

## THE BOOT

### UPDATE FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

When The Boot was closed in July 2017, a notice posted on the door alleged that the Parish Council's action to list the pub as a Community Asset "*directly led to a review of funding by our bankers and the viability of the pub and led to the decision to close the pub*". The Parish Council is of the view that The Boot **can** be a viable business, and looks forward to the day when the Pub is sold to an operator who is able to continue to run this well-loved pub and restaurant.

Since the closure, the Parish Council has monitored the situation and discussed ways in which the Parish Council could encourage the survival of the Pub as an asset for the Village. Help has been sought from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) which has lots of experience of pubs being purchased and run by community interest groups.

The Parish Council now understands that the business which operated The Boot is to be "*wound up voluntarily*" and Griffin & King of Walsall are the nominated Liquidator. The Pub remains for sale through Sidney Phillips of Hereford, and the Parish Council is aware of one serious offer that has been made to purchase the property and re-open the pub and restaurant. However, it may be that the liquidator is looking at trying to sell the site for development to maximise the sum available to creditors.

For this reason, we have worked with our Ward Councillor to impress on the planners in Hereford that the Parish Council wants the property to continue as a pub and would oppose any change of use. We believe that the planners are sympathetic to this, and would resist any application for a change of use. The Neighbourhood Development Plan which now carries the force of law does not envisage development of The Boot site for housing but assumes the continuance of the pub.

The Parish Council's preferred option is for The Boot to be sold to a responsible operator who will continue to run the pub and restaurant. There is also an opportunity for an individual or group of individuals to acquire the pub as an investment and seek a tenant to run the pub. The Parish Council supports viable plans which see The Boot continuing as a pub.

The Parish Council sees the possibility of itself assuming ownership of the pub as a last resort – the Parish Council is not equipped to run a pub, but should circumstances change, then options necessary to secure the future of The Boot will be reviewed and consulted upon.

The Parish Council will be looking at this matter at all our meetings until the future of The Boot is resolved. The next meeting will be on Thursday 16 November 2017.

*Orleton Parish Council*