



Pubs Raise £100m+ for Charity Every Year.

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Communities and vulnerable supported through pandemic by 'pub heroes'

Since the Covid-19 outbreak and lockdown last month, hundreds of pubs have stepped up to help their customers, elderly and other vulnerable people, NHS and key workers and local charities.

Despite the uncertain future faced by many pubs about when they might reopen, and how social distancing regulations may impact their business, licensees are 'pivoting' to offer a range of food and drink for local people, preparing and delivering hot meals to vulnerable people and providing social and emotional support with online quizzes, chats and music gigs.

Des O'Flanagan, co-founder of PubAid, the organisation that highlights pubs as a force for good in their communities, said: "The pandemic has been the biggest challenge our industry has faced, but licensees have shown huge resourcefulness in transforming their businesses overnight to serve the needs of their community in the 'new normal'.

"Pubs have been at the heart of their communities for centuries, and the last few weeks have demonstrated just what a vital role they play: the support they are offering to local people, particularly those who can't leave home, is invaluable, and is frequently done for no gain, just a desire to help.

"When lockdown is lifted, let's hope that these wonderful licensees are rewarded by the ongoing thanks, and custom, from the local residents they have supported."

Community Pub Heroes

McMullen Brewery has been helping local NHS workers with a drive through, contactless service for fresh goods and groceries at its Hertford brewery. The service has been so popular that it has been rolled out to seven McMullen's pubs across Hertfordshire, complementing the support that licensees have been offering their local communities. At The Hare in Harlow, the team cooked up 60 hot meals for staff at Princess Alexandra Hospital

next to the pub, the Long Arm Short Arm in Welwyn is home delivering to elderly people, and the Dogs Head in Bishops Stortford collected fabric to make scrubs, donated to the local hospital. One NHS customer said: *“Amazing quality and service, I will be ordering more stunning fruit and veg next week. Thank you.”*

The Strand in Exmouth, part of the Craft Union group, has created a foodbank at the pub to support the Friends in Need charity. Operators Doug, Kathleen & George have put a supermarket trolley in the pub garden so that people can leave food donations while complying with social distancing rules. Friends in Need looks after local families that have suffered abusive relationships.

The Crown in Costessey, near Norwich, has raised £1,000 for fresh fruit and veg boxes for local NHS staff. The money will enable licensees Bradley Richards and Trina Lake to make up 100 boxes for Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, and complements their regular food deliveries to NHS staff, made either close to hospitals or to their homes. Additionally, a plea to regulars brought in enough toiletries to make up boxes for several local hospitals and care homes, providing daily necessities to vulnerable people.

The Crown and Anchor, Chesterfield has been holding daily online raffles to raise cash for the NHS. Currently they have raised £330, and are also running regular quizzes via Facebook. Elaine, who runs the Craft Union pub with Paul, has channelled her inner Mary Berry by giving baking lessons on Facebook, with her cake becoming a raffle prize that was luckily won by a regular a few days before her 50th birthday.

The Chequers in Aylesford is delivering 150 free meals a week to vulnerable, disabled and isolated OAPs in the local community. The service, funded by generous donations and a band of volunteers to deliver the meals, gives elderly people a hot meal and a friendly face checking on them – from a distance. One message of thanks read: *“The Chequers are stars! I’ve been so worried about my father since my mother was hospitalised, but they provide him with a fresh, hot meal, free and delivered to his door.”*

The Post Office Inn in Plympton, Plymouth, organises a weekly online concert to raise funds for charities NHS Charities Together and local St Luke’s Hospice. Every Sunday evening, the pub’s operator Danny Jones is performing and streaming live gigs which can be viewed via the pub’s Facebook page - providing the local community with musical entertainment.

The Swan in Croydon has supported local street artist, Chris Shea - also known as State of the Art – to raise money for the NHS. Chris has painted a series of art pieces across the city of his son watering a rainbow, in honour of the rainbow campaign of support and thanks to the NHS. The pub has continually promoted the campaign via its social channels, helping it

to raise over £9,000 to date. Chris honoured The Swan by painting his 100th piece of work, known as rainbow boy, on the wall of the pub.

The Witton Chimes, a Craft Union pub in Northwich, Cheshire, is on a mission to raise funds for local charity Tiny Steps who provide sensory, soft play and a social café to support families. Last week, operator Adam Prestage and his team of regular customers raised £500 for the charity from the pub's weekly online 'Kinky Pinky' virtual disco.

Captions to attached images:

- 1) *The team from McMullen's pub The Hare in Harlow deliver meals to local Princess Alexandra Hospital*
- 2) *The 'rainbow boy' image goes up on The Swan in Croydon*

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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 local 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 takes place every March, and the Charity Pub of the Year Awards, which received close to 90 entries in 2019.

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.