

Mandy Dingle back behind the bar in Emmerdale still works after 24 years

Serving pints and offending customers gives actor Lisa Riley more storyline options, says Paul Simper



By [Paul Simper](#)

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When Mandy Dingle (Lisa Riley) strong-armed cousin Charity (Emma Atkins) into hiring her on a permanent basis as barmaid at The Woolpack she not only turned back the clock to the days when she first barn-stormed her way into the village in 1995, she also cleverly presented her alter-ego actor Lisa Riley with the perfect opportunity to spark off other cast members and explore different storylines beyond the relentless scamming that appears to have been her remit since Mandy's full-time return to [Emmerdale](#) and the Dingle clan.

Dingle scams are of course in Mandy's DNA. Only her new employer Charity can match her when it comes to brazen get-rich-quick schemes. It was no coincidence that it was Charity who Mandy turned to when she needed an extra accomplice to play scarlet lady and chief decoy 'Red' in her Poundland version of an Oceans 11 heist, stealing the takings of the casino chain Mandy had been working at with 'son' Vinny.

When she first returned to the soap after 17 years in January 2019 it was important to show that the character had lost none of her old devilment. Mandy hit the ground running revealing Paddy Kirk's mum had had an affair with professional wrestler Bear Wolf who turned out to be his biological dad. She was at her most combative when she [returned again in September with her stash of casino chips](#) which Aaron Dingle pretended to incinerate.

By the time she decided to steal the £10,000 anonymously bequeathed to Lydia Hart by her late mother, masquerading as her cousin's fiancée, there was a creeping feeling that justice wasn't quite being done to one of the show's best-loved and most iconic characters. Not only was Mandy testing the patience of the Dingle clan (to the extent that a kangaroo court was called) she was also starting to leave a faint whiff of déjà-vu with the audience.



Thankfully that changed from the moment she installed herself back in The Woolie. Mandy kicked off by asking Rhona her secret to landing all the best men in the village – "Is it the vet thing? Gets 'em going?" – before moving on to a round of flirting with hapless Dan that would make Mae West blush.

With her natural gift of the gab Mandy promised to double the number of punters in the pub within the week. If that means she'll also be the first to hear what deals are going on across the bar with Kim Tate, Al Chapman, Rodney Blackstock and the rest then all the better. It will also double our enjoyment. A pint of Sherlock Best, please.

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