

Pub is the Hub Case Study

THE GREEN DRAGON, EXELBY, BEDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE DL8 2HA



Background

Exelby is a small rural Dales community of about 80 households about 3 miles from the market town of Bedale in North Yorkshire.

In the past the Green Dragon traded successfully as a traditional village community free house but when the owners retired the pub was bought by a pub operating company and run as a tied lease.

During this time Pub is The Hub worked with the pub company and the lessees to set up a village shop within the pub but it subsequently became apparent that the pub company was keen to sell the property which consisted of pub, car park, land and adjoining cottage, as a development opportunity.

Community Purchase

Concerned that they might lose their vital community asset, local residents formed The Exelby Green Dragon Group in late 2016 with the aim of buying and revitalising the pub. During this time they continued to work with Pub is The Hub on the village shop project.

The community successfully applied for the pub and associated land to be listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) and began to raise funds to buy the pub through a share offer scheme and a grant and loan through the 'More Than a Pub' scheme.

The pub company agreed to sell the entire premises to the community group and the purchase was completed in October 2018 and included a deal with a local house builder to develop five houses on the land and re-site the car park.

The Green Dragon reopened for business in a limited way in December 2018 under the stewardship of the Green Dragon Community Benefit Society and the newly appointed tenants, Tom and Becci Baker. Building work and refurbishment to recreate a comfortable pub at the heart of the village began immediately.

Project Summary

The basic refurbishment complete, phase two of the development plan was to convert part of the ground floor into a village shop with support, advice and some funding from Pub is The Hub.

Part way through the shop project the group identified a second project to create a cafe in the room adjoining the shop, again supported and part-funded through Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund.

After a huge concerted effort, both were open in time for the Tour de Yorkshire in early May 2019.

The shop and cafe are open from 9am to 5.00pm on weekdays and Saturday and 9am until midday on Sunday. At other times shop items can be bought over the bar. The shop stocks essential items, locally sourced produce and delicatessen style goodies such as local chutneys, pork pies, fresh bread from the Bedale Community Bakery and scotch eggs made in pub kitchen.

Pub is the Hub Case Study

The next phase is to refurbish rooms on the first floor of the pub to create three B&B rooms.

Outcomes

The shop and cafe both operate when the pub is closed in the mornings and both bring a much-needed service and focus to the community and appeal to new people and villagers who wouldn't normally use the pub. Meanwhile the new services save locals an 8-mile round trip to Bedale.

The cafe works well as a morning meeting place for villagers and as a stopping place for walkers or cyclists and customers can purchase a pack of their favourite coffee or tea from the shop. As well as being a focal point for the village the shop and cafe also employs three local people and there is another role which spans the shop/cafe and bar.

The community is fully behind the whole project which has so far seen complete renovation of the pub with new toilets, bar, kitchen, beer garden, shop and cafe and creation of the village's first affordable housing in the renovated adjoining cottage.

The Green Dragon is the only social meeting point in the village and through its success now employs 15 people. The pub, cafe and shop are an essential rural service thanks to a huge community effort galvanised by a dedicated and talented committee and excellent tenants.

Project Costs

Shop	Total Cost*	£3,807
	Contribution by the community	£807
	Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund grant	£3,000
Cafe	Total Cost*	£3,328
	Contribution by the community	£328
	Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund grant	£3,000

*In both projects the shell of the rooms and provision of electricity and plumbing were at the expense of the Green Dragon Community Benefit Society and carried out by local trades people and volunteers.

LICENSEE CONTACT:

Tom and Becci Baker

TEL:

01677 427715

PUB OWNER:

Green Dragon Community Benefit Society

For more information telephone 01423 546165 or email enquiries@pubisthehub.org.uk