

A new lease of life for Wickham Market's community pub

20/12/2021



Wickham Market's community saving The George Community Pub. Credit: Julian Evans
A grant of £988,200 has been awarded to The George pub in Wickham Market, Suffolk – a Grade II listed building which will serve as a thriving community hub.

The Heritage Enterprise grant has been awarded to conserve and restore this historic building, which has been closed since a major fire in 2013.

The project is being run by The Society, a community benefit society created to ensure the historic pub would be protected and preserved for future generations. Local community members have been invited to join the project as shareholders, encouraging local people to get involved and ensuring profits are reinvested back into the community.

Restoring and preserving heritage

The historic significance of The George was only revealed after extensive damage had been caused by the 2013 fire. What was thought to be an 18th-century building was found to date back to the 15th or early 16th-century.

The remaining part of the original building will be conserved, restored and reconstructed as part of major works scheduled to start in Autumn 2022.



Old photograph of The George pub from the 1920s. Credit: The George Community Pub

Building a brighter future for Wickham Market

Investing in heritage means investing in the community it belongs to...

Anne Jenkins, Director of England, Midlands & East, The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

As the last remaining pub in Wickham Market, the restoration of The George will create a much-needed community hub, and a comfortable and welcoming place for everyone to enjoy. A pub and restaurant on the ground floor will offer typical pub activities and services, with fully-accessible community rooms on the first floor.

The George will also provide training and employment for local people in the construction and hospitality industries, as well as increase footfall and opportunities for other local businesses.



Scaffolding outside the pub to prepare for construction. Credit: Bill Wolff-Evans

Alongside this, a programme of wellbeing activities will be developed in association with Wellbeing Suffolk and local community groups. Programmes in development include support for people living with dementia or loneliness, ensuring they will have a safe, inclusive place in which to meet and socialise in a post-lockdown world.

Anne Jenkins, Director of England, Midlands & East at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “Investing in heritage means investing in the community it belongs to, which is why we are so pleased to support The George Community Pub in Wickham Market. Not only will this grant conserve and restore this historic building, it will also help regenerate the local economy. This will ensure that the pub's heritage is enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.”

Find out more

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