

## 1 RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY!

**JEMIMA WITHEY MBII**  
TURKS HEAD, HASKERTON, SUFFOLK

We are blessed with a lovely garden and 92 outside covers.

I've been through the building with my Head Chef, my number two, working out how best we can function when we reopen. We're also sitting down with our front-of-house chaps to gather their thoughts and feedback.

Our current plan is to open on July 4, Wednesdays to Sundays. We began by offering a takeaway food and beer service from June 17, which gave us two weeks to get the kitchen back up and running.

It's such a big guessing game, wondering how many people will come, if we need someone to control numbers, etc? I've bought the staff clear visors, rather than masks.

I'm desperate to start trading as soon as possible as I can't afford to lose more money. But I just know that it's going to start raining as soon as July starts!



## 2 THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT BLUE

**JO FARRELL MBII**  
WINDSOR CASTLE, MARPLE BRIDGE, STOCKPORT

I've been busy painting the outside furniture bright blue. Our plan is to take the pub outside to our customers. For the first few days, I'll run the bar myself to see how she (I call my pub a she!) trades.

I'm planning to put the benches in the front car park in a hexagonal arrangement, which I saw on TV helps with social distancing.

And we've got a marquee, if it rains.

We have cleaned the pub so many times during lockdown, only to watch the dust rebuild. But now we've

'emulsified' all the cellar ready for the new beer, as well as the toilets and the vestibules.

Everywhere is clean, disinfected and tidy.

I'm having T-shirts printed with a message: 'Really glad to see you - Welcome back' and

on the reverse, a reminder about social distancing and handwashing.

# TEN to ONE

## 'How are you preparing for an end to lockdown?'

**KATE OPPENHEIM SPEAKS TO 10 LICENSEES AS THEY LOOK TO REOPEN THEIR BUSINESSES**

### COCKTAILS TO YOUR DOOR

**JAMES NICOLIAN**  
EXOTIC BOOZE CLUB CHESTER

I've no plans to reopen until I feel totally comfortable with the situation. We've been

delivering over 1,000 pre-made cocktails a week. Customers pre-order online and we deliver in reusable pouches of four cocktails.

We actually closed our venue ahead of everyone else, so home delivery got 10 people back to work. We're not looking to make big profits, charging just £3.75 to £4, as I see it is more important to get people back to work, pay the rent and build our brand.

I am really missing customer contact - although it's great to meet people on their doorsteps - but hospitality is about giving people an experience, which is about having contact: a hug, a high five, handshakes - that's the whole point for me. Without contact it's not hospitality and as much as it would kill me to lose the venue, I'm not prepared to risk opening.

### 4 BIG WELCOME WAITING

**STEVEN & BECKY PRINCE MBII**  
THE GREY MARE, BELTHORN, LANCS

Our focus is on how to make our customers feel confident and to give them a big welcome back.

Right now we need more guidance, as we can't afford to spend a fortune only to be told later that it was unnecessary. Money is tighter than ever and we're making a loss every week.

Our fish and chip shop style takeaway offer isn't even covering the bills, but it's helping a bit.

We're looking to make better use of our outside space, increase capacity and change the till system to allow ordering from tables. We already had table service, so it's about expanding on that.

Our core trade was older people, pensioners, especially midweek and so the future is a bit of an unknown. We're looking to continue with the takeaway offer.





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## TABLE AND PRE-ORDER SERVICE AT THE READY

**ALEX WILLIAMS FBII**  
POLGOOTH INN  
ST AUSTELL, CORNWALL

We started building up a takeaway service in early June, offering all our best sellers – burgers, ribs, fish and chips, etc – in preparation for a July reopening.

We were banking all along on social distancing measures being one-metre by the time we reopened. We're not sure we could have traded with two-metres. People say 'use the garden', but this is Cornwall, it's bound to be raining in July.

We've extended our kitchen and bought a pizza oven, ready to move forward with our takeaway and eat-in pizzas offer. We're also going to utilise our Point One till system to offer pre-ordering and table ordering.

We pride ourselves on our excellent hygiene standards, which we believe will reassure customers. And hopefully the campsites and hotels will all open and we'll see a jump in the number of holidaymakers coming to St Austell.

## 6 'I DO' PLAN A JULY REOPENING

**ADAM GILES FBII**  
PUNCH BOWL INN,  
BRIDGNORTH, SALOP

We've refurbished the pub, giving it a good lick of paint, and have been taking photos ready to share on social media to welcome our customers back.

I expect every pub has spruced themselves up, no excuse not to! We're a wedding venue and we have lost 60 wedding bookings this year, but fortunately 90% of them have rebooked.

We're lucky in that we have a large function room, which we can utilise to allow for social distancing. We also have an outside bar too and lovely gardens.

We plan to reopen on July 4, but it might actually be the 6th.

## 7 PREPARED FOR THE NEXT CHALLENGE

**KELLY MCCARTHY CBII**  
YE OLD SUN INN, COLTON, YORKS

We're planning on a July 4 reopening. Most of our pub has been taken over by the shop during lockdown and we've been managing £5,500 in sales a week, with a profit margin of 10-15% on groceries. It's what has been keeping our mortgage paid! And with our takeaway service, pizzas and ice cream kiosk sales, we are keeping ourselves going.

Our ice cream is homemade and we've been really busy, thanks to the hot weather. But it has been hard work.

For reopening, we're thinking about a one-way system in the pub. Laminated menus and collection points with people sitting at specific tables. We have a cabin and fully licensed bar outside, which could also work as a drink collection point. The toilets are the biggest problem and we're waiting for more guidance on this. It all hard to predict.

## 8 PUB GRUB FOR DELIVERY

**MARK HOLDEN FBII**  
INN CORNWALL

From the start I redeployed the team into other roles, front-of-house became delivery drivers, packers, etc, kitchen staff stayed in the kitchens. I don't believe we will ever get back to 100%, so we've geared ourselves up to create new revenue streams for the long-term: home delivery, takeaways and wholesale.

We're also testing a EnviroTec coating solution, which should keep surfaces disease-free for up to 30 days. It will be a game changer if it works.

I'm telling our kitchen managers not to cost anything too early, as the food chain and costs are fragile. On margins, we will have to fight for every 1%.



## 10 ON BOARD WITH THE SPECIALS

**KAREN REES MBII**  
THACKERAY PUB & KITCHEN, CARDIFF

We've spoken to our Health & Safety consultants, who have risk assessed us, and we've carried out staff training, etc, and are basically ready to go.

I don't believe we can rush any of this, it's about building confidence. We have a large garden and a big layout inside, so we should be fine. We plan to become more food-led, thanks to our really good team of chefs, including my husband James. We're going to ask regulars to send in their favourite recipe and we'll do it as a special, donating £1-£2 to the NHS for each dish sold!



## 9 NO PLANS TO REOPEN YET

**DIANE GRAY**  
BUTCHER & BEAST  
HEIGHINGTON, LINCS

We started doing takeaway pretty much the first day we closed. A friend had a fish and chip shop, so we raided his freezers and became Heighington's chippy!

We've been very well supported by our community and before everyone else started to doing the same thing, our trade was humungous. We're currently getting 150-200 orders a week, which keeps our heads above water. We've built on the initial offer with our 'pub food at home' menu.

We've been blown away by the local support we've had. Batemans has been amazing too.

We've no plans to reopen in July, but will wait and see. We're a small pub and while our garden is big, our toilets are small. ■

