

Pub is the Hub Case Study

THE BLACK PIG, BARNSOLE RD, CANTERBURY, KENT CT3 1LE



The Black Pig is a traditional oak beamed pub on the edge of the village of Staple (population 700) which is a dormitory for Canterbury, Deal and the North Kent Coast.

The current licensee, Billy Morgan, took on the pub, which was then closed, in the Summer of 2017 and saw an opportunity to rebuild the trade by offering good locally sourced food and developing a further income stream by refurbishing five letting bedrooms. The accommodation was particularly attractive to tourists visiting from mainland Europe given its proximity to the port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel. The pub plays host to a variety of local events – supper clubs, wine tastings - featuring wines from a local vineyard - baby showers and the like.

Background:

In September 2017 the bus service serving the village was axed leaving residents young and old without the benefit of public transport to access shops, a post office and other community services in nearest towns and the village of Ash. Given this development the licensee saw an opportunity to reinforce links with his local community and distributed a questionnaire via the local Parish magazine to gauge opinion on the merits of opening a shop and café at The Black Pig.

Project Summary:

In consultation by the pub operator, Ei Group, Billy decided to convert a room at the pub - served by a separate entrance to the rest of the pub - into a shop and café. He applied to Pub is The Hub for a grant of £3,000 towards the overall cost of refurbishment, purchasing equipment and signage. The shop now provides the essential daily supplies for locals, a café offering food and refreshments throughout the day and a range of premium locally produced products that would appeal to visitors to the area and the pub.

Along with the food available on the pub's menus the provenance of the food available in the shop reflects the importance placed on this aspect of the Black Pig's offer. Fruit and vegetables; bread, morning goods and cakes; delicatessen, cheeses and chilled cured meats are all sourced from suppliers within 5 miles of the pub. Links with a local newsagent have also meant that the shop carries a range of daily newspapers.

Outcomes so far:

- The shop and tea room are well used and have proved to be a lifeline, not only residents of Staple but also other nearby villagers. Local residents who are not nor have been habitual users of the Black Pig are now regulars.
- The viability of the licensee's business has been strengthened as a result of the additional turnover which is now an established part of the weekly income as opposed to the sporadic income generated by functions in the past. In addition, the development of a shop and café has created two new part-time jobs for local people.

Lessons to Learn:

- A relatively modest investment can have a beneficial impact on the range of services available to a community.
- Using a pub as the basis for such services can elevate its status amongst local residents and help foster community relations generally.



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- Such developments can form the base for further community service developments such as Post Office services that are now being considered as the next stage in the Black Pig's diversification.

Total Project Costs	£9,000
Contribution from Licensee	£6,000
Pub is The Hub's Community Services Grant	£3,000

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