



how to set up a community shop



contents

What are community shops?	03
Why are communityshops important?	04
How you can set up or save a shop in community ownership.....	05
Case study: Milland Stores & Cafe	16
Introduction	15
The background	15
The new build	16
Funding	17
Milland parish council and the public works loan.....	17
Milland stores and PCSN membership	19
Milland stores & café: vision statement	20
In a nutshell.....	21
About Plunkett.....	23



what are community shops?

Community shops are essentially village shops that are democratically owned by members of their community.

They trade primarily for community benefit and their interests are linked into community control. Community shops have open and voluntary membership, whereby members are part owners of the business and all members have an equal say in how the business is run, regardless of their level of investment.

There are many models for managing a community shop: the majority are managed and run directly by the community, mostly by a combination of staff and volunteers, and some by volunteer or staff only. A lesser number of communities decide to lease or rent the running of the business to individual tenants or commercial operators once they have secured premises in community ownership. Each community will find a solution which works best for them, but the model promoted by the Plunkett Foundation is to employ a Shop Manager and a team of volunteers. A paid manager can help to ensure that the finances, stock ordering and control, all aspects of legislation, and staff cover is consistently managed, and a volunteer team will contribute to the vibrancy of the shop, inject a range of skills and ideas, and reduce staffing costs.



why are community shops important?

Community shops are important for various reasons: they are an effective mechanism for safeguarding essential retail outlets in rural areas, but they also have wider social, economic and environmental benefits:

- With an estimated 400 village shops closing each year, community shops opening at a rate of 22 a year are now effectively replacing 6% of commercial shop closures.
- Community shops will particularly benefit those who are disadvantaged by lack of personal transport, limited physical mobility, and those seeking employment or volunteer opportunities.
- Community Shops engage large numbers of the community and stimulate social activity and community cohesion: they typically involve 153 members, 7 directors, 30 volunteers, and 3.3 staff.
- Community shops have a positive impact on the local economy: they have average turnovers of £155,000, support local producers and suppliers and create employment.
- Community shops become the hub of their rural community: they are usually the only retail outlet for a 4 mile radius, they have long opening hours, and they host other services: 64% host Post Offices, 56% have cafes, and 19% are co-located with other community buildings such as the pub or Village Hall,
- In addition to sourcing local food with lower food miles, community shops save rural residents' car journeys to alternative food stores: saving an average 8 mile round trip, community shops collectively are estimated to save 4million miles of car journeys a year.
- Community shops are resilient forms of business - the success rate of community shops is 95% compared to the average small business success rate which is 46%.



how you can set up or save a shop in community ownership:

- 1 contact the Plunkett Foundation as early as possible for up to date advice on support available

The Plunkett Foundation has worked with the majority of all community shops currently trading and in the process of setting up. It is the only national organisation supporting the development of community-owned village shops in the UK.

Through a dedicated staff team, network of regional advisers, mentors and specialist consultants, Plunkett is able to support communities to open new community-owned shops and to help existing community-owned shops to thrive.

Plunkett also hosts an online community shop forum with advice sheets and resources, holds networking and training events for community shops, and has a tailored membership scheme for community shops offering substantial time and financial savings on suppliers of recommended goods and services. Your local Rural Community Council will also be able to provide local information and support.



2 form a working group – possibly following a public or parish council meeting

Even though an actual business has not been established by this point, a committee is required to take on the responsibility of managing and leading a community group with the aim of setting up a new community-owned shop. The committee is effectively the management group of an unincorporated organisation.

The committee needs to set out its aims and objectives from the outset as well as allocating roles and responsibilities for its members in order to have a clear purpose, and a clear goal in sight. This should be incorporated into a 'Memorandum of Association' which can be used to communicate to the community at large the purpose and scope of the committee and the persons involved.

3 consult with the community via a parish questionnaire to determine demand for a shop

By consulting the village and surrounding area to discover what goods and services people really need, the shop has a much better chance of being a success. Plunkett has a template questionnaire which can be used to determine the level of support from the community, the level of interest in getting involved, and an indication of what the community would want a community shop to offer.

You may also wish to consider other ways of consulting with the community. For example, you could organise a doorstep survey or an 'open day' at the village hall. Consultation via a wide variety of methods will increase the number of people you reach and ultimately improve your chances of success.



4 hold a public meeting to update community on questionnaire

A public meeting can be held to gauge support and raise awareness of the project. A meeting should only be held, however, when you have something to say, and you are confident you know enough about the background of community-owned shops to present the concept to the wider community. The Plunkett Foundation or Rural Community Council can help with this, in providing presentation materials, facts and figures, or by sending a representative.

5 elect a committee, possibly at the public meeting

Committees should consist of a minimum of three people, and a maximum of twelve. At the very least, a committee should consist of a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. It is also good practice to have 4-6 others with specific roles to lead sub committees, such as;



Business Planning - consider premises options, set up the legal structure, develop business plan, start budgeting income and expenditure

Fundraising - determine estimated set up costs, open a bank account and commence fundraising within and outside the village

Retail and Marketing - assess the competition, decide what your shop will stock and sell, think about the look and feel of the shop, and develop a press/PR campaign

People Management - Keep the community involved and up to date with progress, recruit volunteers, and consider the management and staffing implications

The sub committees, having spread the work load, then feed back into the main committee.



6 select a suitable legal structure

As businesses, we recommend community shops should adopt a recognised legal structure in order to trade. The majority of shops have become limited associations registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (an IPS). Other acceptable legal structures include Company Limited by Guarantee and Community Interest Companies. Co-operatives UK have an online select-a-structure to guide community groups through choosing the most appropriate structure for their needs.

There are two main forms of IPS: **Co-operative Societies** are run for the mutual benefit of their members, and **Societies** for the Benefit of the Community aim to benefit individuals wider than their membership. Over 65% of community shops are registered as Societies for the Benefit of the Community. The key characteristics of these societies include:

- They prioritise the interests of the wider community over the needs of their members or investors
- Voting control is vested in the members equally, not in proportion to their financial stake in the society: one member one vote
- It allows for community investment (innovative form of fundraising)
- Any trade profit is distributed or reinvested for social or charitable purposes

The Plunkett Foundation has Model Rules for an IPS for Benefit of the Community, which is essentially a template legal structure or governing document which has been specifically devised for community-owned enterprises. The advantages for using these for a community shop include following best practice and a quick set up with cheaper registration costs. Other organisations such as Co-operatives UK also have IPS Model Rules.



7 Identify suitable premises

Ideally, the shop should be centrally sited, visible to passing trade, easy to find, have convenient access by foot and car, and good car parking. A good size to aim for is 500 sq ft of shop floor. It may be possible to purchase or lease an existing shop premises. If this is neither possible nor attractive you will need to look at other suitable options such as:

- **New builds** offer the advantage of being purpose built, larger than traditional village shops, with an ability to co-host other services such as cafes, meeting spaces and other commercial or residential space
- Extensions to the **Village hall/community centre/school** provide good size premises with good parking, and ability to co-locate with other existing community activity
- **Portable Buildings** are flexible and cheaper alternatives, and provide an effective mechanism to test the viability of a community shop before fully fundraising for permanent premises
- **Conversions** of existing buildings such as offices, workshops, farm buildings etc offer versatile and character full premises for shops
- **The Public House** may be amenable to hosting a shop in a spare room, or offer to provide an outbuilding to convert, or even space in their car park for permanent or temporary buildings to be located.



8 work up a business plan

A business plan is a valuable tool for setting out your aims and objectives for your shop, defining what you want the shop to offer, and how the business will operate. Your business plan will also include financial forecasts for the shop, including the initial set-up costs and on-going costs and from this, determine how much money the business needs to raise through initial fundraising and future sales in order to be a viable and sustainable business. You should see the Plan as a live document which you revise and amend as the business develops.

A business plan should consist of about 5 or 6 pages, and include a cash flow forecast. You may have someone on your committee or in the village who is experienced at writing business plans and will be able to help you. The Plunkett Foundation can also help both with support from an Adviser and by providing you with a template business plan and examples from other successful community shops.

9 raise required level of finance

Community fundraising events and requests for **donations** are an important way of engaging with the community and gaining their commitment to the project. This should be seen as complimentary to other forms of finance raising, and should be continued throughout the fundraising period to keep up the profile of the project.

Applications for **grant funding** are another traditional source of fundraising which make vital contributions to the project. Grant funding is becoming increasingly difficult to source, however, and is a competitive process.



how you can set up or save a shop in community ownership:

Selling **shares** in your shop is a good method of raising finance from within the community and an important way of recruiting members. Shareholders, or 'members', are buying into the vision of the community shop, and are more likely to become your customers, your volunteers, and your longer term supporters who want to play an active part in the shops future.

'**Community Shares**' are more innovative than the 'one member one share' mechanism, and are increasingly raising the highest proportion of capital required for community shops. They are effectively "withdrawable shares" whereby shareholders are encouraged to purchase more than one share, up to the value of £20,000, and can be rewarded with interest, and the ability to withdraw their investment once the business has stabilised. Additional tax relief is available if the shop registers for the **Enterprise Investment Scheme** (EIS) administered by HMRC. Community shares can only be issued by IPSs, and the Plunkett Foundation is one of only four organisations with appropriate Model Rules that allow for withdrawable shares.

As trading organisations with a good track record, community shops are increasingly relying on **loans** to finance their setup costs. There are a number of Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) who have specific knowledge and understanding of community shops who can offer loans and support at an affordable rate. It is also worth considering a **Public Works Loan** with your Parish Council which is an affordable 'public' loan which can be made available for this type of community initiative.



10 Plan the design and layout of the shop, decide on a stocking policy, source your stock, and set your prices

Once you have secured your premises and funding, you need to consider 'the look' of the shop as well as the practicalities of layout, equipment and furnishings. Whatever look and design you do go for, remember, this is a community-owned shop and needs to appeal to the widest possible sector of the community. The same can be said for the range of goods and services you offer. Typically community shops source their core food goods from a number of suppliers - on average 19 suppliers - ranging from national to local wholesalers, suppliers and producers.



The Plunkett Community Shop Network is a membership scheme linked to the Plunkett Foundation which was established by and for community shops. The PCSN has sourced a range of core suppliers of electricity, insurance, chip and pin services, EPOS, telecoms, fixtures and fittings and more who are recommended by community shops for price, service and knowledge of how community shops operate. The Plunkett Foundation has terms of reference with all suppliers, and regular reviews are undertaken to ensure community shops are accessing the best possible deals at a given time. The PCSN was established to take advantage of the collective purchasing power that community shops have, helping them to keep costs down, but also to save shops and volunteers the valuable time it takes to search the market for the best deals.



11 ensure you are compliant with all legal requirements and best practice trading processes

Health and Safety in the workplace is monitored by the Health and Safety Executive, but it is the role of environmental officers from the district council to visit shops, primarily to advise and then to ensure that correct practices are being enforced and dangerous practices are stopped. Whilst overall responsibility for health and safety control rests with the management committee, it is the responsibility of all - management committee, staff and volunteers - to ensure that the shop is a safe place to be. It is recommended that early contact is made with the environmental health officers so that they have the earliest opportunity to advise your developments.

All retailers who sell food also need to be aware of and comply with food safety and hygiene regulations. These need to be applied to food storage, display, handling and selling. The Food Standards Agency has produced a special pack for retailers to explain food safety regulations - 'Safer Food, Better Business for Retailers' and is free and available to order from the Food Standards Agency on 0845 606 0667 or via www.food.gov.uk



12 publicise the launch date and open for trading!

Publicising the shop opening in the days leading to the opening is crucial to the success of your project because it lets the wider community know that you exist, it makes people aware of the goods and services you offer, it emphasises community spirit, and it publicises the community as a whole. After you have decided what form the launch should take, pick a date and time when you can get the maximum amount of people to attend, and then notify all parties and issue invitations to: Shop supporters and shareholders; financial backers and investors; Parish council; your bank manager; advisers including solicitors, architects, builders, etc; Post Office representatives (if applicable); suppliers; Local dignitaries and celebrities; nearby villages (particularly those without a shop) and schools; and don't forget your Rural Community Council and your Plunkett Community Adviser!



Send personal invitations as well as flyers, prepare roadside signs, make use of village notice board and newsletters, village websites and social media, and of course - word of mouth.



case study: milland stores & cafe

introduction

Milland Stores & Café in West Sussex is a community shop that opened in December 2011, and is worthy of note for several reasons:

- it is purpose-built as a community shop and cafe and has an exceptionally attractive eco-friendly design;
- it was part-funded by the parish council using its financial powers;
- it was one of the first community shops to join the Plunkett Community Shop Network as a new-start project in 2011, and has had a positive input on the membership scheme.

the background

In the beautiful South Downs National Park, Milland village sits deep among winding leafy lanes in the Milland Valley on the Sussex-Hampshire border, in the Chichester district of West Sussex. Although not far from major routes, because of its location it is poorly supported by public transport. The steepness of the lanes into Milland means that when the snow falls heavily, the village becomes unreachable without a four-wheel drive or a tractor.

The village has an excellent pub, a village hall and a primary school, but the village shop had closed thirty years previous. Stimulated by the consultation process arising from Milland's 2006 Parish Plan, and with the support of the rural community council, AiRS (Action in Rural Sussex), a community needs survey was conducted in spring 2009 which identified strong support in the parish for a community shop. This came out as the most requested additional facility required.



case study: milland stores & cafe

In October 2009 a steering group was formed to investigate further and progress the development of the shop. The vision was forming of an amenity that could provide retail and postal facilities, as well as a café, internet access, and emergency deliveries of groceries for the elderly and infirm during bad weather. The availability of all these facilities 'on the doorstep' would also help to reduce traffic, environmental damage and also cut food miles. The steering group conducted a detailed shop survey, based on a format recommended by the Plunkett Foundation, with a 60% response that was extremely positive and supportive. In June 2010 a public meeting was held, an IPS (Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community) was formed, the officers appointed and £900 worth of shares were sold.

the new build

During the spring and summer of 2010 designs of the building and further consultation and open meetings took place. It was decided the new shop should be sited on community-owned land next to the village hall, right in the centre of the village. This location would enhance the shop's aim of being the social hub of the village and it could also make use of the existing large car park, giving easy access for customers and deliveries.

With an opportunity to create an eco-friendly build, local architect Sam Ogilvie designed a building constructed with a locally fabricated green oak frame. It was to include approximately 70 square metres of retail space, plus small office, kitchen, storeroom, a cafe area and a verandah facing the Recreation Field, providing open views for customers of the cafe, with the chief aim of providing an informal meeting and social centre, a social hub for the village.



The external appearance was designed to complement the neighbouring Village Memorial Hall, by having the shop's entrance gable-end matching the village hall entrance. A high vaulted ceiling in the shop with south-facing glass-fronted roof gives an airy and light feel to the interior, glass doors can be opened out onto the verandah, and a ramped entrance provides wheel chair entry. Heat is supplied by a ground source heat pump, and insulation and natural light used to maximum effect to reduce energy use.



The build progressed rapidly, from the breaking-the-ground ceremony on 28 July 2011, to the grand opening (by actor Hugh Bonneville, of Downton Abbey fame) on 3 December.

funding

This unique store opened after two years of sourcing the grants needed to add to village fundraising, shares and donations amounting to approximately £30,000. Grants and other support totaling around £170,000 came from Milland Parish Council by way of a Public Works Loan, The Plunkett Foundation, Action in Rural Sussex, The South Downs National Park, Chichester District Council, South Downs & North Weald LEADER and Palmer & Harvey.

milland parish council and the public works loan

From the outset, the Milland community shop enjoyed the unanimous support and total involvement of the Milland Parish Council - in fact, the PC Chairman and another Parish Councilor were on the Shop Team. To kick-start the project the Parish Council applied to the Public Works Loan Board for a £40,000 Public Works Loan (later increased to £56,000) which was subsequently handed over as a grant to the shop project and the loan repayments put on the parish precept. This first grant got the ball rolling and encouraged other funding bodies to provide grants. This innovative and bold action by the PC was formative to the project.



case study: milland stores & cafe

In November 2011, a month before Milland shop opened, Local Government Minister Grant Shapps issued a rallying cry to parish councils, to safeguard struggling village shops and pubs for the benefit of local people, and cited Milland shop as an example. If a community shop, pub or village post office is threatened with closure, he said, parish councils should use their powers to keep it running. Parish councils have the ability to start new community shops or services by giving small grants or, where appropriate, borrowing to make an investment, such as purchasing a freehold on a property. Many parishes are not using these powers available to them.



Mr Shapps said:

“The village shop, pub or post office is often the beating heart of a community. So when one is threatened with closure, often for a reason as simple as the shop owner or pub landlord retiring, I would expect the local parish council to pull out all the stops to keep it going.

Some have done this brilliantly, but many have watched local amenities close when the power to save them was within their grasp. This is not about propping up failing businesses; it is often about providing temporary financial assistance or putting new community-run facilities in place, so vital services that people rely on are maintained.

So if an important local business is struggling, I would urge the parish council to sit down with their community and explore every option to keep it running for the benefit of local people.”

For further information on the financial powers of parish councils, please contact your county Association of Local Councils: contact details for each county can be found via the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) on www.nalc.gov.uk.



milland stores and plunkett community shop network (pcsn) membership

The PCSN is a membership scheme for community shops which provides access to a bespoke package of goods and services for community shops. The initial package of benefits was launched at the 3rd national Plunkett Community Shop event at Eynsham House in Oxfordshire on 15 March 2011, and it included cost-savings for electricity, card processing services, insurance and telephone. The scheme was developed by the Plunkett Foundation with a Steering Group* consisting of 8-12 community shop representatives. This Steering Group continues to meet to represent the interests, views and needs of the national network of community shops to the Plunkett Foundation and continue the shaping the development and ongoing operation of the membership scheme.

Milland's reason for joining the scheme was to take advantage of not just the potential savings in running costs, but also the huge time-saving such membership could offer to a committee already frantically busy with funding issues, the stresses of a new build, and the search for staff, volunteers and stockists. From day one the shop has been using Ethecol as its card merchant, the Phone Coop for telephone/broadband, the Coop's electricity procurement service and NFRN Mutual for insurance. In addition, Milland Stores purchased its basketware and other items from WBC Ltd using the discount terms available to members.

When, during the planning process of setting up Milland Stores, it became apparent that a recommendation was urgently needed for a EPOS system, the Plunkett Foundation carried out a three-month research programme into EPOS systems and in September 2011 a system was finally selected that was considered to be suitable for a community-run village shop.



With a 12% discount for PCSN members, and with the initial set-up of the system carefully prepared to be fit for purpose, the Fidelity GPOS system was installed in Milland Stores in November 2011. The reaction from all members of staff and volunteers has been very favourable.

Philip Watts regards the shop's membership as having been vital in these early stages of the project. All the decision-making had been done and the best deals sourced, and this saved endless hours of trying to compare costs of services and equipment, particularly as most people setting up community shops have no idea where to start when pricing card services or EPOS, for example. As a member of the PCSN steering group he looks forward to playing his part in developing the scheme and bringing on board more benefits to PCSN members.

*For more information about the Steering Group, please request the Terms of Reference from the Plunkett Foundation on 01993 810730.



milland stores & café: vision statement

Through the Community Shop we aim to strengthen the social hub, support engagement and enhance the well-being of the local community.

We will achieve this through

- Provision of excellent customer experience and service
- Providing goods/local quality produce in an economically sustainable way
- Outreach services which enhance quality of life and reduce social isolation
- Encouraging volunteers to deliver supportive services to the community
- Enabling the young to develop skills & experience vital to obtain a first job



in a nutshell...

the world's fastest interview (140 characters) with Philip Watts, chairman of milland stores

What sort of leader do you have to be to get a large community project like this off the ground?

Decisive, fully engaged, clear vision, a bit autocratic? but still consultative. Able to take tough decisions without trampling on people.

Community shops are run by committee: what is the ideal number and how did the Milland committee get formed?

We started with 1 (me), joined by 2 others later. It's usually only 2 or 3 that take the load in set-up. Ideally 6 or 7 to run the business.

Was there a particularly successful way of engaging the Milland community?

Best thing we did was talk to everyone, knock on doors - a team of 20 spoke to at least half the village. Lots of info, great marketing.

How did you raise awareness during the early stages of the project?

Loads of consultation, surveys, several public meetings, lively coverage in local press & bi-monthly newspaper.

The funding at Milland partly came from the Public Works Loan Board - how did you find out about this?

Action in Rural Sussex (RCC) told us. Andy Coe (on committee & our PC chairman) saw straightaway how it could be a major enabling element.

How necessary was the Public Works Loan (PWL) to the project?

Crucial - it's covered a third of our costs & we could use it freely. Projects like this need unencumbered money. Formative to the project.

How would you describe the significance of the PWL as a funding source?

Enables a village to invest in its own infrastructure - the precept increase is tiny compared to social return. But needs the PC to be on side!

The project was successful in raising the funds it needed - what's important in tackling grant application forms?

You need a brilliant person to fill in forms, they must be impeccable. Don't delegate to an outsider - you have to know the project well.

What words of advice would you give about approaching grant funders?

Don't just fill in forms - ring, go talk to funders, get known. I went to LEADER about 6 times, & was prepared to ask for 2nd grant from CDC.

How many people in total would you say it took to deliver the project?

Several people in the end, but 2 or 3 who really carried the can. There's always got to be one person writing lists at 4a.m. - that was me!



case study: milland stores & cafe

What are the greatest pitfalls when starting a project like this?

No clear vision - not strong enough leadership - letting it drift - and thinking too small. Any of these would clobber a project like this.

How did you judge the scope of the project - it must have been hard as you started from scratch?

Lots of research, visited shops, talked to other shops & to Plunkett, ad nauseam! Finally used my judgement & went for 100 sq m in size.

The shop was architect-designed and purpose-built: how successful is the layout and is there any bit that does not work?

Highly successful but cafe area needs to be bigger so we're addressing that. The design gives great workability and atmosphere.

Have you any advice on shop design after this experience?

Design the building to be modular/flexible, to be extended easily. Even at early planning stages look at phases 1, 2, 3 - with room to grow.

How many shareholders do you have and how much did they invest in the project?

Not enough, only about 100 at £10 each. A bit disappointing but we didn't rely on this and saw the PWL as the way for village to contribute.

Were there any other ways you raised money from the community?

Donation fatigue in our village due to other campaigns. To my mind, fundraising is an overrated pastime and very expensive in terms of time!

Projects like this take a long time to come to fruition: how did you and the rest of the committee keep going?

You need a supportive family, & 2 or 3 other people you can vent off to. Also, not having long meetings helped - keep them short & focused.

How did you know what equipment to buy and where to put it?

I asked Plunkett, Palmer&Harvey, other shops. Go see what works! I have 200 photos of equipment: I can tell you all about serve-overs!

Do you think you got the equipment right?

Seems fine. Big chillers best to be externally vented to keep heat down in shop (vital information we learnt!) & some equipment comes free.

How did you manage the timetabling in the run-up to opening e.g. staffing, acquiring stock?

Delays in build/funding pushed opening day back 2 months. Manager on board a month before opening. Didn't allow enough time for stock/Epos.

How important was the Plunkett Community Shop Network (PCSN) membership to you when setting up?

It saved a huge amount of time, we fed off all the initiatives - power, Epos, chip & pin, phone, basketware - it all worked perfectly.



case study: milland stores & cafe

Have you any comments about other useful benefits PCSN could offer community shops?

All's been good so far, & ahead there can be productive relationships with wholesalers, banks etc. I'm doing my stint on the steering group.

Getting the right staff for the shop is crucial: what were you looking for in a manager?

Motivation - willingness to work long unsocial hours - really organized, with people skills (these two can be mutually exclusive).

Does having volunteers as well as paid staff work successfully for you?

It works brilliantly - the back office & ordering is by paid staff, volunteers work on till, café and most other functions.

How are your volunteers recruited, trained and retained - do you offer any rewards and motivation?

A committee member recruits. Training takes place on the job, and we don't offer incentives: they just enjoy it!

How do you attract new customers in a village with little passing trade from a main road?

Strong PR - local press - using websites - signage - a welcoming atmosphere & personal recommendation. By making ourselves famous!

What would you consider are the essentials to stock in a small community shop?

Good bakery/milk/fresh & emergency stuff, plus some luxury/local: homemade cakes, local meats. Don't go too far down-market.

Any surprises yet on what's selling well and what isn't? Best advice?

Venison a success but people won't pay the earth for organic. Sell nice things people want. No need to stock it all, forget the piccalilli!

What would you say is the most unique and innovative aspect of Milland shop?

Great building design. Its layout means young mums can sit with top coffee watching their kids on recreation ground.

If you were to start again what would you do differently?

I'd make even more visits to other community shops. That learning process is the key. It's blindingly obvious, but some people don't bother.

What lies ahead?

We have a development programme with accountability. Developing marketing programme - expanding cafe - evolving product range, local food.

Final message?

You've only just started when you open the shop. It's an organic growing thing - keep it exciting!



about the plunkett foundation

Founded in 1919, the Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities through community-ownership to take control of the issues affecting them.

Today, Plunkett is the only national organisation supporting the development of community-owned shops in the UK and has been instrumental in the establishment of, and ongoing support to over 270 community shops. We provide a range of business and retail support via a network of Community Advisers, Mentors and Specialist Consultants, together with a telephone, email and online helpline co-ordinated by a team of staff at the Plunkett Foundation.

This guide was produced as part of **Making Local Food Work**, a five year, £10 million project funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme. It works to reconnect people with where their food comes from by supporting community food enterprises across England.

for more information

Take a look at our websites

www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk

www.plunkett.co.uk and www.communityshops.coop

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