

**Melksham Area Board in Partnership with
'Pub is the Hub'**

Executive Summary

The Community Engagement Manager, working in partnership with [Pub is the Hub \(PITH\)](#), is seeking to secure a funding contribution towards the delivery of an initiative that will provide additional community services from The Foresters Arms. The project will be led by PITH, who will be responsible for securing all necessary funding and managing the implementation of the project. A contribution of £500 is now sought from the area board towards the project.

Proposal

The PITH is a not for profit advisory service working with local pubs and breweries in Wiltshire, helping them to diversify their offer to the local community. The first project in Wiltshire – The Penruddocke Arms in Dinton – helped to create a village shop and bakery. See Appendix 1 for more information. The Community Engagement Manager has been working with PITH and the Licensee Beverly Dempsey to develop a local project that would extend the community offer provided. The project would see a community park introduced to the rear of the premises. This would consist of a new children's play park, a small wildflower meadow and a creation of space for market stalls. This space would be completely accessible to members of the community and not just patrons of the pub.

PITH will lead this project, bringing their extensive knowledge and experience from other schemes they have helped to establish throughout the UK. They will contribute £1,000 towards this project, with the Foresters Arms contributing another £800. The approximate project cost is £2,300.00 and the request from the Area Board is for a £500 contribution. PITH will assist landlords directly to ensure any proposed scheme is viable, affordable and sustainable in the longer term. The Community Engagement Manager will liaise with the local agent and assist with promotion of the scheme to local communities, parish councils and businesses in the area.

Reasons for Proposal

The project directly addresses several key JSA priorities including support for existing benefits and combating loneliness and isolation. In its business plan, Wiltshire Council emphasises the need to support communities and local organisations to experiment with new innovative solutions to local issues. *Pub is the Hub* provides an innovative solution to ensuring the sustainability of local services and enhancing their use for the future.

Recommendation

That Melksham area board allocates £500 capital funding to PITH to support the project outlined above, subject to standard grant terms and conditions.

Rhys Schell

Melksham Community Engagement Manager

WILTSHIRE PROJECT BANK

Pub is the Hub

“We want to help communities and local organisations to experiment with new innovative solutions to local issues.” – Wiltshire Council Business Plan, 2017 - 2027

Pub is the Hub is a not for profit organisation who offer advice and support to communities who are looking to relocate, re-open or introduce vital services and activities in their local pub, as well as to communities considering the options for acquiring their local pub and the range of responsibilities involved. They encourage communities, good licensees, pub owners, breweries and the private sector to work together and match local priority community needs with additional services which could be provided by the local pub and a good licensee.

In a nutshell:

The types of initiatives that can be explored are wide and varied – there are no limits to the ideas providing they are offering additional services for the benefit of the wider community. As well as providing food, drink and entertainment a pub can also be a place where you can read a book, find out about the local area, stay for the night or chat with friends over a coffee after the morning school run. One example is taking a spare store room or outbuilding in a village pub and turning it into a valuable community asset through restoring an essential village service.

What makes this project special?

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales inspired the formation of *Pub is the Hub* in 2001, stating that *“rural communities, and this country’s rural way of life, face unprecedented challenges. The country pub, which has been at the heart of village life for centuries, is disappearing in many areas. Providing services from the pub, such as a post office or a shop, keeps an essential service in the village.”*

The *Pub is the Hub* approach enables the community’s priorities to be matched to new services, which can be provided by licensees in their pubs. It’s about bringing interested groups and organisations together, often for the first time, to meet common goals and help local initiatives take place. This can ensure people access services in locations that make sense to them and by integrating these services with an existing social venue it gives both the old and new venture a better chance of long-term, sustainable success.

Reasons for supporting *Pub is the Hub* include:

- It helps to support, sustain and enhance a vital local service.
- It provides a local facility and/or opportunity for people to meet together.
- The new service benefits tourists or workers passing through the area.
- It provides an opportunity for local people to volunteer or share their interests.



Wiltshire pub re-opens a shop and bakery for the village

A new village shop and bakery has opened in the local pub at Dinton near Salisbury in South Wiltshire with support from the Community Services Fund.

Margaret Tonson, the village's long-serving ex-postmistress and shopkeeper officially opened the Village Shop and Bakery yesterday at [The Penruddocke Arms](#), a year after the previous village shop closed down. Free house owners of the pub, Matt Keel and Carly Hunt have set up their shop in an old disused games room at the side of the pub.

Having heard about the work of Pub is The Hub in supporting pubs to diversify their businesses, they made contact with the local advisor, Reg Clarke. He was able to advise and support them on their project whilst also obtaining a grant of £1,500 from the organisation's Community Services Fund towards cost of refurbishing the games room to the shop. Brewer, Greene King also contributed £400 towards the cost of a fridge.

The shop is accessible through a separate door to the pub and is open seven days a week from 7.30am to 6.30pm from Monday to Saturday and from 8am to 4pm on Sunday. It sells newspapers, convenience foods and local produce and will be staffed entirely by family members, with Matt and Carly's mums and two sisters.

Carly, who grew up in Dinton said: "When we heard that the old shop was closing, I really wanted to take it on but it was just too far from the pub to make it viable for us. It was our accountant who suggested that we look at redeveloping the old games room and to contact Pub is The Hub for advice.

"With our own investment and the grant from Pub is The Hub we hope that the shop will save the villagers from having to drive too far for their everyday groceries. We have started up a delivery service for those who can't drive to us – I have children at the school so I'm in the village twice a day – and we serve hot takeaway food and coffees."

She added: "We have been open for a couple of weeks now and it has gone far better than we thought it would."

The photograph above features Margaret Tonson, the ex-post mistress for Dinton, Reg Clarke from Pub is The Hub and Carly Hunt, owner and licensee of the pub

