



# PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 8 March 2011

## **WILL A NEW HELMSMAN BRING A NEW COURSE FOR TESCO?**

Ken Parsons, Chief Executive of the RSA, commented,

“The Rural Shops Alliance would like to wish Sir Terry Leahy well on his retirement after 14 years as Chief Executive of Tesco. The company has seen enormous developments whilst he has been at the helm and it goes without saying that he will be a very hard act to follow for his successor, Philip Clarke.

Indeed, within the UK context we would hope that Mr Clarke’s appointment will herald a radical change of emphasis for the company. Tesco now controls about £1 in every £7 of all retail sales. It exerts enormous power over the marketplace. And now is a watershed, a time for a new chief executive to say that Tesco’s sales in its home market have grown as big as is right for the UK economy and, actually, if truth is told, as big as is right for Tesco.

We wish Philip Clarke well in his new role and hope that he can see that any further significant expansion in the UK will be subject to diminishing returns, as Tesco stores end up cannibalising each other’s sales. Tesco has been one of the very few British retailers to succeed abroad. We hope that Mr Clarke, who was the company’s international director, will continue to clock up a goodly stash of Air Miles, whilst pursuing what we hope will be a strategy of ambitious international expansion into markets not yet saturated with Tesco fascias”.

### **Notes for editors:**

**The Rural Shops Alliance (RSA) is the national voice for about 7,500 rural retailers. We campaign on their behalf and also help these shops to become more competitive with practical advice and support, to the benefit of thousands of rural communities. Many ‘blue chip’ suppliers and county councils sponsor and partner the work of the RSA. Our direct contact with rural shops and with these organisations means that we keep in close touch with emerging issues and concerns in our fast changing business sector.**

### **More Information:**

**Kenneth Parsons**  
**Gary Hepburn**  
**Duty Press Contact**

**- Tel 01761 462371 Mobile 07980 673675**  
**- Tel 01305 752050**  
**- Tel 07092 048546**