

# Pub is the Hub Case Study

---

**THE BOOT, FRESTON STREET, FRESTON, SUFFOLK, IP9 1AB**



## Background

[The Boot](#) is a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed pub located in the small rural village of Freston, situated on the top of Freston Hill with commanding views of the Orwell River its iconic bridge.

The Boot Inn had been closed for 10 years, and recently reopened, after extensive major renovations, with licensee Mike Keen at the helm. The location of the pub makes it an ideal staging post for people travelling to and from the Shotley Peninsula. Mike is acutely aware of this and is already attracting this passing trade alongside the many locals who are pleased to have their pub back.

## Project Summary

Mike's vision was to re-create the feel of a pub before technology took over and started making face to face conversation redundant so The Boot has old pub games with no fruit machines or jukeboxes. Part of this same thinking means that there are no TVs on the premises that would ruin the atmosphere. However, Mike acknowledged that there was still a place for watching important events and classic films and decided to convert the outbuilding adjacent to the pub car park into a small cinema.

## Outcomes

Supported by Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund, Mike set about bringing his vision into reality and, after many technical setbacks, the [cinema was completed in July 2018](#), just a month after the pub opened. Customers can now have a unique viewing experience in this 15-seat, art deco style cinema as an exclusive community space. The cinema has given the villagers and the wider community a much-needed asset and this combined with the children's play area, kitchen garden, wedding paddock, numerous livestock (chickens, ducks, bees, snails a tame raven) and soon-to-be-setup senior citizens luncheon club, the pub is bringing both young and old together helping to reduce social exclusion, and making The Boot the hub of the village.

## Lessons to Learn

- In Mike Keen the community has a licensee with the vision to carry through his idea and recoup the rewards
- The new facilities are helping to combat loneliness and isolation for all types of people in the community
- The pubs and its range of services is enhancing the cohesion and the sustainability of this rural community
- This project is generating a positive perception of the pub

## Project Costs

Pub is The Hub Community Services Grant	£3,000
Applicant's contribution	£8,769
Total cost of the project	<b>£11,769</b>

**LICENSEE CONTACT:**  
**TEL:**  
**PUB OWNER:**

Mike Keen  
 01473 780722  
 Private Investor

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