

Redgrave Community Society Limited



"working for the community"

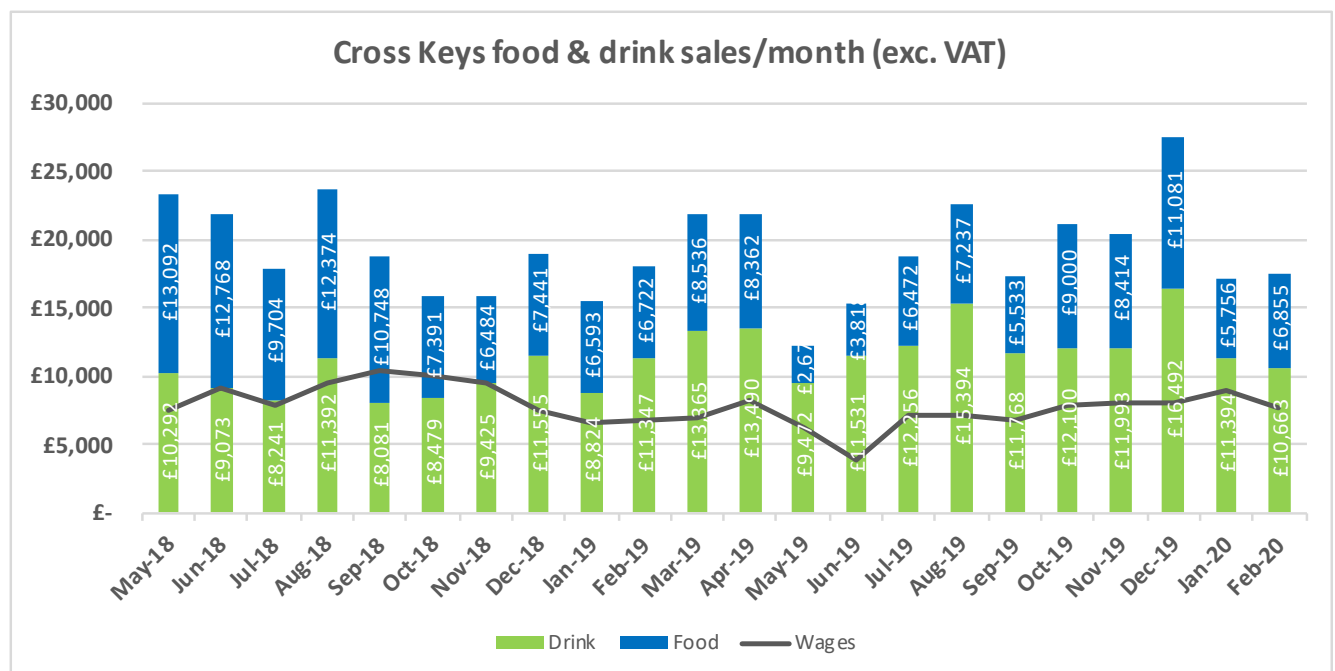
March 10th 2020

Dear Member,

We are writing to update you on business performance, events, the launch of circular walks from the pub, the share offer and volunteering opportunities.

Business Performance

Feedback from customers over the past few months, both in the pub and online, has been very encouraging. A survey of TripAdvisor reviews for October 2019 – Jan 2020 is attached, and it shows that the Cross Keys had significantly more 5-star reviews than any other local pub in the same period, with positive comments about the food, beer, service and friendly atmosphere in the pub. Thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers it seems that the Cross Keys is now offering what members say they want from a community pub.



Despite this, trading in January and February has been very quiet. January 2020 was slightly better than January 2019, even though Michael took some time off, but February was a little down on last year. So far, business in March hasn't shown much improvement. This may be due to the poor weather and other factors but it is still disappointing.

If you are concerned about the performance of the pub then the best thing to do is visit it more often. If all local members visited the pub for a drink every week or two, and came to eat once a month, it would make a great difference to the business. It will also help us achieve the aim of creating a true community hub.

Events

February saw the return of Curry Night, and a Pie & Mash Day was held to celebrate National Pie Week. Both were very successful, and will become regular monthly events. The next Curry Night is this Thursday, March 12th, so please make an effort to come along. Mother's Day lunch is getting quite booked up, but there may be space available later in the afternoon as Michael will be serving food until 5.

Live music continues to be popular, with a packed pub when Walkway played in January. Backstreet are returning on Saturday 21st March, and we expect an equally lively evening.

The Acoustic Music Night is changing to the third Monday of each month, and the Rum Smugglers folk session is continuing on the fourth Thursday.

Sunday 1st March saw the first vehicle rally at the pub – in this case vintage tractors! The motorbike events which became very popular last year will be restarting in May, and we're also hoping for several classic car rallies.

All events are advertised on the new sign on The Knoll, in the parish magazine, and on Facebook (www.facebook.com/crosskeyspubredgrave), Twitter (<https://twitter.com/KeysRedgrave>) and on the pub website (<https://crosskeysredgrave.co.uk>)

Pub Walks

The Cross Keys is at the centre of a great network of well-maintained footpaths. We are close to Redgrave and Lopham Fen and the Angles Way, and there are excellent paths joining us to the neighbouring villages of Botesdale, Rickingham, Hinderclay, Thelnetham and Wortham.

Although the pub is already popular with walkers and walking groups we are keen to build on this, and are very grateful to Emma and Jono Slack who have developed six circular walks from the pub. Printed leaflets will be available in the pub describing the walks which vary in length from 1 to 6 miles. There is already a 'Pub Walks' link on the pub website which will take you to downloadable instructions, GPX files and lovely photographs taken on the walks.

When the first set of leaflets have been tested we will have the leaflets professionally printed, and Mid Suffolk Council have agreed to fund this. We would be very grateful if as many of you as possible can test the walking routes and let us have any feedback before we go ahead.

The launch of the walks coincides with the 2nd anniversary of the reopening of the Cross Keys, so we arranged for the Diss Express to come to the pub and photograph a group of volunteers in walking gear. The article will appear this Friday.

Shares and Loans

All financial support, in whatever form, is always welcome and for the long-term future it makes particular sense for the pub to have more working capital so that continuous improvements to the Cross Keys' service and facilities can be made.

Our target for the current share offer is £31,000 and roughly a third of this has already been taken. We are applying for Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR) so people investing in these shares will be able to deduct 30% of their investment from their income tax bill. (Inheritance Tax and Capital Gains Tax may also be reduced). If you would like to buy more shares, or have friends or family who are interested, email secretary@redgravecommunitysociety.com and ask for a Share Application Pack, or pick up a leaflet in the pub.

Taking over existing loans is also an option for members, at an interest rate of 4%. If you are interested in this please contact the treasurer, John Giddings, at johngidd1@btinternet.com.

Volunteering

As I said in the last newsletter, the pub would not function without volunteers. As well as helping the pub, volunteering is a very rewarding thing to do, as it helps you meet other people, make new friends and feel part of the village community.

Charley Denmark has offered to coordinate enquiries about volunteering activities and ensure that those interested are put in contact with the right people. The more volunteers we have, the less one person has to do on their own. The following list gives example of the support that would be most welcome:

- **Work Parties inside and outside the pub – gardening, spring cleaning, general maintenance etc** – arranged as and when required
- **Regular cleaning inside the pub** - between 9.30-11.30am most mornings
- **Bar line cleaning** - between 9.30-11.30am on Sundays
- **Kitchen assistance including food prep, peeling vegetables etc** – every day for 1-2 hours
- **Helping with coffee & cake mornings**
- **Helping with events**, whether it's behind the bar, organising a raffle, handing out leaflets, helping with summer BBQs etc
- **Behind the bar / restaurant** – any time you can give, full training is given. Regular and standby support both welcome.

We would also like to know if anyone has hidden talents for those days where we may need to call on your services, such as carpentry, upholstery, plumbing, general DIY, graphic design etc.

The team are grateful for any time donated whether it is an hour or a whole afternoon. Sometimes just being on call ready to help is enough, and please let us know if you have any other ideas regarding making the Cross Keys the best pub around.

If you are keen to help please respond to Charley at volunteering@redgravecommunitysociety.com. She will ask you to fill in a simple form to indicate what activities you are interested in, answer any questions you have, and make sure you are put in contact with the right person to get you on board.

If you have any questions or comments about the newsletter or anything else please contact me at chair@redgravecommunitysociety.com .

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

STEPHEN EASON

On behalf of the Management Committee of Redgrave Community Society Limited

Stephen Eason	Chairman
Neil Smith	Vice Chairman
John Giddings	Treasurer
Julie Moore	Secretary
Andrew Dickson	
Donna Taylor	
Carolyn Ward	

TripAdvisor Reviews Oct 2019 – Jan 2020

	Cross Keys	Rickingham Bell	Lopham White Horse	Roydon White Hart	Wortham Manor House	Wortham Tea Shop	Diss Number 11	Burston Crown	Waterfront Diss	Thatcher's Needle
5 star	20	4	4	5	4	7	14		4	8
4 star	1	2		1	2		3	1	2	2
3 star	2	1					1			2
2 star	1		1						1	4
1 star			1	1					1	15

Some of the 5* comments...

Very good English country pub

I had Christmas dinner here and it was first class, the staff are friendly and welcoming. A nice comfortable atmosphere, now I visit on a regular basis.

Sunday Lunch

Had Sunday lunch at the Cross Keys. Chose beef, which was beautiful, moist and cooked just right. An excellent range of veg. Made very welcome and a real buzz in the pub.

Great Community Pub

Booked for Sunday Roast for 5. Staff very welcoming and food served very quickly, hot and big portions. Vegetables -roast potatoes with rosemary and garlic, cauliflower cheese, broccoli, curly kale, carrots, roast parsnips and with homemade Yorkshire puddings. This is a free house with a good selection of unusual ales at very reasonable prices

Interesting community pub. Good food and atmosphere

Had a family dinner with 7 people and various visits for drinks and coffee. Friendly welcome and nice atmosphere. The fact that it's owned by locals means it has a more sociable feel to it.

An absolute 'must' to visit

Wonderful friendly welcome, great choice of fabulous beers, and a super Sunday Lunch. They kindly accommodated us bringing our dog by reserving a table for lunch within the bar area.

Lunch

Wonderful Sunday lunch with six different vegetables, all well-cooked, with the bonus of a home-made pud to finish, Lovely friendly atmosphere in this community owned pub. Give it a try you won't be disappointed.

Had a lovely Sunday lunch with friends, nice friendly pub, food was excellent, had roast dinner, plenty of veg, roast potatoes, we were told there was a new chef, who is excellent, all home-made desserts too. Would recommend.

First time but not the last

It was our first visit to this lovely country pub since we moved to the area and it certainly won't be the last. We had the Sunday roast lunch and it was delicious, everything was cooked well, good portions and hot. All the staff are really nice and friendly and the place had a lovely ambience. Could not fault anything and will look forward to our next visit

Exceptional food

Food had been very up and down while the pub was having trouble finding a good permanent chef, but they seem to have struck gold with the new guy. Absolutely exceptional food now, eaten twice in the last week, both time in groups, trying various dishes and all astounded at how good things were.

Excellent snack lunch

A community run Pub. Just popped in on the off chance, friendly staff, well set out bar and Restaurant good range of beers and menu

Lovely friendly pub with good food

Staying locally and found this little pub on the way. What struck us as soon as we walked in was how friendly and accommodating the staff were. Lovely food, great chips! Fast service too. All in all, a really good family friendly pub!

Great food and friendly service. Well worth a visit

We had lunch and dinner at the Cross Keys. The food was delicious, and I am pretty fussy about my food. The service was excellent. There was live music on Saturday evening, and the place had a really nice feel, the restaurant was full. Only sorry this is not our local. Don't understand the comments about poor food, they must have changed the chef as our meal was much better than most pub fare.