Pub is the Hub Case Study

SYCAMORE INN SHOP, PARWICH, DERBYSHIRE, EAST MIDLANDS

APPLICANT AND BACKGROUND

The Sycamore Inn is located in Parwich, a small isolated village in the Peak District National Park, serving a population of around 769 residents, living locally and in the rural hinterland. The pub is owned by Frederic Robinson Limited, and has been run for the past 7 years by licensee, Janet Gosling.

The village has a school, but no other services, and has recently lost one of the daily buses. There are many people in the village who are unable to drive and a significant number of elderly residents, who rely on the shop, as the nearest shops are located in Ashbourne, which is seven miles away.

The village shop closed in March 2008, and the licensee contacted Pub is the Hub following approaches from locals who were concerned about the loss of the shop. The licensee was able to demonstrate community backing for her idea with a petition from local residents and a letter of support from the Parish Council.

Financial resources from the East Midlands Development Agency enabled Pub is the Hub to act quickly and work with the licensee to set up the new shop. Immediately, the pub was able to purchase fixtures and fittings from the old shop, in addition to some new equipment, and relocate the new shop in the pub.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The shop has been created by converting an unused room. The space is ideally suited, located at the front of the pub near the main entrance, with a window facing into the village onto the main road. The work involved included the fitting out of the shop to include shelving, a fridge and freezer, and all ancillary equipment. The grant also contributed towards creating a storage area for stock. The shop is open during pub opening hours, and has created one part-time job. The new shop sells a full range of goods, including fresh local produce and bread, together with firewood, pet foods and newspapers.

OUTCOMES

This project has demonstrated how, with support and capital grant funding, the village pub can respond quickly to the loss of rural services. The local community showed very strong support towards the new pub-based shop, which in turn gave the licensee the confidence to invest in this valuable service. This resulted in the new shop being open in the pub within four weeks of the old shop closing. This project has increased the vitality and viability of the pub, and further enhanced its existing community role as the 'hub' of the village. The new shop will benefit local people, make use of local suppliers, and also provide a valuable tourism service to walkers and other visitors.

The project has created local employment, providing one part-time job, and since opening, a laundry drop-off and collection service has also been established, and a community computer linked to the Internet is soon to be installed.

LESSONS TO LEARN

- Strong support from the Parish Council and local residents gave the licensee confidence to develop the service.
- Good use made of a redundant space in the existing building.
- The low cost of the project demonstrates that pub-based shops can be developed cost-effectively.
- The availability of grant funding from East Midlands Development Agency enabled Pub is the Hub to act quickly, resulting in the new shop opening within four weeks of the previous shop closing.

PROJECT CAPITAL COSTS

Total project capital costs	£5,827.46
Applicant contribution	£2,913.73
East Midlands Development Agency grant contribution	£2,913.73

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PUB IS THE HUB CONTACT: Mr Hugh Wilson. Tel. 01423 546165