

Pub is the Hub Case Study

THE ALLAN RAMSAY HOTEL, CARLOPS, BORDERS EH26 0NF



Rosemary Brown and Kenny Hall are recent entrants to the licensed trade having taken on a lease of the Allan Ramsay pub, restaurant and hotel following the owner's relocation to Edinburgh. Whilst a highly visible site on a busy main road the hotel was not popular with locals and lacked a quality image. Carlops has a small population of just 100 residents. 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.

When Rosemary and Kenny first approached Pub is The Hub for help and advice about how their pub could play a part in community life they were advised to devise a community questionnaire.

With help from the Pub is The Hub the couple created a questionnaire for local residents with 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. The licensee researched and produced detailed research in co-operation with Glasgow University and sourced a wide variety of artifacts and historical references relating to the Ramsays.

As a result – and with £3,720 in grant funding by the Scottish Government – the couple have since set up provision for a take away food service from the pub; information about local walks around the areas mentioned in the Ramsay poetry; and are looking into bike hire provision for mountain bikers to explore the neighbouring Pentland Regional Park.

More specifically there will be a permanent Allan Ramsey resource at the pub to include copies of key works by Ramsey senior, a specially commissioned reproduction of an historic portrait depiction of Allan Ramsay as The Gentle Shepherd and prints of select paintings by Allan Ramsay junior to decorate the hotel's restaurant. There will be an Allan Ramsay themed rooms and guided walk around Carlops as well as pertinent signage at the pub and other significant locations in the area.

With the presentation of the Alan Ramsay story at its core the Allan Ramsay Hotel will celebrate an annual festival to commemorate the history and culture of the Hotel. Other cultural aspects will be presented throughout the year to maintain activity and interest.

Outcomes so far:

Huge interest has been generated across Scotland giving rise to increased visitor numbers and a re-engagement with the community establishing the Hotel as a focal point for local activities.

The hotel received the honour of having a Historic Scotland plaque in recognition of the hotel's historical and cultural significance and was unveiled by Christine Grahame MSP in October 2016.

Lessons to Learn:

The survey of local residents proved to be an invaluable source of inspiration and support for the project.

The strong cultural background to the project should not be seen as lacking or denying involvement at a local level and generating enthusiasm within the community.

Project Costs	
£	
Total Project Costs	£4,720
Contribution from Licensee	£1,000
CSF Grant (if applicable)	£3,720

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Private Lease

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