

leicestershire drinker

magazine of the leicestershire branches of the campaign for real ale

Issue 6 - Autumn 2023

AUTUMN

**Award Winning Local Pubs - Parish Brewery
Visit to Coventry - Champion Beer of Britain**



FREE

leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk



Campaign
for
Real Ale



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**

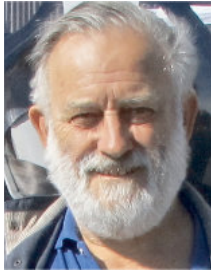


**Supporting Local
Microbreweries**



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Editor's Welcome



Over the last few years, we have carried many articles about safe limits and legal limits for alcohol consumption and we are exploring the issues in more detail in this edition. The debates are often linked and confused but are entirely different. One is medical advice and the other is a legal one. We have carried

articles about safe consumption levels, in itself confusing as various countries' experts offer different advice, but that has nothing to do with the law of each Country's about driving with any alcohol in your blood.

We are told that a modest amount of alcohol is good for you and that red wines in particular have many medical benefits, but now the BMA is saying that we should reduce drink-driving limits. Surely that is something for lawmakers to decide, not what is in effect the doctors' trade union.

One social benefit is often overlooked in that

after a stressful day at work, a wind-down, natter and quick half on the way home can prevent domestic upheavals.

Read more in the article A Point of View and throughout the magazine.

Roy Denney



Putting the world to rights

10 great reasons to join CAMRA

1 CAMPAIGN
for great beer, cider and perry

2 Become a BEER EXPERT

3 Enjoy CAMRA BEER FESTIVALS
in front of or behind the bar

4 GET INVOLVED
and make new friends

5 Save YOUR LOCAL

6 Find the BEST PUBS IN BRITAIN

7 Get great VALUE FOR MONEY

8 DISCOVER
pub heritage and the great outdoors

9 Enjoy great HEALTH BENEFITS
(really!)

10 HAVE YOUR SAY

Leicestershire CAMRA Branches

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Email chair@meltonmowbray.camra.org.uk

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.

September

7th - 9th Tamworth Beer Festival
7th - 10th Burton Ale Trail
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
27th - 30th St Albans Beer & Cider Festival
28th Leicester branch meeting and social 7.30pm (venue tbc) (LEI)
20th - 30th Leicester Samaritans Beer Festival, Oadby British Legion

October

11th - 14th Robin Hood Beer Festival
19th Leicester Branch AGM, Wygstons House 7.30pm (LEI)
28th Leicester CAMRA coach trip to Preston (LEI)

November

1st Melton Mowbray Branch AGM, Hamilton Tennis Club 7.30pm (MM)



Leicestershire Drinker

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Published by the Leicestershire branches of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Thousands of copies of the *Leicestershire Drinker* are distributed across Leicestershire, parts of neighbouring counties and at festivals etc. Read new and old copies at leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk

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.

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Publication Dates

Jan 1st, Mar 1st, Jun 1st, Sep 1st.

Next deadline for advertising or other content is Oct 15th covering the period Dec 15th to Mar 15th.

Advertising rates

Full page £310, Half page £165, Quarter page £90. Full page inside front or back cover £375. Rates for back page and centre page spread available on request.

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Deposited with the British Library.

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 0808 223 1133

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

PLAN YOUR JOURNEY

Stagecoach stagecoachbus.com/about/midlands Centrebus centrebus.info

Arriva arrivabus.co.uk/midlands

Kinchbus/Skylink kinchbus.co.uk

Firstbus firstbus.co.uk/leicester

Traveline - traveline.info

Pub Discoveries / Gossip / Comings and Goings

Somerby's **Stilton Cheese** has won CAMRA's Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland County Pub of the Year award. It is the third time the pub has received the award since 2015, having also been a five-time winner of the Melton Mowbray & District award.

The pub is run by Jeff and Carol Evans, along with their daughters Lynne and Claire.

Gary Pullan, Melton Mowbray & District CAMRA Branch Chair commented that "the Stilton Cheese has been run by the Evans family for thirty-odd years which in this day and age is really something special.

"Their excellent range of ales and the fine food they serve is a magnet for customers from far and wide. The Stilton Cheese has been a regular winner of CAMRA awards and the Melton branch wishes them much success."

The photo shows the team being presented with their award.

This pub is just how the vast majority of people feel a country pub should be.

Thank goodness for the village pub. The pubco operations often just closed the doors during the pandemic, but those like the **Geese and Fountain** at Croxton Kerrial soldiered on under siege. Unfortunately, this pub still lost out in the end. Pubs are hammered on all fronts not least by inflexible owners and the lovely Geese and Fountain has now closed. Like many others, victims of a combination of the UK's exceptional economic collapse and a failure to adequately support businesses trying to recover from the Covid pandemic.

Having been fighting for over two years to reach a reasonable compromise with their landlords, the licensees of the Geese followed the Government's arbitration process, making a case for a significant

THE STILTON CHEESE INN

Open 7 Days

12-3, 6-11 (Sun 7-11)

Extensive Menu Served

12-2, 6 (Sun 7)-9

30+ Malt Whiskies

- Melton & District CAMRA Pub of the Year 2015,2016,2019,2020,2022
- Leicestershire, Rutland & Northants 2015
- East Midlands 2019
- 5 Real Ales, 2 Permanent, 3 Changing, 1 Changing Real Cider

High Street, Somerby, Nr. Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 2QB

01664 454394 – stiltoncheeseinn.co.uk





Presentations to the Stilton Cheese (L) and Two-Tailed Lion (R)



reduction in rent due for the period of restrictions but their landlords said the business was not viable anyway so did not deserve help and as a result, they had to pay the full amount of rent arrears during Covid.

It would appear the owners would prefer the building to be empty as it was for four years before the doomed regime stepped in and poured thousands of pounds of family money into the project only to see it go down the drain.

This is a disaster to that community and a wake-up call to us all.

The **Golden Fleece** at South Croxton has also closed citing the high cost of utilities.



Leicester Branch did the rounds of presentations for their awards, the **Two-tailed Lion** received City Pub of the Year. The award was presented by Chairman Bill Woolley to Ehren and Sam, two of the core threesome - Ryah not being around.

Club of the Year went to the **Oadby British Legion** and Cider Pub of the Year to the **Mash & Press**.

The Country Pub of the Year was the **Chandlers Arms**. When he received his award, the landlord bemoaned the lack of a bus service and produced evidence there had been one in the past. Not very frequent though.

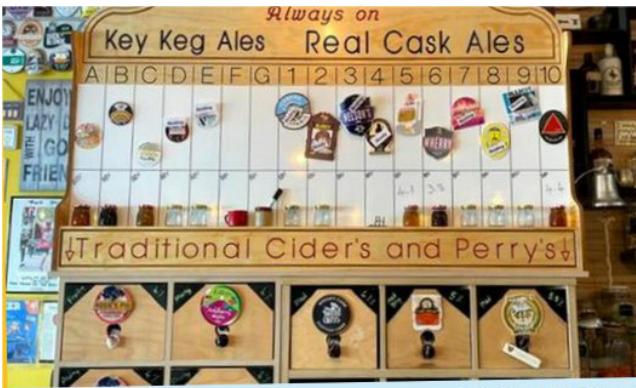
Leicester CAMRA Chairman Bill Wooley presenting to...
 Top: Stella & Martin Woolley (not related) from Chandlers
 Left: Stuart Slessor from Mash & Press
 Right: Ian Thorpe from Oadby British Legion



Nik Antona presenting to the staff of the Plough

The Hinckley & Bosworth Pub of the Year 2023 award was presented to Louise and Darren of the **New Plough Inn** by Nik Antona, National Chairman of CAMRA.

The Hinckley & Bosworth Cider Pub of the Year 2023 award was presented to Sue Summerill of



The range of beers, ciders and perrys at the Pestle and Mortar and Sue with her award

the **Pestle & Mortar**. This charming one-roomed micropub opened in August 2015, in a former chemist's shop. Draught Bass is the regular beer with a varying number of guest ales, including both Cask and Key Keg, along with between 15 and 22 ciders. Remarkably, this is the 7th consecutive Cider Pub of the Year award for the Pestle & Mortar.

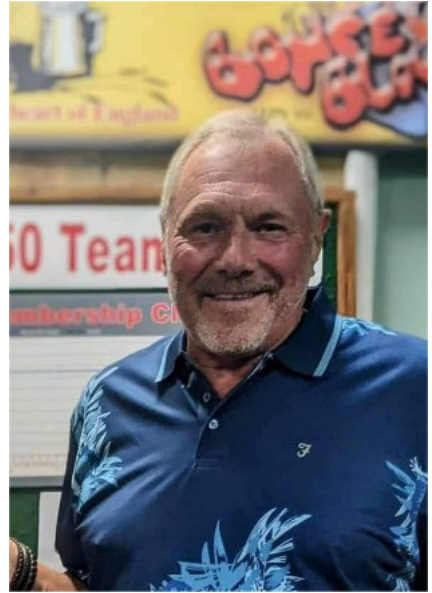
The Oddfellows Arms Community Benefit Society has been awarded £156,000 matched funding from the Government Community Ownership Fund. The **Oddfellows Arms** are now soliciting funds in exchange for shares in the cooperative.

Proper Charlie (3.9% ABV) has recently been added to the Everard's guest beer rota.

On the wider front, the **Fox Inn** in Hallaton closed at the end of July when the lease ended and with the **Bewicke** still closed, this is yet another village with no pub. Sadly we are aware of other pubs under threat when leases run off as sites are valuable for developments not including a pub.

Parish Brewery has now officially changed hands with the founder of the brewery Baz Parish finally standing down after 40 successful years. He has been something of an institution as have his beers. Baz will continue to work with the new joint owners Bruce Cooper and Charlie Gamble on a consultancy basis in the short term.

Round Corner Brewing is continuing to release real ale once a month. They publish local availability online.



Barry Parish

Hinckley CAMRA staged their Rail Ale festival again and in contrast to last year's heatwave this year they faced constant heavy rain which put a bit of a dampener on things. Despite having to work around the various puddles verging on lakes it still seemed a success.

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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0116 233 8604**

Public Transport - Then and Now

562. RUGBY—LEICESTER 641. LEICESTER—SHEARSBY via Countesthorpe				SERVICE 638. LEICESTER—WELFORD 648. LEICESTER—SHEARSBY															
Route in and out of Leicester is via Oxford Street and Welford Road																			
Buses carrying Service 641 run via Peatling Magna, Countesthorpe and South Wigston buses leave WIGSTON MAGNA (Bank) for WIGSTON CEMETERY at 2.35 p.m. and 3.25 p.m., returning from the CEMETERY at 2.40 p.																			
For complete service between Leicester and Wigston Magna see Services L5 to 9 and L18																			
DONS., TUES., THURS. AND FRIS.				WEDNESDAYS								SATURDAYS							
Service	648	648	648	641	648	648	638	648	648	641	648	648	638	638	648	562	638	648	638
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
dep.	6 25	7 15	5 35	6 45	6 25	7 15	8 15	1240	3 15	4 15	5 35	6 45	6 25	7 15	8 15	1215	1240	3 15	5 15
arr.	6 40	7 30	5 50	6 40	7 30	8 30	1255	3 30	4 30	5 50	6 40	7 30	8 30	1230	1255	3 30	5 30
rrms)	6 47	7 37	5 57	6 47	7 37	8 37	1	2 13	3 7	4 37	5 57	6 47	7 37	8 37	1237	1 23	3 37
tel)	6 53	7 43	6* 37	7*37	6 53	7 43	8 43	1*	8 13	4 3	4 36*	7*37	6 53	7 43	8 43	1243	1* 8 13	4 35
atr.	6 57	7 47	6 7	7 41	6 57	7 47	8 47	1 14	6 57	7 47	8 47
Service	641	648	648	648	641	648	562	638	648	638	648	648	641	648	648	562	638	648	638
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
dep.	9 30
arr.	9 38
rrms)	6 57	7 48	6 8	7 41	6 57	7 48	8 41
tel)	7 1	7 52	6 12	7 45	7 1	7 52	8 45	10 2	1 47	5 45	6 12	7 45	7 1	7 52	8 45	10 2	1 47	5 45	6 12
atr.	7 58	8 17	51	7 58	8 17	51	10 8	1 53	5 51	6 17	7 51	7 58	8 17	51	10 8	1 53	5 51
Service	641	648	648	648	641	648	562	638	648	638	648	648	641	648	648	562	638	648	638
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
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Service	641	648	648	648	641	648	562	638	648	638	648	648	641	648	648	562	638	648	638
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
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a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
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Service	641	648	648	648	641	648	562	638	648	638	648	648	641	648	648	562	638	648	638
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
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atr.	7 58	8 17	51	7 58	8 17	51	10 8	1 53	5 51	6 17	7 51	7 58	8 17	51	10 8	1 53	5 51

*Runs to and from Arnesby Village. †Runs via Shearby Turn, and not into Shearby Village.

Further to the comments in Pub News about public transport, we are still in a state of uncertainty. The 159 bus from Hinckley to Coalville is no more as Leicestershire County Council were unwilling to fund it any longer. Better news seems to be that other services seem to have been reprieved for the time being. Leicestershire is one of the poorest funded authorities in the country and continues to press for fair funding.

Rail Services continue to be a problem with industrial action but when trains are running on time, they are the perfect way to travel to a Beer Festival or indeed just a walk around the pubs somewhere you don't normally go to, but it now seems that it takes very little for a train to be cancelled. Not good when it is your return journey. Public transport means of getting to pubs are less available these days but then there are so fewer pubs to go to anyway. Peter Simpson of Hinckley takes up the story.

“It is uncertain when people did start going on pub crawls but if you had been around in 1831, you could have done a five-pub crawl along Watling Street starting at the **Harrow Inn** on the corner of Coventry Road and Watling Street about where McDonald's is now. Then, walking, or riding if you had a horse, heading south you came to the **Plough Inn** adjacent to the canal, a coaching inn which is now the **Lime Kilns** and I believe still the same building. Carrying on, you came to the **Three Pots Inn** which is now a steakhouse and does not sell real ale and is very different to the

pub I remember from about 50 or so years ago! Moving on, our final two pubs were fairly close together. Just past where Lutterworth Road joins the A5 was the **Red Lion Inn** and then down what was then and still was until they changed it, a very steep hill to Smockington Hollow. There stood the **Greyhound Inn**, adjacent to the turn for Sharnford. I can recall as a child, travelling by bus/coach and then, rather than tackle the hill, the driver would take the road from the Magna Park island that goes up to the **Axe and Compass**, Wolvey then to Burbage Road back to the A5.

Presumably, these pubs were all coaching inns that offered accommodation, but in 1831 it would not have been easy to find that out, although there must have been ways, possibly just word of mouth.

Hinckley itself had a lot more pubs than it does now. In our younger days, we could do some very short pub crawls in the town. In Castle Street, the **Castle Tavern** which was my regular in the 1970s and 80s and again at times in the 90s, is now flats, with the Castle sign still outside. On the opposite side of the road was the **New Inn** and the **Crown and Anchor**, both small pubs which closed in about the 70s. Further down was the **Crown**, a large pub with an upstairs function room and an outdoor area at the rear, then nearby and still there today, the **Greyhound**.

Heading into town, the **Barley Sheaf** now the Silchar Indian Restaurant on the left, and

opposite, the **Duke of Rutland**, still going, but no real ale. Nearby is the Union which used to have a public bar about where the outside area is now and the front door led to a smarter area and as with Wetherspoons pubs now, it had upstairs toilets. The **Dog and Gun**, which was a good pub in those days, is now being converted to accommodation.

In the town, the **Hollybush**, opposite the cinema, was a Sunday evening regular visit after the cinema for couples, before closing at 10pm.

Most pubs then served real ale and most of it was Marstons, sometimes of variable quality and often

a touch vinegary and occasionally with a lot of sediment left in your glass. Keg beer was about then, and lager was just starting to become another option.

We do still have some good drinking venues in Hinckley and beer quality is generally now much more consistent than in the past. If you are wondering why 1831, that is the date on the old map I have which I believe I got from the Daily Mail and where I live in the centre of the map. You would get one for anywhere at the time with your postcode at the centre of the map.”

	WORKMEN'S RETURN	SCHOLARS' RETURN
Leicester and Aberdale Road	5½d.	3d.
Leicester and Royal Oak	6d.	3d.
Leicester and Wigston Magna	8d.	4½d.
Leicester and Cooks Lane	9d.	—
Leicester and K Ivy Bridge	10d.	5½d.
Leicester and Kilby Turn or Village ...	1/-	6½d.
Leicester and Arnesby	1/4	9d.
Leicester and Saddington Turn or Shearsby	1/7	11d.

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

A Point of View - Alcohol Consumption

As a group of us put the world to rights again recently, the subject of alcohol consumption was considered.

With driving under the influence of alcohol, the Association of Chief Police Officers some time ago said they were pleased the legal limits and punishments were arbitrary and took no cognisance of actual impairment and capability. They felt that as a deterrent this was justified.

A number of members have suggested that an outright ban should only be for those causing an incident or twice the legal limit, but this seems to fly against the argument as a deterrent. Others suggest that if you fail a breathalyser test your capability should be tested and that should determine the punishment. That again works against the deterrent factor and if that person was to drive on for half an hour the capability would be further impaired.

One member suggested there should be a charge for being in charge of fists and boots as that is where more injury is inflicted. That already exists in the form of 'drunk and disorderly' or 'causing an affray'.

Advocates for stricter limits always talk of the serious accidents involving drink, but most times these are caused by people ignoring the law and way over the present limit, so what would change with a lower limit? It would hit social drinking and eating out and punish the vast majority who are responsible drinkers and it would be another nail in the coffin of the valuable community hubs we know of as pubs.

The answer appears to be in people being better informed just how many units they have had and that is explored within these pages. We have some interesting articles this time around the subject and Alan Gayton mentions strengths being reduced. It is very true that what may bear a historic name is not the same beer it used to be. In my youth, Boddingtons was a thin strong beer, proud to be the cheapest in Manchester, and we knew it as a fighting beer as it did not seem strong. After the takeover, in order to remain

cheap, it had its strength reduced a number of times and it developed a head. The Cream of Manchester it had become – what a loss!

Something else of concern with echoes of the 1960s is that brewery takeovers are happening again. In fact, what is a brewery anyway? We are again seeing mega chemical factories brewing 'beers' bearing the names of once independent brews. Who knows where your beer comes from or whether what goes under the same name in different parts of the country is actually anything like that found elsewhere? Even the microbreweries which may well be the preservers of real ale are merging, or are they also just being

taken over to use their names and goodwill? Increasingly small breweries are being bought and sold as brand names with groups of breweries now forming. For example, Grasshopper Brewery is owned by Backyard Brewhouse, and therefore covers large parts of the Midlands. This is not bad if both still produce their different products and jointly market them, but if

consolidated into one brewery then we are on that slippery slope again.

Drink-fuelled violence is killing city centres at the weekend and even in suburban areas gangs wander into neighbouring areas trying to cause fights. If landlords try to sort these incidents out it usually kicks off, but if they call the police too many times their licence is at risk or they may be charged with keeping a disorderly house. What are they supposed to do?

Perhaps such visitations should be classed as conspiracy to commit an offence and the bad boys banged up, as one landlord put it to me.

Violent behaviour is one reason pubs give up or lose their licences; one of many, unfortunately.

It has been said increasingly frequently that CAMRA must focus more on protecting pubs as without them cask ale is pointless. If you want to help protect both cask ale and pubs to drink it in, join CAMRA if you are not already a member.



CAMRA needs to revitalise itself and new blood in the membership should help.

Breweries are starting to say that cask demand is falling and will continue to do so. Naturally, if fewer and fewer places survive selling it, as is suggested and widely accepted will be the case, that reality would not be surprising. This actually suits larger breweries given keg is easier to distribute, trendy and more profitable. Unfortunately, such prophecies can be self-fulfilling.

Over 150 pubs closed this spring with rising energy bills and other costs pushing them into loss. The number of pubs in the UK at the turn of the century was about 60,000 and there are probably about 45,000 now.

The cost-of-living crisis obviously reduces demand, but staff shortages are perhaps one of the biggest problems.

With the launch in 2021 of the £150 million Community Ownership Fund, residents have the opportunity to run local pubs at risk of closure as community-owned businesses and we have one recent example locally. This is enabling communities across the UK to bid for up to £250,000 matched funding but they still have to either find increasingly expensive staff or help serve themselves, as volunteers.

CAMRA must be quicker to react and more flexible in its approach if it is not to end up reporting from the sidelines on the loss of a war some of us have been fighting for half a century.

I have been drinking cask-conditioned beer since 1959 and it has always been under threat, and 15 years after I discovered this wonderful product it very nearly became extinct.

CAMRA came along and after a lot of skirmishes, we won the battle with the mega breweries (or chemical factories). We won the battle, but the war is not over and we still have to fight on two fronts. Take our eye off the ball and the enemy will start cutting our supply lines ready for the battles to come.

Unfortunately, lockdowns did not just cost us many good pubs, it also got people out of the habit of drinking socially, content to buy cheap

beer to drink at home. Working from home does not help either as you can hardly go for an after-work drink with colleagues.

The plus side is that we are waking up to the fact that cask is at risk again and it has alerted us to that danger. Lockdowns gave us a rude awakening about what a depressing world it would be without cask, so we must call up our reserves and fight for cask to be available everywhere.

The second front we must open up is to save what pubs we have. Many proved their worth during the difficult time helping and supporting their communities while struggling to keep going themselves.

“...we are waking up to the fact that cask is at risk again”

The pub is the heart of most communities; a place where people can meet socially and enjoy the ancient pastime of conversation.

With CAMRA seemingly fighting yesterday's wars and not supporting new ways of fighting back, strident voices are asking whether CAMRA has any relevance anymore and there have even been ideas bounced

about suggesting the need to form a new modern campaigning organisation. One activist recently said, with possible justification, that CAMRA spends ages discussing the finer points of its documentation while its purpose for existence dies around it.

The government is trying to do its bit as reported elsewhere largely because of campaigning by CAMRA and other consumer groups and CAMRA is still the best hope we have, but it does need to move with the times. More and younger members could bring that about.

Festivals are where cask ale is promoted and CAMRA needs to look at more flexible and innovative ways of staging these. Successful craft beer festivals abound these days, many if not most of which would not be acceptable to CAMRA's rigid guidelines. As somebody once said, keep your pen sharp and guard your back; the cavalry won't come riding to the rescue. It is down to us.

Roy Denney

Join Hinckley & Bosworth CAMRA Branch

Do you, like meeting like-minded people, socialising, drinking real ale and cider, supporting your local pub, and live around Hinckley and Bosworth

Then you might like to join your local branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

We have regular mini-bus tours of our pubs, coach trips further afield and train outings to pubs and beer festivals around the country, we also stage our own RailAle festival

We have monthly meetings in a social venue discussing what is happening with our breweries and real ale pubs.

Why not join up and come along and see for yourself?



Joining CAMRA gives you “on-line” access to award-winning national publications, such as Beer Magazine and What’s Brewing, discounted cost entrance to many beer festivals including our Great British Beer Festival at Olympia, London and £30 worth of Real Ale Vouchers which can be used nationally

For all member benefits go to join.camra.org.uk

Membership costs start at just £22 / year, if you are interested contact our membership secretary:

Email membership@hinckleyandbosworth.camra.org.uk

Our website hinckleyandbosworth.camra.org.uk contains lots of useful information about the branch activities and local news



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Chris's Cruises - in Coventry

Still cruising about, and taking advantage of the £2 single bus ticket scheme before it ended, Chris Greenwood went to Coventry. Note he went, not was sent.

The X6 leaves St. Margaret's bus station at 8.50am (it also stops at the train station and Nelson Mandela Park) and it takes around an hour and a half to get there. Chris takes up the story of his cruise round the better pubs there.

"When I arrived, I decided to look at the historic part of Coventry, the bits missed by the Luftwaffe and the planners. There are some very attractive Medieval buildings near the ruined, old cathedral and adjoining streets, which are worth exploring.

My first pub of the day was the **Flying Standard**, a magnificent black and white, half-timbered building, which was rather disappointing inside. There were six ales on, I tried the Flacks Black Jack. It was a sweet porter, with treacle notes and some liquorice on the tongue.

Just around the corner is another beautiful half-timbered pub, the **Golden Cross**. It had plenty of wooden beams and stained-glass windows inside. The friendly landlord served me a Backyard IPA, from the choice of four ales, giving me a CAMRA discount. The beer had a fruity mouth feel, pear drop notes and some bitterness at the end.

My next port of call was the **Earl of Mercia**, opposite the impressive guildhall. The pub had an impressive brick frontage and a lovely ornate ceiling in the upstairs room, which afforded a good view of the guildhall. The pub had a good choice of beer. I drank the Portobello APA, which had a decent mix of malt and US hops, with a fruity finish.



It is a good ten minutes walk to FarGo Village and the **Twisted Barrel Tap**. It's a big industrial, warehouse-like building with plenty of seating and some colourful, flower paintings on one wall. There was lots of keykeg and one cask on offer, all vegan. The Twisted Barrel Architect had plenty of citrus fruit in the mouth, lots of US hops and a satisfying grapefruity finish. The Detroit Sour City was tart and citrusy, a little sour and puckering with some hops in the mix.



Top to bottom; Flying Standard, Golden Cross

On the other side of the city is Spon End, where you will find some more pretty black and white, half-timbered buildings and some impressive churches. There are also plenty of pubs. The first one I visited was the **Gatehouse Tavern**, a sports oriented single-roomed boozier, with a nice beamed ceiling.

The friendly guys behind the bar gave me a CAMRA discount, there were six ales on. The Listers Limehouse Porter was a little thin, with caramel notes and a little bit of bitterness in the finish. The Brunswick Low Winter Sun was a decent mix of Mosaic, Simcoe and Idaho 7. It had a pineapple nose, a dry hoppy mouth feel and a fruity, bitter ending.

Chris's Cruises - In Coventry

The **Town Wall Tavern** is a popular, three-roomed locals' pub. The comfortable, basic bar has old records, music posters and beer adverts on the walls. I drank Theakston's Old Peculier, which was full-bodied, with a caramel sweetness and fruity notes in the finish.

Up next was the **Old Windmill**, built in the 13th Century. The pub is a lovely, multi-roomed pub, with plenty of historical features and seven beers. The Silhill North Star Porter was mid brown, with chocolate malt and a pleasant fruity and hoppy middle and a dark berry fruits finish. I sat in the front room, with lots of dark wood and an impressive fireplace.

Near the rugby ground, is the **Brookfield Tavern**. It's a characterful, one-roomed, basic boozier, with hops hanging from the wooden beamed ceiling. The friendly owner was quite chatty and served me two beers from the choice of seven. The Salopian Beatific had a mix of sweetness, with molasses notes and some balancing bitterness and a dry, sweet ending. The Holden's Black Country Mild was in good condition, with a sweet, caramel and chocolate malt start and a pleasant dry bitterness to create a balanced beer.

Going back to Spon End, I came across the very modern-looking **Town Crier**. I wasn't planning to go in, but it is in the Good Beer Guide, and it has Marston's Old Empire. The friendly lad behind the bar took the sparkler off, helping the flavour of it.

It was in good condition, being a decent mix of hops and malt, with a dry, English hops finish.



Top to bottom: Old Windmill, Town Hall Tavern

Back in the centre, on Corporation Street, is the popular micropub, Hops D'Amour. There was a good atmosphere in this very busy, basic long-roomed bar. There was a very good choice of six beers, mainly from microbreweries. I drank the Attic Brew Co. Four Roads, which had a biscuity start, butterscotch and chocolate notes and a bitter, sweet finish. The Little Critters Single Batch Citra Equanot had a fruity mouth feel, citrus notes and a dry, astringent and hoppy ending. The Black Goddess Aged Porter by Meanwood Brewery was dry and oaky, with a developing sweetness and quite a lot of alcohol in the mouth for a five percent beer. The Vocation and Sureshot Dry Hopped Pale had an enticing orange peel nose, citrus notes and a gentle hoppy finish. Hops D'Amour was my favourite

establishment of the day and it was my final one. The last bus to Leicester is around 6.15pm.

I enjoyed Coventry and will go again soon. Cheers.”



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Real ale is just the start...

We support everything from **pubs** and *drinkers' rights*, to licensee and *breweries*, the list is endless, united in **the story** we all love, our **great tradition**.

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Save on beer when you visit the pub with our vouchers and discount schemes. Plus save on entry to 100s of beer festivals too, just a few perks of our CAMRA membership.

**Make our story part of yours.
Join at camra.org.uk/join**



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, real ale



Times They Are A Changing



Prime minister Rishi Sunak being supervised at the Great British Beer Festival by CAMRA National Director Laura Emson

If you go to Scotland there are still some beers sold as '80 shillings' or '90 shillings' but if you asked for a pint of three pounds twenty you would get a funny look. The shillings described the tax on a pint and therefore its strength way back when, but the tax take on a pint is a lot more than that these days.

Another term rarely encountered other than in legal documents is the 'made-wine'. This term covered things like the fruit drinks masquerading as cider but in future, these will be covered by a catch-all term, 'other fermented products'.

Many of us individually and CAMRA as an organisation have been campaigning long and hard for the Government to do more to protect our pubs and they are now taking steps in that direction. Following several temporary helping measures, they have now comprehensively reviewed and restructured alcohol duty in favour of pubs. They will still struggle, but every little helps.

The government has acknowledged that more support for the hospitality industry is needed, recognising the vital role pubs play in our communities. They also acknowledge that pubs are supervised settings less associated with alcohol harm and that drinking at home is where most dependency develops.

The government has announced they are increasing the draught relief duty differential from 5% to 9.2% for qualifying beer and cider and from 20% to 23% for qualifying wine, fruit ciders etc and spirits. Previously some drinks have been taxed on their strength and others their volume but all that is changing. Drinks will now be taxed in line with how much alcohol they contain and the tiering favours lower-strength drinks and pubs that sell draught beer and cider.

All these changes came in at the beginning of August with the number of bands at which different duties are levied cut from fifteen to six.

This means that a bottle of 9.5% wine should be 46p cheaper, allowing for VAT, but a bottle at 11% should rise by 12p, and a 15% bottle be up by 81p. Fortified wines like a bottle of port at 20% plus should be over a pound dearer.

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Excise Duty Changes

Low-strength ciders now pay slightly less duty in pubs and shops, while duty on 2.5litre bottles of high-strength cider will rise by as much as 45p.

Drinkers are not necessarily seeing the benefits though. Struggling pubs do not pass on the savings to the customers and many producers are reducing the strengths of their products to sneak under a tax band ceiling.

Prime minister Rishi Sunak visited the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) on the day new excise duty rules were introduced. While at the festival in London's Olympia, he faced some robust questions, pulled pints and met with many drinkers. The Campaign also called on the prime minister to protect our pubs and clubs and secure their long-term future.

With around 30 pubs closing every week, CAMRA says now is the time to support licensees, consumers and brewers. CAMRA national chairman Nik Antona said: "I was pleased to host the prime minister at this year's Great British Beer Festival. He saw first hand the vibrant atmosphere and the clear passion people have for producing

and supporting live beer, real cider and real perry.

"The new alcohol tax system recognises for the first time that drinking great beer and cider in your local is the best way to enjoy a pint, along with all the social benefits that go hand-in-hand with a visit. However, costs for businesses and the price of a pint at the bar are still rising. Today I urged the prime minister to expand the difference between the lower and general rate of duty charged on pints to keep pub-going affordable. We need the government to do more to protect our pubs – not only are they a vital part of the UK's long-held traditions and rich heritage, but they also provide an important social hub in our communities, which help reduce isolation and loneliness."

CAMRA is calling on the chancellor to use the Autumn Statement to amend the legislation that prevents takeaway draught beer and cider sales, address the unfair burden placed on pubs by the business rates system, and ensure that UK brewers and cider makers aren't frozen out the market by global producers.

A warm welcome awaits you

The Salmon



The Kings Head



The Salmon

19 Butt Close Lane, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE1 4QA
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The Kings Head

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11 hand pump real ales and 1 real cider.



Great beer,
proudly brewed in the
Black Country.

Holy Water?

We all like a beer or two, but how to drink it and feel virtuous at the same time? A beer festival raising funds for a local church maybe?

As mentioned in the last *Leicestershire Drinker*, St Martin's Church, Desford held a festival in June and, as Desford is only a quick bus ride for me, I went along to have a look. The church itself has a large garden area, making it ideal for a festival on a sunny summer's day.

Knowing some congregations can have certain ideas about the 'demon drink', I asked the organisers how they got the idea of a festival past the leadership team. "We are the leadership team" came the response! Apparently, one of the team held a successful festival at a previous church and decided to do something similar in Desford.

With 26 beers and 15 ciders set up down one side of the church; with seating and a space in the middle of the church as well as the aforementioned garden area, there was plenty of room for the people to sit or stand as they preferred.

Beers and ciders were sensibly priced at £2 per half – kept it simple.

Catering was provided by a gourmet burger van, and a company providing Indian snacks etc – the loaded bowl was very nice!

Of course, upon mentioning that I'm active in CAMRA, I was immediately asked if I'd help with next year's event – looks like this could be a regular event in the festival calendar. Naturally, I



said that I'd be happy to help even if not as CAMRA itself.

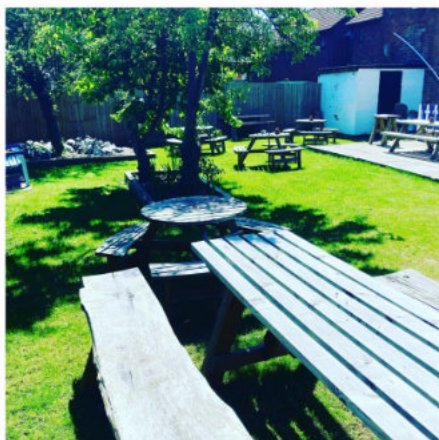
I had five halves over a couple of hours, chatted to some of the people there, and enjoyed sitting in a sunny beer garden – a perfectly pleasant way to spend an afternoon – and with buses still being £2 per trip, it didn't break the bank either!

Gary Sanders





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Raffle

Meet the brewer

CAMRA is nothing without its volunteers and new blood is very welcome.

We finally have hopes of getting a festival off the ground and many hands will be needed. There will be work to be done but it is fun as well. Chatting to people with similar interests, making new friends and helping these events happen.

Help secure the future of the branch with your skills and with bold, innovative ideas.

If you are a member come along and have your say. Help decide what the branch wants to do going forward but most of all support us to make it happen

Not a member? There are lots of reasons to join

CAMRA won the war to save real ale. Now we need to fight to keep real pubs



LEICESTER.CAMRA.ORG.UK/AGM23

Quaffers

What is a strong beer?

Most of us go out for a drink to enjoy company not to get high on the first pint, so while we might admire a strong beer or barley wine, they are not for us, nor will you find us throwing shots back. We like to slowly quaff our ale.

It is also important to understand beer strengths as even one medium-strength pint may push you over the legal driving limit.

Original gravity (OG) measures how much sugar is present in the wort before it is fermented. The final gravity (FG) is how much sugar is left over when fermentation is done. A lower final gravity indicates a dry or crisp flavour, while a higher final gravity indicates a sweet or malty flavour. The size of the gap between OG and FG can be used to calculate how much alcohol the beer contains recorded as the specific gravity. It is affected by temperature and beer must be at a controlled temperature for the measurement to be true. All very technical but I think it means that a 6% beer is not 3% stronger than a 3% beer, it is twice as strong.

If you want to know the strength of a beer it should be on the badge if your eyesight is good and the bar is not too dim.

Those of us who like to have extended visits and be constantly sipping an ale want well-flavoured but fairly low-alcohol beers so that we can keep quaffing. Beer strengths have generally crept up and the days of 3.5% weak beers are behind us. Some of us longer in the tooth can remember beers being sold barely strong enough to pass the 2% rule at which the opening-hours laws kicked in.

The strength of a beer also affects the taxation level which tends to band strengths and prices.

The styles of beers on offer do give a general indication of strength which does help.



Session beers are generally thought to be under 4.5%, strong beers up to 6.5% and above that, just showing off.

On the pale front, there is one major exception. IPA is a pale ale specially brewed stronger for the hot climate in India hence the name India Pale Ale. These are strong ales normally upwards of 5.5%.

If offered pale, blond or golden ales they are normally up to about 4.3% and the colour is given away by the names. You can get some session bitters, darker in colour but of the same sort of strength.

As you would imagine though there is an intermediate band where you will find some of what might be called premium ales and this is where you find

these sorts of beers with strengths between 4.3% and 5.5%.

You then get the darker, sweeter and more-malty beers by definition stronger than the paler ones and these tend to start around 4% and push up towards 6.5%. Darker still, we have the stouts and porters. You get some just over 4%, often the mass-produced ones, but smooth, full-bodied ones fall into the premium and strong ranges.

Beyond these at 6.5% and above are the barley wines cum strong ales all different and rather complex in flavour. Great for the odd half on a cold winter's night.

This issue is now clouded a bit by the strengths at which taxation increases, so something of a rethink is required.

Descriptions and labels for beers are subject to much debate but CAMRA has developed its own for comparison purposes and trains volunteers to join tasting panels. Somebody has to do it, maybe you?

The tasting notes these volunteers produce are often quite different from those the brewer has provided.

Roy Denney

Polly, Mary And The Rag And Mop

A tale of three cities

If you found yourself in the City of Dan you would be facing the wonderful old pub the **Three Horseshoes** which can be found in CAMRA's Register of Historic Pub Interiors at pubheritage.camra.org.uk/pubs/105

If in the mood for a walk from there, you could head north till you came to the City of Hockley, not blessed with a pub but if you keep going to the high point of this area you come to the **Man Within Compass** with its beer garden by



Cademan Woods. Having had a break there when you came out of the pub you could go to your right and walk down the road until you came to the next city, the City of Three Waters. By now you might be feeling down in the dumps.

You are quite literally. This hamlet is known as the Dumps and you are facing Dumps Road rising steeply in front of you. The consolation is the **Hare & Hounds** in the Dumps.

What has all this got to do with 'Polly, Mary and the Rag and Mop'?



The Three Horseshoes is known as Polly's, Mary's House is the Hare & Hounds and the Rag & Mop is the name the Man Within Compass is known by and nobody knows where these names came from. The other anomaly is that these three cities are all in the village of Whitwick and your walk is under two miles.

Roy Denney

Clockwise from top: Three Horseshoes, Man Within Compass, Hare & Hounds

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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.

Champion Beer of Britain



Pictured from left: Elland brewing director Joe Francis, sales marketing director Scott Hutchinson and brewer Rob Thomas

Elland brewery's 1872 Porter (6.5 per cent ABV) has struck gold and been crowned the best in the country after winning CAMRA's prestigious Champion Beer of Britain competition. The 1872 Porter was crowned at this year's Great British Beer Festival (GBBF), following a rigorous and hard-fought competition. The beer has been CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain four times previously, the most recent win was this year.

Champion Beer of Britain co-ordinator Christine Cryne said it was a deserving champion, despite incredibly strong competition.

She described the beer as a ruby black porter, with chocolate and caramelised fruit flavours with a hint of black toffee on the nose. The judges enjoyed its smooth mouthfeel with a finish that is roasty and dry. A satisfying and remarkably easy drinking porter.

Elland brewer Rob Thomas said: "It is absolutely unbelievable to win this accolade, we really didn't expect it. For a team of three people to win the supreme award is fantastic. There is a real passion for more traditional styles and for a very good reason, they taste fantastic!"

"The beer is steeped in history with the recipe dating back more than 150 years. We thrive on these sorts of styles and this is testament to what people enjoy drinking: steeped in history, tradition while embracing innovation.

"Since lockdown, we have faced many challenges and difficult times and this is testament to our small team and our unwavering loyalty to succeed. We passionately believe in our products and people do get excited to try everything we make, we are incredibly proud to take home the crown."

Green King's Abbot Ale (5 per cent) took silver and was described as a classic premium bitter with typical fruit hops and malty throughout.

Bronze was awarded to Salopian's Darwin's Origin (4.3 per cent). It impressed judges with citrus, earthy hops and a flavour that starts fruity and fades into a pleasant bittersweet finish.

CAMRA's national director responsible for the competition Laura Emson said: "Congratulations to Elland brewery. As ever, it was a highly competitive final, with the judges having a difficult decision to make.

Winter Winner Takes Crown

“Congratulations to all the finalists – it really shows the wide range and amazing cask beers which are available for all to enjoy.

“Huge thanks to all the competitors for taking part and to the judges who had a tough decision to make! It is a real honour to be part of this competition and to see how much hard work, professionalism and dedication goes into producing the best of the best.”

CAMRA named Patrick Davies as its “brewer of tomorrow” at this year’s Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) in its second home brew competition.

The judges crowned Magnificent Frigate Strong Mild (6.2 per cent) as the worthy winner following rigorous judging.

Davies, who began brewing in 2016, said: “This award is very exciting and unexpected, I used to work in real ale pubs and learnt a lot about beer and felt the best way to learn more was to begin making it myself. I’m incredibly excited to see how the beer tastes when brewed in a professional kit.”

Who won what

Champion Beer of Britain

Gold: Elland 1872 Porter
Silver: Greene King Abbot Ale
Bronze: Salopian Darwin’s Origin

Mild

Gold: Harvey’s Dark Mild
Silver: Bank Top Dark Mild
Bronze: Church End Gravediggers

Session bitter

Gold: Salopian Darwin’s Origin
Silver: Timothy Taylor Landlord
Bronze: Mighty Oak Captain Bob

Premium bitter

Gold: Greene King Abbot Ale
Silver: Glamorgan Jemima’s Pitchfork
Bronze: Batemans XXXB

IPA

Gold: Bragdy Twt Lol Diablo Dragon
Silver: Loch Lomond Bravehop
Bronze: Thornbridge Jaipur



Patrick Davies and his home brew award

Session pale, blonde, and golden ales

Gold: Swannay Island Hopping
Silver: Oakham Inferno
Bronze: Salopian Oracle

Premium pale, blonde, and golden ales

Gold: Baker’s Dozen Electric Landlady
Silver: Blackedge Kiwi
Bronze: St Austell Proper Job

Champion Winter Beer of Britain

Gold: Elland 1872 Porter
Silver: Robinsons Old Tom
Bronze: Dancing Duck Dark Drake

Champion Bottled Beer of Britain winners

Gold: Green Jack Baltic Trade
Silver: Hobsons Dhustone Stout
Bronze: Five Kingdoms McGregors Mild

Champion home brewer

Gold: Patrick Davies, Magnificent Frigate Strong Mild
Silver: Richard Roseblade, Golden Dragon
Bronze: Mark Robatham, Old Claire



How Much Should I Be Drinking?

Over the last few years, I have attended many appointments at various Leicestershire hospitals and quite often been asked how many units of alcohol I consume per week. I am advised that the current UK recommended limit is 14 units per week. Not only this but the current Chief Medical Officer now claims that there are no safe limits and that the health benefits of moderate drinking are “an old wives’ tale” When I asked for some clarification on the rationale behind this level, I got a blank look. Being a long-standing home brewer and someone who enjoys a drink, I am quite interested in this subject, so I set out to do some research so we can all be better informed.

The World Health Organisation estimates that the

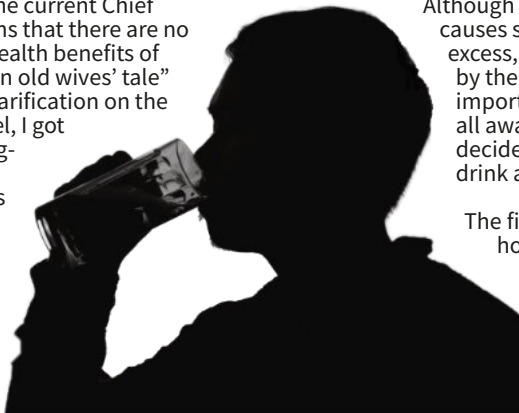
average per capita alcohol consumption was 6.2 litres in 2010 and that alcohol contributed to 3.3 million deaths in 2012. The heaviest drinkers tend to be in eastern European countries, the highest being Belarus at 17.5 litres per person.

With regard to the UK, the NHS estimates that the cost of alcohol-related problems is £3.5 billion per annum. A recent Opinion on Lifestyle survey

indicates that 57% of people over the age of 16 drink alcohol which amounts to 29 million people. Of these, 7.8 million binged on alcohol on their heaviest drinking days.

Although alcohol is a drug and causes serious health problems in excess, it is clear that it is enjoyed by the majority of people. It is important therefore that we are all aware of the facts so we can decide for ourselves whether to drink and how much.

The first thing is to understand how units of alcohol are calculated. This is the volume in millilitres x Alcohol by Volume (ABV) divided by 1000. Therefore, the number of units depends on both volume and strength.



Drinkaware, which describes itself as an independent UK-wide alcohol education charity advertises that a pint of average-strength beer is about 2 units. This is misleading because this is only true for a beer of about 3.5%. There are very few beers brewed commercially at this low gravity. In fact, a 4.5% beer like Marston’s Pedigree is 2.5 units and Everard’s Old Original at

CONVERSION OF ABV TO UNITS

Pint (568 ml)
 $ABV\% \times 568 \text{ divided by } 1000 = \text{UNITS}$
 Pints per week based on 14 units per week

Bottled Beer (500 ml)
 $ABV\% \times 500 \text{ divided by } 1000 = \text{UNITS}$
 500 ml bottles based on 14 units per week

ABV	Units/ Pint	Pints/Week	ABV	Units/ Bottle	Bottles/Week
3.5	1.988	7.0	3.5	1.750	8.0
4.0	2.270	6.2	4.0	2.000	7.0
4.5	2.556	5.5	4.5	2.250	6.2
5.0	2.840	4.9	5.0	2.500	5.6
5.7	3.328	4.2	5.7	2.850	5.0
6.5	3.692	3.8	6.5	3.250	4.3
7.3	4.146	3.4	7.3	3.650	3.9

5.2% is 3 units. Stronger beers are correspondingly higher. More detailed information can be found at the end of this article.

I know from a home brewing perspective that brewing low-gravity beers is difficult as they often taste thin and lack flavour. That is why most of the beers I brew are about 5% which I consider a good compromise. A lot of drinkers prefer to drink two or three medium-gravity beers rather than one very strong one. The problem is that if we take current advice and have 2 days a week without any alcohol, then even one pint per day at 5% will amount to 14.2 units per week which is slightly more than is recommended by the Government.

It is interesting to note that beers of old, particularly before the First World War, were considerably stronger than today. Low-gravity beers of about 4% were called “small beers” and often given to children. Even “mild” beers were brewed at about 6% which is almost unheard of today. After 1914, there were a lot of takeovers and many breweries were closed, thus reducing the choice available. In addition, the tax system in the UK was and still is, biased against high-gravity beers so a lot were no longer brewed. Even very recently many beers have had their gravity reduced such as Old Speckled Hen now brewed by Greene King.

Recommended alcohol limits have changed considerably over time. In the UK the first recommendation I can find on alcohol limits is in 1979 when a weekly limit of 56 units was recommended. This was then revised to 36 units, then to 28, then 21 and finally in 2016 to 14 units. Men and women used to have different recommended levels but that has also now stopped. However, the UK is an exception as in almost all parts of the world, recommended limits for men are greater than for women.

Recommended alcohol levels are also very different in different parts of the world. In Fiji the current limit is 52 units a week, Spain is 35, while Guyana is only 7 units.

The US National Institute on Alcohol Abuse recommends 25 units per week and their research suggests that 26,000 deaths per year are prevented by moderate alcohol consumption

(reduced heart disease, diabetes and stroke) Their J curve which plots the relative risk of mortality and alcohol intake, suggests that the mortality of moderate drinkers is lower than teetotallers and does not exceed that of teetotallers until they consume between 35 and 50 units per week. As most regular drinkers underestimate their consumption either by mistake or design, it is likely that this break even point is even higher.

It has been suggested that the Government is using a technique called “anchoring” which means that if you set a limit of say 14 units, people may well exceed this but probably will not drink twice as much. However, if you set a limit of say 21 units, then people will also drink more but again not drink twice as much. Therefore, setting a lower limit will help with reducing alcohol consumption. In the early days, limits were set by civil servants who looked at the available evidence and made an informed judgement. It has also been suggested that the current limits were influenced by the temperance movement and the health lobby who quite clearly have an axe to grind. When I was in hospital, I asked various consultants whether it would be OK for me to have a moderate amount of alcohol. Some said fine while others who possibly didn't drink because of their religion were totally against it.

“common sense would seem to be the appropriate way forward”

At the end of the day, common sense would seem to be the appropriate way forward. Whilst it is clear that excessive drinking is not good for us, the majority of people in this country do enjoy a drink and the old adage of ‘a little of what you fancy does you good’, may not be a bad approach.

Alan Gayton



The End of an Era

As mentioned in Pub News, Baz Parish has called it a day. Mention this somewhat larger-than-life character anywhere within many miles where real ale is to be had and you will get a story or two. Quite far afield as well, as his 'fame' went before him. Your editor, in his earlier life as a banker, knew Baz when he was at Burrough on the Hill, assisted him and his partner Jim when they set up the Old Brewery in Somerby and regularly took parties of friends on trips to the pub. Jim was actually at Roy's 50th birthday bash just days before he died and not long after that Baz moved back to Burrough. Many, many moons ago, Roy was in a pub in York with Australian inlaws when they found a pub offering some wonderful beers by York Brewery, a new set-up. Chat revealed that Baz had a hand in it.

Parish Brewery started on a small scale back in 1983 and is one of the longest-established microbreweries operating today. Whilst arguably famous for his renowned Baz's Bonce Blower (12% ABV) which has won many CAMRA awards over the years, it was only one of a range of fine beers.



Roy's favourite was actually Poachers, a barrel mixed one-third Bonce Blower and two-thirds Parish Bitter. He recalls one visit when none was available after he had been extolling it to his companions. Roy told the lad behind the bar what it was and asked it be mixed in the pot. The crowd had an excellent evening and one car load went home reasonably early with the driver moaning about the state of his passengers, one of whom sang all the way home. Terrible! Another had left his coat and they phoned to tell the others and commented on the state of his friends. It later transpired that the lad had been mixing two-thirds BBB with bitter.

Baz has continued to produce fine-quality real ales across various beer styles throughout his brewing life. Parish Brewery is also famous for holding the Guinness World Record for Britain's strongest beer. In 1994 with Baz's Super Brew @ 23% ABV, this acknowledgement achieved Baz the title of 'record-breaking master brewer'. Roy recalls having it. You note not 'drinking' it. Baz sold it in thirds only and back then it was £3 a third. Five of them bought one between them and basically passed it around inhaling it.

Baz would never say how he did it, but chemists confirmed it was not fortified. There were, no doubt, several techniques involved, each adding to the end result. At the end of one long evening



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and a certain amount of imbibing, there was talk of the late introduction of Champagne yeast.

Having achieved this remarkable 40-year milestone brewing, Baz has finally decided to stand down. Baz will be putting his feet up and enjoying his retirement with no more excuses for not being able to improve his golfing handicap! Given Roy retired in 1996 Baz has done remarkably well but then strong ale is classed as a preservative.

A presentation to Baz took place at the Melton Indoor Bowls Club in July recognising Baz's achievement of delivering 40 years of brewing excellence. A fitting venue for the event, where Parish beers have been available on tap for customers for many years. A Special Achievement award was presented by John Arthur of Melton Mowbray & District CAMRA who has been Baz's Brewery Liaison Officer for the past 18 years. The event was also attended by



other members of the branch to support this special occasion.

Parish Brewery will continue in the capable hands of its new owners.

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