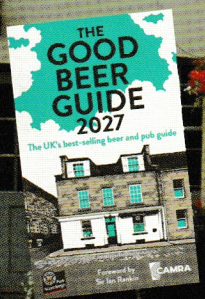
News & Ale

FREE
Summer/
Autumn 2026
No. 159

Crown, Horsell wins Surrey Pub of the Year 2026





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News & Ale

Issue No. 159

The current economic conditions are very difficult for the pub trade. In Pub Clips you will read about three places where the people running the establishments have decided to call it a day. The Happy Man at Englefield Green was the North Surrey 2026 pub of the Year so it is a huge loss to that CAMRA branch. The micro pub Growlers and Cans is another sad loss for the Surrey/Hants Borders branch of CAMRA. CAMRA has been lobbying the Government to help the pub trade and the campaigning article in this magazine reveals some help the government is going to give to the pub trade.

In this issue you can also read about the adventures of the Beery Boaters on the UK canals they have biannual trips each year and will welcome new crew members." to "In this issue you can also read about the adventures of the Beery Boaters on the UK canals. They have biannual trips and will welcome new crew members. Cheers.

Ed

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9 Finway, Dallow Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 1TR
Tel No: 0330 153 9924
E-mail: **camra@camra.org.uk**
Web: **www.camra.org.uk**

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newsandale@shb.camra.org.uk

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CAMRA'S **Political Campaigning**

CAMRA does not support any particular political party; however, we are very much a political organisation as the policies and decisions of whatever party is in government will significantly shape the beer and pub sector.

CAMRA has therefore recently launched a report 'Beer in the UK', which is a comprehensive and authoritative report on the state of the UK beer market. It shows how independent brewers are being excluded from bars across the UK and sets out the case for Competition and Markets Authority action.

The report lays bare the stark state of British brewing, highlighting that:

- The industry is dominated by four international conglomerates with little affinity with our brewing heritage, or what beer drinkers want.
- Seven of the top ten selling 'craft beers' in the UK are made by just four global brewing conglomerates.
- Many of the UK's favourite 'continental' and 'import' lagers are brewed in the UK.
- Data from the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) shows that the demand for independent beer is 280% higher than the share that they have of the pub market.

Our main 'demand' is for the Competition and Markets Authority to launch a Market Investigation into the UK on-trade beer market. The report is all about why we support independent brewers over 'big beer'. We know we are being lied to about UK beer, and we want more people to know how independent breweries are being squeezed out of the market.

The full report can be found on the CAMRA Website, here **camra.org.uk/beer-report**

Over the summer there have been two major announcements by the Government which we broadly welcome. In July, one of the new Prime Minister's first policy announcements was to give a 20% cut to business rates for pubs and clubs from next April. This was a great start providing vital breathing space to pubs.

Then at the end of August the Government finally announced they are launching a review into the way business rates are calculated for pubs, that will hopefully lead to reforming the current, deeply unfair system.

This is something we have been lobbying for, for many years.

Businesses in England are required to pay a tax to their local council based on the value of the property that they occupy – these are called business rates. Pubs currently pay 2.8% of the business rates bill but only account for 0.5% of total business turnover, which is an overpayment of around £500 million by the sector each year.

Pubs have suffered for far too long under the current ratings system, which creates the ridiculous situation where global giants pay less per square metre for warehousing than a licensee does for their pub.

In responding to the announcement of the review CAMRA called it "another promising step from the new Government" though the real difference will of course be dependent on the results. Hopefully, there will be fundamental changes to the out-of-date ratings system and publicans will have the certainty and incentive to grow their businesses.

Hampton Estate to stop producing hops

At the end of August Hampton Estate announced they are ceasing hop growing entirely and that this year will be their final hop harvest.

This is really sad and devastating news as Hampton were one of the last traditional Surrey hop growers and supplied a number of local breweries, including Hogs Back and Crafty Brewing. Their exit means Surrey now has no commercial hop farms left, unless Hogs Back's hop garden is counted.

Breweries such as Hogs Back, who source half of their hops from Hampton, will need to replace Hampton's hops with similar varieties which may of course impact recipes and flavour.

Kevin Travers

Chairman's **Report**

Welcome to this Autumn edition of News & Ale. What a scorching summer that was, I hope you managed to get out and support our local pubs, they certainly need our support. One effect of our hot summer is likely to be a smaller grain harvest which in turn will drive up prices meaning we can expect an increase to the cost of a pint. Only yesterday I heard about a pub in a neighbouring branch that suddenly closed its doors. This was what I thought was a successful pub, surrounded by lots of houses, easily accessible by public transport, it held regular beer festivals and seemed to be popular with both locals and those from further afield. The pub wasn't particularly cheap so I would have thought that the landlord would be making enough to survive, sadly this doesn't seem to be the case.

CAMRA recently published its report on the state of the British brewing industry. In 1980 the UK produced almost 12 billion pints of beer a year. British-owned breweries made 96% of it. Today we brew two thirds of that, and four foreign-owned corporations make 80% of that. Foreign sounding lagers are nearly all brewed in the UK, four corporations are making sure you drink what they want to sell, not what you want to buy. Three-quarters of our beer used to come from six brewers, all of which were, by 2008, in the hands of four large corporations – AB-InBev, Heineken, Carlsberg and Molson Coors. These went on to acquire others, such as Marston's of Burton-on-Trent, Banks's of Wolverhampton, Wells of Bedford and Young's of Wandsworth.

Several other important brewers are also foreign-owned. Greene King is part of a Chinese property firm; Tennent's belongs to an Irish brand brokerage; and Fullers, with others, is owned by the Japanese brewer, Asahi. Barcelona-based Damm brews in Bedford. The largest British-owned brewer is Guinness, now owned by London-based Diageo, though still seen as Irish. The biggest independent was BrewDog, UK brewing's most significant 21st century success story, until it was bought in March by an American firm, for a knockdown price. Of the 3,750 or so small independent breweries founded since 1980, fewer than half have survived, and their combined share of the UK beer market is only around 7%, despite consumer surveys suggesting this would increase to 20% if retailers were free to buy the beers that their customers prefer.

CAMRA is as important now as it was back in the 1970's and 80's, if we let things continue as they are pubs will close and beer choice will become limited. If you are not a member of CAMRA please consider joining us, we are the largest single issue campaigning organisation in the UK. With your help and support we can fight this invasion of foreign conglomerates and restore British beer and breweries as world class once again.

Ian Johnson
Chairman SHB CAMRA

Branch **Presentations**

Kingston and Leatherhead Presentations

The Best of the Season
great days out ending at our Pub of The Season

Good beer, good pubs and good company: life can be simple, and with the right weather it brings out the best of the season. While the heat postponed our midweek stroll between Wandsworth Town and Putney Bridge to Friday 31st July, it still launched three excellent days enjoying Southwest London's pubs at their best. This was an eagerly anticipated event - Stephen Burt's view that he had "been looking forward to this crawl for months" captured the general feeling. So, we began at Sambrook's Brewery, where owner Duncan Sambrook and Derek Prentice, the former Young's brewer, kindly said hello to us as we started with great beer and pretty good pizza. From there we made our way, by various direct and indirect routes and pubs, to Wetherspoon's Rocket alongside the Thames, where the Surrey Hills Three Peaks was excellent.



Drawing at the Bricklayers

Next came a perennial favourite, the Bricklayers Arms, where five beers had to be tried, then crossed the river at Putney Bridge into Fulham and onto the King's Arms, the only Wadworth pub in London, with its pleasant inner courtyard on a very warm afternoon. Finally, we moved on to the more traditional Eight Bells, for a range of beers (and a CAMRA discount).

On Monday, 3rd August, we reassembled for a Quiet Pint at one of my favourites, The Mitre in Richmond. It was a lovely afternoon with a very pleasant crew: some fifteen of our members, several from our host branch, Richmond and Hounslow, plus Rudi the pub dog and the pub's very kind staff. The afternoon highlighted how excellent company, and good beer turns a pleasant visit into a memorable experience.

Please see our Facebook page for more detail and evidence, all excellently maintained by Keith Richardson. Pictured however, is a sketch by German artist Lara Czielinski, who observed our handsome group of CAMRA drinkers in the Bricklayers Arms on Friday, sharing the pleasure of a pint and friendly conversation.

Then on Wednesday, 5th August we focussed on the official Pub of the Season (POTS): The Anglers on the banks of the river in Walton-on-Thames.

Our nomination read: "The pub has recently been taken over by new management, and the beer range and quality have improved considerably. Previously, it was very food-led, and beer quality was indifferent, despite prices being among the highest in the branch. Now beers such as Proper Job, Landlord and Harvey's Sussex are consistently very good and available at under £5 a pint."

We gave our POTS award to Trent Harrison, General Manager for the Morgan pub

company, who was keen to emphasise the family connection. If the pub previously lacked identity, it is certainly gaining one now through Trent's ambition and drive. Having been at the pub for four months, he is bringing energy, a determination to succeed and strong experience from the Victoria in East Sheen - a worthy Pub of The Season!

Trent's focus on customers and what the pub offers them aims to make The Anglers as successful in winter as it is in summer. He is keen to broaden the current offer with live music, cocktails and to refurbish the upstairs space with its riverside view to make The Anglers a destination pub and restaurant. We simply ask that Trent continues to focus the same energy on maintaining beer quality as on delivering a great all-round customer experience!

For the summer, the extended riverside terrace makes for a fine evening, but what mattered most to us was finding good beer in good condition, served in a pub that is once again taking drinkers seriously. Walking home after the award, it felt like exactly the right place to end three cheerful days of good pubs, good beer, and good company — the best of the season in every sense.

Dave Butler
Kingston and Leatherhead Branch Media Contact
Tel: 0773 991 3112
Email: **davidjbutler001@gmail.com**



Presentation at the Anglers

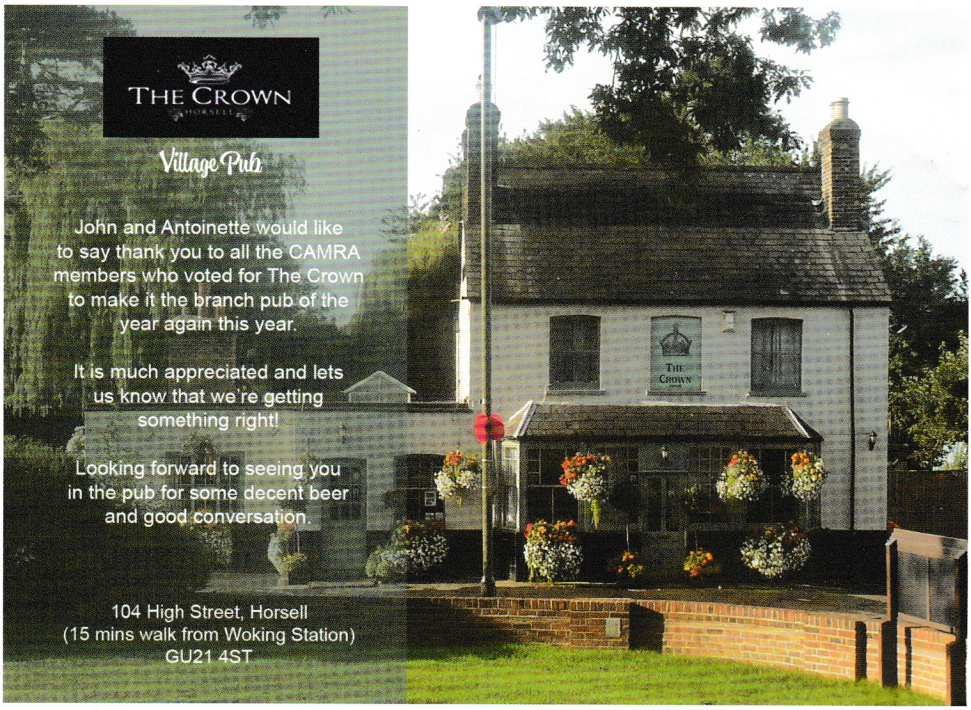
The Crown, Horsell wins Surrey Pub of the Year award

On August 6th members from all four Surrey CAMRA branches gathered at the Crown Horsell to present to Antoinette and John the award for the Surrey pub of the year. The certificate was presented by the CAMRA representative Kevin Travers the Acting Deputy Regional Director (Surrey).

The Crown has previously won the same award in 2019 and 2022 and was the Surrey/Hants Borders branch Pub of the Year in 2026.



Presentation at the Crown



Pub News **Round Up**

BISLEY

Hen & Chickens

This low-beamed pub on main A322 through Bisley Village closed for a major refurbishment in July 2026 and was due to reopen in the middle of September. **Kevin Travers**

BURPHAM

Anchor & Horseshoes

Fantastic pub with a small front and large rear garden, plus ample parking. Greene King Abbot Ale and St. Austell's Tribute are the regular real ales. Recently guest ales were Surrey Hills Greensands IPA and Shere Drop. There is a dartboard and sports screens around the pub, plus a weekly quiz on Wednesdays. **Dylan Thomas**

CAMBERLEY

Four Horseshoes

This pub operates through Heineken's Star Pubs and Bars group, enabling landlady Steph and her team to select from a list of cask ales, usually retaining one in good condition, on a rotating basis. St. Austell's Tribute is often available during the winter months and usually kept in very good condition. Hogs Back Tea was recently popular with some of the regulars. They also stock a range of lagers and ciders, and well chilled Guinness.

There is parking beside and 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, and bar snacks. Well-behaved dogs are welcome. There are regular Karaoke evenings, and live music some weekends, see dates promoted on their Facebook page. **Harry Fish**

CHERTSEY

Coach & Horses

A rare wet-led Fullers local, which also offers en-suite accommodation. Two regular ales are Fullers London Pride and a rarity in these parts, ESB. In July landlady Bev was presented with a Pub of the Year Highly Commended award by local CAMRA Chair Spike. **Laurence 'Spike' Milligan**

Olde Swan Hotel

As the name suggests, this pub also provides en-suite accommodation, which is possibly due to proximity of Chertsey to Thorpe Park. As well as an extensive food menu including lovely pizzas, ales including Tring Side Pocket for a Toad, Timothy Taylor's Landlord and recently Surrey Hills Shere Drop. In addition, there are always a couple of real ciders on offer, and in May they received an award as Highly Commended local Cider Pub of the Year. **LM**

CHURT

The Crossways

In addition to four real ales (Hop Back Crop Circle, Timothy Taylor's Landlord plus at least two guests often from Bowman or Church End). Teresa always has a good range of ciders. The pub's recent beer festival featured some 40 ales, with a few served from the pumps but mostly straight from their casks in the pub cellar. **Mike Andrew**

ENGLEFIELD GREEN

Happy Man

At fairly short notice, this wonderful community local closed on Sunday 16th August 2026. This is a huge loss, as it was our North Surrey 2026 Pub of the Year. It always had a great range of ales and ran several beer festivals a year. We hope that landlord James, manager Frankie and staff including Carmen all the very best in whatever

they do next. Hopefully pubco Stonegate realise what an asset the pub is and reopen it as soon as possible. **LM**

FARNBOROUGH

Prince of Wales

The Prince continues to be a real ale mecca in Farnborough, offering four regular beers supplemented by up to six guests, with the numbers sensibly reducing in the summer to ensure quality is maintained. Most local breweries are supported on a regular basis, with Bowman Swift One and Fuller's Dark Star Hophead always available. The annual beer festival, with up to 70 real ales available, will be held over the weekend of 16th – 18th October, with a CAMRA Branch Social on Saturday afternoon; though expect to see many of us there throughout the weekend!. **Kevin Travers**

FARNCOMBE

Three Lions (Scratchers)

On the main road into Godalming this pub has been in operation for some 300 years and is renowned for its live music. After being closed for over a year, it reopened in June, with the live music being retained and a selection of real ales from Shepherd Neame on offer. **KT**

FARNHAM

Lamb

Closed since July last year, it has been reported in the local press that the pub has finally been sold for auction. There are no details as to who it has been sold to, or what their intentions are, though given the poor state of repair of the building I would be surprised to see it reopen as a pub. **KT**

The Plough

Reopened on 5th June following an extensive refurbishment by Shepherd Neame. The new tenants are making a great effort to bring the pub back to life, with music - blues, jam nights, etc, and improved food offerings - Sunday lunches, steak nights and classic pub food. When I visited their sole cask ale was Spitfire but in very good condition. They had just run out of Creekside Juicy IPA, a 4.0% ABV "pale golden session style with tropical fruit, peach, and orange notes", and were planning to increase their cask offerings. **MA**

Wetherspoons

Despite ongoing delays, Wetherspoon management insist that the former Slug and Lettuce WILL reopen under their auspices. When though, is a different matter as they have owned the premises for a year and a half and in June said that work would begin in July, at the end of which nothing has yet happened. **MA**

The Wheatsheaf

Owned by Shepherd Neame but managed by Stubbings Pub Group, on my two recent visits there was no real ale available at all. **MA**

GUILDFORD

Cannon

Reopened in June 2026 after a five-month closure. This used to be a traditional pub built in 1844 and served as the tap for the long gone Cannon Brewery. It is welcoming to all but doesn't serve real ale and is primarily a student hang out and nightclub with regular DJ sets into the early morning. **KT**

Cricketers

Anthony and Adam recently celebrated two-years at the Cricketers. They have been a fully independent pub since last November and in a pub which is perhaps not a natural real ale venue, have worked hard to promote good quality beer, with regulars such as Fuller's London Pride and Hogs Back TEA, supplemented by a guest beer from the likes of Dorking Brewery. **KT**

Growlers and Cans

Sad news in Guildford, Growlers and Cans has now closed its doors for the last time.

It was a great location for challenging beers and great music. Going to miss the live jazz gigs and vinyl evenings. A certain ex-chairman will greatly miss the opportunities he was given by Max and

Charlie to play his selections of Jazz/Funk and Soul on vinyl on monthly Saturday nights till the early hours and the odd glass of rum. **Mick Bell**

Rodboro Buildings (Wetherspoons)
The pub now serves regular cider, Bag in a Box since May this year (2026). Really enjoyed over this summer - Rum Casked Cider, Lillys Fire Dragon, Blackberries Cider and Weymouth Portland Bill Cider, sadly none of them are real. The Cider Festival that ran across Wetherspoons nationwide seemed to be a hit! **DT**

Sir Ronald Watts
(Wetherspoons at Surrey University)
I visited during the opening week, and enjoyed Westons Old Rosie Cider. I was impressed with the set-up and will be going back in the near future. Buses - No 1, 4 and 5 from Guildford Station stop on the University Campus nearby, or a one-mile walk from Guildford town centre. **DT**

The Star
A 400-year-old pub split into different levels. 1698 Bottle is my personnel choice. A range of Shepherd Neame ales available in draught and bottled form, where bottle-conditioned 1698 is my personal choice. To the rear of the pub is a venue for regular live music/comedy nights and at Christmas an Adult Themed Panto. **DT**

Weyside
Young's pub located by the river Wey which has a stunning outdoor area overlooking the river which is popular with walkers and cyclists through the summer months. I enjoyed Westons Rosie Pig Cider. **DT**

RIPLEY

Seven Stars
This is a pretty country pub, about a mile north from Ripley village. It is situated in attractive countryside and is a pleasant diversion from a walk along the Wey Navigation. Fuller's London Pride and St. Austell's Tribute are the regular real ales, but recently a guest beer from Surrey Hills has been a regular feature. **KT**

SHACKLEFORD

The Cyder House Inn
On Sunday August 2nd Chelsey and Shaun closed the doors of the Cyder House for the last time after eight unforgettable years. They made the difficult decision to leave due to the current economic climate and the challenges facing the hospitality industry. **DT**

SHEPPERTON

Barley Mow
This side street community local is famous for its many and varied musical events, as well as an excellent range of ales with regular Hog's Back TEA and Hop Back Summer Lightning supplemented by guests including Twickenham The Naked Ladies, Wantsum Bullion and Weltons Old Cocky. In June long serving landlord John Keary and his wife Clare were presented with a Special Award for a lifetime promoting real ale, pubs and live music by local CAMRA Rep and regular customer Chris. **LM**

SUNBURY-ON-THAMES

Magpie
Rambling old riverside pub on two levels, with downstairs patio opening onto the terrace overlooking the Thames. There is an extensive up market food menu, and Greene King Magpie Pale Ale and a couple of guests ales including Vocation Bread & Butter and something from Sambrooks. **LM**

THURSLEY

Three Horseshoes
This attractive half-tiled country pub set between Thursley Common and the Devil's Punch Bowl closed suddenly in May for an extensive refurbishment and is due to reopen under new management in the Autumn. **KT**

WEYBOURNE

The Running Stream

Greene King pub owned by the Stubbings Pub Group, this pub continues to provide dark guest beers in addition to three or four Greene King beers and occasional guest bitters or pale ales from independents. On recent visits I have found Theakston's Old Peculier, Triple fff Pressed Rat and Warthog, and Timothy Taylor's/Northern Monk collaboration Northern Rising Unity Stout. Recently they provided another collaboration - Rooster/Theakston's Peculier Assassin. Whilst the beer prices may be a tad high, the food is terrific value, especially if you qualify for the Senior Citizens 20% discount at lunchtimes! **MA**

WINDLESHAM

Bee

The pub only reopened in February last year, under new management, but we have recently been advised that it closed again this Spring 2026, with the tenancy currently available through Stonegate. **KT**

WOOD STREET

White Hart

Good news from Wood Street, where the village has been without a pub since the closure of the White Hart in November last year, followed the closure of the Royal Oak the previous March. Just as News and Ale went to press it was announced that the pub would be reopening on 10th September. It has been completely refurbished and includes a new cellar and kitchen. The new owner, Jeremy Gordeno, who once operated a number of bars and nightclubs in London, is reopening the pub to restore the pub reputation for food that will include traditional pub grub and seasonal À la carte food offerings. **KT**

WRECCLESHAM

The Sandrock

Joanne and Ray White have made significant improvements to the "Rock" since taking over in October. Internal redecoration and improvements to the garden, new more comfortable furniture, good food and most importantly, a fabulous range of eight cask ales, always including a dark beer. Surrey Hills Ranmore and St. Austell Proper Job are regulars. **MA**

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