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The Chiltern Tapler

Magazine of Mid-Chilterns CAMRA

Autumn 2025



The Bull, Berkhamsted. The town's oldest pub.

Berkos oldest pub, The Bull p20

**Championing Real Ale & Real Cider, and Local Pubs & Breweries,
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As a reminder, the *Chiltern Tapler* is on the branch website, and if you scan the QR code it takes you to the Tapler page.

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 <https://instagram.com/midchilternscamra/>



A word from the editors

Welcome to our Autumn edition in which, we hope as always, you will find items of interest from pub and brewery reports to matters from CAMRA's national press releases. Whilst this magazine is very much about our Mid Chilterns region, and a few places 'over the borders', by accessing items from our daily Head Office emails we are able to receive updates from some of the best beer writers in the land – recently those included Laura Hadland, Timothy Hampson and the great Roger Protz: all members of that august body, The Guild of Beer Writers. Incidentally, our very own Branch Chairman (and Tring Brewery expert), Jared Ward-Brickett is now a member of the Guild and has written an article for the magazine.

Now the evenings are drawing in and the weather is turning decidedly autumnal; there are still plenty of opportunities to visit pubs in our area and sample some of the excellent local brews. It is also very reassuring to see that despite one local pub-chain calling in administrators, most of the estate was bought and the pubs kept open. There were one or two casualties, but it could have been far worse. Two pubs, near where I live have had or are undergoing major refurbishments. The outside of the Oddfellows at Apsley, looks fresh and inviting, and the Three Tuns at Nash Mills has also been repainted on the outside and has a more modern look (see Pub Watch).

This is encouraging to see in these difficult times, when pubs need our continued support, and through this difficult period, and lead them to the festive season and better times ahead.

We are always open to feedback, and although this magazine may not be as slick and professional as some, it has gone from strength to strength and our feedback is that the magazine is a welcome addition to the well over one hundred pubs we supply. The print run is now 1750 and is paid for wholly by our generous advertisers, allowing us to supply it free. It is still possible for us to grow in size and

include more of what we hope you enjoy reading about, so if you would like to advertise then please get in touch. Also, we would like to see a few more on our Mid Chilterns committee – all meetings are held in pubs so that could be an incentive – and there are only twelve a year. We have a lot of fun and lively debate and that then dictates how the branch operates, and, to an extent, what goes into the magazine you have in your hand. Please get in touch as we would love to hear from you.

Last edition we decided to drop the What's on Where section, as the beers on offer at a particular pub have changed before the magazine reached you, and as no one has been screaming at us to bring it back, then I think we will drop it permanently. As usual there are articles on pub updates in Pub Watch, Festival Dates, Brewery News, a Special Feature on German Beers, an article on glasses, an update on the Red Lion, Marsworth, a walk through Waddesdon Estates barley fields, as well as Campaign, Industry and Opinion articles from CAMRA, and the Wordsearch Puzzle with the word list based on Herts towns and villages in the Mid-Chilterns branch area.

Enjoy the Autumn and this issue of the **CHILTERN TAPLER** and get to our pubs – perhaps visit some that you have not been to before – where I'm confident you will be sure of a warm welcome.

If you are a CAMRA member in our area, or would like to join, feel free to join us at a meeting, or social, however, there are other things you can do to help us out too – for example submit beer scores online at camra.org.uk and help distribute the **CHILTERN TAPLER** magazines to pubs, clubs, beer shops and other outlets. We are also looking for people to send in news and write articles for the magazine, including photos where possible. Please send them to tapler@midchilternscamra.org.uk.

The Autumn Social is the Tring Trail, which has moved from December, and we are planning a late Autumn Social in London, around Fitzrovia, following a route suggested in the rather splendid "Joolz Guides" by Julian McDonnell, meeting at the Euston Tap. Look out for more information in newsletters and the Mid-Chilterns CAMRA website. There are still some great festivals, both CAMRA and non-CAMRA, in the region and beyond. See the Festival Dates Section. Look out for announcements on our website www.midchilternscamra.org.uk.

It just remains for us to say, support your local pubs and breweries, and try and enjoy new beers and favourites alike!! Brewing is an ever-evolving art! Follow CAMRA for campaigns to preserve our pubs and brewing industry, and news from around the country.

Cheers

Andy & Richard

About the Chiltern Tapler ("Tapler")

Support our sponsors

The magazine you are reading is free. This is because of the pubs, breweries, and other businesses that have sponsored an advert in

this publication. We salute our advertisers, and you can do the same by visiting them. Why not say you found them in the Chiltern Tapler at the same time? Thank you.

Crafted by passion

No one who writes for the Chiltern Tapler, and the editorial team, is paid. We are all volunteers. We produce this magazine because we believe passionately in promoting pubs, breweries, real ale, and local business. Advertising revenue goes towards printing costs, and any excess goes towards funding future issues.

Acknowledgements and credits

We thank all our contributors for their fascinating articles on various beer related subjects - we couldn't produce this magazine without you! We also would like to acknowledge picture credits and articles courtesy of CAMRA's What's Brewing and other sources. Our aim is to bring you a magazine to interest you and broaden your knowledge of beer and explore pubs you may never have been to before, as well as news of CAMRA's latest campaigns.



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CAMRA

regular | ADVERTISING AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Why not let potential customers know what your pub/brewery has to offer? Advertise your range of beers, ciders, and other drinks; special events; food (especially seasonal menus); quiz evenings; beer and cider festivals; beer gardens, themed evenings; cosy warm roaring fire or whatever else, *The Chiltern Tapler* will get the message out there!

To enquire about advertising in *The Chiltern Tapler*, contact the Editorial Team: Andrew Harvell or Richard Abraham at tapler@midchilternscamra.org.uk or call 07748 103190 (Andy), or 07900 907175 (Richard).

The Chiltern Tapler is published four times a year as follows...

Edition	Copy Deadline	Publication
Winter – Dec/Jan/Feb	21 November 2025	Late November/Early December
Spring – Mar/Apr/May	20 February 2026	Late March/Early April
Summer – June/July/Aug	23 May 2026	Late May/Early June
Autumn – Sept/Oct/Nov	21 August 2026	Late August/Early September

Advertising Rates

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Inside cover A5	£120	£110
Full page A5	£120	£110
Half page	£72	£65
Quarter-page	£45	£40

10% discount for advance payment for one year/4 issues

The copy deadline for submissions/adverts for the next edition is 21 November 2025.

Note: It is assumed that once an advert is placed, it is carried until cancelled by email to the editor.

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Tapler Subs, 10 Dean Field, Bovingdon, Herts. HP3 0EW

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THE CHILTERN TAPLER is the quarterly magazine published by the Mid-Chilterns branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. CAMRA campaigns for real ale, real pubs, and consumer rights. It is an independent, voluntary organisation with nearly 200,000 members and has been described as the most successful consumer group in Europe. *The Chiltern Tapler* is distributed free every three months to members of the Mid-Chilterns branch of CAMRA and to pubs and other outlets in the area covered by the branch and beyond. *The Chiltern Tapler* currently has a circulation of around 1,500 copies. Material for publication, including press releases, should preferably be sent by email to the editor or tapler@midchilternscamra.org.uk. All contributions to this magazine are made on a voluntary basis. To join CAMRA, help preserve Britain's brewing and pub industry, get *The Chiltern Tapler* free – and a host of other membership benefits – visit camra.org.uk. © copyright 2025 CAMRA Mid-Chilterns Branch; all rights reserved

CAMRA is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England: company no. 1270286, run at a national level by an elected, unpaid board of directors (the National Executive) and at regional level by its regional directors both backed by a full-time professional staff. CAMRA promoted good-quality real ale and pubs, as well as acting as the consumer's champion in relation to the UK and European beer and drinks industry. It aims to **1.** Protect and improve consumer rights. **2.** Promote quality, choice, and value for money. **3.** Support the public house as a focus of community life. **4.** Campaign for greater appreciation of traditional beers, ciders and perries, and the public house as part of our national heritage and culture. **5.** Seek improvements in all licensed premises and throughout the brewing industry. *The Chiltern Tapler* will not carry editorial and advertising that counter these aims.

The views expressed in this magazine are those of their respective authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or CAMRA.

**Campaign for Real Ale Limited,
230 Hatfield Road,
St Albans,
Herts
AL1 4LW
T: 01727 867201**

The Mid-Chiltern's area is not only blessed with fine countryside but also a plethora of excellent pubs often tucked away in places off the beaten track but serving the best in craft beers and real ales. Whether you are a CAMRA member or not, why not come along to see what it is all about. We try to visit as many pubs as possible throughout the Mid-Chiltern's area and this is a great way of visiting pubs that you would not otherwise have thought of trying.

The diary contains CAMRA events and some local beer festivals that may be of interest.

SEPTEMBER

Weds 3: **Branch Meeting (8pm)**

The Chipperfield Boot, The Common, Chipperfield, Kings Langley, WD4 9BU

Thurs 11 – Sun 14: **BrewFest, Berkhamsted**

Berkhamsted Cricket Club, Castle Hill, Berkhamsted HP4 1HE

www.berkobrefest.co.uk

Weds 24 – Sat 27: **St Albans Beer and Cider Festival 2025 (CAMRA)**

The Alban Arena, St Albans AL1 3LD

stalbanbf.org.uk

Fri 26 - Sun 28: **Kings Langley Beer & Fizz Festival**

All Saints Church, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, WD4 8JS

<https://www.klbeerandfizz.co.uk>

OCTOBER

Weds 1 – Sat 4: **Bedford Beer Festival (CAMRA)**

Bedford Corn Exchange, 13 St. Paul's Square Bedford, MK40 1SL

<https://northbeds.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=243327>

Sat 3 – Sun 4: **18th Ascot Beer Festival**

Ascot Racecourse, Ascot SL5 7JX

<https://ascotbeerfest.org.uk>

Weds 8: **Branch Meeting and AGM (7:30pm)**

The Full House, 128 Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1EZ

Sat 25: **Autumn Social (12 pm) – The Tring Trail**

Start at Tring Brewery, The Robin Hood, Craft Yard, The Black Horse, The Bell, The Akeman, The Kings Arms

NOVEMBER

Weds 5: **Branch Meeting (8pm)**

The Crown, Ley Hill, Nr Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1UY

Sat 29: **Late Autumn Social (12 pm) – London Trail**

Meet at The Euston Tap, Euston Station followed by "A Fitzrovian Frolic". Pubs on the trail include the Grafton Arms; Lore of the Land; Kings & Queen; Nordic Bar; Newman Arms; Fitzroy Tavern; Wheatsheaf; Bricklayers Arms; Bradley's Spanish Bar

DECEMBER

Weds 3: **Branch Meeting (8pm)**

TBC but all members welcome

Why not come along to a branch meeting or social. Look out for announcements on the website or in branch newsletters.

Are you holding a beer festival in the Mid-Chilterns or surrounding area? Contact the [Webmaster](#) with details, and have your event posted on this site.

Details of local and national Beer Festivals are correct to the best of our knowledge, but it would be worth checking with the pub/venue before you plan to visit a venue. We cannot accept responsibility for festivals not being on as we have been given the information in good faith.

All are welcome to our socials, especially members whom we have not previous seen at socials, or potential new members who want to find out more. All CAMRA members are welcome to attend Branch meetings.

Dates may be subject to change.

Please check the Branch Website www.midchilternscamra.org.uk for the latest information or Contact the Social Secretary if you need more information.

regular | FESTIVAL DATES

The following is a list of selected CAMRA and non-CAMRA festival dates

SEPTEMBER

Thurs 11 – Sun 14: BrewFest, Berkhamsted

Berkhamsted Cricket Club, Castle Hill,
Berkhamsted HP4 1HE
www.berkobrefest.co.uk

**Fri 12 – Sun 14: Late Summer Beer and Cider
by the Sea (CAMRA)**

Western Lawns, King Edward Parade.
Eastbourne BN21 4EQ
<https://www.visiteastbournetickets.co.uk>

**Weds 17 – Sat 20: York Beer and Cider Festival
2025**

St Lawrence Parish Church, Lawrence Street
York, YO10 3WP
<https://yorkbeerfestival.uk/>

**Weds 24 – Sat 27: St Albans Beer and Cider
Festival 2025 (CAMRA)**

The Alban Arena, St Albans AL1 3LD
stalbanssf.org.uk

**Fri 26 - Sun 28: Kings Langley Beer & Fizz
Festival**

All Saints Church, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire,
WD4 8JS
<https://www.klbeerandfizz.co.uk>

OCTOBER

Weds 1 – Sat 4: Bedford Beer Festival (CAMRA)

Bedford Corn Exchange, 13 St. Paul's Square
Bedford, MK40 1SL
<https://northbeds.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=243327>

Sat 3 – Sun 4: 18th Ascot Beer Festival

Ascot Racecourse, Ascot SL5 7JX
<https://ascotbeerfest.org.uk>

**Weds 8 – Sat 11: Nottingham Robin Hood Beer
& Cider Festival (CAMRA)**

Trent Bridge Cricket Ground, Radcliffe Road,
West Bridgford NG2 6AG
<https://nottinghambf.camra.org.uk/>

**Weds 15 – Sat 18: Steel City Beer & Cider
Festival (CAMRA)**

Kelham Island Museum, Alma Street
Sheffield, S3 8RY
<https://www.sheffield.camra.org.uk/festival>

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Amersham	Hemel Hempstead
Crown Inn , Little Missenden HP7 ORD	Green Dragon , Flaunden HP3 0PP
Eagle , 145 High Street HP7 0DY	Oddfellows Arms , 113 London Road, Apsley HP3 9SP
White Lion , White Lion Road, Little Chalfont HP7 9LJ	Kings Langley
Aston Clinton	Saracens Head , 47 High Street WD4 9HU
Partridge Arms , 50 Green End Street	Leighton Buzzard
Aylesbury	Boot , 51 High Road, Soulbury LU7 0BT
Chandos Arms , 1 Main Street, Weston Turville HP22 5RR	Cock Inn , 26 High Street, Wing LU7 0NR
Horse & Jockey , Buckingham Rd HP19 9QL	Golden Bell , 5 Church Square LU7 1AE
Plough , Tring Rd HP20 1JH	Swan , Chapel Square, Stewkley LU7 0HA
Weavers , 1 Park Street HP20 1BX	London Colney
Beaconsfield	Bull , Barnet Rd AL2 1QU
Lion of Beaconsfield , Penn Road, Knotty Green HP9 2TN	Redbourn
White Horse , 70 London End, Oxford Road HP9 2JD	Cricketers , East Common AL3 7ND
Berkhamsted	Rickmansworth
Crystal Palace , Station Road HP4 2EZ	Artichoke , The Green, Croxley Green WD3 3HN
George & Dragon , 87 High Street HP4 3QL	Coach & Horses , 22 High Street WD3 1ER
George Inn , 261 High Street HP4 1AB	Cock Inn , Church End, Church Lane, Sarratt WD3 6HH
Highwayman , 262 High Street HP4 1AQ	Feathers , 34 Church Street WD3 1DJ
Cheddington	St Albans
Old Swan , 58 High Street LU7 0RQ	Boot , 4 Market Place AL3 5DG
Chesham	Dylans at The Kings Arms , 7 George Street AL3 4ER
Crown , Ley Hill HP5 1UY	Farriers Arms , 32-34 Lower Dagnell Street AL3 4PT
Dunstable	Six Bells , 16-18 St. Michaels Street AL3 4SH
Old Farm Inn , 16 Church Road, Totterhoe LU6 1RE	Three Blackbirds , 2 High Street, Flamstead AL3 8BS
Red Lion , Church Road, Studham LU6 2QA	Verulam Arms , 41 Lower Dagnell Street AL3 4QE
Swan , Leighton Road, Northall LU6 2EY	Watford
Travellers Rest , Tring Road, Edlesborough LU6 2EE	Horns , 1 Hempstead Rd, WD17 3RL
Great Missenden	Nascot Arms , 11 Stamford Rd WD174QS
Cock & Rabbit , The Lee HP16 9LZ	Swan , 25 Park Road, Bushey WD23 3EE
Green Man , High Street, Prestwood HP16 9EB	Three Horseshoes , The Green, Letchmore Heath WD25 8ER
	Villiers Arms , 108 Villiers Rd, WD19 4AJ

Whilst all of the above pubs normally serve Timothy Taylor's, we suggest you contact the pub for availability before making a special journey

CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale. The scheme builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of environmental issues.



LocAle promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale in order to reduce the number of “beer miles” from brewery to pub cellar.

Learn more at camra.org.uk/locale

What is LocAle?

The CAMRA LocAle scheme was created in 2007 by CAMRA’s Nottingham branch which wanted to help support the tradition of brewing within Nottinghamshire, following the demise of local brewer Hardys & Hansons.

Participating CAMRA branches award accreditation to pubs that regularly stock at least one real ale. Real ales from regional and national breweries as well as from microbreweries can be regarded as “local” if they are brewed within what the branch has decided as being the local area.

Why support LocAle pubs?

Everyone benefits from local pubs stocking locally brewed real ale, including:

- **Public houses** as stocking local real ales can increase pub visits.
- **Consumers** who enjoy greater beer choice and diversity.
- **Local brewers** who gain from increased sales.
- **The environment** due to fewer ‘beer miles’ resulting in less road congestion and pollution. ***This rules out breweries who deliver beer via distant distribution centres.***
- **The local economy** because more money is spent and retained locally.
- **Tourism** due to an increased sense of local identity and pride – let us celebrate what makes our locality different.

CAMRA LocAle Breweries & Pubs

Although it is not set in stone, what counts as a LocAle is taken to be *approximately* 30 miles between brewery and bar. The Mid-Chilterns area stretches over quite a large area and depending on where you are in that area, the following breweries fall within that category:

Aylesbury: Aylesbury Brewhouse Co, Chiltern Brewery.

Borehamwood: Better World Brewing Ltd. **Brill:** Vale.

Chiswick: Fuller's. **Hatfield:** The 3 Brewers of St Albans.

Henley-on-Thames: Chiltern Valley Winery & Brewery, Lovibonds Brewery Ltd, Luxtons.

Hoddesdon: New River Brewery.

Leighton Buzzard: Leighton Buzzard Brewing Co. **Long Crendon.** XT Brewing Company.

Maidenhead: New Wharf Brewing Co Ltd. **Marlow:** Rebellion Beer Co Ltd.

Pinner: Pinnora Brewing. **Potten End:** Mad Squirrel.

Reading: Ridgeway Brewing. **Redbourn:** Farr Brew. **Rickmansworth:** Creative Juices Brewing Co.

Tring: Tring Brewery. **Watford:** Pope's Yard.

White Waltham: Stardust Brewery. **Windsor:** Windsor & Eton Brewery.

There are probably others that we have missed, but you get the idea. If you fall into the category and think that we have missed you out, then please contact the Editor.

Below is a list of pubs in the Mid-Chilterns area that meet the LocAle criteria.

Amersham: King's Arms, The Crown. **Apsley:** Paper Mill, White Lion. **Asheridge:** Blue Ball.

Berkhamsted: Bull, Crown, George, Goat, Mad Squirrel Brewery Shop, Rising Sun.

Botley: Hen & Chickens. **Bourne End:** White Horse. **Bovingdon:** Bell. **Boxmoor:** The Grapes, The Post Office. **Briden's Camp:** Crown & Sceptre.

Cheddington: The Old Swan. **Chenies:** The Red Lion. **Chesham:** George & Dragon, Mad Squirrel Brewery Shop, Queen's Head, Trekkers.

Chipperfield: Chipperfield Boot, Windmill, Blackwells. **Coleshill:** Harte & Magpies.

Dagnall: Red Lion. **Flamstead:** Spotted Dog. **Flaunden:** Brick Layers Arms, Green Dragon.

Great Missenden: The Nags Head. **Hawridge Common:** The Full Moon.

Hemel Hempstead: The Full House, Hop Tap, White Hart. **Ivinghoe:** Rose & Crown.

Ivinghoe Aston: Village Swan. **Kings Langley:** Saracen's Head, Old Palace.

Leverstock Green: Green Man, Leather Bottle. **Ley Hill:** Crown.

Little Chalfont: White Lion. **Long Marston:** Queen's Head.

Markyate: Plume of Feathers. **Marsworth:** Angler's Retreat, Red Lion.

Mentmore: Stag. **Penn Street:** The Squirrel.

Potten End: The Plough.

Seer Green: Jolly Cricketers. **St Leonards:** The White Lion.

Swan Bottom: Old Swan. **The Lee:** Cock and Rabbit.

Tring: Anchor, Black Horse, Kings Arms, Robin Hood.

Whelpley Hill: White Hart. **Wiggington:** Greyhound.

Wilstone: Half Moon. **Winchmore Hill:** Plough, Potters Arms.

Accreditation

If your local pub has a policy of always serving a decent pint of real ale from a local brewery, then we would be happy to help promote them by including them on our "LocAle accredited pubs list". We will also provide publicity materials such as posters, leaflets, beer mats and pump clip crownners to make it quite clear to pub visitors that you are proud to show.

What's happening in the Mid-Chilterns Area

News on closures, re-openings, refurbishments and corporate news affecting local pubs.

The Old Bell Gate, Hemel Hempstead Old Town

The pub has re-opened, after being closed for a short period whilst a new tenant was found.

The Oddfellows, Apsley

The pub has had an extensive external makeover but still retains its theme of being one of the best live music venues in the Mid-Chilterns area and serving top quality real ales.



The Black Cat, Lye Green

This pub is now closed and from a recent drive past looks as though it is falling into disrepair.

The Old Fox, Bricket Wood

Although, not in the Mid-Chilterns area, the Old Fox, Bricket Wood, has just re-opened after an extensive refurbishment following a prolonged period of closure. It is under the ownership of Peter and Gavin, who own the Saracen's Head, Kings Langley, and the Black Boy, Chiswell Green. We wish them luck and hope it is a success.

The Red Lion, Marsworth

The pub is back open following its recent fire, but the kitchen is likely to be closed for at least 12 months (see the separate article on the pub)

The Three Tuns, Nash Mills

The Three Tuns in Nash Mills is temporarily closed between 26 Aug and 20 September for an extensive renovation. Mary Keenan, who had been looking after the pub on a temporary

basis, approved the £155k upgrades to secure its long-term future after confirming plans to become the property's leaseholder. The pub, owned by Heineken-owned umbrella company Star Pubs, had been closed for six months before Mary started running it and she already had experience of running pubs having held several pub management positions. Since her arrival she has hired 10 people, redecorated the interior of the pubs abs redesigned the bar with the help of some of her locals.

Star Pubs confirmed that the six-figure investment would go towards new flooring, a new carpet, new signage and an upgrade of the bar area and lighting.

Corporate News - Oakman Inns

Berkhamsted based Oakman Inns has gone into receivership. They owned a portfolio of pubs in the Mid-Chilterns area. These included The Kings Arms - Berkhamsted; The Red Lion - Water End, Beech House – Amersham and The Grand Junction Arms – Bulbourne. Upham Arms is buying some of the businesses with the exception of The Grand Junction Arms, which has closed. Other venues taken over by Upham include the Beech House at Beaconsfield and St Albans, with the Watford one closing, The Penny Farthing, Berkhamsted, and The Woburn, Woburn.

Contributors: The Editors, Committee.

Local Real Ale Pub News

If you know of a pub that has closed or re-opened recently, or are the owner or manager of a pub or club in the Mid-Chilterns area, and want to share news about your premises, or any other updates, please contact the Editor:

@tapler@midchilternscamra.org.uk

News from some of the breweries in the LocAle area

Chiltern Brewery

North Lee Road, Terrick, Aylesbury,
HP17 0TQ

www.chilternbrewery.co.uk



Celebrating 45 Years of Beer

Celebrating 45 Years of Beers! (1980-2025)

Seasonal and new brews



Their seasonal ale for September is **Kop Hill Ale** - amber, tangerine, smooth, 3.7%.

Kop Hill Ale is the beer of the Kop Hill Climb and we are proud to brew the beer in collaboration with the Red

Lion in Whiteleaf, not far from the Climb's finish line.

Perhaps, like the most successful vehicles up the hill, the beer, at 3.7%, is smooth, light and has just the right amount of oomph, to carry you over the line!

Future seasonal beers.

September: **Golden Hop Ale**. Gold, fresh, lively, brewed with hops grown in the Brewery Gardens. 4.0%.

October: **Dark Cask Special**. A dark beer brewed with Munich malt and Saaz hops for an authentic Oktober celebration. 4.5%.

November: **Hogs in Blankets**. The most popular beer from their SBBs in 2024, that had an Oz twist. It is making a return – this time they are upping the Ante(podean)! 4.5%.

Aylesbury United Football Club – limited edition release

Ducks Ale – available for pre-order now



Ducks Gold is a special limited-edition beer, released to celebrate and support 'The Ducks' in their quest to relocate to Aylesbury.

Three proud local institutions – **Aylesbury United Football Club**, **Xpress Labels**, and the **Chiltern Brewery** – have come together to craft a limited-edition beer that celebrates the spirit of community,

tradition, and collaboration.

Ducks Gold is a golden ale brewed with Bucks grown barley and hops sourced from England. Producing a classic rich golden ale with floral hop notes.

Small batch brews (SBB)

Their core range, seasonals and small batches will be available in their Brewery Shop in Terrick, as well as online.

Please see their website for more details on brewery tours and latest beers.

Farr Brew

Great Level End Farm, Redbourn AL3 7A

www.farrbrew.com



The tap room is fully up and running too and is open every weekend. The current opening hours are Saturday 12 pm to 6 pm, although they expect to expand opening hours once the weather gets warmer. See their website for details of opening hours.

Check out their video to see what makes Farr Brew so special.

For further information, contact info@farrbrew.com – which goes to both Nick & Matt.

Mad Squirrel Brewery

Unit 18, Boxted Farm, Potten End,

Berkhamsted Rd HP1 2SG

www.madsquirrelbrew.co.uk

Brewery news



Mad Squirrel is the main sponsor for Berko

BeerFest 11 – 14th September, at Berkhamsted Cricket Club (see Diary Dates). There will be comedy, beer and live music, and a family day on the Sunday.

New Limited Release Cask Beer

Admiral NZ Pale Ale 4.1%

ADMIRAL NZ PALE ALE 4.1%

Admiral is a bright, refreshing New Zealand Pale Ale brewed exclusively with Nelson Sauvin hops. Bursting with vibrant notes of gooseberry, white grape, and citrus, this cask ale delivers a smooth, well-balanced bitterness and a clean, crisp finish. Its subtle malt backbone lets the unique hop character shine - perfect for sessionable sipping with bold, aromatic fare. A true taste of NZ craft.

HOPS - Nelson Sauvin • IBU - 25
CONTAINS GLUTEN? - Yes • VEGAN FRIENDLY? - No

Sunset Sabro Strata Pale 3.4%

SUNSET SABRO STRATA PALE 3.4%

Sunset is a light and refreshing pale ale at 3.4%, brewed with Sabro and Strata hops for a burst of tropical character. Bright notes of coconut, passionfruit, and ripe berries mingle with a gentle citrus zest, finishing smooth and crisp. Easy-drinking yet full of flavour, Sunset captures laid-back, golden-evening vibes in every sip - a perfect low-ABV beer for slow, sunny sessions.

HOPS - Nelson Sauvin • IBU - 15
CONTAINS GLUTEN? - Yes • VEGAN FRIENDLY? - Yes

Hoodwink Choco White Stout 4.3%

HOODWINK CHOCO WHITE STOUT 4.3%

It looks like a pale but tastes like a stout? That's Hoodwink, messing with your mind. Made with lactose, vanilla and white chocolate this luscious dessert beer has disguised its decadent purpose in the finery of a golden ale. Hoodwink; this is one trick you will enjoy being played on you.

IBU - 27
CONTAINS GLUTEN? - Yes • VEGAN FRIENDLY? - No

Brewery Tours

This is a 45-minute tour through the brewery where one of their experts will give an in-depth explanation of the brewing process from start to end.

The tour also includes beer tasting (4x 1/3 pint) of Mad Squirrel beer and ends in their brewery taproom where you will enjoy a handmade pizza.

The bar and shop will be open for more drinks to have in or take away, plus a selection of merch from clothing to glassware to choose from.

www.madsquirrelbrew.co.uk/brewery/brewery-tour

Pope's Yard Brewery

Unit 12, Paramount Industrial Estate, Sandown Road, Watford WD24 7XA

www.popesyard.co.uk



Pope's Yard Brewery have started brewing again, with a beer commissioned by the Abbey Flyer on the Watford – Abbey Line to celebrate 200 years of modern railway in Britain.



It will be launched at St Albans Beer Festival, and will initially be available in bottles, and after that pubs in the area along the railway, could serve it.

For more information email:

ale@popesyard.co.uk

Rebellion Beer Co

Bencombe Farm, Marlow Bottom,
Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 3LT
www.rebellionbeer.co.uk

Cask Monthly Specials: 2025 Greek Mythology

September - Huntress



4.2%. Huntress is a classic amber best bitter that really hits the spot. It seemed only right to use Archer hops which have a classic floral and citrus character.

October - Mutiny



4.5%. A full bodied, ruby coloured premium ale with a rich, complex malt character, and well-balanced hop bitterness and flavour.

November - Challenger



4.1%. A malt forward best bitter with caramel and biscuit notes. Challenger hops add robust notes of spice and pine.

Tring Brewery

Dunsley Farm, London Road, Tring,
Herts HP23 6HA
www.tringbrewery.co.uk



TRING

BREWERY Co.

Seasonal Special

Squadron Scramble – 3.9% - Brewed to

commemorate the Battle of Britain.
(September to November)



Brewed to commemorate the Battle of Britain, this ale is characterised by a debonair medium light colour and a daredevil maltiness that compliments a courageous hop aroma from the best Mount Hood hops.

Food pairing

This works well with a good welsh rarebit – brown bread, strong cheddar and smoked bacon for the sauce, wholegrain mustard. Yum.

Monthly Special

Turner's Lathe – 3.8% - Suppable British Golden Ale. (September)



Flavours of marmalade and spice meet on an axis of sweet grain and caramel. First Gold hops (UK) are spun into a malt base which features Cara, a lightly

kilned grain that shapes this ale's bright aesthetic.

Food Pairing

Tangerine and marmalade hop aromas will be complimented well by a wood-fired goat's cheese and apricot pizza. Top the pizza with a mouth-watering balsamic drizzle, sip your pale ale and soak in the summer!

The latest tour booking dates and times can be found at www.tringbrewery.co.uk. Any updates will be published via their email newsletter (sign up through the website) and across their social media channels - @tringbrewery.

Vale Brewery

Tramway Business Park, Ludgershall Rd, Brill, Aylesbury HP18 9TY
www.valebrewery.co.uk



Seasonal Beers.

Our Shark – Amber Ale 4.1%



Celebrate 50 years since the release of Jaws with this summer blockbuster: bright, fruity hop aromas over a well-balanced malt base.

Hops: Dragon, First Gold

Malt: Pale Planet, Munich, Mild, Crystal

Brewery Tours

See how it all comes together with a hands-on look at the brewing process from start to finish.

Head Brewer of 25 years, Dave Renton, shows you how to create top-quality ales, and the care and attention that goes into each beer and brew.

Finishing with drinks in the taproom, this is the perfect gift for those who love beer.

Please note: ticket price is for 1 person and includes 1x tasting paddle of beer at the end of the tour.

Dates: 13/09, 11/10, 15/11, and 13/12/2025.

Windsor & Eton

1-4 Vansittart Estate, Duke Street, Windsor, Berks SL4 1SE
www.webrew.co.uk



Beer of the month.

Crafting an Unforgettable Fusion: Maqui Chileno

Maqui Chileno – Best Bitter with a Chilean Twist 4.6%



At Windsor & Eton Brewery, we had the incredible opportunity to host a group of talented Chilean craft brewers during their technical tour of the UK. Together, we embarked on a brewing adventure that would result in the creation of Maqui Chileno, a beer like no other. This collaboration brought together eight Chilean brewers, four bar owners, and their partners, each with their own unique brewing expertise and passion.

Maqui Chileno offers beer enthusiasts in the UK a truly exceptional experience. It breaks free from traditional beer styles, introducing a fusion of flavours that captivate the senses. By combining Maqui berries, sourced directly from the stunning Patagonia region, with British blackcurrants, we've crafted a brew that showcases the best of both worlds.

With a radiant golden hue and a subtle purple tint, Maqui Chileno entices the eye even before the first sip. The complex malty ale base provides a solid canvas for the interplay of soft berry flavours, derived from the Maqui berries and blackcurrants. This collaboration results in a beautifully balanced brew, offering hints of sweetness and complexity before finishing with a gentle bitterness that leaves a lasting impression.

At Windsor & Eton Brewery, we take pride in fostering collaboration and celebrating the diversity of brewing traditions. Maqui Chileno embodies this ethos, exemplifying the cross-cultural exchange that occurs within the craft beer community. It is a testament to the global camaraderie that unites brewers and beer lovers, transcending borders and creating innovative, unforgettable brews.



Raise your glass to the craftsmanship, creativity, and cross-cultural camaraderie that brought Maqui Chileno to life. Join us on this

exciting journey of taste and discovery, as we proudly present this unique and extraordinary beer. Let Maqui Chileno transport you to the enchanting landscapes of Patagonia while celebrating the shared love for brewing and the remarkable flavours that emerge from collaborative brewing ventures. Cheers to the unforgettable experience that is Maqui Chileno.



The beer is a traditional English Pale Ale but with some interesting special features given its history. It has a very light amber colour (continental requirement!) and resultant subtle caramel and biscuity maltiness. Following fermentation, the beer was dry hopped for an extended period in "warm-conditioning" to give a full, distinctive yet mellow hoppiness on the palate and aroma. Overall, this produces a fruity, complex yet light and balanced beer with a long-lasting satisfying smoothness. A classic with pedigree.

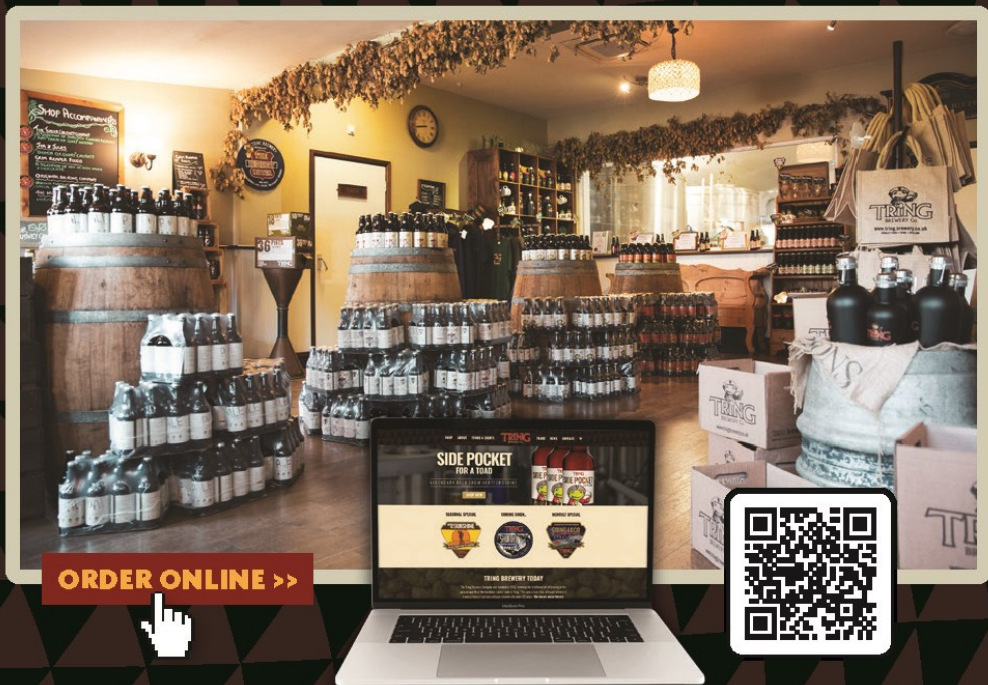
Brewery News

Want your brewery featured next time?
Contact the Editor:

@ tapler@midchilternscamra.org.uk

LEGENDARY BEER FROM HERTFORDSHIRE

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In 2025 our Monthly Specials are raising funds and awareness for The Repair Shed



Dunsley Farm, London Rd, Tring HP23 6HA

☎ 01442 890721 🌐 www.tringbrewery.co.uk



This issue we are shining the spotlight on The Bull, Berkhamsted. Berkhamsted's oldest pub

How Berkhamsted's oldest pub, The Bull, squares up to tough new operating conditions

In early April this year, the hospitality sector was dealt a triple-blow to its operating conditions. The Great British pub, an institution regarded by many as on its knees, saw a reduction to business rates relief, an increase in employer national insurance contributions and an increase to the paid minimum wage.

A cruel joke, two of the three changes came into effect on April Fools' Day, a day that saw perfect beer garden weather. This led to me feeling conflicted as I sat on the outdoor decking of a sun-drenched pub, pint in hand, ready to talk about challenges faced by modern publicans. I had arranged to meet Mark Prendergast and Oli Board, new managers of Berkhamsted's oldest pub, The Bull.



Mark (Bar Manager) and Oli (Head Chef) sat down with us for a brew and a chat

The Bull in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, was constructed at a time when Henry VIII was on the throne, around 1535. It is not outrageous to imagine the portly king supping at The Bull, considering the monarch's eleven-year residence at nearby Asheridge House, a property that came into his possession through the dissolution of the monasteries in the late 1530s. Unlike the guillotines and ruffled collars of Henry's rule, The Bull is still

tangible in everyday life and remains a community hub for the people of Berkhamsted. But the pub is an old building that creaks and groans, and new problems are beginning to rear up.



The Bull, Berkhamsted

"I SIGNED UP FOR THE LOVE OF THE JOB, THE PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITY."

"Five percent. We're looking at five percent of the business from the changes this month. That's without any other prices rises, or reactionary changes from us." Homing in on business rates, Bar Manager Mark explained further "The playing field is massively skewed when it comes to local bricks-and-mortar businesses versus giant online retailers. The [business rates] relief has gone down at the same time that we've been told to absorb a two-pronged rise in staffing costs. But I didn't sign up to be a publican for the money. I signed up for the love of the job, the people and the community."



YOU CAN BRING A CALF TO WATER

When I'd arrived at the pub, Mark was partway through constructing a new set of garden benches and Head Chef Oli was on his way. Mark seemed relieved to be distracted from the task at hand. "The manufacturer shipped these [benches] out with the correct number of panels, hooray, but nowhere near enough bolts! Anyway, the pub opens in fifteen minutes."

Destined for The Bull's canal side beer garden, located at the north end of the pub's elongated footprint, Mark's benches were just one facet of an ambitious exterior makeover. The headline feature of the revamp was a new children's climbing frame named The Calf. The Calf was an impressive turret-shaped structure, a nod, I was told by Mark, to Berkhamsted Castle. The turret's cabin, complete with a slide, could be accessed via a child-sized climbing wall. Underneath the cabin sat a small booth, adorned as a miniature pub.



The "Calf" in the pub garden

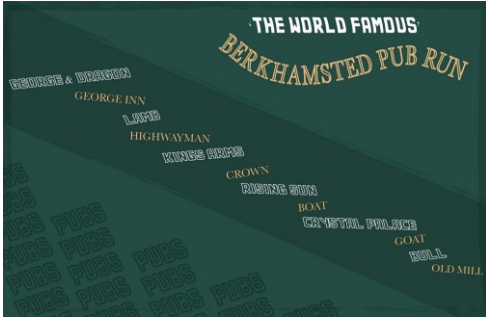
"Here it is – The Calf. It wasn't cheap, it was bespoke, in fact. We're hoping it boosts our family credentials for the summer." Mark elaborated "We've invested so that the pub can become a community space for Berkhamsted residents. We can't let five percent off the balance sheet compromise our offer. The Calf, the benches, new green spots... they help us cater to community values. They bring people in."

The pub's garden area was flourishing and, helped by Mark's green fingers, the space looked very much in bloom. He remained pragmatic still "Maybe it was easier for pubs in the past, but operating conditions are getting tougher. These days, you can't rely solely on a canal side setting. In fact, some think of our location as off-the-beaten-track," he rounded off "We want to give these people a reason to choose The Bull."

A CHOCOLATE BOX PUB RUN

Set to the east of Berkhamsted, The Bull's beer garden offers a first glimpse of the Grand Union Canal from the high street, located at one end of the town's celebrated pub run. The Berkhamsted run, or crawl, is a route of twelve pubs on a near straight line that straddles either side of the high street. Alongside easy navigation and bountiful pub numbers, the town's chocolate-box aesthetics make Berkhamsted the beer destination of West Hertfordshire. Held in similar regional esteem as St. Albans, AKA home of CAMRA, this historic market town swings above its weight when it comes to pubs.

Local opinions are split when it comes to the crawl's health. Some believe that a post-COVID peak in pub numbers makes the growing, affluent town a beer drinker's nirvana. Others reckon that the latest round of budget measures could be the last nail in the coffin of their beloved locals, already pitted in fierce competition. As part a press release which addressed April's business changes, CAMRA's national chairman Ash Corbett-Collins said, "Hundreds of pubs have already stopped trading this year ... with big increases in costs from higher National Insurance contributions starting this week, and hikes in business rates bills for pubs in England too ... we risk losing more pubs which are a vital part of our social fabric". I was determined to find out what Berkhamsted publicans thought of the run's future.



The Bull features on the legendary Berkhamsted Pub Run

“The town is definitely seen as a pub destination and I think that in that respect, we all make each other stronger. Every pub has its niche and serves it well.” It was very nearly opening time and Head Chef Oli had arrived, keen to add his opinion. “Pub crawls, pub-golf, hen dos, stag dos; they still pass through. Not as often as they did. It seems the party economy has shrunk a lot. Clubs and bars aren’t as prevalent as they were pre-Covid and Uber isn’t allowed to operate in the town, so taxi prices can be uncompetitive. Of course, people just have less in their pockets at the moment which is another barrier altogether. Add to these concerns the reduction in business rates relief and increase in NI and wages – it could get tough for all of us.” By now, the pub had begun to come to life, so we took our pints out of the sun and into the heart of The Bull.

The interior of The Bull, a Grade-II listed building, features plush leather seats, charcoal-black wood panelling, a large Tudor fireplace and casement bow windows. Though, as Oli said, the pub “creaks and groans”, The Bull is considered a charming highlight of the town’s legendary pub run.

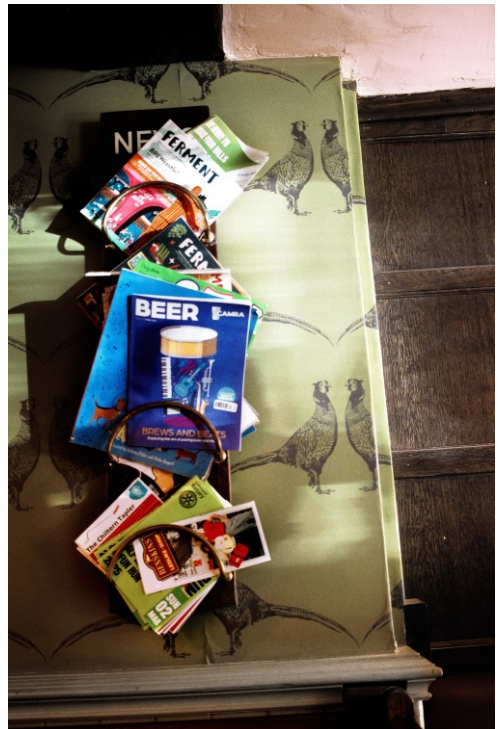
OF TIME AND FREEDOM

Oli had started in The Bull’s kitchen nine years ago, part of a team headed up by previous owners Russell and Shelley. Like the owner before them, Russell and Shelley leased from pub company Red Oak Taverns. Oli remarked “Red Oak Taverns are a good pub company

and have looked after this building for years and years now”. Oli and Mark’s relationship with their pub company, or ‘PubCo’, was key to the business’ bigger picture.



Enjoying a relaxing pint



The Bull’s interior features tasteful fittings and fixtures, such as a communal news rack, loaded with beer publications and local literature

In recent years, many of the nation’s PubCos have seen complete relationship breakdowns with their tenanted managers, leading to the

establishment of the Pubs Code Adjudicator, a new government body with statutory powers and regulations. Mark expanded on his pub's relationship with Red Oak Taverns, clearly content with the arrangement "They take care of the building itself. As I said, The Bull is very old and that could be an expensive worry. The structure is covered, as is the boiler and a number of other big assets. This leaves us with the time and creative freedom to grow the pub, even in the face of new challenges coming this month." Like Oli, Mark had worked under Russell and Shelley for a respectable spell, now in his eighth year at the pub.



Mark, Bar Manager at the Bull, pours a pint of a local ale

With a combined tenure of nearly two decades, Mark and Oli had wowed thousands of covers and poured countless well-kept pints before they took the reins in January 2024. Common knowledge among by the pub's regulars, Oli and Mark prided themselves on a warm welcome. I was impressed that with each guest passing through the door, of which there were many on this particular Tuesday afternoon, came a first name greeting and a familial chitchat with either manager. The pub was far removed from the 'painted on smiles' cliché so bemoaned of clinical hospitality. Mark and Oli knew from experience; a pub can be the centre-point of community life.

"AS WITH MANY BRITISH PUBS, THE BULL HAS GOT A SIMPLE YET APPEALING PURPOSE. WE DON'T PLAN

TO DEVIATE FROM THAT, JUST TO MAKE IT THE BEST IT CAN BE."

"We've been in charge for a year and three months now and we've not had a single instance of anti-social behaviour. We've not had to eject or bar anyone. Unlike the supermarkets, who seem to get an easier ride, we have a duty of care to supervise our drinkers. Locals know The Bull to be a safe and welcoming space. That, for us, is what it's all about." Mark is the most local of locals, living above the pub whereas he told me, there were still fixtures for hammock bedding. These fixtures are a reminder that The Bull was a popular guest house in the heydays of the canals. Oli added "The pub has hospitality heritage. Not much has changed besides the offer of beds and hammocks. As with many British pubs, it's got a simple yet appealing purpose. We don't plan to deviate from that, just to make it the best that it can be."

Rounding off our chat, Mark doubled down on Oli's 'simple but well-executed' sentiment "You can't be everything to everyone. We used to have a commercial-grade coffee machine, but there's no need to compete with the fifty other coffee outlets in town. We removed live sports from the pub almost as soon as we took over, which was a sweeping change." As a spectator in The Bull many times myself, I knew the sizeable crowds live sports had drawn in. But, as Mark explained, with a near eightfold increase in broadcasting costs, the 24/25 season had brought little financial promise. A change in management called for a clean slate. Mark and Oli were determined to crack the basics.

UP TO SPEED, AND ONE FOR THE ROAD

These days, 'Monday Quiz Night', 'Cheap Tuesday' and 'Fish & Chip Friday' put bums firmly in seats, complimented by unique seasonal events such as beer and food matchings, wine and food matchings, and street food markets. Oli's culinary passions are clear, though in his own words he didn't want to "...project [my] personal obsessions

onto a menu that is expected to be refined British pub fare. It's tried and tested, and I respect that." He concluded "There are personal touches; seasonal produce, weekly specials, recipe twists... but the beer and wine matching events, served up with special small dishes, allow the kitchen team and I to explore our gastronomic curiosities. Thankfully, our guests love these events just as much as we do."



It had come time to finish our interview, which had meandered into a friendly babble through the help of some local cask ale. I was left with the impression that both managers took the changes of April 1st very seriously, understanding the consequences for British publicans, the Berkhamsted run and their newly acquired business venture. But to them it was more than a business venture, it was a lifestyle and a purpose.

Oli and Mark recognised that warm welcomes, well-kept beer, quality food and a sense of community make British pubs a sum of their parts and then some. Sure, there were new challenges for Berkhamsted's oldest pub, but the outlook of The Bull's latest custodians was

optimistic and resolute. Oli and Mark were going to give it their all.

Cheers to The Bull!

The Bull can be found at 10 High Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 2BS. To join CAMRA in supporting and protecting British pubs, or to find out more about the organisation's stance on recent changes to business rates relief, the paid minimum wage and employer national insurance contribution, please visit camra.org.uk.

This feature was written by accredited beer sommelier Jared Ward-Brickett and produced with the support of Laura Hadland via a mentorship scheme from The British Guild of Beer Writers. If you're interested in finding out more about the Guild, please visit www.beerguild.co.uk. All words, photos and graphics by Jared Ward-Brickett.

26th-28th SEPTEMBER 2025

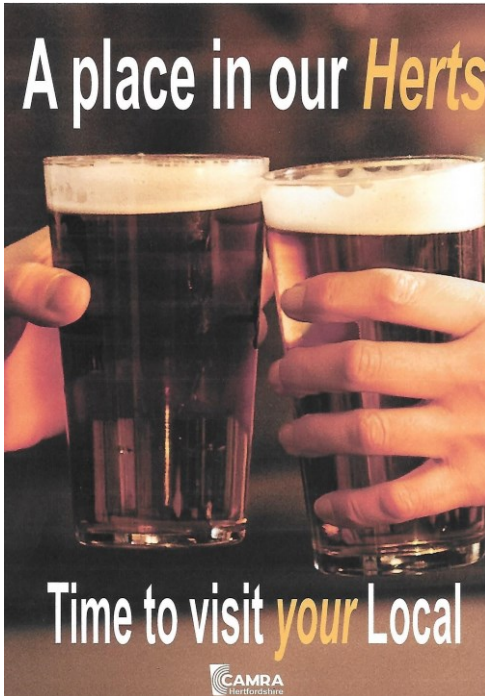
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www.klbeerandfizz.co.uk

In this section we have collected articles which readers may find of interest. It covers topical items as well as CAMRA articles on campaigns, industry news and opinion.

Place in our Herts pubs campaign launched

Campaign



Hertfordshire CAMRA branches have launched a campaign urging people to regularly visit the county's pubs. The initiative is being promoted through posts in pubs and the next edition of the county's Pints of View magazine, at local tourist offices and at Hertfordshire CAMRA beer festivals. South Hertfordshire branch's pub protection officer Les Middlewood said: "Well-publicised national economic pressures have negatively affected so many pubs nationwide, resulting in closures, sometimes permanent or for extended periods. "As the financial noose tightens the queue of new publicans for tenancies is short. And high costs for landlords

have often led to an inevitable increase in bar prices which seemingly has dissuaded many people from regularly crossing the pub threshold for a pint. It is a difficult squeeze for landlord and drinker alike. "Nevertheless, pubs are at the very heart of Hertfordshire's tradition, remain great social centres for conversation and fun and are on our agendas for meeting friends in moments of celebration and commemoration. But if they are going to survive and prosper, we need to convince more people to see it that way and to visit more regularly. "While CAMRA nationally continues to petition government for beer duty relief, changes to Business Rates and seeking VAT fairness, in Hertfordshire we feel it is also time for our locally led pub-supporting campaign, visual on the ground at pub level and for as many people as possible to see."

07/08/2025 by Timothy Hampson

Community pub ownership bulletin – August

Campaign



Since April's bulletin, the number of community-owned pubs (COPs) has increased from 217 to 223. Those not owned but run by the community remain at 28 and the number of active campaigns is still 78, though that hides a degree of churn with some

campaigns coming to fruition, others failing and new ones coming along.

CAMRA supports the community-ownership model and is keen to assist those interested in going down this road. The community-pubs webpage of CAMRA's website contains advice and guidance as well as regularly updated information about existing and planned projects.

Community Right to Buy

Government recently published the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill which will deliver the promised Community Right to Buy, giving groups first refusal on the purchase of Asset of Community Value (ACV)-listed properties that are put up for sale. The current ACV regime offers groups only a "right to try" and owners can ride out the six-month moratorium period with no obligation to sell.

Under the new scheme, once the property is put on the market, a community group can enter negotiations with the owner. If a price cannot be agreed, then an independent valuer will set the figure based on market value. The moratorium period will be extended to 12 months. Owners will be able to ask the local authority, six months into a moratorium, to check that community groups are making sufficient progress to raise the necessary funds.

Nominating groups will be able to appeal against a local authority's decision to refuse an ACV application. Presently, only owners have a right of appeal. Local authorities will be supported to deliver the new powers with revised guidance.

This is positive development. At present, there are many instances of owners putting ACV-listed pubs on the market at inflated prices that effectively put a halt to any meaningful purchase negotiations. In future, the sale price should be a fair one, reflecting the property's value as a pub rather than as a development site.

The changes also give a boost to the ACV regime itself. Having that status will significantly increase the chances that a pub can be bought by local people for a reasonable price.

CAMRA will continue to work with civil servants on the detail of the Bill's provisions, paying particular attention to the revised ACV guidance for local authorities and look to address the many omissions and ambiguities in the existing documentation.

15/08/2025 by Roger Protz

Pubs should be parent and child friendly

Opinion



It was the loneliest I'd ever been. A few years ago, I took parental leave when our first-born was still a baby and found myself with

days in front of me without work and, crucially, a social network to rely on. I tried various playgroups, activities and classes but I found myself encroaching on female spaces with not much to add to their conversations. I expected none of this when my partner and I worked out that I would at times be the primary carer of our children. And a time I thought would be full of purpose and adventure, turned into the opposite. That was until I went to the pub and a female bar manager, who was Italian, decided to support me and my fledgling family by creating a space that was inclusive. For her, running a pub for all was second nature because she viewed hospitality as not just a career but a mission to make lives better to all who stepped through the pub doors. It also helped that, for some reason, both my children didn't make much noise when they were babies, but more than made up for it years later as my neighbours will attest. Soon my routine involved the pub and other parents joined in, leading me to remember this time fondly. Having experienced this in a so-called, wet-led pub, I do feel the narrative of children

in pubs is all wrong as it seems to be focusing on this idea that we as a nation either have two options: create adventure playgrounds in pubs or ban children all together. But first, let's deal with the elephant in the room. The reason I was the outlier, and continue to be, is women still do the most childcare (and housework), a situation exacerbated by systemic issues, such as low pay and paltry paternity leave. So, if men are more likely to work and be paid more, then they're more likely to rise to managerial positions and be the type of bloke who gets to change rules in a pub chain. And I might be wrong here, and I'm happy to be corrected, but Marston's pubs installing a Woodie's Sweet Factory sounds like a headline-grabbing marketing idea with little thought of the effects. Worst of all it stereotypes children and the way they should act. As mentioned, my kids are at the age where they are noisy but if I take them to the pub, they are well drilled on what I expect from them. I'd rather they left their playground antics at the playground because I want their fun to not be at the expense of others. But some children have different needs and I'm fortunate enough to not have to worry about unpredictable behaviour, noise or high energy levels. (Sidenote: the Red Lion desi pub in West Bromwich has a quiet room designed for families with children with additional needs). You could also say, rightly, I'm privileged to be able to visit pubs a lot because of my job. The other extreme is to ban children which is the worst option and I think this is whereas a society we are wrongly choosing to go down the route of polarisation. We need pubs to be of mixed demographics, especially when it comes to ages. By celebrating families, the old meet the new and they might even start to learn from each other. But most of all there are women and men who desperately need spaces when they're looking after their children to have a few moments to just be themselves. If I hadn't been welcomed into the pub with the baby in the sling and not patronised, then that loneliness would've

maybe become unbearable. Instead, I look back fondly at the community I found, and I want future generations to feel the same.

09/08/2025 by David Jesudason

Voters back easing tax burden on pubs

Pub



A new poll, commissioned by the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), reveals pub business rates have become politically contentious. More than half those surveyed (55 per cent) say they would vote for a party that promises to ease the tax pressure on pubs. Support climbs to 73 per cent among 25-34-year-olds. These findings land as the BBPA warns that without meaningful business rates reform, Britain's locals and breweries will struggle to survive and pubs will continue to close at a rate of one a day. The cut from a 75 per cent rate relief to eligible pubs, to just 40 per cent was estimated to cost the pub sector £98m. On top of this, publicans now keep just 12 pence on every pint sold, squeezed not only by unfair tax but also by rising energy bills, staffing costs and regulatory pressures. The BBPA's Long Live the Local campaign argues the next Budget is the best chance in a generation to secure permanent, meaningful reform of business rates and to embed fairer beer duty. BBPA chief executive Emma McClarkin said: "This data is crystal clear that many see pubs as a lifeline instead of a luxury.

However, too many pubs are finding it impossible to keep the doors open when they're up against so many punishing rates and regulations. "When a pub closes it not only takes away the heart and soul of the community, but hurts working people and their families who rely on those wages. "The government can turn this around by delivering meaningful business rates reforms that will ultimately boost jobs, high streets, and the economy." The findings show the public agrees pubs are central to communities, as 55 per cent of respondents say a good local ranks in their three most important neighbourhood amenities ahead of schools, places of worship and gyms. And 58 per cent say they have attended or organised an activity such as a playgroup, darts night or book club in a pub during the past year. Despite this role, pubs still pay significantly more in business rates than comparable community spaces. That disparity helps explain why 76 per cent of the public believes pubs that host community services deserve a reduced tax burden. Paul Frost runs the of the Langton in Bristol. He said: "Pubs like ours are seen as the heart of the community by everyone, except the taxman. "We host choirs, toddler groups, charity events, and even a wellness hub, but business rates haven't caught up with reality. The support just isn't there, even though we're doing more than ever to bring people together." Kate Davidson of the Old Ivy House in Clerkenwell, London (pictured) is fearful for growth at her pub, she said: "We knew it would be tough, but it's become relentless. We're growing, but the profits don't reflect that proportionally. "The pub isn't just about pints; it's about lonely people finding connection, students bonding with retirees and parents feeling welcome. That's the value the current rates system completely ignores."

18/08/2025 by Timothy Hampson

What makes a good beer head?

Industry



The tendency to foam and the stability of the head on a beer is often seen as an indicator of successful fermentation and now new research has proved this to be true. A research paper on the stability of a beer head has recently been published by the American Institute of Physics in its journal *Physics of Fluids*. The authors compared the stability of the head produced by four Belgian beers: Bosteels Tripel Karmeliet, 8.4 per cent ABV; Westmalle Triple, 9.5 per cent; Westmalle Dubble, 7 per cent; and Westmalle Extra, 4.8 per cent and two Swiss lagers: Chopfab, 4.7 per cent; and Feldschlösschen, 4.8 per cent. The conclusion is that triple-fermented beers have the most stable foams, while the froth rim created by a single fermentation brew, including lagers, is more likely to collapse. Like any other foam, a beer's head is made of small air bubbles, separated by thin films of liquid. Under the pull of gravity and the pressure exerted by surrounding bubbles, over time, the bubbles burst and the foam collapses. The rate at which this occurs depends on the form of a barley-derived protein, Liquid Transfer Protein 1 (LTP1). In single-fermentation beers, LTP1 proteins have a globular form and arrange themselves densely as small, spherical particles on the surface of the bubbles. "It's not a very stable foam," said Prof Jan Vermant, a chemical engineer at ETH Zurich, who led the study. During the second fermentation, the proteins become slightly unravelled and form a net-like

structure that acts as a stretchy elastic skin on the surface of bubbles. This makes the liquid more viscous and the bubbles more stable. During the third fermentation, the LPT1 proteins become broken down into fragments. These protein fragments stabilise foams in many everyday applications such as detergents. Some of the triple-fermented beers had foams that were stable for 15 minutes. Vermont added: "We now know the mechanism exactly and are able to help the brewery improve the foam of their beers." 05/09/2025 by Dave Pickersgill. Photo: Dave Pickersgill

Global women's beer campaign gears up for 2026

Industry



International Women's Collaboration Brew Day (IWCBD) will be back for 2026 with funding and partnerships in place to increase the campaign's impact. The global campaign organised by Women On Tap CIC brings together beer and International Women's Day by inspiring communities to gather at breweries on or around 8 March to brew, network, learn and celebrate women. The beer industry remains stubbornly male-dominated, with women still making up just 30 per cent of the overall UK workforce – a figure unchanged since 2022. Only four per cent of those women are now in brewing roles, a sharp drop from 11 per cent in 2019. Women now represent just eight per cent of all

brewers, down from nine per cent last year, and their presence in management has slipped from 25 to 23 per cent. Meanwhile, women remain heavily overrepresented in administrative roles, comprising 78 per cent of that segment. IWCBD aims to drive change by boosting representation, promoting the growth of support networks, and inspiring breweries to reflect on workplace inclusion. First launched in 2014 by Sophie de Ronde of Burnt Mill brewery, the global brewing celebration ran for 10 years before taking a break in 2024. Later that year, Women On Tap CIC – the social enterprise championing gender equality in the beer industry – announced it would be picking up the reins. IWCBD made its welcome return this year with 61 brew days, 837 participants, 66 beers, and £26,921 raised for 44 women's causes around the world. Women On Tap has now secured funding and put in place the building blocks for IWCBD 2026, with a number of enhancements. These include: – the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) is headline partner for IWCBD for another year, demonstrating its commitment to inspiring inclusion and supporting positive change – WSET (Wine and Spirit Education Trust) will once again be the education partner. For 2026, it is expanding its support by increasing donated places on the exclusive IWCBD online Level 1 Award in Beer from 18 to 30. These places will be available to participants across all regions, helping more people around the world to access professional beer education – a new bursary will be offered, supplying direct financial support to those who are required to cover their own travel costs and who would find this a barrier to participation in the campaign – Simpsons Malt has returned as a main sponsor SIBA chief executive Andy Slee said: "SIBA could not be more pleased to once again be partnering with Women On Tap to present the International Women's Collaboration Brew Day for 2026. Improving the diversity of the beer industry and attracting more women to join brewing is essential for

the future of the sector and we look forward to helping as many breweries as possible get involved this coming year.” WSET beer educator Natalya Watson said: “WSET is thrilled to increase its impact for next year’s IWCBD campaign. In 2026, we’ll be offering 30 global participants the opportunity to gain their Level 1 Award in Beer and to grow their networks through this special online course. Our qualifications don’t just provide product knowledge and tasting skills – they build confidence and create opportunities for people to take their next step in beer.” Women On Tap founder Rachel Auty, who will lead the campaign again in 2026, said: “It’s been an honour to take ownership of this legendary campaign this year. We’ve already started to evolve it with excellent results, and there’s more to come. “For 2026 we’re looking to grow participation, particularly internationally. We’ve engaged a range of new industry supporters and we’re introducing a bursary scheme to remove some cost barriers. We want to increase the impact of the campaign across all metrics for 2026, and we’re grateful to SIBA, WSET and all our other supporters for enabling us to do this.”

02/09/2025 by Timothy Hampson

Action needed to get people back into pubs

Campaign

As the Great British Beer Festival opened its doors in Birmingham, the Campaign had a stark warning for government ahead of the Autumn Budget. New polling from YouGov reveals 45 per cent of pubgoers say they are going to the pub less often in the past 12 months due to the rising cost of living. A clear signal urgent action is needed to protect the nation’s pubs, publicans and brewers. CAMRA chairman Ash Corbett-Collins said: “People want to support their local pubs, but the reality is, they’re being priced out. With lower disposable incomes and publicans being forced to put up prices through no fault



of their own by rising running costs, for a lot of people a regular night out at the pub just isn’t affordable. “This is a warning sign for the future of our locals. If people can’t afford to go, pubs can’t survive. But luckily, the chancellor can use the Autumn Budget to help fix this. “We are demanding the government uses the upcoming Autumn Budget to help make pubs more accessible: starting by rolling back on the disastrous hike in National Insurance contributions, cutting VAT for pubs just like they’re planning to do in Ireland, introducing significantly lower business rates bills for pubs and brewers, and cutting tax specifically on pints served in pubs. These measures are desperately needed to secure the future of our beloved locals, world-renowned breweries and to stem further price hikes for drinkers.”

06/08/2025 by WB Reporter

The gastropub lives

Opinion



I’ve been organising my thoughts on the gastropub concept ever since I read the wonderful Katie Mather’s thoughts on the subject in her excellent newsletter, The Gulp. She talked about slow death in a gastropub, and while much of what she said resonated with me, I have always been a keen devotee of the concept. Since the term was coined in the mid-nineties, and popularised from the

2010s, I have sought to find the unicorn – a great pub with excellent beer and an uncommonly high level of food quality. There's nothing wrong with standard pub grub, I enjoy it regularly, but sometimes I like a little bit of fancy. But finding a genuinely excellent example has been next to impossible, because I care about my beer. While there are many venues out there who offer an elevated menu, I have almost universally found their beer lists are distinctly lacking. You can have all of the locally foraged ingredients and nose-to-tail eating you want, but if you can't choose a quality pint or bottle to pair with it, disappointment ensues. Practically every gastropub I have ever visited in my life appears to have worked hard to curate a decent wine list but afforded approximately seven seconds to making sure their beer and cider offering passes muster. Imagine my surprise to encounter two brief-fulfilling pubs in the course of one day. Fittingly enough, they were both in London – the birthplace of the gastropub in the form of the Eagle in Farringdon (which I have to confess I have never visited). I started off with lunch at the invitation of the William IV in Shoreditch, a pub which was rescued and beautifully restored in 2023. If you had asked me to describe my ideal gastropub to you before my visit, I would accidentally have described this pub precisely, without even knowing it. It is cosy and welcoming – a friendly space for the many local residents but fitted out to a high standard. It has a phenomenally well thought out pub menu, and in the evenings, there is an even bigger menu in the upstairs Dining Room. And it has a fine selection of beers and ciders. I counted 44 options on the list, including a good range of low-and-no alcohol products. Had I been dining with a friend, I would certainly have chosen one of the Little Pomona 75cl sharing bottles to enjoy with the meal. A pint of Siren's Mesmerist kept me company as I browsed the menu instead. The William IV is still finding its way around what actually sells, so not everything I wanted to try

was in stock. The Pohjola sours that caught my attention had taken so long to sell that they had not been replaced, for example, but there were plenty of more than satisfactory alternatives. The pub does an excellent line in pies, served with the most incredible triple-cooked chips, but those in the know only countenance the chalkboard of daily specials. It is written each morning just before opening, when the chef has picked up the best fish from Brixton and the choicest Swaledale cuts of meat have been delivered. I had the chalk-stream rainbow trout with a caper and sundried tomato sauce, roasted new potatoes and fennel. It was a joy. Crispy skin atop perfectly moist fish that was still a gleaming red within. An encapsulating orchestra of flavour that was only improved by the addition of a bottle of Boon's classic Mariage Parfait. If you want a lighter snack, then I recommend the homemade Welsh rarebit crumpet, which I think may be the most satisfying thing to pair with a pint that I have ever eaten. None of this food was fussy. It was simple and uncomplicated. Fresh, carefully chosen ingredients were left alone to sing their own song. The presentation and portions were good – everything invited you to dive straight in – but there were no smears of sauce or micro herbs or any similar fripperies that can scream pretension. Even more remarkable in many ways was the pricing, with most main courses not costing anything more than I would expect to pay for a (significantly lower quality) meal in a chain restaurant here in the West Midlands. After this wholesome lunch, I had an evening soiree with brewer Anspach & Hobday. As part of its tap takeover at the Lore of the Land in Fitzrovia, it had arranged a special five-course pairing menu, showcasing its beers with new dishes developed by the kitchen team. Again, it was a privilege to attend, despite the fact that I was incredibly full. A sea bream crudo with pickled fennel danced on my palate alongside the Anspach & Hobday Blonde. We were treated to a homemade stout fudge with Maldon salt and –

what else – a small glass of London Black. These are the things that dreams are made of. I know I am not alone in enjoying good food just as much as I enjoy good beer. I am heartened to see that fantastic gastropubs do exist and that they are well patronised. Rejuvenated, I will continue my quest to find, and share, more of the great ones in the hope that it encourages the others to pull their socks up and ensure they get their beer offer up to standard.

19/07/2025 by Laura Hadland

Cream of Manchester heads home

Industry



The Cream of Manchester is heading back to the city as JW Lees is to brew and distribute it under licence from Budweiser Brewing

Group (BBG). This partnership will see Boddingtons Cask at 4 per cent ABV being positioned in the growing premium cask beer category under the leadership of JW Lees head of national sales Matt Savage, who joined JW Lees from Heineken in April this year. Henry Boddington started brewing at Strangeways brewery in Cheetham Hill in 1778. In the 1990s, the beer was promoted as the 'Cream of Manchester'. Whitbread bought the brewery in 1989, and Boddingtons Bitter received an increased marketing budget and nationwide distribution. Boddingtons achieved its peak market share in 1997 and at the time was exported to more than 40 countries. Production of the cask-conditioned beer moved to Hydes brewery in Moss Side, Manchester, until it was discontinued in 2012, ending the beer's association with the city. William Lees-Jones, sixth generation MD of JW Lees, said: "When I joined JW Lees in 1994, Boddingtons was the Cream of Manchester and we were in awe of their position in leading the cask beer revolution and we are planning to put Boddingtons back where it rightly deserves to be as one of the

leading premium UK cask beers particularly in our heartland of the North-West. "We also look forward to working with Budweiser Brewing Group with their portfolio of market-leading lagers and premium packaged beers in our pubs." AB InBev Western Europe president Brian Perkins said: "We are excited to relaunch Boddingtons Cask ale in partnership with JW Lees, combining one of the UK's most iconic beer brands with one of its most respected brewers. "We see real growth potential for Boddingtons in the UK on trade, and this is a great example of how strategic partnerships can unlock value for both businesses and beer lovers alike."

24/07/2025 by Timothy Hampson

Mild's stronger than you think

Opinion



On my first trip to the Beacon Hotel in Sedgley I found a visitor from Japan in one of the small rooms supplied by the central bar. When I asked him what had brought him to a pub in the English Black Country he held up his glass and said: "Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild." That's fame for you. A beer brewed on a tiny plant at the back of a pub that has achieved recognition in Asia. I recalled that meeting last month when Sarah Hughes won Silver in the Champion Beer of Britain competition with its Snowflake Barley Wine. It's a deserved award but the pub and brewery will always be best known for its Dark Ruby that at 6 per cent ABV

has changed our perceptions of how mild ale should taste. Most modern interpretations of mild clock in at around 3.5 per cent or less. But historically that was not the case. In 1871, in Herbert's Art of Brewing the typical gravity of mild was 1070 degrees, which is around 7 per cent alcohol in modern measurement. At the turn of the 20th century the average strength of beer was 5.5 per cent at a time when mild was the dominant style. Back then the term mild was used to describe a beer that was not weak but which was sweeter than such other dark beers as porter and stout. They were aged in wood for lengthy periods and had a sour and lactic bite. Mild on the other hand was not aged and often had an addition of brewing sugar and caramel. The end result was a beer that satisfied large numbers of people engaged in heavy industry or agriculture and who needed to restore lost energy after long shifts in factories and fields. The Beacon Hotel was built in 1850, and it included its own small tower brewery in the yard at the back of the pub. Tower indicates that the brewing process flows from floor to floor, with water tanks at the top feeding mash tuns and coppers below. Sarah Hughes bought the hotel in 1921 and ran it for 30 years. She passed it on to her son and daughters when she retired. Only one beer, the strong mild, was produced. The family closed the brewery in 1958 but Sarah's grandson, John, reopened it in 1987. All the old wooden vessels had rotted away, and John replaced them with stainless steel ones, faced with wood. He had the good fortune to discover Sarah's recipe for mild in an old cigar box locked in a bank security vault. It's a simple recipe: pale malt, 10 per cent crystal malt and Fuggles and Goldings hops. On my first visit, after chatting to my new friend from Japan, I clambered up to the brewery to survey the kit. When I asked the brewer which variety of barley he used, he replied Maris Piper. I wondered if he was distilling vodka on

the side as Maris Piper is a variety of potato. Fortunately, John Hughes was on hand to correct his brewer and state firmly the barley was good old Maris Otter. He went on to add Surprise, Pale Amber and Snowflake to his range, but Ruby Mild remained far and away the most popular beer on offer at the hotel and free pubs in the region – not forgetting Japan. With Penzance Mild winning the overall championship at the Great British Beer Festival last month, it was good to see such revered and historic beer styles getting the appreciation they deserve. Barley wine all but disappeared in the 20th century but is now being brewed again by discerning brewers. It's a style that was developed for the English aristocracy in the 18th and 19th centuries. As a result of the interminable wars with France, patriotic English nobles refused to drink French wine and got brewers to make strong ales to grace the lords' and ladies' dining tables. Many of the noble houses had their own small breweries where it was the butler's task to start the mash before preparing their master's breakfast. As a result of heavy taxation on beer in the 20th century, strong ales of 8 per cent and more were too expensive to produce. For decades the only barley wine available was Whitbread Gold Label. It's still around, owned today by AB InBev and largely ignored by the world's biggest brewer of Eurofizz. But it's being brewed again by a number of brewers, and I hope Snowflake's victory will encourage more to follow the trend. The 8 per cent beer has another simple recipe: Maris Otter pale malt, a dab of crystal malt with good old Fuggles and Goldings for aroma and bitterness. It's luscious, vinous, with honeyed malt, rich fruit and spicy hops. You can enjoy it at the Beacon Hotel, with a packet of crisps made, no doubt, from Maris Piper spuds.

07/09/2025 by Roger Protz



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Committee members on tour: William, our secretary, recently visited Germany and describes tow al-like beers he discovered there!

Alt-ernative beers of Germany

What springs to mind when you think about German beer? Golden steins of Pilsener? Probably. That Weissbier you enjoyed on holiday? Maybe. But ales? Almost certainly not! And yet a stretch of the Lower Rhine is home to two beers that have ale characteristics: Altbier and Kölsch. Both are top-fermented using ale yeasts but cold lagged for conditioning.

I first encountered Altbier at GBBF some years back. I was intrigued by its deep copper hue and malty, nutty palate, complemented by a slightly fruity tang from the hops. How could this beer be German? It resembled an exotic cousin to best bitter. I was intrigued and wanted to know more. So, I consulted the great authorities on global beer styles, Michael Jackson and Roger Protz. Their books told me that Altbier got its name – literally ‘old beer’ – because it had long been the dominant style of beer in North Rhine-Westphalia before Pilsner became top dog in the 19th century. In Dusseldorf and the surrounding area, it had clung on as a cherished part of local culture and identity.

I felt that I needed to go there and persuaded a beer-obsessed (and German-speaking) friend to join me. Our mission: to visit all five of the brewpubs keeping the Altbier flame burning in and around Düsseldorf’s lively Altstadt, or old town. First up was Uerige, which means ‘grouch’ – the original 1860s owner not being renowned for his sunny disposition. It’s a warren of a place, with room after cosy room sprawling from winding corridors. Here we first encountered the local style of service: our typically brisk and taciturn waiter (nicknamed ‘Kobes’ – short for Jacob) plonked down our cylinder-shaped half-pint glasses from a circular rack on one arm, made two marks on my beermat to keep track of the tab, then brought the next round as soon as

the last was done. The only way to stem the tide was to put a beermat on top of our glasses – the signal for the bill – and fast.



A couple of ‘regulars’ at Uerige, Düsseldorf

We then walked ten minutes into the modern city centre to Brauerei Schumacher, the oldest of Düsseldorf’s brewpubs.



Rabbits at Brauerei Schumacher, Düsseldorf

Even more than Uerige, it had retained an old-world character, with abundant traditional decoration that shades into outright eccentricity (check out the rabbits!). The effect, combined with the excellent beer and

food, is to make the customer feel right at

home. If my friend hadn't persuaded me to leave after the sixth beer, I suspect I'd still be in my corner seat now. Back in the old town, we hit Zum Schlüssel (literally 'To the Key' – by all accounts a nod to the medieval custom of keeping the key to the city gates in a nearby pub. What could go wrong?). This was a more



Altbier in the wild, Zum Schlüssel, Düsseldorf

of an open-plan beer hall than the first two and so busy that we had to grab one of the last tables, which had narrow ledges to perch on instead of stools – these were more suited to, ahem, the less generous posterior! We resolved to just stay for 'a couple' but the beer's malty richness was so moreish that that idea rapidly slipped to 'maybe three more'. We were also encouraged to stay by our waiter, who broke with the Düsseldorf stereotype by being up for a chat and a joke during a lull in trade.

But again, we had to press on with our mission: to the venerable Am Füchschen ('At the Little Fox'). On a fashionable street behind the huge K20 art gallery, this one reminded me of a Belgian 'brown café' on a grander

scale, with dark walls and red-tiled floors in its numerous rooms.



Side-room at Am Füchschen, Düsseldorf

Their Alt was another favourite, sharing the russet hue of the pub's namesake and dialling up the fruity notes on the back of a hefty malt hit. Our last stop of the five brewpubs, Brauerei Kürzer, was the new kid, having begun life in 2010. Inside it was much like many contemporary brewery taps: industrial, stripped-back décor. And in another break with tradition, our 'Kobes' was female. Despite its 'youth' the beer compared well with its much older rivals, while perhaps lacking a little of their depth and complexity.

Mission accomplished? Not quite. My research had missed two pubs! A visitor from Frankfurt who shared our table at Uerige told us of Altern Bahnhof, another newish brewery across the Rhine in the affluent suburb of Seestern. One speedy internet search later, we realised it was a quick ride on the U-bahn (underground) away and went for it. We found an elegant building that combined the best of tradition and modernity – lots of wooden panels and brightly painted walls overlooked smart tables and the centrepiece: the spick-and-span copper brewing kit. And their Gulasch Alt went down a treat, as did the food from their extensive menu. The second pub we found by accident on the way back to the hotel, looking for somewhere to fill up with some late-evening carbs. Frankenheim did that job admirably and was a pleasant enough

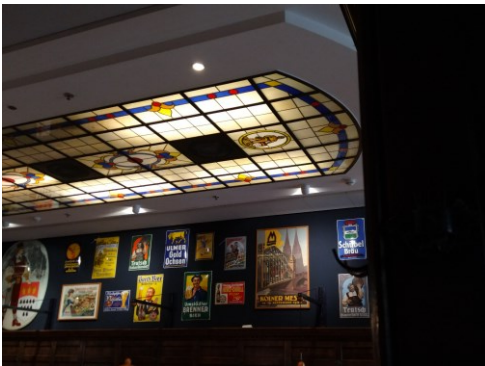
special feature | ALT-ERNATIVE BEERS OF GERMANY

place with a sizeable beer garden; but their brew was a bland affair compared with the others. Later we were unsurprised to learn that the brewery had been bought out by a larger concern from out of town – an all-too-familiar tale.

I would highly recommend a short break in Düsseldorf and Altbier is definitely a style that is worth getting to know. Not 'old ale' as we know it in the UK, but a formidable German alternative,

I mentioned earlier that there was a second ale-like beer in Germany, namely Kölsch. This beer is literally synonymous with Cologne: 'Kölsch' comes from Köln, the city's German name. Only brewers based there are allowed to call their beer Kölsch, so fiercely protective are the locals of this liquid tradition. Cologne's brewers' association laid this down in a 1986 government-backed convention that also fixed the style's characteristics. The pale and frothy appearance of a Kölsch could lead to it being mistaken for Pilsener, but that impression fades quickly on contact with the nose and tongue. The aroma tends to be fruity and floral; the taste delivers on that promise, adding a subtle maltiness before a gently bitter finish that swiftly urges you onto the next gulp. It is served in a similar manner to Altbier, but in an even smaller glass, the 200ml 'stange'. The ABV clocks in at 5% or a little less.

I was reminded of this rare style while planning my Altbier trip to Düsseldorf. When I



Decoration at Gaffel am Dom, Cologne

discovered that Cologne was just half an hour away by train, a side trip just had to be done. A quick bit of research yielded five Kölsch brewpubs dotted around the old town, although the city has at least twice that number. After a few minutes gaping at the dramatic cathedral that dominates the view the moment you step from the train station, my friend and I felt that a drink was called for. Fortunately, Gaffel am Dom was just around the corner. Before noon the place was already heaving with locals getting stuck in, and no wonder. It's a beautiful beer hall with stained glass and vintage beer advertisements catching the eye everywhere you look. But the beer! This was (just about) my favourite – its



Jünner Kölsch, Cologne

subtle flavours and long bitter finish somehow slaked and stoked the thirst at the same time. I confess that we later felt the need for a nightcap (or two) there

before catching the train back.

Next, we worked our way anticlockwise round the cathedral to Früh am Dom. I felt that the food outshone the beer at this local institution, but it was still well worth a visit to explore its rustic rooms and cellar with old brewing equipment. Deeper into the old town, we found Peters Brauhaus on the edge of the pretty 'Old Market' square. This was another wonderfully designed pub, all dark wood, stained glass and inviting nooks. But the early Spring

sunshine lured us outside, where we enjoyed the malty sweetness of the house Kölsch, which gave the beer bags of character without upsetting the balance of flavours.

Resisting the temptations of the Beer Museum and its bar, we pressed on to Sünner im Walfisch ('Sinner in the Whale'), a 17th-century gabled building whose well-lit, cheerful interior is the very opposite of what the name might lead you to expect. Their beer, complex in palate and on the dry side, was another firm favourite.

A detour along the bank of the Rhine took us to our last pub, Brauerei zur Malzmühle. The clue was in the name: their Mühlen Kölsch is all about the malt, from start to finish – this might not be to everyone's taste, but it certainly was to mine. While we sipped our 'stangen', some locals joined our table and talked about rivalries with their neighbouring city. One gentleman, possibly with tongue in cheek, told us how the good people of

Cologne would pour Kölsch into the Rhine and the Düsseldorfers scooped it out again downriver as the darker Altbier. I suspected this was not a compliment and politely kept quiet about what had brought me to Germany...

If you're in the mood for some 'beer tourism' and want to try somewhere off the beaten track, a short break on the Lower Rhine has much to offer. Düsseldorf is perhaps a less conventionally 'touristy' city, but its attractions extend beyond the excellent Altbier brewpubs, especially if modern art is your thing. Visit Cologne for its elegance and two millennia of history but do stay for the subtle depths of its prized local beer. You'll get to experience ales brewed with a German twist and a convivial drinking culture. Just be careful not to order an Altbier in Cologne, or a Kölsch in Düsseldorf – you might not be allowed back!

William Powel

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The Red Lion, Marsworth, a Phoenix risen from the ashes!

On the day following the fire at The Red Lion, Marsworth standing with the Landlord, Pete Oxley I confess I thought it would be a very



The Red Lion, Marsworth, after the fire

long time before pints were again pulled across the bar. The considerable damage caused on 21 May (not 23 May as reported in the Summer Tapler – my error) has yet

to be put out to tender, there are many considerations in a 17th Century Grade II listed building, but – amazingly – the bar re-opened on Thursday 7 August.

A large part of the pub including the porch main entrance, restaurant and kitchens are

completely blocked off but the bar is very much open for business. A clarion call to the local community and friends of the pub led to six or seven volunteers a day, from the previous Saturday to the day before opening, rolling up their sleeves and cleaning, painting and more to bring this well-loved pub back into use.

Such is Pete and Mandy's sense of humour that the beers on cask were Oakham 'Inferno', Rebellion 'Roasted Nuts', Chiltern 'Black' in addition to their regular Rebellion 'Smuggler', and the cider is Lilley's 'Fire Dancer'.

Just eleven weeks after closure the Red Lion is up and running, though the restaurant side will probably take twelve months, a wet-led pub which Pete says he can sustain until food is again available. Mid Chilterns CAMRA welcomes the Oxley's determination in being back in business after such a short period and loves their ironic sense of humour.

Richard Abraham

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Where great food, live music, and a relaxed atmosphere come together. Tucked away in the heart of the countryside, we're the perfect spot for locals and visitors alike to unwind, dine, and enjoy.

- 🍳 Kitchen Open Daily 12pm – 8pm
- 👤 Featuring our popular Sunday Roasts – comfort food at its best!
- 🎸 Live Music Most Weekends
- 👉 Kick back with a drink and enjoy great local talent every Friday and Saturday night.
- 🎯 Darts Board & Pool Table
- 👥 Challenge your mates to a friendly game – or join in the fun every week!
- 🕒 Free Pool Tuesdays 6-8pm
- 👉 Yes, you read that right – free pool every Tuesday evening!
- 🐕 Dog Friendly
- 👶 Water and treats always available for our furry four-legged friends.
- 👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Children Welcome Until 9pm Daily
- 👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 A relaxed, family-friendly setting for all ages.
- ☀️ Beer Garden

Make the most of sunny days in our spacious garden – the perfect spot to relax with a cold drink.

Whether you're here for a roast, a round of pool, or a pint in the sun, we've got everything you need for a perfect pub experience.



🕒 **Opening Hours:**

Mon: 10:30–23:00
 Tues: 12:00–23:00
 Wed – Thurs: 10:30–23:00
 Fri: 10:30–00:00
 Sat: 12:00–00:00
 Sun: 11:30–22:30







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Dimple, Lantern, Sleever, Nonic and more.....

Since beer was first created it has been imbibed from many different types of vessels – wood, leather, bone, horn, pewter, lead (that from Roman times which wasn't a great idea as it led to poisoning of the drinker!), through to glass and - sadly – polycarbonate, and worse still 'bendy' plastic! In my case I started bitter drinking from a cider mug where the 'baby' blue outside and off-white inside glaze was crazed over time and use, the important thing was that it was a handled receptacle, still always my preference. Thinking about this and coming across the word Nonic – more of which later – has led me to researching some of the history of the vessels used to consume our favourite beverage.

It is entirely likely that the pottery mug from which I enjoyed my Courage Bitter was mochwaware, invented around the end of the 18th Century, and probably produced by Pountneys of Bristol. Up until the First World War it would have been commonplace to see most pub beer drinkers using pottery mugs, though the higher echelons of hostelry-going consumers drank from pewter in the Saloon Bars. T.G Green of Church Gresley, South Derbyshire, was apparently the last company still making mochwaware until ceasing production at the outset of World War II; the company finally closing in 2007.

Glasses specifically for drinking beer out of have been made in Britain since at least 1639, and were first recorded, produced at a Newcastle upon Tyne glasshouse owned by Sir Robert Mansell, though these products were very expensive and therefore mass production wasn't an option. It would take the invention of pressed glass, made by pressing semi-molten glass into an iron mould, before beer glasses could begin to come into the reach of the common drinker. The first patent recorded for a commercial glass-pressing machine was granted in the United States in 1825, to John Palmer Bakewell, son of an English-born Pittsburgh glassmaker,

Benjamin Bakewell. The first glass-pressing machine in Britain was installed at the Wordsley Flint Glass Works in Stourbridge in 1833, founded by Benjamin Richardson, whose firm became the first in *this* country to make mass-produced pressed glass tumblers. However, in Britain glass remained relatively expensive until the abolition of the glass tax in 1845, which caused a considerable increase in the production of glassware of all kinds.

Richardson's product would have most likely resembled a glass which still can be found in modern pubs. This is the straight sided conical or Sleever glass, known as a shaker in the United States, where they claim this style was invented. That seems hard to accept given that a Sleever is still the correct vessel in which



to serve Draught Bass, arguably holder of the oldest 1875 registered trademark – the red triangle - in the world. Arguably because Averill Paints in the United States, Lowenbrau and Stella Artois make similar claims! However, this is digressing, but we can allow the Americans to lay claim to the Nonic, more of which later.



Another classic glass beer vessel is the Lantern style mug, sometimes over time having been referred to as the 'fluted', 'ten-sided' and Queen's Choice mug, it has been around since the early 1920s. It was picked up by the Brewers Society in the 1930s as, literally, the face of British beer in its long-running "Beer is Best" promotional campaign: the campaign's Mr XXX was a man with a ten-sided beer mug as a head! Not seen so often in my experience, having been 'forced out' in the 1960s by the more popular Dimple beer mug, but from around 2017 a fifth-generation family firm supplying to the hospitality trade – Stephenson's of Stockport, Cheshire – are

retailing Lantern mugs. It would be great to say that are also producing them but not so.



As with the Dimple mug, any recently produced Lanterns come from China!

So, to the ubiquitous Dimple mug. This originates from 1938 and was invented at the Ravenhead Glassworks in St.

Helens, Lancashire and quickly became the most popular pub glassware, produced in pint and half pint measures. As beers became lighter in hue, away from the much darker porters, stouts and milds, it was thought necessary to pour the new amber English bitter styles into a glass which would better show them off. That had been the case with the Lantern glass but holding a multi-faceted Dimple up which reflected and refracted light showed the beer at its best. Another advantage of this style was that when hand washed – as all were before the advent of machines for the purpose – the glass could be gripped rather more easily than straight sided and Sleever glasses. Despite being a Ravenhead design, other manufacturers notably Dema of Chesterfield, in Derbyshire, who at that time was Britain's largest domestic glassware manufacturer, also produced the Dimple mug. Both Ravenhead and Dema went into receivership in 2000 and 2001 respectively and Dimple production ceased. The French company Arcoroc produce a Dimple style called Britannia, but most these days come from China.

In the 1970s, when there was a wider choice of beer for the drinker – the rise of lagers and keg beers in particular – the heavier glass style started going out of fashion, (to an extent that decline is still seen today) and lighter vessels became preferred. These times also saw a large increase in branded glassware with most producers demanding that their beers should only be served in their own glasses.

In addition, pubs have increasingly sold a

greater range of bottled beers from overseas so, again, these are served in glasses bearing the brewery's logo. The only menu in my favourite town local – The Black Lion, Leighton Buzzard, a wet-led pub – is that itemising a large range of bottled beers from many parts of the world; all served in the correct branded glass.

Whilst this subject is endless (some of my research in writing these thanks must go to the late Martyn Cornell – a beer writer for over forty years – and his Zythophilic, which I thoroughly recommend, website) it is time I covered the Nonic glass! For this one we can give the United States full credit as it was created in 1913 by Hugo Pick of Pick & Company, Chicago. Called Nonic or No Nick, which rather better explains why it was so named, it is effectively a



thin glass Sleever style receptacle but with a bulge about three quarters of the way up the glass. In the 1920s glassware was a significant expense for pubs so this unassuming bump in the glass served three purposes. It gave the drinker a better grip on a glass possibly covered in condensation so it's less likely to be dropped. Secondly the bulge makes the glasses easier to stack and unstack so thus are less likely to stick together and lastly, if the Nonic is knocked over the bulge hits the bar first preventing damage to the rim so **no nicks!** It is true to say that there had been glasses with bulges of various sizes since the mid-19th century, but these were often for different purposes; fitting under a soda-fountain in the States for instance, not for the reason the Nonic was created, which in the UK first went into production at Ravenhead in 1948.

So, there we have it, an article on beer drinking vessels down the years which, though very far from exhaustive, was purely driven by the fact that I had never heard of a Nonic glass!

Richard Abraham

George Jenkinson, partner at the Chiltern Brewery takes us on a field walk

Each year, we walk the fields of malting barley grown exclusively for us. Late last month, we joined Olly Pemberton, Farm Manager of Waddesdon Estate, for a field walk at Nether Winchendon.



Olly Pemberton, Farm Manager is L; Tom Jenkinson, Chiltern Brewery Partner is R.

The view from the field is stunning. It stretches across the Vale of Aylesbury and with a brilliant blue sky and welcome zephyr, we walked the field to assess the goldening crop. Despite the dry weather, the ground is holding moisture well just below the surface, as Olly showed us. He is happy with this year's crop and the malting barley looks very good.

Waddesdon use regenerative farming methods to grow our malting barley, and Olly and his team's efforts go into improving the health of the soil.

Regenerative farming uses minimal tilling, sprays and disturbance, so that the soil is kept healthy. What is good for the soil, is good for the barley, and therefore good for the beer in our hands!

For Olly, the next stage is his favourite, harvest time. From Waddesdon, the golden barley is taken to Warminster Maltings. They turn it into malt using a traditional floor malting process - in fact they are the oldest and last traditional floor Maltsters.

After steeping the barley in spring water drawn from beneath their maltings, the natural germination process starts. They then dry it on malting floors, turning it morning and evening, until they know it's ready.

It's a Victorian process, very much in tune with the practice of regenerative farming. Natural processes which yield terrific results.

When Warminster give us the nod, we take delivery of the malting barley which will be ready for us to brew with!

In all, from the time Olly plants the golden seeds, to when it is ready to brew with, it can take one to two years.

It is a natural, unhurried and pleasing process. One that we like to think makes our Beers worth their 'wait' in Gold!

Calling all Publicans...and Drinkers – we need your help

Publicans

CAMRA's WhatPub website is Britain's most comprehensive database of the nation's pubs, listing almost 30,000 pubs, clubs and bars. It provides customers with free access to information about YOUR PUB. So, having brought customers to your front door, let's not disappoint them by giving the wrong description and out-of-date opening times!

It is important that your WhatPub entry is kept up to date, and whilst the local branches work very hard trying to make the information relevant and current, CAMRA members can't be everywhere all the time! This is where YOU, the publican, can help CAMRA to help you.

Go to WhatPub.com, search for your pub (name and part address/post code) and check the information. Maybe something needs correcting, opening hours, regular beers, facilities, transport connections? Or perhaps the description of the pub, its history and the photo can be improved upon?

It's very simple to contact CAMRA with your changes using a phone or laptop/PC/tablet.

See '**How to update WhatPub**', opposite.

Drinkers

Sitting in your local, enjoying a quiet pint, might be a good time to check if the WhatPub entry is up to date. Has one of the regular beers changed? Has the pub stopped showing live sport on the TV? Is there something else you've noticed? Take a look at the pub's entry by searching whatpub.com. If you think a change is needed, see '**How to update WhatPub**', opposite.

Once that's done how about using WhatPub to plan your own 'ale trail' (or 'pub crawl' as some of us still call them)? A geographic search by county, town, first part of the post code, etc., is easy, as using the filters to narrow down your choice based on a list of features and facilities. And as WhatPub is provided by CAMRA, a filter on the homepage allows a search for only those pubs and clubs that serve real ale.

All pubs are included from village locals to destination pubs, from town community pubs to city centre bars, and from historic pubs of architectural interest to slick modern outlets.

Whatever your taste, you're almost guaranteed to find a suitable pub in any part of the country.

How to update WhatPub

Non-CAMRA Publicans and Drinkers

1. Search for your pubs, then click on '**updates on the pub**' in the pink box (you can also use '**Submit Updates**' if on a PC/laptop).
2. In the three boxes enter **Your Name, Your Email Address, Your Message**. Your message should list the required amendments and let WhatPub know if you are the publican.
3. Now confirm that you're not a robot and click on '**Send to CAMRA**'.
4. You will receive an email from CAMRA with a copy of your message and confirmation of the Local CAMRA branch it has been forwarded to.
5. Your suggested amendments will be received by a designated CAMRA Officer from the Local Branch. Once authorised, WhatPub will be updated.

CAMRA Members:

1. Search for your pub, then click on '**updates on the pub**' in the pink box (you can also use the '**Submit Updates**' if on a PC/laptop).
2. Click on '**Go to Login page**'.
3. Enter your **Membership Number and Password** then click on '**Login**'.
4. Scroll down the list and click on '**Yes**' next to the item you want to change. This will open a drop-down box.
5. Type your change(s) in the box.
6. Repeat for each item you want to change.
7. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on '**Send to CAMRA**'.
8. Your suggested amendments will be received by a designated CAMRA Officer from the Local Branch. Once authorised, WhatPub will be updated.

Your help is needed!

Why?? ...Because now most Branches use beer scores (as per CAMRA's recommendations) in order to decide their shortlist for the Good Beer Guide pub selection. We have a meeting each

December to look at the beer scores for the previous 12 months. We then try and visit the top ones to check out the quality of beer and in January we shortlist the top 8 pubs from Bucks and top 8 pubs from Herts (we can only put 8 from Bucks and 8 from Herts in the Guide). If you want your favourite pub to stand a chance of meeting the criteria, please submit beer scores for the quality and condition of their beer. Mid Chilterns Branch has 850+ members but only about 30 of those submit scores.

The National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is an easy-to-use system that has been designed to assist CAMRA branches in selecting pubs for the Good Beer Guide and also monitor beer quality by encouraging CAMRA members from any part of the world to report beer quality on any pub in the UK. If you are a CAMRA member, we want you to tell us about the quality of beer in the pubs you visit.

You can score your beer online at home or if you have a smart phone in the pub!

To submit your scores just visit <http://whatpub.com>. Log into the site using your CAMRA membership number and password. Once you have found a pub on the site, you can start scoring. You can find out more at <http://whatpub.com/beerscoring>

You need to record the location and name of the pub (WhatPub mobile can work this out!), The date you visited the pub, a score out of 5, the name of the beer/brewery.

The scores mean the following:

0 - No cask ale available

1 - Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.

2 - Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but does not inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

3 - Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

4 - Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.

5 - Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

You can also enter half scores, e.g., 3.5 for good to particularly good beer. You should not mark down a beer just because you do not like it because if the beer is in good condition, it should be marked accordingly. It is not about personal preference; it is about the quality and condition of the beer.

Once beer scores have been submitted online, CAMRA branches can download them and use them to help in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide selection process. For more information, go to <http://camra.org.uk/nbss>

branch members scoring as the committee can't get to every single pub in the branch (nearly 200) more than once a year, if that, so we rely on local members scoring their local pubs. Landlords often ask us why they aren't in the Guide, as do members occasionally, but we need at least 5 different people to put in a score per pub each year and at least 10 different visits to the pub in order for it to have an average score and a chance of being on the shortlist.

PLEASE help us and the local pubs by submitting scores on a regular basis. I would also ask Landlords to encourage their regular CAMRA members to put their scores in. Thanks very much.

Nigel Harris

Pubs, Pints, People.

Give a gift membership to the beer lover in your life!

Beers are best shared with others. So, treat someone you like to a CAMRA gift membership and bring them along to the pubs and festivals that matter.

Set the membership to start on someone's special day!

They'll receive all the great discounts, benefits and vouchers you do, through the post.

Gift a membership today!
camra.org.uk/gift-membership



 **CAMRA**

As a bit of fun, the Wordsearch grid below contains the names of the words in the list below. The words can run up or down, left to right, backwards, or at an angle. Punctuation is ignored. Each puzzle is based on a relevant beer or cider related theme.

Herts town & villages in the Mid-Chilterns branch area

E	T	T	R	L	D	Z	U	T	L	B	P	O	T	T	E	N	E	N	D
A	R	R	F	U	I	N	Y	R	E	B	O	V	I	N	G	D	O	N	D
V	D	I	F	U	B	T	U	O	L	L	D	U	T	O	Y	E	E	K	O
C	F	N	L	Y	K	N	T	W	E	C	O	W	R	O	A	S	T	Y	M
W	X	G	A	F	F	O	L	L	V	A	E	Z	T	N	T	O	Z	O	D
N	W	B	N	L	R	R	W	E	E	H	L	R	S	T	E	N	G	A	B
Q	I	R	S	A	I	T	I	Y	R	G	X	D	O	O	O	E	E	W	E
D	G	I	T	U	T	H	L	B	S	U	A	C	B	T	T	T	N	M	R
K	G	D	E	N	H	C	S	O	T	G	I	D	S	U	S	V	C	D	K
U	I	E	A	D	S	H	T	T	O	P	N	R	D	P	R	C	H	I	H
W	N	N	D	E	D	U	O	T	C	S	A	L	M	E	I	Y	I	U	A
B	G	S	G	N	E	R	N	O	K	M	S	E	M	A	S	B	P	X	S
U	T	C	H	S	N	C	E	M	G	S	H	P	P	E	M	D	P	X	S
L	O	A	B	E	L	H	N	N	R	L	M	P	I	M	A	R	E	L	T
B	N	M	P	O	T	A	O	F	E	I	I	F	Y	E	R	M	R	N	E
O	K	P	Y	J	X	L	N	M	E	M	L	E	Y	G	K	M	F	G	D
U	K	J	G	D	P	M	E	G	N	V	L	J	D	I	Y	C	I	S	F
R	Z	A	M	Y	U	H	O	Y	L	S	S	E	Z	H	A	A	E	C	O
N	F	Z	F	H	Y	V	P	O	P	E	P	S	A	V	T	S	L	G	W
E	T	C	M	T	J	G	Q	A	R	V	Y	G	B	H	E	G	D	S	P

The words in the grid can be found from the lists of breweries below. Ignore spaces and special characters.

ALDBURY
 APSLEY
 BERKHAMSTED
 BOURNE END
 BOVINGDON
 BOXMOOR
 BRIDENS CAMP
 BULBOURNE
 CHIPPERFIELD

COW ROAST
 FLAMSTEAD
 FLAUNDEN
 FRITHSDEN
 HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
 KINGS LANGLEY
 LEVERSTOCK GREEN
 LITTLE GADDESSEN
 LONG MARSTON

MARKYATE
 NASH MILLS
 NORTHCHURCH
 PICOTTS END
 POTTEN END
 TRING
 TROWLEY BOTTOM
 WIGGINGTON
 WILSTONE

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The Mid-Chilterns CAMRA Branch Officers are all unpaid volunteers, but please feel free to contact us about local pubs, breweries, and events.

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