



Community Pub

CASE STUDY



Exelby Green Dragon

Bedale, North Yorkshire



KEY DETAILS

Name of organisation	The Exelby Green Dragon
Category	Community owned pub
Organisation's county	North Yorkshire

KEY DETAILS cont.

Legal structure	The Exelby Green Dragon is registered as a Community Benefit Society in the name of Exelby Green Dragon Community Pub Limited
Population size	200
Services & Activities	<p>The pub offers many services including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Café and Deli • Free WiFi • Book Club • Quiz nights • Folk Club • Sing Around Group • Women's Club • Gardening Club • Art Club • Village notice board • Restaurant • Grazing Boxes and Takeaway Service • Luxury Bed & Breakfast Accommodation • Beer Garden with Igloos • Community Led Housing

KEY DETAILS cont.

Overview	<p>After two and a half years of negotiating, the Exelby community came together and achieved the purchase of the pub in October 2018. This was made possible with individuals purchasing shares together with a grant and a loan.</p> <p>Immediately following the purchase a renovation programme started and now there is a fully renovated bar and dining area, brand new toilets, re-fitted kitchen, a deli shop/cafe and luxury accommodation. Work to the exterior of the pub and the beer garden area has also taken place along with the purchase and full refurbishment of the adjoining cottage for a community led housing project.</p> <p>The renovation work would not have been possible without the significant volunteer effort from the local community.</p> <p>The focus of this case study is the community led housing project.</p>
Started service	2018
Volunteer or staff led service	Staff led service with tenants
Costs	The total cost of the pub refurbishment and renovations, including accommodation, was circa £250,000
Websites	www.exelbygreendragonpub.co.uk www.exelbygreendragon.co.uk

I About The Green Dragon

Exelby is a small rural village situated in the lower dales of North Yorkshire about three miles from the historic market town of Bedale.

The Green Dragon has always been at the centre of community activity, and the pub is well used by local residents; increasingly it has also now become a popular destination pub for visitors. For most villages, a pub is a vital service: it is a meeting place, communication centre and an important lynchpin of village life. Much of the appeal of Exelby as a close-knit village rests on its sense of community

When the Green Dragon was put up for sale the community successfully applied for the pub land associated with the pub to be listed as an Asset of Community Value and with no interest from other potential purchasers, the community came together to mount a successful bid for the property. The future is now firmly in the hands of the community and the Exelby Green Dragon is now much more than a pub.

Many different events and social activities are run with the support of the volunteers and the current tenants. As well as the bar and restaurant there is also a delightful café and a well-stocked delicatessen.

A great deal of support for a café was found during community consultation. It was felt that a café would work in harmony with a deli shop and the restaurant in driving food sales, minimising food wastage and contributing to sustainability and the overall business model.

I Community led Housing

A housing needs survey and local questionnaire indicated that there was a clear need for affordable housing in Exelby. An adjoining 18th century cottage, which had been left to deteriorate, originally part of The Green Dragon's ladies facilities, provided an opportunity.

With guidance from Hambleton District Council, funding was secured from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and with the addition of local support Exelby's first community led housing project was achieved. This high quality housing with an affordable low cost rent is for people who live in or work local to Exelby and it is not just for now but for generations to come.

Exelby Green Dragon Community Pub Ltd raised the money to purchase the pub, extensively renovate the premises and the adjoining cottage by issuing shares at £500 each. This raised a total of £345,000 funding.

Hambleton District Council provided £45,000 from their Community Housing Fund. £35,000 was used for legal setting up costs, a feasibility study and development (including materials and labour). A further £10,000 was needed to cover the unexpected cost of a new roof.



Photo credit: www.andy-matheson.com/

Looking to the future

When the pub finally re-opens again, visitors will be able to enjoy the new and recently completed luxury bed and breakfast accommodation



Community Garden and Safe Space

Plans for the coming year also include more facilities to promote community activity and wellbeing. In particular an accessible 'Community Garden and Safe Space' will be created in an area that adjoins the new car parking area.

The garden will encourage residents, both young and old, to come together and share ideas in a safe and welcoming space; this will help to counter loneliness with activities and resources that promote wellbeing in the community.

This will include:

- A community vegetable patch; a space for the existing gardening club and where other enthusiasts can grow vegetables, herbs and propagate plants. This will encourage the sharing of knowledge and skills combined with healthy eating.
- The Book Swap: a covered area to encourage reading in the garden
- A Safe Space comprising an enclosed area at the top of the garden with seating and planting to stimulate sensory awareness. It will be an informal space ideal for meeting up for a chat or quiet reflection.
- Bike Library – following the pub's successful inclusion on the route of the Tour de Yorkshire, Exelby now has its own place on the cycling map!
- The pub will offer a selection of maintained bikes for free use by the community so that everyone can experience the iconic route, encouraging health and fitness for all the family.
- It is estimated that works to the area and facilities will cost in the region of £10,000 with the addition of volunteer labour supplied by the village!



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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.



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