

Pub is the Hub Case Study

THE THOROLD, MARSTON, GRANTHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE, NG32 2HQ – CAFÉ



The rural villages of Hougham and Marston have a combined population of around 600 people in 221 houses. There is no other pub, shop, café or other communal space and there is no public transport through either village, further limiting the opportunities. When the pub and shop closed, the community and Parish Council registered the building as a Community Asset.

The Thorold Arms Community Benefit Society was set up in 2016 and run by local volunteers, to address the loss of this vital community asset – the only village shop and pub in this very small rural community in Lincolnshire that stood vacant, with little, or no maintenance for several years. The building, pub and shop meant a lot to this local community and its loss was devastating for the villagers. Following a three-year campaign, the community successfully purchased the pub and shop through a community shares offer in July 2018.

Project Summary:

The aim of the Thorold group was for the pub to become the centre of village and villager's life as a community hub offering a café, small shop, pub, bed and breakfast, meeting room and home to various groups such as IT support, book club, meals on wheels, parcel drop, chess club, pumpkin club, mindfulness sessions and small support groups as identified and requested by the villagers.

The community approached Pub is The Hub and was able to successfully apply for a Community Services Grant of £3,000 to enable the pub to develop a cafe. Its primary function is to serve drinks and refreshments during the day and is pivotal for most of the social inclusion activities such as pensioners' lunches, coffee mornings, knit and natter and a book club.

The community have also been successful in providing a post office service in the pub each Wednesday morning from 9.30am to 12.30pm and their hope is to continue to develop the pub's space to maintain its long term sustainability with a shop, accommodation and a meeting room. In doing so, they hope that the pub will provide jobs, volunteering and training opportunities for local people. They have employed a professional manager, Rob Morley, to run The Thorold.

The group also have ambitions to encourage visitors into the area and want The Thorold to become a "go to" destination for the many drivers, cyclists and walkers that pass by on the Viking Way and various circular walks centred around the village.

Outcomes so far:

The Thorold re-opened in November 2019, quickly followed by the community café serving hot drinks and refreshments daily. It is early days and the team are now developing the food they want to offer.

Projects Costs:

Community Services Fund from Pub is The Hub	£3,000
Total Project Costs	£3,000

LICENSEE CONTACT:

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