what you raise – this project will receive all pledges made by 13th December 2023 at 12:00am

Project Facebook Food and Drink, Business Share



**1%**  
**£100**  
raised of £10,000 target by 3 supporters

Give Now

Share

We're raising £10,000 to bring the Weston Pantry Shop and Post Office into community ownership (donations)

Local community

Don't have time to donate right now?  
Set up a reminder

# How to support?

- Buy community shares:
  - Visit [crowdfunder.co.uk/p/weston-sos](https://crowdfunder.co.uk/p/weston-sos)
  - Complete our online or paper application form:
    - [weston-sos.org/share-offer](https://weston-sos.org/share-offer)
    - Paper copies available in the Weston Pantry
    - Must receive application form + payment (transfer / cheque) for it to count towards our share offer
  - Deadline: **13<sup>th</sup> December**
- Make a donation:
  - [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/weston-sos-donations](https://justgiving.com/crowdfunding/weston-sos-donations)
- Spread the word:
  - Speak to your friends/neighbours/relatives/colleagues
  - Like/share our Facebook posts ('Weston SOS')
  - Help us reach local businesses

# FAQs

- What's better, buying shares or making a donation?
  - We recommend buying shares as you become a member of the society and get to have your say in the future of the Shop and PO
  - Having lots of 'members' demonstrates strong community support
- Which method of buying shares is best?
  - Using the Crowdfunder platform is the easiest way for you to purchase your shares (via debit/credit card or bank transfer).
  - Completing the paper/online application form and paying by bank transfer/cheque reduces our platform fees for using Crowdfunder. We can still add your investment to the Crowdfunder total at a reduced fee.
- Can I increase my investment?
  - Yes – you can top-up your investment at any time, subject to the maximum limits of the share offer
- Can I give more than the maximum?
  - Please speak with the Weston SOS Chair to discuss options
- Can I claim tax relief on my investment?
  - As we're taking over an existing business, we're not eligible for any of the current tax relief schemes (EIS/SEIS)
- What happens to my investment/donation if you fail to buy the Shop / Post Office?
  - If we're unable to proceed (e.g. raise insufficient funds, unable to obtain commercial finance, unable to retain PO contract), we will endeavour to return all donations and investments made during our share offer.
  - We hope to keep our costs/outgoings as low as possible until the completion of the purchase of the freehold/property.
- I want to pay by cheque, when will the cheque be cashed?
  - Cheques will be cashed at the end of the share offer period if we're successful, if we're unsuccessful, the cheques will be returned.
- Is my money safe?
  - Buying any type of shares involves risk. Community shares can't go up in value, but they can go down if the society is making losses. As a shareholder you could lose some or all of the money you invest.
- Can I sell my shares?
  - No – community shares are non-transferrable, but they can be withdrawn from the society (subject to management committee approval). You can also nominate someone to receive your shares in the event of your death.
- When do members 'elect' the management committee?
  - At the first members meeting, all current committee members will stand down and may choose to stand for re-election to the management committee