

A new website

We've created a new website for stuff relating to village life. We hope, with people's contributions and ideas, it will grow over time

www.rushlakegreenvillage.co.uk



Subscribe today

If you'd like to receive this newsletter online and think you're not yet on the mailing list, email: rushlakegreenvillage@googlemail.com and mark it "subscribe to Village Leaf"

The Village Leaf

An occasional newsletter – village life matters

Issue 1.1

We still need our shop

Around this time last year, the future of the last remaining shop in Rushlake Green was in danger. The village, and the wider community of Warbleton, faced losing an important centre of gravity. The Shop campaign generated huge amounts of energy and interest from everyone associated with Rushlake Green, and it was agreed that every effort should be made to save the shop from closing. One year on, we still need our shop just as much, but some of us have perhaps become less conscious of how much the shop's future depends on how we use it. **We battled to keep our shop but are we fighting to sustain it?**

A new leaf . . . our idea . . .

This newsletter, along with the accompanying website is born out of a desire to re-ignite some of the sense of connection that was originally sparked-off by the shop campaign in 2008. Many people have approached us, saying they felt that the campaign brought the community together in a new way, so this newsletter is designed to act as a channel for sharing local community issues and ideas. Future Village Leaf editions will be driven by your response.

Our shop still needs us

Andrew Wickens and his family, as the new owners, have been clearly working hard to maintain the momentum of the shop whilst developing their plans for the whole property. And it's been great to see Katie Skinner establishing herself as a friendly, helpful and much-valued presence behind the counter. But if life was tough for a small retailer a year ago, it's even tougher now, post-crunch. It's easy to say we need a local shop but harder to change our habits and get used to shopping more locally. So our thought is that, one year on, perhaps this is a good time to remind ourselves how we felt during the shop campaign, and focus some energy back into giving the shop a bit more support – by voting with our wallets. When the sums were done, as part of our potential community shop rescue plan, it was very clear to everyone that our shop could only survive, in any form, if many more local people spent more in that shop, more often. We also concluded that, to encourage people to spend more, the shop needed to get better at responding to what people wanted. Andrew and Katie want to respond to local needs but they first have to know what those needs are.

Have your say – do our survey today

Please take part in our Leaf Poll village shop survey. It only takes a couple of minutes to do. We really do need to know your opinion, so that we can let The Stores know what we as a Village think.

What do we think about what 'The Stores' offers? What more would we like? What ideas can we offer? Please find the time to answer these and other questions in our independent 'Leaf Poll' survey – a short questionnaire you can either fill out and return or, even easier for many, complete online. It only takes a few minutes and it's the best way for all of us, as a community, to say what we think. There should be a copy of the questionnaire accompanying this newsletter. If not you can obtain one by calling 01435 830 574

**To do our Leaf Poll online, follow the links on the website:
www.rushlakegreenvillage.co.uk**

Why a village website?



Many people have said they'd like to be able to continue some of the sense of connection that was created by the shop campaign. So the rushlakegreenvillage.co.uk website, sparked of by the need to share an updated newsletter and shop survey online, is an experiment to see whether such a thing could be useful to the village. It could provide links to other online initiatives people are planning. It could also perhaps in time become a place that brings together some of the distinctive, but sometimes quite separate, activities that make up village life. But most of all it could be fun to get involved in. So if you have any ideas to offer, please let us know.



Starters for ten

We've created a simple website, closely based on our original Shop Campaign site, as the starting point for a site that could develop as people want it to. We thought it better to start modestly and then let things grow organically.

We need your local favourites

We all have our own lists of amazing local shops, suppliers, people and places of interest. It could be a favorite supplier of great local produce, a brilliant plumber, an amazing local restaurant, an inspiring local artist or perhaps the best place to learn about organic gardening. There are already some useful numbers on the Parish website, but we thought it might be useful to pool ideas from the village and publish them in a newsletter and on the website. All we need is the name, type of business or activity, contact number/person, email address and approximate location – such as Rushlake Green, Cowbeech or Punnetts Town. We think it makes sense to spread the net quite wide, so anything goes as long as it's within a reasonably accessible distance that can be considered 'local'. To give us your list of local favourites you can either: email (marking your email "local favourites") to: **rushlakegreenvillage@googlemail.com** or send a note or the form below to: 'RGV local favourites' c/o Tudor Cottage, Rushlake Green, TN21 9QD.

We need your ideas

Over time, it might be valuable to offer space on the website dedicated to local activities. It could be a local group; it could be a regular activity or some useful or interesting information about Rushlake Green and the surrounding areas. The only limit is that we'd prefer to keep each entry to a single page (although it can be a long page web page) and we need to have content that will not need constant updating. To send us your ideas for website content pages you can either: **email to:**

rushlakegreenvillage@googlemail.com marking your email "content ideas"

Or you can send a note or the form below to 'RGV content ideas' c/o Tudor Cottage, Rushlake Green, TN21 9QD.

We'd also welcome ideas for topical subjects more suitable for the newsletter, which can be sent in the same way.

Local favourites.

Name	Type of business / activity	Location	Contact name/number/email

Website and Village Leaf Newsletter ideas.

Suggested subject / content	Contact name for potential content	Contact name/number/email