

Issue 3  
January 2024

# Building The George

News of The George Community Pub



Made possible with

**Heritage  
Fund**

## A major milestone is reached in The George rebuild

After the disastrous fire of April 2013 a protective scaffolding and corrugated iron roof was erected in a bid to give the remaining fabric as much protection as possible. This structure has dominated and overshadowed the Wickham Market High Street for the best part of 10 years but on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 it started to come down. An historic moment for the George project and for the community.



Within days the view on the High Street changed dramatically

By mid January the roof has been felted and battened; floor joists re-installed on the first floor; gable end brickwork repaired and panelling to the internal walls started.

Coming up next in the rebuild programme is the excavation of the old foundations at the rear of the building in preparation for new foundations and the installation of the steel framework which will house the new kitchen, toilets, stairs and lift.

The hope is that the work will not reveal any archaeological discoveries that impede progress.



The first floor activity space

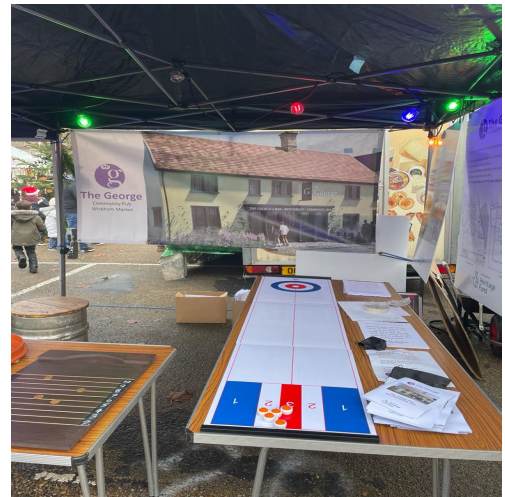


The rear of the building cleared for foundation works

## The George at the Christmas Festive Market on the Hill



The 2<sup>nd</sup> of December may have been the coldest day of the year but there was plenty of festive cheer at Wickham's Christmas Market. On the George stall sales were brisk with both hot chocolate and mulled wine selling out. Committee members were on hand to update visitors on project progress and to sign up new shareholders and 200 Club members.



The George will be at the Spring Market on The Hill on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 9am-2pm with drinks for sale and all the latest project news and opportunities. Do come and have a drink and a chat.



**The George**  
Wickham Market's Community Pub

Made possible with



**Heritage Fund**

**Join us for our popular**

# **PUB GAMES NIGHT!**

**Friday 2nd February at the Village Hall, 7pm**

Come and enjoy playing traditional pub games

## **BAGATELLE, SHOVE H'PENNY**

## **BAR SKITTLES, QUOITS, DARTS**

## **PLUS A QUIZ!**

All proceeds go to The George 'Gilding the Building' fund  
Teams of any number welcome - prizes to be won.

## **TICKETS £5**

There are 3 ways to buy your tickets.  
Either purchase them online using the George bank details  
(use 'Games Night' and 'your name' as the payment reference)  
or alternatively, you can pick up tickets from the  
Teapot Tearoom, 70a High St (cash only)  
Or on the night on the door.

**Bank details**  
Lloyds Bank. Account No 54205968 Sort Code 30-94-51

Follow us at @thegeorgewm on Instagram or Facebook  
for restoration updates and news of events

## Volunteering opportunity



We are keen to recruit volunteers for The George Gardening Team which will be responsible for greening the George with plantings, flower baskets and tubs and wildlife habitat including bird and bat boxes. Eventually it is hoped to apply for an allotment for supplying fresh produce for use in the pub.

Immediately, there is a working party planned to clear ivy from the wall and fence bordering George Lane. This work needs to be carried out by mid March before the nesting season begins.

If you are interested in this volunteer opportunity please contact Christine Abraham, Community Engagement Co-ordinator, by emailing her at [cec@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk](mailto:cec@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk)



## Community Pubs – the Suffolk Picture

The Plunkett Foundation supports a wide variety of community owned enterprises throughout Great Britain, the most numerous being community shops at 428. Second to this comes pubs at 179 of which 10 are in Suffolk. Not surprisingly, the business models in place at these are varied and reflect the story of their journey from a community asset under threat to a sustainable enterprise.

Some, such as the *Sorrell Horse* at Shottisham and the *Brook Inn* at Washbrook are tenanted with the community element very much in the background. The *Elmswell Tavern* at Elmswell is at the centre of a major community development where the Parish Council have purchased the site and there are plans for local housing, community centre and pub. The *White Horse* at Thelnetham is currently engaged in a major fundraising campaign while the *Duke of Marlborough* at Somersham and the *Racehorse Inn* at Westhall seem well established. A similarity to The George exists with *The Case is Altered* at Bentley in that it was owned by Punch Taverns before closure and rescue.

What sets The George apart from others in Suffolk is its near ruin condition at the start of the campaign to save it and also, but not exclusively, the strong element of community engagement in its business plan. The Plunkett Foundation use the phrase 'more than a pub' in their publicity for this sector of community enterprises and The George will certainly live up to that.

## Gilding the Building

Whilst the full restoration costs have been secured we have had to make cost savings in other areas to meet overall targets. Our 'Gilding the Building' campaign aims to raise money to bring back a wish list of finishing touches that will make the pub even more comfortable for us all to enjoy.

## Become a shareholder!

What better way to feel part of our community pub and help our 'Gilding the Building' campaign than by becoming a shareholder. A part owner of the business with a chance to get involved and offer thoughts and ideas to the management committee. To find out more about buying shares in The George please contact: [secretary@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk)



Become a member!

From just £5 per month, you can become a member of our 200 Club. which will give you the chance to win cash prizes in our monthly draw. 50% of our income goes towards the prize fund with the remainder retained to help fund our 'Gilding the Building' costs. For details please email [info@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk](mailto:info@thegeorgecommunitypub.co.uk).



## New displays on the George front hoardings



As part of an acknowledgement to our starting the building phase we have refreshed the hoardings on the High Street to include new information which looks forward to when we open in December 2024.

*follow The George at @thegeorgewm on Instagram or Facebook for restoration updates and news of events*

Building The George newsletter is written and distributed by The George Community Pub (Wickham Market) Ltd which is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 FCA Mutuals Public Register No. 7462

