

Dear neighbours,

Our experience of this winter just gone has been expensive to say the least. After spending nearly a quarter of a million to get the pub looking and functioning as it is, we had to subsidise it through the winter to the tune of tens of thousands of pounds. And that is without paying ourselves.

Now, weather permitting, we know that the summer should provide us with an acceptable living, but what we can't afford to do it to use that to subsidise the pub over the winter or the whole endeavour becomes rather pointless. Neither do we want to close and mothball the site during the winter months.

We have a strategy to raise extra funds to ensure the pub remains open and solvent during the winter months. This strategy will be of minimal impact to the village, but we understand how rumours can proliferate and cause unwarranted concern, so we thought it best to be fully open about our plans with you.

On 2 days over this summer we will close the pub and operate ticketed daytime events that celebrate music, food and culture. There should be minimal, if any, impact to the village:

- The events operate within the parameters of the existing licence. In fact, the events will end at 10pm, three and a half hours before our licence requires us to close.
- There will be no public vehicular access to the site. All tickets will include coach transport from Brighton or Eastbourne and tickets will specify departure times for journeys both from and to the pub. This, and the conditions of entry, will ensure that the only way in or out of the event is via means that we directly control and that no one who hasn't applied for tickets and been approved, will travel to the event.
- The pub and its grounds will be entirely enclosed and secured. This means that there will be no access to anyone who hasn't been pre-approved and that no one at the event will be able to leave, either temporarily or permanently. Egress is only permitted via specified locations onto pre organised transport. There is no chance whatsoever of customers trying to cross the road to the garage, ending up in the village or neighbouring fields. This will be guaranteed not only by physical perimeter security but by highly experienced event management and SIA security staff.

- The event capacity is limited to marginally more customers than we would expect to see on a busy summer Saturday.
- The demographic that will attend each of these events are affluent adults in their 30's – 50's and their families. We are not promoting events that deviate from our current core audience.

The events will host up to 10 varying food and drink outlets, up to 3 areas of music and entertainment and multiple other forms of art and entertainment. The only possible inconvenience to village is that the music may be slightly louder than we would normally play. But this music will cease hours before our licence dictates and indeed before the village hall is required to cease playing music. And in this, we ask for your understanding, bearing in mind that the purpose of these events is to enable the pub to stay solvent and open through the costly winter months.

We don't need to ask permission or seek approval for these events but we, as we always have, understand we sit within a community, and it is right and correct to try to work together and pragmatically to ensure that not only can we operate a successful business in a very hard and uncertain economy, but also that we respect the environment in which we sit. We have always tried to give back to the village in the small ways we can when we can, and this is no different. We will donate £500 per event, (we predict this to be between 5% and 10% of the profit), to the village to do with what they see fit. We will also offer free tickets to anyone within the village, (probably worth about £50 each), who wants to attend the event.

In reading this letter back, I am aware that I am making a song and dance of something that is in reality very negligible. However, whilst trying to maintain a business in a particularly unforgiving industry, we do also want to be good neighbours, and by being clear and open with our plans and the reasons for them is integral to that. I am happy to talk to anyone who has concerns, although I am confident there will be no real issues here; We have years of experience in safely and unobtrusively running venues and events and employ event directors and planners who work with the biggest and most respected brands.

If you have any questions you would like answers to please contact me and I will be happy to meet you individually when I get back from holiday.

Similarly if you would like tickets for the event, please email me with your name and address and how many tickets you would like and I will come back to you with details.

Thank you for your time,

Matthew @ The Barley Mow.