

Pub is the Hub Case Study

The Pheasant, Gestingthorpe, Essex CO9 3AU



BACKGROUND

James and Diana Donoghue bought this pub 5 years ago and at that time it was very much a male dominated drinking establishment, and would not have survived without the development of the food offering. Since then they have established a superb pub that still caters for the drinkers, but is now much more family friendly. They have created a 40 cover restaurant that wraps round the pub and even have their own unique smokery for curing fish, serving smoked salmon/halibut etc, they also have their own bee-hives, and use the honey for sauces. All of which has made the pub the village hub and newcomers quickly realise that if they want to be part of the community then being a regular customer at The Pheasant is the best way to do it. James and Diana have gained a well-deserved reputation for good food and drink and have now enhanced this with the completion of The Coach House accommodation, comprising 5 en-suite bedrooms (with the help of a substantial grant from The East of England Development Association) thus providing much needed B& B accommodation in this tourist area.

PROJECT SUMMARY

They have now started on their next project which is well underway- to set up a Market Garden, they have bought the glebe-land (opposite the pub approx 90x40 metres) previously held by the church, which also involved buying the lease back from the local farmer. This land will now be turned into a market-garden and the produce used for the pub restaurant and they also plan to open a small shop selling convenience foods and the produce from the market garden.

OUTCOMES

James has many talents as well as being an award winning chef which he puts to good use in the restaurant, he is also a Chelsea Flower Show garden designer, and is well know for his horticultural articles in the local press, and therefore plans to bring this expertise and knowledge to the community by running educational courses so that people can learn how to develop their own vegetable gardens.

James and Diana worked hard to completely reinvigorate the business and have developed a community-oriented family friendly pub; they are now helping to tackle the high rate of unemployment providing work and training for local young people.

LESSONS TO LEARN

- Licensees with 100% commitment to helping the community
- Community responding positively with a growing number of customers
- An employer that invests in helping the local employment
- Able to successfully apply for grant support

PROJECT CAPITAL COSTS (EXCLUDING VAT)

Total project capital costs	£25,000
Cost of land	£16,000
To buy the lease	£5,000
Legal Costs	£4,000
Match funding grant from Essex C.C	£5,000

LICENSEE CONTACT:

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