



Issue 205  
February - April  
2024

# DERBY D **rinker**

FREE



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select their  
Nine Finalists  
for Pub of the Year**



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Further details inside this Bumper Edition



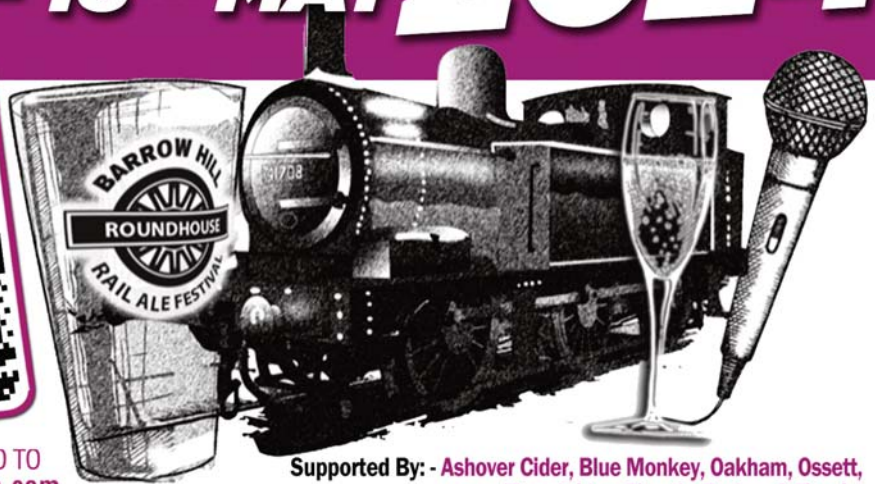
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## DERBY DRINKER INFORMATION

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Mail to:

**44 Duke St, Derby, DE1 3BX**

E-mail:

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

Website: [www.derby.camra.org.uk](http://www.derby.camra.org.uk)

*Design & layout by:* Jam Print  
[www.jamprint.co.uk](http://www.jamprint.co.uk)

*Additional contributors:*

Paul Gibson, Mark Grist, Martyn Pickard, Andrew Norman, Gareth Stead, Paul & Jane Whitaker.

*Additional photographs:*

Paul Gibson, Andrew Norman, Martyn Pickard, Gareth Stead, Paul Whitaker.

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or send a cheque made payable to 'Derby CAMRA' to :

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[www.derby.camra.org.uk](http://www.derby.camra.org.uk)

## Welcome

Hello & welcome to our third A5 Derby Drinker, the biggest one to date. We hope you are enjoying the new format and layout. This issue sees all of the usual features return together with a few new topics and ideas so please sit back and enjoy the read.

And we would also love to hear from you if you have any news, articles, details of any events that might be happening throughout the area, etc as we'd love to promote anything we weren't aware of. Just drop us a line to **[derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk)**

## Free Advertising

Would you like to get your pub, brewery, event, etc advertised for FREE on Derby CAMRA's website and throughout all their social media platforms? Well now you can by taking out an advert in *Derby Drinker* we will also guarantee to promote it at no additional costs across all our formats. The advert rates are set out opposite and we offer a range of sizes to suit your budget so just drop us an e-mail and we'll see what we can do for you - **[ads@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:ads@derby.camra.org.uk)**

## The Derby CAMRA Branch area

We often get asked about the exact area that Derby CAMRA covers, well it is quite extensive and includes the following:- **All of Derby City, Aston-on-Trent, Duffield, Coxbench, Melbourne, Ockbrook, Repton, Shardlow, Ticknall, Weston-on-Trent and Willington.**

We also have a **Sub-Branch** which covers the **Ashbourne** area and they have a regular page of news and features within *Derby Drinker* so check out the updates from that Branch there or take a look at their website

**<https://www.facebook.com/AshbourneCAMRA/>**

## CAMRA Member Discounts on Real Ales

Did you know if you are a CAMRA member you can get a discount with your membership card in many pubs throughout the Country. Derby & Derbyshire pubs offer varying degree of discounts so it's always worth asking when you are at the bar. Derby CAMRA's website has the latest list of participating pubs **[www.derby.camra.org.uk/discount-scheme](http://www.derby.camra.org.uk/discount-scheme)** so please check it out.

And if you would like your pub to join the scheme and get some free publicity through our website and social media outlets then please contact the Pubs Officer - **[pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk)**



# Derby CAMRA Branch

## DERBY CAMRA turns 50

Well, well, well would you believe it, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the formation of Derby CAMRA and few back then would have imagined it would still be going strong today. The Branch hopes to mark the occasion with a number of different events throughout the year which will be open to all and these will be publicised on the Branch website <https://derby.camra.org.uk/> and throughout its social media outlets as well as appearing in future issues of Derby Drinker. We do hope you will be able to come along to support some of them and help the Branch celebrate this amazing milestone in true style.

## DERBY CAMRA Pub of the Year Finalists

After a vote by Branch Members the Derby Branch of CAMRA has selected its Pub of the Year Finalists for 2024 with further details below:-

The **City Pub of the Year** finalists are the Brunswick Inn on Railway Terrace, the Flowerpot on King Street & the Smithfield Alehouse on Meadow Road. The **Suburb Pub of the Year** finalists are the Pot Hole in Allestree, the Hole in the Wall in Mickleover and the Hoptimist in Spondon.

The **Country Pub of the Year** finalists are the Royal Oak in Ockbrook, the Spirit Vaults in Melbourne & the Shiny Tap in Little Eaton.

There will also be one overall Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year from the 9 finalists mentioned above. The intensive judging period is already well under way with Branch Members visiting each pub and scoring them not just on the quality of the Real Ale but taking other things into account like the service & welcome, the atmosphere, style, décor, furnishings, cleanliness and community focus of the pub as well as a sympathy with CAMRA's aims. The results will then be tallied up and announced at a future Branch Meeting with the winners and runners-up featuring in a forthcoming issue of Derby Drinker which will hopefully include a selection of presentation photos of the pubs with their certificates too. Congratulations then to all the pubs involved for making this year's shortlist.

## DERBY CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year Finalists

This year's finalists are the **Brunswick Inn, Flowerpot & Victoria Inn** all from Derby. Judging is currently ongoing and the winner will be announced at a future Branch Meeting and feature

in a forthcoming issue of Derby Drinker.

Congratulations then to all the Pubs involved in this year's competition.

## DERBY CAMRA Club of the Year

This is another competition that is currently ongoing with Clubs throughout the Branch area being judged against each other. The winner will be announced at a future Branch Meeting and feature in a forthcoming issue of Derby Drinker.

## Branch Annual General Meeting

Derby CAMRA's Annual General Meeting will take place on **Thursday 8th February** at 8pm in the Victoria Inn on Midland Place in Derby. All are welcome to attend and we encourage anybody who feels they want a fresh challenge to stand for the Branch Committee. All posts are up for grabs including Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and several Committee positions. If you want to put your name forward or want to find out further information then please e-mail the Branch Secretary, Ian Forman at [secretary@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@derby.camra.org.uk)

## Good Beer Guide Selection Meeting

This will take place after the Branch AGM at the Victoria Inn, Derby on **Thursday 8th February**.

## Upcoming Nearby CAMRA Beer Festivals

While Winter tends to see a slow up in CAMRA supported Beer Festivals there are still a few to look forward to (see list below). And remember if you are a CAMRA member then there is usually discounted entry or discounted beer tokens on offer.

**Hucknall Beer Festival** - 8-11 Feb - John Godber Centre.

**Great British Beer Festival Winter** - 15-17 Feb - Burton Town Hall.

**Bradford Beer Festival** - 29 Feb-2 March - Victoria Hall, Saltaire.

**Loughborough Beer Festival** - 7-9 March - Polish Club.

**Rotherham Real Ale & Music Festival** - 7-9 March - Magna Centre.

## Other Local Beer Festivals

Derby Drinker is delighted to promote the following events and you'll see their adverts listed in this issue:-

**Smithfield Murk Fest** - 22-24 March - Derby.

**Brunswick Beer Festival** - 10-14 April - Derby.

**Great Campbell St Beer Festival** - 18-21 April - Belper.

**Rail Ale Festival** - 16-18 May - Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

**Tutbury Beer Festival** - 16-19 May - Venues around Tutbury.

### UK Beer Festival Listings

If you, like me, love attending Beer Festivals then <https://www.beer-festival-calendar.co.uk/> is the site for you with probably the most comprehensive listings of upcoming Beer Festivals in the whole Country. Both CAMRA and non-CAMRA events are included and help you plan ahead for a great day out. You can also upload any Beer Festival that you know about for free and get it listed on the site to help the publicity for the event.

### Cheap Bus Travel to the Pub & Beer Festivals

The Government backed National scheme on cheap bus travel has now been extended to **31 December 2024**. The scheme caps any single bus journey at £2. This is great for a day out visiting pubs, beer festivals & breweries further afield in different towns and cities. From Derby you can travel to the likes of Chesterfield on the Comet or Leicester on the Skylink or Buxton on the Transpeak to name but a few so why not get out & about and make the most of the scheme while it lasts.

### What Pub - Your Guide to UK Pubs & Clubs

If you weren't already aware CAMRA has a great site for checking information on pubs & venues up & down the Country including the best ones to visit for Real Ales & Ciders. This site is kept up to date as possible with pub descriptions, locations, opening times and Real Ales available and is a more than useful tool when travelling about. Check it out at <https://whatpub.com/> And if you're a CAMRA member you can login and score the beer you are trying as well which helps local Branches with their selections for the Good Beer Guide.

### Real Ale Finder - What's on Tap Near You

Ever wanted to find out what ales are on at a local pub without physically popping in ? Well now you can by checking out the Real Ale Finder mobile phone App which lists pubs all over the Country and what ales they have on that particular day or week. Ciders, Perries and Craft Keg beers are also included so it's a great way to plan ahead before your visit. It does rely on pubs keeping the information updated and not all pubs are listed but registration is free and makes a great additional marketing tool for pubs so I would encourage any pub to sign up if you haven't already done so. A lot of Derby pubs are already on the App including 11 City Centre venues so why not download it now for free. It also lists Breweries and Events too.

### Derbyshire CAMRA Branches

Derbyshire is covered by a number of different CAMRA Branches not just Derby & Ashbourne but Amber Valley who cover the Alfreton/Belper/Ripley areas, Erewash who cover the Heanor/Ilkeston Long Eaton areas, Burton who cover the South Derbyshire area and Mansfield who cover the South Normanton area. If you live in any of these areas please give your local Branch some support by attending their meetings and socials, they'd love to see you. Check out their websites or facebook pages for details or see below.

### Amber Valley CAMRA Diary Dates

**Sat 10th Feb** - Public Transport Social - Sheffield.

**Thu 22nd Feb** - Good Beer Guide Selection Meeting - Hunters Arms, Kilburn - 8pm.

**Sat 9th Mar** - Public Transport Social - Kirkby, Sutton & Mansfield.

**Thu 28th Mar** - Branch AGM - Old Oak, Horsley Woodhouse - 8pm.

**7-9 June** - Belper Goes Green - Meadows Cricket Club.

## Derby CAMRA



Website - [www.derby.camra.org.uk](http://www.derby.camra.org.uk)  
Facebook - DerbyCAMRA

#### Contacts:-

**Chairman** - Kevin Hepworth [chairman@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Secretary** - Ian Forman [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)

**Membership** - Karen Cooper [membership@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Pubs Officer** - Mark Fletcher [pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Press & Publicity** - Kevin Hepworth [publicity@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:publicity@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Derby Drinker** - Gareth Stead [derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Socials** - Jamie Williams [socials@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:socials@derby.camra.org.uk)

**LocAle** - [locale@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:locale@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Pub Preservation** - Mark Fletcher [pubpreserve@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubpreserve@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Social Media** - Gillian Hough [socialmedia@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:socialmedia@derby.camra.org.uk)

**Young Members Officer** - [YM@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:YM@derby.camra.org.uk)

## DerbyCAMRA Branch Diary

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials, meetings and trips.  
Here is a list of forthcoming events:

### FEBRUARY

**Thu 8th - AGM** - Victoria Inn, Derby - 8pm.

**Tue 20th - Social** - Old Bell, Derby - 8pm.

### MARCH

**Thu 14th - Branch Meeting** - Venue TBC - 8pm.

### APRIL

**Thu 11th - Branch Meeting** - Venue TBC - 8pm.

Contact the Social Secretary, by email - [socials@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:socials@derby.camra.org.uk)

(Check [www.derby.camra.org.uk](http://www.derby.camra.org.uk) for all upcoming events)



# Ashbourne & District CAMRA Branch

Contact Mark Grist [m.grist2@sky.com](mailto:m.grist2@sky.com)



Royal British Legion Club in Parwich

## CAMRA Club of the Year

As Derby Drinker went to press, we were expecting the announcement of CAMRA's overall Club of the Year with the **Royal British Legion Club in Parwich** having made the last four together with Cheltenham Motor Club, Dobcross Band Social Club & Marden Village Club. Whatever the result it's still a tremendous achievement for the RBL to have made the last four and we are delighted our Branch Club of the Year got so far.

## Branch Awards

Our January Branch Meeting saw voting for the Winter Pub of the Season, Pub of the Year, Club of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year and the results will appear on our Branch website

<https://www.facebook.com/AshbourneCAMRA/> and feature in the next Derby Drinker.

## Branch Beer Festival

Following a break last year due to lack of venue and festival committee we hope to return this year subject to planning and approval. The provisional venue and dates are the Town Hall between **12-14 September**.

## Pub News

**Ye Olde Vaults**, Ashbourne reopened on 19th January with licensee Kerry Edwards at the helm, running it alongside her existing outlet at the **Queen's Vaults**. Beers such as Thornbridge Jaipur and Theakston's Old Peculiar were some of the first to appear.

## Royal Shrovetide Football

This annual event is played throughout the town every Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday which this year are **Tuesday 13th & Wednesday 14th February**. Come along and visit this unique spectacle and sample a few beers around the town's many hostelries.

## Branch Diary

(subject to changes)

**Tuesday 13th & Wednesday 14th February**  
Ashbourne Royal Shrovetide

**Tuesday 27th February**  
Branch Meeting - The Cock, Clifton - 8pm.

**Thursday 28th March**  
Branch Meeting - Venue tbc.

# Pub News

Things are constantly changing on the pub scene so it's nice to catch up on everything we know about in our area. You may already be aware of some of this information but other things you might have missed so we recap here.....

The **Little Chester Ale House** in **Derby** re-opened in mid December and is now run by the Mad Brewer Pub Co who also run the Bank of Beers micropub in Melbourne. See article on page 14.

The **Thomas Leaper** in **Derby**, a former Wetherspoons pub has been bought by Amber Taverns who have submitted plans for a refurbishment with the hope of opening in Spring. The new pub name would be "The Iron Ram".

A new micropub, the **Hoppy Place** opened at the beginning of the year in a former coffee shop at the Lane End area of **Chaddesden** on the main Nottingham Road. See article on page 19.

Also in **Chaddesden** and directly opposite the Hoppy Place, the **Toby Carvery** has re-opened after a refurb as has the **Wilmot Arms** on Morley Road.

The fight to re-open the **Abbey** pub in **Darley Abbey** closed since 2019 goes on with local Councillor, Martin Repton joining forces with an unnamed brewing company in a bid to get it open again. Approaches to owners, Samuel Smiths Brewery have been made but things are still at the very early stages.

Another new micropub, the **Dead Man's Tankard** has opened in **Heanor** on Market Street.

Last time we reported that the **Bunny Hop** micropub in **Langley Mill** had closed for good but we are happy to report that is now open again.

The **Navigation** in **Shardlow** has reopened after a year's closure and is now run by the same people who run the Jolly Sailor in Hemington.

The **Spotted Cow** in **Holbrook** has transferred from community ownership to being run by Pub People Company although the staff have been retained.

The **Cross Keys** on **Belper** Market Place has also been taken over by the Pub People Company.

And finally, still no news of the sales of the **Tap & Greyhound** in **Derby** which where put on the market when the Real Brewing Pub Company, the pub company arm of Derby Brewing Company went into administration. We believe there has been several interested parties including a strong rumour of one in particular but as yet nothing can be confirmed. Both pubs remain open.

*Derby Drinker would like to thank other local newsletters and CAMRA members for these updates, but the usual disclaimer applies to the info provided.*

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- 6 JUST RADIOHEAD
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- 19 CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN
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# Brewery News

## Black Hole Brewery

Just to let you know Black Hole Brewery down in Little Eaton have been brewing Milky Way 6.0% wheat beer for a number of years, striving to get the perfect taste on the palette. As a result, it won the gold award at the Grantham Beer Festival last October. This is not the first time that Milky Way has had the seal of approval from CAMRA drinkers. Over the last two years we have achieved Champion Beer of Britain, East Midlands Regional Bronze 2022 and Champion Winter Beer of Britain Silver in 2023. As a result, Milky Way will, therefore,



move forward to the national final of the Champion Beer of Britain, Speciality - Differently Produced style category. This national judging will be held at GBBF-Winter hosted at Burton Town Hall on Thursday, 15th February 2024. You could say that our Milky Way beer is out of this world.

From the team @ black hole brewery.

*Andrew Spencer*

## Falstaff Brewery

Falstaff brewery would like to wish a Happy New Year to all our supporters over the past year. We will be brewing our usual stable beers plus specials this year and are planning another strong dark for later in the year after the success of P2. Watch this space.

*Jim Hallows*

## Shiny Brewery

Happy 2024 from all of us at Shiny Brewery! Now we've kicked off the year with Tryanuary, we're all about trying new things this year, from a nitro stout to a new bright cask. We recently launched Type Beats, a single hop Pale Ale series focusing on a new hop each time, with Citra and Mosaic being the first to be featured. This year

we'll be using hops we've never used before, so watch this space. To try our new releases fresh from the brewery, visit us at the Shiny Tap, Little Eaton, for some great craft beer and food, and events such as live music, quizzes and comedy nights!

*Mia Schroder*

## RBA Brewery

We have been working with Ben from the Burnt Pig in Ilkeston about a Tap takeover and hope to be able to supply a number of beers during the event which will take place over this coming Easter weekend. The line-up is expected to be a traditionally brewed Baltic Porter, which is currently in the fermenter, giving it time to lager and be ready in time for the takeover. Two session ales to be confirmed, a traditional Amber coloured bitter, an American IPA at around 6% full of citrus flavours, and following behind with a Special 6.7% mild, being conditioned as we speak to stand in line with the rest. More details in names and abv's for all six will be confirmed nearer the time.

As we only brew a cask at a time, it limits us in providing beer to our other regular customers whilst committed to a tap takeover. Therefore other beers will be coming along in the following months, but I suppose this is what makes us unique and capable of producing something new and individualistic.

*Richard Burton*

## Dancing Duck Brewery

December was busy as usual in the brewery. Our Christmas Quackers 4.2% pale hoppy ale flew out with all three brews sold by 12th December, and it was great to receive lots of positive feedback on it. It was the first time we have used a new hop from New Zealand called Nectaron and it was as good as we hoped it would be. We were delighted to receive a few more CAMRA regional awards with Dark Drake winning another Gold medal, 22 and Ay Up receiving silver medals and Abduction a bronze medal. This month we are brewing our 4.2% pale #wetfebruary which we think is the perfect antidote to dry January. We also plan to brew our 5.2% ruby ale Seduction for the first time in several years, along with Waitangi, Indian Porter and our six regular beers.

*Rachel Matthews*



## Brunswick Brewery

The brewery is still producing lots of new beers, the newest one being 'Necta' a single hopped extra pale w/Nectaron from N.Z, gorgeous grapefruit and citrus notes, we've been told it's the best beer we've ever done! Will definitely be seeing that more in the future. Also very proud

to have been informed that 'Ubiquitous' our permanent 'Engine Shed Project' beer won gold at last years 'Champion Beer of East Midlands - IPA category' and will now be moving on to nationals, fingers crossed.

*James Salmon*

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## The FALSTAFF

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*Falstaff Brewery*



## The POTHOLE

Park Farm, Allestree  
Derby DE22 2QQ

# Derby Drinker Q&A Meet the Brewer - Little Brewing Company

Continuing our meetings with local brewers, we talk with Matt Willers from the Little Brewing Company. The brewery is located on the Robinsons Industrial Estate, Shaftesbury Street, Derby.



## **DD. When did the brewery start and where did the name come from?**

MW. The brewery started on this site as the Littlelover Brewery in 2015, by the original owner Tim Dorrington, becoming the Little Brewing Company in mid-2020 when we acquired it after he retired. The former name came from where Tim lived. Many of the beer names are from places and areas of Littlelover, such as King George after the playing fields, and The Panther after the pub. We decided the name needed an update as we wanted to produce more modern styles of beers, alongside some traditional ones. And the old brand felt old. We didn't want to completely break away from the following Littlelover had, so we'd been looking for variations. Shortening the name came as a stroke of genius, not only making the name easier to fit on any branding, so Little can be bigger, but by creating a sense that the brewery is small and local, wherever the beer appears on the bar.

## **DD. What were you doing prior to the brewery opening and was this career change what you expected?**

MW. Immediately prior to acquiring the brewery I was running Bar 189 in Allestree, through which I met Tim as he was involved in the Pothole. Prior to that, I worked for ten years on large yachts as an electro-mechanical marine engineer.

Taking over the brewery in 2020 during Covid was not what I was expecting and was very much an up-hill battle.

## **DD. Why choose brewing as a career?**

MW. I thought that owning your own pub and supplying it with your own beer was a great arrangement and the two would go hand-in-hand. Also, it would give an outlet for newly created recipes, getting instant feedback from customers.

## **DD. What is your view on cask versus keg?**

MW. Both are great and should have their own place on the bar. I always feel good cask is harder to find than good keg. It's a bit more forgiving in the brewing process and can't be dispensed badly. There is a common and incorrect view that all keg is force carbonated and therefore the devil. It can be achieved by allowing the yeast to naturally carbonate the beer in the fermenter if you have a pressure rated tank and setting the spunding (venting) valve to achieve the desired level. Either way, the CO<sub>2</sub> is absorbed by the beer causing it to become fizzy. It's all personal preference and refreshing (literally in summer) to see more and more people are trying it. Whatever your view cask or keg beer, the brewing process is fairly similar.

## **DD. What types of beer do you generally produce?**

MW. Our core beers are a low 4% hoppy pale, a mid 4% session IPA, a 4.2% stout and a 4% traditional best bitter. On top of that we normally have six different rotating beers, some cask, some keg, some hazy and some hoppy. This will vary depending on the time of year too.

## **DD. Where did you learn your craft?**

MW. Myself and my Dad, Nick, did a two-year apprenticeship with Nottingham University, which was a level 4 diploma, equivalent to a foundation degree in brewing science. Emma who works at the brewery is also undertaking the same qualification. Brewing is not just a practical trade, there is a lot of science behind it as well. There are so many brewers around with no understanding of the science behind brewing, or more worryingly the hygienic control systems. Some breweries you visit really smell, and this shouldn't be the case.

## **DD. Who is responsible for the new beer recipes?**

MW. It's a joint effort, the team sitting down together looking at market trends and what direction other producers are going. You can either go with the new trend and styles or go against them. Also you have to know what is going to sell. Importantly, we have a good understanding of hops and malt and what goes well together.

Sometimes we trial new recipes using our 100-litre brew plant.

**DD. Do you have any plans to expand?**

MW. We currently have big plans to expand and to move the brewery to larger premises which will incorporate a proper brewery taproom, where you can sit and see the kit and watch the process. We want to encourage more people to visit to understand how beer is made, why quality of ingredients is important and to get an understanding of the costs involved. At the new brewery we will also be able to run brewery tours and brewery experience days, with hands-on opportunities. The move would create new jobs due to increasing capacity and needing people to meet-and-greet and talk to visitors. Hopefully we will get full support from all the parties that are needed to make this happen and you will be able to visit us soon.

**DD. What is the one single thing you would not want to be without?**

MW. The electric kettle: Yorkshire tea (other brands are apparently available) keeps us going. Having a cup of tea makes us stop what we're doing and gives us time to chat about ideas and some of the best ones have been as a result of having a cuppa.

**DD. Looking back, is there anything you would do differently?**

MW. Since taking over the brewery in 2020 we have been constantly going uphill. The way the industry operates and where people are choosing to drink, and big changes to the Small Producers Duty Relief. Having said that we have doubled our output every year since 2020, and we've had to work very hard to achieve it. Our distribution is now national, all our current beer is certified gluten-free and it's all vegan friendly. We started out in a world that none of

us had ever worked through, and it's easy to look back with hindsight with a better plan, but in truth, from where we started to where we are now, the biggest thing I'd do differently would be to worry less.

**DD. Does the making of your lager differ to that of your other beers, e.g. malts, water etc?**

MW. Depending on the style of beer we're producing we'll use different types of strains of yeast and a different mixture of malt. We then test and create a different water profile for every style of beer we brew, so in that sense it is no different to anything else. The major difference is that when we make our Vors Pilsner lager we let it mature for much longer than our cask beers. Typically we lager it for six weeks, to ensure its flavour and to guarantee it is crystal clear. This takes up a lot of space and adds to the costs.

**Andrew Norman**

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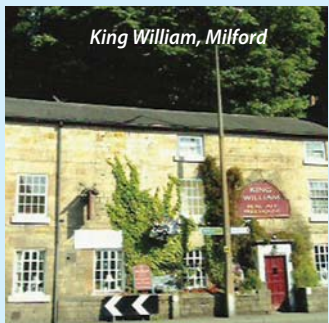
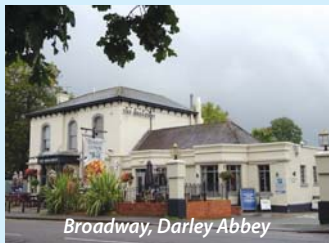
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# Take the Sixes for a G



The £2 flat rate bus fare has been extended to the end of 2024 so there's never been a better time for boarding the bus, and here we look at some pubs on the Trentbarton Sixes route.

Leaving Derby bus station, the **Broadway** soon hoves into view. Once a Darley Abbey mill manager's house but converted to pub usage in the 1930s, this handsomely fronted establishment is a reliable refuge from the busy main road. Four hand-pulled ales including Pedigree accompanied with food served all day ensure the pub's continuing popularity.

Alighting in Duffield, the aptly named **Town Street Tap** is run by Tollgate brewery and naturally two of its beers vie for attention with four changing guests. Firmly established in the *Good Beer Guide*, the outstanding feature here is table service, something which many thought had been consigned to history. Nearby are the **King's Head** and **White Hart**, whilst the redesigned **Pattenmakers** on Crown Street is also worthy of patronage.

The **Elephant and Peacock**, Milford, is our next port of call, often featuring the likes of Timothy Taylor and Dancing Duck. The former Strutt Arms has built up a reputation for good quality meals and children are welcome. Around the corner, the venerable Dave Sutton at the **King William** ensures his quartet of ales are always in fine condition and expect to find Draught Bass and Abbot competing with newer breweries. The classic **Holly Bush**, Makeney, is within walking distance.

Belper is a beer drinkers' delight reflecting the mill town's reputational rise in the past decade, boosted by a wealth of independent shops. The **Tavern** opposite the former Babington hospital is a good starting point and several pubs and new bars line Bridge Street (A6). The longest established are the **George and Dragon** fronted by a fine portico, and the **Devonshire** which is superbly run, offering Dancing Duck beers, including Dark Drake, and a wide choice of comestibles all day. The stone flagged floor beneath subdued lighting lends a traditional ambience, and a

# Great Choice of Real Ale

commodious rear patio is busy in summer. A relatively new micropub, **Bang in Belper** is worth a call too featuring four handpumps, including at least one guest beer from an unusual source. There are also many other recommended hostelries in the town.

The hourly Trentbarton 6.1 goes all the way to Bakewell, and alighting in Wirksworth, half a dozen pubs beckon including the prominent **Red Lion** which incorporates the renowned **Feather Star**. An imaginative beer selection leaves those sated who are searching for something unusual.

Descending down Cromford hill, one is spoilt for choice with the **Greyhound, Bell Inn** and the discreetly located **Boat** all vying for attention. The latter's landlord is Dave Mountford who has aided many a licensee's plight with his tireless campaigning on their behalf with pubcos.

Further on is Matlock Bath with the Good Beer Guide listed **Fishpond's** terraced-gardens set into the cliff-face. The 6.1 stops right outside, and Dale Road in Matlock has a clutch of exciting new bars, including

the Good Beer Guide listed **Bod Matlock** and **Twenty Ten**, making a stop here essential.

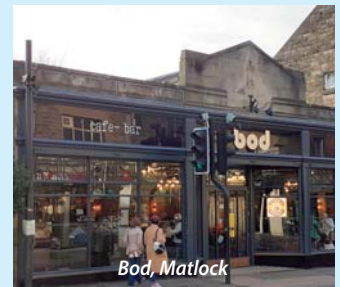
The 6.1's ultimate destination is Bakewell, where the acclaimed **Thornbridge Brewery Tap Room**, off Buxton Road is situated. Thornbridge brewery is one of the county's great success stories having outgrown its Thornbridge Hall premises where it set up in 2005, and relocated to a state-of-the-art brewery in order to supply 200 outlets and twelve tied houses. There are a number of good pubs in Bakewell, some owned by Stockport brewer, Robinson's. And the **Joiners Arms** micropub is directly opposite the bus stop and features six regularly changing cask ales.

We hope we've shown just how many interesting and historic places there are on the frequent **Trentbarton Sixes** service.

For full timetable, route and map details including bus stops visit the Trentbarton website:

<https://www.trentbarton.co.uk/services/sixes>

**Paul Gibson**



# Good Beer Guide Regular Ushers in New Era

The story of the Little Chester Ale House starts in the sprawling suburb of Chaddesden in early 2011 when Walter Scott set up a one-barrel brewing plant, expanding to 3-barrels soon afterwards. Wentwell was the name of the new brewery and a collaboration with George Lambert seized the opportunity to convert dry cleaning premises on the corner of Chester Green Road to Derby's first micro-pub in 2012.

Around this time, Darren and Lindsey Hartshorn established a six-barrel brewing plant on Alfreton Road and they acquired the LCAH in 2016, running it until last November. It's now been spruced up and it reopened on 12th December under the auspices of Mad Brewer, run by Matt and Alex Allingham. Mad Brewer is a reference to their father, Edward, the first Leatherbritches brewer in the 90s when they originated in Fenny Bentley.

Upon entering the attractively fronted corner house, I was greeted by Dan Montague, a familiar figure to Derby drinkers, having previously worked at the Friargate, Smithfield and Peacock. On a dark, late December



afternoon, the tapered interior, warmed by a log burning stove, was lit up by a large, illuminated clock, beneath which comfortable banquette seating surrounds the scrubbed-top tables. Atop the wooden planked bar servery were half a dozen hand-pumps dispensing Scary Hairy, The Bounder, Ashbourne Ale (all Leatherbritches), Burton Bridge Bitter and a brace from Seacider, a Sussex cider producer. The intimate LCAH has been omitted from the Good Beer Guide just twice in the past decade and with the Coach and Horses nearby, this corner of Derby is worth seeking out. Leatherbritches' devotees can also sample their wares in the Victoria, Midland Place, Derby, and Bank of Beers, Melbourne, the Mad Brewer sister pub.

**Paul Gibson**

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Friday & Saturday 12am till 11pm

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*Dog friendly and children  
under 16 are allowed in until 7pm*

# Inn Focus: Shakespeare, Sadler Gate, Derby



**T**he Ostrich, as it was then named, was built in 1737 but by 1818 the bard's name had been adopted. In the 21st century it's also been known as the Blue Dog, and Dog and Moon. A certain Albert Fretwell kept the Sadler Gate inn between 1957 and 1981 before Chris Thompson, son of Ingleby brewer, John, took charge and the carriage archway was in-filled to add internal floor space.

In 2023, a costly refit was carried out with good use of natural materials such as exposed brickwork. The Sadler Gate end of the bar has retained the wooden wall panelling I recall from the 80s when it served the nectar known as Ind Coope Draught Burton Ale. The carriage archway which would have accessed the stables, now leads to a stone flagged, split-level indoor area

with a rustic feel and the tables are flanked by comfy high-backed banquettes. Doom Bar, and Tribute from Cornish brewers St Austell are the beers of choice, with the latter priced at a very reasonable £3.95 a pint. I feel that many pubs over-reach themselves in terms of multiple choice and, perhaps, forget that brisk turnover is an essential element of well-kept real ale.

The food menu should appeal to carnivores and the many meat dishes vie for attention with sourdough pizzas and burgers. In the summer, the extensive rear patio surrounded by old, enamelled advertisements will doubtless hum to the sound of conversation on a busy weekend evening.

All in all, an attractive proposition in the heart of the Cathedral Quarter.



# Celebrating 50 Years of the GOOD BEER GUIDE in Derbyshire (Part I)

CAMRA's first bound copy Good Beer Guide in 1974 was ground breaking as, hitherto, pub guides had been published but none had assessed beer quality, nor distinguished between traditional cask and keg beer.

The first pressing, which was monochrome and just 96 pages, earned a certain notoriety when Watney's beer came with a warning to "avoid like the plague". When CAMRA became aware of potential litigation, subsequent pressings toned this down to "avoid at all costs".

In the first of three articles, we review the 18 Derbyshire pubs listed all those years ago with 1974 descriptions in *italics*, although some pubs' descriptions were very brief or even non-existent!

## Ashbourne:

**Green Man and Black's Head Greenall**



Whitley (Warrington) mild and bitter  
Congenial pub in pleasant town.

Convenient for Dovedale and Peak District. Intriguing name - and "gallows" type sign across the road.

In the 18th century, the beautifully panelled Boswell Bar was where lawyer and writer James Boswell met lexicographer, Samuel Johnson, but this is now a shop. The modern Green Man is a swish pub-cum-restaurant on the opposite side of the carriage archway where Castle Rock Harvest Pale and Taylor's Landlord, both former CAMRA Champion Beers of Britain, plus guests are offered alongside high-quality food and snacks.

## Brassington:

**Gate Marston's (Burton on Trent)**  
Pedigree and mild



Same licensee 31 years. Scrubbed-top tables in bar; black-leaded fireplace;

*genuine brasses; high-backed "pew" seats in snug.*

The licensee in question was Charles Castledine who accompanied Derby CAMRA on a tour of Marston's brewery in December 1976. CAMRA's National Inventory ranks this 400-year-old hostelry as a maximum three stars - a pub interior of exceptional national historic importance, the focal point being the finest fireplace and range I've seen. Today, Pedigree and Wainwright vie for attention with

locally brewed  
Aldwark Nostrum 4.2% abv, and steaks feature on the menu.

## Buxton:

**Grove Robinson's (Stockport)** mild and bitter

*Two bars open to public in large hotel. Public bar has darts, American billiards, and character.*

In 2024, the Grade 2 listed building is retail outlets.





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**Crich:**

**Black Swan** Hardy's and Hanson's (Kimberley) mild and bitter



*A pleasant inn; stone built, like virtually everything in the village.*

Behind the attractive Brewers' Tudor frontage are two rooms: a wood-panelled lounge and a spacious bar. A large range of real ales included a brace from Dancing Duck but I opted

for Ruby Red from the Hobgoblin brewery in Witney which was due to close in November. The elevated garden has far reaching rural views and horses are still welcome in the stables area. Opens at noon every day.

**Cliff Hardy's and Hanson's** (Kimberley) mild and bitter  
*Pleasant stone pub in*



*attractive countryside at top end of village, next to Tramway Museum.*

It was in 1974 that new licensees, Roy and Beryl Calladine, took over, eventually retiring in 2002. Today, Peak Ales and Dancing Duck are among the

beers featured and, post-lockdown, considerable improvement has been made with a cosy, characterful snug complete with original fireplace now integral to the public area. In all, four rooms coalesce around the small bar servery and food is popular.

**Jovial Dutchman** Hardy's and Hanson's (Kimberley) mild and bitter  
*Ordinary village local.*

Back then, it served beer through metered electric pumps which was a favoured method of dispense for Nottinghamshire breweries. This one-time thatched pub closed in 2009 and is now residential.

**Paul Gibson**

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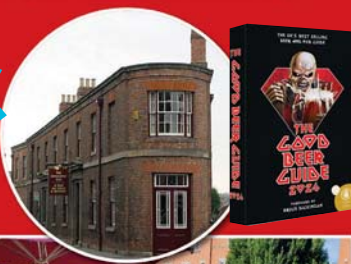
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## The Good Beer Guide 2024

CAMRA's new Good Beer Guide has a stunning front cover and a forward by non-other than **Bruce Dickinson**, lead singer of legendary British Rock Band, **Iron Maiden**.

The unmistakable lettering from Iron Maiden and the iconic figure of Eddie pulling a pint of real ale on the front cover together with the words of Bruce, an avid drinker and supporter of real ale himself help make this a unique collector's edition.

The **GBG** of course is the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide and it continues to represent the best of the best in the brewing and hospitality industry. With 4500 pubs, bars, and clubs selected by unpaid volunteers up and down the country, this is the best guide for pubgoers interested in being served a



good pint of real ale as well as those who wish to find a local near them that is welcoming and has many other benefits that may appeal. Each entry contains a short description as well as details of regular beers that can be linked to the brewery section to discover local beers, as well as some treasured national favourites.

Derby and Derbyshire pubs and breweries are well represented, so if you want to find out who made it this year then copies are available now via CAMRA's national website or from local bookshops and pubs such as the Alexandra, Brunswick & Furnace in Derby.

# Derby Drinker Visits Derby's Newest Micro Pub

Fifty years ago the world, although familiar to many today, was in some ways quite different. In January 1974 keyboard maestro, Rick Wakeman, was about to record his Prog Rock masterpiece, Journey to the Centre of the Earth, at the Royal Festival Hall, and the only set of traffic lights on the old A52 from Derby to Spondon were to be found in Chaddesden at the junction with Chaddesden Lane End. It is there today we find not "a world within a world," as Professor Lidenbrock would say, but Derby's newest micro pub, the Hoppy Place.

Its recent conversion from a high street cafe has resulted in a spacious if somewhat generic interior, with lots of dining tables, upright chairs, and simple decor of old books and hand tools. The single toilet/washroom is generous enough to swing a long-tailed cat and smells lovely. The neat bar hosts four hand pumps. At the time of my visit Dancing Duck Dark Drake, Greene King Abbot, Little Brewery Lone Ranger and good ol' Bass were available, all at £4.20. The landlord, Adam, is a Spondon chap and is new to the pub trade. He has all the enthusiasm of someone working for himself. One of his plans for the future is to open up the large south facing rear yard, which on sunny days will double the seating area, a facility he will be most grateful for on Rams' match days. We had a chat about micros in general and I

directed him to visit the Burnt Pig in Ilkeston, which in my opinion all others are judged against.

Opening hours are 2pm-10pm.

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# Belper - Beer Capital ?

A recent survey of Belper, Milford and Makeney confirmed what many locals believe, Belper is a great place for real ale



*Cross Keys and Black Swan on Belper Market Place*



*Angels Micropub on Belper Market Place*

**G**roups starting from Chesterfield Road, Bridge Foot, Makeney and Broadholme headed into the town centre visiting all the pubs on the way. In total **31 pubs and clubs** were visited finding **66 different real ales** from **42 Regional and National Breweries**. Both numbers may have been higher but Tyler's was closed for a private event and Campbell Street Brewery tap room is currently only open for special events. Just five pubs didn't have real ale - Vibe, Monk Bar and the Bank all on King Street, the British Legion which has some occasionally and the Beer Trap primarily a bottle shop with an eclectic mix of beers and craft keg on tap.

The most popular beers were Pedigree (7), Ayup (5), Bass and Landlord (4), Wainwright Gold and Jaipur (3). The well-known beer emporiums, Holly Bush at

Makeney, Angels, the Railway and Arkwrights topped the list for most real ales with up to eight. Four or more were quite common in many pubs. Perhaps more important than quantity, quality was generally very good so competition for next year's Good Beer Guide is sure to be keen.

Welcome changes found were the formerly Batemans house, the Cross Keys in the Market Place now run by Pub People offering four ales. The Palfrey at Milford, primarily a restaurant, has a welcoming separate area for drinkers, stocking two Dancing Duck beers on our visit. They hope to have their separate cellar bar open during the summer.

The town centre pubs are well known but anyone planning a visit ought to consider starting at the slightly out of town pubs - Fisherman's Rest, Talbot, Queen's Head or Thorn Tree

which are close to bus stops for the Sixes or Transpeak, whilst the joint villages Milford and Makeney are a night or day out on their own.

In answer to the question posed in the title of this article Belper has a different beer for every 300 residents, the equivalent figure for Derby is around one per thousand. I'm sure statistical analysis could easily point out the flaws in this argument but never let the facts get in the way of a good story. It works for most of the media!

If you're planning a visit to any of Belper's pubs check opening hours on Whatpub (Whatpub.com) CAMRA's guide to British pubs and if a CAMRA member don't forget to enter your beer scores to assist Good Beer Guide selection.

**Paul and Jane Whitaker**

# National CAMRA Events

## National Pub of the Year

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year is once again the **Tamworth Tap** which is an impressive brewpub located in a 16th century shop front falling within the shadow of Tamworth's historic Norman castle. It boasts eight handpulls, including at least one Tamworth ale brewed on site and is well worth a visit being a short 20 minute train ride from Derby.



## National Members Weekend

The 2024 National CAMRA Members Weekend will take place in **Dundee** from **26 to 28 April** at Caird Hall. As well as the

AGM itself the event also includes an onsite Beer Festival, Brewery and Social Trips and Pub Crawls around Dundee. You can pre-register for the event including booking trips at [camra.org.uk](http://camra.org.uk) or you can register on the day. See advert on page 23.



**15 – 17 February 2024**

**Burton Town Hall**

CAMRA are really excited to be bringing everyone back together in Burton upon Trent in February for the Great British Beer Festival Winter. As the winter counterpart to CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival, visitors will find a fantastic range of not only dark and winter brews but a great selection of light and hoppy ales to sample over the period. The festival will feature hundreds of cask and craft beers, ciders, perries and gin in the beautiful surrounds of Burton Town Hall, where visitors can also enjoy a range of entertainment and food throughout the weekend. It will also be home to the prestigious Champion Winter Beer of Britain awards.

Tickets are available to buy in advance from the CAMRA website or pay on the day. So put the dates in your diary now and don't miss out on this fantastic event.

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