



Chairman's Report

Year ended – 28 February 2022

Management Summary

I am delighted to present the fifth annual report for the Society; a report of another year that was impacted by the Covid pandemic but one in which we managed to make a profit and pay interest on shares for the first time. As normal, I will only cover the period to our year end.

Within the year our tenant Jack McEntee of The Happy Wolf Pub Company Ltd completed his first year of operation and, despite lockdowns, made a positive impact in establishing The Yew Tree as a destination pub, which attracts customers from far and wide.

Our finances are looking healthy and we have repaid all of our short loans, while beginning to meet requests for share redemptions. We have introduced new policies to limit the maximum number of shares held by any individual with the aim of bringing more financial stability to the Society.

Our Member numbers continue to increase and we now have 134 Members.

Looking forward, with lockdown restrictions now removed we hope to have another successful year. We have established committees to consider the future vision for the Yew Tree, our finances and the wellbeing of the Society.

We aim to once again pay interest on shareholdings, make share redemptions and set aside funds for development. Of course, this is dependent upon the Yew Tree continuing as a successful business.

Detailed Report

At the start of our reporting year, The Yew Tree was closed due to Covid restrictions with no clear date for reopening. However, as the Government had announced a phased ending of lockdown restrictions, hospitality venues were allowed to reopen on 12 April 2021. This included the Yew Tree, bringing with it the return of an income stream for the Society: as Shareholders will be aware, we receive a percentage of turnover under the terms of the lease.

Registered with The Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a Benefit Society

Registration Number: 7489

VAT Registration Number: 272 5990 71



There was an initial surge in business, created by pent up demand, but this quickly settled down to more modest levels as customers remained cautious, with many choosing to avoid venues where masks were optional.

Jack and his team remained positive and worked hard to rebuild the business and the success of this showed in the results and, of course, our income. There is no doubt that, in the summer months, the outside facilities helped to attract customers new and old and the range and quality of the food and drinks offerings in the restaurant and from the Shack, made The Yew Tree something of a destination pub.

In response to a question at a previous AGM, we set up a sub-committee to consider the future vision for the Yew Tree and, in doing so we also created a further sub-committee to consider the vision for the Society and its finances.

Finance Committee

This Committee made a number of significant recommendations during the year. These included paying off debt, paying interest to Members and revising the policies to the limit the maximum shareholding and share redemptions.

Although we had taken advantage of a repayment holiday on our Key Fund Loan, we resumed principal repayments, repaid our bounce back loan and member loans in full.

Our mid-year financial review gave us confidence that, as income had increased, we would be able to make our first ever interest payment to Members. We assessed that it would be best to pay interest based on nine months rather than wait until after the year end to make a full year's interest payment. All eligible Members had their accounts credited with interest payments based on 2.5% of shares invested, but only amounts in excess of £5 were paid out. Other balances remain in a separate member interest account and as any future interest accruals exceed £5, this will be paid.

During the year we also determined that we were in a position to meet some requests for shares to be redeemed. There is one request outstanding and the Management Committee is liaising with this Member on an ongoing basis. However, this also prompted us to review our share redemption policy, which is covered below, under Membership Strategy.

Membership Strategy

Our strategy in previous years has been simply to increase the Membership by selling shares to whoever applied to buy them and in the numbers that they requested. However, ad-hoc requests for the redemption of shares caused the Management Committee to review this approach.

We concluded that we should reduce the upper limit on Shareholdings. We are seeking endorsement, at this AGM, of the Management Committees recommendation to make the upper limit £5,000 rather than the current level of £25,000. It is likely to take a number of years

Registered with The Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a
Benefit Society

Registration Number: 7489

VAT Registration Number: 272 5990 71



to achieve this target, but we believe that, by removing the destabilising effect of one or more major Members requesting repayments on an ad-hoc basis, we will emerge as a Society with a much more solid financial base.

We will continue to increase the Membership, by selling shares to new applicants and we will consider launching a new share sale in the coming year.

The Yew Tree Development Group

This Group commissioned a site survey to provide a sound basis for any plans to develop the premises. A quote was received from Western Power to install a dedicated power supply to the outbuildings but a decision to undertake the work was deferred pending any development plans.

Jack has reported that his priorities for developing the site are to improve the outbuildings for food storage and preparation, to ease the load on the kitchen, which limits the pubs catering capability. Inside, the toilets are in need of refurbishment and a disabled toilet facility is badly needed. He would also like to offer AirBNB to guests at some stage in the future and this will require planning permission for a change of use and for conversion of the upper floors of the Yew Tree.

More than a Pub activities (Social Impact)

To comply with the terms of our loans and grants, we have to submit an annual report setting out our achievements in making The Yew Tree “more than a pub.” In our report, we set out the main events that use the pub as a focal point. In our reporting year, the biggest event, The Soapbox Derby did not take place, but we were pleased to be able to report Pop-up markets, the Walking Group and its spin-off, The Strollers, as well as the Bridge Club and the book exchange as examples of our commitment to being more than a pub.

All of these events and activities are organised by volunteers, but we are always looking for new ideas and more volunteers to take a lead. Anyone interested in starting a new group or activity should contact a member of the Management Committee in the first instance.

Financial status

The Accounts for the year ended 28 February 2022 will be presented for adoption later in the proceedings.

The main focus has been to continue to reduce debt, reward members for their continued support and to provide for future interest payments and share redemptions.

It is acknowledged that there is a corporation tax liability and the Management Committee will, in conjunction with the various sub-groups, be looking at developments that can be achieved in the future to try to reduce any future tax liability.

Registered with The Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a
Benefit Society

Registration Number: 7489

VAT Registration Number: 272 5990 71



Summary

Once again, I thank all of our Management Committee for their extensive efforts and input during the last year. In addition I must thank our volunteers without whom many of the “more than a pub” events wouldn’t happen. Finally, I can’t end this report without thanking Jack and Ella and all of their staff for making the pub such a great success.

We all know that without the Yew Tree, the village would be a very different place and keeping the pub at the heart of the community remains our main priority.

Registered with The Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Communities Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a
Benefit Society

Registration Number: 7489

VAT Registration Number: 272 5990 71

