

Herefordshire goes into Tier One!

And, as you all know, that means that *up to six people* can share a pub or restaurant table, even if they are *from different households*. It also means that (provided it is served at a table) you can drink alcohol without having to order a substantial meal.

Just after the announcement, members of the Management Committee met with Dom and Nick for the second week running, and we can now explain how The Bell aims to serve its customers – at least until the next change in the rules! After this weekend's (19th and 20th December) Takeaway options The Bell will open as follows:

Christmas and New Year



CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

We are now taking bookings for tables of up to 6 from multiple households and you no longer have to have food with alcohol (as long as restrictions do not change)

23rd - Closed

24th – Festive set menu, serving food 6-9pm, last drinks orders 10pm

25th - Open for drinks only 12-2pm

26th – Open for drinks only 12-3pm

27th – Vietnamese evening, eat in or takeaway, serving food 6-9pm, last drinks orders 10pm

28th – Closed

29th – Closed

30th – Closed

31st – Open 5pm – 11pm, last drinks orders 10pm, sharing platters available

1st - Takeaway only 6-8pm

2nd - Eat in or takeaway, serving food 6-9pm, last orders 10pm

3rd - Eat in or takeaway Sunday lunch, serving food 12-5pm, bar open until 9pm

Menu details on website and to follow

From 8th January

The Bell will open 3 days a week (Friday through Sunday)

6-11 Friday evening; 12-3 and 6-11 Saturday; 12-5 Sunday lunch

The Eat-In menu will mirror the Takeaway menu - there will be a choice between a meat and a vegetarian dish together with a dessert and alcohol or other drinks.

Takeaways will continue - details on the website

And now for some background... our tenants have shared the economics of their situation with the Committee, and where appropriate, we can pass on some details by way of explanations.

The key factors in the new plan are:

- The severe Covid trading difficulties faced *ever since opening* mean that the business has not yet been able to build up the reserves which would allow it to absorb trading losses.
- Such losses are immediate if customer numbers and revenue do not exceed costs, and the majority of the customer base is not composed of heavy-drinking, high margin, party animals – though this may be a blessing given the potential transmission rates in such groups.
- Attracting more dine-in custom from further afield is obviously good for the pub's income in normal times. At present however there is a danger of importing Covid risk from areas with higher transmission rates.
- The fine-dining menu of earlier months is demanding of ingredients, labour and therefore cost. So Nick and Dom plan to keep labour costs down to two staff plus themselves and menu ingredients down to the simpler Takeaway-style. Having said that, the tenants' idea of a simple takeaway takes some beating, and the high level of support for these dishes has demonstrated both their popularity and the shareholders' commitment to The Bell as an enterprise. All of us would like to say a massive THANK YOU to everyone who has ordered, and enjoyed, the Takeaways, and also "KEEP ON TAKING THEM AWAY!"
- We also appreciate that there are lots of you who can't wait to actually be in the pub again, so the Covid-secure measures will be the best possible, and Nick and Dom can't wait to welcome you! They are treading a difficult path between risk and reward, and

truly hope their offering will be the best of all worlds for the maximum number of customers, keeping folk happy and providing them with a way to enjoy the pub either on-site or at-home.

As explained last week, getting supplies and conditioning ales, means that the new hours can't start immediately. Nick and Dom will be prepping the fabulous CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVE MENU ready for the first re-opening on 24th December.

On Christmas Day come and enjoy a celebratory drink, and do watch the website for details of the New Years Eve event. The new Friday through Sunday hours start from Friday 8th January 2021.

We hope we will, but if we don't see you there, Happy Christmas from Nick, Dom and the Management Committee, and all the very best for a much better 2021.