

# Mild & Bitter

Keeping Derby CAMRA drinkers informed since 1975

## Belper Goes Green Festival is Imminent

The eagerly anticipated Belper Goes Green Festival 2026 will take place at Belper Cricket Ground in the first week in June. It will be open on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup>** in the evening, all day on Saturday and on Sunday until the beer runs out. As well as a wide range of eco-themed stalls and music on two stages throughout, volunteers from Amber Valley CAMRA will be running a Real Ale / Cider tent. An impressive beer range will feature **fifty different beers from twenty-five different breweries**, all within a fifteen-mile radius of Belper. The idea is to provide a wide range of styles while minimizing beer miles. There will also be at least **fifteen ciders**, both conventional and fruit flavoured. All these ciders are vegan. All this will be supplemented with the Cricket Club's own bar. Advance tickets are available from the Belper Goes Green website, but admission at the door should be OK. A great day out for everyone.

### Double Beer Boost for Sadler Gate

Dom Metcalfe, Managing Director of Buxton brewery, has announced Vines, Sadler Gate, will become a taproom with a view to offering speciality beers from Buxton. It will now be known as **Dukes**. Roy Shorrocks and Kim Beresford founded Ashover Brewery at the Old Poets Corner, Ashover in 2007 but ultimately the enterprise floundered owing to a flurry of hostile headwinds. Happily, however, Roy's daughter Janine Shorrocks, and an enthusiastic, dedicated cohort of friends have established Ashover Brew Co which aims to produce distinctive ales. Janine is the head brewer. The former Carnivore restaurant in Sadler Gate, Derby will now be known as **The Tannery** serving a number of their beers. With the Old Bell Hotel just up the same historic street, we hope that these new enterprises will help Sadler Gate to thrive once again. The Tannery is planning a "soft" opening on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> June, from 5.00pm.

### Champion Beer of Britain

At the recent Cambridge Beer Festival, Bristol Beer Factory's Independence, 4.6% abv, won the accolade. It's described as refreshingly full flavoured, fruity and smooth. Full results are on page 2.

### Ockbrook Family Finally Call it a Day

The family who had run the Royal Oak, Ockbrook for the past 73 years are finally retiring after selling the village pub. Sally Parrott and Steve and Jean Hornbuckle built on the work of Lew and Olive Wilson who took on the then Offiler's pub in 1953. Since CAMRA was founded, the Oak has been Good Beer Guide listed for nearly 50 years, held dozens of beer festivals and won CAMRA awards. It holds the record for the highest Derby Branch meeting attendance – 100, early in 1978. At the time of writing, the buyer hadn't been disclosed but it's understood that more emphasis will be placed on plated dishes whilst retaining the pub's traditional ambience.

### Derby CAMRA Branch Meeting

**Derby:** Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> June, Maypole, Brook Street, Derby – 8.00pm.

### Derby Beer Girls' Social Gatherings

Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June at the Creaky Floorboard, Kedleston Road, Derby.

Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> July at the Five Lamps, Duffield Road, Derby.

Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> August at the Hole in the Wall, Station Road, Mickleover. All of these socials are from 7.30pm.

### County Awards are Revealed

The **Derbyshire Pub of the Year 2026** is the Dead Poets Inn, Holbrook. A presentation will be made at the Poets at 19.30 on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> June.



The **Derbyshire Club of the Year 2026** is the RBL Club - Parwich. Congratulations to all concerned. **Gareth Stead**

### Beer Day Britain at the Brunswick

Come along and raise a glass to celebrate all things related to British beer and pubs at the Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year, The Brunswick Inn, 1 Railway Terrace from 6.30pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June. Glasses will be raised at 7.00pm.

### Burton Ale Trail is Not to be Missed

On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June, we're joining in the fun on the Burton Ale Trail social. Meet at 4.00pm in the Outwoods Brewing Co. unit, 21 -22 Station Street, Burton on Trent DE14 1AZ. 45 minutes here, before embarking on a leisurely trawl of some of the outstanding pubs on the Trail. Contact James 07510 161 151 for our whereabouts. It's sponsored by Burton Bridge Brewery and runs from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> June. For more information go to [WWW.BURTONALETRAIL.COM](http://WWW.BURTONALETRAIL.COM)

### Heritage Festival Move is Confirmed

The third Heritage Beer and Cider Festival has been confirmed for Derby Market Hall between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October. If you'd like to get involved, please see page 2 for meeting dates. Meanwhile, we'd like to thank outgoing Treasurer, **Tony Harris**, for his work over the years and we welcome **Tim Williams** to the role.

### Beer Festivals

**29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May:** Red Lion, Matlock Green. X17 bus stops close-by.  
**11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June:** The Old Dog, Spend Lane, Thorpe DE6 2AT. 30 cask ales with live music all weekend, festival food options and it's family friendly.  
**12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June:** Craft beers, wines and spirits Festival, Market Hall, Derby between 1.00pm and 10.00pm.  
**24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June:** White Hart, Bargate.  
**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sun 5<sup>th</sup> July-** The Eyes Have It Music festival, Duffield. There's a real ale & cider marquee.  
**3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> July:** Annual cider festival, Red Lion, Kniveton.  
**25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August:** 47<sup>th</sup> Peterborough Beer Festival, now Britain's largest festival after the Great British Beer Festival was postponed.  
**27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August:** Ashbourne CAMRA beer and cider festival at the Town Hall.  
**12<sup>th</sup> September:** Derby Pride, Markeaton Park. Gareth Gates will be headlining.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October:** Craft beers, wines and spirits Festival, Market Hall, Derby between 1.00pm and 10.00pm.  
**14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> October:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Heritage Beer and Cider Festival at Derby's Market Hall.  
**Don't forget, as a member you have free admission to all CAMRA Beer Festivals.**

### Hurt Arms Reopens After 3 Years's Closure

Internal flood defence measures including filling a cellar with concrete have future proofed the Hurt Arms on the A6 at Ambergate against further flooding. Moorwood Hotels has invested half a million pounds in a major revamp which includes letting rooms, a wedding suite and a swish, contemporary ambience throughout, courtesy of light wood wall panelling. There's a garden at the back too. On the bar were Thornbridge, Crackendale and Sharp's Two Waves at a fiver a pint. Food is very much to the fore with a wide-ranging menu including "grazing boards". The pub is served by the Transpeak bus from Derby which stops close-by as well as a rail service which sees Derby to Matlock trains stopping across the road. On a less happy note, the Greyhound and Bell at Cromford just up the A6, are both closed leaving the historic, industrial village with the Boat Inn only.



### Historic Derby Hostelry Closes

The Friary Hotel, Friar Gate, which was built circa 1730 and was granted an on-licence in the mid-1920s is currently closed. Distinguished by a large portico, The Friary brewed its own beer in the 1960s and was in the first tranche of Derby pubs to take the classic Ind Coope Draught Burton Ale (DBA) in 1976. There's speculation about its future.

### Champion Beer of Britain 2026

**Barley wine and strong ales:** Driftwood Spars, Alfie's Revenge.  
**Brown ales, red ales, old ales & strong mild:** Harvey's Old Ale.  
**IPAs:** Blue Monkey, Infinity plus 1.  
**Mild:** Shortts, Two Tone.  
**Premium bitter:** Cairngorm, Wildcat.  
**Premium pale, blond and golden ales:** Bristol Beer Factory, Independence.  
**Session bitter:** Purple Moose, Cwrw Glaslyn/Glaslyn Ale.  
**Session pale, blond and golden ales:** Blue Monkey, BG Sips.  
**Session stouts and porters:** Cairngorm, Black Gold.  
**Speciality, differently produced:** London Brewing, Beer Street.  
**Speciality, differently flavoured:** Farm Yard, Hoof.  
**Strong stouts and porters:** Green Jack, Baltic Trader Stout.

### CAMRA's New Strategy

CAMRA has published a new strategy. It reflects the post-Covid changes in people's leisure habits, and the current economic situation. More radically, it recognizes the value to the campaign of all real ale drinkers, not just CAMRA members.

There are approximately 50 real ale drinkers for every CAMRA member (according to my AI search – so needs a pinch of salt). Although non-members do not deliver Derby Drinker, etc., between them they spend much more money in support of real ale pubs and breweries than members. Many will be as passionate about real ale as we are, and help fund CAMRA indirectly by coming to beer festivals. CAMRA will remain a membership organization, but the strategy is to look beyond simple membership headcounts to find ways in which we can encourage some of the largely untapped resource of non-members to become more involved. Some will ultimately become the highly active members we need. To encourage people to join and progress up the "membership ladder", the strategy will be to make the benefits of membership more attractive, and to develop the tools needed to make the work of the more active volunteers easier and more effective. The strategy is 10 pages long and can be found at <https://camra.org.uk/about/who-we-are>. Operational plans are still being developed, but from a branch perspective, **there are two things worth noting now.**

**First**, the strategy recognizes that beer festivals are key events for interaction with non-members. They provide the biggest opportunity to get real ale drinkers (and any mass-market keg mates with them) more informed about real ale and CAMRA, and thus potentially interested in getting involved, perhaps when the time is ripe for them.

**Second**, beer festivals are now the prime source of new members and renewals. About 75% of the money that CAMRA has available for campaigning now comes from membership subs. Beer festivals, though vital for promoting real ale and recruitment, now provide less than 25% of campaigning funds.

Happily, Derby has always had an excellent record of interaction with, and recruitment of, non-members, both at our festivals and more recently from the innovation of pop-up stalls at pub festivals, etc. The Derby Heritage Beer Festival in the Market Hall in October will provide another golden opportunity. Hopefully, the new venue will attract the 25% of 18 to 24-year-olds, who now regularly order cask ale.

If you are interested in finding out more, or discussing the issues, please come along to a Branch Meeting, or email me [timwilliams39bhr@gmail.com](mailto:timwilliams39bhr@gmail.com)

**Tim Williams**

### Photo-walk 2 and Tamworth pub tour

Following a successful inaugural outing to Cromford and Wirksworth last month, on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June, photographers and ale enthusiasts alike are catching the 1108 Birmingham train, alighting in Tamworth and meeting in the thrice national CAMRA Pub of the Year, the Tamworth Tap at noon. The photography challenge is “Castle and Moat House” and the theme is SMALL and the colour is PURPLE (bring props if you want). The winner from last month’s photography competition gets a free pint and the runner up gets a half. Notwithstanding the competition, the town has some great pubs to enjoy in the middle of summer and the Tamworth Tap’s rear outside area is unique.



Tamworth Tap

### Membership Numbers

Gillian Hough, membership secretary, reports that nationally CAMRA has 140,887 members as of April 2026 which represents a 6.4% increase for the period December to April. The East Midlands has 14,337 (down 114) of which 1,913 are Derby members.

### Bias Against Cask Ales

John Arguile’s revealing piece in M&B two months ago resonated with long time CAMRA member Dave Dreher who lives in Melbourne. Dave said that thirty years ago he was working at a Scottish and Newcastle pub and it had a similar policy of mandating a 105% return on every cask. Financial penalties would ensue if this wasn’t met.

### Handpump Hi-Jack Latest

An amendment to existing legislation is to be read in June or later in parliament which, if passed, will outlaw the serving of keg beers through handpumps. Derby CAMRA has blazed a trail in this campaign and it’s still not too late to write to your MP supporting our campaign which we hope will see cask beer earning protected status.

### Brewery Historian Publishes Book on “Big Six”

John Arguile has published “The Big Six” which recounts the formation, growth and demise of Britain’s six largest breweries between 1955 and 2025. It looks at the key players involved and notable beers are recounted by employees. Priced at £9.90, you can obtain a copy from the Alexandra, Siddals Road, Derby and Poynton’s in the Derbion shopping centre stock it too. Alternatively, please send a cheque for £13.35 (including postage and packing) payable to Mr J Arguile to 71 Elms Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 6FB.

### Market Hall Heritage Festival Meeting Dates

It’s an exciting time to be involved with the beer festival planning, so if you want to join in here are the meeting dates: 10<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 13<sup>th</sup> August, 9<sup>th</sup> September. The June meeting is at the Smithfield and the other meetings’ venues are to be decided.

### Happy Birthday, Chris

Licensee, Chris Wilbraham, recently celebrated his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday at the Holly Bush, Makeney. Chris has been at the pub for 15 years and is only the fourth licensee here since World War 2 which is quite remarkable. On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June, there’s a pork and cider festival with BBQs and live music by Pancake Boy and Misshapen.



Holly Bush, Makeney

### Minutes of the Ashbourne & District CAMRA Meeting, at The Old Dog, Thorpe, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April

#### Attendance:

Graham Burke (Chair), Mark Grist, Colin & Alison Terry, Martin Sales, Konrad Machej, Stephen Asbury, John Chamberlin, Dave O’Dell, Kevin Woolley, Hannah Barton.

#### Apologies:

Diane Grist, Mick Betts, Mike Burrows.

#### Declaration of Interest:

Mark Grist – Smith’s Tavern; Kevin Woolley & Hannah Barton – Red Lion, Kniveton & Kniveton Cider.

#### Minutes of previous meeting inc. accuracy/action minutes:

Taken as read.

#### Chairman:

Reported on attendance at recent Uttoxeter branch meeting, also confirmed presentations had taken place at The Queen’s Vaults, Ashbourne for Spring Pub of the Season and The Hug and Heave, Ashbourne as a Rising Star. Had intended to attend the National AGM in St. Albans in person, but observed through the online portal instead.

#### Secretary:

Membership as of 1<sup>st</sup> April – 72 (no change). Nominations are invited for the Summer Pub of the Season, to be voted on at the June meeting.

#### Cider:

Kevin & Hannah reported that the meeting was taking place during British Cider Week (25<sup>th</sup> April-5<sup>th</sup> May), an initiative led by The National Association of Cider Makers. Also, a reminder of their annual cider festival taking place on 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> July.

#### Pub News:

*The Horns, Ashbourne* is still dark, with no news on when it may re-open, nor any firm information on its future. *The Black Horse at Hulland Ward* may be seeing an application to turn the site into housing.

#### Beer Festival:

Meeting took place on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Next one will be held immediately before AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

#### Social events:

#### Date:

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Branch AGM – Smith’s Tavern, 8pm – any motions for debate or nominations for branch officer positions must be received by 7pm on the day.

**Derby Branch Diary**

**MAY**

**Fri 29<sup>th</sup> – Afternoon social** in the Last Post, 1 Uttoxeter Old Road, Derby – noon to 3.00pm.

**JUNE**

**Thu 4<sup>th</sup> – Derbyshire Pub of the Year presentation** at the Dead Poets, Holbrook at 730pm.

**Thu 4<sup>th</sup> – Burton Ale Trail social.** Meet at 4.00pm in the Outwoods Brewing Co. unit, 21 -22 Station Street, Burton on Trent DE14 1AZ. 45 minutes here before embarking on a leisurely trawl of some of the outstanding pubs on the Trail. Contact James 07510 161 151 for our whereabouts.

**Wed 10<sup>th</sup> – Heritage Beer Festival meeting** – Smithfield, Meadow Road -8.00pm.

**Wed 10<sup>th</sup> – Derby Beer Girls’ Social Gathering** at the Creaky Floorboard, Kedleston Road, Derby from 730pm.

**Thu 11<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH MEETING,** Maypole, Brook Street, Derby at 8.00pm.

**Sat 27<sup>th</sup> – Photo-walk 2 and Tamworth pub tour**  
1108 Birmingham train alighting in Tamworth and meeting in the thrice national CAMRA Pub of the Year, the Tamworth Tap at noon. The photography challenge is “Castle and Moat House” and the theme is SMALL and the colour is PURPLE (bring props if you want). The winner from last month’s photography competition gets a free pint and the runner up gets a half. Notwithstanding the comp, Tamworth has some great pubs to enjoy in the middle of summer.

**JULY**

**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sadler Gate revival evening.** Join us in the newly opened **Dukes** and **The Tannery** bars to enjoy some beers from Buxton and Ashover breweries respectively, right here in the heart of the Cathedral Quarter.

**Tue 7<sup>th</sup> – Derby Beer Girls’ Social Gathering** at the Five Lamps, Duffield Road from 730pm.

**Thu 9<sup>th</sup> - BRANCH MEETING,** Babington Arms, Babington Lane – 8.00pm.

**AUGUST**

**Thu 13<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH MEETING,** Tiger Inn, Lock Up Yard, off Cornmarket, Derby – 8.00pm.

**Tue 18<sup>th</sup> – Derby Beer Girls’ social gathering** at the Hole in the Wall, Station Road, Mickleover from 730pm.

**Amber Valley Diary**

**JUNE**

**Thu 4<sup>th</sup> – Derbyshire Pub of the Year presentation** at the Dead Poets, Holbrook at 730pm.

**Fri 5<sup>th</sup> - Sun 7th Belper Goes Green,** the Branch is running the real ale and cider marquee. See page 1.

**JULY**

**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sun 5th - The Eyes Have It Music festival,** Duffield, Branch is running the real ale & cider marquee.

**Amber Valley Contact**

**Chairman: Chris Rogers 01332 880041**

**Ashbourne Diary**

Information to be released shortly.

**Ashbourne Contact**

[info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk](mailto:info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk)

**DERBY CONTACTS**

**COMMITTEE**

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**Secretary:** Nic Scott [secretary@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Treasurer:** Andrew Norman [treasurer@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@derby.camra.org.uk)

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**Pubs Officer:** Kat Higgins  
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**Ashbourne Chairman:** Graham Burke  
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**Campaigns’ Coordinator:** Alan Pickersgill  
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**Cider and Perry Officer:** Post vacant.  
**Socials:** James Williams [socials@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:socials@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Press and publicity:** Alan Pickersgill  
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**Beer Festival:** Russell Gilbert  
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**Advisory role:** Kevin Hepworth

**NON – COMMITTEE**  
**Derby Drinker Distribution:** Kevin Hepworth  
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**Derby Drinker advertising manager:** Vacant  
[ads@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:ads@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Derby CAMRA Tasting Panel Chair:** Les Williams  
[lescama39@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lescama39@yahoo.co.uk)

**M&B Copy Deadline**

Copy to  
[mildbitter@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:mildbitter@derby.camra.org.uk) by  
**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June**

**Derby Drinker Deadline**  
**5<sup>th</sup> July**

[derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk)  
Advertising:  
[ads@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:ads@derby.camra.org.uk)