

# Pub is the Hub Case Study

**The Swinburne Arms, 31 Northside, Stamfordham, Northumberland NE18 0QG**



Stamfordham is a popular and thriving village of some 1,100 residents, which is approx.15 miles from Hexham and 10 miles from Ponteland. The village church is 13<sup>th</sup> Century, but the area around the village has its roots much further back in history. The village and surrounding area has a very strong farming history as well. The village is popular with walkers and cyclists, being on one of the Coast to Coast routes.

The Swinburne Arms is privately owned by the Capheaton Estate and had suffered a decline in village support until it was taken over by Rob and Anne Gormanley in August 2014. Although experienced business people, neither had run a pub, but this hasn't deterred them from throwing themselves 100% into putting the pub back at the heart of the community. The village shop closed down over 10 years ago. The Post Office also closed some time ago and is now hosted one afternoon per week from the village Hall. Bus services have also recently been cut back, making it even more difficult for local residents to access daily essentials. It very quickly became apparent that the village would benefit from having its village shop back and Rob and Anne identified that they could establish a shop in an outbuilding/old stable which had been used as storage space.

In February 2015 Rob and Anne approached Pub is The Hub to seek advice on creating a village shop. Our Yorkshire & NE Advisor visited the pub to offer advice on how to move the project forward and to see if it would qualify for our Community Services Fund Grant. The project had clear support from local residents, the Parish Council, the WI and the Vicar. The first priority was to obtain planning consent, which was duly granted in October 2015. PiTH also confirmed that the project would qualify for its maximum grant of £4,000. Once Planning Consent was in place Rob and Anne didn't waste any time and immediately embarked on the total renovation of the old stable, due to the keen interest and enthusiasm from the local community. Local contractors carried out the renovation works.

## Outcomes so far:

The Swinburne Arms Village Shop opened for business at the end of June 2016. The shelves are well stocked with everyday items such as milk, eggs, bread, dairy produce and other convenience foods including frozen meals. The shop stocks daily newspapers, magazines and greetings cards. The shop is proving increasingly popular as the word is spreading of its opening. Fresh bread and eggs are sourced from local suppliers. Rob and Anne are intending to expand stock from local suppliers over time and as they establish what fresh produce will sell. A number of older residents are now able to do their full shop in the new Swinburne Arms village store, saving them not only the time and inconvenience of having to travel to Ponteland or Hexham, but also the cost. The shop is proving very popular with the village's children and 2 part-time jobs have also been created for local residents.

## Lessons to Learn:

- Before setting out on a project it is essential to have the support and backing of the Parish Council and local community and to ensure that the project you are planning truly is wanted and needed by the community
- Carry out a survey to establish the 'Top 50' items residents would wish to see stocked in a local store
- Projects always take longer than anticipated to come to fruition so build some "slack" into your timetable
- There are always additional, hidden costs, so make sure you have a contingency built into your costings

Project Costs £	
Total Project Costs	22,000.00
Contribution from (eg local council)	NIL
Contribution from (eg pub co)	Landlord (Capheaton Estate) Contribution £4,000.00
Contribution from Licensee	£16,000.00
PCF/CSF Grant (if applicable)	£4,000.00

LICENSEE CONTACT:

Rob and Anne Gormanley

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PUB OWNER:

Private Lease from Capheaton Estate

For more information telephone 01423 546165 or email [enquiries@pubisthehub.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@pubisthehub.org.uk)