



pub is the hub

THE hub

News from the heart
of Pub is The Hub

Surviving and thriving

More rural pubs benefit from diversification

WINTER 2015



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Introduction - The pace hots up

Since our Spring 2015 newsletter, things have moved on apace with Pub is The Hub.

We've seen the opening of a dozen new projects where rural pubs are reaping the benefit of diversification – not least from the heightened awareness by the local community and the media – but from more sustainable, future-proof businesses.

Devon has joined our Local Community Services Champions campaign to encourage the county's rural pubs to diversify and we are being ably supported by Devon Communities Together and their enthusiastic team of advisors. We have much to do in the winter months ahead!

Marcus Jones, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government – or 'pubs minister' as we like to call him – honoured us with a visit to one of our Cornish projects in September and he was encouraged by our partnership and work with Cornwall Council to set up eleven micro

libraries in rural pubs.

And finally, the whole organisation has benefitted from the spotlight cast on our work by our incredibly supportive patron, HRH The Prince of Wales. Both he and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall visited five of our projects over the summer and the impact of their association is always astonishing and very warmly received.

Next is the launch of our initiative north of the border in January so 'stayed tuned' via our website, Facebook or Twitter feeds for our most up-to-date news.

Sláinte!

Simon Theakston

Simon Theakston DL
Chairman of Pub is The Hub and
Executive Director of T&R Theakston Ltd.



Thanks to our sponsors



Greene King's Hat Trick boosts fund

Greene King has made a donation of £15,000 to Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund and is the third year Greene King has given to the fund, bringing the total donated to £45,000.

The Community Services Fund, which has been available since April 2013, aims to offer funds to licensees who are looking to broaden their services to the wider community but are unable to find suitable funding from other sources. With grants available of up to £4,000, applicants have to demonstrate that they will be offering a new service or replacing a service that has already been lost to the local community, such as a local shop or a library.

Rooney Anand, Greene King's chief executive said: "Pubs have always played a really important role in the community and by supporting the Community Services Fund means we can help pubs to provide other services in their local area. It is great to see licensees offer their locals something more than a pie and a pint, such as a library in a pub or providing a postal service when the local post office has closed down. I look forward to seeing the progress and positive impact the Community Services Fund will make again this year."



Greene King CEO Rooney Anand with John Longden.

Since 2013 the Pub is The Hub Community Services Fund has:

- Supported 55 projects in England and Wales
- Helped create more than 112 additional services, carried out by licensees and benefited a population of over 60,000 local people



Mark Graham, licensee of the Star Inn, Vogue with Marcus Jones, Pubs Minister and John Longden, Chief Executive of Pub is The Hub

Pub Minister checks out book from pub library

Pubs Minister Marcus Jones popped into the Star Inn at Vogue near Redruth to look at the pub's library on a recent trip to Cornwall.

Opened in December 2013 by Punch Taverns licensees Mark and Rachel Graham with support from Pub is The Hub and Cornwall Council's library services, the library has been a valuable community asset to the large adjacent village attracting many regular library members as well as pub goers who fancy a quiet read with their pint. In addition, the pub is also home to a hairdressing salon six days a week ensuring regular footfall.

The Minister was impressed with the partnership arrangement between Pub is The Hub and Cornwall Council whereby the former finds rural pubs with space to spare

and the latter provides the micro-library service. Both partners fund each project 50:50 for less than £1,000 per pub.

The Minister said: "It is so encouraging to see what a good licensees like Mark and Rachel can achieve in supporting local services in the community and delighted that Cornwall Council are enjoying the benefit of their enthusiasm.

"Equally, I am amazed at the variety of different services that Pub is The Hub has encouraged over recent years and congratulate John Longden and his small team for the work they are doing with pubs all over the country."



New year, new country

Pub is The Hub is launching a rural services initiative in the Scottish Borders at the start of 2016 in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and is supported by the Prince's Countryside Fund, Scottish Government and Diageo.

Pub owners and operators, suppliers and local authority representatives in the Scottish Borders are being invited to attend an awareness raising launch event on 20 January 2016 at The Lodge Carfraemill in Lauder, Berwickshire.

Gordon Izatt, our Scottish Advisor and the

team aim to showcase advice, support and, if appropriate, funding for pub operators and owners who are considering a diversification scheme and is urging pubs in the Scottish Borders area to attend. Schemes of this type include providing post offices, shops, libraries, internet cafes, allotment schemes, school dinners, lunch clubs for the elderly, cash point machines, IT training and meeting rooms.



'Tough Choices' for Devon means timely launch for pubs



In November Pub is The Hub's Local Community Services Champions was launched in partnership with Devon Communities Together to encourage Devon's rural pubs to branch out into new services for their communities.

Elaine Cook, the Chief Executive of Devon Communities Together said that in light of all possible cuts in services suggested in Devon County Council's 'Tough Choices' paper, this initiative, "could not be more timely."

Pub is The Hub will work with Devon pubs to encourage them to take up new amenities when rural services in their community are cut. Anouska House and Andy Andreou from the Miner's Arms in Mithian in Cornwall joined

the meeting to share their experiences of opening a small shop in their pub and Jessica Stanton from the Halfway House in Polbathic, also from Cornwall talked about how their micro-library had been well-received by the locals.

The launch of the scheme in Devon is also being backed by the Big Lottery Fund which has had an association with Pub is The Hub since 2011.

Reg Clarke, the advisor for the South West said: "We are available to chat to any licensees and pub owners who are considering the option of diversification – and even those who have never thought of it before."

Anyone who would like to find out more can telephone 01423 546165



John Longden with Devon Communities Together Chief Executive Elaine Cook.



Above: The Union Inn; Tom Haywood chats with John Longden at the Devon launch event

A Union of pub, shop and post office

Tom Haywood, the licensee for the 14th Century Union Inn in the Devon village of Denbury has just installed a small shop selling essentials with plans to take on the post office service in early 2016.

Tom was at the launch event to explain that following the retirement of the village's postmaster earlier in the year he was keen to keep the continuity of the service for his community and it was, "another string to our bow whilst also keep vital amenities going for the village."

Tom said: "We have had lots of positive feedback and support from the village. The shop only opened in early November so it's still early days."

Rural services under BBC's Spotlight

Local media were keen to report on the initiative for Devon pubs with local newspapers, radio and even regional TV turning up to feature the story.

Leigh Rundle for BBC TV's 'Spotlight' regional news and current affairs programme for the South West of England spent the morning at the launch event broadcasting a slot on the lunchtime news and then one later in the day for the 6.30pm slot.

The end result was a huge boost for the Pub is The Hub initiative with Reg Clarke, the regional advisor being approached by one interested pub later that evening when he was enjoying a quiet pint in his local pub!

Right: John Longden being interviewed by Leigh Rundle of BBC TV



Three more pubs move into retail:



Licencee Andy Trowsdale behind the Post Office counter

From pool room to post

When Hinderwell's postmaster and shop owner, Mike Bunn and his wife Chris, announced their retirement it was Andy and Jenny Trowsdale at the Badger Hounds pub who decided to take on the valuable service and retain it for the community.

The old pool room was converted into a shop and post office with a grant from Pub is The Hub while the Post Office supported the cost of installing their equipment.

Libraries Update:



Jessica Stanton and Russ Matterson with VIP guest Chloe Powell-Thomas

Ex-overseas aid couple open library

An international aid worker, Jessica Stanton and her partner Russ Matterson have returned to their Cornish roots to run a local pub that now boasts a library thanks to help from Pub is The Hub and Cornwall's library services.

The couple took over the Halfway House in Polbathic near Torpoint earlier this year and June saw the opening of their latest venture – the pub's library – with local girl Chloe Powell-Thomas cutting the ribbon in an official opening ceremony.



Chris Sandow from the Library Services, Sara Liddle, Reg Clarke and Geoffrey Wellum

Fighter pilot opens pub library

The new library at the Old Inn at Mullion was officially opened by Battle of Britain fighter pilot, author and local resident, Geoffrey Wellum in August.

Now aged 94, Geoffrey Wellum fought in the Battle of Britain in World War II and subsequently published the book: 'First Light: The Story of the Boy Who Became a Man in the War-Torn Skies Above Britain'. The book was made into a TV drama in 2010.

Sara Liddle, the licensee running the Old Inn added: "I am thrilled Geoffrey agreed to come along and officially open the library. His book will be pride of place on the shelf!"



Jerry and Sharon Bird with some of their farm shop produce.

Stepping up with a farm shop

Jerry and Sharon Bird who run the Three Horsehoes in Charsfield in Suffolk are typical of the sort of rural pub that has received support from Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund.

Having re-opened a closed village pub in 2013 the couple set about talking and listening to their local community. As a direct response to this by July this year they had opened a farm shop in their pub's outbuilding to sell local produce, convenience foods and home grown plants.



Betty Miners cutting the ribbon to open the new shop with Reg Clarke from Pub is The Hub, Anouska House, licensee and her partner Andy Andreou.

Betty Miners opens the Miner's Arms shop

Mithian's longest resident, Betty Miners officially opened a new village shop inside the Miner's Arms pub in April.

Licensee Anouska House used a £2,500 grant from Pub is The Hub and some of her own money to convert the pub's storeroom into a self-contained space serving fresh, local food, handmade crafts and displaying art from a number of local artists.

Anouska said: "We are a traditional village pub providing additional employment and an outlet for locally-made goods."

Royal Visits

Our patron HRH Highness The Prince of Wales helped to raise awareness of Pub is The Hub, rural pubs and rural communities in an unprecedented summer of five visits to projects around the country.

John Longden commented: "For the Pub is The Hub team of advisors and volunteers, it's been quite a summer. We've hoovered carpets, put banners up and down and drunk quite a lot of tea. We're incredibly grateful for the fantastic hospitality that each pub has provided – what a delightful and hard-working industry we work in!"



Library members, Tina Clements and Suzanne Warring talking to HRH The Prince of Wales with John Longden and Reg Clarke

CORNWALL: Popping in for a pint and a paperback

Heralding the start of National Countryside Week, HRH Highness The Prince of Wales celebrated the opening of the new community library at the Falmouth Arms at Ladock in Cornwall spending time talking to regular customers and meeting representatives from other community groups in the village.

Pub owners David and Emmeline Smith, decided to add this new community service to the usual pub offer by converting an old, unused pool room. One side of the room was fitted out with shelving and a computer terminal to access online library services.



WALES: Trio of Welsh pubs rolls out the red carpet

In July Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall paid visits to pub diversification projects in Wales as part of their annual Wales Week.

On Tuesday Charles and Camilla visited The Raven Inn, a community owned and run pub in Llanarmon-yn-Ial near Ruthin in Denbighshire. There the community had not only taken over the pub five years ago but had also more recently set up a community shop and a community brewery – Cwrw Lal Community Brewery.

The Royal couple pulled an eponymous pint of beer specially brewed for the occasion - The Prince of Wales - with Cwrw

lal brewer, Doug McPherson offering a guiding hand.

Then on Wednesday, it was HRH The Duchess of Cornwall's turn for a solo visit to The Royal Oak in Rhandir-mwyn near Landoverly in Carmarthenshire where they had recently opened a farm shop in the pub. There the owners, Chris Pollington and Rachel Byrne showed Camilla around and introduced her to their community groups and suppliers.

Finally on Friday HRH The Prince of Wales visited The Glan yr Afon Arms in Talgarreg near Landysul in Ceredigion. Owners Hefin and Megan Evans have run the pub since 1976 but it has been in Hefin's family

since 1954.

Malcolm Harrison, advisor for Wales commented: "We have been working on diversification projects with pubs in Wales for the last few years with the tremendous support of the Welsh Government and The Prince's Countryside Fund. It was entirely fitting that Their Royal Highnesses should pop in and see the imaginative and enterprising approach adopted by these champions for rural services and their terrific community spirit. Their support this week has been the cherry on top of a fantastic series of projects in Wales."

From left to right- John Longden, Chief Executive of Pub is The Hub watching Their Royal Highnesses pulling a pint of beer behind the bar at The Raven Inn, Llanarmon-yn-Ial, also watched by the brewer Doug McPherson of Cwrw Lal Community Brewery; Rachel Byrne & Chris Bollington having a cup of team with HRH The Duchess of Cornwall at the Royal Oak in Rhandir-mwyn; a member of the pool team at the Glan yr Afon in Talgarreg watching HRH The Prince of Wales playing a shot.

YORKSHIRE: Prince calls in for last orders



John Longden and licensee, Stuart Miller watch as HRH The Prince of Wales pulls a pint

After a day of engagements in Yorkshire, HRH The Prince of Wales popped into the local on his way home for a beer at The George and Dragon Inn, Hudswell, near Richmond.

Having closed in 2008 due to bankruptcy, the community raised the money to buy the pub and it was re-opened June 2010. Pub is The Hub supported them to set up 'The Little Shop' inside the pub a few months afterwards in December 2010. It is now run by lessees called Stuart and Melissa Miller.

Stuart and Melissa Miller said they were thrilled to have such a high-profile customer.

Calling time on no mobile coverage

In September Vodafone UK announced the launch of a new pilot scheme in partnership with Pub is The Hub to provide four rural community pubs with a reliable 3G indoor mobile coverage for the first time.

Called the Rural Community Pub programme, the pilot involves the installation of Vodafone's Premium Sure Signal, at four rural pubs – two in Norfolk and one each in Dyfed and Flintshire in Wales. The discreet 'femtocell' unit – about the size of a small broadband router – connects to each pub's existing fixed broadband connection and provides both reliable, deep indoor 3G voice coverage and high-speed 3G mobile internet access for employees and their regulars.

The Rural Community Pub pilot and Vodafone's innovative 'femtocell' schemes, help bring reliable coverage to rural communities without the need for a traditional mast. Pub is The Hub's work with rural communities to support rural services through diversification meant it was a natural partner when it came to identifying suitable pubs for a pilot scheme.

Paul Grothier, Landlord at The Cross Keys in Dilham commented: "I'm really proud that The Cross Keys is the first pub to go



live on the trial. Dilham is an area with very little mobile coverage and being on the Norfolk Boards, we get a lot of holiday makers coming into the pub who have previously been disappointed by the lack of coverage. Since the technology has gone live the pub has fantastic 3G coverage and fast data speeds. My customers, staff and business are reaping the benefits."

Steve Marquis, Landlord at the Blue Bell Inn, Halkyn added: "The Blue Bell Inn, Halkyn brings quite a bit of tourism to North East Wales and the 3G coverage that the Vodafone Rural Community Pub programme will bring could hopefully be one of the key drivers to increase the quality of a visit to our venue. Customers will have an instant way to share experiences here in this increasingly connected world."



Community owned pub moves into retail

Serving the community for over 200 years and in the hands of its' own villagers for nearly three, the White Horse at Upton in the Norfolk Broads branched out in April into retail, restoring an essential service back to their village.

Back in 2012 and threatened with closure, over £120,000 worth of shares for the pub were snapped up by the locals. Since then they have improved facilities and now Upton has a thriving pub and restaurant.

After hearing about Pub is The Hub the White Horse management team were able to apply for two grants to create their shop in an outside storeroom: A capital grant from Broadland District Council has been used to fund the building and construction

work and professional services whilst the £4k grant from Norfolk County Council's Community Services Fund has been used to pay for freezers, fridges, electronics, shelving display systems, security and lighting, and general shop fittings. Further funding was provided by the parish council.

Peter Crook, Director and Company Secretary for The White Horse Development Trust said: "I am happy to say that the shop was on our to 'do list' when we took the pub over in 2012 together with a lot of other projects such as a micro-brewery, installation of camping pods and a central fruit press for local produce. It was the announcement of grant availability from Norfolk County Council by Pub is The Hub

that rapidly elevated the shop to the top of our list, and the reality that it has now become.

"As a community enterprise the shop extends our role in the village to a wider clientele and has particular benefits for the older residents. As with the pub business we need to pay our way to be viable, but the real return is the social and community benefits the village enjoys.

Lindsay Latham, a local volunteer serves in the new shop



A pint and some popcorn



Jeremy Holmes, Terry Stork & Sue Whitaker enjoy the new cinema

The Chequers at Feltwell in Norfolk opened a community cinema, a book exchange and a senior citizens luncheon club in October to widen its appeal to the community providing services that they would otherwise have to drive over 20 miles to enjoy.

Pub is The Hub and Norfolk County Council have contributed £1,750 to the cost of the project and the licensee and freeholder, Jeremy Holmes, has matched the grant.

Cllr Sue Whitaker said: "I am really impressed with the effort that Jeremy has put into this initiative for his community. In Norfolk we are keen to support elderly people in keeping their independence for as long as possible and many urban pubs could learn a lot from some of the creative new services that rural pubs are introducing in partnership with Pub is The Hub."



Tea and t'internet

The Mermaid Inn at Elsing near Dereham broadened its appeal with broadband.

In June they opened a brand new range of services that included disabled access, a disabled toilet, a tea room and internet access that will also host IT training.

Licensee Helen Higgins and her partner Kevin Wills discovered that they could apply for a grant from Norfolk County Council's Community Services Fund to

improve disabled access and facilities for the pub. The addition of the tea room and internet provision should also help to combat isolation for local residents.

Helen said: "We're hoping that the improved access, disabled facilities, tea room and internet provision support the long-term viability of the pub business by maintaining footfall."

Above: Customers now enjoy internet access in the tea room

South Norfolk crowns its pub of the year



The Crown Inn, Pulham Market was named as South Norfolk Council's Community Pub of the Year 2015 in September in an annual award set up as part of Pub is The Hub's long-standing relationship with the local authority.

The runners up from each district were: The Railway Tavern, Framingham Earl, The Queen's Head, Hethersett, The King's Head Woodton and The Green Dragon, Wymondham.

Judges: Alison Thomas a South Norfolk District Councillor; Anthony Carol the Eastern Daily Press Community Editor; Terry Stork from Pub is The Hub and South Norfolk Deputy Council Leader Martin Wilby enjoy a drink outside The Crown at Pulham Market



And finally...

A warm welcome to Bernard Lee, our new advisor for the Cambridgeshire, Herts and Essex area.

Bernard joins us with many years' experience having provided BII training for over 12 years in the area as a BII accredited independent training provider. He has also served as regional Chairman for the BII in East Anglia,

He will be knocking on doors and spreading the word and looks forward to meeting licensees who are thinking of taking the plunge!

Get in touch

To make an enquiry, find out more about our work or to chat through an idea, please contact Sam Hope, in the Pub is The Hub office:

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