16th July 2026 - GGCBS Committee Meeting: Pub Purchase Strategy, Fundraising, and Governance

> Date: 2026-07-16
> Participants: [Tim] [Alan] [Simon] [Nick C] [Pelham] [Will] [Nick G]

Meeting Notes

Access Management and Systems

- Several critical accounts (committee website/email, GG CBS Limited, FCA portal) are currently accessible only by [Alan].
- Committee website/email supports communications with groups like OTCS and HTC.
- GG CBS Limited account was established for membership management and includes a Google Drive with shared documents; the membership register (“Air Register”) is owned under this account to keep costs low.
- [Simon] requested website login to set up a shared drive; [Alan] clarified the existing Google Drive under GG CBS Limited.
- FCA portal is used annually; a backup person is needed, potentially the future treasurer.
- Decision to streamline manual member signup (currently 5–10 minutes per person) by gaining website control and implementing online signup integrated with flyers.
- Conclusion: [Alan] will send login details for the committee website and GG CBS Limited Google account to enable wider access and proceed with efforts to gain website control for online signup.

Website Updates, Content, and Communication Strategy

- The committee website needs updates, especially FAQs, shifting focus from planning issues to fundraising.
- Current webmaster (Derek) is sometimes unresponsive; the group will request direct admin access.
- Ainsley, could take over or replicate the The Lion website structure and handle publishing.

- Agreed to add a clear, unemotional history of the pub: last village pub, ACV status five years ago, owners purchased at lower value with obligation to keep as a pub but did not, clarifying the community's goal to reinstate a community asset without vendetta.
- Broader communication plan proposed to keep the community informed and enthusiastic via multiple channels (website, flyers, events, direct conversations).
- Flyers to launch on 20 August 2026 with punchy call to action (go to website or pay £1 to sign up), designed by Allie; ensure website carries the right message before/alongside distribution.
- Door-to-door membership drive from 20 August through end of September 2026, aiming to grow membership from 70 to 100–120, steering conversations away from the appeal.
- Conclusion: [Alan] will contact Derek to request admin access; consider Ainsley for management and replication; align website messaging with flyer campaign.

Governance Documents and Compliance

- Legal requirement for a complaints procedure, GDPR policy, and maintaining a book of accounts.
- [Alan] is drafting complaints and GDPR documents and will circulate for review; AI tools may assist.
- Proper bank account needed for capital raising; current SumUp is unsuitable.
- [Alan] will email committee members to collect personal details for bank application; all committee members to be included.
- Decisions needed on access rights: double-signature authority and credit card holders.
- SEIS compliance to be considered for investment offering; plan to have an accountant review and engage SEIS expert Dave Boyle for a 30-minute consultation at the right time.

Committee Introductions and Roles

- Introductions:
    - Nick Collett: current chairman, stepping down due to personal reasons and moving.
    - Simon Elkington: resident 25–26 years, willing to help.
    - Alan: Society Secretary, resident 36 years.
    - Tim Higginbotham: resident 8 years.
    - Pelham: new resident (6 weeks), willing to volunteer.
    - Nick Ginn: resident 30+ years, Parish Council member, considering joining later.

    - Will: resident 6 years, willing to help.

- Current chairman ([Nick C]) stands down; [Tim] (Tim) agrees to serve as interim chairman for three months while seeking a permanent replacement.
- Need for a new Treasurer addressed; [Will] volunteers as interim Treasurer with support from an accountant contact.
- New committee members to be formally voted in at a special members meeting.

Project Status and Response to Enforcement Notice

- Committee celebrated enforcement notice after a four-year, four-month effort; attributed to persistent pressure from committee, Parish Council, and others on HCC.
- Enforcement does not guarantee purchase; owners could comply, move out, and keep pub closed; next steps must be considerate as owners live in the village.
- Strategy:
    - Remind the owners' agent that the previous offer still stands, creating a paper trail before any possible appeal.
    - Inform the agent about the enforcement notice while reiterating purchase interest positively.
    - Draft a positive, non-harassing letter to owners highlighting the new committee and continued community interest; frame offer as a small premium over Rick's valuation less repair costs, acknowledging unknown condition risks.
- New legislation favorable to community sales has passed but commencement date is unknown; MP and Plunkett CEO have not provided clarity.
- Owners have until August 19 to appeal; appeal deemed unlikely but the group has registered on the portal to monitor and comment; HDC requires no further information currently.

Community Engagement and Fundraising

- Engagement Plan is one of four key documents (with governance, business plan, prospectus) to launch as an active community benefit society; primary goal is to build enthusiasm and raise funds to buy the pub.
- A list of 300–400 village names compiled for direct contact, including those not on the mailing list or Google group; also consider outreach to former residents

and pub-saving advocates.
- The Lion pub's approach (TV, radio, engaging historical ties) cited; plan to replicate effective tactics.
- Mailing list currently ~160 people; plan another flyer drop post-appeal deadline; propose an investors' meeting in early to late September, potentially members-only with signups at the door.
- [Simon] will summarize communication methods into bullet points and share the 300–400 names list on Google Drive for additions.
- Guidance to avoid letting appeal dominate conversations during door-knocking; proceed with recruitment regardless.

Business Plan and Vision for the Pub

- A clear, easy-to-read business case is needed for the investors' meeting; a draft exists based on BBPA rural pub tenant model and a £295,000 valuation, with initial P&L informed by "Dave."
- No formal decision yet on the community-run model; past surveys favor offering food, tea/coffee, internet, and community events over a wet-only pub.
- Plunkett Foundation's strategy (98% success rate) is a guiding model; operating options include a manager (helps qualify for SEIS via employment growth) or volunteer-run to reduce overheads.
- Create two or three scenarios (worst, medium, best) to demonstrate pathways to profitability; canvass current membership for input on the pub's future.
- Re-engage Plunkett for professional assistance now that there is a tangible property; request business plans/accounts from successful examples (Lion pub via Rachel, Sportsmen in Amberley).
- SEIS "at risk" requirement noted; plan for accountant review and targeted questions for SEIS expert consultation.

Timing and Meetings

- Engagement timing to adapt based on appeal outcome; plan to wait until after August 19 for major push but continue planning.
- Anticipated appeal could take up to six months; planning should continue regardless.
- Follow-up meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 7:00.
- Short update to be provided at Parish Council on the first Monday in August.

Actions & Next Steps

- [ ] [Alan] to send login details for committee website and GG CBS Limited Google account.
- [ ] [Alan] to contact Derek to request administrative access to the website; check with Derek regarding signup process or related tasks.
- [ ] Consider Ainsley to manage/replicate website; distribute Eccleston Lion website address.
- [ ] Align website messaging; Alan to draft and circulate the pub history content for collaborative editing.
- [ ] Have a meeting to define website technology, format, content, and owner allocation.
- [ ] Start flyer delivery on 20 August 2026; ask Allie to design the flyer; define clear call to action (website signup and/or £1 on-the-door signup).
- [ ] Begin door-to-door membership drive from 20 August through end of September 2026; target membership increase from 70 to at least 100–120.
- [ ] Tentatively schedule investors' meeting around 20 September 2026; finalize date, venue, and publish details; inform residents accordingly.
- [ ] [Simon] to summarize communication methods into bullet points; share and expand the 300–400 names list on Google Drive.
- [ ] [Nick G] to speak with Dom to leverage reach; talk to Giles Scott about a greater committee role, possibly as intermediary.
- [ ] Hold a special members meeting to vote in new committee members; actively encourage candidates for chairman role.
- [ ] [Nick C] to send an email to the agent renewing the offer; inform HDC of the renewed offer.
- [ ] [Tim] to draft a letter to the landlords and share for group feedback.
- [ ] [Nick G] to continue pushing for the legislation commencement date.
- [ ] Plan community engagement push (flyers, investors' meeting) after August 19; set guidance for handling appeal-related questions.
- [ ] Alan ([Alan]) to draft and circulate complaints procedure and GDPR policy.
- [ ] [Alan] to email committee members to collect personal details for bank account application; decide on access rights and signatories (double-signature, credit cards).
- [ ] Maintain a proper book of accounts for the mutual society.
- [ ] [Nick C] to draft points for flyer/mailer by Monday, July 20, 2026; find results of previous questionnaire (from Derek or Lyndon); draft landlord letter.
- [ ] [Alan] to contact Alison at the Plunkett Foundation for assistance.
- [ ] [Pelham] to speak to Sportsmen in Amberley for business plan information.
- [ ] [Nick G] and others to engage Rachel from the Lion pub for their business plan and guidance.

- [ ] [Tim] to send out the meeting invitation for Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 7:00.

AI Suggestions

- Define a contingency if Derek refuses or is unresponsive; formally assign Ainsley or another technologist and set a deadline for obtaining website control.
- Assign roles and a content approval workflow for website updates (authors, reviewers, publisher).
- Finalize primary signup method (website vs. £1 on-the-door) to avoid mixed messaging; define the data handling workflow for online forms (database, privacy, security) and assign responsibilities.
- Select and confirm a backup for FCA portal access, especially before appointing a permanent treasurer.
- Finalize bank account signatories and credit card holders; document access rights.
- Clarify approach to the landlord: decide whether to use a friendly face, agent, or intermediary; set tone and objectives for communications.
- Mitigate offer risks by commissioning a current survey or inspection to estimate repair costs before pricing; reconcile strategy between waiting for a lower price and paying a premium to acquire sooner.
- Plan engagement timing amid legislative uncertainty: set phased milestones independent of the new law’s commencement date and define triggers to adjust strategy.
- Define specific questions and timing for consultations with Plunkett and SEIS expert Dave Boyle to maximize value.
- Formally define the pub’s operating vision (manager vs. volunteer-led) and develop business case scenarios (worst/medium/best) for investor confidence.