

First Quarter 2020 Free

# ALE of Thanet



The Quarterly Magazine of the Thanet Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

Please note this issue was put together before Coronavirus restrictions were put in place and therefore certain articles have not been updated to reflect this. There will be no physical version available in pubs. We hope to have the next issue out and on the bar in June

**Thanet Easter Beer & Cider Festival not going ahead this Easter**

Bake & Alehouse once again wins top spot in Thanet CAMRA's pub of the year competition



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**Five minutes walk to**  
**Ramsgate football ground**  
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**route**

## A view from the chair

Welcome to our first Ale of Thanet in 2020. It's that busy time of the year again and right now we're preparing for the Thanet Easter Beer Festival. Once again CAMRA members will get early entry on Good Friday and we all look forward to seeing you there. Please feel free to volunteer, there are plenty of ways to help during setup, take down and during the festival and you can find more details on our website, including entry times and entertainment details for both days. Check out our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages for festival details and competitions where you can win free entry tickets.

In January we had our Branch AGM at the Northdown Tap, big thanks to Johnny and Katie, and welcomed our new Treasurer, Brian Taylor, after Debbie Aris had stepped in following the sad death of Jez Laming following ill health. A big thank you to Debbie for picking things up, looking after our accounts and getting the budget for the Beer Festival prepared, submitted and approved by CAMRA Head Office.

The Kent Region AGM was held on Saturday 7 March and one of the challenges we faced was finding a new Regional Director and also a new East Kent Area Organiser. Paul Sanders, Surrey and Sussex RD, had been acting Kent RD following Kae Mendham's retirement from the post at the previous Kent AGM. If we failed to find a new RD Kent would be forced to combine with Surrey and Sussex, losing our independence and having a Kent 'Pub of the year' entry at National level. With this in mind I stood as RD and was elected Kent RD.

The good news is that we, Kent CAMRA, won't have to combine with Surrey and Sussex region but it does mean that I won't be able to stand for any branch positions at our Thanet AGM in January 2021 so we'll be looking for a new Chair next year. If you are interested in taking on this role please let me know.

On the subject of good news we've just announced our Pub of the Year awards and if you haven't heard the winners are -

Micropub and Branch Pub of the Year	The Bake and Ale House
Micropub of the Year runner up	The Old Bay Alehouse
Traditional Pub of the Year	The Montefiore Arms
Traditional Pub of the Year runner up	The Artillery Arms

Congratulations to everybody involved at these great pubs and presentation dates will be on our website soon, if they're not there now. Once again a big thank you to everybody involved in our Pub of the Year judging and awards.

We be shortly be publicising this year's CAMRA 'Summer of Pub' campaign where we aim to encourage members of the public who might not be regular pub goers to get to love their local. It will take place on 8 May – this is the bank holiday weekend where pub opening hours have been extended by the Government to mark the anniversary of VE Day. Watch our website and social media platforms for more details.

Thanks for reading, I hope you enjoy all the brilliant articles in this issue of the Ale of Thanet and I look forward to seeing you at our Easter Beer Festival.

Martin Knight,  
Thanet Branch Chair

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# CAMRA's Summer of Pub 2020



*Join us down the pub  
this Summer*

Find events near you at  
[www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub](http://www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub)

## **Love your local? Make 2020 the Summer of Pub**

CAMRA's 'Summer of Pub' campaign is back this year to get as many people as possible enjoying the season of good – well, better - weather by heading down to their local for a pint.

We will be celebrating how our nation's pubs offer numerous benefits to people's mental and social well-being and play an instrumental role in the communities they serve. Drinking cheap supermarket booze at home does little to improve your life – but change that setting to the social environment of a pub and you can increase your happiness, make friends and connect with others in your local community, while still enjoying the tipples of your choice.

Campaigning to support Britain's pubs is something anyone can get involved in and can be as simple as stepping out the door and taking a stroll to a local. And if you can encourage some friends or family to join you, then all the better.

CAMRA's Pub Campaigns Director, Ben Wilkinson, said: "We are kicking off the celebrations on 8th May. This is the Bank Holiday weekend when the Government has extended licensing hours for pubs across England and Wales to mark the 75th anniversary of VE day - truly, making the event a PUBLIC holiday! We look forward to seeing plenty of people down their local, raising a glass to three quarters of a century of freedom in Europe – and, of course, the start of Summer!"

As the season progresses, make sure to plan a pub visit for some of our key celebratory dates, whether it's the UEFA Euro Championships (12 June – 12 July), Beer Day Britain (15 June), the Great British Beer Festival (4 – 8 August), or one of many others, leading up to the closing PUBLIC Holiday weekend (29 - 31 August).

So head down to the pub, make friends and memories, and – most importantly - shout about how much you love your local this Summer.

You can share the fun by supporting Summer of Pub on social media - let us know how you're be celebrating by sharing photos of you and friends in the pub using the hashtag #SummerofPub.

To find out more and see Summer of Pub events near you, visit [www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub](http://www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub)

## **2 Marine Drive Margate CT9 1DH**

# **THE TWO HALVES** **MARGATE**

**Thanet CAMRA  
Pub of the Year  
2018**



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## AoT visits Dover with added bonus

So going to take you on a short sojourn around Dover, some familiar and some new, for AoT anyway. Early start 10am as the journey has to be by bus as the trains were not running and it is as quick to go by bus – so let's set off on a cloudy Saturday .....

A trip on the No 8 bus takes us to Canterbury as our first stop. The starting point as always is The Longport Café for a hearty full English breakfast on Longport. A short trek around the corner onto the New Dover Road and a No 15 bus was only 2 minutes away once we got outside Waitrose. There are very few stops on this bus whilst getting to Dover and we alighted just in time to get to Breakwater's brewery and taproom - at opening time - and we were lucky enough to arrive for their happy hour. The choice here was amazing 19 ales in total a mixture of cask and key keg. AoT started with a Handpicked Gold! a new Breakwater beer 4.2% brewed with East Kent Goldings hop, gave this a real fresh hop flavour (recommended) and swiftly followed by Broken Wave, a 5%



traditional IPA which had a crisp finish.

We needed to move on – a 20-minute stroll down the hill into town and our stop here was the newly opened Hoptomist (3 Bench St, Dover CT16 1JH), this was formerly the Mash



Tun which closed. This had a great feel to it and there was a good selection of cask and key keg ales 10, 11 here too. To last the day out, AoT had a Kent Session Pale, a great tasting low abv 3.7% English pale ale – a light hoppy session ale with hints of citrus and elderflower. Having found this little gem in the market square, time to move on and follow our noses to The Lanes (15 Worthington St, Dover CT17 9AQ) 12. Here as usual is a good selection of ales 13 but a couple of halves this time. If you fancy a zingy beer you should try the Zingiber from the Kent brewery, a ginger infused 4.1% golden ale made with American hops, quite



refreshing this one and a follow up of Marsh Midnight AoT's first dark ale to contrast with the lighter ales to date. It was quite malty at 4.5% but still well hopped containing 9 different grains, dark crystal malts which gives it a dark reddish brown colour.



Time to go to our added bonus, main event of the day. Maison Dieu House and the Dover 27th White Cliffs winter beer fest. Representatives of Thanet were here Northdown, Ramsgate and Wantsum (in no particular order). Magic Dragon 5.5% golden ale, Northdown interestingly was sponsored by The Hoptomist. So several ales were quaffed but here AoT only describes arguably a couple of different ales. Ellipsoid Saison from Mad Dog, Monmouthshire and as the name suggests this was a punchy Belgian style Saison 5.6% with all those farmhouse esters that you associate with a saison made with lemon and sorachi ace. Goa Express from Dark Revolution, a chai spiced Baltic



porter. This was really smooth and velvety cold fermented with dark biscuit malts, did enjoy this one. On wandering about, we bumped into several of our Thanet colleagues. These interesting (although you might have other names for them) characters [see picture], were poodling around the Halls. Well time was marching on so we resolved to revisit the Breakwater brewery and Taproom. Another couple of halves before we resumed our journey back to Canterbury and the onward journey to Thanet. So to be different tried the Cherry and Blueberry milk stouts. The



Cherry milk stout 4.2%, had a strong taste of cherry which I don't mind but may not be to everyone's taste. The blueberry milk stout also a 4.2% stout



wasn't on the board but wanted to give this a go as well also had a distinctive fruit flavour. So reluctantly we leave the Breakwater brewery (highly recommended) and get back on the No 15 bus and return to Canterbury. A quick decision was made to reconvene in the New Inn, 19 Havelock St, Canterbury CT1 1NP, well there was more than 1 reason for stopping here, you know those calls of nature. A couple of halves here again an interesting beer Mandarin Sky, a hazy Belgian IPA at 5% tropical and citrus flavours were coming through and a low bitterness finish. Had to have Thornbridge's Jaipur as one of AoT's favourites, a citrus dominated IPA well hoppy and a great bitter finish. So having sated over the day, it was time to get back on the No 8 for Thanet and home. See you in the next edition, hope you enjoyed travelling around with us and get to



see some of these places.

All comments etc. are AoTs only with a little help from a friend!

## Thanet pubs selling locally brewed beers

Listed below are pubs and bars that are known to regularly sell real ales from breweries within 20 miles of Thanet.

**Birchington:** Wheel Alehouse, Old Bay Alehouse **Broadstairs:** Bradstow Mill, Chapel, Charles Dickens, Dolphin, George Inn, Hogshead, Mind the Gap, Pavilion, Tartar Frigate, The Pub Micropub, Thirty-Nine Steps **Cliftonville:** Banks, Laughing Barrel, Tap Room **Margate:** Ales of the Unexpected, Fez, Harbour Arms, Lifeboat, Mechanical Elephant, Two Halves, Wig and Pen **Minster:** Hair of the Dog, New Inn **Pegwell:** Sir Stanley Gray **Ramsgate:** Artillery Arms, Churchill Tavern, Comfort Inn, Conqueror Alehouse, Earl St Vincent, Elephant & Castle, Hotel De Ville, Hovelling Boat Montefiore Arms, Nauticales, Oak Hotel, Queen Charlotte, Queens Head, Red Lion, Royal Victoria Pavilion **St. Peters:** Four Candles, Yard of Ale **Westgate:** Bake & Alehouse, Swan **Reading Street (St. Peters):** White Swan

*Thanet CAMRA cannot guarantee the availability of a local ale or the quality of the ale served in any establishments listed and cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions to this list.*

## We hope to stock Ale of Thanet regularly in these pubs

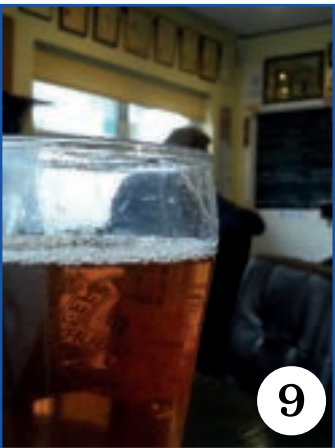
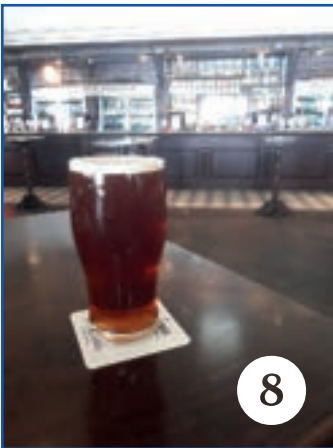
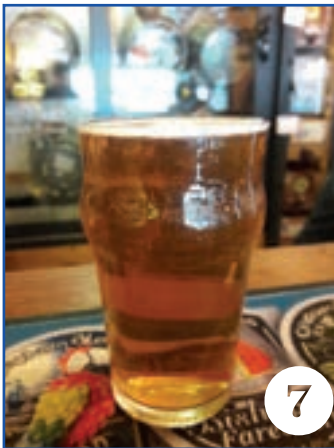
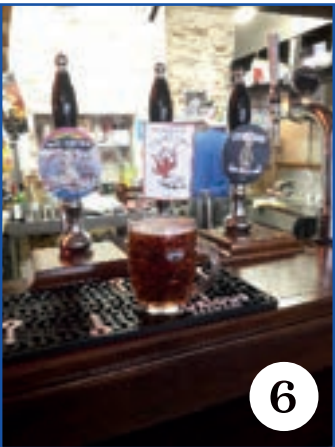
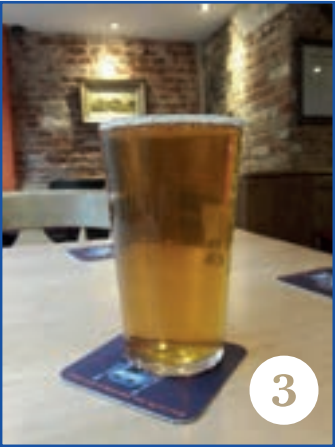
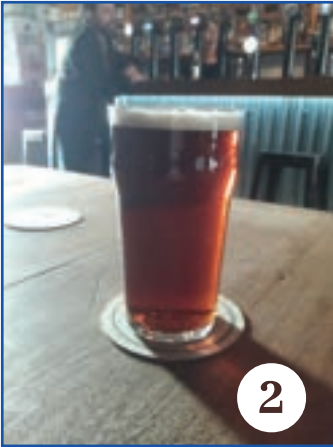
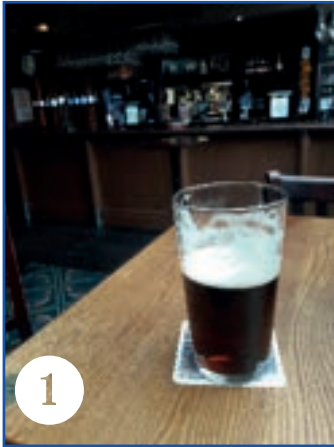
**Birchington:** Wheel Alehouse, Old Bay Alehouse **Broadstairs:** Magnet Micropub, Mind the Gap, Thirty-Nine Steps **Margate:** Ales of the Unexpected, Fez, Harbour Arms, London Tavern, Mechanical Elephant, Two Halves, Wig & Pen **Minster:** Hair of the Dog, **Pegwell:** Sir Stanley Gray **Ramsgate:** Artillery Arms, Churchill Tavern, Conqueror Alehouse, Hovelling Boat, Montefiore Arm, Nauticales **St. Peters:** Four Candles, Yard of Ale **Westgate:** Bake & Alehouse

Other pubs in Thanet, East Kent and beyond also stock Ale of Thanet irregularly.

It is published quarterly in March, June, September & December. It can be viewed online at [issuu.com/aleofthanet](http://issuu.com/aleofthanet) or downloaded from the branch website.

Guess the pub?

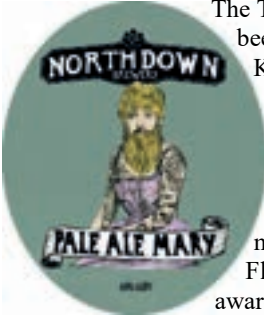
Can you tell which pubs Beery Steve has been drinking in recently. Answers on page 27





# Northdown brewery win Kent beer of the year

## Pale Ale Mary judged top beer at the Taste of Kent Awards



The Thanet-based Northdown Brewery's Pale Ale Mary has won the prestige beer of the year gong at the Taste of Kent Awards organised by Produced in Kent, the annual showcase of the very best products and food and drink businesses across Kent and Medway.

Northdown Brewery's owners, Katie and Jonny Spanjar said on receiving the award, "We are elated, can't believe it, speechless! We have been making this beer for four and half years now and working hard to make it an award-winning brew. This is fantastic and I would like to dedicate it to my nan Mary who the beer was named after."

Floortje Hoette, Chief Executive at Produced in Kent comments: 'These awards celebrate the very best in their sector each year and tonight we

celebrated all those businesses from Kent chosen by the public and judged by a team of experts, to find the winner for each category. All the finalists tonight are winners, and deserve our congratulation for making it here.

Winning an award presents new opportunities for finalists as well as winners, all of whom have worked so hard to get this far. The food & drink sector is highly competitive and all businesses need to stand out from the crowd – these awards help make that happen.

The judges have had a particularly challenging job this year making their decisions, with some incredibly close scores across the board – especially in the Food Product Classes, where we have a record number of entries reaching the finals.

It is clear that the businesses who have entered the awards in previous years have all taken their feedback on board and moved their businesses forward dramatically – improving all aspects of their business: from customer service, local sourcing, and most of all the quality and taste of the food they're producing. Produced in Kent was created to support, elevate and progress the food & drink industry in Kent, and it is evident that the Taste of Kent Awards helps us to achieve this.

Thank you to all our sponsors for their continued support and welcome to our first time sponsors too. Without your support these awards are not possible.'

The Taste of Kent Awards is now in its sixteenth year and it is recognised as the outstanding annual showcase of Kent food and drink. The awards promote a wide range of categories and are open to all food and drink businesses across Kent. The campaign begins each year with these soft fruit winners and continues with the commencement of public voting between September and early January before concluding with the gala dinner in March when winners are announced.

Ramsgate Brewery's Gadd's No.3 was also nominated in the top three of the beer of the year category.



Katie & Jonny Spanjar receiving the beer of the year gong at the Taste of Kent Awards dinner

# Join up, join in, join the campaign



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## ALE of Thanet First Quarter 2020 (March-May)

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GBBF Foyer Twitter Account while articles were contributed by Beery Steve, Martin Knight, Dennis Brandrick, Peter Jaquiss,  
Graham Rickett, Danny O'Sullivan & Martin Baldwin.

Articles, letters, pub reports & news, photos and suggestions are always welcome. Please email them to:  
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# Social secretary's blog

Welcome to my eleventh blog as the Thanet CAMRA Social Secretary. I hope to inform you about the pubs and events the branch has been involved in the last few months, and inform you as to where we will be visiting next. All socials/meetings for the next few months can be found in What's Brewing, Twitter, the Thanet CAMRA website and in the current Ales of Thanet magazine.

Any member can email me with suggestions for pubs to visit. In particular, they should point out for example, when pubs in Thanet have beer festivals or maybe meet the brewer sessions or any event that members would find of interest. All members are welcome to come along to these events though you need to be a member with a current CAMRA membership card to vote at any business meeting or the AGM. I hope to include more visits to areas we don't visit as often as we should, as well as some of the many fine pubs and micros we have in Thanet. Please check the local CAMRA website to make sure events are as planned.



Our final social of the year was the Cliftonville crawl. We started at Banks Ale Winehouse where four beers were on offer. My Green Devil IPA from Oakhams at 6% and £3.50 went down well. Phillip supped an Oscar Wilde mild at £3 a pint and Martin had a



good pint of Gadd's HPA. Unfortunately our next pub, the Tap Room was closed so we moved onto the Laughing Barrel in Palm Bay.



Here we found not only four real ales but an excellent spread for the 6 of us who made it here. Julian thought his Wantsums 1381 was very good. Jill's favourite was the Wantsums More Head.



Johns Golgotha at £3.50 a pint was in great nick. All the beers here tonight were £3.50. And so ended our final social of the year. Our first social of the new year was the Hogmanay social at Gadd's brewery at the start of January. This was our best-attended social ever, with 27 members present in all. Along with eight Gadd's beers, two of which were on key keg we enjoyed cheese

and biscuits provided by the brewery and Sausage and chips courtesy of the local chippy. In general, the beers were on the



chilled side, as was the brewery tap. Martin enjoyed his Uber Hop which was a 5.1% lager style beer. Phillip thought his seasonal beer, Little Cracker at 5% was better than he had drunk elsewhere in Thanet. All the



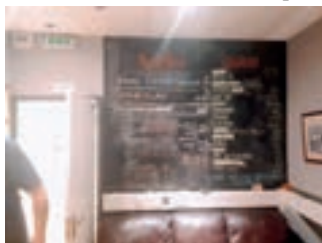
beers came with a 10% CAMRA discount, ending up at an unusual £3.16 a pint.

The brewery tap, unfortunately, closed at 5 pm, so 10 of us headed for Nauticales, a shortish walk away. Here we found Jim behind



the bar and four ales ready for our enjoyment. The Weltons Old Ale was on special at £2 a pint and 4.5% was enjoyed by most of us. Johns favourite was the locally

brewed Maiden Voyage, a 4.2% beer brewed at the Four Candles brewery coming in at £3 a pint. The Weltons Wencelas, a 4.6% beer brewed in Horsham was one of Jill's favourites at £3.50 a pint.



So ended what was probably the best social that I had planned. The next social was the visit to Sandwich more about elsewhere in this issue of AOT.

Mid-January saw us gather for the annual AGM at a new venue, the Northdown brewery in Margate. Again I couldn't make the meeting as it clashed with my visit to Lithuania. And my birthday. A good spread was laid on and four Northdown ales were on offer at £3.20 a pint. Over 35 members attended what was reported as a very successful AGM.



Our final social in January was the Broadstairs pub crawl. It was a final chance to sample the ales of some potential Good Beer Guide pubs before the top three pubs would be announced. The crawl started at The 4 Candles. Three beers all brewed in their own brewery on site were available. John enjoyed his 4.2% Bitter

and Lynne her Biscuity Pale at 3.8%. All the beers were £3.20. We noticed that at The Albion opposite there was a big crowd in for steak night. They also had 4 beers available. My Gadd's Uber Hop at 5.2% was fine and Lynne enjoyed her Norweigan Blue; beers here were £3.60 a pint.



Our next stop was The Pub; four beers were served on gravity here. Viv enjoyed his Boutilliers Meet A Mega Bear which was offered at the lower price of £3.30. Martin drank the excellent Hoppy Stout from Wantsum. This was a 4.4% beer that was £3.20 a pint. Jill thought the Time and Tide Pale Ale at 3.6% was superb. We moved on down the hill to Mind the Gap. It was a comedy night with some good comedians. Here I found my beer of the night, Black Pearl from Gadds at 6.2% and £3.50 a pint. Vic thought his Mighty Oak Jake the Snake was in fine form at 4% and £3 a pint. A couple of our group thought the comedy night was a bit much for them and moved on to try an extra pint. Jill enjoyed a pint of Range ales Golden shot. At the Neptune, Julian had a dodgy pint of Whitstable Bay which had to be changed to a Masterbrew, which was excellent.

We moved down to the beach and the Tartar Frigate. Two beers were available. Martin thought his Charles Wells Bombadier was in great form where the rest of us had Gadds no 5, which at £3.90 a



pint was the most pricey pint we had in Broadstairs tonight. Our final visit was to the 39 Steps. There were 3 beers on but they were running out fast. Lynnes Dark Star Hophead was reduced to £2.50 a pint before it ran out. Martins Timmy Taylor Landlord was very good and I tried a pint of Old Rosie



cider to finish the night off. We had managed to drink in 8 different pubs, a record since I took over as Social Secretary.

Early February saw our away day trip to Dover and the beer festival at the town hall. We started at the Lanes where I had a Quiet American, a 4.2% beer from Kent brewery. Jill enjoyed a KGB also from



Kent. All beers were under 4.5%. Unlike over at Dover town Hall where no beer was under 5%. Lots of CAMRA members were there including at least 20 Thanet members over the course of the



day. There was an unusual pricing



policy where beers were either £3.50 or 3.90 a pint depending on strength. Made it difficult to use



tokens for half-pints. My favourite beers were Goacher's - 1066 Old Ale at 6.70%, Mad Dog - Petronius DIPA at 8.5%, Kent - Twelfth Night at 7.4% and

Thornbridge / Thornbridge Hall - Opus at 8.5%. It was my first time at the festival for 3 years but it was well worth the wait.



Our final social in February was the Margate Meander which saw an excellent turnout of 17 start at the London Tavern where we



enjoyed 3 real ales. The Brentwood Gold was the most popular beer on offer though John thought the Brentwood Ordinary wasn't bad either. All beers tonight were on at £3.40 a pint.

Our next port of call was the Two Halves. Four beers were offered



here. I enjoyed my Mighty Oak Cascade, a 6.2% beer at £3.50 a pint. Graham wasn't so keen on his Dorking Red IPA at 5% but the Black Noise, a porter from Dorking went down much better. We had heard good things about a new pub that had opened called the George and Heart so we



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*Thanet CAMRA Runner Up Pub of the Year 2018 & Runner Up Micropub of the Year 2019*



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assembled there. They seemed



shocked to see so many customers arrive at the same time but they



coped admirably. They were serving four beers all from the North-down

brewery, three on KeyKeg and £5 a pint and one on cask at £3.50. Steve enjoyed his Reginald Perrin, the only cask ale whereas Mike thought that the 6% Hancock Shaker was his beer of



the night. It was indeed delicious, though expensive.

As some moved on for their bus home the remainder headed for The Lifeboat which had a seven-piece band playing some excellent music. Three ales were on offer plus numerous KeyKegs; my

Kent Breakfast Stout at 4.2% and £3.40 a pint hit the spot and Nick liked his American Pale Ale from Romney, at 5% and £3.80 a pint. The music here brought in a big crowd to this small pub, with the band taking up quite a bit of room.

It



was a most enjoyable way to end what was a very successful night in Margate.

That's it for this issue,

Cheers

Danny, Social Secretary

## Branch Diary

All branch activities have been postponed or cancelled for the the time begin due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Please check the branch facebook or twitter feed in the coming weeks for information on when the branch will be recommencing branch activities.

Dates and times are correct at time of printing but may possibly change and additional events many be added so follow the branch on Facebook & Twitter or on the website to keep up to date.

## **15th Thanet Easter Beer & Cider Festival – 10th & 11th April 2020**

Following the governments recent advise and communications from CAMRA - the Campaign for Real Ale - we will not be holding our Easter Beer & Cider Festival on the planned dates - we are working with the Margate Winter Gardens to see if there is an opportunity to hold the festival later this year (after all we have quite a few 2020 souvenir glasses to use!!).

I am sure this is no surprise to anybody.

We will be in touch when we have any news on our facebook page or twitter feed.



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## An afternoon drinking in Sandwich

I had been to Sandwich a few times to enjoy the delights of this medieval town but never to sample its beers. The Maidstone branch do a bus trip each week, so when I saw that they were heading for Sandwich one Monday afternoon in January it seemed a good opportunity to have a joint social and see what ale's Sandwich had to offer. Our 11 minute train journey to Sandwich wasn't quite what it seemed as we jumped on one that headed for Canterbury by mistake, and then had to run through the city centre to get the bus to Sandwich, adding an extra £4.40 to the journey; however the Maidstone mob were on the same bus. Seven odd pounds buys you a ticket that takes you around most of Kent, so if you set off early you can travel a good distance for a reasonable fare.



The first pub, the eight of us stopped at was the Red Cow, Sandwich's only pub in the current Good Beer Guide. This was a quality pub with many not only sampling the beers all of which were £3.90 to £4 a pint but enjoying some tasty looking food.

Historically, this pub was the watering hole for market traders in years gone by. With its tiled floors and exposed beams it had a comfortable and traditional country pub

ambience to it. There were five ales on including one from the Ramsgate brewery and one cider. Charles enjoyed the Christmas beer, Rocking Rudolf at 4.5%; Andrew had a fine Timmy Taylors Boltmaker and I enjoyed an excellent Gadds Uberhop.



We moved on towards the New Inn. We were almost enticed inside by a sign saying all beers at £2.95. However when I found out the two beers on offer were Courage Best and Gloombar the offer didn't seem so appealing. So we made our way to The Crispin Inn which had a back entrance that led to the river. This ancient public house can be found by the medieval Barbican and old toll bridge. Its low ceilings, wooden beams and brick walls create an old world feel, providing a congenial



ambience for locals and tourists alike. There were four real ales here including one house beer from the Mad Cat Brewery called

Crispin ale. Most of the beers here were £3.90 a pint. Jeff and Andy both enjoyed their Crispin ale whilst my Harvey's Best went down well. We were heading to the Smugglers micro pub, but the hours given in What Pub were wrong and we found



the pub to be closed on a Monday so we headed to The George and Dragon. This 15th-century pub and restaurant is tucked away in the back streets of this Cinque Port, just a few minutes-walk from the town centre. Inside, the wood-floored bar area with its beamed ceilings and a real fire in winter gives this pub and restaurant a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere. Four ales were being offered and a few locals were eating a drinking here including Dom







from the Steph and Dom show and Gogglebox. The most popular beer was the Pig and Porter Stone Free at 4.3% and £3.90. Both John and Lynne thought it was in very good condition. All the beers here were that price. Andrew enjoyed his Dark Star Hophead and insisted it was as good a pint as when it was brewed in Sussex.

That was it as far as the Maidstone Branch was concerned and they headed off by bus to The Furlongs Ale

house in Faversham. What was left of us decided to try the Hoff and Huffkin. Recently opened following refurbishment, this restaurant and wine bar has a gastropub-style interior providing a smart but casual dining and drinking experience. Two local Gadd's ales were served from the cask along with several craft ales. Food is locally sourced, with the Kentish Huffkin, a type of bread roll, featuring strongly on the menu. This was the most expensive bar we drank in. Lynne enjoyed her craft beer from the Curious brewery in Ashford, Winter Ale at 5.4%. This came in at a pricey £5.20 but we both enjoyed it. However Julian's Gadd's no 5 at £4.50 a pint was not in good order and had a vinegar taste. We were not sure whether it was a real ale or not and the staff weren't keen on replacing it as they said it had only gone on last week. On that note we thought it was time to leave and this time get the correct train back to Ramsgate after a mostly enjoyable day.



Danny O' Sullivan



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## **CAMRA Press Releases**

### **New research shows the benefit of cutting tax on beer sold in pubs over supermarket**

**by Madeleine Hardman**

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has launched a new piece of research conducted by Europe Economics into the impact of introducing a preferential rate of duty for draught beer.

The latest report highlights the benefits of such a measure – which is in place in Australia – as it would allow the Government to lower tax on beer sold in pubs as compared to supermarkets. CAMRA argues that this move will encourage people to enjoy a pint in the social, community setting of the pub which will, in turn, encourage responsible alcohol consumption.

The research, undertaken by Europe Economics, models several options on how much the proposals could cost and was launched at an event yesterday in the House of Commons. Key findings include:

- Cutting draught beer duty is an effective way of creating additional employment in the on trade.
- A reduction would help move consumption from the off trade to the on trade. Cutting draught beer duty by 5% would create £26.6m of additional spending on draught beer, and 38% of this increase would be beer that would have been consumed in bottles or cans before.
- A 5% reduction in draught beer duty would be cost-beneficial for the Exchequer compared to freezing or cutting beer, spirit and cider duties. A move to specifically support pubs with a preferential rate of duty was previously not possible under EU legislation, but can now be considered as the British Government plans for its future outside of the European Union. Commenting on the launch of the report, CAMRA National Chairman, Nik Antona said:

“A preferential rate of beer duty on draught beer is a radical proposal that will really help to save our pubs.

“This research is an important piece of work which demonstrates how much it would cost for the Government to take real action and show their commitment to a Great British institution. “We are delighted at the support shown by MPs



today which will help us keep the pressure on the Chancellor ahead of the Budget.”

Giles Watling MP, who sponsored the event in Parliament and is backing the proposal said:

“Pubs are important community assets and we need to do all we can to protect them. Unfortunately, previous freezes in beer duty, while welcome, have also allowed the supermarket to continue undercutting the pub with cheap alcohol. That was because of Single Market rules, which equalised rates between pubs and supermarkets.

“Now we have left the E.U., I want to change that and differentiate the rate of duty so that it finally benefits and supports our pubs.

“The event in parliament allowed us to educate Parliamentarians on this proposal and I am glad so many colleagues took the time to show their support.”

Pau Salsas, Managing Consultant of Europe Economics said:

“Our research underlines the value of the on-trade sector in supporting jobs in the UK, and how job gains can be achieved with a modest reduction in the duty rate applied to draught beer.”

Full report is available

here: [https://camra.org.uk/campaign\\_resources/eur-ope-economics-report-the-impact-of-cutting-draught-beer-duty/](https://camra.org.uk/campaign_resources/eur-ope-economics-report-the-impact-of-cutting-draught-beer-duty/)

**CAMRA comments on Brains selling 40 pubs**

Commenting on the decision by S.A. Brain & Co. Ltd to dispose of 40 of their pubs CAMRA National Chairman Nik Antona said:

“It is vital that these 40 Brains pubs are marketed as going concerns, so that different pub operators have a chance to take them on. Local communities and pub staff deserve rapid reassurances that everything will be done to secure the future of these pubs.

“CAMRA are also calling on the Welsh Government to urgently bring forward long-promised changes to planning laws to give communities a chance to save their local pub.

“Giving people a say through the planning system if their pub is being sold, converted into another use like housing or is facing demolition would give pubs better protections and a chance to thrive under new ownership.”

**CAMRA comments on the “Unlocking Pubs’ Potential” report by the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group**

Commenting on the release of the report “Unlocking Pubs’ Potential” by the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group, Nik Antona, CAMRA National Chairman said:

“It’s great to see a report come out of Parliament that is so unashamedly positive about the contribution of pubs to our economy and society. Pubs are a force for good and we absolutely echo the calls for the Chancellor to ensure this continues to be the case by cutting the tax burden on our beloved locals – through beer duty and business rates.

“At CAMRA we believe that the best way to reduce beer duty is to introduce a lower rate of tax on draught beer – which is sold on tap, in pubs. Coupled with fundamental reform of business rates, this will encourage consumption of alcohol in a supervised setting, bring investment and employment to high streets and village centres, and allow everyone to take advantage of the social and wellbeing benefits of thriving community pubs.”

The full “Unlocking Pubs’ Potential” report can be downloaded from [www.beergroupinquiry.com](http://www.beergroupinquiry.com).

**CAMRA comments on appointment of Fiona Dickie as Pubs Code Adjudicator**

Commenting on the appointment of Fiona Dickie as Pubs Code Adjudicator, CAMRA National Chairman Nik Antona said:

“CAMRA congratulates Fiona Dickie on her appointment as Pubs Code Adjudicator. We look forward to working with her to ensure the Pubs Code is fit for purpose and works for the benefit of tenants.

“Our research has shown that the Pubs Code isn’t delivering on its aims to support licensees. The yet uncompleted Pubs Code Review is the opportunity to make changes to the Pubs Code Regulations. This will help ensure that tied tenants are no worse off than free of tie tenants, and to stop pub companies circumventing the Code.”

**Tickets now on sale for the Great British Beer Festival**

Tickets have just gone on sale for Britain’s largest beer event of the year, the Great British Beer Festival.

Taking place from 4-8 August 2020 at Olympia London, the festival will see over 500 breweries under one roof including brews from Britain and beyond, ciders, perries, wines and gins.

The famous craft beer section will be returning for its second year, along with the very popular Discovery Zone to give festival-goers the chance to learn more about their favourite drink by meeting brewers on-site, exploring quality ingredients and taking part in comparative taste testing.

As usual, street food, live music, pub games and entertainment will all be in abundance, as well the announcement of the Champion Beer of Britain on the festival trade day (4 August).

250 Early Bird tickets for each day are now available offering visitors the chance to scoop a £2 discount off advance ticket price, which is £11 for Tuesday to Friday and £9 for Saturday. A season ticket is just £29 for entry into all sessions and VIP packages and group discounts are available. Festival organiser Catherine Tonry says: “We will be building on the success of last year’s festival to provide more of what our visitors ask for – fantastic brews and a wonderful experience! Mark your calendars for the largest beer event in the calendar and join us for this year’s Great British Beer Festival.”



With May being the month that CAMRA celebrates the beer style Mild I'm republishing this article from a past Ale of Thanet

## Beer Styles

### Mild Ale

A hundred years ago, during the height of the Industrial Revolution, when manual work was plentiful and arduous in factory, field or pit, men

would restore themselves with a pint or twelve of Mild. Most popular in the North West and Midlands, this sweetish, dark ale conjures up images of old men in cloth caps (with ferrets and black pudding in the Yorkshire version) talking and smoking aimlessly for hours in ancient pubs. Since the decline of the manufacturing industries, of all the styles, Mild's rise and fall has been the most dramatic.

But what of the origins of Mild Ale? During the mid 18th century, Porter was the beer style for the masses, its strong, dark and murky depths well hidden from the drinker in pewter tankards. Malting technology (the art & science of turning barley seed into the brewers malt by part germination and subsequent kilning) dictated that malted barley was brown in colour, due to the use of wood in the kiln, and thus, all beer was brown at the time. Porter was also aged (which gave it a slightly lactic, sour flavour); the lack of re-fridgeration encouraged the majority of beer to be brewed during the winter, favouring long maturation times. With the rapid growth of the industrial towns and cities, supply often fell short of demand and brewers were forced to brew 'stop-gap' beer late in the summer to see them through. This beer was characterised by a cleaner, fresher flavour (it had to drunk young since its keeping qualities had suffered due to it being brewed in warmer conditions) and the masses began to get a taste for it, dubbing it Mild.

During the nineteenth century, the malting industry became more commercialised and adopted the use of coke instead of wood. Coke burnt cleaner and allowed maltsters to produce pale malts in great quantity, economically and at a high quality - brewers would now use 'patent' dark malts (black, roasted) to colour their beers.

Glass manufacturing technology had also made great headways, enlightening the Porter drinker to the previously hidden 'soup' concoction and highlighting the visual benefits of the new 'pale' ales. So the rich switched to Pale Ale and the poor to Mild. But this ale was twice the strength of Mild today – in the late 19th century, the average strength was around 7% abv, dropping a % or two by the early 20th century and undergoing, as all beer did at the time, a significant drop in strength during the first world war. By the end of the second world war, the average strength had declined to around 3%!

Towards the end of WWII, the admiralty commissioned three brewing ships to serve 'our boys' in far-flung corners of the world and although only one ever sailed and brewed, it chose Mild as the style. Mild was still the mainstay of the British brewing industry and remained so until the effects of the swinging, modern sixties were felt.

This fabulously drinkable, lightly hopped, dark rich ale retains many followers in the old industrial heartlands of England and Wales and, through CAMRA's efforts in recent years, is enjoying a mini-renaissance amongst the more enlightened ale drinkers of a new generation.

So look out for special promotions on Mild in your favourite ale house during May and drink a toast to the hard working men and women who got through the Industrial Revolution supping a goodly amount of the stuff – the binge drinkers of their time!





## **A heritage pub that has been in the family for 250 years is named the best in the country**

A perennial gem of a pub that has been in the family for 250 years has been named the best in the country in CAMRA's Pub of the Year competition.

The Bell Inn in Aldworth, Berkshire scooped the top prize after judges praised its strong community focus, relaxed ambience and great beer. The only pub in Berkshire with a Grade-II listed interior, it last won the coveted Pub of the Year title nearly 30 years ago to the day.

CAMRA's Pub of the Year organiser Ben Wilkinson said:

"The judges were impressed with how a stranger entering the pub was treated like a regular straight away. It's clear that the local customers use the pub as a community

centre as well as a place to drink, and the warm welcome and knowledgeable staff made us feel right at home. Nothing can beat the combination of good beer, great food and warm heritage pub."

The Bell Inn last scooped the award three decades ago, when it was run by the current owner's parents, Heather and Ian Macaulay. Her son, Hugh, was delighted to see the award come home again after so many years.

Manager Hugh Macaulay said: "The Bell Inn has been in my family for 250 years and my mother and father were running it when we last won the award. It's a wonderful thing to be recognised for driving quality year after year. Not much has changed because we have kept our interior unspoilt all this time, and intend to keep it that way for years to come."

Pubs in the competition are selected by CAMRA volunteers and judged on their atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, community focus and the quality of the beer. Runners-up in the competition include the Swan With Two Necks in Pendleton, the George & Dragon in Hudswell and the Red Lion in Preston, Hertfordshire.



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**"Great beer brewed by the sea"**

# Boozing by bus across the Baltics

## Part 1

After my last visit to Estonia two years ago, I decided to return to see if I could find cheap quality beer outside of the Estonian capital Tallinn and in the neighbouring countries of Latvia and Lithuania. I had read that the cheapest beer to be found in the EU was in Lithuania. The tax rates on beer had gone up and beer had become unaffordable for many

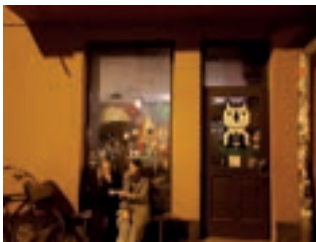


locals in Estonia. But was it like that in the other Baltic states? We got a return Easyjet flight for a bargain £48, a tram into the city for 1.5 euro and a Lux bus from



Tallinn to the Latvian capital Riga. The journey was just over 4 hours and cost 11 euros. I had been to Riga 4 times before, twice before they joined the EU in 2004 and can remember those wonderful days of 40p a pint. Our Hotel was The Viktoria, about 20 minutes

walk from the old town and at only £17 a night for a 3\* hotel. The first pub we found was a bar inconspicuously located on a quiet



residential street north of the Old Town, Alus Muiza which had a cosy, wooden interior and 10 Latvian beers on tap. I had a DIPA beer, Crocodile Tears an 8% strong but sweet and hazy beer which was very hoppy. It came in



at 4.2 euros a half litre. Lynne had a Mzavas, a lager style beer at 4.6% which was 2.10 euros for a third of a litre. We next tried a Brengulu Gasais, a 5.6% Light and very sweet beer. We also tried



the dark version, Brengulu Jumsais which came in at the same strength and a price of 2.60 euros a litre. We found this bar to be one of the best and most packed bars

in Riga and returned here 3 times. Alus Muiza is a popular beer bar which stocks a good range of Latvian beer from the likes of Malduguns and Indie Janis.

Alus Muiza also offers takeaway for their draught selection and we saw a couple of people merrily wandering off with plastic bottles filled with their choice of beer. It also had the benefit of being across the road from a pizza place which we enjoyed one night. Unfortunately, they didn't sell any beer. And kept us waiting 40 minutes for a pizza.



The next place we visited was Gauja, an upmarket but reasonably cheap cafe style bar by Riga standards which was a 5-minute walk away from Alus Muiza. Four local beers were available here. Lynne tried a dark lager called Tumsan, at 2.70 euro and 5.6%. My beer was Tervetes, a sweet, light beer at 2.90 euro and 5.3%. Good soft rock music was played in the background.

The next day we explored the Old town. Back in the 90s, I spent many an hour in the old town where the bars were plentiful and prices low. 50p a pint was not



uncommon, though you would have to pay nearer a £ when I returned at the turn of the Millennium. However, things have changed. Low-cost airlines have brought in stag parties from the EU and the days of cheap old town beer has disappeared. We



went into one of the new bars, Mr and Mrs. The cheapest beers were 4.8 euros for half a litre and their beer of the day was a London Pride at 6 euros! We weren't surprised this lovely bar was empty. So we left too.

Another interesting bar was Easy Beer. Easy beer is somewhat of a novelty bar where patrons get to pour their own beers. It's a pretty simple concept (thus the name, Easy Beer): get a card from the



waitress, grab a glass, tap your card to activate the tap and fill your glass with a local beer of your choice. Pour a little or pour a

lot – it's fun to be your own bartender! However, we found 6.5 euros to pour a half litre of a 5% pale ale just a little off-putting so we moved on.

Just around the corner, we found Peters Brew House. The sign on the door told us of the exciting



beers we would find within. The Mezpils Tumsais, a dark home-brew came in at 4.5 euros a half litre and the light version the same price. However, we didn't have



time to sample these delights and moved on again.

We moved out of the old town and to a bar near our hotel. This was Taka Bar. Stemming from the

land-lord's interest in beer, Taka is the place to come to discover the most diverse range of



beer brewed in Latvia. Brews concocted by small breweries enjoy pride of place here. Sometimes you'll find a new beer on tap that has not yet been given a name,

giving every visitor the chance to discover unexpected pearls from the kingdom of beer. At Taka, you

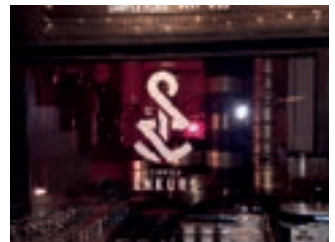
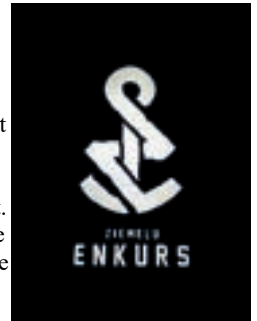


will also find out everything about Latvia's small breweries, because Taka's barmen not only pour beer, but they are also experts on the subject. This bar was about a 15-minute walk from our hotel. I had a Tinte Imperial Stout, which at 4.40 euros and 10.5% packed a punch. Lynne had a Tropical, a DIPA which was a hazy beer and very hoppy. This was 4.2 euros and 7.3%. Many beers here were from the smallest breweries,

sometimes even varieties that don't even have a name yet.

There are also some live performances of alternative music, film screenings and board games,

though not during our visit. Our last stop was Ziemeļu Enkurs (Matīsa Street 8, 12 minutes from our hotel), a small brewery and





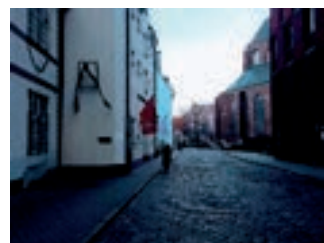
brewpub on historical site of the former Kuntzendorff Brewery.



Ziemelu manufac- tures artisan beer with only natural quality ingredi- ents, and the pub, that is the

ginger. This was 4 euros for a 6.1% beer. The porter on offer was

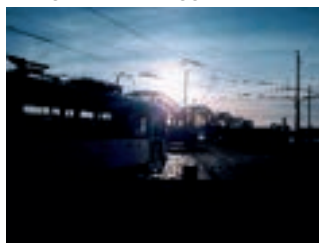
Astonka an extrem ely lively 4.7% dark ale at 4.5 euros a half litre. Here I will end part 1 of



Chancellor freezes or lowers beer duty in the UK, it is rarely passed onto the customer. We went out of town on the trams to see if we could find any decent boozers.

newest of Riga Beer District, serves also meals to be enjoyed with beer. There is a cosy roof-top terrace with views over the former brewery buildings. Ziemelu enkurs (The Northern Anchor) was established as a logical continuation of its landlords' love for beer and their experience in home brewing. Ziemelu enkurs offers strong and intoxicating homemade beer, which is brewed using natural and

our Baltic by bus tour. Had I found bargain booze in Latvia? Well not in Riga. An alcohol tax war had broken out between Baltic neighbours Latvia and Estonia, who are among the EU's biggest consum-



ers of alcohol.

First, a 25% alcohol duty cut came into force in Estonia on July 1, in a bid to stop people from travelling to Latvia to buy a cheap drink. But Latvia, keen to protect its booze trade on the border with Estonia, made a 15% reduction of its own.

It's a temporary cut until February 29 this year that means Latvia remains cheaper for alcohol than Estonia. However, I have to admit that just as when the

However, after spending 45 mins

on some trams all we found out in the suburbs were off sales for alcohol in super- markets. It seems Latvians



like so many others were drinking their beer at home. This was in contrast to our trip to Prague

where we found many a decent pub full of locals at the end of



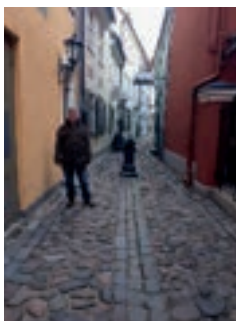
quality ingredients only. I started off with a 9.7% Imperial Stout. This was superb and came in at 5.50 a half litre. Lynne tried a Kviesitis, a wheat beer which was cloudy but sweet, at 3.5 euro for a third. She also tried a Zvejnieka Dels, a spicy beer with hints of



most tram lines.

Danny O'Sullivan.

Part 2 in the next edition of AOT.





## CAMRA partners with UK brewers to help beer-lovers learn more about their favourite drink

CAMRA will once again partner with British brewers to help beer and cider lovers learn more about their favourite drink at CAMRA festivals up and down the country.

The ‘Discovery Zones’, which debuted last



year, give festival-goers the chance to meet local brewers, sample comparative beer and cider tastings to

calibrate their senses, and explore fresh brewing and cider making ingredients on the floors.

The programme was heralded as a great success in 2019, with seven festivals taking part in the pilot and 45 brewers lending their time to help visitors learn more about their brews. The Discovery Zones also provided space for informative talks and panel sessions, curated by the likes of award-winning beer writer and broadcaster Emma Inch and cider educator Gabe Cook, as well as collaborations with not-for-profits such as the LGBTQ+ Queer Brewing Project.

Learning & Discovery Manager Alex Metcalfe says: “I think the most important takeaway



from last year is that the sky is the limit.

From running a ‘Re-Think Cider’ event in Manchester to delving into issues

around gender and equality in Cambridge, there is a real thirst for greater knowledge and discourse about the beer and cider industry.

“There are no stupid questions at our Discovery Zones. Each event is run by both volunteers and expert brewers, and we all learn a lot from whoever turns up on the day – it’s very much a two-way process.



That’s why I’m so excited to see so many festivals take the initiative forward in 2020.”

This year, the Discover Zones will be featured at the following festivals:

- Thanet Easter Beer Festival (10-11 April)

- Great Welsh Beer Festival (22-25 April)

- Belfast Beer & Cider Festival (6-9 May)

- Cambridge Beer Festival (18-23 May)

- Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival (7-11 July)

- Great British Beer Festival (4-8 August)

- St Albans Beer & Cider Festival (23-26 September)

- Ayrshire Real Ale Festival (1-3 October)

- Nottingham Robin Hood Beer & Cider Festival (7-10 October)

- BBC Good Food Show (26-29 November)

Visitors can simply stop by the stand when visiting the festival to get involved.



CAMRA is currently looking for coordinators to help run these Discovery Zones across its festivals, so if you think you can help get in touch by contacting [alex.metcalfe@camra.org.uk](mailto:alex.metcalfe@camra.org.uk)



## Pub occurrences

Compiled by Julian Stone

### Birchington on Sea

**Waves Bar, 2 Hengist Road, CT7 9QP**, cask ale now unavailable.

### Broadstairs

**Crown of Broadstairs, formerly Ye Olde Crown Inn, 23 High Street, CT10 1LP**, renovated and reopened with 2 cask beers.

### Cliftonville

**Tap Room, 4 Northdown Parade, Price's Avenue, CT9 2NR**, closed possibly only temporarily at time of going to press. A crowd-funding page has been created to help the venue survive.



### Margate

**Britannia, Fort Hill, CT9 1HH**, reopened in February with a new business plan and much reduced bar area footprint. There are 1 or 2 cask ales available. Its lease is available.

**Mulberry Tree, 53 Dane Road, CT9 2AE**, following external works on the 170+ year old building it earned a town pride award from the Margate Civic Society. The certificate hangs on the right hand wall as you go in. 1 or 2 real ale are always available.

### Minster and Monkton

**Corner House, 42 Station Road, Minster-in-Thanet, CT12 4BZ**, handpumps removed and no longer selling cask ale. There are 2 tap beers from Curious Brewery available.

**Saddler, 7 Monkton Road, CT12 4EA**, reopened after being closed for a short while. It now has a temporary landlord and the lease for the pub is up for sale.



**White Stag, 70 Monkton Street, CT12 4JF**, the pub has been closed and is currently subject to works to build a number of dwellings at the rear. If the pub will reopen and in what format is not entirely clear.

### Ramsgate

**Bedford Inn, 29 Westcliff Road, CT11 9JP**, reopened after a refurbishment, the Bedford is now in a new and more contemporary incarnation, however only font beers are currently available. Good luck to

Grant in running the pub.

**Chilton, 187 Pegwell Road, CT11 0LY**, with notices in the windows saying the pub would be open for Christmas 2019 hopes were high, this was not to be and the pub remains closed and its future remains uncertain.



**Coastal Bar, 37 Harbour Street, CT11 8HA**, a newly opened bar and restaurant run and owned by Christian Ferris. There are no imminent plans for real ale.



Any pub news pleas send to [aot@mail.co.uk](mailto:aot@mail.co.uk) - with pub news in the subject box please/

### Guess the pub?

1. Mechanical Elephant, Margate
2. Lifeboat, Margate
3. Hoveling Boat, Ramsgate
4. New Inn, Minster

5. Red Lion, Ramsgate
6. Magnet, Broadstairs
7. Mind the Gap, Broadstairs
8. Royal Victoria Pavilion, Ramsgate
9. Conqueror, Ramsgate



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*Spirits ~ Wine ~ Soft Drinks*  
*Hot Drinks ~ Bar Snacks*

~ OPENING HOURS ~

Monday - CLOSED

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday - 11am-2pm & 6pm-10pm

Friday - 11am-11pm

Saturday - 11am-2pm & 5pm-11pm

Sunday - 12pm-6pm

(Hours subject to change)



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**SUNDAY TELEGRAPH**

*"They look after their customers as well as they look after their beer"*

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**THE MICROPUB GUIDE**



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