# The Little Taproom celebrates five years of resilience in Liverpool



Aggy Perreau and Si Vanderbelt have marked five years of running The Little Taproom, a micropub on Aigburth Road, Liverpool, despite facing unprecedented challenges since their launch on March 13, 2020. Initially welcomed with a bustling opening night, their operations came to an abrupt halt just one week later as the UK prepared for its first nationwide lockdown to combat the spread of coronavirus.

Reflecting on their opening, Aggy, 45, stated, "We opened on Friday, March 13, and it was an incredible opening - we couldn't have wished for a better one. There were tonnes of people, they were really there to support us." However, as news of COVID-19 escalated, the atmosphere quickly shifted. On March 16, the then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged the public to avoid hospitality venues, and by March 20, Aggy and Si made the difficult decision to close their pub.

The formal announcement of the lockdown came on March 23, with restrictions legally enforced from March 26. "We opened on the Friday and then closed the next Friday," Aggy recalled. "Because we then realised that there were things happening and we had decided we were going to close the pub on the Monday. Then people around us said 'it's not this Monday, it's tonight'. That came as such a shock."

Following their closure, the couple faced the daunting task of adapting their business model. After a brief hiatus, they began offering takeaway and delivery services, which were met with enthusiastic support from the local community. Customers queued for milk bottles filled with beer, often enjoying their purchases socially distanced in nearby Sefton Park. "Si would be in the pub doing take-outs and I would go around Liverpool and drop beer off," Aggy explained.

By summer 2020, the government began allowing limited reopening of pubs, but numerous restrictions remained in place. This created additional stress for Aggy and Si as they navigated guidelines around social distancing, table service, and capacity limits. Aggy noted, "I remember spending a whole day with Si and a tape measure just making sure that we could accommodate people two metres apart."

Despite these challenges, and with Aggy approaching the pub industry with little prior experience while Si brought 35 years' worth of expertise, they began to stabilise their operations. The couple focused on sourcing craft beers from small and medium independent breweries, often needing to communicate constantly with suppliers. "It was a very, very stressful time," Aggy admitted.

Fast forward to March 2022, and most COVID-19 restrictions had been lifted, allowing the pair to operate as a traditional pub once again. However, the hospitality industry soon faced new challenges related to the ongoing cost of living crisis, which exerted pressure on operational costs and consumer spending. "It was really nice when we could then just operate as a pub,” Aggy stated.

Despite the difficulties experienced over the years, The Little Taproom has gained a loyal following and become a notable part of the Aigburth community. The pub has garnered several awards, including being named a pub of excellence for 2025 by the Campaign for Real Ale's Liverpool and district branch. "We're still growing our business," Aggy said, adding that they have built strong relationships with regulars and welcome new customers regularly.

While acknowledging that they are not quite where they envisioned themselves five years down the line, Aggy expressed gratitude and pride in surviving the tumultuous early years of their venture: “We're a community pub. That's important for us, and that's also what helped us to survive. People wanted us to survive and really had our back."

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)