

Pub is the Hub Case Study

The Old King's Head, 50 The Street, Brockdish, Diss, Norfolk IP21 4JY



BACKGROUND

The small village of Brockdish in South Norfolk has a population of 700 and no amenities other than its only pub, The Old King's Head. The pub closed in September 2013, but in July 2014, Jonathan Townley and his sister Louise Lees bought this thirteenth century inn, and since then have worked hard to restore it to its former glory. Jonathan and Louise had done some local research and were aware of the community's needs, so when Norfolk County Council created a fund to support Norfolk pubs to develop community facilities and services, working with 'Pub is The Hub', they immediately got involved.

PROJECT SUMMARY

A village survey had highlighted the need for a café, particularly to help combat isolation among elderly residents, with the added benefit of bringing young and old alike together to socialise. Therefore, with this idea and the 'kick start' funding for the café project, Jonathan and Louise set about sympathetically restoring the pub's historic character, whilst transforming it into a functional pub, restaurant and café with the addition of a bakery.

OUTCOMES

The Old King's Head Pub-Restaurant and Café opened in February 2015 with the café open daily from 8.30am. Now residents, commuters, and parents taking children to school can enjoy freshly ground coffee and homemade cakes plus newly baked bread, alongside a full menu of locally sourced food. It is a meeting place for the community, with villagers and visitors alike enjoying the delights of this lovely renovated pub with its own café and bakery. Jonathan's culinary expertise and his sister's business acumen have married together perfectly to make this venture a success. The benefits to the community have been creating local jobs for local people, and by sourcing locally supplied food this in-turn helped the local economy, making the pub more sustainable and the hub of the village.

LESSONS TO LEARN

- Local Authority backing gave a kick-start to this project.
- Opportunity to purchase newly baked produce and locally sourced fresh food.
- Addressing a long standing need for a village pub and helping reduce social exclusion.
- Generating a positive perception of the pub.

PROJECT CAPITAL

Total project Capital Costs	£12,435
Applicant Contribution	£8,435
Norfolk County Council Community Service Fund	£4,000

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