

# Ullage

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The Magazine of West Berkshire CAMRA Spring 2023



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

[www.westberksamra.org.uk](http://www.westberksamra.org.uk)



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@WBCAMRA

## Five Giants at the Bell Inn, Aldworth

There were some frustrating delays in commissioning the Aldworth Brewing Company nano brewery, housed in an old wooden building behind the award winning Bell Inn, Aldworth.

Landlord Hugh Macaulay, father of founder brewer James Macaulay, joked that it was a race to see which would arrive first, a cask of beer from his son's brewery or the expected baby from James's partner Ali.

The race was won by baby Hugh, soon followed, by the first cask of Five Giants to be served at the Bell on 2 December 2022.



CAMRA National Pub of the Year 1990 & 2019



The five giants, illustrated on the pump clip, are the friends who assisted at the birth of ABC's original beer: Jack Skerritt; Hugo Fullerton; James Macaulay; Rob Drysdale and Griff Maggs. Local brewers Tom Broadbank (Delphic), Kevin Brady (Indigenous) and Will Twomey (Renegade) also helped with advice etc.



Hugh Macaulay & Pat Kyle

Pat Kyle was one of the pub's first customers to sample the long awaited brew, which he described as 'a very balanced easy drinking 4% beer'.



Rob Drysdale & James Macaulay



Photo: Ian Jack 18/2/2023

James plays rugby as well as brewing beer. On Saturdays he is often wearing the number three shirt for Newbury Blues 1st XV.

As supplies are limited, you may need to visit the historic interior of the pub a few times before savouring your first pint brewed by James, fresh from the source.

Consider also visiting the famous 'Aldworth Giants', nine stone effigies, inside nearby St Mary's Church.

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Renegade Brewery

Arkell's Brewery

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[www.westberksamra.org.uk/ullage-ratecard](http://www.westberksamra.org.uk/ullage-ratecard)

Pubs with Quiz nights include:

**Chaddleworth:** Ibx Inn

**Cold Ash:** Castle Inn; Spotted Dog

**East Ilsley:** Crown & Horns; Swan

**Great Shefford:** Great Shefford

**Hermitage:** Fox Inn

**Hungerford:** Plume

**Hungerford Newtown:** Tally Ho

**Newbury:** Dolphin; Globe;

King Charles Tavern; Lion;

Old London Apprentice;

Two Watermills; Woodpecker

**Upper Bucklebury:** Cottage Inn

**Wickham:** Five Bells

**Yattendon:** Renegade Brewery Taproom

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Sair Inn, Linthwaite



Find our national campaigns here



Find West Berkshire CAMRA

[camra.org.uk/join](http://camra.org.uk/join)

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## Letter from the Editors

Beer festivals are back after a winter lull and it's good to see the Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival return on 21-22 April.

Bracknell Ale & Cider Festival and the Reading Ale Trail also return but sadly, Reading Beer & Cider Festival has again been cancelled. See page 5 for more details.

On other pages, Emily, Assistant Editor, encourages young people to join CAMRA in her article on bridging the generation gap and Tim, Editor, reports on his trip to Leeds and the award winning Sair Inn, Linthwaite.

Please get in touch with us if you would like to contribute to *Ullage* with news, stories or photos or to assist Richard on design.

Cheers!

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Emily Pennington – editor3@westberkscamra.org

**CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is calling on the Prime Minister and Chancellor to put together a support package to save the UK's pubs after new figures showed that 21 pubs a week are closing for business or losing their licenses.**

Beer drinkers and pub goers are being asked to contact their MP to ask them to support action to save pubs in the Government's Spring Budget set for 15 March 2023.

Commenting on pub closure figures for the last half of 2022, CAMRA Chairman Nik Antona said: "These figures should be an urgent wake-up call for the Government. Without a support package in the Spring Budget, we risk losing more pubs which are at the heart of community life and play such a crucial role in bringing people together and tackling loneliness and social isolation.

"With the cost of doing business rocketing, energy costs sky-high and customers tightening their belts it is little wonder that hundreds of pubs across the country are closing for business or are standing empty. We know that the licensed trade can thrive and drive growth in the economy, but only if the Government acts quickly.

"That's why CAMRA is calling on all pub goers to join our campaign for urgent help to save our pubs which includes giving more help with energy bills from April, making the business rates system fairer for pubs and cutting tax on draught beer and cider by 20% to give our locals a fighting chance to compete with the likes of supermarket alcohol."

## Swift Halves



■ The recipe for Return of the King, the first 100% organic beer from **Windsor & Eton Brewery**, uses barley from the local Royal Farm and English hops. Martin Jessup was commissioned to paint King Charles III surrounded by birds, butterflies and bees. The 4.2% ABV Coronation Ale will be available in cask, bottles and cans featuring the artwork.

■ The Christmas raffle, quiz and bingo at the **Cow & Cask** raised £350 for Asthma + Lung UK, in memory of Andy Tillen.



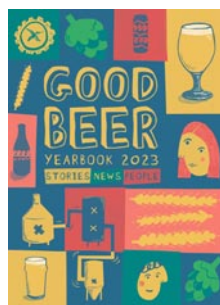
Ian Batho has a selection of pump clips, from over 780 beers served at the Newbury micropub since opening in November 2014. These are mainly from local breweries able to deliver direct including

Indigenous, Ramsbury, Loddon, Loose Cannon and Vale. A charity donation is suggested for visitors able to recycle selected pump clips as colourful décor or coasters.

See page 8 advertisement for hours etc.

■ Best wishes to Gary Bush, whose 17 December 2022 post on the Bucklebury pub's Facebook page reads "Today marks 12 years of myself and family running the **Cottage Inn**. ... I have just signed another 5 years at the Cottage."

■ Emma Inch is the contributing editor of CAMRA's first annual **Good Beer Year Book**. The fully illustrated 234 page paperback includes features by Matt Curtis on Mild's rising trend and Andy Parker on homebrew innovation. <https://shop1.camra.org.uk>



■ The [www.newburypubwalks.org.uk](http://www.newburypubwalks.org.uk) website has details of over 30 circular walks from pubs near Newbury including linear walks from pubs on the Kennet and Avon canal.



■ Local CAMRA members meet monthly on a weekday lunchtime at a different pub, well served by public transport. In January, the **Cow & Cask** opened specially for the occasion. See Diary Dates on page 12 for the next lunchtime socials, where prospective members are always welcome.

■ About 30 CAMRA members from Central Southern branches met up in London on Saturday 11 February 2023 for the first regional event in London since the January 2020 Waterloo to London Bridge trail.

This year, Paul and Jennie Rayner enjoyed the cask ales at the Euston Tap and food and beer at the nearby Exmouth Arms. Their favourite trail pub was the Queen's Head, North London CAMRA Pub of the Year 2022, near King's Cross.



Photo: Tony Girling



Photo: Jennie Rayner

Later, after Simon Grist's tip, they left the trail with him to visit the nearby Scottish Stores and found 'superb cask ales'. Another highlight of their day was to meet up with Alan and Michele Molloy from

Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead branch.



■ **Loddon Brewery** beers freshly brewed for the spring months are: March - Wolf Quad, session IPA with a smooth oat malt base using a new Slovenian hop; April - Gorgeous George, best bitter traditionally hopped with Fuggles and Goldings; May - Al Fresco Pale, hopped with Mosaic and using a base of Lager, Maris Otter and Oat malts for a citrus profile with a smooth moderate bitterness.

Dragonfly, a 5.2% ABV pale ale, is often available at Wetherspoon pubs including the Hatchet Inn, Newbury.

■ The **White Hart**, Hamstead Marshall, has been 'hibernating for the winter'. In January, the historic pub with accommodation was listed by Colliers for sale at £895,000 or for lease.

■ The two cask ales at the **Old London Apprentice** are Fuller's London Pride and either Timothy Taylor Boltmaker or Harvey's Sussex Best. There is Bingo every Thursday night with Eyes Down at 8pm.

A beer festival with live music, in support of Nomads Musical Theatre, is planned for 1-2 July. The OLA advertisement is on page 7.





■ The **Renegade Brewery** website has Shop, Visit and About Us tabs. [www.renegadebrewery.co.uk](http://www.renegadebrewery.co.uk) Shop for brewery fresh beers including mixed cases of bottled ales and the new 'Runaway beers'. New merchandise includes shirts, caps, glasses and a refillable metal growler.



Visits to the brewery at Yattendon can be booked for: brewery tours; beer tastings; meals at the Taproom & Kitchen; quiz nights, on the last Wednesday of each month; 'Summer Sessions' of live music in the beer garden, on Friday nights from 12 April and Undercover Comedy, monthly, starting Tuesday 9 May. Save the date for Forest Fest on Saturday 1 July.

'Dave', the Renegade Bedford van / mobile bar, will be supplied with coffee and breakfast rolls for the West Berkshire Cars & Coffee events at the brewery, on the first Sunday of each month from 9am to 12 noon.



Photos: Renegade Brewery

The latest Renegade beer is Green Man, a Citra cask session pale.

Good Old Blues is the name for the keg best bitter supplied to Newbury RFC.

Renegade Brewery advertisement is on page 7.



■ Announced in January, the CAMRA National Pub of the Year 2022 is the **Tamworth Tap**. Opened five years ago, the brewpub housed in former shop premises, offers views of Tamworth's Norman castle from its courtyard beer terrace.

The **Hop Inn**, Hornchurch, is the CAMRA National Cider & Perry Pub of the Year 2022. The micropub, which opened in 2019, was also awarded CAMRA Greater London Pub of the Year in 2021 and 2022. It's near Emerson Park, the only intermediate station, on the Romford to Upminster Overground line.

**Marden Village Club**, a short walk from Marden station on the Tonbridge to Ashford (Kent) line, is the CAMRA Club of the Year.

■ The Mild beer style, described on page 7, is promoted by CAMRA in May. Rudgate Ruby Mild, a former Champion Beer of Britain, is a popular guest ale at the Lion, Newbury.

Brewed in Chaddleworth, Baldrick, an Indigenous Brewery mild, is named after the diagonal ribbons worn by Morris dancers, like the Garston Galloper on the label.



■ Chris Underwood is the new manager at the **Tally Ho**, Hungerford Newtown. The community owned pub is less than a mile south of the M4 Junction 19. [www.thetallyhohungerford.co.uk](http://www.thetallyhohungerford.co.uk)

■ The **Blue Ball** hosts a Kintbury Beer & Music Festival on Saturday 17 June.

■ Jonny Dillon is General Manager of the riverside **Great Shefford**. The four changing cask ales are often from nearby Indigenous and Ramsbury breweries. Director Georgiana Caras is now also in charge of the kitchen. <https://thegreatshefford.com>



■ Best wishes to Imogen and Georgia who moved from the **King Charles Tavern**, Newbury, to the Village Inn, Shaw, West Swindon, a Blackrose pub.

Elliot Chipperfield moved from the Great Shefford to become General Manager at its sister pub on 21 February.



See back page for the KC advertisement.

■ Congratulations to Kealey Hitchings, General Manager of Abingdon's **Broad Face**, on the Oxford CAMRA Town & Village Pub of the Year 2023 award.

Kealey previously managed the King Charles Tavern until 2020. <https://broadfaceabingdon.co.uk>

■ The changing beer range at the **Catherine Wheel** usually includes a stout, porter or mild. The Easter beer festival at this Newbury pub, from Thursday 6 – Monday 10 April, adds an extra eight casks in the courtyard, BBQ and live music.

Look out for events to mark the King's coronation in May and the pub's ninth birthday, since Warwick Heskins took over, in early June.

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2018

WB CAMRA Cider pub of the year  
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[thecatherinewheel.com](http://thecatherinewheel.com)
01635 569897

- **Bond Brews** Thirst Slayer will be back for St George's Day, on 23 April. The Best Bitter is brewed using five types of malted barley and wheat and five hop varieties for bitterness and a fruity aroma.

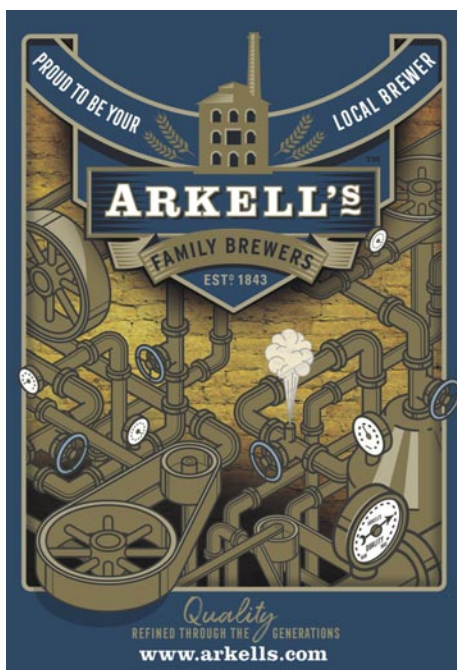
Monthly dates are set for the Saturday outdoor Tap Yard events at the brewery, located at Gardeners Green Farm, between Crowthorne and Wokingham: 22 April; 13 May; 17 June (8th anniversary beer festival). Opening at noon with up to six ales on draught, local cider and food until 6pm (8pm June). [www.bondbrews.co.uk](http://www.bondbrews.co.uk)

- Five Giants, the first **Aldworth Brewing Co** beer for the Bell Inn was brewed with East Kent Goldings and Challenger as the bittering hop. Elleorde, the name recorded for Aldworth in the Domesday book, may lend its name to the second ABC beer, an English Pale Ale brewed with Harlequin and Jester hops.

- In 2023, **Arkell's Brewery** celebrates a very special anniversary; 180 years of continual brewing at the original site founded by John Arkell in 1843. The Victorian tower steam brewery is situated in Kingsdown, Swindon. Activities to mark the 180th anniversary include an ale trail competition around Arkell's pubs, weekly brewery tours for the public starting in February, and a Big Birthday Bash in September with live music and lots of beers to sample.

The start of the year was marked by a new celebratory brew – 'Tradition' 3.4% ABV.

Alex Arkell, Head Brewer and sixth-generation of the Arkell family said: 'We put together a recipe blending some old and new ideas, the beer is an easy drinking deep red session beer with a warming fruit biscuity base, this comes from using Rye which was often used in our old brew books. We've then rounded this off with a hop aroma of mango and peach ... a perfect blend of old and new!'



- The January **Berkshire Beer Box** included beers from eight Berkshire breweries including: Wild Weather - Peeler (Banana Milkshake IPA); Renegade - Good Old Boy (Best Bitter); Two Flints – Santiago (Hazy Pale Ale) and Indigenous - Moonstruck (Porter).

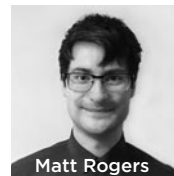
Subscribe via [www.berkshirebeerbox.co.uk](http://www.berkshirebeerbox.co.uk)

- **Two Flints Brewery** was founded by Alex Kerr in 2022. The brewery and taproom are located in railway arches approaching Windsor & Eton Central station.

The winter issue of *CAMRAngle*, the Slough Windsor & Maidenhead Branch magazine, mentions that Two Flints Brewery 'embraces hop forward pale ales and IPAs as well as being inspired by Bavarian lager traditions and the fermentation processes of Belgian beer'.

Matt Rogers, former *CAMRAngle* editor, won the British Guild of Beer Writers 2022 silver award for Best Citizen Beer Communicator.

Allan Willoughby is the temporary new editor.



- The **Foinavon**, Compton, is 'closed until further notice'. The Swan and the Crown & Horns in East Ilsley are only two miles away.

- After the award of CAMRA Pub of the Year 2018 to the **Wonston Arms**, near Sutton Scotney, another North Hampshire pub has won a national award.

The villagers' efforts to acquire and refurbish the **Plough Inn**, Longparish, only five miles away, led to the CAMRA Pub Saving Award 2022.



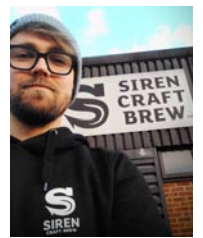
The Plough, which dates to 1721, closed in December 2015. The villagers used grants, donations and a community share scheme to purchase the pub, in conjunction with the Parish Council, in February 2021. After months of refurbishment work, it reopened as a pub and community hub in September 2021.

- **South Oxfordshire Brewery**, led by MD James Tomlinson, has acquired **White Horse Brewery**, based in Stanford in the Vale, the brewer of Village Idiot and Wayland Smithy. The deal sees SOX, based in a former hangar at the old Chiltern Airfield, Ipsden, acquire the entire interest in the brewery from White Horse's shareholders that include Titanic Brewery.



The agreement will see Titanic retain the Royal Blenheim, Oxford CAMRA's City Pub of the Year 2023, which serves Titanic, White Horse and local guest beers. <https://www.soxbrewery.co.uk>

- After leaving his Head Brewer job at Wild Weather Brewery in December, Jamie 'JD' Duffield joined the team at **Siren Craft Brew**, Hogwood industrial estate, Finchampstead, 12 miles to the east, on 30 January.



- **Elusive Brewing** are also based on this Finchampstead estate. Paul Newton talked with



Andy Parker the brewery's founder and Head Brewer about Janet's Brown, a 6% ABV American Brown brewed in collaboration with Jamil Zainasheff who is revered by homebrewers. This conversation forms

episode 62 of the Beer Prime podcast. <https://www.beerprime.co.uk>



- For **Reading Amateur Brewers** first national competition of 2023, entries are invited for both sour and session

strength beers until 21 April. The brewers of the two winning beers will be hosted by Phantom Brewing Co for a brewday in Reading.

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



- Stephen Folland, a former Great Shefford resident, brewed **Doggy in the Woods**, the 16.1% ABV winner of CAMRA's first Homebrew Competition, as featured on the front page of Ullage (Autumn 2022).



A 10.2% ABV version of his beer, with ingredients including chocolate, coffee and honey, was later brewed on a commercial scale at Worthing's Brewhouse & Kitchen, with casks supplied to CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival Winter at Burton upon Trent in February.

- Save the date for the **Great British Beer Festival** at Olympia, London: 1-5 August 2023.

- Last held in March 2020, White Horse CAMRA is not proceeding with **Wantage Beer and Cider Festival** in 2023.





## LIVE MUSIC



Follow @SoundNewbury on Twitter & Facebook for weekly updates of pub gigs with free entry

**ACE Space**, St. Nicholas Road, Newbury  
www.acespace.org.uk  
Unplugged Open Mic on 1st Friday of month (except August)



**Arlington Arts**, Mary Hare School, Snelsmore  
www.arlington-arts.com



**The Angel**, Woolhampton  
www.jazzangel.co.uk



### NEWBURY area

**Bacon Arms** Catherine Wheel  
**The Club** Globe  
**Hartley Arms** King Charles Tavern  
**Lion** Lock Stock & Barrel  
**The Monument** FB @TheMonumentRocks

### Newbury Pub & The Terrace

Open Mic night on Thursdays

**Nags Head** Old London Apprentice  
**Plough on the Green** Starting Gate  
**Two Watermills** Woodpecker

### THATCHAM area

**Kings Head** Mill  
**Old Chequers** Swan  
**White Hart**  
**Cold Ash:** Castle Inn Spotted Dog

### HUNGERFORD area

**Borough Arms** Plume  
**Railway Tavern**  
**Tally Ho**, Hungerford Newtown

### OTHER areas

**Blue Ball**, Kintbury  
**Crown & Horns**, East Ilsley  
**Fox Inn**, Hermitage  
**Great Shefford**, Great Shefford  
**Ibex Inn**, Chaddleworth  
**Old Boot Inn**, Stanford Dingley  
**Renegade Taproom**, Yattendon  
**Six Bells**, Beenham  
**Swan**, East Ilsley

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Things are a little different right now. Help CAMRA keep WhatPub up to date by using the feedback form to let us know about any changes at the pub:  
[www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com)

## Beer Festival Diary

Cancelled in 2020, **Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival** is back in the Grandstand enclosure on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 April 2023. Act quickly to benefit from the CAMRA discount offer (details above) before 10 April.

**Reading Ale Trail** launches at 12.30pm on 4 March at the Nag's Head, Reading, which celebrated its 16th birthday in February. Ale Trail booklets will also be on sale at the Alehouse and the Retreat in Reading and at the Falcon, Theale.  
<https://reading.camra.org.uk/aletrail>

The **Hatchet Inn**, Newbury, hosts a Wetherspoon Real-Ale Festival from Wednesday 22 March to Sunday 2 April.

A pint can be supplied as three one third pint glasses of different beers during the festival.

Last held in 2019, a **Reading CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival** Facebook post mentions '... infrastructure and the health of key team members have been critical factors ... (affecting) ... the difficult decision to cancel RBF for 2023. We are striving to bring RBF back in 2024 ... we'll be recruiting additional volunteers to join the core organising team.'

The 45th **Farnham Beerex**, run by Farnham Lions Club and Surrey Hants Borders CAMRA for charity, returns on 20-23 April with advance booking essential. [www.farnhambeerex.org.uk](http://www.farnhambeerex.org.uk)

The **Fox & Hounds**, Donnington, May Fest starts at 1pm on Sunday 28 May featuring a hog roast and outside bar with guest ales and ciders.

The Side Project headline May Fest's live music programme.  
[www.foxandhoundsnewbury.co.uk](http://www.foxandhoundsnewbury.co.uk)

# Bridging the generation gap Emily Pennington

With the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) founded over 50 years ago, its membership has grown to around 155,000, but it struggles to attract the Millennial and Gen Z generations.

Before CAMRA was founded in 1971 and in its early years, pubs tended to cater towards certain clienteles - you had pubs where the 'tribes' of 'rockers', 'punks' etc would meet and it would be the social scene. Nowadays, with the increase in social media and the ability to call, text, message or FaceTime your friends daily and essentially be in contact with them 24/7, there is less of a need to meet in a designated place to socialise. Back in the day, if you wanted to speak to your friends you had to commit in advance to meet them, and often it was pre-arranged from the previous time you saw each other. The new forms of communication mean you can not only make arrangements last minute but also cancel last minute.

Furthermore, coronavirus lockdowns introduced a new way for people to socialise, friends would have an online Zoom pub quiz or have a catch up from the comfort of their own homes. The need to leave the house and spend money to spend time with and see friends has reduced.

Within West Berkshire, Millennials and Gen Z can struggle to find places to socialise, only

a few pubs have their favourite games or a comfortable environment to watch sports. Those that do, can often become full and friends are left to find somewhere else to complete these activities. In some instances, people would not bother going out on days where there might be a big game on, as they will not be able to get in or it is just 'not worth it', when they can watch a game at home and message each other live, as it is happening.

Although CAMRA started as a campaign for real ale, it now also promotes cider and perry along with traditional pubs and clubs. West Berkshire's CAMRA branch currently has over 300 members, who benefit from a welcome discount at many Newbury pubs and several others in the area, a formal Branch meeting every two months and a social on the intermediate months. These socials could include an Ale Trail, a tutored beer tasting, a brewery trip, a festival visit or simply an evening in a pub. Members can also suggest ideas for the socials allowing everyone to get involved.

All of these events and more are a great way for the younger generations to get involved and meet a variety of people of all ages. CAMRA offers a concession membership for those aged 18-25 from just £20 per year.

As a 26 year old woman, I felt that I certainly would not belong in CAMRA, I am not



particularly an ale drinker, tending to stick to cider or wine, but being part of this has made me more interested in ales, not necessarily drinking them but giving things a try.

In my short time being a member, everyone I have met so far has been so welcoming and lovely that I have felt like a member from the moment I joined. I would highly recommend joining CAMRA to anyone my age as it has given me an opportunity to meet new people and go to events that I usually wouldn't.

## Real ale in Leeds

Based in Farnham, Mark Geeson is a seasoned CAMRA beer festival volunteer and canal enthusiast.

Mark invited a loyal group of CAMRA friends, including Tony Lea, 'tankard' David Bunyan and *Ullage* editor Tim Thomas to join him on a five day visit to West Yorkshire staying in Leeds, where Mark once worked.

Having previously enjoyed two of Mark's previous trips, based in Liverpool and in Stourbridge for the Black Country (featured in *Ullage* Spring 2019 & Spring 2020), Tim accepted his invitation for 16 January 2023 and took photos and notes for related *Beer Europe* blog posts.

Visits on these cold days were almost always enhanced by coal or log fires burning in the pubs and nearby seats would be occupied first.

This group of Southerners soon adjusted to the almost universal local use of the swan neck and sparkler to give a creamy head when pints are poured using a handpump.

The sensible decision to visit pubs, station buffet bars and refreshment rooms between Dewsbury and Stalybridge on a weekday avoided other large groups on the Transpennine Real Ale Trail. The Trail is especially popular at weekends since Oz Clarke and James May publicised its joys in 'Drink to Britain' on TV in 2009.

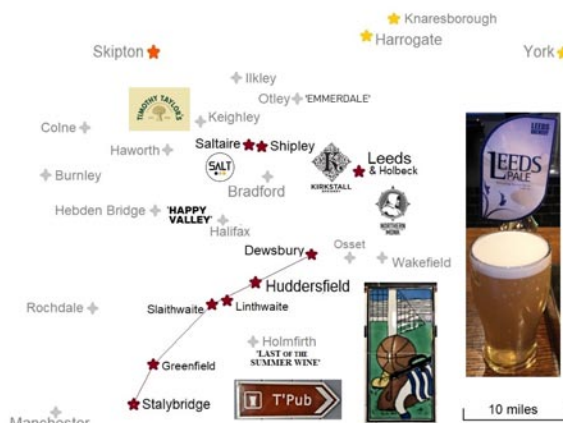
The 'map' includes rough locations of three other popular TV series as well as highlighting towns visited by some or all of the group. Visits to the impressive brewery taprooms of SALT (Saltaire), Kirkstall (Leeds) and Northern Monk (Holbeck) are also marked. Tim visited the Sair Inn, Linthwaite, CAMRA National Pub of the



Mark Geeson - Adelphi, Leeds

Year 1997, to drink beers from Linfit Brewery brewed before its 'hopefully temporary' closure in December 2022. The Sair Inn is included in CAMRA's national inventory of historic pub interiors, along with the Sportsman, Huddersfield ('football' tile illustrated) and three Leeds pubs also visited by the group: Adelphi; Grove Inn and Whitelock's Ale House.

As well as pub and beer details for the towns marked



with dark red stars, the four blog posts include further details of museums and art galleries visited together with some related photos of landscapes and landmarks.

<https://beereurope.blogspot.com/2023/01/leeds-holbeck.html>

<https://beereurope.blogspot.com/2023/01/transpennine-real-ale-trail.html>

<https://beereurope.blogspot.com/2023/01/saltaire-shipley.html>

<https://beereurope.blogspot.com/2023/01/huddersfield-linthwaite.html>





# Beer style guide: Mild by Jeff Evans

It's hard to believe today but mild was the most popular beer style in Britain until the 1950s. It was a drink closely associated with heavy industries - the beer that miners, steelworkers, foundry men and farmers reached for in search of both refreshment and nourishment at the end of a sweaty day's toil. The decline in such industries has been mirrored in the decline of mild.

Being 'mild' in alcohol, the beer offered tired workers the welcome opportunity of sinking a few pints without feeling too much the worse for wear, although this is not actually where the name comes from. Neither does it come from the fact that the beer is traditionally not as highly hopped as other beers, so it is milder in bitterness, although both these attributes do sum up what mild is mostly about. Instead, historically, mild was simply a beer that was fresh, as opposed to one that had been allowed to age and develop a more demanding, sour flavour. It had a mild taste. This, of course, doesn't explain how the beer is made today, or the ingredients that shape its character.



A typical recipe for mild is based on a generous use of malt - both pale malt to provide most of the brewing sugars and darker malt to add roasted grain character and colour. Hops provide a gentle balance of bitterness rather than taking over. But these are not rules, just generalities. Some milds are, perversely, fairly bitter, and some milds are not even dark. There's a type of ale, with the traditional amber hue of a bitter, but with only gentle hopping, that falls into the category known as 'light mild', and then there are also milds that are not so easy on the alcohol. Whereas most milds contain about 3 - 3.5% alcohol, some are quite strong, heading up towards 6% and more.

**Editor's notes:** Locally brewed milds include: Butts Wild Mild; Hermitage Brewery Lodestone Mild; Indigenous Brewery Baldrick; INNformal Alice INN Wonderland Ruby Mild and Renegade Maggs' Mild.

Pubs where a mild is usually served all year round include: the Bell Inn, Aldworth and the Nag's Head, Reading.

## LocAle

Many LocAle pubs in our branch area serve beer brewed within 25 miles. Pubs shown in bold serve beer brewed onsite or within one mile.  
pubsofficer@westberkscamra.org.uk  
See also the LocAle Pubs page on [www.westberkscamra.org.uk/locale](http://www.westberkscamra.org.uk/locale)

### LocAle Pubs - EAST of A34

<b>The Bell Inn</b>	Aldworth
The Bladebone Inn	Chapel Row
The Bull Inn	Stanford Dingley
The Castle Inn	Cold Ash
The Catherine Wheel	Newbury
The Coopers Arms	Newbury
The Cow & Cask	Newbury
The Cottage Inn	Upper Bucklebury
The Fox & Hounds	Donnington
The Fox Inn	Hermitage
The Hare & Hounds	Speen
The Hartley Arms	Donnington
The Hatchet Inn	Newbury
The Old Boot Inn	Stanford Dingley
The Pot Kiln	Frilsham
<b>Renegade Brewery Taproom</b>	Yattendon
The Rowbarge	Woolhampton
The Royal Oak	Yattendon
The Six Bells	Beenham
<b>The Wheatsheaf Inn</b>	Thatcham
The White Hart	Thatcham
The Woodpecker	Wash Water

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## Green Shed Cider



Dave Bailey (kneeling) at Newbury Real Ale Festival

Home crafted in West Berkshire's own Newbury, Green Shed Cider is a local cider company. Cider maker Dave Bailey uses locally grown apples to create delicious ciders, bottled straight from the barrel. These include still dry ciders, named after apple varieties, with strengths ranging from 4.7% ABV of the Vilberie to 7.3% ABV of the Prince William.



Currently, Dave's most popular ciders are the Medium Blend (5% ABV) and the new Berkshire Pyder (5.2% ABV). To create this he blends together local cider with Perry, representing the fantastic apple and pear trees in Berkshire's orchards, adding 20% of Perry to the cider to create the unique 'Pyder' blend. The pears he

uses are Yellow Huffcap perry pear, grown on massive trees. He shakes them down and picks the perfect pears for making Perry. There is a limit on how much Perry he can make as it is less stable than cider while fermenting and maturing.

Green Shed Cider currently has six new, single variety, bottle conditioned ciders that are bottled nearby at Tutts Clump Cider. These ciders are bottled into clear bottles to allow people to see their colour. Bottling cider into clear bottles is not common as some believe that UV light penetrates the clear glass and can affect the taste. Dave only bottles between 40 and 50 litres at the time and doesn't believe the clear bottles will affect the cider and that it is important for people to see its colour.

Some of the single variety ciders are a bit stronger than the regular ciders that Dave



makes. He sees these as being 'sipping ciders', where you could share a bottle with a friend.

If you are interested in trying one of the Green Shed ciders, you can get advice and pick up a bottle from Dave himself at Newbury Farmers Market (first Sunday of the month) or Reading Farmers Market (first Saturday of the month). By selling at markets, Dave feels it allows him to talk to people who are interested in buying his ciders and offer samples and gain appreciation of peoples palates.

Green Shed ciders are also available at local pubs and taprooms including: The Catherine Wheel, Newbury; The Cow & Cask, Newbury; A Hoppy Place, Maidenhead & Windsor; Renegade Brewery Taproom & Shop, Yattendon; Inn at Home, Newbury; Loddon Brewery Taproom & Shop, Dunsden Green and Scrattings Craft Cider Shop - online specialists.

Alternatively, you can purchase the ciders online at <https://www.greenshedcider.co.uk> where there are currently 11 different ciders, a cookbook and a t-shirt available.

Dave can be contacted via text on 07496 826431 or by email: [dave@greenshedcider.co.uk](mailto:dave@greenshedcider.co.uk)

Emily Pennington

## A green touch of glass

Did you know that recycling is so efficient that it can take up to 50 times less energy to make new glass from old bottles than to make it from sand? The recycling of beer bottles is one of the most effective processes available today. The process consists of crushing the bottles into small pieces (cullets), washing, melting and then moulding into new ones. This process is highly efficient because it only takes two kilos of recycled glass to make one of new glass.

### How are beer bottles made?

The glass in beer bottles is made of silica sand and soda ash (sodium carbonate). When they are mixed and melted at high temperatures, it forms a completely transparent glass that's durable enough to withstand the transportation and storage of beer. Colour can then be added for aesthetic purposes by adding various metal oxides. Only three types of glass can be successfully recycled: clear, brown (iron oxide) and green (copper-oxide). Most other types are not recycled due to their impurities or toxicity levels.

### Do you need to separate the different coloured bottles?

Luckily, most counties no longer require you to separate your bottles by colour. Instead, the recycling facilities will now do this for you using advanced detection and sorting systems on a mass scale. The reason for separating the colour is to keep the structural integrity of the recycled beer bottles.

### Why are beer bottles almost always brown or green?

It's all to do with the sun. Clear bottles do absolutely fine when it comes to storing beer in the winter. However, as soon as summer comes around, preservation problems crop up. That's because the sun's UV rays can easily penetrate transparent glass, turning the beer slightly sour. In fact, the lingering smell it causes is so off-putting that clear glass bottles are now almost never used for ales, lagers, and ciders. The darker

green glass was used as an alternative to block the UV rays and preserve the taste and smell during the summer months. However, post WWII, there was a world-wide shortage of copper-oxide and so brown was then used instead. Today, we see a mix of both.

### What about labels?

Similarly to colour sorting, the responsibility used to fall on the consumer or business to scrape off their labels and rinse out the contents. But now, as long as you ensure your bin only includes unbroken bottles then the recycling facilities will do the rest. Although, you should still remove the bottle caps and make sure these don't end up in the glass bins. The reason broken bottles should be kept separate from the undamaged bottles is because it makes the separation process a lot trickier as fragments of different coloured glass can end up in the wrong place.

Glass is one of the best materials when it comes to recycling and it's perfect for storing beer. That's why it's so important that we try to keep bottles out of landfill and instead use dedicated glass bins for our bottles.

Alfie Godfrey

- Marketing manager at Waste Managed.

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This is an edited version of an article published online by CAMRA in *What's Brewing* (17/12/2022) <https://wb.camra.org.uk>



## Real Cider & Perry

For the first time since 2020, the orchard wassail tradition was celebrated at Tutts Clump Cider on Saturday 7 January led by Kennet Morris Men.

To encourage a good crop, cider was poured on the roots and toast was hung from the branches of the apple trees.

Berkshire South-East CAMRA's Mike Lee then presented Tim Wale with a certificate for Tutts Clump Royal Berkshire, judged Cider of the Festival 2022 at Ascot.

Later in January, the Tutts Clump Cider belt press was dismantled, deep cleaned and serviced at the end of the pressing season which usually starts in early September.

Traditional Farmhouse and Berkshire Diamond are among the Tutts Clump ciders supplied to the Bell Inn, Aldworth.



On the evening of Friday 3 February, Icknield Way Morris Men led the wassail around the old apple tree in the Bell Inn's garden. Adding to the noise and spectacle, seven 'musketeers' fired a volley of shots from their black powder muzzle loaders. The outdoor entertainment ended with rockets lighting up the night sky.



Photos: Tim Wale



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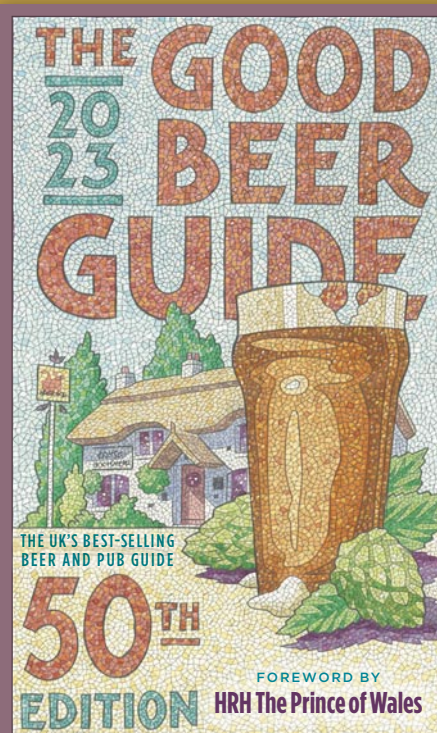
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Find the most comprehensive list of real cider and perry in the UK at [camra.org.uk/cider](http://camra.org.uk/cider)

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## Pub Companies Part 4 How they make money

**It goes without saying that pub companies are businesses whose main objective is to make money. There is no reason, though, why companies cannot both be profitable and own pubs that offer customers great pub experiences, either directly or via their tenants/lessees.**

Pubs are not just businesses; they are an integral part of our social network so community responsibilities are attached to their ownership (and hence the protections afforded to pubs by the planning system). Some companies have been accused of putting short-term profit ahead of long-term commitment to their pub estates - and we'll return to this in a later article.

### Managed Pubs

We saw in the previous article that pub companies are increasing the number of pubs they manage, either directly or through retail agreements. The advantage for them is control over every aspect of the pub operation - stock, pricing, staffing, opening hours, décor and so on. The bigger companies can use their buying power to command significant discounts from suppliers, including brewers. They can standardise elements of the customer offer, like menus, which also bring economies of scale. Efficient practices can be identified and then applied across every outlet.

The danger, of course, is that pubs become identikit and certainly some branded operations are pretty much the same wherever in the country you find them with choice and character being sacrificed to conformity. Other companies, though, take great care to ensure the individuality of their pubs, notably by the way they are designed and fitted out - so a balance can be achieved. It must also be said that many customers value consistency and like to know in advance what they can expect to get.

### Tenanted/Leased Pubs

Companies derive income from their tenants/lessees in two main ways - 'dry' rent and 'wet' rent.

The dry rent is what you pay to occupy the building. Typically, there will be an initial deposit then a monthly rent, agreed for a three to five year term. Pub companies claim that their rent levels will generally be lower than the market rent for an equivalent property and so represent a relatively low-cost entry to a business that also provides a roof over your head. In fact, surveys by the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers show that rent as a proportion of turnover (the key figure) is on average higher for tied pubs than free-of-tie leased pubs.

The wet rent is what you pay the company for beer and other supplies. As a tenant, you'll normally be 'tied' to the company and obliged to buy the products they offer at the prices they ask. With beer, for instance, that price will usually be 50%-100% higher than the free trade price. The company, because of its bulk buying powers, will pay less than that price anyway so the profit for them from this income source is considerable.

Some companies offer free-of-tie tenancies and tenants can also try to use the Pubs Code to

obtain freedom from the tie - but in both cases, the quid pro quo will often be a significant increase in the dry rent.

### Pub Disposals

Pubs often occupy attractive, well-located buildings. In many cases, particularly in villages, they are worth hugely more as houses than as pubs. Others are on large plots of land which make them attractive to developers. A little while ago, over a hundred pubs a year were being lost in conversions to convenience stores, mainly in suburban areas. The temptation for pub companies, therefore, has been to capitalise on their assets and flog off pubs to make a quick profit.

Fortunately, and thanks to campaigning by CAMRA and others, it's now more difficult to do this, in England at least (the planning laws are less helpful in the rest of the UK). Before 2017, planning permission wasn't needed to demolish a pub or convert it to a restaurant, a shop or most kinds of office. A change in the law means that

consent is now required for any change of use or demolition. Pub losses have fallen greatly since then despite all the recent difficulties for the trade. Where a pub is clearly valued by the local community, CAMRA will always support objections to unwanted planning applications. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that some pubs find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time, because the previous clientele is no longer there or because of demographic changes in the area, and change of use in these circumstances would be reasonable and even welcome.

Running pubs can (and should) be a profitable business but, as campaigners, we want all pub companies to appreciate that they are custodians of a much-loved British institution and to behave accordingly.

This is the fourth article produced by the CAMRA Pub and Club Campaigns Committee. See *Ullage* Autumn 2021, Spring 2022 and Winter 2022 for parts 1-3.

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### Bristol has a huge number of pubs and a decent number of breweries.

We haven't been to every pub in Bristol, although we're not far off having been to 281. First published on 7 June 2018, we updated our **guide on where to drink** on 8 January 2023. There are some **decent crawls** with varied and interesting pubs:

- **St Michael's Hill** – Zero Degrees, The Open Arms, The Robin Hood, The White Bear (sometimes), Beerd, The Highbury Vaults.
- **Gloucester Road** – too many to list but start at The Inn on the Green and keep going until you're done, or in town.
- **Kingsdown** – The Hare on the Hill, The Hillgrove Porter Stores, The Kingsdown Vaults, The Green Man, The Highbury Vaults.
- **King Street** – Small Bar, The Royal Naval Volunteer, The Beer Emporium, Llandoger Trow (German lager specialists), The Old Duke (jazz), among others..
- **Bedminster** – Standouts: The Old Bookshop, Alpha Bottle Shop & Tap, and the Bristol Beer Factory taproom.

We're very fond of our **former local**, **The Drapers Arms**, 447 Gloucester Road, a bus ride from the city centre, or about an hour's walk.

The **Shortlist** of three different pubs we'd particularly recommend if you've got a couple of hours spare in the centre.

- **The Barley Mow**, Barton Road – definitely a pub but modern.
- **The Llandoger Trow**, King Street – a revived Bristol classic that nearly shut.
- **The Bank**, John Street – a central, old-school, back-street pub.

**'Proper pubs'** (5) – We're talking here about the kind of place with only one, two or three hand-pumps, one of which is permanently

dedicated to Bass, Courage Best, Butcombe, or something along those lines; which is, or feels, antique brown; and which, if you're lucky might have ham rolls in clingfilm or a pork pie to eat. e.g. **The Kings Head**, Victoria Street – it nearly shut for good, now it's back under the ownership of local brewery Good Chemistry who know what a good pub should feel like. The interior is historic with mirrors and gilded signs. The beer is a small but pleasing mix of cask ales (e.g. Fyne Ales Jarl) and keg. They also have 1930s-style ten-sided pint glasses.

**For beer and other things** (8) e.g. **Grain Barge**, Mardyke Wharf, Hotwells – a pub on a boat with views over the water and across to the SS Great Britain. A long-time favourite of ours with a range of Bristol Beer Factory beers on cask and keg, and in bottles, plus guests.

**Chains** (3) e.g. **Zero Degrees**, Colston St – the interior might be rather sterile but the beer is simply very good these days ... The view from the roof terrace is pretty spectacular, too.

There are **Neighbourhood standouts** (6) and lots of hidden gems in the suburbs.

**Taprooms** (2) aren't really our thing but our personal favourites are Good Chemistry and Lost & Grounded.

*The full version of this post includes details of all the pubs in the bold categories above and a Google Map (last updated 2018) to locate them:*

### We're Boak and Bailey

We're geeks in general, but especially about beer and pubs. We write under the names Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey. We live in Bristol. We've been blogging about beer since 2007.

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



## Curmudgeon

### They all add up

In my *Review of 2022*, I mentioned that I had visited 128 different pubs during the year. This was considerably more than in the two years of lockdowns, but still quite a bit less than in the four preceding years.

Ever since I reached legal drinking age I've been fascinated by pubs. I would go out and visit various pubs with my dad, and with former school friends in the university holidays. At university in Birmingham, armed with a student railcard, I travelled as far afield as Bath and York. Remember in those days that lunchtime closing was 2.30 pm in most places in the South and Midlands, so trips had to be planned much more carefully than now. Apart from the two years of lockdown1, I would say I've visited at least 100 different pubs in every year of my adult life.

In the early years, a major factor was sampling different beers that I had never encountered before. At this time, the tied house system still held sway, and there were only a handful of national-distributed beers, meaning you had to travel to find particular beers. I often sought out obscure pubs just because they had a rare brew for the area.

Nowadays, the situation is very much changed, with far fewer pub-owning breweries with a distinctive offer on the bar, and far more beers distributed across the country. Very often, you will walk into a free house or pubco outlet with no idea what you are likely to find, which to my mind somewhat detracts from the experience. However, I will seek out family brewer tied houses when away from my local area, and indeed in the 2010s had two mini-holidays with the partial motivation of visiting Donnington and Hook Norton pubs.

However, I increasingly found that it was the pubs themselves were the attraction, not the beers themselves. As I wrote back in 2010 in a post entitled *Wooden Wombs*:

*At heart I have to conclude I'm more fascinated by pubs than beer – by the variation in layout and architecture, the fittings from many different eras, the ebb and flow of trade, the little rituals and quirks of pub life, the mix of customers, their interaction with the bar staff and each other, the way their clientele and atmosphere reflect the varied strands of society. Every pub is different and has its own character and its own story to tell.*

And there are still plenty of pubs to explore that haven't had the soul sucked out of them by corporate makeovers. I will also make an effort to seek out pubs on CAMRA's National Inventory when I'm outside my local area.

I'm not setting any targets or making any predictions for 2023, but I would hope that, if all goes well, I can manage at least 150 during the year.

The Pub Curmudgeon blog posts can be read on [www.pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com](http://www.pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com)





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### Beer Festival Diary

CAMRA run or supported beer festivals provide excellent opportunities for sampling a wide range of real ales and ciders. See also page 5 and [www.westberkscamra.org.uk/festivals](http://www.westberkscamra.org.uk/festivals)

21 - 22 April 2023

**Newbury Racecourse Beer Festival**

See advertisement on page 5

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

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[www.kandl.camra.org.uk](http://www.kandl.camra.org.uk)

28 May 2023 TBC

**Bracknell Ale & Cider Festival**

Bracknell RFC, Lily Hill Park RG12 2UG

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

### Diary Dates 2023

The following is a list of all forthcoming meetings of the West Berkshire branch of CAMRA. Some are 'social' meetings, lively and friendly occasions where we enjoy a few beers; others are 'branch' meetings, which are slightly more formal and where we discuss beer and pubs issues. Unless stated, our meetings are open to all-comers - and new members are particularly welcome!

**Wednesday 15 March**

**12.30pm**

*Lunchtime Social*

Plume, Hungerford

**Wednesday 22 March**

**7.30pm TBC**

*Beer Festival Social*

(Members' table will have

CAMRA items on display)

Hatchet Inn, Newbury

**Saturday 1 April**

**2pm TBC**

*Afternoon Social*

(Meet in garden if fine)

Bell Inn, Aldworth

**Thursday 13 April**

**12.30pm**

*Lunchtime Social*

Angel, Woolhampton

**Wednesday 19 April 7.30pm**

*Branch meeting*

Hungerford Club, 3 The Croft

**Friday 21 April 1pm**

*Beer Festival Social*

(Meet at festival bar)

Newbury Racecourse

**Thursday 11 May 12.30pm**

*Lunchtime Social*

Cow & Cask, Newbury

Late additions, amendments & further details on our website: [www.westberkscamra.org.uk](http://www.westberkscamra.org.uk)

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