

FREE

LONDON
CAMRA
DRINKER

Volume 47 No. 6

December 2025/January 2026



The White Horse & Bower - See page 14

wetherspoon



London pubs included in The Good Beer Guide 2026

London (inner)

J.J. Moon's, Tooting
Shakespeare's Head, Holborn
The Brockley Barge, Brockley
The Crosse Keys, City of London
The Holland Tringham, Streatham
The Metropolitan Bar, Marylebone
The Rockingham Arms, Elephant and Castle
The Surrey Docks, Rotherhithe
The William Morris, Hammersmith
The Willow Walk, Victoria
Wetherspoons, Victoria station

London (outer)

J.J. Moon's, Hornchurch
J.J. Moon's, Kingsbury
J.J. Moon's, Ruislip Manor
Spouter's Corner, Wood Green
The Beaten Docket, Cricklewood
The Colley Rowe Inn, Collier Row
The Coronation Hall, Surbiton
The Eva Hart, Chadwell Heath
The Furze Wren, Bexleyheath
The George, Croydon

The Good Yarn, Uxbridge
The Great Spoon of Ilford, Ilford
The Greenwood Hotel, Northolt
The Moon and Stars, Romford
The Moon on the Hill, Harrow
The Moon on the Hill, Sutton
The Moon on the Square, Feltham
The Moon Under Water, Colindale
The Moon Under Water, Enfield
The Moon Under Water, Hounslow
The Mossy Well, Muswell Hill
The New Crown, Southgate
The New Fairlop Oak, Fairlop
The Nonsuch Inn, North Cheam
The Railway Bell, Barnet
The Red Lion & Pineapple, Acton
The Sir Julian Huxley, Selsdon
The Sir Michael Balcon, Ealing
The Village Inn, Rayners Lane
The Watchman, New Malden
The Whispering Moon, Wallington
The Wibbas Down Inn, Wimbledon
The William Webb Ellis, Twickenham
The Wrong 'Un, Bexleyheath

OPEN NOW

Sigered, King of Essex, 8-10 East Walk, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Basildon, SS14 1HG
The Sir Alexander Fleming, 5 Merchant Square, Paddington Basin, W2 1AS
Walham Green, 472 Fulham Road, Fulham, SW6 1BY
Next to Fulham Broadway station's entrance

OPENING SOON: WED 10 DECEMBER

Coombe Lodge, 104 Coombe Rd, Croydon, CR0 5RB

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for the facts
drinkaware.co.uk jd.wetherspoon.com

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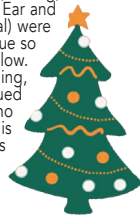


The Chancellor of the Exchequer will present her autumn budget on 26 November, which happens to be the same day on which this edition is published. I commented on CAMRA's hopes for the budget in the previous edition and will report on its contents in the next one, by which time, hopefully, all will be clear. As a pointer however, this is what Tonia Antoniazzi, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Beer Group, was hoping that the Chancellor would do: (1) reform national insurance contributions and cut beer duty and VAT, (2) deliver meaningful business

rates reform and (3) align the definition of alcohol-free with European norms.

Readers may have seen the message from CAMRA's chairman, Ash Corbett-Collins, that, for financial reasons, next year's Great British Beer Festival and GBBF Winter have been cancelled and that there will a general review of the Campaign's finances. I would like to assure readers that, as can be seen from the Branch Diaries column, there will be no reduction in activity at branch level. Likewise, CAMRA's local beer festivals in Greater London (Bexley, Dulwich, Ealing, Kingston, Thurrock, Pig's Ear and the Cider & Perry Festival) were successful and will continue so long as circumstances allow. This magazine is self-funding, thanks to our valued advertisers, and is under no threat. CAMRA is essentially a grass roots organisation and that is where our strength lies.

Tony Hedger



CAMRA on the move

CAMRA has now moved. The new address is Unit 9 Finway, Dallow Road, Luton LU1 1TR. It has long been planned that the Campaign's office and warehouse operations should be located together to achieve greater efficiency. This has now been achieved. All systems should be up and running by the time that you read this.

A complete collection of all issues of *London Drinker*, going back to the first edition in 1979, is available on-line. Go to <https://londondrinker.camra.org.uk/wordpress/> for editions from August/September 2020 onwards or www.london.camra.org.uk before that. These are all scalable to read in larger print.

CAMRA volunteers distribute copies of *London Drinker* to some 1,200 pubs and clubs in and around Greater London. Wetherspoons deliver them to all of their outlets in the area and Fuller's supply them to over 100 of their managed houses. *London Drinker* has the largest print distribution of any CAMRA local magazine. It is also available online at www.london.camra.org.uk and a link is emailed to all CAMRA members living in London who have opted to receive electronic communications.

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Branch diaries

This is a list of CAMRA Greater London regional and branch events for December 2025 and January 2026, as notified at the date of production. **For full details of the events listed below and where no events are shown, please consult the branch website as listed.** If no events are listed, it does not mean that there are none taking place.

Meetings, visits and socials are open to all; everyone is welcome to come along. To check on the areas covered by the branches shown below, please go to www.london.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=20208.

LONDON REGION

January

- Wed 14 (7.30) Greater London regional meeting; Trinity (upstairs), 202-206 Borough High St, SE1 1JX
- Wed 21 (7.30) Pub of the Year 2025 Runner-up presentation; Cockpit, Chislehurst, 4 Royal Parade BR7 6NR

LONDON PUBS GROUP

Jane Jephcote, jane.jephcote@googlegmail.com, 07813 739856

December

- Wed 17 (7pm) Waterloo tour, meet Lion & The Unicorn, The Sidings, Waterloo Station

January

- Mon 19 (7.30) Meeting; Trinity (upstairs), SE1 1JX. All CAMRA members interested in pub research and preservation welcome.
- www.londonpubsgroup.camra.org.uk

CIDER

Ian White, whiteik@talk21.com

January

- Sat 24 (2.30) Wassailing; One Tree Hill allotments, see <http://ianwhite.info/Wassail.html>.

YOUNG MEMBERS' GROUP

Dario Bertero, dbertero.w@gmail.com

December

- Sat 13 (from 5pm) Christmas get together; Bullfinch Brewery, Arch 886-887 Rosendale Rd, Herne Hill SE24 9EH

January

- Sat 24 Hackney social (open to all young and young at heart members, potential members and non-members); (5pm) Pembury Tavern, (6.30) Chesham Arms, (8pm) Cock Tavern

Facebook: Greater London CAMRA Young Members

BEXLEY

Rob Archer, branch.contact@bexley.camra.org.uk

December

- Wed 3 (7pm) Christmas meal; Wrong 'Un, Bexleyheath DA6 8AS
- Wed 10 (7pm) Meeting; Door Hinge, Welling DA16 1TR
- Tue 30 (12pm) Twixtmas social: (12pm) Robin Hood & Little John DA6 8PF

January

- Wed 14 (7pm) Meeting; Penny Farthing, Crayford DA1 4JJ
- www.bexley.camra.org.uk

BROMLEY

Social Sec: Barry Phillips, social.secretary@bromley.camra.org.uk

December

- Mon 8 (7pm) Winter Beer Week social; Orpington Liberal Club BR6 0RZ

- Wed 17 Micropub social: (7pm) Hackney Carriage, Sidcup DA15 7AA, (8.15) Halfway House DA15 8DJ, (9.40) River Ale House, East Greenwich SE10 0RJ
- Sat 27 Bromley BR1 social: (1.30) Crown & Anchor 3HJ, (2.20) Freelands Tavern 3HZ, (3.10) Red Lion 3LG, etc

January

- Thu 8 (7.30) GBG selection meeting; Orpington Liberal Club
 - Tue 13 West Wickham BR4 social: (7.30) Wheatsheaf OLU, (8.30) Real Ale Way 0PX, (9.50) Railway Hotel 0EW
 - Mon 19 (7.30) Committee meeting; Three Hounds, Beckenham BR3 4PR
 - Wed 28 Petts Wood BR5 social: (7.30) Daylight Inn 1LZ, (8.10) One Inn the Wood 1LA, (10pm) Sovereign of the Seas 1DG
- <http://bromley.camra.org.uk/calendar/>

CROYDON & SUTTON

Social Sec: Roger Ford, 07977 984219, social@croymdon.camra.org.uk

December

- Wed 3 (8pm) Addiscombe social; Cricketers CR0 7ER
- Wed 10 (8.30) Meeting, Cryer Arts (Watercress Suite) SM5 3BB
- Thu 18 Wallington SM6 social: (8pm) Dukes Head 0AA, (9.30) Whispering Moon 8QF
- Tue 30 (8pm) Croydon social; Royal Standard CR0 1SS

January

- Thu 8 (8pm) Carshalton SM5 social: (8pm) Railway Tavern 2HG, (9.30) Sun 2HU
 - Wed 14 (8.30) Committee meeting; Green Dragon (upstairs) CR0 1NA
 - Wed 21 (8pm) Croydon social; Builders Arms CR0 6TP
 - Thu 29 (8pm) Carshalton social and London Drinker pick up: Hope SM5 2PR
- www.croydon.camra.org.uk

EAST LONDON & CITY

Branch Sec: Andy Kinch, 07757 772564, elacbranch@mail.com

December

- Tue 2-Sat 6 Pig's Ear Beer Festival; Round Chapel E5 0LY
- Tue 16 (6pm) Social; Leyton Orient Supporters Club E10 5NF. Beers from Mighty Oak + mince pies
- Thu 18 (2pm) First GBG selection meeting; North Star E11 3AR

January

- Tue 13 (8pm) Second GBG selection meeting; European E10 7EQ
- www.pigsear.org.uk

ENFIELD & BARNET

Peter Graham, 07946 383498, contact@enfieldandbarnet.camra.org.uk

December

- Thu 11 (7pm) Social; Lord Nelson EN5 2SA
- Tue 16 (4pm) Social; Leyton Orient Supporters Club E10 9NF

January

- Thu 1 (12pm) Cobweb social; New Crown N14 5PH
 - Wed 7 (8pm) GBG selection meeting; Bohemia N12 9QH
 - Wed 14 Enfield EN4 social: (7pm) Builders Arms 9SH, (8pm) Railway Bell 8RR
 - Wed 21 Out of area social: (7.30) Wenlock Arms N1 7TA, (8.30) Old Fountain EC1V 9NU
 - Thu 29 (7pm) Social; Little Green Dragon N21 2AD
- <https://enfieldandbarnet.camra.org.uk>

SHEPHERD NEAME



Spitfire



NEW-LOOK SPITFIRE TAKES TO THE SKIES

Spitfire Kentish Amber Ale is one of the UK's best-loved beers with an international reputation as a Great British Classic.

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Now, it has been given a bold new look - proudly brewed in Kent and honoured with a Royal Warrant from King Charles III, this beer delivers a true taste of British heritage.



TASTING NOTES

Brewed using 100% Kentish hops, the finest malt, and water drawn from the artisan well deep beneath the Faversham Brewery, Spitfire Amber Ale combines the pick of Kentish hops to layer bitter orange marmalade flavour on top of sweet biscuits and caramel malts for a peppery dry finish.



FIND OUT MORE
shepherdneame.co.uk
[@shepherdneame](https://www.instagram.com/shepherdneame)

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD

John Burns, jburnsklc@gmail.com

December

- Wed 3 (2pm) Social at Pig's Ear Beer Festival
- Sat 20 Christmas at Kingston: (12pm) Canbury Arms, (1pm) Wych Elm, (2pm) Willoughby Arms, (3pm) Park Brew & Kitchen, (4pm) Park Tavern

January

- Fri 2 Day out to Reading: (12pm) Retreat, (1pm) Alehouse, (1.45) Allied Arms, (2.30) Castle Tap, (3.15) Nags Head, (4.15) Greyfriar
- Thu 8 (8pm) Meeting; Grafton Club, New Malden
- Thu 29 (8pm) Winter Pub of the Season presentation (venue to be chosen at January meeting)

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

NORTH LONDON

Contact John Cryne, treasurer@northlondon.camra.org.uk.

December

- Tue 2 (6pm) Visit to Pig's Ear Festival
- Tue 9 (7.30) Pub of the Season award; Pocket N1 2AS
- Wed 17 (4pm-8pm) Christmas pizza social; Hammerton Brewery Taproom, Units 8 & 9, Roman Way Industrial Estate, N7 8XH

January

- Tue 6 Holloway Road tour: meet (7.30) Oak & Pastor N19 5QZ
- Wed 14 (2pm) Leisure social; Wenlock Arms N1 7TA
- Tue 27 Kentish Town West social: meet (5pm) Parakeet NW5 2AA

www.northlondon.camra.org.uk

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

George Kimber, 020 8977 8104, contact@rh.camra.org.uk

December

- Wed 3 (7pm) Meeting; Red Lion, Barnes SW13 9RU
- Mon 22 (7pm) Christmas currywurst evening; Northumberland Arms, Brentford TW8 8JB
- Mon 29 Post-Christmas walk: meet (12pm) Jolly Coopers, Hampton TW12 2SJ

January

- Tue 6 (7pm) Meeting. Pilot, Chiswick W4 4BZ
- Wed 21 Hounslow TW3 social: (7pm) Cross Lances 3TU; then Moon Under Water 3LF

rh.camra.org.uk

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Andrew Large, 07794 350930, contact@sel.camra.org.uk

December

- Wed 3 (7pm) Social at Pig's Ear Festival
- Sat 13 Andy Sewell Memorial social, a daytime trip to Chipstead and Sevenoaks; meet (12pm) Bricklayers Arms TN13 2RZ

January

- Mon 5 (7.30) GBG selection meeting; Trinity SE1 1JX
- Mon 19 (7.30) Branch AGM and social; Southwark Brewing Company SE1 2EZ

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

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Mike Flynn, 07751 231191, info@swl.camra.org.uk

Cycling: Geoff Strawbridge, geoff.camra@gmail.com

December

- Wed 3 (4pm) Social at Pig's Ear Festival
- Mon 8 (7.30) Meeting; Duke of Cambridge SW11 3AA

January

- Mon 5 (7.30) GBG shortlisting meeting; Hand in Hand SW19 4RQ
- Tue 20 (7pm) Clapham Old Town social: meet (7pm) Prince of Wales SW4 0LB

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

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Andrew Vaughan, 07854 988152,

branch@watford.camra.org.uk

December

- Sat 6 Bedmond and Abbots Langley WD5 social: (1pm) Bell 0QR, (2.15) Royal Oak, Kitters Green 0ET, (3pm) Compasses 0LJ

January

- Thu 1 (1pm) Social; Nascot Arms, Watford WD17 4QS
- Mon 12 (8pm) Meeting; West Herts Sports Club, Watford WD18 7HP
- Fri 23 Oxhey WD19 social: (8.30) Rifle Volunteer 4AJ, (9.15) Villiers Arms 4AJ, (10pm) Railway Arms 4AB
- Fri 30 Pre-Xmas London pub crawl; meet (6pm) Greyhound, 1 Kensington Sq, W8 5EP

www.watford.camra.org.uk

WEST LONDON

Paul Charlton, 07591 125486,

contact@westlondon.camra.org.uk;

Social Sec: Paul Young, 07591 125486,

pyoung3114@aol.com

December

- Wed 10 Chelsea social: meet (2pm) Sydney Arms SW3 6NJ, then two more pubs
- Mon 22 Victoria social: meet (2pm) Wetherspoons, Victoria station concourse, then one more pub

January

- Tue 6 Olympia social: meet (7pm) Hand and Flower W14 8J, then two more pubs
- Tue 13 (7.7.30) Meeting; Harp (upstairs) WC2N 4HS
- Mon 26 North Soho social: meet (2pm) Clachan W1B 5QH, then two more pubs

www.westlondon.camra.org.uk

WEST MIDDLESEX

Branch contact: Ben Hart, ben@westmiddx.camra.org.uk

Social Sec: Bob O'Brien, 01895 673266

December

- Mon 15 (from 2pm) Social; Botwell Inn, Hayes UB3 3EB.
- Mon 22 Gospel Oak tour: (7pm) Southampton Arms NW5 1LE; (8pm) Pineapple NW5 2NX, (9pm) Tapping the Admiral NW1 8SU
- Tue 30 Ruislip HA4 tour: (7pm) Woodman 7SE, (8.15) Hop and Vine 7AN, (9.30) JJ Moons OAA

January

- Mon 5 (8pm) Meeting; Greenwood Hotel, Northolt UB5 4LA
- Thu 15 Pinner HA5 tour: (8pm) Oddfellows Arms 3EN, (9.15) Queens Head 5PJ
- Thu 29 (8pm) Social; Gate, Northwood HA6 2RH

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

The electronic copy deadline for the February/March 2026 edition is no later than Friday 9 January 2026.

Please send entries to ldnews.hedger@gmail.com.

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*HOMEMADE
PORK PIES &
SCOTCH EGGS.*

*FRIENDLY &
KNOWLEDGEABLE
STAFF.*



GREATER LONDON CLUB OF THE YEAR

The presentation of the award to the Orpington Liberal Club took place on 9 October. The photo shows CAMRA's Regional Director for Greater London, Ellie Eames, making the presentation to Peter Muldoon from the OLC, with colleague Phil Wheeler looking on. The club is open to CAMRA members on production of a current membership card. The full address is 7 Station Road, Orpington BR6 0RZ.



KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD BRANCH

While Surrey County Council was deciding the future of local government in the county, our Kingston and Leatherhead branch continued as a 'combined county authority', presenting our two Pub of the Year awards to the Jolly Coopers in Epsom (KT18 7SD; Leatherhead area) and the Park Tavern (KT2 6AP; Kingston area). Regular readers will recognise both pubs as previous winners, because they are exceptionally good, and it struck me during my wanderings to ponder what makes them so.

On 27 September we visited the Jolly Coopers but sadly Dan, the 'personal booze guru' wasn't there. The Coopers isn't just a pub; it also has a brewery, Fuzzchat and, that Saturday, Dan was away pouring his freshest small-batch brews at the Ewell Tap. We were however extra pleased to hand the award to Alicia who looked after us well and, following a strong round of applause from the regulars, we concentrated on the excellent choice of beer.

It's rare that I commend a pub's website but please do visit theirs, <https://jollycoopers.co.uk/>, before you visit the pub. You can choose from a fantastic selection of beers and select your glass from one-third, half-pint, two-thirds and pint measures. This is beer, and pretty much everything else pub-wise, in the modern age. The team work their socks off across a real range of skills and it shows in their success.



The photo shows branch chair Richard Russell making the presentation to Alicia.

On 16 October we went to the Park Tavern. The pub claims to be Kingston's best kept secret but everywhere I go I'm asked if this is one of our favourites. It is indeed and has been for a long time. While presenting the 2025 award I saw one from 1997; a very steady tradition. The pub has been owned by the same family, the McFarlanes, for 35 years, with Peter and Sue as landlords.



The photo shows Richard doing the honours again, to Peter and Sue. Inevitably family values are central, "As a family pub, we have family values. Don't come for a drink, have a drink and a chat while you're here." There is always a great selection of beers available, and they are pretty good indeed. The ceiling displays an impressive collection of pump clips and so, if what you want isn't there today, you can check whether

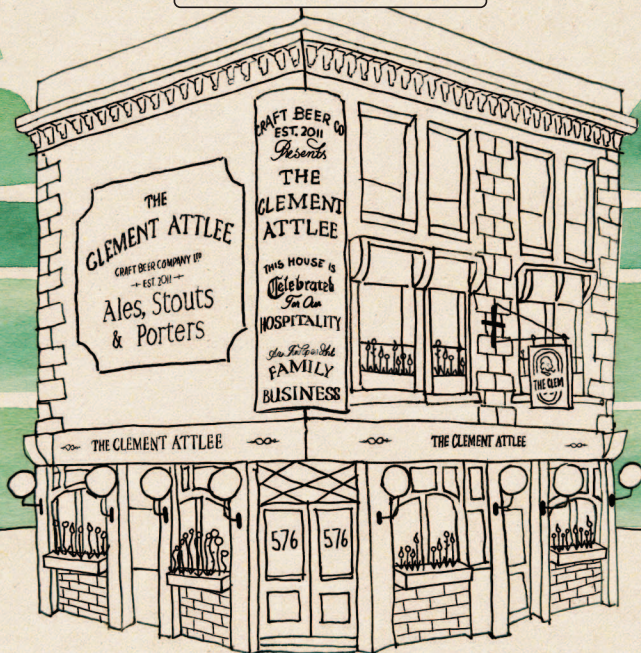
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it has been previously. Beer, a bit of sport and not much else; what more could I ask for? A superb, small traditional pub that does what it does well and long may it continue to do so!
Dave Butler

WEST MIDDLESEX BRANCH

Our Harrow & Brent area Pub of the Year presentation was held on 24 September at the Castle, Harrow on the Hill (HA1 3EF). The photo shows Jesal receiving the award on behalf of the pub from me.



After a successful Ealing Beer Festival, volunteers met up at Perivale Brewery at Horsenden Farm to celebrate. Casks of Wild Green, a green wild hopped beer, and VeriBrek, an oatmeal stout, went down very well.



Thank you to Perivale Brewing for hosting us and to everyone who volunteered at Ealing Beer Festival this year.
Tracey Powell

Making the supreme effort!

Have you ever wondered how pubs get into CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide*? Unlike some guides, entries into the *Good Beer Guide* are based entirely on the assessments of CAMRA members over the course of a year. Beer scores play a major part in this. During the year, thousands of scores are collected on London pubs alone and it is only the consistently highest scoring pubs that are considered for the guide; a pub cannot buy its place. The number of pubs allocated to Greater London is only 293 even though there are 2,426 pubs and clubs selling cask beer within our area. It is no easy task to be chosen to be included.

A place in the guide is a label that says 'We sell great cask beer' and, for that reason, pubs are delighted when they find out that they have been included. It reflects the hard work and dedication of the whole of the pub's team over a considerable amount of time. The reward is usually an increase in footfall and a raising of the pub's profile, particularly for those who have made it into the guide for the first time.

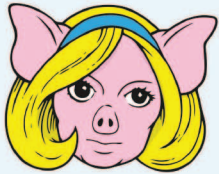
Behind each new entry is a story. Take the Duke in Bloomsbury (WC1N 2PB). Bill and Maddie took on the pub

in 2023 and gradually started building a reputation for good quality beer, making this historic 1934 Art Deco pub a place to go to other than for the décor. Coming from a family connected with pubs (Bill's dad runs the Old Red Lion in Holborn) Bill had a good idea as to what he was doing and the Red Lion is not yet in the Guide! A bit of family rivalry!



EAST LONDON AND CITY BRANCH OF CAMRA PRESENTS
41ST PIG'S EAR EAST LONDON BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

PIGSEAR



TUESDAY 2ND TO SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2025
ROUND CHAPEL, 1D GLENARM ROAD, E5 0LY
NOON TO 10.30PM (11PM FRI/9PM SAT)
MEMBERS £3 (£8 SEASON TICKET) NON-MEMBERS £5

WWW.PIGSEAR.ORG.UK / @PIGSEARCAMRA

Making the supreme effort!

There is also the Northumberland Arms in Brentford (TW8 8JB). This pub is unusual in that the licensee, Ivo Penev, originally from Bulgaria, brews his own beers at a nano-brewery on a tiny island on the Thames. This includes Dark Matter, a 5% ABV porter that has twice won the beer of the festival award at the Twickenham Beer Festival. Ivo also serves a changing range of interesting, often dark ales from other breweries and there is live music from local groups five days a week. This a special pub.



Our third example shows how the expertise in getting one pub into the GBG can be used to do the same with another. Nick Bailey took over the Robin in Stroud Green (N4 4AP) after running the renowned Southampton Arms in Kentish Town; a regular GBG entry. Using his knowledge and team building skills, the Robin won CAMRA North London branch's Cider Pub of the Year award in the Spring and now it has its first entry into the *Good Beer Guide*.



These are just three of the great London pubs in the guide. In all, the guide features 4,500 pubs across the UK and also includes a unique and comprehensive listing of UK breweries (both cask and keg). At only £14.99 plus postage (with the discount for CAMRA members: cover price £16.99), it makes a great Christmas present for anyone who loves pubs or even a treat for yourself. To buy your copy and support CAMRA go to <https://tinyurl.com/GBG2026>.

All CAMRA members can and indeed are encouraged to enter beer scores for any pub visited. Simply find the pub's entry on CAMRA's pub database (<https://camra.org.uk/pubs>) and then click 'beer score' beneath the photo of the pub.

Christine Cryne

REAL ALE

CAMRA defines real ale as live beer:

'beer that, when first put into its final container, contains at least 0.1 million cells of live yeast per millilitre, plus enough fermentable sugar to produce a measurable reduction in its gravity while in that container, whatever it may be'. Within this definition comes cask-conditioned beer, which is defined as 'live beer that continues to mature and condition in its cask, any excess of carbon dioxide being vented such that it is served at atmospheric pressure'.

It should be left to settle and condition in the cellar, for up to ten days if necessary and served at cellar temperature, which is 11 to 14°C.

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www.mashpaddlebrewery.com/londondrinker

The White Horse & Bower reopens

As an organisation that loves pubs and does everything to ensure their survival, we have to be thankful to pub operators (and brewers) Shepherd Neame of Kent. Spending £950,000 on a pub refurbishment is no mean investment and, after a three-month project, it is great to see the pub open again. Sheps have put as much effort into restoring its heritage features as they have in improving the interior and upgrading its facilities. While doing this there was considerable attention paid to sustainability, including LED lighting and a fully electric kitchen.

The pub was built in 1812 and acquired by Sheps twenty years ago. It is not far from Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. I was fortunate to attend the formal reopening led by chief executive Jonathan Neame. I am no expert on architectural features but my notes say tasks undertaken included a new Barley Window, a reclaimed fireplace, work on the stained glass

and adding Lancaster Wallpaper. The swing sign outside is wooden and hand painted.

Mr Neame set out the current difficulties for the hospitality industry and pubs in general, highlighting their key value to local communities, hence their need to survive. To emphasise this, the company made a £1,000 donation to the local Cardinal Hume Centre, which supports local people in such areas as childcare, housing and employment initiatives. The MP for Faversham & Mid Kent, Helen Whately, informed us how much she loves beer and the pubs that it is sold in and how she, as an MP, was very involved in trying to reduce the tariffs on beer.

The work carried out should help the pub continue for generations to come, so give it a try; it's well worth it. The pub is featured on this edition's cover and its full address is 86 Horseferry Road, Westminster SW1P 2EE.

John Cryne

CAMRA Events

A list of CAMRA events taking place throughout the country is available at https://events.camra.org.uk/events?event_view=list or through this QR code.



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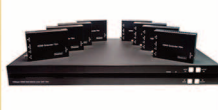
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A Remarkable story

As reported in our previous edition, CAMRA Greater London's John Young Memorial Award for 2025 was awarded to Robert Thomas, the founder of Remarkable Pubs Ltd. Over the last 40 years Robert has taken over pubs across London, many of them unloved, and has turned them into the heart of their communities. It all started when Robert and his wife, Jean, were cycling past the Prince George in Dalston (E8 3AG). They admired its classical pillared porch and architectural charm but didn't much fancy a drink inside. Upon discovering the pub was for sale and, despite never having worked in or run pubs before, they decided to take a chance on the old building and carefully rescue it. This was the start of many. The Remarkable Pub estate now consists of 17 pubs, mainly in east and north London. All have been sympathetically refurbished. Remarkable Pubs are still a family business with Robert and Jean's son and daughter now involved.

Andy Kinch from CAMRA's East London branch said, "Robert's venture has resulted in a very remarkable and much-loved set of pubs. Their acquisitions are always carefully restored with some magnificent examples including the Boleyn Tavern in Upton Park, where a huge amount of love and care went into bringing this beautiful and majestic building back to its former impressive Victorian glory."

Ellie Eames, CAMRA's Regional Director for Greater London, added, "At a time when so many pubs are altered with little regard to their heritage, Remarkable

Pubs have bucked this trend and we are delighted to be awarding Robert the John Young Memorial Award. We think that John Young would approve!"



Robert said, "We are delighted to receive this much coveted award. My thanks go to all the people who have worked hard and contributed to our success. And thank you to all the customers who have supported us and given us inspiration and ideas for our pubs."

The award was presented at the Prince George on 28 October. The presentation, as has now become a tradition, was made by Torquil Sligo-Young, the nephew of John Young. The photo shows Robert (centre) with Torquil (left) and Ellie.

Christine Cryne



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- * Once a haunt of the Sloane Rangers, the **Admiral Codrington** in Chelsea (SW3 2LY) has reopened after a three-month refurbishment. Originally a Charrington's pub, it has now changed operator from Butcombe Brewery (formerly the Liberation Group) to the Inda Pub Company. This is their tenth pub. The unusual five-sided pub sign depicts the Admiral, who successfully led the British fleet in 1827 against the Turks at the Battle of Navarino.
- * Somewhat unexpectedly, the **Black Bull** in King Street, Hammersmith (W6 9LP) is to be reopened. This 1960s estate pub closed in 2018 when its licence was suspended. The site has now been purchased by a local hotel company. There were objections from local residents to the renewal of the licence.
- * The Exale Brewery from Walthamstow have converted a former pie and mash shop in Dalston into their fourth pub, the **Black Eel** (E8 2JS). The shop is Grade II listed and its original tiled frontage and doorway mosaic, dating from 1862, have been preserved. It will serve food but Mediterranean style rather than pie and mash.
- * I am pleased to report that two of the pubs that were recently closed by BrewDog have reopened under new management and both selling cask beer. The Bird House Brewery have taken over the site in Goldhawk Road, Shepherds Bush (W12 8QQ), renaming it the **Bush Tavern**. The site in Goodge Street, Fitzrovia (W1T 1TA), the **Queen Charlotte**, has been reopened by the partnership that recently reopened the Blue Maid in the Borough (SE1 1HR).
- * The imposing Grade II-listed **Cauliflower Hotel** in Ilford (IG1 1TZ) closed in July 2018 following a fire. There have been various plans for it in the meantime but now it has reopened as a 'fine dining restaurant and lounge' called 553 London.



The ground floor will be a restaurant with a lounge and bar space on the first floor, featuring live music and entertainment. It will serve alcohol and Halal food in order to cater for all of the local communities. With thanks to Colin Price for the photo.

- * In August, there were concerns as to what might happen to **Coombe Lodge** (CR0 5RB), a large, Grade II-listed Georgian house being used as a Beefeater restaurant, when owners Whitbread announced that it was to close. It was one of 38 Beefeater outlets, estimated value £38 million, that Whitbread were planning to dispose of. Given how many outlets in Croydon that they have closed, it came as a surprise when JD Wetherspoon announced that they had acquired the site and would reopen it as a pub, provisionally on 10 December. It is in the Lloyd Park area of Croydon which, JDW say, 'has retained much of its rural character'. The site features a large conservatory and huge beer garden. All credit to JDW for taking on the care of another historic building. The Lloyd Park Tramlink stop is reasonably close.
- * After much delay, the **Guinness Open Gate Brewery** in Covent Garden (WC2H 9FA) is now due to open on Thursday, 11 December. The 54,000 sq-ft site will include, among other features, a tasting room, two restaurants and a 'pour your own pint' experience. There will also be a microbrewery producing a rotating range of limited-edition beers although not the 'Black Stuff' itself. A large outdoor seating area will be available for cultural events. Guinness merchandise will also be on sale from two stores. The address is Old Brewer's Yard, 1 Mercer Walk. If you are in the area, a visit to the Porterhouse in Maiden Lane (WC2E 7NA) may be an interesting 'compare and contrast'. Their house beers are served under gas pressure but are unpasteurised.

- * This is a sad story but a fairly common one, given our planning system. The **Hero of Switzerland** at Loughborough Junction (SW9 7LL) closed in 2020 after developers acquired the freehold and secured planning permission to replace the two-storey 1950s estate pub with a 13-storey tower. This was to have included a replacement pub. It is part of the Loughborough Estate, which was built in an area badly damaged by bombing and the pub itself, popular with the 'Young British Artists' movement in the 1990s, was a replacement for one built around 1850. Very little appeared to have happened until this September when a new set of developers applied to Lambeth Council to vary the terms of the original permission. Meanwhile, the pub just stands there, rotting behind some hoardings. This should not be allowed to happen.
- * London has a mead pub! Peckham-based Gosnells Drinks have taken over the wonderfully named **John the Unicorn** in Peckham Rye (SE15 4TL). It is their second outlet after their bar in Bermondsey and closer to home. They describe their products as 'honey nectars; sociable-ABV sparkling drinks inspired by the craft beer and mead', which are '100% natural, gluten free and sustainably produced'. They are available in cans and on draught. The pub's name comes from the favourite toy of a previous manager's daughter and no-one has had the heart to change it. The pub was previously operated by Antic and then Portobello Pubs.
- * Some encouraging news. It has been revealed that the new owner of **McGlynn's Free House** in St Pancras (WC1H 8ET) is the artist Peter Doig, whose studio is nearby. A planning application has been submitted for works to reinstate some original features of the Grade II-listed building and preserve its 'special architectural and historic interest', along with some improvements to ensure that it can 'continue to function as a viable public house'. If you would like to find out more about Mr Doig, there was a very good feature on him in the Observer (12 October). He also currently has an exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery.
- * There is no further news of the **Olde Swiss Cottage** (NW3 5EL) beyond it being up for sale. Local residents' groups are still on the case.
- * Further to Mike Goldwater's article in the previous edition, there is news of the **Railway Hotel**, a fine piece of Brewer's Tudor in Edgware (HA8 7AD). A proposal has been put forward whereby the pub, which is near derelict, will be fully restored, paid for by a housing development on the land behind. The plans are still at the consultation stage and, if approved, would not see the pub reopen for some years.
- * Good news and bad news. Readers will recall that London's oldest chophouse (founded 1757), **Simpson's Tavern** in Cornhill (EC3V 9DR), closed in 2022 because of a rent dispute with the freeholders arising from the pandemic. The original management tried very hard both to dispute the claim and to raise enough money to pay what they did owe but now, it seems, without success. The Grade II-listed premises are to reopen but under the management of a nearby restaurant called Cloth. They say that they will preserve its 'ancient look' but I suspect that they are unlikely to offer cask beer.
- * The London Brewing Company has taken over the **Three Lords** in the Minorities near Tower Hill (EC3N 1DE). Formerly a Young's pub, it was closed by the then current operators in July. See the entry in this edition's pub information update for more information and an explanation of the name. It should be open by the time that you read this.
- * For reports on the **Marlborough** in Mayfair (W1K 6WD) and the **Trafalgar** on the King's Road (SW3 5UA), please see this edition's pub information update.



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The final four

In the previous edition I listed the 16 finalists in CAMRA's National Pub of the Year. These have now been narrowed down to four. Sadly, the Greater London winner, the Hope in Carshalton (SM5 2PR), is not included but, if any of you are on your travels, I'm sure that they are all worth a visit. Two of them are previous winners while one of them has already won this year's National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year award. The judging will, as ever, be on the basis of their atmosphere, décor, welcome, service, inclusivity, overall impression and, crucially, the quality of their cask beer, real cider and perry. For those pubs that have won the award previously, credit should be given for their ability to maintain their standards. In alphabetical order, these are the four.

Blackfriars Tavern, Great Yarmouth (NR30 3BZ). CAMRA's current National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year. A Victorian street corner pub with its own brewery. As well as cider and perry, it specialises in cask ale from East Anglia.

Pelican Inn, Gloucester (GL1 2QR). Grade II-listed and dating from 1679, a traditional community pub handy for the cathedral and the Kingsholm rugby ground. It features beers from the Wye Valley brewery, among others.

Tamworth Tap, Tamworth (B79 7LR). A part Tudor, part 16th century building featuring a courtyard drinking area close to the Norman castle. It is the tap for the Tamworth Brewing Company and also sells a wide variety of cask ale from other breweries around the country. It won the National Pub of the Year award in 2022 and in 2023. It boasts a complete set of Good Beer Guides.

Volunteer Arms (Staggs), Musselburgh (EH21 6JE). Run by the same family since 1858, it is a traditional bar with wooden floors, wood panelling and mirrors from defunct local breweries. The interior features an attractive Victorian gantry with old spirit casks. It won the national award in 1998 and made the final four again in 2018.

Sign up!

A number of CAMRA branches send newsletters to their members by e-mail. To receive these, CAMRA members need to consent to the receipt of e-mails from their branch. To do this, log in to the CAMRA website (<https://www1.camra.org.uk/>) then click on the disc on the left showing your initials. Select 'Dashboard', then 'Account' and then 'Marketing Preferences'. Set Branch to 'yes'.
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A tour of Twickenham and Teddington

On Saturday 18 October, CAMRA's London Pubs Group visited five pubs in the Twickenham and Teddington areas. Proceedings commenced at noon at the **Sussex Arms** in Twickenham (TW2 5BG), a locally listed ex-Charrington pub having one star on CAMRA's National Inventory, with an interior of special historic importance. This brick and rendered two-storey pub was rebuilt in the inter-war period and retains a number of original fittings. The main bar at the front (originally three rooms or two rooms and off sales) has fielded panelling on the walls to two-thirds height, with a bare wood floor and a 1930s brick fireplace on the right. The bar counter front has square panels and looks to date from the 1930s, as does the bar-back fitting. Some modern embellishments, such as white tiles, have however been applied. The pub is operated by the Morgan Pub Collective and regular ales served here are Big Smoke Solaris, Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter, Oakham Citra and Thornbridge Jaipur. There are also eight changing guest ales and six ciders on handpump.

From the Sussex, a short walk via Twickenham Green led to the **Prince Albert** (TW2 5QB), which was our officially designated lunch stop. Another locally listed building, the pub was opened by the Star Brewery in 1840 and was later unofficially known as Wiffen's, being run by three generations of the same family whose name is still inside the Albert displayed behind the bar.



It is nowadays divided into three areas and is popular for its convivial atmosphere and an attractive garden. The Prince Albert has been a finalist in the Fuller's Master Cellarman competition for four years running. Dark Star Hophead, Fuller's ESB and London Pride are normally served here along with a Fuller's seasonal ale.

The final stop in Twickenham was the **Rifleman** (TW2 5EL). This characterful back-street local is a former Courage pub now operated by Twickenham Fine Ales. It too is locally listed.



The pub takes its name from Rifleman Frank Edwards of the London Irish Rifles, who dribbled a football when going 'over the top' at the Battle of Loos during WW1. Expect five cask ales from Twickenham to be available along with Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter.

A 281 bus was used to reach our first pub in Teddington, the **Masons Arms** (TW11 8PJ). This is also a locally listed building, with a pretty green and brown tiled façade and a secluded garden at the rear. You enter through a door lobby that leads into a single space dominated by a generously sized servery, with a wooden bar counter decorated with fielded panelling and reeded reliefs. Notable are the beautiful wooden handpulls made especially for the pub by the brother of the owner of the Roebuck in nearby Hampton Hill. Pub and brewery memorabilia line the walls and hang from the ceiling beams.



Stained glass at the Masons Arms

On the right-hand wall is the original pub sign with the motto 'God is our Guide'. On the left-hand wall is a wonderful Bass & Co mirror, although historically the pub was a Watney house. Some of the windows retain fragments of original stained glass. Hop Back Summer Lightning, Sambrook's Junction, Windsor & Eton Knight of the Garter and one changing cask ale are normally served here.

Bus 281 again, or simple old-fashioned shoe leather, took us to our final venue, the **Builders Arms** (TW11 9AS). Yet another locally listed building, it rates two stars on CAMRA's National Inventory. The pub still has two separate rooms linked by a relatively modern arched cut-through. Almost certainly built in Edwardian times, it offers a marked contrast with earlier, Victorian ornateness. The exterior is distinguished with brown glazed brick, a band of blue-grey mottled faïence and some attractive designs in the window frames. The upper parts of the windows throughout the pub, as well as the doors, have some delightfully detailed glazing with green leaves and other motifs. Both rooms also have beamed ceilings, which were popular at the time to evoke a sense of older, timber-built buildings. The counter and the bar-back in the main bar (originally the saloon bar) on the right look as though they might be inter-war replacements, although the counter top is modern. A prominent Tudor-style arch spans the width of the room.

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A tour of Twickenham and Teddington



The bar at the Builders Arms

Charming features not to be missed are the Art Nouveau-style spear-like recesses carved in the wall panelling, which may well be unique in pub ornamentation. Surrey Hills Shere Drop, Twickenham Naked Ladies and Windsor & Eton Windsor Knot are normally served here.

All of the pubs visited, with the exception of the Sussex Arms, are in CAMRA's 2026 Good Beer Guide.

Jane Jephcote and Kim Rennie



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The Roberts Ramble 2025

Pete Roberts was a member of CAMRA's East London & City branch whose passions were real ale and rambling, which he would often combine. After his death ELAC branch instigated a ramble in his honour to be held each summer. Previous rambles have included Windsor, Hampstead, Ware and Epping Forest. The crucial criterion for each ramble is a selection of interesting pubs along the way. This year we visited the medieval city of Winchester in Hampshire. Our chosen date, Saturday 6 September, was a lovely hot day with plenty of sunshine. We had a good turn out with members from ELAC, Enfield & Barnet, North London and Southern Hampshire branches in attendance.

Our first pub was the **Albion** (SO23 7BZ), just a two-minute walk from the railway station. This is the latest addition to the Hop Back Brewery's estate and was serving five of their ales. Latecomers were able to join us there. We then walked down to Winchester High Street, past the front of Winchester Cathedral and through Inner Close with its lovely old buildings to the **Wykeham Arms** (SO23 9PE). This Grade II-listed Fuller's pub had a large selection of its real ales available. We then walked past the buildings of Winchester College to the **Queen Inn** (SO23 9PG). This pub has its own microbrewery and served a large selection of its own and guest beers.

We then did some exploring, walking out to the medieval buildings of St Cross Hospital which these days function as almshouses. The photo shows the party outside St Cross. Note the Pig's Ear t-shirts! From there we returned to town through the water meadows and alongside a chalk stream of the River Itchen, stopping at the Grade II-listed **Black Boy** (SO23 9NQ). This pub had four real ales available. On the walk back to the railway station we visited one last pub, the **Hyde Tavern** (SO23 7DY), which had four real ales available and is also Grade II listed.



We always raise a glass to Pete Roberts at some point in the afternoon. This year we also raised a glass to Peter Needle who was key in instigating the Roberts Rambles. Sadly, Peter passed away earlier this year. A tribute to him appeared in the October/November edition of this magazine.

All of the pubs visited are in the 2026 edition of the *Good Beer Guide*, except the Black Boy which was in the 2025 edition.

The day went really well with positive feedback from everybody. In summary, great pubs, good beer, lovely walk and good company! Our thoughts now turn to the venue for next year's event. All members are, of course, always welcome to join us.

Andy Kinch

Bots, brewing and beer

Worldwide spending on artificial intelligence (AI) reached US \$4 trillion last year, a sum that is set to double this year. This money has caused stock markets almost everywhere to soar, especially in the US, where the market capitalisation of the big six tech firms now accounts for around a third of the total. Many investors are likely to lose their shirts, but AI's effect on all aspects of life and commerce is certain to grow.

Beer brands are increasingly looking to artificial intelligence to improve their recipes. In 2023, Beck's of Bremen, Germany marked their 150th birthday by using an AI chatbot to produce Beck's Autonomus, a lager with a subtle sweetness, a hoppy texture and a robust head. Many tasters considered it superior to their standard lager - admittedly not a hard task!

The Atwater Brewery in the USA introduced an AI-designed IPA, also in 2023, and, last year, the St Austell brewery in Cornwall produced another AI IPA called Hand Brewed by Robots. The response from customers was, according to the brewers, very positive. The boss of Atwater explained that AI can analyse complex flavours and then match them to the ingredients and the brewery's equipment. The AI bot then comes up with new recipes by tweaking the

sweetness, acidity and hopping to produce beers that customers like.

In 2021, the Species X Beer Project in the USA asked an AI bot to make a new lager. It suggested mixing Maris Otter malt, known in the UK as an ale and stout malt, with Belgian candi syrup. Despite their doubts, they brewed it anyway and customers judged it to be the best lager they had ever brewed.

And in 2024 scientists at Leuven University in Belgium (the home of AB InBev) analysed the chemical make-up of 250 Belgian beers. Then they trained machine-learning algorithms to model the effects on taste by adding or subtracting different aroma components, such as glycerol and lactic acid. I have no record of any results and remain unaware of any recent improvement in Stella Artois.

Still, and thankfully, a chatbot will never replace a human brewer because ingredients must be poured, brew kettles must be tended and beers must be tasted. While AI is likely increasingly to become part of the brewing process, the 'craft' of physically brewing beer will remain human.

The inspiration for this item came from an article entitled *Brewers Bot* in the *Economist* magazine (30 August, 2025).

Peter J Sutcliffe

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Ealing Beer Festival



We also competed in national and international competitions with our packaged products.

Our entries in the **British Bottlers' Institute Competition 2025** saw us take Gold Awards for Christmas Ale, Lewes Castle Brown Ale, Southdown Harvest Ale and Star of Eastbourne East India Ale.

At the **World Beer Awards 2025**, we achieved Gold UK Winner Awards for Christmas Ale, Old Ale and Prince of Denmark Stout.

While, at the **International Beer Challenge 2025**, we were given Gold Awards for Georgian Dragon Ruby Ale, Old Ale and Prince of Denmark Stout. Gold Medallists then go head to head in each category and these heats saw successes for

Old Ale (Trophy for Best Ale up to 5%) Prince of Denmark (Best Stout or Porter Trophy)

The seven trophy finalists then compete in the final.

The judges named **Harvey's Old Ale 'Supreme Champion'**

We were also awarded the accolade
UK Brewer of the Year 2025

"Winning the 'Supreme Champion' Trophy, in competition with a wealth of beer styles and brewing nations, is an accolade we had not expected. Our Sussex beers are brewed in the County Town using authentic methods of production that have stood the test of time. Combining our spring water and yeast strain with locally sourced hops and barley remains fundamental to our brewing process, as does the skill and dedication of our staff. Every member of the team has contributed to this success and I am immensely proud of them."

Miles Jenner, Head Brewer & Joint Managing Director



HARVEY'S BREWERY



New lease of life for the Lances

We reported in the last issue that the Cross Lances in Hounslow was closed for refurbishment following its takeover by new management. I am happy to report that it has now reopened, with attractively priced real ales still very much on the menu. Owned and operated by Fuller's for many years, it was taken over by the independent Real Pub Co Ltd in 2012 and is now being run by the management of the Pasa restaurant nearby. Their sensitive refurbishment has freshened up the interior while preserving its traditional features. As before, two to four well-kept real ales are on offer at prices between £4 and £5 a pint. Beers have initially been largely from the Fuller's and Dark Star range but enthusiastic young manager Wilson Maharjan is keen to feature other beers too, including Young's Winter Warmer and other seasonal brews. He has already put on Twickenham Autumn Red. A wide range of tasty Indo-Chinese, Nepali and Newari food is also available daily (afternoons and evenings). Currently this is brought in to order from the Pasa restaurant and served takeaway style but the management are planning to establish an on-site kitchen in the pub itself.



The refurbished back bar with pool table and stage area beyond

This welcome rebirth follows a turbulent six months for the Lances, which is pretty much the last surviving small traditional community local in town. Most of the others have been closed down, altered out of all recognition or demolished. It narrowly escaped closure at the end of May, followed by several months of uncertainty and temporary closures. Regulars feared the worst, especially as the pub had been under threat before, when developers tried to acquire it in 2020. They were thwarted by a spirited local

campaign that resulted in the pub being listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). That is exactly what it is. As well as providing a place where people can meet socially and relax in a traditional pub atmosphere or just sit and read the paper over a pint, it has supported a wide range of community activities down the years and has raised funds for numerous charities and good causes. It also provides a venue for local bands and performers (Saturday is rock night, occasionally Friday) and pool and darts are also available. In particular it hosts a welcoming and inclusive fortnightly Open Mic Night on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, MC'd by Elaine Samuels of local band Kindred Spirit and featuring a wide variety of music and performers (including Wilson himself). There's also a rear garden, which has had a welcome revamp, and a customer car park (pay for a permit at the bar).



The Cross Lances is also of considerable historical interest. Built in 1838 and named after the insignia of the 12th Royal Prince of Wales Lancers who were then based nearby, the interior has remained almost entirely unspoilt and unaltered for decades, with three distinct areas (including an alcove 'snug'), wood-panelled walls and an unusual curved etched-glass front window. Happily, all these features were retained in the refurbishment.

So, the Cross Lances has been saved once again and will hopefully go from strength to strength once word gets round. 'Use it or lose it', as they say, and Hounslow has lost far too many pubs already. Local CAMRA members are spreading the word about the pub and encouraging people to support it to help ensure it survives.

The Cross Lances is easy to get to. The full address is 236 Hanworth Road, TW3 3TU (corner of Cross Lances Road), a short walk from Hounslow National Rail station and a short bus ride from the town centre and tube stations. Buses 110 and 111 stop nearby and the 281 stops a few minutes' walk away. The opening hours are 2pm to 11pm Mondays to Thursdays, 2pm to 11.30 on Friday, 12pm to 11.30 on Saturday and 12pm to 10pm on Sunday. Christmas and New Year times may vary (check with pub for details). You can keep up with news, events, upcoming bands, new beers etc via the pub's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/974833069225067>.

My thanks to Elaine Samuels for background and historical information and to Giulietta Cinque for the photo.

Graham Larkbey



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The Sultan

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LONDON BREWERS' ALLIANCE FESTIVAL

The LBA's latest festival was held at the Bird House Brewery in Herne Hill (SE24 9AJ) over four days in September. As the event guide pointed out, it's a very special year for the LBA as they celebrate their 15th anniversary. Over 80 beers covering a very broad range of styles were available from 32 member breweries, including eight cask beers. There were three from Windsor & Eton (Guardsman, Knight of the Garter, Canberra Autumn Ale), two from Fuller's (Vintage Ale, Red Fox) and one each from Sambrook's (Powerhouse), Wimbledon (Keller Helles) and Bird House (Amber). I visited on the Thursday and the cask beers that I tried were in great form. The festival was very well laid out with plenty of tables and seating, with room to move between the bars. There was also a good selection of food. The event was very well attended, including a good number of younger drinkers. The brewery tap, originally the home of Canopy Brewery, is worth a visit. The full address is Arch 1127, Bath Factory Estate, 41 Norwood Road and it is very close to Herne Hill station. Turn left as you exit. For opening times and other details see <https://birdhousebrewing.com>.

Martin Butler

BROCKLEY BREWERY - RAISING THE BAR

Like many small independent breweries, Brockley has developed into a cornerstone of its community through forging strong links with nearby businesses and schools, supporting local campaigns and collaborating with cultural events. In November, to further embrace their ethos of being a community-led enterprise, the brewery launched a crowdfunding campaign called 'Raise the Bar'. All proceeds will be used to establish a brand new taproom that will include a dedicated area for local artists, musicians and young creatives. Brockley's co-owner, Carl Lawrence, says, "This isn't just about raising money, it's about growing together. For more than ten years we've seen how powerful this community is and this campaign is our way of giving everyone the chance to shape what comes next." The campaign runs until Christmas. If you are interested, visit <https://crowdfunder.co.uk/p/brockleyraisethebar>. Contributors are being offered a number of different rewards, ranging from various bar tabs through to (I've been informed) ten years of unlimited Brockley beers from the taproom.

Colin Hillier

(CAMRA Liaison Officer for Brockley Brewery)

GIPSY HILL ON THE MOVE

Gipsy Hill, which is now part of the Sunrise Alliance Beverages group, is to move the majority of its brewing to another Sunrise site, the Curious Brewery in Ashford, Kent. They had wanted to stay at their current site in Hamilton Road (SE27 9SF) but there are rent increases on the horizon which, even though they have been trading well, make this impossible. Production will transfer once the new versions of the beers have been matched to the originals. The rent increases primarily affect the storage and warehousing areas. The adjacent tap room will remain and be expanded. Some beers may still be brewed at Hamilton Road.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S COLLABORATION BREW DAY

The theme for the 2026 competition has been announced. It will be Unite Belonging. This is intended to be a global call to create a kinder, more inclusive world through the power of our beer communities. In this spirit, the brew days will celebrate the power of belonging, because no one should feel like an outsider in beer, in our communities or in the world. For the first time, posters are being produced for the event, run in partnership with the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) and

Women On Tap CIC. Printed copies will be sold to raise funds for the campaign and it is hoped to make the posters an annual collectors' item. Applications opened on 31 October. For more details go to the Women On Tap CIC website and social media.

PORTOBELLO GO FOR TANKS

News of another Sunrise Alliance group member. Portobello Brewery has agreed a partnership with the Big Easy restaurant chain to sell Portobello London Pilsner (4.6% ABV) in Big Easy's five sites in London. Tanks holding 880 pints are being installed in the restaurants and the beer will be delivered fresh from the brewery.

SIGNATURE COLLABORATION

There are, as usual, quite a lot of green hop beers around at the moment. One of the more interesting ones is a collaboration between Signature Brew of Walthamstow and Cornwall's St Austell Brewery. Signature were invited to go west by St Austell's brewing director Georgina Young and the outcome was a 3.4% ABV green hop pale ale called Never Mind The Dry Hops. The beer featured at Signature Brew's Harvestfest event on the Blackhorse Beer Mile and is also available at certain St Austell pubs.

SPANISH EAGLE

Readers will recall that the Eagle Brewery in Bedford, once home to the Young's & Wells Brewery Company, was bought, along with its brands, by what was then the Carlsberg Marstons Brewing Company. It was subsequently sold to Spain's largest brewers, family-owned SA Damm. This is their first venture away from home. Damm are looking to turn the site into the largest independent brewery in the UK. The plant has been modernised, doubling the packaging capacity and installing equipment for making soft drinks. A number of new jobs have been created. They have not ruled out brewing cask beer. Now that Carlsberg Britvic, as they are now, have closed the former Banks's brewery in Wolverhampton, those cask beers that remain from the Eagle portfolio are being brewed at the former Marstons brewery in Burton-on-Trent.

WIMBLEDON BREWERY

The brewery held their autumn beer festival at the brewery tap over three days in September. It was billed as the 'Beer Festival of Champions' and formed part of the brewery's tenth anniversary celebrations. It featured twenty cask beers in a good variety of styles plus 24 keg beers, likewise. Included were beers from Rodenbach and Cantillon, a selection of speciality and rare European bottled beers and three ciders from Against the Grain. The festival was well attended with most beer sold.

During the event, the brewery were kind enough to host the London & South East round of CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain for the 'speciality beers - differently produced' category. Six beers selected by a combination of CAMRA members' votes and county tasting panel scores were subjected to a blind tasting by a panel selected from both the trade and trained CAMRA volunteers. The results were as follows:

- Gold: London Brewery Co; Beer Street
- Silver: Langham; Saison
- Bronze: Portobello; Market Porter

The gold winner will go forward to the next round where it will be judged against the category winners from the other regional rounds. The winner from that goes into the final round of the overall Champion Beer of Britain competition.

Martin Butler

(CAMRA Liaison Officer for Wimbledon Brewery)



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What is better than the beer that's made of malt?

This is a proverb that dates from at least the 17th century but, when extolling the ingredients in beer, with many beer drinkers, malt usually plays second fiddle to hops. However, this wonderful ingredient impacts on a beer in lots of ways. As well as giving beer flavour, malt is responsible for most of the colour of a beer, its mouthfeel and alcohol content.

Barley, from which malt is made, is among the world's most frequently grown grain, with maize taking top slot and of which 40% is grown in the USA. In the UK, around 35% of the barley grown is used for malt; the remainder going for animal feed. A trip to one of the heartlands of malt production, East Anglia, showed some of the art and science behind producing malt as well as the many challenges.



Simpsons, who hosted the visit, has a long history as a maltster. Set up by James Simpson in 1862, by World War 1 they had 17 floor maltings; today there are just two: Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland) and Tivetshall in Norfolk. This reflects the decline in the beer market but also improving efficiencies. Berwick is now the largest barley maltings in the UK with Norfolk concentrating on specialist malts (e.g. coloured malts, crystal and caramalts) and grains such as oats and rye.

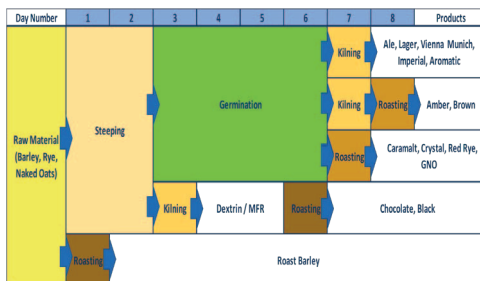


When it comes to malt production, sustainability is inevitably on the agenda, although Simpsons declare that the malt whisky market is ahead of the beer market. Consistency, and knowing the provenance of the grain, has also been a key strategy for Simpsons, with the maltsters forming long term partnerships with selected growers. Meeting one such farmer showed that success is far from easy to achieve. Richard, who runs a family farm, started by explaining how the variability of the weather is a major issue. "It's been the driest spring for over a century but we were saved by rain in late May/June", he said, adding, "We can't just build a (water) reservoir. Natural England won't allow it". He then went on to describe the two barley crops. "Drilling of the winter barley starts in September/October. Flagon is one variety used; it's been around for about 20 years and is good for making crystal malt." Spring barley is drilled around February and has a shorter growing season, allowing time for another crop. One such spring barley is the famous Maris Otter, much beloved by many brewers. It's been in existence for 60 years and Rob, Simpson's grain buyer, explained that when it is grown there is a royalty to pay.

Richard tends to plant Laureate, which is used for both beer and distilling.

Besides the weather, changes in farming subsidies have created a bit of a roller coaster. Richard was getting around £90k for farming in an environmentally friendly fashion, which then just stopped. Rob followed on from Richard to explain how such partnerships with growers are developing. One such initiative is taking place in the north where ergonomists are working to measure the carbon in the soil to see how different interventions by farmers affect the carbon level.

On arrival at the maltings, each delivery of grain is analysed and the quality checked to ensure it matches what the grain buyer has agreed with the farmer. They check for the nitrogen and water content and, if the water content is above 14%, the grain is dried before it is stored. The grains are also assessed for their enzyme and protein levels and a sample kept to check for any infestation. With the exception of roasted barley, the grain is initially steeped in water for around two days but this depends on the type of malt to be produced (see diagram). Once the grain reaches 42% to 45% moisture, germination is then allowed to occur, except for chocolate and black malts. Grains destined to be made into chocolate and black malts are roasted after steeping. This is done using a roasting drum, which can take anything up to five hours and at up to 200 degrees. The colour is checked by eye of the operator.



Enzymes convert the longer starch chains in the grain into shorter sugar chains (mainly maltose) so that it can be easily consumed by the yeast. To do this, the grains are allowed to germinate after steeping. This is known as malt modification. Ale malt takes longer to germinate than a lager malt and the latter is less modified. At Tivetshall, a three-foot deep bed of grain is created and air is blown through at 22 degrees, with the grain being turned a couple of times a day to help separate the rootlets that form on germination. These days, this is no longer done manually, something that used to cause the industrial injury 'monkey shoulder'.

What then happens to the germinated grain depends on the end product. Caramalt, crystal and red rye are just roasted. Ale, lager, Vienna, imperial, aromatic, malted wheat and malted oats are 'kilned'. Here the grain is heated for up to a day, with the last four hours at what is called the 'curing temperature', which varies from 82 degrees to 90 degrees according to the type of malt being produced. The malt is then bagged with around 70% left whole and 30% crushed. It is then up to the brewer to weave their magic and use this wonderful malt to make wonderful beer! For more information, go to www.simpsonsmalt.co.uk.

Christine Cryne

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A trip to the seaside

The Beer of the Festival at Dulwich this year, as voted for by the customers, was Leigh-on-Sea Brewery's fantastic SS9 Imperial Stout. At a hefty 9% ABV, it's packed with notes of coffee and chocolate. This great beer takes its name from the post code for Leigh-on-Sea.

In September, members and friends from CAMRA's South East London branch thought they would pop down to the brewery to deliver the award in person. This involved a train to Rayleigh, then a bus and a short walk; not a bad run out on a Saturday morning. Sadly, the winning brew was not available on the occasion of our visit but I did well, sampling on cask a very nice sessionable 3.4% ABV Bawley Pale bitter followed by Mayflower Best Bitter (4% ABV) and then their Castle Black nitro stout on keg (3.9% ABV). All were ably served by bar managers Sandra and Derek Willbourne. Other beers were also available! The brewery was founded in 2017 by Ian Rydings and Mark Springham, and they've produced a number of SIBA award-winning brews.

In Rayleigh, on the way back to the station, we also visited the rather nice Crafty Casks Taproom (SS6 7JD). There were more awesome beers to be sampled here, too. Worth a visit if you're in the area.



Essex has quite a few local breweries; check out Essex Breweries, Essex Real Ale and the CAMRA Branch websites. Two well-established names with taprooms are Wibblers (whose award winning Dengie IPA and Dengie Gold beers are particular favourites of mine) and Crouch Vale. Their Amarillo is another of my go-to beers and, given that it won CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain in 2024, clearly a few other folks think it is good too.

With thanks to Brian Fretwell for the photo.

Maria Freeman

Trade news

Young's brewing again!

To celebrate their 194th anniversary, Young's decided to bring back Waggledance, the 4% ABV honey flavoured beer that they acquired from Vaux some years ago. The significant point here is that it was brewed in-house at the King Street Brew House in Bristol. This site was included in the deal when Young's acquired the City Pub Company. Young's have allowed the very popular brewpub, which opened in 2016, to continue trading as before. The beer, which used honey from the White Bear in Kennington, was available for a limited period in cask at selected pubs, including the Spread Eagle in Wandsworth and the White Bear itself.

Meanwhile Winter Warmer has made its welcome annual return. It had previously been brewed at the former Banks's Brewery in Wolverhampton but, following Carlsberg Britvic's recent closure of that site, it is presumably now brewed at the former Marston's brewery in Burton-on-Trent.

Young's reported that, for the 52 weeks ended 31 March 2025, like-for-like revenue grew by 5.7%. Over the last Christmas period, the Guinea Grill in Mayfair took over £300,000 in one week.

Fuller's news

On 12 November, Fuller's reported that, in the six months ended 27 September, sales in their managed pubs and hotels sector increased by 4.6%. The total revenue received was £207.5 million, up by 7%. This included £17.2 million received from the sale of the Mad Hatter at Blackfriars. The company reports that it is now in a position to 'take advantage of opportunities to grow the business through acquisition, when the right acquisition targets arise'. Revenue in tenanted pubs increased by 2%. Christmas bookings are already 16% ahead of last year. The company continues to buy back its own shares, with 1.2 million 'A' shares repurchased during the period.

Trafalgar Day (21 October), the 220th anniversary, was celebrated in style at Fuller's flagship, the Admiralty on Trafalgar Square. This has now become an annual event, with a four-course meal, speeches and toasts. Entertainment was supplied by the Kings Pond Shantymen along with the drums and bugles of the Royal Marines Association. There was a raffle that raised £1,400 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC). Sambrook's Brewery collaborated with the pub team to produce a special beer for the event called Immortal Toast. It was intended that the beer would remain on sale for a few weeks, so there might just be some left. A special feature was a competition for Fuller's apprentice pub chefs to produce chocolate replicas of HMS Victory (not life size!). The winner was Nelly Bennett of the Swan in Staines. Congratulations to her.

Wetherspoons news

JDW's policy of 'churning' pubs continues. The latest closure is the Baxter's Court in Mare Street (E8 1HE). It is expected, as with most of JDW's disposals, that it will reopen as a pub under new ownership. Over in Croydon, JDW have acquired a historic former Beefeater, the Coombe Lodge. See the Pub News column for further information.

The first of fifteen planned Wetherspoons franchises has opened but none are in London and so it isn't known how they differ, if at all, from the original concept.

There are 278 Wetherspoon pubs included in the *Good Beer Guide 2026*.

Greene King invests in London

GK report that, in the course of 2025 to date, they have invested over £6 million in fourteen of their London pubs. They spent £1 million on the Railway at Liverpool Street and saw an increase in trade of 113% as a result. Something similar happened at the City of Quebec in Marylebone, regarded as London's oldest LGBTQIA+ venue. GK are planning to

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refurbish a further five pubs before Christmas, starting with the Two Brewers in Covent Garden, which should already have reopened by the time you read this. GK have 166 pubs in Greater London out of an estate of 1,600.

Greene King's chief executive, Nick Mackenzie, made some interesting comments to the Propel newsletter recently. He believes that the main competition for pubs now comes from cafes and food delivery 'apps' such as Deliveroo providing take-aways and that there are now other businesses fighting for consumers' money as a growing share of the population is not drinking alcohol.

Morgans expand

The Morgan Pub Collective has acquired the Jolly Fine Pub Group. This has added the Victoria in East Sheen (SW14 7RT) and the Fox & Grapes on Wimbledon Common (SW19 4UN) to their estate.

Following the Lady

Following the great success of their venture, the Devonshire, in Soho, the three partners are opening a second venue, this time in Covent Garden. The site in question is the former offices of The Lady magazine, which retired to the country in 2019. The large six-storey Georgian building in Bedford Street is, somewhat surprisingly, not listed. Westminster City Council approved the premises licence application in October. There will be a pub on the ground floor with various restaurants on the upper floors, very much in the style of the Devonshire. The new venture, possibly called the Lady, is not expected to open until early 2027.

Readers may recall that, in 2023, JD Wetherspoons acquired a former TGI Friday site further along Bedford Street. Their application was refused.

Laines outsources their brewing

Brighton based Laines, a subsidiary of the Punch Pub Company, has ceased brewing in order to concentrate on its pubs. Instead, it has concluded an arrangement with the Keystone Brewing Group under which Keystone will produce and distribute Laine's beers. Keystone's portfolio includes the Black Sheep and Purity breweries. Laine run a number of former Young's tenanted pubs on behalf of Punch following

their purchase of the Ram Pub Company.

More Stonegate pubs for sale

Following the package that they put on the market in March, Stonegate, the UK's largest pub company, is offering a further 23 pubs for sale, either individually or in small lots. These are all free-of-tie pubs let on long leases, so this is an investment and the new owners will not have immediate access to the pubs for their own use. It is expected that the sale will bring in around £22 million. The pubs are spread out across the country, with five of them in London.

Ringwood Brewery site sold

A curiosity worth reporting, I thought. As seemed inevitable, Carlsberg Britvic have sold the site of the former Ringwood Brewery in the New Forest, closed at the beginning of last year, to a housing developer. It has not however been sold for redevelopment. The buyers intend converting the site into offices for themselves. There will also be some spare space available to let to another company, so that at least they will be bringing some jobs to the town. I expect that the sale price was somewhat more than the £19.2 million that CB paid for the business in 2007.

London, Capital of Brewing

Sadly, the number of independent breweries in Greater London has now fallen below 100. They are listed on CAMRA's Greater London Region website: www.london.camra.org.uk.

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Still here after sixteen years

Evin O’Riordan is a softly spoken enigma. He was born in New York State and grew up in Ireland. He studied Russian and history at degree level before moving to London to take a Masters’ degree in literature and philosophy at Goldsmiths College. He then went to work for Neal’s Dairy, which is where the story of Kernel really began. He was tasked to go to America to set up a shop there and was so taken by the beer scene that he decided that he wanted to set up his own brewery. So, in 2009, he took the plunge and leased a railway arch in Bermondsey.

Evin started with a four-barrel brew length kit and concentrated on bottles, using a small bottle filler and labelling by hand. He was aided by two friends, Rob and Chun, who still works for the brewery. When asked why it was just bottles, Evin said, “I didn’t know any better. I was a home brewer, so had a good idea about bottling. Having worked for Neal’s Dairy, I understood the retail market of shops rather than pubs and the margins were slightly better. It also helped get the brewery known, as people shared bottles and that helped word of mouth.”

After three years, Evin decided to expand, moving to a new railway arch and installing a 20-barrel kit. But the move came with a condition: the leaseholders only allowed Kernel to have a tap room alongside the brewery if they agreed to move the tap room to new premises nearby once that building was ready. “That took 13 years,” Evin said with a wry smile. “It wasn’t until January 2024 that we moved in and it took us some time to make it habitable; we opened in August that year.”

The new tap room is modern and clean; not your usual tap room but welcoming all the same. Evin explained, “The tap room provides a useful showcase for our beers. Although the brewery and the old tap room are only around the corner, most people didn’t know we were there. As part of our licence, we had to have a kitchen and Yagi Zakaya runs that side of the business. That has helped us attract a mixed audience.” The opening wasn’t without obstacles, however, because local residents were concerned that the tap room would be an extension of the ‘Bermondsey Mile’. “We had to reassure them that wouldn’t be the case. Shutting at 10pm each night also helped,” Evin said.

the bottling line about nine years ago and at that time there were fewer options and there wasn’t a canning line of the same quality as a bottling line for a brewery of our size. We have looked at it from a carbon footprint point of view and there isn’t much difference. We have no way of knowing if the aluminium comes from the Far East or Poland. Also, the problem with cans is that it is hard to pour to allow for the sediment; all of our beers are bottled conditioned.”

Kernel’s beers are forever changing. The demand might be for a pale ale but the brewer will decide on what hops to use; they see no need for each beer to taste the same as the last batch, as with many breweries. This allows the brewer the freedom to experiment and constantly improve the recipes.

There are 18 staff, of whom eight work in the brewery. Evin explained, “Everyone who works in packaging will also brew from time to time. This allows us to cover for sickness and holidays and it keeps them interested. I still brew occasionally, about every two weeks. I have just brewed our annual collaboration with Redemption, Victorian Mild. We also do the odd collab with Burning Sky.”

Evin said he has no plans to grow further. “With this number of staff, I know everyone personally and they are given the authority to make decisions and to take pride in the quality. We aim for a good environment to work in, showing respect to everyone. This helps create a culture where everyone cares; holding true to what we believe in.”

When asked what makes Kernel different from other breweries, Evin replied, “We are still here after sixteen years. The market hasn’t really still recovered post Covid and both pubs and drinkers are finding it difficult but we didn’t set up Kernel to sell up, like some other breweries.”

So, it is likely that Kernel will be around for a while yet. With the brewery recently winning a Silver award in the CAMRA London & South East Champion Bottled Beer of Britain competition for their Table Beer and Bronze in the National Champion Bottled Beer of Britain with their Imperial Brown Stout, it’s clear that Evin’s commitment to quality beer continues to pay dividends.

The London Tasting Panel notes from the visit can be found on CAMRA’s Regional website: www.london.camra.org.uk. If you are interested in joining the panel, details of the next training course can be found at <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/435/taste-training>.

Christine Cryne



Evin and colleague Alep with their awards

The tap room accounts for 8% of Kernel’s sales; the rest is through pubs. Keg has played a bigger part, particularly since they moved into the new tap room, but there are always two cask beers available. Bottles account for 35% of their total sales. When asked about bottles versus cans, Evin explained that there were a number of reasons why they continue to use bottles. “We bought

A promotional graphic for CAMRA. It features a dark blue background with a circular inset showing a glass of dark beer with a white head of foam next to a yellow gift box with a red ribbon. The text reads: "Pubs, pints, people." at the top. Below that, in large white letters: "For lovers of great beer and pubs". At the bottom left, a white box contains the text "JOIN CAMRA". At the bottom right, a red circular badge says "BUY NOW for free festival entry all 2026". The CAMRA logo is in the bottom right corner.

Is your local pub under threat?

CAMRA has the tools
to help you save it



Photo credit: Stop Press Media/Alamy Stock Photo

camra.org.uk/saveyourlocal



Beer lovers in the USA have much reason to be grateful for the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) because it gave rise to the Great American Beer Festival (GABF), America's premier beer event, which is held annually in Denver, Colorado. It is organised by the Brewers Association (BA), the not-for-profit trade group representing small and independent American craft brewers.

The latest GABF drew tens of thousands of attendees and, once again, showcased the breadth and creativity of today's beverage scene. While beer remained the undisputed star of the show, the presence of spirits, cider, hard kombucha, hard seltzers, hard tea, ready-to-drink cocktails, gluten-free and low/no-alcohol options proved that they all have a place in today's contemporary drinking culture.

More than a tasting event, GABF has become a multi-sensory celebration. Breweries were grouped into themed zones such as Prost! (a tribute to German *biertagens*), Score! (a sports-themed hub), Fright! (Halloween-inspired) and Blast Off! (showcasing 'beyond beer' beverages). There were also a Meet the Brewer section, Chill (a backyard-style space with live music and lawn games) and the new Mile High Stage for live music and entertainment. Running alongside the main festival, PAIRED united Michelin-starred chefs and world-class brewers, offering guests exquisite beer-and-food combinations that pushed the limits of pairing creativity. With 500 breweries, cideries, and distilleries pouring more than 2,000 beverages, GABF once again delivered something for every palate.



The GABF

The latest trends that readers might like to hear about are as follows:

The haze craze lives on: even after a decade in the spotlight, juicy/hazy IPAs continue to dominate the US craft beer landscape. First recognised as an official style by the Brewers Association in 2018, it remains the most competitive category at both GABF and the World Beer Cup. The wide range of 'hazies' at the festival proved the style's staying power, with brewers refining mouthfeel, developing aroma and flavour and layering complexity while maintaining that subdued bitterness that appeals to both newcomers and IPA loyalists. A flagship example is Sierra Nevada's Hazy Little Thing, which was launched in 2018 and is now the best-selling hazy IPA in America and widely available around the world.

Lager than life: long hailed as 'the next big thing', lager had its moment at GABF. Brewers showcased an eclectic array of lager brewing excellence from Firestone Walker's Pivo Pils to Deschutes' Fresh Hop King Crispy, plus dry-hopped, smoked, fruit-infused, and salt-lime variations. Classic European styles, from Japanese rice and Italian pilsners to Oktoberfest Märzens,

Dunkels, and Schwarzbiers, reinforced lager's growing popularity.

Packaging innovation: Sierra Nevada Brewing Co has recently taken the bold move of launching their German style pilsner, PILS in 8.4oz (250ml) cans, designed to reflect European drinking culture and keep the beer 'fresh and cold from first to last sip'. Look out for it in export markets shortly. At the other end of the spectrum, the 19.2oz (568ml) 'stovepipe' can continues to gain popularity with US drinkers looking for value and convenience.

Beyond beer: for the first time in its 43-year history, GABF introduced a Distilling Experience, with 20 craft distilleries pouring whiskey, gin, vodka and botanical spirits. The move mirrors a growing trend; one in four US craft breweries now produces beverages other than beer.

Low and no alcohol: reflecting the rise of mindful drinking, low and no-alcohol beers were a strong presence on the festival floor. Standout producers included Athletic Brewing Co, Deschutes, Sierra Nevada, and Samuel Adams, all demonstrating that moderation and flavour can happily coexist.

The competition: this year's GABF competition evaluated 8,315 entries from 1,555 breweries and cideries, awarding 347 medals to 273 producers. Notable winners included Allagash Brewing Co, taking gold for Allagash Tripel and Allagash Lager, plus the prestigious Brewery Group of the Year award. Oskar Blues also struck gold with Dale's Pale Ale. The categories with the most entries were Juicy/Hazy IPA, West Coast IPA, Oktoberfest, German Pilsner and Hoppy Lager.

Evolving with the times: from its humble beginnings in 1982, when just 700 people gathered in Boulder, Colorado, the Great American Beer Festival remains a benchmark of brewing excellence. It's a celebration of creativity, innovation and community that continues to adapt to changing tastes while staying true to its craft beer roots. With new categories, diverse beverages, and a spirit of inclusivity, GABF proves that beer and beverages bring people together like nothing else.

Lotte Peplow

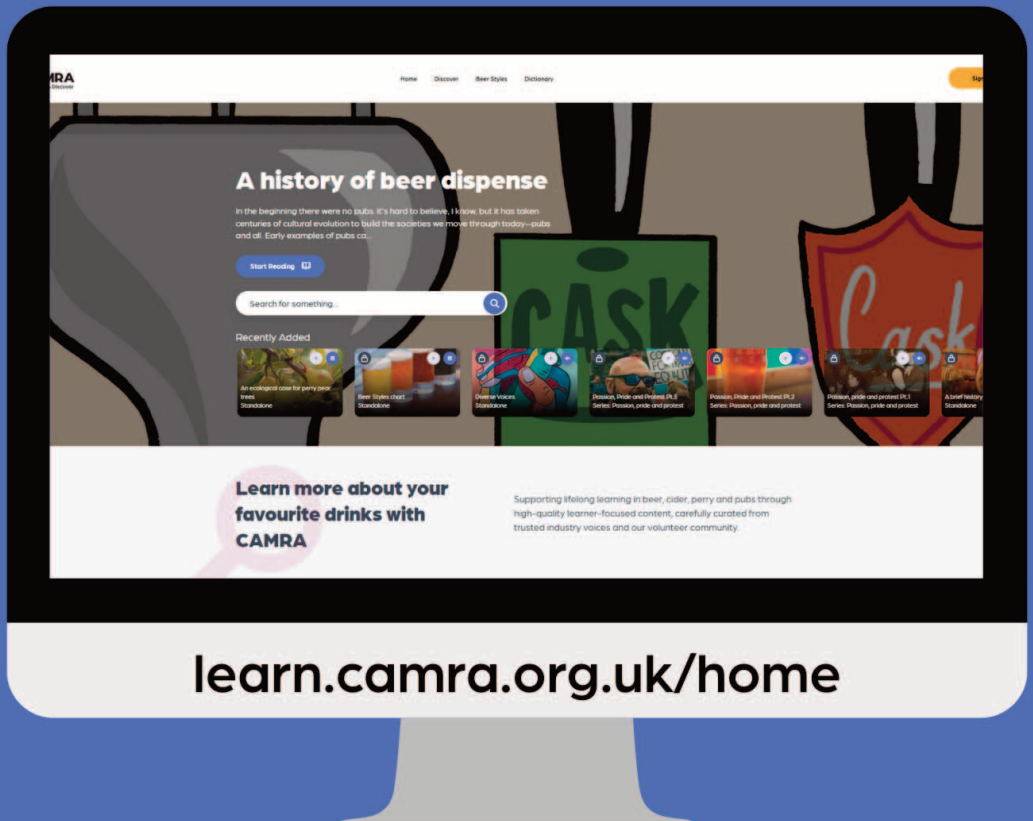
Lotte is the Brewers Association's American Craft Beer Ambassador for Europe. The BA represents over 5,600 independent craft brewers in the USA and its seal is a widely adopted symbol that differentiates beers by small and independent craft brewers. For more information, go to www.brewersassociation.org.

LEARN and DISCOVER

Don't forget to visit the **Learn and Discover** section of CAMRA's website

(<https://camra.org.uk/learn-discover/>) for all you need to know about beer, cider, perry and pubs. The basic information, about the brewing process and ingredients etc, is available to all but the more in depth material is only available to CAMRA members. There is also a useful dictionary of brewing terminology. CAMRA's podcast, 'Pubs, Pints, People.' is available at <https://shows.acast.com/pubspintspeople> or via Spotify or Apple Podcasts. You can also follow on 'X' (Twitter as was) @PubsPintsPeople.

Make the most of your membership
with our multi-award winning
#LearnandDiscover platform!



learn.camra.org.uk/home

Pub heritage and planning

CAMRA is running its Pub Design Awards competition again this year. The deadline was 17 November for projects that were completed between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. Details were issued only after the previous edition had been published. The categories, as before, are New Build, Community Local, Historic England Conservation, Conversion to Pub Use and Refurbishment.

Last year there was a London winner, with the Forester in West Ealing (W13 9EP) taking the Community Local Award. CAMRA's London Pubs Group has identified a number of projects that look to be likely candidates and has encouraged the owners to enter the competition. More details can be found at https://camra.org.uk/awards/pub-design?selected_year=2025.

Red Bull, Peckham (SE15 5ED). Having been used as a shop and then a restaurant in recent years, the Red Bull returned to being a pub last year. The interior has been modernised but it has retained some marvellous tiling, believed to date from 1875, which forms a mural depicting the trial of Catherine of Aragon, a scene from the Shakespeare play, *Henry VIII*. The trial took place in 1529 in Blackfriars and was part of Henry's campaign to annul his marriage. The tiling was the work of W B Simpson & Sons. Consequently, the pub has now been added to CAMRA's National Inventory, rated one star. The full address is 116 Peckham High Street. The pub does not however sell cask beer.

The return of Meantime

After slowly disappearing from the London beer scene, Meantime has made a comeback. The Meantime name has been around since 1999 when Alastair Hook set up the original brewery near the Charlton Athletic football ground. In 2010 they moved into a new state-of-the-art brewery, the largest to be built in London since Guinness's Park Royal site in the 1930s. This was situated about 20 minutes' walk from North Greenwich tube station and the O2 Centre.

Five years later, Meantime was sold to SABMiller for £120 million and, in 2016, they were acquired by Japanese brewers Asahi as part of the 'merger' of AB InBev and SABMiller. Subsequently, Asahi bought Fuller's Brewery in 2019 (for £250 million). Sadly, Asahi decided to consolidate their brewing and closed the Meantime Brewery in 2024, despite having spent a lot of money refurbishing it.

Most people thought that it was the end but it turns out that it wasn't! In October 2025, a new pub called the Dial opened under the Meantime brand and it includes a six hectolitre (3.7 barrel) brewery. Appropriately it is opposite North Greenwich station and the O2 Centre in Peninsula Square (SE10 0SQ).

bar with ten television screens and the kitchen. Each floor has a bar selling Meantime beer (all keg). Tucked around the back of the ground floor is the brewery, with a small bar directly opposite.



The brewery

Brewing is the responsibility of Luke McCulloch and Sven Hartmann, who work on Fuller's ten-barrel pilot brewery in Chiswick. Luke was brewing in New Zealand and came over to London in 2022 to join Meantime, moving to the pilot brewery when Meantime closed. He explained, "We are responsible for trying new and experimental brews for Fuller's, Dark Star and Meantime. We will probably be brewing at this new Meantime Brewery about once a week and we are open to bringing back some of the old Meantime beers that were popular."

The brewery was commissioned from Waverly Systems in Edinburgh. Care has been taken in its design; from the central beer tanks supplying all the bars, the ingredient stores (which are hidden behind doors) to the open, easily viewed brewery itself. This small brewery might be a long way from the 60-barrel brewery that Meantime once had but, to quote Luke, "It's good for Meantime to have a presence again in Greenwich."

For more information on the Dial, see <https://thedialdn.com/>
Christine Cryne



The 360° bar

The pub is huge; there are three floors with outside terrace seating on the ground floor and balcony seating on the top floor, with 360° spectacular views. The middle floor is a sports

The *WhatPub?* pub database is no longer supported as a separate system. However the data remains available for all to use, not just CAMRA members, as part of the main CAMRA website; just go to <https://camra.org.uk/pubs>. It continues to feature over 31,000 pubs that currently serve cask beer, plus records of pubs that do not sell cask beer or are closed.

All of the information used has been compiled by CAMRA members and no fee is charged, or sought, for inclusion. You will find opening times, descriptions, facilities, maps and, of course, details of the cask beer and cider on offer. You can search by specific pub name or general location.

This update is based on news items collated by CAMRA's branches in Greater London. We aim to report all openings and closures of pubs and clubs, those that add or remove cask beer; and changes of name, ownership or beer policy. Readers are encouraged to 'suggest an edit' using the website when they find incomplete or out-of-date information (but not customer reviews, please). Members can also 'spot a beer', allowing others to see what beers are currently available.

Available on the Greater London CAMRA website under Pub Updates, a longer version of this schedule includes changes to Cask Marque status, cider policy, LocAle, CAMRA discounts and pub operating model.

NEW & REOPENED PUBS & CLUBS – INCLUDING THOSE CONVERTED TO CASK BEER

INNER LONDON

EC1, ALCHEMIST (Living Ventures), 145 City Rd. Reopened as **OLE KYIV OLD STREET**, a Ukrainian bar & restaurant - keg and Ukrainian beer.

EC2, VAGABOND LIVERPOOL STREET, Unit G31, 1 Broadgate. Chain wine bar. Keg beer.

EC3, THREE LORDS (Punch), 27 Minorities. Reopened by London Brewing Co who run the Bohemia. Punch no longer involved. Two bars on two floors: cask beer only on the ground floor. Four handpumps as well as keg taps. Both bars have framed posters but look out for the glass to the right of the ground floor bar advertising Upright and Beer Street. There are portraits of four lords in the entrance stairwell and an explanation of the pub name on a board by the entrance door.

E2, FLORIST ARMS, 255 Globe Rd. Reopened by Barley Pop. Besides East London and Oakham beers, Celtic Marshes cider has been available.

E8, BAR 161, 161 Mare St. Reopened in October as **PAPER TIGER**, a 'Dim Sum cocktail bar' with keg and bottled beer.

E8, DRAUGHTS (Draughts London Ltd), 41 Kingsland High St. Now **BLACK EEL** from Exale Brewing, a bar/community space. The bar is in the old F Cooke's Eel, Pie & Mash Shop with larger spaces to the rear including a ballroom and a games area. The back garden has seating for 150 people, a petanque court and a boat. Two handpumps sell an Exale cask beer and a cider (Seacider); there are 12 keg lines.

E8, FOX (Wellington), 372 Kingsland Rd. Reopened in September after closure in 2018 for building refurbishment. Live music and keg beer but sadly this once great cask pub has no handpumps.

E8, HAGGERSTON (Acme Bars), 438 Kingsland Rd. Cask beer reinstated after 10 years. Initially Five Points Best priced @ £5 pint followed by DEYA Fresh. They hope to reuse the other two handpumps if sales allow.

E14, CRATE WOOD WHARF, 14 Water St. Based in a modern multi-storey office block and very modern - glass, steel, no ceilings, concrete floors, exposed services etc, with a hefty wooden bar that mimics the one at Hackney Wick. Keg taps (could be conventional or KeyKeg) dispense their core beer range plus guests from (e.g.) Yonder, Vault City and some collabs. The pizza menu is similar to Hackney Wick's.

E14, PRINCE REGENT, 81 Salmon La. Reopened but will close for six months in January for refurbishment.

E20, GRAVITY MAX, Units 1-7, Chestnut Plaza, Westfield Ave, Montfichet Rd. Arcade with a variety of games for which booking is required. Heineken sports bar and Gravity Social bar with keg beers and booths [bookable] for watching the sport. 10 keg beers and bottles. Snacks include hot dogs and nachos.

N7, CROWN (BAR & CAFE), 261 Holloway Rd. Reopened as **RED LION** in March after five-year closure. 10 keg beers include Camden Stout.

N17, ELMHURST HOTEL (Heineken), 131 Lordship La. Now just **ELMHURST**. Cask beer available: Otter Bitter and Purity Mad Goose.

NW2, ZOMBIE, 15 Cricklewood Broadway. Games cafe & bar, mainly for gaming enthusiasts, opened c. June 2023. Adorned with zombie-themed decor, selling craft coffees, five keg beers, cans and food. Food includes poke bowls, sandwiches or traditional English such as fish/chicken & chips.

NW6, GREEN ROOM, 82 Fortune Green Rd. Reopened as **SUNNY'S (PIZZA)** about 8 months ago, offering a weekly pub quiz and two keg beers.

SE1, BEERSHACK, 42 Newington Causeway. A craft beer bar located in the large Mercato Metropolitan food and drink complex. No cask beer but draught keg beer from Two Tribes and Prime Time.

SE1, EGG & KEG, 42 Newington Causeway. A bar and coffee shop located in the same complex. Draught keg beer plus wine and cocktails.

SE1, FOUR QUARTERS, Arch 33, 68 Union St. Arcade gaming bar in a railway arch a short walk from Borough High Street. A wide variety of gaming options includes over 25 vintage arcade machines. Craft beers available on draft and in bottle/can.

SE1, HAWKES CIDERY & TAPROOM (The Arch Company), 88 Druid St. Reopened as **FABAL BEERHALL**, a sister venue to the nearby Hiver Beers taproom, this bar opened in summer 2024 and focuses on British craft lagers.

SE1, SUN WHARF (Wetherspoons), 50 Tooley St. Wetherspoons house next to London Bridge station, opened in September in premises part of which had been the London Dungeon tourist attraction. A spacious venue with seating on several levels, a lot of brick walls and several seemingly original arches between areas. 12 handpumps in two banks each of six. However, the three regular cask beers, GK IPA and Abbot plus Doom Bar, are usually only joined by only three or four changing beers from Portobello and Southwark or on the national list. The other handpumps are either doubled up or show beers 'coming soon'.

SE2, BOULDER BAR, 13-15 Wagtail Wk. Opened by Rock Leopard Brewery initially as a pop-up in May and mainly a tap for their own beers. Hours have gradually expanded (currently Thu-Sun). Food is sourdough pizza and jollof rice bowls.

SE10, DIAL, Gateway Pavilion, Peninsula Sq. Contemporary Meantime brewpub opened in November, a stone's throw from the world famous O2 entertainment venue. In addition to the ground floor bar and microbrewery, there is a first-floor sports bar and second floor private events space with 360-degree views. Has a range of Meantime beers on tap.

SE10, SHIP, Pier Promenade, Cutty Sark Gdns. This Thames riverfront venue opened in a former restaurant in October and is a sister pub to the nearby Trafalgar Tavern. Next to Greenwich Pier, it is named after the former Ship Tavern that was in front of where the Cutty Sark tea-clipper now sits from 1855 until suffering major bomb damage during WWII. The spacious interior is divided into drinking and dining areas and is decked with nautical memorabilia. Breakfasts are served at weekends. On a first visit, one of six handpumps was selling Ship Ale, a rebadged Wantsum best bitter.

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SE15, PYROTECHNISTS ARMS (Stonegate), 39 Nunhead Gn. Reopened in July by Biggest Splash Ltd. No cask beer reported.

SE16, AGAINST THE GRAIN, 76 Enid St. Cidery and taproom serving their London craft cider, made from fruit not concentrate, both on draught and in cans. Business was previously based in SW London but relocated in May.

SE16, PACIFIC TAVERN, 100 Redriff Rd. Restaurant and bar opened in December 2023 on the site of the former Quebec Curve pub close to Surrey Quays station. No cask beer.

SE23, STUFFED WALRUS (Heineken), 52 Perry Rise. Reopened in September but currently not selling cask beer; two handpumps apparently 'might be used if there is demand'.

SE24, BIRD HOUSE BREWERY & TAP ROOM, Arch 1127, Bath Factory Estate, 41 Norwood Rd. One handpump has been installed and is selling their own amber 5% beer.

SW1, WHITE HORSE & BOWER (Shepherd Neame), 86 Horseferry Rd. Reopened after lengthy refurbishment. Four handpumps provide at least three ales from the Shepherd Neame range.

SW3, TRAFALGAR (Three Cheers), 224-226 Kings Rd. Stated to be the first new pub to open in Kings Road in over a century, on a corner directly opposite Chelsea Old Town Hall, it's the tenth pub from Three Cheers pubco. Via a £2.4m investment a grade II-listed former banking hall has been transformed into a two-floor pub sympathetically decorated in a heritage style. The ground floor with its very high ceilings and large Georgian windows is stunning. Dining areas are at the front and in a side room, with a drinking area at the back. Two cask beer handpumps initially serve Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter and Timothy Taylor Landlord. Downstairs is dedicated to live entertainment: music, cabaret and stand-up comedy; and private parties in keeping with King's Road's vibrant history. The Trafalgar name is a nod to a pub that stood a few yards east at 200 Kings Road, now demolished as part of the Gaumont development.

SW18, GRAPES (Punch), 39 Fairfield St. Reopened in September after brief closure.

W1, BOX, Unit B Ground & Basement, 21-23 Shaftesbury Ave. Arc Inspirations run sports bars in other English cities under their Box brand and this is their biggest and newest such venture, with an investment reported at £4m. At the base of a modern building very close to Piccadilly Circus, it's spread across 7,200 sq ft with a capacity of 550 people. The venue offers 33 screens for watching sports plus activities such as electronic shuffle, electronic darts, and karaoke. It also features Box's signature Bandoeke event, where guests can sing on stage with a live band. The drinks lineup includes draught craft beers; food veers towards burgers, pizzas, kebabs and sharers.

W1, CLAYS, 77 Brewer St. Imbiba-backed, indoor interactive clay shooting experience in a 1930s Art Deco building spanning around 19 thousand sq ft across three floors. Draught keg beers plus cocktails, wines etc.

W1, FLOWERHOUSE (Portman Estate), 56 Blandford St. Now the HART operated by Public House Group. A pub on the ground floor with an authentically pubby look serves British beers such as Portobello Pilsner, Allsopp's and DEYA. There are two cask beer handpumps. The first floor has an open kitchen, the second floor a restaurant; and the third floor is described as 'an intimate dining space'.

W1, LOUCHE SOHO, 4-5 Greek St. Renamed GREEK STREET LIVE. A bare-boarded bar selling various keg beers including Guinness and continental lagers plus other drinks. Live music gigs from a stage at the rear, booking necessary.

W1, MARLBOROUGH HEAD (Grosvenor Estate), 24 North Audley St. After a period of closure, the pub reopened in November as the MARLBOROUGH with strategic support from the team behind the Devonshire in Soho, whose celebrated Guinness installation has been replicated. Two cask beers (Landlord and Proper Job) are among the drinks offering. Downstairs is a bespoke pizzeria under the control of Carl McCluskey of the W6 Chancellor's pub and its crisp pizza fame.

W1, SHASTON ARMS (Shaftesbury/Hall & Woodhouse), 4 Ganton St. Reopened and now a gastropub, the second pub

secured by Joe Grossmann, founder of burger concept Patty & Bun and operator of the Waterman Arms in Barnes. Two cask beers are on offer (initially from Five Points and Wadworth).

W2, KUPP, Unit 53, 5 Merchant Sq. This has now become Wetherspoon's SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING, the name taken from another (now closed) pub further south in Paddington. On the ground floor of an almost new building, it is not as big as many 'Spoons. The entrance, on the pathway alongside the canal cul-de-sac basin, leads into a bar with picture windows overlooking the water and across to parts of St. Mary's Hospital, where Sir Alexander discovered penicillin in 1929. The interior is very modern with bright lighting, an open kitchen, mustard-coloured exposed brick and screed walls, then timouse blue or mushroom paint; the floor has a typical JDW unique patterned carpet then terrazzo flooring around the bar. There is a lot of exposed ductwork, photos and historic prints of the area. Six handpumps offer cask beers: GK Ruddles, Abbot, Doom Bar and three guests.

W2, OAK, 137 Westbourne Park Rd. Reopened as GOOD OAK. For a long period classified as a restaurant but now describing itself as 'a modern tavern where good food, great drinks, and a warm community come together under one roof'. There is a ground floor pub/restaurant with a central bar, where you can drink without needing to eat, and an evening cocktail bar upstairs.

W5, WEST FIVE (Wellington), 25 Popes La. Renamed EALING OAK. Timothy Taylor Landlord initially available.

W11, QUIET NIGHT INN (Max Barney Pub Company/Forest Road), 60 Great Western Rd. Reopened as LOCK & LANTERN. The operator is now 202 Pub Co (ex-Aldrich Inns), a small but growing London chain. Handpumps not currently used.

W12, TOCA SOCIAL, Westfield White City, Aerial Way. Within the Westfield complex but with a separate entrance opposite Shepherds Bush library, this is the third venue to be opened by TOCA Social. As its name implies it's a social gaming venue with an emphasis on football and with photo booths, football tables, shuffle boards, claw machines and virtual reality equipment. It has a capacity of 1000 with 500 seats. Two bars sell keg beers (including steins and 3-litre towers) and other drinks.

W14, CROWN & SCEPTRE (Heineken), 34 Holland Rd. Reopened in September. One cask beer is on offer.

OUTER LONDON

DAGENHAM, MAY & BAKER SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB, Dagenham Rd. Reopened under community management.

HOUNSLOW, CROSS LANCES, 236 Hanworth Rd. The pub has reopened under Nepalese owners and is going to be known as the Cross Lances Nepalese Pasa Pub/Restaurant. It has undergone only internal refurbishment so far. The new owners want to keep it as pub, retaining the ale (currently Pride & Red Fox), the music, pool table and darts area, tournaments and open mic nights.

KINGSTON, BONNIE ROGUES (NEOS Hospitality), 154 Clarence St. A new chain pub opened in September opposite the Kings Tun and next door to the Cornerstone. It takes up the northern part of the site that was Pryzm night club. With a loud and lively atmosphere, it offers food and drinks during the day and late into the night. Standard keg range. The others in the chain are in Cardiff and Swansea.

TWICKENHAM, CRANE TAP, 2 Brewery La. Reopened in September by Morgan Collective.

PUBS & CLUBS CLOSED, CONVERTED, OR CEASED SELLING CASK BEER

INNER LONDON

EC1, BOUNDARY FARRINGDON (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.

EC1, EREBUNI. Closed in May, future uncertain.

EC1, LAMB & TROTTER. No longer sells cask beer.
EC1, SPACE TALK (Marylebone Leisure Group). No longer sells cask or indeed any draught beer. Bottles only.
E1, DUKE OF SOMERSET (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.
E1, GEORGE TAVERN. No longer sells cask beer.
E1, KILL THE CAT SPITALFIELD. Closure self-reported.
E1, OLIVER CONQUEST (Conquest Pubs). Closed for 'refurbishment' at the start of the year, still closed.
E2, MOLLY'S CAFE (Geffrye Museum/Company of Cooks). Closed again.
E4, OLD HALL TAVERN (Heineken). No longer sells cask beer.
E4, RUSTY BIKE. No longer sells cask beer.
E8, BAXTERS COURT (Wetherspoon). Closed in November and appears to have been sold.
E8, DALSTON EASTERN CURVE GARDEN CAFE. No cask beer, the remaining handpump being used to dispense Celtic Marches cider.
E8, DUKE OF WELLINGTON (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.
E8, WORKER'S CAFE, 404 Kingsland Road. Reverted to takeaway a couple of years ago.
E17, BLACK HORSE BAR & PIZZERIA. Closed, repossessed by owner in October.
N1, HUNTER S (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.
N4, NATURALIST (Young's). No longer sells cask beer.
N7, HERCULES (True Pub Co). No longer sells cask beer.
N7, NEWMARKET ALE HOUSE (Mendoza). Closed and boarded since the beginning of the year.
N7, OWL & HITCHHIKER (Laine). No longer sells cask beer.
N7, VICTORIA TAVERN (Stonegate/Frontier). No longer sells cask beer.
NW1, UNION. No longer sells cask beer, handpumps removed.
NW6, FIDDLER (Kissane Taverns). Closed c. April 2024
SE1, ITALIAN JOB @ MERCATO METROPOLITANO (MM E&C LTD). Closed by January 2025, probably earlier.
SE1, KATZENJAMMERS. Closed in August, future uncertain.
SE9, RISING SUN (Greene King). Closed for a refurbishment, although locally rumoured to have been sold by GK.
SE10, DUKE OF GREENWICH (Hamna Wakaf). Closed, looking for new tenant.
SE18, GEORGE IV (Stonegate/Craft Union). No longer sells cask beer, handpumps unused.
SE19, BEULAH SPA (M&B/Harvester). Closed as a Harvester in September, to reopen in December as an Orleans Smokehouse.
SE22, BISHOP (Greene King/Metropolitan). No longer sells cask beer.
SW8, NO.29 POWER STATION WEST (Darwin & Wallace). Closed, future uncertain.
SW19, PRINCE OF WALES, 98 Morden Rd. Cask beer discontinued again in November owing to lack of demand.
W1, COURT (M&B/High St Pubs). No longer sells cask beer.
W1, G-A-Y (Soho Estates). Reported in media as permanently closed owing to rising costs.
W1, NORTHUMBERLAND ARMS (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.
W5, EALING PROJECT (British Land/Really Local Group). Closed, to become Gutterball.
W6, BRASSERIE BLANC (St. George). Self-declared closed in late October, future uncertain.
W7, KINGS ARMS (Stonegate). No longer sells cask beer.
W12, OAK. Closed, lease on the market.

OUTER LONDON

CHEAM, CLARET WINE BAR. Closed in October with significant refurbishment planned before reopening at some point.

COLLIER ROW (ROMFORD), GRAVITY BAR. Converted to Bhale Biryani, which has subsequently closed.
COLLIER ROW (ROMFORD), RM5 LOUNGE. Closed, future uncertain.
CROYDON, MARKET TAVERN (Stonegate/Craft Union). Closed in September.
FELTHAM, BEDFONT & HATTON ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (Royal British Legion). Closed, future uncertain.
HIGH BARNET, BLACK HORSE (Heineken). Closed due to financial pressure on operator.
ISLEWORTH, WOODLANDS (Heineken/McLean Inns). No longer sells cask beer
KINGSTON, INCOGNITO. Closed, premises future uncertain.
SOUTH CROYDON, WHELAN'S (Heineken/Whelans). No longer sells cask beer.
THORNTON HEATH, ELGON VIEW. Closed since June, future uncertain.
TWICKENHAM, BEAR TAVERN (Stonegate/Craft Union). No longer sells cask beer.

OTHER CHANGES

INNER LONDON

WC2, DALY'S WINE BAR (Young's). Reopened following refurb and merged with Temple Brew House to become **DALY'S WINE BAR & BEER HALL.**
WC2, TEMPLE BREW HOUSE (Young's). Used to be a standalone bar and brewhouse but, following Young's takeover of City Pub Co, this is now a beer hall and part of Daly's Wine Bar. A separate street entrance has been kept. The brewery is no more.
N1, DUKE OF WELLINGTON (Stonegate/Frontier Pubs), 119 Balls Pond Rd. Reopened in November under Stanley Pubs after a major refurbishment, with four handpumps now at the front.
N19, ST JOHN'S TAVERN (Nobledash). Now operated by Urban Pub & Bars after a £1m+ refurbishment. Cask beer still available.
N22, NAG'S HEAD (Stonegate). Now a Dunnings Irish bar (also see SW15 Fox & Hounds)
SW1, GANYMEDE (Lunar Pub Company). Renamed **ELIZABETH.**
SW3, ADMIRAL CODRINGTON (Butcombe Brewery). Reopened and run since October by the small London Inda Pubs chain, after a period under Butcombe Brewery management. Three handpumps for cask beer.
SW11, FOUR THIEVES (Laine). Renamed **THIEVES** after major refurbishment this autumn.
SW15, FOX & HOUNDS (Stonegate). Now operated by Dunnings, an Irish themed pubco.
W1, QUEEN CHARLOTTE (Shaftesbury/BrewDog). The pub is no longer part of the BrewDog group, the new operator also runs the Blue Maid in Borough High Street. Three reasonably priced cask beers.

OUTER LONDON.

CHEAM, OLDE RED LION (Stonegate). Operated since August by the Morgan Pub Collective.
HAYES, NEW INN. Now operated by Whelan's.
KEW, CRICKETERS (Inda Pubs). Reverted to **ROSE & CROWN** after refurbishment.

LETTERS

All readers – not just CAMRA members – are invited to submit letters for publication to *London Drinker* but please remember that the letters column is intended for debate and constructive criticism. The editor reserves the right not to print any contributions that are otherwise. Please e-mail letters to: ldnews.hedger@gmail.com.

If you do not have e-mail, hard-copy letters may be sent to the same address given for subscriptions on page 3, addressed to *London Drinker Letters*.

In both cases, please state 'letter for publication' so as to avoid any misunderstandings.

Memories of Mortlake

Your article in the August/September edition, 'Farewell to the Stag Brewery' (page 28) reminded me of a visit I made to Mortlake in 1975. I had just become interested in real ale and had got a list of Young's pubs from my local Young's pub, the Britannia in Barking. On one Friday lunchtime I was on a train passing through Mortlake, so I decided to get off and try the Young's pub, the Jolly Gardeners. When I got there, I found that most of the drinkers were actually Watney's workers wearing Watney's branded overalls. At the time Paul Cook, who later went on to be the drummer in the punk rock group the Sex Pistols, was working as an apprentice electrician at the Stag Brewery so possibly was in the pub. As a 135-er I know

puts it, "Paul Cook worked for Watney's, then he became a punk rock drummer. I don't know which is worse."

Colin Price

Editor's note: younger readers may not have heard of the '135 Association'. For some time, there were 135 Young's pubs, give or take one or two. As Colin says, the company produced a little three-fold list of its pubs called 'Real Draught Beer and Where to Find It'. If within a year you had a drink in them all and had your list ticked, you were awarded a special tie and/or a pin of ale. Although chaired by John Young at one point, the Association itself was independent of the company. It was wound up early this century although it is understood that there are still occasional reunions.

Tributes

Bobbie Scully

A huge number of CAMRA members, Great British Beer Festival volunteers especially, were shocked to learn of the passing of Bobbie Scully at the age of just 62. Born in Wallasey, Merseyside, Bobbie (she never used her given name of Barbara) read law at Keele University and was called to the Bar at Middle Temple. She took an unusual career path in joining the Council of Law Reporting which involved her making precise records of court proceedings that could set a legal precedent and which are essential to our legal system. Her skills led to her reporting cases right up to the Supreme Court.

In 2011, she succeeded Iain Sutherland as the editor of the *Times Law Reports*, becoming the first female to hold this prestigious post. Iain then became a fellow CAMRA volunteer. Bobbie was also the treasurer of the High Court Journalists' Association, which promoted relations between the legal profession and the press. A senior colleague at the TLR described Bobbie as being 'always cheerful of manner and as reliable as clockwork'.

Bobbie first volunteered at the Great British Beer Festival in 1994 and completed the bar managers' training course in 1996. She then became deputy to Dave Holland, who was to become her partner for life, and, after two years as a joint manager with Ben Parr-Ferris, she was given her own bar in 2007. Many colleagues posted tributes on CAMRA's on-line forum (Discourse) and most of them followed two themes.



The first was just how good a manager she was. Her relaxed, low-profile style hid a high level of professionalism. She would say that she just 'swanned about' and that she left her deputies to run the bar but she had trained them to the highest standard and encouraged them to have confidence in their abilities. That said, she always had her eye on everything that was going on.

The second theme was friendship. Many mentioned the loss of a friend with the driest of senses of humour and someone who always had the utmost respect for fellow volunteers. We send our condolences to Dave and to Bobbie's family. The funeral, family only, was held on the Wirral. It is hoped to arrange a celebration of her life in London in the new year. The photo, kindly supplied by Steve Richardson, shows Bobbie at the GBFF in 2017.

Peter Trout

Peter passed away on 18 October after a period of illness. He was a true CAMRA stalwart and his colleagues in Bexley branch paid tribute to him as one of the driving forces behind successive, successful Bexley Beer Festivals. He was also involved as a cellarman at a number of other CAMRA festivals, including the much-missed Kent Beer Festival in Canterbury. He also represented the branch at regional meetings.

Peter was also well known locally for his work in hospice charity shops in North Heath and Welling. His funeral is being held on 27 November at Eltham crematorium. The wake, fittingly, is at the Dartfordians Club, the home of the Bexley Beer Festival in recent years. Peter was widely regarded as one of the nicest men you could wish to meet. He will be missed.

Bexley Branch

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camra.org.uk/join



Are you a CAMRA member?

If not, why not join? See below for details



CAMRA essentially remains a campaigning organisation and, with the threats currently faced by our independent pubs and breweries, there is still a lot to be done. Lobbying politicians (both national and local), objecting to planning applications and even delivering magazines such as *London Drinker* all contribute to the cause. Volunteering is a great way to learn new skills and meet like-minded people who share your love of all things to do with beer, cider and pubs. To find out more about volunteering opportunities go to <https://ow.ly/SB3H50V0KGf>.

In addition, as a CAMRA member, you will have access to lots of beer-related benefits. You can take advantage of these at home, at events, and in pubs. Here are some of the options for you to explore:

- * **The campaign:** keep up with the campaign that your membership is supporting with our *What's Brewing* online publication, available online here <https://wb.camra.org.uk/>.
- * **Beer discounts:** your membership card and vouchers get you discounts on your beer at pubs up and down the country. Check out whatpub.com, search for locations and use the filters to find great pubs near you with features you like.
- * **Beer festivals:** as a member of CAMRA, you get free, or reduced price entry, to our 160 beer festivals up and down the country. Search for a festival near you on our website, get out and try new brews!
- * **The CAMRA shop:** did you know that CAMRA is also an award-winning book publisher? As a CAMRA member, you have access to preferential rates at our shop for books, merchandise and more. Take a look on our website today. <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/>.
- * **Member benefits:** your membership should allow you to save money on the things that matter to you, which is why we work with partners to bring you great discounts. We're adding more to our website all the time; see <https://camra.org.uk/join/membership-benefits/partner-benefits/>.
- * **Keep in touch:** whether you're on our website, in the pub, or at a beer festival, having a voice and getting involved will allow you to get more out of your membership. *BEER Magazine* and our CAMRA YouTube channel are a great way to keep up to date with CAMRA news and beer, cider and perry in general (<https://www.youtube.com/user/CAMRAOFFICIAL>). Our *Learn and Discover* platform and *Pubs. Pints. People* podcast are also the perfect ways to grow your knowledge.

Annual subscriptions (from 1 July 2025) are as follows:

- Single membership, paid by Direct Debit, £34.00;
- Joint membership (partner at same address) £42.00.

Add £2 if not paying by Direct Debit. Some concessions are available.

You can find out more at <https://join.camra.org.uk> or search 'join CAMRA'.

Idle Moments

Hello again and welcome to the Christmas(-ish) edition of Idle Moments, although, as I write this, we've only just had Guy Fawkes Night. Of course, the season of goodwill doesn't necessarily mean that I shan't be inflicting torment on you in the form of silly questions and puzzles and so let's get it over and done with.

I was sitting quietly (won't say where) the other day and a recollection drifted into my mind of a puzzle that somebody submitted involving cryptic names for

Underground stations. Sorry, but I can't remember who it was as it was probably over 30 years ago (Yes, really!) but I recall that one of the clues as 'Whistling Stream' which I am sure instantly brings Tooting Bec to your minds. When I have time (and inclination) I might search through the back copies of the *Drinker* so that I can give due credit (blame?) to the originator. In the meantime, I proffer a 2025 version of
CRYPTIC STATIONS:

1. Boggy portal
2. Miners' plantation
3. Skint boy in the woods
4. Captures a stream
5. Bottom included?
6. This way to Scotland?
7. Where the rabbits live
8. Incinerated tree
9. Alpine retreat
10. Perfect square of trees

A couple of weeks ago I was watching a posting on YouTube from a chap who travels around Europe producing short films about interesting things and places and he did a piece on the names of the districts in Paris. I thought that would do quite nicely for Idle Moments. I shall give a credit to the chap with the answers next time (to do so now would make it too easy for you). So here I present 5BY4 (the Arrondissements de Paris):

- | | |
|----------|---------------------|
| 1. 1st | A. Bourse |
| 2. 2nd | B. L'Elysee |
| 3. 3rd | C. L'Entrepot |
| 4. 4th | D. L'Hotel de Ville |
| 5. 5th | E. Louvre |
| 6. 6th | F. Luxembourg |
| 7. 7th | G. L'Opera |
| 8. 8th | H. Palais Bourbon |
| 9. 9th | I. Pantheon |
| 10. 10th | J. Temple |

The other day for reasons I cannot explain I thought that I could do some Trivial Knowledge questions linked (tenuously) by events that occurred on each day of the festive season, so here I present The Twelve Questions of Christmas, unless our illustrious Editor decides there isn't enough room and deletes a couple:

1. Which scientist was born on 25 December 1642 at Woolsthorpe, near Grantham?
2. Radium was discovered and isolated by Pierre and Marie Curie on 26 December; in what year?
3. HMS Beagle departed from Plymouth Sound on 27 December carrying Charles Darwin as its naturalist on its five-year circumnavigation of the world; again, in what year?
4. On 28 December 1950, the first of Britain's National Parks was designated. Which area was given this accolade?
5. Britain's first 'Ironclad' battleship, HMS Warrior, was launched at Blackwall, London on 29 December, of what year?
6. Rudyard Kipling, the English writer and poet, was born on 30 December 1865; where?
7. The chimes of the Great Clock (Big Ben) were first broadcast on 31 December of what year?
8. The Commonwealth of Australia was created by the amalgamation of the six states and two territories on 1 January of what year?
9. On 2 January 1901 the first municipal crematorium in England was opened by the Lord Mayor in what city?
10. On 3 January 1958, the South Pole was reached by overland land expedition for the first time since that of Captain Robert Falcon Scott in 1912. Who was the leader of the expedition?
11. The first pop music chart, based on record sales, was published on 4 January in New York in Billboard magazine on 4 January; of what year?

12. The first automatic ticket barrier on the London Underground came into operation on 5 January 1964. At what station was it installed?

And so I leave you with a greeting for a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. I'm just looking forward to the holiday outside of hospital this year.

Andy Pirson

As usual, here are the solutions to the puzzles set in the **October/November** Idle Moments column:

Breweries by Numbers:

1. 40 FT – Dalston, London
2. 71 Brewing – Dundee
3. 4Ts – Warrington, Cheshire
4. 1648 – East Hoathly, E Sussex
5. 9 Lives – Ystradgynlais, Swansea
6. 8 Sail – Heckington, Lincolnshire
7. 360° – Uckfield, E Sussex
8. 1086 – Doncaster, S Yorkshire
9. 3 Words – Evesham, Worcestershire
10. 52 Degrees – Brownhills, W Midlands

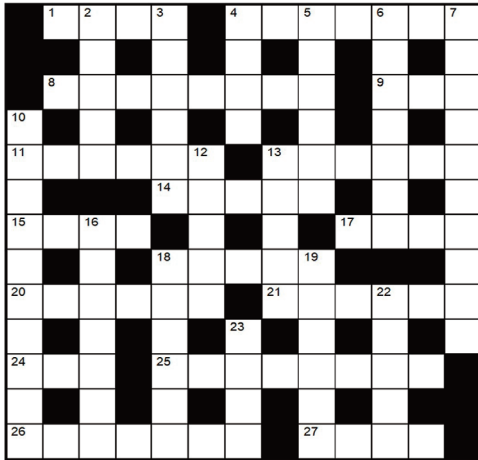
BAZY Celebrities:

1. LK: This Morning presenter [Lorraine Kelly]
2. ML: Ninety Five Theses [Martin Luther]
3. NM: Australian opera singer [Nellie Melba]
4. ON: Humourist (Devil's Dictionary author) [Ogden Nash]
5. PO: American protest singer [Phil Ochs]
6. RQ: Swiss footballer [Rene-Pierre Quentin]
7. SR: 'Miracle' singer [Smokey Robinson]
8. TS: Czech playwright [Tom Stoppard]
9. UT: Kill Bill actress [Uma Thurman]
10. VU: Austrian composer (died in Auschwitz) [Viktor Ullman]

General knowledge:

1. In pre-decimal coinage, three (old) pennies together weighed one ounce and thus the weight of a pound (sterling) was five pounds (or 2.27kg).
2. According to the Royal Mint a (new) penny weighs 3.56 grammes, so £1 in new pennies weighs 15.68% of £1 in old pennies.
3. The pre-decimal British coin that was one inch in diameter was the halfpenny (or ha'penny if you prefer).
4. The 50 pence coin first went into circulation (in preparation for the introduction of decimalisation) in October 1969.
5. The original 50 pence coin was replaced by the smaller version in the same design in 1997 (1 September).
6. The penny and two penny coins were made thicker in 1992 to maintain the weight unchanged, because the cupro-nickel coins were replaced by copper-plated steel (which is less dense).
7. The decimal half penny was withdrawn from circulation in December 1984.
8. The (pre-decimal) farthing was withdrawn from circulation in 1961 (1 January) and was last minted in 1956.
9. The new denomination of coin introduced at the time of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee (1887) and only minted for three years was the double florin (4 shillings).
10. The 20 pence coin was first issued in 1982 (9 June, according to Wikipedia).

Compiled by DAVE QUINTON - £20 prize to be won!



Name

Address

Telephone

E-mail

All correct entries received by first post on 21 January will be entered into a draw for the prize. The prize winner will be announced in the April/May edition and the solution will be given in the February/March edition.

All entries should be submitted to:
London Drinker Crossword, 25 Valens House, Upper Tulse Hill, London SW2 2RX

Please note: Entries on oversize copies of the grid will not be entered into the prize draw.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER SOLUTION



ACROSS

- Stand by an objection. [4]
- They carry drinks. [7]
- On a charge meant to wipe out artillery initially. [8]
- Top class service. [3]
- Scene I recreated for relatives. [6]
- Deny entrance to extreme nuisance. [6]
- Captured, thanks to Barbie's mate. [5]
- Warning! Topless females. [4]
- Captain rejected previous solution. [4]
- Search for key day of celebration. [5]
- A doctor went ahead, slowly. [6]
- Rioting, please pass by. [6]
- Account of some reprisals. [3]
- Weaken, even tear asunder. [8]
- Gas explosion. Go! You can't come in. [2,5]
- He's here and not Mark. [4]

DOWN

- A pub, in general, supplies drink. [5]
- John to work hard on film. [6]
- Place tee initially, but not for this. [4]
- Show embarrassment at revolutionary study. [6]
- Issue makes English fellow worried. [7]
- They say the man loves dockers. [10]
- Pub gets praise for creativity. [10]
- Full of chopped dates. [5]
- Some inner veins found in cheek. [5]
- Couple following me back for a cuddle. [7]
- First half of last month's computer fraud. [6]
- Still supporting the Spanish team. [6]
- Pop makes head reel initially. [5]
- Drink for the birds. [4]

Winner of the prize for the August/September crossword:
Katie Howey, Chelmsford.

Other correct entries were received from:

Ted Alleway, Tony Alpe, Neil Arnold, C Baguet, John Barker, C Bloom, Kay Breach, Kelvin Brewster, Jeremy Brinkworth, Mrs Val Brothers, Barnaby Bryan, John Butler, John Clark, Owen Cunningham, Andy Dadd, John Davis, Michael Davis, John Dodd, R Evans, Brian Exford, Bill Fullick, Richard Garton, Nick Goodwin, Roger Grant, Paul Gray, J E Green, Alan Greer, A Gregg, Matthew Griffiths, 'Shropshire' Dave Hardy, Alan Humphrey, Martin Jeffrey, Carol Jenkins, Eric Johnstone, R L P Keys, Seymour Kleerleigh, Pete Large, Terry Lavell, Aidan Laverty, Julie Lee, Tony Lennon, David Lopatis, Malcolm Lowing, Jim McColl, Derek McDonnell, Ken McKenzie, Steve Magin, Rob Mills, Pam Moger, Jan Mondrzejewski, Ruth Moreton, David Morgan, Al Mountain, Brian Myhill, Gerald Notley, A Ognjenovic, Michael Oliver, Nigel Parsons, Stephen Pegum, Alan Pennington, Robert Perris, Andy Philips, Portrush Annie, Barrie Powell, Jeanette Powell, Mick Pring, Jeffrey Ramsdale, James Rawle, David Renwick, Robert Ripley, Nigel Roe, Richard Rogers, Derek Seeley, Mrs Amanda Shepherd, R Tassi, Bill Thackray, Mark Thompson, Martin Weedon, Richard Whiting, Jerry Wiggins, Fred Williams, John Williamson, N Woodford, Shez Wright, K Zemek.
There were also six incorrect and one incomplete entries.

**14 BEERS ON TAP.
4 ROTATING CASKS.
CZECH SIDE POUR.
CASK / LAGERS / CRAFT.**



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