

Pub is the Hub Case Study

THE BELL INN, LOWER BROADHEATH, WORCESTERSHIRE



Lower Broadheath is a picturesque village in the Malvern Hills district of Worcestershire with a population of 1,728 and situated about 3 miles north-west of Worcester. The village has a village hall, church and a primary school. There are also two pubs and a restaurant in the village.

Broadheath is the birthplace of the English composer Edward Elgar. The cottage in which he was born is now a museum managed by the National Trust.

Lower Broadheath Stores and Post Office closed two years ago in 2017 and it was more than a mile to the nearest shop and two miles to the nearest Post Office, both of which were hard to reach without a car. With permission and support from licensees Ian and Lyndsey Davies, a mobile Post Office was set up in the car park of The Bell Inn on Monday mornings to provide a temporary solution until a permanent Post Office could be provided.

The community quickly galvanised to reinstate this crucial amenity as the Lower Broadheath Community Shop Ltd and sold shares to raise almost £40,000. Ian and Lyndsey immediately offered to give up parking spaces in their car park to site the community-run enterprise.

In developing the scheme, the community were lucky to be able to receive grant funding from several different sources; £10,000 from the National Lottery Awards for All, £3,000 from the Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation and £3,000 from Pub is The Hub from its Community Services Fund – the latter through Ian and Lyndsey's association with the project.

Pub is The Hub's advisor also liaised between Ian and Lyndsey and their pub operating company to ensure that there was a separate lease agreement in place between the community and the landlord.

Project Summary:

- The Community Shop in Martley Road, Lower Broadheath has been beautifully fitted with wooden shelves and bunting for a farm-shop feel.
- The shop sells household essentials, newspapers and local produce including milk, cheese, crisps, honey, eggs, ice cream, bakery, meats and beer.
- There is a wide range of Post Office services over 27 hours a week – significantly longer than they had before. These opening hours make it far more convenient for customers to visit.
- It is also a new social centre for villagers to meet, with chairs and high chairs for younger children. It is a gathering place for Mums with children right through to the elderly.

Project Outcomes:

- The shop is run by more than 50 volunteers from teenagers to pensioners and 14 of these volunteers have undergone the additional training to serve Post Office customers. There are two part-time managers that are paid – Jessica Ronan and Victoria Howells.
- It is very convenient for those without cars, but also for those with businesses in the village who can bring their takings or for those local business people who sell items online.
- The social centre has proved a great meeting place for the community, especially the lonely and the isolated. They have Mums from the village with their children to pensioners. The shop volunteers, many of whom are retired, have also said that their new roles have given them a sense of purpose and they feel useful again and they also really enjoy meeting the community. They also have young people gaining work experience.



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Total Project Cost	£39,000
Raised by the community in shares and donations	£23,000
National Lottery Awards for All	£10,000
Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation	£3,000
Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund	£3,000

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