



December 2014

Opening

TIMES

THE FREE LOCAL CAMRA MAGAZINE

Covering the Cities of Manchester & Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, N.E. Cheshire & Macclesfield



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What's On

Information, Notes and Local CAMRA Branch Events

Opening Times - Information

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Their telephone no. is 0845 404 05 06. To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

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- Transport for Greater Manchester: www.tfgm.com. 0161 228 7811
- East Cheshire: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel.aspx. 0845 140 2666
- Derbyshire: <http://www.derbybus.info/>

Disclaimer

We aim to ensure that the information in *Opening Times* is correct at the time of going to press. If we get something wrong then please get in touch (editorial contact details above) and we'll print a correction. Please also note the opinions expressed in *Opening Times* are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally.

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Front Cover – Season's Greetings from CAMRA.

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Local CAMRA Events

Everyone welcome at these events

Wednesday 3rd – “Most Improved Pub” presentation to Worsley Old Hall followed by early Christmas buffet (price tba). From 7.30pm. (NM)

Thursday 4th – Branch Meeting: Volunteer, Cross Street, Sale. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Saturday 6th – Christmas Social at Glossop Labour Club. Starts 5.00pm. (HPNC)

Wednesday 10th – Swinton Survey: Catholic Club, Worsley Road 7.30pm; Cock & Swine, Worsley Road 9.00pm. (NM)

Thursday 11th – Branch Meeting with Winter Quiz and mince pies: Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Thursday 11th – Christmas Meal at the Lloyds, Chorlton. Book with social@thcamra.org.uk (T&H)

Thursday 11th – Christmas Meal at the Queen's Head, Congleton. Starts 7.30pm. (MEC)

Saturday 13th – North Cheshire Branch Visit to Chorlton. Local members are invited to join our neighbouring branch on their Christmas outing. Starting Noon at Chorlton Metrolink. (T&H)

Saturday 13th – Stroll in Stalybridge starting at 6.00 pm at Stalybridge Labour Club. Includes presentation of High Peak Branch Greater Manchester Club of the Year 2014 certificate and runner up certificate for the Greater Manchester Regional Club of the Year 2014. (HPNC)

Wednesday 17th – Branch Meeting: Crescent, Salford Crescent. Starts 7.30pm. (NM)

Friday 19th – Annual Hillgate Stagger: starts 7.00pm at Queens Head, Little Underbank; 8.00pm Waterloo, Waterloo Road. (SSM)

Saturday 27th – Social at Waters Green Tavern, Macclesfield. From 8.00pm. (MEC)

Monday 29th – Trip to Chester by train. Details from social@thcamra.org.uk. (T&H)

Monday 29th – Annual Manchester City Centre social starting at the Smithfield on Swan Street at 12 noon. (HPNC)

Tuesday 30th – Pub of the Month presentation to Davenport Arms, 550 Chester Road, Woodford. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Advance Notice – Saturday 10th January – Greater Manchester Branches Regional Meeting: The Deansgate, Deansgate, Manchester. Starts 1.00pm.

Pub of the Month

The Davenport Arms, Woodford



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month award for December 2014 has been won by the Davenport Arms at 550 Chester Road, Woodford, often referred to by its nickname of the Thief's Neck.

Situated at the extreme south of the territory of Stockport MBC, it's one of only two identifiably "country" pubs in the branch area. Outwardly it's a farmhouse-style building of mellow red brick, dating back to the early part of the 19th century, with a pair of gables flanking the central door. The interior comprises a number of small, cosy rooms warmed by real fires in winter, while in summer the outside is decked by floral hanging baskets. There are extensive outside drinking areas at both front and rear.

The licence has been held for 83 years by five generations of the Hallworth family, which must now be a unique achievement in the area. The current licensee is Yvonne Hallworth, who succeeded her late father John, and is ably assisted by her sister Alison Nixon (who runs the kitchen) and bar/cellarman Mike Swann.

In the early part of 2014 Robinson's carried out a major refurbishment, which made the pub smarter and broadened its appeal, while still retaining its rambling, multi-roomed character. It was good to see the classic Farmer's Weekly posters of British horses, livestock and working dogs being kept in the tap room, while the lives of the staff were made easier by replacing the old cramped bar with a more roomy and well-arranged one. There's more emphasis on food, with an extensive menu including a special selection of "bar tapas", plus daily specials, but it remains very much a hub of the community and is used by a wide cross-section of customers.

It has featured in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide for 28 consecutive years, now the longest continuous period in the branch area. The beer range is Robinson's 1892, Dizzy Blonde, Unicorn and Trooper, plus the current seasonal beer and the possibility of Old Tom in the winter months.

So why not break up the monotony of the gap between Christmas and New Year, jump on a X57/157 bus, and join the local CAMRA branch to celebrate the award which will be presented to Yvonne and her team on Tuesday 30 December when I'm sure a great night will be enjoyed by all.



The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephenson's, a local family firm that has been supplying the local pub and catering trade for over 140 years. Check out their advert on this page.

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Friday 2-10pm Saturday 12-10pm Sunday 2-10pm
Monday **CLOSED**

Stagger

A rainy night in Bramhall with John Sutcliffe



It was a very wet Friday in August when we met at the **Three Bears** on Jackson's Lane in Hazel Grove. This is one of five pubs owned by the Almond family and they seem to have hit on a successful formula of well-kept real ale and a good carvery.

Unlike at the Hesketh in Cheadle Hulme, another of their pubs, where some may feel a little uneasy if not eating, here in the Three Bears you can be comfortable just having a pint. It is one of the more recent Robinson's houses being built around the early 1990's on land acquired from the Bell's estate and named following the nursery rhyme theme that they used for new pubs during this period.

All beers are Robinsons but while the Citra had come to the end of the cask, there was a choice of Unicorn or the stronger Trooper, both of Good Beer Guide standard or Dizzy Blond, nearly as good. The carvery costs £7.25 (£9.25 on Sunday) but there is a two-for-£12.50 offer during the week. Salad, soup, prawn crunch or a terrine were available and Old English fish pie, fish or scampi and chips and a choice of eight desserts. The pub was refurbished in 2011 with a conservatory extension on the front so there was adequate room even though there were plenty of customers.



During the day the 307 and 308 buses pass the door, but most of us had arrived there using the 374 that drops you off only a five minute walk away (though the service is only hourly). We also sign up a new recruit to CAMRA; and in view of the downpour, Adam was kind enough to give us a lift to the next pub.

The **Shady Oak** on Redford Drive, serving a housing estate built in the 1970s, is not the easiest place to find, concealed as it is behind

the Co-Op, but it was worth the effort. There was a good choice of cask beers ranging from acceptable to Good Beer Guide standard: Everards Tiger, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Sharp's Doombar, Adnam's Broadside, also a Black Sheep beer that was not tried. It is a deceptively large pub with a number of different rooms round a central bar, some of them on a slightly raised area.



Because of the spread out nature of this stagger, we were at the half way point and soon needed to move to the **Ladybrook** as it was now 9.00pm. Built in the inter-war years in mock-Tudor style, this was a Boddingtons' pub with full size snooker tables. This all changed many years ago with an extensive refurbishment but while the front rooms are largely given over to food the large vault has been retained at the rear, with pool table and darts, and is well used throughout the week. Beers were Fuller's London Pride, Thwaites Wainwright and Wells' Bombardier, all quite acceptable.

A 20 minute walk brought us into Bramhall village where we needed to check whether the **Beluga Café Bar** and **Napa** had started selling real ale - No - and if it has made a re-appearance in **Bubble Room** - It hadn't.



Now we came to the **Victorian** on Ack Lane East. Formerly the Orange Tree it was bought by John Willie Lees (I think from Punch Taverns) and was first tenanted as the New Victorian. When Max, the then-landlord, went to Australia, it became a managed house and was renamed the Victorian. The pub's website claims that it has been there for over 100 years and it is true that there was a pub on the site but the current pub was rebuilt when the shopping centre was constructed. The present manager Joe came from the Carousel in Reddish and

hopes to keep a high standard of real cask ale. The three beers that we tried were Manchester Pale Ale, Game On and 100.

Food is a major part of the operation with both the Lees' corporate menu plus dishes devised by the chef and it is served until 9pm. Outside drinking is offered in abundance with a garden courtyard to the rear that can usually be entered from the side and there is even pavement café style seating squeezed in to the front so take your pick. There is good disabled access and it is family-friendly.

Our choice now lay between visiting the Jolly Sailor in Davenport or else taking one of the hourly 378 or 157 buses to the **Pointing Dog** next to Manchester Rugby Club at the junction of Grove Lane and Gillbent Road. Formerly the Smithy, this was transformed into an extensive establishment with a large car park at the front and garden with seating at the rear. As this is also the terminus for the 313 to Stockport and with a late 157 to Cheadle, and stays open until 1.00am on Fridays, we opted to finish there.



Beers were excellent Theakston's Bitter, Worth Incline and Worth Doggy Style that was possibly the best beer of the night. Prices are not cheap for food or drink but all the beers were below £4 a pint. With all areas being mixed drinking and eating there is plenty of room in very pleasant modern surroundings with the bar staff in traditional long black aprons. There is a good food menu with a selection of starters, salads, burgers and light meals; steaks, fish and chicken main courses from £12 - £26.50, average about £15 and desserts for around a fiver. You could have a three course meal for about £25 which is not excessive for Cheadle Hulme.

It was still raining as we left and finished a very spread out but overall excellent Stagger and caught the bus home.

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Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

John O'Donnell with more news of next month's event

Tickets are now on sale for the 2nd Manchester Beer & Cider Festival. The festival returns to the Manchester Velodrome from 21st - 24th January with an incredible line-up of beers, ciders & perries planned.

There will be 19 bars spread across the Velodrome's concourse and floor including 10 top breweries who are bringing their own bars to the event. These will be led by Manchester's own Marble Beers with their enduringly popular ales including Pint, Dobber and Marble Ginger. Also returning to the festival for a second year will be Cumbria's Hawkshead Brewery who last year walked away with the award for Champion Beer of the North West for their Cumbrian Five Hop. Ilkey from Yorkshire and Bollington from Cheshire are returning and will be joined by six other brewers who are setting up a bar here for the first time.



Brewster Michelle Kelsall will bring her Offbeat beers to the event including the award-winning Way Out Wheat and Dotty Double IPA. Fellow brewsters Amanda Seddon and Kathryn Harrison of Wilson Potter brewery will also have their bar at the event. It has been quite a year for Wilson Potter having made a habit of picking up awards, winning Beer Of The Festival at Stockport, Chorlton and Didsbury Beer Festivals. The award-winning beers should all be on the bar.

Bury will have two representatives in the brewery bar line-up with Outstanding Beers, one of the most established and respected micro-brewers in the region, lining up alongside the up-and-coming Brightside Beers who have made great strides since setting up in the back of the family bakery just three years ago. From Hebden Bridge, Bridestones Brewery have been making a name for themselves in their heartland for the past couple of years but are only just starting to appear regularly in Manchester - this will surely change after they bring their bar to the festival.

Last but by no means least in the brewery bar line-up will be Marble protégé Rob Hamilton and his Blackjack Beers. The regular Brew Tap open weekends at the Manchester-based brewery have become a Mecca for beer fans over the past year and now they will be bringing their diverse range of beers to Manchester Beer & Cider Festival. The Blackjack Brew Tap will be located on the concourse level.



MANCHESTER
Beer & Cider
Festival



Of course there won't just be beers at the event. The new Cider Bar on the concourse level will focus on the growing number of cider producers in the North of England. While the traditional cider-producing areas of Somerset, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire continue to dominate the industry, recent years have seen a growing number of producers in the North. Manchester Beer & Cider Festival will be featuring some of the very best of these including Manchester's own Moss Cider Project, Bolton's Red Bank Cider Company, Dunham Massey Press and Pure North Cider Press from Holmfirth.

The festival is also expanding its range of beers from across the world. Once again, it is expected that the full range of German Oktoberfest beers will be on the bar, in itself a rare occurrence in the UK. Also the festival will be featuring a range of beers from the growing craft beer movement around the world. These will include beers from Australia's Stone & Wood, Denmark's Amager and Spain's Naparber. The USA will be represented by Evil Twin, Two Roads and Greenflash amongst others. Other countries represented will include France, Switzerland, Belgium, the Czech Republic, The Netherlands and Italy.

Next month, Opening Times will bring you the full details to help you find your way round the festival including our pick of the beers and ciders. In the meantime, tickets can be purchased at www.manchesterbeerfestival.org.uk. To keep up to date as brewers & beers are confirmed follow the festival on twitter at @MancBeerFest or on Facebook.com/ManchesterBeerFestival.

Below – scenes from this year's festival.





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High Peak Pub Scene

Robin Wignall & Tom Lord with News and Views

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall

Although I was away during the weekend of the beer festival at the **Drum & Monkey**, I was able to try some of the beers early in the following week, and also to get some feedback on what was obviously a successful event. Beers from Whaley Bridge Brewery were first to sell out. Also popular were the products of Happy Valley, Phoenix, Storm and Bradfield.



Abbeylea Full English Breakfast was in fact a smoky stout with coffee notes. A real curio, and something of a coup, was the sale of Winkle Old Oak, 6.6%. This was a one-off on draught, as it is normally only made for bottling. It was a fine beer which of course deserved caution. Storm Pale Gale Ale was another brew to catch the tastebuds. This festival was very much the anniversary festival to celebrate two years of the Drum & Monkey. Look out for the next festival in the New Year though it is well worth a call there at any time. Recent beers available have been Whaley Bridge Rapa Nui and Happy Valley Black Magic, this latter being Champion Beer of Cheshire in 2013. Waiting in the cellar were Bradfield Farmers Belgian Blue and Poppy Ale.

A walking group visited the **Bull's Head** in Foolow, about a mile off the A623 between Chapel-en-le-Friith and Baslow. Historically the building was part of the estate of Tennant's of Sheffield, one of the long-lost breweries that went in the Whitbread tour of destruction. These days it is a good free house. Twenty-three of us were pre-booked for a walkers' special which was efficiently served and certainly helped to fill the empty corners after a morning's walk. There was some good beer available too. Abbeylea Absolution was perhaps a bit strong for lunchtime drinking, but good to see it on the bar. Easier drinking came with Black Sheep Bitter, and more interestingly, Peak Ales Bull's Head, and Bradfield Foolow Farmer. These last two are house brews which are probably re-badges of other beers from those breweries. The Foolow Farmer is well recommended.

Another pre-booked group dined at the **Old Hall** at Whitehough, near Chinley, recently.

High Peak Pub News

With Tom Lord

It is reported that Robinson's **Prince of Orange** in Ashton-under-Lyne is undergoing a major refurbishment and will reopen around the 11th December. Also in Ashton, what used to be Peg's Tavern on the Hartshead Estate has been refurbished by Enterprise Inns and reopened as the **Waterhouse**. It has two constantly changing ales from the Enterprise list. The beers were Wychwood Dogs Bollocks and Black Sheep Bitter when OT called.

Up in Mossley the **Highland Laddie** has been closed. It is not certain yet whether this will turn out to be permanent or not.

In Marple thankfully the much loved **Hatters Arms** has reopened after a considerable refurbishment. The small room interior layout of the pub has remained unaltered and it is a well carried out and sympathetic renovation with the number of hand pumps increased and with extended range of Robinsons beers plus cider. Carrying on the theme of refurbishments the **Oakwood** in Glossop is also closed for this purpose.

In the last month's issue it was mentioned that the Waggon and Horses in Mottram was closed and boarded up. This should have read the **'Waggon'** and not the 'Waggon and Horses' and thus avoiding any confusion with Robinson's very much open Waggon and Horses in Stalybridge which is quite close to the border with Mottram.

The Old Hall has a good reputation for both food and beer. Needless to say the group of walkers and runners were very pleased with the visit. The early-bird menu at lunchtime and early evening in the week makes for a sensibly priced meal. Then there is, of course, an ever-changing range of guest beers, mainly from local-ish microbreweries, but also from across the Pennines. Look out for the Christmas Fair here early in December, and then for the Winter Ales Festival in February.

Two of us went for a birthday meal at the **Castle** in Castleton in early November. An evening meal offer gave an interesting choice of food from a smaller range of meals, but at a sensible price. Well-fed, we were able to wash our meals down with one of Pedigree, Doom Bar and a much more interesting choice, Leeds Pale. The Castle is not alone in Castleton in serving good beer, and many of the pubs are well worth a call in this tourist destination village.

The **Railway** in Whaley Bridge regularly has good pints of Unicorn and Trooper, and continues to promote the live music scene. In the New Year it is planned that with a small



The **Commercial Hotel**, Manchester Road, Mossley reopened last month after a few days' closure for redecorating. In the public area there are a new bar top, pumps, floor, chilled cabinets and paintwork. The cellar has been re-worked with better cooling and updated dispensing systems. The hand pulls for cask beer have been relocated to the rear face of the bar – they no longer are on the bar by the entrance. There are now five of them. When OT called Millstone Tiger Rut and Stout were on sale, but the plan is to offer two regular beers and three guests. Bottom Mossley is getting quite interesting as there are three real ale pubs – as well as the Commercial, there's the **Best of Brass** and the **Britannia** – within a few hundred yards of the railway station.

Finally we were saddened to hear that John Crossland, the longstanding and respected landlord of the **Pack Horse** in New Mills, died last month after a short illness. The pub has been a regular Good Beer Guide entry and in recent times has been run by his son, Mark.

change to use of rooms, food will be available to add a further attraction for the pub.

Up at the **Shady Oak** at Fernilee, on the Long Hill road between Whaley Bridge and Buxton, the new management has come across, and has displayed, a framed list of the innkeepers from 1841 until 1998. This takes the pub through the days of being a Clarke's of Reddish house, into the era of Boddington's and just beyond. By 2003 the Shady Oak was closed for a time, briefly became a free house and then was bought by Jennings shortly before the Cumbrian brewer sold out to Marston's. It is not surprising that the list stops at 1998, as the frequency of change after then would have made it difficult to keep it up to date! Previous tenants Sue and Craig brought stability back to the Shady Oak in 2009, and hopefully the new management will continue this process. Two beers were on sale recently, both from the Marston-owned Wychwood, Hobgoblin and a seasonal, Pumpking. The latter was a decent pint.

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CAMPAIGN
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Manchester
Evening News



Heard at the Bar

Pub News covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Happy Birthday

The **Magnet** on Wellington Road North, Stockport, celebrated its fifth birthday as a free house last month – and gave itself a birthday present with the launch of its own brewery. Over the past months the pub's regulars have watched the construction of the small brewhouse at the back of the pub (and latterly also enjoyed the new outdoor seating area on the brewhouse roof).



The beers from **Watts Brewing?** were launched to coincide with the birthday celebrations and all sold extremely quickly. They included the pale and hoppy What's First and Cheers to 5 Years along with the darker Dim. Numerous other beers are planned by brewer Sarah Bergin. Our photo above shows landlady Lesley Watts (left) and daughter Laura with two of the beers.

Sale & Dunham Massey

There are new tenants at Holt's **Volunteer Hotel** in Sale. Former hosts Jim and Tracy Roberts left the Cross Street pub at the end of September and have been replaced by Debby and Eddie Scott.



The couple have a long association with Sale having moved to the area from the North East 26 years ago and are really pleased to be back in the area they view as home. They have been in the pub trade for many years with an impressive list of pubs behind them - Stretford's Melville and the Kingsway in Levenshulme to name just two. They have moved to Sale from another Holt's pub, the Grafton Arms in the shadow of Manchester Royal Infirmary. The couple don't have plans

to make significant changes to the pub - the Thursday night quiz will remain as will Saturday's disco and karaoke.

The **Rope & Anchor** on Paddock Lane in Dunham Massey has just gained Cask Marque accreditation for their real ales. The JW Lees house is best known as a dining venue but has been making a major effort to improve the quality of their ale offering which has culminated in the Cask Marque. They have joined a growing number of Lees pubs which offer 50p off a pint of cask ale every Monday. They also have a presence on both twitter (@Rope_anchor) and Facebook (facebook.com/RopeAndAnchor) where they post news of changes to their beers & menu as well as special events at the pub.

The former **Manor House** on Manor Avenue in Sale has had a major refurbishment and is now the **Samuel Brooks**, subtitled 'pub and dining' and further subtitled 'friends and family'. The pub is named after Samuel Brooks, an industrial and banking magnate who owned land to the south of Manchester and indeed Brooklands. He also developed another district, Whalley Range, which was named after his home town.



The new man in charge of this Hydes outlet is Elton Borge who has previous experience in the trade in Bristol and his native Wales. It's good to see three handpumps in use dispensing (when OT called) a seasonal in the Lowry series, Muscavado Mocha (from the Beer Studio), and Hydes Original. A new menu is available from 12 noon to 9.00pm every day with various special offers available on most days, one being an over 60's lunch club which runs from 12 to 4.00pm Monday to Friday.

The new layout is not that far removed from the old: it's just bigger and certainly has a lighter feel with huge picture windows on three sides. Although it is possible to eat throughout, the large room to the left of the entrance is dedicated to family dining and the other rooms are restricted to over-18s. A feature of the re-vamp is the diverse and unusual furniture from many sources with recycled factory tables and benches alongside the traditional soft bench seats giving a varied look to the interior. At one end is a vault type area with a large screen TV and a dartboard and at the other a

substantial outdoor area with traditional bench seats and tables. All in all it's very appealing and worth a visit.

Cheadle Update

The **White Hart Tavern** in Cheadle has re-opened after a makeover. Now called the "White Hart Tavern", it has to be said that it does look very good indeed. The interior rambles around the central island bar and is split up into a variety of areas giving a multi-roomed feel to what is essentially an open-plan pub. There's lots of dark woodwork and the fixture and fitting are very traditional.



There's a substantial food operation but there is no problem if you just want to drop by for a drink. Indeed the pub advertises "craft and cask ales" outside. Inside these are (well, were when OT called) Greene King IPA and IPA Gold, Jennings Cumberland Ale and Shepherd Neame Spitfire on handpump and, in the fridges, bottled beers along the lines of Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, BrewDog Punk IPA, Duvel and Fuller's Black Cab, amongst others. If you are in CAMRA you'll get 10% off cask beers on production of your membership card. It seems to be working well as the pub was pretty much full of locals and families on a Saturday afternoon.

Elsewhere in Cheadle, the **George & Dragon** has a varying beer range which seems to bounce around between various national brands and more local offerings. Beers from Fool Hardy Ales have recently been spotted on sale. The pub also has a special offer on Tuesdays where all ales are reduced to £2.40 a pint.

Stockport Pub Shorts

We understand that the **Woolpack** on Brinksway was set to re-open on 1st December so may be up and running when you read this. In the town centre, **Little Jack Horners** on Lord Street is up for sale – the pub remains open so this could be an opportunity for someone we think. Also up for sale is the **Full Shilling** on Tiviot Dale but this pub was also reported closed as we went to press. With the closed down **Tiviot** across the road, Tiviot Dale is a depressing sight for the pub lover.

[More pub news on page 17.](#)

PubCo Reform

Something we'll be returning to next month is the Government's defeat on an amendment to the cumbersomely named Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill. This happened two days before *Opening Times* went to press so we didn't really have time to consider everything in detail.

All the hoo-ha is down to an amendment that will allow tenants of those pub owners who own more than 500 pubs to pay a full market rent in exchange for a freedom from the tie. It actually seems to be a bit more complicated than that as companies owning more than 500 pubs may be able to specify what beers their "free of tie" tenants purchase but those tenants will be able to buy those specified beers from any supplier.

Given the pub ownership threshold this means that the family brewers will not be caught by all of this although larger independent brewers like Greene King and Marston's will.

What is striking however is the response of the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) which is replete with dodgy statistics and pseudo-historical guff. They say the vote will "hugely damage investment, jobs, and results in 1,400 more pubs closing, with 7,000 job losses - as the Government's own research shows." The Government's research says no such thing - as we will explain next month.

Having deployed the dodgy statistics the BBPA then tries to employ the forces of tradition. "This change effectively breaks the 'beer tie', which has served Britain's unique pub industry well for nearly 400 years" says Chief Executive Brigid Simmons. As beer writer and expert Pete Brown has pointed out "while tied pubs may have existed in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, they didn't become the norm until the late nineteenth century, when beer consumption peaked and brewers floated on the stock exchange to buy up the pubs that sold their beer." So a generous 150 years rather than the quoted 400.

Of course we have to be aware of unintended consequences and perhaps the BBPA has some good points to make. We'd like to see them make them instead of insulting our intelligence with stuff like this.

City News

Social Media has been aflame following news that Manchester is to get a companion bar to the Sheffield, York and Euston Taps. These make up a chain of modern craft beer bars that feature wide ranges of cask, keg and bottled beer (the Manchester outlet is slated to have no fewer than 30 beers on tap). The Sheffield Tap even has its own in-house brewery. There has been much speculation as to the site of the Manchester outlet and now it



looks confirmed as Piccadilly in the former shop premises at 8 Station Approach. This is the former "Leather Shop" but given there are large vacant units on either side it is possible that the Manchester Tap could be quite a decent size. Our image is taken from the Manchester Tap's Twitter feed - follow them on @tapmanchester.

Just as we went to press we saw a press release announcing the imminent re-opening of the **Sawyer's Arms** on Deansgate in its new guise as part of the Nicholson's chain. We are promised that the pub The Sawyer's Arms will be offering a range of Cask Marque-accredited real ales as well as a delicious menu of freshly cooked pub classics. Served from 10am every day, the pub food combines classic seasonal dishes with year round favourites. A full review next time.



“

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The Winter Warmer Wander



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This month we are once again running the Winter Warmer Wander, our annual celebration of festive beers to bring you a little winter cheer across the Christmas and New Year season, and on into the cold nights of January. Like the Mild Challenge and the Cider Circuit, this is the chance for you to visit some new pubs and try some new beers. This year we have lots of great prizes and lots of ways to win them...

What you need to do...

- * Buy at least half a pint of cask conditioned stout, porter, old ale, barley wine (or if none are available any other premium beer at 4.5% ABV or greater).
- * Get the pub to put a sticker on its entry below (if they can't find a sticker, just get a signature).
- * Get 12 stickers and you will win two bottles of beer plus a ticket for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival.
- * 24 stickers will get you two tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival and a special WWW t-shirt plus entry into two prize draws, one for a hamper of assorted beers and the other a meal for two at a local Wetherspoons.
- * Visit all 41 pubs to win two bottles of beer, two tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival and a special WWW t-shirt plus entry into two prize draws, one for a bumper hamper of beers, the other a meal for four at the Hinds Head, Heaton Chapel.

The Winter Warmer Wander runs from Saturday 29 November to Sunday 11 January. Completed forms need to be with Dave Platt, 138 Broom Lane, Levenshulme, M19 3LJ by 16 January (so we can post the tickets in time). Don't forget to include your name, address and a contact number and/or email address please.

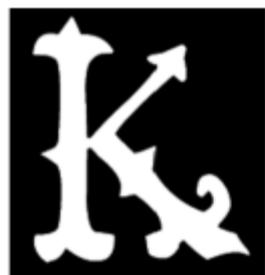
<i>New Oxford</i> 11 Bexley Square, Salford M3 6DB	<i>The Wharf</i> 6 Slate Wharf, Castlefield M15 4ST	<i>Knott Bar</i> 374 Deansgate, Manchester M3 4LY	<i>Paramount</i> 33-35 Oxford Road, Manchester M1 4BH	<i>Waterhouse</i> 67-71 Princess Street, Manchester M2 4EG
<i>Castle Hotel</i> 66 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE	<i>Crown & Kettle</i> 2 Oldham Road, Manchester M4 5FE	<i>Smithfield</i> 37 Swan Street, Manchester M4 5JZ	<i>Marble Arch</i> 73 Rochdale Road, Manchester M4 4HY	<i>Harewood Arms</i> 2 Market Street, Broadbottom SK14 6AH
<i>Ford Madox Brown</i> 3 Wilmslow Park, Rusholme M14 5FT		<i>Great Central</i> 306 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield M14 6NL		<i>Friendship</i> 353 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield M14 6XS
<i>Victoria</i> 438 Wilmslow Road, Withington M20 3BW	<i>Milson Rhodes</i> 1D School Lane, Didsbury M20 6RD	<i>Fletcher Moss</i> 1 William Street, Didsbury M20 6RQ	<i>Gateway</i> 882 Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury M20 5PG	<i>Oddest Bar</i> 414 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton M21 0SD
<i>Sedge Lynn</i> 21a Manchester Rd, Chorlton M21 9PN	<i>Marble Beer House</i> 57 Manchester Road, Chorlton M21 9PW	<i>Font</i> 115 Manchester Rd, Chorlton M21 9PG	<i>The Parlour</i> 60 Beech Road, Chorlton M21 9EG	<i>Costello's Bar</i> 18 Goose Green, Altrincham WA14 1DW
<i>Old Market Tavern</i> Old Market Place, Altrincham WA14 4DN	<i>Hinds Head</i> Manchester Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport SK4 2RB	<i>The Hope Inn</i> 118 Wellington Rd Nth, Stockport SK4 2LL	<i>Nursery</i> 258 Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 2NA	<i>Magnet</i> 51 Wellington Rd Nth, Stockport SK4 1HJ
<i>Crown Inn</i> 154 Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AR		<i>Swan With 2 Necks</i> 36 Prince's Street, Stockport SK1 1RY		<i>Calvert's Court</i> 13 St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB
<i>Bakers Vaults</i> Market Place, Stockport SK1 1ES	<i>The Cocked Hat</i> 2 Market Place, Stockport SK1 1EW	<i>Arden Arms</i> 23 Millgate, Stockport SK1 2LX	<i>Railway</i> 1 Avenue Street, Portwood, Stockport SK1 2BZ	<i>Midway</i> 263 New Bridge Lane, Portwood, Stockport SK1 2NX
<i>Fairway</i> 137 Higher Hillgate, Heaviley, Stockport SK1 3HR	<i>Horse & Farrier</i> 144 Gatley Road, Gatley SK8 4AB	<i>John Millington</i> 65 Station Road, Cheadle Hulme SK8 7AA	<i>Church Inn</i> 90 Ravenoak Road, Cheadle Hulme SK8 7EG	<i>Wilfred Wood</i> 204 London Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4DQ



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Heard More at the Bar

Pub News covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

New Hatters



The Hatters Arms, Marple, has reopened following a three-week refurbishment by Robinsons.

The local favourite, which dates back to the early 19th century, has been renovated to ensure that its original charm is retained. The brewery



design team chose a palette of greys, greens and warmer neutral tones, and a striking feature wallpaper, depicting vintage wooden crates, now enhances the interior. The existing seating was re-upholstered, and quirky table lamps made from old books, sit alongside new industrial lighting. The most noticeable change to the bar is the addition of a new bank of four hand pulls, a feature that didn't go unnoticed when the pub opened its doors to the public in early November.

City News

In Levenshulme, **Fred's Ale House** will now be opening in early December if all goes to plan. The planned November opening had to be postponed while repairs were carried out to a drain area at the rear of the pub.

Owner Lawrence Hennigan has confirmed it will operate over three floors – the basement will be a drinking area and art gallery with a large LED screen to show short films and sport, while the ground floor bar area will have six cask pumps and also serve coffee and light snacks. There will be a covered front terrace and a smoking area to the rear. The third floor will include the toilet facilities, a coffee lounge and art space. This promises to be a major investment in the Levenshulme pub scene and we'll bring you more details after it has opened.

In the City Centre, **Kro Piccadilly** closed its doors suddenly on 18 November. The owners

put the bar's demise down to a large rent increase demanded by the building's new owners. The two remaining Kro outlets, on Oxford Road and in Heaton Moor continue to trade normally.



On a brighter note, the **Micro Bar** (pictured above) in the Arndale Market will be having a beer festival, which will start on Thursday 22nd until Sunday 25th January, which takes in some of the period of the Manchester Beer & Cider Festival. Prior to the beer festival, the Micro Bar will be closed from Monday 19th January for alterations. On re-opening there will be an increase in handpumps from four to six for cask beers and from one to two for traditional cider. The bar is being moved to the area where the bottled beers are currently displayed, and the area where the bar is at the moment will become a seating area.



The new-ish faces at the **Royal Oak** in Didsbury (pictured above) are Paula and Brendan who came from the Bulls Head in Piccadilly. They had that pub for about 18 months (collecting a Pub of the Month award in that time) after the previous licensees retired. They improved upon a good job and built the Bulls Head up to what they felt was its maximum potential considering the investment forthcoming from the owners (although the Bulls Head is a Marston's "tied" pub, the pub itself and the business is owned by a private individual). When the Royal Oak became available, they grabbed at it and took the tenancy from Marston's.

After a break prior to their arrival, Paula and Brendan gladly bowed to local pressure and restored the popular cheese platter lunches for which the pub has been famous.

More on Stockport

One of the more significant re-openings in recent weeks was that of **Live Stockport** in the former premises of Bamboozza on the Market Place. The man behind the operation is Yacoub Naber who has considerable experience in the licensed trade. For two years he ran Hardy's Well in Rusholme and with his brother is the co-owner of a club in Florida. In fact he was considering a move to Florida when he came across an on-line advert for Bamboozza's lease, thought about it and made an offer that was accepted.



The impressive former bank premises are listed Grade II and it took four months to get them back into reasonable order. There's been a thorough restoration of the former banking hall along with the installation of a stage and sound system. This is all proving very popular with local bands and the venue is booked up until the end of January with some bookings already in place for March. It all looks very impressive and spacious (the official capacity is 300) with the large downstairs area supplemented by a smaller room off (the former bank manager's office) and a mezzanine drinking area too.

On the bar there are 10 handpumps and when OT called these were dispensing beers from Outstanding, Phoenix and Moorhouses breweries, although it is likely some of these could be replaced by beers from other local brewers. It's worth emphasising that Live Stockport does function as a pub as well as a music venue and is well worth a visit for good beer in rather spectacular surroundings.

Coming next – reports on the new-look **Chestergate Tavern**, the **Griffin** in Heald Green and the reopened **Woolpack**.

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What's Brewing

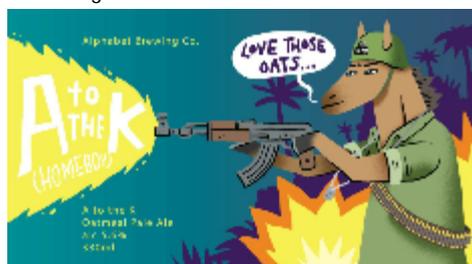
Brewery News from around the region

The wave of new openings seems no sign of abating. Last time we brought news of the latest Stockport breweries. This month we turn our attention to Manchester and it says something that on one day last month *Opening Times* was able to visit no fewer than three new breweries near Piccadilly Station.

Situated at 99 North Western Street, **Alphabet Brewing Co** is the project of Joe Fernhead, owner of Kosmonaut on Tariff Street in the Northern Quarter. The good looking 10 barrel installation (pictured below) was acquired from Buxton Brewery when it moved to a larger kit and was planned to be in production by mid- to late- November. The beers will be mainly be available in bottle and key-keg but some cask will be produced (they have acquired what looks like a substantial stock of casks in fact).



The brewer is Tom Evans (pictured above right with Joe) who arrives via Ossett, Blue Monkey, Celt and Hand Drawn Monkey breweries – something of an impressive pedigree at some cutting edge brewers, and the beers planned reflect this. When OT called a 6% pink grapefruit and tarragon saison was fermenting and this was to be followed by “A to the K” (an oatmeal pale ale), a coffee stout and a session pale ale - the two pale ales will form part of the core range.



The beers will naturally be available in Kosmonaut and also Joe's new bar, Ply, due to open on Stephenson Square hopefully by the end of January.

Further up North Western Street in Ardwick is Mike Marcus's **Chorlton Brewing Company**. Chorlton Brewing in Ardwick? Well yes – suitable premises are hard to come by in Chorlton which is nevertheless likely to remain central to the brewery's operations. Londoner Mike has been joined at the brewery by another southern refugee – Rowan Molyneux – who will work on sales and marketing. They are pictured below at the brewery.



It's another 10 barrel kit, this time supplied by Oban Ales, but this plant will be making some very specialised products. A keen home brewer, Mike will be producing a 7.4% double IPA (which may be matured on sandalwood) but his real love is experimenting with yeasts and sour beers. Indeed as this was typed Mike was in Germany exploring the traditional sour gose beers made in Leipzig and Goslar – he told us that an “imperial black gose” may well be on the cards. We can also expect a lambic-inspired sour beer which will undergo four or five months' maturation before being released.

In addition Mike told us about the 5.1% “Amarillo Sour” he has planned. This intriguing beer will be “kettle soured” and be brewed with no hops but will gain its hop character from extensive dry-hopping with Amarillo along with a touch of Bramling Cross.

Chorlton Brewing will not be producing any cask beer at the moment. Instead the beers will be either keg-conditioned or bottled with something like a 50:50 split between the two. They hope to hit the streets by Christmas.



Brewery number three is Sam Dyson's **Track Brewing Co** which is based on Sheffield Street.

Originally from Cheshire, Sam (pictured below) has been around a bit - not least because he spent something like three years cycling around the world! Sam told OT that he's always enjoyed beers, and his cycling trip, which took him across the USA from east to west, was something of a beery revelation.



On his return to the UK he spent some time working at Camden Brewery in London during its early days. He left there to set up on his own but these initial plans fell through. However he's now trained at Brewlab and is good to go.

The eight barrel kit came from Pureweld in Mirfield (who have also supplied Squawk in Ardwick and Tweed in Newton) but Sam reckons he will get about nine barrels out of it.



The first brew was planned for mid-November and was to be a blonde beer although Sam's real interest is red and amber beers. Notwithstanding this he has a range of beers in the pipeline including a rye beer, an oatmeal stout, a saison and the almost obligatory IPA. These may comprise the planned core range of five or so beers which will be available in cask, key-keg and bottle, with the emphasis on cask.

If all goes to plan Sam may well have a weekend tap at the brewery – and given the close proximity of the other brewers in the area (and there is at least one more to come) this raised the enticing prospect of a Manchester equivalent of London's “Bermondsey Mile” which sees a raft of local brewers open to the public on Saturdays.

Coming soon – **Cloudwater**. See next month's *Opening Times*.

More Brewery News on page 25.



Pennine



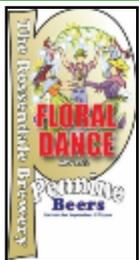
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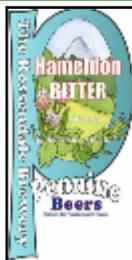
Contacts - Office: 0333 210 4021; Geoff: 07816 912 794; Robin: 07709 874 783

[Meet our beers](#) - Beer Tasting Notes



Floral Dance
3.8%

A pale and fruity session beer, with body that is more than a match for many stronger beers!



Hameldon Bitter
3.8%

An unusually dark traditional bitter, with a dry and assertive character that develops in the finish.



Glen Top Bitter
4.0%

A citrusy, full bodied pale beer. Intentionally not over hopped with quite a dry after taste.



Rossendale Ale
4.2%

A malty aroma leads to a complex, malt dominated flavour, supported by a dry, increasingly bitter finish.



Halo Pale
4.5%

A citrusy, pale ale brewed with Cascade aroma hops, finishing with a slightly bitter aftertaste.



Pitch Porter 5%

A full bodied rich beer with a slightly sweet, malty start, counter-balanced with sharp bitterness and obvious roast barley dominance.



Sunshine
5.3%

A hoppy and bitter golden beer with a citrus character. The lingering finish is dry and spicy

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further info!

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CAMRA Discounts

There are several pubs in the *Opening Times* area that offer a discount to card-carrying CAMRA members. This is a very welcome promotion and we are very grateful to those pubs that have taken up this initiative. *Opening Times* publishes an updated list of these pubs every three months. To date we have been given details of the following pubs which offer a discount. If any pub out there has been missed off the list (or the information below is incorrect) then please email *Opening Times* Editor John Clarke with details. The email address is: stocam@btinternet.com.

Here are the pubs we currently have full details of:

- J **Font, New Wakefield Street, Manchester:** 25% off cask ales
- J **Font, Manchester Road, Chorlton:** 25% off cask ales
- J **Font, Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield:** 25% off cask ales and ciders
- J **Albert Square Chop House, Manchester:** 20% off cask ales
- J **Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar:** 10% off cask ales
- J **Harewood Arms, 2 Market Street, Broadbottom:** 20p off a pint of cask ales Sunday to Thursday
- J **Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street, Manchester:** 50p off a pint and 20p off a half of cask ales
- J **White Hart Tavern, High Street, Cheadle:** 10% off cask ale
- J **Victorian, Ack Lane East, Bramhall:** 10% off a pint of cask ale
- J **Mary & Archie, Burton Road, West Didsbury:** 10p off a pint of cask ale
- J **Lloyds, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton:** 10% off food and drink
- J **Stalybridge Labour Club, Acres Lane, Stalybridge:** 14% off cask ales
- J **Bar Fringe, Swan Street, Manchester:** 10p off a half and 20p off a pint of cask ale
- J **Trevor, Beech Road, Chorlton:** 10% off cask ale
- J **Beehive, Market Place, Droylsden:** 10p off a pint on Mondays
- J **Mono, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton:** 10% off cask ale
- J **Spinning Top, Wellington Road South, Stockport:** 30p off a pint on Mondays

Yet more good reasons to join CAMRA! See membership form on page 26 or join online at: <http://www.camra.org.uk/>

Recent CAMRA Awards

The winner of High Peak CAMRA's Autumn Pub of the Season Award was the Printers Arms at Thornsett. This former Robinsons pub is now a thriving free house. Members of the High Peak Branch are shown right with the certificate being presented to the pub.



The Cider of the Festival at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival was Black Bart by Rosie's Cider from Wrexham – another fine example of the resurgent Welsh cider and perry industry. A small CAMRA party visited Rosie's in November and our photo shows Cider Bar Manager Charlotte Bulmer presenting the award to Rosie's Steve Hughes.



Brewery Historians Charity

Alan Gardner has been in touch to tell us about a very worthwhile event taking place on Saturday 6th December. The BBHS (British Brewery Historians Charity Section) are holding a Christmas Charity Meeting at the Hope (Wellington Road North, Stockport) from 12 noon onwards. All are welcome to attend.

Beer mats, beer labels, pump clips, beer books and anything else to do with beer will be sold, raffled and auctioned with **all** the money being passed to the Kidscan charity on the day. It is hoped that there will be refreshment in the form of pie and peas, visits round the in-house Fool Hardy Ales brewery and a guest visit from famous collector Tom Corner of Uppermill.



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New Festival Charity

Beacon Counselling say Cheers!

Beacon Counselling, a local Stockport charity, was thrilled to discover it has been chosen as the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival's charity. Their tenure as the Festival's charity will begin in 2015 and will run for three years. The news comes as the charity celebrates its 30th Anniversary.



The General Manager, James Harper said "everyone at Beacon is delighted to be given this fantastic opportunity to raise our profile and some much needed funding, and we would like to thank the Festival Committee for their support so far". The next Stockport Beer and Cider Festival will run from Thursday 28th until Saturday 30th May 2015 at Edgeley Park.

Beacon Counselling exists to improve the lives of adults and young people who experience mental and emotional distress. This includes problems such as depression, anxiety, bereavement and loss, or with relationships. With one in four of us experiencing these challenges at some point in our lives the need for counselling services is as great as ever.

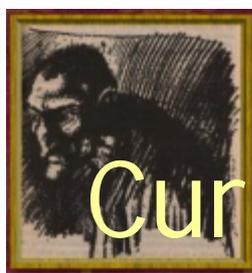
So far this year Beacon Counselling has welcomed over 1,000 people through its doors, but the pressure on their services still remains high. Being awarded the position of Stockport Beer and Cider Festival's charity means Beacon Counselling can raise vital extra funds and increase the awareness of their work and services in the Stockport area.

To ensure the success of the event, Beacon Counselling is looking for volunteers to help over the course of the Festival weekend. They need volunteers to help with everything from fundraising activities to pulling pints. So, if you are able to help then please contact Beacon Counselling on 0161 440 0055 or alternatively by email on admin@beacon-counselling.org.uk.

About Beacon Counselling

A registered charity set up in 1984, Beacon Counselling received the accolade of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2008, in 2012 won the prestigious IMPACT Award from Glaxo-SmithKline for the impact it has in communities across Stockport, and in 2013 won 1st prize in the Winifred Tumim Memorial Prize, a national award for excellence in charity governance.

They receive a range of grant and other funding but there is always a shortfall, particularly in recent years with the impact of government cuts and charitable funders having less to give away. This vibrant and innovative Charity is always grateful for support, and currently they are looking for help with raising the profile of the charity. If you feel you can help, and would like to know more, please contact James Harper, General Manager, on 0161 440 0055.



Curmudgeon

A Taxing Issue

While you may not always agree with him, Wetherspoon's chairman Tim Martin has to be applauded for being prepared, unlike many of his counterparts, to speak out on the issues facing the brewing and pub industry. However, one campaign on which to my mind he is very wide of the mark is that for a lower rate of VAT to apply to food sales in the hospitality trade. It is claimed that it would give a major boost to employment, but, taking a wider view, is it really such a good idea?

The issue is portrayed by its supporters as some kind of unjustified subsidy to supermarkets, whereas in fact a zero rate of VAT has always applied to most food sold in shops, whether supermarkets or local traders, and few people would argue that it should be taxed. Fifty years ago, the vast majority of alcohol sales were in the on-trade, but since then the off-trade has steadily gained ground despite not enjoying any advantage in tax and duty. In contrast, out-of-home dining has mushroomed. It's possible to argue that, for most alcohol purchases, there's a realistic choice between the two, but the same is never going to apply to food.

It's also not comparing like with like. Even if food bought in a shop is zero-rated, to actually eat it you need to take it home, store it (maybe in the fridge), cook it using gas or electricity, provide tables, chairs, plates and cutlery to eat it, and heating and lighting for your room, all of which may be subject to VAT, whereas these things are included in the price of a meal served up in a pub.

It's hard to argue that out-of-home food is too dear anyway – indeed you hear some people claiming that it is too cheap. There's a wide variety of food available at all kinds of price points, and would reducing the price of a £9.99 Beef Stroganoff to £8.75 really prove a decision-breaker for many people?

It wouldn't only be pubs that benefited, either. The hospitality trade encompasses all kinds of cafés, takeaways and restaurants too, so it would be giving a financial boost to your local kebab shop and burger joint as well as, if not more than, pubs. "Unfair tax treatment for McDonald's" doesn't somehow sound quite as appealing. It would also be helping the bottom line of three-star restaurants. The well-off tend to eat out more than the poor, and spend a lot more each time, so they would gain the greatest benefit. By definition, the more costly a meal, the higher the VAT element. And, when many food campaigners are complaining that people are less and less often preparing meals from scratch, surely cutting the cost of prepared meals would make them even less likely to cook at home.

It's always a subject of political debate as to whether it is better overall to reduce taxes or increase government expenditure. The proposed VAT cut from 20% to 5% on out-of-home eating would undoubtedly be expensive, and, even assuming it is affordable, it's not difficult to come up with areas where a tax cut might be more widely beneficial. Two obvious examples are a smaller reduction in the general rate of VAT, and increasing the income tax threshold. And, if encouraging employment is the main objective, then that would be better addressed by either increasing the threshold or reducing the rate of employers' National Insurance contributions.

The conclusion must be that this is a superficially appealing but poorly thought out idea that is a classic example of special pleading, wanting tax favours for businesses you happen to think are deserving. Even if money was available for tax cuts, it would be better spent elsewhere.

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com

(comments on these articles can be left on the website)

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Brewery News

Continued from page 19

There is another new brewery we have become aware of in recent weeks but to date they have been a little difficult to contact. This is **Zymurgorium** which we think is based in Wythenshawe Park. It's a project by Aaron Darke who has won £10,000 start-up capital in a national competition. It is described as follows on the Manchester City Council website: "Zymurgorium is an alternative, community-focused meadery and brewery company from Wythenshawe. Zymurgorium's plan is to offer a wide range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic organic drinks, raw materials for which are foraged in the local area. Their non-alcoholic range includes novel tipples such as 'hibiscus cola'."



Several beers have been sold by High Peak Beer Co in Stockport Market including a banana and chocolate Kongo Stout and a Kiwi Pale Ale. OT has exchanged emails with Aaron but we've not yet been able to meet up. In the meantime here are a couple of YouTube links so you can listen to him in his own words:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j8yrr7t9yo>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwaFrc7B738>

Brewery Updates

Following our reports last month, there has been a set-back at **Cryptic Ales** which suffered a burglary last month. Several key items were stolen and brewing may not now start for a few weeks. On the other hand **Thirst Class Ales** is now good to go and the first beers should be out soon.

Fool Hardy Ales, based at the Hope on Wellington Road North, Stockport, goes from strength to strength and to keep up with demand has recently upgraded the plant to a four barrel capacity, the largest that will fit in the pub cellar – the snug fit is shown in our photograph here. The latest beer is Jack's Ripper, an oatmeal stout at 4.7%. Brewer Martin Wood tells us that his core range has now expanded to include Russian Roulette (5%), Ravenous Romp (3.5%) and the pale and hoppy duo of Rhidonkolous (3.7%) and Rival Blond (4%). These will alternate with the existing range over four handpumps in the Hope with another being given over to the Fool Hardy monthly special. The brewery has also produced a range of 330ml bottles that are available in six packs.



Up in Reddish, **Ringway Brewery** has re-branded with more modern pumpclips and artwork. The excellent beers remain unchanged and the range has been augmented by the very pale and hoppy Admiral Pale (3.5%). Meanwhile Hyde's newcomer, Newton-based **Tweed Brewing** should have had its first beer out by the time you read this. Winter Tweed is a 4.1% seasonal beer brewed using Admiral hops.

The newly appointed brewer is Anthony Lewis who has arrived from Denton's Hornbeam Brewery.

Stockport's latest brewery is **Watts Brewing?** based at the Magnet on Wellington Road North. See Heard at the Bar on Page 13 for details.

Recent Awards

Regional Club of the Year

The winner of the Greater Manchester Regional Club of the Year 2014, **Bolton Ukrainian Social Club**, was presented with the award on a Saturday in early November. To celebrate the event, the club provided a buffet for CAMRA members present and an award-winning beer line up on the bar: Bank Top Dark Mild (Champion Mild of Britain 2014); Brightside Amarillo (SIBA NW Gold award 2013); and Brewsmith Bitter (SIBA NW Gold award 2014).

This is the second year running that the club has won this prestigious award and all in attendance at the celebration had a thoroughly enjoyable day, with a number of them then visiting some of Bolton's best town centre pubs.



Photo: Bolton Ukrainian Club Secretary, Paul Hnylycia is presented with the award by Greater Manchester CAMRA Deputy Regional Director, Beverley Gobbett (left), with Bolton CAMRA Branch Chair Gill Smart in attendance.

Pubs of the Month

We have managed to get rather behind schedule with our pictures of Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA's Pub of the Month Awards. We don't have room for a complete catch up but here are some of this year's winners (hopefully more next time).

The March award went to Beartown Brewery's **Navigation** at the top of Lancashire Hill. Local CAMRA member Stuart Ballantyne (left) is seen here congratulating landlord Barry Harvey on the award. The Navigation goes from strength to strength selling a range of Beartown beers.



The June winner was Hydes' **Nursery** on Green Lane, Heaton Norris. Stockport CAMRA's Treasurer Jim Flynn (left) is shown here presenting the award to manager Brendan Adderley.



More recently the October winner was the **Hinds Head** in Heaton Chapel. Pictured here is local CAMRA Chairman John Clarke (left) presenting the award to Colin and Janine Edwards.



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