



## SOS Pub Clearance – VPS’ clean and clear team plus their security services combine to meet Christmas deadline

### INTRODUCTION

A 17th Century pub set in the quiet Devonshire village of Holbeton, had been closed for almost a year. It had been left to deteriorate, electricity disconnected, meters removed, the rooms were filthy from top to bottom, and had become infested with fleas. Five fridges and freezers with decomposed contents had been left in the kitchen, together with 50 25-litre old cooking oil drums, and floors and walls described as ‘yellow and very sticky’. Further surprises awaited the clean and clear team once they got started.

### THE TASKS

#### PEST CONTROL

The property was widely infested with fleas which required a specialist operation. VPS have partnered with an accredited pest control provider, and have undertaken a strict audit process that guarantees professionalism and conduct to the highest standards. In this instance, one of the methods the pest control team used was to prepare and make the premises airtight, then use ‘flea bombs’ followed by a deep clean and vacuum operation to remove dead and surviving eggs.

**“At one stage it really was just like BBC’s ‘DIY SOS’ – we had all hands to the deck, our managers coming in, chainsaws in hand, helping to get the job finished in time for Christmas”**

### OVERVIEW

<b>SECTOR</b>	Hospitality
<b>CUSTOMER</b>	Local village resident
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide variety of rubbish needed removing</li> <li>• Variety of materials needed different disposal methods</li> <li>• Building at risk from theft and vandalism whilst being refurbished</li> <li>• New owner and contractors needed access at all times without compromising security</li> <li>• Urgent time factor meant job needed to be completed before Christmas</li> </ul>
<b>SOLUTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Pest elimination</li> <li>• Clearance of contents</li> <li>• Multiple disposal routes – recyclable, oils, personal items</li> <li>• Deep Clean</li> <li>• VPS Steel Security</li> <li>• VPS SmartAlarm</li> <li>• VPS Smart LockBox to allow contractors and owners easy access</li> </ul>





## CLEARANCE

VPS are a licenced waste carrier so can remove any necessary materials without the need for additional contractors. The pub, closed for almost a year, contained a wide variety of materials that needed to be disposed of – some were recyclable, such as wood and metals, some required specialist disposal like the 50 drums of old cooking oils found in the kitchen, and some required careful hazardous handling, such as the decomposed items left in the five fridge freezers. As little as possible remained for incineration or landfill.

## THE BIG CLEAN

Not only the leaded windows, inside and out, but all the internal walls, floors and ceilings required intensive, deep cleaning to bring the building up to a standard for use in the hospitality sector. “The building was filthy” said one of the members of the clean and clear team. The kitchen in particular was covered in a sticky yellow substance that took considerable time and effort to remove.

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**“There were also personal items that had to be returned to the former tenant, including a collection of animal skulls. Then as we progressed the clearance through the building, we discovered an old boat on a dilapidated trailer in the garden. This required careful demolition where almost all the materials, including the boat’s engine, were recycled. The boat really tested our time constraint, as the owner had a deadline to meet to open the pub before Christmas.**

Peter Houghton  
VPS Business development Manager, South West.

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## SECURITY AND ACCESS

Once the pest problem had been dealt with, the internal contents cleared and cleaned, the owner sent the contractors in to refurbish the property in readiness for its re-opening. From experience, the VPS team knew that once a site was looking like it was being refurbished, it could attract the wrong sort of attention, as valuable tools and equipment might be thought to be kept inside. So the security of the property became more important. VPS sealed the entry points and windows with steel, and installed a Smart Alarm.

However, the owner and contractors needed steady and flexible access to the pub, to be able to carry out their work and inspections, so we installed an intelligent Smart Lockbox – a bluetooth enabled key box with a difference that allowed only authorised personnel access to the property keys and alarm fob.

## RE-OPENING IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

In the end, the job was done on time, and the village regained this iconic Inn, built in 1617.

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**“The steel screens were effective, and we suspected only one attempted breach took place, but failed. However, the screens are not environmentally attractive, so village locals made a great effort to cover them with painted wooden hoardings to lessen the harsh impact. We do provide special decals that make screens look like ordinary windows, with net curtains and the like, but we didn’t have time to order the tailor-made versions that were needed for this site.”**

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