

# Taw Valley Brewery

Marc Whiteside and his partner moved their young family from Brighton to the Taw Valley in August 2016. Escaping City jobs and urban life for a rural change of scene, they bought a Grade II listed Tudor thatched property with outbuildings. Wanting to start a business from his long term hobby of home brewing, Marc decided to use the 16<sup>th</sup> century thatched threshing barn on site to set up.

*“The first thing I did was look on the internet for any available funding to help me start my brewing business. Greater Dartmoor Local Enterprise Action Fund (GDLEAF) came up in the search and it seemed a perfect fit.” says Marc*

The DR Company, who manage GDLEAF, were impressed by Marc’s business plan and his project proposal. With the help of one of DR’s

project advisors Sophie Price, he successfully applied for just under £10,000 of funding which he matched with around £13,000 of his own money. This enabled Marc to purchase 130 stainless steel casks, a generator and two high quality fermenters:

*“While some items can be purchased cheaply, others need to be high quality, top of the range products,” explains Marc, “items such as the fermenters, which are the key to the taste and quality of the beer produced and strong, durable, easily washable casks are key for successful storage and retail purposes. Finding funding for these items was critical to my being able to start the business.”*

Marc uses locally sourced and sustainably produced products wherever possible and the brewery thrives on reusing and recycling: the property has its own well, which supplies the brewery with fresh Taw Valley spring water year round; all spent grain is recycled as feed for neighbouring farmers; liquid waste from the brewing process is channelled from the barn to feed a custom created reed bed which filters and thrives on the waste; the grain he uses is from nearby Crediton.

Since securing the funding Marc has turned a hobby once conducted in a VW campervan, into a growing business and what Marc believes to be England’s only fully thatched brewery. Marc already sells casks of his traditional English ales to 12 local pubs, and his plans for next year include beginning to bottle his product to enable him to expand his customer base to local farm shops and retail outlets.

