

# ale

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter

Issue 366

Spring 2014



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

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Pubs Month by taking part  
in the CAMRA Ale Trail**



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# Pub News

Starting as always with the bad news, it looks very much like the villagers of **Hildersham** have lost their local pub.



The **Pear Tree**, designated as the last pub of the village and as such supposedly

protected by South Cambridge District Council, is now officially listed as a furniture shop. The Council offered a lot of bluster, but in the end decided there was nothing they could do to prevent the request for change of use. Outraged villagers have formed the "Hildersham Pub Committee" and will be holding a "Pop-up Pub" evening in Hildersham Village Hall on Friday 21st March, when Adnam's cask ale will be on tap.

Meanwhile our concerns for the future of



**The Tree, Stapleford** look like they may have foundation. Rumour has it that a plan-

ning application to turn the pub into residential use is in the offing. Local residents are preparing to make a stand, and hope to make presentations at a Local Plan special meeting on 13th March. Like The Pear Tree, The Tree is in South Cambridgeshire. So it is unlikely to get a great deal of support from the county council.

Rumour also has it that **The Ship**, Northfield



Avenue is under threat of demolition, however the situation is still

unclear. A planning application has been

## Branch Diary

Don't forget that all Branch members are very welcome to attend the monthly business meetings. Those upcoming are (all 8pm)

Tue 8-Apr : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Free Press, Prospect Row

Tue 13-May : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Fort St George, Midsummer Common

Thu 15th May, celebration of Cambridge Pubs, The Cambridge Museum

Mon 19-May - Sat 24-May : 41st Cambridge Beer Festival, Jesus Green

## Trading Standards

If you have a complaint about any unfair trading practice, such as short measure or misleading product promotion, contact Cambridgeshire Trading Standards at:

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Cambridgeshire County Council

PO Box 450, Cambridge City, CB3 6ZR

Tel: 08454 04 05 06

email: [trading\\_standards@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:trading_standards@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

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## To Advertise

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Neil Richards—01536 358670

[n.richards@btinternet.com](mailto:n.richards@btinternet.com)



# Pub News

Continued...

put in, but according to the landlord it has since been withdrawn. Further meetings may offer more of a clue to the future of this, the only pub in the area.

The **Jolly Millers, Cottenham**, is in need of a new tenant – the third in 6 months!



And finally in the bad news section – or is it good? The business that was being run from **The Zebra** looks

to have failed. Will this see the building once again become a pub? Rumour says.... but no, nothing is confirmed so watch this space!

Moving swiftly on to some good news. I've had a lot of correspondence from worried locals telling me that Bill Johnson could be leaving **The Plough, Duxford**



this summer. There were, people were telling me, irreconcilable differences between Bill, the tenant and his landlord, Everard's Brewery. I'm happy to report that these differences have been resolved and Bill is staying in the pub for the foreseeable future.



Hayley and Steve Pellegrini have reported that they have been given another years lease on **The Hopbine, Fair**

Street. Whilst this is disappointing – they were seeking a two year lease – they tell me that they will keep pushing to make this the very best free house in the area. They have just appointed Liam Burdett as Gen-

eral Manager and continue to serve 7 real ales and a cider.

The **Red Lion, Whittlesford** also has a new manager. Oliver Bleckman, the Operations Manager, contacted me



to tell me about the beers on offer in the hotel bar. Adnams IPA and Explorer appear to be the stock beers, with Nethergate and Woodfordes as companions. Oliver tells me that, Elgoods, Wolf and City of Cambridge beers are also offered in rotation. His plans are to add a 5th hand pump in May.

A number of our pubs have closed for refurbishment recently.

As I write **The Green Dragon, Chesterton** remains closed. It looks like Greene King have taken the opportunity presented by the temporary closure of the nearby green dragon bridge to give the pub a complete make over. Our correspondent described the interior as "totally gutted".



**The Bakers Arms**, East Road, has also had a make over. Catching on with recent events Greene King have

given it a new name: **The Duke of Cambridge**. Gawd bless you sir!

The **Salisbury Arms**, Tenison Road has been given a lick of paint to celebrate the arrival of new management.

The **Three Horseshoes, Stapleford** has asked us to pass on the message that it is no longer serving food on Mondays and Tuesdays. Nothing wrong with the beer though, so I suggest you visit anyway.



I always like to report when our correspondents tell me good things about local pubs. "The

Horrible Helge" has written to me singing the praises of **The Carpenters Arms, Great Wilbraham**. This pub, which has its own micro-brewery, "Crafty Beers", dates back to the 17th century. The building has recently been extended, but still remains very much a pub. Helge was very keen to tell me about the quality of the beers, especially the Carpenters Cask.



Meanwhile, our Newmarket based correspondent Matt Miller, wanted to tell me about the good

things happening at **The Reindeer, Saxon Street**. The pub is now owned and run by Martin Kemp. Martin, who founded the famous Pitfield Brewery in 1982 and is a life member of CAMRA, moved to Saxon Street from London, looking for a less hectic lifestyle. Matt, who was very impressed, describes him as "arguably the most knowledgeable person in the country when it comes to brewing beer and running independent pubs." The Reindeer currently serves two real ales and has a very large selection of bottled beers. Rather unusually, it also offers a selection of pub memorabilia for sale – according to Matt, everything from tables and chairs to beer mats are up for grabs. Martin has decided that he needs time to settle in, so for the time being, The Reindeer is open weekends only (Ale Trailers take note).

PINTS and PUBS blogger Adam W (Take a look at this site, it's very good) has written to tell me that the **Plough, Shepreth**, which



was saved from development last year, opened its doors to local residents at the end of January in order to let people see the refurbishment plans and to help them to see the size of the job ahead. The pub had been stripped almost bare by the previous owners so there is a lot of hard work to do. If all goes to plan The Plough should reopen at the end of April 2014.

Another correspondent, Colin Gardener, has written extolling the virtues of **The Med, Perne Road**. Colin describes himself as a member of the Queen Edith Exiles Club. This club moved to The Med when the Queen Edith closed in 2013 and was, according to Colin, made very welcome. He describes the Adnam's bitter as "exceptional", and is full of praise for Marcus, the landlord, and Lyndsey, the bar manager.

**The Anchor, Silver Street**, recently showed its continuing support for local breweries by holding a "Tap Take Over" evening, run by Cottenham based Fellows Brewery. 5 Fellows beers were on sale, and Mark, Fellows owner/brewer was on hand to talk about his beers, and anything else of interest, knowing him. Not afraid of a challenge, Mark has recently been appointed brewer to The Cambridge Brewery, which is based in The Cambridge Brew House, King Street. Fellows Brewery will remain a going concern, but will concentrate on brewing stronger beers. The Anchor is to hold another "Tap Take Over", highlighting the delights of Grain Brewery, towards the end of March.

I received an e-mail from James, owner of Saffron Brewery to say at last Littlebury Lighthouse is available in bottles. Why it has taken so long I'll let you know next issue. The easy drinking bitter is available in

## Pub News Continued...

a number of local supermarkets and off licences. It is also available on tap from The **St Radegund, King Street.**

Jon, owner of Lord Conrad's Brewery has decided to give up his daytime job to concentrate on beer production. This will, he tells me, increase both the production rate and the quality of his beers.

Finally, put a note in you diary for 15th of May, when the former White Horse Inn, Castle Hill/ Norfolk Street corner, will be opening it's doors for one evening only to celebrate the history of Cambridge pubs. Now known as The Cambridge (formerly Folk) Museum, The White Horse will be serving ale for the first time in decades. See the article on page 15.



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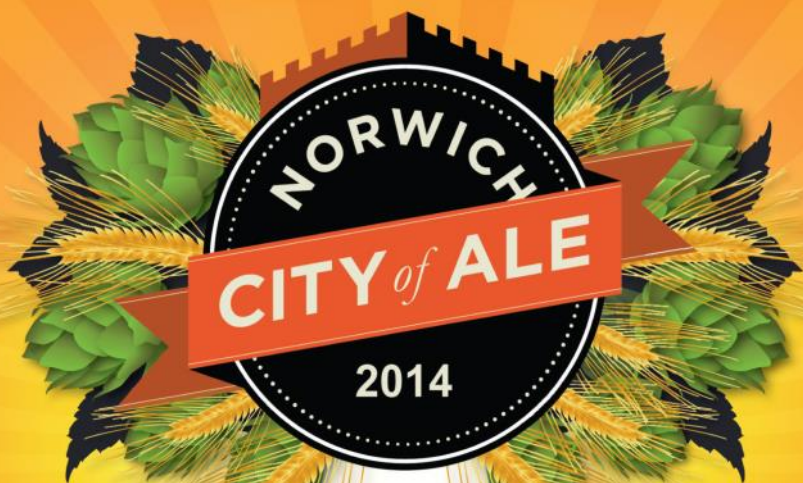
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**"It just keeps getting better and better!"**

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 [norwichcityofale2014.wordpress.com](http://norwichcityofale2014.wordpress.com)

 CityOfAle  #cityofale

 **NORWICH**  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



# Cambridge CAMRA pub tours:

If someone had told me that, on this the latest leg of Cambridge CAMRA's annual tour of local pubs we would be visiting 10 pubs, and trying at least 10 beers on an intrepid Saturday afternoon, I would have just about believed it. If they'd told me that some of the pubs we would be visiting were at the southernmost edges of our district and that plenty of our time would be spent on the coach travelling between venues, I'd have been more sceptical.

However, this is what we did. 14, intrepid beer tasters, a grumpy bus driver, and myself, put our best glasses forward (not the driver of course) and undertook:

## The South Cambridgeshire Beer Tour

The first pub on our journey was the very traditional **Queen's Head** at **Newton**.



The Queen's Head is well known in CAMRA circles, having been in every edi-

tion of the Good Beer Guide since time begun. Described by fellow traveller Matt Miller as "A fantastic traditional pub." the Queen's Head hasn't changed one iota in the last 30 years, and one suspects part of



the building have remained untouched for much longer. Check out the cobwebs in the inglenook

fireplace – I'm sure they are Victorian. No cobwebs on the beer though, Adnam's favourites, Old, Broadside and Southwold Bitter served straight from the cask. We tried the Old (4.1%), a dark red brown ale,

full of toffee and caramel flavours with a clean rather than cloying finish. Yum!

A short journey along the winding country road, and we came to **The Green Man**,



## Thriplow.

This pub is unashamedly a dining pub. This isn't surprising when you consider that it is a

sister pub to the gastro pub, The Hole in the Wall, Little Wilbraham. The modern style single room is split into distinct dining and drinking areas, each served by the one bar. Beers on offer included, Oakham Dolphine



Dance and Bishop's Farewell; Shepard Neame, Spitfire, and Marston's Pedigree. I have always

enjoyed the complex bittersweet balance offered by the Bishop's Farewell (4.6%). This beer, winner of a SIBA silver medal, has long been one of my favourite golden ales, and I was pleased to find this was a good example.

Moving even further into restaurant territory our next stop – after a considerable coach trip, and a false start at **The Bees in the Wall**, which unfortunately was closed – was **The Tickell Arms, Whittlesford**. This is a very popular gastro pub, run by the owners of Cambridge Chop houses, Cambscuisine. It was packed!

I could imagine a lot of busy pubs may have struggled with 15 drinkers turning up without warning as we did. I have seen smaller parties turned away on such occasions. No such thing happened at The Tickell Arms. We were welcomed by the bar staff, who



# The odyssey continues



were not at all fazed by our numbers. The beer list included, Growler Brewery, Old Growler, Mil-

ton Pegasus, Brewster's Hophead, and my option, Calvors, Smooth Hoperator (4%). This is first cask ale to be brewed by the Ipswich based brewery, which previously had concentrated on lager style and craft ales. Described as easy drinking ale", it is brewed using 4 East Anglian Malts, and all English hops. It was a refreshing beer, which I think would be best served very cold, but I'm afraid I found this example to be a little bland.



After another short coach ride we found **The Ickleton Lion, Ickleton**. This is another "cracking

traditional pub" (another quote from Matt), complete with wooden bar, glasses hanging above the bar, and traditional fires offering a warm, cosy welcome. The bar is actually quite small, tucked into one corner of the pub, whilst much of the rest of the building is given over to an extended dining area.



This is a Greene King pub, but does not restrict itself to Greene

King beers. It was nice to see Wibblers American Dark (brewed in collaboration with GK), and Lancaster Lemon Grass sitting beside the usual Greene King IPA on

the bar. I tried the Wibblers (4.5%), a nutty porter style beer.

With 5 pubs to go before the end of our journey, we were pleased that the next village, **Duxford** was only a mile and a half or so along the road. We headed for **The Plough** and I was pleased to see that Landlord, Bill



Johnson was still very much in tenure. The Plough is an Everard's tied pub and I'd heard that Bill was set to leave, having not met eye to eye with his landlord over various issues.

The pub has gone from strength to strength since Bill took over in the middle of last year and I hoped very much that the rumours were wrong, especially as when I'd last met him



he had reported that Everard's were treating him well. "Well, yes," Bill told me, "there have been difficulties. But I'm meeting with the regional officer and I'm sure we'll sort it out." So, a sigh of relief, it looks like Bill is going to stay.

Everard's beers, as you'd expect dominated the beer list. Tiger and Beacon bitter, alongside Adnam's IPA, Wadworth's 6X and Sharp's Doom Bar. The Plough also offers a real cider, which on this occasion was Westons Scrumpy. I enjoyed the malty/bitter Everard's Tiger (4.2%).

The next pub on the tour was a real treat for me. Not only because it was my first ever visit to **The Pheasant, Great Chishill**, but

# Cambridge CAMRA pub tours continued

also because I made the acquaintance of two very, very, tired Jack Russell puppies who had just had a busy day raising pheasants for the local shoot. It was the last day of the season, and The Pheasant was accommodating last day celebrations of two local groups. This created a very welcoming atmosphere.



Another cosy traditional country pub, The Pheasant is

served by a half moon shaped bar and is complete with a 1970's style carpet. The food looked to be of excellent quality. There was also a good selection of beers, including Growler IPA, Oakham Jeffrey Hudson and London Pride. This really is a nice pub. It is a shame it is so far from Cambridge

The 8th pub on the list, and the 7th visited was **The Three Tuns, Abington**. Perhaps



best known for its excellent Thai food, this pub is usually also a pretty good

place to get a beer. Unfortunately on our visit the choice was quite limited. One of the 3 beers on offer, Mighty Oak, Captain Bob, ran out just before we arrived, leaving an uninspired choice between Greene King IPA, and Mauldon's Gold (4.2%). The Gold was pleasant, but this pub wasn't the beer drinker's paradise I remembered it to be. It must have been an off day.

Moving further from Cambridge, we then

visited **The Crown, Linton**. I'm afraid this



was another disappointing experience. There is no doubt that The Crown is popular.

The long narrow pub was packed with early evening drinkers. There was a lively atmosphere and the locals were keen to engage us in conversation, but of the 5 real ales on offer, two had to be returned, of the rest the Greene King Hardy and Hanson Kimberley Bitter (3.9%) was the best kept offering.



After the (surprisingly) disappointing experience of the previous two pubs, we felt we deserved a treat, and so we headed for the final pub on the tour, the hitherto unvisited **Three Hills, Bartlow**, full of hope. We weren't to be

disappointed. What a lovely pub this is. We stepped into the long narrow smoky bar area – there is a grand log fire – to be given a very warm welcome by both the staff and the local community

Two of the possible three beers were available, Woodforde's Kett's Rebellion (4.3%), a beer brewed to celebrate the peasant's revolt of 1549, was the most interesting. It is a copper coloured bitter, a fruity malt beginning with a bitter finish. Thank goodness we finished with a nice pint!

# The Cambridge Blue

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# Community Pubs Month – April 2014

CAMRA will again be organising Community Pubs Month in April following the success of 2013's event. This month of action gives pubs a campaign to focus promotions around and try some new marketing initiatives to attract more custom.

We would like all pubs to take part by organising some fun events for the local community to enjoy in April and encourage pubs to try a variety of different communication methods of informing the locals of what is planned including press releases, social media such as Facebook & twitter, website, collecting local email addresses and sending regular e-newsletters, leaflet drops, adverts in other local amenities etc

26 pubs close every week. We do not want this situation getting any worse, so please encourage your friends (especially those

that do not visit pubs regularly) to have a night out in one of your local pubs in April to show your support. Imagine if your local was one of the 26 to close next month!

How will CAMRA support this event?

We have produced some free promotional packs for pubs to use that will remind people how great pubs are.

All pubs that feature in the Good Beer Guide 2014 will automatically be sent a promotional pack. Other pubs can order one by visiting [communitypub-smonth.org.uk](http://communitypub-smonth.org.uk). The promotional packs will be sent out in February and March.

CAMRA's national press office will also issue a number of press releases to raise the profile of pub-going.

## PIG n HOG - St Neots

### Pig n Falcon



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**Fri/Sat 10-2.30am**  
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**Min 8 real ales plus 6 real ciders, bottled foreign beers.**

**Potbelly Best £2.60/pt**

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**John Nunn - Hunts CAMRA Pub Champion 2013**



### Hog & Partridge



**Russell Street, PE19 1BA**  
**Mon-Wed closed**  
**Thu 6-12.30, Fri 4-12.30,**  
**Sat 12-12.30, Sun 1-7**

#### Tapas Thu, Fri & Sat

**Min 4 real ales plus 4 real ciders, draught foreign and craft beers.**

**Tapas - 'two for one' on Thursday**

**Hunts CAMRA Most Improved Town Pub 2013**

**PIG n HOG Spring Beer Festival - 17th - 29th April**

**Tel 07951 785678 - [www.PIGNFALCON.co.uk](http://www.PIGNFALCON.co.uk)**



# The Cambridge & District CAMRA Ale Trails

## What They Are

*Our three Ale Trails aim to encourage local drinkers to visit local pubs, especially ones they might not know. The Trails connect to our April Community Pubs Month, though they don't need to be completed until the end of May.*

*This year we are adding cider trail. To earn a coveted Cambridge CAMRA cider trail T-shirt you will need to drink a half of cider in, and receive a stamp from, 12 of the 16 pubs indicated by the apple symbol.*

## How It Works

1. Order a pint or half of real ale (a LocAle if available) in a participating pub and ask to have your form stamped.
2. Collect at least twelve stamps on a Trail to qualify for the prize of a T-shirt. There are different coloured shirts for each Trail, so you can enter one, two or three forms as you wish.
3. Send your entry, by 31 May, to Ale Trails, 32 Lovell Road, Cambridge, CB4 2QR or hand your form(s) in at the Membership Stand at the Cambridge Beer Festival.
4. Anyone visiting all the pubs on all the Trails will go into a draw for a very special prize.
5. In addition to taking part in these trails, you might wish to score your beers at the National Beer Scoring System. - go to [www.beerscoring.org.uk](http://www.beerscoring.org.uk).

## Public Transport

Most pubs on the Trails are accessible by public transport, though buses are few and far between to some of the rural pubs.

For details, visit our website at

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

*Please don't drink and drive.*



# Ale Trail 1

Tickell Arms,  
Whittlesford

☐

Green Man,  
Grantchester


☐

Bees in the Wall,  
Whittlesford

☐

The Bell,  
Balsham

☐

Queens Head,  
Newton


☐

The Sun Inn,  
Waterbeach


☐

Green Man.  
Thriplow


☐

The Mill,  
Cambridge


☐

Queens Head,  
Fowlmere

☐

Flying Pig,  
Cambridge

☐

The Pheasant,  
Great Chishill

☐

Six Bells,  
Fulbourn


☐

Three Hills,  
Bartlow

☐

Ickleton Lion,  
Ickleton

☐

Blue Ball,  
Grantchester

☐

The Free Press,  
Cambridge

☐

My favourite beer/cider was ..... in .....

My Name .....

Address & Postcode .....

..... Email .....

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub) .....



# Ale Trail 2

The Boot,  
Dullingham

☐

Red Lion,  
Chevely

☐

Red Lion,  
Kirtling

☐

The Crown,  
Ashley

☐

The Reindeer,  
Saxon Street

☐

Cambridge Blue,  
Cambridge


☐

The Fox,  
Burwell,

☐

Live and Let Live,  
Cambridge


☐

Carpenters Arms,  
Great Wilbraham

☐

Kingston Arms,  
Cambridge


☐

Marquis of Granby,  
Stetchworth

☐

The Elm Tree,  
Cambridge


☐

The White Swan,  
QUY

☐

The Hopbine,  
Cambridge


☐

The Chestnut Tree,  
West Wrating

☐

The Champion of the  
Thames, Cambridge

☐

My favourite beer/cider was ..... in .....

My Name .....

Address & Postcode .....

..... Email .....

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub) .....

# Ale Trail 3

Plough and Fleece,  
Horningsea

☐

The Maypole,  
Cambridge


☐

Kings Head,  
Fen Ditton

☐

3 Tuns,  
Fen Drayton

☐

Jolly Brewers,  
Milton

☐

The Bank,  
Willingham

☐

Haymakers,  
Chesterton


☐

The Golden Hind,  
Cambridge

☐

Red Lion,  
Histon


☐

The St Radegund,  
Cambridge

☐

White Swan,  
Conington


☐

Carpenters Arms,  
Cambridge

☐

The Poacher,  
Elsworth

☐

The Carlton Arms,  
Cambridge


☐

The Castle,  
Cambridge

☐

Anchor,  
Burwell

☐

My favourite beer/cider was ..... in .....

My Name .....

Address & Postcode .....

..... Email .....

T-Shirt Size (Please circle) XXL XL L M S

I would like to collect my T-Shirt from (name of pub) .....

# CAMRA at the Museum of Cambridge

**Thursday 15th May, 5.30-8.30**

at the Museum of Cambridge (formerly the Cambridge and County Folk Museum)



Join us for a special evening recreating the atmosphere, tastes and tales of the old 'White Horse Inn', now the Museum of

Cambridge. Try heritage beers and ales

brewed only for this event, discover the secrets of the Inn, join a walking pub history tour and enjoy

music and dancing throughout the evening.



Part of CAMRA's community pubs month and the 'Museums at Night' campaign, this event celebrates Cam-

bridge's amazing pub history and proceeds go towards learning and outreach programmes at the Museum.



**Tickets £5.00** including entry and one free pint. Drinks thereafter offered at £1 per half pint. **Booking and advance payment advised** but a limited number of tickets will be available on the night. **Call 01223 355159 or email**

**erin@folkmuseum.org.uk**



## White Swan

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Lunch menu served noon till 2:30pm

Tuesday to Saturday

Evening Menu served 6pm till 9pm

Thursday to Saturday

Traditional Sunday Roast served

Noon till 2:30pm

Dog friendly, Large Children play area and Pub garden. Discount for CAMRA members

## Beer & Music Festival

**1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> August.**



# Ales in Aldeburgh

## *A rainy pub crawl in a Suffolk seaside town*

The desire to spend a weekend by the sea to bring some light to these dark winter days took us to Aldeburgh on the Suffolk coast. As well as exploring the pretty fishing town and soaking up the sea views, a pub crawl was firmly on the agenda. Being close to Southwold, we were fairly sure that most pubs would be Adnams houses, and we were keen to discover what they had to offer.

As the rain pelted down on this windy Janu-



ary evening we ran from our hotel, the Brudenell at the top of the High Street, into the first pub we came to, the **White Hart**, a traditional one-bar pub dating

back to the 1800s. This Adnams pub is located next to the Aldeburgh Fish and Chip Shop, regarded as one of the best in the country (queues are normally out the door, but on this rainy night everyone was crowded inside with the door firmly closed behind them, windows steamed up).

Upon entering the White Hart it was obvious that this was the place to be - locals were chatting and laughing around the bar, there was a roaring fire, and the atmosphere was warm and friendly. This single, dark wood-panelled bar had a nautical theme, with hanging plates and pictures on the walls depicting ships, plus a framed diagram of a boat displaying sailing terminology - if you didn't know your inner boustay from your baggywrinkle then you would after looking at this (the baggywrinkle prevents chafe, by the way).

A good selection of Adnams ales was available including Old Ale, Ghost Ship, Southwold Bitter and Broadside, and guest beers included Fullers London Pride and Castle Rock Harvest Pale, with Leffe also on tap. I ordered a Castle Rock Harvest Pale, which was light, crisp and easy drinking, although I think the hops would've been even more 'zingy' if it hadn't been served through a

sparkler (just my personal preference!) My drinking partner ordered a Ghost Ship (no sparkler) which was full of flavour with a big malty backbone and lots of citrus hops. We realised that we had probably stumbled upon the best pub in Aldeburgh and it was hard to tear ourselves away, but the other undiscovered pubs were beckoning ...

It was chucking it down as we ran along the High Street towards the town centre, and after nipping down a little alley to the right we emerged onto Crabbe Street opposite the pretty **Cross Keys Inn**. This pub, which resembles a country cottage and dates back to the 16th century, has a courtyard



which faces the sea - not something that we'd be using that evening, mind, but good to remember for warmer weather. We ducked inside, and came face to face with not one but three wet dogs, all warming themselves up by

the blazing wood burner.

This Adnams pub has a winding layout, plenty of old beams, horse brasses on the walls, pew-style benches against the brick walls, and stools along the bar. A food menu was chalked up on the blackboard which included many fish dishes. This pub was quieter than the White Hart, with just a few locals (and another dog) at the bar, and a family sitting in the area with the fire - but it was early evening. Beers on the bar included Southwold Bitter, Broadside and Ghost Ship; Adnams wines were also available. I went for a Ghost Ship, having had a taste for it in the last pub, but I actually enjoyed the full-flavoured Broadside more; it had slightly more condition than the Ghost Ship and was rich and warming.

We moved on, leaving the wet dogs and fire behind, and were blown along Crag Path towards the centre of the town and the Moot Hall, the striking 16th-century timber framed building facing the sea on the green at Mar-

ket Cross Place and home to the town's museum. Behind the Moot Hall was an attractive timber framed pub called **The Mill**, so we crossed the road and ventured inside.

The Mill was brightly lit and also relatively empty - everyone was in the White Hart it seemed (or in the chip shop!). The bar is



located at the far end of this long pub and it feels quite cosy with several seating areas; we sat in the room nearest the door which was very

neatly furnished, with an elegant fake log burning stove in the middle of the room, fat cushions, wooden beams, and leaded windows framed with heavy drapes. An interesting menu was displayed by the bar which included fish dishes and a vegetarian risotto; one of the locals we spoke to earlier said the food was very good since the new owners had taken over recently. Ales on the bar included Southwold Bitter, Ghost Ship, and Jack Brand Dry Hopped Lager on keg. I

opted for the bitter, an enjoyable session ale with caramel flavours and spicy hops, and my drinking partner had the dry hopped lager.

After our drinks we headed back out into the heavy rain, and squelched along the



High Street back to the **Bru-denell Hotel** bar. We entered the bar looking like drowned rats (luckily we weren't the only ones) and took a seat on the comfy chairs where we drank Dry Hopped Lager on keg

(Spindrift was also on as well as Bitter and Broadside on cask) which had a lovely aroma of citrus hops and tasted fresh and fruity.

And as we sipped our beer, we watched the waves crashing on the beach and the horizontal rain pelting against the large picture windows. It could rain as much as it wanted now; we were going nowhere.

**Louise Hanzlik**



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# Small is Beautiful

Imagine it is 1830. Money is tight and work is hard to find. Binge gin drinking, cock fighting, bear baiting and gaming are rife. The politicians assemble and somebody has a bright idea: in order to reduce the consumption of gin and eliminate all of its associated antisocial side effects... why not encourage the populace to drink more beer instead?!

The Beer House Act is passed. Anybody can pay just two guineas to the authorities and be granted a licence to open their house to sell beer and cider.

What happens over the next eight years or so? Every street has a beer house, often only one room and open every day except Sundays... Imagine that!

The Victorian back street pub is born.

It is not so hard to imagine. Ignoring the fact that in 2014 we are losing nearly 30 pubs a week nationally, there is another area of the pub industry that IS growing. Little pubs are opening again. The day of the micropub is back, nearly 200 years around there are over 30 micropubs nationally. Most of them are in Kent, and another area where they are starting to spring up is in the Fens.

A micropub needn't necessarily be that small, but what does make a pub a micro? I decide to visit and compare a few examples...

## MICROPUB ONE



The first micropub not too far from Cambridge was **The Railway Arms in Downham Market**. The

pub is located on the southbound platform of the railway station, and is also part cafe part bookshop. There is also a model rail-

way within the pub running around the ceiling of this one roomed bar.

All beer is served on gravity (straight out of the barrel), which is the main feature of all micropubs. When I visit, there are 4 ciders on tap and indeed The Railway Arms has been voted CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year 2013.

I do find the method of serving a little strange whereby I pay at the bar, the beer is poured from another room and my change is then collected from the café. Being a Friday lunchtime, The Railway Arms is pretty busy and I feel that I have to wait longer than I need to be served. Eventually I have a pint of Cottage Brewery's Sterling Pale Ale at 4.5% (£3.30) and also order a sausage and mustard sandwich. One is citrusy and heathery and the other a meat feast - both are excellent.

This micropub proudly appeared on TV in 2011 on "Great Railway Journeys of Britain" presented by Michael Portillo. Well worth a watch and well worth a visit.

## MICROPUB TWO



Our local micropub is **The Bank in Willingham**, which recently celebrated its first birthday in early

December 2013. There are 4-6 beers on tap. It is not unknown for The Bank to sell out on a Friday or Saturday, so they have a stock of bottled beers just in case. On my visit I see two Adnams beers on. The Elgood's Double Black Dog (6.5%) is a taste of Christmas. Landlord Chris tells me that Adnams provided much help in getting the wiring/plumbing set up and didn't charge him a penny.

What a friendly pub this is! I find myself



chatting to two Watford fans (yes, 2) and we immediately hit it off. Jerry, who is currently striving to save The White Horse in Swavesey, buys me a pint and many regulars tell us about what a success this micropub is. Chris also operates the Post Office next door but don't ask him for a book of second class stamps! He is a busy man, and he can be found behind the bar in the single room pub on Tuesday to Saturday evenings only. Hence a word of warning here: many micropubs offer limited opening hours and it is a good idea to check in advance to avoid disappointment. I will return.

## MICROPUB THREE



The most recent micro pub opening in our area

was **The Liberty Belle** in Fore Hill, **Ely**. My initial visit was on their first Friday night. They had 4 beers on tap, mainly from the Norfolk area. Bitter Old Bustard (4.3%, very nutty) and Norfolk Kiwi (3.8%) from the JoC's Brewery (pronounced Josie's) are real favourites here. This pub is decorated from head to foot in old cinema and music hall paraphernalia, perhaps too much? Most people like it though... and a testimony to this is that they now often have 6 beers on tap on a Tuesday night. Jess who oversees the day-to-day running tells me that The Belle gets through up to 15 casks a week, which is pretty good going for a micropub! My only reservation about this pub is that most pints cost upwards of £3.70, but on reflection this does not stop me coming.

Like all of these micropubs, the Liberty Belle lacks a jukebox, TV, games machines or loud music.

On my most recent visit I enjoyed a syrupy Titanic Porter (4.9%) from Oakham's Brewery, which has a rich sweet plum finish.

Dark beers are especially popular in this micropub.

## MICROPUB FOUR



All of these 3 local micropubs are brought into sharper focus for me when I go to the West Midlands (last weekend) and have

the pleasure of being introduced to the baby of them all by relative Keith. **The Little Ale-house in Bromsgrove** has only been open a couple of weeks. The pub used to be a mobile phone accessory shop, so it is something of an improvement! Despite the end of communications for the previous shop, conversation is encouraged in this simplest of pubs.

There are 8 beers on tap and 5 ciders. All 13 drinks are available at £2.70 a pint regardless of alcoholic strength! And there is 20p off a pint for CAMRA card holders! I start with Byatt's XK Dark at only 3.5% but bursting with blackberry and tarmac notes! Keith opts for the Salopian Kashmir (5.5%) from Shrewsbury which is a salty and honey hop powered goliath of a beer. The landlord, Terry offers us a taster of the classic Sarah Hughes Dark Mild at 6% and we decide to take a couple of pints home with us. Meanwhile, barman Nathan pours Nicola a cider (from Scotland!) as she enjoys the unusual high seating that runs down one side of the ex-headset shop. The 4% cider from Thistly Cross tastes like a strawberry mivvi, and we note that it is simply called "Strawberry Cider". No surprise there after all.

These micropubs, each reminiscent of a Victorian ale house, offer excellent beer and a particularly friendly atmosphere. In my opinion they are here to stay. We will, I expect, have to wait a little longer for the return of badger baiting or cock fighting.

**Fred Laband**

# A Cambridge CAMRA School Report

At the end of January David Cameron took French President Francois Holland for a pub lunch at the Swan Inn in Swinbrook, Oxfordshire. Politicians like photo opportunities in pubs. It shows that they are, like us, part of the community.

So just how much are politicians, nationally and locally, doing to protect our favourite British institution? National government can have more effect on pubs than any other level of government. They can affect everything from the prices we pay, to the range of beers available, and can directly increase the chances of a pub remaining a pub.

Local authorities control local planning and can introduce special measures to protect our pubs. Maybe it's time for a school report to find out who in government is head boy/girl and who is standing in the corner wearing the dunce's cap.

**United Kingdom National Government**  
Last year, after many years of campaigning by CAMRA and others, the UK government scrapped the beer tax escalator and even dropped the cost of a pint by a penny! For this we will award them a gold star (but it certainly took them long enough). No doubt, they will also need prompting to leave it unchanged this year. The school bullies are the Pubcos and they've got their hands on a third of our pubs.

National government, the school prefects, could introduce rules to make them play fairly. We are promised that at some time during this government's term, there will be "a Code" and an Adjudicator to rein in the Pubco bullies. Under the Code, tenants will have to be charged market comparable rents and will be given the option to serve more guest beers. The government have said that they will make this happen, once they have completed an extended consultation process, but again they are taking their time to act.

One thing they did change quickly was planning law. Paragraph 70 of the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework gave local authorities a duty to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities, including pubs. The 2011 Localism Act allowed communities to list their pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) and gave them a right to bid for it if it came on the market. All of this deserves an award of merit. But wait, a pub can still be sold as a going concern without triggering the right to buy, and under current guidelines, pub owners can change a pub into a shop, restaurant or office, and can even demolish it without the need for planning permission. 100 lines awarded for lack of attention to detail.

Overall: National Government can be slow to act and their work can be patchy. Must try harder. Graded C.

**East Cambridgeshire District Council**  
Several years ago ECDC reacted to concerns over pub losses and introduced a pub protection policy often referred to as their "Last Pub in the Village" policy. 10 out of 10 for effort and planning. When informed of loopholes in the planning law that allowed pubs to be lost without planning consent, ECDC, the school snitch, responded by calling on national government to change the rules and close the loophole to protect all pubs. 6 out of ten, but could improve. Unfortunately it is now waiting for the government to act and is not considering what else it can do. Zero out of 10

Overall: East Cambridgeshire District Council wants protected pubs but won't do all that is its power to do so. Preferring, naively, to let the government take the burden of acting quickly. C+

**South Cambridgeshire District Council**  
Like its schoolmate ECDC, SCDC introduced its own "Last Pub in the Village" policy some years ago. However, in December 2013 SCDC was shocked when The Pear

# on National and Local Government

Tree, Hildersham was scrumped by the school bullies, and despite being the last pub in the village became a furniture shop. On seeking advice from the school nurse (CAMRA, amongst others), SCDC was told in no uncertain terms what it needed to do – adopt Article 4 Directions to prevent pub demolitions or changes of use without planning permission. Unfortunately, SCDC, the school dunce, gave a response, which was sadly lacking. Use of Article 4 Direction was spurned. Instead they called on national government to close the loophole, but only for pubs listed as Assets of Community Value not all pubs.

Overall: South Cambridgeshire District Council's ostrich performance, which continues even after the loss of The Pear Tree, is extremely disappointing. Graded D

## Cambridge City Council (CCC)

Although initially slower than its school-

mates to respond to the crisis, Cambridge City Council is now not just top of the class, but has been awarded the post of head Boy/Girl. The introduction in 2012 of the Interim Planning Policy Guidance (IPPG) set a benchmark standard for local authorities across the country, and soon had the school bully Pubcos calling "foul!" When building developers tried to circumvent the IPPG by demolishing pubs outside of protected areas, CCC did their homework and introduced Article 4 Directions on a scale not seen anywhere else in the country. They have currently adopted Article 4 Direction for 18 pub sites that weren't protected in other ways.

Overall: Cambridge City Council is a shining example to all other local authorities. Only its reluctance to fully address the loopholes that allow pub losses through change of use prevents CCC gaining an A. Graded B+.

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# Carpenters Arms



The Carpenters Arms on Victoria Road is in new hands. Mike

Champion, formerly at the Black Bull, Balsham and Red Lion, Hinxton where last year he was awarded National Front of House Manager of the Year, is now at the helm of his local.

In 2011 the pub was sold by Punch Taverns to a property developer, and plans were submitted to convert the pub into seven apartments. However, with guidance from the National Planning Policy Framework, the application was refused, partly on the grounds that it "would lead to the loss of a public house, which is a valued community facility helping to meet day-to-day needs".

Closed for a couple of years, it reopened last May as a free house after a refurbishment and now Mike, a Victoria Road resident, is aiming to build on that good work and improve his local pub. There'll be more regularly changing beers from local breweries - the aptly named Carpenter's Cask from the Crafty Brewery at nearby Great Wilbraham was on - and they intend to make more use of the outdoor area, especially the wood burning pizza oven with everything now being cooked in it, from the pizzas to Sunday roasts, the new menu featuring more 'pub classics'.

The pub dates back to the 19th century - in 1855 Peter Fulcher is listed as a beer retailer on Victoria Road. By 1869, he is listed as publican of the Carpenter's Arms and a carpenter, so it seems possible he gave the pub its name. Standing on the corner of Frenchs Road, over time it has incorporated one of the adjoining terraced cottages on

Victoria Road.

In the late 19th century it was owned by the Albion Brewery, one of the largest of Cambridge's former breweries, which was acquired by Lacons in 1897 - set into the wall above the front door is a plaque with the Lacons falcon. In 1965 it was taken over by Whitbreads.

A 1975 pub guide described the pub as "bright and cheerful", but by 1979 as "dark and spooky"! There was a skittle pitch in one bar, the game played here well into the 1990s when, as a Whitbread pub, the regular beer was Flowers IPA. It is now the first pub under the ownership of the Light Blue Pub Company, a limited company Mike set up at the beginning of this year, planning to take on more Cambridgeshire pubs in the future.

**Adam W**

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# Cambridge Beer Festival Rides Again



The Cambridge Beer Festival returns to Jesus Green this coming May. The festival is now in its 41st year. It starts on Monday 19th May and runs through to Saturday 24th.

As always, the festival will have around 200 real ales from all around the UK. Alongside will be 60 ciders and perries, mead and wine. The Cambridge Beer Festival wouldn't feel right without the cheese counter - the usual ton or so of cheese will be ordered soon.

Every year the beer festival supports a charity. This year we're supporting the You Can Bike Too project, based at Milton Country Park. You Can Bike Too gives young people with a disability the opportunity to enjoy cycling and provides new experiences. An obvious one is the experience of speed - something many will not have encountered in the same way before. Using the adapted bikes means that they can be active participants in a sport, rather than passive observers - it increases self-esteem and independence. Along with all of that there is the opportunity to work on balance and co-ordination skills without even realising it, and perhaps more importantly, the young people can have fun with family and friends. The cycling project is expanding the horizons for young people and their families.

Like all CAMRA beer festivals Cambridge is organised and staffed entirely by volunteers. We always need more staff -

whether serving on the bar, looking after the beer, washing glasses, or one of the numerous other jobs that has to be done. Any time you can give is very welcome, so do get in touch. Anyone who's interested in working on the site team would be of particular interest.

For more information visit [www.cambridgebeerfestival.com](http://www.cambridgebeerfestival.com), find us on facebook at CambridgeBeerFestival or on twitter @cambeerfest. You can also call and leave a message on 01223 967808, or email [enquiries@cambridgebeerfestival.com](mailto:enquiries@cambridgebeerfestival.com). You can find out more about our festival charity at [www.youcanbiketoo.org](http://www.youcanbiketoo.org).

**Bert Kenward**  
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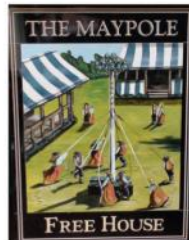


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