



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Opening Times



Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA

Issue 153

The Campaign for Real Ale

Winter 2012/2013



Booze on the Ouse

St Neots Beer & Cider Festival

Thursday 14th - Saturday 16th March 2013

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Protection for Pubs

Cambridge City Council has introduced new planning guidance to protect pubs - and Huntingdonshire CAMRA has asked for similar protection in its area for urban as well as rural pubs, in a consultation by Huntingdonshire District Council on proposals for its new Local Plan. Cambridge's new interim planning policy guidance will ask applicants for change of use or demolition of pubs to market the properties for a year as free-of-tie pubs. They would also need to demonstrate that diversification has been considered and that the pub business is no longer viable or needed by its community. This is the first such policy in the UK; Cambridge has introduced it in line with the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which recognises the amenity value that pubs can provide to communities. But the British Beer and Pubs Association has objected, claiming that the measure would delay sales by pub owners aiming to raise funds to invest in other pubs in the area.

CAMRA was told by a government minister, before the recent cabinet reshuffle, that the government would review the rules on the use by local councils of article 4 directions, which offer protection to pubs threatened with closure by forcing developers to seek planning permission for changes that would not otherwise be needed, for example to convert pubs to premises for businesses such as restaurants, shops or financial services. CAMRA is concerned that current guidance could dissuade councils from applying article 4 directions because of fears that developers could seek compensation from them if an article 4 direction stopped a development from going ahead. Former community pubs minister Bob Neill promised the review after receiving a letter from CAMRA before he was replaced by Brandon Lewis in the recent reshuffle.

Huntingdonshire District Council's Draft Development Management Policies, part of the proposals for a new Local Plan to 2036, include a policy that will only allow losses of local services or facilities, including pubs, if 'there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored' or an equivalent facility is provided in an equally accessible location for the community. In addition, general evidence will be needed that there is no community support for continuation of the service or facility and that reasonable steps have been taken to market the property for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its permitted use.

The draft appears to indicate that this policy would only apply to rural pubs. In its submission to the consultation, Huntingdonshire CAMRA have reported that over 40% of pub closures in its area in the past five years have been in urban areas, and has asked the Council to make it clear that the policy will apply to all urban as well as rural settings, in line with the NPPF, which local authorities are being encouraged to comply with.

Huntingdonshire CAMRA's submission also asks for:

1. A commitment to an article 4 direction for all public houses within the Council's area, to ensure that developers would need to seek planning permission to change pubs to restaurants, convenience stores, supermarkets, other shops or financial services .
2. Inclusion of pubs as designated 'Town Centre uses' that will receive specific protection
3. Extension of proposed boundaries for areas identified for 'Town Centre uses' to include important town pubs in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots.

A Look Back In Time

10 YEARS AGO

CAMRA announced 'Victory at last!' as the government published its Licensing Bill, due to become law in the summer of 2004. The new law would end nationally-determined licensing hours, transfer licensing from magistrates to local authorities and introduce separate licences for publicans and premises. Launching the bill, Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell said '90 percent of men and over 85% of women drink, and the vast majority of them do not drink to excess. They deserve, finally, to be treated like adults'. CAMRA's Mike Benner said 'Longer opening hours will boost tourism and help stamp out binge drinking through a more responsible approach to alcohol'.

CAMRA launched its first National Pubs Week in February 2003, reviving an annual campaign previously run by the Brewers



and Licensed Retailers Association and dropped on grounds of cost. CAMRA's head of campaigns, Mike Benner, said 'The campaign will be very positive and promote the message that there's a pub for everyone.'

St Neots CAMRA held open meetings at the



Old Bridge Hotel at Huntingdon, the Oliver Cromwell in St Ives and the Millers Arms, Eaton Socon and there were rail trips to visit the York brewery and the Sir William Peel pub brewery at Sandy.

CAMRA's national winter ales festival moved to Burton-on Trent in January 2003

after four annual events at Manchester's Castlefield Market.

The Boddington's brewery at Strangeways, Manchester was reprieved after the Belgian brewing group Interbrew reversed its plan to transfer production of keg Boddingtons Bitter to its plant at Magor in South Wales. The move was seen as a climb down after an angry outcry in Manchester, supported by CAMRA. Union leaders had claimed that a switch of keg production would render the Manchester brewery unviable, leaving it with only one day's work a week.



Essex microbrewery Crouch Vale put its award winning Cap and Feathers pub on the market after owning it for 13 years. It was hoped that the cash raised from the sale would help Crouch Vale to relocate its brewery to larger premises.



FINE ESSEX ALES

The Channel Islands lost an historic cask beer brewery, Guernsey Brewery at St Peter Port, originally opened in 1856. The brewery's new owners, CI Traders and the Le Riche group, decided to close the brewery, which was badly in need of investment. The group also owned the Ann Street brewery on Jersey, parent company of the Guernsey brewery, and the Topsy Toad brewpub on Jersey, which was to continue production of Guernsey's 4.2% abv Sunbeam Bitter.



A Look Back In Time

25 YEARS AGO

The government's Monopolies and Mergers Commission identified a monopoly in the UK beer supply industry. In its interim report on its enquiry into the big brewers, it stated 'It appears that the companies constitute a group who so conduct their affairs as to prevent, distort or restrict competition'. The commission was due to publish its final report by August 1988; this would define whether the monopoly acted against the public interest.

Scottish and Newcastle Breweries succeeded in its third attempt to take over Blackburn brewing company Matthew Brown and its Theakstons brewery and brands. On this occasion S&N captured 56% of Matthew Brown shares and the Brown board conceded when the Office of Fair Trading decided that the takeover would not act against the public interest and declined to refer it to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.



St Neots CAMRA held two-pub socials at the White Hart and Black Bull in Godmanchester, the Vine and Falcon at Buckden and, in Eynesbury, the Woolpack then the Hare and Hounds.



Ipswich brewer Tolly Cobbold brought back its Old Strong winter ale after a campaign by the Suffolk CAMRA branches. Tolly had dropped the popular real ale the previous winter when it introduced a new strong ale, XXXX.

Greene King announced that its Biggleswade brewery would be converted to a la-

ger brewing plant for the Harp brand by October 1989. The move was seen as a defensive move against a possible takeover by the Australian brewers of Fosters lager, Elders IXL, who had built up a 13.1% share in Greene King. Suffolk CAMRA's Stuart Bowell said 'Loss of ale brewing from any brewery is always sad, but if it means Greene King will be strengthened, than that is a positive move'. The only cask brand solely brewed at Biggleswade was the light mild KK; this was expected to be discontinued.

Greene King's Bury St Edmunds-brewed version of Rayments BBA was given the thumbs down by CAMRA following Greene King's closure of its Rayments Brewery in Hertfordshire in October 1987. In market research carried out by CAMRA's Rayments action group, 73% of drinkers had rated the Hertfordshire brewed BBA as 'very good' or 'excellent' compared with only 11% for the new Bury brew, which 65% rated as 'bad' or 'average'.

Ma Pardoes, the revered historic home brew pub in Netherton, West Midlands, was taken over by Hoskins brewery of Leicester. Hoskins paid £250,000 for the pub and also took over the management of the brewery.



CAMRA had helped to rescue the pub and brewery through its involvement in the Netherton Ales company set up following the death of Mrs Pardo, but the company, which had extended and refurbished the pub, had lost

£66,000 in the previous year.

Half Pints

The beer duty debate in parliament on 1 November, triggered by a successful government e-petition, unanimously backed the call for a review of the beer duty escalator in advance of next year's budget. CAMRA will follow up this success with a mass lobby of MPs on Wednesday 12 December, when over 1000 CAMRA members are expected to descend on Westminster.

The government has asked pub companies for evidence that self-regulation of their relationship with their tenants is working and will base any further action on their responses. In 2011, the government rejected the advice of the parliamentary Business Innovation and Skills Committee to introduce a statutory code of practice and agreed a revised voluntary code. But in early November, Vince Cable, Secretary of State for the Business Innovation and Skills department, expressed disappointment that a code of practice had not materialised.

Real ale volumes grew last year for the first time in 20 years. The Cask Report, backed by CAMRA and members of the brewing industry, recorded a 1.6% increase in cask beer sales to 2.2 million barrels. Cask also overtook keg as the most popular format for draught ale. Report author Pete Brown said, 'The Cask Report has been analysing the sector for six years now and while cask has been outperforming the beer market for most of them, this is the first full year of actual growth.'

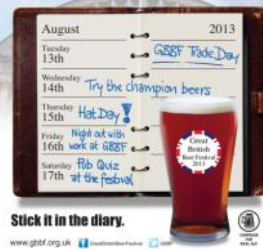
Over 8000 pubs took part in this year's successful Cask Ale Week, run by Cask Marque, backed by CAMRA and members of the brewing and pubs industry. Activities included discount promo-



tions, tutored tastings, 'introduce a friend' campaigns and 'try before you buy' promotions. Licensees reported that the event attracted new customers and increased sales of real ale. Cask Ale Week will run from 27 September to 6 October in 2013.

CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival will

Great British Beer Festival
Olympia, London.
Tue 13th-Sat 17th August 2013



remain at London Olympia for next year's event, from 13-17 August. The 2012 festival smashed CAMRA's attendance record for the event at Olympia when it was moved back there from Earls Court, which, at the time, was in use for the Olympic volleyball tournament.

The Cliff Quay brewery has moved to Debenham, Suffolk after brewing at the site of the former Tolly Cobbold brewery in Ipswich since 2009. But Cliff Quay brewery has also been talking to the owners of the old Tolly site about the possibility of setting up a nanobrewery within the original Victorian building as part of a forthcoming £30m proposal to revive the site.

The Compasses at Little Green, Essex is



CAMRA's East Anglia Pub of the Year. A picturesque Victorian country pub, it was once the tap for the now closed Ridley's Brewery. It is one of sixteen regional Pubs of the Year



Half Pints

that will now compete for the honour of being named in December as one of four super-regional winners. In February next year, one will be crowned national champion. The current holder, the first Welsh winner, the Bridge End Inn, Ruabon is hoping to repeat its success as it has been named the best in Wales for the second year.

The Scottish government is consulting on a proposal to lower the drink driving limit from 80 to 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood, to match levels in France, Germany, Italy and other European countries.

Drinks wholesaler Waverley TBS has gone into administration with debts of £64.5m and the loss of 685 jobs. Other drinks distributors have blamed high levels of discounting and competition for the failure. Following the collapse, pub operators were reporting difficulties in finding alternative suppliers and some brewers were concerned about an estimated £1 million worth of cask beer that was reported to be in the hands of the administrators.

The finalists of CAMRA's Club of the Year competition have been announced. They are: Cheltenham Motor Club, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire; Darlington Snooker Club, Darlington, Co Durham; Leyton Orient Supporters Club, Leyton, London SE10 and Nunsfield Social Club, Alvaston, Derbyshire. CAMRA's John Holland said: 'All four finalists are outstanding clubs offering an unrivalled level of beer quality and choice. Choosing the final winner is going to be a difficult task.'

Fuller's brewery in Chiswick, West London, are planning to install a small pilot brewery to trial new and innovative

brews, following similar moves by Brains, Thwaites and Shepherd Neame, all of whom have small plants capable of producing small runs of five or ten barrels of beer alongside their main breweries.

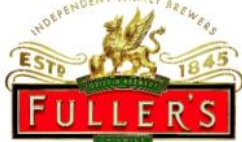
Wye Valley Brewery has put its cartoon pin-up, Dorothy Goodbody, into actuality, with a competition to find a real-life lovely who encapsulated the spirit of its belle for a 2013 calendar. More than 90 applications to be 'Dorothy for the Day' were sent in, all



hoping to be the successful beauty treated to a professional photo-shoot at Herefordshire's verdant hop farm, Pridewood Farm, and styled by vintage fashion expert Vivien of Holloway. The winning Dorothy was Lucy Dearden from Folkestone, Kent.

A poor apple harvest this year – the result of extremely heavy rain, severe frosts and bees unable to pollinate the trees – has been cited around the country as the worst in up to 30 years. Roger Wilkins, a cider producer in Somerset, said that the crop from his orchards was likely to be the smallest since 1982. Andrea Briers, chair of CAMRA's APPLE committee, which promotes real draught cider and perry, said: 'We are concerned about the reports of widespread problems with the apple crop and hope that cider producers are able to cope with the difficulties faced this year'.

Greene King are offering tickets for the Six Nations rugby tournament in a promotion for Greene King IPA, the Official Beer of England Rugby. Entrants need to submit a photograph of themselves drinking IPA in a pub.



Half Pints

CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival



takes place in Manchester, at the Sheridan Suite, from 23-26 January 2013. Festival beer buyer Adrian Saunders says he is hoping to showcase beers from

the fourteen female brewers who are all members of the Project Venus group. And Stockport brewer Robinsons will be celebrating its 175th anniversary with a celebratory brew called Frederic's 175. In total, the organisers promise there will be more than 300 beers as well as a selection of cider and perry.

The founding family of the Belgian brewery Duvel Moortgat wants to buy the company back. The Moortgat family has made an offer for the approximately 24 per cent of shares that it does not currently own. It is understood the family, which founded the company in 1871, has made an offer of more than £100m for the shares. The company went public in 1999 when it wanted to raise capital for further expansion. The brewer of the bottle conditioned Duvel and



Maredsous abbey beers also owns Czech brewer Bernard and Bel-

gian brewers Achouffe (La Chouffe), Liefmans and De Koninck.

Moorhouse's Burnley brewery, well known



for its Pendle Witches Brew, increased its October beer sales by 36% this year compared with 2011. Boosted halloween sales took advantage of the brewery's

new 100-barrel brewing plant, as well as the 400th anniversary of the local Pendle witch trials.

Britain's beer tax was slashed for one night only in three Norwich pubs as a part of local Cask Ale Week celebrations, organised by CAMRA's Norwich and Norfolk branch. The Champion, White Horse and Cottage pubs sold pints drawn at French beer tax prices, giving happy drinkers a massive 60p a pint discount. The tax cutting beer was supplied by Woodforde's, Grain and Norwich Bear breweries.

CAMRA's 35th Peterborough Beer Festival last August was hailed a success, with more than 27,500 people attending the riverside event - 5% more than the previous year. More than 350 different real ales were on sale and some 91,832 pints were consumed. Equally popular were the large range of ciders, bottled beers and wines



available at the festival. Some 13,240 pints of cider, 10,817 bottled

beers and 1,650 bottles of wine were sold over the five day event.

Pub Pieces

What's On in Your Local? Reports in *Pub Pieces* are provided by our branch pub contacts, licensees, local CAMRA members and *Opening Times* readers. Further news of changes at local pubs is welcome.

Please send news to news@huntscamra.org.uk

Congratulations to Ian and Teri at the **Crown and Cushion, Great Gransden**



who have just celebrated their first year in the pub. The Crown and Cushion is now a member of the

Oakademy Of Excellence scheme, with an Oakham beer always available - often Inferno. Typically 2-3 real ales are available, often with beers from Milton and Adnams, and sometimes something a bit special (in

October they had Victoria Bitter from the Earl Soham brewery). The pub also offers plenty of live music, with rock and blues bands on Thursday and an open mike session on Wednesdays.

At the **Vine, Buckden**, the new licensees have introduced a loyalty card with a difference. You get it stamped each visit (one stamp per day) and six stamps gets you a free pint. This only applies to real ale purchases. The pub is offering a much expanded range of real ales with four hand-pumps regularly in action, and the beer quality has improved as well. The new licensees at the Vine are the same team that runs the White Horse, Eaton Socon.

The **White Horse, Tilbrook** has been won the East Anglian 'Best Community Pub' award from The Great British Pub Awards, sponsored by the Morning Advertiser. Following discussions with the Head Brewer at



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Pub Pieces

Charles Wells, the licensee has introduced a policy of using sparklers on all Wells beers (but not on Youngs beers). The bar staff will happily remove the sparklers for customers who request this. Opening Times would be grateful for feedback from readers who see the same policy being introduced in other Wells pubs.

Congratulations are due to the management and chefs of the **Cock, Hemingford Grey** as they are the overall winner of the 'Good Pub Guide' national Pub of the Year award for 2013. As CAMRA members also know, the beer is pretty good too.

The **Axe and Compass, Hemingford Abbots** is now selling Cromwell Cider.

Welcome to Gary Evans and Rachel Davies, the new tenants at the **Three Horseshoes, Graveley**. Gary and Rachel want to revive the Three Horseshoes as a traditional community pub. Food is still a key

feature of the pub with 'good food at a good price' and a focus on local produce. In addition, more community events will feature, such as live music evenings and pub games teams (e.g. darts and crib), and the restaur-



ant will be available as a function room for community events. Adnams Bitter and Greene King IPA are

the regular real ales on offer.

The **Longbow, Sapley** was demolished in August to make way for a new housing development. The pub had been closed for some years.

The **Fox and Hounds, Great Gidding** remains closed. The situation at this pub remains obscure. The pub was sold earlier in

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British Pub of the Year 2013 (Good Pub Guide)



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Pub Pieces

the year, but it is not certain if the freehold or the leasehold was sold. There are rumours that a covenant may prevent this building from ever being used for any purpose other than a pub. The only thing that is known for certain is that the previous licensee was given notice soon after the sale, and that the pub has remained closed since she left.

The **Royal Oak, St Ives** now has Westons Old Rosie Cider and Westons Perry on hand pump, alongside regular beers Oakham Inferno, Sharps Doom Bar, Wychwood Hobgoblin and two guest beers. The Royal Oak is now a member of the Oakademy of Excellence scheme, and the pub is also Cask Marque accredited.

At the **Golden Lion, St Ives** the regular beers on offer are Greene King IPA, Adnams Bitter, and Castle Rock Harvest Pale.

The **Seven Wives, St Ives** offers a chang-

ing range of beers that includes beers from Woodforde's, St Austell and Timothy Taylors.

There is temporary manager at the **Nelsons Head, St Ives** and Greene King are advertising for a new permanent tenant.

The **Manchester Arms, St Ives** remains closed and all furniture and fittings have been removed. A previous planning application to demolish the pub and build a store was withdrawn, but it is anticipated that a revised planning application will be submitted at some point.

The **Aviator, St Ives** is also closed and there are rumours that it may become a restaurant.

The **Plough, Eynesbury** closed in September, after the freehold was sold. It is understood that the new owner of the pub is looking for a new leaseholder.



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Pub Pieces

The **Hare and Hounds, Eynesbury** now offers four real ales, and at the time of writing had Greene King IPA, Woodforde's Wherry, Fullers London Pride, and Wychwood Hobgoblin.

Opening Times has received a report that the **Woolpack in St Neots** has been sold.

The **Rose and Crown, Somersham** is currently closed. Building work is in progress but the future plans are unknown.

The freehold of the **Riverview Inn at Earith** has been sold and the pub is currently closed. It is understood that the new plans to operate the Riverview as a tea rooms and Bed & Breakfast.

The **Earith, Crown** has reopened. New tenants David, Sarah and Gary, the team who also operate the Green Man at Colne, are offering three real ales with different beers on a regular rotation, including local

beers from Oakham and Milton. The Crown will be a community pub with 'something for everyone'.

As well as having the regular Inferno from Oakhams, in December the **Green Man, Colne** will also stock Oakhams "Winter Wraith" 4.5%, a spiced stout style ale. The pub recently acquired "Cask Marque" status for quality of its ales.

The **Prince of Wales, Bluntisham** has now reopened under the management of an enthusiastic new tenant, Mrs Sam Anson. Sam worked for Greene King for three years, and is now aiming to bring life back to the Prince of Wales and give it back to the community. A new menu sources Cambridgeshire produce and local mums now meet there for coffee. This former Greene King pub reopened last year after being bought by Wadsworths, but closed again in May.

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Booze on the Ouse Success

The 21st St Ives Booze on the Ouse Beer and Cider Festival proved to be a bumper birthday party and the festival sold out of real ale early on Saturday evening.



Unprecedented numbers of people attended on the Saturday afternoon so much so that



they drank the real ale bar dry. The festival continued to the scheduled closing time selling cider and bottled

beer.

Congratulations to Oakham brewery - their Dreamcatcher was the Beer of the Festival, with Nethergate Umbel Magna in second place, and Green Jack Trawlerboys Best Bitter in third place.

Visitors to the festival had something new to do whilst working their way through the variety of beers on offer; for the first time the a general knowledge quiz was part of the festival and the teams gathered at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon. They all chose a team name from the list of independent breweries in the Good Beer Guide and gently wandered through the warm up round of trivia and current affairs.

Those of a certain age remembered that pubs had to close in the afternoon up to as recently as 1988; the mathematicians smugly told us all about reflex angles; the twitchers knew all along that the fieldfare is a member of the thrush family; and the Ar-

senal fans were still shaking their heads at the prospect of having to part with £1.955 for a season ticket at the Emirates Stadium. The Old Trouts took an early lead and consolidated their position thanks to their knowledge of American states beginning with the letter 'M'.

The Trivia Trail pegged them back as the Jolly Fellows quickly got the hang of the quiz master's twisted logic and successfully made the connection between the River Trent, former Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and the playwright Alan Ayckbourn. With the obligatory Olympics themed round to come it was close on the leader board but the Reservoir Hogs and Bitter and Twisted were struggling to keep up with the leaders.

The Old Trouts, who had obviously been TV sports addicts over the summer, reeled off most of the top ten nations in the final Paralympics medal table and then matched them up with their capital cities; a ten point lead going into the final round but with 42 points at stake even the Reservoir Hogs clung on to faint hopes of glory as they languished in last place with 25 points.

'Music Through the Beers' took us on a journey through the 21 years of the festival. A piece of music from each year; one point for the title and one point for the artist. What could be easier?

Bitter and Twisted drew on their knowledge of hits by Whigfield, Liberty X and Mis-teeq, scored well and very nearly pipped the Jolly Fellows to second place but the Old Trouts were inspired by Lady Gaga, the Kings of Leon and Muse and surged to a handsome victory by a clear 25 points.

Thanks to all those that took part and hopefully there'll be a few more next time.

Events and Socials

December 2012

- Tue 4th Open committee meeting at the **Cross Keys, Caxton** (20:30)
- Fri 14th Local members socials in **Huntingdon, St Ives** and **St Neots**. See www.huntscamra.org.uk/diary for more details. (CAMRA members can also subscribe to our Yahoo group to keep informed about details of socials. Send an email to camrahunts-subscribe@yahoo.com).

January 2013

- Tue 8th Open committee meeting, **King of the Belgians, Hartford** (20:30)
- Fri 25th Christmas social, **Chequers, Little Gransden** (20:00). See www.huntscamra.org.uk/diary for more details.

February 2013

- Sat 2th Local Community Pub Week coach trip: **Hemingfords, Fenstanton, Hilton, Graveley, Offords, Great Paxton**, with pick ups from St Neots, Huntingdon and St Ives. (11:00-18:00). Free to CAMRA members. Book your place with the social secretary.
- Tue 12th Open committee meeting, **Vine, Buckden** (20:30)
- Tue 19th Good Beer Guide selection meeting, **Three Horseshoes, Graveley** (20:30)
- An up to date listing of social events can be found on the web site: www.huntscamra.org.uk/diary, or contact the social secretary, Andy Shaw.



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Opening Times

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