



LIONHEARTED

Community Benefit Plan for

The Ickleton Lion

PREPARED BY
ICKLETON COMMUNITY PUB LIMITED

Introduction

The Ickleton lion has the potential to become the beating heart of our community once more, providing significant social and economic benefits. By fostering community cohesion, enhancing mental wellbeing, supporting local businesses, and promoting sustainable practices, we aim to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable business.

This plan outlines our commitment to becoming more than a pub – for The Lion to once again play a pivotal role in the community's fabric. It pulls together information from a number of sections of our Business Plan and develops them further. It should be read in conjunction with the Business Plan which describes the location and development of Ickleton, a rural village in South Cambridgeshire, our plans for reopening the Ickleton Lion and the services it will provide.



Our Community

In this section we look in more detail at our locality and what this tells us about our community needs.

Ickleton residents

The data below is drawn from analysis of the 2021 census published on the websites of the Office of National Statistics and its Nomis service. Figures in brackets in the data below, are national averages.

At the time of the 2021 census, Ickleton had a population of 747 living in 310 households, including farms and former farm worker cottages that lie outside the main village.

- The age profile differs somewhat from the national average, with above average numbers of school age children and residents aged 65+. 20.2% are aged 15 or below (18.5%), 56.8% are aged 16 to 64 (62.9%) and 23% are aged 65 and above (18.6%).
- 94.9% of the population is predominately white (81%). 10% of residents were born outside the UK (17.4%).
- 16% of residents are disabled (17.3%). 3.1% are in bad health (4%) and 0.7% are in very bad health (1.2%).
- 63.7% are economically active (57.4%). Of those people who are economically inactive, 15 are looking after long-term sick or disabled people and 20 are looking after home or family.
- 15.3% of residents live in social rented housing (17.1%) and 16.3% live in privately rented accommodation (20.6%). 25.7% are one person households (30.1%).

The 2021 census provided estimates that classified households in England and Wales by four dimensions of deprivation: Employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding. Ickleton households were classified as follows: 32.4% of households deprived in one dimension (33.5%), 12.1% of households deprived in two dimensions (14.2%) and 2.6% of households deprived in three dimensions (3.7%).

The local primary school is in the neighbouring village of Duxford. Government data shows that 14.3% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. [Analysis by Action for Children](#) estimates that 3,673 children in South Cambridgeshire live in poverty (whilst this is a relatively low rate compared to other areas, it is still far more than we want to see).

Our Community

As expected in a rural area, vehicle ownership is well above the national average. Only 9.9% of residents do not own a vehicle (23.5%).

South Cambridgeshire Residents

The following information is taken from [South Cambridgeshire District Council's health and wellbeing strategy refresh 2024-2028](#)

- South Cambridgeshire is the least deprived district in Cambridgeshire. Although deprivation does exist across the District, it is dispersed within smaller communities and largely hidden.
- Where poverty does exist the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception is significantly worse than the England average for local children with free school meal status
- The barrier to housing and services domain of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019), measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. South Cambridgeshire ranks the lowest (most deprived) of the five districts across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough against all other local authorities nationally (98/317). This is a reflection of the very rural nature of the district.
- South Cambridgeshire is predicted to have the highest level of growth in absolute numbers and proportional growth of any Cambridgeshire district between 2016- 2036. With the population forecast to rise to 200,480 by 2036.
- Recent growth has primarily been driven by natural change, rather than migration. However, our planned new housing sites and the numbers of dwellings expected in South Cambridgeshire also contribute to the expected population growth.
- The greatest population growth is expected in the over 75 age group across Cambridgeshire. People aged 90+ is predicted to increase by 137% by 2036.
- South Cambridgeshire has a significantly higher birth rate than the Cambridgeshire average due in part to the number of new communities which attract young and growing families.
- The high cost of housing in South Cambridgeshire means that young families and individuals are at greater risk of housing poverty.
- Cambridgeshire has high levels of hospital admissions among 10-24 year olds due to self-harm (almost twice as high as reported across the East of England and 1.5 times higher than found nationally).

Our Community

Communication and Transport

Ickleton has good communication links - if you have a vehicle and can drive. Otherwise, there is an hourly bus service during the day between Cambridge and Saffron Walden. The journey takes an hour to get to the centre of Cambridge which discourages many residents from using it.

There is an hourly train service from Great Chesterford to London and to Cambridge. The bus service also goes close to Great Chesterford railway station although times of trains and buses are not co-ordinated. It takes about half an hour to walk to the railway station along a narrow footpath not suited to young families or anyone with mobility problems.

Ickleton is on National cycle route 11 and is situated on the ancient walking route the 'Ickniel Way'

Access to Services

Ickleton's Post Office closed earlier this year. The nearest alternative is a mobile Post Office which comes to the Duxford Community Centre twice a week for 1½ hours each time. The bus goes to Duxford but passengers then have to walk to the Community Centre. The closest banking facilities are in Cambridge.

The bus passes GP surgeries in Sawston and Great Chesterford. The local primary school is in Duxford and secondary school is in Sawston with Sixth Form education in Cambridge and Saffron Walden.

Ickleton has one 'corner' shop. The nearest village with a variety of small shops, Post Office and small supermarket, is Sawston or, for a wider choice and larger supermarket, there is Saffron Walden.

Support groups for people living with disabilities and long term health conditions, carers, young families etc are available in the district, but very few are easily accessible by public transport.

Social and leisure facilities

Ickleton has a modern village hall regularly used by groups from Ickleton and other villages. Due to its popularity it can be difficult to find availability for ad hoc meetings and events, so these must be booked-in weeks, or months in advance. There is a children's playground and a recreation field. There is a toddler group once a week, cricket club, allotments society, a village amenity society and a social club. The social club is a well-supported members' club of long standing. It is situated in a small building which was formerly the Conservative Club and, before that, a barn. It is licensed, run by volunteers and is open on a part-time basis. It has no kitchen or garden.

Our Community

Businesses

There are 3 farms in the Parish and some small businesses linked to agriculture. A small business park at Abbey Farm Barns is home to Team Consulting, a medical device design and development consultancy which has an in-house team of 150+ expert staff, and the Cambridge office of Hill Group, an award-winning house builder.

The Wellcome Genome Campus is partly in Ickleton parish. Through a number of institutions, including the Sanger Institute and EMBL's European Bioinformatics Institute, it undertakes internationally important genome and biodata research and has over 2,500 members of staff. A huge expansion to the campus is currently being built.

Neighbouring Duxford Parish is home to the Imperial War Museum which attracts large numbers of visitors to the area, particularly on air show days. It also has a sizable industrial area where Hexel Composites and Hunstman are based and workers travel into their sites on a daily basis.

New Dwellings

The expansion of the Wellcome Genome Campus will see up to 1,500 dwellings for campus workers. Great Chesterford is seeing a growth in housing with over 180 houses being built or having planning approval and an application for 350 houses going to appeal. 340 houses are being built in Sawston some 5 miles from Ickleton, 60 homes are to be built in Duxford and 48 homes 4 miles away near Whittlesford Parkway train station.

Community Surveys

The Business Plan describes in detail the community survey carried out in May and June 2024 (section 6 and appendix B). 258 responses were received and there was overwhelming (97%) support for a community pub which provides community services in addition to those of a traditional pub. 131 people said they would volunteer to help with the project and the refurbishment or running of the pub.

Some suggestions for possible additional services were given in the initial survey; members of the community have subsequently suggested others. Further research was undertaken at community events. This showed strong support for themed nights, a community café, breakfast, small plates and a kids teatime offer.

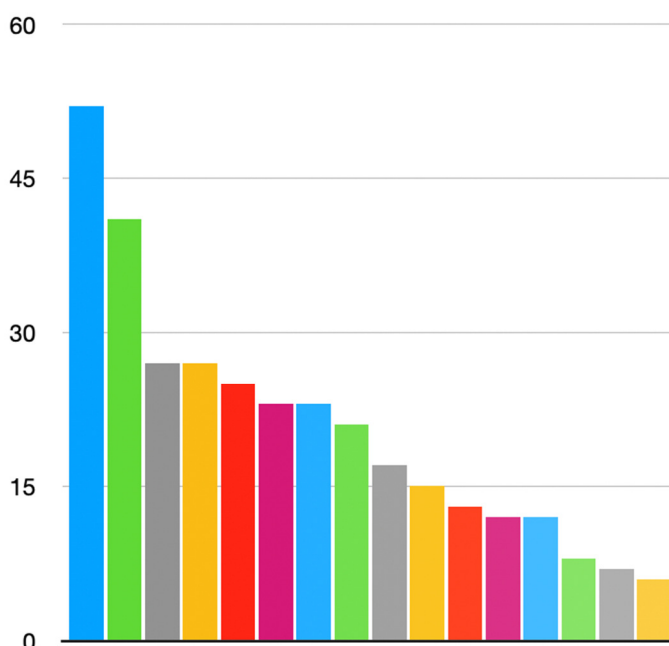
A repair café, farmers / artisan market and mobile post office were also popular requests.

Our Community

Community Services/Events ideas voted for at the *Pop-up Pub* and the *Pop-up Cafe* - June 2024

(shown in descending order of popularity)

- Themed nights (cocktails, wine tasting, gastro-night, BBQ etc)
- Cafe with tea/good coffee/cake
- Breakfast/brunch
- Small plates/tapas/small portions
- Kids teatime
- Repair Cafe
- Farmers/artisan produce market
- Mobile post office
- Community garden with wildlife
- Weekday lunch clubs
- Board games/bridge/mahjong/dominoes
- Dementia friendly times
- Vegan & gluten free options
- Chatty cafe/knit and natter
- Co-working space
- Digital cafe (help to get on-line)



Our Community

Conclusions

The data shows that, in general, Ickleton is an affluent area with high employment rates, levels of home and vehicle ownership. Nevertheless, levels of deprivation are not that far below the national average - we know there will be people who are struggling financially and therefore children living in poverty.

The village has above average numbers of older people and, while the number of one person households is below the national average, it is still over a quarter of all households in the village. Local knowledge tells us that many elderly residents live alone. There are significant numbers of people living with a disability or long term health condition, or who have taken on the role of an unpaid carer.

While some of the people in these groups have friends and support groups and are able to join in activities, we know that there are others who find it difficult for a variety of reasons. Non-drivers and those who have mobility problems cannot easily get to many venues. We have been told by some residents that they do not find it easy to join clubs and groups or walk into social settings on their own. There is, therefore, a need to address social isolation and loneliness.

The large number of new homes being built, particularly on the Genome Campus, poses some risks to social cohesion in the area with communities divided between 'old' and 'new'. Whilst there are some employment opportunities nearby, services in the village are very limited. The use of petrol and diesel driven vehicles is high and public transport, low.



Can pubs help?

Village pubs such as The Ickleton Lion are a natural focus for social and services activity. The loss of a pub can be an emotional blow to residents as well as one that can seriously affect the local economy and community infrastructure; nowhere to meet, no focus for community life and no community cohesion. A study by Ignazio Cabras ([link](#)), Professor of Entrepreneurship and Regional Economic Development at Northumbria University showed that parishes with a pub had more community events than those without a pub or those with just sports or village halls. Furthermore, pubs had a positive, statistically significant impact on social engagement and involvement among residents, increasing community cohesion.

Whilst most people will feel lonely at some point in their lives, research shows that some personal characteristics, social and structural factors, and certain life events can be risk factors for loneliness ([Link](#)). Young People, older people, those who are living alone or caring for a partner, living with a disability, or on a low income, the LGBTQ+ community, transgender and gender diverse people, ethnic minorities, people with poor mental health, those who are neurodiverse, single parents, parents of young children and those new to an area may all find it difficult to connect with other people.

A report commissioned by MPs in 2023 found that isolation, poor public transport and a relative lack of digital connectivity contributed to poor mental health outcomes for all categories of people across rural communities in England, but especially among farm workers and vets. In rural localities, a pub plays a multifaceted role, acting as common ground where locals meet, forge relationships, celebrate milestones, and discuss local affairs. ([link](#))

In their study, *Open Arms: The Role of Pubs in Tackling Loneliness* ([link](#)), researchers at Loughborough University found that pubs not only play a valuable role in bringing people together so they can socialise across age groups and other social differences, but also recognised the important social role played by pub staff.

“Skilled and experienced pub staff facilitate social interaction and help forge social linkages that might not otherwise find expression. It is therefore important to recognise the huge amounts of undervalued or unacknowledged skilled labour done by staff working in the pub and wider hospitality trade in terms of welcoming, attending to and supporting individuals and groups at risk of loneliness”

A community pub can also play a role in helping people live well and independently into older age. According to the Alzheimer's Society ([link](#)), social isolation can increase a person's risk of dementia by about 60%. It is related to marital status with studies showing that lifelong single people are more likely to develop dementia than those who are married. Widowed

Can pubs help?

people are also slightly more likely to develop dementia. Engaging in social activities may help people build up their brain's ability to cope with disease, relieve stress and improve mood. Just having a conversation with someone can exercise a wide range of mental skills. Village pubs also provide a valuable contribution by offering space that is truly intergenerational at a time when social, economic and political divisions between generations can be pronounced and problematic.

In summary, pubs have always been venues for sociability and companionship. They play a role in connecting individuals, groups and communities in beneficial ways and have a social value that extends far beyond their economic benefit.



Meeting the needs of our community

Our plans to refurbish and reopen The Ickleton Lion as a community pub offer the following benefits to the community:

A Sustainable Local Business

Reopening The Lion will bring back a much loved pub where countless social gatherings, formal and informal, meetings, celebrations, parties and wakes have been held over the last 300 years. With its location at the heart of the village and significant future neighbourhood growth in population and business, The Lion is well placed to trade successfully as a free house and community pub. There will be potential for much increased lunchtime and evening custom.

Its location next to the Village Hall and recreation ground places it in an excellent position to provide and complement existing community groups and services. Cricket matches, village fetes, after school gatherings, village walks, jubilee celebrations and many other events have been sources of good business for the pub; indeed, the cricket club fondly describe The Lion as their 'Pavilion'. Village clubs and groups have held Committee meetings in the pub over a drink and residents leaving the Village Hall after meetings and events would often call at the pub before going home. These opportunities have been much missed since the pub closed.

Furthermore, the Lion is well positioned to benefit from local tourism. The Imperial War Museum at Duxford, city of Cambridge and Audley End house all draw large numbers of visitors. Rare frescoes and parts of a 14th century Doom painting in the village church also make Ickleton a destination in its own right. Its position on national cycle route 11 and the Icknield Way makes the Lion an ideal stopping off point for ramblers and cyclists. We plan to encourage trade by ensuring the pub provides appropriate facilities and swift service to make it an attractive destination for those looking for a quick bite to eat. The conference centre at Hinxtton Hall also brings large numbers of visitors from across the globe.

Opportunities for Employment and Training

The pub will bring back vital local employment opportunities, which are limited for those for whom transport may be a barrier to work. Local employment may appeal to young people looking for temporary work or starting out in their career as well as those looking for flexible employment to fit around caring responsibilities. The number of shifts available will increase as trade increases and opportunities for training will become available.

Our manager, bar staff and volunteers will be our most valuable asset, developing relationships with customers and helping us to build a successful and sustainable business. We aim to offer specialist training opportunities so

Meeting the needs of our community

they can confidently meet the needs of specific groups, use appropriate language when greeting people and fulfil our aim for the pub to be a welcoming home-from-home for all our visitors. This will not only develop employees' skills, but provide customers with a better experience so that they are more likely to return.

Potential volunteer roles are immensely varied, ranging from help with social media, to building and garden maintenance and hospitality and management roles. Volunteering benefits people in many ways; developing skills, building confidence, reducing isolation and getting people back into work.

Increased Social Cohesion

Residents of rural areas, especially those on low incomes, often struggle with poor access to services, high housing and fuel costs, making it difficult to socialise and meet people. A culture of independence and self-reliance in rural areas, together with a fear of stigma can discourage individuals from accessing targeted support provided by statutory and non-statutory organisations, which in turn can lead to social isolation and loneliness.

Local, flexible employment and training opportunities, combined with activities such as a repair café, knit and natter groups, a community garden, lunch and breakfast clubs and a 'kids' tea' are all low cost, inclusive initiatives that involve minimal travel and improve mental health by encouraging new and supportive friendships between groups of people that may not ordinarily meet and connect with each other. Shared working space has also been a popular request by members of the community to combat the isolation of working from home.

The large number of new dwellings being built in our area will bring in people of all ages and backgrounds. While facilities will be available to new residents on the Wellcome Genome Campus, it will be important to provide a way in which they can, if they so choose, integrate into the wider community as this will be of benefit both to themselves and the existing community. Great food and drink, plus the wide range of activities proposed could make The Lion an attractive option, especially as it can be accessed on foot, via a pleasant walk through the Wetlands.

127 local people have volunteered to help with the refurbishment and maintenance of the pub and garden. As well as saving on the cost of refurbishment, villagers will have the opportunity to learn new skills from each other, forge new friendships and enjoy a shared sense of achievement.

Meeting the needs of our community

Improved Accessibility

Thoughtful planning and careful design when taking decisions about decor, lighting, seating and toilet facilities can affect the level of accessibility and comfort for different groups of customers, including those who are neurodivergent or living with a disability.

We will provide ramps to improve access for disabled customers. Also in section 8 of the Business Plan, we outline future plans to provide a disabled toilet. We will need to work with the Conservation Officer to find an acceptable way of achieving this without compromising the historic nature of the Grade II listed building. We will seek guidance from both expert organisations and people with lived experience within our community to help inform these decisions.

Sadly, Ickleton has had, does have and will in the future have residents who suffer from dementia. We believe the Lion can achieve the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) certification ([link](#)) by making a number of adaptations so the pub is more accessible to people with conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's and they can enjoy going out with their families and carers. There is already a clear line of sight to the bar, quieter tables are available in the restaurant, easy to read menus could be provided with suitable typeface and photos, and the right type of lighting. Carers' lunches could be popular and, on quieter days, dementia friendly sessions and memory cafes. This would allow us to feature on a Google map showing all dementia-friendly facilities across the UK, which will draw in new customers in addition to providing a valuable service the residents of our local communities.

Environmental Benefits and Sustainability

When refurbishing the pub, we will take the opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of the building as described in section 8 of the Business Plan, including refitting the kitchen with electric appliances rather than gas. In time we hope that restrictions on solar panels on listed buildings may be changed so that the pub can install them on the rear, south facing roofs together with batteries so that the kitchen will be energy efficient.

Having The Lion trading again will help reduce car use; without a pub in the village, residents and groups such as the cricket club and Church lunch club are currently forced to drive to other pubs to meet. We aim to source goods locally as far as possible, while being mindful of price and reliability of supply. This too will reduce vehicle emissions.

Meeting the needs of our community

The Lion has a beautiful garden, which has been neglected for some time. 56 volunteers have already offered to help with maintenance. Gardening has significant health benefits and is well understood to be beneficial for mental health – there is strong support for a community garden, which could supply the kitchen with fresh herbs, and a wildlife area.

What Ickleton has lost

Photos in The Lion and other former local hostelries from the collection of the Ickleton Society



Measuring Success

Measuring the success of community benefits can be difficult but, by keeping records of certain transactions over time and conducting feedback surveys, it should be possible to get some data. Examples include:

Proposal	Impact	Metric	Measure
Café Breakfast Small plates	Reduce social isolation and loneliness Improve social cohesion Increase trade Improve health and wellbeing	Number and size of transactions	Conduct survey Analyse accounts
Repair shed/café	Reduce social isolation and loneliness Improve social cohesion	Number of people offering repair services Number of items brought for repair	Conduct survey Analyse records
Kids' teas	Address deprivation Improve health and wellbeing Reduce social isolation and loneliness Improve social cohesion	Numbers of families and children attending	Analyse records and accounts Conduct survey
Dementia friendly facilities	Improve health and wellbeing Reduce social isolation and loneliness	Numbers of dementia friendly lunches and events	Analyse records Conduct survey University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre certification
Use of volunteers	Reduce social isolation and loneliness Improve social cohesion Foster greater community pride	Numbers of volunteers	Analyse HR records
Facilities for cyclist	Increase trade	Numbers of cyclists	Conduct survey
Energy efficiency	Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	Energy bills for the pub	Analysis of energy use
Consumables purchased locally	Supporting local economy and jobs Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	Invoices for purchases	Analysis of purchase records
Co-working space	Reduce social isolation and loneliness	Numbers attending	Conduct survey