

Pub is the Hub case studies

Pub is the Hub has developed many schemes and established a body of best practice to aid rural pub businesses and their communities to overcome services challenges and strengthen the community.

Bringing back village shops

The Black Swan in Ravenstonedale, Cumbria converted a ground floor bedroom into a village shop which now sells locally-sourced food and items produced by local craftspeople. The project was supported with funding from Cumbria County Council and has brought a much needed service to this remote community, who previously had to travel 6 miles to the nearest town for their grocery shopping. It has made the Black Swan a real community hub.



Six months after the village shop closed, a new shop opened in the **Prussian Queen in Saltfleetby, Lincolnshire** with funding from the East Midlands Development Agency. During alterations it was 'business as usual' in a tent in the front garden. A good brewery relationship kept disruption to a minimum during works, and there was a great support from the local authority. Everything from baked beans to bathroom freshener is sold in the shop together with supplies from local growers. The new shop is a valued local service as people do not have to make a 9 mile round trip to Louth for shopping.

Established shop projects include: **The Fighting Cocks in Stottesdon, Shropshire** which incorporates a shop and creche, and has won numerous awards and the **White Hart Inn, Blythburgh, Suffolk** which has provided villagers with vital services including a shop and post office for over 6 years. **The Shoulder of Mutton, Kirkby Overblow, North Yorkshire** specialises in sourcing local produce in the shop.

Retaining rural post offices

Three years after the village lost its post office, a new service has been established at the **Mussel Inn, Down Thomas, Devon** with Enterprise Inns, Devon Rural Renaissance and the Post Office playing key roles. The new service was set up in a small disused garage, bringing a redundant building back to life. Working closely with the Parish Council, the licensees recognised the impact on the village as there are a significant number of older residents.

The new service has had a positive effect on the pub business and has reduced the need for local people to drive to nearby Plymstock.



Supporting social enterprise

When the community was faced with the closure of their local pub, the **New Inn at Shipton Gorge, Dorset** they decided to act. The village had already lost its school, two shops and a post office and villagers felt strongly about losing their pub. Villagers formed New Inn Support Ltd, as a not-for-profit company. They raised finance and took over the lease from local brewery, Palmers. The pub took 10 months to refurbish and received financial support from Defra. The pub holds coffee mornings, a pensioners' lunch club and other events to restore the pub to the heart of village life. Established schemes are doing well; the **Dykes End in Reach, Cambridgeshire** was purchased by a 49 strong village action group, who made improvements leading to a 100% turnover increase and now hold the lease with the freehold being assigned to the Parish Council. The **Old Crown in Heskett Newmarket, Cumbria** was purchased by 125 members as a community co-operative in 2003. A second co-operative purchased the brewery located in a barn behind the pub.

Developing community facilities in Wales

Thanks to the **Salisbury Arms, Tremeirchion, Denbighshire**, local families are benefiting from new play facilities. In response to a request by members of the community, and with a grant from the Rural Development Programme for Wales, the licensee has built a community playground in the pub garden.

Previously, the only play facilities were in the school, which is closed out of hours. The new playground is now available to everyone in the village at all times, with the pub playing a vital community role.

The Eagles Hotel, Corwen, Denbighshire has developed a community allotment where local children are growing their own food. A gardening club has been formed with older residents, working together to grow plants, fruit and vegetables.

Also, an outbuilding has been converted into a community room and cafe where children will be able to cook and taste the food they grow. The community room is also freely available to local groups including the football team and Welsh speaking classes.

The Raven Inn, Llanarmon Yn Lal, Denbighshire had been closed for three months, when the village decided to take it over and run it as a co-operative. Securing a six-year lease, the pub is now open 6 days a week, and run by volunteers.

The pub runs a youth club and brings together elderly people for lunch and social events.

We hope that these case studies may inspire you. To find out more information and download resources to get your good ideas off the ground please visit our website: www.pubisthehub.org.uk

Alternatively if you have a good idea for a pub-based rural project and would like to discuss the needs of your organisation, pub or community and explore opportunities then do contact:

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pub is the hub

Helping pubs provide community services



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A Warm Welcome

What is Pub is the Hub?

- **Pub is the Hub** was initiated by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2001, as President of Business in the Community. It is affiliated to His Royal Highness's Rural Action Programme, and is a 'not for profit' advisory organisation.
- **Pub is the Hub** encourages rural pub owners, licensees, and their local communities to work together. The aim is to support and retain local services, improving the viability of the business which, wherever possible will be located within the pub itself.

How Pub is the Hub works

- Rural pubs are at the heart of communities, and Pub is the Hub's experienced advisors help pubs stay that way, by encouraging and supporting the provision of viable local services.
- **Pub is the Hub** provides voluntary advice and guidance with administration support from Diageo, the Post Office, Enterprise Inns, Punch Taverns, Frederic Robinson, Greene King, Brewers Company, Fuller's, Marstons and other trade bodies including the British Beer and Pub Association, British Institute of Innkeeping and CAMRA, with other in-kind support from several organisations and individuals.
- Rural pubs and their licensees are essential to communities, and the support for shared services in turn supports the pub.
- Whilst it is hard work serving pints of beer and milk as well as providing groceries and postal services etc, these valuable community services do help to increase trade and create part-time jobs, as well as supporting local suppliers, building important social links and maintaining local community spirit.

How does Pub is the Hub help?

- **Pub is the Hub** assists with guidance on the availability of local and regional project funding, and having a thorough understanding of the pub business, is able to advise on the best way to progress with each individual project.
- **Pub is the Hub** projects range from providing local shops to encouraging the local sourcing of products, accommodating Post Office services, providing local school meals, IT training or community centres and even church services.
- Many projects today include a local shop plus other extra facilities that have developed as a result of the original project.

OVER 300 pubs and communities have been supported by **Pub is the Hub** local networks nationally over the last 6 years.

Pub is the Hub in the regions

- Seven regional advisory groups comprising of experienced volunteers across a wide range of industry fields have now been created to offer local assistance for projects.
- Currently regional advisory groups exist in the Midlands, the North West, Yorkshire and the North East, the South West of England, the South East of England, East Anglia and Wales. Groups are also created in other areas when required on an individual basis.
- Volunteers are from the pub, property and drinks industry, together with licensees, Post Office representatives, local and national authorities and trade associations.
- Volunteers work hard to help keep rural services and pubs at the heart of their communities. They help create local employment and local sourcing opportunities because they care about rural pubs and community services.

How Pub is the Hub is unique

- **Pub is the Hub** is the only national advisory body working directly with licensees and linking up with both private and public sector partners to support rural regeneration objectives.
- At a local level, **Pub is the Hub** acts quickly and looks for innovative ways to ensure rural pubs remain relevant to the needs of their local communities.
- **Pub is the Hub** assists village communities acting as co-operatives who have bought their own pub to ensure it is retained as a services centre for the local area.
- **Pub is the Hub** acts as a catalyst to encourage rural licensees and communities to work together in support of their local needs, being concerned with the retention or return of services felt essential to their area.

Pub is the Hub in partnership

- **Pub is the Hub** has formed a number of successful partnerships, working closely with regional development agencies, county and district councils, rural community councils and rural partnerships.
- **Pub is the Hub** works closely with Defra, the Council for Rural Communities, the Post Office and other private sector partners to gather reliable research and intelligence on rural pub services.
- **Pub is the Hub** works at a national level, consulting and advising on the needs and opportunities for rural pubs and services within their communities.

OVER 70% of villages have no access to a shop, Post Office or alternative services and **NEARLY 70%** of villages no longer have a pub.

Pub is the Hub benefits

- An independent national body that is able to share best practice and co-ordinate support and advice.
- Projects demonstrate a cost-effective and sustainable business approach to the delivery of essential rural services.
- Projects help to maintain the sense of community which is essential in rural areas.
- Helps pubs remain sustainable by offering new community oriented services.
- We can provide information on innovative alternative financial models such as co-operatives.
- We encourage co-operation and mutual benefit which is an invaluable instrument of community regeneration.
- Our experienced volunteers and industry professionals provide a free service to licensees and communities.
- Our commitment to working in partnership with the private and public sector helps to ensure that the rural pub remains healthy and project funding opportunities can be sourced.
- Projects bring services to people locally and are environmentally responsible, helping reduce vehicle travel and food miles which benefit the wider rural economy through supporting local producers and suppliers.

"The support from local people and visitors to the area has been fantastic... it is the kind of community venture that I would urge more people to consider getting involved in."

Louise Dinnes, Black Swan, Ravenstonedale, Cumbria.