

Mild & Bitter

Keeping Derby CAMRA drinkers informed since 1975

Important Notice Regarding the Future of M&B

The Committee of the Derby Branch of CAMRA has decided that Mild and Bitter will in future be emailed using the CAMRA Comms implementation of MailChimp rather than the open version. This will save us £600 per year. The downside is that with the CAMRA version we can only send to members who have opted into Derby Branch Comms. The transition will be over the next few weeks, following which a revamped and expanded version of M&B is planned.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

If you receive Comms from Derby CAMRA, the December issue of M&B will be automatically sent to you.

If you do not receive Derby Branch Comms (for example the one sent on 07/11/2025 - 7th October 2025 Branch Minutes and Next Meeting) and want M&B in future, go to the national CAMRA website, log-on to the members area, and check your options for receiving communications. Members not registered to Derby (e.g. in neighbouring branches) can opt to receive communications from Derby as well as their home branch.

To help us monitor progress, please also unsubscribe from Mild and Bitter using the link at the bottom of the email from Mailchimp, and enter the reason as "Other". You will then get M&B via Comms only.

If you are no longer a CAMRA member, we will unfortunately not be able to send you M&B. As you may know we are fighting a campaign against Molston Coors who have started to sell non-real ales in pubs via handpumps. This will only spread to other breweries, and we therefore urge you to rejoin CAMRA and put your weight behind the campaign. You can rejoin via the CAMRA website.

If You Have any Questions or Comments or Need Help Please contact the Derby Branch Secretary, Nic Scott, secretary@derby.camra.org.uk

Nominations Invited for Annual Awards

You have until the **end of December** to nominate your top picks in these five categories: City Pub of the Year, Suburban Pub of the Year, Country Pub of the Year, Cider Pub of the Year and Club of the Year. Please submit your nominations, name and membership number to Pubs' Officer, Kat Higgins pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk

Use Your Discernment by Becoming a Judge

The more judges for Pub of the Year the better. Many judges mean any potential personal bias is minimised when assessing the merits of individual pubs. A few years ago, Amber Valley Branch had around 40 judges for its Pub of the Year, thus it would be great if we could amass a similar number. Please contact Pubs' Officer, Kat Higgins pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk

Judging will take place in January and early February and Cider Pub of the Year judges are especially welcome.

CAMRA Branch Meetings

Derby: No meeting in December.

Amber Valley: Tuesday, 27th January at a venue to be announced. Please note this is on a **Tuesday**.

Ashbourne: Tuesday, 27th January at The Queen's Vaults, Ashbourne – 8.00pm.

A Message from the Beer King

Les Baynton is recovering from a partial leg amputation and consequently is currently out of circulation. He is, however, responding well to treatment and quipped "I'm only three quarters of the man I was but I hope to see you soon!"

Les Baynton, Derby Beer King

Handpump Hi-Jack Campaign Latest

Derby South MP, Baggy Shanker, Alan Pickersgill and Gillian Hough have been prominent in bringing Handpump Hijack to the attention of parliamentarians and this is a great coup for Derby. Early in December, a delegation from Derby CAMRA will visit Westminster and if the amendment to existing legislation is passed, Trading Standards will be informed accordingly to halt this unwelcome development forthwith.

Budget 2025

Prior to the Budget, Ashbourne publicans Mark Grist (Smith's Tavern) and Amanda Hodson-Walker (House of Beer) were interviewed on BBC television's Politics England regarding their hopes for aiding hospitality in the Budget. In the Budget of 26th November, it was announced that alcohol duties would rise in line with inflation but business rates would be permanently revised and the package is expected to reduce the cost of business rates by an average of £1.2bn between 2026-27 and 2028-29. The impact is expected to be broadly neutral by the end of the period as the relief scheme and local retention measures expire. Minimum wage levels will rise.

Opportunity Knocks for Volunteers in Derby

Derby CAMRA has a number of interesting roles for those with a few hours to spare. Please contact Branch Secretary, Nic Scott secretary@derby.camra.org.uk for more information. Age/gender are irrelevant.

Advance Notice of Branch AGM

Please make a note of Wednesday 4th February, which is when the Derby CAMRA AGM is held at the Victoria Inn, Midland Place, Derby. The meeting starts at 8.00pm.

Keep Those Beer Scores Coming in

It's vitally important that we maintain a high level of beer scoring from as many members as possible to retain impartiality in Good Beer Guide selection and Pub of the Year. Please go to the CAMRA website on your phone.

Beer Guide is a Good Christmas Present

The Alexandra, Brunswick, Smithfield, Furnace and Shiny Tap, Little Eaton all stock the 2026 Good Beer Guide, should you want a copy of this uniquely informative publication. There are other pub guides but, uniquely, the Good Beer Guide includes a large brewery section detailing brews.

Falstaff Fuddle is one of the Year's Social Highlights on the Derby CAMRA Calendar

The annual festive fuddle needs no introduction to devotees who turn up year after year. A warming open fire in the Offiler's lounge, truly traditional surroundings and great, reasonably priced own brewed beer make this event on **Thursday 18th December** unmissable. Why not bring some nibbles and we'll be there from 7.00pm. Everyone is welcome



The classic Falstaff, 74 Silver Hill Road, Normanton, DE23 6UJ

Beer Festivals

27th to 29th November: Dudley Winter Ales Fayre, Town Hall, St James Road, Dudley DY1 1HP.

27th to 30th November: Smithfield Ale House, Meadow Road, Derby. Nano Christmas Crackers mini festival, celebrating our smallest breweries.

2nd to 6th December: Pigs Ear East London Beer and Cider Festival, Round Chapel, 1D Glenarm Road, Hackney E50LY.

10th to 13th December: Cambridge Winter Beer Festival, Corn Exchange, 2 Wheeler Street, Cambridge CB2 3QB.

Duffield Inter-Branch Social Proves Popular

19 Amber Valley and Derby members enjoyed a great evening intermingling at the revitalised (by Shiny brewery) Pattenmakers, Duffield on the 29th October.

Ashbourne Beer Tastings

The tastings event held in November at the Smith's Tavern was very successful with 13 in attendance including some members from Derby.

Second Heritage Festival: The Definitive Report

M&B has received the following data regarding the festival at the Museum of Making in September: The attendance was less than capacity with approximately 2,312 attending over 4 days. 6,086 pints of beer were sold, the equivalent of 2.6 pints per person. 880 pints of Cider and Perry were sold. Sales of World beer again went very well with 545 bottles of foreign beer sold. Along with 79 bottles of wine, 40 of which were prosecco! There was less demand for Key Keg beers this year and 6 of the 20 kegs were sold on or returned. 540 pints were sold. The most enthusiastically received were the Imperial Stouts and Sours with Neon Raptor Birthday Impy selling out first. Derby Museum Trust was able to raise £2,472 for its charitable work, from the donation of returned glasses. 43 CAMRA members were signed up during the festival, up from 34 last year.

Changes at Derby Brewing Company and a New Brewery for Derby

Changes are afoot at the Nottingham Road, Chaddesden brewery which will allow the Harris family to concentrate on their successful pubs, The Hole in the Wall, Mickelover and Little Darley, Darley Abbey. The familiar Derby Brewing beers brewed since 2004, will continue to be available but will be contract brewed on the same site by Pour Me Brewing, a new enterprise. Innovative new beers: Greatest Bambino (3.7% abv); Fingy (4.4%); Reet Petite (4.1%); The Messiah (5.5%) and S'mores Code (4.5%) will also be brewed on the former Mason's paintworks site by Andy Marshall, Dominic Flynn and Courtney Holmes who form Pour Me Brewing. Between them, the trio have extensive experience at Derby Brewing, Kelham Island (Sheffield) and Navigation (Nottingham).

Julian Hough Award

Les Williams was the deserved winner as voted for by those who worked at the second **Heritage Beer and Cider Festival**. Les presented a friendly and personable figure fronting the busy World Beers bar. She has an incredible record of working at our beer festivals, including Elvaston Castle in the 80s, missing only one day in total!!

Julian Hough was a much-liked Derby CAMRA activist who played a leading role in Derby CAMRA's Beer Festivals and he was a member of CAMRA's National Executive.

Objection Lodged to Pub Conversion

Derby CAMRA's Pubs' Officer, Kat Higgins, has lodged an objection to the conversion of The Railway, Hatton to 3 flats.

Join us on a Great Post-Christmas Walk

James Williams has organised a terrific end of year walking social visiting some of the best pubs just north of Derby. Milford and nearby villages are our destination on Saturday 27th December. Please see page 4 for details.

Amber Valley CAMRA members are most welcome.



Holly Bush Inn, Makeney

CAMRA Corner at Furnace Festival

Our thanks go to Gillian Hough and Mark Fletcher for utilizing their time at the Furnace Halloween beer festival, where they sold CAMRA merchandise and gave the Branch a presence. Gillian has recently been appointed CAMRA's Events Director, and we wish her well in her new role.

Derby Drinker Distributor Required

We need a distributor as follows: Breaston, Draycott, Long Eaton, Sawley and Ilkeston. Please contact Gareth Stead derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk if you can help.

The Beer Hunter is no Longer

Colston Crawford, author of the Derby Telegraph's Beer Hunter column, has retired after enhancing the Friday edition with his interesting and informative articles for the past 21 years. Colston was Derby Drinker's first Editor in 1983 and he used to edit M&B. He was Branch Secretary in the past.

Derby Drinker is Seeking New Contributors

Derby Drinker has 24 pages and is published 5 times a year. Please contact Derby Drinker editor, Gareth Stead derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk

if you'd like to write an article as more copy will be required.

Blue Monkey Planning Application Highlighted in M&B Succeeds

A while back, M&B made an appeal to members to sign a petition to progress Blue Monkey brewery's planning application for a brewery tap. Well, I'm pleased to report that it's succeeded and Derby Drinker editor, Gareth Stead, has visited it, sending a glowing report stating that it serves 8 ales in Giltbrook.

One More Belper Historic Pub Walk This Year

There is one more excellent tour this year on the 21st December. www.belpernorthmill.org.uk
Tickets are £7.50.

Ash Wednesday in Ashbourne will be a Destination in February

2026 will see Ashbourne Shrovetide football in full swing again and John Smith, the enterprising licensee of the Victoria, Midland Place, Derby, is organising an excursion that includes a bacon and sausage cob beforehand. So, make a note of Wednesday 18th February if you'd like to be on the coach, and the price will be announced soon.

Photograph Appeal

We've had a request for a photograph of the (Black) Panther pub now known as the Oaklands, on Oaklands Avenue. If you can oblige, please contact M&B.

Wetherspoon to Open Spanish Outlet

J D Wetherspoon will, next month, open a hacienda (farmhouse) style bar in the departures area of Alicante airport. I'd be interested to know which hand-pulled beers they intend to sell.

Title Winning Rams' Star With CAMRA Connection Dies

First Division title winner with Derby County, and Welsh international full back, Rod Thomas, has sadly passed away at 78. Rod was guest of honour at Sam Smith's beer marquee at Wirksworth Cricket Club in 1976. Overnight security in the marquee was provided by Derby CAMRA members Ian Forman, Tim Williams and Paul Gibson.

Why not Take Advantage of the Member-get-Member Initiative?

You should, by being in receipt of M&B, be a CAMRA member. Why not help to grow the CAMRA community by inviting others to join with our *new referral scheme*? Your friends will get £5 off their CAMRA membership when they use your unique *referral link or code*. As a thank you, you'll receive six months of free Tastecard membership (worth £39.99) which saves you money on dining out with 2-for-1 meals, discounts at popular restaurants, cinema tickets and more. The initiative is available for every member – please go to the CAMRA website.

Minutes of the Ashbourne & District CAMRA

Meeting at the Royal Oak, Mayfield on

Tuesday, 28th October 2025

Welcome

Graham welcomed everyone and introduced new visitors. He thanked the Royal Oak for hosting the meeting. David gave an update on John Chamberlin's situation post-operation; we all wished him well with his long and difficult recovery in hospital.

Attendance: Graham Burke (Chair), Paul Jesson, Alan Shenton, Colin Terry, Alison Terry, David Odel, Mandy Hodson-Walker, Rob Hodson-Walker, Angela Bradley (Ashbourne Council), John Boyle and Simon Ardron (Uttoxeter Branch Chair).

Apologies

Received from: Mark (Secretary & Pubs Officer) & Diane Grist, Hannah Barton & Kevin Wolley, Konrad Machej, Stephen and Sue Asbury and John Chamberlin.

Declaration of Interest: Alan Shenton/Paul Jesson RBL and Mandy/Rob HOB.

Minutes of previous meeting inc. accuracy/action minutes

Accuracy: Minutes of the last branch meeting were accepted as correct

Officers' reports:

Chair: Visited the Uttoxeter branch meeting at the Black Swan, and the Derby branch meeting at the Alexandra Hotel. Both meetings were poorly attended, but both sounded an interest in sharing the POTY voting across branches/regions, this would not only be interesting but would cancel out any favoritism. Nominations would still come from the owning branch but a team from another branch would do the voting. Work to do on this to make it happen – Graham. Graham also visited the Stoke beer festival which was well attended and had a good selection of 150 different ales. Simon reported that Titanic Brewery ran away with most of the awards in the regional bottled beer competition. The new Derby Drinkers are out and are currently being delivered throughout the Ashbourne district. This is the last issue for 2025 and the next will be February 2026.

Secretary: Membership has increased by 2 this month at 79

Cider News: No report this month.

Pubs News: Alan reported that the beer festival at RBL Parwich made a significant profit. The new Bistro/bar, the Hug & Heave is to be located in the old Artisan premises on St John's Street and due to open in November. The Ex-Serviceman's club are still hoping to re-open but no date or timescale has been given yet. Graham gave a brief outline of the area covered by the Ashbourne & District branch to the visitors.

Festivals:

a few local 'pub' festivals on in the area during November/December see Mild & Bitter for details of promotions or go to our Fb page.

Pub of the season:

(Winter) nominations, so far 1. Pavillion 2. Sycamore at Parwich. Other nominations are invited by emailing Graham or Mark. Voting will be at the November meeting where the Summer POTS and winter POTS will automatically go forward to the Ashbourne & District POTY competition, a further 4 pubs to be nominated in November to go forward to POTY. Voting will be by selection team and results will be announced at the end of January 2026.

Socials:

Graham – just been too busy to organize anything but will try better in November!

Minutes of the Ashbourne Meeting, Continued

Tasting panel is booked for 8th November at the Smith's Tavern, tickets are limited to 16 and are available to all CAMRA members via the Tckty.camra web site. Simon gave a detailed explanation of what the course included and why it took 5 hours. Graham gave a big thank you to Mark for hosting the event.

Pub Surveys: Simon gave a good explanation why these are important to maintain the credibility of the CAMRA database/scoring information i.e. opening times, beers available etc. Graham agreed to progress this with Mark to see if we can at least get one done in 2025.

Brewery visits: Graham advised that it's now unlikely that we will manage this before the end of the year and gave a list of the venues considered and their restricted opening hours/days. Two more venues were added to the list for consideration/investigation: Burton and Titanic. Graham to progress. **Any other business:** None.

Date and venue of future meetings:

Tuesday 23rd December – Christmas town pubs stating at the Tavern at 7pm.

Tuesday 27th January – Queens Vaults 8pm.

Tuesday 24th February – Horns or George and Dragon - tba.

Derby Branch Diary

DECEMBER

Mon 1st - COMMITTEE MEETING - Green Man, 1 Canal Bridge, Willington – 8.00pm.

Thu 18th – Fabulous Falstaff annual fuddle from 7.00pm. Bring nibbles to 74 Silver Hill Road, Normanton DE23 6UJ.

Sat 27th – Magnificent Milford Walk 12:00 – 18:00. Why not get out of your home after the Christmas festivities and join us on an interesting rural walk with a few cracking pubs? 11:35 am Transpeak bus from Derby Bus Station, Platform 3, and alight at Milford for social walk starting at the famous **Holly Bush Inn at noon**, heading onto The Spotted Cow, Dead Poets and then finishing at The King William. There may be time to pop into the White Hart in Bargate, although we will not be rushing. Please contact me on **07510 161 151** if you are joining later. Roughly 4.5 km circular or just under 3 miles in old money. Wear appropriate footwear for potentially muddy footpaths, methods to the pubs may change to avoid the worst pathways following local members' advice.

Amber Valley CAMRA members are most welcome.

Amber Valley Diary

JANUARY

Sat 10th - Volunteer thank you party, Arkwright's, Campbell Street, Belper. Starts (upstairs) at 4.00pm.

Tues 27th - BRANCH MEETING venue TBC.

MARCH

Thu. 26th - AGM at The Old Oak, Horsley Woodhouse at 8.00pm.

Amber Valley Contact

Chairman: Chris Rogers 01332 880041

Ashbourne Diary

DECEMBER

Tues 23rd – Ashbourne Christmas walkabout. Join in the festive fun and soak in the atmosphere in Ashbourne's finest pubs, starting at the Smith's Tavern at 7.00pm.

JANUARY

Tues 27th – BRANCH MEETING at the Queen's Vaults, Ashbourne town centre - 8.00pm.

Ashbourne Contact

info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk

To unsubscribe from M&B, click the link at the bottom of the email. Changes from M&B email links will not affect your CAMRA membership account. If you get M&B by post, phone Paul Gibson 07895 277062

DERBY CONTACTS

COMMITTEE

Chair: Mark Fletcher *chair@derby.camra.org.uk*

Secretary: Nic Scott *secretary@derby.camra.org.uk*

Treasurer: Andrew Norman *treasurer@derby.camra.org.uk*

Membership: Gillian Hough *membership@derby.camra.org.uk*

Pubs Officer: Kat Higgins *pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk*

Ashbourne Chairman: Graham Burke *info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk*

Campaigns' Coordinator: Alan Pickersgill *campaigns@derby.camra.org.uk*

Cider and Perry Officer: Post vacant.

Socials: James Williams *socials@derby.camra.org.uk*

Press and publicity: Alan Pickersgill *publicity@derby.camra.org.uk*

Derby Drinker: *derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk*

Beer Festival: Russell Gilbert *BeerFest@derby.camra.org.uk*

NON – COMMITTEE

Derby Drinker Distribution: Kevin Hepworth *derbydrinkerdist@hotmail.com*

Derby Drinker advertising manager: Vacant *ads@derby.camra.org.uk*

Derby CAMRA Tasting Panel Chair: Les Williams *lescama39@yahoo.co.uk*

M&B Copy Deadline

Copy to *mildbitter@derby.camra.org.uk* by **Saturday 20th December**
Derby Drinker Deadline

5th January

derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk

Advertising:

ads@derby.camra.org.uk