

PRESS RELEASE

**Virgin Wines partners with two mental health charitable enterprises**

**Norwich May 2020**

Virgin Wines has partnered with The Drinks Trust and farm based mental health charity Growing Well to assist those struggling with mental health issues. The Drinks Trust is a charitable wellness initiative within the drinks industry to assist those who are directly affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic. It will focus on the likely long-term effects that CV19 will have on the mental health and wellness of the drinks industry community.

‘’We strongly believe in helping people within our own industry at their time of need. This is a much needed and very worthy cause and one we are proud to be significantly supporting’’, said Jay Wright, CEO.

The campaign will offer a comprehensive package of services accessible to everyone in the industry, combined with specific treatment for depression and severe anxiety to a number of individuals who are identified as having the greatest need. This is combined with specialised one-to one support for those who have severe struggles with alcohol as we look to promote mindful drinking at this time.

The campaign will run for an initial seven-month period, from May 2020 to December 2020. The launch is planned to coincide with mental health awareness week (18th – 24th May).

In addition Virgin Wines have also partnered with care farming organisation Growing Well who offer mental health recovery work with the operation of an organic growing company. Growing well rehabilitates those with mental health issues to move back into a work environment by volunteering to grow food and increase their social connections. A number of the people they help have had unhealthy experiences with alcohol in the past either leading up to or as a result of their mental health issues.

Wright states **‘**Fundamentally our aim is to support a wonderful organisation that helps many people with a variety of mental health challenges, at a time when funding for these organisations is being cut back dramatically to the point where they would find it hard to survive without additional financial support.’

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors**

**About Virgin Wines**

Virgin Wines is an independently owned and run online wine retailer licensed to use the Virgin brand. Its range comprises over 500 boutique wines at any one time, with 90% exclusive to Virgin Wines.

Virgin Wines was established in 2000 under Richard Branson’s Virgin banner. Five years later, Virgin Wines was bought by Direct Wines to become a subsidiary company of theirs. In 2008, Jay Wright was appointed Managing Director, alongside his role as MD of Warehouse Wines and Averys of Bristol. In 2009, Warehouse Wines merged with Virgin Wines creating a unique, consumer focussed multi-channel wine business with unparalleled online, offline and fulfilment expertise.

In November 2013, Mobeus Equity Partners and Connection Capital provided a combined debt and equity package of £15.9 million to support the management buy-out of the business from Direct Wines by CEO Jay Wright and CFO Graeme Weir. The company continues to go from strength to strength as an independent business focusing on developing a portfolio of outstanding, exclusive, hand crafted wines, its ground breaking WineBank scheme and its award winning customer service. In February 2017, Virgin Wines was named ‘Online Retailer of the Year’ at the Drinks Retailing Awards.

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