



## **Kent Region two-monthly report for March 2022**

**Contents: Minutes of meeting on March 26, reports submitted prior to the meeting etc**

**I Minutes of the Kent Regional Meeting held at  
the Ship Centurion, Whitstable on  
Saturday 26th March 2022**

The meeting commenced at 12.07 with Martin Knight, Kent Regional Director, in the chair.

**SYNOPSIS**

The lack of a paper or downloadable What's Brewing continues to hinder activity at branch level, leading to problems with activation and retention of members. In order to raise the issue constructively at a higher level Martin Knight would need to know what use if any branch members were making of What's Brewing and what value it had for branches. Branches were actioned to let him know their situation as soon as possible.

The signatories on the Kent bank account would need revising to reflect the latest management structure. The full list would become Martin Knight as regional director, Ian Fielder and Glyn Parry as area organisers, Geoff Hetherington as treasurer and Kae Mendham as finance officer.

It seemed that Christina Ketchum was no longer a CAMRA member so the position of Regional Cider Representative was vacant. There was no channel by which to deal with the Cider Pub of the Year in Kent. Therefore it was assumed that there would be no Kent winner this year.

The lack of an editor was seen as the most likely impediment to producing a branch magazine but if one editor could be found it would be possible to produce a composite magazine covering multiple branches, along the lines of Draught Copy. This could be particularly useful in East Kent.

**1 ATTENDANCE**

1.1 Branch not represented: Swale. Total Attendance 16.

1.2 Also present were:

Martin Knight	Kent Regional Director
Adrian Moss	Secretary
Glyn Parry	Area Organiser, East Kent
Ian Fielder	Area Organiser, West Kent
Kae Mendham	Regional Finance Director
Geoff Hetherington	Regional Treasurer

1.3 Apologies for Absence have been received from:  
Roland Amos, Martin Atkins, Bob Belton, Gerry Keay, Peter Page-Mitchell (SE & Kent Brewery Liaison Co-ordinator), Mike St Clare-Newman, John Sissons, Linda Thompson, Jeff Tucker.

**2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Approved.

2.1 **Matters Arising.**

None.

**2.2 ACTION LIST** (New items and status changes in **bold**).

<b>No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Actionee(s)</b>	<b>Required by</b>	<b>Status</b>
111	Consider revision of branch pub allocations for the 2022 and subsequent Good Beer Guides.	Branches.	In advance of a meeting to be arranged before preparation for the 2024 guide.	<b>Closed. Action 117 continues.</b>
112	Seek a candidate for East Kent area organiser.	East Kent branches.	As soon as possible.	<b>Closed.</b>
113	Clarify the lack of an obvious replacement for the Internal Policy Document.	Regional Director, Surrey & Sussex.	As soon as possible.	<b>Ongoing, awaiting the outcome of the National AGM.</b>
114	Clarify whether CAMRA's insurance covers non-members working at beer festivals as conflicting advice has been received.	Regional Director, Surrey & Sussex.	As soon as possible.	<b>Closed. Non-members should be covered but it is advisable not to use them.</b>
115	Contact Christina Ketchum to see if she is still prepared to act as Kent Cider Representative.	Regional Director.	As soon as possible.	<b>Closed. Apparently she is no longer a member.</b>
116	Inform Martin Knight of branches which did not see the proofs of the pub section of 2022 Good Beer Guide.	Those branches affected.	As soon as possible.	<b>Closed.</b>
117	Schedule a separate meeting of branches to decide revisions to branch pub allocations for the 2024 Good Beer Guide.	Ian Clennett and Martin Knight.	In time for preparation of the guide.	<b>Ongoing.</b>
<b>118</b>	<b>Inform Martin Knight of the extent of branch usage of What's Brewing and its value to the branch.</b>	<b>Branche</b>	<b>As soon as possible</b>	<b>New. Minute 5.1 refers.</b>
119	<b>Liase with Linda Thompson on steps to reinstate regional cider reporting.</b>	<b>Regional Director</b>	<b>As soon as possible</b>	<b>New</b>

120	Contact East Kent branches to seek an editor for a composite magazine equivalent to Draught Copy	Damien Clark	As soon as possible	New. Minute 9.2 refers.
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### 3 REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 3.1 Some branches were still not back up to speed after the lockdowns. For instance, Ashford were still short of a chairman.
- 3.2 A new development of the comms tool which might replace Yahoo groups is in beta testing but there are no details.

### 4 AREA ORGANISERS' REPORTS

- 4.1 **Kent (East)** Nothing to report.
- 4.2 **Kent (West)** Nothing to report.

### 5 CAMPAIGNING

- 5.1 The lack of a paper or downloadable What's Brewing continues to hinder activity at branch level, leading to problems with activation and retention of members. News items are not easily available in any form which is readily usable by the majority of members. The news website which nominally represents What's Brewing is not easy to follow or attractive and seldom up to date and was described as unfit for purpose. As a result the most obvious incentive for people to join CAMRA and remain members was missing. In order to raise the issue constructively at a higher level Martin Knight would need to know what use if any branch members were making of What's Brewing and what value it had for branches. Branches were actioned to let him know their situation as soon as possible.

### 6 FINANCE

- 6.1 **Regional Finance Officer's Report** Kae Mendham would like to be informed of the dates of branch AGMs. She and Martin Knight should receive copies of examined accounts from branches after an AGM. If examined accounts are not available at the AGM a copy of the unexamined accounts should be submitted with an explanation for the absence of any examination. There was no information on a COBAS training session in Kent.
- 6.2 **General Finance** The current balance is £328, which should be sufficient to cover requirements until the signatories on the bank account were updated. No requests for funding were submitted by branches.
- 6.3 **General Matters** The signatories on the Kent bank account would need revising to reflect the latest management structure. Linda Thompson and Jeff Waller would be removed from the list and Martin Knight and Glyn Parry added. The full list would then be Martin Knight as regional director, Ian Fielder and Glyn Parry as area organisers, Geoff Hetherington as treasurer and Kae Mendham as finance officer.

## **7 PUB OF THE YEAR, CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR AND CLUB OF THE YEAR.**

**7.1 Pub of the Year** All branch winners were known and judging forms and guidelines would be sent out imminently. The guidelines were new with two extra categories.

It was confirmed that there is no embargo on revealing a branch winner, only those at higher levels. Branches should ensure the pub is informed first and then details can be added to the Kent website and other publicity.

**7.2 Club of the Year** Jeff Tucker had heard of winners from GDV, MMK and West Kent branches. Other branches had until March 31 to submit theirs to him. Judging would be open to any branch, using the Pub of the Year guidelines, and should be completed by the end of July.

**7.3 Cider Pub of the Year** There was no channel by which to action and communicate this. Therefore it was assumed that there would be no Kent winner this year.

## **8 CIDER**

**8.1** It seemed that Christina Ketchum was no longer a CAMRA member so the position of Regional Cider Representative was vacant. Martin Knight would liaise with Linda Thompson and Angela Briers to ascertain the course of action to follow.

## **9 PUBLICATIONS**

**9.1 Good Beer Guide** Ongoing. Branch data entry to WhatPub for the 2023 guide was required to be completed by April 19. Branch pub allocations for the 2024 guide might still be revised depending on the outcome of the separate meeting to which action 117 refers.

**9.2 Magazines** The 200th edition of Draught Copy had appeared. Both Medway Beer Belly and Ale of Thanet needed new editors in order to restart. The lack of an editor was seen as the most likely impediment to producing a branch magazine but if one editor could be found it would be possible to produce a composite magazine covering multiple branches, along the lines of Draught Copy. Expenditure to establish the first few editions could be considered a campaigning expense, with a view to the venture later becoming self-financing via advertising. This could be particularly useful in East Kent and Damian Clark agreed to contact East Kent branches to see if anyone was prepared to become editor for such a project.

**9.3 Websites** The Kent Website is now using "BeerEngine", CAMRA's web platform for the provision of CAMRA Branch websites. The URL has therefore changed to <https://kent.camra.org.uk>. Branches need to change this detail on their own websites and other communications. It was thought that branch meetings could be listed on the site together with other branch news.

## 10 COMMUNICATION

For the time being the best means of communication would be Discourse for messages, backed up by an email circulation list for documents. In future documents could also be made available via the Kent website. Dates and venues of meetings will be added to the national Branch Diary website and the national planner once confirmed.

## 11 BREWERIES (items not covered by submitted reports)

11.1 Peter Page-Mitchell's latest report had been circulated before the meeting.

## 12 FESTIVALS (those having significant CAMRA involvement)

**White Cliffs** The earliest the Town Hall venue would be available is expected to be 2025, though the council are keen to have the festival back. Other options may be pursued for 2023 and 2024.

**Thanet** 15 and 16 April 2022. Ongoing. There will be a key keg bar.

**Bexley** 5 to 7 May 2022. Ongoing. Budget approved.

**Kent & East Sussex Railway** 17 and 18 June 2022. About 50 beers etc.

**Kent** No plans at present. Attempts are being made to recover the deposit for the Westgate Hall, Canterbury.

**Cricket Tents** Nothing possible this year. Canterbury seems no longer to be available as a venue.

**East Malling** 3 September 2022. Budget under discussion.

**Faversham Hop Festival** 3 and 4 September 2022, confirmed.

**Spa Valley** 7 to 9 October 2022. CAMRA will have more control than in 2021.

## 13 BRANCH REPORTS (items not covered by submitted reports)

Reports had not been received from Canterbury or Medway. There were no additional items.

## 14 FUTURE MEETINGS

To avoid clashes with beer festivals, Bexley and MMK had agreed to swap dates for this cycle only, with the previous sequence to resume thereafter.

May 21	Beer Seller, 64 High Street, Tonbridge TN9 1EH (to be confirmed).
Jul	DDS. Date and venue required ASAP.
Sept	Bexley. Date and venue required ASAP.
Nov	Thanet.
Jan 2023	Medway.
Mar	AGM. Swale.
May	MMK
Jul	Ashford.
Sept	GDV.
Nov	Canterbury.
Jan 2024	Bexley
Mar	AGM. DDS.
May	W Kent.

It was noted that there was a need to minimise travel expenses, to cover no more than two meetings in the year.

## **15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 15.1** Tasting panels and Champion Beer of Britain were not included in the agenda for this meeting but should be from now on. Glyn Parry had offered to help try to re-establish the Kent tasting panel and chair it. Approximately 20 people attended a virtual introductory training session last year. Glyn and Martin Knight were working to arrange a suitable date and venue for training to take place and Kevin Travers would attend to conduct the session.
- 15.2** The 2022 area judging for Champion Beer of Britain has commenced and Thanet Beer Festival will host the judging of the speciality beers category. Disappointingly, some other festivals have declined to be involved, so as it currently stands judging of all categories will not be possible this year. The organisers of other festivals in the region that are planned for later in the year were asked to consider hosting a category judging. There are plenty available and there is flexibility as to the number and style of beers to reflect the size and type of festival. Kevin Travers is also happy to consider pub and non-CAMRA events.

Meeting closed at 15.07.

## **II Reports (numbered in accordance with sections in the minutes)**

### **6 Finance**

#### **Regional Finance Officers Report**

##### **Information**

##### **Branch Reporting**

In the past I used to provide the regional meeting with a table of Branch Compliance as regards forwarding annual audited accounts to me, the Regional Director, and St Albans.

The last table I have on my file is dated September 2019, and I am sure that branches must have had their annual general meetings since then, and therefore do not consider it would be useful to reproduce that for this meeting.

##### **The Future**

I ask all branches to let me have the dates of their Annual General Meetings, and following the meeting to provide me with a copy of the audited, and approved accounts.

If these are not available I ask for a report from the Branch Chairman, or Secretary, shortly after the meeting, giving me details of the discussion about the accounts that took place

**My email address is** [Kaemendham@gmail.com](mailto:Kaemendham@gmail.com)

##### **National Information**

The annual accounts for CAMRA have been audited and signed off, and published in BEER magazine for you to read. The full details of the accounts are available on the main web site.

Due to some actions to minimise costs during the past year a deficit has been avoided.

### **14 Branch Reports**

#### **14.1 Ashford**

##### **Branch News**

Our first meeting since February 2020 was held on 2nd March 2022 - Martin Knight in attendance.

Agreed to hold our AGM in May when branch accounts will be available.

##### **POTY**

Winner :- Bowl Inn, Hastingleigh

Runner Up :- This Ancient Boro', Tenterden No cider or club POTY were considered.

##### **GBG23**

16 entries plus reserves have been chosen and ready for submission

Agreed to review selection process at a special Branch Meeting along with RD

##### **Beer Festival**

This will now go ahead at KESR on 17th and 18th June.

Budget has been approved and all is in hand.

## **14.2 Bexley Information**

### **Pub news:**

The Guy Earl of Warwick, Welling Broadway, previously the home of the annual "Great Welling Beer Fest" reopened in February with new operators.

### **Branch news:**

Bexley branch now holds meetings the second Wednesday of every other month – April, June, August, etc. with socials on alternate months although not necessarily on the Wednesday.

Pub of the Year voting results - 1<sup>st</sup> The Long Haul, Barnehurst; 2<sup>nd</sup> Robin Hood and Little John, Bexleyheath; 3<sup>rd</sup> The Broken Drum, Blackfen. Cider PotY winner is the Penny Farthing, Crayford. Club of the year is Dartfordians RFC, Bexley.

### **Misc:**

Branch website – [www.bexley.camra.org.uk](http://www.bexley.camra.org.uk)

Branch official Facebook page - [www.facebook.com/camrabexleybranch](http://www.facebook.com/camrabexleybranch) Branch Twitter account - [@BexleyCAMRA](https://twitter.com/BexleyCAMRA)

### **Actions from last meeting relevant to branch:**

	<b>Desc</b>	<b>Req'd</b>	<b>Status</b>
111	Consider revision of branch pub allocations for the 2022 and subsequent Good Beer Guides.	before September	ongoing
116	Inform Martin Knight of branches which did not see the proofs of the pub section of GBG 2022	ASAP	new

## **14.3 Canterbury**

No report received.

## 14.4 Dover

### Important News

- DDS website is now at <https://dds.camra.org.uk>.
- All branch email addresses have now changed to @dds.camra.org.uk. Old website and email addresses have expired.

**Branch Pub of the Year** Berry, Walmer.

### Activities

- In response to the P&O actions, a Facebook discussion and webpage was created advertising pubs that were looking for staff.
- LocAle page added to website.
- GBG & POTY Selection Rules revised.
- Continue cataloguing WhatPub photos to ensure we have copyright approval.
- Thirst Thursday Events continue to be held.
- Winter Pub of the Season Presentation to the White Horse, Dover.
- Winter Ales Celebration, including pub walks, as a replacement for the branch beer festival.
- Two minibus outings have been organised.
- Continue monitoring pubs for sale & planning applications affecting pubs.
- No Cider Pub of the Year competition, as no pubs were nominated. Now using NBSS Analysis Spreadsheet.

### Pub News

- Admiral Owen, Sandwich: Planning application indicates it will reopen as a restaurant & bar.
- Bowling Green Tavern, Deal: For sale.
- Chequer Inn, Ash: The tenant running the community-owned pub has gone into administration. Pub is expected to reopen.
- Coach & Horses, Hacklinge: Has been sold.
- Clarendon Hotel, Deal: Planning application to turn a part of the hotel to residential has been refused.
- Crispin Inn, Sandwich: New publicans.
- Crown Inn, Finglesham: has been sold.
- Eagle Tavern, Deal: To reopen mid-April with new publicans.
- Plough & Harrow, Tilmanstone: For sale.
- Saracen's Head, Deal: New publicans.
- Smuggler's Inn, St. Margaret's at Cliffe: Celebrated 25th anniversary.
- Three Cups, Dover: For sale.
- White Horse, Dover: LocAle accredited.
- Real cider accreditation has been removed from White Horse, Dover; Eight Bells, Dover, Sir Norman Wisdom, Deal, Anchor Inn, Wingham and Crispin Inn, Sandwich.
- Real Ale accreditation has been removed from Cricketers, Dover, Boars Head, Dover and Crown & Sceptre, Dover.

### Brewery News

Time & Tide, Eastry: Expanded brewery capacity.

## **14.5 GDV INFORMATION**

1. In the event, at the branch AGM on December 1 the existing committee was re-elected en bloc.
2. Branch POTY is the Compass Alehouse, Gravesend. Cider POTY is the Three Pillars, Gravesend. Club of the Year is Dartford Working Men's Club.
3. Brewing had ceased at Dartford Wobbler but has restarted using the previous recipes.

## **PUBS REPORT**

1. Growler, Dartford New micropub, only keg beers at present.
2. Cricketers, Gravesend Closed. Future uncertain.
3. Crown & Thistle, Gravesend Was recently sold. Gravesham Council had refused to relist it as an ACV on the grounds that there was no prospect of it reopening as a pub in the next five years.
4. Darnley Arms, Gravesend Closed. Future uncertain.
5. Grapes, Gravesend Seems to be closed again. An unconfirmed rumour suggests it may have been sold by Shepherd Neame.
6. Ship, Green Street Green Was advertised for sale.
7. Black Lion, Hartley Has reopened.
8. Amazon & Tiger, Harvel Gravesham Council have belatedly responded to a letter from the local campaign group and seem to accept that the accommodation the owner intends to continue to run was ancillary to the main business of the pub. Further developments awaited.
9. Green Man, Hodsoll Street A local group is seeking to buy this to rebuild it.
10. Railway, Longfield Closed after a fire. New management being sought.
11. Pavilion, New Ash Green At the sports ground. Has a pub licence.
12. Black Horse, Stansted Owner is believed to want to sell to a developer.
13. Sun, Swanscombe Has reopened.

## **DISCUSSION**

None.

## **ACTIONS: from last location: Dartford Working Men's Club in November 2021**

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION	STATUS
	None.		

## **14.6 Medway**

No report received.

## **14.7 MMK Information**

Victoria, East Farleigh	Pub closed and signage removed. Owner seeking to remain and turn it into a private house but council have refused.
Knoxbridge, Frittenden	Licensee failed to agree terms with owner and left. Has reopened with new licensees but no food yet.
Harrow Inn, Lenham	Closed. Owners have reportedly placed it in hands of receivers.
Bar 6, Maidstone	To become a Turkish restaurant.
Brickmakers, Maidstone	Owner has regained possession and is seeking a new tenant.
Market House, Maidstone	New Licensee
Kings Head, Sutton Valence	Sold to young couple. Changeover is in early April.

Wings Bar & Restaurant, Headcorn Airfield currently closed but new operator expected to open when aerial activities become more frequent.

Five other long term closed pubs remain with unknown future.

From our total of 160 open pubs 114 have been visited so far this year.

Whilst there has been large numbers of pubs no longer accredited to Cask Marque MMK have only had 3 drop out. This leaves us with 28.

## **Draught Copy**

March edition is now available.

## **Discussion**

None

## **Actions from last Location**

## **14.8 Swale**

**Branch News** POTY winners for 2022 have just been announced. The branch decided not to enter a CPOTY and a COTY is something that has not been followed by the branch at any time.

Winner POTY 2022 is The Three Tuns, Lower Halstow  
Runner up. The Elephant, Faversham  
Third. Paper Mill, Sittingbourne  
H.C Shipwrights Arms, Hollowshore, Faversham

This year the branch has 14 allocations for the GBG as agreed with Martin Knight. We have just had our monthly branch social at The Fruiterers Arms in Rodmersham. Good weather and attendance. The committee continue to meet 'ad hock' at present to discuss branch matters.

**Pub News** Nicola Smith has taken over the lease at 'The Playa' in Minster. Nicola has taken over from her previous pub in Broadstairs and re-opened last week. There have been a number of changes to pub licensees over the past couple of years but are too numerous to mention here and are already documented within branch.

**Festivals. Faversham hop festival September 3rd – 4th 2022.** After two cancelled years and almost a third, funds have been raised to hold the festival. Preliminary discussions regarding this year's festival are scheduled to take place on 29<sup>th</sup> March place and the application for a stall has been made.

**Swale Ale.** At this point in time there are no plans to re-introduce the magazine due to current lack of advertisers due to the present state of the UK economy. The situation continues to be monitored.

### **Items for the agenda (subject to these being able to be re-introduced)**

#### **Confirm willingness to attend COBAS training in Kent.**

I strongly suspect that due to the expansion of her business which has now opened in Faversham and despite re assurance in December when I posed the question, plus the fact that she is now a lapsed member according to Head Office, we shall need to ....

**Seek a volunteer Cider Representative to cover either Kent as a whole or East or West Kent.**

## **14.9 Thanet**

1. Festival:- the festival returns to the Winter Gardens this April on Good Friday 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>. There will be live entertainment on stage and a selection of food available in the Queen's Hall.

The budget has been approved.

For the first time we intend to run a "craft" keykeg bar.

All volunteers will be welcome.

### 2. POTY.

The winner is the Two Halves in Margate.

Cider POTY is the Little Swift in Margate.

We did not run a club of the year competition. We do not believe that we have any true contenders.

### 3. Pubs:

In Thanet we have 152 open venues on WP, an increase of two since the last report. A 101 of these sell real ale.

Other matters:

a) There have been two re-openings, the London Tavern, Margate (real ale) and the Foresters Arms, Ramsgate (no real ale) which has been renamed Fury's Bar.

b) There is a licence application lodged with the council for the Shakespeare in Margate, which has been closed since 2016. The applicant, Shakespeare Hotel Margate Ltd is associated with a company whose business is "architectural activities".

c) We objected to a planning application to convert the Wheatsheaf in Ramsgate to residential. The application has still not had a decision as of 22 February.

d) The Brown Jug in Ramsgate has apparently been bought by Tracey Emin. It remains closed.

4. Currently Ale of Thanet is not being published because we do not have an editor.

5. The next social event will be in Margate on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

## **14.10 West Kent**

### **Chairman's Report**

The branch has tightened the criteria once again this year for those pubs that may be surveyed for the GBG, with beer scoring becoming the key criteria. All existing GBG Pubs are currently being surveyed along with those with above average scores. We then remove those pubs where something could jeopardise the continuance of that pubs ability to keep high beer standards such as a change of manager or cellarman.

On Sunday (27<sup>th</sup> March), the branch members will meet to discuss all the submissions. We had an open discussion on PoTY, for which branch members had recently voted upon, with the result that the Nelson in Tonbridge has been voted the best pub, with Runner Up awards to Fuggles, Tunbridge Wells and The George, Tunbridge Wells.

The Club of the year was the Royal British Legion in Leigh, with the Cider Pub of the year award going to The Beer Seller in Tonbridge.

### **Membership Report**

Locally, we currently have 617 members, which is approximately a 10% drop on our figure since January 2020.

### **Pub Report**

The locals in Toys Hill managed to get an ACV attached to the Fox & Hounds during the Covid 19 Lockdown. Despite this, the brewery is trying hard to sell it as a residential property and at present, it is permanently closed.

### **Local Cider Report – Keith Ennis**

I was most surprised to find that the Beer Seller were selling Charrington's Earl's Reserve cider on draught. This is a 5.8% cider described by Charrington's as medium and I would say it is on the sweeter side of medium. A very quaffable cider in my opinion. I have been talking to Charrington's about doing 20 litre Bag in Box (BIB) for Spa Valley but they told me on two or three occasions they could only do it in the 3 litre pouches. When I spoke to Jamie at the Beer Seller and he told me that they wanted him to sell their cider but he was not prepared to have it in the 3 litre pouches so they finally relented and did Jamie a 20 litre BIB.

For those who are not aware, Charrington's Drinks are based at Charrington's Fruit Farms, Cryals Farm, Matfield.

### **AOB**

A few of the branch members have re-started the local Camra Occasional Pub Surveyors (COPS). This has received various levels of attendance, but even on the day of the storm Eunice, four gallant explorers managed to attend. Having proved very popular before Covid, the group are now looking to continue these events which are open to anyone (members or not). Further outings have been arranged on a fortnightly basis for the next few months.

## **15 Additional item**

### **Tasting panels and CBOB**

#### **Tasting Panels**

Following Simon Monk standing down as Tasting Panel Chair for Kent, I am pleased to advise that Glyn Parry has offered to help try to re-establish the Panel and chair it.

I have sufficient numbers of people, approximately 20, who have expressed an interest in getting trained as Tasting Panel members and who attended a virtual introductory session I ran last year. Glyn and Martin Knight are working together to arrange a suitable date and venue for training to take place and I will attend to conduct the session.

There is an ongoing national appeal for new tasters which is generating a continuing trickle of responses, so there may be more people coming forward.

#### **Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB)**

The member nominations for the 2023 competition took place during September and October 2021. There was an increase in participation by Branches across the country, In Kent there was a 10% increase in participation compared to 2019 and 43% above 2018, which was an awful year in the Region. Just 1.5% of the total membership in the region voted. The full breakdown by Branch is as follows. If anyone wants to know more details about the beers voted for in their Branch, then let me know as I have all the data.

Branch	Nominations	% of Members
Ashford Folkestone & Romney Marsh (ASH)	9	1.95%
Bexley (BEX)	5	0.84%
Canterbury Herne Bay & Whitstable (CAN)	3	0.58%
Deal Dover & Sandwich (DDS)	6	1.58%
Gravesend & Darent Valley Branch (GRA)	6	1.22%
Maidstone & Mid Kent (MAI)	14	1.82%
Medway (MED)	7	1.24%
Swale (SWA)	10	2.28%
Thanet (THA)	9	1.79%
West Kent (TTW)	11	1.8%

The 2022 area judging season has commenced and many thanks to the organisers of Thanet Beer Festival for stepping forward and agreeing to judge the speciality beers category at their Festival next month. Disappointingly, both Bexley and Kent Beer Festivals have refused to be involved. This response has sadly been replicated from many branches across the whole of the south-east, so it is currently stands I will be unable to carry out judging of all categories this year. So could the organisers of any other festivals in the Region that are planned for later in the year, please get in touch with me and consider hosting a CBOB category judging. There are plenty available and I can be flexible as to the number and style of beers to reflect the size and type of festival you are hosting. I'm also happy to consider pub and non-CAMRA events too.