

Don't let Sainsbury's rip the heart out of it.

WHITE LANE

Support the **White Hart Action Group** www.savetheheartofwhitehartlane.co.uk

THERE IS HOPE FOR US ALL:

Welcome to the terrific twelfth edition of the **WHAG weekly Update**-it's your free guide to the campaign to stop **Sainsbury's** ruining our neighbourhood for ever.

A Sainsbury's store can close, as well as open.

In November last year, a Sainsbury's "convenience store" opened in the small town of Ripley, with the usual fanfare of publicity and the usual promise of "fresh, affordable food for local people." It replaced the old Kwik Save supermarket and employs 15 people and two managers.

Or rather, it did.

For on May 17th, the store closed, making the 15 staff redundant, with no redundancy pay. The managers, lucky people, will be relocated.

The reason? Euan McMurdo, (remember him?) commented that "...this decision was not taken lightly, but a review of the store's performance showed it is not possible to continue to trade."

Customers were urged to visit "...our nearest store, which is less than a mile away..."

The reason given to staff for the closure was that the store was "not hitting targets since it opened."

Intriguingly, the store was welcomed at first by local residents, who naturally looked forward to the "fresh, affordable food" said to be on offer.

Presumably, as there were no local traders to undercut and put out of business – the common practice of Tesco, Sainsbury's et al – there obviously wasn't any need to provide the "affordable" side of the promise.

Nothing else could explain the sudden closure.

This is not the first Sainsbury's store to close rapidly and many supporters of the WHAG here in Barnes will fervently hope it isn't the last.

A WHAG spokesman commented: "Given that Justin King has made it quite clear that he never had any intention of re-assigning the lease on the proposed White Hart Lane store, the WHAG now urges all its supporters to follow the lead of the people of Ripley – and ignore the store when it finally opens."



Ripley town centre Sainsbury's to close - Ripley Today

Supermarket giant Sainsburys is set to close its store in Ripley town centre just six months after it opened.

The store on Grosvenor Road opened in November, replacing the old Kwik Save supermarket, but will close on May 17 due to poor trade.

The store currently employs 15 staff, who look set to lose their jobs, and two managers, who will be relocated. Euan McMurdo, head of property convenience, said: "The decision to close the store was not taken lightly and all possible options to keep the store open have been explored. A review of the stores performance showed it is not possible to continue to trade the store.

"We have informed colleagues of the decision and we will continue to consult with them over the coming weeks. We are hoping to minimise job losses by offering colleagues the opportunity to work at nearby Sainsbury's stores." "We would like to thank our colleagues and customers at the store for their support. Our nearest store is less than a mile away at Butterley Park in Ripley."

Luke Goacher, a customer training service manager at the store, said: "It's come as a shock to everyone. As it's only been open for six months. We will be made redundant with no pay." He said the reason they were given for the store's closure was that they were not hitting targets since it opened in November.

Martyn Dudley, from the Ripley Business Engagement Forum, said: "It remains to be seen what affect this will have on the town.

"Sainsbury's obviously know how many transactions they need a month to keep it going, but to me it's flying a flag for the business in Ripley and it's a shame they can't keep it open." "Everytime I go past there are always people in there, from the outside it looks like a success, but obviously it's not."

The Corrections

We have been asked by our readers to print the following corrections and we are happy to provide clarification.

- 1) Sainsbury's do not own the site but have a 15 year lease on the retail space. We understand that the freehold interest recently passed from the developers, Oakmill, to Barnes Property Ltd.
- 2) At a very early stage, the WHAG proposed community use for the site. The offer referred to in our last edition was not for community use but alternative commercial use.
- 3) In statements to the press, Sainsbury's have referred to a 'public inquiry' which they say gave an opportunity to local traders and residents to express their views on the development. The 'public inquiry' was in fact an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate by the developers, Oakmill, following a refusal of planning consent by Richmond Council and a subsequent failure to determine a second application within the prescribed time limit. The prospect of Sainsbury's occupying the site was not in the public domain at the time of the appeal hearing. There was therefore no opportunity for comment on Sainsbury's plans. Sainsbury's themselves maintain that they only became involved in the development after planning consent had been granted, on appeal.
- 4) Roy Collado, now a partner in Collado Collins, architects for Oakmill on this scheme, was responsible for the award winning Sainsbury's store on the Greenwich peninsula. Robin Barton of Oakmill is a partner in Barton Finch, development consultants, who have worked with Sainsbury's on major projects.
- 5) The site on White Hart Lane, prior to demolition, has been described as a 'second-hand car showroom'. The last permanent use was in fact as the Barnes branch of prestige motor dealership, Guy Salmon Jaguar. We understand that a major reason for vacating the site was the inadequacy of customer parking space.

The view from the WHAG

And so we come to the endgame.

Many of you predicted it would come to this and it looks like many of you were right.

Many people said we were being naïve in thinking that a company like Sainsbury's would ever willingly give up a prime site such as this and, again, it looks like many people were right.



I even remember being told – by one of our most ardent supporters – that we'd end up with egg on our face if we took seriously anything said by the CEO of such a company.

Well, *he* was wrong.

I looked in the mirror this morning and saw no egg.

Bitter disappointment at the realisation that the fight isn't over yet.

Deep anger at the behaviour of the CEO of one of our biggest companies.

A passionate desire to make Justin King and every other share-price driven executive realise that they have no God-given right to walk all over local communities.

But no egg.

I think the day we all stop trying to do what we feel is right, simply because the odds seem stacked against us, is the day we give up the right to determine our own futures.

And if I didn't believe that so many of you feel the same, I'd have given up this crazy crusade a long time ago.

But I do. And I believe we can still win.

As our front page reports, a Sainsbury's store which opened last November in Ripley, closed this month, because local people didn't spend enough there.

(So much for Sainsbury's claim to "serve communities".)

In the next few weeks, the WHAG will begin a campaign asking you not to shop at the White Hart Lane store if, as now seems inevitable, it opens.

If you believed it was wrong last year, when so many of you voted NO in the referendum, then we say to you it is still wrong now.

And if all of you who voted NO then, vote with your feet now, this store could make Ripley seem like a major success story.

David Rossiter



The WHAG

The Information Page

www.savetheheartofwhitehartlane.co.uk

Did you know that there have now been more than **8000 visits** to our website? This is the place to get all the information about the campaign and there's a chance to leave a comment-here's a recent selection:

"I was outside the White Hart pub today, thinking how relaxed it was and amazing to have such a pretty, unspoilt place in London. Then I noticed the posters and found out about this. A Sainsburys would destroy it. Utterly."

"We must fight for the independent shops of Barnes and Mortlake. Our family will be boycotting any Sainsbury's store on White Hart Lane"

"Neither my family, or my sister's family, also living in Barnes, will ever shop in the Sainsbury's in White Hart Lane. I wonder what kind of village or town Justin King lives in. Does it have charm and individuality? How depressing that he, along with too many other bullying superstore giants, is determined to make local towns and villages ever-more bland and characterless"

Hmmm.....so where *does* Justin King live? Let's go straight to Wikipedia and the answer is.....**Harbury!** "I'm sorry, where?" Harbury, it's a large village (population 2,485) and civil parish in the Stratford-on-Avon district of Warwickshire, England. Harbury has ancient origins.

Bronze age cooking pots have been found in the area and the name of the village is said to come from *Hereburgh* a woman tribal chief of around 500 BC. The Domesday Book..... "OK, let's skip the history lesson, what's it like now?"

Well, there's a windmill, still standing but no sails and a primary school with about 200 pupils.

"I'm not getting a feel for retail here, any shops?" Yes, there are shops including two newsagents, a chemist, a grocery shop -

Mugleston's Country Fayre, and an estate agent,

oh, and there's the library as well but the best thing is the *five* pubs.... "Five? You're joking, name them!" OK, The Shakespeare, The Crown, The Dog Inn, The Old New Inn and the Gamecock. "So no Sainsbury's then?" No. "Tesco's?" No. "Morrisons?" No, nothing. "How on earth do they survive?". I'm sorry, we just don't know..... (to be continued)



COMING SOON!

NEW FREE POSTERS, NEW WHAGBAGS*

CARDS, BALLOONS, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.... *(Thanks to our sophisticated retail

analysis we can confirm that the cost of a bag of WHAG merchandise has risen by less than 2% since last year. Note: bag contains no popular food items)

The Fighting Fund

Spare cash? We still need it-check the website for details and many thanks again to all of our supporters.

Whilst every effort is made to check the accuracy of information contained in the WHAG Weekly Update, neither WHAG nor any individual member of the group can be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused by any inaccuracy in this publication.

