



# East Kent Drinker

North East Kent CAMRA branch news

SPRING 2026 ISSUE 6



Kevin Costello, of the Haywain pub celebrates 20 years as Landord



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## Welcome

East Kent's beer and pub culture has deep roots, shaped by tradition, community, and resilience over centuries. Our pubs are both precious and vulnerable; a legacy that can easily slip away. This issue of *East Kent Drinker* offers two views of our lost and vanishing local brewery and pub history.

In addition to reflecting on our history, we also celebrate the people and pubs of the region that keep good beer – and cider – alive and available. The Haywain in Bramling marks 20 years of providing excellent beer and food. We also briefly tour the local gastropubs and the beers they offer. From Bulgarian craft beer to fifty years of the Swale CAMRA branch, there should be something to entertain and inform you in these pages.

We regularly report on the difficulties facing our pubs; major increases in costs and falling custom. For once, alongside the predictable toll of pub closures, there are some hints of good news with new pub openings – notably in Thanet.

Whatever else you do this spring, please do make sure that you get out and support your local pub. If we fail to use our pubs then we will surely lose them.



## Events diary

Follow the links or scan the code for the latest information:

**CANTERBURY, HERNE BAY, AND WHITSTABLE BRANCH:**

[canterbury.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=264780](http://canterbury.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=264780)



**SWALE BRANCH:**

[swale.camra.org.uk/diary](http://swale.camra.org.uk/diary)



## Contents

- 4 Pub and Brewery News** – news from around East Kent
- 12 Events Calendar** – beery events around the region, and further afield, over the coming months
- 14 Swale Branch 50th Anniversary** – John Sissons celebrates a landmark for Swale CAMRA
- 16 Twenty years at the Haywain, Bramling** – landlord Kevin Costello celebrates his anniversary.
- 19 What to do if your local pub is under threat** – James Ross provides some practical advice.
- 22 Historic Pubs** – Brina Snipson seeks out the heritage in our local pubs
- 26 2026 CAMRA Winter Champion Beer of Britain** – Glyn Parry relates a day in the life of a national beer judge
- 28 CAMRA Cider and Perry** – Carolyn Gibbons shows us where to find real cider in East Kent
- 30 Gastrobeers** – Gill Keay trawls our local gastropubs to check out their beer offerings
- 32 Bulgaria's Hidden Beer Haven** – David Lindridge discovers some excellent beer in distant parts
- 34 Advertising Short Measure** – Steve Bury takes task with pubs serving short pints
- 37 The Vanishing Footprint of our Brewery Heritage** – Rory Kehoe seeks out East Kent's brewery history
- 38 Mobility** – Gill Keay examines access issues for disabled beer lovers

**THANET BRANCH:**  
[thanet.camra.org.uk/diary](http://thanet.camra.org.uk/diary)



**DOVER, DEAL AND SANDWICH BRANCH:**  
[dds.camra.org.uk/diary](http://dds.camra.org.uk/diary)



**KENT CAMRA BRANCHES:**  
[kent.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=196760](http://kent.camra.org.uk/viewnode.php?id=196760)



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Broad Oak Colour, Units A & B  
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[www.broadoakcolour.com](http://www.broadoakcolour.com)

East Kent Drinker is published on behalf of the Canterbury, Herne Bay & Whitstable, Swale, Thanet and Dover, Deal & Sandwich branches of CAMRA.

CAMRA is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and registered in England; company no. 1270286. Registered office: 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 4LW.

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## Pub News

### Swale Branch

The Swale pubs have all commented that the start of the year has been quiet. Dry January and recovering from Christmas and New Year festivities often leads to a quiet month.

Sadly, **The Playa** on the Leas in Minster, Sheppey has closed due to untenable trading circumstances. There is no further information on the future of this pub. Hopefully a buyer will be found and the pub will be able to continue to serve the community of Minster.

**The Long Hop** near Key Street is now a curry house, no real ale it only has lager available

In good news, the **Admiral's Arm** in Queenborough has new owners. Chris and Rachel Colliers had a final goodbye to their locals on January 31st. The new owners, Nic and Sue Gray, are taking on their first pub and will initially keep things as they have been.



The Admiral's Arm, Queenborough

### Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay Branch

**The Royal Oak** in Blean has two applications from two people, one is for a licence and the other to use the car park for a car wash site. No decisions have yet been made by the council.

**The Two Sawyers** in Woolage Green. Sadly, the landlord passed away on January 29th. The future of this delightful village pub is unknown at this time. Hopefully we will have more news in the next edition.

**Rodneys Head**, North Street Herne Bay. The decision to change the use of this pub and convert it to 7 flats and a micropub, is still ongoing. They have asked to

build a two-storey extension at the back.

**Swan Inn**, Sturry. Having originally proposed keeping and extending the pub to provide accommodation in 2021, owners King's School changed their plans to convert the Swan to an education center and nursery in 2023 and aving originally permission has now been granted.

**Old Roman Oyster Beds**, Reculver. A decision has yet to be made to convert this warehouse into a microbrewery, visitor facilities and have a building extension. This is a proposed relocation of Whitstable Brewery from Grafty Green to Reculver.

**The Phoenix**, Canterbury. This pub on Old Dover Road closed on January 24th with no successor in place. It is available to let on a 'free of tie' lease at a rent of £25,000 pa and the owner is willing to invest. Nomination by CAMRA to Canterbury City Council to list the pub as an Asset of Community Value has been granted.

**The Kings Head** Wincheap. The ongoing news on this pub is positive. It was sold at auction for £265,000 to a London buyer who intends to reopen it after repairs and refurbishment, which we understand have started.



The King's Head, Wincheap

### Thanet Branch NEW OPENINGS

**Henry's**, High Street, Margate, previously a long-standing electrical shop of the same name. This new pub has a strong Indian vibe and includes early Bollywood film posters. The Indianesque decor is contrasted at the front of the pub with early British Railways colours and antique waiting room benches. It is run by Paul Singh, Colin Barber and Philip Evans. Cask ales are available.



Henry's, Margate

**Margate Beach Club**, Albert Terrace, Margate, this already existing venue has been re-imagined but it remains a fully inclusive venue and safe space for the LGBTQIA+ community and is open to all. It is a bar, and up the stairs there is a feeling of casual luxury. ►

# The ANCHOR INN at WINGHAM

With its historic interior, this family-run traditional pub is friendly and inclusive, and we welcome walkers and dogs.

Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter is always on tap, and we serve three changing cask ales, usually including one from Kent.

Some favourites include Oakham Ales, Gadd's Ramsgate Brewery, Wantsum and Long Man.

*Our Cask Marque is \*\*\*\* Excellent!*

As well as excellent beers in the bar, the restaurant serves traditional pub food, bar snacks and our acclaimed Sunday roast.

We're well known as a serious music venue presenting original acts from all over the world. We also host quiz nights, clubs, social, theatre and charity events.

Our function room/arts centre offers a great performance centre and community resource.

The large garden is a welcome and relaxing place for enjoying those lazy summer days, Sunday afternoon music or a game of Bat and Trap or Petanque.

We are on the 43 bus route.

[www.theanchoratwingham.com](http://www.theanchoratwingham.com)

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Currently it opens in the evenings but longer hours are planned when the holiday season starts. It is the brainchild of Neville Cavendish and Lee Sewell who ran the nearby Northern Belle. It is not a cask ale venue.

**Wellington**, Old Town, Margate, a pub surviving from the late 1800s, last operated as a pub in 2010. Subsequently it became a kitchen and cookware shop on the ground floor, then a bistro. It is now back as a higher end food-led traditional pub run by Billy Stock and Ellie Topham. No cask ales at the moment.

#### CLOSED

**Café G**, Margate. This licensed cafe sold bottled ales from Wantsum brewery plus various keg lagers. The site is set to become a restaurant with a new owner.

**Northern Belle**, Margate, the pub was closed in December and was put up for sale with an asking price of up to £485,000. Recently it was marked as sold on estate agents' listing pages.

With the start of the new year there have been some changes of management to report – all of these venues sell cask ale:

**Australian Arms**, Ramsgate, is now run by Adam and Stephen Kirby-Brown. It is their first pub and their backgrounds are hospitality and retail. The interior has been painted in a muted gold and green to reflect Australia's national sporting colours.

**Bake and Alehouse**, Westgate on Sea. New first-time landlord Glyn Marsh who lives locally has taken on this award winning micropub.

**Bell**, St Nicholas at Wade, the new campanologists are Michael and Helen Johnson. The Bell has been in the *Good Beer Guide* thirteen times, starting in 1974.

**Belle Vue**, Pegwell, remains Shepherd Neame but is now run by Beach Street Restaurants Ltd which has five other pub/restaurant venues, all in Kent.

**Churchill Tavern**, is now managed by Geoff Torr. Amongst other venues Geoff has previously managed the once famous Brodie's brewpub, the William IV in Leyton, East London.

**The Falstaff**, Ramsgate, is now managed by Stuart Bleazard who previously managed the nearby Churchill Tavern.

**Jolly Farmer**, Manston, is now managed by Lea and Clare Milsom.

**The Fox and the Hound**, Margate, this was Sheldons which closed late last year. It has a new look, new name, and new landlord – Jonathon Wood.

Cask ale is not available.

**Mulberry Tree**, Margate. Aaron Apps is the new landlord. This is Aaron's first pub. Having run some businesses previously, he says he is supported by family who are in the trade.

**Vale Tavern**, Ramsgate, as predicted in the last issue of *EKD* the Vale re-opened in December. It is run by Rick King whose previous pubs include the Fountain of Ale in Sittingbourne, Popeye's Coastal Bar on an Isle of Sheppey holiday park and quite a few other places. An outdoor wrestling spectacular will be held in the pub garden on 4th July.

#### Dover Deal and Sandwich Branch

**DEAL:** The quirky wine bar, **Le Pinardier**, has reopened, after expanding into the adjacent property.

**The Farrier** recently celebrated its 10th anniversary as a popular community pub.

**DOVER:** **The Priory Hotel** has opened under new management, serving cask ale and food.

Steve & Alyson, at **The Fox**, Temple Ewell, celebrated their 25th anniversary as publicans. They are hosting the Rotary Club beer festival at the beginning of May.

**The Red Lion**, Dover is proving to be a good outlet for Kentish beer & Ciders.

**SANDWICH:** **Karmi**, a new Cypriot wine bar on The Butchery, opened on Friday, 27th March.

Photos on Facebook, show that work on the **Fleur de Lis** is progressing apace, with handpulls on the bar.

**King's Arm Hotel** is our Winter Pub of the Season.

**WALMER:** **The Berry's** application for change of use to residential has been granted, leaving the future of one of the branch's leading real ale pubs in grave doubt.

There's a new owner at the **Freed Man**, where a recent visit showed it to be as welcoming as before.

**RURAL:** We are expecting a new pub, **Calif & A Half**, to open in Lower Goldstone, near Ash, in the summer.

New publicans have taken over the **St. Crispin**, Worth. ►



The Red Lion, Dover © Tony Wells, licensed to CAMRA

## Pub of the Year (POTY) Award

### How do we choose our branch Pub of the Year?

Pub of the Year is an accolade that all the pubs in our region strive to achieve but, to be in with a chance, they need to satisfy some challenging benchmarks.

Firstly, quality of beer served. Each branch can submit a fixed number of pubs for the national *Good Beer Guide*. This is published annually and lists those pubs that offer the best beer on a regular basis. POTYs are selected from the guide entries.

In selection, we first look at scores that CAMRA members have recorded for quality of beer throughout the year. We then take the top scoring pubs and look at a further seven criteria scoring against each of these.

The criteria are:

- Promotion and knowledge of real ale
- Cleanliness and staff hygiene
- Community focus
- Service and welcome
- Style, décor and atmosphere
- Sympathy with CAMRA aims
- Overall impression and value.

We then have our top three pubs who are awarded Gold, Silver and Bronze and receive a framed certificate which we present to the Landlord. They then have this in their pub for all their customers to admire!

The Bouncing Barrel, Herne Bay



### Canterbury Herne Bay and Whitstable Branch Pub of the Year 2026

- Gold** The Haywain, Bramling
- Silver** The Bouncing Barrel, Herne Bay
- Bronze** The Parkerville, Herne Bay

### Swale Branch Pub of the Year 2026

- Gold** The Elephant, Faversham
- Silver** Furlongs, Faversham
- Bronze** The Paper Mill, Sittingbourne



The Elephant, Faversham

### Thanet Branch Pub of the Year 2026

- Gold** The Royston, Broadstairs
- Silver** Magnet, Broadstairs
- Bronze** Montefiore Arms, Ramsgate

### Dover Deal & Sandwich Pub of the Year 2026

- Gold** Just Reproach, Deal

No silver or bronze awards were made by this branch.

Congratulations to all our pubs on not only achieving an excellent standard but also maintaining the quality throughout the year.

### Meeting with Canterbury MP – Rosie Duffield

At the beginning of March Canterbury CAMRA members met with Rosie Duffield MP. The purpose of the meeting was to make her aware of the threats facing many of our local pubs and to ask for her help in opposing proposed changes to national planning policy which will remove existing planning protections given to community facilities such as pubs.

We also ask her to support the reinstatement of The Community Ownership Fund (scrapped in 2025) which will form a vital element to the success of the English Devolution and Empowerment Bill. When this Bill passes into law, hopefully this year, it will give a boost to community ownership of pubs by replacing a community 'right to bid' with a 'right to buy'. But without access to a national funding scheme its effect is likely to be limited.

## Dover, Deal and Sandwich CAMRA News

### Relaunching the White Cliffs Beer Festival

After a successful meeting with the Dover Town Hall Management Team, we're looking to relaunch our beer festival in the town.

To make this happen, we need a Festival Organising Committee to manage, organise and run the festival. Volunteers are needed to staff the key positions on this committee. Please email [beer.festival@dds.camra.org.uk](mailto:beer.festival@dds.camra.org.uk) if you'd like to be part of launching this very popular beer festival.

### What happens when you swap buses for narrowboats?

Members of our branch (known as the Beery Boaters), who jump onto narrowboats at every opportunity, recently hosted an invasion of fellow Beery Boaters from the Surrey Hants Borders branch.

As our area is devoid of canals, local Stagecoach bus services had to suffice. With careful route planning, they managed to visit many recommended drinking establishments during the two days they were here.



The Beery Boaters

As well as a wander round some Dover pubs, there were visits to Walmer (Berry/Freed Man), Deal (Ship/Farrier/Sir Norman Wisdom) and Sandwich (Red Cow) and even as far afield as Eastry (Five Bells) and Bramling (Haywain).

One bus driver commented that he had never stopped at one particular bus stop and he was astonished when no less than eight gentlemen, all proudly bearing their bus passes, clambered aboard.

It was agreed by all that, "We had a great few days!".

### Thirst Thursdays

We have been making branch visits to our local *Good Beer Guide* (GBG) listed pubs for many years. This year's visits are underway

Why Thirst Thursday? On that weekday most pubs are open, usually without being too hectic. Hence the 'Thirst Thursday' of each month. We vary visits to fit in with opening times. Some out of the way pubs can be hard to reach, so visiting all our pubs listed in the *GBG* can be challenging. But we take our time to savour the beer and, of course, don't do them all the same day.

We have fourteen pubs to visit this year, so to get our money's worth we've organised seven Thirst Thursday sessions, visiting two pubs each time.

Nearly all pubs are on or close to bus routes, though the July visit will involve a walk of about 4 miles to reach the Carpenter's Arms at Coldred.

This year we had an easy start visiting two pubs in Dover Town Centre followed by three in Deal.

Please feel free to join us on future trips. Details of pubs and meeting times are posted on our branch's website: [dds.camra.org.uk](http://dds.camra.org.uk)

### Thurs April 2nd

Staggered Inn, Dover; Breakwater Tap, Dover.

### Thurs May 7th

Freed Man, Walmer; Berry, Walmer.

### Thurs June 4th

Jackdaw, Denton.

### Thurs July 2nd

Fox, Temple Ewell; Carpenter's Arms, Coldred

### Thurs August 6th

Five Bells, Eastry; Red Cow, Sandwich

We hope to see some new faces along soon.

# THE HALVES

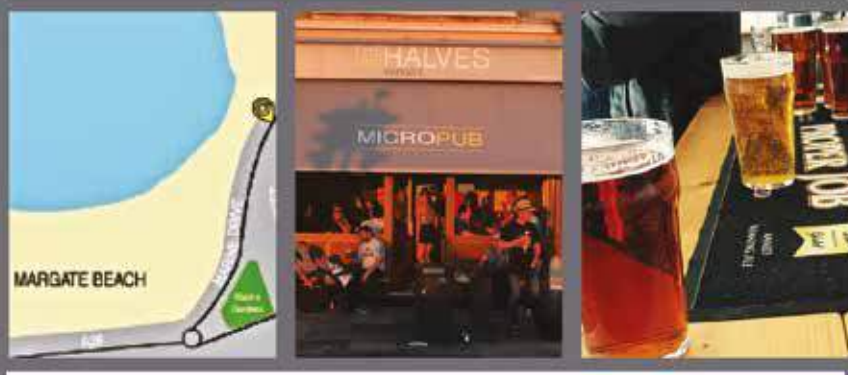
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## Margate

PUB OF THE YEAR WINNER 2018, 2022  
HIGHLY COMMENDED 2023

A FREE VIEW WITH EVERY BEER

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CIDER FROM £4  
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## Brewery News

In a constantly changing world here is glimpse into just some of what is happening with our treasured local Breweries.



### Canterbury Ales, Chartham

In late November 2025 Mark Wood succeeded Martin Guy and Vanessa Kent as the owner of Canterbury Ales.

Mark, Martin and Vanessa are working together during a transition period, ensuring a smooth transfer of operations. Mark's current focus, having acquired the brewery, is threefold.

- Retention of the brewing team.
- Continuity of the core cask range and ensuring consistent quality.
- Expanding the brewery with a 25% increase in brewhouse capacity. In the longer term, he desires to open a tap room, subject to suitable premises being available and the level of investment required.

### Northdown Brewery, Margate



Again, the driving force behind the Margate Tap takeover which happens over the weekend of 17th to 19th April.

Their esteemed 5.8% Squidly Diddly, having won Gold at SIBA SE Judging goes forward to National Final. Fingers crossed for further glory. Core beers remain, but new offerings are Doris, a New England IPA 5.2% and Brown Bear, a 4.5% nutty brown ale.



### Ramsgate Brewery, Ramsgate

Gadd's Black Pearl Oyster Stout won Silver in the Strong Stouts and Porters category at the recent Liverpool-held CBOB Winter Awards. Look out for a not just for core beers but also a rotating range of Irregular beers such as 4.6% Oatmeal Stout and 4.9% ESB - Dark Conspiracy.



### Wantsum Brewery, St Nicholas at Wade

All their beers are now gluten free. Seasonal beers are produced monthly – in April there will be Miller's Mirth, a 4.2% bitter, and Beckett's Brown Ale 4.5%.

### Chislet Brewery, Chislet

Have announced that their Taproom will be opening shortly so make sure to visit.

### Swallow Brewery, Folkestone

Have announced a new 8-barrel brewery, based on the site of the Angels and Demons Brewery at Capel-le-Ferne near Folkestone



### Shepherd Neame, Faversham

Have extended their partnership with the Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS). Since the partnership began in 2024, staff, pubs and customers have raised more than £80,000. They have invested £1.8 million restoring the historic Hoop & Grapes pub in London.



### Long Man Brewery, Litlington

Are in the process of commissioning a new canning line which will significantly increase production capacity for cans and will look to expand the range of beers available over the course of 2026.

Vintage Old Man is back, at an ABV of 5.4% for this year, and selling fast through its limited run of just 500 bottles. In cask: in addition to Long Man Best (winner of the SIBA Southeast Champion Cask Award), Long Blonde (3.8%), Old Man (4.3%) and Rising Giant (4.8%), March sees former Eastbourne Beer of the Festival, Long Man Oatmeal Stout (4.4%) return in cask, and this year in keg and can too. The cask offering for May is the refreshing extra pale Sleeping Giant (3.8%) and June cask sees Rye Red Ale (4%) back for a second year.

Planned guest keg and canned beers this year include a new NEIPA, single hop Simcoe and several more to be announced later in the year. Brewery Tour & Tasting Experiences are available to book on the brewery website, and the Shop & Tap Room is a popular place for a pint and is open seven days per week.

## Beer events in and around Kent

See [kent.camra.org.uk/diary](http://kent.camra.org.uk/diary) and local branch diaries for latest updates

	<b>Margate Tap Takeover 2026 (Non-CAMRA Event)</b> Around Margate Friday, 17th – Sunday, 19th April 2026
	<b>CAMRA Members' Weekend, Annual General Meeting &amp; Conference 2026</b> Alban Arena, St Albans Friday, 17th – Sunday, 19th April 2026
	<b>Rotary Club Charity Beer Festival</b> Fox, Temple Ewell Friday, 1st – Sunday, 3rd May
	<b>CAMRA 19th Bexley Beer Festival 2026</b> Dartfordians Community Sports Club, Bexley Thursday, 7th – Sunday, 9th May 2026
	<b>Haywain May Beer Festival 2026</b> Haywain, Bramling Thursday, 14th – 17th May 2026
	<b>Crabble Corn Mill Beer &amp; Cider Festival 2026</b> Crabble Corn Mill, River Friday, 22nd – Sunday, 24th May 2026
	<b>Kent &amp; East Sussex Railway Beer Festival 2026</b> Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden Friday, 5th – Saturday, 6th June 2026
	<b>CAMRA Cricket Tent @ 174th Canterbury Cricket Week</b> St Lawrence Ground, Canterbury Friday, 19th – Monday, 22nd June 2026
	<b>Sandwich Folk &amp; Ale Festival 2026</b> Around Sandwich Friday, 3rd – Sunday, 5th July 2026
	<b>Spirit of Tenterden Festival 2026</b> Tenterden Club Friday, 3rd – Sunday, 5th July 2026
	<b>London Craft Beer Festival 2026</b> Southwark Park, London Friday, 17th – 18th July 2026
	<b>East Kent Railway Beer &amp; Cider Festival</b> East Kent Railway, Shepherdswell/Eythorne Saturday, 29th – 31st August 2026
	<b>Faversham Hop Festival 2026</b> Faversham Town Centre Saturday, 5th – Sunday, 6th September 2026

Includes CAMRA beer tent

## Award winning beers from The Waterworks Brewery



Our **Pissior Porter** has recently won three awards including a **CAMRA Silver Medal for London & South East England** (Stouts & Porters)



We serve our full range of beers in the taproom along with a local lager, ciders, wines, gins and soft drinks. There is also live music every Sunday 3-5pm



**TAPROOM OPENING TIMES**  
Fri 3-7pm, Sat 2-7pm  
Sun 1-5pm

**BREWERY & TAPROOM**

The Old Dairy, Rye Road, Playden,  
(opposite the old Peace & Plenty) East Sussex TN31 7UL

## Serving 10 local ales & 18 local ciders



Along with our own beers, we serve a good range of ales and ciders, We also have a selection of wines, gins and soft drinks and award winning Scotch eggs and pork pies.



**PUB OPENING TIMES**

Mon - Fri from 2pm  
Sat & Sun from 12pm

**RYE'S MICROPUB**

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[www.ryewaterworks.co.uk](http://www.ryewaterworks.co.uk)

## Swale Branch commemorates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

The Swale branch of CAMRA marked its 50th anniversary on Saturday 21st February 2026 with a well-attended celebration at the Park Tavern in Sittingbourne. The warm, late winter's afternoon marked a milestone in the Swale Branch calendar, and an opportunity to reminisce on how beer, and beer drinking, had changed since the branch's official inception on 17th February 1976.

As you probably remember, CAMRA was formed in the days when brewing had fallen into the hands of accountants resulting in the drinker being offered bland, boring fizzy beer. CAMRA was set up to fight back and promote traditional brewers and the enjoyment of Real Ale. A brochure (costing the princely sum of ten pence) produced by the branch in the wake of the closure of Fremlin's Brewery in Maidstone showed where to find Real Ale in Swale. This closure left just Whitbread and Shepherd Neame breweries operating in Kent. A sad situation. Time has also taken its toll on the fifty-one pubs that appeared in the brochure, some twenty-eight are no longer in operation. Sheppey, once a stronghold of Shepherd Neame pubs, now has not one remaining.

Back to the commemoration, the scene was set. Invitations had been sent out. Shepherd Neame, owners of the Park Tavern in Park Road, Sittingbourne, had kindly arranged



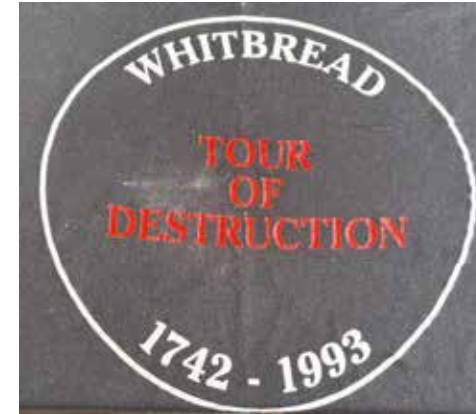
Where to find  
**REAL ALE**  
in  
The Campaign for Real Ale  
**CAMRA**  
Swale Branch

Since the closing of Fremlins Brewery at Maidstone the only Breweries left in operation in Kent are those of Whitbread Fremlins and Shepherd Neame at Faversham. While most houses owned by Shepherd Neame sell real beer in the traditional manner the majority of houses owned by the other brewers in this area do not.

The pubs listed were all serving genuine living beer without the assistance of CO2 at the time of printing but no guarantee is given that a changeover has not taken place since.

June 1976 Price 10p

for a buffet, plus two casks of beer, Master Brew and Spitfire. Martin Apps, a well-known local photographer, attended to record the event for posterity (and a cheeky press release). Our thanks go to both Sheps and licensee Gio for these arrangements. Founding branch member Paul Durkin and his wife Linda attended, along with local MP Kevin McKenna, who also happens to be a branch member. On display was a variety of memorabilia, including a 'Whitbread Tour of Destruction 1742 – 1993' T-shirt. Still unworn, we are led to believe. There were press cuttings and branch records. Notable also were Shepherd Neame beer



passports from the late 70's through to the mid-1980s, once used to collect stamps from Sheps pubs and redeem them for ties, tankards and other promotional items. Other items included a bottle of Swale Ale, brewed marking the tenth anniversary of the inaugural branch meeting. The current chair

Steve Bury made a welcoming speech and the afternoon went with a swing.

The current branch members declared the event a great success and are looking forward to future branch activities. A vote of thanks was recorded to everyone involved and special thanks were given to Shepherd Neame for their participation.

John Sissons



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HAVELOCK ST. CANTERBURY



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**PUB OF THE YEAR 2017, 2018 & 2022**  
**7 REAL ALES**

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# Kevin Costello Celebrates Twenty Years at the Haywain Pub, Bramling

We moved into the Haywain in 2006 after viewing several pubs around the south of England and Wales. We almost gave up, then my wife Louise saw the Haywain on the internet. She said it ticked many boxes, so we went to Canterbury to see it. It was almost empty, we got a drink and looked around, trying not to draw attention, then a voice said are you viewing this pub, to which I replied is it that obvious. Maureen told us what a good pub this could be with the right couple running it. Having a great garden and a car park, we decided to go for it.

We moved in on 7th February having never run a pub before, it was scary. Opening night was



10th February, the place was packed, it seemed everyone wanted to meet the new landlords.

I introduced a beer festival based on the Kent Beer Festival at Canterbury which I attended regularly, it's been a huge success. Our next one is the 14th to 17th May. We have seen many people come and go over the years, the one thing I was not expecting was the number of funerals I would attend. We plodded along for a few years with dart nights, bat and trap, crib and domino evenings, karaoke and talent shows. We have raised several thousand pounds for charity over the years especially for Pilgrims Hospices and Royal British Legion. Our latest cheque of £11,150 going to the Pilgrims Hospices to put our total over £150,000.

In 2010 we won the Taste of Kent Pub of the Year, the amazing advertising led to a 25% increase in business, Louise was the chef and decided it was time to employ a professional chef. To top that, we won our first CAMRA branch Pub of the Year, which I took personal pride in, I now have a wall full of CAMRA awards including 3 golds.



Kevin with Festival Beers

We remained good friends with Maureen until she sadly died in 2018. It has been a pleasure to run the Haywain, although it can be hard work, the good times make up for it. Who knows how long we will remain at the Haywain, but I guarantee it will not be another 20 years!  
**Kevin Costello**

OPENING TIMES	ADDRESS
Monday to Thursday from 1pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12pm	<b>80 Herne Bay Road, Swalecliffe, Whitstable, CT5 2LX</b>  100 yards from Chestfield and Swalecliffe Rail Station
CONTACT	
07947 984991  Find us on Facebook: The Brickfield Micropub	Bus 400 from Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable  Bus stop 50 yards from the pub  <span style="background-color: #000; color: #fff; padding: 2px;">Accessibility Compliant</span>

  
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## What To Do If Your Local Pub Is Under Threat

All too often you only get to know that your local pub is under threat once it has already closed, or worse for the customers in the now infamous case concerning the Crooked House in Himley, Staffordshire, you wake up to find your favourite local has been set on fire and bulldozed!

Such extreme cases are sadly on the increase despite the fact that since 2017, planning permission is now needed to convert or demolish a pub. Even so, speculative developers often see pubs as an easy way to profit because of the relatively low (going concern) purchase value compared to their equivalent residential or development value. Unfortunately, once acquired there are ways an unscrupulous owner will attempt to deliberately run down a pub by serving poor quality beer and food and being rude to customers or by keeping erratic hours. Another common tactic in seeking to justify its closure and redevelopment is to undermine a pub's viability by reducing or manipulating an important trading asset, such as a garden or car park.

Local CAMRA branches monitor planning applications, which councils are obliged to publish, usually each week. However, being forewarned of an impending threat to a pub by intelligence gathering when stories or rumours begin to emerge is a crucial first step. Loyal customers and groups are encouraged to contact their local CAMRA branch if they know that their pub is under threat. Contact details can be found at [www.camra.org.uk/camra-near-you](http://www.camra.org.uk/camra-near-you).

A useful starting place in protecting a community pub in the case of a perceived threat, or even if there is no threat, is to nominate it as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). An ACV nomination can be made to the Local Authority by a local group or organisation, such as a Parish Council or CAMRA branch. It can

also be made by a group of not less than 20 like-minded individuals (such as concerned customers) who must reside in the same Local Authority area as the pub. An ACV will be listed by the Authority for 5 years, after which it can be renewed. It is not a guarantee against development or closure but in the event of the pub being put up for sale, it places a 6-month moratorium on a disposal to allow time for a community to submit a bid to acquire the pub. It also importantly lays down a marker because a Local Authority will usually regard it as a 'material consideration' when considering a planning application to change the use or redevelop a pub.

Although the current ACV regulations allow a community group the right to submit a bid to buy a pub put up for sale for a limited period, CAMRA hopes that the provisions contained in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill – currently making its way through parliament – will change the law to allow a 'Community Right to Buy'. This would be a fundamental change to the law by compelling pub owners to sell at a realistic price and dissuading speculative purchases. This bill is due to pass into law before the end of 2026.

There are times when an unprincipled developer will seek to rob communities of their local pub but it's worth remembering that anyone can have a say to protect it. If you believe your pub is under threat, contact your local parish or ward councillor. Otherwise get in touch with the local CAMRA branch. You don't have to be a member and although CAMRA can and does make representations on behalf of communities, it is there to assist and enable rather than take over a campaign.

**James Ross**



Is your local pub under threat?

CAMRA has the tools to help you save it  
[camra.org.uk/saveyourlocal](http://camra.org.uk/saveyourlocal)



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**ALL HAIL  
THE ALE**

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*Opening times and offers vary by pub.*

# HISTORICAL PUBS: A National Inventory goes local

**W**hy should we be bothered about the place we drink in? I mean it's just a pub. How wrong could you be, for old historic pubs are disappearing all over the country while we use them without a thought? Many ancient pubs around Canterbury are documented in books or included in photos taken in the early 20th century but there are few images of those lost in the past five decades. The west side of Butchery Lane that remained after WWII includes the Shakespeare and City Arms pubs. These exteriors look very similar to old pictures, but I can't compare the interiors, I recall a fire closed many buildings there in 1990. CAMRA's National Inventory lists local pubs, the Fordwich Arms, the Prince of Wales in Heme Bay and the Unicorn in Canterbury for their interiors. Interiors of some of the lost pubs were also of note with bottle and jug counters for off-sales and separate panelled bar areas. While perhaps post-war era, these are still worth recording and it is now the time to consider what might disappear soon. Where

are images of the 1950's Leopards Head? Are there photo collections around from the 70s and 80s? In this past year we have already seen five local pubs with some architectural interest go on the market, two lost for ever but perhaps the other three might be dramatically changed when they reopen.

The Pub Historic Group (PHG) was set up by CAMRA some 30 years ago with the principal aim of recording historic pubs, ones with original interiors, both nationally



The Bear Inn, Faversham

and regionally. Now we are being asked to have a crack at recording those in our area. Next time you are out for a pint take some pictures. You don't need to lug a camera around, pictures from your mobile are suitable for the local database. A local booklet of some interesting drinking places could be published and, with this in mind, any words of brilliance you have would be welcome. Now is the time to ►

Interior of the Unicorn Inn, Canterbury



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## Bar & Drinks

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## Restaurant & Food

A traditional selection of traditional home-cooked food, including starters, mains, sides and desserts, plus a special menu for the kids. There's a range of light bites when you're looking for a snack. Breakfast includes full English/Irish, vegetarian, and vegan dishes.

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Quiz Nights; Food Events; Clairvoyance Evenings; Beer Festival; Live Music; Prize Raffle; Seasonal Events; Breakfast; Function Room; Enclosed Patio.



Full details of events on our website or Facebook page.



spread the word about our fantastic local historical pubs and clubs.

The PHG are particularly keen to locate pubs without bars for service or with exceptional bars, tiled interiors, fireplaces, artwork, partitioned snugs or snob screens. I can't think of any of these locally, but you prove me wrong.

More information about The Pub Historic Group can be found on the CAMRA national website (camra.org.uk). Here the National Inventory includes more East Kent pubs; at Faversham you can try The Bear Inn, Railway Hotel and Bull Inn. On the way to Dover visit Coldred for the delightful Carpenters Arms. All are listed for their interiors. Further afield take your passport and visit the Isle of Thanet for the Neptunes Hall in Broadstairs, Ramsgate for the Queens Head, or Margate for the Rose in June. Cycle out a little further and you'll find the Bell Inn at St Nicholas-at-Wade, near Wantsum brewery. It is time we added even more, I think.

**Brina Snipson**



The Bell Inn, St Nicholas-at-Wade



© Carpenter's Arms, Coldred

Please email [nekcamra@outlook.com](mailto:nekcamra@outlook.com) if you have any pictures or suggestions.

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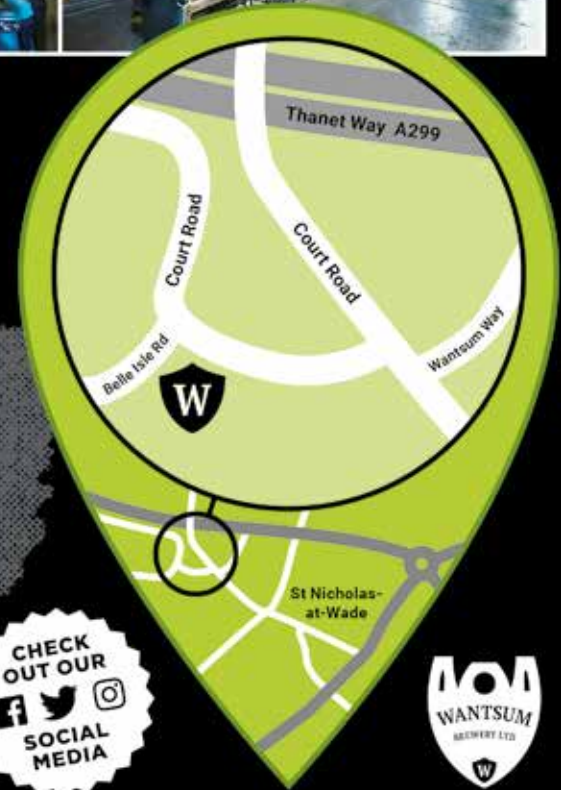
## TAPROOM OPENING TIMES

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For Trade & Wholesale Enquiries email [sales@wantsumbrewery.co.uk](mailto:sales@wantsumbrewery.co.uk)

### OPENING TIMES

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from 1pm  
Friday, Saturday and  
Sunday from 12pm

### ADDRESS

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# THE HANDSOME SAM MICROPUB



## 2026 CAMRA Winter Champion Beer of Britain – A Judge's Tale

This year the final rounds of CAMRA's Winter Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB) were held in the magnificent Lutyens Crypt of the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral during the Liverpool Beer Festival. The venue was a wonder of post-war architecture; atmospheric and moody.

This writer received the invitation to chair a judging panel and, despite the distance, and without a second thought, duly accepted the honour. Train and hotel were booked the same day.

To fit in with Beer Festival timings, judging had to commence at 09:30am with a range of wintery beers ranging from Brown/ Old ales through Stouts/Porters, Speciality Ales to Barley Wines.

There were six tables with six judges, each with Chair, notetaker and timekeeper, a mix of CAMRA officials, brewers, beer writers and cellar experts. All very serious stuff.

This writer chaired Table 4 – judging eight Barley Wines ranging from 6.5 to 13%. For breakfast. You feel the pain.

The judging procedure: inspect, sniff, taste and savour the finish. Then score, pause, discuss and review. Then repeat for each beer as presented before going back to cross-compare the earlier beers.

To reach this stage of the competition all the beers are of an extremely high quality, making it a tough task to rank them. The responsibility to the brewers who have put so much care and passion into their beers, and to earlier-round judges and drinkers, weighs heavily.

After scores were tallied, and brewery feedback was given – a breather. Oh, and a beery palette cleanser. The scores for all judged beers in the six style categories were tabulated and the top scorers put forward to a final judging by a separate elite group.

It was a really tough challenge, but eventually the winners were announced during the afternoon trade session.

It was only polite, and for research purposes only you understand, to go and taste the winning beers. And runners-up. And ones that didn't make it. Brutal.

What a lovely day and in no small part a sense of contributing to this superb competition and supporting our amazing brewing industry. Liverpool Beer Festival and this fascinating city should be on your list of places to visit.

Glyn Parry

### Winter Champion Beer of Britain

The Winners:

**GOLD** Kent Brewery, London Brewing – Beer Street 4.0% – an amber rye bitter

**SILVER** Cairngorm – Black Gold 4.4% – session stout

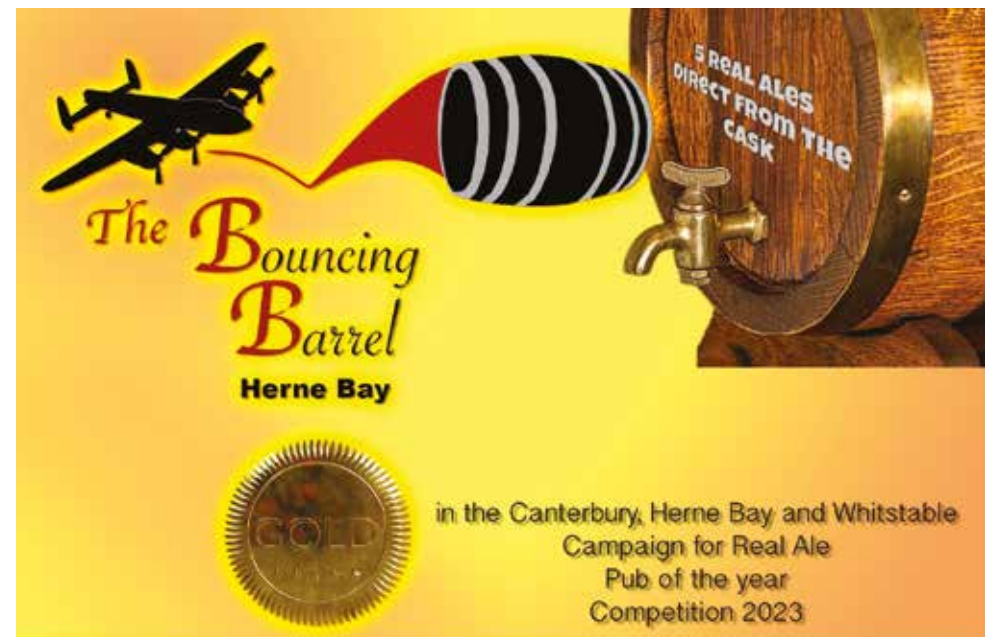
**BRONZE** Green Jack – Baltic Trader 10.5% – export stout



Liverpool Beer Festival



The judging table



The Bouncing Barrel 20 Bank street CT6 5EA



Although CAMRA campaign mainly about beery issues, it also supports the production of traditional cider and perry.

My name is Carolyn and I am the Cider Representative for the Newark branch of CAMRA. Last July my partner and I took a week's holiday in Kent, based in Whitstable. As a history fan, Canterbury and Hever Castle were places I had to visit. As CAMRA members, of course we also visited many hostelrys in the area. The CAMRA pub database helped us find the best pubs selling both cask ale and real cider though I noticed that some of the cider entries were inaccurate; showing real cider on sale when there wasn't any or failing to list real cider when it was on sale.

For readers who are unsure about what exactly is "real cider", it is a long-established traditional drink which is produced naturally from apples. Cider is made from apples, perry is made from perry pears, which tend to be smaller and harder than dessert pears. CAMRA defines real cider or perry as being fermented from the whole juice of fresh pressed apples or pears, without the use of concentrated or chaptalised juices. Chaptalisation is a process where the alcohol level in a cider or perry is increased by the addition of sugar to a high degree for storage, before being diluted to the desired level for sale.

CAMRA use #NotFromConcentrate for online campaigning for real products. A map and list of producers can be found on the CAMRA website at [camra.org.uk/promotional-campaigns/promoting-real-cider-and-perry/map](http://camra.org.uk/promotional-campaigns/promoting-real-cider-and-perry/map)

Real cider and perry should never come from concentrate nor be diluted. Each glass represents hundreds of years of craft and tradition. There are also many new producers of cider and perry using the traditional process (albeit in some cases with more modern

equipment) and still creating a traditional product.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for many of the well-known ciders and perries sold in the UK as they are not produced using the natural processes. Some well-known ciders & perries may be served from boxes and look like they should be "real" but aren't, e.g. Lilley's/ Westons / Thatchers / Gwynn Y Ddraig.

In our Newark branch area, we just have the one producer, Daisy Farm Cider based in Upton. They are a husband-and-wife team who last year produced three different ciders; Dry, Sweet and Summer (made with added home grown plums) and a perry. They produce only from their own apples, so are harvest dependent and small scale. Newark was the first CAMRA Festival to showcase their ciders in 2024.

You are very lucky in Kent to have many delicious cider producers and pubs serving real cider. Some highlights of my cider drinking during our visit to Kent were:

**The Handsome Sam, Whitstable – Biddenden & Dudda's Tun**

**The Sea Farmer's Dive Taproom, Whitstable – Kent Cider**

**Yellow Stocks, Sittingbourne – Dudda's Tun**

**New Inn, Canterbury – several real ciders, I chose Kentish Pip**

**Tankerton Arms – Kent Cider & Kentish Pip**

I am really looking forward to visiting the area again soon!

Wassail.

**Carolyn Gibbons**

**Newark Branch Cider Representative**



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[thehaywain@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thehaywain@hotmail.co.uk)

<http://www.thehaywainbramling.co.uk>

Opening times - Check different meal times

Monday and Tuesday closed

Wednesday to Saturday - Noon - 3.00pm, 6.30pm -11.00pm

Sunday - Noon - 4.00pm

Traditional country pub, CAMRA Local POTY award pub, real ales, award winning home cooked food. Quiz nights, a selection of wines. Outside seating area.

**Beer Festival**  
★ 14th May to  
★ 17th May

## Gastrobeers

It's nice to splash out occasionally and have a meal in a gastropub. Expensive, but my two top tips are:

1. Go for the lunch set menu
2. Try beer or cider instead of wine! It can make a big difference to the bill

Gastropubs have extensive wine lists, but do any have a beer list? As I'm a beer drinker, I wondered what our local gastropubs had to offer in the way of good beers.

I started by looking at the East Kent restaurants and gastropubs in the 2026 *Michelin Guide*. I have been lucky to eat at them over the last few years, and I got decent beer at all of them, at a price similar to most town centre pubs. None of them had a beer list on their websites.

The Hide and Fox at Saltwood is slightly outside our *East Kent Drinker* area but is worth a mention as it's the only restaurant in our part of the world with two Michelin stars. When I celebrated a significant birthday there three years ago, I enjoyed a bottle or two of Romney Marsh Brewery's Golden Ale at a very reasonable price.

In the *EKD* area, we have the Sportsman at Seasalter and the Fordwich Arms, both with one Michelin star. The Sportsman's inside seating is reserved for restaurant reservations but there is some seating



Angela's, Margate

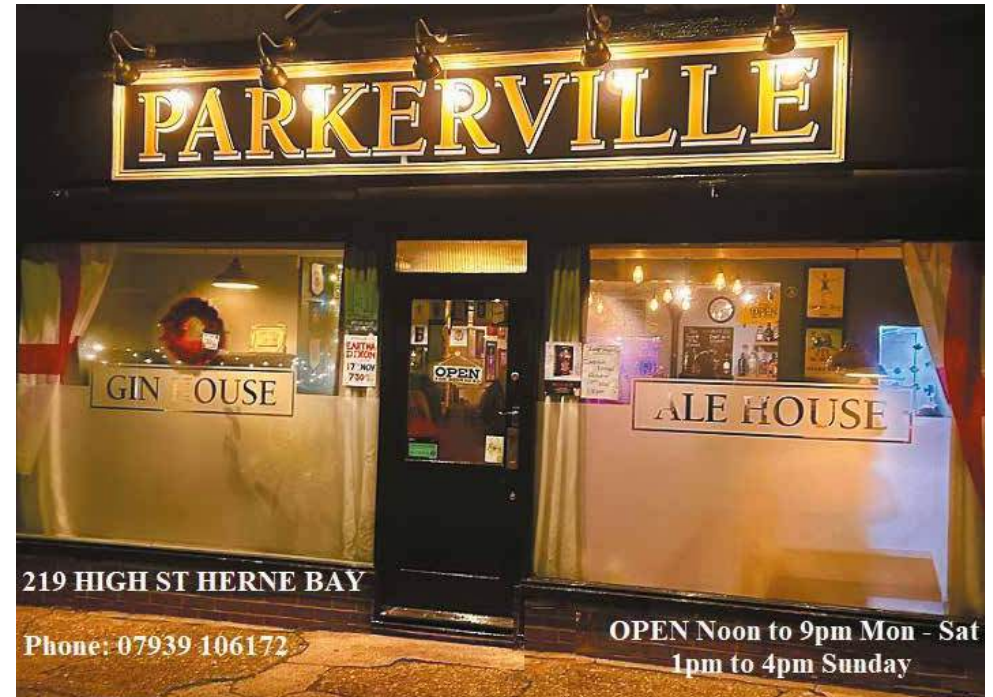
in the conservatory for drinkers. I had an excellent pint of Shepherd Neame Master Brew from the handpump on my last visit. The Fordwich Arms has a pleasant bar with one well-kept beer on handpump, currently from Canterbury Ales, but it can change every few months. There is seating for non-diners at the bar.

Angela's in Margate has been awarded a Michelin green star for sustainable gastronomy. There are three beers and three ciders, all interesting, on their menu. We enjoyed a bottle of Gadd's Black Pearl Oyster Stout and a can of Time and Tide Spratwaffler. Docker's Local Lager, an unfiltered lager, was also listed. The stout is a RAIB (real ale in bottle).

Then we get on to the websites of pubs and restaurants which have been awarded AA rosettes for their culinary excellence. I found twelve in the *EKD* area (more are awaiting decisions). Five are pubs and all five do real ale. The Plough at Stalisfield Green, the Phoenix in Faversham and the Dove at Dargate proudly mention their real ales but give no details of which ones. The Dog at Wingham and the Marquis of Granby at Alkham have beer lists. The Dog mentions one changing guest ale; the Marquis has a drinks menu which

lists their two real ales. For more details, see [camra.org.uk/pubs](http://camra.org.uk/pubs).

That leaves seven restaurants. I was pleased to see beer lists for four of them on their website Drinks Menus. None mentioned draught real ale but some had RAIBs. The Pig at Bridge had an excellent list of Kentish RAIBs and ciders, and so did the Corner House in Canterbury. The Buoy and Oyster in Margate has cans of beers from the Harbour Brewing Company. The Firepit at Boughton under Blean has a bottled beer list, but I couldn't see a RAIB on it. The websites of the other three restaurants had little or zero information about drinks, apologies if I missed something. Service please, Chef!



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## Bulgaria's Hidden Beer Haven

The Beer Stop is a tiny bar wedged between a taxi rank and a kebab shop on the main road through Sunny Beach, a resort on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast. Calling it a micro-pub would be generous; at roughly eight feet by six, "atom pub" feels more accurate.

Built as a makeshift extension of a shop, it is simple baton wood covered with clear plastic sheeting, giving it the appearance of a small allotment greenhouse. Overflow seating spills onto the pavement: plastic stools and oil-drum tables, one graffitied with "Say No to Lager." Despite its ramshackle look, the place is unexpectedly friendly, welcoming and full of character, offering some of the most interesting and varied beers I've encountered abroad.

My son and I were greeted by Ned, the landlord, whom we had briefly met the previous evening. He had been closing up but encouraged us to return the next day. I'm glad we did. The Beer Stop specialises in Bulgarian craft ales – far removed from the mass-market lagers typically associated with holiday resorts. To my Pilsner-accustomed palate, these beers tasted like nectar.

Ned presented the beer menu and talked us through the beers one by one. Young Bulgarians often speak excellent English, and his enthusiasm for local brewing was infectious. We perched on stools along the compact bar and began exploring the beer range.

The Pale Ale (4.2%) was light and refreshing, with a gentle zestiness rather than the sour citrus flavour common elsewhere. The Special English Ale (4.6%) had the character of a traditional bitter but with a softer hop profile. The Porter, a style I hadn't expected to find in Bulgaria, was a personal favourite – dark, rich and full-flavoured. As good as any Porter I had tasted. Ned explained it sold better in the colder months.

An American Pale Ale at 6% featured an eccentric note on the menu – "Hot Dogs" listed among the ingredients – while a fellow customer recommended the Saison, notable for its fresh lemon character without the tartness and generic pineapple flavour sometimes associated with the style. Not my style of

beer but refreshing and ideal for a warm day.

As the evening went on, more people filtered into the tiny bar, giving it a Tardis-like quality. Street cats wandered in and out, as they do in many Bulgarian establishments. Conversation turned to recent floods that had made international news, as well as football – reliable common ground in bars worldwide. Ned and his friends played 1970s hard rock, including Deep Purple, along with Bulgarian classics whose lyrics they translated for us. Themes of resilience and history ran through the songs, echoing the national character.

The following day, in calmer conditions, I returned to discover more. All the beers were from Glarus Brewery, one of around 15 craft breweries in Bulgaria, using local hops. Craft beer has grown steadily over the past decade, especially among younger drinkers, though some older locals still prefer cheaper brews at about 60p a can.

Glarus beers range from 4.2% to 6%, and all cost 4.5 lev (about £2), regardless of strength. Ned demonstrated his serving method: each beer is dispensed into a purpose-made plastic bottle attached to the tap before being poured into a glass. This "Russian system," he explained, is designed to reduce wastage.

I asked Ned about large red steel drums outside, decorated with the Glarus logo, that caught my eye on the first night. He explained they were inspired by traditional cauldrons used to distil rakia, a spirit deeply rooted in Bulgarian culture. Double distilled from almost any fruit, it is considered a medicine as much as a beverage across the Balkans.

Later we travelled to Varna, home of Glarus Brewery. The city, with its grand architecture, golden-domed cathedral and illuminated Singing Fountain, contrasts sharply with Sunny Beach. Its bars and beer shops – some little more than open storefronts with barrel tables on cobbled streets – offered an impressive range of Bulgarian craft beers at similarly modest prices.

All too soon, our trip ended. Visiting in mid-October meant half-price accommodation and inexpensive flights from London. For anyone interested in exploring Bulgarian craft beer, culture and coastal towns without the high prices of British pubs, it's an inviting and rewarding destination.

David Lindridge



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**gad |gad|**  
verb (gadded, gadding)  
[ intrans. ] informal  
go around from one place to another, in the pursuit of pleasure or entertainment... possibly in the search of fresh local beer:

'help out around the house and not be **gadding about** the town in the search of fresh kentish ale'

**GADDS'**  
The Ramsgate Brewery  
WWW.RAMSGATEBREWERY.CO.UK

## Advertising Short Measure

For me, TV appears to be endless soaps, celebrity game shows, accident, catastrophe and police chasing down criminals who then get let off. Between those and repeats there are insulting adverts. Those that anger me most involve David Beckham promoting Stella Artois. By the way, the UK version, brewed under licence at Magor Brewery in Newport, is 4.6% ABV, compared with the 5.2% Belgian original.

In the first advert the barperson pours three pints for three ladies then Beckham (popping up) tries to take one. The more observant will note the short beer measures. Beckham, with a knowing grin, accepts an even shorter offering. The second advert features Beckham pouring Stella from a home keg dispenser. Beckham fills (allegedly) several glasses, runs a knife over the excessive froth and reveals little over half a pint of beer in the glasses.

This feels like part of a subliminal campaign to make consumers accept short measure without complaint. With many pints in Kent now costing over £5, it has never been more important to ask for a top-up.

Even CAMRA publications often show what I consider short measure. A UK judgement states that a pint at the point of sale should be 95% liquid and 5% head. With the increasing variety of branded glasses designed to advertise what you're drinking, it's becoming harder to judge what a 5% head actually is.

CAMRA's full pint campaign has been running since the 1980's and the only way to guarantee 20 fluid ounces is through oversized lined glasses. CAMRA uses these at all its recognised beer festivals.

Over my long drinking career, I've heard some bizarre excuses for short measure. In a pub opposite the British Museum, I was told the bar "tilted towards the customer," causing the short pour. I replied, "Then fill it up and hand it to me without putting it down." In another pub, a barmaid claimed she couldn't top up my pint because overflowing froth would damage her manicure.



In the Summer 2025 edition of CAMRA's *BEER* magazine, Tim Maccabee, a publican of just over two years, argued that restocking lined glasses and providing full pints would require price rises. But glassware wears out quickly – breakages, glasswasher chemicals, and fading logos mean most glasses are replaced within 12–18 months anyway. Introducing lined glasses during this natural cycle would cost nothing.

As for price rises, the cost of a pint is already increasing. A one-off adjustment is minor compared with the long-term benefit of guaranteed full pints. More beer brewed means more jobs. What Tim may not have recognised is that the government would get a windfall of extra tax, VAT and excise duty (let's face it when you buy a pint you pay tax on your tax). My message is, let's try and make sure that CAMRA publications depict what we want and campaign for. Show lined glasses and beer with an acceptable head. Remember to always ask for a top-up.

Steve Bury

THE BEST CASK ALES – REAL CIDERS – WINES – SPIRITS – FRESH ROASTED COFFEE

# THE ROYSTON

COFFEE & ALEHOUSE

THANET BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR FOR THE 4TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR.

CAMRA SOUTH EAST REGIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR 2025

THE GOOD BEER GUIDE ★2026★ WE'RE IN IT

Facebook, Instagram, TripAdvisor RANKED #1

2 THE BROADWAY, BROADSTAIRS KENT, CT10 2AD  
(TURN RIGHT FROM THE TRAIN STATION AND WE'RE A 2 MINUTE WALK AWAY)

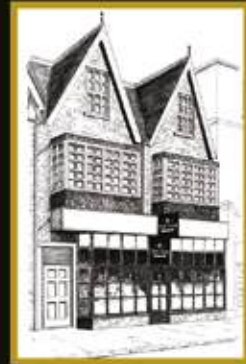
# THE PUB

MICROPUB

73 High St, Herne Bay CT6 5LQ



Follow us on socials @thepubmicropub



“Very friendly pub with a great selection of ales, beers and ciders. Dog friendly and the atmosphere is very relaxed and inviting, highly recommend dropping in!”

Pictured below is Richard, the amiable landlord of The Pub, the latest addition to Herne Bay's thriving bar and micro pub scene. Furnished with an eclectic collection of blue-painted vintage furniture and mismatched tall bar-stools, this warm and friendly bar offers a comprehensive range of cask ales, craft ales, ciders, wines and premium spirits, along with mixers, soft drinks and alcohol-free offerings too.



The decor is enhanced by a gallery of works by local artists, all of which are available to purchase.

The Pub Micropub boasts a stereo accompanied by a collection of classic vinyl albums, a sizeable courtyard with ample picnic benches, free WiFi plus dogs are welcome! There are pub games, regular pub quizzes and poker evenings too, supporting local charities.

A wonderful place to while away some leisure time, this unique local gem should be on everyone's list of must-see watering holes!

Opening Times: Tues 4pm - 10pm | Wed, Thurs & Fri 1pm - 10pm  
Sat 12pm - 10pm | Sun 12pm - 8pm

www.thepubhernebay.com

## The Vanishing Footprint of our Brewery Heritage

Considering that East Kent has a brewing heritage going back many hundreds of years, there isn't really much left around to show for it.

For instance, until 1968, Thanet had two breweries founded in the 17th century (Cobb's and Tomson & Wotton) but almost nothing remains of their (surely listed?) buildings. Much the same is true in Canterbury, where only the very impressive brick-built Flint's St. Dunstan's Brewery survives. Whilst this lives on, hosting small business units and apartments, there is almost nothing left of the city's other three main breweries: Ash's, George Beer's and Northgate Brewery.

Better news in Faversham where, apart from Shepherd Neame's venerable buildings, on the opposite side of Court Street sits the former Rigden's Brewery, which remains largely intact, now housing Tesco and a number of swanky apartments. But... from Whitstable, right around the coast to Folkestone, you'll find scant trace that large breweries, such as Thompson's (Walmer), Leney's (Dover) or Gardner's of Ash, ever existed. Never considered for sympathetic repurposing, these fine buildings were just flattened. True, a few outliers remain, such as the former East Kent Brewery in Sandwich and Mackeson's maltings in Hythe but in terms of visible brewing heritage, that's about all folks!



George Beer windows. Bat & Ball, Canterbury (destroyed)



Budden & Biggs' Carving. Crown & Anchor, Sheerness (closed but extant)

Sadly, it's the same with our much-loved traditional pubs. Licensed premises may be listed but even so, over the years, successive PubCos, developers and owners have, sometimes unlawfully, chipped away at pubs' visible history, by removing attractive carvings, smashing etched windows and ripping out quirky internal features. One of the enduring attributes, rightly associated with the best of British pubs, is tradition. We enjoy meeting in convivial, familiar surroundings, chatting with our friends and clinking glasses with them. Thereby, as we know, resolving all the world's problems, in much the same way as many generations before us have done and for my money, long may this remain the case!

Most pubgoers don't crave any return to the "good old days" when largely men-only pubs featured smoky bars, spittoons, smelly loos and gourmet selections of stale snacks! No, let's leave all that firmly in the past. The problem is though, that once our remaining traditional heritage pubs are ripped out, sometimes merely as a craven nod to some "funpub" phase, or to satisfy a passing marketing notion (think imitation "Irish" theme pubs!), the irreversible damage will have been done and our favourite watering hole is now sitting in landfill, never to return.

Pubs can and should be better protected from unsympathetic "improvements" which are usually dreamed up by corporate suits sitting in their London head office. If you'd like your favourite watering hole to be spared such a dire fate, then write to your Council's planning department and tell them. Take photographs of all the pub's features and get them on the protection inventory. By doing this you'll help ensure that your traditional local can be enjoyed by future generations. Cheers!

Words and pictures by Rory Kehoe



Cobb's windows. George, Margate (closed but extant)

## Mobility Access to Pubs

Up to now, CAMRA beer guides have included a wheelchair symbol which indicates that the pub is completely accessible to wheelchair users. CAMRA is now recognising that there is a wide range of mobility. About 11 million people in the UK have some limitation of mobility, but only 1.2 million are wheelchair users. Some of them can walk a bit, some can't walk at all. Some have a friend with them to help out; some are on their own.

How can CAMRA help? Those millions of people need to know what obstacles they may face when using a pub. CAMRA branches could put accessibility details their excellent online guide, CAMRA Pubs, ([camra.org.uk/pubs](http://camra.org.uk/pubs)). Canterbury Branch has already started to put this information in for some pubs, and we hope to do it for all of them.

Here's an example. If you look at the entry for the Haywain at Bramling, you will find this:

### Mobility Access Statement

Accessibility description. Shallow threshold step at entrance. Step free access around pub and bar, low step to small outdoor seating area. 7 steps with handrails up to large garden. No wheelchair accessible toilets. Grab rails in toilets. Limited frontage parking, main parking at the side with a steep slope down to pub or rear garden, no handrails.



This entry tells us that wheelchair users can use the Haywain – if they don't need to get the wheelchair into the toilets! But a wheelchair user who can walk a bit should be able to manage. And someone who uses a mobility aid such as a rollator or walking stick should be OK.

My husband is a wheelchair user. Experience has taught us that there are lots of obstacles we can overcome and some that we can't. We need all the information we can get when visiting new places. This doesn't just include pubs. We need accessibility details for cafes, restaurants, hotels, holiday cottages and Airbnbs. There is so little information. We often need to ring up. At the time of writing this, I'm waiting for a reply from an Airbnb host for information that could easily have been put into the website. It took me over three hours to find a place that looked reasonably accessible. We don't need completely step free access (rare), we can manage a small step, but there are no filters for that.

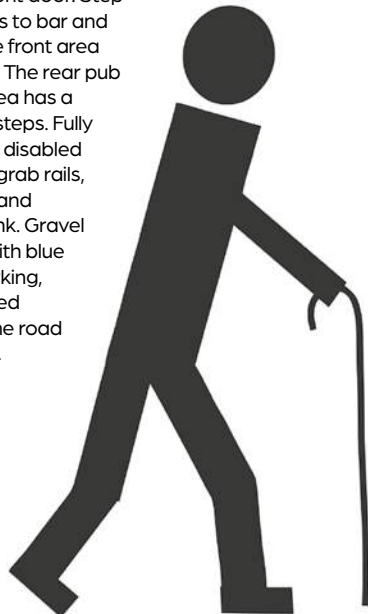
It would be great if pubs would put simple accessibility details on their own websites. It wouldn't take them long, and once the information is there, only the occasional update would be needed.

Top marks to Premier Inns and Travelodge. They allow us to book an accessible room direct from their website.

So, landlords, restaurateurs, hoteliers – please give us more information on your websites. Here's another example, for the George and Dragon at Fordwich:

Accessibility description. Step free side door access to pub or one 5cm step via front door. Step free access to bar and around the front area of the pub. The rear pub seating area has a variety of steps. Fully accessible disabled toilet with grab rails, call alarm and lowered sink. Gravel car park with blue badge parking, care needed crossing the road to the pub.

Gill Keay



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Join today	Direct Debit	Non DD
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Please indicate whether you wish to receive our quarterly award winning magazine **BEER** by email OR post:  Email  Post

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

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We will process your data in accordance with our Privacy Policy which can be found at [camra.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://camra.org.uk/privacy-policy). We will only send you communications you have consented to, see above tick boxes, and service-based communications. To manage your full set of communication preferences, please visit your online member account at [account.camra.org.uk](http://account.camra.org.uk).

I wish to Opt-in to  General Communications  Branch Communications  
 We will ask for your consent in future communications and you can log-in to [account.camra.org.uk](http://account.camra.org.uk) and edit your membership preferences at any time.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association which can be found on our website.

Signed .....

Date ..... Applications will be processed within 21 days

### Direct Debit Instruction

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
**Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW**  
 Email: [membership@camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@camra.org.uk) Telephone: 0330 153 9924

<b>Name(s) of Account Holder</b>	<b>Billing Address</b>
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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Stripe asks you to.
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- Setup of Direct Debit Instruction with Stripe on behalf of CAMRA.



Please post this direct debit form to our main office address: 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW

# SHEPHERD NEAME CREEKSIDE



A pale golden juicy IPA, Creekside offers bursts of tropical fruits courtesy of a combination of four hops.

With hints of orange and peach, it is the perfect pint to enjoy all year round, with a light, refreshing finish.