



The Auctioneers Arms Community Newsletter

Summer 2021 edition.

www.auctioneersarms.co.uk

A message from our Chairman Barrie Roberts



Welcome to the Summer Edition of the Auctioneers Arms community newsletter. Let's start with the most important item "The Football". It was wonderful to be able to offer the matches at your local hostelry and I think it would be fair to say that unless your name was Chris Whitty an opportunity to let your hair down was long overdue. Yes, we know we lost in the final but it was a fabulous journey and our best showing since 1966.

I prefer to concentrate on all the positives like beating our favourite opposition and finding a manager that actually was a credit to his profession and the Nation. Anyway, as everyone will have an opinion the place to debate it is naturally over a coffee and/or beer or two.

Thankfully by the time you receive this "Freedom Day" has arrived and most of the restrictions have been lifted at long last.

So, what does this mean for us at The Auctioneers Arms?

We will do what we can to make life as it was before the pandemic such as being able to go up to the bar again, not wearing face masks, no one way system around the pub, take down most of the signage regarding Covid etc..

However, we must be mindful of two things:

- 1) We will always place the safety of our Shareholders, Staff and clientele at the forefront of our actions which means by keeping abreast of current affairs we can adjust our sails along the way should new developments arise. Ross Ward is our Covid Marshall who does a magnificent job of advising and guiding us on up-and-coming issues so until the pandemic is put to bed (probably never) Ross could have a job for life!
- 2) Financially, like all businesses, it will take a little time to repair the damage Covid-19 has done to our balance sheet and profitability. We will do what we can in both the short and long term to generate new business whilst maintaining the "The Knox" experience for all our customers.

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The pandemic has affected us all in one way or another and many of us have been forced to change our habits, notwithstanding the hospitality sector, to help prevent the spread of this deadly virus. The enforced lockdown gave us the opportunity to reflect upon our current operating practices as well as improving certain areas of the business and the safety

of our staff and customers, for example:-

- The introduction of our new QR ordering app has been a huge success
- Take away menu on selected nights
- Improved selection of Cake/coffee menu in The Gavel
- Cashless payments only
- The expansion of our outside seating area
- Tables service for customers
- E-Commerce; Upgraded EPOS Electronic sales system
- Upgraded security and CCTV systems.



Our new opening times are as follows: -

Monday – Thursday:	12:00hrs to 23:00hrs
Friday & Saturday:	12:00hrs to 00:00hrs
Sunday :	12:00hrs to 22:00hrs

*** No alcohol is to be consumed outside after 22:00hrs ***



Please Note we will only be accepting card payments (no cash) for the foreseeable future



Our volunteers are an integral and an essential part of the business. Unlike traditionally owned Pub Companies our business model relies heavily upon volunteers to support the business behind the scenes, in fact a proportion of our funding is awarded to us because we have created volunteer opportunities within the community.

We have approximately 20 dedicated volunteers who, collectively give up an average of **50hrs per week** of their spare time (unpaid) to assist in one way or another with the smooth running of the venue.

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Some examples of volunteer work include: -

- Committee Board Members - Strategic work. (Finance, Administration, Marketing & Comms, AGM planning, Suppliers and contractors, Community Liaison, Social Impact monitoring and reporting)
- General repair and maintenance of the venue
- Watering of the planters, grass cutting and weedkilling
- Gavel Support
- HR support
- Social media updates (Face Book/ Instagram)
- Applying for additional grants and funding
- Litter picking
- Painting and decorating
- Security

This great work undertaken by our Committee and volunteers was formally recognised in June this year when they were awarded the Prestigious **Staffordshire Moorlands Volunteer Team of the year award 2021**. Well done to all involved and thank you for your continued dedication and support.



If you have any free time to spare and are interested in joining our team of volunteers please email us at infor@caverswallcommunitysociety.co.uk



Congratulations also goes out to Jon Cacia, a local resident and a regular of the Auctioneers Arms, on becoming the winner of the **Volunteering Support for the Over 65s Award**. Well done Jon! Caverswall is very proud of you.

Our Staff

Our business model is not only designed to create volunteer opportunities but employment opportunities as well. Since opening as a community owned establishment in May 2018 we have had an excellent staff retention reputation. Our Manager Terry has provided training and development opportunities to a number of our young staff to help develop their life long skills, including Kyle who completed his apprenticeship in earlier this year. Kyle has since picked up a full-time career working for JCB and we wish him all the very best.



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Kyle joined us as a young lad in 2018, this is what he has to say...

“The apprenticeship offered to me whilst working in The Auctioneers Arms really helped me to understand the backgrounds of managing and the logistics of establishments focused around hospitality. When I started I was really shy, moody and had little confidence. I guess growing up and working in the pub made me more comfortable. I always get told that when I first joined the team I was like a German soldier. Most people in the pub now still carry on the joke. I think my time at the pub has taught me an awful lot. The apprenticeship I took has led me to a good career and I'm really grateful for the opportunity. In one of my exams I got a distinction. I have just completed my other exam but awaiting my results. I would like to thank Terry and the staff for all their help which no doubt taught me a lot and pushed me to be better. Thank you.”

Two members of staff are currently undertaking development programmes. Tilly is working her way through her apprenticeship in Supervisory Hospitality and Dan is completing his ILM level 3 which is a course in leadership and Management in the Hospitality Sector.

We would also like to welcome our new part-time staff members to the team, Jazz, Tom, Erin and Dan.

National Pubwatch



National Pub Watch is a voluntary organisation set up to promote best practice through supporting the work of local Pubwatch Schemes. Its aim is to achieve a safer drinking environment in all licensed premises throughout the UK. The Auctioneers Arms has now joined forces with fellow local establishments **The Red House** and

Caverswall Cricket Club to help to combat anti-social behaviour within the village. An effective communication network has been set up between all three venues to share information on individuals who have been barred due to their unacceptable behaviour.



We believe that customers should be able to enjoy a good night out safely and responsibly without fear of being the victim of alcohol-related crime and disorder. Pubwatch enables licensees to take collective action to ban troublemakers, while promoting effective working relations between licensees, the police and local authorities.



Thanks go out to Sam and Josh (The Red House) and Matt Gibson (CCC) for helping to create the local partnership.

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Our Food Hygiene Rating.

We are proud to announce that following a recent inspection from the local authority Food Standards Agency we achieved a **5 STAR** rating for our food storage, preparation, service and record keeping.

Overseas Members/Shareholders

We currently have 220 shareholders who have contributed to and supported the Auctioneers Arms since it came under community ownership back in 2018, many of which are from the local community. We do however have a large number of investors from not only outside of Staffordshire by also from overseas, some as far as Europe, America and Australia. One such investor who lives in **California, USA** has kindly offered to share with us her reasons for investing in the pub, her name is Francie Neukom and you can find her story on the back of this newsletter.



A new **open share offer** may be available in the autumn, to customers who would like to become a member and invest in The Auctioneers Arms. Further details will be provided at our next AGM.



Now that things are starting to get back to some kind of normality, we plan to bring back to the pub some of our regular events as well as introducing new ones:

- The return of our popular Tuesday Quiz night (from 21:00hrs)
- Monday/Wednesday darts leagues
- Live weekend entertainment
- New revised food menu
- Staffs Moorlands Scooter Club - 23rd Sept 2021 ride out and meet
- Staffs, Shrops, Cheshire Blood Bikes (SSCBB) Charity meet (23d Sept 2021)



AGM - Dates TBC

Due to covid restrictions we had no choice but to hold our last AGM “virtually” via ZOOM back in November 2020. Whilst this wasn’t ideal, we did manage to get through the essential business requirements. The date of our next members AGM is still yet to be confirmed but it is likely to be in the autumn. All members will receive at least 14 days’ notice of attendance.

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Google Business Reviews

Ave rating 4.5 ******4.5/5** [299 Google reviews](#)

We are always seeking ways to improve the business so we welcome all feedback from our customers. Please continue to leave us your comments on GOOGLE REVIEW.



EG of recent reviews...

- 3 weeks ago - 5 X ********* *A previous haunt of mine in years gone by but I haven't been in for ages. Called in with my brother and sister in law for coffee. Excellent service and very friendly.*
- 3 months ago; 5 x ********* *Brilliant and relaxing. Staff and management have worked so hard to get it ready and its certainly paid off. Here's to no more lockdowns and the success of The Auctioneers* 👍
- 3 months ago: 5 x ********* *Great food, quality drink and most of all a proper family, community feel. Definitely worth a visit.*
- a month ago: 5 X ********* *Good honest food for a fare price, very nice staff.*
- 3 weeks ago **NEW: 5 X ******* *Lovely tea & cake, friendly service*



The Gavel

We have recently introduced a new range of cakes sourced from local suppliers and will continue to increase our offerings. The date for our Gavel "Open Day" where customers can join us for coffee and

sample our fine selection of cakes will shortly be announced. Follow us on Face Book page and Instagram for more information.

Supporting local businesses.

From time to time when we require specialist work on our venue we have to call upon on qualified tradesmen, so where possible we like to support small, local businesses.

The following small businesses have carried out work on the pub over the past 12 months and come highly recommended:



- Dave Hughes : Roofing www.spot-on-roofing.co.uk 07933 763496
- Stef Giblin : Website Designer. Contact sayhello@stefgiblin.co.uk
- John Cacia: CCTV/Security – J C Security 07831 662221
- J.D Rushton Carpentry & Joinery. jdrushton@gmail.com 07930201489
- HG Plumbing & Heating Services 07973 754860

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Our Child Policy

As a business we have a duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of our customers. Whilst we welcome children into our venue we respectfully ask that parents maintain supervision of their children at **all times** when on the premises and adhere to the following guidelines:-

- Children **MUST** be closely supervised at all times
- Children are not to be left alone outside of the venue
- Children are not allowed to run around the venue.
- Children are not allowed to play on the car park
- Children are not permitted in the Bar after **19:00hrs** or The Gavel after **21:00hrs**

POLITE NOTICE

RESPECT



We have received a number of complaints from local residents regarding noise and foul/abusive language. We politely ask all customers to respect our local residents and to consider noise levels when drinking in our outside seating area and also when leaving the premises late at night.

And Finally.



I think now is an appropriate time to say thank you to our fantastic committee. I am extremely proud to be Chairman of a Committee that is made up of such talented and hardworking individuals.

Each and every one of them brings something different to our meetings, some of which can be quite colourful because there are no sycophants on board so debates can be quite lively.

This is what a good committee should be all about because apart from myself nobody has a monopoly on good ideas or the best way forward.

We all, without exception, have the good grace to accept a majority decision when our suggestions don't get acceptance, to give you a flavour of events one case in point being the debate on going cashless or not.

I also want to thank the Volunteers for putting in those unpaid hours that allows the Auctioneers Arms to continue.

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I have asked their work/tasks to be itemised within this Newsletter because I feel without it very, very few people would be aware of just how varied, how challenging and how reliant we are on them to keep the pub in good shape on a day-to-day basis.

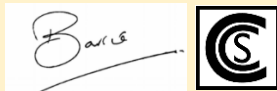
I hope during my term as Chairman I never forget to thank our Bar Staff who, thanks to Terry's guidance and training (even patience dare I add) have all risen to the challenges presented by the pandemic.

They are our front line and without their professionalism, drive and charisma The Knox would not be the pub it is today

As in all industries staff will move on etc but for me the benchmark is that they will always have fond memories of working with us and would come back again if circumstances allowed.

Finally, I must point out that "Freedom Day" will have drawbacks for some so when I was asked if I could keep my mask on to save scaring the horses then I felt I should do whatever I could to help.

So, keep smiling, keep drinking (beer or coffee) and stay happy because there is an awful lot of truth in the saying: - "Live every day as your last because one day it will be."



Barrie Roberts
Chairman of Caverswall Community Society
Registered CBS for The Auctioneers Arms



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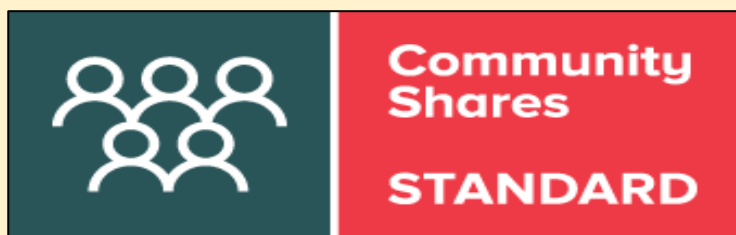
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Caverswall Community Society
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Francie's Story.

Hi, my name is Francie Neukom and I live in the USA. I have never been to your town, but I felt inspired to donate to your cause. I first heard of your campaign to save your local pub through the CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) Facebook page.

I joined the page because of a book I'd read entitled "Real England: The Battle Against the Bland" by Paul Kingsnorth. In it, the author discusses how England seems to be slowly being swallowed up by chain after chain, and how difficult it is to keep businesses location-specific. It's been a while since I've read it, so it's hard to remember specifically what he talked about, but I do remember locally owned pubs and community orchards as being two of his examples, where he profiles cities and towns that have successfully brought these local resources back to life.

I saw CAMRA's notification about your need for donation and it really plucked at my heartstrings, so to speak. While I've been a lot of places in your fair country (I lived in the UK for a year as a baby when my dad did a Fulbright Teacher Exchange in Gravesend, Kent; I studied abroad in Oxford when I was an undergraduate at Stanford University; I got my master's degree from Cambridge, etc.), I had never been to Caverswall, but it made me think... it is so easy to donate to local businesses and charities when we usually get to be the beneficiaries of said fundraisers eventually. How selfless would we have to be to donate to a place we've never visited, to make a contribution to the lives of people we've never met?

I guess I saw it as a challenge to myself -- could I really be this selfless, donating while knowing full well I may never get to see the fruits of my generosity? Then I thought of the "Real England" book and figured I should put my money where my mouth is. I think "normal" people would use this impulse to just donate to a more general CAMRA fund, but I was excited by the thought of donating to just one little pub and making all the difference in a town that might not be as "sexy" as other pub places like London, Edinburgh, Stratford-Upon-Avon, etc.

As an American who has spent a lot of time in the UK and has many British friends, at the end of the day, I have always been envious of the institution of pub life in the UK. There is simply nothing like it over here in the States. We have bars, yes, but they are usually seen as adult-only spaces and either exist primarily for watching sports (and thus are somewhat unfriendly toward female clientele) or for chatting up strangers, which give them more of a "singles' bar"/nightclub feeling. The most comparable thing in my mind to what might be the parallel to a local pub in my neighbourhood is maybe the corner Starbucks or frozen yogurt shop, but again, those places are usually part of a chain and are not seen as a "community living room" the way pubs are. English pubs seem to be this wonderful amalgamation of bar, restaurant, meeting space, and community centre, and I would argue one of the great British gifts to world culture.

Well, I hope this has helped clarify as to why a crazy American with no connection to Caverswall whatsoever is the outlier in your data set. Feel free to erect a plaque over the snug of the pub in my honour! (Just kidding.)

But honestly, I am honoured to help your community. I am sending you all a big, warm American hug from Sacramento, California. Visiting Caverswall (and specifically the Auctioneers Arms) is now on my life goals list.