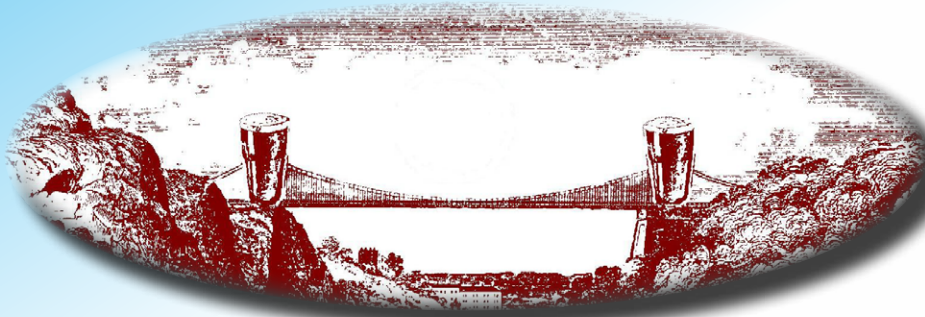


CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year



Campaign
for
Real Ale

FREE
No. 134
Spring/Summer
2023



PINTS WEST

Multi-award-winning magazine of the Bristol & District
and Bath & Borders branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale





PINTS WEST

The multi-award-winning magazine of the Bristol & District branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, plus the Bath & Borders branch

Brought to you entirely by unpaid volunteers

Up to ten thousand copies of Pints West are distributed free to hundreds of pubs in and around the cities of Bristol and Bath ... and beyond

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If you have any pub updates: please enter them via whatpub.com or email details to whatpub@camrabristol.org.uk

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For instance, scanning this one should take you straight to the national CAMRA website (www.camra.org.uk).



And this one should take you straight to an online copy of *Pints West* (www.camrabristol.org.uk/pintswest.pdf).

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name in blue in an article – or in some cases the picture of a pub – clicking on that should take you straight to the WhatPub entry for that pub.

For instance, clicking on this pub name – **Bridge Inn** – or on the photo should take you straight to its entry in WhatPub.

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Cover photo by Steve Reed: see page 40

Love your local?

Make 2023 the Summer of Pub

CAMRA's 'Summer of Pub' campaign is back this year to get as many people as possible enjoying the season of good – or at least better – weather by heading down to their local for a pint.

Summer of Pub is a summer-long campaign to promote pub-going and to highlight the social and cultural importance of the UK's pubs. We will be celebrating how our nation's pubs offer numerous benefits to people's mental and social well-being and play an instrumental role in the communities they serve.

Campaigning to support Britain's pubs is something anyone can get involved in and can be as simple as stepping out the door and taking a stroll to a local. If you can encourage some friends or family to join you, then all the better. Drinking cheap supermarket booze at home does little to improve your life – but change that setting to the social environment of a pub and you can increase your happiness, make friends and connect with others in your local community, while still enjoying the tipples of your choice.

The nation-wide campaign is running from the early-May Bank Holiday, and closing in September to coincide with the launch of the *Good Beer Guide*. Everyone is urged to make the most of this summer by joining in with Summer of Pub however they can.

This is a difficult time for the trade. It is vital we give them all the support we can, so that we can continue to enjoy everything that makes our nation's pubs so special for many summers to come. If your

CAMRA's Summer of Pub 2023



*Join us down the pub
this summer*

idea of a perfect summer involves a pint and a beer garden, then get involved, and start your Summer of Pub.

So head down to the pub, make friends and memories, and – most importantly – shout about how much you love your local this summer.

Pints West: CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year 2023

Pints West is officially the best CAMRA branch magazine, having been awarded first place in the 2023 competition at the CAMRA Members' Weekend in Sheffield at the end of April.

Regular readers will know that this is not the first time that the Pints West team of volunteer writers, led by editor Steve Plumridge, have been recognised for the quality and mix of articles covering Bristol, Bath and districts' pub and brewery news and CAMRA's campaigns locally and nationally. This is Pints West's sixth overall win since 2002 (with several other awards for 'most improved', 'highly commended' and 'runner-up' since 2001).



There are over 200 CAMRA branches, most of which publish magazines (find links online to them at camra.org.uk/publications/internal-publications/branch-magazines), and competition is strong. Congratulations to all the volunteer researchers, writers and photographers who make Pints West such an engaging read, and to Steve for his editing and design skills. Pints West can be found in hundreds of pubs and other outlets in the



branch area thanks to the many volunteers who give up their time to collect and distribute it; copies also find their way to pubs and beer festivals further afield, and to postal subscribers all over the country.

Pints West has to be self-financing, so particular thanks go to all our advertisers over the years, and especially for those who have supported us post-pandemic, without whom Pints West could not be published. Getting the word out is key, so we are particularly grateful to the pubs that act as distribution hubs: the [Cornubia](#) and [Lime Kiln](#) in central Bristol, the [Parish Pump](#) in Worle near Weston-super-Mare, and the [Royal Oak](#) in Twerton, Bath.

Lesly Plumridge

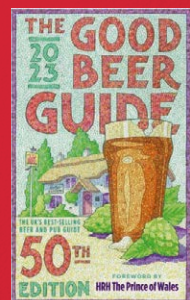
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PUB OF THE YEAR 2022**

Bristol Beer Festival 2023

The provisional dates for the next CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival are Thursday 16 November to Sunday 19 November 2023, to be held once again at City Hall (formerly the Council House), College Green, Bristol. Pop them into your diary now!

The details of tickets etc. will be confirmed in due course, but there was a lot of feedback after the 2022 festival that people wanted more notice of the dates, so this time we are sharing them early.

There was also feedback that some people preferred Brunel's Old Station at Temple Meads as a venue, not least because it is located at a railway station. However, there are currently no indications that this venue will be



available for hire during 2023, so we are moving ahead with plans for another festival at City Hall on College Green.

In light of customer feedback that at the peak of some sessions of the 2022 festival it felt a bit too crowded, the overall number of tickets on sale per session is being reduced. Friday afternoon has long been one of the most popular sessions of the festival and it was a shame that we were not able to run one last time. Some good news is that following discussions with the venue it looks as though we will now be able to run a Friday afternoon session, although the number of tickets will be strictly limited and it should perhaps be considered a VIP event!

Notice of the festival tickets going on sale will be shared first via an email to Bristol & District CAMRA members (including Weston-super-Mare sub-branch) so to avoid missing out make sure that you are signed up as a CAMRA member and that your membership preferences are set to receive emails from your local branch.

Richard Brooks





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Bristol & District Pub of the Year

Each year the Bristol & District branch invites local CAMRA members to nominate pubs for consideration in the branch Pub of the Year competition. The finalists from this nomination stage are then judged against various official CAMRA criteria

(so considering other factors in addition to just the beer) to decide the result. For 2023 the result is that the **Siren's Calling** in Portishead is our branch Pub of the Year and the **Merchants Arms** in Hotwells is the runner-up. Congratulations to both pubs!

Siren's Calling

This is a comparatively new pub that first opened in 2018. In their feedback the pub of the year judges praised the range and quality of the beer at the Siren's Calling. They were also impressed by the community focus of the pub and that it shows initiative in holding a range of beer-related events. The general view was that it is a clean, well-run, real ale-focused independent pub in a prime location right by the Portishead marina.

Andy Holian, owner of the Siren's Calling, said: "This is an incredible achievement for us, a small unassuming bar, operating in a local community and representing all the regulars that support us. Without their ongoing support of the work we do and the events we offer, making it to our fifth anniversary – what with everything thrown at us including residents' revolts, collapsing ceilings, flooding toilets and of course Covid – would never have been possible.

"We have enjoyed offering different experiences and events including the cask-focused 'Bristol Brewery Challenge', blind beer tastings, winter and summer beer festivals, and our ever-popular Oktoberfest weekend, not to mention the ongoing promotion of Belgian beers and brasseries.

"I would like to thank CAMRA for their support and their recognition of the hard work we do, and I would like to make special reference to our local rep Neil Ravenscroft who has spread our name since the day we opened. We have an idyllic setting and we hope that more people will now stop by when walking around the marina and enjoy a beer or two!"



@JonCraig_Photos

Merchants Arms

This is not the first CAMRA award won by the Merchants Arms. Back in 2001 it was awarded what was then the national CAMRA Joe Goodwin Award (now called the Community Local Award) which is given to 'outstanding refurbished street-corner locals'. This year the pub of the year judges considered the Merchants Arms to be a great community local. A welcoming pub with a nice cosy interior and excellent real ale.

Mike Wilkins, owner of the Merchants Arms, said: "It is a great honour to accept the runner-up award for the 2023 Bristol & District Pub of the Year from CAMRA members. I feel it demonstrates that there is still a place in this fantastic industry for a traditional real ale pub: no frills, no machines, no juke box, but a selection of excellent, mainly local cask ales, an eclectic mix of background music and great conversation ... oh, and a roaring log fire in the winter.

"However, that is only half the story of the Merchants. I have the best team I have worked with in my very long career in this trade, brilliant customers and the best local breweries we could hope for. Thank you all for making the Merchants Arms the great pub it is."

Richard Brooks



Orchard Inn: Cider Pub of the Year

This year the branch has awarded Cider Pub of the Year to the **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Spike Island, Bristol.

The presentation on Wednesday 24 May is too late for this edition of *Pints West* but the award will be covered more fully in the next one.

Plastic pints are rubbish!

CAMRA is calling on licensing authorities to allow pubs to use alternatives to plastic pints in collaboration with NGO *A Plastic Planet*

As beer, cider, and perry lovers we're all passionate about quality and there's little that's more disappointing than an otherwise delicious pint being served in plastic. In fact, research by the organisation *A Plastic Planet* found that 75% of consumers say that plastic ruins the taste of beer, with 89% going further and saying that they'd like to see plastic pints banned for good.

You might think that in the face of overwhelming consumer agreement, plastic pints would be heading the way of the plastic straw, with pubs, social clubs, and other venues choosing to move to better alternatives.

However, the on-trade doesn't currently have much of a say in the matter, with licensing authorities across the UK mandating the use of plastic or polycarbonate as a condition of a venue's premises license.

The reasoning, of course, is that plastic pints are needed for public safety. In venues where pints might be dropped or broken no one wants to see consumers hurt by broken glass, but this doesn't mean that plastic is the answer.

Licensing authorities could make a simple change in wording to the licensing conditions they apply to venues where using glass wouldn't be in the interests of public safety. Rather than specifying plastic, licensing could include a wider range of materials or simply give the criteria a material should meet – for example, requiring that beer is served using shatterproof pints.

As it stands, almost 70% of plastic pint cups will end up in landfill or as litter. Plastic cups are the sixth most littered item in UK rivers and eighth most commonly found item on our beaches, so with innovative alternatives being developed all the time, CAMRA is asking why licensees are still being shackled to single-use plastic.

Some high-profile venues and events, including the Oval cricket ground, London's iconic Pickle Factory, and all Live Nation festivals (which include Reading and Leeds, Wireless, Latitude and Download) have all already pledged to go plastic-free and have found alternatives using everything from paper to aluminium to compostable corn starch. As might be expected from a consumer organisation, CAMRA beer festivals have always served beer in glass too. But while these occasional venues are able to lead the way, pubs and social clubs – the undisputed homes of the proper pint – are being left behind.

CAMRA's campaigns director, Nick Boley, said: "CAMRA's members voted at conference to add environmental campaigning to the areas we lobby on and we want to support the innovators who are creating solutions for a plastic-free pint but can't currently market their products to the on-trade."



Sian Sutherland, cofounder of *A Plastic Planet*, says: "It is an outdated and irrational position of licensing authorities to mandate the use of damaging single-use plastic when the sustainable alternatives are readily available. The British public is eager to see change. Venues are being shackled by the narrow specifications handed down from above. The pubs and bars of the UK should be able to drive forward their shared agenda of making sustainable alternatives to plastic the norm."

Your shout

Please address letters to the editor, details on page 2

Little Hop, Swindon

It was good to see that you visited Swindon recently (article 'Ideas for beery days out from Bristol: Swindon' by Vince Murray in the last issue of *Pints West*) and I hope you enjoyed it as much as you seemed to.

I would however like to clarify a couple of things about the [Little Hop](#). It actually isn't partly owned by Arbor, it is entirely independent and is the little sister of the [Hop Inn](#) (Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA pub of the year). Also it doesn't open until 4pm on Fridays.

You could have, with better local knowledge, have broken your walk between the two clusters of pubs by popping in the [Beehive](#). It's easy to find if you're local but easy to miss if you're not. What you may find a bit irritating is that you were literally 100 yards away from it on some point of your trek.

Just to finish, the [Hop Inn](#) also has six box ciders available, most, if not all, from the CAMRA-approved list.

Hope to see you again soon. Excellent publication, by the way.

Cheers,
Gary Hazell,
Barman, Hop Inn, Swindon.



"Longer-term, CAMRA will be calling for plastic pints to be included in the bans on single-use plastic being rolled out by governments across the UK, to ensure that our nation isn't clogged with littered plastic pints and that we can always enjoy real ale, cider and perry without the taste of plastic."

"For one area of government to be mandating the use of plastic, while other areas of government look at banning it, is ridiculous and we want to see a more joined-up approach to this issue."

BAD Ladies

visiting Bemmie newbies

Bristol and District Ladies Who Love Beer, aka BAD Ladies, are a group of CAMRA women who meet up once every couple of months to socialise, share a beer or cider, and learn more about brewing and the brewing community.

Our first trip of 2023 was an exploration of new breweries and ventures in Bedminster ("Bemmie"), Bristol. Around 14 of us gathered at our first venue, **On Point Brew Co**, a brewery and taproom tucked away in a small industrial unit on Herbert Street. The brewery was set up in the spring of 2022; the taproom is a more recent venture that, on the day, was still not officially open and selling beer at the bar. Brewer Ollie Dent was kind enough to meet us specially, give us a tour of the brewery, and explain his history and future plans.

Ollie has about 15 years previous experience brewing, including with Fierce & Noble in St Werburghs and Celtic Experience. He had some interesting tales to tell about how he established this brewery, including acquiring unused Brains' fermenting vessels he spotted in a field near Cheltenham. The brewery's popular brew *Sun Up*, a session IPA at 4.5%, is available in many Bristol pubs, and we were given a tasting.

Taking us further into the brewery Ollie showed us the range of wooden casks where more experimental ales are conditioned, and where differences in wild yeasts, temperatures and the nature of the casks themselves (the timber and the previous contents, e.g. sherry, wine or whisky) produce beers of a very complex character and unpredictable final flavour.

Small but perfectly formed, we look forward to the On Point taproom opening in the near future.



Ollie Dent at On Point, special wooden casks in the background

We then went on to visit the **Grain Alchemist** situated in a small industrial unit in the Windmill Farm business centre on Bartley Street, just off Philip Street. This is a brewery and tap that has grown out of Mitch Du Venage and Arno Rohlandt's brewing hobby and, at the time we visited, had been officially open for around four months. The two South African friends have other full-time jobs which they fit their brewing around, so the taproom is only open Friday nights and Saturdays.

We tried their *Coast to Calypso* IPA at 4.6% and their *Midnight Sunshine*, a coffee porter at 6%, both of which were well reviewed by the BAD Ladies as we drank watching the Six Nations rugby. Beers from other breweries were also on sale, and we tried *Promises I Made Myself*, an alcohol-free IPA from the now sadly closed Newton Park brewery.

We had wanted to visit **Bruhaha**, a new nanobrewery, but their pop-up taproom wasn't in Bedminster on the day so we finished off our trip at the **Alpha Bottle Shop and Tap**, located in a former hairdressers



BAD Ladies at the Alpha Bottle Shop

in Imperial Arcade at the bottom end of East Street, where we tried a whole range of different bottles and some beer on tap. Notable here were *Taurus*, a damson sour at 4.7% by Wild Card Brewery in Walthamstow; *Juxt*, a very delicious pastry stout at 5% by Unity Brewing; and *Lost in Music*, a New England hazy IPA at 6% from DEYA Brewing in Cheltenham.

The overall impression we gained was there is a lot going on brew-wise in Bedminster, so it will be worth a repeat visit soon.

We have an ongoing series of events that take place as usual on Saturday afternoons from around 2 till 6pm. If you'd like to join us just turn up; no need to book.

● **Sat 10 Jun: A trip around the Harbour.** Meet 2pm at the **Kings Head** in Victoria Street (BS1 6DE). We'll move on using the ferry to visit some notable historic harbourside pubs.

● **Sat 16 Sep: Cardiff explorer.** Meet at Temple Meads for the 13:23 service (GWR timetable tbc) to Cardiff Cathays to start from the **Andrew Buchan** in Albany Road (CF24 3LH).

● **Sat 18 Nov: Kingsdown and St Michael's Hill.** Meet at 2pm at the **Green Man** in Alfred Place (BS2 8HD) before visiting a couple more venues.

You can find out more by looking at the detailed programme on the BAD Ladies page on the Bristol & District branch website:

www.camrabristol.org.uk/ladies.html

You can also find out more by following @CAMRA_BADLadies on Twitter.

Bianca Ambrose

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Shine on Long Ashton (and Ashton)

For the spring 2004 edition ([Pints West 61](#) if you want to check your back catalogue), the editor – a dashing young chap whose name escapes me – asked me to visit Long Ashton to report on the pubs there. I've been many times since, but we thought it might be worth returning formally to see what, other than my waist measurement, has changed.

The first thing to note is that the village of Long Ashton boasts one pub fewer, with the former Robin Hood's Retreat (then simply the Retreat) on Providence Lane already in the process of converting to a restaurant even then.

Not far further along Providence Lane is:

The Miners Rest

42 Providence Lane, Long Ashton, BS41 9DJ



High above the village, on the quiet residential road towards Failand, the Miners Rest is a gem of a pub that is still welcoming drinkers even though it was rumoured in 2004 that it was to be sold to developers. There is covered outdoor seating at the front. The interior, though well-maintained, is otherwise little changed, with three linked rooms and a real fire near the bar. These days Butcombe Original is the real ale on offer. The pub is open all day, offering lunchtime food and the most magnificent views across North Somerset.

Down the vertiginous hill into the village of Long Ashton and turn right and you will soon come across:

The Bird in Hand

17 Weston Road, Long Ashton, BS41 9LA



In 2004 the cellar had just been refurbished, and consequently the Bass and Wells Bombardier were reported as being in tip-top condition. From my notes I confess I found the pub a little quiet (I actually said 'dour') back then. Not any more! When I went back this time I found a bustling, lively community two-roomed pub with a refreshing cheeriness. It's worth noting that the pub opens at 4pm Tuesday to Thursday, and not on a Monday, but opens all day over the weekend.

St Austell Hicks and Tribute sat alongside Otter Amber when I visited on a rainy spring day. Hicks reminds me of out-of-season holidays in Cornwall, with its all-pervading maltiness and tawny colouring, and was a firm favourite during my formative years. And it certainly didn't disappoint here. The Bird in Hand is very active on social media so it is well worth checking for special events, menus and the like.

Heading back towards Bristol, the last building on the right before Ashton Court Estate is:

The Angel Inn

172 Long Ashton Road, Long Ashton, BS41 9LT



In 2004, this was a late 15th-century former coaching inn and in 2023, er, I guess it still is. In 2004, however, this was a really good place to drink Smiles Best Bitter. In fact, if you look at the sign on the north-east-facing outer wall you can still make out the old Smiles logo. They also had Bass and Courage Best in those days too. Bass is still here, but is now supplemented by St Austell Tribute, Sharp's Doom Bar, Butcombe Original and Otter Bitter. The building's enduring charm is still very much apparent, with a real fire, oak doors and the sun-trap courtyard where in 2004 the swallows had just returned for the summer.

About a quarter mile further back towards Bristol is:

The Ashton

Ashton Lane, Long Ashton, BS41 9LX



2004 found this sprawling pub in the middle of a period trading as the Dovecote, though it had previously been named the Smyth Arms, after the family who owned the adjacent Ashton Court Estate. Already there was a significant focus on the needs of diners and, name change notwithstanding, that is still the emphasis today.

There is a light, airy feel throughout, although the front of the building – part of the original property – has a cosier, more intimate feel. A wide range of menu options available for diners (booking recommended), and a very pleasant pint of St Austell Tribute.

Although those were the only pubs covered in 2004, this time I did take advantage of being in the area – and not being the designated driver – to run a swift but supportive eye over some other local pubs:

The Coopers Arms

12-13 Ashton Road, Ashton, BS3 2EA



A Victorian single-bar pub periodically known as 'The Office', situated near the old Ashton Brewery, and therefore near the Bristol Beer Factory, and very popular on Bristol City and Bristol Bears match days. Doom Bar on offer here but the pub doesn't open till 3:30 on weekday afternoons.

The Rising Sun

21 Ashton Road, Ashton, BS3 2EA

Also popular among sports fans for its proximity to Ashton Gate, the Rising Sun is a much larger pub, with an emphasis on live sport on the TV. Only reopened in 2022 after a period closed, and offering two or three real ales. Tribute and Sharp's Doom Bar continue their quests for ubiquity, alongside Old Speckled Hen when I visited.



The Robins

Ashton Drive, Ashton, BS3 2PW

On the other side of Ashton, towards the Sainsbury's superstore, is another traditional 'football' pub. It has the look of a 1960s estate pub but has been popular with the Fans after whom it is named for many a long year. On my visit the resident Doom Bar was sadly not available.

Duncan Shine



Tickets now on sale for the Great British Beer Festival 1-5 August 2023

The Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) is one of the biggest, most exciting and well-known annual events in the beer and cider world dating back to 1977. Organised by CAMRA and staffed by thousands of beer loving volunteers, it brings hundreds of UK beers, international beers and real ciders and perries under the iconic Olympia London roof.

GBBF is also home to the prestigious Champion Beer of Britain award, with the winners announced on Tuesday afternoon during the trade and press session.

As well as the huge range of drinks on offer, you can enjoy a varied selection of street food and snacks. Entertainment is also included as part of the ticket price with live music in the afternoons and evenings.

Why not test your skill on a variety of traditional pub games, and browse the festival shops for pub books and CAMRA merchandise. Want to learn more about beer? Visit our 'Learning and Discovery' stall to quench your thirst for knowledge.

We've invited some amazing breweries to join us with Brewery Bars, to serve you their great beers direct. We will also be offering wine, gin and coffee for those looking for a little break from all things beer.



Tuesday 1 August	12:00 - 17:00	(trade session)
Tuesday 1 August	17:00 - 22:30	(public session)
Wednesday 2 August	12:00 - 22:30	
Thursday 3 August	12:00 - 22:30	
Friday 4 August	12:00 - 22:30	
Saturday 5 August	12:00 - 19:00	

For more info and to buy tickets visit: gbbf.org.uk

Wild West Cider

It's sad that so many orchards are not being used these days owing, at least in part, to the increased use of imported concentrate by the larger manufacturers of cider, so it is always good news when another cider-maker starts up to try and make use of them. One such producer is Wild West Cider, over at Failand Farm, run by Matt Stephenson and Sean Beaton.

Matt moved into the farm in 2016 and originally planted 3,200 vines in order to make mostly white wine but, circa 2018, realised that much of the same equipment can be used to make cider and expanded the venture. Use is made of existing orchards but, for independence, two certified-organic orchards have been planted on the farm, one with 100 standard trees and another with 650 bush trees, both containing a variety of cider apples plus some perry pears. An EU-funded 'LEADER' grant was obtained to part-fund the purchase of equipment and the conversion of an old agricultural barn into a clean, temperature-controlled environment.



Current production is around 5,000 litres per year, some of which is produced using the technique of keeving, whereby nutrients are removed from the juice by getting them to bind to the pectins and float to the top [see associated article]. Other ciders are produced using the method of regular racking during fermentation, which again removes nutrients and causes the fermentation to slow and ultimately stop early. Consequently, many of their ciders are low-alcohol and sweet. The ABV range is 2.9-4% for the keeved ciders, 6% for the non-keeved drier ciders. They have also produced a range of traditional method sparkling ciders, aged on the lees for a minimum of 18 months, which will be released later this year.

As can be seen in the photograph, theirs is not a "traditional" setup but all squeaky clean with stainless steel variable-capacity tanks, only some of which are shown. In fact some of the equipment, including the press, is shared with Wilding Cider who are based near Chew Magna.

Aside from the keeving aspect of the cider-making process, theirs is a low-intervention ethos: no sulphite, wild fermentation, no pasteurisation, no dilution, no force carbonation. All cider goes into 750ml bottles. The cider undergoes a final fermentation in the bottle, just enough to give it a fine sparkle. They also go to the laborious effort of disgorging the yeast as is done with champagne. This involves laying the bottles in riddling racks with the bottles slightly tilted downwards so that the yeast will settle down to the cap. Eventually, the necks are chilled enough to freeze the yeast into a plug which is removed with the cap. After a small top-up of cider, the bottle is recapped.

They are continually trying out new blends and have already won two gold awards in the influential 'Taste of the West' competition.



Wild West Cider-makers Matt Stephenson and Sean Beaton

Given that they supply in champagne-style bottles, their market demographic is not pint-drinkers, a market dominated by larger-scale producers. Their market is direct via the web (www.wildwestcider.co.uk), shops (e.g. Grape & Grind, Corks, Native Vine, Cider Box, plus others), and fairs and events (e.g. North Somerset Show, BBC Good Food Show, Eat Festivals, Clevedon Sunday market).

Martin Campling

CAMRA campaigns for real cider and perry



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Real cider is made from fresh apple juice, and real perry is made from fresh pear juice. Naturally fermented and free from concentrate or artificial processing.

To find out more visit:
camra.org.uk/cider

Keeving, the science and art

Cider has a tendency to ferment out to full dryness, that is, to have no residual sugar. There are a number of techniques that may be employed to end up with a cider that still contains sugar and probably the most unusual is the process of keeving. It's a technique that is used to create sweet, low-alcohol and usually sparkling ciders without the use of filtration or pasteurisation. Essentially, it's a technique for reducing the amount of yeast, nutrient and pectin from the freshly-pressed juice.

Frequently used in the Brittany and Normandy regions of France, it is now being used by more than a few small and medium-scale cider-producers in the UK. The term "keeve" seems to have been first used in 1775 but whereas it was then used to refer to the vessel in which the process takes place, it now is used to refer to the process itself.

As with all cider, the keeving process starts with apples; but not just any apples. It requires a slow fermentation and so the apples used generally come from older orchards that have low nutrient levels and are harvested late in the season (October at the earliest) and possibly allowed to mature further in storage. The apple varieties used tend to be bittersweets, with a fairly low acidity (pH 3.5 to 3.7) and medium to high tannin levels.



The "chapeau brun", floating on the surface of the tanks

After milling, the pulp is often left for a few hours. The cell walls break down and release pectin. Oxidation also browns the fruit, resulting in a juice that is a deep colour. The juice pressed out from the macerated pulp is fermented at a temperature of between 6 and 12°C, though 8-10°C is the generally accepted target range. Naturally-present wild yeasts are preferred since commercial ones tend to lead to too rapid a fermentation. Ideally, the vessel used for the ferment should be translucent to be able to observe the process.

The next stage is the keeve. This is where pectin esterase enzymes cause changes to the molecular structure of the pectins allowing them to bind to calcium ions. A gel forms (the so-called 'brown hat' but which sounds better in French – "chapeau brun") which is slowly pushed to the top of the vessel by the carbon dioxide released by the fermentation. Not only does this remove a lot of the pectins but also some of the nutrients, caused by the binding of the positively-charged nutrients to the negatively-charged pectins. This also takes some of the yeast with it, resulting in a very slow fermentation. Some of the pectin also combines with proteins and tannins and falls to the bottom. The process can take anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks and can happen naturally but, these days, the process is helped along by the addition of commercially-available pectin methyl esterase (PME), followed by calcium chloride salt. In olden times, chalk and table salt were used – not things one would normally think of throwing into cider!

The result is a very slowly fermenting middle layer that has a low yeast count and low nutrient levels. This is carefully drawn off for further fermentation. A later racking off the lees may be required to slow it down even more.

Such keeved ciders are often bottled in champagne-style bottles in which a small amount of further fermentation produces a light sparkle. However, owing to the now unfavourable conditions, fermentation should stop in the bottle, leaving a final product which is low-alcohol and quite sweet.

The entire process is labour-intensive and rather unpredictable even for the most experienced cider-maker; not all attempted keeves work. It's also wasteful of juice. However, the method produces cider with a different flavour profile than a non-keeved version.

Martin Campling

Find the most comprehensive list of real cider and perry in the UK

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Visit camra.org.uk/cider



Bristol Pubs Group

The Bristol & District CAMRA Pubs Campaigning Group (Bristol Pubs Group for short) was formed in response to the growing number of pubs in the Bristol area closing or being drastically altered. The Group was launched in 2008 with the support of local councillors, members of the trade and the media.

Web: www.camrabristol.org.uk/pubsgroup Email: bristolpubsgroup@camrabristol.org.uk

Our aims are simple. Bristol Pubs Group will:
Promote the use of community pubs.
Campaign against closure of pubs that could be viable.
Campaign against insensitive alterations.



Reprieve for Merchants Arms, Stapleton

There is currently no justification for allowing a change of use for the **Merchants Arms** in Stapleton. So ruled the Planning Inspectorate who rejected an appeal for change of use on 21st March, just over two years since the latest planning application was submitted.

Many readers will know, at least from passing by, the imposing Art Deco style pub that sits on the banks of the Frome, adjacent to Eastville Park. Some will recall drinking there before it was closed in December 2016 following its sale by Greene King to a local property developer: a man who apparently does not believe that pubs have any place in residential areas. The Merchants Arms served the local community for almost 80 years and until the last was a popular and much loved 'local'.

Built by the Merchant Venturers in 1938 specifically to service the newly built Colston Estate, the opening ceremony was a gala event, attended by the 'great and good' of the Corporation and local dignitaries, including the Master Warden of the Merchant Venturers, who performed the opening ceremony.

Designed by renowned local architect Richard James, commissioned by Georges Brewery (who operated the pub for many years before the business was sold to Courage), the Merchants Arms was considered to be his best pub, and is mentioned by English Heritage in '**The Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Public House in Bristol**', a report on local inter-war pub architecture. It was given local listing by Bristol City Council in 2018.

The local community association, with support from the Bristol Pubs Group, successfully achieved Asset of Community Value (ACV) listing in 2018 and had already forced the withdrawal of two planning applications before the current application went to appeal.

The current owner, Mr Nasir Muhammad, proprietor of Red Rock Developments Ltd, has unlawfully operated parts of the premises as a 'house in multiple occupation' (HMO) since closing the pub – for the first two years without an HMO licence and throughout without planning consent.

Appeals to the Planning Enforcement Department to stop the unlawful letting early on fell on deaf ears. However, there is now justification for not doing so, and this will be a vital first step if the pub is ever to come back into use.

When the premises were placed on the market, the community association formed a 'community interest company' (CIC) and submitted a bid to buy the pub which was, unsurprisingly, rejected. They were not allowed even a viewing without first proving they had the full asking price of £975,000 – double what Mr Muhammad paid in 2016.

The Planning Inspector had to adjudicate on the two main conditions of Bristol's key planning policy that relates to pubs – DM6, which only allows a change of use if either the pub is shown to be unviable or if there is sufficient alternative provision within reasonable walking distance that can meet the collective needs of the community.

Regarding viability, the Inspector said he could find no justification or rationale for the inflated asking price and felt it was based on a 'hoped-for value' rather than a realistic valuation for the lawful use. He found that the requirement to show 'proof of funds' to be 'a significant barrier to interest' and 'would likely put off some potential buyers.'

He also noted that no substantive evidence had been submitted to show that the pub had not been – nor could be – viable. He found the



The Merchants Arms, Stapleton

over-reliance on the failure to sell as evidence of non-viability to be unconvincing, especially in light of the inflated asking price.

The CIC had commissioned an independent valuation report through the Plunkett Foundation that found evidence in the Valuation Agency Appeals records showing the pub had been trading well prior to closure and was capable of a 'fair maintainable' operating profit of around £70,000 per annum. Despite this, the case officer at Bristol City Council proclaimed himself unable to distinguish between the opposing submissions and so failed to reach any decision or refer the application to a planning committee – resulting in the owner appealing to the Planning Inspectorate on grounds of non-determination.

Both the CIC and the Bristol Pubs Group had argued that there was no alternative provision within reasonable walking distance, and that 800 metres was the standard distance. The applicants tried to convince the inspector that 1,200 metres was the correct distance but this was rejected. The inspector ruled there was no alternative provision within reasonable walking distance.

The applicants had failed to show they could meet either of the tests in policy DM6 to justify change of use and the application was therefore rejected.

The Bristol Pubs Group had, through meetings with Bristol's Head of Planning, persuaded the Planners to clarify the details of the criteria by which change of use planning applications for pubs would be judged, and this resulted in a detailed 'Practice Note'.

So where do we go from here? There is no longer any excuse for Bristol City Council not to take enforcement action, although the human cost of this will be higher now than if the letting had been nipped in the bud at the outset as people have been living there for six years.

The ACV listing expires in May and we will be applying to renew it, but there is no guarantee the owner will sell to the community association's CIC or that the CIC will be able to raise sufficient funds to purchase and renovate it. A joint venture with an established pub operator might be an option if one can be found.

But the ball remains in Mr Muhammad's court. He has vowed the pub will never reopen and until he changes his approach there is little anyone can do.

The good news is that this is the second clear judgement we have had from the Planning Inspectorate and together they now form a very useful precedent to be quoted in future cases. This, together with the Practice Note will greatly strengthen our hand in challenging any future threats to pubs within Bristol.

Chris Faulkner Gibson

Swinging the axe on developer proposals for the Battleaxes

The **Battleaxes** in the village of Wraxall is located on the B3130 Bristol Road, a mile and a half east of Nailsea, close to the B3128 Clevedon Road and the National Trust-owned Tyntsfild House. It was the last pub left in Wraxall following the closure of the **Old Barn** in 2017 but then itself closed in September 2020 when the Country Pub Group, who owned the Battleaxes and several other pubs, went into administration. It has remained closed ever since.

Bristol Pubs Group became aware of the closure but looked forward to its reopening at some stage in the future. However, the fact that the marketing agents Fleurets were advertising the pub for sale for around £1,000,000 did little to inspire confidence that an enterprising pub company would be prepared to take it on at that price (although there also appeared to be an option to lease it). Recent Fleurets marketing literature appears to indicate that the pub has been sold subject to contract.

Before closure, the Battleaxes was a popular pub and hotel, AA 4-star listed, consisting of six en-suite bedrooms, two function rooms, a restaurant and a lounge bar serving real ales. It was a well-known destination pub, especially for family gatherings and parties, also gaining many favourable reviews from couples who had wedding ceremonies there.

The English Heritage grade II-listed Battleaxes was designed by the renowned Gothic Revival architect William Butterfield between 1880 and 1881 on behalf of Matilda Blanche Gibbs, widow of wealthy merchant William Gibbs (who made a fortune from the Peruvian guano fertiliser trade). It was originally built as a Temperance House for estate workers from Tyntsfild House in 1882 before becoming a pub and up until the 1980s it was known as the Widdicombe Arms.

Currently, there is no planning application for a change of use although developers submitted a pre-application Screening Opinion in August 2022 to ascertain whether an Environmental Impact Assessment was required for a proposed new community hub, farm shop, café, studio spaces and artisans studios together with the retention of overnight accommodation and the building of seven low-carbon homes and a headquarters office for the Studio Hive business.

Following a limited local community engagement event and a presentation by the developers in July 2022 we raised this issue with the parish clerk and the Wraxall & Failand parish councillors and informed them that we would oppose any planning application which seeks to convert the pub to alternative non-pub uses. However, it appears the developers' slick presentation which suggested that the



pub was unviable may have some influence on future decisions without looking at alternative ideas to try and save it as a pub/hotel. This is particularly frustrating in view of the pub's tourism potential, being close to Tyntsfild House and Clevedon Court (with its association with Lord Edmund Elton's 'Elton Ware' pottery).

Permanent pub closures in the South-West of England are of major concern to Bristol Pubs Group because they affect local communities and could leave them without any community pubs, as is the case in the village of Wraxall where the Battleaxes is the last surviving (albeit closed) pub. For future long-term community cohesion and wellbeing, it is essential for local people to be able to access secure local employment in a facility like the Battleaxes and be able to meet and socialise there in a safe and welcoming environment.

Therefore, Bristol Pubs Group will likely oppose the forthcoming planning application unless it can include a community facility such as a pub or similar facility and urges former pub customers and interested Wraxall residents to contact them (email bristolpubsgroup@camrabristol.org.uk) for advice and information on ways to organise a community campaign to save their local. This could include the local community registering the pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) which provides some protection against converting the pub to an alternative use. It gives them an opportunity to submit a 'community right to bid' application to buy and run the pub themselves, or alternatively they can employ an experienced manager to manage it on their behalf.

Bristol Pubs Group are happy to support any local community initiative aimed at saving the Battleaxes as a pub and deal a mortal blow to developer proposals for this much valued historic pub.

Ian Beckey

A large advertisement for Dartmoor Brewery. The background is a scenic view of a stone wall on a hillside. The text 'DARTMOOR'S FINEST' is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, a paragraph describes the brewery's location and commitment to quality. Four beer labels are shown in the foreground: Jail Ale (4.8% ALC), IPA (4.0% ALC), Legend Cask Ale (4.4% ALC), and Best (3.7% ALC). The Dartmoor Brewery logo is at the bottom right, and contact information is at the bottom left.

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DARTMOOR BREWERY

Pub news from Bristol Pubs Group

BS1

We have been receiving multiple reports via [WhatPub](#) that the [Famous Royal Navy Volunteer](#) on King Street in central Bristol – which had sadly limited its cask choice of late – has started to build its offering again, with as many as six cask real ales on offer when a correspondent visited recently.

In Broad Street just off the centre, [Horts Townhouse](#) has reopened after a period shut. It has been extensively refurbished and is now a 'Pub with Rooms' offering a boutique hotel experience but with the bar very welcoming of drinkers, and offering beers from the Young's stable.

Bad news, good news in Wapping Wharf. Sadly, the [Wild Beer](#) bar there had to close its doors early in the year. However, we were delighted to hear that the Bristol Beer Factory has taken over the property and will be opening the [Junction](#), its new pub, during the spring.

In Lower Park Row, the [Ship Inn](#) closed suddenly in March. No plans as yet for any reopening.

We also receive news that the long-closed [Rummer](#) at the border between St Nicholas Market and Castle Park (not to be confused with the part of the building that is the [Rummer Hotel](#) on All Saints Lane) is to become the St Mary-le-Port Hotel.

BS2

The long-time landlord of the [Crown Tavern](#) on Lawfords Gate, St Phillips has announced plans to retire. As this is a freehold building in a very desirable location, the future of the pub must be in danger.

BS3

Worrying times in Bedminster in late March. Four pubs all closed on the same day. Operated by the same people, the [London Inn](#), [Albert Lounge](#), [Tap & Barrel](#) and [Black Cat](#) all had notices pinned to the door reporting closure due to unforeseen circumstances. As we went to press, we had heard that the [London Inn](#), [Tap & Barrel](#) and [Black Cat](#) had already reopened under new management, so hopefully the [Albert Lounge](#) will soon too.

BS5

The [Black Swan](#) in Eastville has announced it is closing for at least a year for refurbishment. The bar, club and live music venue was planning a series of 'farewell' events. At the time of writing there was very little information available about the nature of the 'refurbishment'.

BS6

We have heard that the [Beaufort](#) in Montpellier is trading on reduced hours, and may even be about to close. We sincerely hope not as it is a cracking pub, and will watch with interest.

BS7

News from the [Bulldog](#) in Filton, where a change in management in 2022 appears to have signalled an improvement in the fortunes of this 1930s pub whose history has been, shall we say, chequered. Early reports appear positive, so we hope this pub finds a wider clientele.

In Bishopston, planning permission has been granted to create a new micropub at 44 Gloucester Road, putatively called the [Bottle & Jug](#).

Meanwhile, just up the road, we hear that the [Gloucester Road Ale House](#) is up for sale with the current owners looking to let it go. It was still open when last we wobbled past.

BS8

Initially worrying news in January when the [Coach & Horses](#) in Highland Square in Clifton closed 'due to unforeseen circumstances'. We're not sure what happened, but were delighted to note in March that it has reopened pretty much as before.

BS16

Down at the bottom of the Strait in Fishponds, we have a change of venue for the [Porto Lounge](#) to larger premises across the road. The

address for the new [Porto Lounge](#) is 782a to 784 Fishponds Road, but the offering remains consistent with all the Lounge Group venues.

At the top of the strait, there is scaffolding aplenty outside the [Cross Hands](#), which has been taken over by the Oxford-based Dodo Pub Company. As we went to press they were planning to reopen on May 19th under the name [All Inn](#).

The freehold of the [Masons Arms](#) in Stapleton has been sold subject to contract. We do not at the time of writing know what the new owners' plans will be, but we will keep a close eye on it.

The [Old Tavern](#) in Stapleton (the pub where Arbor Ales began) has been sold to property developers, who have begun a consultation process for the 'redevelopment' of the site.

BS21

A new opening in Clevedon to report. The [Riff Corner](#) on Old Church Road is a music venue and bar offering regular live performances.

The [Star Inn](#) at Tickenham had been in the midst of a transformation from pub to restaurant. As in early April the venue is only doing food collections and deliveries, but hoped to open fully later in the year. However, news reached us in April of plans being submitted to demolish the pub and build houses there instead. Worrying times indeed.

BS25

Down in Shipham in Somerset, the [Penscot Inn](#) reopened at the beginning of the year under new management. Good home-cooked food and real ales from St Austell and Butcombe are on the menu.

BS30

After an extended period closed, the [White Hart](#) at Bridgegate has reopened. It is being operated by the same people as the [Fishponds Tap](#) in, er, Fishponds. That pub's combination of Himalayan dishes, 'craft' ales and pub classics is to be replicated here too. I haven't had a chance to visit yet, but we hope to report further for the next edition.

BS31

The former [Wine Bar](#) in Keynsham has reopened as a pub called the [Keynsham Courtyard](#). The property has been completely renovated, and the aim is to offer a new vibrant up-to-date community space offering coffee, beers and live music.

The [Bird in Hand](#) in Saltford has changed hands, having been in the same family for more than thirty years. The previous occupants decided to take a well-earned retirement from the hospitality trade. The pub has been bought by the same guy who already owns the [Crown](#) just up the road. The plan is to retain the pub's emphasis on great food, real ales and an amazing garden.

BS37

Confirmation that the [White Lion](#) in Yate, which has been closed for many a year, is to reopen as an Italian restaurant. Banners have begun to appear and the venue is thought to be hiring.

BS40

Down in Blagdon, the [Seymour Arms](#) has reopened after a period closed. Open from 4pm during the week, and offering fine dining and a range of ales.

BS48

Cleeve in Somerset is the home to the [Maple](#), a new lounge bar and restaurant (built on the site of the former [Lord Nelson](#) pub and attached to Touts supermarket and filling station) offering an extensive menu featuring local produce, including a pint of Bath Ales Gem.

As ever, [Pub News](#) is only as good as the information provided to us by CAMRA members, volunteers, pub-goers and licensees, so please let us know if you have any pub news to share and we'll see if we can include it next time.

*Duncan Shine
for Bristol Pubs Group*

Our continuing concerns regarding development plans around the Cornubia

In last autumn's edition, [Pints West 132](#), we wrote of the [Cornubia](#) on Temple Street in Redcliffe being under threat by proposed developments around it. Basically, the proposal – by the owners of the land and buildings including the pub itself – is to demolish a neighbouring office block, Canningford House, and replace it with a larger one nine storeys high, extended up to the pavement of Temple Street. To the side of the pub running through the larger area of the beer garden, a modern version of Long Row is intended to be reinstated as a passageway from Victoria Street to Temple Street, becoming a public right of way, and with the current beer garden to the side of the pub being totally lost to the pub, leaving space for only the four existing picnic tables at the front.

Long Row used to be a road running flush with the side wall of the pub (the canvas-covered area in the photo) and which continues across the other side of Victoria Street, leading towards the Fleece and the Seven Stars. Permission to block off the Cornubia's part was granted to Bristol brewery Georges in 1960. The developers now want to reinstate it with the alleyway mentioned, taking away the beer garden to the side of the pub (the area circled).

Subsequently, in October, a public consultation was held in the pub. The developers gathered from this the concern of customers attending, of which there were many, one of the main ones indeed being the loss of most the beer garden. They told us they would go away and see if they could change things.

However, two planning applications have since been submitted (ref. 23/00128/LA and 22/05268/F) which include the removal of the toilet extension at the rear of the pub and for the pub's toilets and its beer and waste storage to be housed on the ground floor in the new building across the way! The cosy, enclosed and landscaped pub beer garden will still be reduced to about a quarter of its current size.

We see little change to the original proposal by the developers. They do not appear to have made any effort to resolve the issues the public



raised at the consultation. Taking away the majority of the private outdoor drinking space will reduce the number of drinkers the pub can cater for. And making changes so customers and staff have to go outside to access the toilets? The mind boggles.

We encourage readers with any concerns for this pub to visit www.bristol.gov.uk and follow links to find the planning applications – or if it's easier just go directly to here: pa.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple then search for references 23/00128/LA and 22/05268/F or for 'Cornubia' ... and submit a comment.

Tim Belsten, for Bristol Pubs Group








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BADRAG

Bristol And District Rare Ales Group

BADRAG, the Bristol & District Rare Ales Group, is an award-winning campaigning group within the local branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

Its aim is to promote the rarer *styles* of real ale, in particular **dark beers** such as **milds**, **stouts** and **porters**.

For a list of pubs that support BADRAG please visit:
www.camrabristol.org.uk/badrag/RareAlePubs.html

Email: BADRAG@camrabristol.org.uk

The first three months of 2023 have been busy for BADRAG, with attendance at several beer festivals and 'trails', the latter intended to encourage pubs and their customers to try rare/dark beers and, hopefully, serve them again in future. BADRAG was set up to campaign for rare styles of ales that were, at the time, becoming increasingly hard to find. Of particular concern were dark beers such as milds, stouts and porters; other styles of interest to the group are the even rarer old ales and barley wines (plus rye ales, wheat beers and brown ales).

We started the year on 7 January with our **Annual Review**. Held at the **Gryphon** in central Bristol as in previous years (thanks for letting us have the function room, John Ashby), much was discussed at this informal and friendly gathering and many plans made; overall the verdict was: "Carrying on Badragging"! (BADRAG founder Laurie Gibney was unable to make the meeting due to ill health, so thanks to Chris Griffiths and Chris Hooper for chairing and Peter Bennetts and Dave Kibble for note-taking.)

The **Exeter Festival of Beer** in January was our first festival of 2023. About 20 of us travelled to the new venue at the **Corn Exchange**; a third of the 65 ales on offer were BADRAG style, my favourites being Teignworthy *Martha's Mild*, Utopian Gadds' *Power-Cut Porter* and Nuttycombe *Snow Leopard* pale mild. The following week was **Tewkesbury Winter Ales Festival**, where we found all but 11 of the 75 ales on offer met the BADRAG style criteria. A definite for another visit in 2024!

On 2 February, Norman Spalding led about 15 of us on a **Staple Hill & Kingsdown Trail**. We started at the **Wooden Walls** micropub, enjoying a stout from Nuttycombe and an interesting almond and cherry cake mild in the form of Brass Castle *Fat Rascal*. We moved on by bus to the **Kingswood Colliers**, where there were four BADRAG-style ales to try, including Green Jack *Lurcher*. After a short walk, we finished with a Thornbridge *Gold* light mild at the **Kings Arms**.



Just some of the beers at the 22nd MetAle Festival at the **Gryphon**, these on gravity in the upstairs room, others downstairs in the bar through the usual handpumps.

(Photo by Nigel Morris)

Two days later about ten Badraggers visited the **Lime Kiln** in central Bristol (behind City Hall) for its **beer festival** and were delighted to find half the ten available beers were BADRAG style, including Ashley Down *Red Stoot*, Ashover *Blackberry Stout* and Church End *Irish Coffee*, a vanilla and whisky stout. While there we welcomed Andy and Hilary to the group.

As Tim Belsten reports, there was a good choice of porters, stouts and milds to try across the selection of 30 beers available at the **Bath Beer Festival** on 17 February: "I started with a half of Brains *Dark*, a 3.5% mild, then switched to thirds (so as to sample more). All those I tried were in good condition although, as I forgot to take a pen, I cannot recall my favourite. I was surprised at the Bath Brew House *Mint Chocolate Stout* (6.2%) as it was quite gentle and I had no regrets in trying it; definitely not an 'After Eight'!"

A visit in February to the 22nd **MetAle Festival** at the **Gryphon** (a great venue for both heavy metal music and real ale, landlord John Ashby being particularly keen on dark beers) did not disappoint. One Badragger Bridget Andrews found the *Derailed Porter* from Five Points "lovely, had to have another one" and Broadtown's *Barnabus* (a 10.4% imperial Russian stout) "very good, in that dangerous kind of way." Nigel Morris popped in on the Friday, adding "all tried were excellent ... of the many Badraggers there, those that tried the Russian stout said it was really good." Martin Gray's favourite on the Saturday was the Brew By Numbers *Hazelnut Stout* (5%).



Mal Fuller (who reports here) led about 20 of us Badraggers on a **Gloucester Road (Central) Trail** on 11 March, starting at the **Inn on the Green**. The pub's long, narrow shape is explained by the long-gone bowling alley. There's a warm welcome, cosy seating, good food and table service is offered should you wish it. They normally have several cask-conditioned beers on, including Bristol Beer Factory's *Milk Stout* (4.5%) as a regular. This is based on a 150-year old recipe and is black with a white head, beautifully smooth, almost creamy, with a solid body of roasted malts. Definitely a winner for the brewery (and us).

A ten-minute walk took us to the **Crafty Cow** on the corner of Gloucester Road and Wessex Avenue, opposite Horfield Common. Inside it is modern, light and airy with a family-oriented eating area, but also separate drinking spaces. The dark beer on offer was Frome's *Zig Zag* stout (4.5%), quite rich from the well-roasted malt body and hint of coffee; an easy drinking 'session stout'. It was in excellent condition, as was the Hop Union *Moose River*.

Another ten minute walk further down Gloucester Road is the **Drapers Arms**, a 'traditional' micropub which regularly serves six to eight beers, gravity drawn, and no lagers, keg beers or spirits (but they do sell wine). It's a small, converted drapers shop amongst others on the parade between Strathmore Road and Quarrington Road and has a real community feel. The pub has enthusiastically supported BADRAG trails over the years and this was no exception. The Bason Bridge *Bridge Stout* (5%) and Pitchfork *Santa Fé* (7.2%) were both in excellent condition. The former is a good, easy-drinking session stout, while I would describe the *Santa Fé* as a barley wine or perhaps an old ale. Whichever, it was stunning, strong and warming with notes of toffee and fruit and a complex malty body; for me it was the beer of the day (such a shame the brewery has recently closed).

Last stop on the trail was the **Annexe** on Seymour Road. This is a single-storey brick building situated in the courtyard of the **Sportsman**. It regularly shows sports on TV and is split into a main drinking area, two booth-like spaces and a conservatory, all with an old-fashioned snug bar feel. They offered Hanlons *Port Stout* (4.8%), an award-winning dark chestnut stout, served in perfect condition.

As the crowd drifted away, the unanimous conclusion was a jolly good time was had by all. It had been a fun day out. A big thank-you goes out to the above four pubs for supporting BADRAG, for putting the beers on, all of which were in great condition, and for the warm welcome they gave us.

The next BADRAG event saw several Badraggers headed out to Nailsea on 14 March to enjoy an early evening BADRAG social at the **Nailsea MicroPub**. This coincided with a tap-takeover by the Navigation Brewery of Nottinghamshire, with five of their beers on offer, including *Eclipse* cherry fruit stout and *Longboard* dark mild.

The final event to report this time is the visit to the **Chippenham CAMRA Beer, Cider & Perry Festival** on Saturday 1st April, with sixteen BADRAG-style ales to be sampled.

The BADRAG visit was quite a problem. First it was on, but when a rail strike was called for that day it was off (for me, three hours on three buses from the outer Bristol fringes before and after drinking was too much to face). Then our visit was back on again when the strike was called off.

On the day of the festival, however, the rail tracks were flooded in various places, including Dauntsey Bank and Box Tunnel, causing cancellation and rerouting of trains.

Eight of us eventually made it to the festival, arriving at around 1pm. For me it took three and a half hours to get from Nailsea to Chippenham instead of the one hour anticipated, due to the flooding. However, about the same number gave up when their train was sent back to Bristol from Bath. Our eight caught the train to Bath and then a bus from there, going round and round the houses of Corsham and outer Chippenham!

We left just before the festival closed and headed, in hope, to the railway station where a train to Westbury was waiting; we planned to take that and get a Cardiff train from Westbury to Bristol. But a London-bound train from Bristol pulled in and after some time we found out that it was returning to Bristol, so we caught that and, with nine minutes to change, made it to a Paignton train to Nailsea & Backwell for three of us and Yatton for two others.

An eventful day! At the festival I enjoyed six one-third glasses of dark ale including a 10.4% one, and still made it to the **Nailsea MicroPub** later. Those that gave up on Chippenham ended up drowning their sorrows back in Bristol in the **Cornubia**, **Kings Head** and **Lime Kiln**.

We'd like to conclude by saying a big thank-you to all pubs that have supported BADRAG trails and held festivals featuring BADRAG-style beers. Our campaigning has not been in vain!

BADRAG future events – see page 46 for details

- **Sat 20 May:** BADRAG South Glos Trail.
- **Sat 17 June:** BADRAG Cotham and Kingsdown Trail.
- **Sat 15 July:** BADRAG Trail in Cardiff.

For further BADRAG events, including any late changes, plus other Bristol & District CAMRA activities, keep an eye on the branch diary at: www.camrabristol.org.uk/diary.html

Laurie Gibney
and Mal Fuller

BADRAG founder stepping down

Laurie Gibney, the founder and inspirational leader of BADRAG, has decided it's time for him to step down. "I have been involved in lead roles within BADRAG for seventeen years – plus a couple of years representing the branch on the national CAMRA Endangered Beer Styles Group – so I think I deserve retirement!"

Laurie has put in an enormous amount of work for BADRAG over the years, organising trails and other activities, perhaps culminating in the annual 'Mild Time' promotion. His motivation is that mild ale is his favourite beer style. He formed BADRAG as a gathering of like-minded people to publicise and seek out mild ales, but also kept the wider perspective by promoting all rare styles such as stouts, porters, old ales and barley wines ... and anything else that appeared endangered.

Laurie has achieved much. BADRAG 'membership' runs into hundreds and around a hundred BADRAG supporting-pubs are listed on the branch website as now selling rare ales in and around Bristol. Laurie won't be disappearing though. He will still take an active interest in BADRAG, but from a back seat. The question is, who will now step forward to fill his shoes?

Thank you Laurie, all your efforts over the years are much appreciated.

SP



CASK, the real story of Britain's unique beer culture

The explosion of craft brewing in recent years has engaged a whole new and youthful audience with speciality beer, but in a very different way from the beer consumer movements of the past. The level of technical knowledge among brewers and homebrewers has also reached a new peak. Many of the new beers currently causing excitement are in keg and can, and there's a danger that styles linked with the past and tradition could get left behind in the scramble for innovation and novelty.

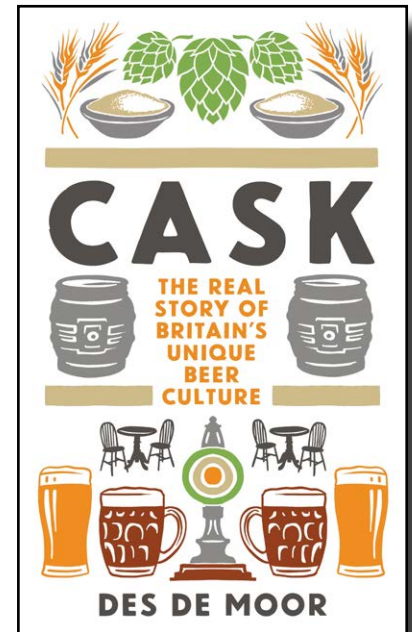
Cask beer played a crucial role in the rise of beer appreciation and remains a unique format delivering a drinking experience that can't be achieved any other way. Many drinkers and brewers still recognise its importance, and there's increasing interest outside the UK.

In this book:

- What makes cask unique and essential, explained in clear and accessible terms;
- How cask as we know it today emerged as brewing techniques evolved in the 18th and 19th centuries and how it persisted in the UK;
- How we almost lost cask in the 1970s, and how the campaign to save it inspired what became the global craft brewing movement;
- The state of cask beer today, with profiles of some prominent producers and the ways they work;
- The importance of good cellaring and dispense, including profiles of exemplary pubs and bars;
- The future of cask.

The book – by award-winning beer writer Des De Moor – will be available from the beginning of August, but you can order your copy now from the CAMRA shop:

shop1.camra.org.uk/product/cask-the-real-story-of-britains-unique-beer-culture



Simon Sherwell RIP

Simon Sherwell, landlord of the [Old Bank](#) in Keynsham High Street, died suddenly in February aged only 40, leaving his wife Zoe and three teenage children.

We first knew him as a member of one of the opposing teams in the weekly quiz at the Old Bank. He came every week with his brother Martin, and the then landlord Colin Brook ran the quiz.

Simon was an avuncular and sociable chap, always polite and fair-minded and his team were worthy competitors in the quiz.

After a few years Colin decided to give up the pub. In a move that was rather surprising at the time, Simon went from customer to landlord and acquired the pub in partnership with his friend Craig Mattock, while his brother Martin became quizmaster. The quality of the cask beer remained as good as ever and slowly the number of ales and range of styles improved. Simon clearly listened to his customers, as he confessed to having previously been a lager drinker!

Various improvements were made to the interior of the pub, including the biggest flat-screen TV in Keynsham and later a replacement floor and remodelled bar area. Much more was made of the outside area at the back, where a substantial heated smoking shelter and outside bar servery were built, and frequent events were held including weekly live music and discos, plus promotions alongside Keynsham Music Festival and Victorian Evening. The pub became a regular entry in the national *Good Beer Guide* and a noted destination for dark beers. Simon was a member of CAMRA and a keen supporter of BADRAG activities, running twice-yearly beer festivals.

Simon moved with his family into the accommodation above the pub and would often come into the bar and have a chat with us about the beers, although he had staff running the bar for him and held a responsible day job as well.

Simon was very good-humoured and a good conversationalist. He was a well-known and respected contributor to the whole community in Keynsham, and was well-loved by all his customers; witness the hundreds who attended his funeral and the pub afterwards. It was a huge shock to hear that he had died. His absence will leave a large hole in many people's lives. Rest in peace.

Norman Spalding and John Firth



Simon Sherwell, joint landlord of the [Old Bank](#) in Keynsham High Street, died suddenly during the evening of Monday 6 February after suffering a stroke the day before in the pub. Simon leaves a wife and two young children. He ran the Old Bank jointly with his business partner Craig.

Simon was a very popular landlord and you were always guaranteed a warm welcome and a chat on arrival. His many regulars and staff members were deeply shocked by the sudden news of his death and at such a young age.

Simon and Craig took over at the Old Bank in 2014 and immediately made their presence felt by providing an outlet for more unusual beers on a regularly changing basis. They also organised regular winter ale festivals. The pub is listed in the *Good Beer Guide* and is the only entry for Keynsham.

Simon always went out of his way to help people and had a bright and cheery disposition. I remember looking forward to the Friday home ale delivery service he provided for regular Keynsham customers during Covid lockdowns together with take-away meal services.

Craig plans to carry on in much the same vein selling more unusual real ales and representing Keynsham in the *Good Beer Guide*. I wish him well for the future after the massive shock of losing his business partner and good friend.

Mike Organ

Desi Pubs

A guide to British-Indian pubs, food and culture

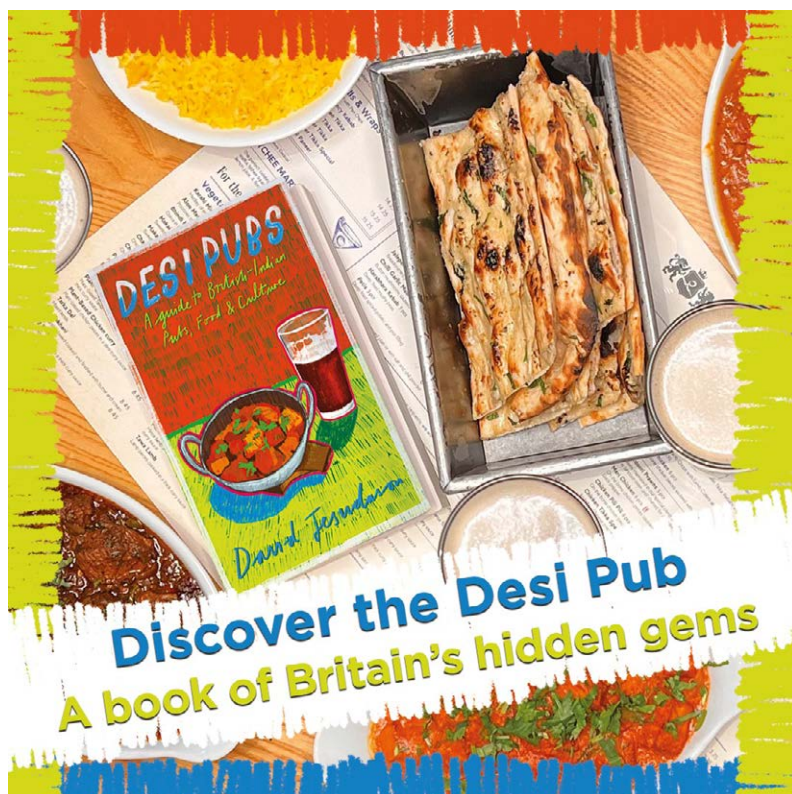
The 'desi pub' began as a story of resistance. First established in the 1960s to break the racist colour bar, which saw many non-white customers refused service, they have since evolved into a modern-day celebration of multiculturalism. This is how 'desis' – people with Indian heritage – saved failing pubs and turned them into a joyful festival of mixed grills, naans and curries all washed down with plenty of beer.

In this new book, the first of its kind, award-winning British-Asian journalist and beer writer David Jesudason travels the length and breadth of the country, visiting over 200 'desi pubs' run by British-Indian landlords who have stamped their unique identity on a beloved institution and helped to challenge our preconceptions of the pub customer: from rowdy cricket fans to vibrant bhangra nights via football supporters enjoying pre-match mixed grills and beers.

Desi Pubs will take you on a journey to parts of Britain that are seldom visited. This is a celebration of 2023 Britain and the forgotten people who created our modern multicultural country.

You can find out more and order a copy from the CAMRA shop:

shop1.camra.org.uk/product/desi-pubs



Cryptic Crossword

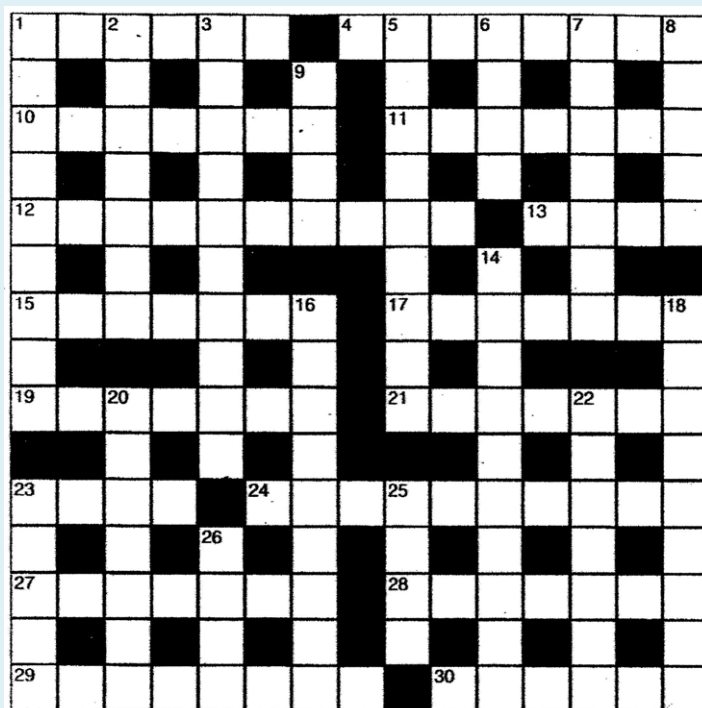
Compiled by Pete Taberner (solution on page 45)

ACROSS:

1. A drink for the hotel employee (6)
4. Brown, curiously dark, southern drinking vessels (8)
10. Pestors Hall & Woodhouse for best bitter (7)
11. Bolton brewery to deposit sweater (4, 3)
12. How to get ales on line? (5, 5)
13. Some polypins are back as a bargain (4)
15. Do drain damaged robot (7)
17. Proper Black that is drunk to relax (3, 4)
19. Ales in odd tavern trips (7)
21. Settle down for a proper pub meal (3, 4)
23. Not quite open for a beer? (4)
24. The broad middles of beer bellies (4, 6)
27. Coniston's Oatmeal Stout could be remarkable (7)
28. Stand round e.g. when intoxicated (7)
29. Leicester brewery sounds like it's always tricky on 1st Sundays (8)
30. Rum lad could be the favourite (4, 2)

DOWN:

1. Landlord who could be tied up (3, 6)
2. Drinking chums found in Bristol suburb (7)
3. Original garden brewery robbed. Toolled up for break in (4, 6)
5. Love barrels a Bristol brewery produces (5, 4)
6. Chief Bristol street for pubs (4)
7. Mash tun in road, it's round (7)
8. Finish your drink! Tom's almost back (3, 2)
9. Key rye beer from New River (4)
14. Characteristic of huge Bristol brewpub (4, 6)
16. Concentrated cider to raise spirits (9)



18. Charles appears sad at Bristol wine vaults (9)
20. University ace concealing confused Dame (7)
22. Set sour mixture to generate heat (7)
23. Part of church is immersed in ale (5)
25. Drunken muse strictly for the birds (4)
26. Abnormal craving for some epic ale (4)

Good Chemistry

The biggest news from Good Chemistry since the last *Pints West* hit the streets is the revival of a style last popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s, so unlikely to have been seen before by even the most committed and long-standing *Pints West* readers. *Supper Club* is a 3.1% light dinner ale, which brings together traditional ingredients such as invert sugar (effectively a sugar syrup adjunct) with Simcoe hops as a nod to more modern palates. Launched in cask in early March, it's a popular addition to the Good Chemistry cask range, which currently includes: *Time Lapse*, a 3.8% English bitter; *Fast Forward*, a 4.8% hoppy, pale ale; and *Storms Pass* – this 4.3% brown ale based on historic recipes has made a reappearance this spring, and is brewed in open-top fermenters with English malt and hops. Two new cask pale ales will also be available by the time of publication, one brewed in collaboration with North Brewing Company from Leeds.

Away from cask, look out for the following in keg and can (as live beers): *Kokomo Weekend* – Easter sees the return of this 7% firm favourite tropical pale; *Kokomo Weekday*, the session-strength little tropical IPA brother of *Kokomo Weekend* weighing in at 4.3%; *No Nonsense*, a 5% 'straight-forward' stout; *Funny Business*, a new 6% IPA; *Peach Fizz*, a delicious 4% fruited sour; *Pure Optimism*, a 4.2% session-strength IPA; *Good Lager*, Good Chemistry's 4.5% gluten-free lager; and *Shadow Future*, a 4.2% dry stout (currently cans only). All of Good Chemistry's range is suitable for vegans.

The end of April saw the first East Bristol Brewery Trail of 2023, with everyone happy to be back on William Street. You'd be advised to make the most of the second East Bristol Brewery Trail (over August bank holiday weekend), as Good Chemistry's taproom has sadly not reopened after its usual annual hibernation. Increases in production over the last few months mean there just isn't room to regularly set up the bar. Warehouse space previously used to create the taproom is now hidden away under pallets of beer and materials. The team is working on ways to reopen in 2024, of which we'll keep you informed.

Away from the brewery, Good Chemistry's two pubs have been vibrant and well-supported over winter and early spring, with the [Kings Head](#) on Victoria Street basking in the reflection of Bristol Light Festival that hosted an installation within Temple Church at the back of the pub. Opening hours at the church are planned to be extended during 2023, so keep an eye out on the usual social media places for announcements on this, and pop in for a visit to this interesting building if you're at the Kings Head.



No room at Good Chemistry to open the taproom this year

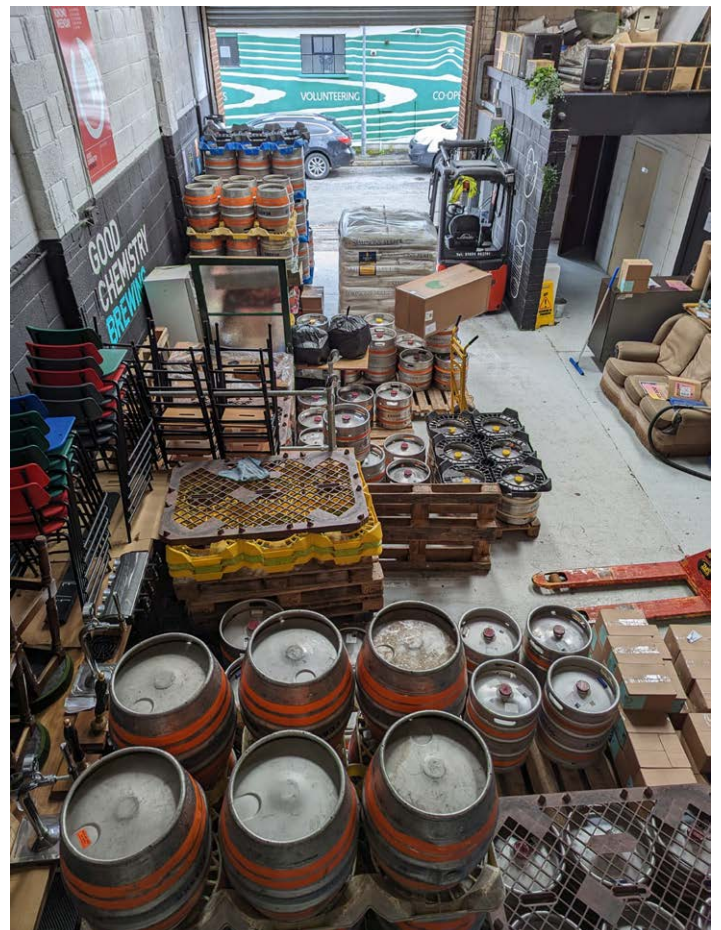


Good Chemistry lead brewer Dan

Up at [The Good Measure](#) in Redland, early March hosted a bottle share in collaboration with Elusive Brewing and home brew suppliers [The Malt Miller](#), where female home-brewers were invited to brew their own version of *No True Measure*, the oatmeal stout brewed for this year's International Women's Day, and bring it along to discuss with fellow enthusiasts. Other regular events continue to be held at The Good Measure, including weekly quizzes on a Monday evening, monthly She Drinks Beer events for women interested in discussing beer and brewing (the next nights are 6th June, 4th July and 8th August), and monthly tap-takeovers and meet-the-brewer events, with Sussex's Burning Sky in February and Leeds' North Brewing in March being two recent ones.

There'll be plenty going on at the brewery and in the popular two pubs throughout late spring and all summer, so look out for social media posts wherever you normally find them.

Stephen Edmonds



Brewery News

Bristol Beer Factory

Following the closure of **Wild Beer** on Gaol Ferry Steps at Wapping Wharf, Bristol, there is now some exciting news that the Bristol Beer Factory will be opening a new venture on that site. The venue is going to be named **Junction** in a nod to both the historical Bristol harbour railway and to the pub's location at the junction of Wapping Wharf and the harbour.

The brewery advises that **Junction** will have five pumps for cask beer and that they want it to have an inclusive community pub vibe. They are seeking to bring a taste of classic British pub culture to Wapping Wharf, with a range of not only their own locally brewed beers, but also of other locally made Bristol drinks.

For the food offering they are working with Josh Eggleton of **Pony & Trap** fame to create a simple and delicious selection of classic pub-grub dishes. They say that they can't wait to join the community down at Wapping Wharf and for pub, beer and harbourside lovers to come and see them at **Junction**, opening late spring.

Keep an eye out for the following new Bristol Beer Factory beers that will be out during this edition of *Pints West*. In cask there will be *Challenge Accepted*, a 4.4% Scottish 80 shilling beer, deep amber in colour; and *Lemon Love*, a 4.4% dual nation pale ale made with Lemondrop and Huell Melon hops. In keg there will be *Horizon*, a 4.4% Pacific session IPA; and *Take Me Away*, a 4.8% American wit beer.

Richard Brooks



Bristol Beer Factory's MD Sam Burrows (left) and Pub Ops Manager Ally Cave outside what will be the Junction



KINGS HEAD

Open Monday - Sunday
Victoria Street
Central Bristol, BS1 6DE



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Brewery News

Hop Union

It has been a brilliant start to the year for Hop Union, as their *Bloody Nora* took Gold at the recent national SIBA Independent Beer Awards, which took place at BeerX in Liverpool.

At 4.7% ABV, *Bloody Nora* is described as a blood orange IPA. Light Maris Otter and pale chocolate malts in the mash give the beer its golden-orange colour. Orange peel in the whirlpool creates a subtle pithy bitterness. Idaho 7, Citra and Simcoe hops added at various stages during the fermentation layer in tropical orange citrus flavours.

Bloody Nora won Gold in the 'keg speciality IPA' category. While it was the keg version of the beer that was judged for this award, *Bloody Nora* is also available in can and cask. The cans can regularly be found in Wetherspoon's South West pubs.

The SIBA Independent Beer Awards represent the very best beer from the UK's independent brewers and are judged by fellow brewers and industry experts, making these awards the "Brewers' Choice." According to Richard Naisby, SIBA chairman: "The winners from the SIBA competition are officially the best independent craft beers in the UK, something brewers should be extremely proud of."

Hop Union's Leanne Stone said: "We are very proud that our already award-winning *Bloody Nora* has done it again. We won Gold! It is down to the dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable team we have here, and we could not be more pleased. It's safe to say we celebrated with a pint of *Nora* or two!"

In other news, Leanne said: "We are delighted to announce the opening of our dog-friendly [Hop Union Taproom](#) here at the brewery on Bonville Road in Brislington. We are now open every Friday (4pm to 9pm) and Saturday (12 noon to 8pm). We welcome the newest



From the right are Kevin, Leanne and Jason from Hop Union being presented with their certificate

member of the team Iwan; he will be managing the taproom, creating a warm and fun place to enjoy a freshly poured beer that has been brewed on-site by our expert team of passionate brewers."

The brewery shop opening hours are Tuesday to Thursday 10am to 5pm, Friday 10am to 9pm, and Saturday 12 noon to 8pm.

Sunfest

The Stone family, who own Hop Union, also own the [Rising Sun](#) in the heart of Frampton Cotterell. In fact the pub has been in the family for the last 40 years, and this was the subject of an article in the last *Pints West*. It's here that they will be having their annual beer festival, Sunfest, which will take place this year on **Saturday 29th July**.

SP

HOP UNION BREWERY Taproom & Shop Now Open

Friday 4 pm - 9 pm
Saturday 12 pm - 8 pm



20 Bonville Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5QH
0117-957-2842

S&DJR
MIDSOMER NORTON
SOUTH

Silver Street, Midsomer Norton BA3 2EY



REAL ALE & CIDER FESTIVAL
Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd July

Enjoy some special local ales and cider as well as train rides on the restored Heritage Railway.
The station shop and buffet will also be open.

Check for more details and booking information at www.sdjr.co.uk or contact us via email: sales@sdjr.co.uk



* BEER & CIDER DISPENSED VIA 'BAG IN BOX' SYSTEM

Brewery News

Arbor Ales

There have been many developments at Arbor since the last issue, with further developments on site, new recruits to the team as well as new beers. The business continues to expand, with new accounts both locally and around the country, plus export orders heading to Italy, Spain, France and elsewhere.

April saw the team pouring beer at the Hopyard festival at Propyard on Bristol's Feeder Road, and at the end of the month the long-established East Bristol Brewery Trail took place across the bank holiday weekend. As their input, Arbor opened their doors again to an appreciative crowd of ale fans.

After the success of the 2022 barrel-ageing project, featuring two very well received imperial stouts, Arbor welcomed the hugely well-regarded Emperor's Brewery to Bristol in January to brew another. The resulting beer will spend the next six or more months ageing in a mixture of rum and bourbon barrels before being packaged in the run-up to Christmas.

Other new beers include an alcohol-free offering called *Wish You Were Beer*, and two New England IPAs taking their names from New England ski resorts, *Pico Mountain* at 3.4% and *Nashoba* at 6.2%, while a collaboration with Manchester's Marble Brewery resulted in an 8% double IPA, *It Comes in Pints*, for release later in the spring. Finally, for CAMRA's national Mild May promotion the popular, and delicious, *Mild West* (3.8%) will be available.

The sales team has almost doubled, with Amber Thorne (previously of Good Chemistry, Siren and most recently Lucky Saint breweries) joining as customer account manager. Will Holmes also comes on board as sales manager, with Jamie Cansdale moving across into a newly created marketing and sales role.

Henry Davies

Moor Beer

Exciting news is that Moor is the exclusive brewer in the upcoming season of the TV show 'Top Chef'. The new season was filmed in London, the first time it's been filmed outside of the USA. Viewing figures are regularly in the millions for episodes, so this is a fantastic opportunity for the brewery to reach a global audience and show what Moor Beer is all about and what makes it stand out – and to publicize can-conditioned beer. Moor beers feature throughout the season, as part of the competition and also as refreshment for the deliberating judges. You can catch Top Chef on TV in the UK on the Bravo channel, and it streams through Amazon Prime and also Peacock.

On the beer front, recent releases have included *Overpower*, a collaboration with the Bristol-based band of the same name ("a crossover of American Citra with Australian Galaxy hops on a British malt base – super drinkable and even better with loud music"), and *Mando*, a West Coast pale ("aroma of ripe strawberries, classic grapefruit and pine flavour, full and balanced") to celebrate the launch of season three of the Mandalorian (Star Wars). Moor's Star Wars-inspired T-shirt is also available again. Moor founder Justin Hawke is a massive Star Wars fan!

Justin has recently returned from Italy, where he brewed an Italian grape ale in collaboration with La Granda brewery and Vite Colte winery. Justin hopes to get some back to the UK. Let's hope we get to try it, as it sounds fascinating! Keep an eye on Moor's social media for news of more new brews and the return of some old favourites.

Moor's tap in Days Road together with the tap in Bermondsey are hosting regular gigs, supporting both local bands and overseas visitors. Again, check out Moor's social media for further details.

Phil Cummings



BITTON BEER BASH

Friday 9 – Saturday 10 June 2023

BITTON BEER BASH

We're working with *Hop Union Brewery* to bring you a great selection of 25+ real ales for you to enjoy on our station platform this summer. This year you can also choose to enjoy them onboard one of our heritage diesel trains by upgrading your ticket.

There are three sessions, lasting 4 hours, over the weekend;

- **Friday 9 June:** 6 – 10pm
- **Saturday 10 June:** 12 – 4pm and 6 – 10pm

Entry costs just **£4.00**, or **£12.00** to include a ride on one of our heritage diesel trains.

For tickets and more details please visit:
www.avonvalleyrailway.org

Find us off the A431 between Bristol and Bath, BS30 6HD



In association with



New Bristol Brewery's new taproom

After a bit of a wait the new **New Bristol Brewery Taproom** opened in March within the brewery at 20a Wilson Street in St Pauls, Bristol. The change is substantial. Gone is the industrial look of the iron bar and the metal roller shutters. Instead, the space has been relocated to the front right corner of the premises where the original brewery started and given a much lighter and airier feel.

The main feature is, of course, the bar which holds 22 taps. The bar back is tiled as well as the front bar itself which is quite long with a good serving area behind. The two outside walls now have windows and large glass doors while the internal side is bounded by the brewery's fermentation vessels.

The bar dispenses a wide choice of beers of all styles plus wine, cocktails, kombucha*, coffee and soft drinks. There is plenty of space with lots of seating at tables of various sizes in front of the bar, a counter with stools in the middle and large picnic tables by the fermenters. No problem getting to sit down with your mates!

The outside has also been improved with solid dividers from the pavement, a roller awning above and some new paint and signage. The food vans and marquees have gone, replaced by a kitchen unit occupied by Asado. Their burgers are cooked over a wood-fired grill; they use high-quality, locally-sourced ingredients with veggie and vegan options too.

Various events have already started up including a quiz night on Thursday, vinyl night on Friday, and Sunday sessions featuring more vinyl and DJs. A big screen has already been put to use during the recent Six Nations rugby tournament.

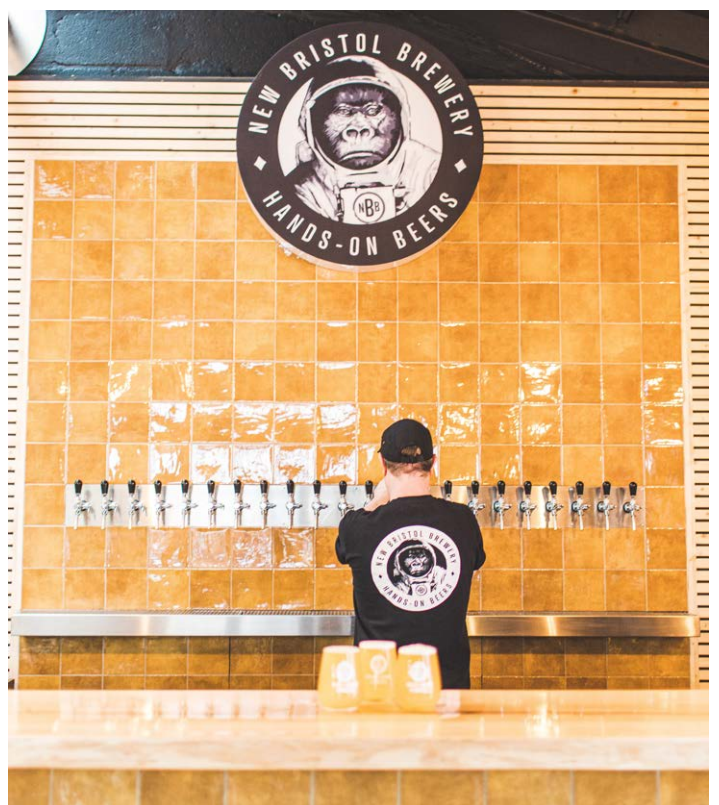
Current opening hours are Thursday 5-10pm, Friday 4-10pm, Saturday 12-10pm and Sunday 1-6pm. Cans can be purchased from the fridge Monday to Friday 12-5pm in addition to the above hours.

Located in an area not far by foot from some other tap rooms and pubs in the St Werburghs area, the new taproom is a worthy destination in itself and we wish the brewery well in this new venture!

Finally, New Bristol Brewery recently won Gold in the national SIBA Awards for their canned *Coffee & Biscotti Stout*. Many congratulations to them for this well-deserved award.

Michael Bertagne

**A drink produced by fermenting sweet tea with a culture of yeast and bacteria.*



Tom (left) and Noel (right) of New Bristol Brewery receiving their Gold award from SIBA

Brewery News

Pinkers Craft

On the 20th of March this year Pinkers Craft Brewery celebrated its third birthday. Founded by Scott Pinkstone, within days of Pinkers starting up commercially the first Covid lockdown happened, but somehow the company managed to survive by concentrating on a home-delivery service with people ordering beers online.

Not only survive, but thrive, and recent expansion and increasing sales have necessitated the building of a new store adjacent to the brewhouse, to be used mainly for storing malt but also for storage of casks, new cans, etc.

During early February the [Brit Bar](#) in Weston-Super-Mare held their own version of the 'Brit Awards' in which *Pinkers IPA* won the award for the best IPA in Weston. High praise indeed! Scott says that they are not resting on their laurels though and currently have a new beer in progress; it will be a 4.7% pale ale made with seven hop varieties and, true to form, it will have the WsM-related name of *Weston Rocks*.

Pinkers are now the sole supplier of beers to the [Ginger Pig Kitchen](#) in Weston who are "proud to be serving modern British bistro food ... using local suppliers and produce."

This year Weston-super-Mare and Hildesheim in Germany are celebrating 40 years of twinning towns. To mark this occasion Pinkers are travelling to the [Hildesheim microbrewery](#) to brew an anniversary beer in August. To reciprocate this hand of friendship across the water, members of the Hildesheim microbrewery will be travelling to Weston-super-Mare to brew one of their beers. To celebrate this occasion in September both beers will be released at the same time in both towns. More details on this to come as the year progresses.

Trevor Perks



Scott and his wife Louisa after receiving the Brit Award for their IPA

Basement Beer

'The Only Way is Up' may have been a 1988 chart topper for one-hit wonders Yaz and the Plastic Population, but it's also the solution that Basement Beer maestro Ben Evans alighted upon when seeking to expand his brewery.

With the compact Upper York Street premises hemmed in on all sides, Ben decided to invest in three brand-new double-height 600-litre fermenters, so earlier in the year the brewery and taproom closed for a short break while the new equipment was delivered and installed.

All went smoothly, and clearly the only appropriate way to commemorate this event was to brew a brand-new beer with the brand-new kit, then hold a party to launch it. Thus first out of the taps when the Basement taproom reopened to its patient customers was *Trespassers Will Be Lasered*, a crisp, citrusy 4.5% pale ale made for drinking on those longer spring evenings.

Good news for *Pints West* readers is that more capacity equals more cask. Ben has already tested the water with two weekend mini-pins (20 litres, or 36 pints in old money) of two very different cask ales; first came *The Red Rynoceros*, a 5.6% dry-hopped red rye beer made with Vienna and caramel malts, so popular it sold out within a single session. Next up was regular favourite *Lost Horizon* stout (5.9%), which in cask beautifully showcases the subtle dark fruit and rum notes of the coffee, a kilo of which goes into each batch. Ben plans to further increase cask production, which should increase the number of sightings of Basement beers in local pubs and bars beyond the taproom and unofficial Basement 'tied house' the [Robin Hood](#) in Kingsdown. In the meantime, the [Christmas Steps](#) in central Bristol, [Hillgrove Porter Stores](#) Kingsdown and [Swan With Two Necks](#) in St Judes have all taken Ben's beers as part of their craft offering.

Another addition to the Basement range (not yet in cask, but give it time) is *All My Friends* (6.5%), a hazy and juicy big flavoured New England IPA. This complements the regular range on offer at the taproom which invariably includes refreshing sour *Strawberry Lemonade* (3.9%), New England IPA *Galaxy Hopping* (5.9%) and crisp American pale ale *Oblique Strategy* (4.1%).

Further brewery expansion is on the cards with two more fermenters due later in the year, after which Ben admits "space will be maxed out". Front of house, he



Basement's Ben Evans pours a fresh *Lost Horizon* stout

has turned his attention to the taproom. This has undergone a spruce up that includes the addition of brand-new external shutters which had acquired their own street art within 48 hours – that's Stokes Croft for you! A planned increase in the taproom's opening hours is still the subject of bureaucratic wrangling, but in the meantime you'll find the doors open and a friendly welcome from 5 to 10 on Fridays and 3 to 10 on Saturdays.

Marty Cummins

Incredible Brewing Company

The Incredible Brewing Company is one of the earliest of the “new wave” breweries in Bristol. It is ten years since Stephen Hall (pictured) produced their first beers. But as Stephen says: “It’s a tricky time to be brewing just now and although we marked the occasion, celebrations were slightly muted.”

Incredible admit to struggling a little at present, as are so many in the industry. There are times when Incredible feel that government policy choices seem designed only to hinder the brewing industry. Nonetheless Stephen says he remains optimistic that public support for quality locally produced beer will win out over cheap imported beers. And just now Incredible are “brewing like crazy” to get their stock levels back up after running low over the winter months.

But Stephen says: “Sadly it is becoming increasingly hard to justify putting beer into cask or keg for pubs which is really heart-breaking. With so many pubs under extreme financial stress, and many closing outright, the money is just too often not there to make it a viable option.”

Incredible sell the majority of their beer directly at food or music festivals around Bristol, Somerset and Gloucestershire. This might be running a bar or simply selling small packs. Incredible are gratified by the enduring popularity of their beers. Alongside this popular appeal Incredible have also recently enjoyed critical success too, winning awards for both their *Amber Ale* (Gold medal, Taste of the West 2022) and their *Coriander & Lime*.

Stephen adds: “Cans are really beginning to take off and this is increasingly the main format by volume as we finally return to pre-lockdown production levels. Glass is another format suffering from cost pressures and bottles are simply becoming too expensive to use routinely. However packaged, our beers remain traditionally produced and conditioned and naturally carbonated.”



There are loads of events and markets coming up this summer. Incredible will be at the Bath & West Show, the North Somerset Show and the South Gloucester Food and Drink Festival, in addition to similar events in Taunton, Bath, Devizes and Melksham.

In the next few months Incredible are planning to open up a more permanent shop and tap at the brewery with regular opening times. They are also planning to expand their local online delivery service.

www.incrediblebrewingcompany.com

Mark Munday

Zerodegrees

Rumour has it that *The Beast*, the 4.6% black lager, could be joining *Downtown* pale ale, *Our Mango* beer and *The Bohemian* pilsner as a core ale at [Zerodegrees Bristol](#). Meanwhile, as befits a *Good Beer Guide* brewpub, specials keep coming, with the current crop featuring a 5.5% Belgian amber, *Belgo Bristol*; a 4.3% single-hop (Mosaic) IPA, *Tasty Investment*; and from [Zerodegrees Cardiff](#), a 4.9% Gose, *Taste Elevator*, brewed with Styrian Wolf hops and flavoured with coriander and salt.

Ramping up the medal count, brewer Simon won Gold awards in the last South West region SIBA competition for his *Cloud Waltz* Vienna lager and *The Bohemian* pilsner. These were subsequently entered in the National BeerX competition, also organised by SIBA, held in Liverpool this March. *The Bohemian* picked up the Silver award in the keg lager category, and *Cloud Waltz* was took the Bronze award in the keg amber and dark lager category, beaten to the Silver by [Zerodegrees Cardiff](#)'s *The Beast*! Boosted by his continuing success, Simon is preparing to enter five ales in the next South West region SIBA competition.

For those of you who like food and drink in quantity as well as quality, since March [Zerodegrees Bristol](#) has been offering “Bottomless Brunches” every Saturday and Sunday: “Enjoy 90 minutes of bottomless pizza and beer (or Prosecco) between 12 and 4pm at £30 per guest.” Please eat and drink responsibly!

Roy Sanders

Wiper and True

It's been a brilliantly busy start to 2023 for Wiper and True. The brewery kicked off January with the release of their first alcohol-free beer, a 0.5% German Helles lager called *Tomorrow*, available in can and keg. Wiper and True report being “absolutely blown away” by the positive response to this beer, which is now part of their core range of always-available beers. Wiper and True have plans to expand their alcohol-free range later this year, with the addition of a delicious pale ale to the range.

Wiper and True have got some exciting cask releases coming up. In celebration of Mild May they have been brewing a 3.7% mild called *Heading Home* as a tribute to this wonderful style. They say they have reserved enough for their taproom that they should have it on in Old Market throughout the month of May. It is also being released in Fuller's pubs under the name *In My Dreams*. Wiper and True are now regularly casking their flagship 4.2% pale ale, *Kaleidoscope*, and are looking to increase cask availability for this beer even more in the future. Later in May Wiper and True plan to release a cask bitter, brewed in collaboration with the brilliant Ramsgate brewery.

In March Wiper and True celebrated their tenth birthday as a brewery by creating six collaboration beers with some of the UK's finest breweries, including Verdant, Deya and Donzoko. Creating such varied beers, differing both in style as well as the techniques and ingredients needed to create them, has been challenging for the new brewhouse in Old Market, Bristol. The quality of the beers produced makes all the hard work worthwhile. As they say: “We've never been prouder of the beer we're producing since moving into our beautiful new brewery and taproom last July. This stunning new home was our tenth birthday present to ourselves.”

Wiper and True send thanks for all the support from the *Pints West* team over the past ten years since they first opened. Here's to another ten years!

Mark Munday

Brewery News

Abbey Ales

Abbey Ales in Bath are proud to have received four Golds and a Silver for their beers in the first phase of the Taste of the West Product Awards 2023.

Gold awards went to: *Bath Best*, a 4.0% traditional best bitter brewed with bags of crystal malt; *Bath Pale Ale*, a 4.2% pale ale (as its name makes clear); *Oh, Mr Porter*, a 4.9% dark and smooth porter; and *Red IPA*, a 4.6% ale which they describe as “our unique rich, red, amber brew from the addition of a shovelful of chocolate malt, and complemented with a fruity, floral finish supplied by Citra and Chinook hops.”

Silver went to *Bellringer*, a 4.2% clean-tasting, golden bitter with a refreshingly hoppy finish. This multi-award-winning beer is the first beer Abbey brewed when it started in 1997.

Abbey's bottled range of beers are all big sellers in the Abbey shop in Northumberland Place (next to the [Coeur de Lion](#)) and very popular in local restaurants promoting local produce. At the time of writing, two new ones are also planned: a 5.3% stout called, appropriately enough, *Bath Stout*, and a 4.5% celebratory beer called *Coronation Ale*, the latter also in cask.

The best place to sample Abbey Ales' cask beers is of course in their Bath pubs: the [Assembly Inn](#) in Alfred Street, which Abbey Ales founder Alan Morgan and sales director Simon Morgan say is “Bath's premier sports bar”; the [Coeur de Lion](#) in Northumberland Place, reputedly Bath's smallest pub; and the [Star Inn](#) on Vineyards (the Paragon), with its rare and unspoiled pub interior. First licensed as a pub in 1759, the Star is listed in CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors, and was crowned Bath & Borders CAMRA Pub of the Year 2022.

SP



Twisted Brewing

Twisted Brewing in Westbury recently launched a couple of new beers for 2023. First there was *Finnegan's no. 1*, a 4.4% roasted coffee stout. Finnegan's was Twisted's owner and head brewer Andy Murray's first pub, of which he says: “Located at RAF Aldergrove, it supported the RAF and the Army Air Corps. Great entertainment and some edgy nights – always makes me smile.” The beer is a collaboration with Westbury's Cesar's Coffee, who roasted and crushed the Colombian coffee beans, and who run a coffee bar in Trowbridge, near the station.

The second beer, *Heritage Dark Mild* (3.4%), was launched in March. It is a blend of five dark malts, including a Chocolate Rye malt, which adds flavours of bread, nuts, chocolate, and coffee. Of this beer Andy says: “We're on a mission to ensure some of the heritage brews can be enjoyed today and in the future. Dark mild was the 'go-to' session beer for decades and whilst it might not be *de rigueur* at the moment, we hope to breathe fresh life into this beer locally.”

Three of Twisted's core range of beers have recently been commended for their quality in the first phase of the Taste of the West Product Awards 2023. These are:

Canteen Cowboy, a 4.5% American pale ale: “A blend of American hops give this premium golden ale the aroma of a fresh fruit salad. The sweetish malt supports the cocktail of fresh fruit flavours on the palate, whilst the hop bitterness increases towards the finish.”

Gaucha, a 4.6% premium ruby ale: “The malty, slightly roasted and fruity aroma acts as a precursor to the full-bodied and satisfying taste of a solid malty backbone and background hop bitterness, overlaid with the flavour of forest fruits before a long-lasting and well-balanced bittersweet aftertaste.”

Three & Sixpence, a 3.6% session pale ale: “With a fullness of body that belies its strength, this session pale combines the sweetness of tropical fruit with the bitterness of citrus all sitting on a light malt base with a hint of caramel. The sweetness becomes more pronounced as it lingers in the long finish.”

SP

Yonder, Electric Bear, Bath Brew House

Three breweries in the Bath & Borders branch's area have won awards at the recent SIBA South West Independent Beer Awards 2023. **Yonder**, based near Binegar, midway between Midsomer Norton and Wells, won the Gold in the 'Keg Sour & Wild Ale' category and 'Overall Champion of the Keg Competition' for its 4.0% *Raspberry Gose*, and Silver in the 'Keg Session Lager' category for its *Helles*. Another Gold award went to Bath-based **Electric Bear** for *Werrrd!* in the 'Keg Session Pale Ale' category, whilst **Bath Brew House** picked up Bronze in the 'Keg Speciality & Flavoured Beer' category for its *Mint Choc Chip* stout, a cask version of which featured at February's Bath Beer Festival. Congratulations to all three breweries.

Steve Hunt

Left Handed Giant

Left Handed Giant (LHG) have been busy so far this year and they have several events planned for 2023 at their [LHG brewery and taproom](#) on Wadehurst Industrial Park in St Philips, Bristol.

There was the first 'East Bristol Brewery Trail' over the weekend of 29th and 30th of April, just as Pints West went to the printers. This is a trail around several of Bristol's breweries, taking in Arbor, Dawkins, Good Chemistry, Little Martha, Moor, Wiper & True and, of course, Left Handed Giant. If you missed it, look out for the second trail in August.

Next up will be 'Vegan Fest 2023' on 11th June and again on 16th September, each a day of local vegan food with vegan LHG beer on tap.

Then the 'Little Summer Beer Bash' on 22nd July. This is an annual beer festival co-hosted and run with Verdant and DEYA, rotating between the three breweries. There will be beers from over 20 breweries from the UK, Europe and US, local street-food vendors and DJs. This year they're partnered with the charity Help Bristol's Homeless and will be donating all proceeds to help their incredible work.

LHG continue to brew at their main brewery at St Philips where the taproom is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The [LHG Brewpub](#) at Finzel's Reach is open every day serving beer brewed on-site as well as beers from the St Philips brewery.

They also have [Small Bar](#) in King Street, Bristol. This is where the Left Handed Giant journey began in 2014. Last December they brewed *Sibling Rivalry*, a West Coast IPA at 7.0%, to celebrate the occasion.

Left Handed Giant recently celebrated their eighth birthday in April with a party at the taproom and the release of three collaborative brews: *No Sleep*, a 5.0% New Zealand Pils in collaboration with Pressure Drop Brewing (London); *Sing Loud*, a 5.5% ESB in collaboration with Fyne Ales (Cairndow, Scotland); and *Big Fun*, a 6.3% hazy IPA in collaboration with Beak Brewery (Lewes, East Sussex).

Simon Beasall

Little Martha

The big news from [Little Martha](#) – the small brewpub based in St Philips, Bristol, brewing and serving their own range of beers in their cosy railway arch location (pictured) – is that their taproom is now open on Tuesdays from 4pm to 10pm, adding to their previous hours of noon to 10pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays, noon to 11pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and noon to 8pm Sundays.

They have recently started canning some of their beers produced on site, a slow and labour intensive process as each can is filled, sealed and labelled by hand. The 4.5% New Zealand pale ale *Mysterious Intergalactic Object* is currently available in can, soon to be joined by their 5% *Stout* and 5.8% IPA *Quantum Fluctuations*.

Recently the guest beer offering has included cask, with the first one being a pin of *Sunset*, a golden ale from [On Point Brewing](#) in Bedminster. *Stroopwafel* export stout from Blackjack Brewing in Manchester has also featured. Demand for the cask beers has been fairly limited thus far, but as and when this increases they are hoping to regularly offer a guest ale served by gravity from a firkin.

Events wise, over the bank holiday weekend at the end of April, Little Martha joined the first East Bristol Brewery Trail of 2023. If you missed that, keep an eye out for the second one later this year.

Andy Coston

Bath Ales (and St Austell)

The former Bath Ales bar/restaurant located in Bath, [Graze](#), has recently been closed for refurbishment. It is being relaunched by St Austell (owners of Bath Ales) and the ETM Group as the first in a series of premium sports bars to be located across the West Country. It will be known as **Ludo Sports Bar & Kitchen**, opening mid May. ETM already operate an award-winning collection of bars, pubs, and restaurants in central London, which serve food and drinks and offer state-of-the-art video and audio technology.

Good news arising from this change is that the brew kit that was located in [Graze](#) to brew *Platform 3* IPA has been moved to Bath Ales' Hare Brewery, and will be able to be used by Bath Ales brewers and apprentices to experiment with small-batch brews. At present they have to go to the St Austell brewery to experiment and hone their craft, but hopefully this move could lead to small-batch brews being brewed in Warmley, and circulated to selected pubs in the Bristol and Bath areas.

The St Austell-brewed small-batch beers are still available periodically in the [Albion](#) in Clifton, and if you are quick, in May you may be able to sample a Schwartzbier brewed by one of the Bath Ales apprentices. However, take note that after they arrive on a Friday, these specials are usually gone by the following Monday.

For those of you who have enjoyed a visit to the Celtic Beer Festival, or who would like to experience this fine Cornish festival at the historic St Austell brewery, you will be pleased to know that it will be held again this year at the end of November. Keep an eye on the St Austell website for further details.

Roy Sanders



Brewery News

Farewell Pitchfork and 3D, it was truly Epic!

In late February 2023 I was shocked to wake up and see an unexpected Facebook post announcing the almost immediate closure of Epic Beers (including the Pitchfork and 3D brands). Having been the CAMRA brewery liaison officer (BLO) for the brewery (and RCH before that) for 20 plus years, I didn't see that coming. The brewery entered voluntary insolvency and has been actively selling off all remaining stock. A number of pubs in Bristol and nearby have grabbed the chance to buy the last few casks, but these are sure to be gone before you read this.

It's worth giving you a brief potted history to demonstrate what a terribly sad loss this is.

The RCH brewery started as a tiny affair in the 1980s in the cellar of the Royal Clarence Hotel in my home town of Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. Two main brews were on offer: *Clarence Pride*, a session bitter; and *Regency*, a stronger dark beer. They were mainly offered at the pub and occasional beer festivals. The owner was Denis Davey. When he took a step back in 1993 his sons Paul and Mark moved the brewery to a former cider mill in West Hewish, just north of Weston-super-Mare. The original beers were dropped and replaced by the likes of *Pitchfork*, *Old Slug Porter*, *Santa Fé*, *East Street Cream* and *PG Steam*, all developed and brewed by new head brewer Graham Dunbavan. Things really took off from there with RCH winning a huge number of awards and the beers gaining a national and international reputation for quality. They also ran a successful beer distribution agency which supplied pubs and beer festivals (including our own CAMRA Bristol Beer Festival) with a huge range of guest beers.

All seemed well until around 2016, when the agency closed and the RCH brewery was sold to a mysterious businessman who also bought the Otley (South Wales) and Cottage (Somerset) breweries. Head brewer Graham Dunbavan and Mark Davey stayed on. Shortly afterwards all three breweries were declared bankrupt. All seemed lost but along came Dave Turner, who with Graham and Mark, established 'Epic Beers' on the same site in 2017. They were keen to retain the famous beers under the 'Pitchfork Ales' brand with the same all-British ingredients, but also wanted to explore new markets with exciting international ingredients. Thus '3D Beer' was born too. Everything was rebranded and aggressively marketed as the brewery was dragged into the 21st century. All was well with the world again! Like all businesses, little did they know what would lie ahead with COVID, lockdowns and the economic crises.



Dave Turner on stage at one of the Brews, Blues & Barbecues festivals

Epic can certainly not be accused of not being positive and innovative in attempting to battle through such adversity. Furlough and inertia was most definitely not for them, as they fought tooth and nail to overcome each and every setback. Already having rebranded and increased on-line presence before lockdown, they went into overdrive after it. Here are just a few examples.

During the first lockdown, Epic launched what was probably the first on-line beer festival, their 'Armchair Beer Festival', which involved a variety of cask ales being delivered to your door. You then tuned into a Zoom type



Mark Davey and Graham Dunbavan

channel where you could interact with Dave and Graham and watch three live music acts. It was quite brilliant – a break from the tedium of that lockdown, a rare chance for some actual cask beer and a thorough breath of fresh air.

Not long after, Epic upgraded their takeaway beer facility to create the 'Beer Drive Thru', whereby you ordered and paid on line, selected a time slot for pickup at the brewery, pulled up, and an employee put the beer near your car and left the scene. You picked it up and drove off, totally contactless. More lockdown genius! Cask ale was still hard to get at that point, remember, and Epic were proud of never having to throw away a single pint of beer as many other breweries so publicly did. This facility proved very popular and continued thriving once freedom returned, right up to the brewery closure recently. If you signed up to it, you got an email every week detailing that week's offering.

Realising that not everyone could get to the brewery, Epic set up a local and national delivery service that majored on cask beer as well as bottles and cans plus merchandise. Delivery charges were kept reasonable so all could access their beers. They also developed innovative packaging that meant you could, for example, order three pints each of up to four different fresh real ales in one single box, direct to your home. I'm not aware of any other brewer that did that.

As soon as gatherings were allowed again Epic relaunched their popular 'Brews, Blues and Barbecues' summer beer and music festival at the brewery, an awesome fun occasion for all of the family. Indeed, this year's event was selling well in advance. They have offered assurance that all ticket holders will be refunded by the ticket agency.

From all of the above I hope that you can see that this was the last brewery that deserved to fall victim to the current economic crisis. It really did come as quite a shock given their amazing efforts in the last few years. It also serves as a dire warning as to what may lie ahead for other pubs and breweries that have been far less proactive. Let's hope that I am wrong about that!

Despite all this Dave has asked me to pass on the following message to readers: "A heartfelt thank-you to everyone that has enjoyed our beers over the years and have expressed such wonderful sentiments and sent such lovely messages to us about this sad situation." As for the future, Dave is seeking employment, not necessarily in the brewing industry, and Graham is taking a break whilst contemplating his options. Mark left the brewery a few months ago.

It just remains for me to say: good luck chaps, it really was Epic and you and your beers will be missed terribly.

Vince Murray

Bath & Borders branch news

News from Bath

We are pleased to report that, following a long period in limbo, the **King William IV** at Combe Down has been acquired by Charlie and Amanda Digney, who have a long-established track record of running pubs within Bath and further afield. This is good news as the **King William IV** should have a promising future.

The **Trinity** on James Street West has undergone a refurbishment. Work began on a £185,000 revamp in mid-February with the aim of turning of the pub into a top-notch city centre local with an emphasis on sports and eclectic live entertainment. The new managers are Tobias Goodnight and Tui Sancha, who together have had 12 years of experience in the hospitality industry.

Kettlesmith Brewery looks set to open a new bar in Bath in the near future. The Bradford-on-Avon based brewery has signed a lease for a small, combined beer bar and bottle shop at the top of Walcot Street. They aim to create a similar feel to the brewery's existing outlet in Corsham, **Kettlesmith's**. At the time of writing it is hoped that the new premises will be open early May.

We were pleased to see that the **Griffin Inn** on Monmouth Street on the west side of the city centre reopened on Thursday 6 April following several months of closure. Dating back to 1730 this attractive, historic pub has a new landlord, Roger Payne, who also owns the nearby Robun Japanese restaurant. The Griffin is initially opening as a drinking establishment with bar snacks, but a food menu is to be introduced and the refurbished letting rooms should become available in the coming weeks.

Exciting news from Wells

We have just learned from a local member that there has been an astonishing transformation of the **White Hart Inn** in the centre of Wells. Situated directly opposite the famous cathedral, it has become something of a beer emporium. During a visit in around mid-March, our local member found there to be 17 interesting beers on, including a number on cask, with many hailing from local breweries. We understand that the White Hart has become part of the same pub group that has the **Famous Royal Navy Volunteer** in Bristol, the **Butcher's Hook** in Thornbury and the **Strand** in Cheltenham.

Bell at Buckland Dinham reopens

The **Bell Inn**, an old pub overlooking the village of Buckland Dinham, has reopened following a long period of closure and uncertainty. It's open six days a week – Tuesday being the exception – and its activities include pizza nights, quiz nights and Sunday roasts.

News from the Bradford-on-Avon area

A second planning application to convert the **Bear Inn** in the town centre into private dwellings was made at the end of 2022. The first application, made in the spring of 2022, was agreed with conditions. The difference here is in the configuration of the private dwellings. Worrying as this is, the pub was still open at the time of writing (mid April). At the top of town, the lease on **Castle Inn** is up for sale. South of the town centre, the **Canal Tavern** reopened in early April following a short period of closure. Back out of town the canal- and river-side **Cross Guns** at Avoncliff reopened on Thursday 2 March, following a two-month period of closure. January saw the first tentative steps to a complete renovation of the now community-owned **Hop Pole** at Limpley Stoke (pictured above), mid-way between Bath and Bradford-on-Avon, as some of its new owners, including our own branch pubs officer Hugh Steele, began a thorough strip-down of the interior of the pub.

News from Westbury

We were very sad to learn of the passing of Bob Musker, the landlord of the **Horse & Groom** on Alfred Street in Westbury. Bob died following a long illness on 23 February. The freehold of the pub is up for sale. The selling agents are Christie and Co and the asking price is £535,000. The good news is that it is being marketed as a going concern.



The Hop Pole Inn, Limpley Stoke (photo by Hugh Steele)

Alhampton Inn relaunch

The **Alhampton Inn** is one of the pubs that the Bath & Borders branch has recently been taken on from the now closed Heart of Wessex branch. Deep in the south of our area, this attractive pub, in a highly picturesque village of the same name south of Evercreech, closed with little notice in the autumn. The good news is that the pub should be well on the way to being reopened. The local community rallied around and formed a community benefit society, with support from the Plunkett Foundation, and is raising sufficient funding to take a lease and relaunch the pub. The community has just started the process of hiring a manager or management team to run the pub.

Latest from Frome

Coop Kitchen, who run the **Griffin** on Milk Street, took over the **Artisan** at the top of Catherine Hill on 10 April. The pub is being refurbished and we believe it may revert to its historic name of the Ship. We understand that from sometime in May the **Griffin** will go back to being operated by Frome Brewing Company.

Somerset Arms, Semington closed

We were concerned to hear about the closure at the end of March of the **Somerset Arms**, a lovely pub in village of Semington, south of Melksham. Hopefully the closure of this Wellington-owned pub, the history of which goes back to the 16th century, will be temporary, especially as it is the only pub in the village, as well as the nearest pub to the West Wiltshire Crematorium. There is certainly a good community and business case for keeping it open. We understand, however, that the departing landlord had no knowledge of any future plans for the pub. Meanwhile the local parish council has applied to nominate the Somerset Arms as an Asset of Community Value.

Crown Inn at Clapton planning appeal

An appeal has been made against the refusal of planning permission to convert the **Crown Inn** into private residences. The Crown is not only the only pub in the village, which lies to the west of Midsomer Norton, but also the only pub for miles around. The planning application would have seen the conversion of the pub into three private dwellings and the erection of two further dwellings in the grounds. The starting date of the appeal is 3 April with a decision expected after 8 May, which is the deadline for representations.

Some last-minute snippets

We were concerned to hear via its Facebook page that the **Angel Inn** at Heytesbury, south of Warminster, was closing its doors on Sunday 23 April. There was no indication of what the future holds for this historical food-orientated pub. The **Old Bear Inn** at Staverton, east of Trowbridge, is under new management. There seems to be lots of praise for the food here on Facebook.

Steve Hunt

Pub of the year

The Bath & Borders branch of CAMRA currently covers an area stretching from just north of Bath to Westbury in the east, just south of Wells in the west, and down to Wincanton in the south. Every year it selects a city pub of the year and a rural pub of the year, one of those becoming the

The Raven, Bath: Overall Pub of the Year



It was a case of *déjà vu* when the Bath & Borders branch of CAMRA presented the Pub of the Year certificate to the **Raven** in Bath on the evening of Thursday 13th April.

The **Raven** (which some readers may remember as Hatchetts), situated on the corner of Queen Street and Quiet Street, is a regular entry in the *Good Beer Guide*, with seventeen consecutive entries since 2007 and branch pub of the year awards in 2006, 2013 and 2018, so the award ceremony was on familiar territory.

One notable change since 2018 is the substantial sideways and upward expansion; the pub now has four bars across three floors, and typically offers nine real ales. Tasty Pieminister pies are still served, though sadly my favourite (Matador) has disappeared from their range since 2018.

Trevor Cromie, chair of Bath & Borders CAMRA, said: "The Raven has been a magnet for real ale drinkers for many years and is now bigger and better. Congratulations and keep up the good work."

The photo above (courtesy of Lewis Hands) shows, from left to right: Mickey Flint, the Raven's cellarman; Trevor Cromie, chair and press officer of Bath & Borders CAMRA; and Gabriel (Gabe) Lee, the Raven's general manager.

overall branch pub of the year. We are pleased to announce that the **Raven** in Bath is this year's Bath & Borders Pub of the Year, whilst the **Fox & Hounds** in Warminster is the branch's Rural Pub of the Year. The **Royal Oak** at Twerton, Bath, has been awarded Cider Pub of the Year.

Fox & Hounds, Warminster: Rural Pub of the Year



On Saturday 4 July 2020, the first day that pubs were permitted to reopen following the first wave of the pandemic, it was to the **Fox & Hounds** in Warminster I journeyed in what seemed like the slow dawning of a new era. I'd decided that I should enjoy my first hand-pulled pint in over three-and-a-half months of enforced abstinence in one of the most sociable pubs in our branch area, even though it's around six miles from where I live. It seemed the obvious place to go. And, on arrival, I found the atmosphere to be just as friendly as I'd remembered it, my first pint like nectar.

In the past dozen years or so the Fox & Hounds has been awarded a branch pub of the year title of some sort around half a dozen times: it has been 'Rural Pub of the Year', 'Community Pub of the Year', and in 2012, it took the overall title. At its heart the Fox & Hounds is a glorious example of what a community pub can be. Under the ownership of its recently retired landlords Chris and Marion Pitcher, it became an attractive, smart pub, catering for a variety of customers: from people who want nothing more than a quiet drink to those wishing to meet up with friends, from those wishing to watch televised sports to those wanting to play pool, from darts teams to skittles teams, whilst it's a regular haunt of the local church choir, and the go-to venue for many CAMRA branch meetings. The layout of the pub consists of three drinking areas, a snug, a main public bar area with dartboard and the TV, and the pool table area, whilst a large skittle alley acts also as a function room. To the side of the pub is an outdoor drinking area. Usually, three cask beers are available and several real ciders, all at reasonable prices: so all the more reason to come and drink at one of our best pubs outside of Bath.

Pictured left to right are Trevor Cromie (Bath & Borders chair), Loma Harris (manager), Marion & Chris Pitcher (owners). Photo by Hugh Steele (Bath & Borders pubs officer).

Royal Oak: Cider Pub of the Year

This year the branch has selected a Cider Pub of the Year, with the winner being the **Royal Oak** on Lower Bristol Road, Bath. The Oak is possibly better known for collecting awards for its beer, but it does have great ciders too.

The presentation on 1st June is too late for this edition of *Pints West* but it will be covered more fully in the next one.



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Bath Beer Festival

After a two-year gap Bath & Borders branch hosted its 2023 beer festival over the weekend of 17th and 18th February, once again in the [Widcombe Social Club](#), just a few minutes' walk from Bath Spa station. For the first time tickets were only available online and were all sold about two weeks before the event.

This was the branch's 42nd beer festival and bar managers Graham Church and Dave Holland presented visitors with 32 beers in a range of styles from 30 breweries. As normal about half of the beers came from breweries in the Bath & Borders branch area with the balance from more distant breweries in England, Wales and (another first) Northern Ireland.

This year's event started a little earlier than normal at 4pm on Friday evening (through to 11pm). The all-day session on Saturday (from 11am to 7pm) attracted the largest crowd since we moved to this venue in 2016 and about 50 early birds queued down the stairs and out the front door from about 10.45.

At the end of the event we still had 23 beers on sale. Nobody was surprised that St Austell *Big Job* (7.2%) and Kelham Island *Pale Rider* (5.2%) were the first firkins (72-pint casks) to sell out on the Saturday afternoon though I don't think that anyone had Brains *Dark* (3.5% mild) in the sweep. The firkin of Ludlow *Gold* (4.2%), and the pins (36-pint casks) of Bays *Topsail* (4.0%) and Electric Bear's *Rock the Caskbah* (3.8%) and *Just Brew It* (4.0%) also sold out, as did the bag-in-boxes (20 litres, about 35 pints) of *Harmonious Brook* (4.4%) and *Enlightened Spring* (2.9%) from local debutante Golden River. The firkins of *Dark Side of the Ralph* (5.0%) from Ralph's Ruin in Bath and *Hoppelhammer* (6.0%) from Whitewater in Northern Ireland were practically empty too.

This year we had three 'meet the brewer' sessions and Will Hartley from Bath Ales, Max Cadman from Bath Brew House and Sam Ashall from Electric Bear all made themselves available to answer questions.

The [Widcombe Social Club](#) hosts a wide range of events throughout the year and we thank them for supporting the festival, along with our main sponsor [St Austell](#) who sponsored the festival glasses, plus [Abbey Ales](#), [Bath Brew House](#), [Electric Bear](#), [Frome Brewing](#), Tim at the [Old Green Tree](#), [Ralph's Ruin](#) and [Twisted Brewing](#) for their sponsorship support. Thanks too to Steve (multi-award-



Bath & Borders branch chair Trevor Cromie with Anne Allen and Sam Chant of the RDA (photo by Tony Husband)

winning) Plumridge who once again did the design and layout of the programme. On their way out customers made generous donations for the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) who received a cheque for £300 on 14th March in the [Royal Oak](#) on Lower Bristol Road, Bath.

If we can summon the energy we'll do it again next year; it looks like "Book early to avoid disappointment" may be the 2024 mantra.

Trevor Cromie

Roy Priestley RIP

Sadly the Bath & Borders CAMRA branch lost a stalwart in January with the passing of Roy Priestley. Roy and his wife Ruth were regulars at branch events and pub-goers in the centre of the branch area will recognise Roy as the *Pints West* distributor to lots of pubs in that area (e.g. Tucker's Grave, Fox & Hounds, King's Arms, Old Down Inn, Oakhill Inn).

Roy will also be well known to regulars at the [Cross Keys](#) Inn in Corsley as he was the landlord for many years after earlier careers with the railways and British Airways. Roy and Ruth retired to Radstock and Roy became a regular in the [Fromeway](#).

After a touching service at Haycombe Cemetery dozens of his friends and family gathered to celebrate his life in a two-part event at the Fromeway and his beloved Cross Keys. He will be missed by regulars of both.

Bon voyage, Roy, bon voyage.

Trevor Cromie



'Watering Holes in the Desert'

Brought to you from Weston-super-Mare

Weston-super-Mare CAMRA is a sub-branch of the Bristol & District branch. Set up over 20 years ago, it covers Weston-super-Mare and some of the surrounding areas. At the time of the sub-branch's founding, Weston did indeed seem a bit of a beer desert, hence the tag.

Things have changed a lot since then. The "beer desert" tag is now long-since redundant (though we decided to keep it anyway). When we were formed, the [Regency](#), [Dragon Inn](#) and [Off The Rails](#) were the only three pubs in town that seemed reliable for good quality ale. Only the first of those three remains open, the other two having closed a few years ago. However, many other pubs have upped their game and now there is a great choice of pubs and beers available. We frequently have visits from CAMRA branches from other parts of the country making day-trips to enjoy some of our many pubs worth visiting.

The sub-branch has also had two breweries in the area it covers. Sadly, the oldest – Epic Beers, makers of beers under the Pitchfork Ales and 3D Beer brands – has recently closed. The newest – Pinkers Craft Brewing, set up just before the first Covid lockdown – continues to thrive.

Over the years we have continued to have socials at least once a month and have made many trips to beer festivals far and wide. The account below gives a flavour of some of what we do.

We commenced 2023 with a series of town survey crawls – with between 10 and 20 members coming along each time – and here is what we found.

On 12 January, we began at the far end of town, meeting at the [Captain's Cabin](#). This pub was the subject of an article by Tim Nickolls in [Pints West 131](#) (summer 2022). In that he said: "The seafront patio outside the Captain's Cabin on Birnbeck Road provides, in my opinion, the finest spot in Weston-super-Mare to enjoy a drink. Unfortunately the pub's location, 15 or so minutes walk from the town centre, can be off-putting to some visitors and even some Westonian ale drinkers. I shall attempt to persuade you that the trek up Birnbeck Road is worth the effort!" Well, we can't argue with that; the effort is worth it. And the views from the patio (pictured below) are indeed magnificent. Beer-wise, here we found 3D *Grinch Beer* (a green IPA!) and Exmoor *Stag*.

Moving uphill, the next pub was the [Criterion](#). This is a genuine free house and traditional community pub, just off the seafront in the Knightstone area, and believed to be one of the oldest pubs in town. Here there was Dartmoor *Jail Ale* and St Austell *Tribute*.

The [Cabot Court Hotel](#) was next. This is a large Wetherspoon conversion on the seafront between the Grand Pier and the Winter

Gardens, opened in July 2011. Inside it's on four levels, each with its own distinctive style. The choice of beers here included Twisted Oak *Fallen Tree*, Hop Union *Bristol Belle* and Exmoor *Wicked Wolf*. Exmoor *Stag* was due to come on, but not yet available.

The fourth and final pub was the [Regency](#) on Lower Church Road. This is a comfortable, friendly town-centre local with a good range of beers. The pub has pool, skittles and crib teams, but also offers a quiet refuge for conversation. The beer choice was St Austell *Anthem* and *Tribute*, Butcombe *Original*, Dark Star *Hophead* and Timothy Taylor *Landlord*.

The survey crawl on 9 February started at the [Bear Inn](#) on Walliscote Road, only a few minutes' walk from the seafront and the Tropicana. This is a spacious pub, formerly called the Balmoral, that reopened in 2012 with a new name after a period closed. It has since undergone much refurbishment, making it a pleasant and comfortable place to be. This dog-friendly pub boasts a skittle alley and several en-suite rooms, popular with holiday-makers and contractors working away from home. The choice of beer was Stonehenge *Old Smokey* porter, Otter *Winter Warmer* and Exmoor *Wicked Wolf*.

Next was the [Fork 'n' Ale](#). Very conveniently located in the town centre and close to both the train station and the seafront, it opened in November 2019 as a joint venture involving the now closed Epic Beers and well-known local publican Andrew Bidmead. (*Despite the brewery's closure, the pub continues to be run independently.*) As a keen supporter of local breweries, the beers on offer here included Good Chemistry *Glowing Embers* and Pitchfork *Spuddle*.

Finally stop was the [Duke of Oxford](#). Reopened in August 2016 after a long period of closure, and subject to many name changes over the years, this pub is situated just outside the main shopping area and near to the seafront. Here we found Quantock *Plastered Pheasant* and *Wills Neck*.

On 23 February our survey crawl started at the [White Hart](#), a typical Victorian local where there is a friendly welcome given to all, dogs included. It's a popular place with a skittle alley and television for sports. The one real ale on here that day was *Draught Bass*.

Moving on to the [Black Cat](#), real ales available were Quantock *Loco for Cocoa* chocolate stout, Electric Bear *Just Brew It* pale ale, and Cheddar *Potholer* and *Ebboriginal* (an Aussie pale ale). This is Weston's first – and once again only – micropub; a second one, the [Cat and Badger](#), was relatively short lived. Pictured below is the wonderful mural on one of the walls inside.

Final stop was the [Brit Bar](#). This has been a top provider of quality real ales in the town centre for several years. There are normally five ales available covering a wide range of styles and strengths, with



local breweries such as Bristol Beer Factory, New Bristol Brewery and Quantock being regularly featured, along with delights from across the UK. Tap takeovers and 'meet the brewer' events are occasionally held. Today we had a choice of Hobsons *Dhustone* stout, Quantock *Plastered Pheasant*, Fine Tuned *Freestyle*, Cheddar *Tiers of Despair* and New Bristol Brewery *Joy of Sesh*.

And briefly, on 4 March we had an out-of-town car-assisted trip, firstly to the [Lamb](#) at Axbridge which was serving Butcombe *Original* and *ESB*. We also checked the nearby [Oak House](#) but no real ale was available. Moving on to the [White Hart](#) at Cross the choice was Frome *The Usual* best bitter, St Austell *Tribute* and Bath Ales *Gem*. A short walk then to the [New Inn](#) also at Cross for Oakham *Citra* and Bristol Beer Factory *Power House*. Finally we arrived at the [Old Inn](#) at Hutton where the choice was Palmers *200*, St Austell *Tribute*, Fuller's *London Pride* and Otter *Head*.

There will be plenty more similar events in the months ahead. If you are one of the local CAMRA members who has never been along

to a social (or maybe a non-member who is considering joining) then perhaps now is the time to take the plunge and come along to meet some like-minded people and maybe make some new friends. All events are posted, regularly reviewed and updated on the WsM Google calendar and located in the Bristol & District CAMRA diary at: camrabristol.org.uk/diary.html

so keep an eye on that and also the sub-branch Facebook page. See also the diary and contacts inside the back page.



A Round with Robin

Having missed out on last year's 'Exeter Festival of Winter Ales', the last to be held at St James Park football stadium, I went to this year's 'Exeter Festival of Beer' at the [Corn Exchange](#) on its second day, a Friday in January. It was a pleasant venue and good not to have to be carrying full glasses of beer up or down steps from separate bars. 65 cask ales, 12 bottled beers and seven real ciders were on the menu with a short description of each on the programme. My favourite dark ale was the Beer Engine *Old Iron Horse*, a new red winter porter at 5.2% with chocolate malt dominating. Once again (as in the pre-Covid festival) my overall favourite was from Powderkeg brewery at Woodbury Salterton in Devon, the *Sixes & Sevens* 5% IPA, so named as it has "six malts and seven hops masterfully blended in complete defiance of any common sense."

A flyer at the festival proclaimed the fact that the [Imperial](#) in Exeter (a large Wetherspoon pub close to the university, Central and St David's railway stations) was once again having their 'Ale in the Orangery Beer Festival' in February. As I had been to the last one, I decided to go again. This year the 15 cask ales (on gravity serve) were chosen by the Wetherspoon staff with a note on the informative programme as to the time spent in service. For the occasion I wore my [Dragon Inn](#) 1999 festival T-shirt (the Dragon being Weston-super-Mare's first Wetherspoon pub, but which closed down during Covid) and was able to renew acquaintance with Emma who used to be manager of the Dragon and now is manager of the Imperial. Regrettably, the Keltek 6% beer *Grim Reaper* had sold out the previous day (I hope to be able to try this at the SIBA Maltingsfest in April) but all the other beers were available including the South Hams *Sherman*, a 6.4% IPA dedicated to the Torcross D-Day rehearsal incident. This was a vastly hoppy beer and I suspect mostly US hops in keeping with the name. My favourite beer was also from Keltek in Cornwall, the 5.1% *King*; and all beers were £1.29 a half pint.

On the last Saturday before train fares increased my mate Max (from the Somerset branch of CAMRA) and I went to Gloucester for a small pub crawl. I had not been there since 2018. Back then the [Turks Head](#) micropub was in Southgate Street, but it has since relocated – as the [Turks Head Inn](#) – to St Aldate Street, between Northgate Street and Kings Square; this was our first port of call. As you would expect, the interior has a good collection of casts of Turks' heads, also many Toby jugs, a fine collection of pewter tankards hanging from the ceiling, and walls covered with over 500 handpump clips. The pub has four beer engines and I settled for a half pint of Bespoke *Money for Old Rope* (4.8%) which is a regular beer here and from the Forest of Dean. Other beers at this time were from Milestone and Parkway breweries and all were £1.90 a half – cash only, no silly cards. The pub has six still ciders, Guinness and a selection of the usual lagers and keg ciders. There is seating downstairs for 22 including a snug that is partially hidden by an upright piano, and more seating upstairs, plus a selection of books, cheese and onion rolls, and an amusing list of rules (but not as long as at the [Bag of Nails](#) in Bristol).

Next, we went to the [New Inn Hotel](#) on Northgate Street, a favourite of mine in times past, but unfortunately the management was changing the beer engines from one bar to another so no real ale on this day. The pub has a gallery around an open courtyard with bars opening onto this. Despite its name Queen Jane learnt of her succession to the throne of England, when Lady Jane Grey, at this pub.



Turning right at the crossroads we entered Westgate Street and entered the [Fountain Inn](#) via a passageway. Warmth from a modern stove of split logs in a huge carved stone fireplace hit us as we entered. Six beer engines serving three beers from the South West and three from remainder of England, and we both settled for Bristol Beer Factory *Independence* (4.6%). We were shown to a table reserved for diners in 25 minutes; the pub has a vast menu, quite reasonably priced, and reservations for a lunchtime meal are a must-do. This old pub has been in the *Good Beer Guide* on many occasions.

We then made our way to the [Dick Whittington's](#), a pub that was also a regular in the *Good Beer Guide*, but discovered it is now closed. The Whittington family owned the pub for many years. Almost opposite it, still in Westgate Street, the [Lower George](#) was also closed. We then went to the [Pelican Inn](#) in St Mary Street, not far from the St Oswald Priory ruins which are well signposted. The pub is so called as one of its beams allegedly comes from the ship of the same name that became Sir Francis Drake's Golden Hind. The Pelican is currently the regional pub of the year for the South West. It is owned by Wye Valley Brewery and seven of the ten beer engines were for Wye Valley beers. Max was in heaven. I had three half-pints of their beers and a half-pint of Vocation's *Naughty & Nice* 5.9% stout. All the beers were £2.10 a half. Here also were cheese and onion baps at £1.80 so I forced one down as we stayed for two pints of beer. The open fire place had more split logs burning merrily to keep the good number of drinkers warm. Luckily there was no rugby on this day as otherwise the pub gets very crowded being not far from the rugby ground.

The last pub in Gloucester I wanted to revisit from 2018 was [Angie's](#) in Bull Lane, not a micropub as such but very tiny, said to be Gloucester's smallest bar. Only two local beers; I had the Bespoke *Forest Gold* (4%) at £2 a half and it was most satisfactory. More seating upstairs, the sign said, so Max and I went up the narrow staircase (it must have been a cottage at some time) and found a good-sized room with leather sofa, tables and three old video game machines one of which featured Pac-Man which was being played on by a brother and sister whilst their parents and grandparents occupied the rest of the room. However, they made space for Max and me at one of the tables.

On our way back to Gloucester railway Station Max wanted to call in at the [Regal](#), a fine Art Deco ex-cinema now owned by Wetherspoon. Very crowded but we got a table where I had a half of Brains *St David's Ale* (4.1%) at £1.29.

Robin E Wild

Heritage pubs of Worcester (plus one!)

A heritage pub is defined by CAMRA as one which has an intact traditional interior or features and rooms of national importance. CAMRA produces several guides that enable the reader to seek out the best heritage pubs in Great Britain. These guides can be found and purchased in the pub heritage section of CAMRA's online shop at shop1.camra.org.uk (search for "heritage").

We are very fortunate to have quite a few of these pubs within a reasonable travelling distance from Bristol, so my hope is that this and previous articles will inspire you to visit them, enjoy their interiors and drink a pint or two.

My trip this time was to Worcester. Worcester has six heritage pubs listed in the *Real Heritage Pubs of the Midlands** guide and we decided to visit the four located in the city centre. The 60-mile journey north to Worcester from Bristol is straightforward by a direct train from Bristol, with an off-peak return costing just under £17. All four heritage pubs are less than ten minutes' walk from Worcester Foregate Street station. Unfortunately, one of the four pubs – the [Cricketers](#) – was closed. It was surrounded by scaffolding and undergoing some serious renovation when we passed it; hopefully it will reopen in the not too distant future.



The Cardinal's Hat



The Cardinal's Hat

Our first stop was the [Cardinal's Hat](#) on Friar Street. This handsome three-storey building dates from 1760 and has a half-timbered ground floor with some attractive leaded windows. Inside, the pub consists of three small rooms. The front room to the left contains the bar which had a good range of four beers and four ciders. Above the roaring wood stove was a chimney which had a beautifully painted plaster cardinal's hat motif. We decided



The Eagle Vaults

to sit in the rear room which is the highlight of the pub. Its walls were fully covered in Tudor-style dark oak panelling together with a large stone fireplace containing another warming wood stove. It was a very comfortable room in which to drink our Wye Valley HPAs. On our way out we took a quick look into the small cosy snug which affords a good view of the street through the leaded windows.

We then walked a short distance up the street to the [Eagle Vaults](#). This pub was built in the 18th century and the impressive 'Mitchells and Butlers' glazed tiled frontage is from around 1890. There is a tiled dado in the lobby and a mosaic floor going to the back of the pub. Inside there is a fine wooden Victorian bar and counter together with a centrepiece clock. This pub sold four beers from the Marston's stable. I chose Banks's Amber Bitter which was so different from the unremarkable beer I remembered from years ago. It was refreshing and tasty and went well with our very good value lunch. We admired the etched windows and original fireplace from our seats and, just like we saw in the Cardinal's Hat, we noted the now defunct bell-pushes all around the room.

Our next stop was the Grade II-listed and *Good Beer Guide*-listed [Plough](#) which is not listed as a heritage pub but is a very worthwhile place to stop for its fine selection of five beers. I had my best pint of the day there in the form of Salopian Beatific Stout. We could not dwell too long as we had one more pub to see before our train home. This was the wedge-shaped [Paul Pry](#). The first historic feature to greet us was the splendid entrance hall with its multi-coloured floor-to-ceiling tiling and terrazzo floor. We then ventured into the main room to see the grand mahogany bar counter with its elaborate mirrored and



The Paul Pry



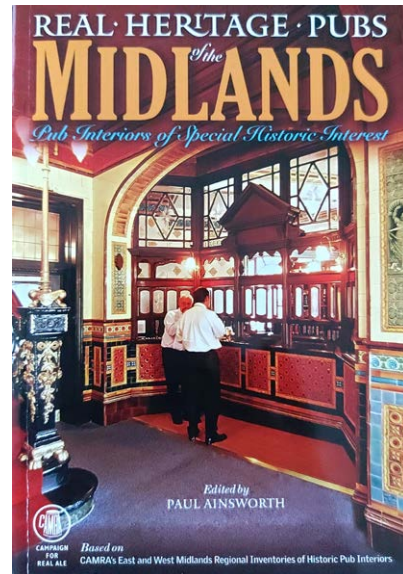
The Paul Pry

columned back bar topped by a centrepiece clock. We ordered our beer (Gloucester Gold) from the three available and then sat to admire the rest of the room with its Lincrusta moulded ceiling and etched windows.

The other two heritage pubs in Worcester are the [Bush](#) (long-term closed) and the [Punch Bowl](#).

On the train home we reflected on what a great pub destination Worcester is – in addition to its six heritage pubs it also has a further seven pubs listed in the *Good Beer Guide*. It was a very enjoyable day of admiring Britain's pub heritage and drinking fine beer.

Dave Weir



* Unfortunately the *Real Heritage Pubs of the Midlands* guide is currently out of stock but some used copies are available (at the time of writing) on Amazon and Ebay.

Other titles in the series are still available from CAMRA's online shop, however, at shop1.camra.org.uk (search for "heritage").

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Campaign for Real Ale

Here, there and everywhere

This is my first piece for *Pints West* since the 'Reed On' articles of the early millennium. To a certain extent I've been inspired to write once again by the many excellent articles other contributors have written in recent times, eloquently documenting their experiences of pub visits and beer travels in general. So, after threatening to do so for some time, I've finally decided to share some personal pub favourites from recent trips around the country. All have delivered an excellent beer experience on every level and hopefully will continue to do so in these tricky times.

I'm not a big fan of social media. Unlike those that prefer to advertise their whereabouts, lives and good fortune (or bemoaning their woes) on that certain well-known platform, my travels and real ale experiences are kept mainly to myself, sharing only with friends in person and others who may be interested. So, on reflection, I'm largely motivated to write this piece for the latter and the many ale enthusiasts that enjoy reading *Pints West*.

There are so many venues my wife (also a CAMRA member) and I have visited country-wide that we've seriously enjoyed over the years, but I've tried to narrow it down to a few nailed-on favourites that we can confirm are still up there with the best from recent visits. Many will know them and others perhaps not, most are award-winners, others deserve to be, but either way if you get the chance to pay them a visit, do so ... they are a must. You won't be disappointed!

The Bridge Inn, Topsham, Devon

In an idyllic setting on the outskirts of this pretty harbour town, not far from Exeter, anyone with a love of that perfect combo of pub heritage and beers served straight from the cask will surely be aware of this classic North Devon alehouse.



Topsham harbour

Visited by Queen Elizabeth II in 1998, there can surely be no greater testament to the family that has been at the helm for well over a century. Offering at least six local beers here (one usually from the Branscombe Vale Brewery) all are served on gravity direct from the cellar room, where you can order from the characterful interior or the serving hatch facing the outdoor sitting area and car park.



Enjoying a beer in the Bridge Inn's garden

Cosy inside in the winter and glorious outside whilst enjoying a pint in the sunshine overlooking the River Clyst. There's usually a spot of birdwatching to be had as a bonus too. Surely there can't be many places to match this South-West gem. Devon heaven!

The Blue Bell, York

As their website states this is "a proper pub for proper pub people" and we certainly wouldn't disagree with that. A tiny place that packs a big punch in terms of atmosphere and quality ales. Full of charm and Yorkshire character in the heart of the old city, it's almost impossible not to strike up a conversation with a stranger in this bijou boozer, where flat caps and whippets are welcome too! The pork pies ain't 'arf bad either.



A view of the Blue Bell's bar

The Kings Arms, Waterloo, London

One of our favourite London boozers. Situated in Rupell Street, not far from Waterloo station and the Old Vic Theatre, this lovely old terraced street and pub have featured in numerous films depicting postwar Britain, most recently *Mrs Harris Goes to Paris* and *Legend* (where Tom Hardy plays both East-end gangsters Ronnie and Reggie, the Kray twins).



With as many as eight cask ales on at any one time, it has two drinking areas at the front of the building either side of a central bar, and another at the back that doubles as a Thai restaurant. On our recent visits they seem to have two regular beers available, the house beer 'The Kings Ale', produced by Sharp's of Cornwall, alongside Adnams of Suffolk's Southwold Bitter. The remaining pumps generally serve ales from small London breweries such as Portobello and Small Beer.



After visiting on many occasions we're still waiting to experience that 'Waterloo Sunset'!

The Harp, Covent Garden, London

Another in the capital, and quite possibly the favourite, this classic pub in the heart of theatreland is an absolute cracker and should be on everyone's bucket list to visit at least once. Sadly, the legendary landlady passed away a number of years ago, shortly after the place was snapped up by Fuller's of Chiswick. But fear not, having purchased this once free house, Fuller's promised not to change a thing, and they have kept their word. Often considered the best drinking experience in London, it's a multi-award-winning pub and revered by CAMRA members, visitors and locals alike.

The bar boasts 10 hand pumps with only London Pride and Dark Star nodding subtly to the owners' portfolio. Those, together with the wonderful Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter, are regulars. For dark beer lovers there will always be at least one to whet the whistle, with the remainder a wonderfully balanced mix of ales to suit most palates.



Harvey's Sussex at the Harp, possibly England's finest best bitter (well that's my opinion). Discuss!

The Halfway House, Pitney, Somerset

What can I say about this place? So called because it's almost exactly half way between the charming south Somerset towns of Somerton and Langport, this is the epitome of a rural gem and another place not to be missed.

All ales (usually around 10 of 'em!) are served on gravity in a room behind the central bar and a great selection is always available, generally from breweries in the South West.

I've been coming here for over 25 years now and very little has changed since we discovered the place and long may that continue. The Halfway House won national CAMRA Pub of the Year in 1996 and is a multiple winner of the Somerset branch's pub of the year award.

It's full of rural charm with open fires, great food and now boasts a well furnished 'hut' in the garden for overnight stays. This truly is a Somerset Levels classic and not to be missed. Probably one of the best places to ask a local with a beer or cider in hand, "How be on then?"

The Fleece, Bretforton, Worcestershire

Owned by the National Trust, this is a relatively recent discovery but hits the spot on so many levels. It's situated in a picturesque Cotswold village, not far from Evesham. Arrive any time of year and just marvel at the wonderful ancient interior, fabulously preserved. I kid ye not ... this place is outstanding in every respect and another CAMRA award-winner!

Under the watchful eye of landlord 'Nigel', just like its sister pub the [Cardinal's Hat](#) in Worcester old town, both places usually feature ales from the Uley Brewery in Gloucestershire and Wye Valley in Herefordshire as regulars.

Stop at the Fleece for delicious pub fare, either indoors or outside, and maybe stay in the bona fide gypsy caravan situated in its own private enclosure at the bottom of the large orchard-style garden. There's just



A view of the Fleece's bar



Just one of a number of rooms in this wonderful building (Fleece)

the one guest room above the pub, if more comfort is preferred, so book early for a lovely B&B!

The Marble Arch Inn, Manchester

A short walk away from Manchester's bustling and rejuvenated Northern Quarter, the Marble Arch Inn sits resplendent on a side-street corner along the Oldham Road. This is the flagship pub and original home of the Marble Arch Brewery in Manchester. Unsurprisingly, featuring a good number of their beers on the nine handpumps, they also aren't shy to feature guest ales too within this period glazed tiled interior that has a mosaic sloping floor! You'll soon get used to this slightly unusual and possibly unnerving feature, then sit back, relax and enjoy their fabulous beers and soak up the atmosphere.

If you fancy a bite to eat, the meals are good in our experience, but beware of the busy lunchtimes as free tables can be scarce. There is also a beer garden out back should the Manchester weather allow al fresco drinking (but don't bank on it!).



'Some might say' ... it's Noel Gallagher's favourite boozer – others tell the truth!

More gems in part two (next issue).

Steve Reed

Good Beer Guide and beer scoring

The process for selecting pubs for inclusion in CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide* (GBG) is a continual process and we need members from across the region to help us gather information about the beer quality in them, preferably by scoring their beers.

Beer scores recorded on CAMRA's national database – via [WhatPub](https://whatpub.com) (web address whatpub.com) or the GBG app if you've downloaded it – are used to compile a shortlist of pubs eligible for consideration, and we need more beer scores for more pubs, particularly those in suburban and rural areas of the branch.

In order to help members with this, Bristol & District will be running minibus trips – probably one per month – to pubs in areas of the branch that are difficult to access by public transport. Many of these more remote pubs receive fewer beer scores than pubs in more populated areas – so we rely on these trips and your scores to help us decide which could be GBG contenders.

We will also be arranging pub walks and trips using public transport to areas closer to the centre of Bristol.

So take a look at the branch diary inside the back page to see what is currently arranged over the next few months, and come along if you can. As well as assessing beer quality, these events are a great way of socialising and visiting pubs you may not otherwise get to.

Equally, if you are drinking in your local or elsewhere in the country it would be helpful if you could remember to score beers you drink. Branches across the country use similar methods to select pubs, so you will be helping in the compilation of the next *Good Beer Guide*.

Martin Gray

GBG Coordinator, Bristol & District branch



Why your beer scores count!



Your beer scores help decide which pubs go into the Good Beer Guide (GBG) and ultimately affects which pubs go onto the Pub of the Year candidate list.

Enter your scores in [WhatPub](https://whatpub.com) or the GBG App.

Help us power WhatPub

An appeal to ALL readers

If you are drinking in your local or another pub somewhere in the branch area – or indeed anywhere in the country, for that matter – take a look at the pub's entry on [WhatPub](https://whatpub.com) and if you notice that the details shown are incorrect, please submit an update to get the entry amended. Anyone can do it – just click on 'Submit Updates' and tell us what's changed.

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Information
updated by
thousands
of CAMRA
volunteers

Created by
CAMRA who
produce the
UK's best beer
& pub guide

Pub companies (pubcos)

Pub companies: Who are they and what do they do?

CAMRA's Pub and Club Campaigns Committee is seeking to raise awareness among members and drinkers generally about the companies that control many of our pubs. This is a series of articles, over a few editions of *Pints West*, that provides the facts on pub company practices and operations, explaining in particular how their business models work and what this means for both licensees and, ultimately, us as customers. The aim is to let the facts speak for themselves so that people can make up their own minds about the positive or negative effects of these practices on our pubs and the folk who run them.

The series comprises:

- Article 1: A potted history of the pubco (*in Pints West 129 - page 24*)
- Article 2: The current pub company scene (*in Pints West 130 - page 38*)
- Article 3: Pub operating models (*in Pints West 131 - page 37*)
- Article 4: How pubcos make money (*in Pints West 131 - page 38*)
- Article 5: The Pubs Code (*in Pints West 131 - page 39*)
- Article 6: Day-to-day management (*in Pints West 132 - page 34*)
- Article 7: Rent reviews (*in Pints West 132 - page 35*)
- Article 8: Dilapidations (*in Pints West 133 - page 35*)
- Article 9: Associated bodies

9. Associated bodies

A number of bodies exist to represent the interests of pub companies or their licensees, whilst other groups (such as CAMRA) champion pubs on behalf of their customers and therefore have a strong interest in the way pub companies operate.

British Beer & Pub Association

Formed in 1904 as the Brewers' Society but renamed in 2000 to reflect its growing pub company membership. Its members are responsible for 90% of the beer brewed in Britain and own around 20,000 of the country's pubs; interestingly, the biggest pub company, Stonegate, is not a member. The Chief Executive is Emma McClarkin who succeeded the long-serving Brigid Simmonds in 2019.

The BBPA positions itself as 'the voice of the beer and pub industry' and campaigns for lower taxes and less regulation to 'enable growth and investment' in the trade. It provides members with guidance, specialist insight, research and statistics, including a 'licensee forum' offering free advice on matters such as cellar management, property & planning, licensing & regulation, and health & safety.

British Institute of Innkeeping

This is a membership organisation with charitable status whose remit is 'to raise professional standards across the sector'. Its 9,000 members are drawn from all areas of the trade – tenants, managers, free-traders, pub chefs, bar-staff, etc. Helplines cover issues like human resources, legal, licensing, tax, environmental health and market knowledge. It also sells services to tenants through their pub companies and in several regards can be seen as a commercial partner of these companies, some of whom offer free BII membership to their tenants/lessees. Several companies are corporate BII members.

Federation of Licensed Victuallers Association

Another membership organisation, this one aims to look after the interests of self-employed licensees and was formed in 1992. The advice, help and guidance it offers includes matters like contracts of employment, health & safety, staff induction and working time regulations. It has a direct financial/commercial link with Stonegate who offer free membership to all their tenants/lessees. When the Pubs Code came in, the FLVA notably did not support the Market Rent Only option.

UK Hospitality

The organisation sees itself as the 'single, authoritative voice representing the broad hospitality sector' – so not just the licensed trade but also the likes of visitor attractions, nightclubs and bowling alleys. It resulted from a 2018 merger of the British Hospitality Association and the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers and membership is offered to operator and supplier companies plus affiliates like educational establishments. Kate Nicholls is the Chief Executive. Its current campaigning priorities are 'the future workforce of the sector, tackling the excessive tax burden the sector faces and

ensuring regulation on business is proportionate'. Members can access a variety of advice services, including cost savings, employee retention and legislative compliance.

Forum of British Pubs

The FBP was founded in June 2020 by redoubtable tenants' rights campaigner Dave Mountford (the Pub Defender) and Ian Cass, Managing Director of the Forum of Private Business, primarily to protect British pubs and the people who run them. They aim to support all publicans, and tied tenants in particular, as well as being a strong campaigning voice with government and the industry. In their view, there is much bad business practice and unfair behaviour in the latter and the absence of a fair, level playing field keeps many licensees in a state of perpetual jeopardy. There has also been, they say, no true representation until they came along for pub tenants at government level.

To help address the imbalance, FBP gives its members access to expert advice and guidance on general and legal issues and, especially, on using (or trying to use) rights under the Pubs Code.

Scottish Licensed Trade Association

Founded in 1880, this is the leading licensed trade body in Scotland. It is consulted by governments, national boards and the media and members are also represented at local level through a series of local and regional trade associations. Membership is open to all Scottish licensed trade outlets.

Pubs Advisory Service

PAS was set up to help tenants obtain high-quality independent advice and support to grow their business. Areas on which it can advise include rent reviews, business rates, unworkable business plans, mis-selling of agreements and the Market Rent Only option. It also provides pre-entry advice for people looking to enter the trade. It has represented many tenants in Pubs Code and other arbitrations.

Campaigning Organisations

As well as CAMRA, several other groups have emerged to campaign on pubs issues generally. The Campaign for Pubs was launched in June 2020 to campaign for a 'better, freer and fairer, more sustainable' pub sector. It aims to unite publicans, campaigners, suppliers and customers 'in a single mass-membership organisation fighting to protect pubs.' Protect Pubs (founded 2014) is a 'community-led campaign organisation and advice forum for all those who love pubs and want to see them at the heart of British culture.' Its Facebook page has over 2,500 members. Fair Deal for Your Local and its predecessor Fair Pint has been campaigning for reform of the beer tie since 2007 and claims to have been the first campaign to get the beer tie and the behaviours of the large pub companies on the political agenda. It was set up and is run by tenants and former tenants.

Paul Ainsworth

(Details believed to be correct at the time of writing in 2021)

Directory of breweries in the Bristol & District CAMRA branch area

Arbor Ales

181 Easton Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0HQ
www.arborales.co.uk

Ashley Down

15 Wathen Road, St Andrew's, Bristol, BS6 5BY

Basement Beer

32 Upper York Street, Bristol, BS2 8QN
www.basementbeer.co.uk

Bath Ales

Hare House, Southway Drive, Warmley, Bristol, BS30 5LW
www.bathales.com

Brewhouse & Kitchen

31-35 Cotham Hill, Clifton, Bristol, BS6 6JY
www.brewhouseandkitchen.com/venue/bristol

Bristol Beer Factory

The Old Brewery, Durnford Street, Bristol, BS3 2AW
www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk

Bruhaha

Windmill Hill City Farm, Philip Street, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 4EA
www.bruhaha.beer

Butcombe

Cox's Green, Wrington, Bristol, BS40 5PA
www.butcombe.com

Cheddar Ales

Winchester Farm, Draycott Road, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3RP
www.cheddarales.co.uk

Clevedon

Unit 1, Tweed Road Industrial Estate, Tweed Road, Clevedon, BS21 6RR
www.clevedonbrewery.co.uk

Dawkins Ales

Unit 2, Lawnwood Industrial Units, Lawnwood Road, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0EF (also has premises in Timsbury, Bath)
www.dawkins-ales.co.uk

Epic Beers (Pitchfork Ales & 3D Beer)

The Brewery, West Hewish, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 6RR
www.pitchforkales.com www.3d-beer.com
Closed – company went into liquidation 1st March 2023

Fierce & Noble

25 Mina Road, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9TA
www.fierceandnoble.com

Good Chemistry

Unit 2, William Street, St Philips, Bristol, BS2 0RG
www.goodchemistrybrewing.co.uk

Grain Alchemist

Unit 4, Windmill Farm Business Centre, Bartley Street, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 4DB

Hop Union (previously GWB)

20 Bonville Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5QH
www.gwbrewery.co.uk

Incredible Brewing Company

214-224 Broomhill Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5RG
www.incrediblebrewingcompany.com

King Street Brew House

King Street, Welsh Back, Bristol, BS1 4RR
www.kingstreetbrewhouse.co.uk/brewery

Left Handed Giant

Unit 3, Wadehurst Industrial Park, St Philips Road, Bristol, BS2 0JE & Hawkins Lane, Finzels Reach, Bristol, BS1 6EU
www.lefthandedgiant.com

Little Martha

23 Oxford Street, St Phillips, Bristol, BS2 0QT
www.littlemarthabrewing.co.uk

Lost and Grounded

91 Whitby Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 4AR
www.lostandgrounded.co.uk

Moor Beer

Days Road, St Philips, Bristol, BS2 0QS
www.moorbeer.co.uk

New Bristol

20a Wilson Street, St Pauls, Bristol, BS2 9HH
www.newbristolbrewery.co.uk

Newtown Park

Unit 8/9, Wadehurst Industrial Park, St Philips Road, Bristol, BS2 0JE
www.newtownparkbrewing.co
Ceased production at the brewery December 2022

On Point

Herbert Street, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 1FJ
www.onpointbrewco.com

Pinkers

148 Quantock Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 4DP
www.pinkerscraftbrewery.co.uk

Portishead

The Port Bar, The Precinct, High Street, Portishead, BS20 6AH
www.portisheadbrewing.com

Tapestry by PROPS

Unit B, Totterdown Bridge Industrial Estate, Totterdown, Bristol, BS2 0XH
www.tapestrybrewery.com

Three Engineers

The Cow Byers, Winterbourne Medieval Barn, Church Lane, Winterbourne, BS36 1SE
www.threeengineersbrewery.co.uk

Twisted Oak

The Brewery, Yeowood Farm, Iwood Lane, Wrington, BS40 5NU
www.twistedoakbrewery.co.uk

Volunteer Tavern (brewpub: New Street Brewing)

9 New Street, St Judes, Bristol, BS2 9DX
www.volunteertavern.co.uk

Wiper & True

2-8 York Street, St Werburghs, Bristol, BS2 9XT & Unit 11, City Business Park, Easton Road, Bristol, BS5 0SP
www.wiperandtrue.com

Wookey Ale

www.wookeyal.co.uk

Zerodegrees

53 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BA
www.zerodegrees.co.uk

Directory of breweries in the Bath & Borders CAMRA branch area

Abbey Ales

The Abbey Brewery, Camden Row, Bath, BA1 5LB
www.abbeyales.co.uk

Bath Brew House

14 James Street West, Bath, BA1 2BX
www.thebathbrewhouse.com/brewery

Blindmans

Talbot Farm, Leighton, Nr Frome, Somerset, BA11 4PN
www.blindmansbrewery.co.uk

Dawkins Ales

Unit 7 Timsbury Workshop Estate, Hayeswood Road, Timsbury, Bath BA2 0HQ (also has premises in Easton, Bristol)
www.dawkins-ales.co.uk

Electric Bear

Unit 12, The Maltings, Brassmill Lane, Bath, BA1 3JL
www.electricbearbrewing.com

Frome (previously Milk Street)

Unit L13, Marshall Way, Commerce Park, Frome, BA11 2FB
www.fromebrewingcompany.com

Golden River

Coronation Avenue, Bath, BA2 2JR
Recently started up

Kettlesmith

16, Greenwood Industrial Estate, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts, BA15 2AU
www.kettlesmithbrewing.com

Plain Ales

Unit 17B/C, Deverill Road Trading Estate, Sutton Veny, Wilts, BA12 7BZ
www.plainales.co.uk

Ralph's Ruin

The Royal Oak, Lower Bristol Road, Twerton, Bath, BA2 3BW
www.ralphsruin.co.uk

Three Daggers

47 Westbury Road, Edington, Westbury, Wilts, BA13 4PG
www.threedaggers.co.uk

True Story

Unit 7, Curtis Centre, Kingdom Avenue, Westbury, Wilts, BA13 4EW
truestorybrewing.com

Twisted

9 Commerce Close, West Wilts Trading Estate, Westbury, BA13 4LS
www.twisted-brewing.com

Wessex

Rye Hill Farm, Longbridge Deverill, Warminster, BA12 7DE

Yonder

The Workshop, Rookery Farm, Binegar, Somerset, BA3 4UL
www.brewyonder.co.uk

Advertise in Pints West

Up to 10,000 copies printed quarterly and distributed to hundreds of pubs throughout the region

Also available on-line at

www.camrabristol.org.uk

Contact: steve.plumridge.pintswest@gmail.com

Solution to the cryptic crossword on page 21

Across: 1 Porter, 4 Tankards, 10 Badgers, 11 Bank Top, 12 Email beers, 13 Snip, 15 Android, 17 Lie back, 19 Travels, 21 Sit down, 23 Ajar, 24 Wide waists, 27 Special, 28 Undergo, 29 Everards, 30 Odds on. Down: 1 Pub tenant, 2 Redland, 3 Eden looted, 5 Arbor Ales, 6 King, 7 Rotunda, 8 Sup up, 9 Isle, 14 Left handed, 16 Distilled, 18 Kingsdown, 22 Academe, 23 Aisle, 25 Emus.

Wear Pints West

T-shirts, polo shirts, sweat shirts and fleeces are available to order with an embroidered Pints West logo on the left breast.

All are available in navy, black, bottle green, grey, red, dark royal, purple and burgundy, and in sizes S, M, L, XL and XXL.

All except the fleeces are also available in jade, sky blue, gold and white.

The best way to order yours is to send an email with your requirements to: clothes@camrabristol.org.uk – you will then be contacted with instructions on how to pay (preferably by bank transfer).

Alternatively, post your written order, including your name and address, plus either a contact email address or phone number, to:

**Pints West Clothing, 19 Willada Close,
Bedminster, Bristol BS3 5NG**

along with a cheque for the correct amount, made payable to:

CAMRA Bristol & District

Please allow up to four weeks for delivery.



Prices, inclusive of postage and packaging, are:

T-shirt	£17.00	each
Polo shirt	£20.50	each
Sweat shirt	£22.50	each
Fleece	£26.50	each

Branch Diaries and Contacts

Bristol & District branch diary

- **Sat 20 May:** BADRAG South Glos Ale Trail. The coach will leave the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol at 11:30am, picking up also at the **Drapers Arms** on Gloucester Road, which will be open from 11:30am, and return to Bristol by about 7:30pm. To check seat availability and to book, please email Martin Gray (marting1@sky.com).
- **Wed 24 May:** Branch 'meet and greet' event at the **Orchard Inn**, Hanover Place, Spike Island, Bristol, from 8pm. This will also be the opportunity to present them with their Cider Pub of the Year award. All welcome (whether CAMRA members or not).
- **Wed 31 May:** Pub survey trip by minibus to pubs in the north-east of Somerset and east of Bristol, leaving the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol at 6.45pm. Price is £12 for CAMRA members. Please email marting1@sky.com to reserve a place on the minibus.
- **Sat 10 Jun:** BAD Ladies Bristol Harbourside trip. Meet 2pm at the **Kings Head**, Victoria Street, then a walk to Castle Park ferry stop for the ferry to the **Cottage**. Then a walk to the historic **Nova Scotia**. Return using the ferry to the Centre and end at the **Shakespeare Tavern**, Prince Street.
- **Wed 14 Jun:** Branch committee meeting at the **Shakespeare Tavern** in Prince Street, central Bristol (tbc), 7.30pm.
- **Sat 17 Jun:** Cotham and Kingsdown pub trail starting at the **Highbury Vaults**, 12.30pm. Leaders Pete Bridle (07973 201307) and Dave Adams (07444 892633 or 0739 495 4113).
- **Wed 21 Jun:** Pub survey trip by minibus to pubs in the East Mendips area, leaving the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol at 6.45pm. Price is £12 for CAMRA members. Please email marting1@sky.com to reserve a place on the minibus.
- **Wed 28 Jun:** Branch 'meet and greet' event in Westbury-on-Trym, at the **Mouse** from 7.30pm then **Post Office Tavern** from about 8.45pm. All welcome (whether CAMRA members or not).
- **Wed 12 Jul:** Branch committee meeting at the **Shakespeare Tavern** in Prince Street, central Bristol (tbc), 7.30pm.
- **Sat 15 July:** BADRAG Trail in Cardiff. Leader Norman Spalding (07790 23756). 10.30 train from Bristol Temple Meads.
- **Tue 18 Jul:** Pub survey trip by minibus to pubs in the Severn Vale area, leaving the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol at 6.45pm. Price is £12 for CAMRA members. Please email marting1@sky.com to reserve a place on the minibus.
- **Wed 26 Jul:** Branch meeting, 8pm, at the **Shakespeare Tavern**, Prince Street, central Bristol (venue tbc).
- **Thu 3 Aug:** Coach trip to the Great British Beer Festival in London. Depart from the **Cornubia**, Temple Street, Bristol 9.30am. This is a thank-you trip for volunteers at the Bristol Beer Festival in November 2022. Volunteers can travel free. If there is space, the trip will be open to all – price tbc.

There may be other events organised – or updates to one or two of the above – so keep an eye on the diary on the branch website:

camrabristol.org.uk/diary.html



If you would like to receive no-obligation details of forthcoming Bristol & District branch events, simply go to the branch website www.camrabristol.org.uk then click on 'Contact Us' under the main menu. This takes you to the branch contacts page where you can enter your email address to subscribe.

Martin Gray

Bristol & District CAMRA

Web: www.camrabristol.org.uk

Twitter: [@CAMRABristol](https://twitter.com/CAMRABristol)

Facebook: [Camra-Bristol-District](https://www.facebook.com/Camra-Bristol-District)

Facebook group: [CAMRA Bristol Chat](https://www.facebook.com/CAMRA-Bristol-Chat)

Branch contact (Secretary): m.bertagne@camrabristol.org.uk

Pints West contact: steve.plumridge.pintswest@gmail.com

Got some news? Email it to news@camrabristol.org.uk

Weston-super-Mare

Weston CAMRA is a sub-branch of the Bristol & District branch covering Weston-super-Mare and some of the surrounding areas.

Facebook: [Campaign for Real Ale Weston-Super-Mare](https://www.facebook.com/Campaign-for-Real-Ale-Weston-Super-Mare)

Contact: Laurie Jackson – glenfern13@icloud.com

Bath & Borders CAMRA

Web: www.bathandborderscamra.org.uk

Twitter: [@BathCAMRA](https://twitter.com/BathCAMRA)

Facebook: [Bath-Borders-CAMRA](https://www.facebook.com/Bath-Borders-CAMRA)

Branch socials contact: Denis Rahilly on 01225 791399 or

07486 884825 or email denis.rahilly@talktalk.net

Contact for all non-social matters: James Honey on 01373 822794

Weston-super-Mare sub-branch diary

- **Sat 13 May:** visiting the **Brit Bar** in Weston-super-Mare for its beer festival (which is on all weekend), from 12 noon.
- **Sat 24 Jun:** visiting the Claverham Beer & Cider Festival organised by Yeo Valley Lions, from 12 noon.
- **Sat 8 Jul:** Taunton crawl by train leaving WsM at 11:24 (Worle at 11:16) arriving at Taunton at 11:53 (subject to timetable changes). Visiting no more than six pubs and returning to WsM by 7pm.
- **Sat 29 Jul:** visiting Weston Lions Real Ale & Cider Festival on the Breach Lawns in Weston-super-Mare, from 7pm (on all weekend).

All events are posted, regularly reviewed and updated on the WsM Google calendar and located in the Bristol & District CAMRA diary at:

camrabristol.org.uk/diary.html

so keep an eye on that and also the sub-branch Facebook page (and note the WsM contact above).

Bath & Borders branch diary

- **Thu 18 May:** Social at the **New Inn**, Monmouth Place, Bath, 7.30pm.
- **Sat 20 May:** Visit to Spring Beer Festival at **Kettlesmith Brewery**.
- **Thu 25 May:** Visit to the **Three Daggers**, Edington, 7.30pm. This is a lovely village pub with its own on-site brewery. They usually have three of their own ales on, plus a guest.
- **Tue 30 May:** Branch meeting at the **Raven**, Bath, 7.30pm.
- **Thu 1 Jun:** Presentation of the Bath & Borders Cider Pub of the Year certificate to the **Royal Oak**, Twerton, 7.30pm.
- **Sat 24 Jun:** Crawl of breweries in east Bristol, starting at **Arbor Ales** and then onwards!

For further events, or any updates to the above, please check the online branch diary at:

bathandborders.camra.org.uk/diary



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01727 798440. * All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your details:

Title Surname
Forename(s)
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)
Address
.....
..... Postcode
Email address
Daytime Tel

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title Surname
Forename(s)
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

Direct Debit

Non DD

Single Membership (UK)	£28.50	<input type="checkbox"/>	£30.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under 26 Membership	£20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	£22.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(At the same address)				
Joint Under 26 Membership	£22.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	£30.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Concessionary rates are available only for Under 26 Memberships.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the
Memorandum and Articles of Association which can be found on
our website.

Signed

Date Applications will be processed within 21 days.

Direct Debit Instruction

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW
Email: membership@camra.org.uk Telephone: 01727 867201

Name(s) of Account Holder

Billing Address

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Postcode

Payments will show as **CAMRA Membership**
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- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us. Setup of Direct Debit Instruction with Stripe on behalf of CAMRA.




Campaign
for
Real Ale

[†]Price of single membership when paying by Direct Debit. ^{*}Calls from landlines charged at standard national rates, cost may vary from mobile phones. New Direct Debit members will receive a 12 month supply of vouchers in their first 15 months of membership. The data you provide will be processed in accordance with our privacy policy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
^{**}Joint members receive £40 worth of vouchers.

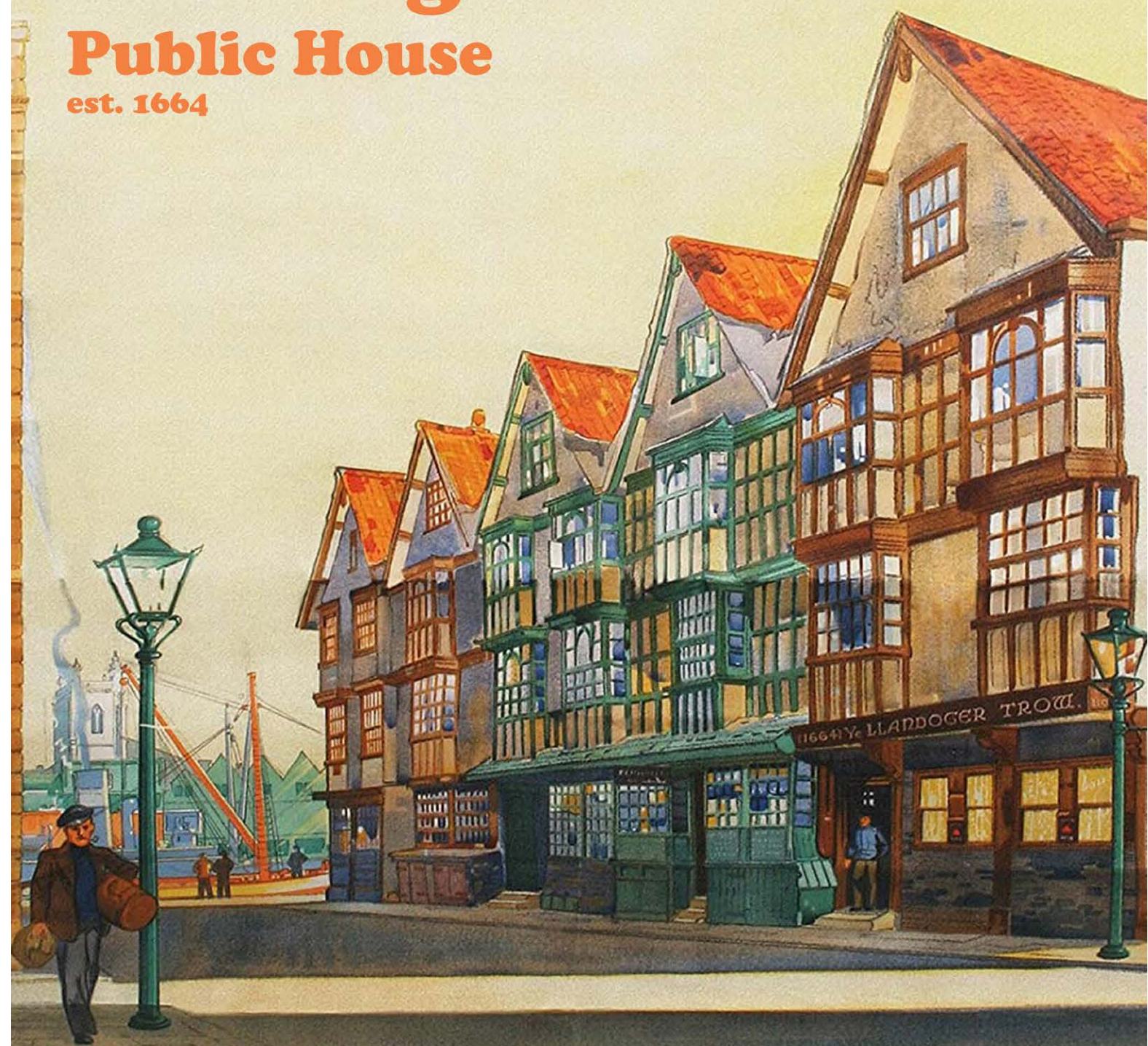
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