



Solihull



Drinker

Issue No 86
Winter 2018

Free
Please take one

The Winged Spur, Ullenhall

Solihull CAMRA's Most Improved Pub of the Year 2018-2019



Branch Chair Carl Wright presents James Hyde, Manager of the Winged Spur, with the award for Solihull & District CAMRA's Most Improved Pub Of The Year 2018 – 2019.

The Winged Spur re-opened on the 6th November 2017, having been closed since May 2016. One year later it won the Solihull and District CAMRA's Most Improved Pub Of The Year Award.

On the day we awarded James Hyde, the manager, with the certificate, the pub also received their Cask Marque. Unfortunately the owner Jason Peck could not attend the presentation due to an accident, but he is to be congratulated in turning this pub into a vibrant and welcoming heart of the community. *(continued on page 3)*

THE BULLS HEAD

Barston Lane, Barston B92 0JU

Tel: 01675 442830

Brad and Joy, celebrating 31 years of award winning hospitality, welcome you to their 15th century village inn



**Opening hours: Mon—Thurs: 11am—2.30pm & 5.00pm—11pm
Friday, Saturday and Sunday: 11.00am—11.00pm.**

**Listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide for over 20
years & 7 times Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year**

Cask Marque accredited—4 real ales on at all times

**Home-cooked meals available lunchtimes and evenings Tuesdays to
Saturdays in the comfortable pub bars or separate intimate restaurant
(Sundays, Mondays: Lunch only: available from 12 noon to 3pm)**

*"When all else fails, there is music.
When that fails you, there is beer."
— James Hauenstein*



www.TheBullsHeadBarston.co.uk

(Continued from page 1)

Branch Chair, Carl Wright, said “The Winged Spur in Ullenhall is many people’s image of a country pub: nestled in the heart of a picturesque village, serving real ales and home-cooked food. It has had its ups and downs over the years and there have been times when it has not lived up to its previously hard won reputation. I am pleased to say that following a major refurbishment last year, and under the new leadership of Jason Peck, and management from James Hyde, it has risen from the ashes of its past, and has soared on its refurbished wings to new heights of admiration and appreciation.

Our members visit real ale pubs very frequently and are always on the lookout for excellence in service and quality of the beers, and it has not gone unnoticed that the Winged Spur is back on track with a warm, welcoming feel and wonderful ambience.

The beer range of up to four real ales often includes guest ales from local breweries and a house beer, Peck’s Amber, brewed by Marston’s, and is always in wonderful condition. It is a pleasure to see such a vast and rapid improvement in what is a very well-loved country pub, which we know is down to the hard work of the team.

Solihull CAMRA and its members thank them for their efforts and offer their congratulations on this well-deserved award, and wish the Winged Spur a bright and prosperous future.”

Recognition should also go to Helen and Lawrence Bates who were managers before James took over in April, and re-established the Winged Spur after reopening.

On the evening CAMRA members in attendance were served Peck’s Amber (3.8%), Church Farm’s Harry’s Heifer (4.2%) and Brown’s Porter (4.2%), as well as Doom Bar (4.0%).

While three regular beers were initially offered at the relaunch, the pump clips on the beams tell a story of many other beers that have passed through the cellar in the last year, with North Cotswold, St Austell, Wye Valley, Birmingham Brewing Company, Purity, Silhill, Steam Box and Marston’s amongst them.

The pub has a large, light and airy, open plan layout which can cater for up to 117 diners and drinkers, with the main dining area integrated into the rest of the pub.

With regular live music and events, as well as the restaurant (and the beer), this pub is well worth a visit.

Features in this issue include:

Dates for the Diary & Midlands Area Events	4
Solihull Real Ale Guide 1984	6
Southampton Long Weekend	10
Crafty Opening In Shirley	14
Editorial	18
A Mid-week Crawl to Stourbridge and Lye	22
Hail To The Ale	24
CAMRA Mass Lobby To Save Our Pubs	28



Dates For Your Diary

Branch Meetings

(Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)

Monday 7th January	Drawbridge, Major's Green
Monday 4th February	8.00pm + AGM Red Lion Knowle (see page 5)
Monday 4th March	Black Swan, Henley

Committee Meetings

(8.30pm start. Members may attend but only participate if invited to do so by the Committee)

Monday 21st January	The Dingle, Solihull
Monday 18th March	The Red House, Solihull

Socials

Saturday 15th December	Christmas Crawl - Jewellery Qtr. & Birmingham
Saturday 19th January	GBG Nominations Crawl
Thur 7th February - Sun 10th	Weekend Away - Wigan, Southport & Preston

For more details and contacts for the above, please call Secretary Allan Duffy on 01564 200 431 or visit our website: www.solihull.camra.org.uk

Most, though not all, of our local pubs have disabled access. If you wish to come to a meeting and require assistance to get inside, contact us beforehand and we will do our best to help.

Upcoming Midlands Area Beer Festivals and Events

January 10-13 (Thu-Sun):

INN ON THE GREEN BEER FEST

2 Westley Road, Acocks Green, B27 7UH. 20 ales, 5 ciders. Music Friday and Saturday live and free. 20p per pint off for CAMRA members.

February 2-3 (Sat-Sun):

PUP AND DUCKLING 3rd BIRTHDAY BEER FESTIVAL

1 Hatchford Brook Road, Olton B92 9AG. For details of beers and ciders available closer to the date check <https://pupandduckling.co.uk> or Facebook @pup.and.duckling.



From popular summer golden and light ales to ruby and dark ales, foreign beers and ciders, all served in magnificent medieval friary halls in the heart of Norwich.

2019 Beer Festival News

Sadly there will not be a Stourbridge beer festival in 2019. It was decided it couldn't continue in its current format and without the necessary volunteers.

Kidderminster festival is on the move - the date is changing, but still at the Town Hall. Normally held in May it will be moving to the 7th - 9th November in 2019. "We are moving it to late Autumn to avoid the competing Spring and Summer festivals and to make the most of what is essentially an inside venue"

Away from the CAMRA festivals the Shirley Round Table festival is also moving dates. As a one off it will be moving to the 6th - 8th June. The format will be the same as this year with an excellent Thursday night comedy show. Hopefully it will be back to its traditional date in 2020.

Notice of the 2019 AGM

Notice is hereby given of the Solihull & District CAMRA AGM, which will take place at the Red Lion in Knowle, on Monday 4th February 2019, starting at **8.30pm**.

If any current Committee member wishes to stand down, or anyone wishes to apply to take up a Committee post (all Committee posts are open to any Solihull & District branch member), in both instances it would be appreciated if you could please email your intentions to Chairman Carl Wright at carl.wright@swisslog.com at least two weeks before the meeting.

The AGM will be preceded by a short Branch Meeting starting at **8.00pm**.

Members are reminded that they will be eligible to vote at meetings on our branch's entries in the Good Beer Guide, and for Pub of the Year, Club of the Year and Most Improved Pub/Club of the Year if they have not already voted on-line.

The criteria for qualification for these awards are published on the Solihull CAMRA website.

There will be the usual beery raffle to go towards the cost of the AGM buffet, for which beer related prize donations would be gratefully received on the night.

Selecting Our Good Beer Guide Pubs

One of the most important functions of a branch is to select pubs and clubs to appear in the annual CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Each year we look at the process used for Solihull & District, with the dual aim of encouraging as wide a participation by the branch membership as possible, and ensuring the end result is our most worthy pubs and clubs being chosen.

At the December and January branch meetings we accept nominations from the floor. Any member can nominate a pub or club. As long as another member seconds the proposal, it goes into the selection process. We insist on nominations being in person, as **the nominator has to commit to completing a survey form of their nominated pub or club**.

This year judging is open to all branch members. Each nomination is scored out of ten on a number of categories; beer quality, range, service and wel-

come, overall impression, and so on. A member can score as many or as few pubs as they like. Obviously, we want people to get out and visit as many as they can, but our main request is for scores to be consistent across the pubs being judged. Once all votes have been cast, nominations are ranked on average score. The five West Midlands and two Warwickshire premises with the highest averages are our selection.

We are trialling an electronic voting form this year, which will be accessible after the January nominations. Branch members will be able to log in via a link to be sent out in an email, and enter their scores. We will still accept paper judging forms at the February branch meeting.

Look out for emails on the run up to the meetings for nominations and judging. With the introduction of the online form, we're hoping for even more participation by our branch members.

Real Ale Guides – How Technology Has Improved Standards

While I was wandering around the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia looking for a refill, I was collared by our friendly West Midlands Regional Director Gary Timmins. Wondering perhaps if I was going to be castigated for not offering to work at the Festival, I was pleasantly surprised to be told by Gary "I've got something for you."

I sought him out at his post on the cider bar, and was handed a copy of an old real ale pub guide covering the Solihull area. Gary had successfully bid for it in the auction and thought Solihull Branch could offer it a good home. Many thanks for that, Gary.

A sample of some of the pubs featured. A few are no longer with us, while others have changed many times since 1984, especially their beers. We also seemed to cover Berkswell within our branch boundary!



THE PUBS

- 11) BARSTON "The Bulls Head" — M & B, Brew XI, Bass (H) — pleasant country pub with nautical atmosphere PB-S-CP-OS 207781.
- 10) BARSTON — Try also "Malt Shovel" — M & B, Bass (H)
- 14) BERKSWEIL "The Bear" — Mains Bitter (H) — large fairly smart pub in pleasant village PB-G-CP-R OS 246792.
- 13) BERKSWEIL "The Railway" — M & B, Brew XI, Mild & Bass (H) — single room, fairly unpretentious and lively PB-CP-PG on B4105.
- 12) BERKSWEIL — Try also "Brickmakers Arms" — Bass (E)
- 16) BENTLEY HEATH "Drum and Monkey" — on Four Ashes Road — Davenport Mild & Bitter (H) Westons Cider (H) extensively modernised pub and rather trendy CP-G-LM-EM-S.
- 2) BICKENHILL "The Clock" on A45 Coventry Road — Ansells Mild & Bitter, Burton Ale, Gold Cross Lager (H) — Large and plush CP-PG-LM-EM-R.
- 7) CATHERINE DE BARNES — Try also "The Boat Inn" — Davenport Mild & Bitter (H).
- 23) CHADWICK END "The Orange Tree" — Flowers O.B. (H) — attractive main roadside pub, recently refurbished CP-S-LM-EM on main A41.
- 35) CLAVERDON — Try also "The Red Lion" — Flowers O.B. (H).
- 21) DORRIDGE "The Railway" — M & B Mild & Bitter (H) — busy local country style pub. PB-PG-CP-G-S on A4023.
- 22) DORRIDGE — Try also "The Forest Hotel" — Banks's Mild & Bitter (E).
- 20) EARLSWOOD "The Bulls Head" — off Salter Street (B4102) — Ansells Mild & Bitter, Burton Ale (H) PB-PG-S-CP — Good country pub, modernised lounge, small friendly bar.
- 18) EARLSWOOD — Try also "Red Lion" — M & B Mild & Brew XI (E).
- 19) EARLSWOOD — Try also "The Reservoir" — Davenport Bitter (E).



INTRODUCTION

This guide has been compiled to assist the discerning thirsty traveller to locate the availability of a range of Real Ales, to be found within, or adjacent to the Solihull Area.

Solihull is substantially a residential suburban town with soft undulating surrounding countryside given to farming and agriculture. It was constituted into a Metropolitan Borough Area of the West Midlands, when county boundaries were re-organised a few years ago. Situated to the South East of Birmingham and almost adjacent to the National Exhibition Centre, the M6/M42 Motorways provide direct access to the area.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of the contents, but as with all guides, the reader may not always agree with the references made, due to the ever changing pub scene. It is hoped it will provide a good companion to the traveller never-the-less.

Cheers! and a safe journey!

THINK OF A PUB with a choice of 19 beers on draught
 THINK OF A STORE with a selection of 150-plus bottle and canned beers
 THINK OF AN OFF-LICENCE that sells spirits, sherry, port and cider on draught
 THINK OF AN OUTDOOR that stocks 120 varieties of wine.
 YOU CAN'T ????

BERNIES

BIRMINGHAM'S No. 1
The Real Ale Off Licence

*We have got the lot, all to enjoy in the comfort of your own home
 Canteenware supplied from pints to gallons.*

EARLS COURT ROAD, 268, CRANMORE BOULEVARD,
 HARBORNE TEL: 021-427 5796 SHIRLEY, TEL: 021-744 2827

SCRUMPY from 39p PER PINT

Savern Bore
 Aston Manor
 Bathams Bitter
 Pandewitch
 Bridge Bitter

Introduction to the 1984 Guide. Bernies is still with us (modern advert on page 26), but Scrumpy is more than 39p a pint today!

Brenda and I then looked through it, (didn't take long!) and estimated that it dated back to 1984.

At the next Branch Meeting, I mentioned it to Steve Dyson who confirmed that it was indeed from 1984 and, in fact, he and Dave Queenborough had produced it.

At the time, it would have been an excellent example of a local guide. It consisted of just 4 A4 sheets folded to make 8 pages and contained brief de-

tails of 31 pubs plus even briefer details of 16 others (see examples above and below).

Sadly, several of the pubs are no longer in existence, but the majority listed are not only still going strong, but also stock a rather wider choice of ales. Yes, the ale scene in Solihull was much worse 34 years ago!

The main difference is that in 1984, the only ales available in all of the 47 pubs were from Ansells, M&B, Davenports, Whitbread (Flowers), and in just 1 pub, Banks's and Courage. If local pubs only stocked beers from those breweries now, I think many of us might have turned to wine or gin!

THE BREWERS

ANSSELLS
Bitter (1037) — pleasant and sweetish.
Mild (1035) — dark malty Midlands mild.
Tetley's Bitter (1035) — refreshing and creamy.
Burton Ale (1047) — strong, hoppy and well flavoured.
Gold Cross Lager (1040) — recently introduced cask conditioned lager, with very low blanket pressure.
Gibbs Mew Wiltshire Bitter (1037) — rather thin but not unpleasant.

BANKS'S
Bitter (1038) — fairly dry, full bodied and hoppy.
Mild (1036) — smooth malty flavoursome and very popular.


COURAGE
Directors (1046) — strong distinctive brew.

DAVENPORTS
Bitter (1038) — well balanced hoppy bitter.
Mild (1034) — pleasant darkish mild.

WATNEY-MANN'S
Manns Bitter (1039) — fairly sweet bitter.

MITCHELLS & BUTLERS (M & B)
Brew XI (1040) — ordinary but popular bitter.
Mild (1036) — dark and malty.
Bass (1044) — rather sweetish.
Highgate Old (1050) — strong winter brew

WHITBREAD
Flowers Original (1044) — strong and hoppy.
Whitbread Bitter (1037) — rather unremarkable.
Sometimes available in selected Whitbread Pubs are:-
Hook Norton Bitter (1036) — distinctive and hoppy.
Wadworths 6X (1041) — splendid malty brew.
Marstons Pedigree (1043) — fine full bodied smooth bitter.



I don't know the cost of producing the 1984 guide, but I suspect it would have been a sizeable chunk of the Branch

budget at the time. I would guess that nowadays, printing has moved on so much that a more comprehensive guide could be produced for the same cost in real terms. Just take a look at the high quality of the printing in this edition of our Solihull Drinker and you will see what I mean.

- 15) SHIRLEY "Bernies" Off Licence, Cranmore Boulevard — Range of about 7- real ales on sale, not normally available in Solihull area — rotation of 100 ales possible during a year — Possibilities are Banks's, Moorhouse, Hook, Marstons, Bathams, Fullers, Thwaites.
- 30) SHREWLEY "Durham Ox" (Free House) — M & B Mild & Brew XI (H) posh lounge, unspoilt bar, huge outdoor play area PB-PG-G-CP-S Shrewley Common near Railway.
- 8) SOLIHULL "George Hotel" — Ansells (Ind Coope) Burton Ale (H) smart hotel in town centre, usual facilities CP-Acc-R-S High Street.
- 6) SOLIHULL "Golden Lion" — Courage Directors (H) — large pub with plush lounge, cosy snug, and only public bar in Solihull PB-PG-CP-LM-S on A41 Warwick Road.
- 5) SOLIHULL LODGE "The New Lodge" — Yardley Wood Road — Ansells Mild & Bitter, Wiltshire, Gold Cross Lager (H) — pleasant town pub, recently modernised, vastly improved since new landlord has taken over. PB-PG-CP-S.
- 31) ULLENHALL — Try also "Winged Spur" — Flowers O.B. (H).

KEY-SYMBOL OF PUB FACILITIES

P.B.	Public Bar	L.M.	Lunch Meals
P.G.	Pub Games	E.M.	Evening Meals
C.P.	Car Park	S.	Bar Snacks
G.	Garden	R.	Restaurant
		A.C.C.	Accommodation

Paper & Print

**PHOTOCOPYING
PLANPRINTING · INSTANT PRINT**



387, STRATFORD ROAD, SHIRLEY, SOLIHULL 021-745 3214.
(BY BRISTOL STREET MOTORS)

As it turns out, the internet has made local guides rather obsolete now as Apps like Whatpub make it so much easier to find real ale pubs in any area of the country. What would we do now without Apps and satnavs!

Allan Duffy

(Editor's note) Back in 1984 it must have been a fantastic achievement to produce such a guide. Today we have computers with sophisticated publishing packages that could only have been dreamed about then. A great insight into our branch history.

Blue Bell Cider House Refurbishment

The Blue Bell Cider House has recently completed a 5 month long refurbishment that has completely transformed the main room, as you will see from the photographs.



The first thing you notice is how clean and bright it now looks in the dining area, with a new bar, matching the rest of the décor. It all looks very new and smart.



The refurbishment took so long because the pub was open throughout, so it meant working when there were no customers there.

The back bar, however has not been touched and retains its character, still hosting the dart board. One of our local members, Kevin Sumner, runs the darts team and they are on the lookout for new members (check Facebook for details).



The Blue Bell has an on-site brewery where unique beers are brewed. The brewers, Lynn and Mark, also have their own brewery at the Rock and Roll Brewhouse in the Jewellery Quarter. Food, however, is one of the Blue Bell's great attractions, with a superb carvery twice a week (booking essential!) as well as the regular food menu.

Sadly, the excitement of completing this project was tempered recently by the loss of one of the Blue Bell's kitchen team, at only 17 years old.

Callum Brown lost his brave short fight against bone cancer on Saturday 22nd September. The Blue Bell team are collecting for a memory bench to be situated at the pub, and for the Young Persons Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. To date over £1,500 has been raised, and donations are still welcome.



CAMRA West Midlands County Pub Of The Year 2018



Open Daily 2-11pm
01564 400 040

7 Real Ales
Ales £3.50 a pint
& only £3.00 for
CAMRA members
(cards must be shown)

Solihull & District
PUB OF THE YEAR



WINNER
2018

1592 High Street, Knowle, Solihull B93 0LF

Extra Platform at Olton Station



Platform 3 near Olton Station opened just as we were going to press with our Autumn issue. Described as a “Wine Bar and Eatery”, and run by the King family from Solihull, it nonetheless sports three real ales on the bar.

Reports from members who have visited have been good, and the beers do change regularly, although the menu on the website lists Tribute, Envile Ale, and Holden’s Golden Glow. Batham’s

bitter has been seen on the bar soon after opening, and you will see recent visitors were Malvern Hills Green Pear, Old Speckled Hen, and Wye Valley HPA.

Platform 3 is a welcome addition to real ale outlets in Solihull, especially in an area without many other options close by.



Southampton, Portsmouth and Winchester Long Weekend

I left you in the last Drinker edition having sampled the delights of Winchester.

Arriving back in Southampton I noted that an evening's worth of good drinking was on the cards as three micropubs, and a couple of traditional pubs, were relatively close to the station. No one else took up the challenge so off I went. Fortunately all three micros are on the Shirley Road and not much of a walk from the station.

The first I came upon was the Witch's Brew, and to my mind was the best of the three. As with most micros it was in an old shop with the bar right at the back of a corridor. Conversation is the byword here and I was soon chatting to a couple who frequented the pub a lot. The beers were served from the barrel but I only tried one, XT Animal Hopcat, a stunningly clean, hoppy beer at 3.9%. Other beers were Downton Honey Blonde, Kingsgate Chennai IPA and 6 Crows Stout. I was sorely tempted to linger but with another 4 pubs to do I reluctantly moved on.



Suffice to say I won't be going to Clockwork or Overdraft again on a Friday night. Both are in converted shops, and had very loud music. Clockwork seems to concentrate on craft beers with five available. Real ales were Red Cat Mrs. M's Porter and Tom Cat, Vibrant Forest Cydonia, Bowman Yumi, and Lapwing. I tried

the latter Lapwing to find it a pretty ordinary 4.5% bitter.

Moving a short way up the road to Overdraft I thought this would be a great pub to visit any other time than tonight, with the level of noise coming from the live band. Heavily into craft beers, and with six ciders, the real ale drinker is not second class here. With a stillage capable of holding ten beers I was delighted to see that six were on. Restricting myself to only one, which would it be? Mash Brewery's Pale Ale, Electric Bear Above the Clouds, Howdy Ho or Drop, Fallen Angels Hole Hearted, or Elusive Spellbinder. On a previous CAMRA weekend away we had visited Electric Bear in Bath, so I went for the Mash Pale as it was only 3.8%: a little sweet and thin for me. Ah, well you can't win them all.

On to two traditional pubs next. First off was the Freemantle Arms in the back streets on Albany Road. Rather featureless on the outside, this one roomed Good Beer Guide (GBG) entry has no real character on the interior, but did have five handpumps in operation. Doom Bar and Tribute were supplemented by the more interesting Fallen Angel Hole Hearted, Flacks Double Drop, and my choice Goddards Isle of Wight, a blonde beer of no great distinction although hoppy.

Not yet flagging, onto the final pub of the night, The Waterloo, which has a strong attachment to Hop Back Brewery. Mock Tudor in style, pleasant enough inside, but very quiet when I visited. A big show of Hop Back beers was to be expected with Haka, Entire Stout, Summer Lightning, GFB, and Crop Circle, with one guest Downton Brewery New Forest Ale, malty, OK but nothing impressive about it. So ended my day. I jumped on the bus and was in bed within half an hour. Portsmouth and Southsea tomorrow.

A hearty breakfast, and we were all on our way to Portsmouth and Southsea for opening time. With a good 16 pubs in the GBG we would be kept busy, so we reached our first port of call, the Rutland Arms. A large street corner local, disappointingly having only 2 handpumps. On offer was Butcombe Original and a sweetish Bowmans Swift One. A disappointing range, but you can't win them all.

Swiftly on to the Fawcett Inn, a large one roomed street corner pub built for Brickwoods Brewery in the 1880s. On the bar were 4 handpumps including Irving Illustrious Strong Pale Ale: at last my first hoppy beer of the day. Other beers were Titanic Plum Porter, a firm favourite with most, as was the Woodforde Wherry. Last and least Marston's Sunbeam.

Rain began to fall, but now on to a cracker of a pub, the Lawrence Arms on Lawrence Street. Deservedly the local CAMRA branch Pub of the Year 2016, it was probably the best pub beer wise of the whole weekend. It is a large one roomed pub with the usual pool table, but it was the beers that we were here for. Irving Type 42; Great Heck Christopher, earthy but very nice; Langham Decenium, a superb clean, hoppy beer; Gadds No.3; Great Heck Black Jesus; and Heavy Industry 77, another great beer. With 7 ciders there is enough of a range to suit all tastes.

Reluctant to leave here we nevertheless moved onto another cracking pub, the Phoenix in Duncan Street, having a piano, many pub games, and the feel of a real local. Not many beers available though. Dark Star Festival was pleasant enough but Ringwood Fortyniner and Trumans Blindside did not inspire.

Our next pub was the Wine Vaults, a large sprawling, soulless Fullers pub with 7 handpumps, of which 6 were operational at the time of our visit. Fullers HSB, London Pride, Gales Seafarers, and Spring Sprinter, West Three Milk Chocolate

Stout, and Tiny Rebel Tai Chi. I went for the Tiny Rebel which was OK but not my taste. I don't fancy Sea Buckthorn, a major constituent of the brew, but you have to try it don't you. It was very busy with people eating rather expensive food, though my pie was very nice.

Not on our list, but one I had noted, saw me veer off from the rest of the crew to go to the Merchant House. On a corner site in Highland Road, it looks as though it could possibly have been a pub in latter days. Now a modern bar, it served 4 real ales and a selection of craft beers. All the cask beers were hoppy, so it suited me down to the ground. Vibrant Forest Flying Saucer, Dark Star Pale Ale, Burning Sky Aurora, and Almasty Mosaic and Ekuanot IPA. The latter was my choice, at 6% a little strong, but it was lovely!

Only time for one here, so off I went to catch up with the others who were at the Meat and Barrel, another shop conversion with plenty of seating. 6 handpumps were the order of the day with 5 operational. On them was Magic Rock Hat Trick, Sharps Atlantic, Welton Horsham Pale, Sharps Cornish Coaster, and Tiny Rebel Vader Shuffle. Everyone was moving on so I didn't get time to try a beer. My choice would have been the Magic Rock but the Tiny Rebel, a wood aged Porter sounded good too.



Superb tiled frontage of the Auckland Arms

Ever onward we passed the Auckland Arms' superb tiled frontage, announcing it was once part of the estate of Long's Southsea Brewery which closed in 1934.

We arrived next at the Wave Maiden. Food and live music here, but fortunately, no music when we got there. Again in a converted shop, with rather garish lime green signage, it was, however great to see the beers served from the barrel on stillage behind the bar. The stillage housed 6 beers but only 2 were on. XT Animal Hop Cat, a beautiful 3.9% gloriously clean and hoppy beer, and Filton Staggeringlys Dawn Stealer Noire IPA, which tasted more like a stout and was strongish at 5.2%. A cracking pub serving great beer... still we must move on.

Another corner shop conversion now, the Belle Isle in Osborne Road. Sister to the Meat and Barrel it was large with plenty of seating and food is strong here. However, it does sport 4 real ales; Sharps Sea Fury, Fallen Angel Hole Hearted, Irving Frigate, a golden bitter with Sovereign and Boudicea hops which was not to my taste, and finally Tiny Rebel 3.9% Cereal Killer which was thin and sweet. A good pub, well worth a visit.



Martin and Paul our organisers mastering Bar Billiards in the Barley Mow

Where to next... too many beers were beginning to take effect. Ah, the Barley Mow, I remember it well. Another street corner pub, the interior seems to me to

be a throwback to past decades, however extremely comfortably so. Wood panelling, with a bar billiards table, separate pool room, piano and even a naughty step for the children. Idiosyncratic or what? With 8 beers on the bar my choice was Trumans Zepher, a hoppy 4.4% pale ale which went down a treat. Supporting it were the rather boring Hobgoblin, Lancaster Red, Fullers HSB and London Pride, with the more interesting Otter Springfest and Snowdonia Cwrw Eryri (don't ask me to pronounce that one!) I limited myself to 1 beer here as there were still 4 pubs left to do.

Off to our next establishment, the Hole in the Wall. We found it to be a small, comfortable, one roomed traditional pub, very busy and a genuine free house. Of the beers on tap I tried 2. Siren Yu Lu and Vibrant Forest Chinook, both excellent hoppy beers. Others I excused myself from were Flowerpots Perridge Pale, Fallen Angel Hole Hearted, and Irving Iron Duke. The other 2 were from the barrel and were both Goddards Gold.



Brew kit in the Brewhouse and Kitchen

Dusk was falling now so we pressed on to the Brewhouse and Kitchen. Part of the same chain as in Sutton Coldfield and Lichfield, it is housed in a mock Tudor building and has its own microbrewery on site. Large, and very much a modern style bar in character, it offered 5 beers all from the onsite brewery, and a cider.

**190 Barn Lane
Solihull
B92 7LY
0121 743 2179
www.thelyndonpub.co.uk**

The Lyndon

**Live Music and
Entertainment
Every
Friday and Saturday**

**Large selection of draft
Beers and Ciders**

Up to 4 cask ales

**(20p CAMRA discount)
Thursdays all cask £2.70**

**Hot food available
(excluding Mondays)**

**Free function room to
hire for all occasions**

Large beer garden



The Lyndon Pub Solihull



Opening Hours:

Sun – Wed: 12.00pm – 11:30pm

Thu – Fri: 12.00pm – 12.00am

Sat: 12.00pm – 1.00am

Mucky Duck, Black Swan, Matchams Glory and Crafty DDH IPA (these last 3 being un-fined), and finally Sexton, an un-fined golden ale which I felt was not as clean tasting as I have come to expect from such a beer. Crafty at 5% was pretty nice, though a little strong for me.

That ended our crawl of Portsmouth and Southsea. Back in Southampton we had a bite to eat then we ventured out to Caskaway, a small micropub in Oxford Street, not far from our hotel. An ex-florist, with on street seating, no bar, casks on stillage and an array of bottled beers, it was a great little pub. 3 beers were on sale; Longdog E Red, Wild Weather Curse of Threepwood, a 5% rhubarb and hibiscus wheat sour. Missed that one out! I tried XT Animal Hopcat again, beautiful and full of hop character.

Next on the list was the Platform Tavern. This is a pub that again I find hard to describe. Colourful with a red ceiling, and

packed with African art. Beers were; Tapstone Soma, a Good Chemistry beer; Gales Seafarer; and Eight Arches Easy Life, a nice American pale ale from the local Wimborne brewery.

The final pub of the night was the Dancing Man Brewery tap. Housed in the old Wool House, this magnificent grade 2 listed 14th century building is cavernous and has two floors. Large cruck beams hold the building up. Our party was lost in it. Dancing Man beers were Garden Party IPA, described as smoky pineapple, Bloody Red Baron, and Old Fashioned. Guests on tap were Vibrant Forest Ilex, and my last beer of the day and indeed the holiday, Ascot Bronco Buster IPA 4.8%, a great beer.

Nothing more to say after a great 3 days, but to thank Martin and Paul for organising it, so I'll say goodnight.

Steve Dyson

Crafty Opening In Shirley

As reported in "Hail To The Ale" in our Autumn Issue, the Craft Inn opened on the Stratford Road in Shirley on the 6th September. Located opposite the Pump House and close to the Red Lion it offers something a bit different. As the name suggests it is a craft beer bar with no cask offering.



What it does offer is a changing range from 18 taps, a mixture of keg and KeyKeg offerings. These are not labelled on the board, but the bar staff can advise you on the different beer dispense methods. Craft Inn have recruited some experienced staff previously at the Wellington and Inn On The Green, and are highly knowledgeable. On a recent visit I was invited to sample an 11% Imperial Stout that had quite a kick. Sadly I was driving so couldn't go beyond the sample.



With 100+ bottles and cans as well as 40 gins there is plenty of choice. You can also takeaway your favourite tipples in a 2 litre growler. The growler itself costs £10, but on subsequent visits there is a 10% discount when you re-use the growler. With craft prices you should recoup your investment relatively quickly.

The décor is quirky with a bit of gas theme if you look closely at the lights, and there is a covered sitting area just outside the door.

Watch out for a Folk night on the last Tuesday of the month, and other forthcoming attractions.



Shirley is the second opening for the growing, independently owned, Craft Inn brand, following on from the first one in Sutton Coldfield. A third opening is planned around April in Moseley as they spread their wings further.

The beer styles available may not all be to everybody's tastes, but there is a good chance you will find something that you like from some excellent brewers. The Craft Inn is also the second venue in Solihull where you can get Kona beer, imported from Hawaii. A touch of the exotic in Shirley?



THE FIELDHOUSE

10 Knightcote Drive,
Solihull B91 3JU
Tel: 0121 703 9209



www.emberinns.co.uk/the-fieldhouse-solihull



Fieldhouse,
Solihull

7 Real Ales on at all times

*Ember Pale Ale, Proper Job,
plus 5 regularly changing guests.*

All Cask Ales £2.49 a pint on Mondays

Meet The Brewer - Check Facebook

Open from 11.30am Weekdays

Close : 11.30 Sunday –Thursday

Midnight Friday –Saturday

Hot & cold meals served all week from
12.00 pm to 10.00 pm
Brunch now from 10 am weekends

Live Music

Sat 8 December - Abba & Chic Tribute

Sat 15 December - Rat Pack

Sat 22 December - 80's Flashback

Mon 31 December - New Year Party

Sat 26 January - Elvis Tribute

*Special Offers for CAMRA members.
(membership cards must be shown)*

- 20p discount off a pint of Cask Ale
- 20% off food with a food discount card



Thornbridge To Open Bar In Birmingham

As initially announced in December 2017, Thornbridge Brewery has joined forces with Pivovar to open 10 new pub sites nationwide over the next five years. Planning has been approved on the first site, a former branch of Lloyds Bank on Colmore Row, in the heart of Birmingham City Centre and was due to open this Autumn.

The Birmingham Tap will be a traditional take on the modern Craft Beer pub, incorporating the Thornbridge brand values and making the most of the history of the building. The pub will be welcoming to all, family friendly and

will have a food offering to complement the range of Craft Beers. Thornbridge and Co. hope to add to the excellent Craft Beer offering in Birmingham and give the opportunity for the city to have an ever changing range of Thornbridge beers to try on draught and in bottle.

Their second site, in the centre of York, is due to open on the 1st December, while we eagerly await news of when the Birmingham bar will open.

Moving into 2019 Thornbridge are looking at sites in London, Manchester, Brighton and Leeds.

FIELDHOUSE

10 Knightcote Drive, Solihull 0121 703 9209

COLEBROOK

Haslucks Green Road, Shirley 0121 744 6871

OLTON TAVERN

Lode Lane, Solihull. 0121 742 0515

WOODMANS REST

Union Road, Solihull. 0121 745 3904

BULLS HEAD

1320 Stratford Road, Hall Green. 0121 7020931



EMBER INNS



Seasons Greetings
& a prosperous 2018

**from the managers
John, Shiv, Adrian
Chris, Andy,
& All The Team
at
Ember Inns**

**JOIN US
EVERY MONDAY
EVERY CASK
£2.49 pint**

Editorial

The 19th Solihull Beer Festival went well in the Solihull British Legion at the start of October. While numbers appear to have been slightly down on last year, everybody appeared to have a good time, sampling some excellent beers, and watching the Strumtroopers perform on Saturday night.

Beer of the Festival, decided by popular vote, was St Austell's Big Job. Friday Street IPA from Framework was the runner-up, and third place went to Fixed Wheel's Blackheath Stout. The first of our two casks of Big Job was also the first beer to run out, followed by Enville's American Pale Ale and Aethelred, from Backyard.

The loss of yet another Midlands beer festival next year (Stourbridge) has highlighted the importance of volunteers once more. Every branch needs volunteers, not just for beer festivals, but for having an operating organisation. Our AGM takes place in February and volunteers for any of the Committee roles are always welcome, even taking on a deputy or learning role from an experienced officer. Please ask any of us (contact numbers on page 31) for further details.

One of the other factors that can impact beer festivals is the sheer range of beers available any day around some of our towns. As an example the Wellington in Birmingham has over 17 cask beers, next door the Pint Shop has 6 cask ales and 21 craft, a short walk away the Head of Steam has 7 cask and 19 craft, while the Purecraft Bar and Kitchen has 6 cask and 16 craft. Add the Nicholson's pubs and you can get to quite a large number. Where

festivals do score is the ability to source numerous interesting beers that pubs are not able to obtain due to ties or ordering policies. Some festivals also have local brewers produce some unique brews.

Nominations for the 2020 Good Beer Guide close at our January Branch Meeting. Campaigning trips around nominated pubs that are a little more difficult to get to are planned (see the diary section page 4). You can then score on-line or at the AGM in February.

The 2018-19 Cask Ale Report has been published and is available from <https://cask-marque.co.uk>. The key message is that cask sales are declining at a rate higher than the market as a whole. Figures to July 2018 show that cask sales are down 6.8% against a beer market decline of 1.6%, and some that are increasing like premium lager (2.2% up). Cask still forms 55% of the on-trade market, and the top 10 cask brands are outperforming the rest of cask brewers.

There is a change in taste apparent with golden beers volume increasing by 6% in cask (22% in craft), at the expense of more traditional amber ales.

The normal issues with cask remain; temperature, quality, and lack of knowledge of bar staff about the product they are selling. These are issues that can be addressed by training.

Finally a plea. Enjoy your Christmas with some good beers, but also enjoy your January as well. Recent campaigns to keep dry in October as well as January affect not just the pubs but also the brewers. Keep sensible but enjoy.

The White Swan



Opening Hours
Sunday to Thursday 07.00 - midnight
Friday & Saturday 07.00 - 01.30
Food served until 11pm each day



8 cask Handpulls on at all times including 5 guest ales from a range of local & national breweries

Wide range of craft beers

2 guest ciders also available

32-34 Station Rd
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 3SB
0121 711 5180

The Pump House



Opening Times:
Sun - Wed:
7.00am - midnight
Thurs - Sat:
7.00am - 1.00am
Alcohol served from
10.00 am
Food available from
7.00am to 11.00pm
daily



Best choice of real ales on 10 hand pumps

Up to 5 guest cask ales from premium
local and national breweries £2.15 a pint
5 draught beers off our Craft barrel
2 real ciders on hand pump



Unit 1A, Parkgate,
Stratford Road,
Shirley
0121 701 5460



Broomfield Tavern - Midlands Cider Pub Of The Year



The Broomfield Tavern at Spon End in Coventry has triumphed in the West Midlands Region Cider Pub Of The Year competition.

They were presented with their award by Regional Director, Gary Timmins, in July. They will also receive a new Sally Lavender memorial trophy at the West Midlands Regional Awards in December.

With up to 15 ciders available, if you are in the Coventry area, and a cider drinker, it will be worth your while.

Beer drinkers need not feel left out as it is the Coventry Branch Pub of The Year with 11 real ales available on the pumps.

Solihull Pubs & Clubs CAMRA Member Discounts

Ember Inns (**Fieldhouse, Colebrook, Woodmans Rest, Olton Tavern, Red Lion Knowle**) - 20p/ pint except Mondays where all cask ales are £2.49.

Fieldhouse additionally gives 20% off food with a discount card available from the bar. For other offers see the advert on page 15.

Flute and Flagon gives 10% off real ales (may not applicable when other low price promotions are taking place).

The Lyndon give 20p/pint except Thursdays when a pint is £2.70. Also 5% off food for card carrying members.

Drum and Monkey, Wharf Tavern, Drawbridge Inn, Boat Inn, Greswolde Arms, give 10% off real ales.

Vintage Inns (**Red Lion Earlswood**) 20p/ pint

The **Ale Rooms, Knowle** 50p/pint or 50p/ half pint

Tap and Tandoor, Solihull 10% off a pint of selected Craft Beers.

Please note that any discounts given to CAMRA members are at the discretion of the licensee, and these may be withdrawn or amended at any time. They are a privilege given to card carrying CAMRA members as a gesture of goodwill.

CAMRA believes that no CAMRA member or Branch should ask for, or expect, a discount from any pub or brewery.

Trading Standards contacts:

Solihull - www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards

Warwickshire - www.warwickshire.gov.uk/contactustradingstandards

Citizens Advice Consumer Service phone 03454 040506

THE BLUE BELL CIDER HOUSE

Warings Green Road
Hockley Heath, Warks. B94 6BP
Tel. 01564 702328

Opening hours:

Monday—Saturday: 11.30am—11.00pm
Sunday: 12.00-10.30pm



5 real ales at all times including beers
brewed on site.

Plus 7 ciders, 4 sparkling & 3 traditional still

Home cooked food with a wide
variety of daily specials served

Monday - Saturday

12.00 - 8.30pm for main meals

Sunday Carvery 12 - 5.00pm

Midweek Carvery (Wednesday)
12 - 7.00pm



Breakfast served from 9 am Monday - Saturday until 8.30pm
Sunday Breakfast from 9 am until 5pm



*Keep up to date with what's on and
what's new at our website:*

<http://www.bluebellciderhouse.org/>

Monday - Jam Session (Live Music)
Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday - Poker
Wednesday Quiz Night

Large car parking area
Children & pets welcome
Large beer garden with canal views



A Mid-week Crawl to Stourbridge and Lye

Stourbridge and Lye came up as a good choice to continue our mid-week crawls, so in July five of us descended on the vicinity. With direct trains from Shirley and Solihull we assembled on Stourbridge Junction station to take the shuttle to the town centre.



Not 5 minutes walk from the station is the Red House Boutique. Housed in a Victorian building this large pub has a modern interior

which exudes little in the way of atmosphere. Quite frankly in the past I have not been too impressed with the unimaginative beer range either.

All that seems to have changed however. The range was excellent, better than shown in the Good Beer Guide (GBG) and Whatpub. To be greeted by Rat Brewery White Rat was a delight for me, so hoppy. What a great way to start the day. On the bar for the others in the group were Wye Valley HPA, El-land Summer Breeze (not a bad beer either), Kinver Khyber, Timothy Taylor Knowle Spring, Abbeydale Deception, Enville Enville Ale, and Holdens Golden Glow. As it was not long after opening the pub was quite quiet: maybe it livens up in the evening.

The only micropub in the centre of Stourbridge is the Barbridge. Not so easy to find maybe, but I do like micros

as they are usually so individual. The Barbridge does not disappoint. Opened in 2015, the beers are stored in a cool room viewable from the bar. Being served when we arrived were Lees Summer Pale Ale, Mallinsons HPA, and Thornbridge Jaipur. They also sold key keg too. I settled for the Mallinsons, possibly my favourite brewery. It was a lovely beer. Turning to the pub, it was really busy and as to the décor, a row of ex theatre seats, tables, chairs and sofas of somewhat dubious pedigree are there to sit on, whilst the walls are adorned with pop posters. All in all a pub of great character, which might not however appeal to all tastes? Oh, and it offers a discount to CAMRA members.



Inside the Barbridge

Next port of call was the Waggon and Horses. A little out of town, this pub has had its ups and downs in the last few years. Now in the hands of Enville Brewery, we hope that its future is more secure. The bar is small and quintessentially traditional, and at the back is a large modern lounge. Enville beers are the mainstay here: Ginger, Enville Ale, and Three Lions was the selection when we arrived. Guests were Holdens

Golden Glow, Purple Moose Dark Side of the Moose, Gower Gold, and possibly my favourite beer, Oakham Citra. So you know which beer I went for! What a good range, and like the Barbridge a CAMRA discount is available.

We next popped into the Old Bank on the High Street. It has a modern interior, but does stock some good beers through their nine handpumps. Sadlers Peakly Blinder Pale Ale (my choice), Enville's Enville Ale, Burton Bridge Stairway to Heaven, Pardoes Bumble-Hole, Salopian Lemon Dream, Green Duck Flame West, and Wye Valley's HPA and Butty Bach ensured a selection to suit all tastes.

This concluded the afternoon session, so we retired to Wetherspoons for a bite before setting off for Lye.

Lye is just a short hop on the bus, and soon we were entering the Shovel at Lye. This is another pub which in the past didn't seem very imaginative in its beer range. This has also changed. Once we fought our way into the packed pub (World Cup on TV) it was great to see Holdens Goden Glow, Morland Old Speckled Hen, Enville's Enville Ale and Ginger, Nene Valley Manhatten Project, Greene King Back of the Net, a

beer called Mosaic (but I can't remember the brewery), Salopian Lemon Dream, and for me their Oracle. We managed to squeeze ourselves on a seat, and as you can see from the photo it was a tight squeeze. With the football on it was a great atmosphere, even the garden was packed.



Sadlers Brewhouse, Lye

So to our last pub, Sadlers Brewhouse. It's housed in an industrial unit with restricted opening hours, so planning to visit the Brewhouse is essential. Ascending the stairs you arrive at a large bar, which is soulless but has as a point of interest an overlook to the brewing equipment. Compared to the Shovel the Brewhouse was really quiet, but the beers were the main attraction. Only Sadlers beers on the bar; American Rye, Mud City Stout, Peakly Blinder Black IPA, Worcester Sorcerer, Hoppers Hut, and Red IPA. Hoppers Hut for me, and for those who like key kegs six were on offer.

Lye station is a short walk from Sadlers so having had an enjoyable day we caught direct trains home to Solihull.

Steve Dyson



A tight squeeze in the Shovel, Lye

Hail To The Ale

Unfortunately the Ales Rooms missed out in the West Midlands Regional Pub Of The Year to the Fountain Inn in Leek. It was still a great achievement to be named the West Midlands County Pub Of The Year.

Further up the road in Knowle, the Vaults kicked off their beer festival on the 9th November with 24 different beers.

On the 10th October the Pint Shop opened in Birmingham next door to the Wellington, following their bars in Cambridge and Oxford. With 6 cask ales and 21 craft ales there should be a good enough choice for most!

Yet another new bar is due to open in Birmingham on the 1st February. Cask and Craft will open in the former Juice

Hut premises in Boldmere Road, Sutton Coldfield. They will focus on "high end craft beers and one-off beers" with 16 available.

Finally, Titanic brewed a special Plum Porter Grand Reserve, exclusively for Christmas, infused with Port.

Bernies real ale off licence managed to get a couple of cases, but more than likely they are all gone now! It is always worth checking what they have in as you never know what you might find, especially with Christmas coming up.



Solihull **THE FLUTE & FLAGON**

28-30 Station Parade

Solihull B91 3SB

Tel: 0121 711 3630

www.fluteandflagonsolihull.co.uk



The Flute & Flagon

*....serving up delicious
food, great drinks, &
unforgettable experiences*



10% off real ales for
card-carrying CAMRA
members *

*(*not valid in conjunction
with any other offer)*

6 hand pumps with
5 Real Ales &
a Traditional
Cider

3 Craft Beers

Opening Hours

09.00—23.00 Sun—Thur

09.00—24.00 Fri

09.00—01.00 Sat

Broomfields Hall

Solihull British Legion Club

**18 Union Road,
Solihull,
West Midlands,
B91 3DH
0121 705 0742
rbclubsec@aol.com**



**Snooker Room
Bowling Green
Three Real Ales Available
Three Premium Lagers
Home Made Food Daily
Ample Parking for 100 Cars**

**In the centre of Solihull
New members welcome £20/year
Red Tooth Poker every Wednesday
Function Room for Hire
 Suitable for weddings, birthday
 parties, or any occasion.
 Funeral wakes welcome.
Further details from the
Club Secretary Ben Brannigan**



BERNIES REAL ALE OFF LICENCE

The best of its kind there is!!!

An ever-changing range of exciting draught beers from season to season—you're welcome to try before you buy.

Now stocking a variety of Craft Ales!



A choice of 350 beers and ciders during the year, available in bottles or on draught.

Party barrels to order and supplied for any occasion.

Sale or return on sealed goods.

266 Cranmore Boulevard, Shirley, Solihull B90 4PX

Tel. 0121 744 2827

Opening Hours:

Mondays to Saturdays: 11.00am to 10.00pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays: 12 noon to 6.00pm

Wines, aperitifs, and other alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are also available for all your get-togethers and parties—please come in and talk to us about your requirements and we will always be glad to help.

Now also stocking snacks and confectionery.



Choice which cannot be bettered

DUNDEE

CAMRA Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference

Caird Hall
5th – 7th
April 2019



For those of you who fancy a change of scenery, the 2019 Members' Weekend AGM and Conference will be held in Dundee.

The event itself will be hosted by the Scottish and Northern Ireland branches so expect some interesting and different beers in the Members' Bar.

The wonderful Caird Hall, in the heart of Dundee, is close to the station, buses, pubs, restaurants and hotels. With everything under one roof, including

the Members' Bar, you can attend the AGM and Conference, take part in activities, socialise, eat and drink without leaving the building!

If you do go out, there will be brewery and pub tours along with other "unofficial outings".

Registration is now open, and there is also a request for volunteers to help over the weekend.

You can register now at <https://agm.camra.org.uk/>

The Solihull Drinker is the quarterly newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed in the Drinker are not necessarily those of the Branch or CAMRA.



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Contributions, comments and advertising enquiries should be sent to Solihull Drinker Editor, 2 Dunton Hall Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2RA; or via email to

davidcove@hotmail.co.uk

Printed by Thistle Print Ltd, Leeds

Solihull CAMRA 2018©

The Editor has the right to amend or shorten any items in the newsletter, but will always honour the spirit & intention of the contribution.

Advertise Your Business Here With Us

We distribute nearly 3,000 copies of the well read Drinker out to pubs, around Solihull, Warwickshire, and parts of Birmingham.

This gives you the opportunity to put your business in front of people who are in the habit of visiting pubs and restaurants.

You don't have to be a pub or restaurant to advertise.

For details on rates, and help in producing your advert, please contact the Editor.

CAMRA Mass Lobby To Save Our Pubs

CAMRA members from branches all over the country, including those from Solihull, travelled down to London on October 30th to lobby their MPs for support on three key campaigns:

- Carry out an immediate review of the Pubs Code so that the Market Rent Only Option becomes a genuine choice for tenants in England and Wales

The Pubs Code came into force in 2016, to govern the relationship between PubCos and tied tenants. This call is because two years into its operation, PubCos are continuing to exploit gaps in the legislation and operation of the Pubs Code and are not abiding by the spirit of the Code.

- Support introducing a preferential rate of duty for draught beer.

Beer Duty (tax) accounts for 49p in every pint of 4.5% abv beer.

In addition, tax represents more than a third of every pint sold in a pub.

Beer duty in the UK is disproportionately high in comparison to other leading brewing nations in the European Union. We pay nearly 40% of all beer duty in the EU but only consume around 12% of the beer.

As the UK leaves the European Union there is an opportunity for the Government to consider options for reform which are not currently possible within EU regulations.

- Commit to reshaping the business rates system to address the unfair burden on pubs.

Businesses in England are required to pay a tax to their local council based on

the value of the property that they occupy - these are called business rates.

In 2016 the most recent business rates revaluation took place, with the new bills calculated from the revaluation coming into force in 2017.

4 in 10 pubs were handed an increase in their business rates bill, many of which are threatening to the future viability of the pub business

Business rates account for around 15p per 4.5% abv pint of beer.

Pubs currently pay 2.8% of the business rates bill but only account for 0.5% of total business turnover, which is an overpayment of around £500 million by the sector each year.

This situation is unfair and wholesale reform is needed to address the pub sector overpayment to stem the rising tide of pub closures.

There are numerous ways that the beer and pub industry benefits the UK economy and wider society.

It supports nearly 900,000 jobs in the UK, and contributes £23.6bn to the UK economy annually.

Pubs play a pivotal role in communities across the country, providing a space for local people to meet, helping to tackle loneliness, and having a positive impact on the personal wellbeing of pub goers.

It's vital that the government acts now to reduce pub closures so that pubs remain at the heart of communities and continue to make a valuable contribution to our society, culture and economy.

Find out more at www.camra.org.uk

The Birmingham home of **Oakham ales**

20p off a pint
CAMRA DISCOUNT OFF ANY
REAL ALE OR CIDER ON PRODUCTION
OF A VALID CAMRA MEMBERSHIP CARD.
This offer is not valid with any other offer.



£10 TUESDAY
ENJOY 2 COURSES
FOR ONLY £10

*Dine in only
served 5:30pm - 10:30pm

Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer, excludes Craftworks.
This offer is redeemable from The Bartons Arms only.

THE BARTONS ARMS

0121 333 5988 | thebartonsarms.com
144 High Street, Aston, Birmingham B6 4UP
Bus Number 51, 33 from the City Centre



ROWINGTON CLUB

*A Friendly Member's club
in the heart of the
Warwickshire Countryside*

New Members Welcome!

Real Ales and guest beers always available.
Featured in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide and winner of
Club of the Year 3 years running!

Enjoy imaginative events throught the year or why not
come along and enjoy a drink while watching the cricket
on Rowington Green.

Facilities include:

- 2 Full size Snooker Tables
- Pool Table
- Darts Board
- Dominoes
- Sky Sports
- Large Car Park

Parties, Events, Pig Roasts, BBQ's and Live Music can be
organised by arrangement.

Opening hours: Mon - Thurs 3pm - 11pm (Fri 2pm- 11pm)
Sat - Sun: 12 Noon - 11pm

Full Membership £20 yearly or £1 guest fee.
Free to card-carrying CAMRA Members.

Contact the Club Steward Adrian Cotton on:

01564 782087

rowingtonclub@live.co.uk

[facebook.com/RowingtonSocialClub](https://www.facebook.com/RowingtonSocialClub)



Rowington Club, Rowington Green, Rowington, Warwick CV35 7DB

Membership Matters

It's that time of year again, when you're struggling to find a Christmas present for a someone who is also a real ale drinker. Forget the hassle of traipsing up and down the High Street, I may have the answer to your problem. A CAMRA gift membership could be the solution, and it won't break the bank. Membership starts from as little as £27 a year by Direct Debit, which equates to about 48p per week. Other gift options can be found on the back cover.

So what would they get if they were to become members of CAMRA as a Christmas present? They will get a monthly newsletter called "What's Brewing" with articles on what's happening within CAMRA and the real ale scene nationally, and a very nice quarterly informative magazine titled "Beer" which has many interesting articles, covering a wide range of topics from breweries to bottled beers. Both of these items are available to download to your devices so you can read them at a time/place to suit yourself. You can be sent these in a printed version if you opt in on-line.

They will get free or reduced entry to the many beer festivals organised by local CAMRA branches all over the country, £20 pounds worth of J.D. Wetherspoon Real Ale/Cider vouchers, as well as many other great money saving deals. For full details of all the different offers available visit www.camra.org.uk

We are not just about real ale, even though interest in real ale continues to grow, reflected in an ever increasing choice of real ale in pubs. We also support the brewing industry, publicans, consumer's rights, and community groups nationwide who are either trying to prevent their pub from being sold to developers, or being closed for good (see page 28 for more detail)

We hold monthly meetings at a local pub with good real ale, but if you don't fancy that come along to one of our social events. We are a friendly bunch and will make you more than welcome, someone might even buy you a pint!!!. Please see the dates in the diary section on page 4 or visit us at www.solihull.camra.org.uk

In early October we once again organised and ran the 19th Solihull Beer Festival, where as a local CAMRA member you could join like minded volunteers and help us run the Festival. So, if you fancy a slightly more active social life CAMRA membership is just the ticket. Join up, Join in, Join the campaign.

Finally I would like to wish all of you reading this publication a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and enjoy whatever ale you drink over the festive season and beyond.

Dave Mckowen
Membership Secretary

Useful Contact Numbers

Chairman

Carl Wright 0121 603 1621

Secretary

Allan Duffy 01564 200431

Membership

Dave Mckowen 01564 778955

Pubs Campaigning/Socials

Paul Wigley 07402 312457

Beer Festival / Treasurer

Martin Buck 01564 770708

Solihull Drinker Editor

David Cove 0121 603 6057

Press & Publicity

Vacancy available.

Solihull Drinker Issue No. 86 Solihull CAMRA 2018 ©

Printed by Thistle Print Ltd, Leeds.

The 87th edition of the Solihull Drinker will be published on Monday 4th March 2019. Please note that the deadline for copy, advertising and any other contributions for this issue is **Friday 7th February**. Thank you in advance to all contributors.



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

The ultimate Christmas Gift for the beer lover in your life

Give your beer or pub lover a whole year's
worth of enjoyment with CAMRA membership



Single Gift Membership

A full year's
membership
subscription

£38*



Gift Membership + *Good Beer Guide 2019*



Gift Membership + T-Shirt

available in bitter, mild,
sour or stout

*Joint and under 26 prices are also available.

Visit www.camra.org.uk/gift-memberships
for fantastic Christmas gift ideas

Please visit www.camra.org.uk/membership-rates for more information