



The Auctioneers Arms Community Newsletter

April 2020 edition.

Hello and welcome to our Spring edition of the Auctioneers Arms community newsletter. Understandably the information in the newsletter will be dominated by what is currently consuming all of our lives at this moment in time, the Corona-19 global pandemic crisis.



None of us could have anticipated that when we embarked upon our journey to “Save the Auctioneers Arms” back in October 2016 that despite all of our hard work we would be forced to close the doors again due to something beyond our control. Although this was a forced decision by the government, we fully support the rationale for doing so as despite our passion for bringing the

communities of Cookshill and Caverswall together we understand and respect the government strategy on social distancing to help reduce the spread of this terrible virus, to protect the NHS and to save lives.

The temporary closure of the Auctioneers Arms has greatly impacted upon all those involved in the pub and the community; the Manager and staff, our customers and neighbours and of course our shareholders. The management committee have been working exceptionally hard behind the scenes with our manager Terry since the announcement to help mitigate and reduce the impact as much as possible so that when we do re-open our doors (and we will,) we can continue to build upon our success of being a great community hub.

WE REGRET TO INFORM OUR CUSTOMERS, THAT AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, AND TO MINIMISE RISK TO BOTH STAFF AND CUSTOMERS DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME, WE HAVE TAKEN THE DECISION TO CEASE TRADING.

WE WILL RE OPEN, AS SOON AS WE FEEL WE ARE ABLE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE, AND SORRY FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE

CAVERSWALL COMMUNITY SOCIETY

Listed below are just some of the measures that the management committee have put into place during this period of temporary shutdown period: -

Measures in place

- *Enhanced security* – All cash and essential stock removed from premises, burglar alarm serviced and auto-dial in place to notify police and key holders upon activation. Regular patrols put in place throughout the day and evening.
- *Staff welfare*- all staff have been furloughed in line with the government guidelines and continue to maintain communication with the Manager via teleconferencing calls.
- *Overheads and costs* – all utility providers have been contacted and have, where possible reduced or suspended our payments. Our main beer/spirts and wine providers will take back any unused and out of date stock and replace it with new stock FOC when we re-open our doors.
- *Loan providers* – we have taken the opportunity to take up the offer of re-payment holidays from our two loan providers
- *Financial Support* - We have been successful in our application for small business compensation grant and have received £10K compensation from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

Our Shareholders will receive more detailed information relating to our financial measures via email.

A note from the Chairman

Who knew that little under two years after we opened our doors, I would have to stand in the pub on a busy Friday evening and have to ask our loyal customers to finish their drinks and leave at a little after 7pm. It was a difficult thing to do both to our customers and to our staff, but it was the right thing to do to help protect the lives of the people in our community. Thanks to some extremely hard work by many people and through some astute financial management, we will eventually reopen our doors and the same members of staff will be there to serve you all once again.

It is an extremely difficult time for the UK economy and in particular the pub industry. Sadly, many pubs and bars will struggle to recover from the economic impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic there were approximately 24 pubs per week closing down in the UK, its predicted that this figure may now increase. The Community Owned Pub business model is designed to focus on sustainability rather than profit and even though The Auctioneers Arms has only been trading as a community owned business since 2018 we are in a relatively good financial position compared to other establishments owned by Pub Companies, notwithstanding the fact that this terrible global pandemic will undoubtedly hit us hard. We will get through this, we will recover and I look forward to seeing you all back in the Auctioneers Arms in hopefully, the not too distant future.

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Other news.



During this difficult period there will be many members of our community feeling vulnerable due to self-isolation, particularly the elderly and those people who don't have family to support them. The Auctioneers Arms

Management committee, with the support of Caverswall Parish Council have introduced a neighbourhood support scheme whereby a number of individuals have volunteered to offer support to the vulnerable by carrying out essential tasks on their behalf such as essential shopping, prescriptions and medication collections, dog walking or just simply having a friendly telephone chat. The volunteers are either parish councillors or known and trusted individuals. Leaflets have been posted through letter boxes with contact details of the volunteers covering specific streets:



- Cllr Paul Roberts – high numbers of school lane and Nathan Close
- Terry Rogers – low numbers of School Lanes and Caverswall Lane
- Brian Griffiths – The Green
- Heather Hulme – Queens Ct, Haldearn Ave and Queens Ct.
- Andy Marshall – Trevor Drive and Vicarage Crescent
- Matt Gibson – High Street, The Square, Roughcote Lane (excluding Holdings) and The Hollow
- Ross Ward, Blythe Bridge Road, Church Croft, and the remaining outlying lanes.

All volunteers have been issued with risk assessments and guidance on how to reduce the risk of either contracting or spreading the virus and anyone wishing to receive support from the neighbourhood volunteers can contact either Lynn Cantlay (Clerk of the Parish Council) on 07811 879 627 or Ross Ward on 07712 640 810.

Members Annual General Meeting



Our Shareholders annual AGM was scheduled to take place on March 25th 2020 but unfortunately had to be cancelled last minute due to the covid-19 crisis. All formal paperwork relating to the business, Board of Directors, financial situation and members resolutions had

been prepared but have now had to be put on hold until a future date is announced. Members will be updated accordingly, however if any member has any concerns or wishes to make an enquiry regarding their share holding they can contact a member of the committee at: chair@caverswallcommunitysociety.co.uk

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Past Events

Since our last newsletter the hub has held a number of *seasonal* events which proved to be hugely successful and have helped us to build upon our previous successes. Over the Christmas period we hosted a Breakfast

with Santa, a Children's Film Show, a carol singing afternoon supported with brass band, New Years Eve disco and Valentines evening. All events were well attended and we have received some excellent feedback from our customers.



Apart from the seasonal events and prior to closing the hub we continued to provide a venue for our regular clubs and meetings such as Boogie-Beats, Knit and Natter, local council surgeries and Staffordshire Local policing team surgeries. We even had a group of young children from St Peters CE Primary School together with the teachers spend the morning in The Gavel. We look forward to putting on more events as and when the pub/hub reopens its doors.

Team Events -



Our darts team(s) continue to grow from strength to strength. We now have four teams that play on Mondays and Wednesdays, home and away and although the league hasn't yet finished, we do have a Singles Merits winner. Congratulations to Clark Evans who played an outstanding final against tough opposition, finishing his final leg in just 14 darts to win the 2020 Division 1 singles merits. Well done Clark! - Many of the darts team members had not known each other before the pub had re-opened in 2018. Thanks to the late Barry Lovatt for creating the team, building new friendships and bringing people together.

Tues Quiz nights – Our popular Tuesday night quiz is being sorely missed by many of our regular “quizzers”. We promise that quiz-night and “*play your cards right*” will be back as soon as we re-open our doors.

Managers update. (Terry Rogers)

Firstly, I would like to thank all the people that volunteer their time and resources to the business. There are far too many people to list names, but they contribute in so many ways, such as; general maintenance, painting, donating items, making planters & fences, cutting grass, helping to organise & run events, organising & running our quiz, providing me with valuable feedback & ideas... the list goes on.

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I would also like to thank all the staff for their continued hard work. We are still managing to stay in touch during these difficult times, we even had our first online staff meeting last week. We will continue to use the webinar rooms for our meetings and also to provide staff training.

Over the past six months we have given jobs to several younger people providing them an opportunity to gain experience within this industry. We now also provide opportunities to gain a recognised qualification with the support of Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce. In January we offered our first apprenticeship in hospitality to one of our younger members of bar staff Kyle, who is making great progress.

Considerable effort has been made to ensure that the pub is in the best position during lockdown. While the pub is empty, we have taken the opportunity to undertake deep cleaning of the premises, including carpets and furnishings. Fridges and freezers have been checked and stock appropriately managed. All the beer dispense equipment has been cleaned and dried out properly so that your first pint back in the pub will be as good as your last. I am currently looking at the plans for our reopening. I am going through our procedures, policies & opening hours to ensure we have the best opportunity to build the business back into the strong position it was in prior to the global crisis.

I look forward to seeing you all back in The Auctioneers Arms soon.

Stay safe & take care

Terry

NEW CHILDRENS POLICY

Just prior to being forced to close the pub on 20th March 2020 we introduced a revised Child Restriction Policy. Accompanied, well behaved children will be welcome in the **bar** until **17:00hrs**. Children will be welcome in **The Gavel** until **19:00hrs** unless dining, when it will be until **20:00hrs**. Children will not be served at and will not be permitted at the bar (this is already enshrined in Licensing Law). We request that all parents and guardians respect and adhere to the policy otherwise they will be politely asked to leave the premises.



Thank you for your continued support

Finally, on behalf of
Caverswall Community
Society we ask you all to
remain patient, stay safe, look
out for each other and take
care of yourselves.



Auctioneers Arms Caverswall



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www.theauctioneersarms.co.uk

“The Auctioneers Arms community pub business plan has been referred to nationally as one of the best Community Pub business models in the UK and recognised as one of the highest performing in the first 18 months of trading, being awarded the Community Standard Mark in 2018.”

