



pub is the hub

THE hub

News from the heart
of Pub is The Hub



Pubs broaden their appeal

WINTER 2016

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New services, same principles



This year Pub is The Hub celebrates 15 years of offering its special brand of advice, support and initiative to rural pubs who want to do a bit more for their communities.

The initial concept was inspired by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2001 as a result of his concern about the widespread closure of rural services. At that time closures for rural post offices, banks and shops were hitting the headlines and pubs looked like the ideal safe haven for continuity of service, utilising unused store rooms or side rooms.

Fifteen years on and the organisation has grown to cover England, Wales and this year, Scotland. Pubs are still opening shops and post offices as you will see through these pages but the range of services and activities has broadened to reflect changing social needs – and it's not difficult to guess what they are: we've opened micro libraries, set up IT

and internet training for the elderly, pop-up tea rooms and dementia-friendly lunches.

Isn't it ironic that in today's 'connected' society there are many people who still feel isolated and vulnerable through lack of essential services nearby? Luckily, this is where local pubs and good licensees can provide a very accessible solution as the one place that is open, warm and welcoming – and long may that continue!

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

Enterprising heroes reap rewards

Thanks to our sponsors



Regional award winners Chris and Liz Shore from The Bell at Wortwell

Three of the pubs that have recently diversified with the help of Pub is The Hub have picked up awards at this year's Enterprise Inns Community Heroes Awards that took place in October.

The Bell at Wortwell was the regional winner for East Anglia, winning £3,000 while the Coach and Horses in Draycott was regional runner-up for the West Midlands and the Royal Oak in Scopwick

was regional runner-up for the East Midlands; both runners-up won £1,000 prizes.

Enterprise Inns' Community Hero Awards recognise those licensees who make a real difference to the communities that they serve, going above and beyond the usual call of duty to bring people together and have a positive impact on the local community.

Life enhancing digital skills – from the pub

Pub goes at the Royal Oak and Castle at Pevensey in East Sussex were treated to a seven week computer course in September and October courtesy of the Barclays Digital Eagles Team.

Running once a week for a 90-minute morning the free sessions covered how to get online; using the internet securely and how to search for content; online shopping and keeping in touch with people.

Debby Fitton who runs the Royal Oak and Castle said: “Barclays provide the training for free and we provided free tea and coffee with cake. About fifteen people turned up on the first week but it settled to around a dozen regulars for the whole course. Many of the trainees were new to the pub and some have taken food menus away with them but it’s not about making more money, for us it’s about investing in our future.”

“One lady who came each week said that she had never walked into anywhere on her own before. She lives alone and was very nervous about coming in for the first time – but now that she has she says that she would feel confident enough to pop in for a coffee and sit in a corner with a magazine. If that’s the most that we get from running this course then it has been worth it.”

Zoe Clarke from Wealden District Council who co-ordinated the course added: “The Barclays Digital Eagles Team make these sessions friendly, and a great way to build confidence using computers and the internet. We’ve already been asked for another course at the pub with two other pubs in the pipeline for 2017.”



Tap into Tinder for a digital spark

The Tinder Foundation is a charity that seeks to improve peoples’ lives through better digital skills. They bring community partners together to deliver help to those who need the support and skills to get online and improve their life chances.

Through Pub is The Hub they are offering pubs the opportunity to become part of their UK online centres network, completely free of charge – as places where people can access training and internet access. Once part of the network pubs will receive regular updates and information about possible funding opportunities, access to low cost equipment and a wide range of online courses.

Any pubs interested in finding out more can call the business support team on 0114 349 1666 or email hello@tinderfoundation.org

New service for all ages

Scopwick village in Lincolnshire saw the revival of a much-needed village shop in October when it opened in The Royal Oak run by Claire Chesters and her son Jason.

The shop was opened by two of the youngest village residents, Evie Tomlinson (aged 4) and Evie Fenwick (aged 12) and one of the older residents, Paul Scholey demonstrating its appeal across the ages.

Claire and Jason had been running Enterprise Inns pub, The Royal Oak for almost a year and were inspired by a visit from Pub is The Hub advisor, Hugh Wilson to convert an underused side room into a shop that is monitored from the bar or kitchen by CCTV and a doorbell.

Claire Chesters said: “The shop has only been open a couple of weeks but it has already made a huge difference to villagers. The children who get off the bus after school love popping in for snacks and the older residents

enjoy picking up last minute essentials and having a chat without needing to travel miles to the nearest town. We have even offered to pop round with their order if they phone us.”

Claire Chesters with Evie Tomlinson (at the front), Evie Fenwick and Paul Scholey, local residents.



COMMUNITY SERVICES FUND CREATES COMMUNITY APPEAL FOR PUBS

Pints to post



Reg Clarke, Luke Hall MP, Jenna Hale and Marian Lewis, South Gloucestershire Councillor for Ladden Brook

Jenna Hale and Paul Jefferies re-opened a South Gloucestershire village shop and post office in an old barn at the back of their pub in October with the help of their local MP, Luke Hall.

Yate village had been without a post office and shop for more than a year until the couple discovered that they could apply for a grant to help towards the cost of converting the pub's disused barn.

Jenna said: "Although Paul and I have only been running the pub for two years, we are both from this area and thought it would be a great opportunity to offer the shop and post office service from The Codrington Arms. We have been overwhelmed with the support we have had from local people and the help from local businesses to convert the barn. We are especially grateful to Reg and Pub is The Hub for all their support."



Ploughing services back in

Sarah and Ted Williams at the Olde Plough Inn at Bere Ferrers in Devon have re-vamped an unloved and unused family room into a café and gift shop.

The café and shop caters for local and tourist trade in their remote location, situated on the peninsular between the river Tamar and Tavy and its speciality is in serving Devon-made ice cream from Salcombe Dairy.

With our help they decided to relaunch

the shop as a gift shop selling Devon-themed gifts along with pub-made jams and chutneys, locally pressed apple juice and an even wider range of Salcombe ice creams.

Sarah said: "Our re-vamped family room gives us the opportunity for long-term viability and an outlet for selling locally made or sourced produce from Devon. Apart from anything, we have the best ice cream for miles around!"



John Longden between Bobbie Jarvis, Secretary and John Pickup, Chair of Neenton Community Society

Pleasant play at The Pheasant

The award-winning community owned and run pub, The Pheasant at Neenton near Bridgnorth in Shropshire opened a children's community play area in August.

Keen to provide valuable resources for the village and surrounding area, Neenton Community Society set about creating a community play area in the garden of the pub. With advice and a grant from Pub is The Hub, supported by other donations and free labour, they have created a safe,

fun area for families.

John Pickup, Chairman of the Neenton Community Society said: "We've provided tables and seating next to the play area so parents can enjoy a drink or a bite to eat while the children play and families and children can access our new community play area whether the pub is open or not. We had a brilliant and very well-attended family fun day on bank holiday Monday to celebrate."



Terry Stork, Advisor for Pub is The Hub, Carolyn Nichols, volunteer for the pop-up tea room, Bernard Lee, Advisor for Pub is The Hub and Mike Downer, licensee for the Royal Oak.

Pop in to the pop-up tea room

Mike Downer, landlord of the Royal Oak in Laxfield near Woodbridge has just opened a new pop-up tea room, book exchange and IT Training space in his pub.

Set up in the pub's dining room, The Scrumptious Tea Shop is available during the day for access to the book exchange, regular IT training for computer and social media novices and a subsidised senior citizens luncheon club.

Pub is The Hub contributed towards the cost of computer equipment and for

converting the dining room into the pop-up team room from their Community Services Fund.

Mike Downer said: "Pub is The Hub have been wonderful in their support for our ideas here and have made our vision a reality. We hope that villagers will make use of and enjoy these new facilities."

Since the pop-up tea room opened in July, it has expanded to include breakfasts and takeaway food.



The cock crows again for its community

Alex and Rebecca Bourne re-opened the last remaining pub in the Suffolk village of Little Thurlow in July with the addition of a village shop and café to broaden the pub's appeal.

With other rural pubs in the area closing, the couple felt that they had to broaden the appeal and increase regular footfall to the pub.

Alex said: "These days people want convenience, not just beer and sandwiches. The shop is stocked with convenience items that people need every day as well as locally sourced and supplied goods. We have a coffee shop in the pub for mums and dads to meet after school and superfast broadband for self-employed home workers in the area."

Lucy Herring, Alex Bourne and Hanna Macintosh displaying a selection of their shop's essentials.

Scotland



Borders pub celebrates its famous heritage

A Scottish Borders pub held a two-day festival in October celebrating a famous Scottish poet to mark the launch of a new cultural heritage resource centre dedicated to his life and works.

In the first scheme of its kind in Scotland, Rosemary Brown and Kenny Hall, are licensees of the Allan Ramsay Hotel in Carllops, south of Edinburgh.

Built in 1792, the coaching inn was built in recognition of Allan Ramsay the poet more than thirty years after his death. As a regular visitor to the area it became the affectionate inspiration for some of his work. His son, also called Allan was a famous portrait artist whose celebrated works included portraits of King George III, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora McDonald.

The inaugural Allan Ramsay festival

took place on 15th and 16th October in conjunction with support from academics from the University of Glasgow, as well as local musical and theatrical groups and featured talks, workshops, an exhibition, a guided walk, a magazine and an Allan Ramsay dinner.

Rosemary explained how their unusual project came about: "With help from our Pub is The Hub advisor, Gordon Izatt, we created a questionnaire for local residents and we were lucky enough to have a 75% return rate. What came through loud and clear was that the village wanted the pub to celebrate their famous connection to the poetry and artistry of both Ramsays and to capitalise on relevant services for visitors to the area."

As a result – and with £3,720 in grant funding from the £30k fund announced by

the Scottish Government earlier in the year for rural pubs – there will be a permanent Allan Ramsay resource at the pub as well as Allan Ramsay themed rooms, guided walks around Carllops and educational signage at the pub and other significant locations in the area.

John Longden, Chief Executive of Pub is The Hub said: "This is the first project that we have done in Scotland in collaboration with the Scottish Borders Council and the Scottish Government so it seems apt that it should be to celebrate the lives of two of Scotland's most celebrated writers and artists.

The pub has also recently been awarded a Historic Scotland Commemorative Plaque.



Young Farmers challenge prince to cockerel racing

HRH The Prince of Wales delighted regulars at the New Inn in Llanddewi Brefi in Ceredigion in July by joining in with the Young Farmers' cockerel racing in the pub car park – a game where a wooden cockerel is reeled in from behind on string.

The Prince was at the pub as part of his annual visits in Wales and at the invitation of Pub is The Hub, the rural pubs champion. He called in to meet the landlady, Yvonne Edwards and several community groups to learn more about a recent diversification project at the pub to improve local services.

In November 2014 Pub is The Hub completed a project at the pub to extend the back room and install a state-of-the-art sound and Wifi system with drop down screen and projector to create a community meeting room and cinema. Since then the room has been used almost daily by groups such as the Women's Institute, Young Farmers, a Pudding Club for the local PTA, embroidery guild, dominoes club and local artists. It also provides the space for film nights and regular fund raising events.

In June 2015 The Women's Institute were even able to live stream a broadcast from the Albert Hall for the NFWI's Centenary Annual Meeting thanks to the Wifi, screen and projection facilities.

The pub has also set up a book exchange area for customers and sells local produce

on behalf of the producers including jams, preserves and chutneys as well as hosting a darts and football team.

HRH spent over an hour at the pub meeting all of the community groups involved and Yvonne was on hand to introduce him to everyone there. Afterwards she said: "I was quite overwhelmed with the impact of the visit today and we will be talking about this for years to come." Yvonne has run the pub for 26 years, taking over from her mother, the previous landlady.



His Royal Highness joins in the cockerel racing with the Young Farmers Club.



His Royal Highness chatting to one of the art group regulars



Licensee Yvonne Edwards welcomed His Royal Highness to the pub



His Royal Highness arrives at the New Inn as is welcomed by a crowd of local school children

Fundraising

Pub finalists show their appreciation



John Longden makes his appeal

Guests at the Morning Advertiser's Great British Pub Awards in October raised a whopping £4,205 for the Community Services Fund.

Following a short presentation by Chief Executive John Longden and a film showing the work of Pub is The Hub, the six hundred guests were asked if they would like to contribute to the Community Services Fund.

John Longden commented: "I cannot believe the generosity of people at the event – many of whom were licensees themselves. The money raised at the event could help as many as four or five licensees to realise their ideas and dreams in supporting their communities."

Online link for donations goes live

Pub is The Hub has launched an online donation facility on its website for the Community Services Fund.

Regular fundraising is a part of everyday life within Pub is The Hub as the organisation does not have any long-term funding – it exists on goodwill and donations from drinks and pub companies, grants from government, the Big Lottery and the Prince's Countryside Fund and funding from other interested organisations.

The new online donation link shows a short film about Pub is The Hub and allows individuals or businesses to make personal donations to the organisation.

Simon Theakston, the Chairman of Pub is The Hub said: "As fundraising is a constant item on our agenda we wanted to make it easier to make donations to our

East Sussex pub is in the Inn Crowd



Actor Ben Duke from Lost Dog Dance

Following the successful live theatre productions in pubs in East Anglia earlier in the year The Inn Crowd partnership between Applause Rural Touring and Creative Arts East has moved down the coast to East Sussex.

In November the latest production of Paradise Lost took place to a capacity crowd at the Roebuck Inn at Loughton in East Sussex. The production had been specially adapted for a pub audience in a one-man staging of Milton's epic poem condensed into 70 minutes, combining theatre, comedy and movement.

Any rural licensees or community organisers in East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire or Suffolk that would like to host Inn Crowd performances in local pubs can contact Pub is The Hub for more information.

Sam's our man at the Frankfurt Marathon

His day job sees him running a PR agency for food and drinks brands but Sam Houston is a superhero in his spare time!

Sam ran the Frankfurt Marathon in October, sponsored by one of his drinks clients, Krombacher Lager but his fund raising efforts were all in aid of Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund and he managed to raise over £950 in total.

It was an incredibly tough but fantastic experience so I have to thank Krombacher for the opportunity. It's obviously disappointing to get whooped by 7 minutes by my little brother Jack but I'm delighted with the time of 4 hours 32 mins. I know just how important pubs are to communities so it's brilliant to have raised some much needed funds for a fabulous cause and I'm looking forward to seeing how they will be used."

John Longden, Chief Executive for Pub is The Hub said: "It's rare that we have

personal donations like this and we have to say that Sam really has gone the extra mile (or should that be 26 miles) for pubs and we congratulate him."



Sam runs the extra 26 miles for Pub is The Hub

Community Services Fund – whether it is from someone who has seen the direct benefit of one of our pub schemes to people like Sam Houston (our marathon runner) who wanted to raise money for a cause that he thought was important."

If anyone is interested in making a donation, you can find the link at www.pubisthehub.org.uk/donate

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:

T: 01423 546165 **E:** samhope@pubisthehub.org.uk **W:** www.pubisthehub.org.uk

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It would be great to hear your ideas and comments and news.