

**FREE**

# Swan Supping



**Issue 108**

**June/July 2015**



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**Branch trip to  
Red Squirrel  
Brewery  
See page 4**

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

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**Circulation 6000**

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## NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Last issue I announced that our last chairman, Alexander Wright, had put himself forward to become a member of the **CAMRA National Executive** and this would be decided by votes cast at the **National Members' Weekend** in Nottingham. Well, I'm very happy to announce that he has been elected to the post and he is the first member of this branch to reach the top table of the **Campaign**! We look forward to regular updates in future issues of the magazine.

Speaking of the meeting in Nottingham, I also said in the last issue that I would be taking a trip round my home town in

Worksop to show anyone who was interested a bit of my history and of the pubs I used to frequent. Five of us took the trip which included a lot of closed pubs, one of which builders were finishing off turning into flats as we toured round. However, it is not all bad news there as we took in three pubs which are brewery taps for three microbreweries in Worksop, one of which, the **Mallard**, I presented with a framed page from a 1966 copy of *Rover & Wizard* which told the story of the record breaking run on the 3rd of July 1938, when the A4 class locomotive Mallard raced down Stoke Bank at 126mph to set a new steam locomotive world speed record (which still stands today).

### Best Day of the Year

On Saturday June 20th we are taking our 25th annual coach trip to the Black Country. Most people who have joined us in the past reckon that it is the best day of the year as we travel round some of the best pubs in the country.

As usual, we are picking people up from Aylesbury (9.45am outside the **Broad Leys**) then Princes Risborough (opposite the **Bell**), High Wycombe (at the **White Horse**) and Stokenchurch (outside the **Mowchak**). We are then whisked away to the **Coach & Horses** in Weatheroak to partake of food and the fine ales from the **Weatheroak Hill** brewery. We then head to the **Waggon & Horses** in Halesowen (pictured above) to enjoy a fraction of their wonderful range of beers on their fifteen handpumps.



The route from here varies every year, but we will definitely be going to the **Olde Swan**, Netherton, which is the home of **Ma Pardoes** beer, the **Bull & Bladder**, Brierley Hill, and will finish off at the home of **Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild**, the **Beacon Hotel** in Sedgley, which is always one of the many highlights of the trip. We aim to be back in Aylesbury by midnight, returning via the pickup points in reverse order.

The cost will be a mere £30, which is the bargain of the year. There is a limited number of seats on the coach (which will have a loo on it) so it is recommended that you book as soon as possible as places are going fast. Please book by contacting me (full address details on page 18).

As usual, my thanks go to all the people who have contributed to **Swan Supping** without whom it would not exist. Many thanks also to all our advertisers and to Colin Stanford for the cartoon he specially created for a new writer to this magazine. Don't worry if you missed the **Gravediggers** this issue, Charlie Mackle will be back with another outrageous episode next time.

Cheers and hope you enjoy some of the many beer festivals in our area!

David W. Roe - *Swan Supping* Editor ([editor@swansupping.org.uk](mailto:editor@swansupping.org.uk))

## NATIONAL CAMRA NEWS

### CAMRA welcomes Holyrood's commitment to investigate the tied-pub relationship

In May, Business Minister Fergus Ewing MSP committed to commission a study into the tied pub sector to determine what legislation may need to be put forward to support tied tenants in Scotland.

The announcement came during a lively debate in Holyrood, following a motion lodged by Paul Martin MSP calling for a Statutory Code of Practice for pub companies and an Adjudicator to protect hard-working licensees.

Thanks in part to hundreds of **Scottish CAMRA** members lobbying their MSP, the debate was well attended and received cross-party endorsement for reform. The debate closed with Business Minister Fergus Ewing committing to commission a study into the tied pub sector in Scotland to determine the best course of action. The Minister suggested that reforms in Scotland may go even further than those in England and Wales to best address the issue.

Ray Turpie, Scotland and Northern Ireland Director says: 'We very much welcome the Minister's commitment to investigate this matter

and hope that this is done in a timely manner. **CAMRA**'s own research has found that 99% of tied pub tenants feel that the Government should act to make sure that tied tenants in Scotland are no worse off than those in England and Wales. **CAMRA** will support the Government in its search for a Scottish solution for a Scottish problem.'

**CAMRA** believe that unfair business practices in the tied pub sector have resulted in higher prices for pub goers, lower investment in the sector and ultimately a higher rate of pub closures. To remedy this, it is calling for a Scottish Pubs Code, an independent Adjudicator, a Market Rent Only Option and a Guest Beer Right.

### The UK's best Ciders and Perries

**CAMRA** announced the winners of its National Cider and Perry Championships at the recent **Reading Beer Festival**.

The joint winners of the Cider Gold medal are **White Jersey** by **Orgasmic** and **Janet's Jungle Juice** by **West Croft**. **White Jersey** was described by judges as being 'fruity' and 'easy drinking', with 'a slight sweetness balanced by an excellent tang', and having 'balance without too much acidity'. **Janet's Jungle Juice** was described as

having a 'mature and woody aroma' with 'an initial sweetness and a smooth finish', and a 'full mouthfeel with a resinous aroma'.

The winner of the Perry Gold medal is **Two Trees Perry** by **Gwynt y Ddraig** (meaning 'dragon's breath' in Welsh) which the judges described as being 'initially sweet with a refreshing, dry aftertaste', 'complex yet well balanced with a poached pear flavour and aroma' with a 'slowly developing finish'.

The competition featured ciders and perries from across the UK, with each cider and perry judged on its individual taste, aroma, flavour, after-taste and overall appeal. The top awards were selected by a specially chosen panel of experienced judges, drinks writers and **CAMRA** members.

### CIDER

GOLD (joint) – **White Jersey**, **Orgasmic Cider Company**

GOLD (joint) – **Janet's Jungle Juice**, **West Croft**

BRONZE – **Medium**, **Three Cats**

### PERRY

GOLD – **Two Trees Perry**, **Gwynt y Ddraig**

SILVER – **Snowy Owl**, **Raglan Cider Mill**

BRONZE – **Perry**, **Snails Bank**

# SINGLE BREWERY TRIP - NO, THREE (OR WAS IT FOUR)?



On Saturday, the 25th of April, twelve enthusiastic **CAMRA** members from Aylesbury, Princes Risborough and Wycombe, set out on a visit to the **Red Squirrel Brewery** in Potten End, near Berkhamsted, where a tour had been booked. Arriving in the Berkhamsted area far too early for the noon start of tour, a sharp-witted legend within the ranks of the entourage immediately proposed a quick visit to the recently opened **Haresfoot** micro-brewery (pictured above) in the town. On arrival we were encouraged to sample their *Wild Boy*, *Exotic Pale Ale* at 3.7% ABV, followed by *Lock Keeper's Ale* at 3.9% ABV, which was their launch ale – the first to be brewed in Berkhamsted since 1914. Both were enjoyed before moving on to **Red Squirrel**.

On arrival at **Red Squirrel** (featured on our front cover) we commenced imbibing from the unstinting supply of ale from the three handpumps on offer – *Conservation Bitter* at 3.7% ABV, *Redwood American IPA* at 5.9% and *London Porter* at 5.0%. One member at least also sampled the **Red Squirrel** dry hopped *Czech Pilsner* at 4.9% ABV.

Whilst thoroughly enjoying quaffing these ales, Tim Hickford, their area



manager, who is also much involved with the shop outlet in Chesham, gave an interesting view of the brewing scene and was very informative (attentive listeners pictured above). A quote from one of the members 'I enjoyed chats with brewers at each of the sites. These young men who pour enthusiasm into their products are always such a pleasure to meet. This trip was, I think, the most enjoyable beer-related day out that I've had'.

As the tour came to an end, we debated where to find some food, and perhaps more ale – the brewery is not able to provide food at the moment whilst undergoing renovation. **XT** brewery was the answer – it was their open day with plenty of ale on offer and a BBQ to boot. So, off to Long Crendon it was – thanks should be expressed at this point to Alex (our recently retired Chairman) who drove the minibus throughout the day accompanied by his daughter, our lead photographer on the day. We all greatly appreciated this Alex.

On arrival at **XT**, we mingled with the crowd whilst enjoying the BBQ and a variety of **XT** and **Animal** beers which included, amongst, no doubt, others:-

- **XT Eight** - 4.5% ABV dark roast
- **XT Gold** – 4.2% Golden Ale
- **XT Pi** - 3.141% Roast Black Mild
- **XT Nine** Black Ale - 5.5% using nine malts
- **Animal Bastard Bunny IPA** 7.2%

**XT** explained that *Bunny* is a collaboration brew with **Moogbrew** – a trendy little brewery in Taplow. It was a chance meeting with them at a beer festival and they said they had made a beer called *Bastard Bunny*. **XT** immediately suggested a joint-brew under their **Animal** brand, only bigger, with lots more hops. The *Bastard Bunny* character is originally featured in NME magazine and the guys from **Moog** are mates with Dave Anderson who created the character.

For most of us this was the end of the day apart from the minibus trip home. However, yes for a few, the day became a four-brewery trip. A couple received a lift back home via the **Cross Keys** pub in Thame, also the **Thame Brewery** base. **Peter Hoade**

## Lynn and Nigel welcome you to **THE BULL**

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## CHANDOS ARMS, OAKLEY



Piers and Sandra have committed to a long term future at the **Chandos Arms** much to the relief of all the locals in Oakley.

On 27th April 2015 they signed a **Punch** Foundation Tenancy after parting company with **Phoenix**. **Punch** has invested £50k in a major refurbishment and they are confident that **Punch** now treat their tenants better than in the past, for which they gained a poor reputation.

In the snug a front door has been rehung to ease entry from outside, the bar has been shortened to create more space and a comfy bench seat has been built. All new furniture in the restaurant is chunky and agreeable ready for meals prepared by Sandra.

The bar now boasts three handpumps, up from two, so that a guest ale can be rotated. Regulars will have a say regarding the guest choice off the Punch list. In time this may include locales.

The pub is busy with activities. The 'What's On' board includes dominoes, poker, Aunt Sally, quizzes, meat raffles and 'pub games'. It's now up to the villagers and locals to make this 'Pub is the Hub' into a really going concern. We wish Piers and Sandra the very best of luck in their extended venture in Oakley.

*Bill Piers*



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## LOCAL NEWS

### AMERSHAM

Just outside our branch, Amersham Round Table are once again organising the catering and entertainment for Amersham Carnival. The intention this year is to build on last year's successful Music and Beer Festival, but with a greater variety of ale and ciders sourced from around the region, including unusual ales rarely seen at festivals. The event takes place on George V Field, Amersham, from 12pm on Saturday 27th of June, with proceeds going to local charities.

### AYLESBURY

Alongside the *London Pride*, *Fullers Oliver's Island* (a 3.8% golden ale) and *Gales Redwood* (a 4% rich red ale) have proved very popular at the *Aristocrat*. Why not try them at one of their regular charity quiz nights - their next one is on Thursday 11th of June for Cancer Research.

The *Grapes* has changed its name again! It is to reopen early in June as the *Tap & Barrel* and will be run as an *Artisan Tap* venue offering Artisan Craft Beers, Cask Ales and Gourmet Coffee. More details next issue.

### BUTLERS CROSS

The *Russell Arms* reopened after a few month's closure on Good Friday (April 3rd) and is currently offering *St. Austell Tribute*, *Tring Side Pocket for a Toad* and *XT 4*.

### DOWNLEY

The *Le De Spencer* is holding its annual Beer and Cheese Festival from Friday 3rd July until Sunday 5th July. Here you can savour the combination of carefully selected great British ales and farmhouse cheeses. They also offer live music from acoustic duo *Fluke* on the Saturday night.

### EMMINGTON

Recent *Locales* at the *Inn at Emmington* have included *Rebellion IPA* and a very popular *Animal Elk*. *St Austell Tribute* and *Adnams Ghost Ship* have also appeared and gone down well.

### GREAT HAMPDEN

The *Hampden Arms* is holding a June Summer Solstice Beer Festival over the weekend of the Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st. The pub will be open all weekend and on the Sunday there

will be a Father's Day barbecue and live music with the *Wedge*. Earlier in the month (Tuesday 9th at 7.45pm), *Whitchurch Morris Men* will be dancing in the beer garden.

### GREAT KIMBLE

Landlord of the *Swan*, Mick Caffrey, will add a thespian string to his bow this summer when he treads the boards in the production of Mozart's *Così fan Tutti* at the prestigious Garsington Opera, held on the Getty Estate at Wormsley near Stokenchurch. It is not known whether he will multi-task by introducing the opera lovers to some of the excellent *LocAle* beers that have appeared on the bar of the *Swan* recently, notably *Toucan* and *Elk* from *Animal Brewery* and *Paradise Lost* by *Vale* (there's no truth in the rumour that this beer was named after the *Whip* in Lacey Green's advert in the last *Swan Supping*).

Continuing the art and culture theme, the *Swan* also held a successful art exhibition in April featuring local artists, demonstrating the imaginative ways pubs can serve the community.

### HADDENHAM

The *Summer Beer Festival* takes place at the Middle School, HP17 8DS (15 minutes walk from Haddenham & Thame Parkway or 30 seconds from the Arriva 280 stop) from 11am on Saturday 4th of July. Pimms, wine, cider, real lager alongside 70 odd firkins of ale plus lots of entertainment and food.

### HIGH WYCOMBE

*Scorpio's Bar* (previously the *White Lion*) in Crendon Street looks a lost cause as planning permission to convert it into housing and a shop has been approved.

### LACEY GREEN

In May, the branch held a popular social at the *Whip* which was holding their 22nd beer festival (pictured below). and the landlord, Nick Smith, has kindly sent us a report on the event:-

Sandwiched between days of pouring rain we were incredibly lucky to have two dry days and pleasant sunshine, and as a result customers rolled up, ale and cider were drunk, the band played, and bellies were filled.

It always amazes me how far folk will travel for a beer festival, we have some hardened regulars who have only missed one of our 22 festivals and they travel down from Yorkshire for the



weekend, others appear from Leicester and we were well supported, not only by the local branch of *CAMRA*, but also branches from around the region notably *Bedford, Oxford, White Horse, Slough Windsor & Maidenhead* and our old friends from *Mid Chilterns*.

During the two days we managed to get through 24 firkins (bar a couple of pints) in the marquee, another seven in the pub and fourteen different ciders.

The first to go was the *Old School Headmaster* from Lancashire which just happened to be my favourite and may have had a head start as I did a fair amount of sampling (Quality Control) on the Thursday night, soon to be followed by both the ales I went down to pick up from Nigel at the *Blue Boar Farmers* bar in Maldon, *Nelsons Blood* and *Pucks Folly*.

So overall around 2,600 pints of ale and cider were consumed which converts to approximately 1.2 tons of liquid refreshment used to wash down 15lb of goat curry, 15lb of lamb curry, 22lb of sausages, 26lb of cod and assorted other rolls and burgers. So it's not surprising that my garden appeared to have dip in it on Sunday morning.

Obviously festivals are great fun, attended by a like-minded, gregarious, friendly, and very thirsty group of people, but they are also very hard work to organise and run properly, and could not be successful without the people behind the scenes on the day.

So my thanks go out to all my staff who tirelessly washed, cleaned, carried and pulled pints for hours on end, and to the customers who mucked in and gave their valuable drinking time over to pulling pints, and of course to Julie for running the kitchen and feeding the hordes, and finally to everyone who

attended and made it a successful and enjoyable experience.

*Cheers Nick @ The Whip*

### LOUDWATER

The *Derehams Inn* is holding their ninth Fag 'n Firkin beer festival over the weekend of 3rd to 5th of July. Live music will be held in their pub garden and food will also be available alongside the twenty real ales and five real ciders.

### MAIDENHEAD

With more than 100 real ales and 20 real ciders this year's Beer and Cider Festival will be held from Friday 24th to Sunday 26th of July. Organised by the *Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead branch of CAMRA*, it will be held at Desborough College, Shoppenhangers Road, a five minute walk from the side exit at Maidenhead station.

Throughout the festival the entrance charge, which helps offset the costs of the entertainment is a modest £3 for public, £2 for holders of the Borough's Advantage Card and £1 for card carrying *CAMRA* members. Full details on their dedicated website, [www.maidenheadbeerfest.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadbeerfest.org.uk).

### OAKLEY

At the *Chandos Arms*, Piers has had a third handpump installed to ring the changes alongside *Fullers London Pride* and *Sharp's Doom Bar*. See separate article on the £50K refurbishment.

### PRINCES RISBOROUGH

*Duke's Wine Bar* has recently opened on Duke Street at the Tesco end of Princes Risborough town centre. While not a pub, *Duke's* caters for beer drinkers with a selection of bottled beers from *XT* brewery and a selection of *Rebellion* ales, served bright from



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containers on the bar. Food is available throughout the day and breakfasts are served on certain mornings during the week (see <http://dukeswinebar.co.uk/>).

The **Whiteleaf Cross** in the Market Square now has four handpumps, reflecting the popularity of its real ale offering. Unusually for a **Greene King** house, the pub does not serve its parent's ubiquitous *IPA*, opting instead for the more unusual *Morlands Original* as well as *Abbot Ale*. The remaining two handpumps serve a selection of rotating guests including, on a recent visit, *Robinson's Trooper* and *White Swan* from the splendid **Thornbridge Brewery**.

## QUAINTON

The **George & Dragon** is holding a beer festival on Saturday 11th July with up to fifteen ales and three ciders.

## RADNAGE

The fifth Radnage Beer Festival takes place at the **Crown** over the weekend of Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th of July. Twenty real ales plus traditional cider will be available.

## SPEEN

I first visited the **Olde Plow** back in the late 60s/early 70s when the pub was obviously run by a retired, enthusiastic rugby player. There were great cartoon-style pictures of him on the walls – unfortunately I didn't capture them on film. If any reader did, it would be great to see them.

The pub at this time was great for ale and food, probably one of the first in the area to offer both to an excellent standard.

I still remember vividly a New Year's Day trip there in the middle of a blizzard, with a significant layer of snow on the ground. Negotiating the notorious bend on the way down from Speen to Flowers Bottom was a particularly unforgettable experience soon followed by excellent ale and lunch.

A shame to see it closed for good, though it hasn't been a pub for some while. It has though in recent years been a great restaurant and recently, to its credit added a *Chiltern* ale to its offerings. The owners have now retired and will remain living in the premises. We wish them a happy retirement. Retaining the **King William IV** as the last pub in Speen ought now to be a priority for the local community I would suggest.

Peter Hoade

## THAME

Summer is around the corner (hopefully), the days are getting longer and the 280 provides a very good service to enable Thame's pubs to be visited without too much difficulty.

Starting off at the eastern side of town there is the **Falcon** which had *Hooky Golden* and *London Pride*. There is sometimes another beer from the *Hooky* range. The pub does not open until 4pm Monday to Thursday.

Heading towards town, the **Cross Keys**, home of **Thame Brewery**, has its regular range of beers from around the country. *XT 4* is the regular bitter and the chances of finding a **Thame Brewery** beer are good. *Hoppiness* was on recently with *Mr Splodge Mild* and *Windy Indy* bitter to follow. The presentation of their Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Cider Pub of the Year award is pictured on the right with Peter Lambert receiving the certificate from Elvis Evans, our local branch cider guru.

The **Swan Hotel** has four beers, *London Pride*, *Young's Bitter*, *Rebellion Smuggler* and *Doom Bar*. On Wednesdays from 6pm, all real ales are £3 a pint.

Across the road is the **Nags Head** with *Greene King IPA*, while close by is the **Black Horse** which only had *Adnams Ghost Ship* when visited out of the three pumps.

Clustered around the centre there is the **Spread Eagle Hotel** with two *Rebellion* beers, *IPA* and *Crossed Swords*, The **Birdcage** also sells *Rebellion*, this time *IPA* and *Seven Seas* and the **James Figg** with its four handpumps offering at the time *XT 15*, *Purity Mad Goose*, *Sharps Coaster* and *Doom Bar*.

Heading on towards the west end of town, the **Rising Sun** has three pumps. *Brakspears Bitter* is always on, there is the monthly special from the **Marston** range and one other again from the **Marston** range, at the time it was *Jennings Cock a Hoop*.

The **Thatch** has *Vale Best* and D.B. and at the **Six Bells**, the **Fullers** pub, there are five pumps, two with *London Pride*, *Fullers Olivers Island*, *Gales Seafarer* and *George Gale Redwood*, only 4% but £4.05 a pint.

Many of the pubs have outdoor seating areas, so if the weather is good what could be better than sitting outside with good ale and the Arriva taxi to get back to Aylesbury or any stops en route.

Brian West

## TIDDINGTON

*XT 4* and *Sharp's Doom Bar* are regulars at the **Fox & Goat** with a third pump serving a variety of guest ales. The third hand pump had *Hook Norton Hooky* on at the end of May to be followed by **Raw Brewing Co Blonde Pale Ale**.

## TYLERS GREEN

The **Horse & Jockey** is holding a beer festival over the weekend of 3rd to the 5th of July.

## WHITCHURCH

The **White Swan** will be holding its second 'Whitstock Music Festival' over Friday 31st July, Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd August. Beer, food, live music and other entertainments will all feature in the extensive rear garden following the success of last years event.

## WHITELEAF

The **Red Lion** rotates a changing selection of beers through its three handpumps and served over 190 different real ales in 2014 so regular customers are rewarded with a changing selection. The pub is planning to repeat its beer festival again this year with a date planned for August, so look out for details in our next edition.

## WORMINGHALL

The **Clifden Arms** is now open for business with its spacious car park and child-safe garden suitable for summer family outings. Manager Jack looks after front of house whilst landlord Chris is chef. The bar currently boasts *XT 4*, *Fullers London Pride* and *Sharp's Doom Bar*.



## George & Dragon, Quainton

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## A ST. ALBANS BEER JAUNT!

I had wondered on this bank holiday weekend (late May) if there were any beer festivals around Aylesbury and in the country – didn't seem to be any in Buckinghamshire but a trip around some pubs in a distant town seemed a good idea. **St Albans** is the home of **CAMRA** and is well served with good pubs. I had last been on a crawl here some 7-8 years ago in the winter, with sub-zero temperatures.

I checked the bus route here – 500 Watford bus and then change at Hemel for the 301 to St Albans. Looking at the timing I came upon some issues on the way back. The last bus left Hemel at 1830 and everyone knows you should never go for the last bus - the penultimate was a little after 6pm; that meant leaving St Albans at around 17:15. So I plumped for the train instead, with a train from Aylesbury to Marylebone then getting the Bedford train from St Pancras. Total cost with my network railcard was £14.40 – and it meant more flexibility with the times on the return.

I met a friend who came from Reading and as it turned out we were on the same (11:34) Bedford train – mobile phones came in handy so he moved carriages to locate me.

Our first pub was some half mile SW of the city station; the **Farmer's Boy**, and it looked a rather typical boozer. Having said that it did food and we had Cumberland sausages (they ran out of Venison) and mash in a huge Yorkshire pudding. This was home of the **Verulam Brewery** and they had one beer on, a 4.8% dark mild called *Super Trooper*, which was somewhat sour and a rather acquired taste!

The brewery is located behind the pub and shares what seems to be an arrangement with **Alecraft** and **Private Brewery of Bob**. **Alecraft** had one beer on; *Sauvin So Good*, a pale hoppy number at 4.0%. The **Bob Brewery** was not in evidence but a large part of their output (they are not currently brewing) is in the bottled beer trade. My final beer was *Leighton Buzzard Centennial IPA* at 6.8% and rather chewy – this was a brewery that featured quite a bit in the 4 pubs we visited; good to see **LocAle** beers promoted.

We were kindly informed that the **White Hart Tap** (pictured below) on Keyfield Terrace some five minutes walk down the road had a beer festival – and so began the journey of beer festivals, which meant we couldn't do all the pubs I wanted to. Too bad! It was located in a marquee in the beer garden and I had halves – in pint glasses, evidently a shortage of half pint glasses there.

We had been informed at the **Farmer's Boy** that a new brewery called **Cloudwater** would be represented there. I'd never heard of it but a bit of digging showed it was a Manchester brewery that had started brewing in the Spring. It was a pale ale – yes, a lot of them around. Since I started 'ticking' beers mid-April at the Nottingham AGM using the Untappd app, approximately 20% of my samplings were pale ales. Not my choice of beer though.

A further beer was *Toast Amber Ale* by the **Liverpool Craft Brewery** – unfortunately it had no condition whatsoever; a downside of beer festivals. The pub itself was quite modern and comfortable – I should imagine a refurbishment had occurred in recent years.

We were then informed by the pub that there was a beer festival down the road (sounds familiar), this time it was at the **Hare & Hounds** – a two minute walk away. The pub itself was a bit of a contrast, claiming to be a pub since 1650, It certainly had the age with a dark wooden interior and old sofas.



Again the beers were out in the garden (pictured below), a smaller number than at the previous one and dominated by the **Red Squirrel** brewery. I had fond memories of our branch visit there several weeks before, and I was impressed with their *Red Dawn Mild* and *Jack (London) Black IPA*. The beer prices were cheaper here at £3 for a pint.

Time was running out and we needed to get our train which went after 7pm. We had some 90 minutes left and decided to keep near the station – and so we came to our last port of call – the **Mermaid**. And surprise, surprise it had a festival on – this time it was cider.

It was the busiest of the lot but then it was early evening. Although not cider drinkers it seemed fitting to have a cider send off as our last drink, I made sure mine was pretty dry as anything beyond medium is a bit sickly. I had the *Abrahams AD* made by **Celtic Marches** in Herefordshire. Yeah it was a change from beer and I was quite happy with it!

It was a good day to crawl – the 'missing' beer festivals all duly turned up. We missed the other pubs of course but that's for another day.

### Lemon Snail



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## MEETUP.COM

We now have a page on social networking website meetup.com. Like Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites, meetup.com is completely independent of **CAMRA** – and it's free to join. It offers the potential for us to plan social events more flexibly and interactively via the many useful functions available via the website. However, we'll still be publicising our social diary in the usual ways.

The link to our page is: <http://www.meetup.com/Aylesbury-Vale-and-Wycombe-CAMRA/> although if you search for meetup and the branch name you'll probably find the page too.

The site itself is fairly self-explanatory. A screenshot of the home page illustrates what you'll see when you visit it. Click on each event for more details – you can even choose to RSVP to an event and message others who are going.

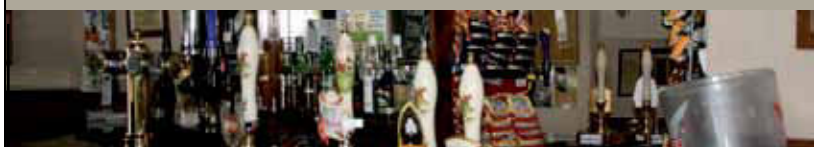


# THE WHEEL

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## BRANCH TAKES ACTION TO PROTECT OUR PUBS

Over the last two months the branch has taken a proactive approach to securing the protection of our pubs by listing them as assets of community value using the Localism Act 2011. Following **CAMRA** pressure on the government, legislation has been passed which removes permitted development rights for pubs that are listed as assets of community value to be turned into restaurants, religious establishments, vet practices and mini-supermarkets amongst other establishments. Permitted development rights allow conversion without the need for planning permission and do not allow the local community to give their opinion. Assets of community value also cannot be sold until the community has been given six months to raise enough capital to submit a bid to purchase their social hub.

In the past it was thought that **CAMRA** branches could not nominate pubs as they did not fit the description of community interest group, as defined by the legislation, and we pressurised Parish Councils to nominate their community assets. This was successful in a handful of cases, however in the majority of cases our advice fell on death ears with the occasional consequence of parishes losing pubs due to the Parish Council's inaction. Thankfully, recent case law suggested that local branches of **CAMRA** can in fact nominate local pubs as assets of community value and **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA** branch has taken it upon themselves to secure the future of our branches pubs on behalf of our members and the community as a whole.

I am delighted to report that, at the time of this publication going to press, the branch has successfully nominated 17 pubs which have been added to the list of assets of community value. In addition to this, we have a further 24 nominations which are due to be determined within the next couple of weeks. At the moment we have 39 pubs within the branch area, nominated by varying organisations, that are listed as assets of community value. This is a significant proportion of the branch.

The pubs which have recently been successfully nominated by the branch are;

- Bledlow – **Lions of Bledlow**
- Booker – **Squirrel**
- Bryant's Bottom – **Gate**
- Cryer's Hill – **White Lion**
- Fingest – **Chequers**
- Frieth – **Prince Albert**
- Great Hampden – **Hampden Arms**
- Hambleden – **Stag & Huntsman**
- Hughenden – **Harrow**
- Flackwell Heath – **Crooked Billet**
- Piddington – **Dashwood Arms**
- Saunderton – **Golden Cross**
- Skirmett – **Frog**
- Speen – **King William IV**
- Wheeler End – **Chequers**
- Whiteleaf – **Red Lion**
- Wooburn Moor – **Falcon**

It is the intention of the branch to continue to list as many pubs in our branch area. This will hopefully fend off many of the predatory supermarkets and housing developers who see our social hubs as easy pickings with which they can make a quick buck at the expense of the local community.

The branch has interestingly faced criticism from some pub owners who have accused us of devaluing their pub as it is no longer attractive to investors for the reason stated above. I would state that I have no sympathy with this statement and would question anyone's motives if they have the potential

value of their pubs as development land in the back of their minds. It is exactly this mindset that encourages us to continue to fight to allow the local community a say in what happens to their social hubs by nominating pubs.

I would also like to reassure pub owners and premises supervisors that by the branch nominating your pub we are not basing your pub's nomination on our perception of your quality as a pub manager. We are simply looking at protecting as much of our branch as possible and hopefully giving local government, as well as national government, the understanding that pubs are valued and therefore need a level playing field against other industries.

We encourage any readers to contact our branch on [chairman@swansupping.org.uk](mailto:chairman@swansupping.org.uk) should their local pub be threatened or if they wish for us to specifically nominate their pub as an asset of community value.

I would also encourage other **CAMRA** branches to start nominating their pubs and offer them any assistance they may need.

*Carl Griffin (Branch Chairman)*

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The festival offers you the chance to discover your perfect pint, as you explore over 900 real ales, ciders, perries and international beers. The UK's biggest beer festival will feature over 350 British breweries across 27 different bars as well as fantastic entertainment, food and traditional pub games all under one roof in the heart of London.

The festival will be spread across five public sessions plus a Tuesday afternoon trade session that will feature the announcement of the winners of the **Champion Beer of Britain Awards**, all of which will be available at the festival.

The festival is made possible thanks to the contributions of over 1,000 volunteer staff, all members of **CAMRA**, who fulfil a variety of roles at the event. Unpaid volunteers work as bar staff, stewards, public relations officers, front of house staff, volunteer coordinators and as members of the festival's organising team. Volunteers also work for days before and after the festival, setting up the beers and stands and taking them down again at the end. Their continuing efforts make the festival successful every year and everyone attending the festival should raise a glass in their honour (in case they can't think of any other reason).

### *New this year*

A new and improved Souvenir Festival Guide will also be making its debut at **GBBF**, produced in the style of **CAMRA's** award-winning **BEER** magazine the guide will include the full festival beer list with tasting notes, special features on beer and brewing plus some attendee only vouchers. The guides will be available to **CAMRA** members' to purchase on the door and throughout the venue for just £1 (non-member price £2).

### *Tickets available now*

Tickets for the festival are now on sale with a variety of special offers and packages available via [www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets](http://www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets).

### **VIP Bundle Tickets**

Price: £17 (non-member price £20)

Everything you need to explore the festival in one package.

A VIP ticket bundle includes single day entry to the festival, a copy of the souvenir guide with complete beer list, a commemorative glass and £5 worth of beer tokens for use in the festival. So you can beat the queues and get to the bar quicker.

### **Season Tickets**

Price: £22 (non-member price £26)

Make your visit to the **Great British Beer Festival** a true voyage of discovery.

A season ticket lets you enter the festival at anytime over the five days it is open, including access to the trade session on Tuesday afternoon. Meaning if you want as much time as possible to find the half, pint or third that you are looking for you can explore again and again.

### **Single Day Tickets**

Price: £8 in advance/£10 on the door.

A ticket for one day's entry to the festival's public sessions.

The festival public sessions are:

Tuesday 11th August: 5pm - 10.30pm\*

Wednesday 12th, Thursday 13th, Friday 14th: 12noon - 10.30pm\*

Saturday 15th August: 11am - 6.30pm\*

\*Last admission times

### *Special Offer – Buy one day, get one half price*

Attend any one day of the festival with a single day ticket (or VIP ticket) and you can also get a second standard day ticket half price! That's just £4 in advance for **CAMRA** members. (Tickets for second day are non-transferrable and must either be purchased alongside the initial ticket or from the festivals ticket office on the first day of attendance at the festival).

You can get tickets now by visiting [www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets](http://www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets) or calling the **GBBF** ticket hotline on 0844 412 4640. (Please note booking fees apply for each transaction.)

### *Branch Social*

Why not join the members of the **AV&W branch** as we hold our annual social at the festival on the Thursday (late afternoon onwards).

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# LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

## Aylesbury Brewhouse

The little brewery in the back of the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury has been in overdrive. Since the last *Swan Supping*, they've brewed a new limited edition beer every week! There was universal praise for one of the most popular **ABC** brews since first starting in 2011; *Manhattan Project* flew out the brewery doors, selling out of all 30 casks in a matter of days. Those lucky enough to get their hands on a pint were treated to brewer Hayden Overton's excellent use of American Simcoe hops

Blink and you missed it; *The Last Unknown* used smoked beechwood and flaked maize with earthy American hops, giving a subtle smoked citrus flavour and a smooth finish at 4.2%. Traders trying to find a new life in the north of America and Canada (*The Last Unknown*) survived by smoking their meat and fish, and growing maize.



Next up is an entertainer, whether you're nobility or a common peasant. **Jester** is red, all English hopped, and 4.7%. Jester hops give an intense, punchy aroma of new world proportions, with flavour notes of grapefruit and tropical fruits.

*Rorschach* is a golden 4.4%, named after the test created by Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach. Watch out for an idiosyncratic pumpclip based on the test!



Room 101 is introduced in the climax of the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell. It is a torture chamber in the Ministry of Love, in which the Party attempts to subject a prisoner to his or her own worst nightmare, fear or phobia, with the object of breaking down their resistance. Make what you will of **ABC's 101** - 3.8%, golden ale brewed with Fuggles, Golding and Pacific Jade giving a soft maltiness with a hint of citrus.



## The Queen's Head Wing

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**\*Beautiful Beer Garden\***

**\*Good Beer Guide Entry for 8 years!\***

## Chiltern Brewery

Eye-catching fresh new bottle labels for the **Chiltern Brewery's** extensive and varied range of bottled beers have just been launched and are attracting much favourable comment. The label designs and beer names reflect the inspiration the Brewery derives from its beautiful rural surroundings in Terrick with chalky whites and rich greens and browns, and mirrors their local history and geography. You can see the new bottles in the brewery shop and at local stockists including Loaf and Larder Farm Shop at World's End and Budgen's Wendover.



George Jenkinson, landlord of the brewery's tap, the **Farmers' Bar** in the historic **King's Head** in Aylesbury, is delighted to have had the pub shortlisted recently in the Bucks Business First Leisure and Tourism Awards for 2015. Results are due in June.

Golden light *Cobblestones Summer Ale* 3.5% vol should still be available in June and bright, crisp and refreshing *Chiltern Gold* 3.9% vol in July and August. Both are perfectly suited to the lighter and (potentially) warmer summer weather.

## Malt the Brewery

April saw the arrival of *Malt Missenden Pale Ale*. This is a 3.6% ABV session ale, developed in response to feedback from trade customers. They liked *Malt IPA* and *Prestwoods Best*, however given these are 5% and 4.4% respectively they were looking for something at a lower ABV. It was selected following trial sessions of a number of similar strength ales by beer club members and is already proving extremely popular both on the brewery tasting bar and with landlords.

## Rebellion Brewery

**Rebellion's** pirate range for 2015 continues with *Swashbuckler*. 4.2% copper and hoppy in June. Following on is *Press Gang* for July, 4.2% with a tasting note of copper and refreshing. The August beer is *Jolly Roger*, 4.2% and is chestnut-coloured and hoppy and in September they'll be brewing *Sea Legs* which will be pale and citrus.



*Blonde* is now here for the summer. 4.3% light golden, with a citrusy hop character and *Red* will be available from September. 4.7%, a red ale, rich and malty with a balancing bittersweet hop character.

Rebellion are very close to starting the last phase of the on-site brewery developments. With their new fermentation area almost finished they can start work on upgrading their current brewery plant to a 50-barrel brewery. The upgrade will start in July resulting in a brewery that will be more versatile and efficient, able to cope with the peak times of the year.

A date for the diary: They are running their biannual charity weekend on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th of July. They raised over £51000 for Scannappeal in 2013 and they're hoping to beat it this year.

*Zebedee* won Gold at the *Reading Beer Festival* for beers 4.2%-4.9%.





## MORE LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

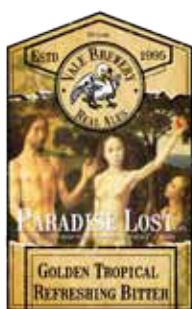
### Vale Brewery

It's official. *Gravitas* is the best beer within 30 miles of Reading, having justifiably won **LocAle Of The Festival** at this year's Reading Beer Festival!

Everyone at the brewery is chuffed to bits, but it's not the first time *Gravitas* has won acclaim; since first being brewed almost ten years ago, it has become **Vale Brewery's** most decorated ale. In 2008 it came third in the **CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain** at the **Great British Beer Festival**, then went to win joint Gold at the **Oxford Beer Festival** in 2010. Most recently, the bottled *Gravitas* won Silver at the **Society for Independent Breweries (SIBA)** Regional Final in 2014.

For the brewery, they know that success has come from the hard work of the brewers, David Renton and Hayden Overton, as well as using only the highest quality ingredients; they never use any artificial additives, colourings or flavourings in their real ales. Just the best, natural Maris Otter malted barley, hops from around the world, fresh water and yeast to produce clean, pure, award-winning beers.

The brewery continues to go from strength to strength, with 2015 being the busiest to date, brewing five times a week, as well as a few double brews of *Gravitas* to keep up with demand! Along with their eight core beers, the brewing schedule includes brewing more monthly specials; June sees *Paradise Lost*. Englishman John Milton's epic poem, to which the beer alludes, describes the fall of mankind and the war between heaven and hell. This golden beer gives a slight nod to the unexpected hero of the story, whilst offering a hoppy, tropical taste of paradise lost. The first pub to sell it was the **Old Swan**, Cheddington for their late May Bank Holiday Beer Festival, where it was widely acclaimed. It was also *Gravitas* that was the first **LocAle** to run out at the festival!



The film *Bullitt* is notable for its car chase scene through the streets of San Francisco, regarded as one of the most influential in movie history. **Vale Brewery's** *Bullitt*, a deep red rye ale brewed with the infamous American Citra hop at 4.4%, is an ode to Steve McQueen's driving, and the delivery vans will burn rubber to get it onto the pubs' pumps!

**Vale Brewery** have also reached the finals of the Buckinghamshire Food and Drink Awards 2015 in the Best Microbrewery category. The winners will be announced at Horwood House on 1st June!



The stately three-storey **George Inn** that dominates the Market Square of Winslow, is being given a new lease of life by **Vale Brewery**. **Vale** has bought the property freehold from **Marstons** and, after an extensive refurbishment, it reopened on 10th April 2015. Mark Williamson is at the helm and brings years of hospitality experience, with a particular passion for real ale. Mark's ale philosophy will be to offer three or four **Vale** ales, alongside **Aylesbury Brewhouse's** limited edition beers and guest ales from around the UK, much like the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury. The inn will be given a further significant make over, adding a new staircase to an upstairs restaurant and new kitchen, whilst maintaining the historic interior. The splendid 'comfy' seating that encircles the rear saloon will be retained. Additional toilets will ensure a viable and efficient operation can be provided for the comfort of customers.

### XT Brewery

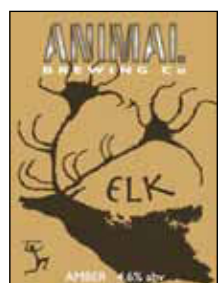
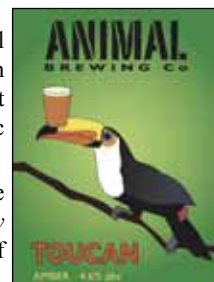
The planning permission for **XT's** brewery extension in Long Crendon has been granted. **XT** are looking to double the size of their brewery in the summer – providing more space for brewing, storing the beers and also a new tasting room. **XT** have been growing steadily year on year since their first pint in November 2011 and space has been getting more and more tight.



New beers from **XT** include: the award-winning: *Pi Mild* – brewed for 'Mild in May' this is a traditional dark mild brewed to 3.141%, **Animal Toucan** – a 4.6% Wakatu amber ale – made with the limited harvest Wakatu hops from New Zealand. A fruity and refreshing spring beer, **Animal Elk** – is a rather different beer – the recipe is based on a Vienna lager, using only Vienna and Rye malts and blended with Czech Saaz and German Mittlefrüh hops. A serious malty foundation matched to a 'Noble' hop finish.

Later in the spring the Magna Carta special will be launched – **XT-1215** commemorates William Marshal of Long Crendon, known as the 'Greatest Knight' and the leading figure behind this historic document.

The **XT** Craft Keg beers have been selling well – the **XPA American IPA**, **TEN Stout** and **Bastard Bunny double IPA** are available in keg form. The range of beers offered will be gradually increased over time.



The nano batch **Baby Animal** beers have been trialling some slightly unconventional brewing methods – the **Baby Stout** was cold brewed for three months (compare that to the more usual one week for a standard beer). There are also several sour beers in progress which should be ready for the summer. Some of the **Baby** brews were available at the last open day and for members of the Beer Club. The **Baby** beers are very limited editions of experimental recipes and more unusual brewing techniques.

The next brewery open day is Saturday 11th July



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The **Gravediggers' Arms** is probably the worst pub in England and its microbrewery produces brews even more foul than the tempers of its unhygienic regulars. Beers like *Toxic Sludge* and *Undescended Gonad* would give even the most fanatical beer ticker the hangover from hell.

Nestling in a very non-idyllic setting between the abattoir and toxic waste dump, The **Gravediggers'** is the ultimate pub you wish you hadn't stumbled into.

Follow the mind-boggling schemes dreamed up by landlord James and Mazz, his sometime mime-artist barmaid in their futile attempts to turn the **Diggers** into a viable pub but find each attempt is frustrated by the incorrigible locals, Old Pete, Old Joe and Old Moses.

*The Gravediggers' Arms* by **Charlie Mackle** collects the first thirty instalments of life in the **Gravediggers' Arms**, published from 2009-2014 in *Swan Supping*, the magazine of the *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch of CAMRA*, and offers a humorous take on the many current issues faced by the country's finest institution – the Great British Pub.

*The Gravediggers' Arms* by **Charlie Mackle** can be found as an ebook for Kindle on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) for less than the price of a *Wetherspoon's* pint. Profits will be contributed towards **CAMRA** funds.

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## Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

### June

**Friday 5th HAZLEMERE/TOTTERIDGE EARLY EVE SOCIAL**  
6.30pm, Beech Tree, 7.30pm, Dolphin.

**Monday 8th BRANCH MEETING**  
8.00pm Bricklayers' Arms, Aylesbury.

**Thursday 11th STOKE MANDEVILLE SOCIAL**  
8.00pm, Bell, 9.00pm, Bull.

**Saturday 20th 25TH BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP**  
Join in on the best day of the year! Please email the editor (editor@swansupping.org.uk) to book yourself in (spaces are limited!). Further details on page 3.

### July

**Thursday 2nd CHILTERN WALK SOCIAL**  
Start 6.30pm Whiteleaf Cross, Princes Risborough, then walk via Ridgeway (1.5 miles); 7.30pm Red Lion, Whiteleaf; walk to (0.5 miles) 8.30pm Plough, Cadsden; walk back to 300 bus route.

**Saturday 4th HADDENHAM SUMMER BEER FESTIVAL**  
Starts 12 Noon, Haddenham Middle School, HP17 8DS

**Saturday 11th REBELLION BREWERY CHARITY OPEN WEEKEND**  
Meet 12 noon onwards, Rebellion Brewery, Marlow

**Monday 20th BRANCH MEETING**  
8.00pm, Wheel, Naphill (venue tbc)

**Sunday 26th SUNDAY LUNCH SOCIAL**  
12 noon, Whip, Lacey Green.

### August

**Sunday 2nd LONDON PUB CRAWL**  
Meet 12 noon, Metropolitan Bar, Baker Street Station.

**Thursday 13th GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL**  
6.00pm Olympia, London. See page 13 for further details on the festival.

### October

**Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th BEER FESTIVAL**  
22nd Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival, Bucks County Council Sports & Social Club, Lower Road, Aylesbury

### Other Dates for the Diary

Saturday 20th – Monday 22nd June, Beer Festival, Hampden Arms, Great Hampden  
Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th July, Fag 'n Firkin Beer Festival, Derehams Inn, Loudwater  
Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th July, Beer Festival, Horse & Jockey, Tylers Green  
Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th July, Beer Festival, Le De Spencer Arms, Downley  
Saturday 11th July, Quanton Beer Festival  
Saturday 11th July, XT Brewery Fun Day  
Saturday 11th – Sunday 12th July, Bi-Annual Rebellion Charity Open Day  
Saturday 11th – Sunday 12th July, Beer Festival, Crown, Radnage  
Friday 24th – Sunday 26th July, Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival  
Tuesday 11th – Saturday 15th August, Great British Beer Festival, Olympia

Further details can be found on our website  
[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk), facebook and meetup.com

**CATCH UP DURING BRANCH SOCIALS:-  
PHONE 0792 215 8971**



Buckinghamshire County Council Trading Standards  
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t: 08454 040506 (Consumer Direct for advice)  
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## DON'T MISS OUT!

Keep up with the latest local pub news, be given beer festival information plus the latest social details, please join our e-mailing list by going to:-

**[www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin](http://www.swansupping.org.uk/joinin)**

## Swan Supping

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

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Edited by David Roe

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Copy deadline for next issue (due out 31st July) is 14th July 2015.

**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 £1.50 for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor at the address above (please make all cheques payable to **CAMRA & W**) 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 most issues of *Swan Supping* can be downloaded from our website ([www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)).

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

Acceptance of an advertisement in *Swan Supping* by a pub or its availability there does not guarantee CAMRA approval.

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\* This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debit.

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