

## Pub is the Hub Case Study

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### THE PLOUGHSHARE, BEESTON, NORFOLK PE32 2NF



Beeston is a village in the county of Norfolk, in the civil parish of Beeston with Bittering. The heart of Beeston was originally clustered around the church but is now a scattered village with its heart nearly a mile east of the original village. Beeston has been a thriving village with many small businesses recorded throughout its history; in the nineteenth century such tradesmen included a shoemaker, a baker, a blacksmith and a wheelwright. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Beeston is still a thriving village and one of the few local villages still to have its own school and public house.

The Beeston Ploughshare dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century but it sadly closed in 2016. The pub was the heart of the village and the closure of the only pub in the village was a major blow to this rural community. The villagers were determined to save the pub and setup Beeston Community Enterprise Ltd. After many protracted battles with the owner they finally got the keys in January 2019, and on entering the premises they found a neglected, dilapidated pub.

Dozens of volunteers then set to work to transform this derelict pub into an outstanding asset for the community; the intention was to return the Ploughshare to the thriving business it once was as a traditional village pub.

#### Project Summary

The committee were aware of Pub is The Hub and made contact for some advice when the Ploughshare initially closed. However, because of the long drawn out discussions with the owner it took three years to finally secure the property. The main focus then, of course, was to get the pub up and running and the Beeston Ploughshare reopened on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019. They then talked with Pub is The Hub's adviser again and discussed their intention to create a café and a shop in two separate rooms, both with their own entrance on the frontage of the pub.

The first phase of the project was to completely refurbish the room chosen for the café and get this completed before starting on the shop. On completion, the café was an immediate success which gave them the impetus to start work on the room designated for the shop and it was accomplished in double quick time.

These two new facilities have a shared patio area at the front of the pub and look very impressive, which is a credit to the hard work, time and money that the many volunteers put into these projects.

#### Outcomes

The café quickly became a meeting place with many of the villagers calling-in for tea, coffee and homemade cakes; helping people to get out and socialise. With the shop being next door they can pop in for their essential items and fresh produce, many of which are locally sourced and thereby helping local business. Many of the customers walk to the pub, giving them a healthier lifestyle and an environmental saving with less car use reducing the carbon footprint. The villagers and wider community have shown their appreciation for the café and shop by returning time and again, making these projects a success and also helping the Ploughshare with its inclusive policy to be the hub of the village.

#### Project Capital

Cost of café	£8,710
Cost of shop	£7,434
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>£16,144</b>
Applicant's own contribution	£10,144
Grants from Pub is The Hub's Community Services Fund	£6,000

#### CONTACT:

#### TEL:

#### PUB OWNER:

Geoff Sorrell

01328 598995

Beeston Community Enterprise Ltd

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