

The Beer and Ragged Staff

FREE

Issue 92 August - November 2016

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Heart of
Warwickshire



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Unit 13, Althorpe Street
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The Beer and Ragged Staff
Issue No. 92 August 2016
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<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk>
Phone Trading Standards Headquarters
Phone: 01926 414040
Call in person Warwickshire Trading
Standards, Old Budbrooke Road, Warwick
CV35 7DP

**Press date for next issue
(November 2016) is
Tuesday 4 October 2016**

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Discounts will apply for multiple entries.
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Branch Diary and notable dates

09/08/2016	8:30PM	Star & Garter, Leamington Spa CV32 5LL
16/08/2016	8:30PM	Vine Inn, Warwick CV33 6AW
23/08/2016	8:00PM	Merrie Lion, Fenny Compton CV47 2YH
02/09/2016	8:30PM	Harbury Beer Festival
03/09/2016	8:30PM	Harbury Beer Festival
13/09/2016	8:30PM	Woodland Tavern, Leamington CV32 5HW
20/09/2016	8:30PM	Lord Nelson, Warwick CV34 5QE
27/09/2016	8:30PM	Case Is Altered, Five Ways CV35 7JD
04/10/2016	8:30PM	Drawing Board, Leamington CV32 4HN
11/10/2016	8:00PM	Branch Meeting - Fox and Vivian, Leamington CV32 4RZ
18/10/2016	8:30PM	Globe, Warwick CV34 4DP
25/10/2016	8:30PM	Antelope, Lighthorne CV35 0BX
01/11/2016	8:30PM	Magazine Distribution Moorings at Myton, Leamington Spa CV31 3NY

16-18 09/2016	Leamington Beer + Music Festival Unit 13, Althorpe Street, Leamington Spa, CV31 2AU
22-24 09/2016	Cannock Chase CAMRA 3rd Beer Festival The Prince of Wales Theatre, Church St, Cannock WS11 1DE
27-29 10/2016	Birmingham Beer & Cider Festival The New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, Birmingham, B18 5PP

Why not join us on the weekly crawls? We visit a range of four pubs per week. Above are the starting points for the next few months. Check the website and Facebook for details of these and other events.



Diary page at
www.camrahow.org.uk/index.php?p=diary



Facebook
www.facebook.com/camrahow

Are your membership details up to date?

To check your details, please logon to your CAMRA account at
www.camra.org.uk

Once you have provided your email address to CAMRA, we will be able to send you regular emails about your local branch including news on campaigns, outings and special events and a PDF version of the magazine.

Pub of the Year - more success

Following the success earlier this year as our branch's Pub of the Year, we are pleased to announce that The Wild Boar, Warwick has been named Warwickshire's too.

This was celebrated on 30 June with a party which included music, meet the brewer - The Urban Huntsman - and a buffet.

A special brew was also available in the Heart of Warwickshire's wooden pin.



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Friday 2nd September:
17.30-23.30

Saturday 3rd September:
11.30-16.00 & 18.00-23.30

Harbury Village Hall, CV33 9JE

Harbury Beer Festival 2016

The 25th Harbury Beer festival may provide the opportunity to look on in Rapture as Mary Jane appears on a High Wire or perhaps she will end up Dazed and Confused following a sample of Pendle Witches Brew leaving her astride a Silver Stallion which bolts as it sees a Silver Adder but perhaps this all this sounds too much like you will have to pay a Silver Dollar to watch it on the Silver Screen.

Yes its another beery fantasy based on a selection of the ales we hope to feature this year. We are revisiting past beers of the festival and fastest sellers mixing them with silver beers marking our anniversary and then introducing some new breweries and beers from Warwickshire that have not been seen at Harbury before. Some old favourites such as Sarah Hughes Ruby Mild; Elland 1872 Porter and Enville Ale will be back for your repeat enjoyment. I mean you will like them again – not that they will repeat on you!

For those of you not into beer there will be a carefully selected range of ciders and perries for your delectation. Many from down the south west plus a few from our local Windmill Hill producer including once again the popular Amber Nectar with the added whisky!

As ever the Harbury Morris will dance on Saturday lunchtime and we hope to feature two bands in the evening the return of the Strumtroopers of two years ago the ukulele band with a difference and then followed by a cut down Umpah Band. We are not sure yet if we are getting the Ump or the Pah – either way it will be good fun! They will be the first festival bands to be able to exploit the new Village Hall permanent stage.

We are hoping the village pubs will join in the theme with their guest beers although some changes in the village are in the offing so check out the programme for the latest information.

The opening times and package price are the same as before – check out the advert and the posters. Please no children in the evenings but bring them along on the Saturday lunchtime.

We look forward to welcoming you back – It will be worth the wait! If you have not been before, where have you been! (unless you were under age last time!) We hope to make your first visit memorable.



Some memories from 2014

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Web - punchbowlwarwick.co.uk



The Search for Cider

Cider for Harbury 25th Anniversary beer festival 2016

The search started, or rather continued, along with my personal experience of Somerset cider farms. Well known to me are Rich's and Millwhites both from the Burnham-on-Sea area, about 20 miles south of Bristol. The first port of call was Millwhites where I attended their Wassailing event in January 2015. Traditionally celebrated on 12th night, Wassailing is a pagan festival consisting of farmers dressing up in bizarre costumes, making lots of noise and hanging cider soaked toast in the trees. The noise peaks with the use of shot guns to frighten away the bad spirits and protect next years crop. There is quite a bit of cider drinking going on and a folk band or two. The boys were happy to help out with the noise making and the singing but were somewhat disappointed at not being let loose with the shotguns. They did not get the idea of toast in the tree but that's the Wurzels for you.

Myself and family, or "Grocclles" as they call the tourists in Somerset, have embraced the customs and strange festivals of the area but mainly because we like the thirst quenching apple delight they make so well in them there parts down wez!!

We were spoilt for choice at Millwhites and decided to take a box of the Rum cask cider at 7.5%. Its a little different and could be a Marmite cider, love it or hate it. A box of Hedgelayar at a lower 4.8% was also acquired and a perry for something different. We ordered a box of a second perry, Piglets choice 7%, from Nempnets, This has received good reviews and we look forward to trying it at the beer festival.

A few minutes away at Brent Knoll, is West Croft cider farm, home of Janet's Jungle Juice, champion Cider of Great Britain for 2007. Also a champion cider in 1997 and 2015 we thought we ought to have some, especially after we had enjoyed the wassail and cider with them earlier this year. Their cider is produced from their own and local sourced apples, the juices are blended and fermented in oak casks.

Next stop was Rich's, Somersetlife food and drinks awards 2015 winner. With a restaurant and well stocked shop on site you can take home a wide choice of ciders, cheese or other goodies. Their own cider can be dispensed into your own tubs, dry, sweet or a mix of the two if you prefer.

Travelling a bit further afield we eventually found Wilkins cider barn. It takes a bit of finding at worlds end farm, Mudgley. Roger Wilkins and his family have been producing cider for many years. How the farmyard seemed to be so full of people enjoying a drink or two with so few cars I will never know. The slops are saved for the dog and the cheese is to die for. A warm welcome and large tasters are the order of the day but you can get stuck here all day chatting and "tasting" but please remember someone has to drive home eventually (this is a rock, paper, scissors moment)

A new find for us, after our friend moved to Worle, is Crossmans cider just off Jct 21 of the M5. There was an Alpaca on the front lawn on our visit and a friendly bunch in the shop. Ben Crossman is the fourth generation cider producer using their own orchards at Maybury Farm, Hewish. With its convenient location and friendly welcome I'm sure this producer will become a firm favourite with family and friends. Hopefully with the local cider to come we will have enough to keep everyone happy at the Harbury beer festival in September.

A Yorkshire Lass



Another quiz from Dougie, the Wild Boar's Quizmaster. Can you decipher the following anagrams? They are all local pubs and clubs. If you need any help can be found in the current (2016) CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

1. Rabid Owl
2. Plow Bunch
3. Peace God of Hoop
4. Copilots Offed
5. Naval Droned Two
6. Cracks Merriest
7. Jar Judges Net
8. Down Linen
9. Turbo Clowning
10. En German

Please send your answers by email to editor@camrahow.org.uk by 4 October 2016. The first correct answer drawn from the hat will receive a voucher for four pints of Slaughterhouse Ale to be redeemed at The Wild Boar, 27, Lakin Road, Warwick. As with all pub quizzes the Quizmaster's decision is final.

The Wild Boar quiz is held on the evening of the first Sunday of the month – it is a popular event and booking is strongly recommended.

Last editions answers:

In which English counties would you find the following breweries ?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Amber Ales | Derbyshire |
| 2. XT Brewing Company | Buckinghamshire |
| 3. Church End | Warwickshire |
| 4. Oakham | Cambridgeshire |
| 5. Otter | Devon |
| 6. Spinning Dog | Herefordshire |
| 7. Enville | West Midlands |
| 8. Iceni | Norfolk |
| 9. Kinver | Staffordshire |
| 10. Dark Star | West Sussex |

Thank you for all your entries. The winner has been informed and will soon be enjoying the fruits of his labour.

The Harvester

Long Itchington

We are pleased to be included in the 2016 CAMRA Good Beer Guide, our 29th edition.

You know we do great beer, sourced from brewers all over the country & food is served every day. We also have free Wi-Fi.

Our large courtyard garden is perfect for summer, and from Friday afternoon till Sunday eve the fire on our wood fired Italian pizza oven is lit, bring you custom made wood fired pizza.



Our twitter feed @liharvester and Facebook page keep you updated on what's on, including our Willow & Tool's music parlour on the first Sunday of each month, which is an informal evening of acoustic music.

Contact us: 01926812698 or
via www.theharvesterinn.co.uk

Real Ale Report

A TRIP ON A TRAIN

What is it about rail and ale that makes them go so well together?

The Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway were holding a beer festival but I had to forgo that as I had an invitation to journey, with friends, to Rail Ale at Barrow Hill roundhouse in Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

We travelled, by rail, from Leamington Spa, via Birmingham New Street.

The courtesy bus from Chesterfield to Barrow Hill took us on a delightful journey through the countryside as the double decker could not negotiate a low bridge.

I have never been to the roundhouse before and, on arrival, was stunned by this great big space filled with locomotives and beer.

We were issued with half pint souvenir glasses rather than thirds, which I prefer as it allows me to try a greater variety before reaching my limit. The guide book boasts of over 300 beers and ciders, impossible to do it justice and remain upright. It would have taken some time to plan a detailed campaign and I was thirsty so I launched into one of the nearest bars with a glass of Ghost Rider from Navigation brewery. "That's cloudy" says my mate.

But the notes talk of swirling mist of an unfiltered pale beer and it certainly hit the spot.

I was well in to my first half when I noticed a locomotive rotating! How strong is this I asked myself? Fortunately it was only the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress having the turntable demonstrated!

Having spotted an old favourite I decided to throw caution to the wind and enjoy a half of Sneek Lifter from Jennings. Back came memories of a holiday in the Lake District and a tour of their brewery in Cockermouth. It was strong stuff as well I remember.

Have you ever been in a pub where the sound of conversation is deafening?

Here the conversation was loud but lost in the height of the building and it was easy to share notes with my companions.

The floor was uneven with rails set into it but nobody tripped and spilt beer, or hurt themselves.

I made a mistake on my next purchase. On the bar was a bowl of chocolate flakes to be sampled. It ruined my palate for a glass of Wainwright, an otherwise delightful beer.

Lunch was taken in the cafe, a home made pasty in a room surrounded by railway memorabilia. Service was very fast!

Then I spotted a gluten free beer; Croften IPA from Kennet and Avon in Melksham. It was surprisingly tasty, not bland as I expected.

A ride on a steam train was now called for as outside was a small saddle tank separated from a diesel shunter by a couple of carriages.

A very gentle interlude with the spectacle of an engineman clambering up the side of the loco to refill it with water and with no regard to health and safety. Brave man!

It was a joy to hear a traditional jazz band, a great improvement on what passes for music nowadays. A pity I was late on finding it, but in the same marquee was a girl selling drinking horns; a souvenir to take home and bolster my Viking heritage.

A variety of food was on offer to be eaten there or taken away. All stalls were busy.

I used up the last of my tokens on a beer called "Brexit" from Brampton brewery, in Chesterfield. The Barman said it was popular. I certainly enjoyed it!

Wassail
Grim Scieran

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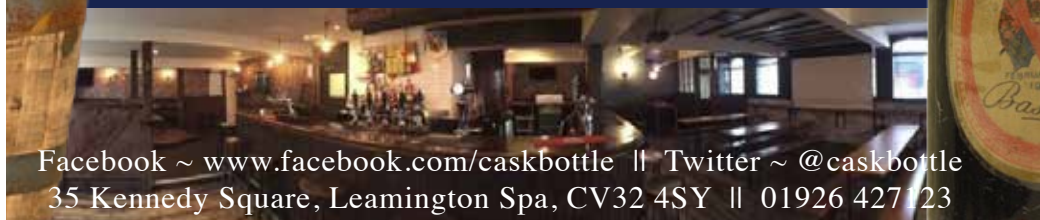
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Long Itchington Beer Festival - an insider's view

Tell people that you are having a beer festival, buy some beer and sell it. In one sentence, that's how to organize a beer festival and for the first couple of years, that's how we did Long Itchington Beer Festival.

Now like Christmas it seems to start earlier each year, with 3 distinct sections, the beer, the pub and general beer festival, each seems to take more time than the last.

Let me deal with the biggest first, general beer festival, sometime before Christmas we start work on the "Event Plan" an 80-page book that details everything that happens at beer festival most of which as a customer you will never see, the leaving on of street lights and sorting out road closures and the Safety Advisory Group (sag) this is a meeting of everybody from both district and county council to the fire service and many more in-between, this is the chance for those who have never run a beer festival to tell us what to do. As well as running a pub I am also the event coordinator, which means the buck stops with me, I am also the one who can cancel or stop the event in light of the weather or other events.

Door staff, stewards, first aid and toilets are next on the agenda, while these make you visit better and safer, they add to the cost of the beer, no admission charge was a policy we set many years ago.

By the time the final version of the event plan has been sent off, there is about 6 weeks to beer festival. At some point in this section we also deal with t shirts, advertising, social media and the guide book, the first year we printed off the sheets that day of the beer we were going to sell, we now have printed 5000 full colour books.

The Pub, is the next section, with staff, glasses and food stalls, to be sorted, closely followed by training and risk assessments.

And then the beer, I have often said if you told me Tuesday beer festival was at the weekend I could sort the beer, and in 2015 that came true.

Start with a blank sheet of paper write down the beers or brewers you want, I start with Church End who lend us the outdoor racking, and work from there, trying to get a mix of light, dark, strong and weak bitters, milds and other styles. 70 beers were sourced for this year, the first year we did 28, also for the first time this year we had a cider bar with over 35 ciders on, the challenge with beer is to get brewers to bring beer that they said would be available, and trying to remember who I spoke to in Jan about bringing beer when they turn up in April.

The beer list is not set in stone until the big poster goes up on the wall, so when you come to beer festival and see me just wandering about, remember all you have to do is tell you were having a beer festival, buy some beer and sell it!

Simon Mills
The Harvester



3 Regent Street Leamington Spa CV32 5HW
(01926) 425868

Email: woodlandtavern@aol.com

How refreshing!

A traditional pub where ordinary folk meet to drink extraordinary beer.

Josie James and her team have fought off the unnecessary desire to 'up-grade' or 'modernise' in favour of a continuing charm - if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

Thus the Woodland Tavern remains unsullied by wine bar graphics or texting bar staff and the commonplace is treated with respect: clean comfortable surroundings, courteous good humour and BLOODY GOOD BEER! Cheers

Good Beer Guide 2016

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GOOD BEER GUIDE 2016
MICROPUB

MICROPUB Association

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Warwick Court Leet - events around the town

Warwick Court Leet

Established in 1554, the 'Warwick Court Leet' acted as upholders of Law and Order in Mediaeval England until the legal system as we know it today came into force with the Magistrates Act of 1947. The legal jurisdiction of the Court was abolished in the 1970s but elected officers still preserve its ancient traditions and it is still used as an advisory body, calling attention to 'anything amiss' or for the 'betterment of the town'. They perform a civic function and raise money for local causes.

Warwick Court Leet Beer, Cider and Music

Festival took place on Friday and Saturday 15th and 16th of July at Warwick Racecourse. There were even more festival goers through the turnstiles than last year's record-breaking numbers and the atmosphere was relaxed and friendly.

There is a true Warwickshire feel about this festival, Matt Hernandez organises a packed programme of music largely selected from local acts all giving their time up for charity. You will see familiar faces serving behind the bar including the lads behind Warwick Real Beer Tours and a hard working local Brewer all freely giving their time.

Many (but by no means all) of the beers are supplied by local breweries and this year there were 50 different beers and 40 hugely varied ciders and despite emergency contingencies being deployed these were all consumed by early evening on the Saturday (all in all 61 casks of beer and 64 boxes of cider were enthusiastically consumed). The music carried on regardless and many remained to enjoy it along with the sun and the atmosphere.

Last year the Festival raised £12,000 for local charities and it is hoped that a similar amount will be achieved this year although there have been some pressures from increased overheads. The fastest selling beer was the 6.5% Church Farm Black IPA which sold out on the Friday night, drinkers returning on the Saturday were delighted to see it replaced. Ann had obviously put a great deal of effort into selecting the ciders with a lot of sessionable strengths being represented.

Yet again an enormous success and a credit to Alan, the organisers and everyone involved with it, not least the thirsty and happy drinkers!

Over 450 years of Ale Tasting Tradition!

The 'Court Leet of the Worshipful Town Mayor & Chief Burgesses of Warwick' recently hosted Ale Tasting in Warwick at The Cape of Good Hope, Wild Boar, Punch Bowl and the Warwick Conservative Club. Up to three ales in each establishment were available for tasting.

Members from three Courts Leet of Warwick, Alcester and Bromsgrove, colourfully and grandly dressed in ceremonial garb accompanied the Ale Tasters on this visit, led by The Bailiff and accompanied by the Town Crier.

The origin and role of the Ale Taster

Appointed annually by the Court, Ale Tasters ensure 'the ale in each establishment be declared fit for the townspeople to consume'. Legend has it that the Ale Taster, wearing leather breeches, tested the ale by pouring some on a wooden bench and then sitting in it. Apparently, if their breeches stuck to the bench the ale had too much sugar and was thus impure!

Today they test the ale for temperature, head, nose, clarity and taste.... more civilised than sitting in a puddle of it!

If the ale is accepted as being 'good and wholesome', the landlord/lady is awarded a certificate and given a sprig of evergreen to display over their portal. This custom originates from before the advent of inn signs and showed prospective drinkers where to go for liquid refreshment.

The role of the Ale Taster is also to check true measures are used. Of course, standard measures for ale (as well as wine, corn etc.) were recorded in the Magna Carta of 1215 to curb Landlords and merchants from 'short-changing' their customers. Interestingly the original mediaeval standard measure of ale, the 'London Quarter', was in fact equivalent to two pints! (i.e. a quarter of a gallon).

13 August 2016 sees the Warwick Court Leet Assizes Day in Market Square, Warwick with other traditional ceremonies such as meat and fish tasting, bread weighing, cheese tasting and of course Ale tasting!

Liz, Darren, and SJ Downes

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Warwick Folk Festival and CAMRA

This year the weather was favourable for the Warwick Folk Festival and the sun shone on us for the majority of the event. The atmosphere was relaxed and we had plenty of time to sit and chat to the potential CAMRA members, 54 of whom did sign up to take advantage of the extra bonus discounts offered by the festival bar.

The membership stand was staffed with volunteers from the Coventry & North Warwickshire and Heart of Warwickshire branches of the West Midlands region organised by Jim Witt, Area Organiser, and Steve Bolton, HoW, with the support of Garry Timmins, Regional Director of CAMRA.

We were positioned conveniently near the main bar at Warwick School, catching the eye of those interested in a nice pint or two. The bar was run by "Moongazing Hare Bars" which is based at the Fleece Inn at Bretchford, a traditional pub owned by the National Trust. There was also a chance for visitors to the Fringe Festival to join us in the Market Square.

The festival gave ample opportunity to chat with members from other branches of CAMRA too. It was great to meet up with like-minded people to enjoy the great beer, facilities, food and folk music. The smell of fish and chips, bacon, curry and many other tasty treats kept wafting past on the breeze tempting everyone to go try something from the plentiful selection on offer.

Real ale and folk music are such comfortable bedfellows, I do not think there will be too much trouble getting volunteers to man the CAMRA stand for future events.

Steve Bolton commented, "I personally would like to thank John Plumb (Chairman of Warwick Folk Festival), Garry Timmins, Jim Witt and especially the helpers for all their hard work that made this such a great success".

Paul



UK Brewers Need To Change How They Hop!!

A hop shortage could be good news for British craft brewers. There have been warnings that drinkers may have to pay more for their pints due to a poor European hop harvest and increased demand for craft beers. This situation could force brewers to be more innovative in a market currently dominated by hoppy beers. Currently everyone is chasing heavily aromatic hops so beer is becoming one dimensional in flavour. There are many other ways of getting flavour in beer even by going back to herbs and spices. Hops are available but not the ones that everyone wants. If brewers become less heavy handed with hops it could be an exciting time to pull away from the mainstream trend. Time to reinvent styles and be economical with their hops. With hops possibly rising to £40-50 a kilo it could be the tipping point for some small brewers if they don't adapt and change.

Heart of Warwickshire



CAMRA LocAle - promoting pubs that sell locally-brewed real ale, reducing the number of 'beer miles', and supporting local breweries.

What is CAMRA LocAle?

CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale. The scheme builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues.

The CAMRA LocAle scheme was created in 2007 by CAMRA's Nottingham branch which wanted to help support the tradition of brewing within Nottinghamshire, following the demise of local brewer Hardys and Hansons. There are currently 125 CAMRA branches participating in the LocAle scheme which have accredited hundreds of pubs as LocAle pubs which regularly sell at least one locally-brewed real ale.

Everyone benefits from local pubs stocking locally-brewed real ale...

- Public houses as stocking local real ales can increase pub visits
- Consumers who enjoy greater beer choice and diversity
- Local brewers who gain from increased sales
- The local economy because more money is spent and retained locally
- The environment due to fewer 'beer miles' resulting in less road congestion and pollution
- Tourism due to an increased sense of local identity and pride - let's celebrate what makes our locality different

We are currently reviewing the pubs listed under the LocAle scheme within the branch area. If you run a pub currently listed in the scheme or would like to join, please contact us - pubnews@camrahow.org.uk - providing details of the beers that you regularly stock that qualify under the scheme.

The Heart of Warwickshire scheme recognises pubs which regularly stock at least one real ale which is brewed by a local brewery, one that is within 25 miles' driving distance.

CAMRA will provide the following benefits:

- Free LocAle listing in the Beer & Ragged Staff, our free newsletter distributed quarterly widely around and adjacent to our area
- LocAle information added to each pub, where appropriate, on our Branch website and What Pub
- Free publicity material to be displayed in the pub, including pump clip crowners, window stickers, posters and LocAle beer mats

Conditions

To gain accreditation into the scheme, a pub needs to:

- Have at least one "local" real ale regularly on sale, i.e. less than 25 miles from the brewery (this can be different beers)
- Maintain the beer at a good standard
- Display the LocAle publicity material as appropriate

For more details visit: <http://www.camra.org.uk/locale>
For more information on the pubs listed, check out What Pub <http://whatpub.com/>



Pubs and Clubs	Local Beer
Antelope, Warwick	Slaughterhouse
Cape of Good Hope, Warwick	Church End, Hook Norton, Old Pie Factory, Church Farm
Fox & Hen, Bascote Heath	Hook Norton
Harvester, Long Itchington	Hook Norton
Market Tavern, Southam	Warwickshire
Red Lion, Northend	Purity
The Anchor, Leek Wootton	Purity, Slaughterhouse, Church End
The Antelope Inn, Lighthorne	Warwickshire, Wood Farm
The Case is Altered, Five Ways	Old Pie Factory, Slaughterhouse, Churchend,
Weatheroak, Warwickshire	Slaughterhouse
The Cricketers, Leamington Spa	Slaughterhouse
The New Inn, Leamington	Church Farm
The Oak, Warwick	Hook Norton
The Old New Inn, Harbury	Purity, Slaughterhouse
The Rose and Crown, Warwick	Purity
The Wharf, Fenny Compton	Hook Norton
Village Club, Harbury	Hook Norton
White Hart, Ufton	Slaughterhouse, Purity
Wild Boar, Warwick	Slaughterhouse, Weatheroak, Tunnel
Woodland Tavern, Leamington Spa	Slaughterhouse

Customers Are Interested In Beer Provenance

A recent survey by SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers Association) has found that drinkers are increasingly discerning in their tastes and preferences. Over half of the licensees surveyed believe that their customers are very interested in local or regionally brewed beer and this is resulting in 7 out of 10 of them planning to stock more independent brewers during the next two years. They believe it helps their pub stand out from the crowd. 93% think that beer range is a big influence on the identity of their pub. A third of those surveyed said that local beers brewed within 50 miles of their pub made up 50% of their beer sales.

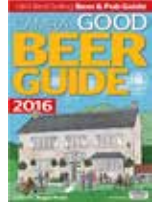
Customers are drinking more traditional, craft and local beers and a broader mix of styles. Encouraging customers are greatly influenced by a good range of guest beers. Knowledgeable bar staff was also rated as important by the licensees. Try before you buy was rated as the top method for encouraging customers to try a new beer.

Despite this 25% of consumers felt the inconsistency of the availability of their preferred beer was a deterrent which suggest there is still a marketing initiative required to be developed in outlets and by brewers to encourage drinkers to be more adventurous with their beer choices.

Good Beer Guide 2016

CAMRA's Good Beer Guide is fully revised and updated each year and features pubs across the United Kingdom that serve the best real ale. Now in its 43rd edition, this pub guide is completely independent with listings based entirely on nomination and evaluation by CAMRA members. This means you can be sure that every one of the 4,500 pubs deserves their place, plus they all come recommended by people who know a thing or two about good beer. The Good Beer Guide Mobile is also available on all Apple iDevices and Android™ Devices as well as POI File for TomTom, Garmin and Navman updated with the latest listings from the Good Beer Guide 2016.

RRP £15.99, from the CAMRA shop £10.00



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In Good Beer Guide to 2015

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Burton upon Trent - a micropub crawl

Have you been in the wonderful Old Post Office in West Street, Warwick? Or maybe the Stratford Alehouse in Greenhill Street, Stratford? Or the Lord Hop in Queen's Road, Nuneaton?

These are all micropubs, a relatively new and happily increasing phenomenon that all share a love of cask ale. More often than not they occupy premises that used to be something else, like newsagents, hairdressers, retail outlets. I long for the day when a micropub, or pub, or maybe even an off licence takes over a premises that was formerly a co-op or a Sainsbury's Express.....

You can (and should) find out for yourselves what a micropub is like by visiting the Warwickshire examples above but you can also take a trip to the Brewing capital of Britain, Burton upon Trent, where you can do a micropub crawl.

The Borough Arms was Burton's first micropub, opening in early 2014, in Borough Road near the Railway Station. Formerly a Greek Restaurant it is a little larger than most micropubs and is certainly the biggest in Burton. Pub and brewing pictures describing Burton's past line the walls on the way to the end bar where cask ales are served mainly by hand pump, although you might find an occasional one on gravity.



Liz and Darren

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