



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig:
Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe Investing in Rural Areas



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The Shed Restaurant



What were the project aims:

- To create a high-end dining experience in the Barry area, helping to attract tourism. To make this restaurant affordable for all, at a sensible price point, using good ingredients cooked and prepared so that every plate that leaves the pass is one to be proud of.
- To renovate part of the original 'Railway Goodshed' in keeping with its industrial heritage, using items such as the wood for the tables which was sourced from wood taken from the Barry Dock. Bar and pass tops were from old slate snooker tables from a Welsh Mine.
- To provide jobs to local people and to train and nurture young talent in

- the restaurant trade.
- To source food from local suppliers where possible.

How were these aims achieved?

The renovation was carried out with a view to the history of the building, keeping the industrial feel. The restaurant has a relaxed dining feel where people can feel free to come weekly or for a special occasion. The use of the wood from the old Barry Dock, slate from Welsh Slate Mines from old snooker tables has helped with this premise.

The menu is kept current by changing ingredients and keeping things fresh and unusual. All food is cooked with the finest ingredients and sourced mainly from local Barry suppliers. Covid has caused many issues with staffing and covers but we hope to grow this

in the coming months.

The relaxed dining area makes people feel welcome whether new or old customers. Our staff are friendly and greet each guest warmly on arrival. Each dish when delivered to the table is explained to the guest by the waiting staff – knowledge of products is key.

Who was involved?

- James and Louise Sommerin – initially full time and then menu construction
- Liam Murphy – Investor and now General Manager
- Sarah Weaver – HR Support and Employee contact
- Shelley Williams – Financial support and Accountancy

How was the project funded?

Rural Wales Grant, Development Bank of Wales Loan, Capital invested by Liam Murphy and Sarah Weaver.

Where did you go for help and advice?

Brian Roberts from Business Wales initially helped us to begin the funding application and some very helpful advice. Phil Griffiths then took over and saw us through the process of applying for Grant funding. Shelley Williams wrote the business/marketing plan and had in depth knowledge of cash flow forecasting for restaurants. Liam Murphy controlled the project during the 'build' up to opening. This was key in keeping the costs controlled and also provided free labour and his experience in property development.

What has been the greatest achievement so far?

I think that opening a restaurant during the beginning of the pandemic has been the hardest thing any new business could have had! But despite this we now have a loyal following and we see new customers at the restaurant every week and have survived despite being closed more than open.

Our reviews have been consistent and amazing at mainly 5's. We are receiving good feedback from the guests regarding the food and the

young and enthusiastic staff, and guests are returning.

We have also been mentioned twice in the Michelin Guide as a restaurant to watch.

Biggest challenge:

Again, has been Covid when we opened for business in October 2020, closed on 18th December and didn't reopen until 17th May 2021! Throughout this period, the restrictions imposed on the hospitality industry has been very overwhelming and this will take a while to recover to where we should have been, if we had traded through this whole 18 month period!

Staffing during this period was practically impossible as we lost a lot of potential staff due to Brexit and the uncertainty of getting a job in hospitality. Many good key Chefs and Waiting Staff left hospitality during this period and may never return. During the 2-year period, we have employed up to 14 people and continue to employ 11 at the moment.

Any tips for those setting up?

1. Ensure your cash flows are true and realistic
2. Be prepared for everybody to get 'hands on'
3. Always be current and follow the market trends – know your competition!
4. Expect the unexpected! And hope your pockets are deep enough!

What's next for your project?

We have just employed a new Head Chef and Restaurant Manager to take this forward and we want to build our turnover and be open for a whole year in a row!

We believe in giving back to the Community and we have signed up for the Kick-start programme, to give young people a chance of employment. Currently we have employed a young man as a Kitchen Porter who showed such enthusiasm; he is now working towards a junior Chef Role. We have offered another placement today to another young person as KP and we think he will grow within the role.

We have taken on a social media specialist and we want to grow the business to a further audience by means of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We will be posting approx. 3 times per week ensuring that all new dishes and special occasions are seen by potential travellers to the Barry area. All new dishes and menu changes will be posted on a regular basis so that we are always on people's minds.

