

Pub is the Hub Case Study

The White Horse Inn Shop and Café, Monmouth Road, Staunton, Coleford, Gloucestershire GL16 8PA



Hayley & John Carter hold this Forest of Dean two bar pub on lease from a private freeholder. They receive good support from regulars but their business was financially insecure. The indications were that if they failed then the freeholder would not seek another lessee but would leave the pub empty pending conversion to a domestic residence.

Hayley was looking for ways of diversifying the business to help keep the pub afloat whilst at the same time supporting the local community. She approached PITH for guidance, specifically regarding the creation of a shop.

The project they embarked upon created a small shop using an alcove within one of the bars and a café area alongside the shop. Both shop and café were aimed at local residents with an expectation of additional patronage during tourist season and it is the intention to use local suppliers so far as possible.

The shop and café formally opened Sept 2013 with a prescription drop off service currently being trialled and a mobile post office under investigation. Coffee sales have increased but overall the café has not been a success over the winter. It is hoped that the café will become more popular after Easter with the start of the local tourist season.

The shop has proved more successful. Most popular items are locally sourced meat (including wild boar steaks), sausages (made on the premises), homemade bread, milk, coffee, firelighters, speciality ale and wine packs, locally made greetings cards. Demand for more routine items such as, say, baked beans, has been lower than expected but should pick up when local campsites open for the season.

Observations

1. Don't underestimate how long it can take to learn what items to stock in the shop.
2. It is hard to make a shop look aesthetically appealing when the space available is very small.
3. Finishing off homemade bread in a speciality oven located in the shop is appealing due to the attractive smell generated. However, the steam given off led to damp in the shop area so the oven has had to be moved into the pub kitchen.

CSF grant of £1550.00 was approved.

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PUB OWNER: Private Lease

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