

Ullage

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The Magazine of West Berkshire CAMRA Summer 2023



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

www.westberkscamra.org.uk



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Quality recognised in 2023 awards

Any establishment which consistently serves cask ale looking and tasting as it should, deserves respect. Real cider and cask ale are best enjoyed at appropriate temperatures although individual preferences vary.

Three top quality establishments, with the relevant cellar and service skills, were recognised in this year's West Berkshire Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) awards. The Branch's easternmost pub, the Bell Inn, Aldworth, received Pub of the Year. In the west, the Hungerford Club, was awarded Club of the Year. In Newbury, the Catherine Wheel won Cider Pub of the Year.

To congratulate these winners, CAMRA volunteers and members visited them to present their award certificates and enjoy some drinks afterwards.

Branch Chair Andy Pinkard presented landlord Hugh Macaulay with the Bell's award on Tuesday 21 March.



Bell Inn, Aldworth

Photo: Tony Girling

A follow up CAMRA social afternoon was also held in the Bell's garden on Saturday 29 April when Five Giants, brewed on site by Aldworth Brewing Co, was served.



Catherine Wheel, Newbury

Photo: Richard Lock

On Jack Heskins' birthday, he and his father Warwick, the landlord (left), wore Green Shed Cider T-shirts, for the presentation made by Branch Cider Representative Pat Kyle, during the Catherine Wheel's Easter weekend festival.

Branch Secretary Mike Avery presented Club Steward Debbie Hutchins with the Hungerford Club's award, before a CAMRA meeting there, on Wednesday 19 April. See also www.westberkscamra.org.uk/awards



Hungerford Club

Thanks to our advertisers

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- Catherine Wheel
- Clear Brew
- Loddon Brewery
- Old London Apprentice
- Renegade Brewery
- Arkell's Brewery
- Cow & Cask Tutts Clump Cider

Contact and advertising rates:

editor@westberkscamra.org.uk

www.westberkscamra.org.uk/ullage-ratecard

Beer Festivals

CAMRA beer festivals feature live beer and real cider served at its best by interested volunteers.

These include: Maidenhead, 7-8 July; Woodcote, 8-9 July; Ealing, 12-15 July and the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF), 1-5 August.

See Beer Festival Diary on page 12 and page 6 for more details.

CAMRA members enjoy reduced entry prices and / or additional beer tokens.

Non-members joining CAMRA at a festival can usually claim two free pints at the time.

One way to try a wider variety of beers or ciders is to order one third of a pint at a time.

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Rowbarge, Woolhampton

Photo: Tony Girling

Find our national campaigns here

Find West Berkshire CAMRA

camra.org.uk/join

Campaigning for Pubs, Pints & People since 1971

Letter from the Editors

Warmer days and lighter evenings give more opportunities to visit pub gardens. We all have our favourites but may be missing out on some charming alternatives tucked away nearby. Read Emily's article to get some ideas for a change of scene.

The cost of living crisis affects us all but pubs have faced extra challenges from higher energy costs and staff shortages. Sadly, this has led to the closure of some local pubs like the White Hart, Hamstead Marshall and shorter opening hours at others. Remember that pubs rely on us all to 'use them or lose them'.

Apologies to all concerned for mistaking the 'winner of the race' at the Bell Inn, Aldworth, in the previous issue. In fact, the first cask of Five Giants, brewed on site at Aldworth Brewing Co, arrived days before baby Hugh, the son of brewer James Macaulay.

CAMRA subscriptions increase by £2 p.a. on 1 July. Membership offers many benefits (see page 10 and strengthens the Campaign's influence. Members can find further advantages by volunteering in various ways and are invited to contact Mike Avery secretary@westberkscamra.org.uk for details.

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!

Tim Thomas – editor@westberkscamra.org.uk

Richard Lock – editor2@westberkscamra.org.uk

Emily Pennington – editor3@westberkscamra.org

Pubs with Quiz nights include:

Beenham: Six Bells

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

Swift Halves



Released by **Hermitage Brewery** just in time for the Coronation of King Charles III, Right Royal Dark IPA, is brewed with generous amounts of Maris Otter Pale Malt,

Crystal Malt and Chocolate Malt. The kettle hops are First Gold and Progress followed by dry hopping with a new variety, Godiva. Richard Marshall advises that bottles of the 5.4% ABV IPA are initially available from Newbury's Inn at Home and Hermitage Post Office. 'If it's liked it may become a regular'.

Events in the beer garden under canvas at **Renegade Brewery** include Undercover Comedy, featuring award winning comedians with MC Jonathan Elston, on Tuesday 13 June, 11 July and 8 August and 'Summer Sessions' of live music on Friday nights. The Taproom is the setting for Quiz nights on the last Wednesday of each month.

Available in can and keg, Paradise Lost, Paradise Found, a 4.8% ABV Hazy Pale, was brewed for Forest Fest, taking over the Taproom on 1 July. See page 6.

After brewing Green Man, a 4.2% ABV limited edition pale ale, brewer Will Twomey said 'It is one of the most hop forward cask beers we've brewed to date, with Amarillo & Citra throughout the boil along with a large whirlpool addition. We double late hopped with Citra in the hop back. It'll also be dry hopped with more Citra. Don't drink it if you hate Citra!'



The **Foinavon**, Compton, reopened in May under the new management of Kenny, Jo and Lizzy, who have relocated from the George & Dragon, Upton. The Greene King pub with letting bedrooms has a large garden and family friendly bar where dogs are welcome. www.foinavon.co.uk

A subscription to the quarterly **BEER** magazine is a CAMRA membership benefit. The summer issue includes: Des de Moor on the history of cask ale; David Jesudason on Pub watching; Jeff Evans

on a porter called Slate from Grain Brewery in Norfolk; Paul Ainsworth on the new *East of England Real Heritage Pubs* guide and a debate about CAMRA's National Beer Scoring System.

See page 9 for details of new books by Des de Moor (CASK) and David Jesudason (Desi Pubs).



WhatPub

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



Photo: The Monument

Amy Weir and landlord Neal Anderson pictured above at the **Monument**.

They arranged a final gig there with The Side Project on Saturday 22 April. A week later, all the Newbury pub's limited space was needed for their farewell party, coinciding with Neal's 60th birthday.

Neal took over the Monument from Simon Owens in September 2008 when the Tap & Spile pub chain name was still on the front. Amy joined him there in 2016. They have now moved to Weymouth where Neal can enjoy semi-retirement and the dog can enjoy walks to the beach. Neal won't miss spending up to 85 hours per week doing all the jobs that running a pub involves!

Neal and Amy ran the Monument as a pub for the local community where all their customers could feel safe. With Craft Union as the owner, they were able to offer customers reasonably priced drinks.

They will be back for visits to Newbury and their former home, the Monument.

Delphic Brewing Co will be serving Unicorn Juice pineapple pale ale at the Newbury Pride event on 24 June.



Released in May, The Patient Ferris Wheel, a 5.5% ABV hazy pale ale, is brewed with Citra, Azacca and Rakau hops.

Tom Broadbank and Jymi Plumer

collaborated to brew That's The Way She Gose Buddy at Delphic's Thatcham base.

Jymi delivered cans of the 5.8% ABV Lemon Gose to Berkshire Beer Box subscribers in April.



Seven more beers in this box included: **Two Cocks Brewery** 3.8% ABV 1643 Leveller bitter; Windsor's **Two Flints Brewery** Alma 4.8% ABV hazy pale ale and **Mortimer Brewing Company** Butler's Bitter. <https://delphicbrewing.com> www.berkshirebeerbox.co.uk



Managed by Sian and Nathan, the **Starting Gate** in Speen, opens daily from noon. As well as darts, pool, TV sport and karaoke / disco nights, the estate pub also hosts **Speen Community Cafe**. This is run by volunteers, every Wednesday from 2pm to 5pm and has its own Facebook page and group. The cafe exists to welcome local people who want to feel more connected with their neighbours and community. Hot drinks and light refreshments are available and all are welcome to drop in for a chat, join in with craft activities, play traditional board games or help out in the community garden.



There are three electric vehicle charging points in the pub's car park.
www.startingatenewbury.co.uk

The **Catherine Wheel**, Newbury, now stocks bottles of Hungerford Park Cider (featured on page 8) and has increased its range of gluten free and non-alcoholic beers.

The cider and beer fridges, with bottles and cans, are side by side at the far end of the bar. Regular live music in the courtyard, for the summer, includes a mini music festival on 9/10 June to celebrate nine years since Warwick took over at the pub.

Wednesday 15 June sees the start of a monthly themed quiz raising money for local charities, starting with West Berkshire Homeless.

The pub's annual beer and cider festival on 1-3 September is a week before Newbury Real Ale Festival on 9 September.

With roof repairs completed and under new management, **The Harrow**, West Ilsley, reopens on Friday 9 June at 5pm. The pub overlooks West Ilsley Cricket Club.

It's all change at the **Bacon Arms**, Newbury, since Matt and Maria took over in May.

At least two cask ales are now served with Brakspear Gravity and Marston's Pedigree typically available.

George and his team moved The Greek Table restaurant from the Bacon Arms to a new permanent home at the **Castle Inn**, Donnington, which had been closed since November 2022.



The 7th birthday of **Elusive Brewing** was celebrated at its Hogwood Industrial Estate taproom, near Finchampstead, on 27 May.

Limited entry for Elusive's 3rd annual Home Brewing competition, has opened with beer to reach Swindon's The Malt Miller by 31 August.

Visit www.elusivebrewing.com for details.



Entries for CAMRA's 2nd Homebrew competition are open until 7 July.

Judging will be at the GBBF on 1 August.

This year's festival will feature last year's Homebrew winner, Doggy in the Woods.
<https://gbbf.org.uk/homebrew>



Dave Reid took over as landlord of the Coopers Arms in August 2000. After losing a leg in September 2021, bar service at the traditional Arkell's pub in Newbury has been in the hands of his wife Tiff, daughter Chari and son Rob. Sadly, Dave passed away in April 2023, aged 73.

Born in Scotland and raised in Gloucestershire, Dave met Tiff in Cheltenham. They ran Cassidy's Bar in the town before moving to Newbury. If the Coopers Arms was quiet, Dave would refer to the newspaper on the bar for horse racing information with a mug of coffee nearby. Some years back, he supported Rangers and Manchester United. Dave liked cask ale, including Wadsworth 6X and Arkell's 3B. He didn't drink lager but enjoyed a tot of Glenfiddich whisky.

Dave left firm guidance stipulating a private cremation, with no mourners or wreaths of flowers. Rather than a solemn wake, Tiff, Chari and Rob will keep the pub open for a day of celebration of his life.

The Coopers Arms opens daily at 1.30pm.

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■ A milestone for the **Cow & Cask**, marked on the blackboard, is 800 unique beers to date, served since November 2014.

The Caskettes, seen above, the micropub's new band play at the **Old London Apprentice Beer & Cider** festival on Sunday 2 July.

■ Since the sale of **Wild Weather Brewery** to Boss Brewing of Swansea, the brewery in Berkshire has closed. An April statement implies that costs will be saved by moving brewing to its new sister brewery, Copperopolis, in Swansea.

■ **Beer Day Britain** is celebrated annually on 15 June, the date the Magna Carta was sealed in 1215, with a national *Cheers to Beer* at 7pm.

Tag with #CheersToBeer on social media. www.beerdaybritain.co.uk



■ **Arkell's Brewery** was established in 1843 by John Arkell and is Swindon's oldest business. In the 180th anniversary year of its founding, a blue plaque for 'Honest John' as he was known, was unveiled on the site of the brewery.

Arkell's 180th Anniversary Ale Trail is hosted on Cask Marqu's free CaskFinder App. Prize points begin after scanning the QR



Photo: Jessica Mutton

codes in ten different Arkell's pubs with a top prize for scanning all 85 qualifying pubs!

Head Brewer Alex Arkell and Managing Director George Arkell welcomed beer writer Roger Protz to the Strawberry Thief,

on Swindon's northern outskirts, for the first ale trail scan.

Coronation Ale, a limited edition 4.5% ABV dark ale, was served at local Arkell's pubs including the Coopers Arms, Newbury and the Carpenters Arms, Burghclere.



■ Newbury Town Council released 15 tickets on the Corn Exchange website for a 90 minute **'Lost pubs of Newbury'** walk, led by a local historian, at 10.30am on Tuesday 15 August. <https://cornexchangeneu.com/event/newbury-walks>

■ Food writer Andy Lynes included The **Great Shefford** in his list of the 31 best UK waterside pubs for *The Times* (*Weekend* 15 April).

■ The Mikron Theatre Co's touring narrowboat docks at the **Rowbarge**, Woolhampton, on Tuesday 25 July. Outdoors at 7pm, they present 'Twitchers' and on 26 July 'A force to be reckoned with'. www.mikron.org.uk



■ CAMRA's Summer of Pub campaign provides digital assets and printed materials including beer mats for pubs. <https://tinyurl.com/5n6epc9>

■ West Berkshire CAMRA members, with time to spare, will celebrate Beer Day Britain, hours earlier, at the monthly lunchtime social at the **Plough on the Green** on Thursday 15 June. Non-members are welcome to join the group in the pub's beer garden, if the weather is fine.

■ Congratulations to Zoe Andrews and Phil Gill, present and past editors of *Mine's a Pint*, the Reading & Mid Berkshire CAMRA magazine, which came third in the CAMRA Magazine of the Year 2023 competition. Bristol's *Pints West*, edited by Steve Plumridge, was this year's winner.

The Bell, Waltham St Lawrence, is Reading CAMRA's Cider Pub of the Year 2023.



Among members from local branches celebrating the West Berkshire CAMRA Pub of the Year 2023 award in the garden of the **Bell Inn**, Aldworth, were Cider Representative Pat Kyle (left) and Webmaster Tony Girling (2nd left).

More photos, with details of a bus and bridlepath route to the rural pub, are online: www.westberksamra.org.uk/bell-by-bus

■ Hungerford's **INNformal** brewery, linked with the John O'Gaunt, increased capacity with an extra 1000 litre stainless steel fermenting vessel.

■ Summer Snowflake is the **Loddon Brewery** seasonal beer for June. Summer Tap Yard hours: Tue-Thu 9am-7pm; Fri 9am-10pm; Sat 10am-10pm; Sun 10am-6pm.



■ The 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.



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■ The **Bowler's Arms**, Wash Common, is inside the new Falkland Cricket Club pavilion. Three popular cask ales are served at the bar.

Berkshire, the National Counties Cricket Association 2022 champions, play Devon at Falkland CC for three days from Sunday 9 July. Another fixture is a one day match against Middlesex on Sunday 30 July. Play starts at 11am.

■ Newbury & District number 6 bus route serves pubs in Hermitage, Hampstead Norreys, Compton, East Ilsley, West Ilsley, Chieveley and Donnington from Newbury.

The £2 maximum single bus fares are now available until 31 October.



■ The **Swan** at East Ilsley serves a changing selection of beers from local independent breweries like Butts, Delphic, Indigenous and Two Cocks. Since May, local ciders from Tutts Clump are also available including Ridgeway, Rhubarb and Route 17.



■ The **King Charles Tavern** has recently welcomed a new general manager. Elliot Chipperfield has been in the hospitality industry for over ten years since he left school and has been in the pub trade for just over three years. Elliot is now one of the youngest pub managers in Newbury, at just 28.

Taking his skills from being the assistant manager of the Great Shefford, Elliot welcomed the exciting opportunity to run his own pub. In his first two months there, he has found that it has had its trials and tribulations but after a bit of a bumpy start he has found his feet and now aims to grow the pub into something special.

The King Charles Tavern, known as the 'KC', is the perfect pub for Elliot. It's mainly a wet led pub, so he can really focus on his ale expertise. The 'KC' usually has eight ales on draught with King Charles, the house ale, on at all times. The other ales vary as guest ales come and go. Local breweries, such as Ramsbury and Uley are



favoured, with Ramsbury Gold likely to remain throughout the summer, due to its popularity.

Ramsbury Brewery focus on producing local, reliable and sustainable ale which is a key factor in choosing suppliers for Elliot. The 'KC' has developed a strong reputation for its ales, so there is no real plan to change from being an ale pub, although Elliot would like to expand its wine range and introduce some cocktails to the bar.

Elliot is honoured and happy to be running a well established pub. He enjoys being able to get to know the regulars and meet their needs, often being able to start pouring their drinks as they walk through the door and then line them up with a welcoming smile. He mentioned the importance of being familiar with the guests and knowing them by name.

If you are in Newbury, make sure to pop along to the 'KC' in Cheap Street for a choice of ales and to welcome Elliot to the area.

Emily Pennington



Route 17 from **Tutts Clump Cider** is named after Reading Transport's flagship service - referred to as the main line - operating since 1901. This new release celebrates that

cider maker Tim Wale has driven buses on the six mile route, either full or part time, for forty years. Look out for Tim driving the bus at weekends.

Coronation, another new 4.5% ABV medium dry cider, was released in time for the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May. This limited edition has a commemorative label.



Tutts Clump Cider (advertisement page 7) outlets include: Inn at Home, Newbury; Loddon Brewery Tap Yard; Old Boot Inn, Stanford Dingley and Bell Inn, Aldworth.



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Beer Festivals

■ **13th Twyford Beer Festival** (8-10 June) at Stanlake Meadow RG10 0AB. Ticket only charity event with beer, cider and live music. www.twyfordbeerfest.co.uk

■ **Eastleigh Beer & Cider Festival** (16-17 June) at Eastleigh Football Club. <https://eastleighfc.ticketco.events>

■ **Bond Brews** 8th Anniversary Beer Festival (17 June) at Bond Brews Tap Yard located between Wokingham and Crowthorne. Free admission. Live music. Local cider also available. Tap Yard also open on 8 July & 12 August. www.facebook.com/bondbrews

■ **Forest Fest 2023** (1 July) at Renegade Taproom, Yattendon. The taproom will be transformed into Yattendon Forest complete with folk music, festival beer, performers and locally sourced food. www.renegadebrewery.co.uk/event/forest-fest-2023

■ **Old London Apprentice Beer Festival** (1-2 July) at OLA, Newbury. 2pm - 8pm both days. Free entry. Live music including: Newbury Nomads; Nash & the Mac; Two and a Half Men Trio; Dave (Roadhouse); Zoe Badman; Caskettes. A change from last year's local beers theme will be to source beers from further afield. Traditional and exotic flavoured ciders. BBQ. www.facebook.com/OldLondonApprenticeNewbury

■ **10th Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival** (7-8 July) at NMCC Sports Bar, Summerleaze Park SL6 8SP. Organised by Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead CAMRA and staffed by volunteers. Admission discount for CAMRA members. <https://maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk>

■ **Woodcote Festival of Ales** (8-9 July) at Woodcote Rally in a field off Tidmore Lane, Woodcote RG8 0PH. Returns after previous event in 2019. Organised by South Oxfordshire CAMRA and staffed by volunteers. Over 30 real ales and ciders. Ticket price includes admission to the steam and vintage transport rally. <https://soxon.camra.org.uk>

■ **Ealing Beer Festival** (12-15 July) at Walpole Park, Ealing. Organised by West Middlesex CAMRA and staffed by volunteers. Featuring over 320 real ales, ciders, perries, craft keg, wines and imported foreign beer. Ticket discount for CAMRA members. <https://ebf.camra.org.uk>

■ **Rowbarg Beer Festival** (14-16 July) at the Rowbarg, Woolhampton, with the beers and ciders in the waterside garden. www.facebook.com/rowbargwoolhampton

■ **Great British Beer Festival** (1-5 August) at Olympia, London. The Live Beer Experience with hundreds of beers to discover, cider, street food and entertainment. Staffed by CAMRA volunteers. <https://gbbf.org.uk>

■ **Plume Hop Dog Festival** (5 August) at The Plume, Hungerford. Free entry. Real ale, proper cider and sausages. Live Music including: The Station; Nash & The Mac; Who Ate All The Crayons; Roz Firth; Kennet Delta Cowboys. www.facebook.com/theplumehungerford

■ **Kintbury Beer & Music Festival** (13 August) at the Blue Ball, Kintbury. www.facebook.com/events/924454258717919

■ **Hungerford Club Beer Festival** (26-28 August) at The Croft, Hungerford RG17 0HY. Ten beers and two traditional ciders. BBQ. Live music: Saturday - Kat Jayne, 4 to the Bar; Sunday - The Station, Uproar; BH Monday - Kitty Mazinsky, Crofton Stokers. www.hungerford-club.co.uk

Advance ticket purchase is recommended for these festivals in September:

Newbury Real Ale Festival (9 September) www.newburyrealale.co.uk/home

Renegade Brewery Oktoberfest (30 September) www.renegadebrewery.co.uk/event/oktoberfest-2023

Loddon Brewery Oktoberfest (30 September) <https://loddonbrewery.com>

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

10th Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival 2023

7-8 July

50+ Beers | Great Food! | 25+ Ciders | Live Music

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Open: Friday 12 Noon to 11pm, Saturday 11am to 11pm
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Tickets available in advance

www.mbfc.camra.org.uk

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THE LIVE BEER EXPERIENCE

West Berkshire Beer Gardens Emily Pennington



Craven Arms

What is more quintessentially British than sitting in a beer garden, on those rare sunny days we get, with a nice drink in hand? We are lucky around here to have some fantastic beer gardens which offer an array of environments along with a variety of drinks on offer. Beer gardens are a great place to socialise with friends and families, and you can often take your four legged friend too.

The Dundas Arms in Kintbury, a traditional country pub, sits between the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal, offering a drink with a view. The pub itself offers a range of cask ales, craft beers, West Country ciders and a selection of wines. It has recently been taken over by Butcombe Brewery who have worked to create a welcoming atmosphere for all to enjoy whether it be a family friendly vibe or a place for friends to have a catch up. With the pub being a stone's throw away from Kintbury Station, you can take a



Dundas Arms

Photo: Richard Lock

leisurely stroll around the village, stop off for a drink or two and not have to worry about parking or restrictions. Butcombe Brewery also own The Crab and Boar near Chieveley which has a beautiful beer garden, open for patrons to take a pew and enjoy the sunshine and the views.

Two distinctive pubs, south west of Newbury and less than two miles apart, are the Bowler's Arms in Wash Common and the Craven Arms beyond Enborne. As CAMRA members who also enjoy exercise, Andy Pavey and Ian Herdman strolled over to the Craven Arms on the Easter weekend. Andy said "The Craven Arms is a fantastic spot on a sunny day, with a quiet location, big garden and well kept ales, not to mention excellent food, it really hits the mark for families or anyone!" A key feature in the beer garden is the heated tipi, allowing visitors to continue their enjoyment and stay warm as the sun sets and temperatures drop into the night. After returning to the Bowler's Arms, which was rebuilt in 2021 and has plenty of outdoor seating, they enjoyed another beer, overlooking the Falkland Cricket Club ground.



Bowler's Arms

The final beer garden I am going to describe is at the John O'Gaunt in Hungerford. The staff at the freehouse are particularly proud of their beer garden and have described it as a little oasis. Having previously won the Hungerford in Bloom contest for Best Public House and CAMRA's Pub of the Year, the John O'Gaunt's outdoor space with its large enclosed tent has become a key feature all



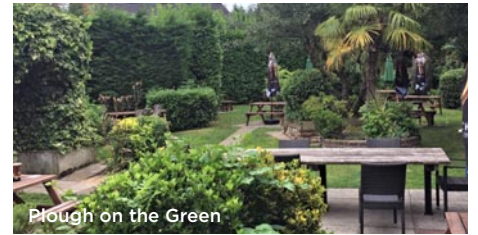
John O'Gaunt

Photo: John O'Gaunt

year round. It is decorated with foliage, from hanging baskets, potted plants and climbing vines. The beer garden is also host to a Tiki Bar and Streetfood Kitchen during the summer offering craft drinks, wines, cocktails and an array of spirits to accompany the welcoming atmosphere. Inside there are many different ales on draught, often changing, to meet all your ale needs.

I could continue on with all the beer gardens in our area but just five more to mention, with a mix of town and country, are: The Plough on the Green, Newbury; The Lock Stock and Barrel, Newbury; The Rowbarge, Woolhampton; The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury and The Red House, Marsh Benham.

As the summer continues and hopefully the weather holds out, it is a perfect time for a local outing to enjoy the sunshine with a drink in hand and good conversation with friends and family.



Plough on the Green



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Hungerford Park Cider Emily Pennington

Located between Hungerford and Kintbury, Hungerford Park Cider is a single site cidery, where apples grown on the 300 acre estate are pressed and fermented. There are over 3,500 trees in their orchard and Hungerford Park Cider is slowly growing production with last year being their biggest harvest so far. Although not yet organically certified, they pride themselves on growing their apples in an organic fashion, producing in a sustainable and ecologically minded way, with chemicals kept to an absolute minimum, letting the apples express themselves without intervention.

There are three ciders on offer at the moment. Hanging Wood, a 4.5% ABV dry cider, Fallen Tree, a balanced medium dry still cider with a refreshing apple taste at 6% ABV and Hedge Row, a delicious 4% ABV fruit cider with a strong focus on blackberry, and subtle flavours of rosehip and elderflower. Their collection offers something for everyone, depending on their palate.

You may have known these ciders in the past as Hanging Wood Cider, based on their single estate craft cider, but they are currently undergoing a rebrand to Hungerford Park Cider. This rebrand is taking them back to their roots and focusing on the orchard and the



apples themselves. The apple varieties grown are Dabinett, Michelin and Harry Masters Jersey. The cider is naturally fermented, and therefore a true expression of the land and the apples.

They are currently expanding their product range, from their base of three ciders. They are in the process of creating artisanal cider vinegar and naturally sparkling cider in 750ml bottles, similar to those used for sparkling wine. Another new line is apple spirits, comparable to brandy, aged in oak barrels.

Back in February, Hungerford Park Cider was invited to the All Party Parliamentary Cider Group reception, where different cider makers were invited to showcase their ciders and liaise with a variety of people, such as MPs, politicians and business owners, to promote quality within the cider trade. Marc Salter, the estate's cider manager, said "The event was fantastic with lots of positive feedback from everyone who tasted the cider".

Traditionally Hungerford Park Cider has been sold far and wide but they are planning to focus on local sales and are looking for new outlets. In the meantime, you can find Hungerford Park Cider at: The Catherine Wheel, Newbury; The Wheatsheaf, Chilton Foliat and The Swan, Wilton, near Lock 61 on the Kennet & Avon canal. You can also buy bottles and Bag in Box cider to enjoy at home by emailing marc@hungerfordpark.com or calling 07990 031048.



Photos: Hungerford Park Cider

MYSTERIOUS BREWING #Discovered

Founded in 2023 by two Reading Amateur Brewers members, Ken Barker and Adam Sculthorp, Mysterious Brewing aims to contribute to the vibrant craft beer culture of Reading and Berkshire with its take on easy-drinking traditional beers with modern hop-forward twists.

Adam said "Mysterious Brewing's philosophy is all about collaboration and a strong sense of community, indeed the brewery would never have been created if it wasn't for the local brewing community."

Ken said "The idea for Mysterious Brewing followed on from the Reinbeer of the Mohicans recipe that I created for Burghfield's Burghfest festival in September 2022, it was scaled up to commercial volumes by Andy Parker at Elusive



Ken Barker & Adam Sculthorp Brewing and released publicly as Mystery Fox."

Mysterious Brewing are using spare capacity at Little London Brewery, with plans to open a taproom in 2024.

The launch was at the Nag's Head, Reading on 25 May and it is hoped that the Cow & Cask, Newbury, will host a Meet the Brewer event.

Plan B, a 5.4% American Pale Ale, was included in the Berkshire Beer Box, delivered to subscribers by Jymi Plumer at the end of May.

<https://mysteriousbrewing.com>

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

LocAle Pubs - WEST of A34

The Ibex Inn	Chaddleworth
The Downgate	Hungerford
The Eastbury Plough	Eastbury
The Five Bells	Wickham
The Fox at Peasmore	Peasmore
The Great Shefford	Great Shefford
The John O'Gaunt Inn	Hungerford
The Queens Arms	East Garston
The Red House	Marsh Benham
The Tally Ho!	Hungerford Newtown
The Three Swans Hotel	Hungerford

Locally Brewed Real Ale

Website advances



In today's fast-moving digital age, the software driving websites undergoes constant review and frequent updates to provide editors with better tools for creating pages and fostering creativity.

For the West Berkshire CAMRA website - westberkscamra.org.uk - we utilise WordPress, which has undergone significant transformations in recent years. These changes have greatly improved our ability to design pages for an enhanced reading experience.

I have developed the website's theme and plugins to leverage these advances. However, our primary focus is to ensure consistency with the style, look and feel that was introduced four years ago.

This enables our page editors to create content more easily, and we hope you will find the new page layouts more informative.

The updated changes have been implemented but are still subject to revision.

In the autumn edition of Ullage, more details will be provided about the changes and how they enable us to deliver information to you more quickly and intelligently.

Tony Girling, Webmaster

The Wheatsheaf Inn Thatcham

The Wheatsheaf Inn, which was originally named 'Wheat Sheaf', is located on the main A4 road passing through Thatcham. After operating since 1814, the pub was reconstructed in 1927.



Having been the landlord for seven years, Dave keeps a very clean and tidy pub which has a single bar and several seating areas.

On either side of the main entrance, there are two large tables in the front bay windows and several small tables.

The 'book corner' is filled with a variety of reading materials and is designed to provide a peaceful and relaxing atmosphere where a reader can unwind in the cosy leather chair.



To the rear of the pub is a separate area, complete with a pool table and darts board.

The rear door leads to the south-facing garden with a well-maintained lawn, hanging baskets, a shelter and several benches.

Dave's focus is on running a community pub, affectionately referred to as an 'Adult Youth Club' by some of the locals.

There is a regular Football Predictor competition run in conjunction with five other Thatcham pubs, and other raffle-based competitions. Look out for 'Chase the Joker'.

The pub also hosts a regular pool knockout competition on Thursday evenings and supports three pool teams who meet on Mondays and Tuesdays.

There is entertainment every two weeks including soul / Motown music evenings. Call for updates or check the posters in the pub.

There are two TVs covering major BT Sport events.

The pub's walls are adorned with football memorabilia, mainly relating to Newcastle United. Dave is their main supporter!

If you look around, you will also spot several items handmade by Dave, including the wall clock and the bar itself.

The Wheatsheaf Inn is a traditional pub and therefore offers appropriate crisps and nibbles to complement your pint but no meals are served.

As a Free House, the main handpump is dedicated to The Wheatsheaf Bitter, locally produced by Tom Broadbank at Delphic Brewing Company.



Photos (except 8/7/2021): Tony Girling

A second handpump is used to serve guest ales during the summer months.

Guinness, Stowford Press cider, Madri and Carling lagers are also served on draught. Wine and bottled cider is also available.

Transport:

There is space for a few cars at the front of the pub and ample parking at Kingsland Centre (Waitrose) car park, behind the pub, currently with free parking after 6pm and on Sundays.

The jet black 1 bus, linking Reading and Newbury, stops on The Broadway, only a two minute walk away.

Thatcham train station (GWR) is just over one mile away.

Tony Girling

Bar Times

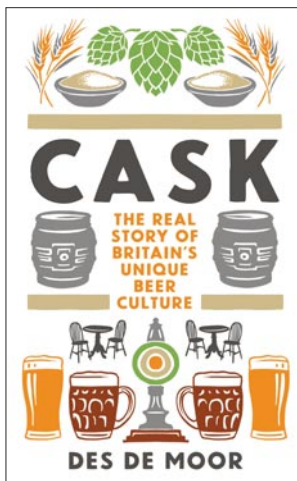
Mon - Thu: 3pm (Summer 1pm) - 11pm
 Friday: 2pm (Summer 1pm) - 11.30pm
 Saturday: 12.30pm - 11.30pm
 Sunday: 2pm - 10.30pm

[NB: To reduce costs, during bad weather etcetera, the opening times may be later than shown.]

The Wheatsheaf Inn,
 15 Chapel Street, Thatcham, RG18 4JP.
 Tel: 01635 876 715 in opening times



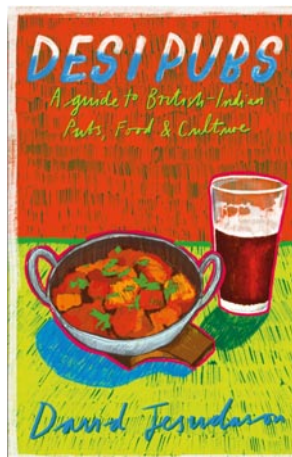
CAMRA books Two new titles are due in bookshops and the CAMRA shop - <https://shop1.camra.org.uk>



CASK is written by Des De Moor, author of London's Best Beer Pubs & Bars.

In his Beer Culture blog <https://desdemoor.co.uk/> (search for cask), Des writes 'Cask beer is a unique format of live draught beer that, at its best and freshest, delivers a subtlety and complexity of flavour in session beers of modest strength unmatched in any other way.'

CASK is the first book for the general reader aiming to 'go into detail about how cask evolved, how it's made and served today and what exactly makes it so different and special'. As well as the brewery side, Des writes about cellar skills 'that hidden world of shives, spiles, stillages and pythons and the people that master them in the service of a perfect pint'.



Desi Pubs is written by David Jesudason, a British Asian journalist who writes for BBC Culture, Guardian, Vittles and Pellicle.

Desi pubs were first established in the 1960s to break the racist colour bar and have evolved and flourished by serving Indian food into a celebration of multiculturalism.

In his research, David visited hundreds of 'desi pubs' around the UK run by British-Indian landlords who have stamped their unique identity upon them.

At www.pelliclemag.com search for 'desi-style' to find David's 2021 post for Pellicle.



Chairman's speech

On 22 April, Branch Social Secretary Andy Pavey was at the Octagon Centre, University of Sheffield, for the CAMRA Members' Weekend where National Chairman Nik Antona made a speech (excerpts below). Andy also volunteered for work behind the CAMRA bar. He previously volunteered for this event at Eastbourne in April 2022. Next year's event is in Dundee: 26-28 April 2024.

This has been another tough year for the licensed trade, with scores of pubs and small brewers closing for business, all while consumers have had to tighten their belts. ...

First, I want to talk about the campaigning that we've done, at every level across the UK, to fight for pubs, clubs, brewers and cider makers. ...

The top priority has been addressing the parallel cost of living and cost of business crises resulting in high-profile campaigning to secure vital energy bill and business rate support.

Throughout, we have used our unique voice as consumers, rather than licensees, to tell government about the nightmare situation many people find themselves in – wanting to support their pubs and clubs, but just not having the disposable income to do so. ...

With the awful decision to drastically reduce energy support this month, we have made clear to government the effect this will have on the already tragically high numbers of shuttered pubs.

And with business rate support schemes ending across the UK next year, that will be a main campaigning focus for the next fiscal event.

Through our campaigning on taxation, regulation and competition policy, we strive for both a fiscal and legislative environment that is beneficial for small brewers and cider makers, and allowing pubs and social clubs to provide genuine choice at the bar for consumers.

This gets tougher in the face of squeezed cask volumes, pub companies taking back tenanted pubs for managed uses and continuing mergers and acquisitions by global brands.

However, we continue to build our relationship with the Competition and Markets Authority and engage with elected representatives to build their understanding and support with these complex issues. ...

Our campaigning through the Alcohol Duty Review will give small cider makers a progressive duty system for the first time, and we closely monitor access to market for small brewers in the context of a contracting post-pandemic cask beer market.

The Alcohol Duty Review will make significant changes to the duty regime, and crucially introduce the new draught duty rate for beer and cider. We secured changes to reduce the draught container size threshold from 40L to 20L – benefitting small brewers, cider makers and pubs. ...

We have also secured a commitment from the Treasury to consult on the definition of cider for

tax purposes. This is a key opportunity to campaign for an increase in the minimum required juice content of cider. It remains baffling, and misleading to consumers, that something less than 50 per cent juice can be sold over the bar as cider. ...

Our expert pub protection advisors are helping community campaigners save pubs across the UK ...

And across the board, throughout the UK, cask ales sales continue to be squeezed. That is why we have been the driving force behind a new, cross-industry campaign to revive cask beer as a desired and attractive choice.



Beginning from a great idea within CAMRA, the 'Drink Cask Fresh' campaign has secured tens of thousands of pounds of investment from trade groups and brewers and now has a dedicated

steering group and project manager in Pete Brown, acclaimed author, marketer, and passionate advocate for cask.

This campaign is now being run in selected pubs as a pilot phase, testing a new, research-led marketing and sales approach to getting people enthused about cask. ...

We also invest in our own educational content, campaigns and communications.

The Learn and Discover platform goes from strength to strength this year with a drive on video content through our YouTube channel – if you haven't already, please visit and subscribe.



The Pubs. Pints. People. podcast, is now two seasons older, with more listeners and new hosts.



And the 50th edition of the Good Beer Guide ... I won't try and hide the challenges that festivals have faced as we get up and running again, from venue hire to procurement and sponsorship –

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Join us, and together we can protect the traditions of great British pubs and everything that goes with them.

Become part of the CAMRA community today – enjoy discounted entry to beer festivals and exclusive member offers. Learn about brewing and beer and join like-minded people supporting our campaigns to save pubs, clubs, your pint and more.

Join the campaign today at camra.org.uk/joinup

Join the campaign today at camra.org.uk/joinup

*Price for paying by Direct Debit and correct at 1 July 2021. Concessionary rates available. Please visit camra.org.uk/membership-rates
†Joint members receive £40 worth of vouchers.

CAMRA
Campaign for Real Ale

these are tough economic times for festivals as well as the licensed trade. ...

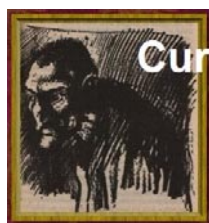
The Environmental Working Group reported in the middle of last year. This resulted in new strands of environmental campaigning emerging – including Plastic Pints are Rubbish – a campaign on getting local authorities to ditch specifying non-recyclable plastic containers like polycarbonate from licensing conditions. ...

We are a broad church, and our strength comes in our numbers, our diversity, our determination, and our local, community presence. ...

And there is so much to look forward to. Our Summer of Pub campaign is coming back ... we have more festivals returning this Summer, building back towards our pre-pandemic levels.

Whether it's beer scoring, Cider Month, new book titles, ... or lobbying our MPs, there's something for everyone to get involved in and enjoy. ...

The full speech, with many embedded weblinks, is at: <https://tinyurl.com/rjv34bw>



Curmudgeon

A touch of grey

We live in an ageing society, with an ever-increasing ratio of older people compared with younger ones. However, you would never guess this from the media, who seem obsessed with the youth market.

This can be a dangerous attitude to carry across into the business world, where companies often seem preoccupied with attracting a diminishing and fickle youth audience while loyal older customers are ignored.

Increasingly, the over-45s are the people with both the time and money to spend in pubs, but when they do cross the threshold they encounter a variety of factors that make them feel ill at ease.

The volume of music in pubs is a perennial complaint. Regardless of what genre it is, if it's too loud to sustain a conversation many people are simply not going to want to stay.

The choice of music is also an important factor. It has to be remembered that the older generation are people who have lived through the Summer of Love, punk and rave culture, and so don't necessarily want to be given the musical equivalent of a pipe and slippers. There is a tendency to believe a pub appealing to a more mature clientele should offer a mixture of bland easy listening and songs from the shows, which can be very wide of the mark.

From the Beatles to the Britpop era, the popular music of the day was part of the general public consciousness. But, in the present century, the fragmentation of media and the growth of streaming has greatly undermined this, and so if a pub plays contemporary pop it will to a large extent fall on deaf ears. And a crucial factor is that

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Is your cider #NotFromConcentrate?

Visit camra.org.uk/cider

music should always be selected to suit the tastes of the customers, not the bar staff.

Pub seating is another important aspect. If customers aren't comfortable, they'll go elsewhere. A particular offender is the growing trend towards high-level posing tables. Another type of seating that is very offputting to older people is long forms with no backs, as often seen in craft bars.

Other factors that could be added are:

- Low lighting, making reading impossible.
- Bare wood floors, which echo and amplify noise rather than soaking it up.
- Long flights of stairs to reach the toilets. Wetherspoon's do well on most of these points, but not on this one.
- Putting your entire menu on a blackboard – maybe OK for daily specials, but regular items should be on a printed menu with font of a legible size and which makes it clear how to order and exactly what comes with what.
- Allowing noisy children a free run of the pub.

Obviously if a pub deliberately markets itself as being targeted at the older generation it is likely to have a negative effect – oldies do not want to be reminded of the fact. But it shouldn't be too difficult for pub operators to take a few simple steps to avoid being offputting to older customers without deterring anyone else. And, at a time when younger people seem to be increasingly avoiding alcohol entirely, and preferring burying themselves in social media to actual physical socialising, it makes good business sense.

It's easy to say “you need to catch them young”, but it has been extensively demonstrated over the years that there are many things in life that people just grow into. An excessive focus on youth is likely to prove counter-productive.

This is an abridged version of a Pub Curmudgeon blog post. The full version and other posts can be found at www.pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com

BOAK & BAILEY

Be as into beer as you need to be

How interested should you be in beer? As interested as you want to be, as long as it makes life more enjoyable.

That could mean not at all.

If being fussy or analytical about beer makes you enjoy life less, then don't do it.

Drink what you like, where you like.

You're not doing it 'wrong' or missing out.

Equally, you might find, as we have, that being slightly obsessive makes the world more fun.

It's an optional downloadable add-on that gives us a new way to look at and explore places.

A good pub or brewery tap can turn a dead end into a destination.

With beer in mind, a few spare hours between appointments can become a mission, and a pleasure.

Decisions make themselves. Options grey themselves out.

Which way to go?

That way, towards the beer.

Talking about beer beats talking about the weather, or football, or wallowing in the grim state of politics.

Or, at least, it's a way of cutting the grim state of politics into digestible pieces.

We can't change the world but we might be able to nudge things along in our own small corner of it.

If you're not interested in beer, or have fallen out of love with it, don't fret.

There'll be something else along soon enough – birdwatching or woodwork or embroidery or...

If you're lucky, that is. These harmless obsessions are a blessing, for most of us.

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



Social Media



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West Berkshire CAMRA



Chair/ **Andy Pinkard**
Contact/ Tel 07989 382676
Membership: chair@westberkscamra.org.uk
membership@westberkscamra.org.uk

Secretary: **Mike Avery**
Tel 07918 138612
secretary@westberkscamra.org.uk

Treasurer: **Jeremy Harding**
treasurer@westberkscamra.org.uk

Webmaster: **Tony Girling**
webmaster@westberkscamra.org.uk

Social **Andy Pavey**
Secretary: social@westberkscamra.org.uk

Pubs Officer: **Paul Worsley**
pubsofficer@westberkscamra.org.uk

Cider & Perry **Pat Kyle**
Coordinator: cider@westberkscamra.org.uk

Ullage **Tim Thomas**
Editorial: editor@westberkscamra.org.uk

Assistant **Emily Pennington**
Editor: editor3@westberkscamra.org.uk

Ullage **Richard Lock**
Design: editor2@westberkscamra.org.uk

Local Trading Standards office: Tel 0345 404 0506
www.westberkscamra.org.uk

Beer Festival Diary

CAMRA run or supported beer festivals provide excellent opportunities for sampling a wide range of cask ale, live beer, real cider and perry.

7-8 July

10th Maidenhead Beer & Cider Festival
NMCC Sports Bar, Summerleaze Park,
Maidenhead SL6 8SP
www.maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk

8-9 July

Woodcote Festival of Ales
Woodcote Rally, Tidmore Lane,
Woodcote RG8 0PH
www.soxon.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=195200

For further festival details, including some not listed here, see page 6 and
www.westberkscamra.org.uk/festivals

12-15 July

Ealing Beer Festival
Walpole Park, Ealing, London W5
www.ebf.camra.org.uk

1-5 August

Great British Beer Festival
Olympia, London W14 8UX
www.gbbf.org.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!

Thursday 15 June 12.30pm
Beer Day Britain
Lunchtime Social
Plough on the Green, The Folly,
Stroud Green, Newbury

Wednesday 12 July 1pm
Lunchtime Social
Ealing Beer Festival,
Walpole Park,
W5 5BS

Thursday 10 August 12.30pm
Lunchtime Social
The Lion, Newbury

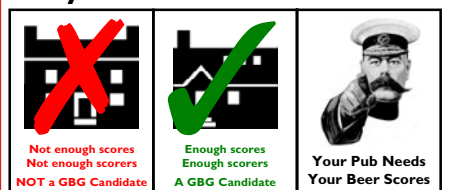
Wednesday 21 June 7.30pm
Branch meeting
Craven Arms,
Skinner's Green Lane, Enborne

Saturday 15 July 12.30pm
Beer Festival Social
The Rowbarge,
Woolhampton

Wednesday 20 September 7.30pm
AGM followed by
Branch meeting
The Lamb,
5 Enborne Road, Newbury

Late additions, amendments & further details on our website: www.westberkscamra.org.uk

Why Your Beer Scores Count!



Not enough scores
Not enough scorers
NOT a GBC Candidate

Enough scores
Enough scorers
A GBC Candidate

Your Pub Needs
Your Beer Scores

Your beer scores decide which pubs go into the CAMRA Good Beer Guide and become candidates for West Berkshire CAMRA Pub of the Year
<https://westberkscamra.org.uk/beer-scores/>

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