

leicestershire drinker

magazine of the leicestershire branches of the campaign for real ale

Issue 5 - Summer 2023

SUMMER

Local Pub and Brewery News - Hinckley Trail
Visit to Market Harborough, Sheffield and Northampton



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Editor's Welcome

Summer is here, and I hope like me, you are using the beer gardens and supporting the pubs with them. These larger plots are most at risk given how many houses could be built on them. Unfortunately, a lot of these are not near bus services and somebody has to drive. Then there is the question of whether it will be open when you get there. It is a cycle of despair. When they don't have enough customers, they shut and those of us who try to use them cannot and so we don't risk going there again. Even fewer customers!

The alternative is for CAMRA to organise coach trips. Sometimes to wander these remote but reasonably local hostleries, but sometimes full-blown long-distance visits to where there are good pubs. Some go to a single destination and leave you to your own devices and some do a number of stops allowing time at each. Non-members are usually welcome. Leicester Branch has an interesting trip to Worcestershire for which bookings are currently being taken. The first port of call will be Bromsgrove Beer & Cider Festival with options to visit other venues too, most probably calling into three towns with time to explore each.

Supermarket chains are gobbling up pubs and I can think of at least three former Leicester pubs now Tesco Express. Until recently, planning permission wasn't needed to convert a pub to a shop but since 2017, planning law is amended and any change of use of a pub now requires planning consent. This has reduced the number of pub-to-shop conversions, but we are still seeing them.

There was some good news in the budget in the duty rate discount on draught beer and cider. This was increased to 11p (9.2%) and will come into effect with the other scheduled changes to duty in August. The downside is that the freeze on all alcohol duty will end at the same time and duty will increase in line with inflation, as measured by the Retail Price Index. The increased discount will help pubs compete with supermarkets but higher prices on other drinks will not help.

The future of many businesses is still at risk, with rocketing energy costs on top of the other pressures facing all businesses but more than most, the licensed trade. Communities may lose their local pubs because energy support is ending. Pubs used to rely on food but now pubs are closing their kitchens because of the combined effect of energy costs, staff recruitment problems and rising produce costs.

Over the last few years, we have carried many articles about safe limits and legal limits for alcohol and the debate raises its head from time to time, and to my mind, legal limits are arbitrary and safe limits are fiction.



There was a time when if an officer thought you were not driving properly you would be asked to walk a straight line which was a measure, if crude, of capability. Some years ago, a spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers said they knew the legal limits were unfair but they liked that as a deterrent. We all know people who drink like a fish and seem quite capable but others who would be drunk on a wine gum. Some of the people who inhabit the rim of the North Pacific have as I understand it, an enzyme missing in their make up and they certainly cannot handle alcohol and should not be in a car with half a unit. (Firewater to braves?). Safe limits are an entirely different thing though and all claim to have scientific backing but strangely all country's scientists seem to differ.

We have had some interesting contributions around the subject and are going to focus on it next edition so if any reader wishes to add to the debate please contact the editor. We are interested in any comments about the drink and drug driving rules, here and elsewhere and the widely varying 'scientific' safe drinking levels. There is talk about reducing driving limits but do you think that if a person ignores the present limit they would take notice of a lesser limit? Do you think the penalty should be graduated? This is not a very reliable survey but at the end of the day after publication, we will be inviting a police response.

As we lose some traditional pubs a good few people are opening micropubs and their imagination as to how to make the best use of small spaces is impressive. It does not always impress the Fire Service or Building Regulations Inspectors which can be very frustrating.

We currently deliver these magazines to over 300 pubs but all branches need volunteers to do this. Another problem area is of course funding. We have to find advertising to cover the entire cost of each edition which we have done to date but in these difficult times many pubs are slow at paying and if one quarter has not seen its receipts come in then that restricts us for the next edition.

Roy Denney

Leicestershire CAMRA Branches

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Vale of Belvoir (VB) valeofbelvoir.camra.org.uk

HELP WANTED

The local branches are run entirely by voluntary teams and more help is always welcome. Staffing festivals is a great opportunity to get involved but another is dropping off copies of this publication at pubs you would probably enjoy visiting anyway. Each branch receives an allocation to distribute so if you think you can help please contact your local branch.

Open Meetings and Events Diary

Pub 'festivals' are organised and publicised at fairly short notice so keep an eye on the branches' websites.

June

10th Hoppy Afternoon - meet Salmon 12pm hop-on/off free bus crawl. See website for itinerary (LEI)
22nd-25th Rutland Beer Festival
29th Leicester branch meeting and social 7.30pm (venue tbc) (LEI)
29th-1st July Stafford Beer Festival
29th-1st July Bromsgrove Beer & Cider Festival

July

1st Coach trip to Worcestershire including Bromsgrove Beer & Cider Festival (LEI)
7-9th Langton Brewery beer festival
21st-23rd Market Bosworth Rail Ale Festival (HB)
22nd Branch social - visit Rail Ale Festival - Bus 153 St. Margarets Bus Station 10.50am (LEI)

August

1st-5th Great British Beer Festival
12th Soar Feat - meet Loughborough and bus hop villages back – details on website (LEI)
31st Branch Social venue tbc (LEI)

September

15th-16th Melton Mowbray Annual Beer & Cider Festival (MM)
16th Branch social - visit Melton Mowbray Festival by No 5 bus Haymarket Bus Station (LEI)
22nd-23rd Langton Brewery Langtoberfest including German catering and an oompah band
28th Leicester branch meeting and social 7.30pm (venue tbc) (LEI)



Leicestershire Drinker

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If you wish to comment on any article or wish to contribute something for consideration, please use the website or send them to the editor Roy Denney editor@leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk
We are happy to tidy up raw material but will not publish anything received which is offensive or contrary to the legal framework within which we live. We reserve the right to edit, hold over, or discard material.

The views expressed in *Leicestershire Drinker* are not necessarily those of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd nor its local officers. Material is received from numerous sources and we are not able to check it, so readers should make their own enquiries. As we go to press the information provided is to the best of our knowledge correct.

We are a not-for-profit organisation and rely on advertising to cover the costs of this publication. We do not though, endorse any products or services contained or promoted within those advertisements and readers must use their own judgement.

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Full details at leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk or from advert@leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk

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HELPLINES

Hygiene / Food Standards - food.gov.uk

Trading Standards - For problems such as consistent short measures, no price lists, pass it to Leicestershire trading standards if considered appropriate - 0116 232 3232 or 0800 223 1133

Citizen's Advice - 0800 144 8848 citizensadvice.org.uk

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Arriva arrivabus.co.uk/midlands

Kinchbus/Skylink kinchbus.co.uk

Firstbus firstbus.co.uk/leicester

Traveline - traveline.info

Pub Discoveries / Gossip / Comings and Goings

First, a new festival to consider. St Martins Church Desford are raising funds by staging their first-ever Beer & Cider Festival, with 40+ to choose from. There will also be bar snacks and soft drinks available, as well as hot street food.

A ticket will get you entry, a branded glass (which is yours to keep), and a program - both cash and card will be accepted at the event, noon till 10pm one day only on 24th June. It is not known what they will do with leftovers. They may need help to get rid of it. Advance tickets: Eventbrite: Desford Beer Festival Tickets bit.ly/DesfordBF or Gareth 07739 585150.

The 2023 Market Bosworth Rail Ale Festival will take place in and around The Goods Shed at Market Bosworth Station, CV13 0PF on 21st, 22nd and 23rd July this year. They hope to have over 60 beers and 25 ciders plus wines. As before there will be steam and diesel trains all weekend, traction engines, live music and food. The heritage buses should be running on Friday and Saturday during the day, between Hinckley Station and Market Bosworth (free, but donations to the drivers are very welcome).

A new bar, **Speakeasy@48** has opened in Hinckley on Druid Street. It is unlikely to be selling cask ale or real cider but has interesting 1920s, 30s and 40s décor.

The **Dog & Gun**, Hinckley is being converted to flats and will not reopen as a pub.

The Leicester Branch has announced its 2023 winners. The City Pub of the Year is the **Two-Tailed Lion** and Country Pub of the Year is the **Chandlers Arms**, Shearsby. It is interesting to note that one is a micropub and the other very much food-orientated, perhaps a sign of the times. We all have different opinions as to what constitutes a good pub and all members had a chance to vote so democracy has prevailed.

The Club of the Year is the excellent **Oadby Royal British Legion** and the winner of the Cider Pub of the Year, the **Mash & Press** in Anstey, is an interesting one. Many readers will not have been there and if they wish to do so, may struggle to find it. Bearing this in mind it is remarkable that it has won which is a testament to how good it is.

A previous winner of this award, the **Old Horse** by Victoria Park still has a superb range of ciders to choose from but the thing which makes this year's winner stand out is that it is the home of Charnwood Cider and it is selling its own really good products. A four-pint container of one of their ciders went down very well with my extended and multi-national family at Christmas, as an appetiser.

Called the Mash & Press because you mash to make beer and press cider, it was also home to Anstey Ales before the recent move of the brewing operation to Loughborough. The Mash & Press in Anstey is up a back street of largely terraced housing and above an old light-industrial unit in which the beer used to be produced

Congratulations to all at the **Stilton Cheese**, Somerby, for becoming Melton Mowbray branch of CAMRA's Pub of the Year for 2023. This lovely late 16th century village pub is no stranger to



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awards, having been named Melton's best pub multiple times over the last few years and County Pub of the Year in 2019. A vintage busload of Leicester members visited it last year and would not disagree with this description.

The Hinckley & Bosworth branch cider winner is once again the **Pestle & Mortar**. They have won this award numerous times and in 2016 were East Midlands Cider Pub of the Year. Their Pub of the Year is the **New Plough** like the P & M, in Hinckley itself and also a previous winner. Club of the Year was one of last year's joint winners, the **Sapcote Club**.



Shambles, Lutterworth

Loughborough branch have also announced their winners. The best pub was the **Organ Grinder** and the best micropub was the **Moonface Brewery & Tap**, which was also their best cider pub.

A new live music bar, **Baton Rouge** opened in March in Regent Street, Hinckley, serving draught beers (keg), including Brooklyn Defender IPA.

Red Oak Taverns have purchased three freehold pubs from Marston's - one in the south-west and two in the Midlands - The **Bird in Hand** at Austrey and the **Black Horse** in Sheepy Magna. The pubs are all operated free of tie.

At the **Elephant and Castle** in Thurlaston the publicans, Paul and Lisa left in January, having run the pub for six years. Amy and Gwen took over in February and serve two guest ales alongside the regular Everards beers. Food is also being served at lunchtimes and evenings.

Turning to the present, the **Horseshoes** in Asfordby closed in February as existing tenants reached the end of their term. The speculation is that Bateman's Brewery wants to close it permanently and sell in

the hope that a planning application submitted by the Co-op located next door to convert the pub into a larger convenience store is accepted by

Melton Borough Council. We are still awaiting the council to make a decision as at the end of March. Locals are fighting to keep this pub in the village - the building is still on the ACV list.

The **Shambles Inn** in Lutterworth was a former abattoir and butcher and the oldest timber-framed building in Lutterworth. This historic thatched-roof property dating back to the 16th century had been tastefully modified over the years and underwent a major

refurbishment nine years ago retaining its rustic charm with low ceilings, beams and a welcoming log burner, but all that counted for nothing when a devastating fire gutted the place. Its solid walls are still there but not a lot more and it is all boarded up with no signs of any restoration work.

Better news, the outcome is not yet entirely clear but residents have now been assured that the **Cock Inn**, Sibson has been saved. Many hundreds of people signed the petition to save the pub and a public meeting was held in February to save this historic pub which dates back to 1250. Over one hundred local residents were in



The public meeting to save the Cock, Sibson

Pub and Brewery News



The public meeting to save the Cock, Sibston

attendance and villagers made very clear their desire to save the pub.

Whether or not it had always been their intention, Heineken Star Pubs and Bars sent three national executives (operations, business development and investment) to stress their commitment to renovate and reopen the Cock Inn. There was a commitment to complete much-needed repair and restoration work by the summer and they promised residents a timetable for works would be provided to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

Once structural works were completed Star was to then look to bring in an operator and combine with them for major refurbishment and reopening. Villagers and Star agreed to communicate regularly and work together

towards reopening hopefully later this year. As we go to print works are continuing.

Plans have been unveiled to reopen the **Noels Arms** on Burton Street, Melton with four new apartments created. The pub built a reputation as a quality venue for live music in recent years but has been vacant since last April. There was speculation in the town that it may never reopen but the owner has submitted plans to Melton Borough Council to retain the pub although it would reduce in size. The planning application seeks to modernise the interior space to enable it to meet the needs of a 'microbrewery' style pub. Apartments will be built by converting the rear of the site and existing upper-floor dental accommodation. The building, which is on the corner of Mill Street and Burton Street, has always been a pub since it was built in 1877 and plans for its retention as a pub will be a relief to many in the town.

With so many good pubs being lost, it is nice to have some good news. New owners are keeping alive the traditions of the **King's Head** in Smeeton Westerby. Kelvin Capell sadly passed away at the end of 2021, but Anne Charlton has continued running it since then. Despite this, and the difficulties arising from Covid, she's kept going and maintained a selection of real ales throughout but after nearly thirty years Anne has decided to retire and has passed on the reins to Edd Brown and Andrew Smith longstanding regulars of the pub. Andrew is the new licensee.

Kelvin was always a great supporter of real ale, having a beer festival in early September. As

If you know the history of pubs closed in your area and can help compile a register of them please contact the editor either with what you know or your contact details if you are happy to try and assist Charlie Corcoran in putting together this list.

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regular beers, Andrew intends to carry Langton Brewery Inclined Plane and Church End Brewery Gravedigger's Ale with a rotating guest ale. They are hoping to reinstate an early Autumn mini-beer festival and eventually offer a small selection of traditional pub food and snacks.

As CAMRA members themselves, they are offering fellow members a discount of 30p per pint.

Another pub where a regular has changed sides of the bar is the **Plough** in Ratby. When the previous licensee said she had had enough, Colin Koerber on the spur of the moment, decided to take it on. No sooner though had he completed the formalities than he was confronted with the lockdown. It was perhaps a blessing in disguise as he knew nothing about running a pub and he spent lockdown studying the role on YouTube. He is now doing so well that he is an award winner within the Marston's empire. After a recent brewery inspection, he was asked which courses he had been on to be so proficient and he was doubted when he said none. In addition to YouTube as a learning process, he listens to his customers, perhaps not surprising as he had been a customer himself since probably before he was old enough to be one.

Not such good news; Totally Brewed brewery have sadly announced that they are to shut down after ten years, citing rising costs. Their excellent beers will be greatly missed.

In Hinckley, the **Ashby Tavern**, had a 'to let' sign on it and is reported to have changed hands again, the **Black Horse** has new landladies Tina and Olivia, the **New Plough** is now serving real ciders, usually a choice of three and Kev at the **Weavers Arms** had a leaving do; pub future unknown.

Stoke Golding Club has started serving Thornbridge Jaipur IPA as a regular beer alongside the Church End Brewery's What The Foxes Hat. CAMRA members can get club member prices on production of a CAMRA card. This is part of an initiative to encourage more real ale drinkers to frequent the club and they are hoping that in time that they will be able to offer three or four real ales at any one time

Kirkby House in Kirkby Mallory closed for a couple of months, changed owners and reopened in February under the new name '**Mallories**'. A hotel, restaurant and bar, they serve evening meals and Sunday lunches. Doombar is the regular beer.

The **Red Lion** in Barwell changed hands in February and is being refurbished and the **Red Lion** in Market Bosworth reopened in March, having been briefly closed.

The **Boot Inn** at Ibstock is still for sale, having been closed since 2022.



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Going to Market



Beerhouse, Market Harborough

Leicester CAMRA members caught the bus out to Market Harborough to explore the offerings there and they were something of a mixed bag. The **Sugar Loaf** was fine and a typical Wetherspoon and may account for the poor

music, the only food is cobs and snacks, people actually talking to each other and mature people behind the bar who knew their products.

There was plenty to choose from, probably a couple of dozen I think - six taps for cask ales, electrically-pumped free-flow and a number for ciders and the others for key kegs.

Dragging ourselves away next came the nearby **Freemason's** a popular community local and then came the **Cherry Tree**. This historic inn complete with a thatched roof has a very cosy interior all wood and low beams and nooks and crannies offering Everard's beers.

Members then dispersed a bit but those visiting the **Oat Hill** were pleased they made the effort but it is a more typical modern pub.

competition in the centre of the town. The **Red Lion** seems more like a nightclub than a pub, fine if that is what you want. They found though that as you moved away from the centre, the pubs improved. Those who had the stamina to go out in both directions found the **Admiral Nelson** fine but walking along the riverside in the other direction there was more choice.

The first port of call was the excellent **Beerhouse** and it was tempting to go no further. Probably technically a micro but a larger one than many, it is a beer lovers' haven. As you enter, a complete wall of drinks faces you. It is very much what a pub used to be, with no gaming machines or loud



Cherry Tree, Market Harborough

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Scotland Scene

There is a lot of ferment north of the border where your editor has just been island hopping and I am not referring to the fermentation of hops.

Fresh from its ideas about transgender issues and its struggling education and health systems, not to mention changes of leadership, the Scottish devolved administration is trying to kill off the alcohol industry which in the form of whisky is probably its leading export.

Their plans for an alcohol advertising ban could be the 'biggest threat' to good beer in CAMRA's 50 years of campaigning in Scotland. Pubgoers and beer drinkers across Scotland are being asked to join the fight to stop a ban on advertising alcohol from ruining the choice of good beer and the future of small breweries across the country. The proposed ban on alcohol advertising could spell the end for consumer choice, and independent breweries but also be devastating for all alcohol producers and drinks festivals in Scotland.

CAMRA Scotland Director Stuart McMahon said:

"These plans for banning advertising of alcohol in public and the display of alcohol in shops would be absolutely devastating for pubs, for small and independent breweries – and for choice of good beer and cider for drinkers. The damage that would be caused to the economy doesn't even bear thinking about. The Scottish beer scene has boomed in recent years with consumers being able to pick from a huge range of quality and distinctive brews and ciders from local and independent producers. But if these small businesses can't advertise new products, shops can't display a decent range of local beers and festivals showcasing the best of Scottish brewing can't go ahead because they can't advertise that they are happening then all this could soon come to an end. We risk going back to

the bad old days, where the only choice for customers was between a few similar beers that were mass-produced by a few brewing giants.



Keel Row, Mull

I don't think it is over-egging the pudding to say that this could be the biggest threat to consumer choice and good beer that CAMRA has ever faced in nearly 50 years of campaigning in Scotland. These proposals are aimed at stopping alcohol consumption across the whole of society, despite evidence that the majority of drinkers do so responsibly."

This would be a blow to visitors such as myself, old enough to remember when your choice in Scotland was usually Tennent's or Tennent's. I have recently visited Mull, Iona, Skye and Harris & Lewis and real ale was available on all of them, usually not hand pulled and often keg, but proper beer and normally fairly local.

The biggest supplier to the islands is Fyne, a family-owned farm brewery with a good range of beers. Not all to my taste but it is good to see



most pubs now offering something. I tried their Jarl, Highlander and Easy Trail. Jarl seems to be their flagship. I found it too hoppy but very drinkable when it is all that is on offer. We were trapped on Iona (pop.150) for several hours when the usually half-hourly ferry could not take us off because of rough seas but its one

pub, the **Argyll**, did have Jarl.

On Mull itself, the tiny village of Fionnphort had the best pub we found anywhere in Scotland. This village only seems to exist to accommodate people wanting the ferry to Iona but when the pub closed down the community bought it, refurbished it and it now has a thriving restaurant and cosy bar with three real ales on offer. The **Keel Row** had Jarl and Easy Trail from Fyne and to my delight Orkney Brewery's Dark Island.

Waiting for the ferry to start our island hopping we went into the **Oban Inn** another very good pub where I tried the Highlander from Fyne.

When ready to leave Mull, we crossed the island and had a drink in the **Mishnish** at Tobermory and they sold an IPA from the nearby Isle of Mull Brewery.

On Skye we stayed near the **Uig Hotel**; very upmarket and fine-dining but they did have Skye Brewery's Gold and Red beers on tap.

Once out in the Outer Hebrides, we used four of the seven pubs in Stornoway, the only ones with a proper beer, and all the others on the Island of Harris & Lewis but that only amounted to another three. Given that that island is the biggest in the British Isles after Ireland and Great Britain it meant a lot of driving. Roads were at times appalling but the scenery and beaches were to die for.

The **Crown** in Stornoway was the only pub worth mentioning and they had Landlord and Deuchars.

Alltogether we tried the beers of a number of local breweries, Caledonian (Coast to Coast), Oban, Orkney, Skye, Isle of Mull, and Fyne. I also tried a local lager from Loomshed Brewery in Tarbert on Harris which was good and, on the way back, near Dunstan, Northumberland at the **Cottage Inn**, miles from anywhere, we had Scottish Borders' Tyneside Blond which was very good.

A good trip in great weather after the first day's gale, but one big disappointment; driving to Oban to catch the ferry we went past the famous (or infamous) **Drovers** at the head of Lomondside before it opened. Perhaps just as well as I have always found it difficult to leave.



PLOUGH INN

BURROUGHS ROAD, RATBY LE6 0XZ



A warm welcome awaits you here at the Plough Inn. We are a proud village pub tucked away at the start of the picturesque Ratby Burroughs Wood, part of the large national forest.

We love our cask ales and are proud to update our guest ale weekly. If ale is not your thing, we also offer a fantastic selection of other drinks, both on draught and by the bottle. Our kitchen serves up a wide range of food for every appetite, whether you're after a light snack or a three-course meal, we've got you covered.

The Plough Inn is a dog-friendly pub that offers four separate rooms and two outside areas for people to meet up for food and drinks. We welcome locals and tired ramblers alike, so be sure to stop by and say hi!

0116 239 2630 - ploughinnratby.co.uk

CAMRA Chairman Speaks at Sheffield

National Chairman Nik Antona addressed CAMRA's AGM and Members' Weekend in Sheffield in April. Some of the issues raised in his speech are below. Read the full speech at bit.ly/NikSheffield

This has been another tough year for the licensed trade, with scores of pubs and small brewers closing for business, all while consumers have had to tighten their belts. It has also been a tough year for everyone within the CAMRA family, as we regroup in the post-pandemic world where the landscape for voluntary and campaigning organisations is changing. However, I'm proud of the work that we have done for consumers, pubs, social clubs, brewers, and cider and perry makers in 2022 and into this year.

Through our campaigning on taxation, regulation and competition policy, we strive for both a fiscal and legislative environment that is beneficial for small brewers and cider makers, and allowing pubs and social clubs to provide genuine choice at the bar for consumers. This gets tougher in the face of squeezed cask volumes, pub companies taking back tenanted pubs for managed uses and continuing mergers and acquisitions by global brands. However, we continue to build our relationship with the Competition and Markets Authority and engage with elected representatives.

Our campaigning through the Alcohol Duty Review will give small cider makers a progressive duty system for the first time, and we closely monitor access to market for small brewers in the context of a contracting post-pandemic cask beer market. The Review will make significant changes to the duty regime, and crucially introduce the new draught duty rate for beer and cider. We secured changes to reduce the draught container size threshold – benefitting small brewers, cider makers and pubs.

Across the board, throughout the UK, cask ales sales continue to be squeezed. That is why we have been the driving force behind a new, cross-industry campaign to revive cask beer as a desired and attractive choice. Beginning from a great idea within CAMRA, the 'Drink Cask Fresh' campaign has secured tens of thousands of pounds of investment from trade groups and brewers.

While we know where teaming up with others in the beer and pub world will get the best results, we also invest in our own educational content, campaigns and communications. The Learn and Discover platform goes from strength to strength this year with a drive on video content through our YouTube channel.

The Environmental Working Group reported in the middle of last year. This resulted in new strands of environmental campaigning emerging – including Plastic Pints are Rubbish – a campaign on getting local authorities to ditch specifying non-recyclable plastic containers like polycarbonate from licensing conditions.



The Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Review has delivered its final report. This is the result of the biggest consultation exercise with members and the wider industry since 2017. The recommendations and work that will follow stand to benefit everyone in the Campaign, helping us become stronger and grow in number.

Being a member of CAMRA provides many social benefits and we pride ourselves on the support network, both formally through our branch structures, and informally through wider friendships, that being a part of the CAMRA family provides. Whether you want to take to the streets with banners to protest a local brewery closure or work with the council on stronger pub protection measures, we want to support your local campaigning aspirations. Whether it's recruiting five people to reboot your branch, or an army of volunteers for a new festival – we want to have the training and resources in place to help you succeed.

Because campaigning solely from the centre isn't the same, and our message is most effective when it's rooted in the local. We are a broad church, and our strength comes in our numbers, our diversity, our determination, and our local, community presence. Whether it's beer scoring, Cider Month, new book titles, Learn and Discover content, Club of the Year selections or lobbying our MPs, there's something for everyone to get involved in and enjoy.



A warm welcome to our customers, old and new!

We look forward to seeing you to enjoy fine ales, ciders and home cooked food including our Sunday carvery.

Traditional Pub
and Restaurant



Supporting Local
Microbreweries



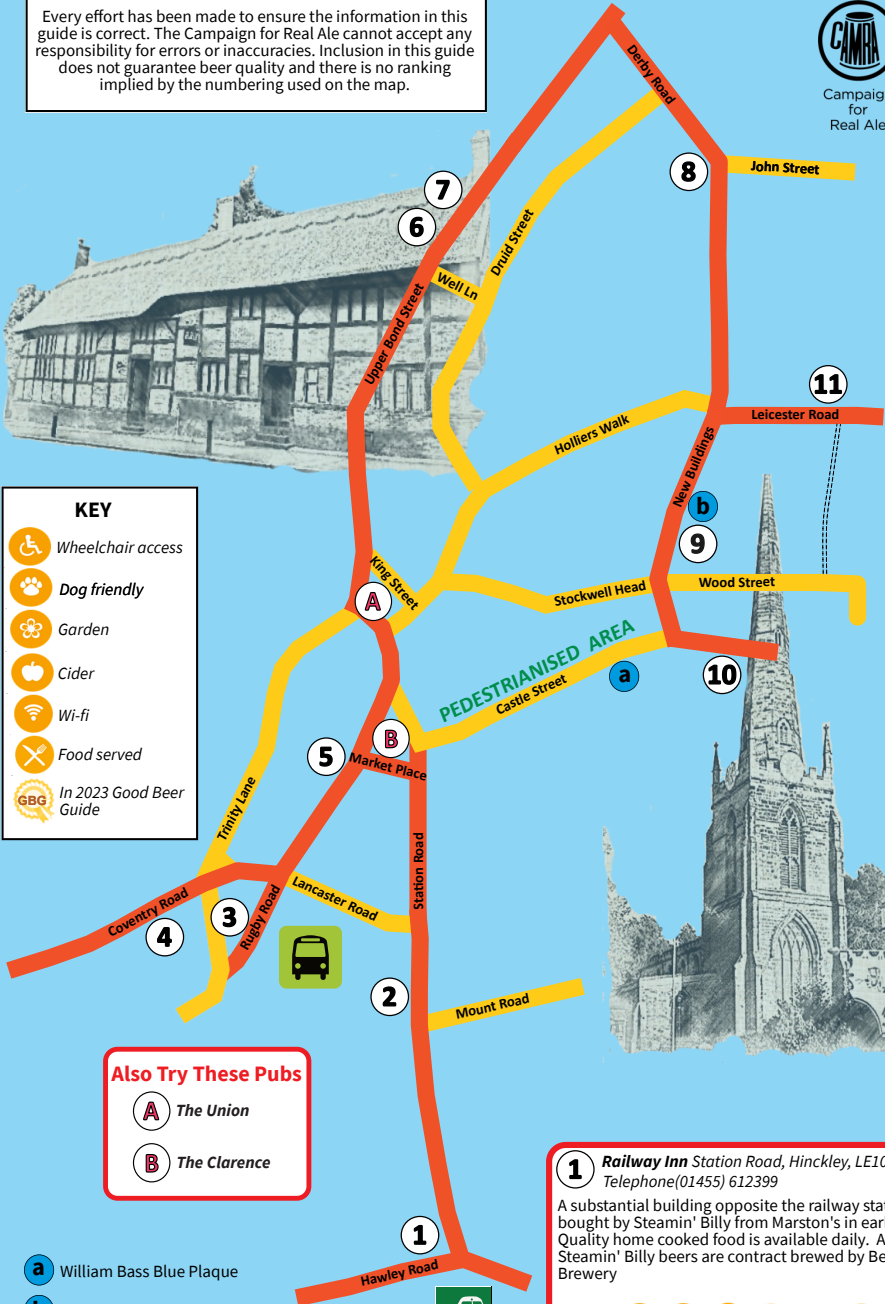
198 London Rd, Leicester LE2 1NE
0116 2548384 theoldhorse666@hotmail.com

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this guide is correct. The Campaign for Real Ale cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies. Inclusion in this guide does not guarantee beer quality and there is no ranking implied by the numbering used on the map.



KEY

- Wheelchair access
- Dog friendly
- Garden
- Cider
- Wi-fi
- Food served
- In 2023 Good Beer Guide



Also Try These Pubs

- A** The Union
- B** The Clarence

- a** William Bass Blue Plaque
- b** William Butler Blue Plaque

1 **Railway Inn** Station Road, Hinckley, LE10 1AP
Telephone(01455) 612399

A substantial building opposite the railway station, bought by Steamin' Billy from Marston's in early 2013. Quality home cooked food is available daily. All Steamin' Billy beers are contract brewed by Belvoir Brewery

-
-
-
-
-
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2 Elbow Room 26 Station Road, Hinckley, LE10 1AW
Telephone 07900191388

Ran by the Arnold family, this friendly one roomed bar, decorated in an industrial style, offers a warm welcome and great atmosphere. The 6 changing real ales/ciders, sourced from across the UK, are gravity served directly from the cellar behind sliding glass doors



3 Princes Feathers 9 Rugby Road, Hinckley, LE10 0QA
Telephone 07926 987748

Changed hands in July 2021 following major refurbishment inside and out. Town centre pub near the bus station. Dogs in garden only. Pool table and darts. See Facebook for entertainment details. 2 cask ales



4 White Bear Coventry Road, Hinckley, LE10 0JT
Telephone (01455) 363049

Bought by Steam'n Billy from Marston's and refurbished in June 2016 with wooden floors and new seating. There is a large beer garden with plenty of seating, a fire pit outside bar and two covered 'bear pit' areas. Traditional pub food is from the 'Burgers and Brews' menu. Regular Steam'n Billy beers plus 2 changing beers



5 Crafty Baron 5-7 Regents Street, Hinckley, LE10 0QA
Telephone (01455) 890169

Re-opened in October 2019 by new owners Crafty Pub Group (Elmesthorpe Brewery Co). The pub was formerly owned by Wetherspoons. A large modern pub, split in to three levels. Beers usually include 2 from Elmesthorpe Brewery and several guests



6 Queen's Head Upper Bond Street, LE10 1RJ
Telephone 07951 063484

New landlords in February 2022. Family-run Victorian pub on the site of an original building dating back to 1809 and serving three ever changing real ales. Local Branch Pub of the Year 2013, 2014 and 2017, a GBG entry since 2013



7 Black Horse Upper Bond Street, LE10 1RJ
Telephone (01455) 699120

New tenants in January 2023. One roomed town pub with function room available for all occasions, catering can be provided. Food available. Occasional live music. The very first meeting of H&B CAMRA was held here on 7th September 2005



8 Weavers Arms Derby Road, Hinckley, LE10 1QE
Telephone (01455) 632927

1930s style with a black-and-white, half-timbered façade, the Weavers is a busy, popular pub and offers a good selection of at least 5 beers and 3 ciders all on handpumps. Free of Tie from early 2018. There are tables at the front and a patio, beer garden with children's play area to the rear



9 Greyhound 9 New Buildings, Hinckley, LE101HN
Telephone (01455) 697575

A traditional three-roomed town-centre wet house. A pub since at least 1815, featuring a traditional interior. It became a free house in 2014 and bars were refurbished in 2022. A blue plaque commemorating William Butler of Mitchells & Butlers adorns the exterior of the pub. Marston's plus 3 changing beers



10 Pestle & Mortar 81 Castle Street, Hinckley, LE10 1DA
Telephone 07715 106876

Opened in 2015 and has up to 22 changing real ciders available. Handpumps deliver up to eight changing real ales. This comfortable, pleasantly quirky micropub has been awarded Local CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2016-20, 2022 and 2023, East Midlands Cider Pub of the Year 2016 and local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2019 and 2020



11 New Plough Inn Leicester Road, Hinckley, LE10 1LS
Telephone (01455) 615037

Opened at the beginning of the last century, and features old settles, a skittles alley, over 50 gins and rugby memorabilia. Local CAMRA Pub of the Year in 2011/12, 2022 and 2023. Marston's Pedigree and up to 5 changing beers are served



Hinckley Real Ale Trail

Real Ale Pubs within walking distance of the Rail and Bus Station



© HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH CAMRA



Chris's Cruises...

Following his report from Peterborough in the last edition, Chris Greenwood has been wandering around again taking advantage of the £2 bus fares offer. First Sheffield, one of his favourite cities to drink in and then somewhere new. There are many interesting and varied pubs, with a good choice of beers and it's only an hour by train and you can often get good value tickets if you book in advance. Chris found a return for £11, so set off to cruise around the city, one Saturday.

"The first establishment I went to was **Dorothy Pax**. It's a music venue, in the attractive Victoria Wharf area. The place has a modern interior, with a collection of typewriters, modern art and cardboard birds. The friendly lad behind the bar served me an HQ Brew Characters, one of the four beers available. The vegan pale ale had a sharp bitter bite to it and a spiky dry finish. There's quite a friendly pub cat, who came for a fuss for a little while.

It's quite a long walk to the **Crow Inn** on Scotland Street. The pub has an attractive black-and-white frontage and is comfortable inside. The smaller room has lots of bird pictures. I drank two Abbeydale beers. The Hibernation was an unfiltered, dry-hopped ale, with a bitter tingle on the tongue and a long bitter finish. The Heathen was an American pale ale, with fruity notes and a bitter finish.

Just down the hill is the **Shakespeare**. There's an attractive Ward's stained-glass window, a grandfather clock, lots of beer memorabilia and a wall covered in hundreds of Salamander pump clips, in this multi-roomed, popular pub. The friendly woman behind the bar served me two of the seven ales available. The Torrside Endeavour was a single hopped pale, with a good balance of hops and malt and a dry, bitter ending. The Buxton Monsal Mild had a sweet start, with treacle notes and some bitterness in the finish.

The **West Bar Tap** is a micropub, opposite the Shakespeare. It's a basic, long bar, with can labels covering one wall. It's predominantly a keg bar but had two cask ales that day. I drank the Verdant Penpol which was a pleasant pale, with a

hoppy mouth feel, some lemon notes and a moderately hoppy finish.

It wasn't far to walk to the **Wellington**, a traditional, two-roomed boozery, with some stained-glass windows and a mosaic floor (not the hops). It was very busy with locals and visitors. The friendly woman behind the bar was excellent, serving people quickly and answering questions. There were four Neepsend beers and one guest. The Neepsend Chrysus was a hazy NEIPA with a good mix of Eldorado, Bru1 and Equanot, very fruity, with a citrus ending. The Neepsend Gendenwitha was an American-style amber ale with a mix of Columbus, Idaho 7 and Amarillo. It had a fruity nose, some strawberry jam notes and a hoppy, fruity finish.

Next, I decided to visit two pubs in Walkley. It's a quite hard walk up a steep hill but was well the effort that day. The **Blind Monkey** has an attractive facade and is even better inside. The Don Valley brewery has done a fantastic job of refurbishment. There are statues, stained glass, a lovely wood-panelled ceiling and lots of dark wood. There were four Don Valley beers, served

by a helpful barman. The Trench Town Rock was a good mix of Chinook and Liberty, with a fruity mouth feel and a hoppy ending. The Go Your Own Way was an easy-drinking American hopped pale, with plenty of hops and a bitter finish.

Further uphill on Palm Street, is the **Raven**. It's a comfortable, down-to-earth, local boozery, owned by the Loxley brewery. There were four of their beers on, some were £3.40 a pint. The pub was busy, with a fair share of young people, mostly drinking beer. I had a pleasant chat with two of the locals. The Loxley Gunson was a red ale, with a generous amount of Citra, red berry notes and a fruity, hoppy finish. The Loxley Fearn had plenty of Pacific hops, fruity, with a slow-building, hoppy finish.

It's quite a long walk to the **Kelham Island Tavern**, but most of it is downhill. This very popular pub has won British Pub of the Year twice



... In Sheffield and Northampton

and always seems very busy. It's one of my favourite pubs, as it usually has a very good choice of beers. I really like Blue Bee beers, so I drank all three that were on that night. The American Five Hop had an excellent combination of Azzacca, Centennial, Citra, Columbus and Idaho 7. It had a hoppy mouth feel, citrus and pine notes and a long dry, bitter, hoppy finish. The Chocolate Stout had a sweetish start, leading to a dry, dark chocolate finish, with plenty of chocolate malt content. The Moutere, Nectarone had fruity notes and was quite peachy, a refreshing beer. I met four really friendly local lads and we had a good chat about beer, pubs, the *Leicestershire Drinker* and other topics.

Time was moving on and so did I, to the **Harlequin**. I have many fond memories of this pub. I've drunk lots of good beer here in the past, and, my mate Andy asked me to be his best man here. That night, it was very quiet, with four beers. I bumped into the lads from the KIT, so we sat together. They asked if they could be in this article. Ian and Jack P had the Jolly Boys Citra Supra and Jack H and Rob drank the Jolly Boys Bitter. They all enjoyed their beers. I had the Citra Supra and enjoyed it too. It had an appealing hoppy nose and was a clean, crisp ale, with a long bitter, hoppy finish.

My final port of call was the **Sheffield Tap**. It used to be the train station waiting room and is very beautiful. The room with the brewery is a lovely place to sit with a beer, with its ornate interior, which includes impressive white tiling and chandeliers. I drank the two Tapped Brew Company ales from the brewery. The Sheaf Street was a pleasant session IPA, which had a sweetish start, leading to a fruity, then bitter ending. The Tapped Toha contained plenty of Kiwi hops and a dry, bitter finish. It's very hard to miss your train from here and I didn't."



Blind Monkey, Sheffield

Another Saturday and another day out saw Chris our roving correspondent cruising around parts of Northampton.

Between February and June, he had decided to make use of the £2 single-fare bus ticket offer and visit some new places for a look around and drink in some of their pubs. After a look through the WhatPub site, he decided to go to Northampton.

The X7 goes from Charles Street, or, more conveniently for him, from outside the train station. The 9am bus gets you into Northampton bus station for 10.30am. Chris takes up the story.

*"I found the town centre has a number of attractive buildings, such as the impressive Guildhall and the interior of All Saints' Church. It also has a Wetherspoons, always useful if you arrive anywhere early. The **Cordwainer** fits the bill, a roomy, two-floored establishment with a very long bar and twelve hand pumps. I opted for the Vale Black Beauty, a dark brown porter with fruit and liquorice notes and some bitterness in the finish.*

Just around the corner is the **Wig and Pen**. It has an attractive frontage and some original features and a long L-shaped room. The young woman behind the bar was very welcoming and served me a Phipps Black Star, giving me a generous CAMRA discount. The beer had an initial fruitiness, with some coffee notes and a lingering bitterness at the end.

A bit of a walk over the river took me to the **Pomfret Arms**. A nice old pub, with two fireplaces, tiled floors and an outside drinking area, with riverside views. The landlady was originally from Leicester and was chatty and friendly. I drank the Great Oakley, Cotton End Coffee Porter, which had an earthy coffee nose

and mouth feel, with a gentle bitter and coffee finish.

Up the road, is the long-term Good Beer Guide entry, the **Malt Shovel Tavern**. It's a long, one-roomed, basic boozier, popular with rugby fans and ale drinkers. It was busy half an hour after opening and there were six ales on tap. The Distant Hills Bright Lights had a grainy, fruity start, with a mix of malt and hops at the end. The Roosters Yankee was an easy-drinking American pale with a bitter tingle on the tongue.

My next port of call was the **Albion Brewery Bar**, the Phipps tap. It has a very impressive red brick frontage and an impressive wooden ceiling and nine Phipps beers on tap. The Summer Meadows had a floral nose, with a dry, bitter mouth feel and a spikey hop finish. The Ratcliffe's Stout had molasses notes and was very sweet, with a tiny bit of bitterness in the end.

It's an easy enough walk out of town, past a couple of attractive churches and old red brick buildings to the next few pubs. First on the bill, was the **Princess Alexandra**, an end-of-terrace bar, with some wood features. Three ciders, but only one real ale, which the cheerful guy behind the bar gave me a taster. The Wychwood Dirty Tackle was a full-bodied, malty ale, with some English hops in the finish.

The next pub I visited was the **Black Prince**, a popular music venue. The pub has an attractive black wood and red brick exterior, two suits of armour and a red ceiling with black beams and old windows. I drank the Black Prince Plantagenet Porter by Potbelly, £1.70 a half. The beer had a sweet start, with dark berry notes and some dryness in the finish.

The next establishment was the trendy, relaxed **Lamplighter**, popular with a younger crowd. There were four locales, two of which were offered as tasters by a helpful chap behind the bar. I had the Roman Way Senate Gold, a good balance of English hops and malt and an initial sweet finish, leading to a dry, bitterness.

Further out is the **Garibaldi Hotel**, a lovely old building, with some nice green tiling, a fireplace and wacky wallpaper in the far-right corner. The place had an eclectic mix of music fans, young, friendly staff and two Roman Way Brewery beers. The Plum Prunum had plums in the nose-and-mouth feel, with a slightly bitter, stone fruit finish.

The furthest pub out was the **Olde England**, a veteran of the Northampton real ale scene. A very traditional pub, with a small bar, with lots of knickknacks and two other drinking areas. Plenty of locales were on offer. I had a dark beer by J. Church Brewery which was sweet and caramelly, with a little bit of balancing bitterness.

Breaking the walk back into town is the **Artizan**. A modern pub, with a few attractive features and rugby on the TV. I drank the Taylor's Landlord, which had a CAMRA discount. It was in good condition, full-bodied and malty, with some hop content.

After that, I legged it into town and got the bus back to Leicester. One stop isn't far from the **Real Ale Classroom**, so I went for a few pints of Almasty. A good end to another pleasant day. Cheers."



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12-14 Mill Hill, Enderby,
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THE FREE TRADE INN

The Free Trade Inn is a traditional pub in the heart of the village of Sileby, serving quality drinks, with a great choice of real ales.

This delightful Grade II listed building dates back to the 16th century and is full of character and charm as well as being haunted (allegedly).

Outside there is ample car parking and large secure garden for families with children. The pub is also dog friendly.

Inside there is always lots going on, with regular music nights and monthly quiz.



Quiz Night first Tuesday of each month.
Open Mic second Wednesday of each month.
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ANNE OF CLEVES

The Anne of Cleves is a beautiful pub in the charming Leicestershire market town of Melton Mowbray. This 14th century pub is steeped in history and is known primarily for being given to Anne of Cleves by King Henry VIII as part of their divorce settlement.

It has recently undergone a lovely interior refurbishment, and the outside has had a major facelift, enabling our guests to enjoy drinks and food, in the gorgeous gardens.

All our delicious home cooked food is made using the freshest locally sourced ingredients.



Delicious food (see website for menu & times).
Beautiful gardens and patio area.
Music every other Friday.
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stuart.monstex@btinternet.com



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mashandpress@yahoo.com





10 great reasons to join CAMRA

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 CAMPAIGN
for great beer, cider and perry</p> | <p>2 Become a
BEER EXPERT</p> |
| <p>Enjoy CAMRA
3 BEER FESTIVALS
in front of or behind the bar</p> | <p>4 GET INVOLVED
and make new friends</p> |
| <p>Save
5 YOUR LOCAL</p> | <p>Find the
6 BEST PUBS IN BRITAIN</p> |
| <p>Get great
7 VALUE FOR MONEY</p> | <p>8 DISCOVER
pub heritage and the great outdoors</p> |
| <p>Enjoy great
9 HEALTH BENEFITS
(really!)</p> | <p>10 HAVE YOUR SAY</p> |

What's yours?

Discover your reason
and join the campaign today:
www.camra.org.uk/10reasons



Campaign
for
Real Ale

But Seriously... Hard Seltzer Might Matter

Beer is having a rough time and it ain't over yet. Covid hit consumption; Ukraine has disrupted supply chains; the half-baked arrangements for the UK leaving the EU haven't helped; and the challenge of reversing climate change is yet to come.

Yet talk to an American beer writer and even climate change pales into insignificance compared to the impact of RTDs, the "Ready-To-Drink" category of alcoholic beverage, among which 'hard seltzer' is the target.

The booze industries' most cynical move to date

"Ready-To-Drink" refers to a catch-all category of alcoholic beverage that includes ready-mixed cocktails, sugary alcopops, and 'hard seltzers'.

These cheap-to-make concoctions of water, alcohol, flavouring and carbon dioxide may sound unappealing, but let the marketeers speak. Couch them as low in carbohydrate or sugar-free; acceptable to drink anytime-anywhere; suitable for vegans; totally gluten-free; and sold only in 100% recyclable containers and, with their zingy tastes and all, what is not to like?

The initial popularity of these post-hipster, low-cal alcopops were so popular initially that highly qualified industry pundits foresaw US brewing's 71% share of its alcoholic beverage market falling to around 58% within five years, a fate so dreadful that the big brewers and distillers, and even the likes of Coca-Cola make major moves into a promising market.

The fact that the alcohol in these things can come from brewing meant that large craft beer operations like the Boston Beer Company (Samuel Adams) produced early leading brands, leading normally savvy US beer drinkers, misguidedly, to offer them some love.



An advantage of not being American

Apply a moment's thought and you might spot that 'craft'-made alcohol and the type that comes from fast and furious large-scale fermentation taste virtually identical, only the latter having the appealing quality of cheapness.

Industry observers in Europe pointed out that neither 'hard' nor 'seltzer' is a word with accepted coinage this side of the Atlantic. Indeed in Germany, where the word seltzer originates, it refers to an antacid, or 'liver salts'.

"Hard" is no better, with many European countries, including the UK, restricting its use when marketing alcohol. Making positive health claims for alcoholic beverages is a no-no too.



None of this denies that aiming a drink that is bright and sparkling at a population obsessed with becoming slimmer and sharper is pretty smart. My local supermarket, when I was living in the heart of independently-minded Bristol's foodiest parish, stocked not a single beer from any of the city's 20 or so small breweries, yet on a recent visit had shelves rammed with RTDs, albeit that hard seltzers were still outstripped by ready-mixed gin and tonic drinks, for people who find putting two liquids into one glass at the same time really difficult.

Time to link up with the Puritans

The only positive to this sorry tale of market manipulation is that hard seltzers might just be an issue around which the legitimate concerns of the anti-alcohol lobby and the informed beer consumer might coalesce.

Hard seltzers are clearly marketed as alcoholic soft drinks without health-affecting sugar, and aimed at taking a part of the beer market. More seriously, they offer no flavour barrier to consumption by children, which makes their

alcohol content not just cynical, but potentially dangerous.

I recently found myself applauding neo-Prohibitionists in the US for posting images on social media of dishevelled and pished young people, with captions from the marketing straplines about healthy lifestyles. The UK equivalent might picture their suitability for necking at bus stops on the morning commute to college or work – so much more acceptable than cans of super-strength lager.

I am wary of working with a lobby that thrives on carefully contrived inuendo and cherry-picked data, but I share their concern that hard seltzers and other alcopops be banned, on the grounds that a world without them would not threaten civilisation, while one without beer would.

Tim Webb writes The World Atlas of Beer with Stephen Beaumont, and numerous other books about beer. He is an international beer judge and speaker, and heads up beer on CAMRA's national drinks committee (RACPC).



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The Beginnings of WhatPub

Brett Laniosh, former CAMRA National Executive member, tells the story of how WhatPub began. CAMRA Members can submit beer scores through whatpub.com These scores help to decide which pubs go in the next edition of the Good Beer Guide and are also counted as part of the judging for the Pub of the Year awards. Branches strive to keep the entries for pubs up to date but if you see that something has changed from a WhatPub entry, please contact us using the Submit Update facility on whatpub.com

It seems obvious that a consumer group with pubs at its heart should have its own website dedicated to pubs, but in 2009 CAMRA didn't have WhatPub or a national pub database.

At that time, many CAMRA branches had developed their own pub databases which had evolved from paper-based records. Some of these were online and a few were even available to the public. If you were on holiday it was not easy to find details of a suitable pub if there were no Good Beer Guide pubs nearby and if you didn't have the local CAMRA guide.

In Eastbourne on 18th April 2009, I met with five people to agree a strategy for the setting up of an online version of the Good Beer Guide and an online pub guide. We didn't know it at the time but that meeting of CAMRA staff and volunteers (including the Chief Executive and National Directors) set the foundation of what would become WhatPub and the Good Beer Guide app.

It is now unremarkable for a pub championing organisation to have an online database of every British pub – a tool that we can use for research and campaigning. A place to record and update key information like opening hours, location, beers, ciders, facilities and our own descriptions.

As our flagship publication, the Good Beer Guide provides this information for our best pubs, but we needed every British pub in our dataset that would be available to non-members as well as



members. One of the biggest challenges at this time was getting over 40,000 pubs surveyed and recorded. Some doubted if our members would be up for this Herculean task. In 2010, the ambition was to launch PerfectPub.com with 4,500 Good Beer Guide entries plus another 2250 pubs. The reality was that our branches managed to get almost every British pub surveyed and recorded within five years. That number is currently over 55,000 pubs. A fantastic achievement.

Following a consultation, and concerns about the name PerfectPub, a poll of staff, regional

and national directors agreed upon WhatPub.com Other popular names considered were Pubfinder and Offtothepub.

In the years that have passed, staff and volunteers have worked together to resolve issues and conflicts of having a free online pub guide and a paid-for book. Systems now talk to one another so that when pub information is updated in WhatPub, it also updates Good Beer Guide online goodbeerguide.org.uk It is possible to submit beer scores from the Good Beer Guide online as well as WhatPub on your desktop or phone. There are far too many people to list everyone involved in this fantastic and ongoing project but my thanks to you all.

Open Every Day

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- 5 Draft Lagers, 2 Draft Ciders
- Selection of Gins



The Golden Shield Fleckney



Welcome to The Golden Shield

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We offer a fantastic selection of refreshing beers and ales, which will not leave you disappointed.

A Warm Welcome at

THE RAILWAY INN



A recently refurbished, traditional village inn which serves up a delicious range of classic pub food as well as our soon-to-be-famous Sunday Roast.

You can also enjoy our range of 2-4-1 cocktails and our competitively priced beers in our bar, lounge and epic beer garden, whilst watching your favourite sports on our brand new big screens!

Come along and rediscover your local pub in Glenfield, Leicester.

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CAMRA's Campaigner of the Year

Helen Anne Smith has been awarded CAMRA's top campaigning award at the organisation's Members' Weekend and Conference for their work to create a more diverse and inclusive industry.

Helen's nomination spoke of their long list of achievements. As well as being a CAMRA contributor featured on the Learn & Discover platform and the *Pubs. Pints. People.* podcast, they are one of the founders of the *Burum Collective* – an online publication for, and by, those working in hospitality.

In response to the outpouring of stories about misogyny, racism, and mistreatment of workers within the beer and hospitality industries, they used their platform to organise the Common Ground Conference, where hundreds of attendees heard from industry



Helen Anne Smith, Laura Emson

leading speakers about improving hospitality workers' rights.

They played a part in industry initiatives like Hospitality Combine and the Brave Noise brewing collaboration – both of which worked towards improving standards for those in the pub and beer sector.

Helen also undertook a three-month Wayfinder residency with Cloudwater brewery which provided training and funds for the launch of an education hub, providing free educational

content for hospitality workers.

They then partnered with the US-based non-profit Beer Kulture to host a jobs forum that aimed to open up UK drinks industry job listings to a more diverse group of candidates.

The Beer Kulture X Burum Collective Jobs Board now has a funded administrator and is a resource that helps connect candidates from marginalised groups to employers within the drinks industry, as well as connecting industry professionals to opportunities such as training or mentorships.

Their passion for building more diverse and inclusive spaces, making drinks education accessible, and empowering the whole industry was evident in their nomination, and the judging panel was impressed by their dedication and the sheer amount of work they had undertaken.

CAMRA awards director Laura Emson said: "Helen was a clear winner, even in this year's strong field of nominations. Their campaigning, both on- and off-line, is empowering the industry to be more inclusive and they have been an integral part of a huge number of initiatives. It's a pleasure to formally recognise their hard work and dedication to making sure that beer and cider are open to everyone. This Campaigner of the Year Award is a testament to the positive impact that Helen has had on the industry, and I look forward to seeing their work in the years to come."

Camilla Weddell

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Energy Regulator Must Act Faster to Save Pubs

The pub and brewing sector has demanded action over energy price rises as more businesses face closure.

Energy regulator Ofgem is moving too slowly and not adequately disciplining suppliers to save businesses across the country from failure, the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) has warned. The BBPA is insisting that Ofgem must step in and instruct suppliers to offer renegotiations of business contracts.

With just weeks to go until energy bills come in at the increased rate since government support fell away on 1 April, the BBPA says Ofgem must act now or risk businesses in key sectors in every part of the UK closing in the coming weeks.

BBPA chief executive Emma McClarkin (pictured) said: "The alarm has been raised for months and in the next few weeks we will see just how severe the damage to pubs and brewers and thousands of other valued high street businesses is due to this energy crisis.

"Ofgem's failure to adequately regulate energy suppliers which are profiteering at the expense of small businesses and domestic customers alike is astonishing. Swathes of community-minded, cherished businesses will be wiped out and high streets decimated if nothing is done.



"The fact it has stepped in to protect domestic customers shows it can act on misconduct but is doing very little to respond quickly to the hundreds of examples provided by our industry and others of unfair charges and unacceptable behaviour by energy suppliers to business customers.

"At the very least, renegotiation of contracts must be offered to those businesses which were forced to sign up to extortionate tariffs and are now completely unable to afford the costs following the reduction in energy support from government."

Timothy Hampson

It's Beer Festival Season!



As you can read on page four, we have a number of trips to beer festivals planned for the summer. We hope you can join us on one or more of them



Bye Bye Buswells

It was with a slightly heavy heart that officers of the Hinckley branch began preparation for their CAMRA quiz night. Not because they don't love quizzes, but because the venue was chosen to mark the special, but sad occasion of Gary and Jill Buswell, long-time licensees of the **Lime Kilns**, moving on to pastures new. We didn't have an exact date for the change of hands so decided to make their 'official' branch goodbye to this much-loved local favourite with a quiz night.

A chance to sample some of the delicious Boswell's brews and to also mark the 20-year-long service award of Gary and Jill in this delightfully traditional canal side inn.

They decided to celebrate the pub and Buswell's brewery by making the quiz all about beer, brewing and the Lime Kilns, apologies to those members who were expecting a more general quiz, they were being tricky!

As quiz masters, Colin and David have a shared interest in beer, but very separate passions for food and history so each compiled rounds separately, coming together in the final round to test members' knowledge of the Lime Kilns pub.

They composed questions on beer in recipes, the brewing process, etc, as the Leicester branch had done in their quiz, but they also included beverages in books and film and beer in history. For example "Said to be the oldest pub in the UK, the Royal Standard in Beaconsfield was mentioned in the Domesday Book. In what year?" They also included a 'know your merchant' round, with partial pictures of famous brand T-shirts from the brewing industry. Finally, a 'touchy feely' round of items found in a pub, brewery or beer festival hall securely wrapped and sealed so you could not see the items and identify them using only touch.



Gary and Jill receive their certificate

The quiz went down well and brought out the friendly competitive streak in some members with the usual ribald quiz banter as scores were revealed round by round and the accuracy of answers debated in time-honoured quiz fashion.

The evening culminated with prize giving, beer of course to the winners, and beer nuts to the runners up and the very important presentation of the certificate from the Hinckley & Bosworth branch to mark Gary and Jill's 20 year-long service award,

presented by Chairman Darren Statham.

Gary's acceptance speech gave us hope that although they may be leaving the Lime Kilns, this might not be the last time we get to taste some of Buswell's Brewery's great beers, watch this space!



Come On You Reds

Coming from Merseyside I am often asked by those who don't know me "Are you a Red or a Blue?" They are under a common misconception that everyone from this area a) Follows football and b) Has sworn allegiance to either Liverpool or Everton football clubs. When I reply "Neither, I don't really like football I prefer cricket." this response often provokes a reaction of disbelief and sometimes derision. However, if the same question is applied to alcoholic drinks, or more specifically to beer, then my position is quite different. I'm most definitely a red!



beer with a slight sweetness. Brimstage Rhode Island Red delivers a dry finish to balance the malt flavour and Orkney Red MacGregor has a spicy finish unlike any other beer I have tasted (and without the addition of any spice). There are also "American Reds", a version of an American pale ale which are very "hop-forward" beers but with the addition of roasted malt to the brew, making a more balanced and appealing beer in my opinion. Cross Bay Brewing produce a very fine example of this style.

If you go through a list of my favourite beers you'll find a common theme: Lancaster Red, Hawkshead Red, Rudgate Ruby Mild, Brimstage Rhode Island Red and my favourite of all Orkney Red MacGregor. I could go on but you get the idea! It has to be the right red though. Liverpool and Manchester United football teams both play in red but you'll not find many people who like them both. Similarly, I love my red ales but am not a fan of red wine.

A red ale gets its colour from the roasted malt used to brew it. In fact all dark beers get their colour in the same way and if you analyse a stout it will actually be very dark red, not black. Red and ruby ales are beers brewed with enough roasted malt to impart the red colour but not enough that the beer goes so dark they appear black. It's a difficult balancing act for the brewer.

In terms of taste because of the addition of the roasted malt to the brew, red beers tend to have a richer malt flavour compared to pale, golden or amber ales. This malty sweetness can then be balanced with a variety of tastes and aromas from the hops. Red beers are by no means samey. For instance, Lancaster Red is a rich, strong, nutty

So what have the blues got in response to this mighty and delicious line up? There are quite a few breweries and beers with blue in the name but from internet-based research, I can only find one beer that is actually blue in colour. This is from Abashiri brewery in Japan, Okhotsk Blue Draft Seaweed beer. I have to confess that I have never tasted it but a beer made from seaweed, I'm dubious! Casting the net somewhat wider to include other alcoholic drinks yields a few more results but don't get excited. In my youth, I tried "Blue Aftershock" a novelty shot, which I seem to remember was akin to drinking mouthwash. Also in my foolish youth, I drank Blue Curacao, a bitter orange liqueur which some bright spark decided would be better if they dyed it blue. I drank it at my university's student union bar but only because they were selling it cheaply to try and get rid of it and that really tells you all you need to know. There is also Blue WKD a vile alco-pop, anyone over the age of twenty who drinks this stuff should have a serious word with themselves! There are also several blue-coloured gins. A regular at one of the pubs I drink in once commented on a blue-coloured gin "Why would I want to drink something that is the same colour as the stuff I clean my toilet with?" I think that perfectly sums up my attitude toward blue alcoholic drinks!

Apologies to any football fans or lovers of blue alcoholic drinks reading this who I may have offended. To sum up, if it is Everton versus Liverpool then I couldn't care less. If it is Chelsea versus Arsenal then I am totally disinterested, but if it is Blue WKD versus Orkney Red MacGregor then I am a diehard reds fan!

Rob Carter



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