# Jeremy Clarkson reveals the unexpected stress of running The Farmer’s Dog pub



Jeremy Clarkson, known for his role as a presenter on "Top Gear" and "The Grand Tour," has ventured into the hospitality sector with the opening of The Farmer's Dog pub in Asthall, Oxfordshire. Purchased last year for around £1 million, Clarkson has transformed the former Windmill pub into a space he hopes will serve as a community hub, particularly for local farmers seeking respite from their demanding work.

In conversations with the press, Clarkson shared insights into the complexities of running a pub, stating, “There are so many things that you discover about opening and running a pub that you wouldn’t even consider.” He noted the stringent food hygiene regulations and the challenge of hiring staff, which has become increasingly difficult amidst a nationwide staffing crisis in the hospitality sector. As reported, over 400 pubs in the UK shuttered in 2024 due to various pressures, including rising operational costs and changing consumer spending habits.

Despite these industry challenges, Clarkson remains optimistic. He expressed a desire to cater specifically to the farming community, envisioning a spot where they can gather to unwind over a pint when inclement weather halts their work. His right-hand man, farmer Kaleb Cooper, echoed this sentiment, emphasising the importance of social interaction among local farmers. Cooper remarked, “Farmers use the pub way too little because they think they’re too busy all the time. Actually, they need to start using it a bit more and just go for a pint and a chat.”

However, Clarkson’s journey has not been without its tribulations. He revealed that balancing the pub's opening with his farming obligations created immense stress, leading him to realise that running a pub can be “more stressful than running a farm.” He highlighted operational hurdles, from staffing shortages to extensive monthly expenses, such as £27,000 for traffic management and parking marshals, which are necessary to accommodate the influx of visitors attracted by both The Farmer's Dog and his nearby Diddly Squat Farm. These operational challenges underscore the broader struggles faced by many in the hospitality industry during a period of economic uncertainty.

Interestingly, the pub has embraced a distinctly British ethos, showcasing a menu crafted from locally sourced ingredients—save for the quinine used in tonic. This dedication to British fare reflects a growing trend among consumers who are increasingly supportive of local suppliers. Clarkson has even integrated an agricultural theme into the pub’s decor, featuring a vintage tractor suspended from the ceiling to resonate with its rural identity.

Yet, the road ahead remains fraught with obstacles. Clarkson is currently engaging with local authorities over planning disputes concerning parking expansions necessary for accommodating the rising visitor numbers. The proposed changes have sparked concerns about increased traffic and potential environmental impacts, specifically on a nearby ancient burial site.

Despite the hurdles, Clarkson exhibits a resilience that mirrors many small business owners battling through similar adversities. He views this venture as a learning opportunity, expressing commitment to steering The Farmer's Dog towards success. With the backdrop of Clarkson's recent experiences and the rich tradition of British pub culture, there’s hope that The Farmer's Dog can evolve into the community staple he aspires it to be.

In a world where hospitality faces unprecedented pressures, Clarkson's endeavours reflect both the love for local culture and the tenacity required to foster it in the face of adversity.

**Reference Map**

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25155763.jeremy-clarkson-opens-bad-stress-cotswolds-pub/?ref=rss)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25155763.jeremy-clarkson-opens-bad-stress-cotswolds-pub/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp35vzewv1wo), [[7]](https://www.ceotodaymagazine.com/2024/12/jeremy-clarkson-reflects-on-challenges-of-his-pub-venture-the-farmers-dog/)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25155763.jeremy-clarkson-opens-bad-stress-cotswolds-pub/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/jeremy-clarkson-farmers-dog-clarkson-farm-pub-b1201491.html)
4. Paragraph 4: [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/23/jeremy-clarkson-fans-oxfordshire-pub-the-farmers-dog), [[6]](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/jeremy-clarkson-pub-farm-oxfordship-diddly-squat-b2600925.html)
5. Paragraph 5: [[4]](https://www.homebuilding.co.uk/news/jeremy-clarkson-in-another-planning-battle-with-council-over-his-pubs-car-park), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/jeremy-clarkson-farmers-dog-clarkson-farm-pub-b1201491.html)
6. Paragraph 6: [[4]](https://www.homebuilding.co.uk/news/jeremy-clarkson-in-another-planning-battle-with-council-over-his-pubs-car-park), [[7]](https://www.ceotodaymagazine.com/2024/12/jeremy-clarkson-reflects-on-challenges-of-his-pub-venture-the-farmers-dog/)
7. Paragraph 7: [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/jeremy-clarkson-farmers-dog-clarkson-farm-pub-b1201491.html), [[7]](https://www.ceotodaymagazine.com/2024/12/jeremy-clarkson-reflects-on-challenges-of-his-pub-venture-the-farmers-dog/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25155763.jeremy-clarkson-opens-bad-stress-cotswolds-pub/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp35vzewv1wo> - Jeremy Clarkson's new pub, The Farmer's Dog, opened in Asthall, Oxfordshire, attracting hundreds of customers on its first day. Clarkson purchased the pub, formerly known as The Windmill, for less than £1 million. The pub offers British produce, including beers and ciders from Clarkson's own brewery. To manage traffic, especially after the success of his Diddly Squat farm shop, a comprehensive operation was implemented. Clarkson expressed concerns about the profitability of the venture, citing the high costs of serving British produce compared to imported goods.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/23/jeremy-clarkson-fans-oxfordshire-pub-the-farmers-dog> - Jeremy Clarkson's pub, The Farmer's Dog, opened in Asthall, Oxfordshire, drawing large crowds eager to experience the new establishment. Clarkson emphasized that all offerings were sourced from British farmers, except for the quinine in the tonic. Despite initial concerns about potential traffic issues, the opening day proceeded without major problems, thanks to proactive measures by Clarkson and local authorities. The pub's interior features an agricultural theme, including a vintage tractor suspended from the ceiling, and offers a menu of traditional British dishes.
4. <https://www.homebuilding.co.uk/news/jeremy-clarkson-in-another-planning-battle-with-council-over-his-pubs-car-park> - Jeremy Clarkson is engaged in a planning dispute with local authorities over the car park at his Cotswolds pub, The Farmer's Dog. Seeking permission to expand parking to accommodate rising visitor numbers, Clarkson faces objections from West Oxfordshire District and Oxfordshire County Councils. Concerns include increased traffic, flood risks, and impacts on a nearby 1,400-year-old Anglo-Saxon burial site. Clarkson's planning agent argues the proposed work is minimal and falls under permitted development rights, aimed at easing congestion and limiting overflow parking.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/jeremy-clarkson-farmers-dog-clarkson-farm-pub-b1201491.html> - Jeremy Clarkson has revealed the challenges of running his pub, The Farmer's Dog, in Asthall, Oxfordshire. Despite attracting customers, converting visits into profit has been 'nigh-on impossible.' Clarkson cited unexpected costs, including £27,000 monthly expenses for parking and traffic marshals to appease the council. He also recounted a plumbing disaster requiring 'chemically trained hazmat engineers' to resolve. Despite these setbacks, Clarkson remains committed to the venture, highlighting the quality of the food and the warmth of the staff.
6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/jeremy-clarkson-pub-farm-oxfordship-diddly-squat-b2600925.html> - Jeremy Clarkson's pub, The Farmer's Dog, opened in Asthall, Oxfordshire, attracting large crowds eager to experience the new establishment. Clarkson emphasized that all offerings were sourced from British farmers, except for the quinine in the tonic. Despite initial concerns about potential traffic issues, the opening day proceeded without major problems, thanks to proactive measures by Clarkson and local authorities. The pub's interior features an agricultural theme, including a vintage tractor suspended from the ceiling, and offers a menu of traditional British dishes.
7. <https://www.ceotodaymagazine.com/2024/12/jeremy-clarkson-reflects-on-challenges-of-his-pub-venture-the-farmers-dog/> - Jeremy Clarkson reflects on the challenges of running his pub, The Farmer's Dog, in Asthall, Oxfordshire. Despite initial success in attracting customers, converting visits into profit has proven difficult. Clarkson notes issues like staffing shortages, increased operating costs, and maintaining a purely British menu. He recounted a plumbing disaster requiring 'chemically trained hazmat engineers' to resolve. Despite these setbacks, Clarkson remains dedicated to the pub and optimistic about turning things around, viewing the experience as a valuable learning process.