

# News & Ale



FREE  
Winter 2025/26  
No. 157

**CAMRA lobbies the government to support pubs and breweries including a reduction in their business rates**



**Farnham Beerex**  
**April 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>**  
*details inside*

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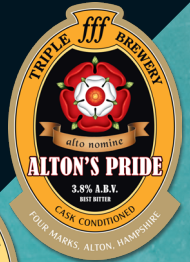


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In this edition of News and Ale you can read about how pubs and breweries are coming under increasing financial pressure due to business rate changes. Read how the industry will pay more in business rates even though hospitality will pay a 'lower tax rate'. CAMRA is very active in trying to persuade MPs from all political parties to change the current government policies and to create a financial environment that will allow hospitality businesses to not only survive 2026 but also to flourish. In this edition we get the views of a local MP on the future of our local pubs and we hope to include the views of other MPs in future editions.

The other campaigning article in this edition is how Wood Street Village is now publess. There is a possibility that one or both Wood Street pubs could be saved by the community. Please read this article and provide any help you can to the campaign for one or both pubs to become a community pub.

Ed

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# Dark days ahead for pubs following November Budget - but is banning MPs the answer?

Pubs and breweries in our area are facing big increases in their business rate bills from April because of decisions taken in the Chancellor's November Budget, together with a rates revaluation.

Businesses in England are required to pay a tax (business rate) to their local council based on the value of the property. The Government is going to introduce permanently lower business rates for hospitality this year. Whilst this sounds like a positive step, and the Treasury says all pubs will pay a 'lower tax rate' than they do at present, there is a sting in the tail. Because these changes come in at the same time as the government are ending the 40% discount on business rate bills for pubs, licensees face having to pay more than they do now! Although 'tax rates' will be lower, without the 40% discount many bills are ending up higher, often significantly so.

This business rates bombshell is the last thing our locals need, and the dismay expressed by a number of publicans is understandable, as they see their already precarious businesses becoming unviable, with no obvious solution. The response by some, in banning Labour MPs from their pub, is therefore totally understandable but perhaps misguided.

Instead, what we need to do is to convince the Government to rethink these big tax rises on pubs and that can only be done through discussion and engagement. We need to make Government understand why their approach is counterproductive to raising valuable tax revenue and that losing pubs would be a disaster for so many local communities. Literally locking the door to those MPs who have the power to change the approach, whilst making you feel a bit better at the time, isn't going to lead to changing Government policy.

CAMRA has therefore stepped up our campaign for a truly fairer business rates system and lower bills for hospitality businesses. We have continued to lobby all MPs strongly and have encouraged our members and non-members to contact their local MPs highlighting the massive impact of these changes to business rates. Locally members have risen to the challenge with each of the seven MPs who represent parts of the Branch Area being contacted a number of times: in total 43 letters and emails being sent.

We hope by doing this we will effect change, otherwise during 2026 we are going to see catastrophe in our pubs like we have never witnessed, with closures on an unimaginable scale. We need to engage the pubs who don't know what's coming and mobilise the people who do.

As CAMRA's National Chairman, Ash Corbett-Collins said in response to the Budget. "This is a dark day for UK drinkers, pubs and breweries. Instead of offering a bold package to save and support the UK's pubs, the chancellor has chosen not to help with VAT, energy bills or employer National Insurance contributions. Pubs and breweries can contribute to economic growth but only with proper support from the government on sky-high costs which are making it impossible for many pubs to survive and thrive."

**Kevin Travers**



# Wood Street Community Pub Campaign



As noted in the Pub Clips section, the White Hart in Wood Street Village on the outskirts of Guildford, shut in November with no certainty if/when it will reopen.



*Royal Oak*

With the closure of the Royal Oak earlier in 2025, Wood Street has been left pub less. This has clearly alarmed the local community as a campaign group has been established to see what can be done to retain a community pub in the village.



*The White Hart*

The White Hart is owned by Stonegate, and is not currently for sale, though it is listed as an Asset of Community Value. However, the pub has been closed for several months and a new tenant is being sought. It is feared that if an offer to purchase were to be made then

the pub would be overvalued, based on the historic turnover of a few years ago but ignoring the need for investment due to the lack of maintenance in recent years.

The Royal Oak, which used to be a great community pub when managed by Tony Oliver, is now owned by private investors. It is currently for sale with an asking price of £750,000 which significantly exceeds its value as a pub, strongly suggesting that the owners have their eye on it as a development site for alternative non-pub uses.

The White Hart has historically been run as a restaurant making the Royal Oak, which is better located, the more appealing proposition for a community pub but it would need a lot of money to be spent to make it viable.

It seems unlikely that the community could manage to purchase two pubs, so they will need to decide which is the best option. A public meeting was held in December, attended by more than 100 people and there is clearly a lot of enthusiasm for the idea of a community owned pub in Wood Street Village. The Community Group is now arranging a more focussed meeting to bring together people with the skills needed to make the proposition a reality. This includes volunteers with a background in building, planning, accountancy, restaurant and hospitality, project management, fund raising and business management. This Group, together with representatives from CAMRA and the Plunkett Foundation, who support community initiatives of this nature, will endeavour to agree the next steps, such as whether to establish a Community interest Company, evaluate the options, formulate a business plan and a host of other preparatory activities to demonstrate the viability of community ownership.

**Kevin Travers**

# Branch Presentations



It's always a pleasure to present an award recognising the great people running a great pub, it's doubly so when the recipient really appreciates the award and the recognition. This was epitomised in August when we presented our Summer Pub of the Season Award to Margaret Ralston, manager of the **Jolly Farmer** in Weybridge. Her reaction to receiving the award and the joyful evening that followed made this a very special occasion.

Margaret herself is a remarkable combination of a natural people person: the desire to work directly with people lead her to change career post pandemic from teaching to running pubs, and a thoughtful and focused community builder. She describes the Jolly Farmer as being like a front room full of friends and judging by the number of people who came up to congratulate her on the award and to commend her to us, she certainly has made lots of friends in the seventeen months that she has been running the pub. Building on this theme, Margaret talked about the importance of creating somewhere that everyone could feel at home and be welcome – a genuine focus on customers and customer service, epitomised by her policy of “overstaffing” behind the bar, so that no one has to wait to be served. Indeed, Margaret's next plans are to improve customer service yet further by making more counter space at the back of the pub.

Of course, none of this is solely down to one person, and Margaret has a great team, a couple of whom show their dedication by travelling more than 20 miles from Aldershot. Overall, the emphasis on

people and teamwork is a refreshing contrast to the more common theme of cuts in staff in response to rising costs and, like the generally low prices charged, is enabled by the support of the pub's owners The Healy Group, of whom Margaret also speaks very highly.

Other interesting aspects include the pub not having a website, although Margaret is a very enthusiastic user of Instagram and Facebook, and being a largely wet-led pub in an era and area where many pubs are restaurants that serve beer. Restricted kitchen space means that food is limited to traditional Turkish kebabs, served by Arslanbey Kebab, in the garden of the pub on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings.

Finally, Margaret's exhortation to “Don't be a stranger” rang true in our ears as we wandered home and we look forward to joining her band of friends again in her front room at the Jolly Farmer. Thanks to Adrian Palmer for the nomination and to everyone at the Jolly Farmer for an excellent evening.

**Dave Butler**

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# Surrey/Hampshire Borders CAMRA Beer Scoring Competition

The branch would like to thank the 60 Surrey/Hampshire Borders (SHB) CAMRA branch members who submitted scores for the beers they have tasted in the branch area over the past ten months. We had more scores submitted than in previous years, this really helped with our Good Beer Guide selection meeting discussions.

A total of 234 licensed premises were scored this year; 218 pubs out of our 256 Real Ale pubs, so 85% of the SHB Real Ale pubs were scored. In total, we had 4,120 scores submitted by 220 different people from 68 different CAMRA branches! So, a large number of our CAMRA neighbours were helping complete the beer

picture in our SHB pubs, for which we are most grateful. A number of prizes were awarded to SHB 'Pub Scorers' at our February AGM in Woking - photos to follow in the next edition of News & Ale.

We hope that branch members will continue with their good scoring habits and provide us with vital information regarding range and quality of Real Ale available in our SHB branch area. Thanks to everyone!

**Val MacT**



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# Pub News Round Up



## ADDLESTONE

### Pelican

At a riverside location on the Wey Navigation tucked away behind the Weybridge Business Park. A regular food menu, conservatory and outside seating on the riverbank with regular visits from the local swans. Usually has three ales which recently included St. Austell Proper Job and Twickenham The Naked Ladies. **Laurence 'Spike' Milligan**

### Waggon & Horses

Dog friendly community local in Simplemarsh Road. Sports TV, dartboard and pool table with occasional live bands. One changing real ale which has recently included Wadworth Swordfish and Timothy Taylor Landlord. **LM**

## ASHTEAD

### Woodman

Has recently reopened after a refurbishment. Run by Ember Inns, the beer range typically includes Fuller's London Pride, Timothy Taylor Landlord and St Austell Proper Job. **Frank Charlesworth**

## BAGSHOT

### Three Mariners

The pub closed suddenly in early October. It is believed there was a dispute with the landlord and that new tenants are being sought. **Kevin Travers**

## BLACKNEST

### Barn Owl

The Jolly Farmer was suddenly closed in January 2025 by Fullers but reopened on 28<sup>th</sup> November as the Barn Owl. It is now owned by Brunning and Price, who also run the Mill House in Hook, Leather Bottle in Mattingley and Refectory in Godalming. This company balances a good range of cask-conditioned ales (including local independents) and real ciders with excellent food. **Mike Andrew**

## BLACKWATER

### Mr Bumble

This Enterprise pub is run by Philippa and Keith, on special terms that enable them to provide a wide range of real ales. Keith does a great job in the cellar; his efforts have been rewarded by regular recognition in the Good Beer Guide. Fuller's London Pride is the regular draught beer, with generally three others available from a wide range, with beers from Windsor and Eton often featuring. They have a "What's coming soon" pole of pump clips, which recently promoted Hophead from Dark Star, very popular at this busy pub, and usually in great condition. Card-carrying CAMRA members can get discounts on their pints. They have open mic/Jam nights on Thursdays and live rock bands some Saturdays. There are three pool tables, and an extensive rear sheltered patio area outside, often used by families. **Harry Fish**

## BROCKHAM

### Old Crown

Has reopened as a Heartwood Inn. **FC**

## BURPHAM

### Anchor and Horseshoes

On London Road, ten minutes via bus from Guildford Bus Station. Four real ales including St Austell Tribute and Greene King Abbot as the regulars with two guest ales one of which is often from Surrey Hills or Hogs Back. It is great to see that the pub has recently been awarded LocAle status. **Dylan Thomas**

## CAMBERLEY

### Carpenters Arms

Harry (brother) and I met up with Oscar some weeks ago and had a good chat about Barcelona, where he hails from, and Harry and I were born many years ago, so still speak some Spanish! He also knows his beers well, and the ones Greene King can provide, so has kept us well supplied in recent weeks. Clearly, he is also in favour of live music so has engaged bands and/or 'karaoke'-type evenings quite often. The Greene King IPA must

remain, of course and there's generally a choice of a couple of other beers including Black Sheep Best Bitter, Greene King Yardbird, and Belhaven Deuchars IPA. **Doug Fish**

#### **Claude du Vall**

After being closed for two months for a thorough refurbishment Camberley's Wetherspoon reopened in mid-November. It was good to see Paul's return as manager and most of the same staff. The refurbishment has been very comprehensive with fresh furniture, lighting and carpeting, etc., but the splendid long bar has been retained. Also retained has been the range of beers and food available at a price that other pubs can only dream of! Little wonder that it's favoured by many for a meal and/or drinks, especially at weekends. So, welcome back Paul and the team, we've missed you all, but it's all been worthwhile! There used to be a large clock on the corner of the wall by the glass-washing area, overlooking the bar, but that's been replaced by an electric sign telling us we're in a Wetherspoon pub, any chance of having the clock back, please as I missed the last bus home the other night! **DF**

#### **Four Horseshoes**

This community pub operates through Heineken's Star Pubs and Bars group, enabling the landlady Steph and her team to select from a list of cask ales, retaining at least one in good condition, on a rotating basis. St. Austell Tribute is often available during the winter months and usually kept in very good condition. Sharp's Doom Bar was available at my recent visit, which has a following with some of the regulars, so is rotated with various others. There is secure parking behind the pub, and a sheltered patio area, with plenty of seating. Inside, there are TVs for sports enthusiasts, and a lounge area for restaurant service, at reasonable prices. Well-behaved dogs are welcome. There are occasional Karaoke evenings, and live music some weekends, see dates promoted on their Facebook page. **Harry Fish**

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#### **CHERTSEY**

##### **Coach & Horses**

Attractive tile-hung Fuller's local, with accommodation. There is Sports TV at one end of the pub. It's a short walk to Chertsey Football Club and, in the summer, the Cricket Club. Fuller's

London Pride and ESB feature, the latter is rare in these parts. **LM**

#### **Olde Swan Hotel**

In the build up to Christmas the pub ran their usual 'Advent Ale' initiative, with regular changing beers including Windsor and Eton Three Wise Guardsmen and Silent Night of the Garter, Rebellion Festive Nectar and Tring Santa's Little Helper. I think you get the picture. **LM**

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#### **CROOKHAM VILLAGE**

##### **Exchequer**

The pub was closed by Grosvenor Inns in September. It is believed that they own the freehold so its future as a pub is very uncertain. **KT**

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#### **EGHAM**

##### **Crown**

Following acquisition by the Morgan Pub Collective and a major refurbishment, re-opened in November. Offering three real ales: Oakham Citra, Harvey's Sussex Best and Hogs Back TEA, as well as an extensive food menu. **LM**

#### **Egham United Services Club**

Following the previously reported passing of long-standing Club Secretary Julie Black, CAMRA member Bob Inman has assumed the role. Their 47th Beer Festival in November went well, and planning for the 48th starting on 8th April has commenced. **LM**

#### **Foresters Arms**

Planning permission for conversion to flats was granted by Runnymede Borough Council in October, despite numerous local objections including ours. Currently still trading (December 2025) though no real ale. **LM**

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#### **ENGLEFIELD GREEN**

##### **Barley Mow**

A Heartwood Inn, and very much food led. However, it has retained a traditional front bar area, where as well as posh coffees there are up to five ales. These recently included St. Austell Tribute, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Windsor and Eton Knight of the Garter. There is a patio at the front overlooking the cricket green and a garden at the rear. **LM**

### EPSOM

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#### Barley Mow

The pub now has regular Fuller's seasonal ales and as a tenanted pub they have a list of local and national beers they can order including Sambrook's, Park, Hogs Back and Thornbridge.

**Keith Richardson**

#### Cricketers

The pub has been acquired by the Morgan Pub Collective and undergone a refurbishment. A good range of beer is on offer, typically including Harvey's and local offerings such as Surrey Hills and Twickenham. **FC**

#### Lava Lounge

Formerly the White Horse, has permanently closed and is set to become a Sainsbury's. **FC**

### EVERSLEY CROSS

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#### Frog and Wicket

The pub is opposite Eversley Cricket Club, with a good view of games during the summer, when it is often very busy at weekends. Ownership passed to Fuller's several years ago, which reflects in the beers available, but the range is extensive from the brewery's portfolio. I regularly enjoy Dark Star Hophead, usually kept in fine condition. The pub attracts many local families, as well as walkers, golfers and other groups, who gather here to enjoy the bar, restaurant and garden facilities. There are picnic-style tables at the front of the pub, with some parking and a large car park at the rear, adjacent to the family garden area, which is safely fenced off, and includes play equipment. The main restaurant leads to an area which can be sectioned off for private functions, with a secluded patio area, ideal for wedding parties, photos etc. **HF**

### FARNBOROUGH

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#### Ship

Jamie and Kerri are the new tenants here, having arrived in August. Their aim is to make it a proper community pub – lively, friendly, and full of character. They have reintroduced both food and real ale, the latter being a single changing guest beer, to ensure quality. Live music, a quiz night, darts, pool and Sports TV are all available. **KT**

### FARNHAM

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#### Borough Beer House

The Borough Beer House in Farnham continues with its policy of an ever-changing range of cask-conditioned ales, always including a dark beer, a bitter and a range of modern styles. They also feature a huge range of British and foreign craft kegs and interesting bottles and, of course, a range of real ciders. **MA**

#### The Wheatsheaf

When visited in November had only Hogs Back TEA on handpump. On a later visit no handpumps were in use. This Shepherd Neame pub reopened after a short period of closure, under the tenancy of the fast-expanding Stubbings Pub Group, which now runs many local pubs. **MA**

### GUILDFORD

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#### Cricketers

Formerly a Stonegate pub situated north-west of Guildford at Rydes Hill, on the main road to Aldershot. Since November 2025 the Cricketers has been an independently owned free house, with beers from independent breweries being introduced. Spotted just before Christmas, was Dorking Festive Porter. Certainly, somewhere worth looking into and supporting. **KT**

#### Stoke Mill

Guildford Borough Council has approved a planning application submitted by McMullen to convert the former offices of the Surrey Advertiser into a pub. There is no indication when the works will start, but it should be a decent addition to the real ale choice in northern Guildford. **KT**

### HORLEY

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#### Jack Fairman

The Jack Fairman reopened on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December after extensive refurbishment and much needed repairs to the leaking roof. I enjoyed a couple of very well-kept beers there during the evening and it was evident that many people were glad to welcome its return. The interior has been updated and fully refreshed whilst still maintaining the 1930's Art Deco features associated with the racing driver after whom it is named. Well done to Justin and the whole team at the pub for managing this transformation. **Ray Wadey**

...Continued on page 20

# Local MP shows support for CAMRA aims



It is no secret that the British beer and pub sector is struggling, and preserving this culture is something I feel very passionately about. In Parliament, I have been pushing hard for practical measures to support the sector – from securing a debate on reducing beer duty, to challenging the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme (which I've dubbed the "glass bottle tax"), and calling for an emergency 5% VAT cut for hospitality.



My commitment to pubs is personal as well as political. Woking is, and always has been, my home and I have many fond memories in our local pubs. From Sunday lunch with the family at the Red Lion in Horsell, to drinking with friends at the Drumming Snipe in Mayford, pubs are far more than just businesses.

When a pub shuts, the community loses a piece of itself, yet many are being pushed to the brink by soaring energy bills, rising alcohol duty and business rates, and increasing staffing costs. That's why an emergency VAT cut would make such a difference, offering immediate relief and helping landlords stay afloat and keep their doors open.

Having served as both a councillor and Mayor before becoming Woking's MP, I've sadly seen

far too many pubs close over the years. Pubs act as hubs within our communities – hosting weddings and funerals, mental health groups and veterans' meet-ups, sponsoring local sports teams, and fundraising for good causes. They help combat loneliness, strengthen local economies, and bring people together.

I actually joined CAMRA at the Woking Beer Festival during my time as Mayor. My first real ale was Hogs Back Brewery's TEA, and I liked it so much I've even done a tour of that brewery to see how the beer is made.

Today, if you ask me to pick a favourite beer, I'd have to choose something close to home: Thurstons Brewery's Horsell Gold. It's a brilliant local golden ale and a great example of the quality we have right on our doorstep.

When it comes to what's on the hand pumps, I strongly believe landlords should have the freedom to support local brewers. Freeing up even one pump (although ideally more) would give pubs the flexibility to showcase more independent beers, benefiting brewers, landlords and customers alike.

And if a local brewery ever offered to brew a special beer for me? I'd opt for either a golden ale or pale ale. As for the name, I'm torn between Will of the Worlds, Forster's Lager, or perhaps Forster's Martian Fuel, as a nod to Woking's famous sci-fi heritage!

At the end of the day, pubs are woven into the fabric of our community. With the right support – and the right political choices – we can ensure they not only survive but thrive for generations to come.

**Will Forster MP**

# Brewers for a day



Back in June, the Kingston Beer and Cider Festival hosted a judging round of the Champion Beer of Britain competition. The category was Premium Golden ales and the deserved winner was Collusion, which, as its name suggests, is a collaboration beer. Something like fifteen years ago, Tim of Cobbetts Beer Shop Micropub was talking to Ross of Surrey Hills Brewery and they decided to brew a powerfully hopped ale together. Intended as a one-off it was so successful they brewed another batch and it has continued up to date with the latest being the 39<sup>th</sup> iteration.



In October, when beer festival volunteers had their outing and made presentations, Tim offered us a chance to join the upcoming brewing day. The beer is brewed roughly four times per year and on each occasion Tim invites his customers and acquaintances to take part, so it was a privilege to be asked. After sharing the invitation with members of the Kingston & Leatherhead branch of CAMRA, five of us signed up.

The brewery is based at Denbies Wine Estate on the outskirts of Dorking and it was an early start for us and the other invitees as we turned up at 8am on a wet Monday morning. The Surrey

Hills crew were already there as they needed to bring the water in the mash tun up to the required temperature of roughly 72 degrees C.

After a briefing of what the day was going to involve, we climbed up the stairs to the top gallery where the two types of malt were waiting in 25kg bags (about the same as a sack of potatoes). Our first job was to tip a total of just over a ton of malt into the mash tun, taking care not to follow it down the chute! While the fermentable sugars were being extracted from the malt we took a break for coffee and breakfast sandwiches.



*Preparing the hops*

Tim is a big fan of hops and this beer was going to feature nine different types. The foil packets of dried hops were emptied into bins and we then had to break them up into individual flowers as far as possible. It is recommended to wear plastic gloves for this unless you enjoy hop oil being absorbed into your skin.

While we were dealing with the hops, the malt wort had been transferred into the kettle where it is boiled with the hops. This left a mash tun full of spent malt which had to be cleared out. As far as possible this is done by shovelling it out through a small opening at the bottom of

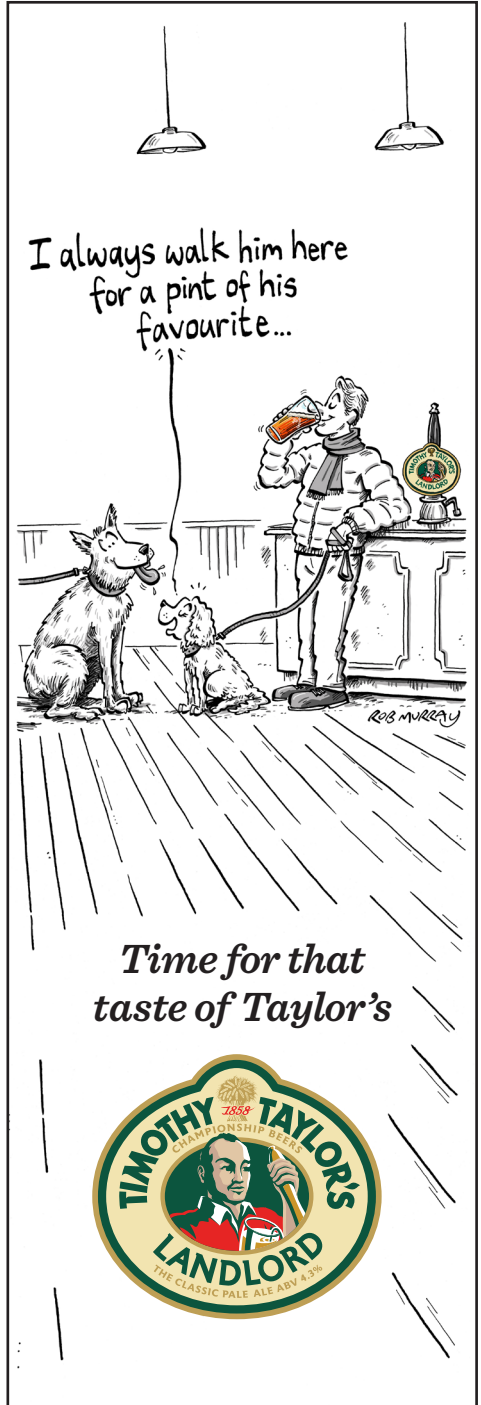
the mash tun, but to clean it out fully, two of our number had to climb into to the hot steamy vessel to finish the job. Evidently it was like being in a beer sauna, perhaps it's a marketing opportunity!



*In the mash tun*

By now it was time for a pizza lunch and more importantly the perk we had all been waiting for, beer. It was back to being a kid in a sweetshop as we helped ourselves to a choice of Three Peaks, Ranmore, Shere Drop, Albury Ruby and Greensand IPA, all drunk in a very responsible manner! The brewery has recently constructed a new drinking area, and this was being painted as we drank. Maybe by now the roof is on, but whether it is or not, it's a great place to spend an afternoon.

Things were beginning to wrap up so we collected our commemorative T-shirts and helped clear up some more. It is said that brewing is 99% about cleaning and that certainly appeared to be true. After saying goodbyes, a few of us retired to the Lincoln Arms just outside Dorking station for a beer or two while we waited for our train. All in all it was a memorable day and we can only give massive thanks to Tim and all at Surrey Hills. Our batch of Collusion is now available and it tastes great to me.



*Time for that  
taste of Taylor's*



# A Grumpy for all Seasons



Let's start with Spring and with the annual migration of pub populations to the garden with the appearance of the first daffodils. Beware the warnings of T.S. Elliot that April is the cruellest month as you get lulled into false optimism with fleeting Spring sunshine quickly giving way to a downpour and a scramble to return to the bar.

As the Summer becomes established an immediate problem appears with the need to grapple with the average garden furniture and what are called picnic tables. The average CAMRA member is neither a contortionist nor an Olympic gymnast and getting seated is problematical especially if you have a knee or back problem.

Do you sit down and attempt to swing both legs under the table or adopt the one leg at a time approach? Either way the result is ungainly and possibly painful. There will eventually come a time when another pint or a trip to the facilities is required and the whole cumbersome process is repeated in reverse. The secret here is having a strong bladder and being mean enough to expect others to buy the drinks, thereby avoiding the need to move.

I almost feel sorry for smokers: outside, braving the elements and huddled together for mutual warmth and appearing somewhat forlorn. They are exiled for the comfort of others, but in Summer we are all in it together and the results are not always pleasant with a fug of smoke and dead cigarettes settling over those areas where the puffers congregate.

Naturally there will be children in the garden, which is where they belong, rather than inside the pub. Sometimes it seems like dog city in the garden, but their antics are invariably an improvement to that of the children. Busy Summer days with drinkers, children and dogs all milling about the garden can give the impression

of the peasants from the Middle Ages in a Bruegel painting with all the excesses involved.

As the Autumn light fades and the Winter months approach, we are back inside leaving the deferred bunch of forlorn smokers to congregate outside together in the cold, wet and windy elements. An overly romantic view of all this has contented dogs laid out around a raging fire and the rest of us at peace with the world. However, there is not much worse than a smelly canine having these attributes enhanced by the heat, duly distributed around the bar and supplemented by bursts of gas from their festive digestive systems.

I always dread the arrival and the beginning of the football season. I have nothing against the game itself, but the fact that it compels all eyeballs to swivel towards the screen(s) thereby suspending all other activities including conversation. The game is over-analysed with experts and endless commentary, which is virtually unintelligible, meaningless nonsense.

I'm reminded of a Monty Python sketch where the interviewer analysed a match in academic terms and then asked the footballer their opinion, bringing the response "I saw the ball and kicked it into the back of the net". There are far too many superlatives where everything is amazing, fantastic or incredible such that I really feel like throwing my glass at the screen. A bit later in the season we can all look forward to the chants of ENGEERLND or EngERLUND echoing from our pubs. Traditionally the Winter is for the darker and stronger beers whilst the Summer is for the weaker and lighter varieties. However this can be taken to extremes. I came across "Cool" or even "Extra Cooled" Doom Bar to lubricate the throat to cheer on 'EngERLUND' (to be continued when Mr Grumpy regains his composure).

**Bob Southwell**  
*Aka The Grumpy Old Man*

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# Social Events and CAMRA Contacts



All social events can change due to unforeseen circumstances such as rail strikes that were not known at the time of publication. Please check the latest updates on each respective CAMRA branch web site before attending an event. Only social events known at the time of publication are shown. If you are attending your first social event, then you may wish to email the respective branch and let them know that you are attending their event so they can look out for you at the event.

## £3 single bus fares scheme

The Government scheme to limit single bus fares to £3 has been extended to the end of March 2027 (please check if your route is covered by this scheme before travelling <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/3-national-bus-fare-cap#south-east>). Please take advantage of this scheme to travel by bus (where possible) to your pub, as travelling by bus is still below pre-Covid levels and many bus routes are under threat of being withdrawn. Note, it may be cheaper to buy a return ticket or enquire if the bus company has a cheaper day rover ticket. Stagecoach has a Nightrider rover ticket that is valid in Surrey and Hampshire and is only £4 (at time of publication) and valid for travel after 7pm. Other bus companies may have similar tickets.

## FEBRUARY

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Tour of some of the highlights of Oxford.** Includes some of its old hostelries, while sampling fine beers along the way. Maybe stopover for a night to explore further. (This is part of an extended tour). Please contact Mark on 07463 195500 for further details. [SHB]

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> 7:30pm Branch AGM Old House at Home, Dorking.** [EMS]

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> 12:00pm Branch AGM Woking Railway Club, Woking.** The branch AGM will feature reports from branch officers and brewery liaison officers, reports on branch campaigning goals, election of officers for the year ahead and agreement of new goals. [SHB]

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Thursday Social at the Star in Godalming and Final Good Beer Guide 2027 selection meeting.** [SHB]

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Good Beer Guide selection meeting,** Kingston Workmens Club (to be confirmed) [K&L]

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> 7:00pm Final Good Beer Guide Selection meeting Garland, Redhill.** [EMS]

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> 12:00pm Visit to Esher and Claygate,** starting in the Wheatsheaf at 12 noon, then on to the Albert Arms (12:45), Bear (1:30), Swan (2:30), Hare and Hounds (3:30) and finishing at the Griffin (4:15). [K&L]

## MARCH

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Bus trip to Crossways Churt,** to mark the introduction of Sunday services on this route. Catch the No.19 bus from Aldershot (opposite Napier Gardens) at 11.35am (or 11.55am from

Farnham) arriving at 12.14pm in Churt. Return at 3.20pm arriving back in Aldershot at 4.02pm. Be aware that the next and last bus is at 6pm! [SHB]

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm Redhill BF 2026 Initial set-up meeting Garland, Redhill.** [EMS]

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Thursday Social at the Borough Beer House, Farnham.** [SHB]

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Branch meeting Dolphin, Betchworth (TBC).** [EMS]

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Trip to Burton Beer Festival.** [SHB]

## APRIL

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> Lewes Branch Social (details TBC).** [EMS]

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Thursday Social at Herbert Wells (Wetherspoon), Woking.** [SHB]

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Branch meeting Old House at Home, Dormansland (TBC).** [EMS]

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> 11:00am Farnham Beerex social.** [SHB]

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> Redhill Beer Festival 'Beer of Festival' presentation Old Cannon, Bury St Edmonds.** [EMS]

## MAY

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> 8:00pm Thursday Social at the Crown, Horsell.** [SHB]

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting Garland, Redhill (TBC).** [K&L]

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> A two-day tour in Cambridge.** Join Mark Geeson for a tour of beautiful Cambridge, taking in the Cambridge Beer Festival (free entry to CAMRA members),

fine hostelries in the Beer Quarter, while sampling some great beers along the way. There will be a stopover to taste the great pub grub at the Geldart. Please contact Mark on 07463 195500 for further details. [SHB]

## SEPTEMBER

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Branch visit to Cornwall**  
We will be rerunning a popular trip from 2019 with a long weekend in West Cornwall. More details later in the year, but numbers will be limited to 20, so if you are interested please get in touch with Kevin Travers [contact@shb.camra.org.uk](mailto:contact@shb.camra.org.uk) [SHB]

## BEER FESTIVALS

### LOCAL BEER FESTIVALS

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April Farnham Beerex at Farnham Maltings, Bridge Square, Farnham. GU9 7QR.**

Please note, Beerex is run in association with the Farnham Lions Club CIO so free entry is not available to CAMRA members. Further details about Beerex can be found at <https://www.farnhambeerex.org.uk> and in this magazine.

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June: Kingston Beer Festival, Kingston Workmen's Club, 25 Old London Road, Kingston. KT2 6ND. [K&L]**

### CAMRA NATIONAL EVENTS

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April CAMRA Members Weekend at St. Albans.** Full details can be found at <https://camra.org.uk/members-weekend-agm-conference>

### SURREY/HANTS BORDERS [SHB]

Includes all of the boroughs of Rushmoor, Surrey Heath & Woking and parts of Guildford, Hart and Waverley. Join the SHB Google group requests: [shb\\_camra@shb.camra.org.uk](mailto:shb_camra@shb.camra.org.uk)  
Contact (Les Murrell): [social@shb.camra.org.uk](mailto:social@shb.camra.org.uk)  
Web: <https://shb.camra.org.uk>

### NORTH SURREY [NS]

Includes the Boroughs of Runnymede and Spelthorne, from Stanwell in the north to Woodham in the south.  
Contact: [contact@northsurrey.camra.org.uk](mailto:contact@northsurrey.camra.org.uk)  
Web: <https://northsurrey.camra.org.uk>

### KINGSTON AND LEATHERHEAD [K&L]

Includes Kingston Borough, Leatherhead & Elmbridge.

You can also find us on Facebook or follow us on X [@CAMRAKL](https://twitter.com/CAMRAKL)

Contact (John Burns): [contact@kandl.camra.org.uk](mailto:contact@kandl.camra.org.uk)  
Web: <https://kandl.camra.org.uk>

### EAST AND MID SURREY [EMS]

Includes Boroughs of Reigate & Banstead, Tandridge, and parts of Guildford, Mole Valley and Waverley.

Contact (Roy Golding): [info@ems.camra.org.uk](mailto:info@ems.camra.org.uk)  
Web: <https://ems.camra.org.uk/>

### NATIONAL CAMRA

Web: <https://camra.org.uk/>

What's Brewing: <https://wb.camra.org.uk/>

Podcast: <https://camra.org.uk/podcast/>

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# Redhill Beer Festival Report



*The photo shows the main hall.*

The organisers of Redhill Beer Festival wish to express a massive thank you to everyone who attended the 19<sup>th</sup> festival at the end of October and made it a successful event. A total of 933 people came through the doors over the three days the festival was open. We also welcomed 15 new members to CAMRA.

During the festival our thirsty customers and staff drank a total of 3,912 pints of beer and 245 pints of cider and perry. This enabled the festival to make a healthy contribution to CAMRA funds to help continue the Campaign's good work. The Beer of the Festival was Gunner's Daughter from Old

Cannon Brewery in Bury St Edmunds and the Cider/Perry of the Festival was Impeared Vision Perry from Double Vision near Maidstone.

Having reviewed customer preferences, we are considering increasing the proportion of dark beers next year as they are always very popular.

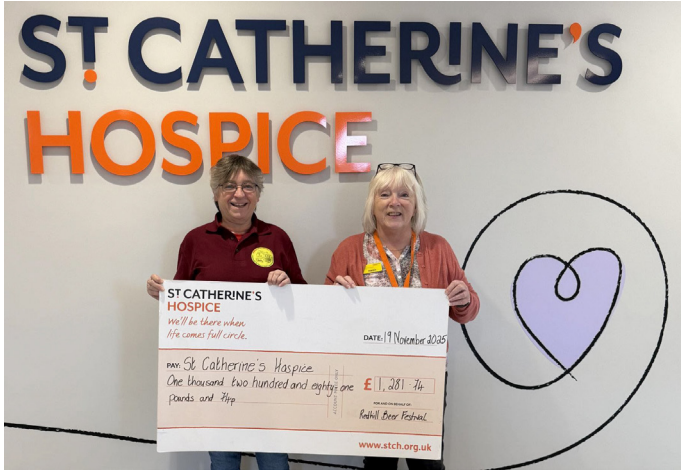
We are also very grateful to our wonderful team of dedicated volunteers, without whom this festival could not be held. A total of 49 people helped out over the festival. Some were there every day for eight days. Others were there serving for a couple of hours while

the festival was open. All are needed to make the festival run smoothly.

The jobs that need doing range from setting the hall up for the festival and helping with deliveries, to various roles while the festival is open, both in the hall and behind the scenes, and then finally clearing the hall after the festival and helping load the lorries and vans that take away the empty casks and the equipment. We also have qualified first aiders on site whose services were again fortunately not required but are always there in case of any incidents during the festival.

We welcome extra help from anyone who would like to help with running the festival. If you are interested in helping out, please contact [redhillbf@ems.camra.org.uk](mailto:redhillbf@ems.camra.org.uk). Our initial meeting will be held at the start of March to decide on what will happen in 2026 and tasks will be allocated.

We are always pleased to welcome Oven Fresh Bakery, in Reigate who provide and serve all the food. As well as their hot and cold pies and pastries, they prepare baguettes to order.



All being well the next festival will be held at the end of October 2026. Details, including dates, plus beer and cider lists, will be on the Redhill Beer Festival page of the East & Mid Surrey website, <https://ems.camra.org.uk/festival>, as the details become known.

Did you know?

Pubs raise over £100 million a year for charity

Source: publist.com (accessed 2020)

CAMRA

The generosity of all those who donated to the festival charity, St. Catherine's Hospice, raised a record £1,284.74 which was made up of £930.84 cash and

£350.90 in unused tokens. Jan Carpenter from the festival can be seen making a presentation to Frankie Goodall from the charity's Fundraising Team.

## The Star in Godalming wins more awards

2025 was an amazing year for awards for the Star in Godalming, The Star started of the year by winning the Surrey/Hants Borders CAMRA branch's 'Cider Pub of the Year' (for the 14th year in a row!). At the Greene King Pub Awards, the Star was nominated for 'Greene King Best Beer Pub'. It won this award which also put it into the category of 'Greene King Pub of the Year' which is the overall winner for Greene King Pub Partners. To the great surprise of Andy Mounsey, the pub licensee, it won this prestigious award!

By winning this award the pub was entered into the Great British Pub Awards (The Oscars of the pub industry) in the 'Greene King Pub of the Year' category. Andy Mounsey stated, "We have been to this awards ceremony several times and never quite got over the finishing line. However, this year was our year! We are super proud of



Tim Fraser and Andy Mounsey

this achievement and would like to thank all our customers for their continued support and our amazing staff! That without them winning these awards would not be possible!"

### LEATHERHEAD

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#### Running Horse

Maintaining its reputation for beer quality under the new management, with top notch Surrey Hills Ranmore and Shepherd Neame Spitfire on offer. **FC**

### LINDFORD

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#### Royal Exchange

Celebrated its tenth anniversary with a 'back to the future' price drop session which saw selected drinks at 2015 prices and some pints of beer were selling at just £3.60. The pub was saved from permanent closure by a strong Save the Pub campaign by the local community. Among the guests at the pub was Gregory Stafford, MP for Farnham and Bordon, who praised the Royal Exchange team for turning the pub into a popular community hub. Gregory Stafford said: "It was lovely to celebrate The Royal Exchange's 10th Anniversary – a local pub at the heart of Lindford. Well done to Amy, Chloe and Aaron for all their hard work to keep the pub going. As many of our pubs are facing a difficult time at the moment, it is wonderful to see their dedication matched with strong local support, and I look forward to being back for a drink very soon". **Ros Shiel**

### LOWER BOURNE

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#### Fox

The ale range at the Fox, Lower Bourne, in November was Greene King Abbot and Rocking Rudolph, Hop Back Summer Lightning and Hogs Back TEA. A Greene King pub, formerly run as Greek/Cypriot restaurant is now run by the Stubbings Group. The Summer Lightning was good. **MA**

### NEWDIGATE

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#### Six Bells

Surrey Live reported that the Six Bells in Newdigate, "a rare example of a traditional pub, set in lush countryside with a homely bar area featuring Inglenook fireplaces" is being offered for sale through Fleurets at a guide price of £625,000 (as of December 2025). The report stated that "owners Brad and Charlotte, who have run the pub for two years, announced the sudden closure on Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>". **MA**

### NEW HAW

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#### White Hart

Situated on the Wey Navigation with a riverside garden. Community pub with an extensive food menu and regular events including pub quiz and karaoke evenings. Usually three ales, which recently included Wye Valley HPA and Theakston Old Peculier. December winner of local MP Dr. Ben Spencer's Constituency Pub of the Year competition. **LM**

### THE SANDS

---

#### Barley Mow

The Barley Mow was bought by the local community from Stonegate in Autumn 2024 as a boarded-up and much neglected building. Over 140 local investors raised sufficient money to buy the freehold and get the pub looking warm, welcoming, profitable and a fabulous community asset.

Their vision is that of a small, local and beautiful 'wet' pub that serves great food - not a gastro pub or a restaurant that serves average drinks. With no tie, they are free to choose their beer range. The permanent cask beer is Hogs Back TEA with the other two pumps used in rotation, typically including another very locally brewed beer (e.g. Tilford, Triple fff or Surrey Hills) and occasional more widely known but equally high-quality nationals such as Timothy Taylor. For most evenings, the Barley Mow is full with diners, and lunchtimes are also very popular. However, a pub feel is maintained at all times with local bands, quiz nights, bread tasting, historical lectures, book clubs, children's parties etc all organised by locals and these all help to bring the local community further together. **KT**

### SELBORNE

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#### Selborne Arms

The excellent Good Beer Guide listed free house the Selborne Arms is for sale (as of December 2025), which is worrying. **MA**

## SHEPPERTON

### Barley Mow

Popular local to the west of village centre. Long standing landlord has been the winner of multiple CAMRA awards over the years. Regular live music includes jazz, rock and blues, and quiz night are also popular. Five ales with Hop Back Summer Lightning and Hogs Back TEA as regulars, and guests which recently included Twickenham The Naked Ladies, Wantsum One Hop and Wimbledon Copper Leaf. **LM**

## STAINES-UPON-THAMES

### Beehive

Traditional back street local situated five minutes walk from Staines Station away from the town centre. Traditional layout including two separate bars, with wood panelling in one. No food other than bar snacks, usually one ale on which recently was Windsor and Eton Guardsman. **LM**

## SUNBURY-ON-THAMES

### Admiral Hawke

Has been greatly refurbished recently and has a welcoming front bar area leading to a large wood panelled room used for drinking and dining. Smart covered patio at rear and another at the front. Extensive pub menu and usually Sharp's Doom Bar, Fuller's London Pride and occasionally St. Austell Proper Job on bar. Closest pub to Hazelwood, home of London Irish Amateur Rugby Football Club for any real ale loving supporters. **LM**

## TONGHAM

### Hogs Back Brewery

Often pop in here, from time to time, during summer months, to sample the beers in their tap room. There is a pizza oven, large rear patio to enjoy the views over the hop vines and Hogs Back countryside. There is also a great shop selling a range of merchandise, local beers, wines, spirits and snacks. **DT**

## WALTON-ON-THAMES

### Anglers

An attractive riverside pub, that has recently been acquired by the Morgan Pub Collective and at the time of writing was continuing to offer a range of mainly national cask ales at £4.50 a pint.

On a recent visit Timothy Taylor Landlord and St Austell Proper Job were on offer and in very good condition. **John Burns**

### Swan

Also by the river, it has been refurbished but the layout with the large open plan bar area and extensive garden has been retained. Surrey Hills Shere Drop was available on a recent visit alongside the regular Youngs ales. **JB**

### Walton Village

Continues to offer up to two changing guest ales, often from smaller breweries, alongside the regular Hogs Back TEA. **JB**

## WEYBRIDGE

### Jolly Farmer

Kingston and Leatherhead Summer Pub of the Season, currently has four ales on offer, typically including Surrey Hills Shere Drop, St. Austell Tribute, Ringwood Fortyniner and a changing guest. Recently this was Surrey Hills Albury Ruby. The pub has a spacious open plan bar area and large attractive garden at the rear. **Adrian Palmer**

### Minnow

Part of the Mitchells & Butlers Premium Country Pubs Collection, reopened recently after a refurbishment. The pub is handy for the river towpath and although strongly food oriented, drinkers are welcome and well-kept Fullers London Pride is usually on offer. **AP**

## WOOD STREET

### White Hart

The White Hart closed in November 2025, having reopened briefly in October. It is understood that a new tenant may be taking over and reopening the pub, but this has yet to happen. There is also a local campaign that may lead to the pub being taken over by the local community (see separate article) **KT**

**WRECCLESHAM**

**Sandrock**

Landlord Simon left the Sandrock, Wrecclesham, on 11<sup>th</sup> November. But it's not all bad news, as its new landlords are Ray and Joanne White. Ray was, until that date, part of the team at the Good Beer Guide listed Three Horseshoes in Cranleigh, working there with landlord Pete Slinger, who has a part share in the Sandrock business. Before that, Ray very successfully managed the Good Beer Guide listed Duke of Cambridge free house in East Street, Farnham, leaving there some time before the owner closed it, for it to become a Thai restaurant. Ray and Joanne then ran the Royal Oak at Lasham in its GBG years. Ray was brought up in the pub trade, working with his parents at the Cricketers, Lower Bourne, and then at the Queens Head in Farnham, before becoming manager of the Duke of Cambridge. Pete has a similar story, his parents running the Barley Mow in Tilford, after which he (and Ray) became stalwarts of the Farnham Beerex in its early years. Pete was very much a regular at the Sandrock during its time as a West Midlands flavoured free house under Andy

Bujok, then Andy Bayliss, and has since run many pubs himself. The team's plan is to make gradual changes to make the 'Rock "more pubby" in the new year, with an interesting range of ales and home-cooked traditional meals. **MA**

**YATELEY**

**Dog and Partridge**

This pub operates through the Heineken Star Pubs and Bars scheme, with access to a range of beers, often with Sharp's Doom Bar available and one or two others. It is situated in the old village, next to St Peter's church. Recently I enjoyed a St. Austell Proper Job there, in great condition, and Rebellion IPA was also available. This community pub has been ably run by Jessica for many years, enabling her to build a great reputation for providing good food, drinks, and service for her regulars, and a warm welcome to any visitors. There are TVs to show sporting events, comfortable lounge furniture and a small restaurant area inside, plus an extensive rear garden with a marquee and seating for their customers and well-behaved dogs, with canine snacks as rewards! Live bands play most weekends. **HF**

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# Brewery News

## CRAFTY, Dunsfold

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



Established in 2014, Crafty Brewing continue to supply their core range of ales: Blindsight (4%), Hop Tipple (4.2%), Loxhill Biscuit (3.6%) plus Crafty One (3.9%) which are available in cask and bottle. These are complimented by bottled beers from Ridgeway (now grouped and brewed with Crafty). In a move to accommodate more, and more flexible production, the Crafty team now brew the majority of their beers in a cooperative facility in Pulborough.

Steam-heated grain milling, and flexible tank volumes now allow for more variety and control. As a result of the new capacity Autumn/Winter saw two new seasonal ales, Midnight Rambler (4.6%) and Silent Night (4.6%). In can and keg there are “craft” beers, lagers, and ciders which are available as personalised and custom labelled cans.

Since 2023 Crafty have been in partnership with “Crumbs” of Reigate, brewing Crumbs’ range of beers made with unsold bread from the Chalk Hills bakery. Meanwhile the office, the store and retail sales are still at the farm in Dunsfold. The Crafty brewery on Dunsfold Road is open to visit for off-site sales Monday to Friday 10:00-16:30 (closed Bank Holidays) and beers are available to order online for delivery in cans, bottles. Polypins and mini-kegs can be ordered in advance.

There are regular pop-up tap-room events on site, including local food vendors.

Details are on the website [www.craftybrewing.co.uk](http://www.craftybrewing.co.uk) and they can be contacted via

[hello@craftybrewing.co.uk](mailto:hello@craftybrewing.co.uk)

The W3W location of the farm main gate is /// [drama.bonus.corrects](#)

**Mike Sanders**

## PILGRIM BREWERY, Reigate

<https://pilgrimbrewery.co.uk/>

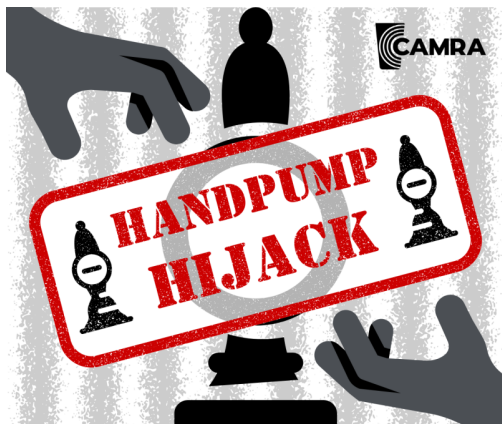


**PILGRIM BREWERY**

Reigate Est: 1982

The planned improvement works which will move the brewery into the side building and add further fermenters is expected to have got under way by the time this issue is published. Once the brewery has been moved then the planned extension of the taproom into the old brewery space can commence.

**Andy Poole**



## ASK, “IS IT CASK?”

The launch of ‘Fresh Ale’ by Carlsberg Marston’s Brewing Company (CMBC) is a handpump hijack, which misleads consumers into thinking they will be served a cask-conditioned beer – which is far from the case.

# The Beery Boaters (almost) go to great depths on the Trent & Mersey Canal

Beery Boating began in April 1981 as a one-off canal holiday organised by Peter (Jim) Green, Hon Commodore (Unelected), for select members of Deal, Dover, Sandwich & District CAMRA. The guiding ethos was (and remains) to promote waterside pubs and Real Ale. Successful in this noble cause, Beery Boating is now a twice-yearly event with many SHB CAMRA members participating. Googling “Beery Boaters” returns links to the DDS CAMRA magazine “Channel Draught” and Jim’s accounts of Beery adventures... <https://dds.camra.org.uk/channel-draught>. Channel Draught has unfortunately now ceased publication but with Jim’s permission, News & Ale will now include accounts of recent Beery Boating trips précised by Mark Geeson from Peter Broberg’s rambling reports. Read on, it’s all (mostly) true...

The Black Country Ring trip in September 2025 was thwarted with many canals short of water. Instead, we cruised 78 miles (sedentary by Beery Boating standards) from Great Haywood along the Trent & Mersey (T&M) canal, turning at its source at Derwent Mouth, taking us through 32 single and 12 double locks.

## DAY 1

(Monday 22/9/25) - 13 motley crew assembled at Anglo Welsh boatyard, **Great Haywood** to take over two narrowboats: Floral Dance (12 berth, 69 ft, ‘FD’) and Duloe (six berth, 68 ft).

FD crew were Peter Broberg (Cherub), Mark Geeson (Cook), Paul Rhoads (Chief Engineer), with lower rankings Simon Price, Alan Hodges, Brian Bourne, David Bunyan (Tankard) & Pete Smith (Bonio). Duloe was crewed by John (Shep) & Lesley Shepherd, Len Hood & Graham Porter. Francis Scannell joined them on Friday.

Asda delivered the week’s groceries and after signing for the narrowboats we set off eastwards. Mooring abreast at the Ash Tree (Marstons), **Armitage**, we drank their few last pints of Pedigree before it ran out, the Beery Boater’s curse. No other ales or local pubs were available. Mediocre food was consumed before returning to the boats where the FD crew enjoyed cheeses, pate and crackers, washed down with lashings of port. Usual first night chaos ensued, stowing luggage and making beds whilst under the influence.



*Duloe and Floral Dance  
in a lock*

## DAY 2



*Swan at Fradley Junction*

After watering up and Cook’s full English, we descended the **Fradley Junction** locks. Here

the thirsty crew enjoyed several pints (mainly Everard's) in the picturesque Swan opposite the entrance to the Coventry Canal. This would have been our route if dry weather hadn't caused critical flights of locks to be closed.

After an uneventful afternoon continuing east on the T&M we dined at the Crown Inn, **Alrewas** (Dancing Duck & Burton Bridge beers) before moving to the George & Dragon (Directors, Pedigree, Wainwright). Back on FD usual rations of port and cheese were demolished. A disturbed night followed as tired domestic batteries repeatedly triggered the water pump at the forward end of FD. Thereafter the water pump was switched off at night.

### DAY 3

An early start with Cook's full English and we descended onto the River Trent. The weirs were benevolent and we passed through Branston (of pickle fame) to reach **Burton-Upon-Trent**. A pipe bridge advertised the home of Marston's Pedigree.



*Approaching Burton-upon-Trent*

The friendly Oak & Ivy served excellent Pedigree and Directors. Cook bought a round to celebrate his birthday and the commencement of a generous weekly beer allowance funded by his old age pension! A disappointing foray to the Roebuck (2026 GBG) yielded very poor Bass, so we returned to the Oak & Ivy.

Cook topped-up cheese and port stocks at Lidl before pressing on to the Dragon, **Willington** (GBG 2026). A minor collision with another boat's secret bike rack delayed getting to the pub but apologies and details were exchanged amicably. Duloe breasted alongside as mooring space was limited. We ate well and drank fine beers from Bass, Blue Monkey, Peak Ales & Little Brewing. At 'Time' while bar staff relaxed with their drinks, several more halves of stout appeared after pleading it was Cook's birthday.

### DAY 4

A call notified Anglo Welsh of the previous afternoon's "bump" then we cast off with bespoke breakfast sandwiches assembled by Simon and Bonio using Cook's prepared ingredients. The flotilla pressed on through wide locks to historic Shardlow, missing a lunch stop due to our late start.

We passed through the open flood gates at Shardlow and the final lock down onto the Trent, where flood boards showed Green (safe). At Derwent Mouth, Simon smoothly "winded" FD, turning 180° before returning to the lock for our ascent back to Great Haywood.

Dining in **Shardlow** at the New Inn with Titanic, Bradfield & Blue Monkey beers, we then moved to the Navigation where Little Brewing, Castle Rock and rich, fruity Bass was savoured from the cask. Chief advised that FD's primary WC was full, leaving just the small forward WC to use, so a Beery Boater tradition - the 'Underdown Bucket' - was revived for overnight disposal of processed beer.



*Sign in the New Inn at Shardlow*

### DAY 5

Our early start was frustrated when ascending the wide Weston Lock where a gate paddle was opened too early, sending a wide jet of water straight into FD's front deck, threatening life and the vessel. **GATE PADDLES MUST BE OPENED WITH EXTREME CARE**, slowly and only once the paddle is submerged. Even with the front doors closed, a large amount of water entered FD through air vents, soaking the front beds and flooding the rear. With two inches of water in the galley Cook blow his emergency whistle! With the gate paddle closed damage was assessed while the lock gently filled. With sinking averted we continued while Bonio did a magnificent 'water dance', shuffling towels around the galley absorbing the water. The carpets remained wet and smelly for the rest of the week emitting a pervading 'eau de canal'. Cook blew his whistle again when his pans began tipping. Chief diagnosed the "Tankard/Hodges Effect" where both CAMRA members sitting on the same side causes a discernible list! Cherub declared FD safe to continue but the good news was short lived when FD's other toilet was also declared full. A call-out plea to Anglo Welsh delivered clean, dry bedding during a pitstop where Cook dutifully pumped out both toilets as most of the tank contents derived from his fulsome breakfasts, drizzle, branded fruit, caraway and carrot cakes! The delays (aka "adventures") stymied plans for a lunch stop, plus we wanted more time in **Burton-Upon-Trent**, where Francis joined Duloe.

At Burton's Weighbridge Inn micropub, the founder's wife proudly showed us CAMRA gold medal certificates for their Muirhouse beers. After visiting the crowded Devonshire Arms, we ventured into the Constitutional Club (CAMRA welcome), a well-kept secret, to drink fine Bass. A swift 'spoons meal preceded the Burton Bridge Inn. The crew then made their way back, some on foot, others by Über.

### DAY 6

Chief was loaned to Duloe for steering duty and was plied with beer and whisky for his services! FD scarcely missed Chief and moored near the busy **Barton Turn** pub which proudly displayed their GBG 2026 poster and served Brewsters, Wainwright, Pedigree & Limestone beers. A prompt getaway to make good progress to **Fradley Junction**, where the 14-crew dined and savoured more Everards beers in the Swan's beautifully refurbished cellar.

### DAY 7

With help from CRT volunteers, and on our best behaviour, we quickly cleared the locks and Cook's legendary nourishing full English was eaten on-the-move to **Rugeley**. The Vine Inn brew pub quenched thirsts with their Session IPA, Blonde, Grapefruit IPA & tasty Imperial Stout. Slowly cruising back to **Great Haywood** against a tide of weekend boaters, Cherub skilfully reversed into the boatyard with Duloe mooring alongside. We dined at the Clifford Arms (GBG 2026) enjoying Bass, Wye Valley, Adnams, Wainwright & TT Landlord beers. Cherub's chum Tim joined us to be regaled with tales of criminal damage, unusable lavatories and malicious flooding.

### DAY 8

(Monday 29/9/25) - Cook's final breakfast of scrambled egg with tomatoes and beans was demolished as the boats were cleared, checked and handed over with a small refund for unused fuel and surprisingly no fine for wet carpets. The crew departed with jamboree bags of homemade sausage rolls, cakes and other goodies.

Overall we cruised 40 hours 50 minutes, averaging six hours 18 minutes a day. Dry bright weather persisted with only drizzle on Cook's excellent cake. The crew hinted they'd enjoyed themselves and might even come again!

**Cherub (Mr. Broberg)**  
(as edited by Cook), October 2025

# Headscratcher No. 102 Results



The winner of Headscratcher No 102 was **Norman Donachie** and the draw was made by Garry Hollis, landlord of The Herbert Wells, Woking.

Correct answers were also received from Ted Alleway, Ian Amy, John Barker, Dennis Batty, Phil & Rose Bell, Hilary Clare, Barry Cox, Jane Cox, Jim Davies, Jennifer Davis, John Dodd, Richard Draper, Roger Grant, Bob Heaps, Gary Hinds, John Hook, Maria James, Ian Johnson, Terry Lavell, Andy Lobban, Iain Murray, Roger Thurston, Chris Truin, Allan Turner, Alan Welsh.

There were 2 incorrect entries.

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## IS YOUR PINT NOT A PINT? UNHAPPY ABOUT THE QUALITY?

Should you be served with a pint that you feel is a short measure, always ask for a top up. If you feel that reasonable requests for a legal measure are not being honoured, you should contact Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 03454 040506

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Please let us know for our records.

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# Farnham Beerex 2026





## FARNHAM BEEREX 2026

23-25 April 2026 | Farnham Maltings

### Drinking for Charity

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



FARNHAM BEEREX is a FARNHAM LIONS CLUB CIO event run in association with CAMRA

**FARNHAM BEEREX** is our great annual beer festival, first held in 1977 then every year, apart from the pandemic years and 2026 is the 48th event. There is plenty for all to enjoy, whether regulars or newcomers. It's a great occasion for meeting up with family and friends, enjoying good company and music along with a selection of over 100 Real Ales, Ciders, Perries and a larger Craft Bar.

Beerex has moved on over the years and while there have been a few changes we have not forgotten what makes it such a great event.

- A commemorative clear Beerex polyglass
- This year there will be a number of limited availability beers starting with 'Thursday specials' - *when they're gone, they're gone*
- Friday lunchtime will still be band free with tables and chairs in the Main Hall and drinking up until 3:30pm
- Bands will perform at the other sessions
- The Saturday lunchtime session will close 30 minutes later at 3:30 pm
- All ticket purchasers will receive a link to download the programme from 16<sup>th</sup> April.

- A number of hard copies will be available as well as separate beer and cider lists.
- Street food vendors will be offering a range of food styles outside the Maltings.
- There will again be a CAMRA stand, where we will be offering **two free pints** at Beerex 2026 for any **NEW MEMBERS** who join on the day. Come along and talk to us, we like to talk about beer/cider pubs and clubs.

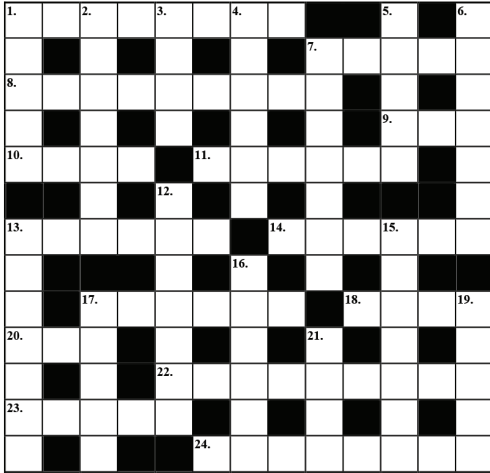
Please note, Beerex is run in association with the Farnham Lions Club CIO so free entry is not available to CAMRA members.

Tickets are available now and Beerex welcomes card payments at the event.

To see session times and to order your Entrance Tickets please visit:  
[www.farnhambeerex.org.uk](http://www.farnhambeerex.org.uk)

Cheers!

# Headscratcher No. 103



Prize: £20

## Clues for Headscratcher No.103

### Down

1. March winds bring a good luck spell. (5)
2. Digging reveals more than one well. (7)
3. Fish were found in a well in Germany. (4)
4. The alien used new musical compositions. (6)
5. Short trees are replanted. (5)
6. Attached to an eccentric redhead. (7)
7. A biblical temptress. (7)
12. To hate speed is extraordinary. (7)
13. To refrain from voting is a black mark. (7)
15. Living primarily on gin starts getting a craving. (7)
16. The caller was transferred to the wine store. (6)
17. The large reconstruction is fit for a king. (5)
19. Dispatches the remnants after Sunday. (5)
21. Performs in Cats. (4)

### Across

1. Rebuilding this cloister could be more expensive. (8)
7. A disturbed adder can cause great fear. (5)
8. Changing the dart venue is a risky undertaking. (9)
9. He's changed to another gender. (3)
10. Travelling around Rome give something extra. (4)
11. An emblem of French immorality. (6)
13. Friends are everyone that is special. (6)
14. Put to sea when Delia's back. (6)
17. This sword is in bad repair. (6)
18. Guns upset animals. (4)
20. This article appeared initially in the first two hundred editions. (3)
22. Widespread elections will provide a choice. (9)
23. I am turning to the opening of Great Expectations for a mental picture. (5)
24. Find time in the newspapers to give warnings of things about to happen. (8)

**Closing date for entries is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**  
 All correct entries will be entered into a prize draw and the winners printed in the next edition (unless requested otherwise).. Entries to:  
**William Hill, Pendennis, Frimley Road,  
 Ash Vale, Surrey GU12 5NN**

Name

Address

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