

# Fox & Goose

## CO-OPERATIVE PUB

### Newsletter Relaunch

#### Have Your Say

The Directors of the F&G have been aware for some time that the Shareholders and our other customers have been poorly served when it comes to the provision of information about what's been going on at the pub and behind the scenes with the co-operative.

We aim to rectify that by publishing a bimonthly newsletter to keep you up to date.

Everyone is entitled to a view about the management of the pub and what it should offer.

I can't promise that we'll deliver all the things people want, but I do promise that we'll listen and where appropriate provide a response.

Send your comments to;  
Steve Holland  
info@foxandgoose.org

The pub today! Decorating nearly done.



#### CUSTOMER SURVEY

Earlier this year we asked you what you wanted the management committee to concentrate on.

These are the six priority areas;

1. Paint the outside of the building.
2. Improve quality and range of drinks.
3. Make the darts room more welcoming.
4. Improve customer service.
5. Ensure financial profitability.
6. Explore feasibility of solar panels.

All of these have been addressed and progress reported on page 2

#### FOOD AND DRINKS SURVEY

In March we conducted a food and drinks survey. 112 people responded so it was statistically very useful. Comments about the range of drinks, the quality of the product, together with some criticism of aspects of the customer experience have been noted and will be acted upon.

Drew and Hannah will be ordering the sort of beer that people say they want. The new bar displays the product more effectively and simple snacks can be prepared.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR UPCOMING BREWS



## THE NEW BAR

The old bar was no longer fit for purpose. The floor behind it needed to be replaced in order to prevent that awful smell returning. There was an opportunity for us to provide Hannah and the team with an area to work in that would help her improve the range and quality of drinks, improve customer service and contribute to greater profitability.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped but particular mention must go to Barry Newton and John Cattermull who did the lions share of the graft, professionally supported by our builder, Alistair McIlroy and his team with sterling efforts from Tony Wright, Sue Turner, John Wilson, Steve McArdle, Drew Marsh, Jonny Owen and of course George Parker who has practically lived at the pub over the last month, firstly project planning then overseeing the work. To get it all done, with the pub only being closed for three days was a remarkable effort.

### VOLUNTEERS

*We know that there are lots of you out there who are willing to give an hour or so of your time, to improve the pub. We also know that we have to get better at facilitating that effort.*

*To that end, anyone who has any interest in helping, pop in on **Sunday 20th August** between 1pm and 3pm and we'll talk about the opportunities over a pint.*

*Cheers! Steve.*



### WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE F&G?

Since the last newsletter was published lots of 'stuff' has happened at the pub. Most importantly we've been getting to grips with how to make the place profitable whilst maintaining the ethos of a community pub. All of the effort to save the Fox and Goose would have been futile if it isn't financially viable.

Hannah Thurman was appointed as Pub Manager in March of last year with a clear remit to improve the pub's financial performance. She has overseen a hugely encouraging improvement in that area. Both turnover and gross profit have improved markedly and are now on target. Profit is currently being ploughed back into the pub, addressing some of the long standing property maintenance issues.

Staff are now aware of the proper financial procedures and a simple but effective reporting system with Hannah receiving excellent support from her newly appointed deputy Julia Andrus. The management board receives detailed financial information monthly and is able to address issues before they become problems. We will continue to carefully monitor the situation but the performance trajectory very much on track.

The reporting system is geared to improving staff performance and enhancing the customer experience. Several members of staff have attended the cellar management course and others have received on site training on how to serve 'the perfect pint'. If you have suggestions about how we can improve, please let us know.

We value our staff and are pleased to be able to pay The Living Wage as defined by the The Living Wage Foundation.

Our focus is on providing excellent quality and choice of beers and we are delighted that Drew Marsh has joined us as cellar/stock controller. Drew knows the pub business inside out and has a long association with the Fox and Goose and we're delighted to have him onboard. He and Hannah are not only ensuring our beer is superb by maintaining excellent cellar management they have an ambitious and exciting quality beer identification and purchasing plan.

A number of shareholders have, for a variety of reasons, chosen to withdraw some or all of their shares, the three year moratorium having now passed. This provides us with the opportunity to offer their shares to anyone who would like to purchase them and there has already been a lot of interest. We don't think we need to over-complicate this simple share offer and myself and Jonny Owen will be issuing further information in the next couple of weeks.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

As we improve the amenities in the pub, so our ability to host community centred events increases. Hannah and our new Director, Rachel Loise are exploring the possibilities of how we can co-ordinate what we offer to support the multitude of festivals and community initiatives generated in Hebden Bridge.

Fran Labrom has produced a map showing walks from the pub which is on the website. We're looking at the possibility of providing guided walks with pie, peas and a pint at the end.

Future newsletters will have comprehensive events listings. Space in this one is limited but these are the headlines. More details on the website.

2nd August. **Blyth Power.**

Original and innovative band.

10th August. **Meet the Brewer.**

Half Moon Brewery coming along to talk about their beer. Hannah is putting food on.

20th August. **Volunteer Day**

Pop in for a pint and see how you can help.

25th August. **Diamond Family Archive.**

Multi instrumentalist Duo

28th August. **Official Bar Opening**

Lots of food and shenanigans!

8th and 9th September. **National Wildlife Day.**

Lots of things going on celebrating NWD on the 4th.

For the next few weeks the work of local artists will be exhibited. Arranged by Tony Wright.



We think the environment in the pub has seen a similar improvement. The source of the dreadful smell which pervaded the pub has been located and dealt with. Incremental improvements in all the rooms is beginning to bear fruit.

George Parker is completing the work in the darts room to make it more welcoming and homely. The partition which screens the Gents toilets contributes to it feeling less like a corridor to the loo.

Top of your list of priorities was to improve the kerbside appeal of the pub and the picture on the cover shows that this work is now nearly complete.

George is also exploring all the options around solar panel installation.

The Fox and Goose has always been a dog friendly pub and continues to be so. Following a number of complaints however and advice from our insurers we have had to stipulate that dogs must be kept on a lead in the pub.

This has proved to be unpopular with some of our customers and we apologise for any distress caused.

Finally we acknowledge that not all the changes we have made have been popular with everyone and with more than 250 shareholders it's impossible to keep all of the people happy all of the time. We understand that the unique allure of the pub was it's quiriness and the last thing we want to do is lose that.

At the same time if the pub is to survive it needs to be able to stand on it's own feet in a very competitive market place. New drinking establishments are opening almost by the week in Hebden Bridge and we need to be able to maintain if not increase our footfall and market share.

Please let us know what you think about what's happening at the pub and also let us know what else we need to concentrate on.

Hopefully we'll see you in the pub before very long.

Cheers

Steve Holland