FREE

LONDON CAMRA DRINKER

Volume 48 No. 3

June/July 2026

Thornbridge come to town - See page 16

wetherspoon

CAMRA

THE GOOD BEER GUIDE ★2026★

WE'RE IN IT

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

The Sir Alexander Fleming, 5 Merchant Square, Paddington Basin, W2 1AS
Walham Green, 472 Fulham Road, Fulham, SW6 1BY
The Sun Wharf, 50 Tooley Street, London Bridge, Southwark, SE1 2TF
Coombe Lodge, 104 Coombe Rd, Croydon, CR0 5RB
The Lion & The Unicorn, The Sidings, Waterloo station, Lambeth, SE1 7BH
The Captain Flinders, 34–38 Eversholt Street, Euston, Camden, NW1 1DA

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

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Have you paid £10 or more for a pint of standard beer in London? I haven't, yet I read in the papers that this is what it now costs. Except that, if you look at the source, you will find that the 'research' involves drinking in high-end Mayfair hotel bars and restaurants such as the Connaught Grill. I would suggest that most London drinkers would not go to such establishments for a session and so this is therefore not in any way typical. I can only presume that the journalists involved were on expenses. Scaremongering like this does not help the pub trade. I'm not trying to claim that beer prices are not increasing. Indeed, the price of Guinness recently increased by 5.2%, well above inflation, but then Guinness has its own devoted market which owners Diageo seem happy to exploit. The Devonshire in Soho has a reputation for its Guinness and landlord Oisin Rogers told the *Times*, *"I've known many a landlord over the years and I know very few who take any pleasure in putting up the price of a pint. Rising costs across the industry have certainly forced the hand of some but pubs need to remain accessible to all. Pints that are too costly will price normal drinkers out of pubs, which defeats the object of being a pub in the first place."*

According to the *Morning Advertiser* on 14 April, the average price of a pint in London was £6.50, although in many places the norm is nearer £5 even without including Wetherspoon's. £6.50 was also the price quoted for Basingstoke, Brighton, Guildford, Harlow and Reading, while in Oxford it is £6.75. According to the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), the average UK price is £4.52.

Another statistic heavily quoted recently was that two pubs a day are closing. As I have previously said, I am suspicious of such numbers because they are often 'weaponised' to support a particular stance. Speaking on the BBC Radio Four *Today* programme on 5 May, the BBPA's chief executive, Emma McClarkin, said that the Government must do more to save our pubs *'and their business model'*. I assume that she was referring to the beer tie, into which an 'access to market' review is currently in progress. The large non-brewing pub owning companies, whom the BBPA represent, obviously don't want the tie to end. Consumers, whom CAMRA represents, may not agree. If pub tenants could buy their beer on the market rather than having to buy it through their pubco at above-market prices, it could help pubs stay profitable and open, give consumers a greater choice and also help local independent breweries stay in business. It isn't the complete answer, obviously. Additional measures, such as a reduction in VAT for the hospitality industry would also help, but it would be a start.

Tony Hedger

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.**

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.

This is a list of CAMRA Greater London regional and branch events for June and July 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

June

- Mon 29 (7.30) Regional meeting; Trinity (upstairs) 202-206 Borough High St, SE1 1JX

LONDON PUBS GROUP

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

June

- Sat 20 Tooting and Merton tour: (12pm) Trafalgar Arms SW17 0RT, (1.45) Royal Standard SW19 2BN, (2.30) Sultan SW19 1BT, (3.30) Nelson Arms SW19 1DF, (4.15) Trafalgar SW19 2JY

July

- Mon 20 (7.30) Meeting; Trinity (upstairs) SE1 1JX. All CAMRA members interested in pub research and preservation welcome

https://londonpubsgroup.camra.org.uk

CIDER

Ian White, ikwcider@icloud.com

YOUNG MEMBERS' GROUP

Dario Bertero, dbertero.w@gmail.com

June

- Thu 11 (from 6pm) Kingston Beer Festival social (see page 23)

July

- Thu 9 (from 6pm) Ealing Beer Festival social (see page 33)

Facebook: *Greater London CAMRA Young Members*

BEXLEY

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

June

- Wed 10 (7pm) Social and Cider Pub of the Year presentation; Bird & Barrel, Barnehurst DA7 6HG
- Wed 24 (7pm) Meeting; Bird & Barrel

July

- Wed 8 (7pm) Meeting; Penny Farthing, Crayford DA1 4JJ
- Wed 22 Social and Pub of the Year presentation; Long Haul DA7 5AE tbc

www.bexley.camra.org.uk

BROMLEY

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

June

- Wed 3 (7.30) Chislehurst BR7 social and Pub of the Year presentation; Cockpit BR7 6NR
- Mon 8 Beckenham BR3 social: (7.30) Jolly Woodman 6NR, (8.10) Chancery 5NP, (9pm) Br3wery 6LH, (9.50) Bricklayers Arms 1AH
- Sat 20 Crouch Valley Rail Ale Trail; meet (10am) Stratford Stn for 10:20 train towards Southminster, change at Wickford. (11.15) One Green Bottle, Battlesbridge SS11 7RF. (See website for full details)
- Wed 24 Penge SE20 social: (7.30) Craft Metropolis 7HW, (8.30) Southey Brewery 7JD, (9.30) Pawleyne Arms 7EU, (10.15) Goldsmiths Arms 7TJ

July

- Sat 4 Joint Bromley CAMRA and Orpington Liberal Club social: (12pm) Penny Farthing DA1 4JJ, then pubs on route to and in Dartford
- Mon 13 Green Street Green BR6 social: (7.30) Buff 9NL, (8.30) Queen's Head 6BQ, (9.30) Rose & Crown 6BT
- Mon 20 (7.30) Committee meeting; Three Hounds BR3 4PRZ

http://bromley.camra.org.uk/calendar/

CROYDON & SUTTON

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

June

- Wed 3 Sutton social: (8pm) Nightingale SM1 4LG and possibly another
- Tue 9 (8pm) Croydon Pub of the Year presentation; Dark Horse CR0 2DW
- Thu 18 (8pm) Selsdon social; Golden Ark CR2 8LB
- Wed 24 (8.30) Meeting; Cryer Arts (Watercress Suite) SM5 3BB

July

- Thu 2 (8pm) South Croydon social; Crown & Sceptre SM2 6RB
- Sat 18 (12pm) Dorking social with East & Mid Surrey branch; details on website
- Wed 22 (1pm) Carshalton social; Woodman SM5 3AG
- Thu 30 (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

July

- Mon 13 (8pm) Meeting; Craft Beer Co, 82 Leather La, EC1N 7TR

www.pigsear.org.uk

ENFIELD & BARNET

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

June

- Tue 2 Enfield EN2 social: (7pm) Wonder 0JG, (8pm) Old Wheatsheaf 6SE
- Wed 10 (7.30) Social; Cock Tavern, Hackney E8 1EJ
- Tue 16 (7.30 for 8pm) **Branch AGM**; Old Wheatsheaf (The Vault), Enfield Chase EN2 6SE
- Thu 25 Winchmore Hill N21 social: (7pm) Gryphon 1RE, (8pm) Little Green Dragon 2AD

July

- Thu 2 (7.30) Social; Hand & Marigold, Bermondsey SE1 3UH
- Thu 9 (12pm) Ealing Beer Festival social (see page 33)
- Sat 18 (12pm) Branch Ramble: check website for details
- Wed 22 High Barnet EN5 social: (7pm) Kings Head 5SN, (8pm) Olde Mitre Inne 5SJ
- Thu 30 (12pm) Social; Elephant Inn N12 8NR

https://enfieldandbarnet.camra.org.uk

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD

John Burns, contact@kandl.camra.org.uk

June

- Thu 11 to Sat 13 Kingston Beer Festival (see page 23)
- Wed 24 Thames Ditton tour: (7.30) Olde Swan KT7 0QQ, then Red Lion and George & Dragon

July

- Wed 1, (7.30) Meeting; Walton Village KT12 1DG
- Wed 29 Wandsworth to Putney Bridge stroll: (12.30) Sambrook's Brewery Tap, then Cat's Back, Rocket, Bricklayers Arms, Kings Head and Eight Bells

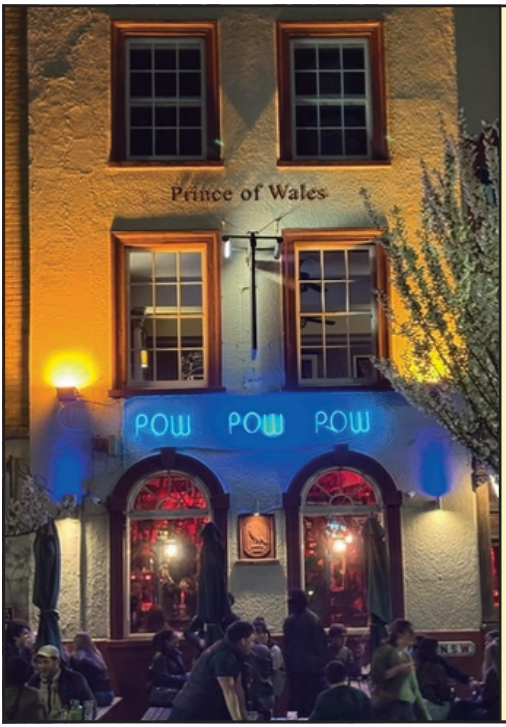
https://kandl.camra.org.uk/

NORTH LONDON

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

June

- Wed 10 (2.30) Social; King Charles I N1 9BL
- Tue 16 N19 tour: (7.30) Oak & Pastor 5QZ, (8.30) St John's Tavern, (9.30) Whittington Stone
- Tue 23 N1 social: (4.30) Railway Tavern Ale House 8JT,



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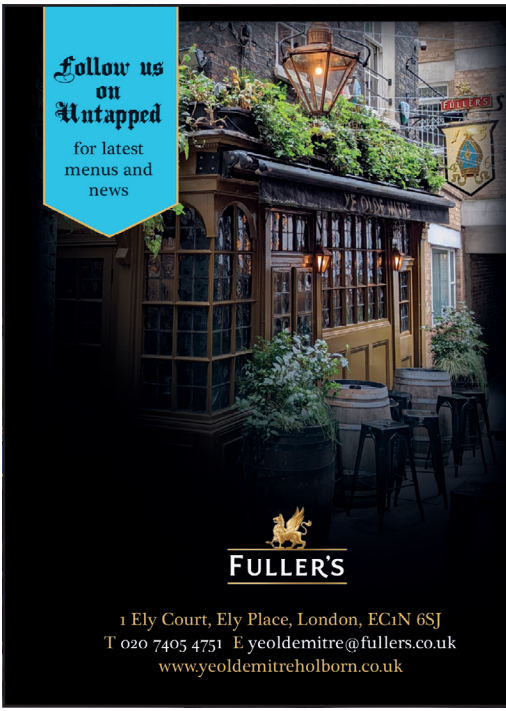

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(5.45) Duke of Wellington, (7pm) Lady Mildmay, optional extras (8.30) Edinburgh and then Snooty Fox N5

July

- Wed 8 (from 4pm) Ealing Beer Festival social (see page 33)
- Wed 15 (2.30) Social; Lore of the Land, Fitzrovia W1T 6BB
- Tue 21 (7pm) **Branch AGM**; Parcel Yard N1C 4AP. Guest speaker: Georgina Wald from Fuller's Pub Company
- Tue 28 Gospel Oak NW5 tour: (7.15) Duke of St Albans 1QX, (8.30) Bull & Last 1QS, (9.30) Southampton Arms 1LE

https://northlondon.camra.org.uk

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

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

June

- Mon 1 Turnham Green and Stamford Brook joint social with West London Branch: (4pm) Tabard W4 1LW, (5pm) Roebuck W4 1PU, (6pm) Raven W6 0SA
- Tue 2 (7.30) Meeting; Queens Head, Cranford TW5 9PB
- Sun 7 Live music with Robb Johnson; Cross Lances, Hounslow TW3 3TU. Free entry with collection (contact Branch for start time)
- Sat 13 London Pub of the Year trip No.3: meet Owl & The Pussycat, Northfields W13 9RT (contact Branch for other pubs and timings)
- Mon 22 Strand on the Green social: (7.30) Bulls Head W4 3PQ then towards Express Tavern

July

- Wed 1 (7.30) Meeting; Pig & Whistle, Sheen SW14 8LP
- Thu 9 (3pm) Ealing Beer Festival social (see page 33)
- Tue 14 (6.30 at brewery) Harvey's Brewery Tour. Cost £18 for tour, train at own expense. Contact *secretary@rh.camra.org.uk* to register interest and for more details
- Date TBA: Beer by Bus (267): Prince of Wales, Fulwell TW2 5QR, then Twickenham, Brentford, Kew Bridge, Chiswick and Hammersmith. Contact Branch for more details

rh.camra.org.uk

SOUTH EAST LONDON

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

June

- Wed 3 (7.30) Pub of the Year presentation and social; Hand & Marigold SE1 3UH
- Tue 9 (7.30) Greenwich District Pub of the Year presentation and social; Green Goddess SE3 7AA
- Sat 13 (7pm) Kingston Beer Festival social (see page 23)
- Tue 23 (7.30) Cider Pub of the Year presentation and social; Miller SE1 3SS

July

- Tue 7 (7.30) Meeting and social; Hand & Marigold SE1 3UH
- Sat 11 (12pm) Ciderdog Festival social; Miller SE1 3SS
- Sat 18 (12pm) Open top bus social (Shirk, Rust & Pray 3); meet Shirker's Rest SE14 6PP
- Sat 25 (12pm) Visit to Epping Ongar Railway Beer & Cider Festival (see page 37)

https://sel.camra.org.uk

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Mike Flynn, 07751 231191, info@swl.camra.org.uk
Cycling: Geoff Strawbridge, geoff.camra@gmail.com

June

- Tue 2 Battersea High Street SW11 social: (7pm) Woodman 60 3HX then Candlemakers 136 3JR and Falconbrook 1-13 Falcon Rd
- Tue 30 (7.30) Meeting; Horse & Groom SW19 1DE

July

- Sat 18 Bus route 44 social: (1pm) Antelope 76 Mitcham Rd SW17 9NG, then taking in J.J. Moon's, Country House, Old Sergeant, Sambrook's Brewery Tap and Battersea Brewery Tap
- Wed 29 Across Putney Bridge joint social with West London Branch: see their diary entry for details

https://swl.camra.org.uk

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Andrew Vaughan, 07854 988152, branch@watford.camra.org.uk

June

- Fri 5 King's Langley WD4 social: (7pm) Old Palace 9HQ, (7.45) Saracen's Head 9HU, (8.30) Rose & Crown 9HT

July

- Sat 18 Sarratt WD3 social: (1pm) Cock 6HH, (2pm) Cricketers 6AS, (3pm) Boot 6BL
- Mon 27 (8pm) Meeting; West Herts Sports Club, Watford WD18 7HP

www.watford.camra.org.uk

WEST LONDON

Social Sec: Paul Young, 07591 125486, pyoung3114@aol.com
Branch contact: Paul Charlton, 07835 927357, contact@westlondon.camra.org.uk

June

- Mon 1 Joint Turnham Green and Stamford Brook social; See Richmond & Hounslow diary entry
- Mon 15 Shepherds Bush W12 social: (2pm) Central Bar 8PH, (3pm) Bull 7GF, (4pm) Defector's Weld 8AA, (5pm) Bush Tavern 8QQ
- Tue 30 Maida Vale heritage pubs social: (2pm) Bridge House W2 6NG, (2.45) Warwick Castle W9 2PX, (3.30) Prince Alfred W9 1EE, (4.30) Warrington Hotel W9 1EH

July

- Wed 8 (from 12pm) Ealing Beer Festival social (see page 33)
- Tue 14 Hammersmith W6 riverside social: (2pm) Cross Keys 9BG, (2.45) Old Ship 9TD, (3.30) Dove 9TA, (4.45) Blue Anchor 9DJ
- Wed 29 Across Putney Bridge social (joint with South West London Branch): (6.30) Duke's Head SW15 1JN, (7.30) Bricklayer's Arms SW15 1DD, (9pm) Eight Bells SW6 3JS, (10pm) King's Arms SW6 4RN

www.westlondon.camra.org.uk

WEST MIDDLESEX

Branch contact: Ben Hart, ben@westmiddx.camra.org.uk
Social Sec: Bob O'Brien, 01895 673266

June

- Tue 2 (8pm) Social; Fox, Hanwell W7 2PJ
- Wed 10 (8pm) Ealing Beer festival volunteers meeting; Forester W13 9EP
- Thu 18 (7.30) Pub of the Year presentation; Owl & The Pussycat, Northfields W13 9RT
- Mon 22 Preston Road and Rayners Lane social: (7.45) Preston HA9 9NG, (9.15) Village Inn HA5 5DY

July

- Thu 2 Ealing W5 social: (7.30) Castle 5EU, (9pm) Kings Arms 5DX (10pm) Questors 5BQ
- Thu 23 (8pm) Social; George & Dragon, Acton W3 9DJ
- Thu 30 (8pm) Meeting; Greenwood, Whitton Ave West, Northolt UB5 4LA

https://westmiddx.camra.org.uk

The electronic copy deadline for the August/September 2026 edition is no later than Friday 10 July.
Please send entries to ***ldnews.hedger@gmail.com***.

HARE & HOUNDS

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FULLER'S

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CROYDON & SUTTON

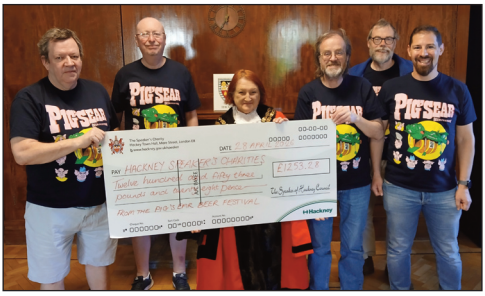
Our Pub of the Year judging has been completed, with the Dark Horse in Selhurst (CR0 2DW) being voted the winner for the Borough of Croydon and old favourite the Hope in Carshalton (SM5 2PR) the winner in Sutton. The Dark Horse has gone through to the London regional competition.

EAST LONDON & CITY

The Cock Tavern in Hackney (E8 1EJ) has achieved the double of winning both our Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year awards. The Cock has previously won Cider Pub of the Year on a number of occasions but this was the first time it has won Pub of the Year.

ELAC members visited the Cock during one of their jazz evenings and presented the awards when the bands took a break. Pictured is ELAC committee member James Watson presenting the awards to manager Joel Wood.
Andy Kinch

The Pig's Ear Beer & Cider Festival raises funds for the Speaker of Hackney's charities which, this time, were the Hackney Food Bank, Hackney Marsh Partnership and the Pedro Club. The festival raised a total of £1,253.28. Pictured at this year's presentation with the Speaker of Hackney, Councillor Sharon Patrick (centre), are, from left, Pete Giles, Dave Gilchrist, Steve Hall, Hugh Smith and Nick Collins of the organising committee.



The Festival will return to the Round Chapel from Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 December this year.

With thanks to Dave Gilchrist for the photo.
Steve Hall

ENFIELD & BARNET

On 21 April the branch presented a certificate to our Pub of the Year for 2026, the Little Green Dragon in Winchmore Hill (N21 2AD). Pictured are Richard the owner, Gulliver, a regular barman and Peter, our chairman.

On the night no fewer than six cask ales were available, including Libertalia Spring Dragon which Richard had jointly brewed with the brewery.
Brian Willis

NORTH LONDON

Our 2026 Cider Pub of the Year award went to last year's runners-up, the Craft Beer Co in Covent Garden (WC1V 7AA). The manager, Benji, and his team were delighted and there were smiles all round when the certificate was handed over. David Healing, the branch's cider representative explained why this pub won, *"Offering a selection of flavours and strengths from a variety of producers, Craft Beer Co. Covent Garden bring real cider into central London and are worthy winners."* John Cryne from the branch added, *"The pub stocks four real ciders on handpumps plus two further ciders in the tap area. The selection regularly changes and they are all from independent cider producers, something that is not easy to find in the area."*

The pub was rebuilt in 1961 as part of the Oasis swimming pool development and was acquired by Craft in 2014. As with many of their pubs, it offers a huge and regularly changing range of cask and other craft beers as well as cider. Being where it is, the pub is popular with theatre goers.

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

The branch continues to try new events and to repeat some favourites. On Tuesday 24 March we held our second annual Beer Knowledge Quiz at the Black Dog in Brentford

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(TE8 0NF). Fourteen teams, both local and from as far away as Egham, competed for the coveted trophy and first prize of a case of The Naked Ladies, kindly donated by our friends at Twickenham Brewery. With thanks to Giulietta Cinque and Abbie from the Black Dog for the photo.

The lucky winners!

On Tuesday 21 April, fifteen of our members visited Fuller's Brewery for a tour. Our excellent guide was able to answer some demanding questions from the group. Of course, some tasting had to be done in the famous Hock Cellar to complete the experience. The photo shows the group in front of England's oldest wisteria.

Other forthcoming events include a pizza night, a tour by 267 bus, a visit to Harvey's brewery and visits to London pubs of the year. For details, see our branch diary entry or our website, *rh.camra.org.uk*.
Damian Smeaton

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Shirking has its rewards. At our May committee meeting, we presented our Lewisham Area Pub of the Year award to the Shirker's Rest in New Cross (SE14 6PP). Opened four years ago in a former solicitors' office opposite Goldsmiths University, the pub is a joint venture between popular local bloggers Deserter and pop-up pub specialists Camberwell Shark.

The beer range includes up to four cask ales, among them a house bitter from Anspach & Hobday. The picture shows branch chair, Andy Large, presenting the certificate to Marta, the general manager, surrounded by pub staff, regulars and CAMRA branch members.
Steve Silcock

WATFORD AND DISTRICT

Our branch Pub of the Year is the Two Trees Micro in Watford (WD18 0EH). The branch offers its congratulations to Kat Perry and Michael Ash for winning the award for a second time.

WEST LONDON

On a bright spring day the West London branch met up at the Bear in Paddington (W2 1JA) to present Jasmine and her all female team with their Pub of the Year certificate. We had a good turn out from the branch and were joined by Jon Huddart from the owners, the Craft Beer Company, as well as regional director, Ellie Eames, and Vesa, a visitor from Finland.

Wanda (right) makes the presentation

We also made a presentation to the Lyric in Soho (W1D 7LT), one of the runners-up and they are now finding room on the walls for their certificate.

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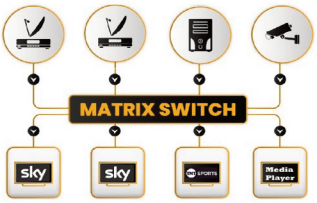

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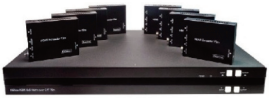

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The other runner up was the Harp in Charing Cross (WC2N 4HS). Here, as well as their runners-up certificate, we presented a certificate to Paul Sims for his services to cask ale. Paul has now left the Harp, got married and moved to Grenada.
Wanda Piontek

WEST MIDDLESEX

Our Club of the Year is the Questors' Grapevine Club (W5 5BQ) and the presentation is due to be held on 29 May (7pm). Our branch Pub of the Year is the Owl & The Pussycat in Northfields (W13 9RT). The presentation will be on 18 June (7.30).

EPPING ONGAR FESTIVAL

The 2026 Epping Ongar Railway Real Ale Festival runs from 24 to 26 July 2026. It is a joint venture between EOR and CAMRA's East London & City branch. This year we are celebrating 40 years of Network South East. There will be 90 cask ales and 13 ciders, plus live music every day. A steam engine and two vintage diesel locomotives will run between the stations, so you can ride in classic style while you sup. Beer and cider will be served at both North Weald and Ongar stations, as well as from the bars on the trains if you are thirsty while on the move. Our famous gin bar will return at Ongar station and, at North Weald, we have delicious food once again provided by Hopleaf. Join us for a unique day out, riding the rails and draining the casks! See our advert on page 37.
Esme Bradbury

PETERBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL

For those of you who might have withdrawal symptoms with there being no Great British Beer Festival this year, the organisers of the Peterborough Beer Festival have asked that I remind you of their event, to be held from Tuesday 25 to Saturday 29 August. This year they will be having a USA cask beer bar. The rail journey from London is around 45 minutes and the venue is walking distance from the station. For more information, go to *https://pborobeerfest.camra.org.uk*.

AN AWARD FOR *LONDON DRINKER*

At this year's CAMRA Members' Weekend, *London Drinker* received the runners up award in the Campaign's Magazine of the Year competition. This isn't quite as good as it sounds because it is fourth place after the gold, silver and bronze awards, but any appreciation is welcome.

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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London Drinker is published bi-monthly.
The June/July edition will be available from Wednesday 27 May.
It will also be available on-line at *https://londondrinker.camra.org.uk/wordpress*.
If you wish to contact the editorial team, please use *ldnews.hedger@gmail.com* rather than the address above.

SHEPHERD NEAME

CREEKSIDE

A pale golden juicy IPA, Creekside offers bursts of tropical fruits courtesy of a combination of four hops.

With hints of orange and peach, it is the perfect pint to enjoy all year round, with a light, refreshing finish.

/SHEPHERDNEAME

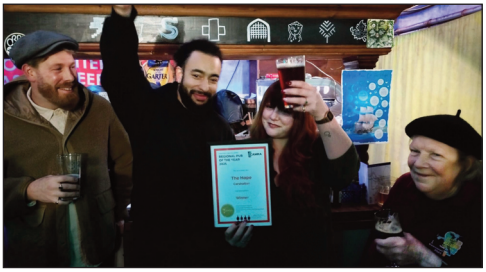
Twelve pubs to visit now!

Now is the time for us to decide on the 2026 CAMRA Greater London Pub of the Year. Teams of thirsty volunteers from each branch are comparing the 12 competing local winners to determine this year's regional award. Announced in late July, the Greater London winner then enters a 'super-regional' round from which four finalists are judged for the overall national award, won for 2025 by the Tamworth Tap.

Would you please contact your local CAMRA branch (see pages 4 and 6) if you would like to help us to judge the 2026 winner. All of the pubs in this year's competition are independently operated and free of tie; you may therefore expect to sample a wide range of cask beers, real ciders and perries.

These are the branch winners, so why not get out and see how you rate them!

- *Bexley* - **Long Haul**, 149, Long Lane, Bexleyheath DA7 5AE
- *Bromley* - **Cockpit**, 4 Royal Parade, Chislehurst BR7 6NR
- *Croydon & Sutton* - **Dark Horse**, 221 Gloucester Rd, Selhurst CR0 2DW
- *East London & City* - **Cock Tavern**, 315 Mare St, Hackney E8 1EJ
- *Enfield & Barnet* - **Little Green Dragon**, 928 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill N21 2AD
- *Kingston & Leatherhead* - **Antelope**, 87 Maple Rd, Surbiton KT6 4AW
- *North London* - **Wenlock Arms**, 26 Wenlock Rd, Hoxton N1 7TA
- *Richmond & Hounslow* - **Mitre**, 20 St Mary's Grove, Richmond TW9 1UY
- *South East London* - **Hand & Marigold**, 44 Bermondsey St, SE1 3UH
- *South West London* - **Trafalgar**, 23 High Path, Merton SW19 2JY
- *West London* - **Bear**, 27 Spring St, Paddington W2 1JA
- *West Middlesex* - **Owl & The Pussycat**, 106 Northfield Ave, W13 9RT



The presentation to last year's winner, the Hope at Carshalton

Marks are awarded collectively by each branch judging panel against eight criteria: quality and condition of real ale/cider/perry; promotion and knowledge of real ale; cleanliness and staff hygiene; community focus; service and welcome; style, décor and atmosphere; sympathy with CAMRA's aims; and overall impression and value.

You can find the judging guidelines on the regional website: *www.london.camra.org.uk*. Judges' visits must be discreet and unannounced. Their marks are necessarily kept confidential throughout the competition.

One point to note for this year is that two of the pubs, the Hand & Marigold and the Trafalgar, are managed by the same licensee, Oli Carter-Esdale. We believe that this is unprecedented.

Geoff Strawbridge

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.

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Admission Price

Tuesday to Friday 12:00- 15:00 £1.00
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Welcome to the Wild Swan

The pub featured on this edition's cover is the Wild Swan in Fetter Lane, Holborn (EC4A 1ES). This is Thornbridge Brewery's first venture into London. As with their other four outlets, it is a joint venture with Pivovar, the specialist beer importers, who also own the Elvington Brewery in York, brewers of Mittel lagers.

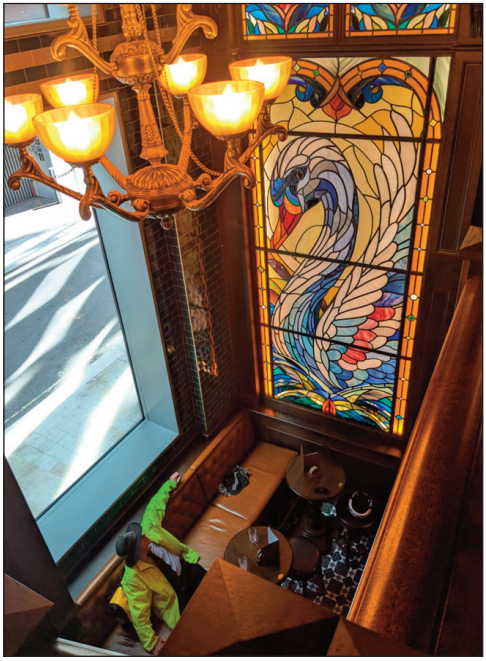
As may be expected, the pub prominently features cask ales, including guests, along with keg beers and an extensive wine list. Food is available throughout the day.

The building is new but the elegant interior very much respects the tradition of the pubs that have preceded it on this site and nearby. Admire in particular the tall stained-glass window that was created especially for the site.

Thornbridge director Jamie Hawksworth said, *"The opening of The Wild Swan marks an important moment for Thornbridge & Co as we bring our first pub to London. Establishing a site in the capital has long been an ambition for us, so it's incredibly rewarding to see that vision come to life on Fetter Lane."*

The cover picture, supplied by the company, shows Mr. Hawksworth (second left) alongside colleagues Jonathon Holdsworth, Simon Webster and Mike Cole. The photo of the window was taken by Robin Wootton.

I have seen it stated that the Wild Swan, which takes its name from one of Thornbridge's beers, replaces the White Swan, also known as the Mucky Duck. In fact, the White Swan, formerly Charrington's and later run by the ETM Group, was at 108 Fetter Lane. It was the ground floor of a 1950s building that has also now been demolished for new offices. The pub that the Wild Swan has replaced is the Printers Devil (99 Fetter Lane), formerly the Vintners Arms. It was destroyed by bombs in World War II, rebuilt in 1955, closed in 2008 and demolished again in 2013.



Thanks to Robin Wootton for the photograph

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Pub news

- The Big Smoke Pub Co have converted their tenancy at the **Bricklayers Arms** in Hersham (KT12 5LS) into a long lease. This, they say, strengthens their long-term commitment to the site and will enable further investment in the venue's future. It is their seventh pub in Surrey and is quite close to the brewery. The freehold is owned by the Wellington Pub Company. The pub had previously been run by the same landlord for 42 years.

- One of the few pubs disposed of by Wetherspoons in 2023 that has not remained a pub is the **Capitol** in Forest Hill (SE23 3TW). Lewisham Council have now approved a planning application for this historic former cinema to be converted into a children's indoor soft play centre. The proposal was supported by the Theatre Trust who felt that this would be a good way of returning the Grade II-listed building to community use. Its stained-glass windows, decorative plasterwork, original joinery and proscenium arch will be preserved.

- Congratulations to Stephen and Maryann O'Connor of the **Green Goddess** in Blackheath (SE3 7AA) who have won the *'best independent beer bar or pub in a city'* award at the 2026 SIBA Business Awards. The pub is a converted Barclays Bank branch. It is planned that the pub, which is very much a community hub, will become the home of the Common Rioters brewery. The equipment has been delivered and installation is in progress.

- The former **Tooting Tram & Social** (SW17 9NA) is one of the last of the pubs included in the Antic Collective administration in early 2025 to be disposed of. It has now become the House of ORA, a community cultural space and music venue.

- The **Mother Red Cap** in Archway (N19 5SE) closed in 2024 when the then landlord retired and it has been empty and boarded up ever since. The pub dates back to 1871 and is locally listed, with some original tiling. The freehold is understood to be owned by Star Pubs & Bars (Heineken). The boarding has now been removed and the *Ham & High* local newspaper reports that the owners had been contacted and that the pub is being renovated and will 'definitely return as a pub'.

- The **Orange Tree** in Winchmore Hill (N21 3HA) closed in February when the long-term licensees retired. This large traditional pub, standing by the New River, has frequently appeared in the *Good Beer Guide* and is a former CAMRA branch pub of the year (Enfield & Barnet). It was originally a Taylor Walker house and still displays their sign. Worryingly, it is up for sale and is described as a 'former pub with significant potential for residential conversion and new build'.

- The **Talbot** in Acton (W3 8JP) closed at the end of 2023. This three storey Victorian estate pub retains some heritage, with windows etched with Mann, Crossman & Paulin brewery signs. Although not listed, it is acknowledged as being a 'locally recognised landmark'. There are now development plans to extend the roof to provide nine residential units but with the pub retained. Inevitably, there are always doubts over such projects.

- The **Victory** in East Dulwich (SE22 8HX), having spent the last 26 years as Franklin's restaurant, has now reopened as a pub under its original name. It is being operated by a local restauranteur, supported by a group of locals.

- The **Wellington Arms** in Watford (WD17 1PA) is under threat. The owners have applied to Watford Borough Council for permission to demolish the pub and replace it with eight residential units and a Class E commercial unit on the ground floor. Class E would rule out any sort of replacement pub or bar. As usual, the developers are claiming that the pub is not viable but the local CAMRA branch, Watford & District, do not agree and believe that it does not comply with Watford Local Plan paragraph 12.10, which requires valued community facilities like pubs to be protected. There are also possible issues over the marketing and advertising of the pub. The branch has encouraged local people to register their objections. The closing date was 1 May. Fingers crossed.

Anyone for cricket?

CAMRA's legendary Canterbury cricket tent will be in operation again this year for the Kent v Middlesex County Championship match from Friday 19 to Monday 22 June. The venue is Kent CCC's St Lawrence Ground on the Old Dover Road (CT1 3NZ). It is part of their cricket festival week. Here are the things you need to know:

- The tent is for CAMRA members and their guests only; it's not open to the general public.
- Admission to the CAMRA tent is free. CAMRA members need to show their membership cards and to sign themselves and their guests into the visitors' book. You may bring as many guests as you like, within reasonable limits!
- It is possible to join CAMRA at the tent and we also offer cricket-tent-only membership at a reduced price.
- You will need to pay to get into the cricket ground (unless you are already a Kent CCC member). See the KCCC website, *www.kentcricket.co.uk* for admission details. Look under 'Tickets and Shop'. It could be cheaper to get advance tickets or ticket bundles.
- The tent will be open from 10am each day until after close of play (about 7pm). Play is scheduled to begin at 11am. Keep an eye on cricket news to check that the match hasn't ended early; County Championship matches do not always last for the full four days. The tent will not open on the fourth day if the match has already ended.
- We have our own private seating at the front of the tent, overlooking the pitch. If all the seats are taken, you are welcome to carry your drinks to other seating areas but please ask us for plastic glasses if you are moving away from the tent.
- We serve cask beer, draught cider, wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee. At our very successful 2025 tent we had 30 different beers and cider from 15 producers, mostly from Kent. We aim to have four beers on at any one time to maintain quality, usually a bitter, a best bitter, a golden ale and a dark ale. As one beer runs out, a new one is put on. This can happen very fast!
- We do not sell food (except for crisps etc) but there are plenty of food outlets on the cricket ground.
- We take cash or card payments. Beer is about £4 to £4.50 a pint.
- Any surplus made is donated to two charities which, this year, are Cancer Research UK and Alzheimer's Research UK. We welcome donations of beer and cider from brewers and cider producers. Any offers of sponsorship are welcome.
- If you have any further questions, please contact Gill Keay on *gillandgerrykeay@btinternet.com* or call 01227 463478 or 07976 431886 (text messages are usually best as I never seem to hear the phone). These details are also on *https://kent.camra.org.uk/*.

Gill Keay

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MENUS EVENTS

Farewell to Helen

Twenty-seven years ago, Helen Wilson and Chris Cochran joined Fullers from Wetherspoons. They became the first managers of the Mad Bishop & Bear at Paddington station (W2 1HB). There was however no staff accommodation at the Mad Bear and so they agreed to take on the nearby Victoria (W2 2NH) as well because it did. At the time, the Victoria was a failing pub but they turned it around. Chris remained at the Victoria but, after maternity leave, Helen moved on to manage the newly opened White Horse in Wembley (which sadly has no real ale) and then, finally, to Fuller's flagship pub, the Admiralty in Trafalgar Square (WC2N 5DS).

Helen continued her innovative management style, introducing events such as Burns Night, Trafalgar Day, Black Tot Day and others, much to the bemusement of the many tourists! Many of these events raised money for charity. The Admiralty has links with Sambrook's Brewery in Wandsworth and there have been several collaborative brews. Helen's last night at the Admiralty was celebrated by the release of one called Flaming Farewell. CAMRA's West London branch were there in force to wish Helen a long and happy retirement and present her with a certificate in recognition of her services to cask ale. Having seen his pub become West London branch Pub of the Year in 2024, Chris is also retiring and left the Victoria on May 29.

Wanda makes the presentation.

Wanda Piontek

The Wenlock wins again

After a wait of nine years, the Wenlock Arms in Hoxton (N1 7TA) has again won CAMRA North London branch's Pub of the Year award.

John Cryne from the branch, said, *"This is a classic story of rags to riches then back to rags and finally riches. The pub was reopened as a free house in 1994 by Steve Barnes and Will Williams and became a beacon for good beer at a time when real ale was not abundant. Then property developers took an interest and, in 2010, a three-year fight began to keep it as a pub. It finally re-opened in 2013 and gradually rebuilt its reputation for good beer and a warm welcome, winning our Pub of the Year award in 2017. Now the pub has won it for a second time under its current owners. This adds to the four awards won under the previous ownership"*

John added, *"The Wenlock Arms now has an impressive array of ten handpumps selling real ale and real cider and it is, of course, only in pubs that you can drink real ale. There are few pubs in our branch area that can boast winning our Pub of the Year as many times as the Wenlock Arms. The winner is chosen by an online vote by CAMRA members. One respondent said 'Harking back to its glorious late 90s/early 00s days as the finest cask ale joint in London (when competition was much slighter), the Wenlock Arms is once again firing on all cylinders (and all lines) as the benchmark in how to keep and serve cask, at the same time creating an inclusive, lively and convivial place to gather'. This comment is a tribute to all the hard work put in by the team at the Wenlock."*.

Samson Armett-Roughley, the Wenlock's cellar manager, said *"With these many ale taps, the ongoing pressures to pubs and businesses means the odds are against us, so it's an honour to win this award and help keep real ale alive."*

The pub was initially the brewery tap for the nearby Wenlock Brewery, hence the pub's name, but the brewery closed in 1962. It's a traditional Victorian corner pub (built in 1835) with a 'U' shaped bar, dartboard and a piano in the back seating area. Such are its classic features that it has been used for filming, including Simon Pegg's 'The World's End'. There is a simple snack menu of toasties, Pieminister pies, baked Camembert and tuna melts.

Esther Harper (general manager) and Samson Armett-Roughley (cellar manager) receive their award from John Cryne (right)

The award was presented to the pub on Tuesday 7 April. The full address is 26 Wenlock Road, Hoxton, N1 7TA, a ten-minute walk from Old Street underground station (go past Moorfields Hospital). Visit *www.wenlockarms.com* for more information.

John Cryne

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ENERGY COSTS

One of the most damaging increases in costs for breweries over the last few years has been the cost of energy. It had been hoped that brewers would be included in the Government's British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme which, from April 2027, will see electricity bills cut by up to 25% for over 10,000 businesses in certain categories. Sadly, brewing will not be one of them.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Asahi are looking to encourage regenerative agriculture in the UK in partnership with the malt suppliers Boortmalt. The aim is to introduce practices such as cover cropping, reduced tillage, crop rotation and reduced artificial fertiliser use. It is hoped that this will result in enhanced soil fertility, better crop yields and increased water conservation, as well as lower greenhouse gas emissions. The malt produced by the participating farms will be used in Fuller's London Pride, Meantime Prime Pale and Dark Star Hophead. The Griffin brewery in Chiswick uses over 3,000 metric tonnes of pale malt per annum, which is about 90% of their overall malt usage.

THURSTONS TO CLOSE

Although based in Horsell, near Woking, Thurston's beers are often seen on the south-west side of London. Unfortunately, not for much longer. After fourteen years, owner John Mintram is calling it a day. He told the *Woking News and Mail*, *"It's just one thing after another – National Insurance rises, beer duty rises, the cost of resources. It's just got harder and harder and it's got to the point where it's just not economical anymore."*

HURRICANE HITS KINGSTON

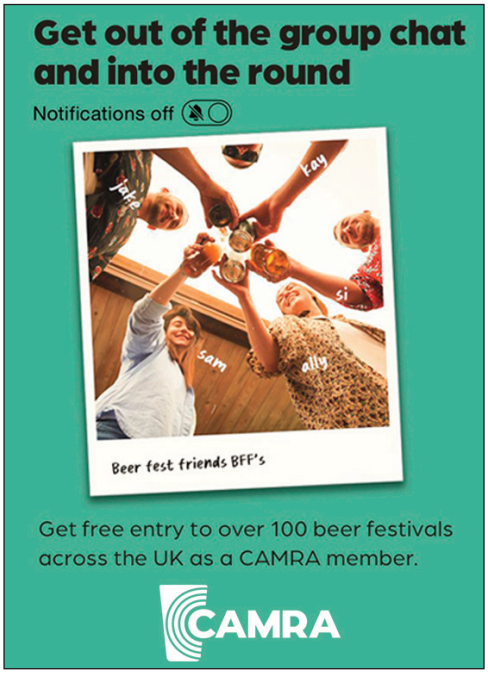
Windsor and Eton brewery (WEBrew) are celebrating the opening of their new outlet in Kingston on Thames with the launch of a new beer, Hurricane, a 4.5% ABV IPA brewed with Chinook and Lemondrop hops. The pump clip portrays a Hawker Hurricane of 85 Squadron RAF, as flown by John 'Paddy' Hemmingway. It was shot down in August 1940 and crashed at Fobbing Marshes in Essex. Happily, the pilot ejected safely and lived to be 105, passing away last year. The plane has been recovered and is being restored at Hawker Restorations in Suffolk. There are local connections. The plane's designer, Sir Sydney Camm, was born in Windsor, close to WEBrew's brewery, and a large number of Hurricanes were built in Kingston. In September, WEBrew plan to hold an exhibition about the Hurricane at the pub. The pub is what was formerly Woody's, riverside at 5 Ram Passage, High Street, Kingston (KT1 1HH).

MICHEAL JAMES JACKSON FOUNDATION

Although it is based in the USA, the Michael James Jackson Foundation for Brewing & Distilling was created to honour the memory of the man who we knew as the Beer Hunter. Michael actually lived in Hammersmith. The Foundation has recently issued its latest impact assessment. It's stated aim is *'Funding technical education and career advancement for people of colour in the brewing and distilling industries'*. It was launched in the summer of 2020 and has since funded 71 individuals to attend over 15 accredited brewing and distilling schools, including Heriot Watt University and the Chartered Institute of Brewers and Distillers in the UK. The investment totals $608,000 to date. For more information see *https://www.themjf.org/home/*.

TWISTED

Adnams produced one of the better April Fool's jokes this year with the announcement that they were planning to enhance their lighthouse tours by adding a helter-skelter ramp to the outside. In keeping with the local aesthetic, it would, of course, be a traditional wooden structure, painted in navy and white. Visitors would be invited to save themselves the 113 step climb back down by taking a malt sack, tucking in their elbows, and sliding all the way down to the Sole Bay for a pint.



The **25th Kingston Beer Festival** is here! As usual we'll be hosting **100+** real cask ales, craft keg beers, ciders and perries. The club also has a fully licensed bar - stocking wine, prosecco, spirits, soft drinks and bar snacks. Hot food will be available on site.

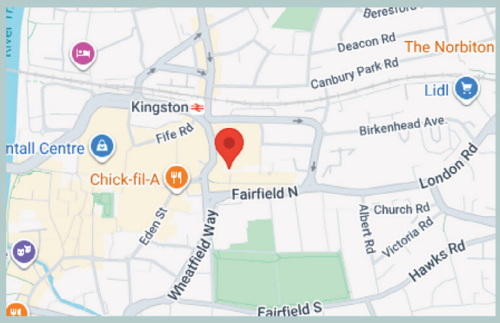
CAMRA members FREE entry, £3 glass deposit and £7 tokens all days.

Non-CAMRA members tickets: Thursday & Friday - £5 entry, £3 glass deposit and £12 tokens. Saturday tickets: £1 entry, £3 glass deposit and £6 tokens.

All unused tokens can be refunded or donated to the nominated charity, **MND**.

Opening times:

Thu. 11 June - 11am to 10.30pm
Fri. 12 June - 11am to 10.30pm
Sat. 13 June - 11am to 7pm



CAMRA

Location: Kingston Workmen's Club & Institute,
25 Old London Road, Kingston-Upon-Thames, KT2 6ND

Hackney Church: a new start - with mice!

Inevitably, it takes a long time to set up a brewery, whether it is a new one or relocating an existing one. Hackney Church Brew Co was no exception. In their case they moved their kit from the arches near Hackney Central where they were founded in 2018. *"We decided to expand in November 2024,"* said Hamish, the co-owner and managing director. *"We eventually started work the following September, finally opening our brand new Blackhorse Lane site in April 2026."* Hamish explained there were a number of reasons for the new premises. *"We had our own generator to power the brewery but during COVID people were working at home and a local complained about the noise. It turned out it would have cost us around £170K to address it. Then there was the need to meet our growing demand. We were turning down contracts because keeping the tap room supplied took up much of our capacity. There is also the fact that our lease in Hackney is up for renewal and the new site gives us that bit more security for the future."*

Hamish

They have no intention of giving up their original Hackney home. The removal of the brewery provides more space and *new opportunities for the taproom. Hamish explained, "We are licensed to hold weddings but, because we had to close the tap room to do so, we limited them to one a month so as not to upset our regulars too much. Thanks to the release of the second arch, which housed the brewing kit, we can put in a bar and extra toilets and so can host the weddings there and increase them to every week."*

The brew length has remained the same but the significant extra space has allowed them to install more fermenters. There are now ten, with sizes ranging from 10 to 40 hectolitres. This means that they are still able to lager their beers. *"It takes six weeks from grain to glass,"* said Jacob, their award-winning head brewer. The wall outside the gents and the stairwell on the way to the ladies are festooned with their award certificates. *"And that's not all of them,"* said Hamish.

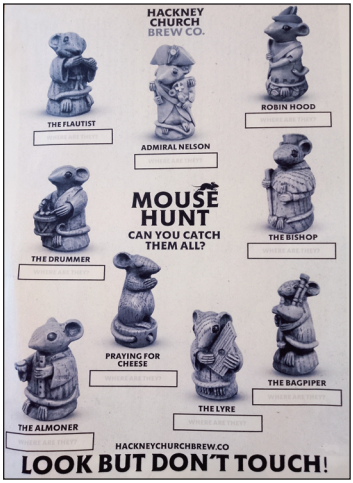
The pulpit

The ladies' toilets are worth a perusal (sorry gents); they have a set of ecclesiastical mirrors, in keeping with the tap room's style. Where else can you find a pulpit in a bar? Hamish explained that he purchased the items from a specialist dealer who offers a whole range of church items.

There is also a lovely twist. Those of you who know your church carpentry may have head of Robert (Mousey) Thompson, who was famous for carving mice into his work. Hackney Church has done the same, although their mice are a little more diverse, ranging from one dressed as Admiral Nelson to another figure praying for cheese. There is a sheet for children (and adults with a sense of fun) to find the mice and tick them off!

The ladies' mirrors

The joie de vie is also apparent in the brewery area. Hamish proudly showed off his set of lights, designed to pick out the various pieces of equipment on brewery tours in what can only be described as a light show with moving coloured lights, more reminiscent of a son et lumière. *"We can use the area alongside the tap room for events, including rugby and cricket,"* said Hamish as he pointed out a huge screen. *"We want to attract new audiences including families, so have introduced Family Fun Days on Sunday with a bouncy castle."*



Those mice!

Only their core range of beer has a religious connotation. Hamish explained that they dropped this link owing to comments from some customers. Their beer is all craft keg and the core range comprises Ascension (Köln style lager), Halo (Helles), Renaissance (Pale Ale), St Clements (Hefeweizen) and Super Fly (West Coast IPA). These are available in cans, produced in-house on their small canning line. Jacob said that they can do cask and maybe they might think about it in the future. Jacob has experience in brewing cask beer, having previously worked at Redemption Brewery.

Hackney Church might be growing but it still retains a friendly feel and remains a small team, with only three brewers (led by Jacob), Mel (part time sales), Hamish and the tap room staff. Why not pop along to the new site to see the brewery and the tap room and seek out those pesky mice while enjoying a beer.

Go to *https://hackneychurchbrew.co/* for locations and times.

Christine Cryne

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JULY – AUGUST 2026

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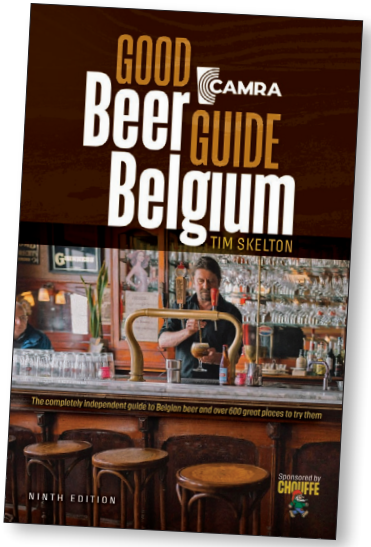
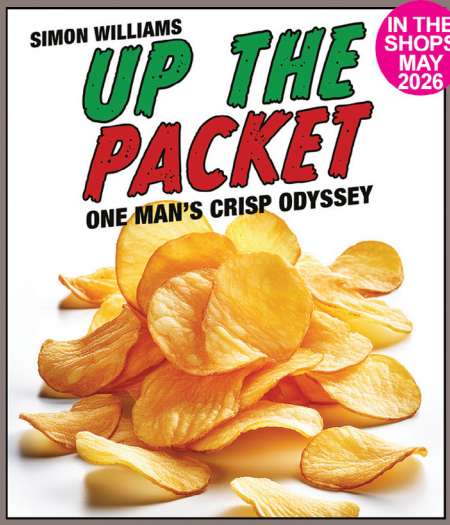
Up The Packet – One Man's Crisp Odyssey
Who doesn't like a packet of crisps with their pint? Have you however thought more deeply about the subject? Simon Williams has produced a book that will tell you all you need to know. Over 24 chapters, Mr Williams, a record producer and the proud owner of a collection of over 8,000 crisp bags, sets out the history of the snack, the development of the various flavours, what defines a crisp and much more. In a light-hearted but very informative style, with plenty of illustrations, this is a highly enjoyable read. Paperback; 181 pages; ISBN-13-978-1-9162327-5-4. Price £14.99. It is available online from the publishers, Damaged Goods Books, at *www.damagedgoodsbooks.com*.

Good Beer Guide: Belgium
The 9th edition of CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide Belgium* was released on 14 May. It remains the essential guide to one of the world's great beer destinations. Completely independent, it features over 1,000 Belgian beers and the brewers who make them. It also lists the very best places to enjoy them, from cosy cafés to specialist beer bars, and from brewery taps to world-renowned beer festivals. It is available from CAMRA Books at *https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/good-beer-guide-belgium-9th-edition-2026*.



TWO NEW PAPERBACK BOOKS

LONDON'S DEAD PUBS
by PAUL TALLING / DERELICT LONDON
Paul takes a look at some of the lost pubs of London. Plus a few that have come back from the dead... and where you can get a good pint today.



UP THE PACKET
ONE MAN'S CRISP ODYSSEY by SIMON WILLIAMS
Simon delves into the history and the future of the noble crisp packet and our favourite snacks.

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Anspach & Hobday - a celebration

In these difficult times, it's encouraging to see a brewery not only surviving but thriving. In March, Anspach & Hobday celebrated their twelfth birthday. It's been a long journey since 2013 when Paul Anspach set up the venture with Jack Hobday. For the first year they shared premises with Bullfinch Brewery, each operating a tiny 100 litre (0.6 barrel) kit.

Since then, they have influenced the keg stout market with the launch of London Black, the nitro keg that now accounts for over 50% of their sales. The pair reflected that there are now numerous 'something' black stouts or porters around the country. Clearly imitation is the best form of flattery!

In 2024, their The IPA (6% ABV) was judged best in its category at CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain competition before going on to win overall Silver. They were just pipped at the post by Essex's Crouch Vale Amarillo for the Gold. This just added to their continuing role of merit. At their birthday celebrations, two more awards were handed over. These were two Golds won in CAMRA's Champion Cask Beer of London for their IPA (again) and The Porter (4.5% ABV).

If you want to see what the fuss is about, pop along to their brewery tap, the Arch House, in Druid Street (SE1 2HH) to try a beer or two on handpump; see *https://camra.org.uk/pubs/arch-house-london-159545*.

Christine Cryne

The brewing team with their awards

CAMRA

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Got questions? Email Emily at secretary@wltuc.com

Greene King sell off

Despite seeing an increase in revenue in the year ending 4 January 2026 of 3.6% to £2, 539 billion, GK are embarking on a restructuring which will involve the sale of a number of properties. This started in April with thirteen hotels and pubs with letting rooms being placed on the market. These are spread across the Midlands and the south of England, although none are in London. It was then announced that GK would be selling ten freehold pubs, again, none of which were in London. However, the true figure may be nearer 150. There are reports of the closure of a number of GK pubs in London. Identified so far are the Ballot Box (a 'Hungry Horse') in Greenford (UB6 7QL), the Builders Arms in Barnet (EN4 9SH), the Masons Arms in Harlesden (NW10 5NU), the Grade II-listed Old Dairy in Stroud Green (N4 4AP) and the Sutton Arms in Sutton (SM1 1EZ). All are currently closed and their futures unknown. At least one, the Masons Arms, has been sold off for development (see the Pub heritage and planning column).

There may be more to come. GK have set up a new 'business unit' containing some 300 pubs whose futures are under review. Some may be converted to leasehold, tenanted or franchise models while others will be disposed of. GK, who operate around 2,600 pubs overall, are owned by the Hong Kong-based conglomerate CK Asset Holdings and readers may recall that they are spending some £40 million on a new brewery just outside Bury St Edmunds.

According to a report in *CityAM* on 29 April, GK are 'driving efficiencies' by introducing an 'AI conversational assistant' to answer the telephones in a number of their London pubs.

Beefeater and Brewers Fayre to close

Whitbread have announced that they are leaving the 'branded restaurant' sector. Of the 197 Beefeater and Brewers Fayre sites involved, 110 will be sold and the others converted into extensions to adjoining Premier Inn hotels, which they also own. Whitbread's aim is to *'to drive a significant increase in both margins and returns that will fund substantial cash returns for shareholders'*. It is reported that the move will lead to the loss of some 3,800 jobs. Mitchells & Butlers are reported to be in talks to acquire a small number of sites. Only three of the outlets listed are in London.

Wetherspoons news

I suggested in the previous edition that JDW could be trying to open a pub at every one of the London railway termini. They might also be trying to do the same thing with airports in Europe. As previously mentioned, the first is at the Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernandez airport in Spain. This will be followed by two pubs at Josep Tarradellas Barcelona – El Prat airport. These outlets will be operated locally and will serve cask beer. Meanwhile JDW are also opening a third pub at Heathrow Airport, this time in Terminal Two. It will be named after Sir Frank Whittle, inventor of the jet engine.

Results for the third quarter of JDW's financial year, the 13 weeks to 26 April, saw a 3.4% increase in sales but chairman Tim Martin has mentioned profit warnings.

So far this year, JDW has opened eight pubs, sold eight and opened 13 franchised outlets. They have also purchased the freeholds of four of their previously leased pubs. They currently operate 794 directly managed pubs and 21 franchises. Three more pubs will open in London this year: at Paddington station, Charing Cross station and in Shaftesbury Avenue.

I heard a wonderful suggestion recently on BBC Radio Four's *News Quiz*, courtesy of Simon Evans. Discussing a complaint from a new MP that too much drinking goes on in the Palace of Westminster, Mr Evans suggested that, given their reputation for restoring historic buildings, the site should be handed over to JD Wetherspoon.

Young's news

For its financial year ended 30 March, Young's have reported a 4.7% increase in sales. They expect their final results to be *'in line with management's expectations'*. Young's have increased their estate by purchasing the Cubitt House pub company with eight pubs. These are listed in the pub information update column.

Many brewers make a winning beer!

As reported in our previous edition, the London Brewing Company (LBC) won CAMRA's overall Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition with their Beer Street (4.0% ABV). On 23 April, and despite a tube strike, both local CAMRA members and the London Tasting Panel made it to LBC's home, the Bohemia in North Finchley (N12 9QH), to cheer on the presentation of the award certificate. The winning beer, an easy drinking, full flavoured rye bitter, was in plentiful supply. Managing director Senan Sexton thanked CAMRA for their support and Alex Woods, the head brewer, thanked his predecessors for laying down the groundwork on which he has built. To help celebrate, some of LBC's past brewers were in attendance, including George Boustred, now at Exale, and Rich White, who has gone on to found Werewolf Brewery.

Christine Cryne

Lots of brewers!

CAMRA

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Saving the Trafalgar

At a time when many London pubs are quietly slipping out of use, it is encouraging to report on a campaign that is not satisfied with simply preventing loss but is actively working to secure a long-term future for a much-loved local. The Trafalgar, tucked away on High Path in South Wimbledon (SW19 2JY), has been trading in one form or another since the nineteenth century. In recent years, under the leadership of Oli Carter-Esdale, it has once again become a proper free house: independent, well-run and valued equally by long standing regulars and newer customers.

The problem for the Trafalgar lies in its location. Flush at the edge of a major regeneration area, its front doors look out onto newly built flats and astroturf, while its beer garden backs onto boarded-up homes awaiting demolition. This uneasy position has resulted in repeated proposals for its demolition and redevelopment, all of which have been refused in recognition of the pub's cultural and social value. Last year, an appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate, confirming at a national level that the building and its continued use as a pub should remain.

Planning victories however only take a campaign so far. With the pub's current lease approaching its end, the Trafalgar's loyal customer base has recognised that avoiding demolition is not the same as securing the pub's future. The result has been the formation of Save the Traf, a community-led campaign now exploring a practical and increasingly well-evidenced solution: community ownership.

No longer a novelty, there are now more than 200 community owned pubs across England operating successfully. Evidence gathered by CAMRA and organisations such as Power to Change suggest that once established, community pubs have strong survival rates, benefiting from local stewardship, loyalty and an approach that prioritises continuity over short-term returns. For the Save the Traf campaign, this model is particularly appealing. Far from being a failing business in need of rescue, it is a thriving, award-winning pub with an active and loyal customer base. What the campaign believes is that community ownership of the freehold will ultimately achieve is stability for Oli, his staff and customers after years of uncertainty. Momentum has built quickly. A public meeting held in March attracted over 100 residents, a clear indication of the depth of local support. Since then, volunteers have been working through the practicalities of governance, finance and engagement, while maintaining dialogue with the current freeholders.

Ellie Eames, CAMRA's Regional Director, presents the award to Oli (in black).

The campaign was given a timely boost when the Trafalgar was voted 2026 Pub of the Year by CAMRA's South West London branch. The presentation was made on 24 April at the Trafalgar's Spring Beer Festival. With punters spilling out onto the street, the festival was a reminder of exactly what is at stake: not an abstract planning principle but a living, working pub doing what pubs have always done best.

It is easy to talk about how, conceptually, to make a place better through 'place-making' and 'improving the public realm'. It is harder, but more important, to recognise when a place already works. The Trafalgar does. Community ownership has emerged as the clear route forward, providing a realistic and proven means of securing it as a proper pub for this corner of South Wimbledon for generations to come.

For campaign updates, go to *www.savethetraf.co.uk*.

Rebecca Coleman
on behalf of the CBS committee

Let there be dark

On 14 March, the guys at the Pressure Drop Brewery and Taproom in Tottenham Hale (N17 9QP) kindly hosted the inaugural Beyond the Pale beer festival, inspired by Low Key's amazing Generation Craft festival and brought to London by the enthusiasm and determination of Albina Dzyaloshinskaya.

Room for all in the taproom

Instead of the pales, IPAs, lagers and bitters that appear in abundance on Britain's bar tops, here the world of Imperial stouts, barley wines, fruit-fuelled beers, sours and black-coloured tipples was showcased in this one-day extolment of these under-celebrated delights. The crowd was in good cheer as they worked their way through the offerings, from the established titan that is Tartarus Beers and up-and-coming Breakbeat Brewing, who are making waves as they experiment with pushing the boundaries of Imperial Stouts. My fellow-drinkers and I salivated at the wares of sour-beer and fruity beer virtuosos, Dolphin Brewery. I personally delighted in the offerings from Amity Brew Co, Drop Project, Gravity Well Brewing, Ampersand and Libertalia Brewing. Crafty Apple's small-batch libations filled a cider-shaped hole.

Wonderful weather. Wonderful beer. I enjoyed the enthusiasm of the day and fingers crossed for a return of this event.

Daniel Meers

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I mentioned the **Masons Arms** in Harlesden (NW10 5NU) in the Trade News column. Although it has been opened out, the pub retains some exceptional Victorian fittings, including the original bar counter and bar-back, and rates one star on CAMRA's inventory of historic pub interiors. Formerly a Greene King pub, it closed in 2024 and was sold to developers for £2.5 million last year. The new owners have now applied to Brent Council for permission to demolish the building and replace it with a six-storey block of 26 flats with a public house (sui generis) on the ground floor. They also want to relocate an adjacent listed water trough. Both CAMRA's London Pubs Group and North London branch have become involved and have urged people to register objections, although the closing date will have passed by the time you read this. If readers want to see the application, the reference number is 26/0807. North London branch's pub preservation officer, Joanne Scott, has also applied to Historic England to have the pub statutorily listed. We will keep readers posted.

There is also concern over the **William** (formerly the William IV) just down the road (NW10 5JX). It is another impressive pub and rates three stars on CAMRA's inventory although it is not listed. Closed in March, it had been operated by Loci pubs whose website says, *'Regrettably, the William has now closed. Thank you to everyone who visited and supported us'*. The freehold is owned by the Wellington Pub Company. The situation is being monitored in case action is required.

Once an iconic Young's pub, the **Railway Bell** in Cawnpore Street, Gypsy Hill, (SE19 1PF) recently came under threat. Having been sold to Punch Pubs as part of the Ram Pub Company in the summer of 2021, it was sold on to developers and closed in June 2023. There appears to be no suggestion that this popular community local, the *Evening Standard* Pub of the Year in 1981, was failing. A planning application was submitted in February by Londres Developments Limited for its conversion to nine single bed units, which suggests that it would be little more than a glorified house in multiple occupation (HMO). HMOs appear to be the current fad with developers, replacing student accommodation. Unfortunately, pubs are often well suited to conversion to HMOs.

The Railway Bell, dating from the 19th century and locally listed by Lambeth Council as a rare two-storey 'cottage' public house, is an attractive building with a wood and tile frontage, although it is neither statutorily listed nor listed as an ACV. A local group, the Railway Bell Friends, was formed to campaign to save the pub and I'm pleased to say that they were successful, with Lambeth's planning committee rejecting the planning application on 17 April. The campaign issued some impressive guidance on making an appeal against the application that is worth a look. It can be found at *https://railwaybellfriends.org*. For those who wish to see the planning application itself, the reference number is 26/00528/FUL. It is, of course, open to the owners to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate but so far, so good.

There is similar news of the **Anglesea Arms** in Woolwich (SE18 6EF). This attractive corner pub, dating from 1850 and formerly owned by Shepherd Neame, closed in early 2025. Planning permission was sought to demolish it and replace it with a four-storey block of seven flats and a ground floor commercial space (Class E) which the developers said was intended to be *'a space for gathering the local community'*. I would have thought that the existing pub could do that. It is not statutorily listed but is on the local heritage list and within the Woolwich Conservation Area. Greenwich Council refused the application on the grounds that the applicant had submitted insufficient information as regards the pub's commercial viability and that the loss of what was considered to be an important social community asset went against the Royal Greenwich Local Plan. There were also concerns about the quality of the accommodation. Again, it is open to the owners to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate but so far, so good here too.

When I last mentioned the **Bell** (the Rat) in Walton-on-the- Hill (KT20 7UJ) in our August/September 2025 edition, the situation was looking grim with the local council having granted planning permission to convert the pub to residential use. There may yet be hope. CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group applied to Historic England for a statutory listing and this has been successful. The Bell is now Grade II-listed. The primary reason for the listing is the pub's rare and complete 1950s interior in Charrington's 'house style', specifically the public and saloon counters, the bar stillion with illuminated signage, fireplaces, fielded panelling, doors, leaded glazing, fixed seating, plaster relief motifs and decorative cornices. The hope is that the listing will make conversion to residential use a less attractive proposition. The planning permission was granted to the owners, the Brakspears Pub Company, who have yet to sell it to a developer. The pub is still open, although the current licensee's tenancy ends this summer. There is still a chance that it may remain a pub, something that the area needs.

An interesting situation has arisen with the **Magdala** in Hampstead (NW3 2SB). The upper floors have long been converted to residential use but the function room on the first floor remained. This was until the owner decided to convert it into a flat without planning permission in 2024. A retrospective planning application has been lodged with Camden Council but this is being opposed by local residents, the Heath and Hampstead Society and CAMRA who want the reinstatement of a much-needed community facility. They wish to see a return to the comedy nights, environmental talks, birthdays and celebrations that it was previously used for. Although the application was registered as long ago as November 2024, there have been delays and the deadline for comments was only 13 April this year. More to come in due course.

It looks like the end for the **Grove** in East Dulwich (SE22 8LF). The pub closed in August 2012 following a fire. The freeholders are the Incorporated Trustees of the Dulwich Estate and, at the time, it was leased to Stonegate. Their lease ended in September 2025 since when the Dulwich Estate has been in negotiations with the Borough of Southwark as to its future. The Council wanted it to remain a pub but it was judged to be beyond repair. In April, the Dulwich Estate applied for planning permission for 'demolition of the existing building on site, erection of a fence and gates, and meanwhile use of a site as a growing garden'. This is however only temporary and the long-term use of the site is still not known. Comments on the application closed on 7 May.

Heritage podcast

CAMRA's chief executive, Tom Stainer, is a trustee of the National Brewery Heritage Trust. The Trust has recently launched a podcast, looking at the people and stories

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behind our brewing heritage. The first episode discusses why Burton ended up as the brewing capital of the UK. Tom says that it is a fun, accessible and fascinating listen. Go to *https://www.breweryheritage.com/podcast/*.

Multiple preservation

Not in London but still a nice story. The Royal Oak in Haworth, Yorkshire (the home of the Bronte sisters) was regularly frequented by volunteers from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, being opposite the station. Sadly, this former Webster's house closed in 2024 but it reopened at the end of April, having been acquired by the K&WVR themselves. It serves four cask beers, two regular and two guests, and there is always one dark beer.

London's Real Heritage Pubs

If you are a fan of pubs that have been able to retain interiors or internal features of historic importance, then this book is for you. It covers 249 London pubs, ranging from simple inns to ornate Victorian drinking palaces and promotes the need to celebrate and protect what genuine pub heritage we have left. It includes many excellent full-colour photographs and informative articles. It is available on-line from the CAMRA shop; go to *https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/londons-real-heritage-pubs/*.

Historical Pubs of London Map

If you have visitors to show around London's historic pubs or, indeed, if you just want to visit on your own, may I recommend the above, published by Blue Crow Media. It comes in flat sheet format but it is handy enough to use on the move. Blue Crow Media specialise in architectural guides and maps which, I suspect, many Londoners will find interesting. They also cover places abroad. You can buy the pub map on-line at *https://bluecrowmedia.com/products/historical-pubs-of-london-map* and their shop is at *https://bluecrowmedia.com/collections/all*.

Did you know we're on your doorstep?

While reading the article in the February/March edition about the threatened pubs of Heathrow (I grew up down the road from Harmondsworth), I realised that I needed to write this article. This year I am the organiser of the Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival and I had been scratching my head as to how to promote the festival more widely. It then dawned on me just how near the delights of CAMRA's Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead branch are for London drinkers. I thought therefore that I would share some of them with you, as they really are worth visiting and are very accessible from all over London.

Where to start? Firstly, I think, with one of my favourite pubs, this year's (and on many previous occasions) our branch Pub of the Year, the White Horse at Hedgerley (SL2 3UY). This pub has everything; it truly is a classic country pub. Set in a stunning village, it is Grade II listed and, at lunchtimes, serves exquisite (and very affordable) food, including a selection of puddings to die for. The real reason for going however is, of course, the beer. Kevin, the landlord of many years, keeps one of the best ranges of real ales in the south east. There are always at least ten available to try, from breweries all over the country and including all colours and strengths; there really is something for everyone.

If you don't have a designated driver to get there (my son takes me on our way to football at least once a month), you can take the train to Slough and it's a bus ride and a short walk to the pub. Alternatively, you can jump in a taxi outside the station. For the really adventurous, you can take the Underground to Uxbridge, then the 102 Flightline bus to High Wycombe (alight at the Mumfords Lane stop before the Crowne Plaza Hotel) and then it's a 1.7 mile walk to the pub across the Chilterns countryside. Whichever way you do it, trust me, you won't regret it.

What then of Maidenhead? It's very accessible, towards the western end of the Elizabeth Line (and still covered by the Freedom Pass) or by a fast train from Paddington. There are a number of Good Beer Guide pubs but, since last year, we also have the Maidenhead Ale Trail. This runs annually from the middle of October to the middle of November but, if you are not worried about having a participant's badge, the pubs are, of course, there all year round. At my age I would find it a bit of a stretch to do all of the trail in one day but it is very doable over a couple of weekends or why not just do a couple of the pubs. They are all great and there are going to be a couple more this year. I would give a shout out to the Lord Grenfell (SL6 1TW), a traditional former Morland's pub, still with some external tiling. There is also the Hoppy Place (SL6 1TJ), a town-centre hostelry with a more modern vibe, specialising in craft beer. There is an Ale Trail map, difficult to reproduce in the printed magazine but displayed on the CAMRA London Region website.

Next, on to Windsor, which is very definitely worth visiting whether you go to the castle or not. You can get here on the branch line from Slough (again, Elizabeth Line or fast from Paddington) or on the South West Trains service from Waterloo (and intermediate stations) into Windsor and Eton Riverside. Both Windsor and Eton have an abundance of great pubs. My favourite is the Windsor Trooper (SL4 3BZ), a little walk from the town centre and currently our Cider Pub of the Year. We do however have a 'hidden gem': our very own beer mile, which, in my opinion, is on a par with Bermondsey and Walthamstow, once you factor in the other attractions Windsor has to offer. There are three breweries within a very short walking distance. These are Windsor & Eton (WEBrew), which has a traditional cask ale offering, plus Indie Rabble and Two Flints which are more craft based.

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The details are:

- Windsor & Eton – The Unit 4 Taproom, 4 Vansittart Estate, Duke Street SL4 1SE;
- Indie Rabble – 27 The Arches, Alma Road SL4 1QZ;
- Two Flints - 25-26 The Arches, Alma Road SL4 1QZ.

Please check their websites for opening hours etc.

Finally, if you have come on the Waterloo line and you still have some drinking time and energy left, get off at Wraysbury, walk down the hill and visit the Perseverance (TW19 5DB), a wonderful locals pub (and famous for its January Pies and Porters beer festival).

And so, I'll end with the reason why I started to write this article. This year's Maidenhead Beer and Cider Festival will take place on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 July. Once again, it is being held at the Sports Bar in Summerleaze Park, which is truly a wonderful venue. We will have a great selection of beers and ciders, food, entertainment and (on Saturday afternoon) something to keep the kids happy. CAMRA members have free entry but, if you book in advance, you can get your first two pints for £9. For further information see our website *https://maidenheadbeerfest.camra.org.uk/*.

Richard Hemmings

Tavern takeover

On Hornsey Road, between the vibrant Stroud Green Road and the Irish bars of Holloway Road, the Shaftesbury Tavern provides a lovely pub experience in what could otherwise be considered a bit of a dry spot for real ale. Run by the Remarkable Pubs group, as evidenced by the Litovel on tap, the venue consists of a front bar area with an open kitchen and a gorgeous function room towards the back, complete with nooks for added privacy. It also boasts an array of screens for sports which, given the location, it may be no surprise that they were showing an Arsenal game (1-0 up at the time I walked in).

On 4 March the pub hosted its first ever tap takeover, by Yorkshire brewery Timothy Taylor's. With their flagship pale, Landlord, now a mainstay on many cask lines in London, it's a shame the rest of their catalogue isn't showcased as much, so this felt like a good opportunity to become better acquainted. This was encouraged by a visit to a recent Timothy Taylor's takeover at the Wenlock Arms in Hoxton, which featured an impressive six ales.

The evening at the Shaftesbury offered a humble three ales by comparison, one of which was Landlord, a regular on the pumps anyway. Nonetheless, the evening was an enjoyable showcase of Yorkshire brewing and hospitality. The two other guest beers were Golden Best (3.4% ABV), a crisp light mild requiring little to no effort to drink and Northern Rising Unity, a decadent stout brewed in collaboration with Leeds craft beer powerhouse Northern Monk (4.4% ABV). In a nod to their origin, the ales were pulled through sparklers for the evening, something of a novelty in a pub this far south. The festivities didn't stop with the beer either as, throughout the evening, a raffle provided prizes such as branded hoodies and beanie hats.

The pub felt in good spirits for the evening, including drinkers who weren't there to sample some lesser-seen beers or taste malt from a bowl on the bar. There were several people in to watch the football on the numerous yet not overbearing screens or try some of the options from the Thai menu. Dishes were coming out of the kitchen at a brisk rate, which was not surprising given the very reasonable deal of a pint and a stir fry for £12.

This was certainly an enjoyable way to spend a Wednesday evening and I hope it was enough of a success for all involved that we will see similar events at the Shaftesbury Tavern in the future.

The full address is 534 Hornsey Road, Upper Holloway, N19 3QN *(https://theshaftesburytavern.co.uk/)*.

Jake Garner

London, Capital of Brewing

At the last count, there were over 100 independent breweries in Greater London. They are listed on CAMRA's Greater London Region website: *www.london.camra.org.uk*. Please support them by buying their beer, preferably from pubs or otherwise direct or from permitted stockists.

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A Swedish conundrum

Our licensing legislation can be difficult at times but the following story, which featured in a recent European Beer Consumers Union (EBCU) newsletter, takes some understanding.

Sweden's alcohol policy is based on the concept that food should always be available alongside alcoholic drinks because this leads to more moderate, responsible drinking. The law requires that, in order to obtain a serving permit for alcohol, pubs and restaurants must maintain a genuine food offer. The state retail monopoly Systembolaget promotes food and drink pairings and their staff are trained to make food recommendations.

In recognition of this, one particular brewery, Poppels Bryggeri, posted some adverts on Instagram showing food and drink. Nothing elaborate, just food and drink. Along then comes the Konsumentverket, Sweden's consumer agency, who say that this breaks the Bildregel, a section of Sweden's Alcohol Act that limits advertising images to the drink itself, its raw ingredients or a single piece of packaging. This was in 2022. This February, the case reached the Patent and Market Court of Appeal who ruled against Poppels Bryggeri. They were given a suspended fine of 500,000 Swedish kronor (£39,810) if the adverts are repeated. Mats Wahlstrom, the brewery's somewhat frustrated chief executive, commented, *"The ruling makes it nearly impossible to communicate about beer as part of a meal, a craft or a culture. The risk is that the result is the exact opposite of the public health goal: that communication is reduced to product and price, without responsibility, without context, and without food. In practice being only allowed to show a product image and a price will drive towards pure alcohol consumption of low-price products."*

Poppels' marketing director added, *"That alcohol should be consumed with food has been one of the cornerstones on which Sweden has built its alcohol policy. We find it hard to see how you are supposed to do the right thing as a company when those who take responsibility are punished."*

The Bildregel rule dates from the 1970s when there were serious concerns about mass-market alcohol promotion. There are questions as to whether it is still suitable for a market that is made up of small independent craft breweries who, unlike the multinational brewers, don't wish to promote a glamorous lifestyle and social aspiration.

The issue also has EU internal market implications and Poppels are contemplating taking the matter to the EU Court of Justice. If they do so, they will have the support of the EBCU, who have already called on the Swedish government to update the rules.

A Tale of Two Ale Trails!

Colin Price's excellent article about the Young's 135 Club in the December/January edition prompted me to share my own recollections of completing the pilgrimage in 1979/1980, along with a similar but more ambitious project some friends undertook at the same time.

I grew up in South London and my love affair with beer started illegally at the age of 15 in 1974 when most bitter in South London was so undrinkable that it was usually mixed with light ale! Lager did not taste as bad but neither did it taste of much at all and, as I remember, it was about 10p a pint dearer; 30p verses 20p; no contest!

My uncle Fred (a local police constable) mentioned that I might find a decent pint in Young's pubs but his advice came with a 'Special' warning. Young's Special Bitter had an OG of 1047 and you'd be hard pressed to find anything stronger in SW London at that time. I headed to a nearby Young's hostelry, the Gorringe Park in Tooting, hoping to get served and looking forward to my first pint of Young's. The trip was a partial success as I did get served but, guess what, I didn't like the Special. It had too strong a flavour for my fledgling taste buds. I tried the Ordinary Bitter next and became hooked. Hops, a hint of sulphur and an enticing loose head. From then on, it was Young's for me whenever it could be found.

So, my taste for good ale was forming but, as Young's pubs were a bit traditional with an older crowd, it became a choice of good beer or a pub with a bit more excitement but poor beer. It all depended on my mood. At some stage an older mate pointed out the leaflet listing all the Young's pubs and told me that, if you got the lot signed off, there was a free pin of beer on offer. I decided that this would be for me but there were two problems: I was skint and had no transport to get to those pubs that were further afield than southwest London. It would have to wait.

Fast forward to 1979/1980 when my mate Chris and I were final year students at Brunel University in Uxbridge. We were not skint because, back in those idyllic days, students got their fees paid and had grants to live off. Our taste for good beer had been sustained by three hand pulls in the Student Union bar and, to top it all, Chris had a battered old mini for getting to the long-distance Young's houses. When I say this mini was old, its windows did not wind up and down, they slid back and forth.

We went at it, with a few pubs being picked off here and there, whenever we found ourselves in the right parts of what was mostly south and west London. We would get the lists signed and some pubs even stamped them. There were longer trips into Surrey, Kent and, to the furthest pub of all, the Fountain at Plumpton Green in Sussex. The longest haul in London was to the Britannia in Barking, although our first effort to get there ended badly when we arrived just after closing time. There was no Satnav to help in those days; we had to rely on the London A to Z atlas. Don't forget that, back then, pubs closed early and also for a few hours every afternoon (just in case we lost the First World War) so that planning was more to the fore than it would be today.

Once our final exams were completed, we embarked on the glorious final day of what by now had become the Young's 139 because of new pubs being added to the list. This was July 1980. To complete our mission in style our last day had to be Wandsworth and its fourteen pubs. We first took a diversion to the Founders Arms on the South Bank which had opened that day and we reckoned made us the first to complete the 139! A trip to the cinema occupied the afternoon

closing time and we finished appropriately, and quite the worse for wear, in the Brewery Tap. The highlights of the great endeavour were many. The beer was wonderful, Ordinary and Special Bitter and occasionally Best Malt Ale and Winter Warmer. The pubs were almost universally excellent, often with separate public and saloon bars, and always welcoming. Boozers standing out in the memory from nearly fifty years ago are the palatial Spread Eagle in Wandsworth, the Lord Napier in Thornton Heath, which had live jazz every night, and the Prince of Wales in Tooting where our pamphlets were signed by the licensee, Nosher Powell, ex professional heavyweight boxer, famous stuntman and world jousting champion!

The Young's 135 Club tie

The reward for our efforts was a pin of beer (although you could opt to take it as nine four-pint party cans), a commemorative tie and a tie pin. These were proudly worn at our graduation later that month. There was also a visit to the brewery, which involved a short tour and a long time in the taproom. Beer aside, the tour was great, with the highlights being the heavy horses (then still used for deliveries within a three-mile radius), a farmyard with resident ram and chickens, plus a Victorian steam powered beam engine, then still in use.

Just before Chris and I kicked off on our Young's ale trail, three fellow Brunelians and ale enthusiasts, Roland, Pete and Duncan embarked on their own, and more ambitious, ale trail. It was totally unofficial and with no offered reward but they decided to visit all 242 pubs in the Greater London section of the 1979 Good Beer Guide. It is a great testament to Young's that they had 44 of those entries. All went well but they hit a barrier. That year, the very posh restaurant, Simpsons in the Strand, had been included in the GBG. This was because they served draught Bass in silver tankards. The GBG entry came with a 'smart dress' warning but, whatever they tried, our friends were never deemed smart enough to get in. Finally, with Simpsons being all that was needed to complete their odyssey, they made the ultimate sacrifice. Not just booted and suited but, with hair cut and beards shaved, they made it in. It could have ended quietly there and then but, to mark the climax of their tour, once the Bass had been supped, off came jackets, shirts and ties to reveal custom made T-shirts saying 'GBG 1979 WE DONE LONDON'. They managed to take a few photos before being politely escorted from the premises.

Inevitably, things have changed. Young's stopped brewing in Wandsworth in 2006 while Simpsons in the Strand allowed women into the main dining room in 1984.

Russ Durbridge

Hostelries along the Hogsmill revisited

On Saturday 21 February the London Pubs Group visited six pubs in the Kingston and New Malden areas. First was the **Duke of Buckingham** in Villiers Road (KT1 3BB). This pub rates one star pub on CAMRA's National Inventory of pub interiors of special national historic interest. A suburban, red-brick pub built in the 1930s by Hodgsons' Kingston Brewery (later taken over by Courage), as evidenced by the shield over the corner entrance bearing three salmons from the borough arms and a rebus with K and a tun!

As you enter you can't miss the attractive and most unusual curved doors: left to the public bar and right to a large room that is now an amalgamation of two original ones. Perhaps the most notable feature is the octagonal leaded skylight over the servery. There is also some original work in the fireplace, panelling, counters, parts of the stillion in the centre of the servery and curved cornices to the ceilings. Wainwright Amber is usually served here.

The doorway to the Duke of Buckingham

The second stop was at the **Spring Grove** in Bloomfield Road (KT1 2SF), an attractive building from 1867, retaining stained-glass windows (possibly inter-war). It was acquired by Young's in 1922. Although opened-up, the pub still retains distinct areas, including a room labelled 'Tap Room' with a stained-glass skylight.

The Spring Grove

The original 1892 plan of the pub can be seen at the entrance to this area. Inside the Tap Room there is a photograph of the exterior showing 1980s Young's livery. The rear of the pub appears to be a modern extension that gives access to an attractive modern garden. A trip to the toilets affords glimpses of old photographs including one of sheep in Kingston town centre, a portrait of the young Terence Conran and a painting of Wolverhampton trolleybuses! Young's London Original and Special, plus two changing guest ales such as Timothy Taylor Landlord or beers from Dorking Brewery and Twickenham Fine Ales are usually served here.

After passing the former Swan pub, closed in 2008 but still displaying its red and gold Courage sign, the tour reached the **Cocoanut** in Mill Street (KT1 2RF), another one-star pub on CAMRA's National Inventory. There has been a pub on this site since at least the nineteenth century but the current building dates from the early 1950s. Plans to demolish the original building and construct a new pub were approved in July 1939 but interrupted by World War II. Charrington's Brewery had started rebuilding in the spring of 1940 but had to stop in August because of a shortage of steel. Work was eventually completed by 1954: a two-storey building constructed of brick with a tile roof and two bow-fronted windows on the ground floor. These have their original green and clear leaded window panes, with the left-hand door having colourful leaded symbols, including a coconut. There are separate entrance lobbies on either side of the building plus a third entrance in the centre of the façade that leads to the original off-sales area. In the centre of the pub is a single U-shaped bar, with 1950s panelling in pale wood, although the bar was shortened and new glass panelling installed at the rear after 1987.

The Cocoanut

The back-of-bar shelving may also date from the 1950s and has the wording 'Wines', a blank space that possibly originally said 'Charrington's' and 'Spirits' along the top on both sides. The pub now consists of a single drinking and dining area, although when constructed there were three distinct rooms: a saloon bar, a public bar, and a games room, plus an off-sales area. The public and saloon bars were knocked into a single space in the late 1980s. Unfortunately, real ale is no longer served here.

Next came the **Druids Head**, an ex-Whitbread pub in Market Place (KT1 1JT). This Grade II*-listed building is the last remaining pub in the market place area. It has some good surviving early eighteenth-century features, including a turned baluster open-well staircase, heavily moulded plaster ceilings and first-floor front room timber panelling. Greene King IPA, Abbot and Druid's Head (house beer, probably Greene King), Timothy Taylor Landlord and two changing guest ales are usually served here.

The fifth pub was the **Park Tavern** in New Road (KT2 6AP). Another former Charrington house, originally converted from two cottages, it is on CAMRA's Local Inventory of interiors of local historic interest. A plan dated 1927 shows a public bar on the front left, a saloon bar on the front right and a bottle and jug department between them. In addition, there was a tap room on the rear left (served by a hatch, which remains) and a bar parlour behind the servery, rear centre. The plan details a reduction in the extent of the bar counter on the right and confirms it has been in its present position since 1927. The counter is of an inter-war style. The mirrored bar-back looks old but the lower section on the left is modern. The front bay windows have inter-war glass. This pub is in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2026 and was Kingston & Leatherhead CAMRA Branch's 2025 pub of the year. Fuller's London Pride and Youngs London Original

plus four changing guest ales are usually available. The ceiling is decorated with pump clips, over 5000 in all, from beers that have been served here.

Windows at the Park Tavern

The final venue was the **Royal Oak**, Coombe Road, New Malden (KT3 4RD). This pub is Grade II-listed and is recognised by CAMRA as having a historic interior of local interest. It dates from the late-1880s or mid-1890s, with minor additions and alterations c1900 and later C20. Located on a corner site at the junction with Sycamore Grove, it was built to an asymmetrical plan of two, two and a half and three storeys, with a red brick ground floor and dressings, stock brick returns, rendered upper storeys, applied timber dressings and tile roofs. The public bar was to the left via a corner entrance, while the former hotel accommodation was accessed to the right. The public bar is subdivided by a panelled partition with a small door and there is a large horseshoe-shaped bar. Elsewhere a certain amount of coloured glass remains. A gilded and brilliant-cut mirror lettered 'Benskins' indicates its former owners, later part of the Allied Breweries estate. Adnams' Southwold Bitter, Hogs Back TEA, Park Brewery Saw Pit and Wimbledon Copper Leaf are usually served here. The Hogsmill of the title is a local chalk stream that rises in Ewell and flows into the Thames at Kingston. Near Kingston town centre it is crossed by the 12th century Clattern Bridge, believed to be one of the oldest road bridges in England.

This was a repeat of a tour that we originally staged in February 2020. That event was dedicated to the memory of Terry Casey, who for many years compiled maps for the Group's crawls. This year's event celebrated the memory of the Clive Taylor, London Pubs Group stalwart and a former resident of New Malden.

Jane Jephcote and Kim Rennie

CAMRA pub information update 74

The *WhatPub?* pub database is no more. 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, MIKKELLER BREWPUB, 37-39 Exmouth Market. In April was offering a cask ale brewed in collaboration with Brentwood. This may not always be available.

EC1, TAVERN, 374-378 Old St. Rebranded from the long established Nest Restaurant. A bistro with a counter bar and classic British food. Reservations advisable for food.

EC2, HORSEMEN, 1 Broadgate Circus. Irish American free house with a separate restaurant area called Fitzgerald's at the rear of the bar area.

EC2, MASONS ARMS (White Horse Pub Group), 12-14 Mason's Ave. Cask beer now available, Timothy Taylor Landlord.

EC2, POOLHOUSE, 100 Liverpool St. Modern version of an American pool hall. 20 tables. There is a charge for playing the tables and booking is advisable. Two bars with keg and bottled beer. Over 18s only.

EC2, WHIPPET, 86 Old Broad St. Latest of the tap format from Bloomsbury Leisure. At least three cask beers and a dozen keg.

EC4, LUCKY GOAT, 1 Bread St. A games bar with a kitchen doing bar snacks, sandwiches and sharers. Music and karaoke. Keg beers. No children allowed.

EC4, WILD SWAN (Thornbridge), 99 Fetter La. Long awaited new premises operated by Thornbridge Brewery and Pivovar. Single bar pub on two floors. The ground floor has a traditional feel with wooden panelling and floorboards, with a mixture of booths, tables, high stools and subdued lighting. The upstairs has more of a refectory feel with long tables and a pizzeria that supplies the food. Six casks ale on a rotating basis, which will be predominantly be from Thornbridge. Card payments only.

WC2, KNIGHTS BAR (The Savoy Hotel), Simpsons in the Strand, 100 Strand. Reopened as **NELLIE'S TAVERN**. Evening cocktail bar in the reopened Simpsons. In addition to cocktails other drinks including bottled beers and ciders are available.

WC2, MR. WHITE'S (Soho Estates), 20-21 Leicester Sq. Reopened as **MARKET PLACE** food hall spanning five floors, and with 16 street-food kitchens, three dessert counters and three bars. Keg beers only.

E1, KILL THE CAT SPITALFIELD, 14 Market St. Reopened as **DOUBLE O MARTINI BAR**.

E1, ORANJ, 15 Dray Walk. Relocated wine bar/restaurant with outdoor space in a pedestrianised area.

E8, EMPIRE TAVERN (Hackney Theatre/Taverns East Group), 289 Mare St. Two cask beers from East London Brewing. Site has had various names including MARIE LLOYD BAR.

E9, GUN, 235 Well St. Reopened as **GUN HACKNEY** in March by a Japanese restauranteur. Keg beer.

E16, BRIDGE RESTAURANT, DINER & BAR, Excel Centre, 1 Westway Gateway. American style bar & restaurant in the main boulevard at the centre of the Excel centre. Keg beer.

E17, BEERBLEFISH BREWING TAPROOM, 2A-4, Uplands Business Park, Blackhorse Rd. Reopened as S**USTAINABLE WINES**, aiming to reduce waste and transportation miles.

E17, EAST LONDON BREWING TAPROOM, 2 Lockwood Way. Now open; a changing cask beer from East London usually available. Up to 20 cask and keg lines. Was WILD CARD.

E17, HACKNEY CHURCH BREWERY TAPROOM, Unit B, 101 Blackhorse La. New brewery and taproom from Hackney Church Brewery.

N1, MYDDLETON ARMS (Samuel Smith/Stonegate), 52 Canonbury Rd. Cask beer reinstated: Hammerton N1, Timothy Taylor Landlord, and a limited beer festival was held in May.

N16, LECONFIELD, 79 Green Lanes. Renamed **GOLDEN TOOTH**. Cask beer reinstated: Five Points Best, served in a Five Points glass at a very reasonable price of £5.

N16, MILDMAY CLUB & INSTITUTE, 34 Newington Grn. Cask beer returned from a bank of four newly installed handpumps. Beers will change but there will always be a best bitter or mild available. Established in 1888, one of the few surviving Club and Institute Union clubs in London. Trad cider and perry and occasionally bag in box unpasteurised beer too.

N19, STAR (Stonegate), 47 Chester Rd. Reopened under new management. Cask beer reinstated: Fuller's London Pride and Morland Old Speckled Hen.

NW1, BLACK CAP (Kicking Horse 3 Ltd), 171 Camden High St. Reopened in March having closed in 2015.

NW1, STUDIO48, 48 Chalk Farm Rd. Reopened in November after a period of closure.

NW8, LORD'S TAVERN Marylebone Cricket Club), St John's Wood Rd. Cask beer reinstated: Fuller's London Pride.

NW10, YELLOWHAMMER, Sunbeam Studios, 21 Sunbeam Rd. Cocktail bar inside Maison Miles Distillery, opened in August 2025. A keg beer plus bottles are available in addition to the spirits made on the premises. Open Thursdays and Fridays.

SE1, BERMONDSEY BIERKELLER, 2-4 Tooley St. Opened in July 2021, the venue was previously named Cynthia's Cyberbar before being used as part of the London Bridge Experience. Bavarian food and German and German-style draught beer available.

SE1, ST CHRISTOPHER'S INN (Beds & Bars), 121 Borough High St. Sharp's Doom Bar reinstated but cask beer may not always be available.

SE1, TELEPHONE EXCHANGE (ex-Fuller's), London Bridge Hotel, 10-18 London Bridge St. Reopened as **QUARTER BAR & LOUNGE** c.2024 but with no cask beer.

SE10, DUKE OF GREENWICH (Hamna Wakaf), 91 Colomb St. Re-opened as the **VANBRUGH** under new management ATS Hospitality in May. Cask beers were Timothy Taylor Landlord with guests Courage Directors and Wainwright Gold.

SE15, SET SOCIAL, 55a Nigel Rd. Members-only arts and social club, including a cafe, bar, library, and garden. The venue holds a number of arts and crafts events and also has a stage for live music. Draught but no cask beer available.

SE17, TANKARD, 178 Walworth Rd. Reopened in February.

SE22, DULWICH HAMLET FOOTBALL CLUB SUPPORTERS BAR, Champion Hill Stadium, Edgar Kail Way. Breweries bar located within the ticketed area of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club. Opening hours depend on football club matches and bar accepts home and away supporters. Two handpumps, often one cask ale available, alongside a range of craft keg beers, some from London breweries. The stadium is the host of the South East London CAMRA Beer Festival annually since 2024.

SW4, DOGHOUSE DISTILLERY BAR, 10 Clapham Common South Side. Opened in May, the local distillery now has a tap on two-floors; the ground floor has more than 40 whisky barrels while the basement is a 'low-lit honky-tonk cocktail bar' with live music, open mic nights and masterclasses. Local keg beers supplied by Mondo and Belleville.

SW6, AMUSE BOUCHE (Wellington), 51 Parsons Green La. Since March this site has been operated by the Yellow Panda Pub Co. which changed the name to **AB CRAFT BEERS & COCKTAILS**. Now four changing cask beers such as Siren Tempo, St Peter's Organic Best and Wimbledon Copper Leaf. There are also sixteen keg options.

SW7, COCO MOMO (Urban Pubs & Bars), 25 Gloucester Rd. Renamed **DUCHESS OF KENSINGTON**. There are two handpumps on the bar for cask ale.

SW16, LEIGHAM WELL (Stonegate), 1 Wellfield Rd. Reopened in March 2026 after a short closure for refurbishment. Cask beer reinstated: Timothy Taylor Landlord.

SW19, PRINCE OF WALES (Ram G LLP), 98 Morden Rd. Cask beer reinstated late April: Young's Bitter.

W3, AERONAUT (Laine Pub Company), 264 Acton High St. Reopened as **WHITE HART** by Unity Social (Punch). No cask beer.

W3, OLD OAK TAP ROOM, Unit 2, North Acton Sq. Opened in one of the crates adjacent to North Acton underground station last October as a taproom for the Old Oak Brewery, which is located in the nearby Foundry Collective. Limited opening hours (Thu-Sat 4-10pm).

W6, BRASSERIE BLANC, Goldhurst House, Parr's Way. Reopened as **REACH BRASSERIE**.

W7, DUKE OF YORK (Heineken), 161 Uxbridge Rd. Reopened following extensive refurbishment in April. Cask beer reinstated after a number of years' absence. Fuller's London Pride, Timothy Taylor Landlord and a guest available on reopening.

W10, LATIMER (Wentworth Andersen), 274 Latimer Rd. This site reopened in April as the Latimer restaurant & pub accommodating around 50 guests across the dining area and bar, with a street terrace open all year round. The emphasis is as much on food as on drink, and alongside the main menu there is a dedicated bar menu. No cask ale. Card-only.

W12, NEXT DOOR RECORDS, 304 Uxbridge Rd. A vinyl record shop also serving drinks including three keg beers. There are two similar outlets elsewhere in London.

OUTER LONDON

BLACKFEN, BROKEN DRUM, 308 Westwood La. Reopened in new hands in March.

CARSHALTON, PALMERSTON (Stonegate), 31 Mill La. Cask beer reinstated: two changing beers such as Sharp's Atlantic and Timothy Taylor Landlord.

CHEAM, CLARET WINE BAR (independent), 33 The Bdy. Reopened as **HALFWAY INN** in April. The handpumps remain in place but cask beer isn't being served at the moment.

CHEAM, PRINCE OF WALES (Heineken/Just Add Talent), 28 Malden Rd. Refurbished in spring 2026 and cask beer is once again served: Fuller's London Pride.

COLLIER ROW, RM5 LOUNGE, 11 Clockhouse La. Reopened as **TIPPLES** in December as a wine bar although three keg beers are available. Over 21s only. Limited opening hours

HAVERING-ATTE-BOWER, ROYAL OAK, North Rd. Reopened in March after several years of closure. Now marketing itself more as a cafe and restaurant. Two keg beers available (Madri and Aspalls).

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

INNER LONDON

EC3, FEENEY'S IRISH BAR & LOUNGE.
Closed, future uncertain.

WC1, BAR POLSKI (Wellington). Closed in April, a sad loss.

E1, DUKE (Shoreditch Bar Group). Closed. Lease taken by Dallas Burgers.

E1, GRAPESHOTS Davy & Co). Cask beer no longer available.

E1, ORANJ. Closed, future uncertain. Moved premises (see above).

E2, SPREAD EAGLE. Cask beer no longer available.

E2, WELL & BUCKET (Urban Pubs & Bars). Cask beer no longer available.

E8, BREW CLUB TAPROOM (The Arch Company). Closed, new leaseholder being sought.

E8, FOREST ROAD BREWERY TAPROOM (The Arch Company). Closed, future uncertain.

E8, HACHA. Closed, future uncertain.

E8, SQUEEZE (40FT Brewery). Closed, future uncertain.

E9, KENTON. Cask beer no longer available. No under 18s.

E17, COLLAB (Signature Brew). Closed, future uncertain.

N1, MEATMISSION. Closed December 2025, future uncertain.

N1, THREE JOHNS (Urban Pubs & Bars). Cask beer recently unavailable.

N4, OLD DAIRY (Greene King). Closed along with four other GK pubs in London. Lease on the market.

N15, POST BAR. Closed in April.

N19, CHARLOTTE DESPARD. Cask beer no longer available.

N19, HIDEAWAY. In February bailiffs repossessed the premises.

NW6, PRIORY TAVERN (Stonegate). Handpumps unused.

NW6, WINGMANS. Closed, future uncertain.

NW10, ROYAL OAK (Stonegate/Craft Union). Handpumps unused.

NW10, WILLIAM (Loci Pubs). Closed suddenly in March, future uncertain.

SE5, ST. GEORGES TAVERN. Closed, being marketed.

SE15, BEER REBELLION. Handpumps unused.

SE15, PRINCE ALBERT (Town Centre Inns). Handpumps unused.

SE23, DARTMOUTH ARMS (Stonegate/MEATliquor). Closed in March owing to MEATliquor going into administration.

SW2, CROWN & SCEPTRE (LT Management). Cask beer ceased owing to poor sales.

SW4, ALEXANDRA (Greene King). Handpumps removed by March 2026.

SW4, APOLLO ARMS (Lunar Pub Company). Closed, future uncertain.

SW16, RABBIT HOLE. Freehold on the market, closed October 2024.

SW19, GARRATT & GAUGE (Stonegate), 18 Hartfield Rd. Closed, future uncertain.

W1, SIXES CRICKET CLUB. The site closed in early 2026.

W2, QUEENS MEATLIQUOR BAR & DINING (MEATliquor). Reported closed in March, future uncertain

W6, BELUSHI'S (Beds & Bars). Closed in March, freehold has been on the market.

W11, ARCHER STREET (The Stage Bar Group Ltd). Closed and in administration. Lease on the market.

W12, REAL GREEK (Westfield). Reported closed by administrators after the Real Greek chain experienced trading difficulties.

W14, BIRD IN HAND. Cask beer no longer available; pub has become more of a restaurant.

OUTER LONDON

BROMLEY, ARTFUL DUKE (Livelyhood).
Converted to restaurant.

BROMLEY, BARREL & HORN (Fuller's).
Closed, lease on the market.

CHADWELL HEATH, TOBY CARVERY MOBY DICK (M&B).
Handpumps removed several years ago.

DAGENHAM, ROUNDHOUSE. Reportedly the main bar is closed and membership is required for the function hall.

EDGWARE, LUNA LOUNGE (Milegate). Became Casablanca restaurant; no alcohol is served. Likely to have been operating as a restaurant for some time as licence was revoked/handed in 2020. Was MASONS ARMS.

GREENFORD, RAILWAY (Segro/Greene King).
Closed and surrounded by hoardings, future uncertain.

HARMONDSWORTH, FIVE (Wellington).
Cask beer unavailable.

HIGH BARNET, HADLEY HOUSE (Stonegate).
Reported *'permanently closed'* in May.

HOUNSLOW, GEORGES BAR. Converted to restaurant.

ILFORD, CHAMPS SPORTS BAR & GRILL (Heineken).
Cask beer unavailable.

KESTON, FOX INN (Stonegate).
Closed after a fire, reopening date uncertain.

KINGSTON, CORNERSTONE (Greene King).
Closed along with four other London GK pubs in April.

KINGSTON, WHEELWRIGHTS ARMS (Heineken).
No longer sells cask beer.

MITCHAM, GARDENERS ARMS (Illusive Bars Ltd).
Cask beer ceased owing to poor sales.

NEW BARNET, BUILDERS ARMS (Greene King).
Closed on 12 April after departure of tenant.

PERIVALE, BALLOT BOX (Greene King).
Closed along with four other GK London pubs.

RICHMOND, NOWHERE (TavernPropCo).
Currently closed and up for sale in March 2026.

ROMFORD, FRANKIE & BENNY'S (Schroders/TRG).
Closed, lease on the market.

SUTTON, LORD NELSON (Punch).
Closed and boarded, seeking new licensee.

ROMFORD, TOBY CARVERY (Schroders/M&B).
Closed 10 May.

UXBRIDGE, MILLER'S TAP (Stonegate).
Closed in March, future uncertain.

WEST SUTTON, GANDER INN (Stonegate).
Cask beer unavailable.

OTHER CHANGES

INNER LONDON

EC4, OLD BANK OF ENGLAND (McMullen).
Closed for big refurbishment. Due to reopen 16 July.

E1, ENGLISH RESTAURANT became **MARKET COFFEE HOUSE & BAR** some time ago.

E1, SHOREDITCH (Shoreditch Bar Group) now **AURA X**.

E2, REDCHURCH (Shoreditch Bar Group) was renamed **MAD CATS**.

E9, HACKNEY PEARL became **PEARL DIVE BAR** in March.

E9, ITALIAN JOB is now **CARBOBAR**.

E9, REHAB has become **HACKNEY EVENT SPACE**.

E17, DUKE'S HEAD (Stonegate). Renamed **DUKE E17**.

N1, ANGELIC (Stonegate). Renamed **GEORGE IV** by new operator. Pride and or Doom Bar maybe available.

SE5, CLARENDON ARMS. Renamed **HENNESSY'S**.
Basic selection of drinks, no cask beer.

SE14, DOKIS LOUNGE. Reverted to **STAR & GARTER**.

SE26, TALMA. Renamed **SNUFFLE**.

SW1, ALFRED TENNYSON. Operator Cubitt House has now been purchased by Young's. Also **ORANGE** and **THOMAS CUBITT** (SW1), **BUILDERS ARMS** (SW3), **BARLEY MOW**, **COACH MAKERS ARMS** and **GRAZING GOAT** (W1) and **PRINCESS ROYAL** (W2). Beer range may change.

SW6, BROWN (Butcombe). A substantial renovation has taken place costing a reported £1.3m, with a near-doubling in size to feature a range of social spaces including electric shuffle boards, multiple screens for live sport and bookable areas. A modern, busy and vibrant all-day casual dining venue with locally-sourced food including breakfast and brunch, bar snacks and a wide selection of mains, as well as Sunday roasts. Unusually, the licence allows sale of alcohol from 8am.

SW11, LOVE PINSA BATTERSEA. Renamed **BAR SOCIAL**.

SW16, ART & CRAFT SW16. Closed in March but reopened in April as **ROWDY TABLE** wine bar and beer shop.

SW17, CRAFT TOOTING (Broadway Market). Closed but quickly reopened as **NINE OUT OF TEN**. Wimbledon lager and two more unusual keg choices available.

SW17, TOOTING TRAM & SOCIAL. After more than a year's closure, reopened at limited times as the House of ORA, a community cultural space and music venue.

W1, BARRIO SOHO. Rebranded as **LA FAMILIA**.

W1, LONDON COCKTAIL CLUB (Nightcap).
Renamed **HIDDEN SOCIETY**.

OUTER LONDON.

ROMFORD, SLUG & LETTUCE (Stonegate).
Renamed **SANDY'S 111** in March as tenancy taken on by Sandy Turmer and Tyron Thomas. The focus is now daytime sports and dining, transitioning into a lively event space with DJs, bingo, and club nights at weekends.
No cask beer.

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 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 beers!
* 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. The website contains a lot of very useful reference information on all aspects of beer and cider.

Annual subscriptions (from 24 June 2026) are as follows:

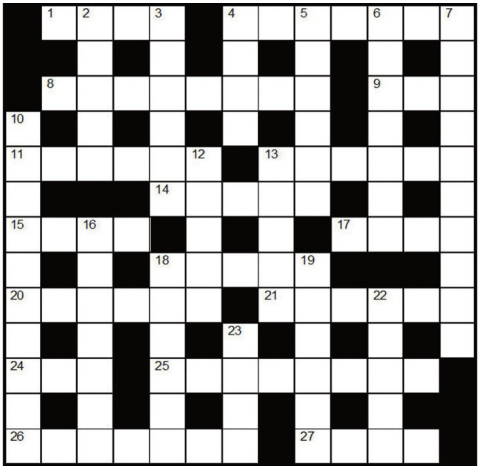
- Single membership, paid by Direct Debit, £35.00;
- Joint membership (partner at same address) £43.00.

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

We are unable to bring you an Idle moments column because of technical problems. Normal service will resume in the next edition.

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



Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone .....

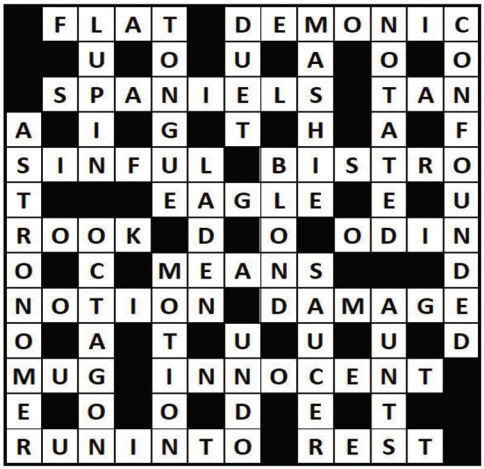
E-mail .....

All correct entries received by first post on 22 July will be entered into a draw for the prize. The prize winner will be announced in the October/November edition. The solution will be given in the August/September 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.

APRIL/MAY SOLUTION



ACROSS

1. Expresses dislike of drink loudly. [4]
4. 50 per cent of bitter ales turn out to be nasty. [7]
8. Worshipper confessing to sloth. [8]
9. Drop of sulphur and silver alloy. [3]
11. A sin may be consensual. [6]
13. For example back solicitor to provide escape. [3,3]
14. Almost finished dressing the bird. [5]
15. The Yorkshire painting is sweet. [4]
17. It's dangerous and warrants some danger money. [4]
18. Type going round the bend in spring. [5]
20. Spoil appearance of a naughty child. [6]
21. Container for leaves of two kinds of cannabis. [6]
24. Slime seen in bottomless well. [3]
25. One politician you damage, showing no respect. [8]
26. Supply a party of girls on stage for him. [7]
27. Rush to reverse electric vehicle. [4]

DOWN

2. Alternative to the German command. [5]
3. I leave fighter to join up. [6]
4. City hit hard. [4]
5. Show cover up. [6]
6. Popular horse bolted towards the land. [7]
7. It's okay to run off with one wife. [10]
10. Birds with split crests. [10]
12. Opening involving new supporter. [5]
13. Two soldiers together are great. [5]
16. It's correct to test twice. [7]
18. European language spoken in the end. [6]
19. Kind offer. [6]

Winner of the prize for the February/March Crossword: Derek Seeley, London N19.

Other correct entries were received from:
Ted Alleway, Tony Alpe, Neil Arnold, L Bamford, C Bloom, Hugh Breach, John Butler, Mrs H Clark, John Clark, P Colmans, Dai Cooper, Owen Cunningham, John Dodd, Lynne & Joe Ellis, R Evans, Penny Farthing, Gillian Ferrier, Colin Francis, Terry Francis, Bill Fullick, Richard Garton, Nick Goodwin, Roger Grant, Paul Gray, J E Green, Alan Greer, A Gregg, 'Shropshire' Dave Hardy, William Hill, John Howarth, Gordon Howells, Eileen Howey, Dan Howles Ford, Alan Humphrey, David Jiggens, Eric Johnstone, D M L Jones, R L P Keys, Steve Laight, Pete Large, Tony Lavell, Aidan Laverty, Tony Lennon, David Lever, Dave Limn, David Lopatis, Ian McDonald, Martin Mason, Pam Moger, Ruth Moreton, Al Mountain, Dave Murphy, Brian Myhill, Mick Norman, Gerald Notley, M Ognenovic, Michael Oliver, John Parker, Nigel Parsons, D Patterson, Stephen Pegum, Alan Pennington, Portrush Annie, Jeanette Powell, Nicholas Priest, Mike Pring, Robert Pryke, James Rawle, David Renwick, Robert Ripley, Nigel Roe, Richard Rogers, Oliver Sarnes, Amanda Shepherd, Pete Simmonds, Alison Skelton, Paul Skinner, Bill Stuart, Martin Stubbs, Mike Teal, Bill Thackray, Mark Thompson, Andy Wakefield, Maria C Wallace, Martin Weedon, Alan Welsh, Elizabeth Whale, Richard Whiting, Jerry Wigens, Colin Williams, John Williamson, N Woodford, K Zemek.

There were also two incorrect and one anonymous entry.

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