

York Campaign for Real Ale

Why The Fox PH in Stockton on the Forest is an Asset of Community Value

The Fox public house is currently shut, but negotiations are in an advanced stage for the purchase of the property by a local resident who has stated that they intend to open the pub again for the benefit of the village and they also have indicated that they welcome it being listed as an Asset of Community Value.

There was a public meeting in Stockton Village Hall in April to discuss making an application for an ACV listing at which over 100 residents attended and overwhelmingly backed the proposal and signed up as nominees – accompanying documentation for this application will evidence this.

There is overwhelming evidence plus testimony from local residents that the pub in the recent past furthered the social wellbeing and social interests of the local community and will continue to do so once open again later this year.

When it was open:

1. The Fox Inn had an inclusive policy and was openly family and dog friendly to encourage the widest number of people to use it.
2. The pub served food five days a week, with regular specials board and discounted meals for older diners. In addition, food could be ordered to takeaway.
3. The pub hosted a weekly quiz night incorporating a weekly card bingo session. These events attract a range of regular and not so regular customers. On average there were 30-50 attendees.
4. The pub put on music gigs from time to time which helped nurture local talent and provide entertainment for villagers rather than having to go into York.
5. The pub was used by various local organisations as the venue for meetings, including the Parent/Teachers Committee, Village Hall Committee, Women's Institute, walking groups, fishing groups, cycling groups, pétanque club, Stockton Players Amateur



Dramatic Society as well as other ad-hoc bookings by local people

6. The pub had a darts team and also hosted dominoes evenings.
8. The pub had Sky Sports TV enabling sports fans to socialise with other like minded people when watching football; rugby and other high profile sports.
9. The pub has three letting bedrooms which will attract visitors to the village and enhance the growth of other local services such as the village shop and garden centre.

It is worth stressing the importance of public houses in rural locations which is back up by expert research.

[REDACTED] the University of Northumbria authored a research paper called "Community Cohesion and Village Pubs in Northern England: An Econometric Study" studied data that comprised 1,488 rural pubs operating within 715 parishes serving a population of over 400,000 individuals located across Northern England.

Their research demonstrates the importance of pubs for maintaining rural areas in these regions and they came to some key conclusions:

"The traditional village pub is an essential feature of the rural scene, as much like the local market or parish church they act as a meeting place where inhabitants can socialize."

"Findings generated from the analysis identified a positive impact exercised by pubs on the levels of social engagement within rural parishes. The SEM analysis proposed not only corroborates evidence from previous studies, but also provides evidence of a possible cause–effect relationship between the presence of pubs and higher levels of community cohesion in the rural parishes examined."

"The closure of rural pubs is strongly associated with the decline of social drinking and increasing levels of alcohol consumption in private premises. It is vital the Government supports rural pubs with appropriate policies to ensure our rural way of life is maintained."

In conclusion, The Fox public house will be a community hub for people to meet and socialise in a safe environment, including those people who meet to relieve loneliness and



social isolation which is particularly prevalent in rural areas. Even though there are evening bus services to York, the presence of a local village pub means that local residents can walk to the pub in order to socialise, without the need to drive and can do so without having to factor bus travel time to and from the pub into their evening plans – especially if they are spontaneous.



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