



Community Pub

CASE STUDY



| The Red Lion Culross, Fife



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The Red Lion, located at the heart of the historic 17th-century Royal burgh of Culross in Fife, has been an important part of the community providing food, drink and a meeting place since the mid-to-late 14th century.

The pub – known locally simply as The Red – was with the previous owners for nearly 30 years, but was put up for sale as they wished to retire. The local community responded, fearful of losing its treasured pub, and after a sustained and determined campaign, the pub was finally bought by the community through its Community Benefit Society, the West Fife Community Trading Limited (WFCT), in July 2022, with community shares held by 270 shareholders.

| Local jobs and community cohesion

The Red Lion's tenant is a local villager, a former builder, and his wife has been chef at the pub for 20 years. It's the biggest employer in the community with between 15-20 staff, and employs several young people from the village, many in their first jobs.

Steven Wood, Chair of the WFCT says of local jobs, "this was one of our BIG goals and has been written into every document from the lease to the CBS constitution." He adds "our primary goal now is to be in a financial position to be able to support voluntary groups in the village, to help them with their projects".

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For a small village these voluntary groups are numerous, including civic interests such as pier restoration, heritage, water and drains, gala committee to a Community centre, parent and toddler group and a seniors group.

Once on an even keel with some steady trading behind them, the ripple effect of the community pub will certainly be felt by all sections of the wider Culross community through its planned support for their activities. Many of these projects the team believes would attract match funding, so that every pound that the pub can provide will be worth two to those projects.

! An immediate benefit

So while the community pub builds up from its community purchase to achieve its ambitions, what else does it offer? **The team says, “The pub helps in so many small ways that are only noticed when they are not there.”**

It will be providing the seniors’ Christmas lunch, the mulled wine for the carol singers in the community garden, the New Year ceilidh (with a local rhythm and blues band) and the hospitality that it is well known for. It hosts a pub quiz for locals and helps out with every collection and community effort from homing the defibrillator to the hub notice board and information leaflets.

“We are trying to get additional funding to install cycle racks and ebike charging points, and are also in the process of negotiating for two e-vehicle charging points for the pub car park”.

Clearly, the Red Lion is built on firm foundations and the aim is a long term resilient resource that will see the village’s voluntary groups, and its summer visitors, supported and welcomed well into the future.



This case study has been made possible through funding from Scottish Government as a way to inspire community owned pubs about the many ways they can address issues facing rural communities.



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If you are interested in starting or developing a community pub please contact the Plunkett Foundation - **01993 630 022**, info@plunkett.co.uk or visit www.plunkett.co.uk to find out how we can support you.

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities across the UK to tackle the issues they face by promoting and supporting community business. In addition to developing and safeguarding valuable assets and services, community businesses address a range of issues including isolation, loneliness, wellbeing, work and training.

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