



Community Pub

CASE STUDY



I The White Horse Church Fenton



I KEY DETAILS

Total raised in community shares	£70,000
Share price	£50 (minimum 2 shares)
Official opening date	1st July 2019
Population area served	650 households
Number of shareholders	200
Legal structure	Community Benefit Society
Freehold price	£360,000

I About The White Horse

For the North Yorkshire village of Church Fenton, securing financial help from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) was an essential step towards saving The White Horse pub and taking it into community ownership.

Church Fenton Community Hub was set up on 28th November 2017 to look, primarily, at the feasibility of saving The White Horse. This was following a resolution in November 2017 by Church Fenton Parish Council to 'submit a formal expression of interest to be considered as a bidder for the White Horse'.

The White Horse had been operating in Church Fenton since 1881, providing catering and restaurant facilities. Sadly, it stopped trading in August 2016, and since that time the community had missed having a pub and restaurant in the heart of this village of about 1,400 people.

Thanks to a small group of determined people, a proactive and forward-thinking Parish Council and support from many of the parishioners of Church Fenton, the pub was purchased by the council using a PWLB facility, approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The process undertaken by the parish council followed the steps outlined in the webinar slideshow and the video from MHCLG.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with the community, clear support was forthcoming and the loan application for £500,000, repayable over 50 years on an annuity basis, was approved.



I Purchase

Following on from the purchase, Church Fenton Parish Council encouraged the creation of Church Fenton Community Hub Limited, a Community Benefit Society (CBS) to provide a management structure and to act as landlord, on behalf of the council.

As a result, Church Fenton Community Hub Ltd (CFCH) became registered as a CBS in April 2018, and has since signed a sub-lease with experienced tenants, H & P Pubs, who also run The Boundary House at nearby Methley.

In order to manage the period whilst the pub was being refurbished (and therefore unable to generate any income) CFCH launched a share offer to raise funds. The offer closed in October 2018, and resulted in almost 200 shareholders raising more than the target amount of £50,000.

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Landmark

Fortunately, the project did not require an increase in the council's precept as the assets - a pub and shop - that were acquired by the council were leased to the two businesses. The rent from these covered the cost of the PWLB loan so there was no financial cost to the community of securing both shop and pub for the community.

The White Horse is again becoming a landmark in the village of Church Fenton and its future secured.

Thanks to a creative approach of combining the power of community shares and ownership and the ability and willingness of the Parish Council, on behalf of the village, to access the PWLB Funding Facility, Church Fenton has been able to provide long-term security for two valuable community assets.



Wherever you are in the UK, if you are interested in starting or developing a community pub please contact the Plunkett Foundation - **01993 810730**, info@plunkett.co.uk or visit www.plunkett.co.uk to find out how we can support you.

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities UK-wide 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.

If you share our vision for a vibrant rural economy with rural community business as its heart, why not join Plunkett as a member? Find out more about our membership packages [here](#).

This case study has been made possible through the More than a Pub programme, funded by Power to Change and the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government.

