



THE SWAN IN CLEWER OPEN FORUM

MONDAY 20th MAY 2024

HELD AT THE SWAN, 9 MILL LANE, CLEWER, WINDSOR

NOTES FROM THE OPEN FORUM

WELCOME

Hollie Harrison, Willie Calvert, and Richard Allen, Directors of the Swan Clewer Community interest Company, welcomed all present. Apologies had been received from Martin Payne, Company Secretary, and others. Notes were taken by Hollie Harrison and Will Calvert, Directors of the Swan Clewer CIC.

The Forum exists to allow all supporters of The Swan, including Bevy members (being community shareholders, those who lent money to the CIC in 2019 and in 2023, and other 'in kind' supporters) as well as other interested members of the wider community, the opportunity to ask questions as well as to receive information. The invite to Open Forums is sent to all subscribers to the weekly newsletter email.

SWAN FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

It was confirmed that the 2023 re-financing raised £15,000 cash loans from 57 investors and £12,000 in cash for equity by 6 investors. A further £12,000 was raised in equity from Green Room Foundation and Will Calvert for Windsor and Eton Brewing Company Ltd, funded by reducing our creditor balance.

Profit for 1 January to 30 April was a loss of about £9,000 which was within £2,000 of the budgeted loss. The Directors had forecast a loss in the first quarter of the year as sales are traditionally lower. Trading is on budget but margins are below budget, partly to keep pricing reasonable. In addition, over £7,000 of mortgage payments have been paid during this period.

The 2024 Budget is to make a profit of £22,000, and to use that to fund a mortgage loan repayment at the end of the year. It is important to trade profitably over the summer months. Our energy usage exceeds last year's usage and budget so this needs to be controlled better.

DÉCOR UPDATE

The interior decor review and planning, that has been led by Lexi Symon, was presented by Richard Allen. This included the brief provided by Board, scope, plan, and provision timelines. This was well received by the open forum attendees to move the interior of the pub away from a 'cafe' feel towards a 'cosy pub' feel. Concern was raised that the addition of rugs would be impractical from a cleaning perspective (e.g. crisps trodden into the carpet). The timeline was recognised as ambitious, and caution was advised around getting the job done quickly, if that compromised quality or would interfere with profitable pub opening times.

GREAT BRITISH PUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2024

The Directors shared the news that the pub has made it through to round two of the Awards under the “Community Pub” category. The first prize is £5,000, with five runners up receiving £1,000 each. The Swan has won the category previously. There was enthusiasm from the room for participation and individuals volunteered to share their experiences of being part of the community for inclusion in the round two submission.

WINDSOR PUBS IN BLOOM

Plans are underway for entry into the Windsor Pubs in Bloom competition. The Green room College and community volunteers will be involved in creating and nurturing the horticultural features. The Friends of The Swan committee have committed £400 to fund the purchase of relevant supplies.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A series of events are planned over the coming months, from sing-a-long film nights, karaoke and special food offerings as well as regular food offerings on Wednesdays through to Sundays each week. More details will be issued in weekly newsletters, on social media, and on pub signage. Thanks were given to Micky for all the efforts he puts into his role as General Manager for the pub and the site.

It was also noted that there would be celebration of life for the re-opened Swan’s first, and oldest, regular, Rene Lowe who had passed away in February 2024 at the age of 102. Trudy Lowe shared that a celebration will be held on Friday 24th May , from 1:30pm onwards, at The Swan. All are welcome and there will be food, drink, and music as part of proceedings.

FUTURE OPEN FORUM SESSIONS

The format and content of the Open Forums is continually being reviewed and considered to ensure that it provides an opportunity for the Directors to share updates and receive feedback and ideas from the community. It was agreed that wherever possible an agenda will be shared prior to the meetings.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members of the Swan Clewer Community Interest Company should note that a General Meeting will be held on Sunday 8th September, in the pub, starting 11:30am. This will include the 2023 Financial Accounts.

NEXT OPEN FORUM

No date was set for the next Open Forum.