

# Going for a Burton

Winter 2025

Burton and South Derbyshire CAMRA Magazine

Pub Opening

**Neil Morrissey brings the Brickies back to life.**

Read the feature on page 18



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# Editors Ramblings

Welcome to the Winter edition of Going for a Burton

## Wet January

This is not the weather forecast, it's the antonym of dry January.

Christmas and New Year will soon be over, so let's get down to some serious drinking and save a few pubs. There may have been a few hangovers, but this would be a sign of a good holiday period. It could be a huge mistake to go dry and have a miserable January. When you are miserable it's more likely you'll have time off work, so wet January would actually help to keep the country running. These dry January people just don't realise the harm they are doing to our economy. The government realises this, and Keir Starmer has actually proposed to relax licensing hours but that will have to be done in conjunction with a reduction in the price of beer to make it more popular.

Stranger things have happened, I have seen two prints, Beer Street and Gin Lane in London, from



Theo Hollier, Editor

paintings by William Hogarth, an English artist. These paintings from 1751 were produced to support the Gin Act and show the population how bad it was in contrast how good it was drinking beer. This is just another example of the benefits of drinking beer. I'm sure gin and any other alcoholic drinks are fine within moderation but the sight of those in the painting would put me off for life!

For those who remember, in the previous edition (Autumn 2025) I promised not to be my usual prophet of doom self in the next edition (this one, winter). So, this is as good as it gets, we can drink in January, be happy and improve the economy and most of all know how good it is drinking beer and socialising in a pub!!



# Arctic Ale in the Polar Night



Take a bottle of beer on holiday and capture the moment. Easy, right?

Well, not when the bottle in question is 150 years old, covered in dust, and carrying the ghost of a failed polar expedition.

This isn't just any bottle. It is Allsopp's Arctic Ale, brewed in 1874 for Sir George Nares' 1875 ill-fated attempt to reach the North Pole via Smith Sound on Greenland's west coast. The men never made it, much like the bottle as this particular survivor surfaced in 2013, empty, forgotten in the cellar of Allsopp's New Brewery in Burton.

The plan: take it north of the Arctic Circle and capture a suitably dramatic photograph; snow, cold, and if luck permits, the Northern Lights. The owner, Gary, had only one request: "I want it back with the dust intact." Spoiler alert: he'll be disappointed.

I've coined a new phrase for the occasion: you can't take a 150-year-old bottle into Arctic Norway without disturbing the dust. Admittedly less catchy than the omelette one.

We arrive in Tromsø in late December 2024. Snow is falling, wind is howling, and the temperature hovers around eight below. Tromsø, the so-called "Arctic Capital," sits like a jewel in the dark, polar night.

The idea is to ride the Fjellheisen cable car up to Storsteinen, a mountain ledge 421 metres above sea level, to capture a panorama of Tromsø glittering below. But the weather has other ideas. The cable car closes, too windy. Hiking through snowdrifts just isn't an option.

The next day we try again. Ninety minutes in the queue, snow piling on our coats, and just as we reach the door, closed! The winds are back. So we try for shots at the mountain's base: the bottle perched in untouched Nordic snow, Tromsø lights flickering behind. Atmospheric, yes, but not quite the grand vision.

**Continues on next page...**



# A Brief History of Burton



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Souvenir Guidebook

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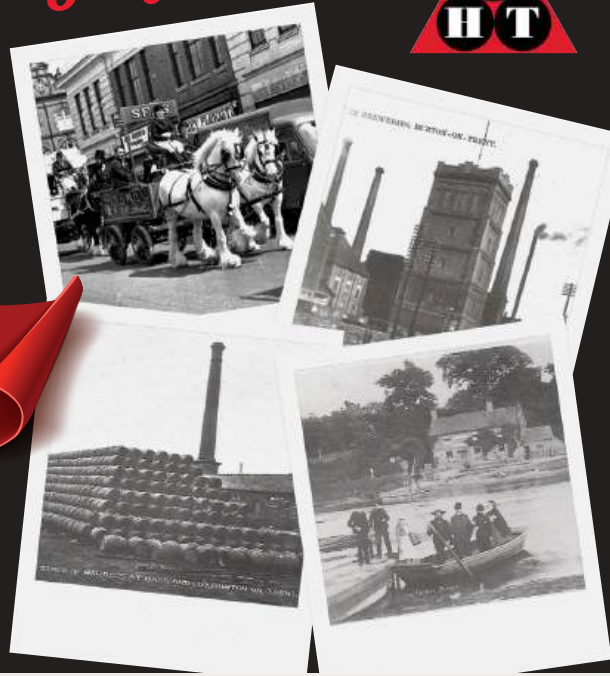
Dec 28<sup>th</sup> 2025, Jan 17<sup>th</sup> 2026

Feb 7<sup>th</sup> 2026 & Mar 14<sup>th</sup> 2026

Tickets available via the website:

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The bottle now travels by sea, wrapped in bubble-wrapped like Fabergé Egg on MS Polarlys, part of the Hurtigruten fleet. We are ferried north through icy fjords. After a hearty dinner of Finnbiff stew (I have two portions because I can), we head outside as the ship docks at Skjervøy, a settlement clinging to bare rock, its name literally meaning “rocky island.” Docking is swift and precise: rope thrown, caught, secured, bays opened, passengers out, bays shut, rope cast off and dragged through the Kvænanen fjord. Fifteen minutes flat. Military in its efficiency.

The Northern Lights are a no-show, hidden behind stubborn cloud. I give up and retire to the cabin in search of sleep which proves as elusive as the lights. Our cabin sits above the engine, which roars into life at every port, shaking the walls until dawn. The Arctic doesn't let travellers rest easily.



By late morning we reach Honningsvåg, latitude 70°58'43" N just shy of Nordkapp, Europe's northern tip. With only 2,600 residents, it still qualifies as a “city” in Norway. It huddles against a mountain, defended from avalanches by snow fences. The sun hasn't risen here since late November and won't return for weeks. The long Polar Night absolute.



Yet the city glows. Fishing boats fill the harbour, lights shimmer across snowdrifts, and the air feels both remote and alive. Here the bottle finally finds its moment. Netty, the photographer, lies flat in the snow while Holly assists, and the camera captures it: Allsopp's Arctic Ale, dust and all, against the endless Arctic dark.

The 1875 expedition may have reached 83°20'26" N, but this is where the bottle's journey ends. For a moment, it feels right to bury it here in the frozen ground, a symbolic homecoming. But the snow is two feet deep, the earth solid, and, minor detail, I don't have a shovel. Besides, Gary would probably kill me.

And so, the dust-covered relic returns with us, a little more travelled, a little less dusty, and with a story far richer than the one it carried in the brewery cellar.

*Ian Webster*



# Promote your business or event in the next issue of Going for a Burton



Our Branch magazine, Going for a Burton is free. Those of us who write articles for inclusion are doing it for free and those of us who distribute the magazine to pubs and clubs are doing it for free. We drive our cars to almost the borders of Rugeley in the west, almost to Sudbury in the north, to Breedon-on-the-Hill in the east and almost to Clifton Campville in the south. Why? Because we believe in the real ale cause - promoting pubs, breweries and local businesses - and enjoy doing it.

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Advertising revenue covers the cost of design and printing the magazine. We help local businesses to increase awareness of their services across our distribution area and reach more potential customers. If you would like to promote your business or event in Going for a Burton, we would be pleased to hear from you. See details on page 31.

We appreciate the support of all of our sponsors and hope that our readers will do the same by visiting them.

# Stapenhill Pubs and Clubs Tour



Swiggy the Swan – arriving by bus using the Diamond 21, 21E evenings, 2 & 22 alight at Main Street, at the centre of our village, by the Chinese. Following the bus as it departs, 50 yards on your left you will find the **Stapenhill Institute**, you may need to press the bell to enter. Here you will find an excellent pint of Bass and up to 3 varying guest ales. The institute has P2 in the cellar from last Christmas, which will be served during the coming festive season. As far as I'm aware it will be the only one to have a firkin of P2 at Christmas. There is snooker, cards, darts, dominoes and a beer garden. You might also get to watch a game of Bowls at the adjacent Stapenhill Bowls club (no bar). As we move into Autumn opening times please check with Whatpub for up to date information (that applies to all). On leaving the 'stute' turn left and across the road you will find the **New Inn** a Marston's house serving Pedigree and the occasional guest from the Carlsberg/Marston's stable. Pool, darts and card games here, plus a TV in both of the bars. There is

an outdoor beer garden to the rear of the pub and an under cover area adjacent to the pub with a large TV, mainly for sport but anything else interesting.

Our next public house is a 15 minute walk to the **Grove Inn**. Go straight up the hill on Holly Street with the pizza place on your right. At the top of the hill turn left to the junction with Woods Lane, passing the Co-op on your right. At the end of the road you come to the Grove Inn, also a Marston's house with Pedigree and two or three rotating guests from the Marston's range. The Grove has now been allowed a beer free of tie so potentially a nice surprise awaits? There's lots of outdoor seating to make the best of the Autumn months. Pool, darts, cards, occasional quiz nights and entertainment in the lounge.

On leaving the Grove, return back, up Woods Lane to Spring Terrace Road junction, go down between the Post Office and Barbershop, keep bearing



THE GROVE



THE ELMS



STAPENHILL INSTITUTE



THE NEW INN



# SHOULDER of MUTTON

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left until you arrive on Stapenhill Road, bear right and 100 yards on your right is the **Elms**. The new tenants, Craig and Loz have settled in from their move from the Dog in Lichfield Street. The decision, for family reasons was their two young children. Coming from the town centre to a leafy suburb overlooking the River Trent is a good move, it has been a seamless transition. The pub is still just as popular and the range of beers has been slightly changed, by keeping the old favourites, like Bass and enlarging the range. These guys know what they are doing and have fitted in well.

Leaving the Elms go right down to the Trent Bridge, which will bring you back into town or perhaps a walk back through the parks area using the ferry bridge (applies both ways). Hopefully some of the other pubs and clubs in Stapenhill will join this group to increase their footfall and remain profitable in these tough times.



*Les Stretton, Chairman*

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# The Old Brewery Quarter



Burton upon Trent has reached a defining point in its regeneration with East Staffordshire Borough Council granting planning approval for the projects that will form The Old Brewery Quarter, a name that celebrates the town's world-famous brewing heritage and its enterprising future.

Cllr Louise Walker, Cabinet Member for Regeneration: "The Old Brewery Quarter is an important moment for Burton upon Trent. This project combines our heritage, culture and commercial growth to create a town centre that residents and visitors can enjoy. It sets a new standard for regeneration in the town and reflects the ambition and vision of our community."

Dr Harry White, Chairman of the National Brewery Heritage Trust: "The Trust has been working closely with East Staffordshire Borough Council on this flagship project, so we are very pleased that planning permission has now been granted. This is a major step forward in an exciting project that will showcase the town's brewing and pub heritage and is a key foundation in preserving it for future generations. Burton upon Trent has long been regarded as the capital of Britain's beer industry and we commend the Council for their commitment to regenerating this important part of the town. We are delighted that the development is to be named the Old Brewery Quarter, a term which sums up the rich past of a town still at the forefront of a great British industry."

National hospitality group Loungers Ltd, whose brands include Lounge, Cosy Club and Brightside, will be the Quarter's first operator, opening a Lounge café-bar in the historic Bass House. The venue will serve Burton-brewed ales and form part of a new Brewing Heritage and Social History Experience, featuring interactive exhibits, a working pilot brewery and the National Brewery Heritage Archive.



Other highlights include the restoration of Town House, the transformation of The Water Tower into a landmark attraction with rooftop views, and the creation of a new Events Square linking the town centre to the Washlands. The Washlands Visitor Centre, developed with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, will feature educational spaces, riverside terrace and the Burton Lounge which will serve ales brewed in Burton including presumably those produced in the pilot brewery.

Adela Appleby of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust said: "We look forward to welcoming people from near and far to enjoy Burton's heritage and nature."

Meanwhile, Carling House, the former Molson Coors HQ, is set to become a modern branded hotel, subject to market engagement.

Groundworks for The Old Brewery Quarter are expected to begin in early 2026, marking the next phase of Burton's regeneration following the successful Washlands Enhancement Project.

*Ian Webster*



# THE RED LION



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# Burton Albion have scored!



After all these years, Burton Albion now sells real ale! During the summer close season, an area called the Fan Zone was built and with a hand pull, we now have Bass. There is still a bit more work to do on the Fan Zone but who cares, the Bass is already there!

The fan zone has now been given an official name, **The Barrel Yard**.

A few fans have said they will stick with the pub where they have always had a pre match pint. I too have had this dilemma as I have always had a pint in the Bridge before the match. However, the problem was easily solved. We now have a pint in the Bridge, and then on to the Pirelli Stadium for a Bass.

This is what I would call a win – win situation. It may just be a coincidence, but the Bass and the current run of good form have coincided? Up the Brewers!

*Theo Hollier, Editor*



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# Last orders at The Coopers Tavern

During her 42 years in the licensed trade, including eight at The Coopers Tavern, Mandy Addis has called last orders more times than she could ever count. But on this final Saturday as Landlady, she's doing it differently; quietly, with purpose, and in her own inimitable style.

"It's time," she says simply, her voice carrying the calm certainty of someone who knows exactly when to bow out. This decision hasn't come easily, but it has been a long time coming.

The past few years have brought their fair share of challenges, both behind the bar and beyond it. While Mandy is private about the specifics, one thing is crystal clear: time with her family now outweighs the long hours and relentless pace of life at The Coopers.

"I haven't cried yet," she grins, raising an eyebrow. "Get a few vodkas in me later, though, and that might change."

Although the pub doesn't open until midday, Mandy and her partner Mark have been at it since ten. Mark is in the cellar, pulling beers through and making sure everything's perfect. The bar serves the full Joules range, a handful of guest ales, and of course, their legendary best-seller: Bass.

"Flat Bass" is served from a stillage behind the bar and is a local icon. Despite being listed as a guest beer by the brewery, it's been a permanent fixture at The Coopers for as long as anyone can remember. It's the only pub in town where you can get it served this way, and people come from far and wide just to get a taste. Bass isn't just a drink here, it's part of the place's very soul.

While Mark manages the beer, Mandy's busy prepping cobs, putting in orders, and taking care of payroll. The place is immaculate,



already swept and cleaned after closing last night. Running a pub is a hard gig.

Just before opening, Mandy's ritual begins: a touch of makeup, her "warpaint," and she's ready to face the day.

Upbeat and full of laughs, Mandy's outwardly as cheerful as ever; you'd never guess the emotions swirling underneath. I make a mental note: never play poker with her.

"People don't come in here to hear about my problems," she says, waving off a regular with a smile. "They come to forget theirs. My job's to make them feel welcome."

The pub is her stage, I suggest.

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“Exactly. If you can’t do this with a smile, you’re in the wrong job.”

“The Gods,” the unique raised seating area next to the bar, and perched high up sit regulars Jason and Cathy and their cheeky French bulldog, Bentley. The two awkward steps have caught more than a few unsuspecting punters off guard after a pint or two. A card and a bouquet of flowers rest on the upturned barrel that serves as their table, the first of many from well-wishers throughout the day. Half a dozen former staff members will stop by to say their goodbyes and there’s been a lot of messages on Facebook. Mandy’s a local legend in her own right.

Today also marks her final football crowd. Burton Albion welcoming Luton Town, and groups of away fans are making a weekend of it. One supporter buys Mandy a drink, half a Green Monkey, her go-to. She doesn’t drink ale, but she knows it better than many that do. Later, he returns with his mates, all amazed at how cheap it is. One even wonders if he’s been undercharged: “Only £12.50? Did you take for the pork pie too?” Welcome to Burton, my friend.

Regulars Keith and Suzanne drop in, they live a few miles away in Barton but make the trek to Burton to drink at The Coopers.

“I’d never been in a pub on my own before,” Suzanne tells me. “But when Keith had heart surgery, he wanted a pint. I was told I could bring one in, so I came here. Mandy looked after me, didn’t even charge me. I’ve been a regular ever since.”

“It’s the little things,” Mandy agrees, a faraway look in her eyes. “It’s about knowing your customers. He’s a big fan of Slumbering Monk,” she adds, referring to popular copper-brown ale from Joules.

The Coopers Tavern is a legendary spot in Burton. If anyone asks for a recommendation in town and only has time for one pint, I always send them here. Recently featured in The Telegraph as a must-visit in Burton, a couple here from Uttoxeter who read this and made the trip today, and it won’t be their last.

Whilst doing a sweep for dirty glasses, someone asks if I’m the new landlord. I laugh and shake my head. Truth be told, I couldn’t do it, the long hours, the never-ending smiling, the patience required, it’s just not for me.

I watch Mandy handle an inappropriate comment from a customer with grace. He asks for a photo

of her pouring his Bass, then follows it up with a crude remark. “That’s rude!” she says, her tone firm but unfazed. I step back just in case he ends up wearing the pint. But it’s done. No fuss. No drama. As always, Mandy handles it professionally, like Bass off a duck’s back.

The usual Saturday afternoon lull doesn’t arrive. The rain outside brings in more punters. I slip into the alley beside the pub to listen to the gentle drizzle on the plastic roof while eavesdropping on the smokers’ random conversations. The pork pies sell out. Someone spills a drink in the meeting room. Business as usual? Not quite as tonight, there’s a party for Mandy’s leaving.

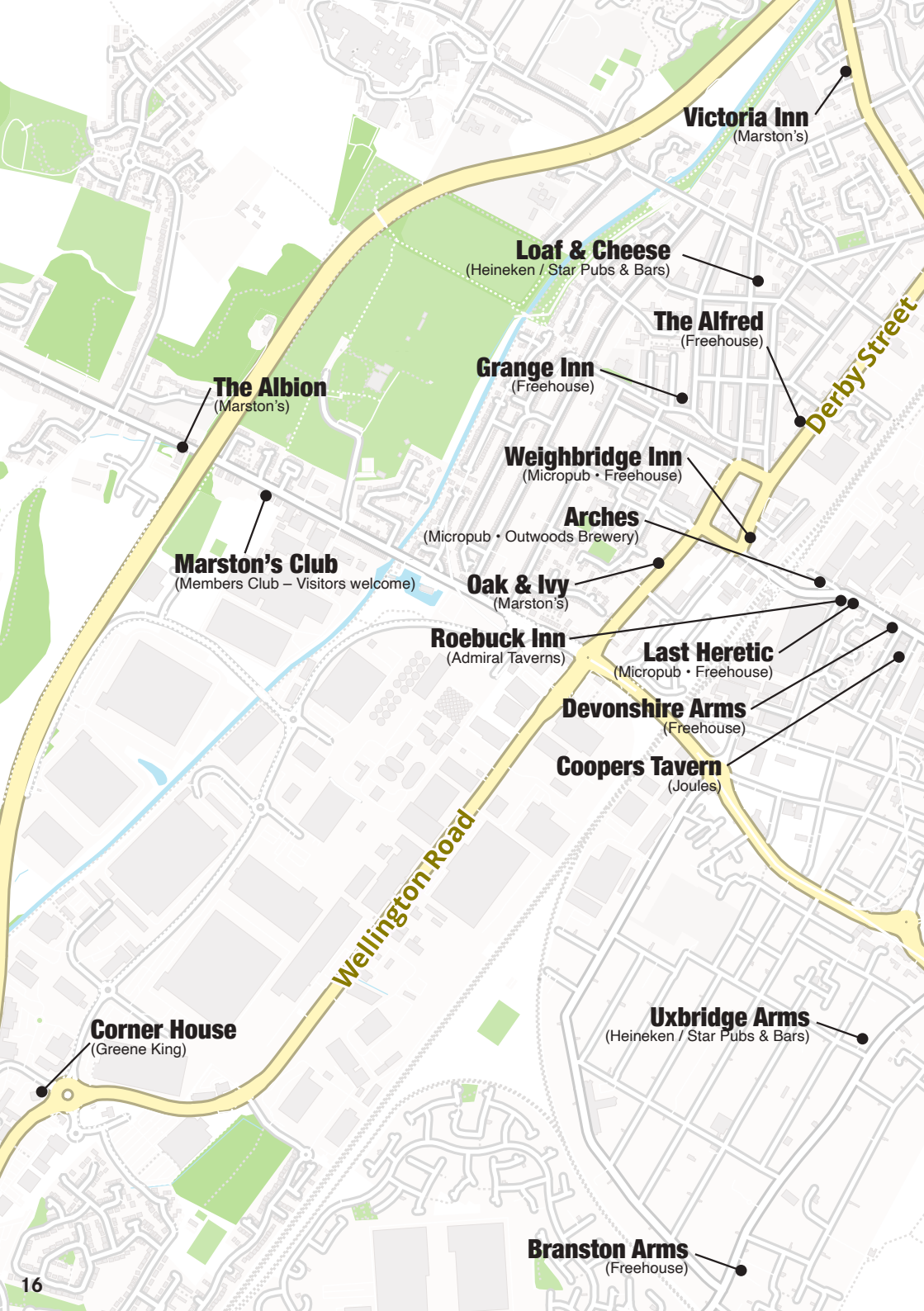


To celebrate there’s a band on. The Hat Tricks squeeze into a corner and belt out classic rock ‘n’ roll tunes. Mandy’s family has gathered and her long-time friend Tania is here, her daughter Honor is serving tonight alongside Ken and Karl. It’s a night for celebration, but the undercurrent of sadness is palpable. Mandy’s leaving, but no one will forget her.

Later, Mandy and Mark finally sit down to eat in the flat upstairs. They’ve ordered a takeaway curry from Apne next door. “I’ll miss this,” she says, referring not to her chicken tikka masala but her life downstairs. “I love meeting people. It’s a great craic. Without sounding big-headed, I was born to do this. It’s not a career, it’s a calling. I was never going to get rich here.”

You could argue that Mandy has been richer than most could ever dream. She’s respected, loved, and will be forever remembered by a community she helped shape long after she calls time on her last day.

*Ian Webster*



**Victoria Inn**  
(Marston's)

**Loaf & Cheese**  
(Heineken / Star Pubs & Bars)

**The Alfred**  
(Freehouse)

**Grange Inn**  
(Freehouse)

**The Albion**  
(Marston's)

**Weighbridge Inn**  
(Micropub • Freehouse)

**Arches**  
(Micropub • Outwoods Brewery)

**Marston's Club**  
(Members Club – Visitors welcome)

**Oak & Ivy**  
(Marston's)

**Roebuck Inn**  
(Admiral Taverns)

**Last Heretic**  
(Micropub • Freehouse)

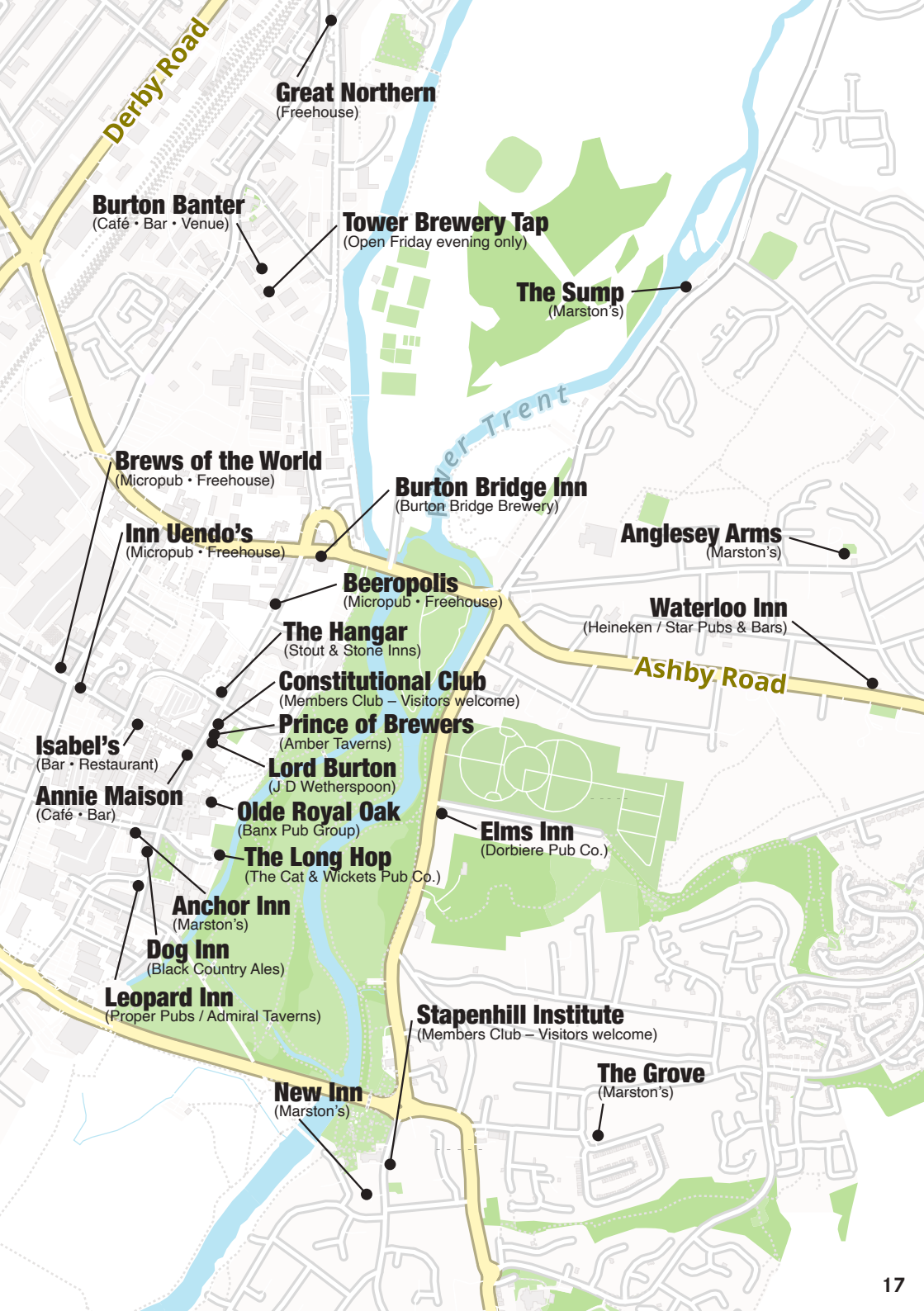
**Devonshire Arms**  
(Freehouse)

**Coopers Tavern**  
(Joules)

**Corner House**  
(Greene King)

**Uxbridge Arms**  
(Heineken / Star Pubs & Bars)

**Branston Arms**  
(Freehouse)



**Great Northern**  
(Freehouse)

**Burton Banter**  
(Café • Bar • Venue)

**Tower Brewery Tap**  
(Open Friday evening only)

**The Sump**  
(Marston's)

**Brews of the World**  
(Micropub • Freehouse)

**Burton Bridge Inn**  
(Burton Bridge Brewery)

**Anglesey Arms**  
(Marston's)

**Inn Uendo's**  
(Micropub • Freehouse)

**Beeropolis**  
(Micropub • Freehouse)

**Waterloo Inn**  
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**The Hangar**  
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**Constitutional Club**  
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**Ashby Road**

**Isabel's**  
(Bar • Restaurant)

**Prince of Brewers**  
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**Lord Burton**  
(J D Wetherspoon)

**Annie Maison**  
(Café • Bar)

**Olde Royal Oak**  
(Banx Pub Group)

**Elms Inn**  
(Dorbiere Pub Co.)

**The Long Hop**  
(The Cat & Wickets Pub Co.)

**Anchor Inn**  
(Marston's)

**Dog Inn**  
(Black Country Ales)

**Leopard Inn**  
(Proper Pubs / Admiral Taverns)

**Stapenhill Institute**  
(Members Club – Visitors welcome)

**The Grove**  
(Marston's)

**New Inn**  
(Marston's)

# Pints, Personality and Priscilla: Neil Morrissey brings the Brickies back to life



“Hi, I’m Neil, pleased to meet you,” says the only man in **The Brickmakers Arms** who doesn’t really need to introduce himself. Neil Morrissey flashes a grin and offers a solid handshake before we find a quiet corner for a chat over a pint of his own beer, Morrissey Blonde or Palace Ale, as it’s known when served at his beloved Selhurst Park.

“We’ve got the Morrissey Blonde on,” he says, raising his half-finished pint, “and we’ll always have at least two Burton Bridge beers. Today it’s Damson Stout and Stairway to Heaven. I’ve never tried the Stout, but I’m told it’s a big seller. I’ll have had pints of both before the night’s out.”

It’s clear from the way he talks and sups that this is a man who genuinely loves beer and pubs. This isn’t his first foray into the trade either. There was the Old Bramshall Inn at Uttoxeter, which sadly closed after COVID and the Plume of Feathers in Barlaston, near Stoke. But this time feels different.

Along with his business partner Richard Slingsby, Neil bought the Brickmakers Arms from Burton Bridge Brewery back in the spring. Now, after

months of refurbishment, the pub has been polished, painted and given a fresh lease of life just in time for its official reopening.

“Yes, we bought it lock, stock, and barrel,” Neil says. “It’s our first free house and I’m really enjoying that freedom. We can keep serving Burton Bridge beers, but now I can put my own beer on too. It’s brilliant.”

When he talks about brewing, his eyes light up: “A master brewer once told me ‘Think of your favourite ale and try to make that, if you get close, you’ve got a good one.’ I used to love it when Timmy Taylor was a proper brew, and then I discovered Thornbridge ales, Jaipur and Kipling are two of my favourites. I’d take the train from London to Sheffield just to drink in their platform pub and never leave the station! A return ticket was about eight quid, I’d spend the day there, then head back home slightly worse for wear. Morrissey Blonde came out of that: an everyman’s beer.”

There’s plenty new to see at the Brickies, not least in the car park out back, where former Plume of Feathers chef Bruce Mackie has set up shop in what Neil calls “a caravan that’s not a caravan.”

“He’s calling it Priscilla, Queen of the Car Park,” laughs Neil. “It’s brilliant, people can order from the van, grab a buzzer, have a pint while they wait, and then go and collect their food when it’s ready. It’s something the pub’s never had before, a proper food offering.”



So why the Brickmakers? Turns out Neil and Richard were already regulars.

“We used to come and drink here after a busy day,” Neil recalls. “We’d get a driver because we knew we were going to sink a few Burton Bridge ales before heading home. When it came on the market, we thought, we can’t let it go. It’s gorgeous, a proper old pub with a modern touch now. Freshly painted, new carpets, proper blackboards, nice colour scheme, it’s still got that old soul, but it’s brighter, fresher.”

Richard joins us, clearly proud of what they’ve achieved: “We did the deal over a pint, Morrissey Blonde, naturally. Every inch of the place has been painted, recarpeted, or refurbished. Bruce and his team have done an amazing job. You come in on a Friday or Saturday evening and it’s packed, full of people, full of life. It’s a proper drinker’s pub again, now with food to match.”

On cue a tray of scotch eggs and snacks appear. Neil moves around the room, pint in hand, introducing himself to locals. Laughter echoing across the polished wood and fresh carpets. It’s hard not to smile. The Brickmakers Arms is buzzing and with Neil Morrissey it’s safe to say this is one pub with real character.

*Ian Webster*

# BRICKMAKERS ARMS

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## NEWTON SOLNEY

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This April, my partner, my daughter and I began a new chapter at The Brickmakers Arms, now part of the Neil Morrissey Pub Company. With the help of our wonderful manager Steph and our dedicated team, we’re committed to running a warm, welcoming pub with community at its heart.

Real ale is our passion. We have five hand pulls, always pouring Morrissey Blonde, Bass, and three rotating guest ales – including one from Burton Bridge to honour our history. We also serve Carling, Hofmeister Helles, Sharp’s Cold River Cider, still ciders, Guinness, and a growing range of premium spirits, plus a Gin of the Week and cocktails created by our mixologist daughter.

From our on-site Main Street Kitchen, we offer Fish & Chip Fridays, Sunday Yorkshire Roast Wraps, and a weekly themed Midweek Munch every Wednesday. We also host regular live music and events, including our Christmas Market on 30th November.

We’ve loved our first six months and are grateful for the amazing support from the community. We can’t wait for what comes next.  
– Cheers, Bruce

### Opening Times:

Tue–Thu: 4pm–10pm | Fri: 4pm–12am  
Sat: 12pm–12am | Sun: 12pm–9pm | Mon: Closed

📍 Main St, Newton Solney, Burton, DE15 0SJ

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# A short history of the pub known locally as “Bessie Bull’s” in Burton upon Trent

The official name was the Mount Pleasant Inn, situated at a junction of the Trent & Mersey Canal (or rather where the wharf and canal met) in the Shobnall area of Burton upon Trent. It was essentially a canal-side pub that could only be reached via the canal/wharf area. The last landlord was Thomas Bull, and the pub nickname “Bessie Bull” was the name of the last landlord’s grandmother.

According to local history, the licence of the pub had been held by the Bull family for 102 years by the time it closed. Beer was delivered straight from the nearby brewery (probably the nearby Marston’s Brewery) and drawn from barrels in the cellar; there was no bar counter or pumps in the usual sense, just jugs drawn from the wood. The setting on the canal wharf made the cellar naturally cool and ideal for storage of ales.

It’s thought that the pub may date back to before the canal was built and that one of the older names for it was The Gateway to Sinai, referencing nearby Sinai Park which is linked to the former monastery of Burton Abbey. It served the Shobnall canal wharf and railway spur from Bond End wharf. The wharf was a busy junction of canal and rail connections.

The pub closed on 28 January 1961 and it was demolished in 1962. On the site there now stands a bungalow probably a family residence. During its construction the original tiled cellar of the pub was exposed.

The story of “Bessie Bull’s” is unusual: a pub without road frontage, intimately tied to canal/ railway transport and brewery logistics. It represents a very local flavour of Burton’s brewing & transport heritage: Burton being a major brewing centre, with this pub being right in the heart of the canal/ wharf system.

This is just a small snippet of the vast brewing history that exists in Burton. Clearly David Wright who has recently completed a model diorama of Shobnall Wharf featuring the long-lost Burton watering hole **The Mount Pleasant Inn** AKA ‘Bessie Bull’s’ The model went on display at The Burton Railex at Rolleston Scouts Headquarters Sunday 7th September. David talked to the ‘nice’ Burtonians hoping to stir memories or recollections of this once well loved pub.

*Theo Hollier, Editor*



*A photograph of David Wrights model*

# Just Wood: Crafting Tradition with a Personal Touch



At Just Wood, every creation begins with a simple idea — to make something that feels both timeless and personal. For us, wood is more than just a material; it's a medium through which memories are shaped, stories are told, and connections are strengthened. Each of our handcrafted gifts is a reflection of the care, creativity, and tradition that have guided our family business for generations.

Our story began long before the modern workshop we have today. WH Mason & Son has been proudly family owned and run since 1897, and over that time, the skills and values that built our name have been carefully passed down through the years.

What started as a wood turnery in Burton upon Trent has grown into a much-loved maker of personalised wooden gifts — each one created with the same respect for craftsmanship that has defined our

family's work for over a century.

We believe there is something deeply special about working with wood. Every piece carries its own character — a grain that tells its own story, a warmth that can never quite be replicated. That natural individuality is what makes each of our creations unique. When we add a personal touch — a name, a message, a design — it becomes more than an object. It becomes a keepsake that captures a moment in time.

Over the years, we have seen how a simple, handcrafted item can bring joy in unexpected ways. Whether it's a personalised yoyo that sparks nostalgia across generations or a custom wooden spoon that finds its place in a busy family kitchen, our aim is always the same: to create something meaningful, made to last, and made with care. Our wooden spoons, in particular, have become something of a favourite among our customers. Simple yet full of charm, they embody everything we love about our craft — functionality, natural beauty, and the chance to make something everyday feel special.

Being a small, family-run business allows us to stay true to what matters most: quality, creativity, and connection. We are closely involved in every stage of production, from selecting responsibly sourced wood to hand-finishing each product. Our workshop may be filled with modern tools and technology, but our process remains rooted in tradition.

Design plays a central role in every piece we make. While our heritage keeps us grounded in traditional craftsmanship, design allows us to evolve and to keep our creations fresh and distinctive. We take pride in blending classic woodworking skills with thoughtful, modern design — from playful engravings that celebrate individuality to sleek, minimalist forms that highlight the beauty of the material itself. That balance between past and present is what defines Just Wood.

One of the things we value most about running Just Wood is the community that surrounds us. We feel incredibly fortunate to be part of a town

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🍷 Inn Uendo's Bar

# The Olde Royal Oak

like Burton upon Trent, where craft, industry, and family values have always been deeply connected. Being local means being part of something bigger — a shared appreciation for honest work and genuine artistry. We love hearing from customers who stop by our shop or message us to share how their purchase has been received. Those little connections remind us that, even in a fast-paced world, people still value the human touch.

As we look to the future, our commitment remains the same: to continue crafting with integrity, to design with creativity, and to honour the traditions that have shaped our family for generations. We want every item that bears the Just Wood name to stand as a testament to the beauty of handmade work and the value of keeping tradition alive.

At Just Wood, we don't just make wooden gifts. We make memories that last. We make connections that matter. And above all, we make every piece with heart.



Weekly Events:

- 🎮 Games Night – Wednesdays
- 🎤 Karaoke – Fridays
- 🎶 Live Entertainment – Saturdays
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11 Market Place, Burton upon Trent, DE14 1HA

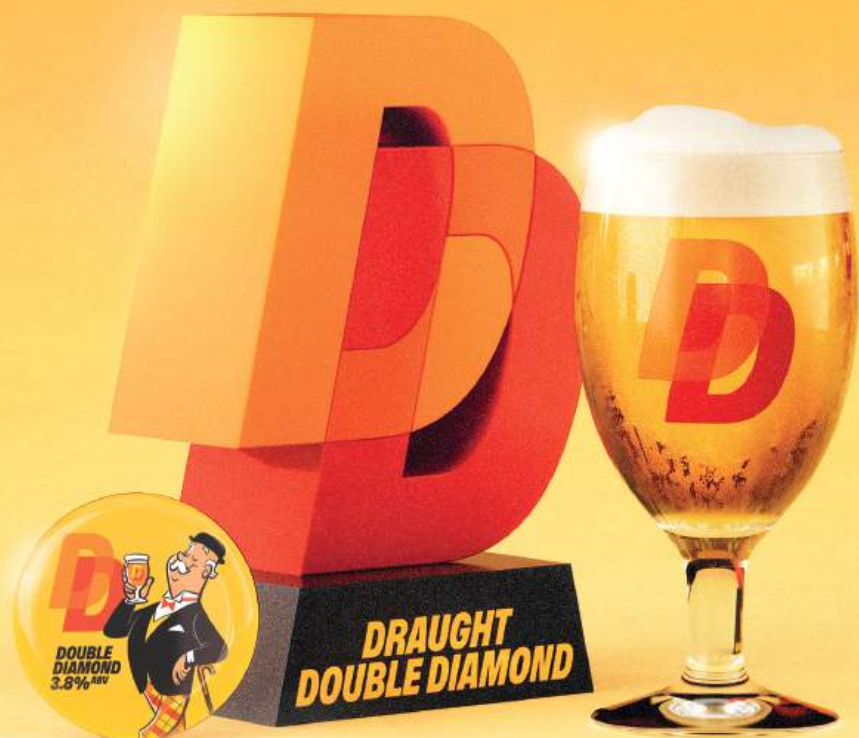


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# The Good Beer Guide

It is the desire of every or certainly most Real Ale pubs to get into the Good Beer Guide (GBG). It's that warm feeling, we've made it! There are certainly benefits of being in it. The most important benefit being more people will come to the pubs in the GBG. I know that because I am a real ale lover. So, whenever I go on holiday or even go to an away football match I would search out the real ale pubs near the ground or hotel or camp site.

So, the picture is, this is important stuff, to get into the GBG. So, how do CAMRA do it?

Is it like going to Bingo or the draw for FA cup? No! Do the CAMRA committee members go into a locked room and thrash it out themselves to get a consensus and let the white smoke come out like at the Vatican? No!

The answer is that every CAMRA member can be part of the process. There is an on-line site [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) to log into from your laptop



or mobile phone. Log in with your Camra membership number and password. It is easy to select the pub you are in or have been in simply putting the pub's name in. A list of the town or city will then appear and select the right one. Then it will come up with – “Submit your beer scores” put in the date, ideally the beer from a drop-down arrow and likewise for the brewery, then select “submit your score” and that's it. Your input will be used for the GBG.

There are a couple of riders, like, if you give your score a 5 every time, it will not be registered as no beers are perfect every time. The scale is from 0 – no cask available to 5 which is perfect. The score of 5 should be used very rarely. 2 is average, 3 is good and 4 is very good.

There is a slight complication at this time as there are 2 sites cunningly called “old site” and “new site”. It's perhaps best to use the new site or if you use the old site it will say “try the new site”, you don't have to but how long will the old site be there?

If this all fails, ask your mate who knows what to do!


So, back to the GBG, every year this scoring from What Pub will be the basis of the GBG, as the average scores for each pub can be listed and the highest average pubs are in -subject to a few riders. For example, a pub could have only 2 or 3 people scoring which may not be representative. In that case it would not be fair against a pub that had 40 or 50 scorers.

*Theo Hollier, Editor*

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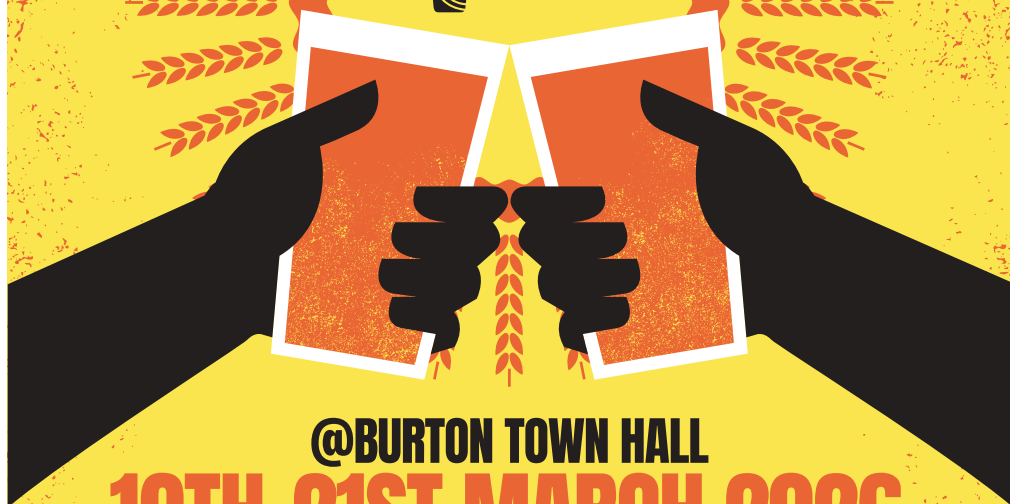
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# Discount for CAMRA members



Looking through magazines from other branches it becomes apparent that the majority of pubs in other areas give a discount to CAMRA members. This should not be confused with the tokens that are given to all CAMRA members every year. I would regard these tokens as being subtly different. I am talking about individual pubs that give a discount to CAMRA members showing their CAMRA membership card.

In the past, in the Burton & South Derbyshire branch area discounts have not been promoted, I remember our chairman, stating "I would rather give the pub the money to help them in these times". I think most of the branch members and pubs were in favour of this position. However, in the last year or so the Oak & Ivy in Wellington Street has been operating with a 10% discount for CAMRA members. This was a personal choice by the licensee, Michelle. She started when she took the pub over and has not looked back since and is very happy to operate it.

Are there any other pubs in the Burton & South Derbyshire that do this? Sally that used to run the Elms was about to introduce a CAMRA discount

but then she left and the idea hasn't been taken up again. So, after years of no CAMRA discount the pubs in our branch could if they wanted to, give a discount. There is absolutely no pressure from CAMRA to do so which leaves the pubs to make the choice. It is possible that the Oak & Ivy being so close to the Town Hall and the annual Beer Festival could be under pressure from CAMRA people from out of our area expect it? I had heard a while ago that a customer from out of the area from the festival demanded CAMRA discount in the Oak & Ivy and was angry and rude when told there was no discount and stormed out of the Oak & Ivy. If this is correct it could explain the introduction.

Time will tell, if decisions are made by some pubs to introduce the discount there may be some benefit for the Pubs by bringing more CAMRA members in. Also there may be some benefit for CAMRA as some may join CAMRA to get the discount, thus increasing membership. However, my personal guess is that nothing will change, the Oak & Ivy will happily continue to give the discount, and the other pubs will happily stay as they are.

*Theo Hollier, Editor*

## 2025 Burton Beer Festival Sponsors

A huge thank you to all of our sponsors for the 2025 Burton Beer Festival.

From Burton and South Derbyshire CAMRA Branch. These were:



**CARLSBERG  
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We are now looking for sponsors for our next Beer Festival which takes place in March 2026.

For all interested parties, please contact Jacky Allen by email: [jacky.allen@outlook.com](mailto:jacky.allen@outlook.com)

# CAMRA Members Upcoming Events Burton and South Derbyshire Branch

## December 2025

### 3rd Wednesday

@Bulls Head, Rosliston

Branch Meeting and Social at the Bulls Head

### 5th Friday

@The Manzil

Branch 50th Anniversary Christmas dinner

Pre dinner drinks at the Tower Brewery

Post dinner drinks at the Burton Bridge

## January 2026

### 7th Wednesday

@Leopard Inn

Branch Meeting and social evening

### 14th Wednesday

@Burton Bridge Inn

Meeting and social

## February 2026

### 7th Saturday

@Leather Britches

Brewery tour

### 11th Wednesday

@Shoulder of Mutton, Barton-under-Needwood

Meeting and social

## March 2026

### 5th Thursday

@Leopard Inn

51 years celebration

### 19th–21st Thurs–Sat

@Burton Town Hall

Burton & South Derbyshire Beer

and Cider Festival

Please note that any event may have to change if circumstances are beyond our control.  
For all events it is best to check on Facebook or the regular flyers to ensure the date is still correct.

## Burton & South Derbyshire Branch Area:



# The Oak & Ivy

## Burton's Best Kept Secret

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# Contacts - Burton and South Derbyshire

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## Going for a Burton

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