

Portloe Community SoS : Announcement Press Release

Portloe's historic Ship Inn lives to sail another day as a community owned pub and, now, the public is being invited to help chart its course, *writes Tom Howe*.

Having raised over £400,000 to secure the freehold of this beloved coastal pub, local people are now calling for continued support to fund the next stage of its revival and find a tenant to run the venue (to support this campaign or to put your hat in the ring as a potential tenant, please visit www.saveourship.co.uk).

News that The Ship was up for sale in December 2024 sparked a groundswell of support from locals and admirers of the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, who rallied to bring the pub into the hands of the Portloe Community Benefit Society Limited (PCBS).

The historic venue - once known as the Portloe Drinking Kitchen - is now set to undergo improvements to both its interior and menu, sourcing its food and drink locally, offering high-quality meals and a diverse selection of beverages that reflect the very best of the locality.



There were fears that losing the venue would deal another blow to a once-bustling Cornish fishing village already struggling to retain its identity in the modern age, as resident Luke Dunstone explains: "It's a very precious place for locals and visitors alike. Memories are made, friendships are forged and life is celebrated."

“It’s been a part of everybody’s life that has lived in Portloe throughout hundreds of years,” added fellow villager Rob Cupper, while Peter Veasey said: “It’s been part of my life here and if this should disappear part of my life is gone and I don’t want that.”

“It’s the absolute beating heart of our village,” concluded Jenny Casson. “There’s just something really special about it that gets in your heart. It makes you want to be here and hold on to The Ship particularly.”

Built in the 17th century as a fisherman’s cottage and converted into a pub around the turn of the 20th century, the venue has been described as a vital hub for strengthening community and tackling isolation.

In April 2025, the PCBS was formed to purchase and manage it as a community-owned asset. Support poured in from across the globe, and the generosity of residents and friends of Portloe led to an offer, subject to contract, being accepted by owners St Austell Brewery.

The project is part-funded by the UK Government through the Community Capacity Fund. (Cornwall Council is responsible for managing projects funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Good Growth Programme).



Now that the pub has been secured, the benefit society is calling on community goodwill to help The Ship sail towards a bright and dynamic future.

Funds raised through a newly-launched [Crowdfunder](#) will go towards the purchase price, legal and administrative costs, and much-needed renovations and investment.

As part of the campaign, a generous prize draw has been launched, with a week's stay in one of several beautiful properties in and around Portloe donated by local supporters.

From the characterful Old Dairy at Tregenna Farm, and the sea-view charm of Hillside Cottage, there's something for everyone.

Other prizes include a stay at the Grade II listed Cliff Garden and a £150 voucher for Pilleigh Way Cookery School, with more prizes being added throughout.



"We're thrilled to share that, through pledges, we've already raised over £400,000," said Steve Hammett, a volunteer member of PCBS. "This has allowed us to buy the pub but we still need your help to reach our full goal and secure the future of The Ship Inn.

"Our mission has always been to buy the pub, bring it under community ownership, and upgrade it so it can truly serve as a vibrant social hub for Portloe."

The vision is to create a warm, welcoming space that serves as a true community centrepiece, one that is attractive to residents and visitors alike, and rooted in the rich heritage of the village.

"We want to preserve an historic building that reflects Portloe's maritime past while making it fit for the future," continued Hammett.

"The Ship will celebrate the old and the new - creating a space that honours tradition and welcomes innovation. By supporting local producers, tradespeople, and fishermen, The Ship will create jobs, keep money circulating locally, and attract visitors throughout the year - not just in the summer months.

(29/09/2025)

“Our renovation plans focus on energy efficiency and sustainability. We’re hoping to invest in green solutions that will reduce our carbon footprint and running costs. Through the PCBS, local people and supporters can have a real stake in The Ship’s future. It’s not just about owning a pub - it’s about long-term community stewardship, shared purpose and collective pride.”



While fundraising remains vital, the group is also keen to highlight a unique opportunity, as they actively seek a tenant(s), offering a chance to live and work in one of Cornwall’s most picturesque villages, and to help shape the future of a beloved local institution.

“Support us today and help Sail Our Ship,” concluded Hammett. “Be part of the story. Help us restore and preserve The Ship Inn - a cherished community anchor where culture, connection, and good old Cornish spirit come together.”

To learn more about the different ways you can support the campaign or to make contact with the PCBS, visit www.saveourship.co.uk.



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