

New F&G Website; St Patrick's Day and F&G Birthday Celebrations; My Fox & Goose feature with Beth Fylan; Fox & Goose Walking Group; energy assessment



Fox & Goose Newsletter: Spring 2023

New F&G Website

Welcome to the spring newsletter - it may be snowing again right now, but it will soon be time to make the most of that lovely beer garden again. We are pleased to announce that the new Fox & Goose website is now live at foxandgoose.org. It features new sections on the history of the pub and the formation of the co-operative, as well as a news feed, events calendar and link to our live beer board on RealAleFinder. It is also home to a Members Area, which links to our Google Drive and is home to all the relevant documents about the co-operative and the ongoing running of the Fox & Goose, including our rules and governance documents, AGM details and minutes and other useful shareholder documents. This area is password protected and the password for this year is **Cohoperative** - please do not share this beyond the membership.

Website screenshots:

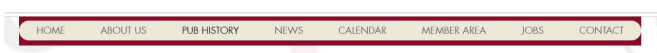


The Fox & Goose Co-operative

In early 2012 the former landlady was struggling to continue running the pub due to ill health, and the pub was under threat of being sold or even closed. As a small pub offering only wet sales in a town with high house prices, there was a strong possibility that it would be run into the ground by a Pub Co and turned into private housing, a pattern all too familiar in recent years.

Instead a group of regulars formed a community group and registered the pub as an asset of community value, buying enough time to look into the possibility of buying and running the pub as a co-operative. 70 people attended the first meeting and a steering group was established to register The Fox and Goose (Hebden Bridge) Limited as a community benefit society, raise enough money to buy the pub and undertake some long-needed refurbishments. Experience was drawn upon from the Co-operativesUK, the [Plunkett Foundation](http://PlunkettFoundation) and [The Old Crown](http://TheOldCrown) in Hesketh Newmarket, the UK's first co-operatively-owned pub.

Bailiffs stripped the pub of its fixtures and fittings in September 2013, yet within two weeks the pub was open again. Regulars brought furniture from home and a pop-up pub was established by the bar staff to prevent its closure. An offer was accepted by the bank in November 2013 and a share offer issued to the community, raising £130,000 from around 250 investors, many of them regulars but others from across the country who were drawn to this unique pub. Investments ranged from £100 to £15,000, but everyone had equal voice and a part ownership in the pub. After contracts were exchanged in March 2014, the pub was closed for a week as people came together to help clean and decorate the pub for its grand opening.



The History of the Fox & Goose

The Fox & Goose is thought to stand on the site of an illegal medieval alehouse, this sort of den being known as a *tiddywink* (in the south west these were *kiddy-winkis*). It would have been a simple single storey building, possibly with an undercroft for animals. Neither the A644 nor Haptonstall Road existed then, and the alehouse is thought to have stood by an intersection of ancient routes. A continuation of Old Gate from the old bridge in the centre of Hebden Bridge ran across the hillside just behind the site of the current pub to cross Golden Clough before ascending Ravenstall Bank, while a smaller route zigzagged up through the woods to Haptonstall, a continuation of Whins Lane that runs down from the Social & Bowling Club. The small settlement at this junction was variously known as Wyndybank, Wyndhill or Whinsbank, *wynd* being a Celtic word for a narrow winding path. There is a reference to brewing here in 1313 and Margery de Wyndhill was regularly fined for 'brewing and selling ale contrary to the assize' at a site on or very close to the Fox & Goose between 1331 and 1348. At her death in 1351, she had profited enough from the trade to own 1 1/2 acres of land in Sowerby parish, though we don't know if her daughter Isabella de Wyndybank continues the trade.

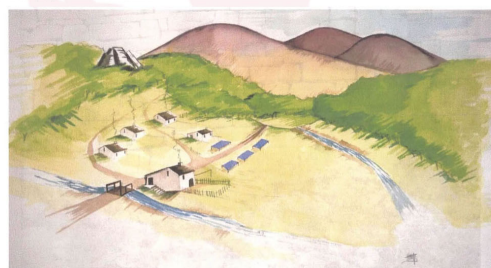


Figure 3. "Margerly's Tiddywink" by Hannah Thurman. The settlement of Wyndybank. Looking along the Calder Valley

F&G Birthday Celebrations and St Patrick's Day

We'd love you to join us at a couple of events in the next couple of weeks. First up we will be celebrating St Patrick's Day on Friday 17th March with a whiskey night. There will be Irish music with Fran & Mark, and any 3 half measures of whiskey for £5 or any 6 half measures for £10. Sláinte!



Then on Wednesday 22nd March, it is the pub's birthday, when we'll be celebrating 9 years since the Fox & Goose reopened as a cooperative pub. There will be cake and other festivities, so please do come and raise a glass with us to mark this anniversary.

My Fox & Goose: Beth Fylan

When did you first come to the Fox & Goose?

It was probably around 17 years ago. My sister phoned me and said would you like to come to Hebden Bridge to watch the rugby and I thought why not. I was living in south Manchester at the time and I didn't have anything to do that day. I'd never been to Hebden, I'd never really heard of it actually... They said come out of the station, turn left and just carry on going and you'll see the Fox & Goose as you go up the hill. It was the second time I'd met Tudor – I'd met him at a party before – and when we eventually got married 6 or 7 years later, somebody (probably Drew) put a chalk board up saying 'Congratulations Beth & Tudor, Fox & Goose Marriage Bureau – another great success' because we'd met in the pub.



How has the pub changed over the years?

It was bustling 17 years ago, it obviously had great beer, and it was very friendly. But the spaces were a bit different – the rugby was on in the little room on the way to the gents toilets, which isn't ideal. The pub's had some ups and downs since then. It was very cold and let's face it a bit smelly during one period – it was not the nicest place to be from an olfactory perspective, especially once smoking was banned. I think the smoking had masked it a lot. I don't miss that or talking about the mysterious smell that strangely disappeared when they took the carpet up. There was loads of controversy when the bar was extended, but I don't miss the old horseshoe bar. I do really think it has only ever got better.

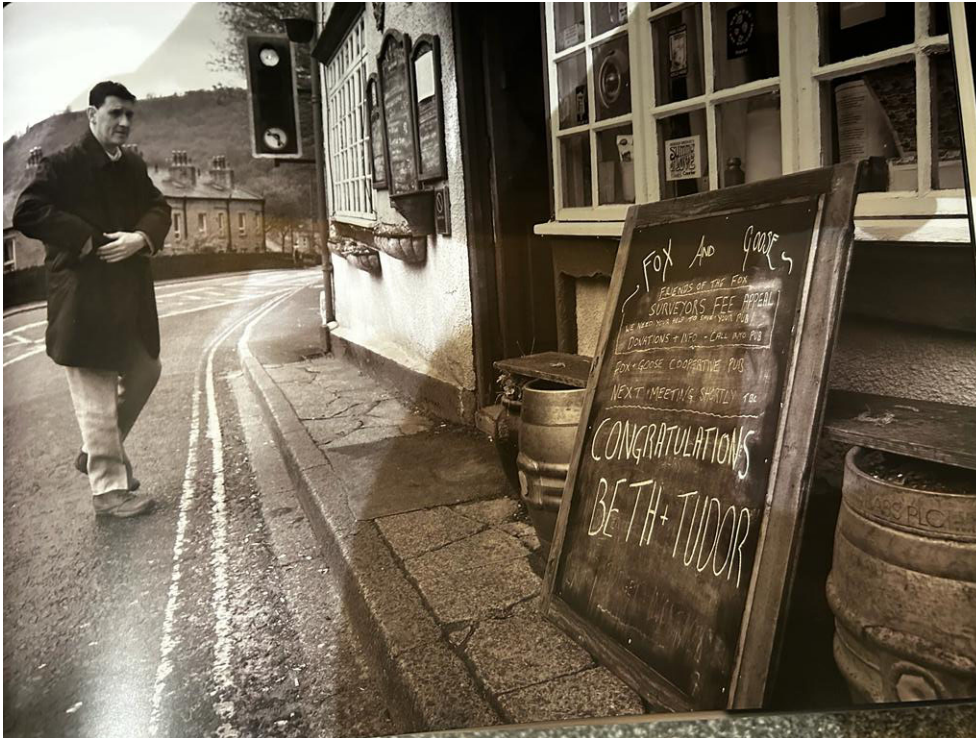
It was a very friendly pub to come to as a woman and has remained so for that entire period. There were no silences or tumbleweeds as you walked in as a single woman on your own. It always felt like a safe place to come, very inviting, and never any sense of sexism. There was a never a sense either of 'God, you're a scouser, you're not local!'

I've got a brother who lives down in Essex and the one thing he misses about living in the north is the fact that you have a friendly local. Over the years he's been up to Hebden a lot and been in the Fox a handful of times, and he's been very impressed that every time he comes in someone says 'Oh, hi Jim, how are you?' I think we underestimate the value of this as we take it for granted that there's

a place where people know you and you're valued.

Do you have a favourite memory of the pub?

Of course we came in here on our wedding night. Me and Tudor and most of the people who were at the wedding party came in here afterwards, so there was a big Scouse sing-along with all my mates from Liverpool. We probably annoyed a lot of people that night. My least favourite was during its darker days when a rat appeared in the fireplace one night and scurried across the pub. I didn't come in for a long time after that as I'm a bit rat-phobic and didn't want to come face to face with this rat.

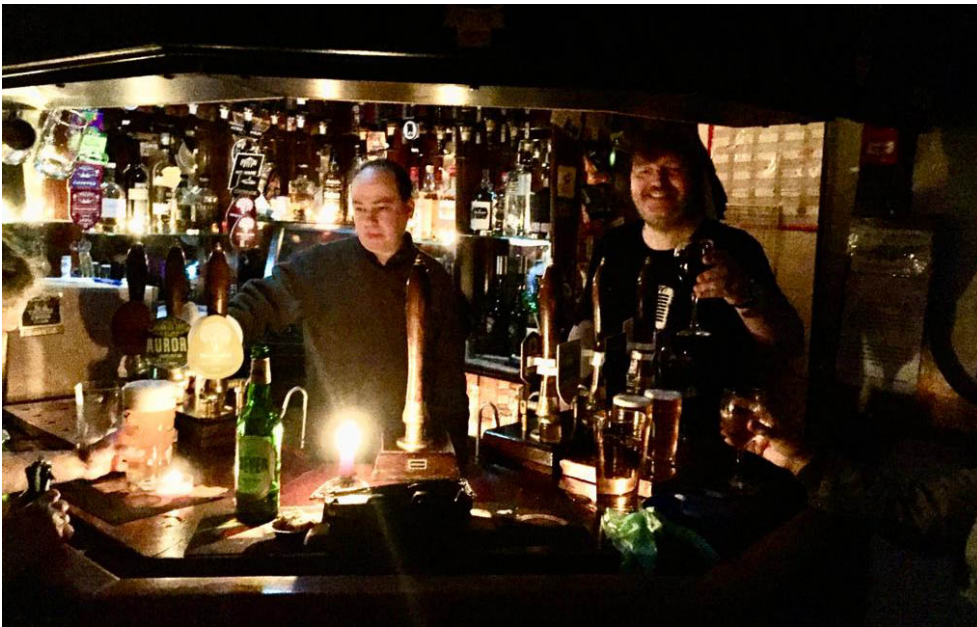


Do you have a favourite drink here over the years?

I think there's always been a great selection of beers here, but I do remember there was a Fox & Goose Mallinson's beer (who are also brewsters, they're female brewers) and it felt great to have a pint of that. I love cask beer but I am really pleased that they do have a hoppy keg beer on now, and I like the option of the Dazzler lager too sometimes, as well as the alcohol free beers they have. I think the fact that the Fox has always styled itself as a craft beer or real ale pub was actually a little bit offputting for a lot of people who just wanted to come in and have a half of lager, but now they can come and do that.

How often to you come in to the pub?

2 or 3 times a week maybe, but there are other great pubs in Hebden and you have to share the love, so I try to support different business. The Fox has been the constant over the years though, the place doing a things a little bit different and a little bit better, and also a place trying to support the community. After the 2015 Boxing Day flood, it was not long after the co-operative had taken over the pub, and there was a power cut all over the valley. It was horrendous, but the Fox was open that day and that evening, with a warm fire lit and serving the beer by candlelight. There were people walking up from Mytholm Court as it was somewhere warm to come. I remember a chap walking in and saying that he had no food and couldn't get to co-op, so I went home and made him a sandwich to take home. But it was the Fox that served as that hub and I always say that the pub that the community saved did something to save the community that day. It was a beautiful night.



The Fox & Goose by candlelight on Boxing Day 2015:

Fox Walkers

For those who don't know, the Fox & Goose has its own walking group, the Fox Walkers. They meet outside the pub at 10.30am on the 1st Saturday of every month and return for a pint or two after a 6-7 mile hike. Led by Andy Chilcott, the group has been going for 4 years and continued throughout much of the Covid-19 pandemic. Anyone is welcome to join in, all ages and abilities are catered for and dogs are very welcome. If you're interested, just show up or contact Andy on 07786 028850 to be added to the WhatsApp group. Bring a flask and some sarnies.



The next walks start at 10.30am from the Fox & Goose on Saturday 1st April, 6th May and 3rd June.

Energy Assessment

Kayla Ente from Brighton and Hove Energy Services Co-operative ([BHESCO](#)) visited the Fox and Goose on Monday 6th February to undertake an energy assessment of the building.

We are awaiting the report from her which should identify ways in which we can make the building more energy efficient and she is also producing a case study on her visit to the Fox.



Regular Events & Sessions

Quiz Night: Every Monday from 8.30pm

Hebden Bridge Birders: 1st Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm (Get together to share knowledge about birds and other wildlife spotted around Calderdale)

Town Folk: 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month, 8pm (Bring along an instrument and join in, or just turn up to listen)

Pennine Piperholics: 2nd Thursday of the month, 8pm

Irish Session: Last Thursday of the month, 8pm (Open session with Marc and Fran)

Blues Jam: Last Sunday of the month (Come along and enjoy our Blues Jam hosted by Paddy - sit and watch or join in)

Keep in touch on social media

We're aiming to make this newsletter quarterly, but remember you can keep up to date with what's happening at the Fox & Goose via Facebook, Twitter and the website. If you're not already a shareholder, you can also subscribe to receive our regular newsletters via email - just contact info@foxandgoose.org