

News

BY OLIVER PRIDMORE

oliver.pridmore@reachplc.com

& TED O'NEILL

tedoneill@reachplc.com

A LOCAL hotel has been forced to dismiss false rumours that it was set to become accommodation for asylum seekers.

The hotel says it was proud to have hosted a group of healthcare workers in recent days, but that it “seems to have caused some misunderstanding”.

The owners of The Elms Hotel in Retford posted on Facebook on Sunday, September 28, to clarify the situation.

Dency Mathew and Praveen Ramankutty said: “Two or three weeks ago we hosted a group of skilled healthcare workers - native Indian people - but who work in the UK for the NHS.

“Sadly, this seems to have caused some misunderstanding.



Please continue to stand with local businesses like ours instead of letting misinformation cause harm.

Dency Mathew and Praveen Ramankutty

“We really appreciate the contribution they made to our community during the Covid-19 pandemic and the contribution they still make up and down the UK.

“They all booked their accommodation and the function room with a buffet of delicious food from our restaurant.

“They had a get together and entertainment in the function room with games for the kids - like a stress-free family get together.

“We are passionate hoteliers and our hearts are in hospitality. We focus on welcoming our wonderful guests and keeping our doors open during this challenging time.

“We'd like to thank the local community - your support means the world to us. Thank you for standing with a local business like ours.”

“We want to clear up some false



The Elms Hotel in Retford
PHOTO: Google

Hotel forced to dismiss asylum seeker rumours after hosting a group of healthcare workers

rumours.

“The Elms is not being turned into accommodation for asylum seekers — this is simply not true.

“At a time when the hospitality industry is facing so many challenges, your support means everything to us. Please continue to stand with local businesses like ours instead of letting misinformation cause harm.”

The government recently confirmed it is now assessing all Ministry of Defence (MoD) sites to see if they could temporarily house asylum seekers as it tries to end the use of hotels.

The government's current plan is

to end the use of hotels for asylum accommodation by 2029 in a move which it says will save £1 billion a year.

Similar rumours were spread about a Sutton-in-Ashfield Travelodge hotel in August 2024, when Ashfield MP Lee Anderson shared misinformation that the site was housing “illegal migrants”.

The MP had been in touch with Travelodge directly about the rumours, and although the hotel told him they were not true, Mr Anderson posted on Facebook that he would be taking Travelodge “at their word” and that he did not want “young men who have entered our

country illegally roaming our streets”.

Less than an hour later, the Reform UK MP was forced to issue a post clarifying the Travelodge situation.

It came after Neethu James, a nurse from India now living in Nottinghamshire, responded to Mr Anderson's post by saying: “I am

appalled to see the comments on here.

“Yes, there were two bus loads of people there, who are mostly international nurses and their families working in King's Mill, and nursing homes in and around Sutton and Mansfield. They were on a weekend trip to have a family holiday together.”

No asylum seekers - but you may bump into a ghost and former mayor to give you the shakes

THE Elms Hotel is a Grade II Listed Building in 2.5 acres of grounds.

The building is on two floors with single storey wings and a beautiful modern function room at the back.

A reporter for the Retford Times stayed there last year, and it is shabby chic, full of character, the floor and the walls are slightly uneven and it probably hosts more than one ghost.

At the general election in 2024 it was used as a polling station and as the election was held in midsummer, the sun was still shining on The Elms Hotel as the polls closed at 10pm.

A former mayor of Retford, Councillor David Naylor works there as a cocktail waiter.

According to Historic England the building has a hipped Welsh slate roof.

The 1st floor centre window is full length opening onto a small balcony with modern iron guard, over a rectangular porch.

The front door is half-glazed with a ‘traciated fanlight’, it has a rectangular porch with Greek Doric columns and panelled soffit.

But most importantly, The Elms Hotel has a lively bar where food is served until 9.30pm, and its very own delicious Indian Restaurant.



Former Retford Mayor, David Naylor, behind the bar at The Elms Hotel