



P R E S S R E L E A S E

12 May 2021

Community Pub Hero Awards winners announced

Two pubs take top honours in scheme backed by MPs

Pubs in Basingstoke and Merseyside have been named joint winners of this year's Community Pub Hero Awards, organised by PubAid and the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group and sponsored by Matthew Clark.

The winning pubs are The Horse & Jockey in Melling, Merseyside and The Portsmouth Arms in Basingstoke. Judges decided to make two top awards this year in recognition of the very different community support offered by the two pubs. Both pubs received a £500 donation from Matthew Clark to the charity of their choice, as well as a trophy, while winners and finalists received a certificate, to be presented by their MP.

PubAid co-founder Des O'Flanagan said: "Judging this year's awards has been a real challenge: we struggled to choose our 10 finalists from an incredibly strong field, and selecting a winner from that shortlist proved impossible!

"We decided to give the top award to two pubs who took very different approaches to supporting their communities in lockdown: The Portsmouth Arms started a record-beating pub quiz that has raised more than £66,000 for charities, while The Horse & Jockey cooked and delivered 15,000 free hot meals and sent out 1,000 care packages. Faced with 'comparing apples with pears', we voted to reward both!"

The Community Pub Hero Awards attracted 115 entries, including 60 from MPs who nominated pubs in their constituencies. This is the third year for the competition, which was reshaped and renamed – it was formerly Charity Pub of the Year - to focus on pubs' support for their communities during lockdown, rather than traditional charity fundraising.

Richard Hayhoe, Marketing Director, Matthew Clark said: “This year’s awards have shone a light on the great support lent by so many pubs to their communities, despite frequently facing uncertain futures themselves.

“Like everyone else in the hospitality industry, we’re delighted that pubs have started to reopen. And it’s been great to see that people have turned out in numbers to support the pubs that supported their communities during lockdown. Let’s hope that one upside of the pandemic is that people now understand just how important the pub is to its community.”

Mike Wood, MP for Dudley South and Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group, said: “These awards have been a great opportunity for MPs to celebrate how landladies and landlords in their constituencies have stepped up to the mark to support their community during the pandemic. Yet again we have seen that pubs are the antidote to isolation.”

COMMUNITY PUB HERO AWARDS: THE WINNERS

The Horse & Jockey, Melling, Merseyside

Licensees: Adam & Suzanne Franklin

MP: Bill Esterton

Licensees Adam & Suzanne Franklin at The Horse & Jockey cooked and delivered a total of 15,000 free hot meals to vulnerable and shielding local residents, sent out 1,000 care packages, shopped for the community and collected and dropped off medication. They also ran a ‘listening ear’ service, calling everyone on their hot meal service to check on them and offer a chat. In all of this, they were helped by a band of 50 volunteers, who came forward within hours of an appeal from Suzanne. After the end of the first lockdown, the pub created a permanent community kitchen to continue helping those in need.

www.jockeymelling.com

The Portsmouth Arms, Hatch Warren, Basingstoke

Licensee: Rich Curtis

MP: Maria Miller

Rich Curtis, GM at this Hall & Woodhouse pub, launched a virtual pub quiz on Facebook Live at the end of March 2020, as a way of bringing a pub experience to locked down customers in their homes. The response was enthusiastic and soon the quiz was running twice a day: a family-friendly one at 5.00 pm – staged with help from Rich’s 9-year-old son Oliver - and one for adults at 8.00. Participants could join for free, but were asked to make a donation to a charity, chosen by the pub and changing every week. Within a few weeks, the quizzes had raised more than £9,000 for charity and had more than 100,000 views, not just from the UK but globally. Every week, Rich came up with a new theme for the quiz to keep it fresh, and had a few star guests. In May, Rich broke the Guinness World Record for the world’s longest quiz master session, achieving a 34-hour, 50-minute quiz which raised more

than £21,000 for The Pink Place Cancer Charity in Basingstoke. In total, the Portsmouth Arms quizzes have raised more than £66,000 for charities.

<https://www.portsmoutharmshatchwarren.co.uk/>

THE FINALISTS

The 10 shortlisted pubs are:

- The Angel & Crown, Richmond
- The Bevy, Brighton
- The Bowgie Inn, Crantock near Newquay, Cornwall
- The Clifton Arms, Blackburn
- The Horse & Jockey, Melling, Merseyside
- The Mowden, Darlington
- The Portsmouth Arms, Hatch Warren, Basingstoke
- The Old Courts, Wigan
- The Orange Tree, Baldock, Hertfordshire
- The Portobello Inn, West Kingsdown, Kent

Captions to attached photos:

The team at the Horse & Jockey, Melling, in the online awards presentation with (bottom) their MP Bill Esterson

Rich Curtis, general manager at The Portsmouth Arms, Basingstoke

-ends-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

PubAid is a working party created in 2009 to promote UK pubs as a force for good in their communities, sharing the message that they raise over £100m per year for charities and contribute £40 million to grassroots sport. PubAid runs the World's Biggest Pub Quiz, which has raised £750,000 since its launch in 2016, and the Charity Pub of the Year Awards, which ran in 2018 and 2019 before being renamed as the Community Pub Hero Awards.

The PubAid steering group is led by co-founder Des O'Flanagan, and includes a number of well-known figures from the pub world, who lend their time and other resources to help spread the positive messages about pubs' role at the heart of their communities.

Matthew Clark is a leading national drinks wholesaler with over 200 years' experience supplying drink products, hospitality training, labour management and marketing support to over 16,000 On-Trade premises in the UK.

The All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group was set up in 1993 and has a membership of over 350 MPs and Peers. The Beer Group's objectives are to broaden recognition of the enormous contribution of brewing and pubs to the UK economy from grain to glass - and to celebrate the unique role that beer and pubs play in our society

Community Pub Hero – finalist pubs

The Angel & Crown, Richmond

Licensee: Nick Botting

MP: Sarah Olney

The team at this Fuller's pub, led by licensee Nick Botting, jumped into action as soon as lockdown was announced, providing hot food and drinks, clothing and toiletries to anyone in need, as well as pairing with local homeless organisation SPEAR to help find accommodation for people. At the height of the first lockdown, they were serving up to 70 people a day, initially funded by Nick but as demand grew, local residents stepped up to continue the service. In total, the Angel & Crown served 5,000 hot meals, 6,000 cups of tea and 7,000 bottles of water to local people in need.

<https://www.angel-and-crown-richmond.co.uk/>

The Bevy, Brighton

Licensee: Chris Llewellyn

MP: Lloyd Russell-Moyle

When lockdown was announced in March 2020, the Bevy's team of volunteers and staff decided they would cook and deliver hot meals three times a week to ensure that none of the elderly attendees of our regular lunch clubs went hungry. Delivering the Bevy Meals on Wheels provided not just dinner, but a friendly face and socially distanced chat, as most of these people were self-isolating. The team worked with local schools, churches, charities and community groups and with Fareshare, to use ingredients that would otherwise have gone to land fill. The team served more than 6,000 meals and staged a number of online pub quizzes to keep the community connected, including the world's first online deaf-friendly quiz. On the August Bank Holiday, the Bevy hosted a free family fun day offering socially-distanced arts crafts and fun for local children.

www.thebevy.co.uk

The Bowgie Inn, Newquay, Cornwall

Licensee and owner: Sally Pickles

MP: Steve Double

The Bowgie Inn used its position overlooking beautiful Crantock beach to offer people uplifting support and compassion during lockdown. Every day, owner Sally Pickles streamed daily live video streams from the beach on social media, so people were able to experience the magic of Cornwall, with thousands of viewers watching and hundreds commenting, not just in the UK, but around the world. People shared their memories of Cornwall, and it was clear the daily videos were making lockdown life a little bit easier as they enjoyed the sound of the sea, watched the waves and stayed connected to the coast. In addition, The Bowgie hosted virtual live music gigs raising money for the NHS, streamed on Facebook straight to people's living rooms (watched by over 20,000 people), as well as a Virtual Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday, an Easter Drawing Competition, free weekly Virtual Live Yoga sessions and 'thank you' campaigns giving out Bowgie vouchers to local heroes on the front-line of the pandemic.

www.bowgie.com

The Clifton Arms, Blackburn

Licensee: Carole Davis

MP: Kate Hollern

When Covid and lockdown struck, the team at Admiral Taverns pub The Clifton Arms were determined to stay connected with their community. Led by licensee Carole Davis, the team started sending out boxes of essential groceries to vulnerable locals. They sent fruit baskets to keep staff at local hospitals and care homes healthy, provided TVs and radios for care home residents, and hot meals and warm clothing for the homeless. At the start of lockdown, they donated 60 Easter lunches for local postal workers. Just as importantly, Carole and her team are always available to help anyone in need. As one local said: "It doesn't matter what a person asks for, this community pub and its landlord and landlady, and a team of dedicated customers, will make sure they get it."

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Clifton-Arms-351843581513246>

The Mowden, Darlington

Licensees: Simon & Rachel Leadbetter

MP: Peter Gibson

When The Mowden shut its doors in March 2020, licensees Simon & Rachel Leadbetter offered to turn their surplus food stock into meals for local vulnerable people. Their Facebook post led to around 40 meals being delivered in the first week of lockdown, and as word spread – with local press and the BBC covering the story - requests flooded in. Over the next 10 weeks, Simon & Rachel and a team of helpers worked six days a week to deliver 900 meals to elderly and vulnerable locals, funded by £9,500 in donations to a justgiving page. Simon said: “It was a difficult time for the business, but helping others in our community really helped us and gave us a focus in such strange times.”

www.mowdendarlington.co.uk

The Old Courts, Wigan

Licensee: Rebecca Davenport

MP: Lisa Nandy

The team at the Old Courts, led by licensee Rebecca Davenport, delivered 700 food parcels to local people in need, and a further 10,000 packed lunches to children during school holidays. They also made over 900 phone calls to isolated residents. The pub supports a number of local arts and music community projects so during lockdown they also collected unwanted musical instruments for children who wanted to learn but couldn't afford an instrument – a great way to turn lockdown into a learning opportunity for youngsters. Other groups helped by the Old Courts include the Wigan Autistic Theatre Company, School of Rock and Over-50 Jammers.

www.theoldcourts.com

The Orange Tree, Baldock, Hertfordshire

Licensee: Rob Scahill

MP: Oliver Heald

On the day after lockdown, licensee Rob Scahill decided to turn his pub into a shop. Within a couple of days, he had stocked his store by reaching out to suppliers, staff and friends offering to volunteer, and help from Greene King. With this support to make the shop viable, Rob chose to make it a not-for-profit operation and, in flash of inspiration, added 20% to the cost price of items with that amount going to a new Baldock Musicians Support Fund – founded by Rob to support local musicians who would be struggling without the pub gigs they relied upon to make ends meet. The Orange Tree shop opened every day, firstly for ‘priority’ customers including vulnerable and NHS workers, giving them a safe shopping environment before it opened to other residents. Rob also continued the pub’s much-loved quiz going through lockdown, with more than 100 people joining online every Tuesday. Rob

said: "I am so proud to be able to say that I never closed my doors, and to have raised an incredible £45,000 for Baldock Musicians."

<https://www.theorangetreebaldock.com/startpage.htm>

The Portobello Inn, West Kingsdown, near Sevenoaks, Kent

Licensees: Charmain & Steven Powell

MP: Laura Trott

At the start of lockdown and the height of panic buying, the team at the Portobello were concerned about the possible impact on local elderly and vulnerable, who might not have enough food to eat. Licensees Charmain and Steven Powell decided to make use of stock they had in the kitchen and put a message out to the community offering homemade lasagne, making 18 deliveries in the village. Next week, the number increased to 70 meals and as word spread, they appealed for donations of money and food ingredients. Soon, they were delivering two hot meals a day, 2 or 3 times a week, to 100 people. Hearing about the great work the pub was doing, the COOK branch in Sevenoaks offered to help, and this partnership saw the number of meals increase to 170, and include a number of NHS workers.

<https://www.facebook.com/theportobelloinnWestKingsdown/>