

The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd Business Plan

Our Mission

“To restore this vibrant, much loved and unique pub to its rightful place at the heart of the community, safeguarding its success for our future generations.”

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I. History

Built in 1820 to coincide with the opening of the Kennet and Avon Canal, the Grade 2 listed Barge Inn at Honeystreet has 200 years of serving the local and wider communities.

Situated in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and described by Pevsner as the best canal side scenery in Wiltshire, it's unique and beautiful setting draws people, not only from the local villages of Honeystreet, Alton Barnes, Alton Priors, Woodborough, Stanton St Bernard, All Cannings and Pewsey but also from diverse groups such as ramblers, the boating communities, canal holiday makers, cyclists and visitors to the ancient sites of Avebury, West Kennet long barrow and Stonehenge, crop circle enthusiasts and musicians.

Over the years, a hugely popular campsite has been added at the rear of the pub and the barn has been rebuilt as a space for community use. More recently, the pub and campsite have been gradually wound down with the intention of private residential development. The most recent owner, having been blocked by both an Asset of Community Value and planning application, both of which having prevented change of use, the refurbishment of the barn for private use and the relocation of an ancient byway, has now put the pub up for sale.

The campaign to save the Barge is not just six months old. It began three years ago, when the owner at that time began to market the barn and the pub separately contrary to planning legislation. A small group of us identified that the pub needed protection from speculators, having witnessed its slow decline over the years, and that's when we decided to do something about it rather than to accept and lament its demise. We knocked on doors and canvassed the local community to support an application for an Asset of Community Value (ACV) which was subsequently successfully registered with the Council. Since then we were notified by the Council of the current owner's intention to sell the freehold and concluded that we had possibly the only opportunity to finally put the pub into safe hands through community ownership.

The dedicated community group responsible for ensuring the registration of the ACV has now registered their interest to utilise the six-month moratorium, triggered by the notification of sale to buy the pub freehold, as a Community Benefit Society, via the sale of community shares. The experience of past tenants has shown the pub to be a viable going concern.

We have chosen the Community Benefit Society route to enable us to raise the capital using community shares, and then own, manage and direct the pub using the democratic structures of a society, and to benefit from the statutory asset-lock to ensure that the pub is protected for as long as the community of owners wishes it to be.

The Barge Inn closed its doors in January 2018 and the community has felt the impact of the closure profoundly. Most significantly, there is no longer a community hub where the diverse community of people can come together to benefit from the social interaction and cohesion that pubs traditionally provide, particularly in such a rural setting.

Many of the tourists and regular visitors to the area have stopped coming and groups such as the International Crop Circle fraternity have lost their epicentre as well as the ramblers, cyclists and canal users that visit this pub as a pit stop or to simply stop to enjoy lunch in a beautiful canal-side setting.

Local businesses (including hire boat companies) have been very supportive of our campaign to bring back this busy tourist destination and have reported a distinct drop in trade and overall loss to the local economy over the past year.

The Barge Inn is a well-known music venue which has a tradition of launching the careers of new and talented local musicians. The Barge Inn has a strong reputation for giving bands a captive audience to help promote their material. Many of the bands are frequent visitors because of the enthusiasm of the audience and friendliness of the pub's culture created over the years.

II. Vision

- 1. To reinstate and secure the Barge Inn and campsite as a homely, welcoming and traditional country pub to be run by The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd for the benefit of the community and for all to enjoy.**
- 2. To facilitate the purchase, The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd is seeking to raise the necessary funds through a share offer.**
- 3. To run a successful business, The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd understands that the business operations need to be founded on a realistic and achievable business plan. This business plan has been prepared on the premise that The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd will secure an experienced manager to run the pub once it re-opens.**

III. Key elements of the business

- 1. We have enlisted the services of a surveyor/valuer. We are currently looking to raise £1,100,000 subject to valuation which could include share capital, donations, mortgage and loans. This will cover the offer price and set up costs of the business. We recognise there is a need to renovate the interior and campsite, so we will need to negotiate to hold back funds for this work**
- 2. At the approximate asking price of £895,000 (subject to valuation), an estimated total capital budget of £1,280,000 is required to cover the purchase of the pub, pay VAT on the purchase price, Stamp Duty, legal fees, Crowdfunding fees etc to enable the purchase of stock and remedial repairs.**
- 3. With income from shares at the optimum target of £1,100,000.00 together with grants, return of VAT on purchase and donations less set up costs, it is estimated that the end of year balance will show a loss of -£24,001 at the end of the first year. At the end of year two we are projecting a healthy profit of £49,538 and £50,879 at the end of year three. It is the intention of the Society to reinvest excess profit, over and above maintaining a healthy cash flow and liquidity, to safeguard the future of its assets.**

4. If our optimum target is not achieved solely through the share equity then we may consider a bridging loan to help with the purchase cost, and/or a long term mortgage or peer to peer loan.

5. There is an Economic Rural Development grant which, following research, we would be considered for once the pub has been successfully purchased. They are unable to fund the purchase of the building but can help to fund development of the campsite, kitchen, cellar and B&B rooms up to £100,000.

6. The pub is to be run by an experienced live in, full-time manager employed by The Barge Inn Alliance Limited, with a full-time chef, up to 3 full-time equivalent trained casual bar staff waiting staff and kitchen porter. This will fluctuate seasonally and thus be reflected in the staffing costs. Feedback from the community suggests there is likely to be an element of voluntary work but as this is not quantifiable it is not reflected in this plan.

7. Our strategy will be to reinvest the profits from the business to make repairs to the property and to develop the business to ensure future prosperity.

Business, Marketing and Financial Plan

The following document outlines the business, marketing and financial plan associated with the reinstatement of the Barge Inn under community ownership. The plan seeks to

- Identify operational matters in terms of management structure, operational days and hours, staffing requirements, and the different supplies and materials required
- Stipulate the target markets and how these are to be attracted to the pub
- Identify the 12-month profit and loss and cash flow forecast to include set up costs and projection forecast over a three-year period
- Stipulate the capital investment requirements and sources
- Identify the preferred sources of funding

The Barge Inn Alliance Ltd (the Society) has set up a Community Benefit Society with the sole purpose of purchasing and managing The Barge Inn Public House in Honeystreet, Wiltshire for the good of the community.

The interim directors of the Society are to be formed from the founding members.

Founding members: Nel Lingard (Company Secretary), Andrew Lingard, Sarah Huggins and Sharyn Jarvis.

Helen Lingard (Nel Lingard informally) is a Project Manager and her day job is running operational teams in the Financial Services sector with a career span of over 20 years. Nel is the Company Secretary and she ensures that every part of our offer documentation, business plan and understanding of how to create a successful community business is professional, compliant and thorough.

Sharyn Jarvis has twenty plus years' experience in the pub trade, including working for The Barge Inn, and is fully conversant with pub management and operational budgets. She knows how a successful pub runs from day to day, from stock control to staffing and punter management along with her eye firmly on the future and next events. In layman's terms, she knows how to get money out of people for good causes and has a very bossy finger!

Andy Lingard (who is at his happiest looking under the bonnet of his VW) has applied his logical thinking and problem-solving skills coupled with his drive and passion for the project to succeed. An excellent writer (see his WordPress blogs!), always with a dry sense of humour, he has researched and accessed the grants, funding and background information, talking to planners and council officials and various other organisations.

Sarah Huggins is known in the community as 'Miss Bowes', she has 26 years' experience in education. Her managerial skills, managing school budgets and staff leadership lend themselves very well to the project. She has had to learn the process from scratch and has done it well. She also brings her communication skills, organisation and motivation. To Sarah, a pub full of 'happy' people is not unlike her classroom and she readily treats everyone as such!

In addition, we have enlisted the following skills set from the community:

Sara Jeal – Accountancy & Twitter guru; **Esther Bradbury** - PR & Journalism;

Jonathan Ashbridge – Lawyer; **Phil Bridgeman** - Graphic designer;

Ben Pope – Para Legal and Conveyancing; **Steve Grist** – IT Developer

IV. The Barge Inn Operation Assumptions

The Society propose to purchase the freehold of The Barge Inn pub and campsite. As a free house, this will provide the management team with the flexibility to secure better value for money on the beers, wines, spirits, soft drinks, and food that the pub will sell.

An experienced management team will be sought to run the daily operation of the pub.

Accommodation is available for the managers to reside 'on-site' and this could form part of the remuneration package to reduce the salary bill.

The ancillary barn has planning consent for two B&B rooms. This resource can be developed once the pub has been secured. There is also the potential for 'glamping' pods such as Yurts or Shepherd Huts. We anticipate we will see a return on glamping and B&B in year two in addition to normal camping.

Key qualities that the Society will look for in appointing the management team are:

- Previous experience and a track record in running successful village pubs.
- Enthusiasm, drive and customer focus.

- Innovative ideas regarding how to attract and promote the pub towards the target audiences.
- A commitment to provide beneficial services for the community through the pub, coupled with strong commercial awareness.
- The operations management team will comprise of a chef and front of house manager supported by casual staff as required.

Trade will be monitored to determine the best operational times and when demand is identified, The Barge Inn will open to meet those demands. The quality of the staff is very important and therefore the remuneration of the staff needs to be appropriate to the expectations that will be placed upon them.

V. Financial Projections

Although revenue takings will vary throughout the year, the surplus generated month-to-month should be sufficient to absorb any weak trading weeks and continue to provide an increasing surplus for the opening balance of the next trading year. By the end of year three, the end of year trading balance is predicting a bank balance surplus of £50,879. For a small business, this would represent a healthy position and one that will secure the future of The Barge Inn as a going concern. It would also enable the board to consider spending capital on improvements and provide investors with an interest payment on their shareholding following the three-year moratorium.

This conservative business plan developed by the directors, with contributions from experienced publicans and research into similar pub and bar costs, shows the minimum trading levels expected and is summarised in the following tables subject to a fair valuation that will determine the actual offer price:

Cashflow Projections

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Operating Profit/(Loss)	(114,601)	62,818	64,476	42,166	44,368
Depreciation charge	0	3,580	3,508	3,438	3,369
VAT Collected	53,333	56,000	57,120	58,262	59,428
Grants	100,000				
Mortgage	300,000				
Share Issue (via Crowdfunder)	800,000				
Bridging Loan	180,000				
Purchase of Freehold Property	(895,000)				
Purchase of Freehold Property - VAT	(179,000)				
Purchase of F&F's	(10,000)				
Crowdfunder Fees - VAT	(14,667)				
VAT net	153,667	(55,333)	(56,840)	(57,977)	(59,136)
Corporation Tax Paid		(9,400)	(13,280)	(13,597)	(9,121)
Mortgage repayment	(2,660)	(2,739)	(2,822)	(2,906)	(2,993)
Bridging Loan repaid	(188,100)				
Share Capital Withdrawal	0	0	0	(40,000)	(39,200)
Change in cash during period	182,973	54,925	52,164	(10,613)	(3,286)
Cash at beginning of period	0	182,973	237,898	290,061	279,448
Cash at end of period	182,973	237,898	290,061	279,448	276,163
Represented by:-					
Cash In Hand	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cash In Bank	181,973	236,898	289,061	278,448	275,163
	182,973	237,898	290,061	279,448	276,163

Profit and Loss Projections

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sales					
Wet and dry sales	500,000	510,000	520,200	530,604	541,216
Campsite	20,000	30,000	30,600	31,212	31,836
Total Sales	520,000	540,000	550,800	561,816	573,052
LESS: Cost of Sales					
Purchases assuming 40% of sales	200,000	204,000	208,080	212,242	216,486
VAT on Gross Profit	53,333	56,000	57,120	58,262	59,428
Gross Profit	266,667	280,000	285,600	291,312	297,138
Gross Margin%	51%	52%	52%	52%	52%
LESS: Overheads					
Staffing	69,171	70,554	71,965	73,405	74,873
Start-up costs	171,600				
Other Overheads	131,565	134,196	136,880	139,618	142,410
Total overheads	372,336	204,751	208,846	213,023	217,283
EBITDA	(105,669)	75,249	76,754	78,289	79,855
Interest on Mortgage	8,932	8,852	8,770	8,685	8,598
Interest payments to shareholders	0	0	0	24,000	23,520
Depreciation charge	0	3,580	3,508	3,438	3,369
Total other costs	8,932	12,432	12,278	36,123	35,487
Operating Profit/(Loss) - Before Tax	(114,601)	62,818	64,476	42,166	44,368
Other income - grants	100,000				
Corporation Tax	9,400	13,280	13,597	9,121	9,547
Net Profit/(Loss) - After Tax	(24,001)	49,538	50,879	33,045	34,821

Balance Sheet projections

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Fixed Assets					
Land	716,000	716,000	716,000	716,000	716,000
Buildings	179,000	175,420	171,912	168,473	165,104
Fixtures and Fittings	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Fixed Assets	905,000	901,420	897,912	894,473	891,104
Current Assets					
Cash in Hand	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cash at Bank	181,973	236,898	289,061	278,448	275,163
Total Current Assets	182,973	237,898	290,061	279,448	276,163
Current Liabilities					
VAT due	13,333	14,000	14,280	14,566	14,857
Corp Tax Due	9,400	13,280	13,597	9,121	9,547
Total Current Liabilities	22,733	27,280	27,877	23,687	24,404
Net Current Assets	160,240	210,618	262,185	255,762	251,758
Total Net Assets	1,065,240	1,112,038	1,160,096	1,150,235	1,142,862
Long Term Liabilities					
Mortgage	297,340	294,601	291,779	288,873	285,880
Total Long Term Liabilities	297,340	294,601	291,779	288,873	285,880
NET ASSETS	767,899	817,437	868,317	861,362	856,983
Financed By :-					
Share Capital	800,000	800,000	800,000	760,000	720,800
Retained Profit	(24,001)	49,538	50,879	33,045	34,821
Retained Profit B/fwd		(24,001)	25,537	76,417	109,462
	775,999	825,537	876,417	869,462	865,083

VI. Staffing

The main cost related to the running of the pub will be staff, stock replenishment and VAT. As highlighted previously, it is important that the remuneration of the staff is commensurate with the expectations that will be placed upon them. Staffing levels must also be sufficient to ensure that the pub can be run successfully at both quieter and busy periods. On occasion, it is anticipated that additional volunteers or temporary staff will be required to either support the main staff during particularly busy times, or as cover for annual leave and other absences. The Society will work with the management team to plan contingencies for such occasions so that the business will not face additional financial burden.

Members of the community have indicated that, on occasion, they would be willing to volunteer their time as a means of ensuring that the pub's operation is sustainable. 'Sweat Equity' will be proactively encouraged and incentivised through community engagement and rewards initiatives.

Staff will manage volunteers, with staff managed by the manager, who is in turn responsible to the Board of Directors of the society. The Board of Directors are responsible to the members of the society, and elections take place every year for a proportion of the board who stand down and can either stand for re-election, or retire.

VII. Drinks Strategy

As a free house the management team will have the flexibility to purchase a range of alcoholic drinks that balances quality with price to maximise the gross profit that can be achieved through each unit sold. It will also allow the pub's management team to bring in locally sourced guest drinks, such as Ramsbury, West Berkshire and micro-brewery ales, to help stimulate interest in re-visiting the pub by ale enthusiasts. We will seek to engage CAMRA in supporting us with this venture.

There may be an opportunity to install a micro-brewery on the premises which would have the dual advantage of increasing margins on beer sales and create a unique marketing selling point to increase trade.

The pricing strategy for the drinks will largely be influenced by the costs of the wholesale price plus duty and VAT. For the business plan, the Society has assumed a price strategy that will be employed with a gross margin of 60% for wet sales and consumables. These margins are conservative and consistent with other pubs in terms of both wet and dry sales. However, as this is a freehouse pub, the gross profit margin has the potential to be greater by contracting with local suppliers and avoiding middleman margins.

VIII. Food Strategy

A separate lunch time and evening menu will be created, offering good quality food at affordable prices.

The Society will conduct a period of consultation to ensure that we cater for the local community and the menu will be designed around this, also ensuring that it meets the requirements of the "passing trade" nature of the business, with the emphasis of healthy and nutritious food. Special offers will be developed to include drinks and extras

The evening menu will have a flexible and evolving cuisine alongside the usual pub favourites. There will also be a regularly changing list of 'specials'; all meals will be designed and priced to create a gross margin of 60%. Vegetarian and vegan options will also be provided. Specific dietary requirements and allergy concerns will be catered for. On Sunday, the main meal of the day will be a traditional roast. An appetiser/starter and dessert menu will accompany the main meal, with the target being to encourage at least two courses per restaurant customer.

The menu will be changed seasonally, with locally sourced produce to be utilised wherever possible including local allotments and gardens. A series of Barge Inn signature dishes are to be developed to include a signature fish and vegetarian dish. There is also the potential for campsite catering and sales, which would be also available to passing trade.

Building a series of good quality vegetarian and ethically sourced healthy options would be beneficial to ensure repeat business from the growing environmentally conscious markets.

Additionally, the availability of a take away menu is being considered.

At 40 covers inside, it is estimated that the overall capacity per sitting will be as follows:

- Lunchtime (12:00 - 15:00) = 80 meals, based on each diner staying approximately 1 hour
- Evening meals (18:00 - 22:00) = 80 meals, based on each diner staying approximately 1 and a half hours
- There are an additional 48 good weather covers outside.

Assuming a 6-day operating period, this equates to an overall diner capacity of over six hundred indoor covers available. Even at busy periods, these capacities are unlikely to be maximised, however this at least demonstrates that the Barge Inn has good turnover potential for food each day.

The pricing strategy for food will match the overall philosophy of providing good quality but good value meals using fresh ingredients. Local produce will be sourced where possible, however it is also envisaged that a contract will be established with one of the main catering suppliers.

IX. Other Sources of Income

Alongside the income from the campsite in the summer months, the Society envisage that the pub will be able to secure additional income through the provision of a pool table, and live entertainment that caters for the wide variety of tastes of the local and wider community. This will include special events for the community, including quiz nights, cribbage and local association meeting points, theme nights, a youth club and other such community activities.

There is the potential to grow the coffee /cafe culture and identify with the target demographics within the surrounding villages.

There is currently no adequate baby changing facilities, minor alteration to the toilets could help improve the desire for parents to use these facilities.

As well as general camping it is anticipated that we will purchase Yurts/Shepherd Huts for a higher level of accommodation generating a higher level of income and, as there is already planning permission in place, to develop two B&B rooms in the ancillary barn, which also has the potential for community functions.

X. Controlling Costs

Generating revenue forms only part of the success of a business of this type.

Controlling the costs of the operation is the other key element. Controlling waste will also be crucial in ensuring that the value of expenses on food and beverages is maximised. There is always an element of wastage related to barrel and keg ales and lagers, generated through putting on a new barrel, pouring spillage and regular line cleaning. Food wastage will also be controlled through good meal design and portion control.

The Society will require the management team to abide by the most stringent food hygiene and safety measures.

The Society will work to ensure that The Barge Inn receives competitive rates on all its purchases. This could involve working with local businesses and residents in the area to seek economies of scale on deliveries of fuel and food for example. The Society will also utilise the skills and experience of the community to volunteer to undertake certain ancillary services – from such tasks as painting, decorating, equipment installation and gardening through to book keeping - as a means of reducing these types of costs. Early indications through word of mouth and social media show there is an encouraging interest in volunteering for ongoing maintenance and the daily operation of running the pub.

XI. Membership

As soon as The Barge Inn belongs to the community, it will be time for everyone to pitch in and help to get the business trading ready and to support its ongoing success. As member shareholders, it is our collective responsibility to make a success of our community hub. You will be committed to supporting The Barge Inn and its objects by being an advocate to generate new business and community awareness and to help to keep our operating costs down. For example you can:

Tell your friends and family about your interest in The Barge Inn as a community member and encourage others to support it

Be a pro-active supporter yourself by being a regular patron and take an active part in the many community activities planned throughout the year to encourage community cohesion and drive up customer numbers

Taking part in AGMs and other general meetings, ensuring that decision making is driven by the community

Volunteer your time and skills, i.e. joinery, building, painting and decorating, accountancy, ground work, bar work, glass collection, mowing, marketing, advertising and this list goes on....

We intend to run a “rewards” based incentive whereby you volunteer your time and skills in exchange for goods and services i.e. meal or drinks vouchers and other such gifts.

In time we also intend to expand the “rewards” initiative in the local community for example tidying gardens for those who struggle to do it for themselves in exchange for goods and services to be redeemed in The Barge Inn. The possibilities for community involvement are endless!

There is a likelihood that there will be large membership base, so we plan to hold AGMs in the open air in the campsite fronted by a small stage, PA and sound system. We will canvas the membership by issuing an agenda and ask for their participation to vote on resolutions raised by the members, the operation team and the Board of Directors. We will provide refreshment such as tea, coffee and soft drinks prior to and during the meeting. Once the meeting has concluded we will open the bar and kitchen and will provide party entertainment going into the evening to encourage the members to stay and enjoy live entertainment and community interaction.

If our financial forecast of three to five years performance goes as expected, then we hope to be able to pay members interest from the operational costs of the pub on their share investment from the end of year three, although it is at the discretion of the Board to determine whether such a payment is feasible as it will be paid from the operating costs of the business. To help reduce the impact of this operating cost (potentially circa £33,000 per annum) we will either allocate rewards up to the value of 3% (or another rate determined by the members at the AGM) to be redeemed in the pub in terms of drinks, meals, camping vouchers, venue hire and functions etc, therefore reducing the cost to circa £13,200 accounting for 40% cost of sales. This will be our preferred method of payment so that it ensures there is an additional cycle of reinvestment into the business as well as reducing operating costs.

In addition, The Barge Inn Alliance Limited is applying for advanced assurance from HMRC for the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) and Seed Enterprise Investment (SEIS). It may also be possible to offset against income tax and inheritance tax and may be able to reinvest half of a capital gains tax liability. Whilst this is a positive incentive for investors, to avoid losing this relief in future years, the pub will need to ensure any rental income generated does not exceed 20% of total turnover.

XII. Marketing

Competition

The Barge Inn is the only pub in the villages of Alton Barnes, Alton Priors and Honeystreet with only two other pubs within a five-mile radius. The nearest is the Seven Stars in Bottlesford, with the Kings Arms also nearby in All Cannings. However, neither of these pubs are situated by the canal and therefore do not benefit from passing trade. These pubs are primarily gastropubs and therefore appeal to a different customer base from our own. This provides variety of choice. There are also several other campsites around, and with visitor numbers increasing with the re-opening of The Barge Inn, all three pubs will benefit. Visitors to the area looking for a canal side country pub to walk to or for a meal out will consider options across a wide area.

The plan is to market The Barge Inn as a homely, traditional English pub, which fully meets tourists' expectations of a country pub. This involves good quality pub food, sourced from local suppliers,

good quality beers, again brewed locally, open fires, a friendly atmosphere and traditional pub entertainment. Camping and live music also attract visitors and meet the needs of the community for a meeting place and venue for events. A special launch event will ensure villagers and the wider community will return to the pub quickly once it is re-opened, which we fully anticipate and expect given the support and loyalty to their much-loved pub over the years. We will utilise the momentum that this creates to build a successful community pub business. Reputation will spread most effectively by word of mouth and must be built on good quality provision and service. Nevertheless, regular marketing is vital to supplement this.

The demographic analysis is as follows:

Local community population of surrounding parishes.	32,000 – families with young children and teens (several oversubscribed schools in the area), commuters, senior citizens and farm and local workers.
Crop Circle community	800
Barge Inn Facebook followers	950
Tourists/Ramblers/Cyclists etc	5000
Boaters (including holiday makers)	3300

The Barge Inn lies in the heart of the affluent area of the Pewsey Vale. We would need circa 3500 people of the local and wider community to invest the minimum shareholding to achieve sufficient funds. From feedback via leaflets, questionnaires and social media, many people have expressed an interest in investing more than the minimum, and we are therefore optimistic of achieving the target. Over 300 individuals and businesses supported our benefit gig in March 2018 to raise funds for start-up costs and a valuation. We raised £4100 after expenses with everyone involved volunteering their time, talents and money to help get the project off the ground.

Additional interest in the project has been raised through our website, Facebook page and twitter. Leaflets have been distributed through the local area and the village website/newsletter. Door to door marketing has been carried out through a well-designed leaflet, and also through personal contact.

More recently, we have been featured on BBC Wiltshire radio, ITV West local news, Wiltshire Life magazine and the Gazette and Herald (local newspaper).

The social media campaign has followed on with a regular traffic of communication and updates to all those that follow us on Facebook and on our website.

We have also employed the talents of a local PR person who is set to help us go national as soon as the share offer is open on crowdfunder.co.uk. We have links with the crop circle communities and local brewery, Stonehenge Ales who have also committed their support.

The Bell Inn, Walcot Street in Bath, another popular community owned music pub, has also committed to raise publicity about our share offer with their members at their AGM on 30 June 2018.

The marketing of the business will be a matter for both the board and the operational management team. The company will be looking to appoint an experienced manager who will work in partnership with them in marketing The Barge Inn and who will pursue the following marketing strategy:

Objectives

Increase general awareness and publicity of The Barge Inn to:

- 1) Increase bar sales
- 2) Increase food sales
- 3) Maximum occupancy for B&B, glamping and camping
- 4) Improve overall footfall

Target Markets

- Local community residents
- Surrounding community
- Dog Walkers & Ramblers
- Cyclists
- Families
- Home workers
- Local groups and associations
- Tourists and transient travellers
- Campers
- Crop Circle Fraternity
- Hire boats and holiday makers

The following activities will be arranged with defined timescales working with seasonal demands:

- Purchase of website domain
- Opening events for the re-launch of the pub
- Communicate opening hours that serve the needs of the community
- Food Menu to be visible on website and specials board changing each season
- Listing on Dog Friendly pub sites
- Food Reviews in local press and on feedback sites such as Tripadvisor
- Cyclist groups to be contacted and routes planned via cyclestreets.net to establish the Barge Inn as a suitable staging point for rest and refuelling
- Canoe Club to be contacted as above
- Signage for coffee & cake
- Quality Branded Coffee signage
- Camping/glamping/B&B to be listed on website and various campsite groups
- Loyalty Scheme, business card with stamps exchanged for beverages and food
- Extensive range of spirits, wines and soft drinks to offer more choice
- Advertising via social media and website of new ranges that are implemented to include a range of local ales
- Maps of circular walks within Kennet and Avon canal trail using the pub as a base, downloadable on the website
- Contact local groups in the Pewsey Vale to investigate how best we can serve their needs
- Create a youth club for surrounding village children to provide a place for them to meet and socialise
- 'Meet up Mondays' for people living alone who could benefit from social interaction
- Monthly and National Events Calendar, eg. Sport Relief, Children in Need etc.
- Press Release/Media Alert to be issued for each event that is organised
- Food & Beverage Events to coincide with national weeks/events.

Each market will be targeted through marketing initiatives such as:

- Developing a new website highlighting the drinks and food menus, and contact details
- Pursuing Brown and White Tourism Signposting with the Wiltshire District Council
- Establishing loyalty programme for both passing trade and local customers
- Local advertising through newspaper publications
- Regular special promotions and events programme
- Social Media including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

The Society will monitor the effectiveness of each marketing channel to ensure that they are being utilised effectively.

XII. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Excellent location on the Kennet and Avon canal, Honeystreet village and close to historic and populous towns of Marlborough, Devizes, Swindon & Salisbury
- Feedback from local hire boat companies suggest it is a popular destination for hire boat holidaymakers
- Close to the famous landmarks Avebury stone circle, Stonehenge, Silbury Hill, The Sanctuary, West Kennet Long Barrow, Alton Barnes White Horse and Adam's Grave all within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- A regular customer base
- The commitment and support of the stakeholder members, their friends and families to the success of the pub
- The pub has a campsite so will bring tourism to the local area and businesses
- The Society will own the freehold and will not be tied to any brewery and is therefore free to negotiate the best deals
- The Society will appoint an experienced licensee to manage the day to day running of the pub
- Consistent with Wiltshire Core Policy Planning strategies
- Benefit to local economy through tourism and employment
- Epicentre of crop circle enthusiasts

WEAKNESSES

- Campsite trade is subject to weather conditions
- It is rather off the beaten track and very rural
- Limited public transport
- Trade may reduce significantly in the winter months

OPPORTUNITIES

- To build a new brand and reputation based on community values
- To develop new customer bases including walkers (with a “Walks from the Barge Inn” booklet), cyclists, crop circle enthusiasts, people in search of locally sourced, good quality food, and locally produced beers
- The Society plans to develop links with local brewers and will explore the possibility of renting space in the Barn to a micro-brewery which could also serve the pub with ales, reducing overheads, saving on transport, delivery and packaging
- The wide programme of events will be designed to attract a whole new customer base
- Take away menu
- Themed nights
- Working with local teenage groups to provide a safe social space within the barn
- Pool and darts teams
- Partnerships with local businesses such as the local Indian restaurant Tale of Spice, White Horse Gypsy Caravans, Herd Thyme, Salisbury Reds buses, hire boat companies and private hire coach companies such as Pewsey Vale Coaches
- Merchandise such tee shirts, key rings, car stickers, mugs etc.
- Charity events for the benefit of the local community

THREATS

- Unable to generate sufficient interest from potential investors
- We do not achieve our optimum target
- Adverse weather conditions may affect numbers of campers and tourists to the area
- Struggling to recruit volunteers

- Once business is established several shareholders may apply to withdraw their shares after the three-year moratorium
- Despite all the work and effort, the continued economic downturn may lead to insufficient use of the pub
- Inability to purchase the premises at a reasonable price
- Offer is not accepted by the current owner
-

XIV. Addressing the Weaknesses and Threats

Attracting trade

Once the pub is owned by the community, the incentive to use the pub and to encourage family, friends and supporters to use it will be considerable. We estimate that in an average week in the summer months approximately 300 of these will visit the premises and many will visit on more than one occasion. The pub will attract visitors on holiday in the area and people from nearby towns by building up its reputation as a traditional, friendly country pub selling good quality food and real ale. In addition to this, the business will deliberately set out to attract the target markets mentioned above.

There is space for tables in the canal side front garden and we will ensure these are updated to look attractive and inviting for customers. There are approximately 8 bench style tables that can each seat 6 comfortably.

Inability to attract sufficient interest from investors

If the proposed enterprise does not attract the anticipated investment, then the proposed purchase will not go ahead. The funds will be pledged via crowdfunder.co.uk. The crowd funding site will hold pledges in suspension until the freehold has been secured. If, at the deadline that we set, insufficient shares have been purchased, the share issue will be halted and all those who have pledged their investment will have their money returned.

We do not achieve our optimum target

If we do not meet our optimum target there are other options to consider, namely a long- term mortgage, bridging loan and peer to peer lending.

Adverse weather conditions

Should the weather have an impact on trading revenue we will make more use of the large indoor barn space for community activities and market this through social media and bill boarding as well as providing live entertainment in the main bar.

Recruiting volunteers

As mentioned previously, early indications of volunteer work are very positive. We already have a number of volunteers ready and waiting. However, to keep the momentum going we intend to have a 'volunteers day' where we provide a reward such as a buffet, live music and a couple of beers to maintain recruitment.

Insufficient Use of the Pub

Should it become impossible to operate The Barge Inn as a viable business, shareholders should be aware that the value of their investments may be reduced or, on winding up, transferred to another community benefit society.

Once the business is established, several shareholders may apply to withdraw their shares after the three-year moratorium

Under the rules of the Society, the Board of Directors have the discretion to decide whether any withdrawal is detrimental to the business and is able to defer until such time there are sufficient funds available.

Offer is not accepted by the current owner

To address this potential threat, we have engaged the services of both an experienced valuer and solicitor to negotiate with the owner on our behalf.

Conclusion

The Barge Inn has a strong connection to the welfare of the local and wider community. The threat of losing this amenity has driven the community to come together to oppose its closure and potential change of use. This in turn has led to the formation of The Barge Inn Alliance Limited as a Community Benefit Society that can provide a realistic and achievable business solution for the benefit of the community and its investors.

Throughout this business plan, the Society has sought to re-affirm that the pub has a range of markets which, collectively, will provide the pub with sufficient revenue to meet its operational costs and return a profit to be re-invested for the benefit of the community.

In addition, the Barge Inn Alliance Limited, through the initial "Save the Barge Inn" campaign, will re-energise the local community. Through a concerted effort to develop the right business strategy and pub environment to benefit the community, the Society is confident that this once great pub will be restored as a community hub.