

ALE TALK



Campaign
for
Real Ale



AUTUMN 2024

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Those of you who routinely access the CAMRA website will be familiar with the furore that has arisen over Whitbread's decision to close their bars to the public in 115 of their premises nationwide. So yet again my Chairman's notes are primarily for the benefit of our many members who are not connected to the Internet. Here in Huddersfield, The Aspley on Wakefield Road was part of the site that combined a Premier Inn, bar and restaurant. The restaurant and bar was food led, but it was perfectly possible to go into The Aspley simply to have a drink. That being the case, The Aspley met the definition of a pub. In taking the decision to restrict access to the bar and restaurant to hotel residents only, the company has changed the use of the building unilaterally. At the time of writing there has been no application for a Certificate of Lawful Use from Kirklees Council to legitimize the change, although that will surely follow as applications have been made in other locations. In my view Whitbread PLC are operating outside the law.

Why does this matter? Quite simply CAMRA believes that Whitbread's move is about circumventing the restrictions on Permitted Development Rights approved by the last government. You may recall that CAMRA had to fight for this change in the teeth of vested interests and ideological purists who believed that pubcos should have the right to dispose of properties how they wished, regardless of the devastating effect on local communities of the loss of a much loved pub. Prior to the restrictions on Permitted Development Rights, developers could convert pubs to housing or other use without the need for planning permission. CAMRA HQ has been coordinating the process of objecting to the granting of Certificates of Lawful Use to Whitbread and I have already written to our new MP on behalf of the branch seeking her support, and she has agreed to meet me. I have also registered a Planning Breach with Kirklees Council and am awaiting a response. It goes without saying that all the other pubcos will be watching events with (vested) interest. If Whitbread succeed in getting Certificates of Lawful Use it drives a coach

and horses through the legislation as it will be much harder to object to planning permission to convert a hotel to flats whose wining and dining facilities were available only to residents, as the argument that a community facility has been lost will be drastically weakened. We ask for the support of all members in opposing this insidious attack on pubs and the legislation designed to protect them.

In another disturbing development, Marston's has sold its brewing arm, which along with the Burton brewery comprised its ownership of five other breweries including Jennings and Ringwood, to its partner in the Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC). This means that Marston's is now simply a pubco. As part of the deal Marston's pubs will take all their beer from Carlsberg. Two risks arise from this; a reduction in customer choice and the potential further closures of breweries as part of a rationalisation process, which, of course, will cost jobs. Once again the weakness of the regulator, the Competition and Markets Authority, which approved the merger in 2020, has been exposed.

Sadly Huddersfield has lost one of its best licensees, Selina Farrington at The Railway, Bery Brow. I won't go into the intimate details in order to respect the privacy of the outgoing licensee, but I can say that it was a dispute about responsibility for repairs that could no longer be put off. I'm advised that by the time you read this, new licensees will be in post and the pub reopened, but unfortunately it has been necessary to remove The Railway from the forthcoming 2025 GBG due to the uncertainty surrounding the pub's future when the submission deadline was reached. You will appreciate that we cannot put a pub in GBG before we know whether or not there will be cask ale, or what its quality will be. Hopefully the new licensees can maintain the standards set by Selina and her partner, Wayne, who we wish well for the future, and challenge for a place in subsequent years.

Paul Laxton

Chairman, Huddersfield and District Branch

Branch Awards

Spring Pub of the Season

Cherry Tree, Huddersfield



The Cherry Tree in Huddersfield Town Centre won the Spring Pub of the Season award. All the usual Wetherspoons features are present, including reasonably priced food and beer. Alongside the permanent beers, there are up to seven changing guest beers, Acorn, Adnams, Leeds, Moorhouses and Acorn feature regularly. Cider drinkers are not forgotten, with three real ciders always available.

Summer Pub of the Season

Four Son's Inn, Fixby



The Four Sons at Fixby was saved from closure by the Starkey family who run the nearby Roundhill Inn. Cameron, seen here receiving the award is one of the 'four sons' and runs the pub. Vocation Bread and Butter, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and Timothy Taylor

Boltmaker are the regular beers, in addition Timothy Taylor Landlord Dark was available on the presentation evening which proved very popular, although many of us still think it as Ram Tam. The Four Sons is a popular pub both for its beer and for the home made food that is served each day. The pub offers a warm welcome to all and is well worth a visit. The 549 from Huddersfield stops outside the pub.



Club of the Year

Armitage Bridge Club

This year's Huddersfield CAMRA Club of the Year award has been won by **The Armitage Bridge Club aka The Monkey Club**. This award winning Club has been a regular nomination for the title of Club of the Year for some years and it's not difficult to see why. The club serves some top quality beers, promotes real ale by supporting local brewers and provides an important community focus with its local events and activities.

Branch Awards

The club's manager, Gareth Shaw, and the bar staff are to be commended for their dedication to looking after the beer and are a shining example of what can be done with a bit of imagination and effort. Quite an impressive achievement for a small local club!

Gareth Shaw has been the manager for the last 15 years. In that time he has successfully managed the beer selection and quality to scoop the prestigious Huddersfield CAMRA Club of the Year Award starting from 2012 to 2024 and achieving runner up in 2014 with CAMRA Yorkshire Regional Club Of The Year.

Unlike some clubs which are tied to the national brewers and obliged to serve bland ales and lager, the Monkey club is totally committed to real ale and is free of tie. The bar supports a selection of four handpulled beers. These include regular beers from **Empire Brewing** and **Abbeylea** brewery with a selection of ever-changing guest ales such as Ashover Brewery beers, Nailmaker beers plus others. All the beers are served in tip top condition, a fact recognised by this award.

One of the highlights of the year is the *annual Monkeyfest beer, cider and music festival*. This year the popular festival known as RAAM (Real Ale And Music) will be taking place on Saturday 7th September for one day only when the festival will be making a welcome return.


The Monkey Club has a good sports fraternity and plays host to the Berry Brow football team. It also supports both summer and winter darts and pool teams. There are two large screen HD TVs with Sky Sports and BT Sports showing live rugby and cricket matches. The Huddersfield Ramblers and the local Morris side are known to frequent the club from time to time to partake of the ale. Other social events include Quiz Night.

If you are looking for a small venue, then the club has an upstairs function room, complete with sound system, bar and attached kitchen for hire. Outside bar hire is also available.



New members are always welcome. No affiliation and no membership are required. The Club is open Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7pm to 11pm; Friday from 5pm to 11pm; Saturday from 4pm to 11pm; and Sunday 3pm to 10pm. It is closed Monday and Tuesday. Bus services that stop nearby are the 307 308 310 314 316, which stop on Woodhead Road at Berry Brow and the 324 which stops on Meltham Road at Big Valley. Daytime only service 354 stops on Bank Foot Lane.

Did you know?

Research commissioned by CAMRA found that people who have a 'local' felt they had more close friends they could call on for help and support



Source: Dunbar, R., "Friends on Tap" (2016)




ASK, "IS IT CASK?"

The launch of 'Fresh Ale' by Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC) is a handpump hijack, which misleads consumers into thinking they will be served a cask-conditioned beer - which is far from the case.

Serving so-called 'Fresh Ale' though a handpump also boots a genuine cask beer off the bar, depriving consumers of choice.

CMBC claim to champion cask beer but have instead closed breweries and removed cask lines from bars.



DAWDLING AROUND DERBYSHIRE

Deciding where to go for a break wasn't too difficult this time as we fancied a bit of football and a pint or three around Derbyshire. Tickets were sorted for Derby County v Exeter City and coach tickets also done for the trip down there. Hotel was the IHG Holiday Inn Express at Pride Park just 5-6 minute walk from the stadium. The game finished 2-0 to the home side and to be honest wasn't too good and we would much prefer our normal amateur games.

Hotel was very nice as was a good breakfast the next morning before getting the Arriva bus into town. Both days we bought Derbyshire Wayfarer tickets from the bus station office - Carol paid £15.50 for hers at full price but I got mine at OAP rate £7.70 but ID must be shown to buy it at that price.



The Dog

Lots of buses to good destinations meant a stack of choice so we headed first to

Burton Upon Trent on the 10.04 Villager bus. Arriving in Burton, the **Wetherspoons Lord Burton** was dead outside the bus stop, so we decamped in there for a quick snifter. Nigel had the *Dos Perros* from the beer festival range and Carol had the *Adnams Nut Brown* from the same range. Both were ok. A short walk down the road led us next to **The Dog**, a Black Country Ales establishment. Great pub with a good range of beers from both Black Country and further afield plus 4 ciders. Tried were *Teignmouth Penny Black Mild*, *Pig On The Wall*, *BFC* and *Milestone Summer Breeze*. All were in excellent condition and a good chatty landlord made the pub a real gem as far as we were concerned. Next up was a bus ride to Uttoxeter but, as we had just missed one bus, we had a very quick half of *Marston's Pedigree* in **The Anchor**, a very average pub and beer to be honest. Disaster then struck as the 401 bus to Uttoxeter didn't turn up so the two of us went back to Derby and caught one to the town from there. First port of call was the **Horse and Dove** a nice little micropub not far from the bus station. Again, a chatty landlord who we got on very well with and the beers were in good nick too- *Wye Valley Butty Bach* and *Peakstones Waymans Milk Stout* went down very nicely. Then a quick half in the **Old Swan (Wetherspoons)** and, as seems to be prevalent in a lot of Wetherspoons pubs these days, a very average beer in *Hook Norton Autumn Ways*. Departing the

DAWDLING AROUND DERBYSHIRE

town, the bus dropped us in Tutbury, which we had gone through earlier on the Villager bus when we noticed the **Cask and Pottle** which looked very interesting. Carol noticed it opened at 5pm and seeing as now it was around 6pm, it was a good time for a visit. A lovely little micropub which was an ex sweetshop. Talk about made welcome, we were soon chatting with the locals and a terrier which tried to make a meal of Nigel's coat. Beers were smashing and we had *Burton Bridge Stairway to Heaven*, *Froth Blowers Templar Amber*, and *Heritage Charrington IPA* (a Burton Brewery museum effort). The Villager bus back to Derby was on time and last port of call was the **Brunswick** for *Titanic Last Porter Call* and *Hollowstone Skylight*, both very good indeed.



Cask & Pottle

The next day it was decided to go a little further afield, so we caught the 6.1 bus to Bakewell just for an hour. **The Peacock** looked good being a Peak Ales pub but, in the end, the 4 halves we had were quite average and at £9.40 for the 4 it was rather expensive, but I suppose Peak District prices. The beers were *Swift Nick* and *Chatsworth Gold*. A bus then to Chesterfield and then quickly onwards via Alfreton to catch a train to Langley Mill. The 6 minute train ride was nice and easy followed by a 2 minute walk to the **Railway Micropub** (much larger pub originally), again made welcome although it was just a half of *Derby Brewing*

Company Dashingly Dark and superb it was too. We had to leave to get a quick Rainbow bus to Heanor and the **Crafty Tap** for again a half of *Blue Bee Milk Stout* and very nice too. The next bus was the 33 bus to Ilkeston, only 35 mins run and there for around 7pm. The **Crafty One** on South Street was ok and the *Pentrich Back to the Bolthole* was fine. Round the corner was the gem of the whole trip and one pub we had fancied for a while- **The Burnt Pig**. What a cracking place this is with not only fabulous beer, but the food cabinets are something else with cheese, pies, pasties, pork pies and maybe other things too. First beer there was *Falstaff Smiling Assassin* which we rated as best beer on our trip and scored a 4 on What Pub, also had were *Stockport West Coast IPA*, *Leatherbritches Dovedale*, *RBA Vampire Black* and finally *Shipstones IPA*. All beers superb and the locals too once again made us feel very welcome. What an end to our trip down to the area and an easy bus back to Derby finished things off nicely. We will definitely be back in the area at some point for another foray into the area.



The Burnt Pig



PUB AND BREWERY NEWS

If you run a pub or have any news or information about your local that you want to tell us about email aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk

An appeal to all members in the Huddersfield District!

Pub surveys are our means of keeping the information in *WhatPub?* up to date - and, right now, many of our surveys are out of date. It's a really easy job to amend a pub survey; all we need are people to go into pubs and change the information if necessary. So, we're asking for your help, as CAMRA members, to get our *WhatPub?* descriptions up to date, so that members from any area can easily decide which pubs to visit and which of the excellent Huddersfield area ales to appreciate!

If you feel you can help, please contact the Pubs Officer (for a survey sheet) at: pubsofficer@huddscamra.org.uk Many thanks!

Empire Brewery have been celebrating their 20th birthday this year and two new beers have been brewed as part of the celebrations, Let There Be Hops and Not What I Planned



Riverhead Brewery, Marsden – new beers have been Land Sea and Thai, Earl Grey IPA and Summer Stout, a collaboration with Zapato.

Three Fiends Brewery is to take over Percy Year's, Golcar

Scene at the Bar...

Traveller's Rest, Brockholes – Currently closed

Huntsman, Harden Moss – Lees Bitter, MPA and seasonal beer

Rose and Crown, Cop Hill – has reopened and is currently selling Empire White Lion and Timothy Taylor's Landlord. Opening times are from 1600 Friday and from 1200 Saturday and Sunday, with street food vendors on site throughout

Four Sons, Fixby – Regular beers are Bradfield Farmers Blonde, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker and Vocation Bread and Butter, plus guests

Butcher's Arms, Hepworth – Abbeydale Moonshine, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker and Landlord

Stumble Inn, Hinchliffe Mill – Ossett White Rat, Wainwright

Pickled Pheasant, Holmbridge – now badged as Munch offering takeaway food including ice cream 0900 – 1500, on the beer front Hobgoblin Gold, Hobgoblin Ruby and Wainwright Gold are available

Box Office, Holmfirth – Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Wainwright

Elephant and Castle, Holmfirth – Black Sheep Bitter, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde, Timothy Taylor Landlord

Magic Rock, Holmfirth – selling Dark Arts, Hat Trick and Ringmaster

Nowhere Bar, Holmfirth – selling Robust Poter and Gyle Pale Ale (now brewed to a revised recipe)

O'Brien's, Holmfirth – Northern Monk Golden Ale and Session IPA

Old Bridge, Holmfirth – Black Sheep Bitter and Respire, Coachman's Wheel Best Bitter Recoil White Snake IPA

Postcard, Holmfirth – Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Theakston Quencher

Shoulder of Mutton, Holmfirth – closed, possibly for refurbishment

Underbank Rugby Club, Holmfirth – Bradfield Euros Special

Y Bar, Holmfirth – Millstone Tiger Rut

Showtime, Huddersfield – Timothy Taylor Landlord

Smile Bar, Huddersfield – Sharpe's Doom Bar plus two other Sharpe's Beers, Solar Wave and Twin Coast

Vulcan, Huddersfield – Bradfield Farmers Blonde and Bradfield Farmers Euro Ale

Red Lion, Jackson Bridge – Bradfield Farmer's Blonde, St Austell Proper Job, Sharps Sea Fury, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker; opening times are from 1300 on Monday, from 1700 on Tuesday, from 1500 Wednesday-Friday and from 1300 Saturday and Sunday

White Horse, Jackson Bridge – Ossett White Rat, Theakston Best Bitter, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker

Beaumont Arms, Kirkheaton – Bradfield Farmers Blonde, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Timothy Taylor Marmalade Best

Cask, Kirkheaton – selling Ossett Blonde, Ossett Silver King, and Ossett White Rat

Royal Oak, Linthwaite – Marston 61" Deep, Robinson's Dizzy Blonde

Scape House Inn, Scapegoat Hill – JW Lees Bitter, MPA, Boilerhouse Craft Pale Ale

Boot and Shoe, Scholes – now selling Moorhouses Pride of Pendle alongside Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and Timothy Taylor Landlord

Commercial, Slaithwaite – alongside regular beers Commerciale and Moonraker Mild from Empire, 4Ts Session IPA, Black Edge Pike Pale, Bradfield Farmers Brown Cow, Mallinson Calypso, Three Acre Skylark Stout were available recently, Heck's Glastonbury Gold real cider is always available

Royal Oak, Upperthong – Regular beers Mallinson Bitter, Millstone Stout and Tiger Rut alongside two changing beers; opening times are from 1600 Monday-Friday and from 1400 Saturday and Sunday

Wooldale Arms, Wooldale – Bradfield Farmer's Blonde, Tetley Bitter, Timothy Taylor Landlord plus a guest beer which was Adnams Broadside when Aletalk called in



Rose and Crown, Cop Hill



The Rose and Crown at Cop Hill occupies a commanding position overlooking Slaithwaite and the Colne Valley. After a period of closure, the pub reopened in June and is currently open on Fridays from 1600 and from 1200 Saturday and Sunday.



Two beers are currently available, Timothy Taylor Landlord plus a beer from Slaithwaite based Empire brewery.



The beer garden has probably the best views in Kirklees if not Yorkshire and whilst the pub is not currently serving its own food, street food traders are on site serving a variety of food.

DRINKING IN DEVON.

A coach trip with quite a few beers involved.

Carol and I booked with Caledonian Travel for a trip to stay in Torquay for four nights. We had a look at the local CAMRA scene and found out that South Devon had a trip to a small place called Chagford. An email to Alan Cooke at the branch sorted things out for joining them on the outing. More of that later.

Monday went quickly with obviously a fairly long trip down to Devon. The hotel was ok but the food at teatime was poor and so was throughout the week. We decided on a fairly short evening in Paignton the bus stop being just across the road from the Torbay Hotel and running until around 2am.

Around 20 mins to Paignton saw us at the **Upside Bar** close to both bus and rail stations – it being in the end the only pub we visited as one other was closed. We had beers from *Teignworthy* which were good and also a couple of local ciders which were excellent. Back to Torquay and a decamp to **Wetherspoons** was had to finish the evening with beers from *Teignworthy* again and also *Bays*, the quality was very good indeed we thought.

Tuesday, we thought was going to be fairly quiet as we explored Devon with the superb Devon Bus Ranger ticket (although one of us has the OAP bus pass so a nice freebie). In Exeter the **Turks Head** initially didn't look much from the outside but once in it was a revelation – it being a micro-brewery with superb food-the beers had were *Golden Axe*, *Dickies Best*, *Hand Off*

and also one from *Hanlon's* all were very good indeed and the food was excellent and totally recommended. The staff also knowledgeable and chatty. Also, that day we called in at the **Chevalier** in Exeter and had *Oakham 12 Monkeys* which was ok. The end of the day was at the **Railway** in Newton Abbott which we didn't know had stopped brewing unfortunately. The beers were ok, but Carol really wasn't happy with her *Titanic Plum Porter* (watery was the comment) my *Dartmoor Jail Ale* was ok. A quick pint in The **Green Ginger Wetherspoons** at Torquay finished off a rather good day (*Ilkley Ruby Jane* was good).



The Turks Head

Wednesday was the Chagford day and so looking forward to it, we had a decent breakfast and set off to meet the branch at Exeter St Davids station for the 173 bus at 11.30am. The bus was late by about 15 mins though. To say the bus trip was interesting is a heck of an understatement- the first 20 mins or so are fairly standard but soon the large hedges and narrow roads appeared,

DRINKING IN DEVON.

A coach trip with quite a few beers involved.



The Chagford Inn

and we had to stop 3 times for cars to reverse and let us through. The back of the bus was full of the unruly mob going to Chagford and conversation was plentiful. Arrival around 12.40 and the four pubs were all within immediate sight in the small village/town. The **Three Crowns**, **Ring O' Bells** and **Globe** all had basically the same beers on either *Otter* or *St Austell* which was a little disappointing although totally drinkable. The **Chagford Inn** however was much better and had a beer on from *Tavistock* and also a good cider too which we had. All too soon however we had to leave as the 15.20 is the last bus from Chagford to Exeter and arrival there was around 16.30pm. Carol and I decamped across the road from St Davids station to the **Angel** for a snifter and found to our liking beers from *South Hams* which were more than palatable, *Eddystone* and *Stumble Bee* were the two on. Train back to Torquay and a visit along the road from our hotel to **TQ Beerworks**, fairly new by the sound of it and very good too as we had the *Torbaydos* and also a couple of bottled ciders. A very heavy day on the pop was had and we left TQ at 11.40pm much the worse for wear. Thursday was a bit of a dead one for us both on all fronts as the beer took its toll from the night before and the weather was shocking so

we just toured round on the bus most of the day. Totnes was as nice as ever though apart from the breweries not being open, we did however opt for the **King William IV** for a *Butcombe Original* which was ok. Bussed it to Paignton and **Henry's Bar** for the almost ubiquitous *Dartmoor IPA*. Again, ok only. Back to Torquay and the **Green Ginger** came to our rescue with a couple of cracking beers *Ramsgate SheSellsSeaShells* and *Nottingham Centurion*. Home time on Friday and the long trip back.

A good few days though and if anyone is going to Devon please get in touch with the cracking people at either South Devon or Exeter CAMRA and you will have a really good day out.

BRANCH COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN

Paul Laxton

relaxpaul@btinternet.com

SECRETARY, ALETALK EDITOR & PUBLIC TRANSPORT OFFICER

Alex Barlow

Aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk

ALL OTHER OFFICERS EMAILS:

info@huddscamra.org.uk

Designed & Produced on behalf of CAMRA by:

Paper Red Media

Website: www.paperredmedia.weebly.com

Neil Richards MBE - 01536 358670

n.richards@btinternet.com

Matt Richards

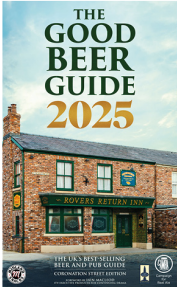
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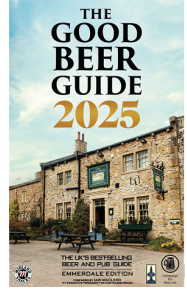
Printed by Zenith Media, Unit 9-13, Pontyfelin Industrial Estate, New Inn, Pontypool. NP4 0DQ

THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2025

LET'S CELEBRATE!



The 52nd edition of the Good Beer Guide is due to be published on 26th September 2024. It will be available to purchase with a choice of two covers featuring two of the UK's best known locals: Coronation Street's Rover's Return Inn and Emmerdale's Woolpack. These fictional pubs represent the familiarity and community spirit of pubs across the UK. This edition of the Guide pays tribute to the communities that are beamed into homes, providing entertainment and companionship to those that may not have a local pub of their own.



Research commissioned by CAMRA found that people who have a local pub rate themselves as happier because of it, and have more close friends, and the pubs on television reflect this feeling. Some of Coronation Street's and Emmerdale's most iconic, touching and memorable moments have taken place in their respective pubs.

This year's Guide is sponsored by Midland Snacks Traditional Pork Scratchings and is endorsed by Cask Marque. For more information about the Good Beer Guide, go to: www.camra.org.uk

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WHY NOT JOIN CAMRA....?

As a CAMRA member you will have access to lots of beer-related benefits. You can take advantage of these at home, at events, and in pubs. Here are some of the options for you to explore:

The campaign: keep up with the campaign that your membership is supporting with our What's Brewing online publication, available online here <https://wb.camra.org.uk/>.

- **Beer discounts:** your membership card and vouchers get you discounts on your beer at pubs up and down the country. Check out whatpub.com, search for locations and use the filters to find great pubs near you with features you like.
- **Beer festivals:** as a member of CAMRA, you get free or reduced price entry to our 160 beer festivals up and down the country. Search for a festival near you on our website, get out and try new brews!
- **The CAMRA shop:** did you know that CAMRA is also an award-winning book publisher? As a CAMRA member, you have access to preferential rates at our shop for books, merchandise and more. Take a look on our website today. <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/>.
- **Member benefits:** your membership should allow you to save money on the things that matter to you, which is why we work with industry partners to bring you great discounts. We're adding more to our website all the time; see <https://camra.org.uk/join/membership-benefits/partner-benefits/>.
- **Keep in touch:** whether you're on our website, in the pub, or at a beer festival, having a voice and getting involved will allow you to get more out of your membership. BEER Magazine and our CAMRA YouTube channel are a great way to keep up to date with CAMRA news and beer, cider and perry in

general (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CAMRAOFFICIAL>). Our Learn and Discover platform and Pubs. Pints. People podcast are also the perfect ways to grow your knowledge in the industry.

Annual subscriptions (as from 1 July 2023) are:


- Single membership, paid by Direct Debit, £30.50
- Joint membership (partner at same address) £38.50.
- Add £2 if not paying by Direct Debit. Some concessions are available. You can find out more at <https://join.camra.org.uk> or search 'join CAMRA'.

Your local committee runs the events in Huddersfield and our own website www.huddscamra.org.uk and each area of the country has such volunteers. Why not join us.

We look forward to you signing up for membership and you will then have full access to our site and get all the above benefits.

Shortly after signing up and getting the info from CAMRA Head Office you should receive an email from membership@huddscamra.org.uk as long as you agree to receive emails which we hope you will do so we can then also send out to you regular information about our activities.

See elsewhere in this magazine for our most recent activities and local pub awards.



Did you know?

Pubs raise over £100 million a year for charity



Source: pubaid.com (accessed 2020)

The roots of the Kirklees Branch of CAMRA go back many years to 1975, although a much earlier branch of CAMRA – then the **Campaign for the Re-vitalisation of Ale** – existed in Huddersfield in 1972. This earlier West Riding Branch was brought about by the activities of the **Holme Valley Wheelers**, a biking club with a penchant for Real Ale. Unfortunately, it was short lived and lasted little more than a year due to the untimely death of one of its founder members.

Two years later it was decided to re-establish a branch of CAMRA – the **Campaign for Real Ale** – in Huddersfield. Following meetings in November and December 1974 to test opinion and prepare for an inaugural General meeting, the Branch was formed at the meeting on **Monday, 13th January 1975** at the white Lion Hotel, Cross Church Street, Huddersfield.

At the meeting Roger Jay, a National executive member, gave a brief resume of the general aims of the campaign and a draft constitution was drawn up. A “Caretaker Committee” was elected consisting of Chairman – Philip Charlesworth; secretary – Grant McNair; and Treasurer – Mike Field. In addition, five other committee members were elected – Harry Halstead, Robert Norman, Geoff Blackburn, Adrian Sykes, and Martin Brown.

The name of the first branch was by no means assured. Various suggestions were put forward, among them being Woollen District, Huddersfield and District, Dewsbury and District (later retracted), Agbrigg and Kirklees. 19 votes were in favour of the name “Huddersfield & District” but 32 voters preferred “Kirklees”, and that is how the first branch became known as the “Kirklees” branch. It was a name the branch stuck with

for the next 20 years until it split by mutual consent in 1995 into the “Huddersfield & District” and the “Heavy Woollen” branches.

From the start it was decided to alternate meetings between the Huddersfield and Dewsbury districts. Meetings were held at the White Lion, Bridge Tavern, Grey Horse, Spinners Arms in Huddersfield, and the Bowling green at Ravensthorpe, the Old Roundabout at Stanningley but to name a few. Unfortunately, most of these pubs are no more or have changed name. However, the Bridge in Colne Road, Huddersfield (now a house) soon became a favourite meeting venue.

Social gatherings were one of the Committee’s first priorities mainly as a means of getting to know one another. These consisted of lunchtime or evening sessions in pubs throughout Kirklees, a CAMRAmble in the Holmfirth area, a tour of pubs in Manchester, outing to Scarborough and York, and a brewery trip to Samuel Smiths at Tadcaster. Not much has changed over the years!

Finance was always a problem. In other words, not enough of it! Mike field, as treasurer, inaugurated a collection at meetings from the very start, suggesting a contribution of 10p per head. The first meeting raised £5.70 plus four bandit tokens, only one of which fitted the machine in the pub. This was invested but lost.

Mike hoped that the branch would be able to obtain funds from the profits made by selling Good Beer Guides, ties, tee shirts, etc, and from social events such as brewery trips. By the end of April 1975, Mike had another bright idea for raising funds. He proposed to start a magazine consisting of 4 or 5 pages which could be sold to members for 10p each

and replace the collections. Thus, was born “Keg Buster”, the forerunner of “Ale Talk”. Mike is credited with launching (and almost single-handed on the journalistic side) “Keg Buster” with the technical assistance of Dean Meacham and Richard Durkin.

Kirklees was one of the very few branches in the country to have its own magazine. “Keg Buster” was an important campaigning tool and went on sale to the public with CAMRA’s monthly newspaper “What’s Brewing” in July 1975. “K.B.” was sold for 10p a copy.

Three main features marked the first year of the branch’s activity: the publication of “K.B.”, then the Guide to Real Ale in Kirklees, and finally the beer Festival.

The “Guide to Real Ale in Kirklees” had been in continuous preparation since January 1975 and by July all known public houses in the Kirklees Metropolitan District had been visited by members of the branch. Grant McNair was instrumental in organising the survey forms and volunteers. Philip Charlesworth stressed that good relations must be maintained with the licensed trade and that landlords and brewers be encouraged to join the branch.

This first Real Ale guide went on sale in August 1975 at the price of 15p. It listed 168 pubs selling Real Ale, the beers from 12 breweries, and devoted a page and a half to pubs whose only Real ale was mild. Twenty five of the best pubs were recommended for inclusion in the 1976 edition of CAMRA’s national Good Beer Guide.

Kirklees first Beer Festival was held at Dewsbury Town Hall at the end of the first week in September 1975. By all accounts it was a huge success. Two thousand people flocked to the event, consuming nearly 7,000 pints during the three-day festival. Of the 900 gallons ordered, only 50 went back to breweries on a sale or return basis, and many were sold out before the end.

In all, 16 breweries from as far as Henley in the south and Edinburgh in the north supplied a total of 35 different beers which were served by 50 CAMRA volunteers. One of the highlights was David Pollard’s first commercial brew. This was so popular that the first 36 gallons sold out and a further 18 gallons had to be fetched from his Stockport micro-brewery. Several breweries decided not to exhibit their beers. In the presence of Fullers ESB and Brakespear’s Bitter, Tetley’s and Bass Charrington’s offerings were not missed. Interestingly, a quite unknown local ‘brewer’, “Gents of Dewsbury” was particularly well patronised!

The burden of organisation of this successful event was borne by Robert Norman, who over the many months, negotiated with 35 brewers and was responsible for the efficient organisation of the festival. Philip Charlesworth said of the festival, “We were delighted with the response and interest aroused in many members of the public who previously knew nothing of the campaign. We are confident we will be able to hold another festival.” And sure, enough in September 1976, the second Kirklees beer festival was held in Batley Town Hall.

A year later after the inaugural meeting, the branch met again at the White Lion or as it was known, “Reggie’s”, not in the bar but upstairs in the Club room. The room had been opened specially for the first time in 20 years! Over 50 members attended to hear Mr. Pye-Oliver, Tetley’s Trade Liaison brewer, give a talk on the skills of cellarmanship. Certainly, the beer was in fine condition at the White Lion and so were the sandwiches.

The branch saw Mike Field resign as Secretary, having taken over from Grant McNair in the summer. Malcolm Sykes was Treasurer, Philip Charlesworth was still Chairman, and Robert Cockcroft editor of “keg Buster”. The branch never looked back.

CAMRA National Beer Scoring and the importance of scoring pubs and clubs

The National Beer Scoring Scheme (NBSS) is a 0-5 point scale for CAMRA Members to judge beer quality in pubs. It is an easy to use system that has been designed to assist CAMRA branches in selecting pubs for the Good Beer Guide and monitoring beer quality by encouraging CAMRA members to report on beer quality where ever they go. **You do need to be a CAMRA member to take part in beer scoring.**

Start by searching for pubs on the main **whatpub.com** website. A list of possible choices is shown - click on the pub that you want and submit your beer score using the panel to the right hand side.

What do the scores mean?

1. No cask ale available.
2. **Poor.** Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
3. **Average.** Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
4. **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.
5. **Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition.
6. **Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely

How can I see my scores?

When browsing pubs on **whatpub.com**, use the 'Scores' tab in the main navigation to view your recent pub visits and the associated scores.

How can I edit my beer scores?

Editing scores on **whatpub.com** will be coming soon, but in the meantime, you can head over to the previous version of NBSS and use the 'Score' tab in the main navigation to edit your scores.

What if I can't find the pub?

Unfortunately, the pub list does not yet cover the whole country. If the pub you have visited is not listed, then unfortunately your score cannot be submitted on **whatpub.com**.

What if I can't decide on a score?

The NBSS allows you to enter half scores

How do I score a beer I don't like?

Ideally a beer should be scored to reflect how it has been kept. In other words, its condition. However, the ability to distinguish between a beer that is in poor condition, is unpalatable to our tastes, but is meant to taste like that, or has been poorly made is going to be difficult for the untrained taster. In these cases, it is better to score the beer as it honestly tastes to you. After all, even if you don't like the carrot and coriander ale, others may well do and therefore score it higher.

Video - Why you should score your beer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBkd4-5pxo>

Video - How to submit a score <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSgRLWj7q20>

How is the information being collated?

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 <https://camra.org.uk/nbss>

Create a short cut on phone home screen

One way of scoring is by doing this on your phone whilst in a pub or club is to log into **whatpub.com** and once done this you should then be able to create a short cut to your home screen via your web browser and this then acts as an app which unfortunately CAMRA does not offer for this purpose.

You can then score away and let us know where the pubs with the best beer are.

WHAT IS WHATPUB?

WhatPub? is CAMRA's unique on-line pub database. It is available for all to use, not just CAMRA members; just go to <https://whatpub.com/>. It features nearly 38,000 pubs which normally serve real ale, plus records of pubs that do not sell real ale or have closed. All of the information has been compiled by CAMRA members and no fee is charged – or sought – for inclusion. You can search by specific pub name or general location. It is also possible for all users, again not just CAMRA members, to submit updates for entries (factual ones, not contentious customer reviews, please!). You will find opening times, descriptions, facilities, maps and, of course, details of the real ale and

cider on offer. Every effort is being made to update entries to show each pub's current situation but, as readers will appreciate, this is a substantial undertaking and so we cannot guarantee that every entry will be updated immediately to reflect every change. WhatPub is, incidentally, not to be confused with the Good Beer Guide 'app'. Good Beer Guide pubs are, of course, included on WhatPub but you cannot simply search for GBG pubs in a particular area.

REAL ALE

CAMRA defines real ale as live beer: 'beer that, when first put into its final container, contains at least 0.1 million cells of live yeast per millilitre, plus enough fermentable sugar to produce a measurable reduction in its gravity while in that container, whatever it may be'. Within this definition comes cask-conditioned beer which is defined as 'live beer that continues to mature and condition in its cask, any excess of carbon dioxide being vented such that it is served at atmospheric pressure'. It should be left to settle and condition in the cellar, for up to ten days if necessary and served at cellar temperature, which is 11 to 14°C

BRANCH DIARY

FORTHCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS

Monday 16th September

Commercial, Huddersfield town centre

Monday 21st October

Liberal Club, Lindley

Monday 18th November

AGM, Rat & Ratchet, Huddersfield

Monday 2nd December

Head of Steam, Huddersfield town centre

FORTHCOMING SOCIALS

details tbc, please check online at:
huddscamra.org.uk

Thank you to the **Tap House**, Holmfirth, **Riverhead**, Marsden, **Monkey Club**, Armitage Bridge and **Sair Inn**, Linthwaite for hosting our recent Branch and committee meetings.

Quality and choice on offer at the Riverhead and Sair Inn.

Aletalk is produced by Huddersfield Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, CAMRA Ltd. or its Branches. No part of the magazine may be reproduced without permission. Contributions are welcome from any Camra member and may be sent to Aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk. Contributions may be edited for reasons of space and may be held over for future issues. Copies are distributed quarterly, free of charge, to outlets in Huddersfield, surrounding areas, and further afield. Thank you to Bob Tomlinson, Paul Laxton, Nigel and Carol Fox, Marcus Garside, for their various contributions.

Aletalk has received the following email in response to the Chairman's Column in the Spring edition:

I don't know if this has been raised already but I thought Paul's notes in the last **Ale Talk** were out of order. This is on 3 points

1) He states, 'let me tell you that minimum pricing in Scotland has had no impact on harmful drinking', without any evidence to support this. If he looked for evidence, he would find the esteemed medical journal The Lancet had an extensive study report which concluded an "estimated 13.4% fall in alcohol specific mortality in Scotland due to minimum unit pricing". [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(23\)00497-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(23)00497-X/fulltext)

2) In an election year, it seems highly inappropriate to even discuss items not relevant to the Campaign, but he just disparages the Liberal Democrats and in particular their leader, with no reference to how good a politician or MP he is or not

3) He goes on to talk about the Laffer Curve, stating "lower taxes often bring in more revenue for the Treasury as a consequence of the increase in economic activity due to increased spending power and subsequent job creation". But the Laffer Curve just says revenue can increase with lowering taxation - it depends where on the curve you are already. If optimising it has been attempted already, as you might expect from a government, then it could easily reduce revenue. And as we saw with Trussonomics, reducing taxes for the most well off didn't produce any bounce at all and has added several percent to most people's mortgages.

Campaigning for you

Real ale is just the start...

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

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

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Campaign
for
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