

**FREE**

# Swan Supping

**Issue 139**

**Late Summer 2023**



**The Champion Beer of Britain was decided at the Great British Beer Festival, Olympia! See Report on Page 10**



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**Newsletter of the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch of CAMRA**

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## NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



### *New Date for the Black Country Trip*

The Black Country Trip scheduled for 15th July did not go ahead as advertised in *Swan Supping* and online. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure suitable coach transport on this day.

Naturally we felt very sad about this, but as we now had a spare Saturday for a social we used Chiltern Railways to travel to Birmingham and visit an equally impressive itinerary of classic pubs (and some new ones) around the city centre.

This proved more of a spur to have the Black Country tour later in the year so we have booked the coach for Saturday 2nd of September! The cost is £40, which is slightly higher than we estimated in our last issue (I blame some guy named Putin for putting up the petrol prices).

Full details are given on page 11. It may be short notice for some due to this issue of *Swan Supping* being later than hoped for, but the best day out of the year won't disappoint anyone as we visit old favourites plus a revisit to the **Fountain** in Lower Gornal which has now got its own brewery! The former **Morton Brewery** at Essington will be changing its name to **Fountain Ales**.

### *More pubs and breweries threatened*

Sadly, one of the pubs we visited many years ago on one of the first Black Country tours was the famous **Crooked House** (formerly **Glynne Arms**). We will be unable to go there again as it had been bought for an alternative use and was virtually destroyed by fire on the night of Saturday 5th August 2023. This led to reports that it had been demolished without consent and we understand that there is to be a police investigation for arson.

The fate of the **Crooked House** shows the danger of losing a pub which is closed forever, especially when you check our **Local News** section and see how many of our country pubs are under threat. The pandemic did no favours to them and the current situation with rising house prices, mortgage rates etc. means that money is not so available for trips out for meals or

popping in for a 'swifter' on the way home!

Please support our pubs and utilise your rights to object when they come up for change of use - especially when it is the last pub in the area

We have also heard that **Paradigm Brewery**, which we featured a few years ago because of their *Watercress* beer, will be closing their doors on 31st August. After nine years supplying over half a million pints of beer, winning eighteen **CAMRA** awards and having lots of fun in the process, it's time for their owners to move on to pastures new...Cheers!

My apologies to people who attended the branch social at the **Great British Beer Festival** (see below and on our front cover) this month who may have tried to use the branch phone to contact me and meet up. Sadly the branch phone had no signal anywhere in the hall at Olympia - perhaps it is time for a new tin can and a better length of string!

Once again, my thanks go to all who have contributed to the making and the delivering of this issue of *Swan Supping*. Special thanks to Colin Stanford for his cartoon.

David Roe, *Swan Supping* Editor

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## NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

### **CAMRA calls for action on business rates and energy bills to alleviate pressure on pubs**

Research commissioned by **CAMRA** shows that only a small minority of Brits (10%) feel that a pint is affordable.

Despite some variation, the figures paint a grim picture across the whole of Britain. Drinkers in Scotland felt the most out of pocket at the bar, with just 6% saying a pint was affordable. Despite having some of the steepest prices in the UK, a high of 15% of Londoners said they found a pint affordable.

**CAMRA** has long called on Government to level the playing field between regulated, community venues like pubs and social clubs, and off-license venues like supermarkets, which face far lower levels of regulation and tax. Additionally, the beer tie and other exclusive purchasing agreements mean many publicans are locked into contracts that mean they must buy beer and cider at higher than market prices, further increasing prices at the bar.

**CAMRA** celebrated lobbying success with the introduction of a new draught duty rate on 1 August. Under this new system, beer and cider sold on draught pays a lower rate of tax, which recognises the social and community value of the on-trade in the alcohol duty system for the first time.

Despite this, the price of a pint has continued to rise as the cost-of-business crisis has hit pubs and brewers, forcing them to increase prices. At the same time, the cost-of-living crisis has meant that many consumers can't afford to spend as much supporting local pubs, clubs, brewers and cider makers.

Commenting, **CAMRA National Chairman** Nik Antona said: 'This data shows how vital it is that Government takes action this autumn and use its planned fiscal event to reassess the huge financial burden they place on the

trade.

'A pint down the pub with friends is one of life's simple pleasures, as well as being a unique part of our cultural heritage. It's devastating that so few of us feel that this is affordable.

'Our campaigning priorities over the next few months will be calling for a shakeup of the punishing Business Rates systems, action to address energy costs, seeing the draught duty rate refined to work better for pubs, and working to secure increased access to market for small UK brewers.'

### **New CAMRA Head Office Site**

**CAMRA** has exchanged contracts on the purchase of a new office and warehouse site, in Luton. Work has been underway on the project for some time and they are pleased to announce we have taken a significant step forward to securing a premises on Dallow Road, Luton. Surveys have been completed, meaning they are well on the way to the next chapter for **CAMRA**.

The new building will provide new office space for staff along with modernised and improved warehouse space. The site will provide additional meeting spaces and parking for staff and visitors, whether **CAMRA** committees, or other external meetings.

The bigger and improved warehouse space will make it easier for **CAMRA** volunteers to order and access kit and equipment, giving **CAMRA** a larger space and ensuring a better experience to organise and ship merchandise from their shop.

It also means the campaign will no longer have to lease warehouse space, making it more economically viable for **CAMRA** in the long-term.



## GOOD BEER GUIDE 2024

The *CAMRA Good Beer Guide*, the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide – is celebrating its 51st edition with a striking cover and a foreword supplied by Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson. The guide, which surveys 4,500 of the best pubs across the UK, is the definitive beer drinker's guide for those seeking the best pints in the nations' pubs.

Dickinson's foreword shines a spotlight on the cultural tradition of pubs within the United Kingdom, the importance of protecting the heritage, charm and welcoming nature of pubs and clubs, and not taking them for granted.

Pubs and clubs are a rite of passage for many bands and musicians starting out in the UK, and Iron Maiden themselves began their career almost 50 years ago playing in London pubs. The conviviality of these venues creates the perfect atmosphere for burgeoning music scenes, and helps to drive footfall into pubs, especially after a challenging period for them brought on by the pandemic.

The cover of the *Good Beer Guide 2024* features Eddie, Iron Maiden's mascot and icon of the band's range



of Trooper beers, brewed by Stockport brewery **Robinsons**. Trooper celebrates its tenth anniversary this year and has become one of the UK's most established ales in that period.

**CAMRA National Chairman** Nik Antona said: 'We're honoured to have Bruce Dickinson pen the foreword for the *Good Beer Guide 2024*. As we enter our second half century of producing the guide, there is no one better to introduce this year's edition, and highlight what makes these institutions so worth visiting.

'The last few years have been an incredibly difficult time for the industry, and we need more support than ever before to keep our nation's pubs open and thriving. I'd encourage everyone to use this year's guide to visit the very best pubs across the UK and support them for generations to come.'

The *Good Beer Guide 2024* is set to be published on 28 September, with options to order the standard editions, alternative cover and hardback editions available on the **CAMRA** shop. To pre-order, go to <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/>

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## BOOBYTRAP BREWERY



For over twenty years, culinary chef Philip Baker ran a successful catering business, working across South England and captivating hungry diners with his remarkable culinary expertise. With an unwavering commitment to meeting his clients' unique preferences, Philip adopted a simple yet sophisticated approach, earning him resounding praise and a constant influx of customers eager to savour his delectable creations.

Then, in one fell swoop on March 23rd 2020, Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered people to 'stay at home' as the first of three national lockdowns was introduced. This one blow would prove to be fatal to Philip's business. Weddings were cancelled overnight, corporate clients pulled the plug and parties were strictly off limits... well, Downing Street excluded, it transpired!

As an avid home-brewer, Philip had been toying with the idea of embracing his pipe-dream of starting a brewery. However, something always got in the way. Now, thrust into a position where it was sink or swim, the path ahead was clear. With time on his hands and adopting his mantra ('F\*\*k it!'), Philip decided to focus his effort on setting up **Boobytrap Brewery**.

Working with brewery consultant, Nick Law who hosts the **Hop Forward Podcast** - a brewing industry-focused show that won the **SIBA Business Award UK's Best Independent Craft Beer Promotion** in March 2023 - the pair set about planning the business, building the brewery and creating the brand entirely over Zoom.

'I believe it truly speaks volumes about his resilience and business savvy,' remarks Nick. 'I had been in constant conversation with Phil for several years leading up to the pandemic. Witnessing his food business face challenges was difficult, but it was truly invigorating to see him seize the opportunity to blend his culinary passion with the exploration of unique and captivating flavours in the realm of beer. The combination of the two was simply the icing on the cake.'

**Boobytrap Brewery** launched in December 2021. With an emphasis on 'Capturing Flavour', the quirky and surreal branding reflects Philip's humour, with beer names such as *Oh Philby*, *Disaster* and *Muppetery* - names for earlier beers that didn't quite go according to plan, which has since been refined and enjoyed by drinkers from across the country.

'The plan was always to offer an experience that marries food and beer together,' says Philip. 'Mostly, it has been me and my partner working the brewery, the kitchen and staffing the taproom. It's been hard work but we love it and **Boobytrap Brewery** has become a valuable asset for the surrounding communities.'



Located at Upper Barn Farm in Westcott, just off the A41 between Bicester and Aylesbury, **Boobytrap Brewery** isn't a natural location for a brewery and eatery but has proven that 'if you build it, they will come' when quality, flavour, reputation and a warm welcome are the dish of the day.

Given the remote location, **Boobytrap Brewery** has collaborated with a local company to offer a shuttle bus to Sunday taproom events are held over the summer and during the Autumn/Winter (see the website for details), leaving from Market Square in Bicester by the post box and via Launton, so you can enjoy all the fayre and beers without having to drive.

The brewery itself is a 5BBL (818 Litres) plant with several unitanks and a small canning line, which creates a wide variety of beer styles including the flagship New England Pale Ale *Hazy Rays*, creamy Milk Stout *No Milk In The Dairy* and their recent light, crisp and refreshing Italian Pilsner, *Luigi*.

The taproom and eatery offers a variety of foods, including Fish and Chips on a Friday, with beer batter made fresh using *Disaster* Cream Ale, Sunday Roasts during the colder months and barbecue events using 'the big green egg' cooker in summer.

The brewery also hosts a variety of street vendors, having already hosted South African Street Food vendor Bokkie. Gyro World will be at the brewery on 7th September and Urban Kitchen will be visiting on 5th October.

'I feel really humbled by the amount of interest and positive reviews with had from customers about the brewery, our food and beer, and generating interest in the local area,' says Phil. 'We're now looking to expand our taproom and eatery to accommodate everyone, so - quite literally - watch this space!'

For more info on the brewery and taproom, to buy beers online for national delivery, or to book a table and sign up for the mailing list for regular updates, visit [boobytrapbrewery.com](http://boobytrapbrewery.com).







## LOCAL NEWS

### AYLESBURY

Peter, the manager at the **King's Head**, has done sterling work to recruit and train new staff and they are very happy to be able to open a little longer than has been possible recently.

The pub is now open: Wednesday & Thursday 12 noon to 11pm, Friday and Saturday 11am to 11pm, Sunday 12 noon to 8pm. Food is available: Wednesday to Saturday 12 noon to 3pm and 6pm to 8:30pm, Sunday 12 noon to 3pm.

In further news, they are very excited to report that work is on schedule in the Great Hall rejuvenation! Many readers may recall this room from many years ago, when it was a superb place to enjoy beer and a chat. They are very much looking forward to opening the doors to this amazing room again, later this year.

### BEACONSFIELD

We understand that a new micro pub, **Taps**, opened a few weeks ago and is in our patch at 5-7, Gregories Road, HP9 1HG. web = craftyGX.com.

This is the sister pub to the **Taps** at Gerrards Cross which opened in February at 14, Station Road, SL9 8EL. The latter is a fine little place perhaps similar in size to **Keg** in Bourne End but with the addition of a basement bar. Ten taps, of which two were casks from **Stardust**, eight were kegs mostly from London microbreweries such as **Kernel**, **Gravity Well** and **Great Beyond**.

The branch has planned a social to cover

both bars on Wednesday 1st November (see Branch Diary on page 14).

### BENNETT END

The **Mash Inn**, previously the **Three Horseshoes**, is subject to a planning application for conversion to residential property. A local action group has been campaigning vigorously for the pub to remain as a community facility and have made an application for **Asset of Community value (ACV)** status. The pub had been run as a Michelin starred eatery but locals report being able to go for a drink there right up until the pub closed in the lockdowns.

### BLEDLOW

**Wadworth 6X** keeps its place as the session ale at the **Lions of Bledlow**, with the remaining four pumps rotating throughout the week. A weeknight visit saw **locAles Parkway Crocodile Tears** and **Vale Orca** on two of the four and **Loddon** brews have also been seen of late. This unspoiled, 16th century freehouse reverts to its winter opening hours in October.

### BRILL

**Brill beer festival** takes place during the weekend of August bank holiday 25th to 27th August and is part of the wider Brill festival which is in its 19th year. They aim to have 40+ real ales and ciders from small independent breweries and cider makers. Additional attractions include: 'street food' from artisan cooks and chefs available all weekend, a comedy night on the Friday night, a family fun day on Saturday and a classic car show on Sunday. Further information on their website [www.brillfestival.com](http://www.brillfestival.com).

[brillfestival.com](http://brillfestival.com).

The **Pheasant** is a free house bought in 2023 by the Aubrey Fletcher family has retained the incumbent management team. Their ales frequently include **Timothy Taylor's Landlord** and **Vale** offerings such as **Gravitas** and **Vale Gold**. A foody pub with great views of the windmill.

The **Pointer**, also a free house, but owned by **Oakman Inns** of Berkhamsted, serves **Fuller's London Pride** and **XT Pointer**.

**Brill Sports & Social Club** serves **Vale Best Bitter** or their monthly special with **Good Day Sunshine**, a straw summer ale at 4.0% on recently.

### CADSDEN

The **Plough** held its Cherry Festival on Saturday 5th August featuring live music and a cherry feast. In May the pub introduced a happy hour from 4-5pm on Saturdays where all beer was half-price although this may have been for a limited time only.

### CHEARSLEY

The **Bell** is a **Fuller's** pub serving **London Pride**, **Seafarers** and **Dark Star Hophead**. Always a good pint here and reliable food.

### CHINNOR

Congratulations to the **Red Lion** for achieving a 5-star rating from **Cask Marque** on their recent cellar inspection; testament to the great work of landlady Nicki and team. The best ale range in the village (four ales at all times) continues with session ale **XT 3** augmented by three rotating ales – a mixture of local and national brews. Recent **locAles** include ones from **Loddon**, **Loose Cannon**, **Oxford** (formerly **Shotover**) and **Rebellion**. Street food vans continue from Wednesdays to Sundays as does the weekly Wednesday night Quiz, the new Comedy Evenings and a potential Beer Festival in September. Check their website or social media for more details.

### CROWELL

Another planning application has been made to convert the **Shepherd's Crook** into a private house. It is almost identical to the application refused by South Oxfordshire District Council three years ago. The pub has remained shut since 2020 and the application has prompted large numbers of objections from local residents who have already lost the nearby **Cherry Tree** in Kingston Blount.

### CUDDINGTON

**Fuller's London Pride**, **Gale's Seafarer's** and a very good **Darkstar Hophead** (regardless of the provenance!) were found on a recent visit to the **Crown**, the only pub in this village between Aylesbury and Thame, which was pleasingly busy with locals on an early Saturday evening.

### DINTON

The **Seven Stars Community Pub** serves **Vale Best** at 3.7%, and a **Rebellion** ale such as **IPA** or **Smuggler** at 4.2%. When visited recently these were supported by **Vale's Brill Gold** at 3.5%. Open every day for food the pub is readying itself for the **Dinton Beer Festival** on Saturday 19 August 2023.

### EMMINGTON

The **Inn at Emmington** continues with its three ale **locAle** line-up – **Rebellion IPA** as the session, and two other rotating: **Loose Cannon Abingdon Bridge** and **Tring Fanny Ebbs** on the last visit here. The Happy Hour is Monday through to Thursday, 5pm to 7pm, with all pints £3.95. Sunday roasts return in September, with booking essential. They are still hoping to go ahead with their second annual Innfest, music and beer festival – check their website and social media for more information.

### FORD

At the **Dinton Hermit**, this **Moogies** pub serves **Fudgel** at 3.6% brewed by **Chiltern Brewery** and **Tring Valiant Viper** was the pub's second ale recently.

### GREAT KIMBLE

Alterations have been made to the garden in the **Swan**. There is now a dedicated barbecue area along with outdoor pizza ovens, which are used on Fridays and Saturdays. Ales are normally from **Tring** (**Sidepocket for a Toad** and **Moongazing**) although **Vale Gravitas** has been spotted recently.

### HADDENHAM

See page 11 for a report on the **Haddenham Summerfest**.

The **King's Head** is a **Heineken Star** pub and serves **St Austell Proper Job** at 4.5%, **Timothy Taylor's Landlord** 4.3% and **Butcombe Original** at 4.0%. Sometimes **Fuller's London Pride** is available. OAP lunches served on Thursdays.

At the **Rising Sun** Liam & Silvie operate six hand pumps with mainly **XT/Animal** ales with a variety of guests that has recently included **Dead Brewers Society** ales brewed by the pub's owners **Oak Taverns** in conjunction with **XT**. Two designated guest craft ale taps are rotated on a regular basis.

### HIGH WYCOMBE

Pav has left the **Belle Vue** but very little has changed. The beer range is down from four to, usually, two or three and the decent cider range is down to just **Old Rosie**. The new opening hours are 2pm – 11pm on Monday to Thursday, 12 noon – 1am on Friday and Saturday and 12 noon – 10.30pm on Sunday. The art collection went some time ago but live music is still a feature as are quiz nights.

### ICKFORD

The **Rising Sun** is under the management of René and Ali, previously 14 years at the **Great Weston Arms** in Aynho. The pub reopened 26/7/23. It is tied to **Punch Taverns** and regularly offers **Hobgoblin** and **Black Sheep** plus a guest. Food Thursday Friday Saturday & Sunday lunches.

### KINGSWOOD

The **Akeman Inn** is part of the **Oakman Group** based in Berkhamsted. The pub tries to have two ales available such as **Fuller's London Pride**, **George Gale Seafarers**, **Dark Star Hop Head** or a **Tring Brewery** guest.

### LONG CRENDON

The **Churchill Arms** serves **Timothy Taylor's Landlord** and an **XT** – usually **XT3** or **XT4**.

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At the **Eight Bells** Carly and Peter from Thame have been at the helm since May bank holiday. *Moogies* no longer run the pub. Carly is chopping and changing the ales from local breweries such as *Chiltern*, *Rebellion*, *Tring*, *Vale* and *XT*. When visited recently *Chiltern Beechwood* 4.3%, *Animal Hop Kitty* 3.9% and *Animal Gazelle* 4.6% were on. Our intrepid taster reported that the *Gazelle* was splendid.

## LOUDWATER

Buckinghamshire Council made the unprecedented decision to grant *Asset of Community Value (ACV)* status to the currently closed **Dereham's Inn**. Since 2020, the council has allowed a number of *ACVs* to expire and refused to approve new listings, so this change of policy is welcomed. Planning permission for the pub to be demolished and replaced by flats has also been refused!

## LUDGERSHALL

The **Bull & Butcher** is a free house owned by local business man Nigel Parker. The pub sells *Rebellion Roasted Nuts* from a 22 pint mini-pin. James and sister Emily have run the pub since April 2019 serving food Thursday through Sunday.

## OAKLEY

The **Chandos Arms**, a free house bought by the parish council, is being run by brothers Conor & Sean Orr. On tap were *St Austell Tribute*, *Timothy Taylor's Landlord* and a *Vale* offering such as *Red Kite*, *Gravitas* or *Brill Gold*. Sean is head chef, formerly at the **Pheasant** at Brill.

## POSTCOMBE

A change on the beer front at the **England's Rose**, as *Loose Cannon Gunner's Gold* has been supplanted by *Rebellion IPA*, albeit served bright via 22-pint 'boxes'. They still have an excellent range of real ales in bottles behind the bar, with a mixture of well-known nationals and *locAles*. To make use of the 2-acre garden out back, an outside bar will be installed for the summer by the time this is published. Thames Valley MG Car Club meet here on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm.

## PRINCES RISBOROUGH

Congratulations to our branch **Pub of the Year**, the **Bird in Hand**, which fought off strong competition to win the Bucks county round of the **Regional Pub of the Year** competition. It is up against the **Butcher's Arms** in Balscote, Oxon (a

former abattoir) and the perennial entry from Berkshire, the **Bell** at Aldworth.

## QUAINTON

Local villagers are working to save the **George and Dragon** (pictured above), which is the last remaining pub (of four) in the village.

A Community Benefit Society to buy the Pub and Coffee Shop has been established: The Quainton **George and Dragon** Community Benefit Society Limited (Reg no 8999). They are members of the Plunkett Foundation who have been extremely helpful.

The pub has been registered as an *Asset of Community Value* with Bucks Council and they have applied for and have been awarded £300,000 from the Government Community Ownership Fund (COF).

They have run a Community share offer and have raised more than the minimum required (£250,000) to match the funding from COF. They are now in the process of negotiating a purchase price with the current owner.

## RADNAGE

The Bucks Free Press has reported that the **Crown**, which was sold earlier in the year, has remained closed as a pub and has been fenced off from the road. Local residents are concerned about the pub's potential future use.

## STONE

The **Rose and Crown** is subject to a planning application for conversion to residential use. The pub has been closed for ages but within the last few years it has traded and even supported a microbrewery, *Willy's Brew*. It remains the only pub in the sizeable village, which would be publess if the application was granted.

## SYDENHAM

Good news and bad news from the leafy village of Sydenham. On the plus front, the **Crown** were the winners of the coveted Tug-of-War trophy at the first Sydenham Fayre in four years back on 2nd June, and as we go to press, the **Crown's** 'B' team top the local Aunt Sally league. The three ale line-up continues with *Rebellion IPA* and *Timothy Taylor Landlord* as the mainstays; the third handpull comprising one of *Rebellion's* monthly specials (*Zebedee* on this visit) as landlord Pete is ex-*Rebellion*. The garden is also looking fantastic for the summer. On a glummer note, Pete and Tina have made the decision not to renew their lease

with the **Sydenham Pub Company**, and will depart on March 24th, 2024, unless new tenants are found beforehand.

## TETSWORTH

The **Old Red Lion** is the only pub in the village and a freehouse at that! It also doubles as the village shop as well as offering B&B accommodation. Just *XT 4* on one of the three handpulls on a weeknight visit, however, they have had *XT 3* and various *Animal* beers on of late. They also have a decent selection of bottle real ales. Thursday nights see home-cooked specials at just £7.50 each (a choice of 5 meals, plus a veggie option) as well as a meet of the local Motorcycle Club. It's also an excellent vantage point to watch cricket on the pitch opposite on a sunny day.

## THAME

An application has been submitted to convert the **Swan Hotel** to residential use.

## TIDDINGTON

The **Fox & Goat** is still under the capable hands of Stewart and Dawn, serving food all day. This free house offers three real ales with *Timothy Taylor's Landlord* and *Fullers London Pride* regularly on. The guest when visited recently was *Renegade's Good Old Boy* at 4%.

## TOWERSEY

*Sharp's Doom Bar* was the only ale on a recent visit to the **Three Horseshoes**, the only pub in this village betwixt Chinnor and Thame, although they have had *Timothy Taylor Landlord* and *Black Sheep Bitter* on the second handpull of late. Still extremely popular for food (200-plus covers per week!), they are

introducing a pizza menu in August when the new pizza oven is installed. Plenty going on here, with the Quiz night and Bingo night rotating every other month, a BBQ Party was held on 5th August and live music returning soon. Their new website is now live which includes a new food menu.

## WADDESDON

The **Five Arrows** serves two real ales. Fairly regular offerings are *Wadsworth 6X* at 4.1% and *Chiltern Brewery Shepherd's Gold Ale* at 4.8%. The *Gold Ale* was in splendid condition when sampled.

The **Lion** is down to one hand pump serving *Timothy Taylor's Landlord*.

## WENDOVER

The **Pack Horse** and **White Swan** have ended their long-standing beer supply arrangement with *Fullers* and now serve beers from *Shepherd Neame*, such as *Master Brew*, *Spitfire* and *Bishop's Finger*.

## WING

An application has been submitted to convert the **Queen's Head** into three flats and build three houses behind the pub. This would leave the **Cock Inn** as the only pub in Wing, which is a large village, and for a considerable distance around. The **Queen's Head** has been featured in the *Good Beer Guide* for several recent years, proving the pub has attracted thriving custom in the past.

## WORMINGHALL

The **Clifden Arms** is a free house serving *Courage Directors* and *Rebellion IPA*. A guest, *Rebellion Overthrow*, in a 22 pint mini-pin, was being served when visited.

# Be part of the CAMRA story

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Look Aberdeen up any guidebook and you'll soon come across its alternative name of 'Granite City'. It was coined due to over half of the city's buildings being constructed of the hard, grey rock, most quarried from the surrounding hills. It gives the port city a grey, brooding, melancholic character, even in the height of summer.

But in beer terms, Aberdeen is '**Brewdog** city'. Love them or hate them, the craft brewery's marketing has been anything but grey, with many attention-grabbing campaigns since it was established in 2007, with some considered provocative towards **CAMRA** and its promotion of real ale traditions. But **Brewdog** is no longer a plucky upstart. According to the local paper, the Aberdeen Press and Journal, **Brewdog** is now the 14th biggest beer brand in the world.

So how is the local world of real ale bearing up in **Brewdog's** back yard? With an afternoon to spare, I set myself the task of finding out, armed with a copy of the **2023 Good Beer Guide**.

First stop was one of **Brewdog's** own bars. There's three in the city, including the flagship, original bar. I visited the **Castlegate** branch at the end of Union Street and ordered their signature **Punk IPA** (5.4%). The bar has all the hallmarks you'd expect from **Brewdog**: neon signs, industrial-chic décor with wooden benches, a burgers and wings



type menu and a long row of beer taps at the back underneath a lightbox beer list. It's a style that's become synonymous with craft beer and much emulated by rival brewers and craft beer bars.

At midday on a Wednesday, it was fairly quiet with most drinkers appearing to be foreign tourists who were buying **Brewdog** merchandise alongside their mac and cheese. There was no sign

of any legendary Scottish pre-lunchtime drinkers (although I didn't investigate any pubs belonging to another well-known chain).

Those real-ale drinkers horrified that I sampled the wares of the evil keg might be interested to know that **Punk IPA** used to be brewed as a cask conditioned ale. In *Modern British Beer*, published by **CAMRA** books, beer writer Matt Curtis recalls sampling this in London in 2010. Cask conditioned **Punk IPA** was discontinued in 2011 but **Brewdog** have experimented with other 'live' beer since then.

For all its ubiquity, **Punk IPA** is a good example of the style of highly, New World hopped IPAs that appeared at the end of the 2000s. Its concentration of citrus and pine aromas and dry, bitter taste that were so distinctive when it was launched are now positively restrained compared to many of the craft beer hop bombs that followed. **Brewdog** founder Martin Dickie worked at **Thornbridge Brewery** when it was developing **Jaipur IPA**. I'd argue that cask conditioned **Thornbridge** beer adds an extra complexity of flavour to complement the assertive hoppiness, it's almost impossible to find a beer that's better than a well-kept **Jaipur**. **Punk IPA** is perhaps its more raucous cousin.

I also sampled the **Brewdog Planet Pale**, apparently a sustainably produced pale ale. At 4.4% this would help me pace the afternoon's exploration better. It was pleasant enough but not particularly memorable.

Having sampled **Brewdog's** beers, I consulted my **Good**

**Beer Guide**. There are ten **GBG** pubs listed under Aberdeen. Unfortunately, my tight afternoon itinerary meant that I had to omit those out of the immediate city centre but I was disappointed to miss a couple of central pubs that only opened up from late afternoon (a recent tendency that Aberdeen seems to share with many other locations).

The **Prince of Wales** is tucked down a back street close to one of the main shopping centres. With a relatively narrow frontage, the pub reaches back a long way. It has to, as it accommodates what's claimed to be the city's longest bar, which runs along the right-hand side of the pub as you enter. The dark, panelled interior is a feature of its listing as one of **CAMRA Scotland's True Heritage pubs**.



There was a choice of four real ales and I opted for the punningly-named **Spey's Cadet** from **Spey Valley** brewery. At 4.5% this was a well-kept 'Session IPA' that seems to be a seasonal beer from the Speyside brewery. Sitting at a tall table by the window, I found it hoppy but not overpowering, perfect for an Aberdeen summer day.

A ten-minute walk along Union Street, crossing the railway line that bisects the city





## N IN ABERDEEN

centre and negotiating a few side streets of granite buildings, I found the **Globe Inn**. It's another pub that's much bigger than it looks from the outside with a large, open plan interior. Sticking with Scottish beers, I sampled *Swannay Brewery's Orkney Session* and *Stewart Brewery's Citra Blonde*, both light, straw-coloured ales, which went down well with a burger and chips.

Somewhat frustratingly, the **GBG**-listed **Under the Hammer** is next door to the **Globe Inn** (so named as it's located under an auction house) but was closed. From here it was a short walk through Golden Square back to Union Street and the **Grill**.

If you think that the **Grill** is an odd name for a pub, your suspicions would be further raised by the exterior: a set of black, opaque panels forbidding any views of the inside and the **Grill** spelled out in black and white art deco lettering. You'd think it was a greasy spoon.

Step inside, however, and you find a remarkable, unspoilt pub interior, the only one in the area that's in the highest tier of **CAMRA's** national inventory. It dates back to the 1920s and appears little changed. The narrow pub is dominated by a long bar to the right. Seating is on benches that run along the opposite walls with a few stools and tables. This is a pub where standing is the only option when it's busy.

A spectacularly large range of Scotch whiskies is displayed against the mirrors behind the bar but the pub has four handpumps proudly placed in the middle of the bar. I had a splendid *Bonnie N' Blonde* from Loch *Lomond Brewery* and one of the two *Fyne Ale* beers, the excellent (and curiously named) *Jarl*.

Aided by the décor and architecture, the **Grill** felt like the most authentic Aberdeen pub experience so far, with locals and bar staff bantering and joking as if they'd known each other all their lives (which they probably had). Earlier in the day, I'd visited the Aberdeen Maritime Museum, which has a spectacular three-storey model exhibit of an oil platform. I could imagine many of the **Grill's** regulars having worked on the rigs in the past and rushing there to get the first pint in of their shore leave.

The **Stag** is almost opposite the **Grill's** back entrance. It's a much larger, opened out bar with a deer stalking theme – a stag's head is mounted high on the back wall next to a *Saltaire*. Again, there was a good selection of real ale. Continuing with beers from Scottish breweries I opted for *Cromarty Brewery's Happy Chappy*, a golden bitter which was ok but showed signs of being tired.

Next stop was a non-**GBG** bar, **CASC**, recommended to me by some beer industry movers and shakers. Described on its website as 'ground zero, the epicentre and beginning of **CASC** nation and the dawn of the bar evolution', its marketing seems to have gone full *Brewdog*. It's actually a snug bar in a cellar reached down, naturally, granite steps. It also specialises in cigars and coffee.

On my late afternoon visit, it was fairly empty but the staff were friendly and welcoming. There was a menu of twenty craft beers on a TV screen and I opted for *Black Isle Brewery's Porter*. This keg version was dark and delicious. The brewery is well regarded for its real ales so I will look out for it on cask.

Last stop was down by the harbour and the most distinctive and off-the-wall pub of the trip (sorry *Brewdog*). I was prepared for something different with a name like *Krakatoa* but this must be a **GBG** entry like no other. It was like walking into



a nightclub at five o'clock in the evening, but one devoted to the pleasures of rock music. There was a mirrored dancefloor at the far end with a neon sign promising 'live nude bands'. Sadly, I didn't stay long enough to check its accuracy.

The bar is bathed in red and purple light and the real ale pumps have an electronic sign promoting 'cask ale'. I marked the end of my brief excursion with a *Salopian Beatific*, a dark, chocolatey stout and the only non-Scottish beer of the day. Then, taking a recommendation from a well-lubricated local, I went for *Windswept Brewery* of Lossiemouth's powerful *Coastal Haze*, an 8% New England IPA. This beer won Gold at the 2023 **SIBA** awards for cask IPA and is a match for any keg beer found on the bar of any chain of craft beer bars.

Suitably fortified, I headed for the airport bus, reassured that real ale is alive and thriving in this city of oil, granite and a large craft beer brewery whose name the *Coastal Haze* had temporarily caused to let slip from my memory.

*Mike Clarke*





## CHAMPION BEER OF BRITAIN!



**Elland Brewery's 1872 Porter** (6.5% ABV) has struck gold and has been crowned the best in Britain after winning **CAMRA's** prestigious **Champion Beer of Britain** competition.

The **1872 Porter** was crowned the official winner at this year's **Great British Beer Festival (GBBF)**, following a rigorous and hard-fought competition. The beer has been awarded **Champion Winter Beer of Britain** four times previously, the most recent being this year.

**Champion Beer of Britain** co-ordinator Christine Cryne said it was a deserving champion, despite incredibly strong competition. She described the beer as a ruby black porter, with chocolate and caramelised fruit flavours with a hint of black toffee on the nose. The judges enjoyed its smooth mouthfeel with a finish that is roasty and dry. A satisfying and remarkably easy drinking porter.

The award – one of the most coveted real ale competitions in the world – puts the winner firmly in both the national and international spotlight. It was exclusively revealed at the **GBBF** trade session on Tuesday 1st August.

Runners up were Silver prize winner **Abbot** (5%) from **Greene King Brewery**, described as a classic premium bitter with typical fruit hops and malty throughout; and Bronze winner **Darwin's Origin** (4.3%) from **Salopian Brewery**, which impressed judges with citrus, earthy hops and a flavour that starts fruity and fades into a pleasant bittersweet finish.

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

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

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

Laura Emson, **CAMRA's National Director** responsible for the competition, says: 'Congratulations to **Elland Brewery** for winning this year's Champion Beer of Britain Award. As ever, it was a highly competitive final, with the judges having a difficult decision to make. Congratulations to all the finalists – it really shows the wide

range and amazing cask beers which are available for all to enjoy.

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

Judging takes place over almost a year from individual nominations at the outset, to local and regional competitions taking place, ahead of a day of rigorous and intensive judging at **GBBF**.

All category winners:

**MILD:**

Gold – **Dark Mild, Harvey's Brewery**

Silver – **Dark Mild, Bank Top Brewery**

Bronze – **Gravediggers Ale, Church End Brewery**

**SESSION BITTER:**

Gold – **Darwin's Origin, Salopian Brewery**

Silver – **Landlord, Timothy Taylor**

Bronze – **Captain Bob, Mighty Oak Brewing Company**

**PREMIUM BITTER:**

Gold – **Abbot Ale, Greene King**

Silver – **Jemima's Pitchfork, Glamorgan Brewing**

Bronze – **XXXB, Batemans**

**IPAs:**

Gold – **Diablo Dragons, Bragdy Twt Lol**

Silver – **Bravehop, Loch Lomond Brewery**

Bronze – **Jaipur, Thornbridge Brewery**

**SESSION PALE, BLOND & GOLDEN ALES:**

Gold – **Island Hopping, Swannay Brewery**

Silver – **Inferno, Oakham Ales**

Bronze – **Oracle, Salopian Brewery**

**PREMIUM PALE, BLOND & GOLDEN ALES:**

Gold – **Electric Landlady, Baker's Dozen Brewing Co.**

Silver – **Kiwi, Blackedge Brewing Co.**

Bronze – **Proper Job, St Austell Brewery**

**WINTER ROUND WINNERS:**

Stouts and Porters, Session – **Dark Drake, Dancing Duck Brewery**

Stouts and Porters, Strong – **1872 Porter, Elland Brewery**

Speciality, Flavoured – **Earl Grey IPA, Marble Beers**

Speciality, Differently Produced – **Dead Man's Fist, Chapter Brewing Company**

Brown Ales & Red Ales, Old Ales & Strong

Milds: **Brampton Mild, Brampton Brewery**

Barley Wines and Strong Old Ales: **Old Tom, Robinsons Brewery**

In another closely fought competition, **Baltic Trader** (10.5%) by **Green Jack Brewing** has been awarded the **CAMRA's** prestigious **Champion Bottled Beer of Britain** award. The annual competition recognises the best bottle-conditioned real ales in the country.

Judges described the Extra Strong Export Stout as a ruby black strong stout with a stunning oyster head.

It had dark roast, black treacle and currants on the nose with alcohol and a very rich smooth mouthfeel. Dry black chocolate, hints of cherry, caramelised fruits and a growing bitter roasty finish that is sweet and lingering. A beer to be savoured.

The well-deserved runners up included **Dhustone Stout** (4.3%) by **Hobsons Brewery** who scooped silver and **McGregor's Mild** (3.8%) by **Five Kingdoms Brewery** took home the bronze award.



## BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP

**Saturday 2nd September 2023**

Bookings are being taken for our 31st trip and the cost is £40 per person. Members and non-members are all welcome to join us on the best day of the year.

The coach will pick up in Aylesbury outside the **Broad Leys** at 9.40am and then at the following: Princes Risborough (Opposite the **Bell** 9.55am), High Wycombe (Desborough Avenue 10.10am) and Stokenchurch (10.20am). Please note that the timings after Aylesbury are approximate and depend on traffic and other pick-ups on route can be catered for.

Due to popular demand, we will once again start at the **Coach & Horses**, Weatheroak, to break the journey and enjoy their superb range of beer and quickly served food.

We will visit lots of old favourites, such as the **Bull & Bladder** (pictured) and the **Beacon Hotel**, plus we plan to revisit the **Fountain** in Lower Gornal which now has its own brewery and regularly features ten beers!



After a full day's enjoyment, we will drop off in reverse order, with the bus due to arrive back in Aylesbury before midnight!

**Contact the editor (details on page 14) to book your place!**

**Space is limited, so make sure you don't miss out!**

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## HADDENHAM SUMMERFEST



On a bright and breezy 1st July, over 4500 people of all ages thronged to **Haddenham Beer Festival Trust's Summerfest** to enjoy a range of 100 cask ales, 35 real ciders and a dozen craft ales.

With 50 cask ales from local breweries and 50 from further afield there was plenty of choice for all. Ciders proved to be particularly popular with a record 800 litres consumed by 6pm.

Ale sales were high and what little remained was quickly snapped up by volunteers clearing up on Sunday.



With two music stages, a theatre stage and a multitude of food outlets, there was plenty to occupy attendees throughout the afternoon and early evening.

This hugely successful event raised around £40,000 for local good causes.

Roll on **Haddenham Winterfest** on 9th December with its 40 ales! In 2024 **Haddenham Beer Festival** will be celebrating its 20th year! More details will be printed as we get them!





# LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

## Chiltern Brewery

The development of the new brew barn has already helped lift the ceiling on their capacity and they are brewing new beers to add to their existing ranges.

In response to increasing requests, they have introduced a brand-new, low-strength beer called *Barely There*, 1.8%, in a can. The story of the beer is really interesting, as it is the younger sibling to their well-known *Bodger's Barley Wine*. It is a full-bodied, properly-brewed beer that has everything in it that you would expect – but with a fraction of the alcohol.

Because of its strength *Bodger's* requires a double portion of malt to generate the strong wort needed in the fermentation for an 8.5% beer. This means there is still plenty of flavour and goodness left in the residual wort that it isn't quite strong enough to use in *Bodger's Barley Wine*.

There is, after all, nothing wrong with that residual wort, and it just seemed too good to waste. And it was this thought during one quiet moment during a *Bodger's* brew day, that led to this new beer. They ran the 2nd and 3rd worts into the copper in their pilot kit, added hops and fermented it.

This is that beer – a beer that didn't go to waste! Full of everything a proper beer should be – and which you would expect a beer from us to be – except the alcohol, which is *Barely There*!

*Barely There* is a 1.8% beer, fully-brewed. They haven't cut any corners, or used energy intensive methods to remove the alcohol. Instead, this is the first in a new range of lower alcohol beers that they are brewing. Their aim is to create more real beers with low

strengths and shall keep refining the process and see how low they can go!

Lastly, almost every beer they brew, is now brewed with malt that is Bucks grown, just down the road from the brewery, on the Waddesdon Estate (LLP). Working in partnership with the estate farm, they are really proud to have established a relationship where they can (almost!) see the barley they brew with, from the brewery! As far as they know, they are one of the very few breweries to be able to say this, certainly in Bucks and the Chilterns.

## Oak Taverns

It has been a busy time at *Oak Taverns* from helping sponsor the Haddenham beer festival to buying another pub. They have just bought the **Crown** at Marcham Abingdon. This is the only pub in the village which is something they said they would not do. It has also been closed for over nine months. Marcham is a large and growing village in the Oxfordshire heartland and it will be interesting to see how their tried and tested formula works when the residents don't have the other options of big food pubs or sport focussed pubs. Fingers crossed it will be another successful venture.

## Rebellion Brewery

Some great beers to come as they continue to celebrate 30 years of brewing, including *Red* and *Amber* their previous seasonal beers, so it's great to see them back on the brew schedule.

They are brewing a Rugby World Cup beer called *Knock-On*. A 3.4% copper and hoppy beer they hope will pair nicely with England doing well in the competition. This will be available for the start of the contest at the beginning of September.

September: *The Bard* (4.2%).. An amber ale with a distinct orange/citrus fruit character. Brewed using the hop Mandarin Bavaria, which as the name suggests, is a German hop with a mandarin orange character. Carrying on the Bavarian theme, they are using Munich malt to add a lovely, toasted note.

October: *Red* (4.7%). A warming, Autumnal red ale, rich and malty, with a balancing bittersweet hop character.

November: *Amber* (4.3%). A malt forward and full bodied best bitter with biscuit and caramel notes. Rich amber in colour with a classic British hop character.

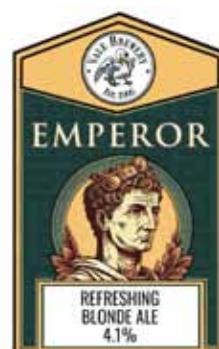
December: *Wipeout* (4.2%).. December's beer is a golden ale with citrus hops and oats. The oats add a smooth mouthfeel and extra body. Citra and Amarillo hops both add a grapefruit aroma which gives this beer a crisp citrus character.



## Vale Brewery

For this month's seasonal brew, *Vale* thought they would revisit the roots of the word August, which hails back to the first Roman emperor, Augustus Caesar. He was such an impressive chap they decided to rename a month after him!

They're very pleased to present today their most August of beers: *Emperor*. Impressive, blonde and refreshing: using Sovereign and Northdown hops to provide a floral hop flavour that is upfront but not overpowering.



## REBELLION BEER

Brewery Shop : Tap Yard : Drive Through  
www.rebellionbeer.co.uk 01628 476594

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**Tap Yard Opening Hours**  
Mon, Tue, Wed: 11.30-6 / Thurs: 11.30-8  
Fri & Sat: 11.30-9 / Sun: Closed



# THE CASKITEERS - PART THIRTEEN

Summer in Shackney and Jacob and Harry were enjoying dressing down, still wearing their checked shirts but sporting wacky, long baggy shorts that modestly covered their nobby knees. They sat in the fleeting sun between London showers at the reconditioned school desks they'd placed on the pavement outside their microbrewery, *Eaten Trifles*. They rested their ankles on the primary school seats, displaying their spindly, shaved calves and five-hundred-pound Blokenstock sandals, with tastefully shabby leather straps.

Jacob sipped a *Silver-Plated Saison* while trying to browse his top-of-the-range ten-thousand-pound MacBook Pro Liquid Air Cornea, except that the sun reflected off the screen and he'd not worked out how to adjust the brightness. He hummed and haa'd and stroked his chin in the way he normally did when he was pretending to be reading something extremely important.

Harry downed pints of *Samphire and Poached Quail's Egg IPA* while squinting at his iPhone Pro 14 Squared with its stag-antler skin cover.

'Erm, Jakes, old chap,' Harry murmured after reading a news article out loud to himself. 'I've been reading the Hipster Hangout blog and they're talking about some alcohol duty increase. Do we pay that on our beers?'

'Yes, dear Harry, we were previously under the yoke of a tyrannical pan-continental alcohol duty regime for which we paid dearly with our blood, sweat and leftover beard wax,' Jacob replied. 'But I am proud to say that as soon as this glorious country achieved true independence that my uncle Jacob Senior presented this alcohol duty bill before our sovereign parliament.'

'That's, er, incredibly amazing of you and your uncle to fly the old union flag like that but—'

'No negative talking down the country, Harry, you inbred dimwit, even if it is royal blood.'

'But it says here your uncle's marvellous alcohol duty reforms reward breweries that produce low strength, industrial, bland, tasteless session beers that are sold by the crateload in supermarkets,' Harry said, reading out the article.

'Naturally, huge faceless mega-corporations are exactly who his policies are designed to support,' Jacob replied. 'How else you do you think he'll get a hugely paid board member's seat for life when he gets bored with politics?'

'Even so, *Blandweiser* is cutting its strength from two percent to one and a half to save billions but it's far worse for characterful, artisanal, lovingly brewed beers.'

'More fool people who brew those,' Jacob scoffed.

'We say we do at *Eaten Trifles* and unless I'm very mistaken...' Harry ventured.

'You usually are,' Jacob interrupted with a snort.

'...ninety-five percent of the beers we brew are at least 10% alcohol by volume. The beer duty on those is going up twenty times to £25 a pint. When we add in our costs that's er...' Harry's brain seized up at the prospect of doing sums.

'Approximately £35 a pint,' Jacob calculated on his high-tech Kumquat watch. 'Surely my friends will have no problem paying that?'

'But you only have one friend who doesn't purely use you for cynical social climbing purposes, Jakes, and that's me.'

Jacob stroked his chin in contemplation. 'I know. Let's go low alcohol. It's all the rage. We can tap into the health vibe.'

\*\*\*\*

Next morning, Ruthie the brewer, was sceptical about Jacob's new beer recipes.

'Ach, yous knows that to produce a wee alcohol beer, people normally either brew to full strength and cleverly suck out the booze or they brew to a specially wee low gravity with yeast that's had the life beaten out of it down the Gorbals?'

'Yes, dear woman, but we can bring down the cost of our brews further if we don't actually use yeast,' Jacob said, throwing *Eaten Trifles*' putrid, week old roadkill smelling store of yeast down the drain.

'But no yeast means it won't ferment and then there'll be no alcohol at all,' Ruthie complained.

'Precisely the point – and no alcohol duty to pay. We can lower the price to a mere £30 a pint and make a huge profit.' Jacob punched the air in celebration of his genius. 'Now get on with it and buy the important ingredients!'

Ruthie sighed and started writing out her shopping list for the wholefood organic bakery and grocers on Shackney Road. 'Chocolate eclairs, profiteroles, goji berries, avocados, pinto beans...'

\*\*\*\*

The next day, Ruthie had 'brewed' the *Eaten Trifles* 'beer' range. They'd been produced in amazingly quick time because no time-wasting fermentation had been involved. Jacob proudly added a banner outside the microbrewery boasting 'Relaunched Spiffingly Healthy Beers'.

Harry's friends Tamara and Ralph were first to sample the new offerings.

'I'll have a zero percent *Pancake Cookie Dough Apricot Parmesan Shaving Sour*, please,' she asked. 'And Ralph will have an *Apple Crumble Filo Pastry Soy Sauce Cavalo Nero IPA*.'

'That's a snip at seventy pounds,' Jacob said, rubbing his hands.

Tamara and Ralph sipped their craft beers slowly while other hipsters ordered the new versions of the range of other zero alcohol 'beers'. After a while, Harry realised that few of Shackney's movers and shakers were returning for a second drink.

'Erm, Ralph, mate. Aren't you just gagging for another of our beers?' Harry asked. 'You're surely not missing the beer taste in our special low alcohol version?'

'Good gracious, no!' Tamara replied. 'I hate the taste of beer, as do all my pals. That's why we love your craft brewery and its mega-flavours.'

'So, what's the problem?' Harry asked. 'You bought third after third after third of our alcoholic versions of these. They have the same marshmallow, guava, peanut, grilled seitan and nasturtium flowers added in. It should taste the exactly the same.'

'Yes, it does – a bizarre concoction of random flavours,' Tamara explained. 'But the alcoholic versions were so marvellously strong we were smashed out of our heads after the first one. That's why we kept buying more at your ridiculously exorbitant prices.'

'And she lives in a castle,' Ralph added. 'I'm not at all keen on this being sober as a judge business. My pater is Lord Chief Justice and he's constantly on the sauce.'

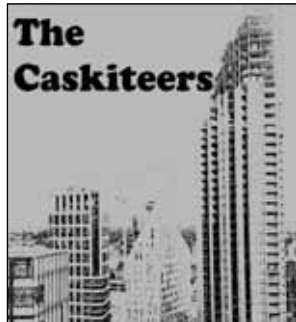
Just then a grim-faced man in a suit marched into the brewery and headed for the bar.

'I'm Maxwell Stickler from the Shackney Council Trading Standards department,' the stern looking man said while showing the badge on his lanyard. He produced a gadget on the bar and stuck his probe into a pint of *Beard Oil Slick IPA*. 'Not only is this not real beer but my calorieometer here has detected that these are the most unhealthy, ultra-processed, sugar dense, fat-laden drinks that I've ever come across in my career! I'm closing this microbrewery taproom immediately due to its massive risks to public well-being and bogus health claims!'

Jacob and Harry were about to make a run for it but found a spilled pint of *Mango and Octopus Ink Porter* had stuck their feet fast to the floor.

'I think I could do with an 11% alcohol version of that,' Harry said, looking forlornly at his feet.

*Charlie Mackle*





## Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

### August

**Wednesday 16th LATE AFTERNOON/EVENING WALKING SOCIAL**

5.30pm Red Lion, Whiteleaf, 6.45pm Plough Cadsden, 8.30pm Stables Bar, Askett.

**Wednesday 23rd REOPENED PUB SOCIAL**

7.00pm, Eight Bells, Long Crendon

**Saturday 26th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL**

12.30pm, , White Horse, Hedgerley

**Tuesday 29th WYCOMBE SOCIAL**

6.30pm Belle Vue, 8.00pm Falcon.

### September

**Saturday 2nd BLACK COUNTRY TRIP**

Full details on page 11

**Saturday 9th HEADINGTON BEER FESTIVAL**

12.30pm Mason's Arms, Headington Quarry OX3 8LH

**Tuesday 12th BRANCH MEETING**

7.00pm, Cross Keys, Thame

**Wednesday 20th MIDWEEK AFTERNOON SOCIAL**

2.00pm Rebellion Tap, Marlow Bottom SL7 3LT

**Tuesday 26th SOCIAL**

6.30pm Rose and Crown, Wingrave, 7.30pm Cock Inn, Wing, 8.30pm Unicorn Cublington

### October

**Tuesday 3rd SOCIAL**

7.00pm Grouse and Ale, Lane End, 8.00pm Chequers, Wheeler End Common

### November

**Wednesday 1st TAPS SOCIAL**

6.30pm Taps, Gerrards Cross, 7.45pm Taps, Beaconsfield

**Saturday 18th MARLOW SOCIAL WITH SWM**

This is a planned date for a joint social with Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead Branch. Further details will be on the website nearer the time.

### December

**Saturday 9th AYLESBURY AFTERNOON SOCIAL (tbc)**

This is a planned date for a joint social with North Bucks and MK Branch. Further details will be on the website nearer the time.

### January 2024

**Saturday 6th THAME SOCIAL WITH OXFORD BRANCH (tbc)**

This is a planned date for a joint social with the Oxford Branch. Further details will be on the website nearer the time.

### February

**Wednesday 28th BRANCH AGM**

Aylesbury - venue and start time to be confirmed.

Further details can be found on  
[www.avw.camra.org.uk](http://www.avw.camra.org.uk) and facebook  
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## Swan Supping

Swan Supping is distributed free of charge to pubs in the branch area.

Estimated Readership **6000.**

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Advertising rates are from :-

1/4 page £90, 1/2 page £150, Full page £260.

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**Subscriptions :-** *Swan Supping* is distributed to over 250 pubs and many other locations in our area but if you would prefer to receive your copy by post we can mail it to you immediately it is published. All you have to do is send £2.00 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor at the address above (please make all cheques payable to *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch*) and leave the rest to us! This applies to single copies to UK addresses only. We can mail overseas, but the price will vary depending on the country to which it is to be delivered. Remember that all issues of *Swan Supping* can be downloaded from our website ([avw.camra.org.uk](http://avw.camra.org.uk)).

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Opinions expressed in *Swan Supping* are not necessarily those of the editor, or the *Campaign for Real Ale*.

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