

1 ADVENTURES IN BREWING

KERIS DE VILLIERS FBII
THE RAM INN, WANDSWORTH,
SOUTH LONDON

We took on The Ram, which is the old Young's brewery tap. It was a big decision to take on a new site when we already had two pubs, but it's definitely been our best decision. We are brewing beer for the first time in a six-barrel brewery in the pub and we sell the beers in our other two pubs.

We've employed a brewer, who used to work at Sambrook's, and have produced a session IPA and a porter. It has been a big adventure.

At one of our other pubs, The Pig & Whistle, we sponsor a rugby team called the SA Wild Dogs and next year they'll be entering more tournaments and we'll be getting more involved. It really celebrates the South African community in London. I'm South African so we like to be part of that.

Young's tenants Keris & husband Lee were BII Licensee of the Year finalists in 2018 and feature this issue on p38-39



2 GOING VEGAN

CLIVE PRICE FBII
BARONS PUBS,
SURREY & BERKS

We committed to a stand-alone vegan menu across all our pubs, which has been very well-received and punched above its weight. It has three starters and three mains and vegan customers really enjoy having that choice. I think it has got more people through the door, but it also takes pressure off the staff, who don't have to trawl through the main menu to help people adapt a dish for them. Customers can just sit down, look at the vegan menu and get on with their conversation and enjoying themselves.

This year we're looking to do better catering in our gardens. We've got some lovely gardens in the estate and it feels like there could be some new opportunities there.

Clive Price runs an estate of 10 pubs and takes advantage of BII services, including legal advice & insurance

TEN to ONE

'What was your best decision of 2019 & what are your hopes for 2020?'

ASKS NIGEL HUDDLESTON

LOTS OF BOTTLE AT THE DB

FRANKIE GRIFFITHS
THE DRAWING BOARD,
LEAMINGTON SPA, WARCS

We opened a separate beer shop, imaginatively called the DB Bottle Shop. It's like an extension of The Drawing Board and gives us more scope to sell some of the weirder, quirky craft beer that we're very passionate

about. Any extra stock from the off-licence can be brought up and put in the pub fridges without the commitment of having to buy cases of beer that we can't guarantee sales of in the pub.

We've made our own session IPA with a local brewery too, as we wanted to kick BrewDog off the bar. We're looking to put that in cans next year. I'd also like to do more food and wine events. I'm planning a food and film night with Silence of the Lambs in February, with liver and Chianti.

4 BEER FEST A BLOW-AWAY SUCCESS

KIM BARKER MBII
SHIP INN, PENTEWAN, CORNWALL

We have a beer festival every year, which is always the same weekend as the nearby Boardmasters Festival. The 2019 Boardmasters was cancelled because of the weather but our best decision was to keep going. We had bought new marquees and, despite the wind lifting us off our feet, we managed to put them up. It turned out to be the biggest and best-attended beer festival we've ever had. If we had decided to cancel it would have been a disaster. It was probably the bravest decision of the year but turned out to be the best.

This year, for the first time, we're going to extend it to a two-day event to build on what we've already created. We try to be bigger and better in everything we do.

Kim Barker was a Licensee of the Year finalist in 2018 and enjoys picking up ideas from other operators through the BII News





5

CAMPING & SHEPHERD HUTS BOOST SALES

SIMON COLQUHOUN MBII
THE GAGGLE OF GEESSE, BUCKLAND
NEWTON, DORSET

The pub site is about five acres and last year we introduced camping and shepherd huts. It has radically changed the pub. We were fully-booked for most of last summer. When you've got an extra 40 people paying to stay in your field, all eating and drinking in the pub, it makes a significant difference. We've got planning permission for five huts but introduced two initially, of different styles – one aimed at couples and one for families – just to see what demand was like.

This year we want to do more to hang on to those people while they're here. It might be theatre, bands or something else every weekend to maximise the benefit. We've already built a pizza oven and barbecue shack out there.

Simon and wife Sarah bought and reopened The Gaggles in 2018 after it had been closed for over three years

6 MUSIC TO EAT BY FEEDS FOOTFALL

GLEN PEARSON
SHIBDEN MILL INN, HALIFAX

The biggest thing for us last year was to introduce low-key, live music for the 'background' in our outside seating area last summer. We received a very good response to that. We had slots on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, mainly solo artists doing some of their own material and a few covers.

This year, it'll be more of trying to be the best in everything we do. We've done a lot of work on the drinks offering with a great range of gin, and developed the food side. We'll be looking to push that more over the next 12 months.

Glen Pearson's pub saw a big spike in footfall from visitors to nearby Shibden Hall, from its links to the TV drama Gentleman Jack!



7 WEDDINGS ADVENTURE

CHRIS NORFOLK FBII
THE ELM TREE, ELMTON, DERBYSHIRE

We've gone a bit crazy on weddings – we did 10 last year and I've even got bookings for 2022. We have an acre of garden, so we hire three large tee-pees for 150-odd people at a time. The pub only seats 100, so it has increased capacity by more than a 100%.

We're also hosting local craftspeople – enamelling, calligraphy, flower arranging. We give them space we wouldn't use during the week and they come along and demonstrate their craft. We add afternoon tea or Prosecco. We've got two booked in for this month (January) and we'll do more throughout the year. You've got to keep coming up with something different.

Chris Norfolk has been a BII member for 11 years values the networking opportunities offered by BII events.

8 FOCUS ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

JOHN HORTON
THE BARGEMAN'S REST, NEWPORT,
ABBEY HOUSE HOTEL & GARDENS,
BARROW-IN-FURNESS

We had a really good reorganisation of the team last year, looking at everyone's roles in great detail and making sure we weren't doubling up. We introduced mindfulness awareness and mental health first-aiders, which has been a great help in the hotel.



We're a bit different to many BII members, in that we are a large hotel. We're about to install a gym for this year. We're reinvesting

to be the best we can possibly be.

John Horton was a BII Licensee of the Year Awards finalist in 2015

10 YOUNG BLOOD TAKE-OVER

JOHN TREACY MBII
WHITE LION HOTEL, SEAFORD,
EAST SUSSEX

Employing my son Michael, who is going to take over the business from me. He is a lot younger than me and heavily into Facebook and Instagram, so he has improved our use of technology and social media. For 2020, we plan to improve our food offering and do a lot more media advertising. It's amazing the number of people who hit our website now who would never have thought of coming to our place in the past.

9 KEEPING AHEAD ON BEER PRICING

CHRIS MAPEY FBII
THE ANGEL, WOODBRIDGE,
SUFFOLK

Cheaper beer. We dropped our price by between 40p and 60p a pint and took everything down to £3-a-pint flat-rate. Our volume has gone up, our profitability has gone up and our wastage has dropped to nearly zero. I thought if I could keep stock moving through, the quality would improve and the yield would get better. It has and turnover has gone up as there are more people in during the afternoon and early evenings.

This year I'm taking on another pub, which is also 100% wet, The Duke of York in Ipswich.

We switched off The Angel's kitchen at the end of 2016 and went completely wet-led. It was the best thing we ever did.

Chris Mapey FBII says membership was invaluable in seeing off an insurance hike

