

Your Community Freehouse News, August 2023

Welcome to the 19th Edition of Dog's Life, where we look back at our Coronation Weekend events, and share news about current and future developments at The Dog Inn.



WHEN THE SUN SHINES!

A cracking start to the summer a few weeks ago allowed us to progress some much needed refurbishment round the back of the pub.

We are extremely grateful to local retired builder, Alex Sunter, who carried out the repairs to the render and the roof, and who was ably assisted by Craig Steele. We are very grateful to them both for giving up a number of days to ensure that the building is water-tight for the next few years (and the subsequent wet weather proved that we got it done just in time!)

In addition, as part of our drive to reduce costs and become

more environmentally sustainable, we are pleased to announce that we have installed Solar Panels on the rear roof of the pub building.

Following some extensive research, and discussions with a number of providers, we engaged the services of local company, The Energy Guys, to supply and install the panels, and we are pleased to report that we successfully applied to Prospects Foundation for a £10,000 grant to part pay for the solar panels. The rest of the cost will be met from a combination of trading surplus and further grants and loans. Any loan costs will be paid for

from the reduction in energy costs that the installation of the solar panels will realise.

As those of you who visit the pub may have noticed, over the past few weeks the scaffolding has been up, and the panels have been fitted. We have chosen to go with recessed panels, which, rather than being fitted on top of the existing roof (which would have needed repairing first) have been fitted instead of parts of the existing roof.

We are hopeful that this will reduce future maintenance costs on the roof, as well as reducing our electricity bills.

A few words from the Chair

For those people who weren't able to attend the AGM, please find below brief extracts from the Chair's report which was presented to the Members at the AGM.

2022 was the year in which The Dog Inn emerged from the shadow of the Covid 19 pandemic. However, the cost of living crisis and especially the increase in energy bills has made life more difficult for us in the second half of 2022 and early 2023.

The first quarter of 2022 was profitable but the second quarter was not. Cost pressures hit our profit margins and, whilst the pub was very busy for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee events, we still lost money. We had never before planned such an expensive programme of events nor erected a large marquee on the field. The costs were greater than we anticipated and by the end of June, the Dog Inn had made a trading loss in the first half of 2022, something we could ill afford as we emerged from the dark days of the Covid 19 pandemic.

However, I believe we should not regret that we were so ambitious for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Such a landmark occasion is unlikely to occur again in any of our lifetimes and it was right and proper that we marked the Jubilee in style.



Since the turn of the year, the pub has been very busy. We have made a trading profit of around £2 500 in the first quarter and have been able to rebuild our cash balances.

We have a busy a programme of community events, music and entertainment planned and there are more community events than ever before in our history. We have introduced new activities such as our monthly youth club for young people in the village.

We are planning a series of major investments in the building which we intend will secure the fabric of the building for the next decade including:-

- Refurbishment of the ladies' toilets and the installation of a disabled toilet - we have already installed a stair lift to make the ladies toilet

accessible for disabled people.

- Replacing the rear elevation of the roof and installing solar panels to reduce our electricity bills.
- Rear wall rendering
- Repairing rear windows
- Revamping the bar area after eight years of use

This will be part financed by grant funding and part through a loan – but the loan repayments are less per month than the predicted savings made from the installation of solar panels, so the costs of the investment in our building will be funded from the improvements themselves.

Dave Hollings
Chair of the Board

OPENING HOURS

BAR / COFFEE SHOP

MON: CLOSED

TUE: 12pm - 9pm

WED - SAT: 12pm - 11pm

SUNDAY: 12pm - 9pm

RESTAURANT

MON: CLOSED

TUE - SUN: 12pm - 8pm

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE CALENDAR

We are delighted that we now have a regular Bingo night, hosted by the inimitable Bekii. These nights are great fun and always extremely popular.

We have also introduced monthly Youth Club nights, where the children (age 11+) in the village can come to the Community Room upstairs, and play pool, darts, table football, air hockey, and numerous other games, or just chill with their friends.

This is supervised by DBS-cleared adults, and may in the future include trips out.

We are hugely grateful to Stephen Horrocks who hosted our quiz nights for a number of years. He recently



decided to pass on the reins and we're very grateful that a few of the quiz regulars are now taking it in turns to become quizmaster and hosting our weekly

Thursday night pub quiz.

One of our villagers, Lynz Beech, has suggested a new group be set up to help support people with long-term illnesses.

Lynz suffers from a number of illnesses, including fibromyalgia, ME, diverticulitis, and osteoarthritis, and would like to meet up with others suffering with similar conditions, to share experiences, tips, and, most importantly, a laugh!

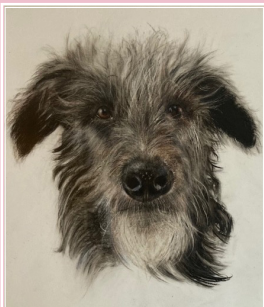
The first date is Wed 6th Sept, 1-3pm in the coffee shop and then hopefully monthly after that. Lifts can be arranged if people are struggling to get to the pub – contact admin@thedoginnatbelthorn.net if you would like a lift.

Cheryl McElroy

PET & ANIMAL PORTRAIT ARTIST

Belthorn based | Commissions re-opening mid-July

Portfolio available on request | Dogs / cats / horses – all animals welcome!



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A WEEKEND FIT



We were very pleased to offer a range of activities on the Coronation Weekend, which proved hugely popular with villagers.

We had managed to obtain some grant funding, which enabled us to hire a marquee, which was erected at the front of the pub, and enabled the events to go ahead regardless of the weather.

We started the weekend with a fabulous visit, on the Friday night, from Monkeymen, our local band, who entertained us

royally in the marquee with their eclectic mix of songs.

On the Saturday, the day of the Coronation, we opened the pub in the morning so people could come in and watch the coronation with friends on our big TV screen. That evening, we were joined by Carry-On Murdering for a right-royal Murder Mystery Supper Night, which was enjoyed by all who attended.

On the Sunday we were very fortunate to have beautiful weather for our "Family Fun

Day" which included a free buffet for villagers, provided by Jamie from the restaurant, which over 100 people enjoyed. This was followed by a face-painting, and a party for the children, which again, was a great success.

The long weekend was topped off on the Sunday by our ever-popular "just for fun" Dog Show, which attracted over 60 dogs and their owners. Although the weather was a bit drizzly at times, it didn't put people off, and I don't envy the task that Nic had in judging the dogs!

FOR A KING!



Our overall champion was very fittingly a King Charles Spaniel, on a throne – one of the entries in the “Best Royal-themed Fancy Dress” class. Following the Dog Show a number of villagers joined in with a local litter-pick as part of the King’s Big Help-Out, and around 20 bags of rubbish were collected from around the village.

The grant funding also allowed us to purchase a number of litter-picking tools, which are now stored in the pub, so if you want to do any litter-picking at any time, but don’t have a litter-picking tool, please borrow one from the pub!



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WEEKLY EVENTS

TUESDAYS

Coffee Morning, 10-12pm:

Come and join us for a chat and a brew. Free admission.

EVERY TUESDAY - FRIDAY

After-School Games, from 3pm.

Entertain the kids after school, Tues - Fri. We've plenty of board games and colouring equipment. Children must be accompanied.

WEDNESDAYS

Bridge Night, 8pm.

All standards of player welcome, from beginner to expert.

THURSDAYS

Craft & Chat, 2-4pm.

Bring some craft to do, or just come along for the chat!

Quiz Night, 8pm.

FRIDAYS

Happy Hours

From 5pm - 7pm. £3 a pint* | Real Ales £2.50 pint | Gin & Tonic £3 | Wine & Prosecco just £12 a bottle!

Sat 26th August, 7pm

Live music with Fundada

Fundada are C-Jay & Benn, an award winning duo from local (and massively popular) group 'Cherrybomb'. Expect huge hits!

Sun 27th August

Family Fun Day

Face-painting, dog show - with novelty classes, (hopefully) a fun dog agility course. Boules, tombola, beat the goalie, BBQ or Pizza. Animals for petting (ponies, sheep, chickens, goats). pony rides. Activities weather permitting. Organised with Village Committee.

Sat 9th Sept, 5pm: **Euros 2024 Qualifiers Ukraine vs England**

Watch live on our big screen - part of the Euro 2024 qualifiers.

Tues 12th Sept, 7.45pm **England vs Scotland 150th Anniversary Match**

A special heritage match to celebrate 150 years, marking the first meeting in 1872 which is recognised by FIFA as football's first-ever international match, as 4000 supporters packed into the West of Scotland Cricket Club in Glasgow.

Sat 16th & Sun 17th Sept **Heritage Weekend**

Heritage displays on the history of Rann, Belthorn, Daisy Green, Guide & Bank Fold.

Sat 16th Sept, 7-9pm **Youth Club - Age 11+**

In community room upstairs

Tues Sept 19th, 7pm **History Society: General Autumn Natter**

Sat 30th Sept, 7pm **Live music with Poppy Holiday**

A mixed bag of jazz songs. big band sounds, through to 50/60s. Modern day songs with unexpected twists.

Fri 13th Oct, 6.45pm **England vs Australia**

Join us to watch this friendly on our big screen.

Tues 17th Oct, 7pm **History Society: Seven Peels:** Lavinia Todd has kindly agreed to come and give us a talk about the Peel family

Tues 17th Oct, 7.45pm **Euros 2024 Qualifiers England vs Italy**

Watch live on our big screen - part of the Euro 2024 qualifiers.

Sat Sept 21st, 7-9pm **Youth Club - Age 11+**

In community room upstairs

Sat 28th October 7pm **Murder Mystery Supper Night**

Enjoy a delicious 2 course meal alongside some shadowy suspects; keep your cool and piece together crucial clues to guess 'whodunnit'. In conjunction with Carry On Murdering. Tickets available www.ticketsource.co.uk. £25.

Sun 29th October, 2 - 4pm **Children's Halloween Party**

Organised by village committee - ticket only event.

Mon 6th November **Firework display**

Organised in conjunction with village committee.

Fri 17th Nov, 7.45pm **Euros 2024 Qualifiers England vs Malta**

Watch live on our big screen - part of the Euro 2024 qualifiers.

Sat 18th Nov, 7-9pm **Youth Club - Age 11+**

In community room upstairs

Mon 20th Nov, 7.45pm **Euros 2024 Qualifiers North Macedonia vs England** Watch live on our big screen - part of the Euro 2024 qualifiers.

Tues 21st November, 7pm: **History Society: talk by Jennie Cook**

Fri 25th Nov, 7:30pm **Live music with John Gallagher**

Solo guitarist singing rock, blues, country and 60s/70s pop.

RESTAURANT NEWS AND REVIEWS...

The restaurant continues to get exceptional 5-star reviews on TripAdvisor - most reviews comment on the "amazing food", the "friendly atmosphere", the "lovely staff" and the "wonderful views".

As we move through the summer, there will be a menu change in August, which will see pizzas being available from Thursday through til Sunday every week.

When pizzas were trialled at various village events earlier in the year, including the May Day Parade, and the Dog Show, they proved extremely popular, and we are sure they will be just as popular on the main menu. Choose from; Marinara, Margherita, N'duja & Red Onion (spicy), Pepperoni, Truffle Mushroom, Chicken & Sweetcorn, Garlic Bread & Garlic Bread With Cheese.

A lunch menu has also recently been launched where you can get a selection of sandwiches, served with fries from just £7. Look out for the new menu arriving soon.

The popular 2 for £18 offer will continue, where you can enjoy our 'pub classics' and burgers, Wednesday to Saturday 12pm - 6pm, every week!



SHARES

We currently have a number of shares that are available for purchase in the Dog Inn. Community ownership ensures that the business works alongside existing village businesses rather than competing directly with them.

We believe it is vital that The Dog Inn is genuinely community-owned and our ambition is to have as many of the population of Belthorn and surrounding communities as co-owners of The Dog Inn as possible, shaping its future.

Shares are available from a minimum investment of £250, up to £10,000. Shares can be purchased by individuals (over the age of 16), corporate bodies, voluntary organisations and public sector investors.

We aim to pay annual interest payments of 3%. Full details of the share offer can be found on our website at: <https://thedoginnatbelthorn.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Open-Share-Offer-2022.pdf>

If no shares are available at the time of application, applicants will be put on a waiting list, and will be able to buy shares as and when they are relinquished by other shareholders. Transfer of shares is not permitted - shares can only be relinquished to the Society.

The Dog's Life is written, designed & distributed by a team of Belthorn volunteers.
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