

# HERTFORDSHIRE'S CAMRA Pulling Together



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

The bi-monthly publication for every discerning drinker

December / January 2021

Issue 5



## Selling off The Old Fox, Bricket Wood



Landlord Cliff  
Caswell at the  
Queen's Head, Allens  
Green awarded  
Branch Cider Pub of  
the Year for  
Hertfordshire



Stevenage Old Town Ale Trail  
planned for early February 2021



Rob and Julie  
Chapman at The  
Woodbine, Waltham  
Abbey, with awards  
for Branch Cider pub  
of the year, and Essex  
and overall Branch  
pub of the year



## Lockdown Two and take away cask ale

When the second lockdown was announced further pressure was placed on an already damaged licensed trade. When the paperwork was read it appeared that pubs would be blocked from selling any take-away alcoholic drinks, which in the first lockdown had been a lifeline for cask ale. There was an outcry in the press as this was seen as a step too far and unnecessary and could have been the final blow for many pubs. CAMRA mobilised its members to contact as many MP's as possible, in Hertfordshire we have nine. The response was as usual not good. We got some standard replies saying how important the new lockdown was or no response at all. The one light at the end of the tunnel was the response from Daisy Cooper, Liberal Democrat MP for St Albans, in her letter dated 12 November 2020, extract below:

"I fully support CAMRA's call for proper support package for all pubs and breweries.

The Covid-19 crisis has put many of our pubs and hospitality businesses under immense financial pressure, particularly since the arbitrary restriction on opening times – forcing them to kick out patrons out of their venues en-masse by 10pm. This has now been compounded by the further effects of the national lockdown since 5<sup>th</sup> November. I have been very active on the issue of the effects of these restrictions on pubs and hospitality, and have tabled a number of parliamentary questions to Government on the challenges they are facing.

You can see some of my most recent questions to the government and the answers, where they have been provided, here:

*To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the evidence supporting the restriction of takeaway alcohol sales from pubs and licensed premises during the November 2020 Covid-19 lockdown.*

*To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the financial detriment to (a) licensed premises and (b) cask beer producers of the restriction on the sale of takeaway alcohol during the Covid-19 lockdown.*

*To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether pubs in the areas of Tier 3 local Covid alert level restrictions, that do not normally serve food, can serve substantial meals by engaging an outside catering contractor.*

*To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 October 2020 to Question 104771, on the Town and Country (Permitted Development*

*and Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020: what assessment he has made of the merits of exceeding the scope of those measures to include those (a) pubs and (b) hospitality business that are listed buildings, and cannot erect temporary outside structures within their curtilage due to the constraints of listed buildings consents".*

*"Please be assured I will continue to stand up for our local pubs and brewing industry, including continuing to work with local campaign group Save St Albans Pubs and the Campaign for Real Ale, based here in St Albans.*

*Daisy Cooper MP, Member of Parliament for St Albans".*

Somehow the message did get through to the government and another u-turn took place with an announcement being made that alcoholic take-aways from pubs would be allowed so hopefully all our first lockdown heroes will be selling real ale for consumption off the premises.

Wetherspoon and Stonegate dropped the price of real ales to under £1 per pint to clear as much of the outstanding stock as they could before the second lockdown.

## CAMRA Comments on the release of the Pubs Code Review

Commenting on the release of the Pubs Code Review, CAMRA Chairman Nik Antona said:

"While it is good to hear that the Government has published the Pubs Code Review and agree with our assessment that the Code is not working as it should, the proposed course of action falls far short of the changes needed to deliver on the principles of 'no worse off' and 'fair and lawful dealing' enshrined in the Code.

"The Review stops short of making more enforcement powers available to the Pubs Code Adjudicator and doesn't recommend the comprehensive changes needed to address operational issues that have arisen since the Code came into force, or to require pub companies to publish information about rents and tied prices in the interests of transparency.

"We look forward to working with the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, and to furthering a case for the positive changes to the Code that are being considered as a result of the Review. "CAMRA will continue to fight for proper reform of the Pubs Code and for the rights of tied tenants across



the UK. At a time when the outlook is grim for many pubs and brewers, it's vital that tenants are supported, rather than subjected to unfair or potentially unlawful treatment.

"We will also be writing to the six regulated pub companies to ask them to confirm what rent support they will provide to both tied and free-of-tie tenants in England during the second lockdown period and call on other smaller pub companies and brewers across England to do the same".

**Hertfordshire's Pulling Together** is produced by the Herts & Essex Borders, North, South Hertfordshire and Watford & District Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA Ltd or its branches.

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## Star Pubs and Bars Fined £2M by Pubs adjudicator

**T**he Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA) Fiona Dickie has fined Star Pubs and Bars £2 million after finding the company seriously and repeatedly breached the Pubs Code over nearly three years.

Ms Dickie said the nature and seriousness of the breaches by Star who operate the pub estate of Heineken Group in the UK merited the large financial penalty, and it is hoped that the fine would act as a deterrent to Star and other pub-owning businesses from future non-compliance.

Ms Dickie said: "My investigation is a game changer and demonstrates that the regulator can and will act robustly to protect the rights that Parliament has given to tied tenants.

"I will be holding discussions with all the companies I regulate following my findings about how they will ensure they are code compliant. My message is that if anyone previously had any doubts about my resolution to act when I find breaches, they can have no doubt now."

Star had persisted in forcing its tenants to sell unreasonable levels of Heineken beers and ciders when they requested to go free of tie. This was despite repeated regulatory interventions and clear arbitration rulings from the PCA.

The PCA found the company was a repeat offender and had committed a total of 12 breaches of compliance.

Specifically, Star instructing the companies code compliance officer "to ensure the code is interpreted to the commercial benefit of Heineken UK". The company had received warnings but continued to flout the code and not act in a transparent way with the regulator.

Ms Dickie's investigation covered the period from 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2016, when the Pubs Code came into effect, until 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019. She found multiple breaches by the company relating to stocking obligations. In particular, up to August 2018, 96 tenants who requested a free-of-tie option were told that 100% of the keg beer they sold had to be Heineken brands.

This was contrary to the legal requirement that stocking terms should not prohibit a publican selling competitor brands. After several arbitration rulings by the PCA, the company switched to a tiered approach as to the number of own brands to be stocked and specifying 'must stock' brands.

However, this 'crude' policy was still not reasonable and compliant in many cases. Tenants who sold little or no Heineken products at the time that they asked to go free of tie faced having to stock 60% Heineken keg products within one year. This approach could have a particularly significant impact on some former Punch tenants whose pubs were purchased by Star in 2017. Star had no documentary evidence to show how the percentages in the tiered approach were decided.

Tenants told Ms Dickie that they felt pressured by the company into settling on unfavourable terms or that they simply abandoned their free-of-tie right altogether.

The freedom to access these rights and for tenants to do the best for their business is now more important than ever given the uncertainty the pandemic has brought to the industry.

Ms Dickie said "The company must change its mindset and become proactive in its approach to compliance. I have decided this can best be achieved by the imposition of a sanction that will serve as a deterrent to future non-compliant conduct by Star and other pub-owning businesses."

As well imposing the fine, which, by law, is based on the turnover of the whole of Heineken UK, the PCA has also ordered Star to make all its free-of-tie tenancies Pubs Code compliant and to ensure future code compliance. Every free-of-tie tenancy agreed by Star must be audited and those tenants with non-compliant stocking requirements are to be assured that they will be made compliant or will not be enforced. All changes must be paid for by Star.

Ms Dickie has given the company six weeks to provide a detailed response to how it will implement her recommendations and she has ordered it to write to all its tenants explaining her findings, the measures Star is taking to respond to them and how these will affect tenants in practical terms.

Star Bars and Pubs says it is considering an appeal. There has been little reported back since the outcome of Ms Dickie's other landmark decision against Marston's on their casks containing short measure (I assume this has been appealed against as well – *Ed*).

Fiona Dickie took over from Paul Newby the first pubs adjudicator who stood down this year. Newby had received a large amount of criticism because of his connections to the licensed trade and estate

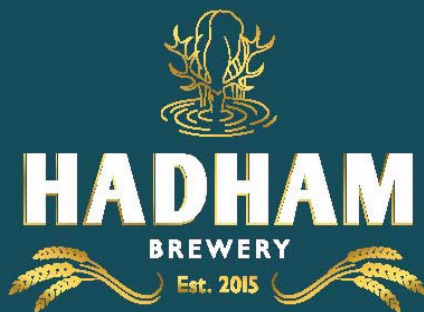




agents Fleurets, who he worked for before appointment, and still held a sizeable shareholding during his time of office. Newby has now returned to the licensed property market by joining Matthew Philips Surveyors. Mr Newby said that he was expecting a backlash from some quarters, but claims there will be no conflict in his new role, as in the event that any issues arise, he will follow the Pubs Code.

## New River Brewery Update

**W**e have recently had some very welcome news that New River Brewery is now back in full production and is delivering its beers out to pubs. Currently the brewery has a range of five cask ale options, including the ever popular *London Tap* and *Five-Inch Drop*. It is also replenishing (and expanding) its range of bottled beers, and these will soon be made available online for local deliveries.



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# ♪...so Beer it is, Merry Christmas... ♪

## Time to Get Those Hertfordshire Christmas Skates On?

Why not celebrate this year's Christmas with some beer from one or more of Hertfordshire's brilliant cask brewers? All of them have been working hard to supply beer during this difficult year and have been finding new and innovative ways of getting them to thirsty pub and home customers. Check out their websites and have some fun finding out what is on offer – some may have.....



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## Old Fox Old Bricket Wood - what the estate agents say

**T**he **Old Fox**, which we have reported about in previous editions, is currently up for sale by Cassidy & Tate Estate Agents, their description of the property copied in blue text below:

### Property features

- Countryside Location
- Asset of Community Value (acv)
- Conversion To Residential (stpp)
- Large Detached Period Dwelling
- Approx 1 Acre Plot
- Potential To Extend Further stpp
- Chain Free
- Ideal Commercial Business stpp

### Property description

The Old Fox presents itself to the astute buyer as an outstanding opportunity to enter the hospitality market with further potential scope for development opportunities and further expansion ability, subject to planning. The property is currently subject to 'An Asset of Community Value Order', known as an acv and subject to 'The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012'. Further details are available upon request. The property also has the possibility of being a dream family home of substantial proportions with excellent surroundings, subject to planning following the ultimate expiry or removal of the acv. Sitting upon approximately one acre of land with outbuildings, The Old Fox was a quaint and modernised 17<sup>th</sup> Century country pub with an abundance of retained period features including a huge garden set in the pleasant rural surroundings of Bricket Wood Common. The Pub but has not been operating for, we believe, around 3 years. This beautiful building measures approximately just over 2,000 sq ft and the public facing space comprises three good size reception areas, a bar, kitchen, store, and ladies & gents wc's, all on the ground floor. On the first floor is a self-contained three-bedroom maisonette with living room, kitchen, a family bathroom and separate shower room. Some initial extension ground work has already been implemented under a previous planning permission. The Old Fox is situated off a quiet adopted country lane close to the popular village of Bricket Wood in a Conservation Area and is blessed with excellent road links for Watford, St Albans, M1 and M25. This site will appeal to an owner/occupiers, investors and developers alike, where the immense development potential for commercial or residential purposes are aplenty, stpp.



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For those of you who don't know 'stpp'. is subject to planning permission. They also seem to have conveniently forgotten to say when the ACV (Asset of Community Value) order runs out. The pub was originally closed because the floor of the bar collapsed, has this been repaired? For those of you who are feeling flush its asking price £1million.

## Stevenage Old Town Ale Trail

At this time of year, I would normally be very busy planning next year's **Stevenage Beer & Cider Festival**. Whilst there were some challenges associated with last year's festival, we managed to make a good profit.

Unfortunately, the Coronavirus pandemic means that there is a high risk of making a large loss next year. There is no news on when large indoor gatherings will be allowed again, and there are far too many factors that are likely to reduce attendance. It's highly likely that until this pandemic is over, the cost of running a beer festival will outweigh the income.

Therefore, the festival organising committee have decided to organise an Old Town Ale Trail. This is not a pub crawl, but a guided tour of the Old Town pubs. It's not a race to see who can drink the most beer in one day. It's an opportunity for drinkers to try something new, with CAMRA members guiding them.

Our aims are:

- To support the pubs in the Old Town
- To celebrate the end of Dry January
- To increase the number of people drinking in the Old Town pubs
- To promote Real Ale and educate people who enjoy a good beer

Whilst full details of the Old Town Ale Trail are still to be finalised. It's likely that the event will start on **4<sup>th</sup> February 2021** and finish on **13<sup>th</sup> February 2021**. There will be a printed guide to accompany the ale trail. This will describe the pubs, beer styles and include a suggested route. The guide will also contain advertisements from local businesses who wish to show their support for the Old Town pubs. At present, we are unable to say whether this will be a CAMRA event or not. Therefore, we would like to have an event sponsor, together with a couple of T-Shirt sponsors and a guide sponsor. We'd also like to run a small quiz, with questions about each pub. Ideally, it will only be possible to answer these questions by visiting each of the pubs.

If you would like to be part of this event, or have any suggestions, please send me an email or call me.

David Hardingham, Old Town Ale Trail Organiser

Email:

[organiser-stevenage@northherts.camra.org.uk](mailto:organiser-stevenage@northherts.camra.org.uk)

Tel. 07504 977279

## Good Beer Guide 2021 Milestones

As CAMRA gears up for 2021 and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in 1971 the first public evidence is the launch of "The Good Beer Guide 2021" sporting CAMRA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo.

The first guide was published as A4 photocopied sheets in 1972 and contained very few entries and many inaccuracies, but the seeds were sown and proved there was a demand for such listings. The first in book form was in 1974 and contained in the brewery section the immortal words under Watney: "Avoid like the plague". his had to be watered down to "Avoid at all costs" in the reprint. The irony was that the disputed words were printed in newspapers and repeated on radio and television and not one of them was issued with a writ for defamation. The upshot was that Watney's were avoided like the plague and the guide sold out. In 1974 there were 180 breweries listed, in the latest copy there are in the region of 2000.

Here are a few milestones reached by some Hertfordshire pubs in the new edition:

Three have completed their 25<sup>th</sup> entry; the **Valiant Trooper**, Aldbury, the last 8 entries consecutively, the **Prince of Wales**, Green Tye, the last 7 consecutively and the **Red Lion**, Preston, the last 11 consecutively.

Four have completed 20 entries; the **Carpenters Arms** and the **Cross Keys**, Harpenden, the **Holly Bush**, Potters Crouch and the **Strathmore Arms**, St Pauls Walden. The **Bull**, London Colney has clocked 15 entries and the **White Hart**, Puckeridge 10.

They all have some way to go to catch the **Rising Sun**, High Wych which has 47 entries. There are four new Hertfordshire listings for 2021: the **Bull**, Berkhamsted, the **Bell**, Bovingdon, the **Monks Inn**, Hemel Hempstead and the **North Mymms Social Club**, Welham Green.

The guide is available from all good bookshops, cover price £15.99 and from CAMRA Books with a discount for CAMRA members.

Bob Norrish





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## It's Wassail time again

Let's hope our Prime Minister is correct in his prediction that we will be ready to relax the lockdown on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, which will hopefully give us the opportunity to meet in small groups and start using the pubs again.

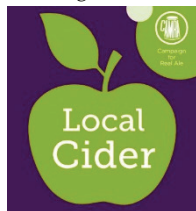
If you want a good apple and pear harvest it is important that you take part in the ancient tradition of wassail in January to ensure that we have a good crop and abundant cider and perry. The name originated from the Saxon "waes hael" literally translated as "good health" or "be healthy" and that involved drinking cider and visiting orchards. Cider was the staple drink of the working classes from serfs followed by farm labourers right through until the industrial revolution. The wassail should take place on 17<sup>th</sup> January which is the old twelfth night after Christmas, and is conducted to ensure a good harvest and that the orchard is protected from a late frost. Of course if you have a lot

of orchards, they can't all be done on the same night, so a little flexibility is allowed. Ceremonies vary involving different characters and often the local Morris dancers and can start with those present selecting a Queen and Princess who will approach the central tree and recite: -

*'Here's to the old apple tree, That blooms well, bears well, Hats full, caps full, Three bushel bags full, All under one tree'.*

Some groups light twelve small bonfires around the orchard and a thirteenth Judas fire which is then stamped out. Torches are optional, and in modern times of health and safety (they are hot and on fire) lanterns or battery powered ones are used. The Queen then places a cider-soaked piece of toast or cake in the fork of the central tree followed by apples being thrown at the trunk. Again in some cases a burning lantern of Herefordshire thorn is hung from a branch of the tree. A momentary silence follows after which is the cry of "Oh lily, white lily!". Then a shotgun (loaded with a cartridge filled with salt) is fired through the branches - again this can be replaced by fireworks being set off, or the assembled crowd making as much noise as possible by shacking stones in tins and banging metal instruments. The aim of the exercise is to scare away the bad spirits from the orchard. The wassail song is then sung by all present: -

*'A wassail, a wassail, the moon shines down  
Our apples are ripe and the nuts they are brown,*



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*And whence thou mayest bud dear old apple tree,  
And when thou mayest bear we sing unto thee  
With our wassail a-wassail a-wassail*

*Oh apple tree prosper, bud bloom and bear.*

*So that we have plenty of cyder next year,*

*And where there's a barrel we hope there be ten.*

*That we may have cyder when we come again'.*

This is then followed by cider drinking; the wassail bowl is passed round for people to fill their cups and some groups use mulled spiced cider for this. A good wassail will then adjourn to the pub. Not mentioned earlier in this article is the optional traditional rural dress.

All this of course will be subject to Covid-19 measures.

Any comments, articles or letters for publication are welcome. Please send to: **Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA.** Or send an Email to us at: [pintsofview@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pintsofview@hotmail.co.uk)



## Dave Burns Memorial Award for South Herts's Tom Blakemore

*A Social Distancing Cheers - by Iain Loe*

**O**n 26<sup>th</sup> September, whilst observing safe social distancing at the **Robin Hood**, St Albans, South Herts CAMRA presented branch member Tom Blakemore with the Dave Burns Memorial Award for his services both at a branch level and nationally to CAMRA.

The Dave Burns Memorial Award (DBMA) honours individuals who have made a significant contribution to the real ale cause in our area and the county.

The award is named in honour of Dave Burns, the driving force in the Branch in the mid-70s and 80s. He had been Branch Secretary and Chairman, edited two editions of the Hertfordshire Beer Guide and the *Hertfordshire Newsletter* the forerunner of *Pints of View*. Dave was also a key committed campaigner at the **Great British Beer Festival**, and bar manager at the events held at Alexandra Palace in the 1970s. Dave died in 1995 aged 45 and the award was created in his honour in 1997, since when there have been only 12 winners prior to Tom.

Tom joined the Branch Committee in 2010 as Young Members rep and ran branch and regional events for young members. In 2012 he took over running the branch website and developed a new site in 2017 which subsequently won CAMRA website in 2019 and 2020.

Tom was also a key player in developing CAMRA's national **WhatPub** national pub website, for which work he was awarded joint CAMRA National Campaigner of the Year in 2014.

Since 2017 he has also been a pivotal member of the **St Albans Beer and Cider Festival** committee coordinating publicity, producing the Festival programme and beer listing and playing a key role in moving the Festival to a cashless token system.



social media in all its forms.

*Above: Branch chair Iain Loe (right) hands over the DBMA to Tom Blakemore (centre) whilst Beer Festival organiser John Bishop (left) looks on.*

Tom continues to be involved in many of the branch's other activities including keeping the branch website up-to-date and

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## New Book: The Family Brewers of Britain

**B**eer writer and Hertfordshire resident Roger Protz charts 300 years of British brewing through the fascinating and sometimes fractious histories of the families still running them in his latest title "The Family Brewers of Britain" published by CAMRA and the Independent Family Brewers of Britain (IFBB). The lavishly illustrated book examines the contribution made to British brewing by the families from the earliest days of commercial brewing through the Industrial Revolution and Victorian innovations, to the advent of craft beer.



Roger said: "Our family brewers are often overlooked flag bearers for real ale and have fascinating stories to tell. Many have been around for hundreds of years, surviving wars, bomb damage, recession, threats of invasion, taxation and mergers and have come out the other side as the backbone of traditional beer in this country. Some brewers remain in buildings of architectural importance with gleaming coppers and wooden fermenting vessels, and a few still deliver by horse-drawn drays and employ coopers to fashion casks. But they are not living in the past – they have faced the challenges of the modern beer-drinking world and still produce beers that meet the demands of today's consumers." Included in the book is a 10-page chapter on McMullen's of Hertford, covering their brewing origins and all of the company's important milestones, right up to the present day. Tom McMullen, joint Managing Director at McMullen's said "It's great to be recognised in the book. We are proud that we are one of the Family Brewers that survived during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century – so many didn't. In these difficult times we are trying to stay very positive about the future. Most of our pubs re-opened in July and we are taking stock or biding time on a few others as to when will be the right time to re-open. The 10pm curfew has been particularly challenging but our managers, tenants and staff have worked so hard to keep things moving forwards – providing a friendly pub welcome in a safe, clean and socially-distanced environment".



Our picture left shows Tom McMullen, left, with a special sleeved copy of the book, presented to him at the brewery in October by CAMRA's Brewery Liaison Officer, Les Middlewood. The 276-page, full colour, hardback

book – an excellent Christmas present for those interested in British brewing – is available from CAMRA on-line, priced £21.99, link below:  
<https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/the-family-brewers-of-britain/>

## Brian Byles Obituary 1959 - 2020

**B**rian was born near Halifax in the West Riding of Yorkshire but when he was still young his family moved down south to the Croydon area.

Despite this Brian still considered himself to be a Yorkshireman. This is the reason he was a supporter of Halifax Town, now Halifax AFC, and was involved with the foundation of Shaymen Down South (a London and South East based Halifax supporters club) in 1993.

Brian's love of cider and real ale lead to him joining CAMRA and then working at many beer festivals. He has stewarded many beer festivals but his main love was cider which meant he worked on many cider bars. We remember Brian at many St Alban's Beer Festivals where he was regularly found running the Cider Bar.

Brian suffered from rheumatoid arthritis which got worse over the years and meant he eventually had to use a wheelchair, but this didn't stop him taking an active interest in the cider bar, albeit from his chair beside the stillage. As Brian's arthritis deteriorated, he had to take strong painkillers which prevented him drinking alcohol. This meant the sales of cola increased.

Brian eventually became bed ridden which meant he could no longer attend any beer festivals and therefore lost touch with many of his beer festival friends.

He will be missed by many people, RIP Brian.

*Mike Brady*

## Advance Notice

### South Herts CAMRA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2021: 2pm**

**C**AMRA South Herts Branch will be holding its AGM on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

In view of the current, and expected ongoing, restrictions on social gatherings due to COVID-19, the AGM and preceding branch meeting will be held using Zoom.

At the AGM the Branch Committee for 2021 will be elected. Nominations for membership of the Branch Committee shall be either by email or in writing to the Chair - [chair@hertsale.org.uk](mailto:chair@hertsale.org.uk), Iain Loe, 130A London Road, St Albans AL1 1PQ.

Each nomination shall be signed by a proposer and second, both of whom should be members of South Herts CAMRA branch, and accompanied by evidence of the willingness of the nominee to stand. Closing date for nominations shall be 14 days before the AGM, i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021.

The AGM will be preceded by a short branch meeting which will start at 2.00pm. This may also possibly be followed by a guest speaker.

If, as a South Herts Branch member, you wish to attend the AGM please let the branch chair know [chair@hertsale.org.uk](mailto:chair@hertsale.org.uk) - giving your name, CAMRA membership number, email address and postal address **by 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021**.

A link for the Zoom meeting will be sent to you prior to the meeting so that you can log in.

Over the past year we have been unable to hold face-to-face branch meetings, so we hope as many of you as possible may be able to attend our Branch and AGM meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January.

Please consider standing for the Branch Committee. Several of the current Committee are retiring and not standing again for election. So we have vacancies to fill.

We need your help to tackle the many challenges which we will face in 2021 as things start to get back to more normal times.

Hope to see many of you, albeit virtually, at our AGM. In the meantime, stay safe and support your local pubs and breweries.

*Iain Loe – Chair, South Herts CAMRA*

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Four real ales available to take away including one dark beer. Open 2-7 Monday to Friday, 1-8 Saturday, 1-6 Sunday. Strictly one in/one out for collections, and home delivery is also available for orders over £20. All draught beer is £3 a pint, and cider £3.50 a pint - served in either two or four pint containers. See the pub's social media pages for the latest on beers and ciders available.

<https://www.facebook.com/mermaidstalham/>

#PullingTogether - [Find out more](#)

**NOTICE** As venues recover following the coronavirus lockdown period they need your support more than ever. But please be aware that some special restrictions may apply, opening hours may be different to those displayed here, and some venues may be yet to re-open at all. Before visiting any venue, we strongly advise you to check its website or social media, or get in touch with them first to avoid disappointment.

If you see any details here that need updating, please let us know by submitting [feedback on the pub](#).

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**Submit Beer Scores**

\* Fields are required

Date of visit: 07 / 07 / 2020

Score (0-5): e.g. 3.5 (required)

Brewery (optional): e.g. Greene King

Beer (optional): e.g. IPA

[Show advanced options](#)

**Submit Score**

[Enter Tasting Card](#)

**Campaign for your local**

We campaign on a number of issues to help keep pubs open and pints affordable. If you love beer and pubs, get involved today!

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Things are a little different right now. Help CAMRA keep WhatPub up to date by using the feedback form to let us know about any changes at the pub:  
[www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com)



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

*This section contains information from a large number of sources and occasionally errors may occur. News items are supplied to meet newsletter deadlines, and which in some cases may unfortunately be out of date upon publication. Comments or additional information should be sent to our contact details on page 10.*

**Ashwell:** New tenants have been found for the **Three Tuns** and the pub was due to re-open November 20. However, due to the second lock down, this has been postponed and a food takeaway service is planned as an interim measure.

**Baldock:** The **Boot**, closed since Autumn 2019, has planning permission lodged for change of use to residential. The **George IV** re-opened 6 October following the first lockdown.

**Flaunden:** The **Green Dragon**, with its simple intact tap room to the right and famous for its connection to cold war soviet agent Kim Philby, re-opened in August. The pub had been closed for over a year for refurbishment following a planning application for internal modifications. The proposals for the tap room met with the approval of the CAMRA pub heritage group. We have had reports that the pub was busy on a recent visit and had six real ales on.

**Hertford:** Simon and Sally Davis are the new owners of the **Old Barge**. They have been managers of the popular riverside pub for over a dozen years and have taken the ownership plunge aiming to build on the pub's existing reputation for well-kept traditional ales, good food and the weekly Sunday and monthly music quizzes. There are four traditional beers with a strong Marston's and Adnams presence and often a beer from a local brewery such as 3 Brewers or Hadham. Some recent internal modification and refurbishment work at the **Millstream** in Port Vale has created additional drinking space. A range of Mac's real ales are available. Sadly, real ale has been unavailable at the **White Hart** – the first Mac's pub that we've heard of that no longer sells real ale. We understand this may be a temporary measure because fewer cask ale drinkers have been using the pub, but hope is that this may soon return when pubs are fully re-open. A refurbishment and redecoration of the **Crafty Duck** has been completed. There's an additional WC and brighter spaces for drinkers including the upstairs area that overlooks Parliament Square.

**Hitchin:** The **Venue**, closed for some time, was demolished in October.

**Ickleford:** The landlady of the **Old George** was reported to be leaving in November, and the pub being advertised to let.

**Old Bricket Wood:** The **Old Fox** is on sale with Cassidy and Tate for £1m, we believe it will still need permission for change of use to residential. See article on page 7.

**London Colney:** As predicted in *Herts Pulling Together* Issue 3 there is a planning application to convert the **Golden Lion**, now surrounded by flats, to residential.

**Royston:** The **Jockey** which closed in 1999 has re-opened October 2020 as a pub / restaurant.

**St Albans:** It seems that the **Rose & Crown** in St Michaels is no longer owned by Punch Taverns. A sign has appeared in the window – "This is an Inn Partnership pub" – and Punch's billboard seeking a new manager has been removed. It also looks like a limited refurb is in progress. **Punchin' Palooka** – "Where?!" you might reasonably ask. Continuing a long run of extremely silly names, this is the bar formerly known as **Naughts & Crosses**, Mokoko etc. Of course, it's currently shut due to lockdown, but almost certainly it's to be yet another cocktails place.

**Ware:** The **Brewery Tap** (Greene King) has re-opened after a long period of closure during the Covid crisis. A welcome to John Migan, a Ware resident, who has taken the lease and aims to restore the pub's reputation for stocking well-kept ales. Half of the beers will come from the Greene King stable but the other half from the likes of Oakham, St Austell and Tring breweries.

**Wheathampstead:** The **Reading Rooms** reopened on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 4pm then daily from Saturday 3 October 13.00 – 21.30. It promptly closed to drinkers upon imposition of the latest lockdown.



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# CAMRA BRANCH DIARY

All CAMRA branches pub events, visits and engagements are currently suspended.  
Please check CAMRA Hertfordshire branches internet sites websites for individual branch updates.

## CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS

### Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

**Chairman** – Brendan Sothcott, Tel: 01279 507493  
**Minibus Bookings** – Call Graham on: 07753266983,  
Email: [mini-bus@heb-camra.org.uk](mailto:mini-bus@heb-camra.org.uk)  
**Pubs Officer** - Vacant, any urgent enquiries to  
Chairman Brendan Sothcott.  
**Socials Contact Email:** [social@heb-camra.org.uk](mailto:social@heb-camra.org.uk)  
Email: [Secretary@heb-camra.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@heb-camra.org.uk)  
Internet: [www.heb-camra.org.uk](http://www.heb-camra.org.uk)

### South Hertfordshire CAMRA

**Chairman** – Iain Loe  
Email: [iain492002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:iain492002@yahoo.co.uk)  
**Branch Contact:** John Bishop, Tel: 07720 295419,  
Email: [realales@yahoo.com](mailto:realales@yahoo.com)  
**Socials Secretary:** Ian Boyd, Tel: 07402 323525  
Email: [ian.boyd@me.com](mailto:ian.boyd@me.com)  
Internet: [www.hertsale.org.uk](http://www.hertsale.org.uk)

### North Hertfordshire CAMRA

**Chairman** – Paul Coard  
Email: [chairman@northherts.camra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@northherts.camra.org.uk)  
**Branch Contact** - Jeremy Kitson  
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**Socials Secretary** – Brian Mason  
Email: [socialsecretary@northherts.camra.org.uk](mailto:socialsecretary@northherts.camra.org.uk)  
Internet: [www.northherts.camra.org.uk](http://www.northherts.camra.org.uk)

### Watford & District CAMRA

**Branch Contact:** Andrew Vaughan.  
Email: [branch@watford.camra.org.uk](mailto:branch@watford.camra.org.uk)  
**Phone:** 01923 230104. **Mobile:** 07854 988152.  
Internet: [www.watford.camra.org.uk](http://www.watford.camra.org.uk)

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Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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# Attention ALL CAMRA members!

Want to get more from your membership?  
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Understand more about local branch campaigns?  
Want to know more about your local beer & cider  
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