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Winter Edition 2024

Issue No. 312

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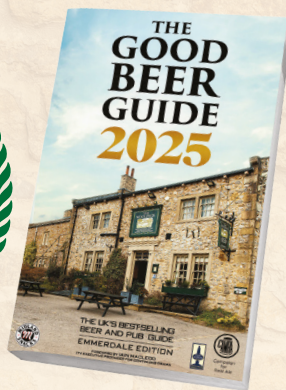
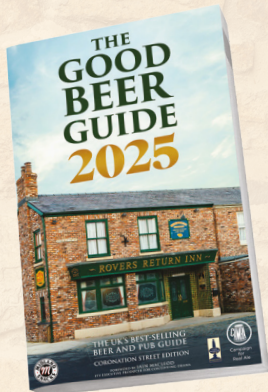
Pints of Interview - Tim Taylor's Tim Dewey

Guest columnists - Annabel Smith, Christine Cryne, Pete Brown,  
Roger Protz, Steve Bury, Steve Dunkley, Tim Webb



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## Thanks to this issue's contributors!

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Jeremy Kitson	Steve Dunkley
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Jonathan Humphries	Tim Vaughan
Les Middlewood	Tim Webb
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# Starting Pint

I'll kick off by welcoming back those North Hertfordshire readers who were denied their quarterly fix of *Pints of View* due to some 'distribution difficulties' with the Autumn Edition. Anyway, all is now happily sorted!

Before I forget, do look out for the new reminder to send in your comments, opinions and ideas.



Have your say! Email [editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk)

Whilst I can't guarantee they'll be printed, I *can* guarantee they'll be read.

And talking of new, alongside regular columnists Roger Protz, Steve Bury and Tim Webb, we have a number of new guest writers to contribute both quality and quantity to these pages.

**Annabel Smith** is a writer, broadcaster and ex-publican, who became one of the UK's first female beer sommeliers and was Cask Marque's first female beer inspector. Read in *Beer Belle* why she believes that enticing more females into the industry's top jobs will result in a boost for beer sales.

**Pete Brown** is an author and broadcaster, who loves speaking his mind as much as he loves beer. Editing his superb blog down to a page for *For Pete's Sake* was an opportunity to remove expletives, and use asterisks for the one left in. Read his lambasting of CMBC (Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company) for their closing down of iconic cask-ale breweries and culling of beloved beers.

**Steve Dunkley** was the man behind the, now closed, Manchester railway-arch brewery/taproom Beer Nouveau. He's an authority on brewing with a passion for, and knowledge of, historic beer styles. In *Brewer's View* he explains how the Chancellor's cut in Duty Rate will boost profits of the multi-mega-buck global brewers, rather than bring down the price of your pint. But, he goes on, it's not all doom and gloom...

**Christine Cryne** is a beer tutor, writer and



master trainer. Her mission is to encourage others to appreciate beer, and its many styles, as much as she does. I attended a CAMRA-organised session at the Bohemia, London N20 in June last year and loved it! Also an accredited beer judge, in *Cryne...into beer*, Christine explains the process to find CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain and announces the 2024 winners.

Fingers crossed, they'll all want to return to the magazine in 2025. But I'm getting ahead of myself...

This bumper issue focuses on Independent Brewers; the British bastions of great beer. On the cover, you might have noticed a map showing 15 active Hertfordshire Breweries, along with three fantastic, further-flung Independents. My *Pints of Interview* with Tim Dewey, CEO of ever-growing, but still independent, Timothy Taylor's, paints a positive picture with respect to the future of cask ale. Tim tells me what makes the brewer of Landlord different (and successful). Another 'real-ale hero' is Miles Jenner of Harvey's. Find out why we're congratulating him in *National News*. Back in Hertfordshire, Buntingford celebrate nearly 20 years and Les Middlewood decided he'd pay them a visit, which you can read about in *Herts Pubs, Clubs & Breweries*. Finally, before this page runs out, let me recommend a trip towards the back of the magazine, where Roger Protz says "*Hear, Hear to Indie Beer!*" on his *Roger... and out* page. He's another person who's not a fan of the global brewing giants and supports SIBA's (Society of Independent Brewers and Associates) campaign to promote Independent Brewers.

Roger closes: "**So think Indie and drink Indie.**"

Prompted by Lotte Peplow's report on the Great American Beer Festival in *News & Brews from abroad*, I'll close along similar lines: "**MAGA! - Make Ale Great Again! - Vote Indie.**"

**Paul Donatantonio**  
Editor

# Campaign Column

## Nik Antona steps down...

In late August, CAMRA released a statement, both to Members and the wider world:

*“National Chairman Nik Antona is stepping down from his role with immediate effect due to serious illness. Nik resigned his position as chairman and a National Executive (NE) member to concentrate on his treatment and recovery.*

*CAMRA’s National Executive will now conduct an election to select a new national chairman.*

*“Nik has served as a CAMRA volunteer for more than two decades, giving his time to his local branch in Burton-on-Trent, as well as serving as a Regional Director, National Director and, most recently, as National Chairman for the last five and a half years.”*

The editor of *Pints of View* magazine, this edition’s main contributors and the



Hertfordshire CAMRA Branch Chairs, would like to thank Nik for his tireless dedication to the Campaign and hope that his health recovers sufficiently for him to enjoy many years spent relaxing in pubs with a pint in hand.

## “Cheers!” from all of us

**Annabel Smith**

*Beer Sommelier & Writer  
Wakefield CAMRA*

**Graham Darby**

*Chair  
Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA*

**Phil Defriez**

*Pub Promotions & Awards Officer  
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*International Beer Writer & Judge  
Exeter & Devon CAMRA*

**Georgina Donatantonio**

*Cheesemonger & Writer  
South Herts CAMRA*

**Pete Brown**

*Author, Broadcaster, Beer Lover  
Norwich & District CAMRA*

**Will Lewis**

*Photographer  
South Herts CAMRA*

## ... and Ash Corbett-Collins steps up

Following a vote by the National Executive in September, 33-year-old Ash Corbett-Collins was elected as Nik's successor; graduating from Vice-Chairman to head the organisation.

Ash joined CAMRA at the Burton Beer Festival, whilst at university. It took him a few years to attend a branch meeting, yet at the age of only 26 he was voted onto the National Executive after having already fulfilled numerous roles at branch, area and national level. Below are Ash's quotes from a conversation back in May 2018, shortly after his election, with Member of the Guild of British Beer Writers and Burton-upon-Trent Brewing Historian, **Ian Webster**, for his then fledgling blog: **THE BEERTONIAN - Burton upon Trent, Beer and Brewing**. They reveal someone passionate about pubs and beer, expressed with a relaxed candour that I hope Ash hasn't lost following his promotion into the spotlight.



*meetings and replacing them with discussion topics. If there is a local pub that is under threat it shouldn't be an item on a packed agenda, it should be the focus of the meeting. Spend an hour talking about what action can be taken rather than waiting to report on it next month under the item agenda 'Closed Pubs'.*

*"...we need to focus on getting the next generation of volunteers involved with the Campaign. I started volunteering more to gain experience for my CV and I'm not alone in that. Organising a beer festival is project*

*management and doing the beer order is experience in procurement; we need to do more to highlight the benefits of volunteering. At the moment we make it sound like a job, with titles and requirements."*

And finally...

*"Craft beer is not the enemy, it is not the reason pubs are closing and it is not the reason cash sales are down. For those outside CAMRA, good beer is good beer. Drinkers aren't loyal to a particular dispense method; they want good beer, full stop. When we pontificate about real ale and demonise craft, we don't persuade people to try real ale, we persuade them that we are zealots and elitists.*

*"Personally, I drink what I want to drink. When I walk into a pub, I look at the taps and hand pulls and I choose to drink what I want in that moment. That ability to visit a good pub and to enjoy the benefit of choice is why I am a CAMRA member."*

*"CAMRA suffers from an image problem. Many who are passionate about beer and pubs see us as the snobs with beards, sandals and bellies, ineffective, old-school and elitist. [Yet,] CAMRA and its members can be some of the most friendly, welcoming and passionate people. The change I want to see, and be part of, is welcoming the next generation of volunteers into the organisation. The people that already write beer blogs, organise events and want to promote good pubs and good beer. I want them to see a CAMRA that is passionate, effective and, most importantly, fun!*

*"How many new members have walked into their first branch meeting, sat through an hour of reports on closed pubs and local breweries, listened to a brief moan about 'that new craft place' and then decided to not bother attending again? Too many!*

*"I'm in favour of removing agendas from branch*

Well said Ash and my thanks to **Ian Webster** for allowing me to use selective quotes from his interview. Do explore **THE BEERTONIAN** blog and check out his follow-up interview with our new Chairman, from a couple of months ago.

**Paul Donatantonio**

# Herts Personalities

## Moray Taylor R.I.P.

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Moray Taylor died on Friday 8th November, aged only 56, after a prolonged period of ill health.

Moray was a dedicated fan of U2, which I had trouble understanding, and remember teasing him about his musical tastes. He supported York City FC, who are having a good season, albeit in the 5th tier National League. He was also a dedicated walker and completed the “coast to coast” with his friends, who nicknamed him “Dr Moz”.

Moray was very well educated and gained his doctorate whilst working for the Ministry of Agriculture at the Rothamsted Research Centre in Harpenden. He joined South Herts CAMRA, was active in the branch, and co-edited *Pints of View* with Watford & District’s Bill Austin. This lasted for about three years until summer 1996 when his job relocated to the Central Science



Laboratory in York and I took over where he left off.

However, despite the move North, Moray kept in regular contact with the South Herts branch members, both at the St Albans Beer & Cider Festival, where he volunteered, and at CAMRA national AGMs. He attended every one from 1993 in Salford through to this year in Dundee. Quite an achievement that involved a lot of travelling. During the early years we shared rooms in what I remember as some of the most awful and eccentric B&B’s around the country!

Whilst Moray was a quiet and reserved person, he held strong beliefs regarding pubs, beer and breweries. I will certainly miss him, as I’m sure will many of his friends and colleagues.

**Steve Bury**  
Chair  
Swale CAMRA

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# Steve's Shout

## Clear Beer from KeyKeg - that's unreal!

Clear beer was not demanded by customers until production methods improved in the 1850s and reasonably-priced clear pint glasses became readily available.

A shortage of oak led us to import wood for barrels from Russia, which is where isinglass finings originated, being produced from sturgeons' swim bladders. When added to the beer, the paste-like fluid clings to the brewers' yeast, along with other small particles, taking them to the bottom of the cask to ensure a beautifully bright, clear polished pint, unless the cask is disturbed. It might be thought that something made from the (swim) bladder of a fish would SMELL, but isinglass is not only the most effective form of finings, but completely odourless. Furthermore, it does not kill the yeast, allowing the secondary fermentation to carry on as normal.

Nonetheless, there are now brewers who question the use of isinglass; not only because vegetarians and vegans object to its use, but because some believe that finings can strip flavour from the beer, by also removing proteins. For this reason, they do not use non-animal products such as silica or Irish moss, which would otherwise be acceptable. That would be great if they simply brewed the beer properly, filled it into casks and allowed it to clear (drop bright) naturally, which could take up to 48 hours without any finings.

However, vegetarian and vegan beers tend to be put into KeyKegs. Why? The answer is two-fold and simple: 1) KeyKegs are designed to keep the beer separate from the atmosphere, which is very handy as it can extend longevity from days to months; 2) These low turn-over outlets with poor cellars and often no knowledge of how to keep cask-conditioned beer have something to offer customers.

A bit about KeyKegs. They vary in volume from 10 to 30 litres and were never intended



to be used for beer, having originally been designed for wine and soft drinks. The beer is filled into a collapsible bag inside a rigid plastic container. To dispense the beer, gas is forced into the space between bag and container, which causes the beer (that the gas never comes into contact with) to be forced out. However, the agitation will cause the sediment and yeast in a naturally conditioned beer, to be disturbed, rendering the beer cloudy.

I'm old school. Brewers' yeast is a laxative and not something I want floating around in my pint.

It is, of course, perfectly possible to get bright beer from a KeyKeg, but this will have been filtered before filling to remove yeast and sediment, which will prevent secondary fermentation and so it won't be real ale. In fact, the resulting beer would be flat and so we are back to the 1960s and 70s with it being force-carbonated at the brewery. I don't want that, either! Cask-conditioned beer is served in a far more natural manner.

Not only does KeyKeg prevent real ale from being dispensed bright, it is also such an environmentally unfriendly and wasteful contraption. KeyKegs are, generally, non-reusable and their size makes them hard to recycle as the collapsed bag has to be removed from the plastic container. Furthermore, disposing of KeyKegs is a problem, as gas may be trapped inside, so they should not be crushed.

Aside from environmental issues, the other problem with throwaway containers is cost – who pays? Of course, you the customer, which goes some way to explaining why so called craft-keg beers are more expensive than real ale in casks.

**Steve Bury**  
Chair  
Swale CAMRA



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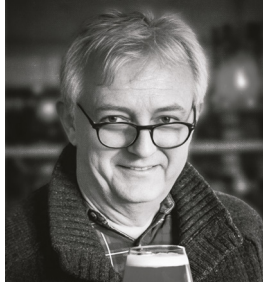
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# World-Wise Webb

## Is non-alcoholic beer important?

Can you love a beer that is a soft drink? The answer used to be no, because non-alcoholic beers are dull. Thankfully, or otherwise, this is no longer true.

Non-alcoholic beer is trending across Europe, driven by factors like tighter drink-driving laws, younger people delaying their drinking careers, and brand-name brewers wanting a product for the lucrative soft drinks market that can be advertised at sporting events.



**The history of non-alcoholic beers** - The first low-alcohol beers came in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in response to the spread of Temperance ideas. They were produced by limiting fermentation and using less grain, resulting in beers that were thin, sweet and tasted of wort – imagine cold, malty broth. They were also unstable, which put off traders. Even when produced on a grand scale, during Prohibition in the USA (1919-33), they were not good enough to survive its repeal.

In the late 1930s, a Swiss brewery used a technique called vacuum distillation, literally to suck the alcohol out of a completed beer. However, work on the potential of this ended with the outbreak of war in 1939 and it was not until 1969 that another Swiss brewer, Hürlimann, used ‘maltose-intolerant’ yeast to create Oro, a non-alcoholic beer with more body and reduced sweetness.

This beer became Birell, which arrived in the UK in 1972, heralding the decade-long era of NABLAs (Non-Alcohol Beers & Low Alcohol Beers). However, these rarely tasted as good as regular beers, drinkers deserted them and with no financial incentive to produce better ones, commercial interest waned.

**The new techniques** - What changed in the last decade was the rise of two contradictory trends, mainly among younger adults. The first was a rise in concern about alcohol consumption, and the second an increased interest in craft brewing. The new audience has brought new methods.

Maltose-negative yeast, now available even to home-brewers, stems alcohol production and reduces warty flavours; and fermenting at a lower

temperature slows maturation, allowing closer monitoring of flavour balance. Importantly these fiddly advances are quite cheap, allowing smaller brewers into the game.

Then came reverse osmosis, a technique in which a fully-fermented beer is passed through a complex filtration system, to remove alcohol and water, before the water is replaced, along with topping up any flavour components that may have fallen away in the process.

Larger brewers, able to afford the massive investment required for large-scale vacuum distillation, can reach the same end-point faster, with less water usage, but as usual, smaller brewers are way ahead in deploying sharper hop recipes for bolder hoppy and herbal flavours, leading the market in non-alcoholic beers that have bigger tastes.

**Where to next?** - The bad news for brewers and consumers is that the cost of the techniques involved still outweighs the saving on alcohol duty. The good news is that brewing is way ahead of wine-making in overcoming the technical challenges

Non-alcoholic beers are not a new beer style. Rather, they represent existing styles in a non-alcoholic format, the best being so true to the original that the absence of alcohol is hard to spot. The fun part is watching the anti-alcohol lobbyists trying to twist their prejudices to deal with the concept of an alcoholic beverage that comes in a non-alcoholic format.

The minority of religious and health institutions that insist that all alcohol is harmful, often misquote the writings on which their beliefs are based. Furthermore, not only are they ducking the problem that unpasteurised fruit juices often contain 0.5% ABV, they are conveniently ignoring the greater health risks of sugary soft drinks.

Non-alcoholic beer matters; not least because it's a great disruptor.

**Tim Webb**

*Beer Writer*

*Co-author, The World Atlas of Beer  
Exeter & Devon CAMRA*

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# Brewer's View

## Budget to beat the Global Bullies

The latest Budget from the government is not a great one for drinkers. Despite cheers to beer being '1p a pint cheaper in the pub', it's actually pretty grim if we look at the real numbers.

That 1p is smoke and mirrors. The amount of duty paid is based on the amount of alcohol in the beer, and to get that full, but hardly generous, 1p discount, would require an 8% ABV beer - the discount on a 4% ABV beer on draught is 0.5p. Wow!

Furthermore, duty isn't paid by the pub, it's paid by the brewery, and the 36p saving on a 72pt cask (a firkin) is unlikely to be passed on by the country's struggling small independent breweries, and certainly won't be by the large multinationals for whom it will add up to quite a tidy little saving. So it's not a great budget for choice, as it only benefits the largest corporations and their not-very-wide range of oh-so-very-average beers.

What was potentially good, though, was hidden away in the associated budget documents; a 168 page report going into more detail on the soundbites announced at the dispatch box. Buried at the end of a paragraph on page 47 is this line: *"The government will also consult on ways to encourage small brewers to retain and expand their access to UK pubs, maximising drinkers' choice and local economies, including through provisions to enable more 'guest beers'."*

This may not sound like a big deal, but, if you're reading this in a pub, have a look at the bar. Examine the draught lines on offer. How many breweries are actually represented? The vast majority of beers sold in the UK are nothing but brands owned by the new 'Big Four' of: Heineken, Carlsberg, Molson Coors and AB InBev. These multinational corporations don't own pubs - the closest is Heineken's Star Inns - but rather they have agreements with the PubCos (pub companies) and regional breweries to supply their tied estates. The



Photo: © Laura Hadland

managers and tenants of these pubs are unable to choose who to buy their beer from; they have to either purchase directly from their parent company, or use a specific wholesaler who will be setting the prices - and, of course, taking their cut. No matter the good intentions. People running the vast majority of pubs in the UK are heavily restricted as to whom they can buy their beer from. As a result, the small independent breweries, providing the quality and variety we crave, are kept out.

But this promised consultation could change that. As with 'The Supply of Beer (Tied Estate) Order 1989' - more commonly known as the Beer Orders - tied pubs could be forced to allow a guest beer. However, unlike with the Beer Orders, anything brought-in will need to apply to the PubCos, too, not just the brewery estates, and be non-restrictive. Wetherspoon gives its managers the option to order from any local brewery within 30 miles of the pub, but with the caveats that the brewery has to use a specific wholesaler and adhere to non-negotiable terms and prices - effectively pricing out the majority of those local breweries.

Allowing the managers and tenants of pub chains to order-in what they want, from who they want, can only lead to a wider choice on the nation's bars. Smaller breweries, providing the local variation so beloved by discerning drinkers, will be given a chance to survive.

There are not *"too many breweries"*, as I so often hear each time another small brewery closes, but there *are*, most certainly, *"too many tied lines"* in the so-called free-houses.

GO to your local free house, BUY a pint of local beer, and CAMPAIGN to make that the norm.

**Steve Dunkley**

*Beer & Brewing Historian & Writer  
Founder, Beer Nouveau Brewery  
Peterborough CAMRA*

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Norton Road, Baldock, SG7 5AW



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# Beer Belle

## The Gender Pint Gap

Here's a little game for you whilst you're drinking your pint. I want you to rack your brains and think about when you last saw a beer brand being advertised on mainstream television or a streaming service. Maybe on a billboard, or in a magazine.

I'll guess it was probably a big brand from one of the global or national brewers. When you picture the advert, was there anything about the imagery or the wording that offended you, or could, perhaps, be considered antagonistic to your family, friends or colleagues? There probably wasn't, because the way all alcohol is advertised is heavily regulated to make sure it conforms to guidelines set out by the industry (a self-regulated industry).

Alcohol advertising can't (amongst other things) make the packaging appealing to children, which rules out the use of bright primary colours or cartoon characters. Adverts can't advocate the over consumption of alcohol or give undue emphasis to the intoxicating effect of alcohol; this prohibits images of anyone looking too bright eyed and bushy tailed. Adverts can't associate the drinking of alcohol with bravado, or with violent, aggressive, dangerous, anti-social or illegal behaviour. Adverts can't suggest alcohol will bring you social or sexual success. They cannot be sexist, racist, ableist, or ageist.

Whilst it sounds very 'nanny-state', I fully support this regulatory framework. I remember the days of bikini-clad pneumatic women being depicted on bottles of lager. Sigh. I recall Carling using the strapline *"I bet HE drinks Carling Black Label."* Really? I watched men guffaw and women roll their eyes at the (snigger) *double entendres* on cask-ale pump clips, poking fun at marginalised groups.

I'm telling you this because I've recently completed another research study into women's attitudes, opinions and behaviours towards beer. Earlier this year, I commissioned a YouGov survey, and it found only 14% of women



in GB drink beer regularly (once a week or more) compared to 50% of men. We have the lowest percentage of female beer drinkers in the world. Only 8% of GB women said beer was their favourite drink, compared to nearly 40% of men.

What was the biggest reason for women not choosing beer as their drink of choice? You've guessed it. The way beer is

marketed, advertised and promoted. 82% of women said they thought beer advertising was typically targeted towards men and, interestingly, 74% of male respondents agreed with this statement too.

It's been over a decade since regulations were introduced to limit discriminatory or exclusionary messages in alcohol advertising, marketing and promotional material. But, clearly, we've got long memories and there's a lot of history to unravel, owing to some of the most successful ad campaigns of all time. Furthermore, only 3% of head brewing jobs in the UK are held by women. If breweries want to attract more female drinkers, they need to attract more women into these senior roles. More women working in the brewing industry is one of the ways to change the narrative that beer is just for men.

Beer is the most sociable drink in the world; across the globe it forges friendships regardless of gender, race, ability and age. We all have a part to play in unravelling the messages the brand owners created generations ago, and make beer inclusive for all.

If you would like to read more details about the research study, search for 'The Gender Pint Gap Revisited' online. The report was published in May 2024 and is available to anyone interested in beer, and GB beer drinking habits.

  
[www.beerbelle.co.uk](http://www.beerbelle.co.uk)

**Annabel Smith**  
 Beer Sommelier & Writer  
 Wakefield CAMRA

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# For Pete's Sake

## Why does CMBC hate cask ale so much?

On 7th October, CMBC (Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company) announced that they would be closing the Banks's brewery in Wolverhampton. It was a tough decision. It wasn't their fault; it was San Miguel's fault. It was the market's fault. Actually it was YOUR fault, because you don't drink their beers as much as you should.



Every time CMBC commit an act of corporate vandalism on Britain's cask-ale market they plead that they had to do it. The cask-ale market is in such bad shape, so frail and weak, they had no choice but to kick it in the face.

Despite being the UK's and, therefore, the world's biggest player in the cask-ale market, there was absolutely nothing they could do to prevent its decline. You know how it is. It's not as if they could - ooh, I dunno - put any marketing support behind their cask brands, or join any of the industry campaigns trying to promote cask, or even put one single f\*\*\*ing picture of a cask ale on their corporate website. Nope, poor old CMBC were utterly powerless to prevent its decline.

But don't worry, they said. Just because we're closing a massive cask-ale brewery doesn't mean the brands are under any threat. Why would you think that, you great big paranoid lummoxx? Apparently, it would allow them to brew *more* cask ale! *Better* cask ale! That's how business works. You just don't understand. Their own headline couldn't be clearer - "*Banks's brewery closure won't affect cask brands.*"

You'll never guess what happened next. CAMRA heard rumours that, actually, some beers were going, and pressed for a response. Lo and behold, CMBC confirmed that 11 beers are for the chop.

To go from "*the brewery closure won't affect our cask brands*" to axing ELEVEN beers in one fell swoop suggests to me either: One, they'll just say any old shit they feel like, to get people off their backs. Or two, someone is really rubbish at their job and has absolutely no idea what's going on. Or maybe even the whole company is just making it up as they go. Back in October, CMBC could have said, "*Obviously things are tricky, but we're going to do our best.*" They could have sought buyers for these brands, or found people to brew them under licence. But no.

The impact is, of course, uneven. I'm not sure there'll be too many people missing *Eagle IPA*, but I used to bloody love *Old Empire* on the increasingly rare occasions I could find it. I was never a fan of *Bombardier*, but it used to be one of the country's biggest ale brands till this lot got their murderous hands around its neck. In their respective geographical heartlands, *Banks's Mild*, *Jennings Cumberland Ale* and *Ringwood Boondoggle* were beloved icons.

I recently checked CMBC's website and could find NONE of the above-listed beers, so it's not as if they've actually been *trying* to sell them to drinkers. Why the hell would they want to do that?

Are CMBC attempting to deliberately destroy the UK's cask-ale market? Of course, they'd say no, if they could ever be arsed to comment. But if they really were trying to murder cask ale, what would they be doing differently? Probably nothing...

**Pete Brown**

Author, Broadcaster, Beer Lover  
Beer Writer of the Year 2021, 2016, 2012, 2009.

Norwich & District CAMRA

[www.petebrown.net/pete-brown-blog](http://www.petebrown.net/pete-brown-blog)

*Banks's Mild*  
*Banks's Sunbeam*  
*Bombardier (keg)*  
*Eagle IPA*  
*Jennings Cumberland Ale*  
*Mansfield Dark Smooth (keg)*

*Mansfield Original Bitter (keg)*  
*Marston's Old Empire*  
*Marston's Ship*  
*Ringwood Boondoggle*  
*Ringwood Old Thumper*

**CULLED BEERS**

# Pints of Interview

## Tim Dewey – neither Taylor, nor Landlord



Independent, family-owned heritage brewer **Timothy Taylor's** is best known for its classic pale ale **Landlord 4.3%** – a quality beer that commands a premium. Yet, customers clearly believe they are getting value for money. Landlord is ranked number two (by volume and value) on the 2023 list of the UK's best-selling cask ales, with sales having increased 11% by value and 6% by volume over the previous year.

“We charge more because of higher ingredient and brewing costs... with 100% focus on quality.”

**Sharp's Doom Bar 4.0%** currently occupies the number one spot, however, 2023 sales dropped 10% by value and 12% by volume. Were this to be repeated for 2024, the value of Landlord sales would comfortably outstrip Doom Bar, and Tim Taylor's classic would sit top of the table.

Feeling sure that this real-ale success story would be of interest to *Pints of View* readers, I contacted CEO Tim Dewey and asked him to share some of the Company's secrets...

“Yes, our beer is priced higher than many others, but a high price, in itself, is no guarantee of quality. We charge more because of higher ingredient and brewing costs, which allow us to adopt a no-compromise approach

“Cask ale is an essential and very special part of a pub experience that's impossible to replicate at home.”

*with 100% focus on quality. Get that right and volumes will grow through increased customer demand, so long as the publicans do their part!*

“One of the characteristics of our beer is the vigorous secondary fermentation, which actually develops another layer of quality and complexity to the beer. This makes it very important to allow sufficient time in the pub cellar for the beer to condition. Serve too soon and it's what we call 'green beer'. Whilst it's technically drinkable after only three hours, and very good after two days, give the beer a week and it will develop into something very special. A rare example of green not being good!



“To help publicans, we've produced a guide called: **'All for that taste of Taylor's.'** It's a clearly written, easy-to-read 28-page manual with plenty of illustrations, that starts with a page devoted to an 'Introduction to Timothy Taylor's' and ends with two pages entitled 'Troubleshooting'. I think it demonstrates how seriously we take working with pub staff to ensure quality.

“Cask ale is an essential and very special part of a pub experience that's impossible to



replicate at home. You'd think pubs would want to make sure they've got that absolutely spot on, because it's what brings customers in, yet it ends up being such a challenge getting the quality right.

"Landlord is still the heart of our business, accounting for about 80% of what we brew. **Boltmaker [4.0%]** is number two. It used to be called 'Best Bitter', but a name-change in 2012 was followed by it winning the CAMRA Great British Beer Festival champion beer of Britain in August 2014, just before I arrived on the scene!

"Our other beers include **Knowle Spring Blonde [4.2%]**, **Golden Best [3.4%]**, **Dark Mild [3.4%]** and **Landlord Dark [4.3%]**, which are all relatively small in volume terms, but play an important role, as does our first keg ale **Hopical Storm [4.0%]** which represents 'a foot in the other camp'.

"On the packaging side, cask ale is still very dominant, representing 85% of what we produce, with bottled beer to the supermarkets and keg making up the balance.

““ Cask ale is still very dominant, representing 85% of what we produce.”

"I'll end with a funny-but-true story. Back in 2005, so way before I joined, the brewery received an email from JD Wetherspoon, stating that the chain wouldn't continue to stock our beer unless it met 'certain price criteria'. My predecessor, Charles Dent, responded with an explanation of why we couldn't sell at the price they wanted and ended the letter with: 'Should your policy ever change from buying on cheapness to buying on quality, here's a list of all the awards that our beers have won in blind tastings at festivals!'

"Both are framed and on display in our boardroom as reminders of Timothy Taylor's philosophy. There were other customers who were delisting us because they weren't prepared to pay for our quality, but are now back, having realised that people are willing to pay a premium for something special."

But what is that 'something special'? A few years ago, just before COVID struck, esteemed Beer Writer, Pete Brown, visited the Knowle Spring brewery to find out. After a full nooks-and-crannies tour, hosted by Tim, Pete came away with the answer: "The best word to sum it up would be 'craft'." Maybe today, SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers and Associates), of which Timothy Taylor's is a member, and CAMRA would prefer to use the word 'Indie'. Whilst I fully support the 'Indie campaign' to recognise, support and promote Independent Brewers, I'm not sure it conveys quite the same message.

Now go to the centre spread on pages 32-33 to see which Hertfordshire pubs are serving Timothy Taylor's.

Paul Donatantonio

Real stories, real people, **real ale**

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# Herts Brewery A-Z (numbered 1 - 15 on Front Cover)

## 1. 3 Brewers of St. Albans

**Symondshyde Farm, nr Hatfield AL10 9BB**  
[www.3brewers.co.uk](http://www.3brewers.co.uk)



Despite variable weather, the 8th annual Beer & Music festival was attended by a record number of people, numerous dogs and at least two peacocks. The full range

of 3B beers was backed up by real cider, G&T and wine, and the expanded bar with more staff meant no queues. Street food included hog roast from the Brewers Pork Company, whose pigs are fed on spent grain from the brewery!

Not at the festival was limited edition *Green Hop 4.1%*, produced with Harlequin hops and launched in October.

2025's festival is planned for Sat 30th August, so see you there!

**Steve Thompson, Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO)**

## 2. Baron Brewing

**Great Hormead, Buntingford SG9 OPB**  
[www.baronbrewing.co.uk](http://www.baronbrewing.co.uk)

BARON

Brewing commenced in Oct 2021 on a small farm near Buntingford. The brainchild of former McMullen Brewer, Jack Baron, the brewery has gone from strength to strength and celebrated its third birthday by launching a trio of beers including a Red IPA and an Imperial Stout.

Jack is gaining a reputation for experimenting with different hops and equipment including 'Tank 5' – used solely for interesting and unique brews. The quality and diversity of beers has also helped Jack to brew a number of collaborations with the likes of Verdant, Rivington and Pressure Drop.

**Simon Dewhurst, BLO**

## 3. The Belgian Brewer

**Raynham Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 5NZ**  
[www.thebelgianbrewer.co.uk](http://www.thebelgianbrewer.co.uk)



This unique brewery was started in 2018 by Nik Lemmons, a man from a family of Belgian brewers.

Originally in IT, Nik decided that brewing beer was much more interesting and in quick time, his premises expanded into three industrial units that now include a tap room. Belgian styles are brewed with traditional methods and natural ingredients. The range kicks off with *Pilsner 4.8%* and tops out with the mighty *Quadrupel 10.5%*; there are also Wheat, Saison and Fruit beers.

STOP PRESS – following successful trials, beers are now available in stainless steel pins (36 pt), alongside keg, bottle and growler for take-out.

**Brendan Sothcott, HEB CAMRA**

## 4. Buntingford Brewery

**Therfield Rd, Royston SG8 9NW**  
[www.buntingfordbrewery.com](http://www.buntingfordbrewery.com)



Established in 2001 in the town that gave the company its name, within four years the brewery had relocated to the rolling countryside of North Hertfordshire. Water is drawn from the farm's own bore hole, malt is from East Anglia and hops from the UK. Core range is: *Twitchell 3.8%*, a fruity golden ale; *Polar Star 4.3%*, a heavily-hopped blonde ale; and *Hurricane 4.0%*, a malty copper bitter. There are also numerous occasional and seasonal beers. Packaging is 72pt cask, 5L bag-in-box and 500ml bottle. Online orders can be delivered or collected.

**Les Middlewood, South Herts CAMRA**

## 5. Creative Juices Brewing

**Woodoaks Farm, Rickmansworth WD3 9XQ**  
[www.creativejuicesbrewingcompany.com](http://www.creativejuicesbrewingcompany.com)



The brewery has doubled capacity in the last year and recently installed a canning line, giving more control over the packaging process. This improvement has allowed them to start canning unfiltered hazy beers again. Most of the beer is kegged and sold through the taproom, but more venues have started stocking their brews. Sadly, no cask ale is being produced.

A music night has just started (the “Taproom Sessions”), which has been very successful and looks like becoming a regular thing. The taproom has regular quizzes and other events, as well as exhibitions from local artists.

**Andrew Vaughan, BLO**

## 6. Crossover Blendery

Lannock Manor Farm, Weston SG4 7EE

[www.crossoverblendery.co.uk](http://www.crossoverblendery.co.uk)



After a busy 2024 season, the Blendery Taproom closed at the end of October for winter. It will reopen briefly for the Grainworks Winter Market on Saturday 7th of December, before a full reopening in spring 2025. Their range of beers continues to grow, and are available from their website or specialist shops, including the Beer Shop in Hitchin and St. Albans.

**Jeremy Kitson, BLO**

## 7. Farr Brew

Great Level End Farm, Redbourn AL3 7AR

[www.farrbrew.com](http://www.farrbrew.com)



Founded in 2014 by Nick Farr, the brewery recently completed its move to Great Revel End Farm, near Redbourn, where an opening event was held on 22nd November. Core beers include its first-ever brew *Golden 4.1%*, *Pale 4.2%*, *Bitter 4.2%* and *Lock In 4.5%*. Seasonals will include *Porter 5%* and *Brewdolph 4.8%*.

The Tap Bar is open Saturdays 11 - 8 and Sundays noon - 5. The brewery adjoins a large grass field - plenty of room for music and BBQ events. Watch this space, or follow <http://www.facebook.com/farrbrew>.

**Philip Allen, BLO**

## 8. Garden City Brewery

22 The Wynd, Letchworth Garden City SG6 3EN

[www.gardencitybrewery.co.uk](http://www.gardencitybrewery.co.uk)



Congratulations to the brewery for their American hop *Pale 4.3%* getting joint-third place at St. Albans Beer & Cider Festival 2024

‘Hertfordshire Beer of the Year’ competition.

Brewing continues at least weekly, with a mix of semi-regular and one-off beers, available only from the brewery and gravity dispensed. Recent specials have included a cask lager, green-hop pale and Belgian-style strong ale.

The latest ‘Hop-Spice’ beer was launched on November 13th with 25p from every pint sold donated to the Garden House Hospice. This year’s is a chilli chocolate porter and should still be available, depending on demand, in the weeks before Christmas.

**John Hamblin, BLO**

## 9. Mad Squirrel Brewery

Berkhamsted Rd, Hemel Hempstead HP1 2SG

[www.madsquirrelbrew.co.uk](http://www.madsquirrelbrew.co.uk)



To celebrate their 20th anniversary, the brewery are to produce what they describe as two ‘very big beers’. As yet unnamed, they will be available in keg and bottle, though no mention of cask.

This time in cans, *Guv Island Ale 3.8%* is an unfiltered, light and citrusy hoppy sessionable pale, produced for The Pub Landlord, alter-ego of comedian Al Murray, who is touring the UK until next summer. Branded with ‘The Pub Landlord’ logo, and with the brewery’s name on the label, publicity from the shows has led to pubs taking cans of this one-off beer that is also available online from the brewery.

**Jonathan Humphries, BLO**

## 10. McMullen Brewing & Pubs

26 Old Cross, Hertford, SG14 1RD

[www.mcmullens.co.uk](http://www.mcmullens.co.uk)



Whilst 2024 bows out with Mac’s familiar Christmas offering - dark ruby *Boot Warmer 5.2%* - 2025 will usher in four yet-to-be-named seasonal beers. Meanwhile, cask favourite *AK Original Mild 3.7%* was crowned 2024 Hertfordshire Beer of the Year, whilst *Daze 4.5%*, hazy, dry-hopped and fruity, has been added to the Rivertown permanent range of kegged beers.

On the pubs side, 2024 saw the **Duchess**

and **Dressmaker**, in Brentwood, Essex open, following on from purchases of three London pubs: the **White Hart**, the **Duke of York** and the **Lock Tavern**. Closer to home, the **Golden Griffin**, Hertford, has benefited from the company's estate-wide rolling programme of refurbishments.

**Les Middlewood, BLO**

## 11. New River Brewery

Pindar Rd, Hoddesdon EN11 0FF

[www.newriverbrewery.co.uk](http://www.newriverbrewery.co.uk)



Located on the banks of the New River in Hoddesdon, the brewery is now owned and managed by John Bourdeaux, and entering its

10th anniversary year. The stable of regular and popular beers, includes *London Tap* 3.8%, *Twin Spring* 4.0%, *Five-Inch Drop* 4.6% and *Chadwell* 4.2%, but there are also occasional ales; an APA called *Great Amwell* 4.6% being a recent example.

Beers are available in 72 pt casks, 5 litre bag-in-box and 500ml bottles, for either local delivery or collection from the brewery. The smaller pack sizes can also be ordered online via the company's website.

**Tim Vaughan, BLO**

## 12. Pope's Yard Brewery

Paramount Ind. Est. Watford WD24 7XA

[www.popesyard.co.uk](http://www.popesyard.co.uk)



Having first brewed commercially in 2012 in Watford, the brewery recently returned to the town, after 5 years in Hemel Hempstead. Despite the present site being mainly a film set (producing music videos and short horror films), a few small-scale test brews have been undertaken to develop new recipes and find out how Watford water works with their current beers. An interesting range of bottled beers is still available for sale: *Hibiscus Sparkling Rosé Sour* 4.6%, *Rebel Girl Export India Porter* 9.9% and *Danger Money Imperial Stout* 11.0%

**Charles Teuma, BLO**

## 13. Six Hills Brewing

29b High St, Stevenage SG1 3BG

[www.sixhillsbrewing.co.uk](http://www.sixhillsbrewing.co.uk)



Now well-established in Stevenage Old Town - the Broken Seal Tap Room next to the brewery has a loyal crowd of regulars. All house beers are unfiltered and vegan, with styles ranging from stout to pilsner, in cans and on draught.

New on the taps are: *Man-goes to Mars* 4.3% (a mango version of the regular *Slingshot to Mars* 3.8% raspberry sour), and *Making a Play Again* 5.8% chocolate porter (a slightly lower-ABV version of the 6.2% original). Coming soon: Christmas beer (top secret!), a new fruit sour, and a new pale ale.

**Adam Walsh, BLO**

## 14. Tring Brewery

Dunsley Farm, London Rd, Tring HP23 6HA

[www.tringbrewery.co.uk](http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk)



See page 28 for advert and detailed listing.

## 15. Two Bob Brewing

Danesbury Ave, Welwyn AL6 9SG

[twobobbrewco@gmail.com](mailto:twobobbrewco@gmail.com)



The guys at the brewery were thrilled to secure joint-third place for their *Pale* 4.1% at St. Albans Beer & Cider Festival 2024 'Hertfordshire Beer of the Year' competition, amidst some established and well respected Hertfordshire breweries.

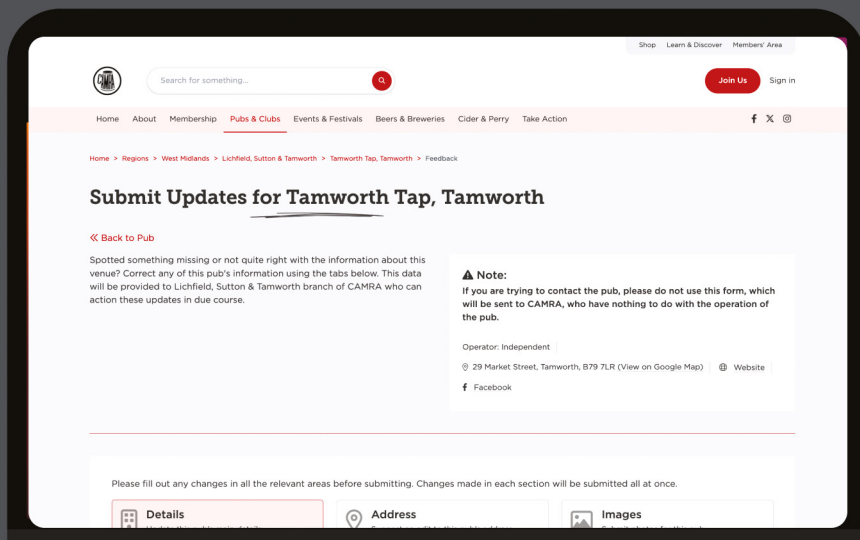
They continue to engage with the local community through local delivery (they will also collect & re-use bottles) and pop up events. Two Bob Gold and Pale are often available on draught in the Plough, Datchworth. Look out for a new, higher ABV special edition beer that's in progress for Christmas 24.

**John Hamblin, BLO**

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# Herts Pubs, Clubs & Breweries

## Buntingford Brewery – 20 Years at Therfield

In 2025 Buntingford Brewery will celebrate 20 years at their rural home, Greys Farm, Therfield Road, near Royston in north Herts. The farm sits alongside Therfield Heath, a biological Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve, popular with ramblers and ornithologists.

Time to catch up with the brewery team. I'm met at the brewery door by brewer Tony Liversidge and Head of Sales Charlie Oakman. Tony explained that Buntingford use water drawn from a bore over 150 feet into the underlying chalk, this core ingredient giving the beers a unique brewing signature. The brewery comprises a 14-barrel plant recently supplemented with a 300-litre pilot brew kit allowing the creation of exciting new recipes and speciality beers.

In 2001, Andrew Potter set up a 2½-barrel brewery at his home in Bishop's Stortford and soon enlisted the help of friends Steve Banfield and Catherine Murphy, who had gained brewing experience in Leicestershire. The equipment was subsequently moved to an industrial unit in Buntingford and trial brewing commenced, resulting in the now familiar *Highwayman's Best Bitter 3.6%* and *Hurricane*



*Force 4.3%* plus other occasional beers. As demand grew, a 7-barrel plant was purchased and installed.

The move to Therfield in 2005 was prompted by a meeting with farmer Edward Darling, who could see the synergy of attracting a brewery to redundant and converted buildings at Grey's Farm. Unique selling points would be the local water and a new reed-bed filtration system to cleanse the brewery's liquid waste, before it flows into a pond designed to attract wildlife. This new brewery location was a chance to expand and being close to four counties, presented a good opportunity for new pub sales, at Cambridge in particular. With the equipment installed, *Polar Star 4.4%* was introduced.

New fermenters were added, increasing brewing capacity to 30 barrels per week and *Twitche! 3.8%* became a regular beer. National acclamation followed when the beer won the Bitter class in CAMRA's 2013 Champion Beer of Britain competition. That same year, *Polar Star* gained silver in the Golden Ale category.

When Andrew withdrew from the business, Steve and Catherine pressed on. But by April 2017 *Pints of View* was reporting that beers had not been forthcoming for some months – the brewery encountering a number of problems, not least a serious infection that had compromised all brewing.

In June 2017, the brewery was bought by Rob Scahill (landlord of the Orange Tree in Baldock) and active CAMRA member Andy Rawnsley, who became the new leaseholders at the farm. Tony was employed as brewer and admits that his learning curve into commercial brewing was steep – he had previously worked



*Charlie and Tony at the brewery gates*

as a car-body repairer, though had also been a keen home-brewer. After a year, the brewery re-opened, following a deep clean and an operational rethink. Things were looking up, but, in 2020, Britain was rocked by the COVID-19 pandemic and, like most breweries, Buntingford needed to quickly adapt. A beer delivery service had only just been introduced (partnering with local cidemaker Cam Valley Orchards) and this presented a surprise boost for Buntingford – the demand for their bag-in-a-box and bottled beers soared, increasing brewery production by 500 per cent! Three core beers were made available at any one time and there was a new addition, *Riwaka Station 4.8%* – a strong pale ale; creamy and fresh with oats and New Zealand hops.

So, where are we now?

Rob withdrew in 2019, leaving Andy as sole owner. In 2021 a rebranding of the company and its beers took place, with attractive new pump clips and a streamlined website. Tony and Charlie, who enlisted in 2020, are now joined by Tom Froggatt who manages logistics and deliveries. Regular beers *Twitchell*, *Polar Star* and *Hurricane* (now brewed at ABV4.0% and marginally Buntingford's strongest selling beer) are supplemented with occasionally brewed favourites – *Highwayman*, *Royston Red 4.8%*, *Oatmeal Stout 4.4%* and bottled *92 Squadron 4.5%*. A cask of the recent seasonal brew, the excellent *Heavy Lies The Crown 4.2%*, took just 32 minutes to be demolished at Histon Beer Festival. There are varieties under the Single Hop 4% banner and eight or so seasonal brews emerge during the year.

*Twitchell* is an easy-drinking golden, fruity bitter with a floral aroma using Goldings and UK Cascade hops. *Polar Star* is a heavily-hopped pale blonde ale with strong citrus notes using Summit hops. *Hurricane* is a copper bitter, malty in character, brewed with 1st Gold hops and named after the restored veteran Battle of Britain fighter plane Hurricane Hawker P3717 which often used to fly over the brewery.

From the pilot brew kit, watch out for a high strength fireside beer being planned for home consumption this Christmas. And from the main brewery expect the popular amber *Silent Night 4.1%*.



Buntingford use malts from Crisp's of Fakenham and hops from Charles Farram of Malvern. Yeast comes from Niche Solutions of Northampton.

Tony says “I would like to create a legacy of beers – always naturally brewed and of good quality.” Charlie added “And we strive for consistency at all times, keeping our carbon footprint as low as possible.”

With 50% of production relying on pub orders, regular Hertfordshire takers include the Orange Tree in Baldock and the Plough at Datchworth. A house beer called *Standard Procedure* is brewed for the Royal Standard in Cambridge, and a similar arrangement has recently been launched for the Plough, Shepreth.

The brewery hosts open events each month, selling out quickly and featuring beer, wine and cheese plus pizzas from Royston's Slice of Price pizzeria. To enquire about these events, how to buy their beers and for contact information go to [www.buntingfordbrewery.com](http://www.buntingfordbrewery.com).

The future looks good for Buntingford – surely time to give their beers a try.

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## Tring Brewery

Dunsley Farm, London Rd, Tring HP23 6HA

[www.tringbrewery.co.uk](http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk)



The brewery was established in 1992 in Akeman Street, Tring and moved to larger premises at the current address in 2010. Brewing capacity was increased in 2016 and is now approximately two million pints per annum. The brewery shop includes a self-service sample bar, where you can try draught beer from the tanks, prior to purchase in a variety of takeaway container sizes. Also available is the range of Tring bottled beers and a collection of merchandise and clothing.

### Shop opening times:

Monday & Tuesday	11.00 - 17.00
Wednesday - Friday	09.00 - 18.00
Saturday	09.00 - 17.00

The Tring beer range consists of twelve core beers brewed all year round including *Side Pocket for a Toad* (a straw coloured ale of 3.6% ABV), *Moongazing* (a red-amber coloured

ale of 4.2% ABV), *Colley's Dog* (a dark ruby premium ale of 5.2% ABV) and *Death or Glory* (a rich barley wine of 7.2% ABV).

Four seasonal-specials range from January's *Nosebag* (a chestnut coloured bitter of 4.3% ABV), through mid-summer's *Fanny Ebbs* (a blonde ale of 3.9% ABV) to the year-ending *Santa's Little Helper* (a well-balanced winter ale of 4.8% ABV).

The line-up is completed with twelve monthly-specials, with names associated with local charities chosen by Tring.

In recent years, Tring has been at the forefront of matching beers with foods such as Biltong, cheeses, cured meats and chocolate, available locally and in the brewery shop.

Finally, Tring has been very active in fundraising over the years. The 2024 Charity of Choice is Hector's House - a men's mental wellbeing charity based in Berkhamsted - for which a record-breaking total is in sight!

**Richard Healey**

*Tring, Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO)*

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# Cryne... into beer

## What makes a Champion Beer of Britain?

The announcements of CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain (CBoB) can often cause controversy. Take 2023, when Greene King's Abbot came overall second and all sorts of conspiracy stories arose, including accusations that the beer was chosen because of Greene King's sponsorship of the Great British Beer Festival. However, as in love, the Champion Beer of Britain judging is blind.



There is no doubt that the competition process is long and complicated, lasting two years from beginning to end. It starts with the voting by CAMRA members and these results are combined with the recommendations from CAMRA's Tasting Panels. Beers are chosen regionally and brewers are asked to submit them for judging. This is what makes the Champion Beer of Britain competition unique. In most other beer competitions, the brewer decides what beer to submit and often has to pay for the privilege of being judged. In CBoB it is CAMRA deciding on which beers it wants to judge.

The winning beers in each of the regions go forward to the national judging, which is split into summer and winter. Finally, the winners in each category are judged to find the supreme champion. The diagram opposite shows the process.

But what about the judging itself? CAMRA tries to have a mix of trained CAMRA members<sup>1</sup>, brewers, publicans, beer writers and other trade people, with a spattering of the great and the good for publicity purposes. This helps to get winning beers that reflect a mix of views – from those who assess the technical prowess

of the brewer to others who ask themselves: “*Will our customers drink and enjoy it?*” Believe it or not, being a good beer judge isn't that easy. Everyone's palate is as unique as their fingerprint and that means we all have our favoured style of beer – why else would brewers brew such a wide variety?

The challenge is to put aside personal preferences and judge each beer on its merits. It is easier when you are judging just one beer style, e.g. milds or session bitters, but the test comes when you have to decide which beer should be the supreme champion. This year, the judges had to decide between seven totally different beer styles. Inexperienced judges, will tend to have a bias towards the strongest beers, which is why the final panel is chosen with such care.

Such was the quality of the winning beers, that only two points separated both first and second places, and third and fourth, with no overall consensus from the final panel<sup>2</sup> of judges!

It might be complicated, but the process does normally lead to some fantastic and consistent beers making it through, and helps CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain remain the world's leading consumer cask-beer competition – the one that brewers want to win. Try the beers, and judge for yourself!

**Christine Cryne**

*Beer Tutor & Master Trainer  
EBCU Accredited Beer Judge  
British Guild of Beer Writers  
North London CAMRA*

<sup>1</sup> The majority of the CAMRA judges are active members of one of CAMRA's Tasting Panels and then pass CAMRA's accredited beer judging course. <https://members.camra.org.uk/volunteers-area/training-for-volunteers/taste-training-and-beer-judging/>

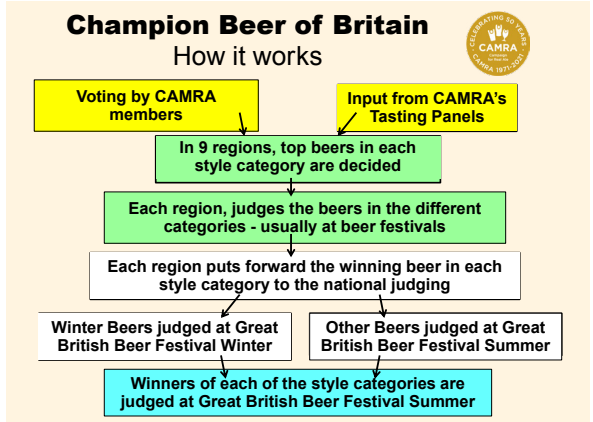
<sup>2</sup> This year's Champion Beer of Britain final panel consisted of: beer writer, Laura Hadfield; two trained CAMRA judges (Jackie Wallis and Hertfordshire's own Bill Austin); MD of Charles Faram, hop merchants, Paul Corbett; Professor of Brewing at Nottingham University, Rod White; and publican & brewer of the Tamworth Brewery & Tap (CAMRA National Pub of the Year 2022 & 2023), George Greenaway.

2024 CAMRA Draught Champion Beer of Britain Competition (Cask-Conditioned)					
Brewery	Beer	ABV	Style	Rank	Region
Crouch Vale	Amarillo	5.0%	Golden Ale	1	East Anglia
Anspach & Hobday	The IPA	6.0%	New World IPA	2	London & South East
Green Jack	Trawlerboys Best Bitter	4.6%	Premium Bitter	3	East Anglia
Loch Lomond	Southern Summit	4.0%	Blond	4	Scotland & NI
Logan Beck	Proper Bitter	4.0%	Session Bitter		North West
Penzance	Mild	3.6%	Dark Mild		South West
Sarah Hughes	Snowflake	8.0%	Barley Wine		West Midlands



Top L-R: Tim Dunford (Green Jack), Laura Emson (CAMRA Awards Director), Fiona & Colin Bocking (Crouch Vale)

Bottom L-R: Jack Hobday, Paul Anspach (Anspach & Hobday)



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<b>Bushel &amp; Strike, 15 Mill Street SG7 5LY</b>	<b>Three Horseshoes, 102 Norton Road SG6 1AG</b>
<b>Rose &amp; Crown, 69 High Street SG7 5NP</b>	<b>Three Horseshoes, Baldock Lane SG6 2AE</b>
<b>Baldock</b>	<b>London Colney</b>
<b>Three Horseshoes, 74 High Street SG7 5HQ</b>	<b>Bull, Barnet Road AL2 1QU</b>
<b>Barnet</b>	<b>Redbourn</b>
<b>Black Horse, 92 Wood Street EN5 4BW</b>	<b>Cricketers, East Common AL3 7ND</b>
<b>Ye Olde Mitre Inne, 58 High Street EN5 5SJ</b>	<b>Rickmansworth</b>
<b>Ye Olde Monken Holt, 193 High Street EN5 5SU</b>	<b>Artichoke, The Green WD3 3HN</b>
<b>Berkhamstead</b>	<b>Feathers, 34 Church Street WD3 1DJ</b>
<b>George &amp; Dragon, 87 High Street HP4 3QL</b>	<b>Royston</b>
<b>Highwayman, 262 High Street HP4 1AQ</b>	<b>Belle, 61 North End SG8 5NZ</b>
<b>Bramfield</b>	<b>Chequers, London Road SG8 8JQ</b>
<b>Grandison, 18 Bury Lane SG14 2QL</b>	<b>King James, 14 Kneesworth Street SG8 5AA</b>
<b>Buntingford</b>	<b>St Albans</b>
<b>Fox, Aspenden SG9 9PD</b>	<b>Black Boy, 79 Old Watford Road AL2 3RU</b>
<b>Blind Fiddler, High Street SG9 0BW</b>	<b>Boot, 4 Market Place AL3 5DG</b>
<b>Goff's Oak</b>	<b>Farriers Arms, 32-34 Lower Dagnell Street AL3 4PT</b>
<b>Goff's Oak, Newgatestreet Road EN7 5RH</b>	<b>Hare &amp; Hounds, 104 Sopwell Lane AL1 1RL</b>
<b>Harpenden</b>	<b>John Bunyan, Coleman Green Lane AL4 8ES</b>
<b>Cross Keys, 39 High Street AL5 2SD</b>	<b>Kings Arms, 7 George Street AL3 4ER</b>
<b>Oddfellows Arms, 15 Leyton Green AL5 2TG</b>	<b>King William IV, 185 Sandridge Road AL1 4AH</b>
<b>Silver Cup, St Albans Road AL5 2JF</b>	<b>Queens Head, 7 Church End, Sandridge AL4 9DL</b>
<b>Hatfield</b>	<b>Robin Hood, 126 Victoria Street AL1 3TG</b>
<b>Mallard, 89 Great North Road AL9 5LP</b>	<b>Rose &amp; Crown, 24 High Street, Sandridge AL4 9DA</b>
<b>Hemel Hempstead</b>	<b>Six Bells, 16-18 St Michael's Street AL3 4SH</b>
<b>Green Dragon, Flaunden HP3 0PP</b>	<b>Three Blackbirds, 2 High Street, Flamstead AL3 8BS</b>
<b>Marchmont Arms, Piccotts End Road HP1 3AT</b>	<b>Verulam Arms, 41 Lower Dagnell Street AL3 4QE</b>
<b>Hertford</b>	<b>White Hart Tap, 4 Keyfield Terrace AL1 1QJ</b>
<b>Old Cross Tavern, 8 St Andrews Street SG14 1JA</b>	<b>Stevenage</b>
<b>White Lion, 59 Bengoe Street SG14 3ET</b>	<b>Chequers, Broadhall Way SG2 8TH</b>
<b>Hitchin</b>	<b>Dun Cow, 32 Letchmore Road SG1 3PR</b>
<b>Fox, 37 High Street SG5 3PS</b>	<b>Lordship Arms, 42 Whempstead Road SG2 7BX</b>
<b>Goat, 77 High Street SG4 8XE</b>	<b>Ware</b>
<b>Half Moon, 57 Queen Street SG4 9TZ</b>	<b>Brewery Tap, 83 High Street SG12 9AD</b>
<b>Hermit of Redcoats, Titmore Green SG4 7JR</b>	<b>Waterside Inn, Bridgefoot SG12 9DW</b>
<b>Motte &amp; Bailey, 1 Great Green SG5 3QD</b>	<b>Watton at Stone</b>
<b>Musgrave Arms, 16 Apsley End Road SG5 3LX</b>	<b>Bull, 113 High Street SG14 3SB</b>
<b>Old George, Arlesey Road SG5 3UX</b>	<b>Welwyn</b>
<b>Plume of Feathers, Upper Green SG5 3YD</b>	<b>Robin Hood &amp; Little John, Codicote AL6 9UB</b>
<b>Red Lion, 16 Chapel Road SG4 8NU</b>	<b>Wellington, 1 High Street AL6 9LZ</b>
<b>Waggon &amp; Horses, 27 High Street SG4 7LE</b>	<b>Welwyn Garden City</b>
<b>Kings Langley</b>	<b>Crooked Chimney, Cromer Hyde Lane AL8 7XE</b>
<b>Saracens Head, 47 High Street WD4 9HU</b>	<b>Sun Inn, 31 Lemsford Village AL8 7TN</b>
	<b>White Horse, 30 Mill Lane AL6 9ET</b>

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

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# News & Brews from abroad

## Latest Beer Trends from those Crafty Americans!

What *did* Colorado, USA and Great Britain once have in common? Well, apart from being of similar land area, they both used to host an annual Great Beer Festival. However, our GBBF took time out this year with its move from Olympia (that's Kensington, London, not Greece) to the NEC, Birmingham (that's West Midlands, not Alabama) in 2025.

The Great American Beer Festival, however, took place, once again, in Denver, as it has done every September/October since 1984 and so, yet again, I was there over three days, scouring the festival floor and sniffing out the latest beer trends because, remember, *"what happens over there tends to come over here!"*

Organised by the not-for-profit Brewers Association, the 42<sup>nd</sup> GABF drew approximately 40,000 people who eagerly descended on the Colorado state capital to sample drinks from 600+ companies – mainly breweries, of course.

**Trends - IPA Dominates** - There are two trends within craft beer styles that are growing the fastest right now:

IPA in its many iterations continues to lead the American craft brewing landscape, now accounting for 46% of the craft beer industry, up from 30% in 2017. Hop forward beers like American IPA, juicy/hazy IPA, and Imperial IPA saw the strongest market share gains in 2023.

Lighter styles, like American lager, wheat ale, and pilsner are also gaining traction, showing growth at both ends of the ABV spectrum.

Overall, growth is coming from both high and low ABV styles while mid-range ABV beers face more challenges. There was a myriad of IPAs at the Festival but a good rule of thumb was to focus on award-winning breweries that produce world-class examples of the style, such as **Breakside Brewery**, **Reuben's Brews** or **Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.**

**How High Can You Go...?** - Topping the bill for extreme offerings was Sam Adams Utopias, boasting an impressive 28% ABV. This rare, bi-annual, boundary-blending, barrel-aged



Photo: © Brewers Association

masterpiece drew the longest lines at the Festival. Other popular examples included **Revolution Brewing's DBVSOD** (Double Barrel Very Special Old Deth) at 17%, a double barrel aged imperial oatmeal stout; **Fremont Brewing Company's Rusty Nail**, a Bourbon barrel-aged imperial stout infused with liquorice and cinnamon bark, coming in at 14.5%; and **Firestone Walker's Bendy Foldies**, a 14% double-oaked ale with red foxy vanilla beans and toasted pistachios.

Lager and lighter styles are having their moment in the spotlight and there were plenty of excellent examples at the Festival. **Deschutes Brewery's Fresh Hop King Crispy**, a German-style pilsner, was a medal winner, while **Uinta Brewing Co's Was Angeles**, a 5% cream ale, proudly took home gold!

**Low and No-Alcohol** - Another strategy for navigating GABF was to seek out unique alcohol-free options. **Athletic Brewing Co.**, a high-profile brand available in many international markets, picked up two medals at the GABF competition, making it an excellent choice, and **Fremont Brewing** won gold in the amber to dark non-alcohol category. The low and no-alcohol beer segment is still small but is rapidly expanding within the American craft-brewing market.

**See You Next Year!** - Great American Beer Festival is a beer lover's paradise and I recommend booking time off now for 9 - 11 October 2025. See you there!



[www.brewersassociation.org](http://www.brewersassociation.org)

**Lotte Peplow**  
Beer Sommelier & Writer  
American Craft Beer  
Ambassador for Europe  
Richmond & Hounslow CAMRA

# Herts CAMRA Festivals

## 28<sup>th</sup> Watford Beer Festival Report

The event took place from Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August at its usual venue; Halsey Masonic Hall in Watford. 40 cask ales together with real cider and perry were available for what was Watford & District CAMRA's most successful festival in years. Around 90% of the beer was sold to thirsty customers over the three days, showing that, despite various doom and gloom stories in the news, there is still a strong demand for cask ale out there.

Unfortunately, local breweries were under-represented at the festival, but we did manage to get two beers from Watford's newest ale producer, **Hardline Brewery**: the light and sessionable *Morning Moon* 3.4% and the dry and citrusy blonde ale *On the Verge* 5.2%.

Once again, dark beers were popular, with three of the top five beers in the Beer of the Festival competition being stouts or porters. Every year we're asked for more dark beers but find that it is very difficult sourcing them from breweries in the summer. Breweries and pubs should take a chance on selling more dark beers in the warmer months because there definitely is an untapped market.

The popularity of dark beers shows that a beer festival can satisfy cask-ale drinkers' desire for a range of beers that tied pubs might find themselves unable to offer. Perhaps some pubs would benefit from a loosening of the pubco tie to try and attract drinkers who seek variety. Some pubs already have a choice to go free-of-tie in the UK Pubs Code, but take up has been low, with some pubcos being accused of penalising publicans who take the option, thus dissuading others from following suit. More pressure needs to be put on the government to strengthen this part of the Code and ensure its implementation.

One of the local breweries missing from this year's festival was **Paradigm Brewery** of Sarratt, which ceased trading in 2023. Paradigm's *Watford Winter Warmer* 6.0% was a perennial winner of Beer of the Festival right up until last year, which means this year



we crowned a new champion. The Beer of the Festival for 2024 was **Tring Brewery's** legendary *Death or Glory* 7.2%. It was great to see Tring come out top in Watford. Their beers are a familiar sight on handpumps in the area and they're great supporters of local pubs, helping to supply beer and equipment to the Oxhey Village Brewfest and the Bushey and Oxhey Beer and Cider Festival amongst other things.

The top 10 beers as voted for by festival-goers were as follows:

1	<i>Tring, Death or Glory</i> 7.2%
2	<i>Leigh on Sea, Castle Black</i> 3.9%
3	<i>Five Points, Railway Porter</i> 4.8%
4	<i>Bristol Beer Factory, Milk Stout</i> 4.5%
5	<i>Disruption IS Brewing, Tepu</i> 2.8%
6	<i>New River, Lost River</i> 4.0%
7	<i>Vocation, Bread &amp; Butter</i> 3.9%
=	<i>XT, 10</i> 4.4%
9	<i>Downland's, Cheap Hotel</i> 6.8%
=	<i>Thornbridge, Jaipur</i> 5.9%

So, congratulations to Tring Brewery and we hope to see you all again next time!

**Andrew Vaughan**  
Chair

Watford & District CAMRA

## Beer & Cheese at SAB&CF2024? Oh, yes please!

Not content with laying on a selection of 200+ draught beers and real ciders, the St Albans Beer & Cider Festival organisers had devised some exciting distractions to pull customers out of the main drinking arena. Tutored beer tastings sounded great, as did an expert-led trail around the historic pubs of St Albans. However, being a trained Cheesemonger, as well as a member of CAMRA, the prospect of a Cheese & Beer pairing took the biscuit, as it were.

Cheese - cleansing the pallet is not so important, however, using both taste-buds and olfactory certainly is. The former detects simple savoury, salty, sour, sweet and bitter, whilst the latter discerns more complex flavours. Tip: pinch your nose, chew with your mouth open to appreciate the simple flavours (your ears will block with a closed mouth!) and now release your nose... BOOM: there lies the power of smell to release the complex flavours.



Des de Moor



James Grant



Daniel & Georgina

Photo: Will Lewis

Having booked tickets in advance, I arrived just ahead of the 12.30pm start time with fellow cheesemonger Daniel Illiev (who's since been crowned World Young Cheesemonger of the Year 2024!).

The 'show' started with introductions to the 30 participants from renowned **Beer Writer & Accredited Beer Sommelier, Des de Moor**, and founder of the Real Cheese Project and owner of **No.2 Pound St, Artisan Cheese Shop, James Grant**. They were then immediately into clear and concise explanations of how to taste their respective products.

Beer - first take a large sip, swish around and swallow. During the quick 'washing of the mouth' you'll notice most beers tasting sweet and then bitter. Now to the important second sip that requires a slower and more deliberate swirling around the mouth to activate the taste-buds, combined with drawing in air over the beer and up through the nasal cavity to bring the olfactory system into play i.e. smell.

Beer and cheese are ideal pairing partners; beer's carbonation cuts through the fat of the cheese, but its flavour is not so intense that it dominates the overall taste.

Whilst lack of space prevents me from describing either the beers or cheeses, the pairings are listed in the table below:

1	<i>Liverpool Dark Mode 3.7%</i> (Merseyside)	+	<i>Caw's Cenarth Thelma's Original Caerffili</i> (W. Wales)
2	<i>Oakham Green Devil IPA 6.0%</i> (Peterborough)	+	<i>Keen's Extra Mature Cheddar</i> (Somerset)
3	<i>Tring Death or Glory 7.2%</i> (Hertfordshire)	+	<i>Mrs Bourne's Cheshire Cheese</i> (Cheshire)
4	<i>Potton Press Heritage Cider 7.0%</i> (Bedfordshire)	+	<i>Kingcott Dairy's Kingcott Blue</i> (Kent)

On a basic level, this most enjoyable hour told everyone what they probably already knew; namely, that the pairing of beer and cheese 'just works'. Many would say the same goes for wine and cheese, but, despite my wine diploma, I do find that cheese can too easily be dominated by, for instance, a buttery oaked Chardonnay, or a tannic Malbec.

So, it's very easy to enjoy most cheeses with most beers, however, spend a bit more money on some flavoursome artisanal cheeses and you will find that there are beers that don't 'just work' - they 'really work'!

**Georgina Donatantonio**  
Cheesemonger & Writer  
South Herts CAMRA

# Herts CAMRA Awards

## Hertfordshire's Top Brew is AKnowledged!

Congratulations to everyone at McMullen for scooping CAMRA's 2024 Hertfordshire Beer of the Year Gold award with their historic AK *Original Mild* 3.7%. The beer came first in a blind tasting held at September's St. Albans Beer & Cider Festival, competing against beers from all of the county's cask-beer brewers.

McMullen AK can be traced back to 1833, making it one of Britain's oldest brews. It was already a stalwart in the 1970s when CAMRA was formed with the aim of defeating the depressing national march towards insipid and tasteless keg beers. The beer, which can be found in the majority of the company's Hertfordshire pubs, is created from Whitbread Goldings hops and Pale, Crystal and Chocolate malts – a quaffing session pint with an initial aroma of toasted hazelnut and caramel. AK is still Mac's best-selling cask ale, proudly sitting within McMullen's Authentic Heritage beer range, alongside *Country Best Bitter* 4.3%, *IPA* 4.8%, *Boot Warmer* 5.2% and other regular seasonal brews.

The presentation was held on 21 November at the splendid Red Lion, Hatfield, conveniently located just up from the train/bus station. On receiving the award

from South Herts CAMRA Chair Ian Boyd, the company's Non-Executive Director, Fergus McMullen, said:

*"Well done AK! As we approach our company's 200-year celebrations in 2027, it's fantastic that it has been recognised with this award. Traditionally, Hertfordshire beers reflected the incredible malting history in the county, a rich barley growing area. Our cask beers embrace that heritage and pedigree - delicate, soft and gentle - malty and subtle in taste. AK is a brilliant 'conversation pint', a session beer enjoyed by generations of drinkers in Hertfordshire. In a way it looks after itself - we are its custodians. We mustn't let it die!"*

Fergus touched on Mac's proud and long family brewing history, praising the current brewing team, headed by Chris Evans, for continuing to brew high quality and consistent beers. He thanked CAMRA for its ongoing support for (and promotion of) cask ale.

The award demonstrates that a beer first brewed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century can still impress the beer judges and drinkers of today.

**Les Middlewood**  
McMullen, Brewery  
Liaison Officer (BLO)  
South Herts CAMRA



Photo: Bob Norrish

(L-R): Ian, Fergus and Les

Hertfordshire Beer of the Year 2024	
<b>Gold</b>	McMullen, AK Original Mild 3.7%
<b>Silver</b>	Farr Brew, Mannered 4.4%
<b>Bronze</b>	Garden City Brewery, Pale 4.3% (USA version)
<b>Bronze</b>	Two Bob, Pale 4.1%

## Mild Mannered Farr awarded Silver

On a freezing cold November night, Farr Brew held a “soft opening” for investors to celebrate the brewery’s move from Coleman Green to Great Revel Farm, about 1.5 miles outside Redbourn. This was a great opportunity for South Herts CAMRA Chair Ian Boyd and other branch members to see the new premises and present directors, Nick Farr and Matt Eldridge, with the Hertfordshire Beer of the Year 2024 Silver Certificate for *Mannered 4.4%* - an award-winning mild with a witty name!

**Philip Allen**

*Farr Brew, Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO)  
South Herts CAMRA*



(L-R): Ian, Nick and Matt

## East Anglia Champion Beer 2004

A small group of dark-drink enthusiasts from Herts & Essex Borders branch turned up at what is now becoming a well-deserved annual event, to present an award to **New River Brewery**, in Hoddesdon. Once again, the brewery’s dark-favourite *Blind Poet 4.5%* made it into the top three of the East Anglia region, Session Stouts and Porters category. This year it was the Bronze award, which was presented by brewery liaison officer Tim Vaughan to boss man, head brewery and general-man-of-all-tasks, John Bourdeaux and his new no. 2, Jake Cox.

The Gold award went to *Black Anna 4.0%* from **Chalk Hill Brewery**, Norwich, which last year took the Bronze award, and Silver went to *Old Man and the Sea 4.1%* from **Mighty Oak**, Maldon, Essex. After a short speech from John, it was time to taste the latest offering; a best bitter by the name of Chadwell (ABV4.2%),

which is purportedly the source of the New River, which flows within a couple of yards of the brewery.

**Norman Samuels**

*Pubs Officer  
Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA*



(L-R): Tim, John and Jake

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Full rate card on page 4



# Good Beer Guide

## 66 – still The Number of The Best!

So, as GBG2024 bows out and GBG2025 is ushered in, it's goodbye to 'Eddie', mascot of British Heavy Metal Band Iron Maiden, and hello to either Coronation Street's Rovers Return Inn, or Emmerdale's Woolpack – the choice is yours. Fictitious monster replaced by fictitious pubs. Some will see this as a small step in the right direction!

As usual, *Pints of View* is indebted to Bob Norrish for trawling the Hertfordshire pages, collating the figures and keeping a spreadsheet updated, along with providing a commentary on those pubs or clubs that warrant a special mention. Bob is a stalwart of the South Herts branch, having been Chair over two periods in the '70s and '80s.

Back to this year's Guide, with 66 Hertfordshire pubs & clubs, it's impractical to list them all, so we'll stick with the top five, along with those that have reached 'Milestones' and the ones that have made it in for the first time:

	Total	Consecutive
<b>Serial Entrants</b>		
1 <i>Rising Sun, High Wych</i>	51	51
2 <i>Swan, Bushey</i>	46	14
3 <i>Crooked Billet, Colney Heath</i>	42	42
4 <i>King's Arms, Tring</i>	42	42
5 <i>Woodman, Wildhill</i>	40	36
<b>Milestones</b>		
<i>Garibaldi, St Albans</i>	30	6
<i>Crown, Buntingford</i>	30	5
<i>White Hart Tap, St Albans</i>	25	18
<i>Plough, Datchworth Green</i>	25	2
<i>Half Moon, Hitchin</i>	20	20
<i>John Bunyan, Coleman Green</i>	15	2
<i>Boot, St Albans</i>	15	1
<i>Admiral Byng, Potters Bar</i>	10	8
<i>Goat, Codicote</i>	10	1
<b>GBG Virgins</b>		
<i>Belgian Brewer, Bishop's Stortford</i>	1	1
<i>Bell, Tring</i>	1	1
<i>Cask &amp; Stillage, Potters Bar</i>	1	1
<i>Oddfellows Arms, Apsley</i>	1	1
<i>Wishful Drinking, Rickmansworth</i>	1	1

The very astute might query the Cask & Stillage as a first timer, since it was called the White Horse before refurbishment in 2014 and gained GBG entry 3 times between 1980 and 2001.

However, it's my article and Bob makes the rules!

Congratulations to each and every drinking establishment that made it into the Guide, and commiserations to those who were there or there about, but did not get in this time. Better luck next year!

**Paul Donatantonio**

# South Herts CAMRA Pub of the Year 2025

Since its inception in 1986, South Herts Pub of the Year has been won by 17 different pubs.

The branch area is divided into four regional zones, each with a similar number of pubs. A coordinator for each zone is appointed and a shortlist of pubs drawn-up from those nominated by Branch Members:

<p><b>North West zone</b> – Matt Handford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cricketers, Redbourn</li> <li>• Cross Keys, Harpenden</li> <li>• Green Man, Sandridge</li> <li>• John Bunyan, Coleman Green</li> <li>• Marquis of Granby, Harpenden</li> </ul>	<p><b>North East zone</b> – Joe Saunders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black Horse, Hertford</li> <li>• Crooked Billet, Ware</li> <li>• Old Barge, Hertford</li> <li>• Old Cross Tavern, Hertford</li> </ul>
<p><b>West zone</b> (St Albans) – Phil Defriez</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boot Inn</li> <li>• Garibaldi</li> <li>• Great Northern</li> <li>• Lower Red Lion</li> <li>• Mermaid</li> <li>• Portland Arms</li> <li>• Robin Hood</li> <li>• White Hart Tap</li> </ul>	<p><b>South zone</b> – Paul Woodhouse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admiral Byng, Potters Bar</li> <li>• Bull, London Colney</li> <li>• Cask &amp; Stillage, Potters Bar</li> <li>• Crooked Billet, Colney Heath</li> <li>• Woodman, Wildhill</li> </ul>

Members are encouraged to get involved! All it requires is going to **every pub in a zone**, drinking real ale and filling in a short form with scores out of 10. Go to <http://pintsofview.camra.org.uk/> and click on POTY Procedure (under **'Please join in!'**).

The criteria to be judged are:

- Quality & Condition of Ale
- Promotion & Knowledge of Ale
- Cleanliness & Staff Hygiene
- Community Focus
- Service & Welcome
- Style, Décor & Atmosphere
- Sympathy with CAMRA's Aims
- Overall Impression & Value



**Remember -**  
whilst judging pubs for the *Good Beer Guide* is only about the quality of the beer, judging for *Pub of the Year* includes seven other criteria.

Please note that for a member's scores to be included, **ALL the pubs in a zone** must be surveyed (and ideally more than once and at different times) and the scores sent to the zonal coordinators by **Wednesday 15th January 2025**.

What a great reason to visit our pubs. Cheers to every member who gets involved!

**Phil Defriez**  
*Pub of the Year Coordinator*  
*South Herts CAMRA*

# Pints of View 312 Winter 2024 Prize Competition

Here's something rather different. Are you aware that *Hertfordshire Pints of View* is but one of around 80 magazines published by the branches of CAMRA, up, down and across the UK? Like this magazine, many can be found in the nation's pubs, clubs, libraries and museums, whilst all (I think) can be viewed online.

Opposite is an alphabetical list, by magazine name, along with a description of the geographical area covered by the publishing branches. TO VIEW A MAGAZINE, JUST CLICK ON THE NAME, WHICH IS HYPERLINKED TO ITS RESPECTIVE WEBSITE.

You will find some really great content and may wonder: "why is this sort of thing not in *Pints of View*?". Well, **let me know which three items interest you most, and you could win a copy of the 2025 CAMRA Good Beer Guide...** and I'll try to include the best of them in future editions.

## What's in a name?

This esteemed publication started life, nearly 50 years ago, under a different name. A certain 'Les Middlewood' was editor of that first edition and of its reincarnation two years later when other Hertfordshire branches came on board. 20 years and many editors later, one 'Steve Bury' was at the helm for the transition to the (almost) current name.

Before <i>Hertfordshire Pints of View</i>		
	From	Editor
<b><i>South Herts Newsletter</i></b>	1976	<i>Les Middlewood</i>
<b><i>Hertfordshire Newsletter</i></b>	1978	<i>Les Middlewood</i>
<b><i>Hertfordshire's Pints of View</i></b>	2000	<i>Steve Bury</i>

Intriguingly, in the edition before the title change, Steve asked readers to suggest a

new name, but he never then told us whose idea it was! Maybe modesty forbade him, or perhaps he just forgot, or could it be that he did not want to let on that *Pints of View* was 'inspired' by Edinburgh & South-East Scotland CAMRA's magazine of the same name? Anyway, whatever the truth, I love what was decided on. A great play on words, a touch of humour and easily remembered.

Once you've browsed the list, do let me know if you think any other names are *even better*.

Finally, for the many *Hertfordshire Pints of View* readers who crave cryptic crosswords, you'll be pleased to learn that another is expected to be ready for our *Spring 2025 Edition*.

**Paul Donatantonio**

1. Have a look online at one/some/all of the other branch magazines listed opposite. (It does not have to be the most recent edition).
2. Choose three items/articles/features (from one or more magazines) that are NOT something you would normally find in *Hertfordshire Pints of View*, BUT which you think would enhance the magazine.
3. For each item please state:
  - a) Branch magazine name
  - b) Edition/Issue number or date
  - c) Item/article/feature page number
  - d) Optional - what you liked

## Entries by Fri 31 Jan 2025:

To: editor@pintsofview.camra/org.uk

Subject: **Pints of View 312 Competition**

Please include Your Name and Home Town

**First TWO eligible entrants drawn,  
each wins:**

**2025 CAMRA Good Beer Guide**

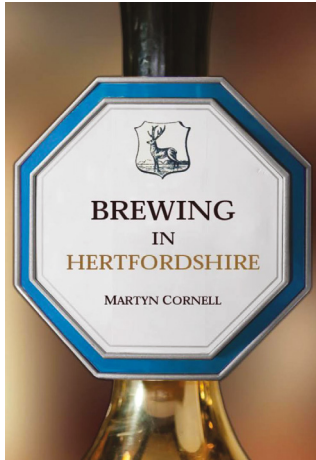
Below is a list of all magazines published by CAMRA branches. Enter a Magazine Title plus Branch Area into a search engine, or use the hyperlink contained within the Magazine Title, if you're reading this online. To advise of any changes, please contact [volunteer.services@camra.org.uk](mailto:volunteer.services@camra.org.uk)

Magazine Title	Branch(es) Area		
Ale	Cambridge	Leicestershire Drinker	Leicestershire
Ale & Hearty	Southport & West Lancs	London Drinker	London
Ale Cry	Central Lancashire		
Ales & Tales	Dudley, Stourbridge & Halesowen	Mad Cow	Berkshire South East
Alesman	Keighley & Craven	MerseyAle	Liverpool
Ale Tales	Solway (Cumbria)	Mines A Pint	Reading & Mid-Berks
Ale Talk	Huddersfield	More Beer	Rochdale, Oldham & Bury
Barrel Organ	Salisbury & S Wiltshire	News & Ale	Surrey
Beer Around 'Ere	Peterborough	News & Brews	South Devon
Beer in Bed(s)	South Bedfordshire	Newsletter	St Helens
Beer Leeds	Leeds	Norfolk Nips	Norfolk
Beer Matters	Sheffield	Nottingham Drinker	Nottingham
Beer Tiz	North Devon		
		Opening Times	Stockport & S Manchester
CAMRAngle	Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead	OtoK	Wakefield
CAMRA Angle	Sunderland & S Tyneside	Ouse Boozer	York
Canny Bevvv	Tyneside & Northumberland	Over the Barrel	Northamptonshire
Channel Draught	Deal, Dover & Sandwich	Oxford Drinker	Oxford
Cwrw Ceredigion	Bae Ceredigion		
Chiltern Tapler	Mid Chilterns	Peel Ale	Dronfield
		Pint Sides	Coventry & North Warwickshire
Derby Drinker	Derby	Pint Taken	Worcestershire
Donny Drinker	Doncaster	Pints of View	Edinburgh & South East Scotland
Drake's Drinker	Plymouth	<a href="#">Pints of View</a>	<a href="#">Hertfordshire</a>
Draught Copy	Maidstone & Mid Kent	Pints West	Bristol & Bath
Durham Drinker	Durham		
		Real Ale Talk	Kirklees West Yorkshire
Ed's Pint	East Dorset	Rising Tun	Swindon & North Wiltshire
East Kent Drinker	North East Kent		
Exe Ale	Exeter & East Devon	Solihull Drinker	Solihull
		SoxonAle	South Oxfordshire
Firkin	North Bedfordshire	Sussex Drinker	Sussex
Forward to the Bar	Birmingham	Swan Supping	Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe
Full Pints	Ayrshire & Wigtownshire	Swiggin' in Wiggin	Wigan
Gael Ale	Highlands & Western Isles	The Bar	Barnsley
Going for a Burton	Burton on Trent & S Derbyshire	The Giant Dongle	West Dorset
		The Tippler	Gloucestershire
Hereford Hopvine	Hereford	Tiny Pint	Rutland
		Tyke Taverner	Bradford
Inn The Drink	Grimsby & North East Lincs		
InnQuirer	Furness	Ullage	West Berkshire
InnSpire	Chesterfield		
Inn Touch	Rotherham	Wightwash	Isle of Wight
Inn Touch	Rugby	WirrAle Drinker	Wirral
		Worts and Ale	East Hampshire
Last Orders	Lichfield, Sutton & Tamworth		
Last Orders	Suffolk & North East Essex		

# Bits 'n' Pieces

## New Book – Brewing in Hertfordshire

Back in the 1970s, Martyn Cornell was a resident in Hertfordshire, a leading member in CAMRA's North Hertfordshire Branch and a regular contributor to the pages of the *Hertfordshire Newsletter*, the forerunner of *Pints of View* magazine. His long career since, in investigative beer writing and as a brewery historian, has taken him to every corner of the globe resulting in a number of books on brewing considered by many to be the best in the subject. Martyn may have long since moved away from Herts but all these years later, he has returned to his roots to write "*Brewing in Hertfordshire*", a 96-page tour through the county's important brewing past,



covering every known brewer in the county from former leading brewers such as **Benskins**, **Simpson's** and **Pryor Reid** to the one survivor from the distant past, **McMullen** of Hertford.

All brewers are covered, large and small and no matter for how long they existed. Today's **New River**, **Mad Squirrel**, **Farrbrew** and **3 Brewers** are all featured along with our many micros.

The A-Z town/village format makes reading easy for those interested in picking up on a specific local brewing history, and an appendix of Hertfordshire brewers founded post-1980 completes the picture. The book is illuminated with old photographs, colourful posters, illustrations and beer labels, and those more fascinated by the full county picture will relish a full read from page 1 right through to page 96. I'm sure it will be a book regularly returned to.

One imagines that Martyn could have written a book twice the size as we have here, having probably unearthed many local anecdotes and lists of brewery-owned pubs – but the book stays true to its title. In "*Brewing in Hertfordshire*" we have an excellent and well-written summary of the county's brewing journey, including the salient factors that have driven the companies and individuals that have been part of it.

The book is a must buy for all those interested in discovering our Hertfordshire brewing heritage. £15.99 RRP from all good book sellers, but currently priced at just £14.39 + P&P from Amberley Publishing, Go to <https://www.amberley-books.com/brewing-in-hertfordshire.html> and place an order in time for Christmas!

Give the gift of beer knowledge at Christmas with books for the beer lover in your life!

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Visit [shop.camra.org.uk](http://shop.camra.org.uk)  
CAMRA member discount applied at checkout when logged in to the shop.

**Les Middlewood**  
South Herts CAMRA



# The CHRISTMAS HANGOVER

by Mark Heptinstall



The morning after the Christmas party you may ask yourself "How did I get into this state?" This article intends to answer the question.

Everyone knows what causes the hangover - alcohol - too much of it. Of course they are right, but how does it do it? And did you know that if you consider what you drink, how quickly you drink it and how you prepare yourself beforehand; you can limit the severity of the hangover?

Alcohol irritates the protective casing between the brain and the skull, making you feel sensitive. It also upsets the stomach lining, making you feel queasy and, in extreme cases, causes vomiting (of which more later). Alcohol disrupts dreams in the second half of the night, and hangovers often begin with frequent waking interspersed with dreams that are unpleasant and broken.

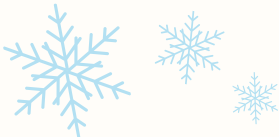
Another cause of the hangover is acetaldehyde poisoning, causing a throbbing headache. The production of acetaldehyde occurs at a fairly steady rate of about 10g (half a pint of beer) per hour, and you can seek to delay (but not prevent) this absorption by drinking a glass of milk before you start.

After returning from a heavy drinking session, it is a good idea to drink a pint of water before retiring to bed, gutter, hedgerow - or wherever else you intend to spend the night. Alcohol causes dehydration which makes you thirsty and worsens your headache.

You may have noticed that different drinks, of broadly similar alcoholic strengths, have markedly differing potentials for hangover. The culprits here are most uncongenial substances known as congeners. These are non-ethyl alcohols that are by-products of fermentation and cause headaches that often accompany a hangover. They are particularly prevalent in red wine, port and brandy, but largely absent in vodka. Unfortunately, vodka is also largely devoid of taste.

Now, as promised, to vomiting. It is a marvel of the human body that, despite having no control over such simple things as speech, balance and judgement, the body can perform the complicated feat that is the technical colour yawn, requiring a great deal of co-ordination. Firstly, saliva is produced to protect the mouth from gastric acid, the stomach's outlet to the intestine is blocked and the entrance to the lungs is closed to prevent inhalation. Now that the body has protected itself against damage to everything except clothing and dignity, the 'fun' can begin! The stomach relaxes and the muscles in the wall of the abdomen contract, forcing the contents of the stomach back the way they came in.

If you can face breakfast the morning after, have plenty of honey, treacle or jam. That's because they are rich in fructose which generates nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide, to assist with the processing of acetaldehyde. Finally, a word about the "hair of the dog". If you find that this works for you, then you should be worried. It is only of any benefit if you are an alcoholic suffering from withdrawal symptoms!



Courtesy of:  
**Draught Copy**  
 Maidstone & Mid Kent CAMRA  
 (First published in Edition 102, Autumn 1995)

# Wether Report

## Mission Impossible

In February 2023, Sir Keir Starmer unveiled his “5 Missions for a Better Britain,” outlining the goals a future Labour government would aim to achieve if elected. Anyone remember what they were?

OK, let’s try something more recent. May 2024 and my *Pints of Interview* with **Sir Tim Martin – The (Real Ale) Pub Landlord** (PoV310 Summer 2024 pages 14-18, <https://pintsofview.camra.org.uk/dl.php?id=222527#page=14>). Only 3 Missions, from this other Knight of the Realm, but every one of the Missions rather more important to readers of *Pints of View*, I would suggest.

Just in case anyone is new to this magazine, the Missions were:

1. NO handpump hijack
2. NO short measures
3. NO cloudy beer

The **‘handpump hijack’** referred to CMBC’s cunning stunt of serving keg beer from handpumps. Oh, sorry CMBC, your multi-million pound marketing team wants us to call it ‘Fresh Beer’. Well, I refuse. Anyway, Sir Tim told me: *“I would say that we have no plans to introduce it.”* And, as far as I am aware, they never have.

The **‘short measure’** referred to using oversized lined glasses in order that liquid could be served up to the pint line, with the head sitting on top. Despite ‘Spoons having given it a go, briefly, many (JJ) moons ago, Sir Tim gave me an upbeat: *“Yeah, maybe we could do it again.”* Well, he told me the other day that the company won’t – not even in a few trial pubs. However, more of that, later...

The **‘cloudy beer’** referred to never serving a cloudy or hazy ale UNLESS: 1) it is as the brewer intended, AND: 2) it is stated on the pump clip, for the benefit of customers and bar staff. Whilst I received no direct response, Sir

Tim reassured me with: *“I’m writing it down; I’m writing it down!”* I have nothing positive to report 6-months on, but do appreciate that this requires the cooperation of brewers. Maybe Dave Aucutt, boss of Wetherspoon beer supplier, East West Ales, could up the ante by INSISTING that breweries supplying the PubCo must ‘tick a clear-or-cloudy box’?

Prior to the interview, I’d enquired whether Sir Tim might be available to speak at the April 2025 Members’ Weekend, knowing that he lives in nearby Exeter. I’d been given a metaphorical ‘thumbs up’ in an email from his PA, but thought it wise to seek his confirmation when we met. So, I asked Sir Tim if he’d be happy to come along, and got the reply: *“Yeah, and give a talk.”* I thanked him and said that I’d better let HQ know, seeing as I had no authority to give the invite.

The Summer 2024 Edition ‘hit the shelves bars’ in June and, that same month, I contacted CAMRA HQ to ask who I should be discussing this potential guest speaker with. I received a prompt ‘pat on the back’ (I like metaphors) and was assured that my email would be passed up to the Senior Staff Team.

A month on, and, to my surprise, I had heard nothing, So, I sent a chasing email, to which I received the prompt response: *“They will consider inviting Tim, but won’t be making any decisions until the new year.”*

I was rather dumbstruck, and responded: *“I’ll tell Sir Tim to block out his diary for that weekend, on the off-chance that he’ll receive a formal invite from CAMRA HQ a couple of months before.”*

Fast forward six months and I decide that this is not good enough and send a chasing email to ‘the upper echelons’



**Have I been SHORT MEASURED?**

of CAMRA... NOTHING. Try again, a fortnight later... NOTHING. Sod it! Ask Sir Tim, yes (metaphor alert) I'm like a dog with a bone, and he tells me face-to-face that he doesn't think CAMRA wants him to speak. After a bit more delving, I find out by email that *"there'd been a mix up and that they'd already secured a speaker for Torquay next April (which wasn't Tim)."*

Ouch! Is it a coincidence that Wetherspoon aren't supporting CAMRA by re-introducing oversized-lined glasses? Probably.

Anyway, who is this speaker? Someone exceptionally dull and controversial, maybe... unlike Sir Tim Marmite!

**Paul Donatantonio**

## Is a Wetherspoon Free House, a free house?

A recent chat on Discourse, CAMRA's web forum, was prompted by the statement: ***"the term 'Free House' should only be applied to pubs that are free to stock beers from any UK brewery."***

The online disagreement was more fundamental than whether it's two words, or one. Below is a selection from the many responses:

"I would think that this will preclude any pub which belongs to a pubco, however large or small. Is that the intention?"

"One prominent chain has the words Free House on every one of its pubs, but essentially the beer choice is foisted on it by its one supplier."

"Back in the bad old days (pre-1990?), a pub was either:

- a) Owned by a brewery
- b) Leased to a tenant who was tied to the brewery
- c) Independent. i.e. a true 'Free House'

Now, it's not so simple."

"The manager of the 'Spoons still can't buy-in from whoever they want, though. There is a strict list of who they can buy from, and to get on that list there is a strict set of criteria for a brewery to adhere to. So it's not a free house, in my opinion."

"I'd say that Wetherspoons *are* free houses as most would understand; namely pubs offering beers from a range of brewers. I mean 'most beer drinkers', not most on Discourse! In reality, any pub not owned by the landlord is unlikely to be a genuine free house."

"I doubt the industry could be got to agree on a definition of 'free house', as very few are actually owner/operator genuine free houses."

Please write in to tell us what you understand by the term 'free house'. Does it still have meaning? And, most importantly, which are the best free houses in Hertfordshire?

**Paul Donatantonio**



**Have your say! Email [editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk)**

# Marketing Preferences

## PLEASE CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP MARKETING PREFERENCES

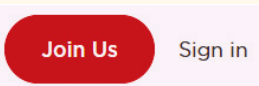
You don't have to be a 'hard-core' active member to enjoy CAMRA Social Activities - ale trails, cider sessions, brewery visits, beer festival trips, or just get-togethers in our many great Hertfordshire pubs. Whilst events will normally be promoted in *Pints of View* towards the back of the magazine under *Herts CAMRA Socials*, there are occasions when they're arranged at shorter notice than required by a quarterly magazine.

If you don't regularly check your branch website or Facebook, you could miss out if you're not signed-up to receive notifications from the branch.

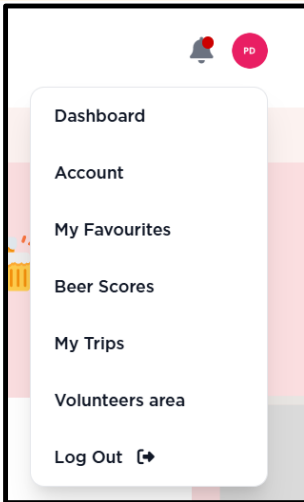
*Paul Donatantonio*

### Here's how to check and make changes to what you're signed-up to receive

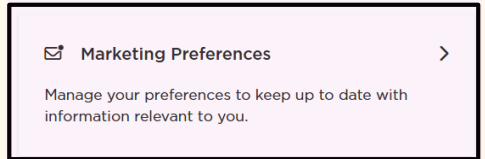
- 1 Go to: [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)
- 2 Sign-in at top right of screen by clicking on the red disc.



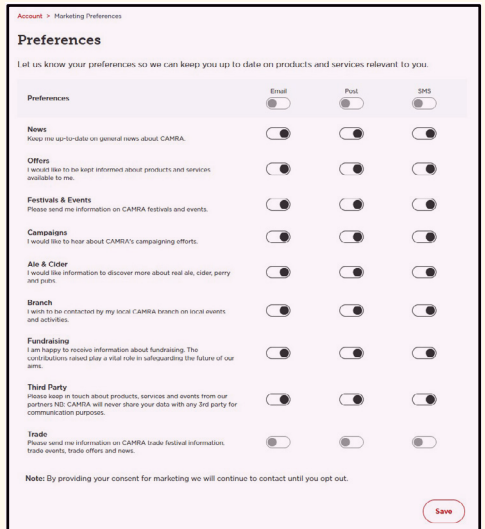
- 3 This will open up a drop-down menu.



- 4 Click on Account.
- 5 Scroll down and click on Marketing Preferences



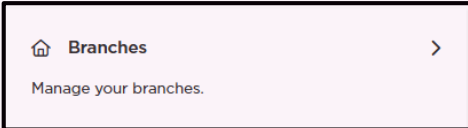
- 6 Select which you would like to receive.



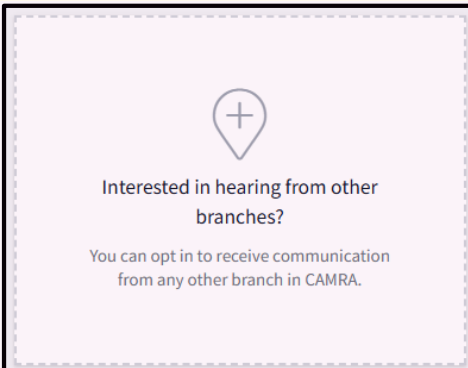
- 7** You can change your mind, however many times you wish.

## And here's how to receive notifications from up to four other branches

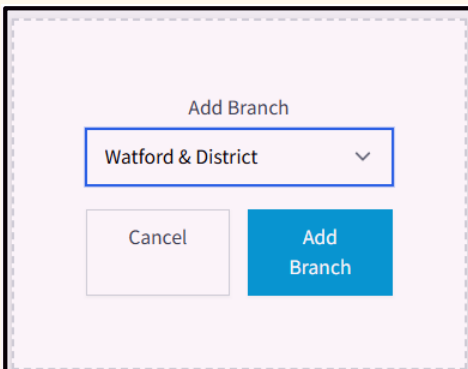
- 1-4** As above



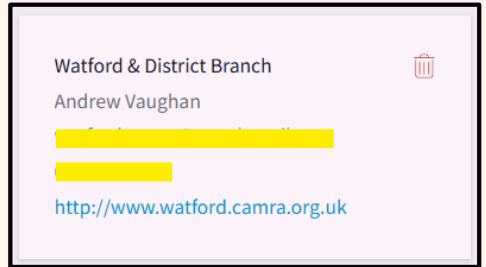
- 5** Scroll down and click on Branches



- 6** Click on one of the four 'empty' boxes (one will already show your Primary Branch)



- 7** Click on the arrow and select a branch from the dropdown list, then click on Add Branch



- 8** The branch contact details will be displayed. Repeat for up to three more branches.

You are now set up to receive notifications for your Primary Branch (normally your local branch) and up to three more branches.

### Pints of View 311 Quotes Quiz Answers

1. John Lennon
2. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nelson Mandela
3. Florence Nightingale
4. George Bernard Shaw
5. Eleanor Roosevelt
6. George Bernard Shaw
7. Walt Disney
8. John Lennon
9. Benjamin Franklin
10. Mother Teresa
11. Abraham Lincoln
12. Franklin D. Roosevelt
13. Mick Jagger
14. Noel Coward
15. Dolly Parton

Congratulations to our two winners!  
Brian Penn, Ware  
Peter Lindsay, St Albans

Each will receive in the post a copy of the 2025 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

# National News

## Award for Harvey's Best Brewer

Congratulations to **Harvey's of Sussex Head Brewer and Joint Managing Director, Miles Jenner**, who was recognized with the prestigious **\*Roger Ryman Lifetime Achievement Award** at the Brewers Choice Awards in late September. The award looks to honour those brewers who have shaped the industry, supported others on their journey and strengthened the independent UK brewing scene.

Mark Tranter, brewer and founder of Burning Sky Brewery, making the presentation, told the 300-strong gathering:

*"This year's lifetime achievement award is being given to someone who has dedicated their entire working life to the brewing industry. Not only that, but 45 years*



*Miles, centre stage with award*

*to one brewery where they are the custodian of somewhere truly magical. The energy of this person is far greater than that of many people half their age – their passion, dedication and belief in what they do is inspirational, their knowledge seemingly bottomless.*

*He is a wonderful orator, a historian, a gentleman in the truest sense of the word and, of course, a fine brewer. His joie de vivre never ends and I am lucky enough to see him, not just as a peer but as a friend – a friend who remains an inspiration."*

Wow, that's quite an accolade! But those of us in South Hertfordshire who know Miles through his ongoing support of our Beer Festival and regular contributions to *Pints of View* will feel that it's truly deserved.

**Paul Donatantonio**

\*Roger Ryman was an outstanding brewer with St Austell in Cornwall, where, on joining the brewery in April 1999, he set about developing a beer to celebrate the total eclipse of the sun in August. It launched on time, it was called Daylight Robbery and its sales went "ballistic", to quote Roger. In 2021 the beer was renamed, and Tribute was born. Roger was also responsible for other successful St Austell beers, including Proper Job, Big Job and Korev. Sadly, Roger died of cancer in 2020, aged only 52. However, the legacy of this revered brewer lives on.



### 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.

# Readers Write

## Will avoids dog's dinner

Beer scoring - If CAMRA really wanted us to submit beer scores every time we sup a pint, we would be provided with a dedicated smartphone app. Instead, what we have is a dog's dinner of a process [NBSS (National Beer Scoring System) via WhatPub] that I, for one, loath and avoid. Its browser-based approach is way too convoluted. It puts me off wanting to provide feedback, and I bet I'm not alone.

I would rather be chatting to my friends than immersed in all that nonsense, which means that branches lose out by not receiving scores.

Dedicated apps are slick, quick and immediate. Time for CAMRA to invest in one, and vastly increase member scoring. Branches need all the help they can get.

*Kind regards*

**Will Mowat**  
Kilburn NW6

**Ed says:** Using NBSS as the sole criterion to select pubs for the Good Beer Guide does have its detractors. Some see it as an unreliable means of judging beers/pubs, whilst others, like you, find the functionality frustrating. On the latter point, I didn't have a problem entering beer scores via the old WhatPub site. The new site - called the CAMRA Experience - whilst a marked improvement in many areas, appears to have lost the Beer Scoring option on the Home Screen Hamburger Menu, at least on an Android phone.

One of my gripes with NBSS is that it calls for real ale to be marked from 0.5 (undrinkable) to 5 (perfect) but only 2 if average. The mathematician/statistician lurking inside me suggests something strange is going on. Maybe CAMRA believes that the average pint of real ale only justifies a 2 out of 5?

## Are pub prices, or poor pubs, the problem?

Tim Webb asks: "*Will my pub survive?*" [PoV311]. Everyone who is a drinker certainly likes proper pubs. Ones with loud electronic music, often accompanied by large-screen sports, are an obvious put-off for the discerning pub goer, but the price of drinking in a pub vs at home has got to be the major reason people eschew the boozier.

Personally, it is the reason I have halved my weekly pub visits.

**Michael Fuller**  
Harpenden

**Ed says:** Price may be the major reason that many drink at home. I suspect this applies

more to an older generation, who count the cash in their pockets and see a good pub, primarily, as a dispenser of good beer.

The younger fraternity, in contrast, appear happy to venture out, armed with credit cards on their phones that get tapped on pay terminals, without so much as a glance at the screen. And whilst big-brands will be ordered at the bar, in preference to good beer, it's really about the accessibility and suitability of the venue as a comfortable meeting place - with wine bars, coffee shops and all-manner-of eateries providing a host of more desirable alternatives to some of our pubs.



Have your say! Email [editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@pintsofview.camra.org.uk)

# Herts CAMRA Socials

## DECEMBER

Friday 6<sup>th</sup>

### NH Pigs Ear Beer Festival visit - London

11.30 - 11.45am. Meet outside the **Round Chapel**, Glenarm Road, London, E5 0LY. Suggested route: Thameslink train to Finsbury Park arriving 10:51, then 254 bus at 11:01 from Stop R to Aldgate alighting at Clapton Girls' Tech College. Anyone preferring an earlier start with brunch before the festival email [chair@northherts.camra.org.uk](mailto:chair@northherts.camra.org.uk) for alternative train/bus times.

### W&D Social - Bushey

8.30pm. **Red Lion**, 50 High Street, WD23 3HN, then 9.15pm the **King Stag**, 15 Bournehall Road, WD23 3EH, finishing 10pm at the **Swan**, 25 Park Avenue, WD23 3EE

Friday 13<sup>th</sup>

### NH Traditional Pre-Christmas Ale Trail - Hitchin

7:30pm. **Radcliffe Arms**, Walsworth Road, Hitchin then the **Victoria**, the **Hamm**, **BBs Bar** and the **Half Moon**. Christmas jumpers optional.

Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

### SH The Sopwell Sweep Trail - St. Albans

2pm. **Beehive**, Keyfield Terrace - then an afternoon tour of the Sopwell area of the City, taking in six real ale pubs. Full itinerary at <https://southherts.camra.org.uk/>

## JANUARY

Wed 1<sup>st</sup>

### W&D Get Away from the Family Social - Watford

1pm. **Nascot Arms**, 11 Stamford Road, Watford, WD17 4QS

Fri 10<sup>th</sup>

### W&D Annual 'Pre-Xmas' London Pub Crawl

6pm. Starting at the **Bethnal Green Tavern**, 465 Bethnal Green Road, E2 0EA

Wed 15<sup>th</sup>

### NH Stevenage Old Town Social

8pm. **Old Town Bar**, High Street, then **Rump & Wade**, **Mulberry Tree** or **Red Lion**, finishing at the **Chequers**.

## FEBRUARY

Wed 19<sup>th</sup>

### NH Social - Hitchin

8pm. Meet at the **Anchor**, Cambridge Road, followed by the **Millstream**, the **Albert** and the **Bricklayers Arms**.



**The  
St Albans  
Sopwell Sweep  
Ale Trail**

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December**

---

2.00pm	Beehive
2.45pm	White Hart Tap
3.30pm	Garibaldi
4.15pm	White Lion
5.00pm	Goat
5.45pm	Hare & Hounds

---

**Six Pubs – Over 20 Real Ales**

**Relax with a Pint and a Chat**

**For those with a spare Yuletide afternoon**

***Everyone Welcome!***

# Herts CAMRA Meetings & Branch Contacts

## South Herts CAMRA


 southherts.camra.org.uk

**Chair:** Ian Boyd

chair@southherts.camra.org.uk

**Branch contact:** Ben Wilkinson  
contact@southherts.camra.org.uk

 facebook.com/camrasouthherts

 instagram.com/southhertscamra

 x.com/SouthHertsCAMRA

## DECEMBER

**Wed 4: SH Branch Meeting – St. Albans**

8pm. **Royston Club**, College Road, St. Albans.

## JANUARY

**Mon 13: SH GBG 2026 – Pub Selection Meeting – North West Zone**

7pm. **Cross Keys**, High Street, Harpenden

**Tue 14: SH GBG 2026 – Pub Selection Meeting – North East Zone**

8pm. **Hertford Club**, Bull Plain, Hertford

**Thu 16: SH GBG 2026 – Pub Selection Meeting – West & South Zones**

8pm. **Robin Hood**, Victoria Street, St. Albans

**Sat 18: SH Branch Meeting and AGM - Hertford**

1pm. **Hertford Club**, Bull Plain, Hertford

## FEBRUARY

**Mon 17: SH Committee Meeting – St. Albans**

8pm. **Six Bells**, St. Michaels, St. Albans

## MARCH

**Wed 19: SH Branch Meeting – Harpenden**

8pm. **Harpenden Arms**, High Street, Harpenden

## Formal Notice

### South Herts CAMRA Branch AGM - 18/01/25

The branch will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the **Hertford Club, Lombard House, Bull Plain, Hertford SG14 1DT** on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2025** at approx. 2.30pm following a branch meeting which will **start at 1.00pm**.

The 2025 branch committee will be elected at the AGM as detailed in the Branch Constitution:

Nominations for membership of the Branch Committee shall be in writing or by email to the current Chair: Ian Boyd, 3 Nunnery Stables, St. Albans AL1 2AS; chair@southherts.camra.org.uk

Each nomination must be signed by a proposer and seconder, both of whom should be members of the Branch, and accompanied by evidence of the nominee's willingness to stand. If a vote is required, a secret ballot will take place at the AGM.

You will need your CAMRA membership card

both to enter the club and vote..

A buffet will be provided and a range of cask ales plus a real cider are expected to be on offer.

Hopefully, you will be able to attend the AGM and consider standing for membership of the Branch Committee and filling one of the many positions. Whilst our branch has a healthy membership of more than 2,000, its success is dependent on enough enthusiastic people taking on the challenge of being *active* members.

There will be a guest speaker for the afternoon, with full details announced nearer the time, so stay tuned to my Monthly Newsletters to keep up to date with that and other announcements!

**Ian Boyd**  
Chair



South Herts CAMRA

## North Herts CAMRA

 northherts.camra.org.uk

**Chair:** Dean Barrett  
chairman@northherts.camra.org.uk

**Branch contact:** Jeremy Kitson  
secretary@northherts.camra.org.uk

 facebook.com/CAMRANorthHerts  
 instagram.com/camranorthherts

### JANUARY

**Sat 25: NH Branch Meeting – Letchworth**  
2pm. The **Storeroom**, 19 The Wynd, Letchworth, SG6 3EN – drinks from the **Garden City Brewery** next door. Meeting to include the Branch Good Beer Guide long list review and a check for any pubs that need surveying.

### FEBRUARY

**Sat 22: NH Branch Meeting – Hitchin**  
2pm. The Barn at the **Victoria**, Ickleford Road, Hitchin. Meeting to include the Good Beer Guide short list review.

## Watford & District CAMRA

 watford.camra.org.uk

**Chair:** Andrew Vaughan  
chair@watford.camra.org.uk

**Branch contact:** Andrew Vaughan  
branch@watford.camra.org.uk

 facebook.com/watfordcamra  
 x.com/watfordcamra

### JANUARY 2025

**Mon 13: W&D Branch Meeting - Watford**  
8pm. **Essex Arms**, Langley Way, Watford, WD17 3EG


### FEBRUARY

**Tue 25: W&D Branch Meeting - Watford**  
8pm. **Oxhey Conservative Club**, Lower Paddock Rd, Oxhey, Watford WD19 4DS

### MARCH


**Mon 24: W&D Branch AGM - Watford**  
8pm. **West Herts Sports Club**, Park Avenue, Watford, WD18 7HP

## Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

 heb.camra.org.uk

**Chair:** Graham Darby  
chair@heb.camra.org.uk

**Branch contact:** Graham Darby  
secretary@heb.camra.org.uk

 facebook.com/hertsessexborderscamra

### DECEMBER

**Mon 9: HEB Branch Meeting – Allens Green**  
8.30pm. **Queens Head**, Allens Green.

### JANUARY

**Mon 13: HEB Branch Meeting – Old Harlow**  
8.30pm. **Marquis of Granby**, Fore Street, Old Harlow

### FEBRUARY

**Mon 10: HEB Branch AGM – Allens Green**  
8.30pm. **Queens Head**, Allens Green

### MARCH

**Mon 10: HEB Branch Meeting – Waltham Abbey**  
8.30pm. **Woodbine**, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey

Is your local pub  
under threat?

CAMRA has the tools  
to help you save it

[camra.org.uk/saveyourlocal](https://camra.org.uk/saveyourlocal)



# Regional CAMRA Festivals

In 2025 CAMRA's annual **Great British Beer Festival** is to be held at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from 5 - 9 August - the first time it has been held away from London since 1990 when it was held in Brighton. Details to come in future editions of *Pints of View*.

## DECEMBER 2024

### Pig's Ear Beer Festival

Tue 3 - Sat 7 December  
Round Chapel, Lower Clapton, London

## JANUARY 2025

### Colchester Winter Beer Festival

Wed 29 January - Sat 1 February  
Arts Centre, Church Street, Colchester, Essex.

## FEBRUARY 2025

### Great British Beer Festival - Winter

Wed 2 - Sat 15 February  
Magna Way, Rotherham, South Yorks.

### Elyian Winter Beer Festival 'TBC'

Fri 7 - Sat 8 Feb  
Maltings, Ely, Cambs

### Chappel Winter Beer Festival 'TBC' - all ticket event

Thu 27 February - Sat 1 March  
East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel, Essex.

## MAY 2025

### Cambridge Beer Festival 'TBC'

Mon 19 - Sat 24 May  
Jesus Green, Cambridge

## JUNE 2025

### Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival 'TBC'

Thu 5 - Sat 7 June  
Hitchin Rugby Club, Hitchin, Herts.

## JULY 2025

### Hemel Old Town Beer Festival 'TBC'

Thu 18 - Sat 20 July  
St Mary's Church, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

## AUGUST 2025

### Great British Beer Festival

Tue 5 - Sat 9 August  
Marston Green, Birmingham

## SEPTEMBER 2025

### St Albans Beer & Cider Festival 'TBC'

Wed 24 - Sat 27 September  
Arena, St Albans, Herts

## Festivals & Branch Events

CAMRA runs 180+ beer festivals each year, plus many more branch events, so there's something for everyone!

Go to: <https://events.camra.org.uk/>

Back then, in 2023...



And again, in 2024...



Will we see you in 2025?...

**St Albans Beer & Cider Festival**  
returns to the Alban Arena, AL1 3LD  
Wed 24th - Sat 27th Sep 2025

# Down Your Way

*This section contains information from a large number of sources and occasionally errors may occur or the information may be out-of-date upon publication. Comments or additional information should be sent to the editor (see page 4 for contact details).*

## PUBS IN TOWN

PUB EVENT & BEER GUIDE



### PUB FINDER



### EVENT GUIDE



### BEER ALERTS



**ASTON:** The now community-owned Rose & Crown finally reopened on 29 November around 10 years after it closed. Their new website and WhatPub/CAMRA entries were not live as we went to press, so go to Facebook and search for Rose & Crown Aston (use the ampersand symbol or you'll get the old page). Food is prominent among their new offerings.

**ASTON END:** The **Crown**, still open, has been put up for sale at £785,000.

**BAYFORD:** No further news on progress at the **Baker Arms**. "The Friends of the **Baker Arms**" community group launched a Community Share Offer to raise £200,000, needed to possibly secure the pub in community ownership. See <https://www.friendsofbakerarms.org/>

In the meantime McMullen are still seeking potential leaseholders.

**BENINGTON:** The longtime closed **Bell** remains up for sale at £799,000.

**BRAUGHING:** The **Axe and Compasses** stays closed with its future still unclear.

**BRICKENDON:** Here's something unique (unless readers can tell us otherwise). The first Wednesday of the month from 7.30pm is **Sea Shanty Night** at the **Farmer's Boy**. Join in the singing or just listen. The pub, which is open all day has a full listing of events and an extensive menu. Two to three cask ales are on offer.

**CHAPMORE END:** There's a new addition at the **Woodman**. The Conservatory Tea Rooms

## THE LORDSHIP ARMS

Repeat CAMRA Pub of the Year Winner  
The Inn in the Sticks, Benington, Nr Stevenage



HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY  
CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2023

Crouch Vale Brewer's Gold  
Black Sheep Best  
Timothy Taylor's Landlord

Plus 5 changing guest beers from Independent & Micro-Breweries including a Mild, Stout or Porter

Also Traditional Cider

See our selection of current & coming beers online

Lunchtime Snacks

Classic Car meetings 3rd Tue of mth Apr to Sep

Tel 01438 869665

[www.lordshiparms.co.uk](http://www.lordshiparms.co.uk)

are open 9.30am-3.00pm Thursdays to Saturdays, offering paninis, baguettes, jacket potatoes and homemade soups. The pub opens 3pm weekdays, 1pm on Saturdays and 12 noon Sundays. Pop-up tapas 5-9pm Friday and Saturdays and roasts from mid-day on Sundays. As usual Greene King cooled cask ales direct from the cask and a guest ale.

**CHESHUNT:** The *Old English Gentleman* was due to close in mid-November for refurbishment.

**DANE END:** The *Boot* is currently closed. Asset of Community Value status is in place and the village has held a Community Consultation Meeting to discuss the current situation and test support for a future for the pub. With a population of over 600 plus and other publess hamlets nearby surely Dane End deserves to have (and then to use) a well-run hostelry that's in its midst. Anyone out there?

**EASTWICK:** The *Lion* remains closed with McMullen still seeking new leaseholders.

**GOSMOR:** For the closed *Bull* planning

permission has been granted to turn the pub into residential use.

**GREAT HORMEAD:** The Parish Council have secured Asset of Community Value status for the thatched *Three Tuns* but it sadly still remains closed. The future for the pub is unclear – we would like to hear any encouraging information.

**HARPENDEN:** The lease is available at Fuller's *Gibraltar Castle* which remains open in the Batford area of the town.

**HATFIELD:** One that has previously escaped these pages, the *Mallard* (formerly the *Wrestlers*) in Great North Road, re-opened earlier this year following refurbishment. So far, the likes of Tring and Greene King beers have been on offer.

**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD:** The *Hop Tap* has opened in the former *Monks Inn* building in The Square, Marlowes, offering a range of real ales and craft keg beers.



**MILL GREEN:** Just up the road from the Mill Green Museum with its working water mill, the **Green Man** is due to open in late January. Shut since 2011 the reopening has been a very long time coming but the fully refurbished pub will be a very welcome addition to the area – more details in the next edition of *Pints of View*.

**Old Bricket Wood:** The long-closed **Old Fox** in School Lane is set to have welcome new life as a free house! Danny and Julie Harding, in partnership with local pub-owner Peter Dillingham, will refurbish the pub aiming for a launch in mid-2025.

**OXHEY:** The **Villiers Arms** in Villiers Road is under new management.

**PERRY GREEN:** The planning application for substantial works that would include for the re-opening of the **Hoops** has been refused by East Herts District Council. Next moves by the owners are awaited.

**PUCKERIDGE:** The **White Hart** (McMullen)

**HERTFORD:** The **White Horse** in Castle Street has new leaseholders again. Welcome to Roy and Rosie who aim to continue the pub's tradition of having a wide range of cask ales at the bar. Stonegate have been looking for a business partner to jointly take on the **Blackbirds** in Parliament Square – it's now under offer.

**HODDESDON:** The **King William IV** has a planning application for conversion into 3 x three bedroom homes.

**HITCHIN:** The **Pitcher & Piano** is now known as the **Glasshouse** following a change of management. Marston's PLC remain as the landlords of the site. There is usually one cask ale.

**ICKLEFORD:** The closed **Cricketers** stays up for sale with an asking price of £700,000.

**KIMPTON:** No recent news on community attempts to reopen the **White Horse**. Updates at <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurWhiteHorse>.



*Dating in parts from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and a Grade 11\* listed building, Lombard House has been a Private Members Club since 1897*



**Up to 4 hand pumps plus Real Cider and Perry - CAMRA Good Beer Guide since 2014**

**Free December for New Members**

CAMRA members may be signed in on production of their CAMRA membership cards

New members are currently welcome, although we are quickly becoming full

**Lombard House, Bull Plain, HERTFORD, SG14 1DT  
01992 421422**

located in the High Street is open but currently available for lease.

**RUSHDEN:** The *Moon and Stars* has been closed for many months. *Pints of View* would like to hear from anyone who can provide an update.

**ST ALBANS:** After four years of pub closure a planning application for works at the *Rose and Crown* in St Michael's has finally been approved by St Albans City Council. However, there are conditions attached and a programme for the works will need to be drawn up accordingly. Re-opening of the pub is therefore likely to be some time away. The *Peacock* (no real ale) in Hatfield Road is once again closed – a sign in the window suggests further refurbishment is on the way. A major overhaul is planned at *Batchwood Hall* where Oakman Inns are aiming to turn it into a bar, dining and events venue when it re-opens. In October the *Garibaldi* in Albert Street was used for the filming of a forthcoming ITV drama 'Code of Silence'. A refurbishment in the spring of 2025 is expected for the *Rat's*

## White Hart Tap

4 Keyfield Terrace, St Albans AL1 1QJ  
01727 860974



**Open Every Day 12-11pm**

**3 regular beers**

*Timothy Taylor's Landlord,  
Tring Side Pocket for a Toad, Wadworth 6X*

**3 guest beers**

**Large range of Traditional Ciders**

**Freshly Cooked Food, Served Every Day**

**Traditional Sunday Roasts**  
(Inc. Vegetarian & Vegan Options)

**Large, Partially Covered & Heated  
Beer Garden**

[www.whiteharttap.co.uk](http://www.whiteharttap.co.uk)  
[whtpub@gmail.com](mailto:whtpub@gmail.com)



**ROBIN HOOD**  
**ST ALBANS**

Real ales and ciders

◆ Beer garden ◆

126 Victoria Street, St Albans AL1 3TG  
01727 856 459

**Castle** in Hatfield Road where a name change to the *Old Toll House* looks to be likely.

**SOUTH MIMMS:** Hertsmere Borough Council approved (with conditions) a planning application for site development to housing which sadly confirmed the loss of the Grade II *White Hart* as a pub – a further application has now been submitted to turn the building and site into a Technology Centre.

**SPELLBROOK:** The thatched, food-led *Three Horseshoes* has undergone a significant refurbishment and re-opened offering a new menu and a range of Greene King cask beers at the bar.

**STANSTEAD ABBOTTS:** It's a change of hands at the *Oak* – welcome to Lauren and her team. Early cask ales have included St. Austell Tribute and Timothy Taylor's Landlord.

**STEVENAGE:** The *Coreys Mill* closed in early July as part of the national closure of Befeater restaurants located next to Premier Inns.

The  
**Six Bells**  
FREEHOUSE

Real Ales



2 Guest Ales & Real Ciders

Home Cooked Food  
Served Every Day

Garden & Parking



Children & Dogs Welcome

16-18 St Michaels Street, St Albans, Herts, AL3 4SH  
www.the-six-bells.com info@the-six-bells.com 01727 856945

**Horse** is still unclear but it's up for sale at £699,975.

**WATFORD:** The **Red Lion** on Vicarage Road is now under the same management as the **Market Tavern** in Market Street. Real ale is available, usually from Tring or Greene King. Planning consent has been granted with the intention to convert the **Old Station House** on St Albans Road to a pub.

**WELWYN:** A new Mexican menu is available at the **Steamer** - Mac's cask ales at the bar.

**WEST HYDE:** As we go to press the **Oaks** is still closed with the Stonegate pub company looking for new leaseholders.

**WHITWELL:** The **Bull** reopened at the end of August after a complete redecoration, offering three cask ales - Tring Side Pocket for a Toad, Adnams Ghostship and Timothy Taylor's Landlord. There is a full enticing menu and if darts is your game, bring your arrows. 25% discount off cask ales on Mondays.

**TEWIN:** If you are looking for somewhere new to play darts, try the **Plume of Feathers** which now has a lit board waiting to receive your arrows.

**TITMORE GREEN:** Welcome to Seth and Anna Perry who have taken over at the food-led **Hermit of Redcoats**. A range of cask beers at the bar.

**WALKERN:** The **Yew Tree** continues to be closed with McMullen still seeking the right tenants. Mac's state that they are intending to invest in the property with plans for significant refurbishment.

**WALSWORTH:** The **Anchor** closed at the end of September for refurbishment. This is part of a Sainsbury development in which a 'local' store will be built in the existing pub car park.

**WALTHAM CROSS:** McMullen are advertising the tenancy at the High Street **Wheatsheaf**.

**WARESIDE:** The future of the closed **White**

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# Roger... and out

## “Hear, Hear” to Indie Beer!

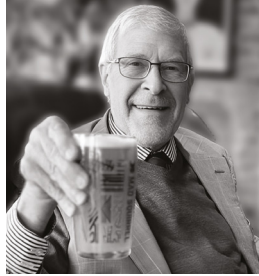
Did you enjoy that glass of Neck Oil, Camden Hells, Doom Bar or London Pride? It's good to drink beer from independent brewers – save for the fact that all the beers mentioned are now owned by global lager producers.

Many drinkers will be astonished and alarmed to learn that Beavertown, producer of Neck Oil, is owned by Heineken, Camden Town brewery is a subsidiary of the world's biggest brewer, AB InBev, Doom Bar is owned by Molson Coors, a Canadian/American giant, and Fuller's London Pride may be brewed in Chiswick, but the owner is now Asahi of Japan. The dynamic growth of the 'craft beer' sector in recent years has prompted the global giants to use their muscle and take over some of the leading independents.

Money is no object. In 2015, AB InBev knocked on the door of the Camden Town Brewery waving a cheque for £85 million. Heineken, in 2018 took a minority 28 per cent share of Beavertown in Tottenham for £40 million and in 2022 bought the remaining share for £200 million.

Asahi has been no slouch in making big changes since Fuller's was divided into a brewery run by the Japanese giant, while the pubs are a separate company, still family-owned. Asahi, which paid £250 million for the brewing side, has closed the Fuller's subsidiary Dark Star and transferred production of such leading brands as Hophead to Chiswick. It also axed the Meantime Brewery in Greenwich and moved those beers to Chiswick, as well.

All of these gyrations in the beer market leave drinkers baffled. But help is at hand. SIBA – the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates – launched a campaign in October called Indie Beer. The society has more than 1,000 members and they are reporting that beer sales have returned to pre-Covid level. But they still have problems getting their beer to market, as a result of the global brewers who cause confusion with



their 'craft' products.

To boost the campaign, SIBA commissioned YouGov, the opinion pollsters, to conduct a survey. YouGov found that 75 per cent of those polled believe consumers are misled when they buy from former independent brewers such as Beavertown. People were shown images of beer brands now owned by global brewers and 40 per cent thought Neck Oil was an independent beer.

As a result, SIBA is ditching the term 'craft beer' and will now proclaim its members' beers are independent brews. Stickers announcing 'Indie Beer' will appear on pump clips on bars, along with bottles and cans. There will also be a Beer Checker tool via [indiebeer.uk](http://indiebeer.uk) that will enable drinkers to discover who owns the brewery whose beer they're drinking.

Indie Beer has been enthusiastically endorsed by CAMRA, and SIBA members are rushing to sign up for the promotion. It's a brilliant initiative that's needed to counter the awesome power of the global lager brewers. They not only dominate the beer market, but they are also taking an axe to the cask ale sector. Heineken, the country's biggest brewer and retailer that bought the former Scottish & Newcastle breweries and pubs, has shuttered the Caledonian Brewery in Edinburgh that produced a former Champion Beer of Britain, Deuchars IPA.

Carlsberg has gone on the rampage since merging with Marston's. In less than two years it has closed Jennings, Ringwood and Wychwood and has now announced it's closing Banks's of Wolverhampton. Only one ale brewery in the group, Marston's in Burton-on-Trent, will survive and many brands are certain to disappear.

So think Indie and drink Indie.

**Roger Protz**

*British Guild of Beer Writers  
South Herts CAMRA*

# QUEENS HEAD

## Free House

Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA  
Pub of the Year 2024  
Cider Pub of the Year 2022 - 2024

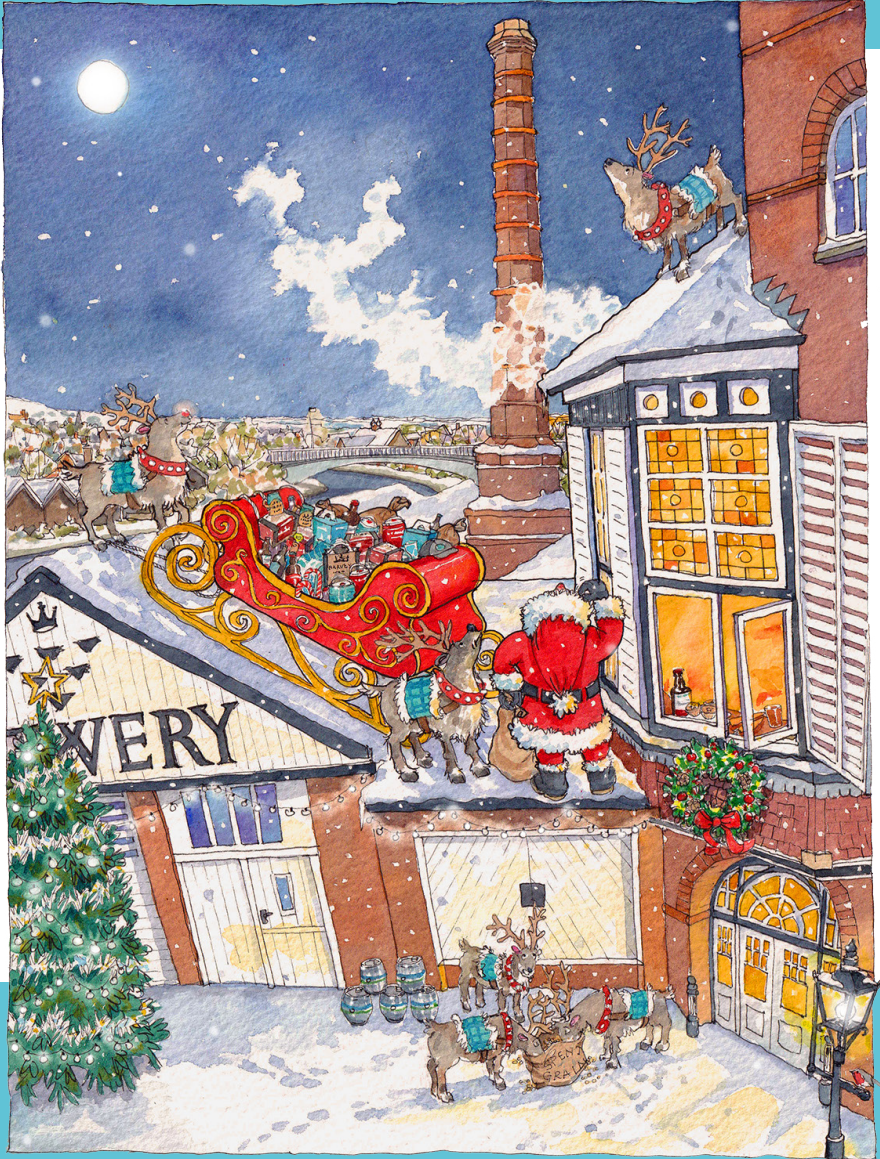
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