

# ale

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter Issue 376 March 2016



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# Pub News

Welcome to ALE 376. We have a couple of interesting developments concerning the registration of pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACVs) to report.

As you might expect, the instigation of ACV status has caused uproar amongst property developers and some pub owners who believe that registration may devalue their property. It is our belief that, as long as the property is to remain a pub, they have nothing to worry about. ACV registration offers the local community the opportunity to purchase the business, but that does not have to be at a discount to the current market rate. It does make it more difficult for the property to be converted into another use, which is perhaps why such extreme attacks against the legislation are being made. A national newspaper recently claimed that one pub owner has banned 400 local residents because they had nominated his pub. If this were true, we'd have to question that particular landlord's business sense.



*The Castle Inn*

Castle Street and **The Hopbine**, Fair Street to be registered as ACVs. These decisions were made on the basis that they felt that there was insufficient evidence that the pubs furthered "the social well-being or social interests of the local community" and in any case these are "ancillary to the main use" of the pubs.

In our view this shows a complete lack of understanding of the role a local pub can play in shaping and maintaining a community. It also shows that the city council, which is Labour led, is out of touch, not only with the local community, but also with Daniel Zeichner its

## Branch Diary

Don't forget that all Branch members are very welcome to attend the monthly business meetings.

Tue 12-Apr : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, White Horse, Milton

Tue 10-May : 8:00, Open Branch Meeting, Alexandra Arms, Gwydir Street

Mon 23-May - Sat 28-May : 43rd Cambridge Beer Festival, Jesus Green

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# Pub News continued

own Labour MP. In a recent meeting with CAMRA representatives Mr Zeichner professed to support the registration of city pubs as ACV's, telling us that he understands the importance of the city pub when helping to build a positive community spirit.

Listing a pub as an ACV is both a recognition of the role it plays in the social fabric of communities and a means of protecting communities from unregulated losses. While the Castle Inn may not be under threat we know from past experience that many pubs are.



*The Zebra*

Our current city council's record on the protection of pubs is not a good one. Last year saw us lose **The Cow**, Corn Exchange Street, and **The Zebra**, Newmarket Road. It is difficult not to see this in a poor light when comparing it with the sterling efforts of the previous city council that wasn't Labour led and that introduced local guidance designed to protect city pubs.



Thankfully it is not all doom and gloom. Former Cambridge CAMRA pub of the year, **The Chestnut Tree**, West Wratting has been registered as an ACV. To celebrate, the pub will be "...taking the St George's Day celebrations to a new level". Starting Thursday 21st April with a beer festival, cheese and quiz evening, continuing with a Friday night pie and mash event in the newly refurbished restaurant, and rounding off with a Saturday of morris dancing and mummers' plays.



*The White Horse*

**White Horse** in Barton and **The Queen's Head**, in Fowlmere (which closed at the turn of the year).

South Cambs District Council have also confirmed ACV registration of **The Hoops** and **The**



*The Red Lion*

registered as ACVs in July 2015.

In East Cambs, **The Reindeer**, Saxon Street, and **The Red Lion**, Swaffham Prior were both

Sorry news from Hadstock, near Linton. **The King's Head**, which has been on the market for a while was closed at the end of January. We understand that a residents' action group is trying to accrue enough money to buy it.



The villagers of Harston have a different problem. Local group Harston Community Pub are discussing ideas for buying and re-opening **The Pemberton Arms** as a community facility.

Better news from **The Ancient Shepherds**, Fen Ditton. Pubco Punch Taverns has taken the pub off the market. A frequent customer of The Shepherds contacted us to say how much the pub had improved.





Just down the road in Horningsea, **The Crown and Punchbowl** has undergone a

period of refurbishment and is, according to correspondent David Willis, “now a proper pub”.

**The Three Hills**, Bartlow has closed for an 8-month long refit. We understand that when it re-opens it will be a pub that prides itself on its food as well as its beer.



The Landlord of **The Little Rose**, Haslingfield has asked us to tell you about the pub's first

ever beer festival, which runs from 21st – 23rd April. The Little Rose is Cambridge CAMRA Community Pub of the Year 2015.



**The Plough**, Duxford is the latest pub to join the Cambridge CAMRA list of pubs that serve beer

brewed by local breweries.



Congratulations To Fran and Barry Todd who are celebrating their 10th year in charge of **The Duke of Wellington**, Willingham.



*The Hopbine*

Some good news of **The Hopbine**, Fair Street, Cambridge. Steve and Hayley Pellegrini have retained

the tenancy for at least another year. The couple, who also look after the very successful Mitcham's Corner pub, **The Portland Arms**, have extended their mini estate to include **The Alexandra Arms**, Gwydir Street as well. All three pubs offer a 10% discount to CAMRA members.



Fred Laband wrote to tell us that **The Cricketers**, Melbourne Place, is to have a new “Thai style

pagoda” added to the rear of the building. It should be completed by the middle of March. Landlady Noi is very excited about the venture, which will add an extra dimension to the pub.



**The Mill**, Mill Lane is now in the capable hands of new manager Lauren Hodges. Lauren, who

has been promoted from deputy manager, takes over from Andy Pierce.

Andy will be managing The City Pub Company's new venture, **The Old Bicycle Shop**, in Regents Street, when it opens in April. The Mill will be holding another “Battle of the Brewers” competition throughout April

Oscar Sotres, Landlord of **The Emperor – Latin Tapas bar**, Hills Road asked us not to judge his pub by its looks, and to have a taste of his beer. There is no doubt that the recent makeover,

# Pub News continued

which makes the exterior look more like a continental bar than a traditional pub, could put off a dedicated CAMRA member, but get inside and it definitely is a pub. Four beers are on offer. On my visit, all were in good condition. The choice wasn't the most inspiring (the most exciting being an offer from Purity) but there is plenty of seating, and drinkers are not pressured into buying food.



And finally; Welcome to Nathan who has taken over management of **The St Radegund**,

King Street. Formerly manager of The Pickerel, Nathan returns to the industry after a year break.

## Brewery News




We understand that **Calverly's Brewery** no longer has a managing interest in

**The Architect**, Castle Street.

Crafty Beers have relocated from the buildings behind the Carpenter's Arms in Great Wilbraham to a farm close to Stetchworth and will be increasing output to a 6 barrel capacity.

Congratulations to **Cambridge Moonshine Brewery** who have won Norwich Beer Festival Gold award in the speciality category, for **Moonshine Brewery Raspberry Wheat**, and a Bronze award in the mild category, for **Moonshine Brewery Harvest Moon Mild**.



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# Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

Last issue's 'mystery' lost pub was the former Prince of Wales on Histon Road, as correctly identified by Merv Hughes, Pete Davis, Chris Scott and Fiona Darler.



A pub of that name first appears in the directories in 1847, although the present building is probably a couple of decades later than that; licensee one Henry Orpwood, who was succeeded by his widow, Elizabeth, from around 1869 to at least 1887. (Another Henry Orpwood, presumably their son, is listed as licensee at the Victoria Tavern, Histon Road. This is now long demolished – it used to be around where the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Histon Road and Victoria Road now sits.)

Latterly one of Disco Kenny's haunts, this former Tolly pub closed in 1995 to become the Tandoori Palace, and has remained in the same family since then. ALE 292 reported: "The Prince of Wales in Histon Road, for some years one of the city's few non-real pubs, has closed for good, being converted into a much-needed Indian restaurant. There are only three others in the vicinity. [A bit of tongue in cheek there, I suspect!] To their credit, Pubmaster, the pub's owners, did make every effort to sell it as a licensed premises. There were evidently no takers."

Fiona Darler provided some particularly interesting memories: her father, Frank Nolan,

ran the pub from 1963 until 1982/3, and she and her two brothers were born there. She recalls that what is now the car park at the rear was a garden and, even in the 1960s, stabling.

She continues: "The cellar was also accessed from the garden, and was below the building. I remember watching as the draymen delivered the barrels of beer: they would drop them off the back of the lorry onto a large cushion made of what looked like interwoven rope! They then proceeded to roll them over to the cellar, and again drop them down onto a large cushion. Back then the barrels were wooden, as were the crates of bottled beer.

"This was a weekly task my father would oversee, as was changing the dart boards this entailed taking down the boards that had hung in the pub all week, which had therefore become very dry, taking them outside and submerging them in a large tank of water, having removed the replacement boards, which were allowed to stand for a few hours until the excess water had drained away. Darts was a very popular pub game in the 1970s and most pubs had a team that would meet each week for a match with a local team, one week at home the next away. The bar was usually very busy on match nights.

"Another memory of the people who used the bar during the late 1960s was of rather elderly looking men, usually wearing their caps, sitting round a table chatting while putting a brown powder along the upper part of their thumbs and then proceeding to sniff the powder up their noses; this powder was snuff, along with smoking this is no longer seen inside bars these days.

"Sometime during the 1970s we moved out for a while so that the building could be modernised, the garden turned into a car park, a new cellar added, and upstairs living quarters modernised. While this was happening, my father ran another pub that has now disappeared: the Wheatsheaf at the top of Castle Hill on the corner of Mount Pleasant."





Marvellous stuff. Here's another one.

As usual: Where is/was it? What was it called? Do you remember it when it was a pub? Let's see if anyone can come up with reminiscences like Fiona's for this one.

We'd like to find out more about all our lost pubs, so if you have any memories of it – and even better, photos of when it was still open – please contact [pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk](mailto:pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk).

Answer, hopefully some stories about it, and another teaser, next issue.



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# Meet the Maker

The following is the second of a series of three articles on local cider maker, Simon Gibson.

## **Do you make cider all year round?**

No, you can't, not the way I make it – using fresh fruit you are limited to the autumn and winter months – you could use fruit from cold storage but that is usually food grade fruit that's picked before its fully ripe. I only use 100% freshly pressed juice to make my cider and perry, I would not make it from concentrate - that goes against the ethos of Simon's Cider, so I am limited as to when I can make it.

## **Are your products available off trade (Supermarkets)?**

No, not at the moment. I wouldn't sell to Supermarkets as a matter of principle really – I would consider small independent outlets, but at the moment my drinks are only being sold at beer festivals and by myself at some events. The cost of licensing against 1000 litres of produce does not make it viable. Next year though, with my expansion plans – I will take out the appropriate licences, so they will soon be available for purchase online, watch this space.

## **Cider and Perry seem to be making more than a bit of a revival; do you think there is still room in the market place for small, independent producers such as yourself?**

Yes, definitely. The big companies – you know who they are – are focusing more and more on fruit flavoured ciders and perries. Now I don't have a problem with this, they run massive advertising campaigns and more and more younger people are drinking these drinks and that in turn makes customers for me.

Last year I worked at the Chelmsford beer festival and I had these young 'TOWIE' types, in their pastel vests, all 'Sun's out, gun's out' coming up to me and saying 'ello mate, got anyfin like Kopparberg cider mate?', I gave them a glass of light natural cider, full of apple fruit and very moreish. They then come back for more and try something different, so I'm very



grateful for the likes of Kopparberg, Magners and Rekorderlig. If it wasn't for them the younger

elements would be drinking lagers and the like. The North American market is huge and the Asian market hasn't even got started yet – if I could afford to buy an apple plantation in Canada, I probably would.

Thanks to the likes of CAMRA and their beer and cider festivals, along with their campaigns, there is still plenty of room for operations similar to mine. If you drive around Cambridgeshire these days you'll see lots of little beer and cider festivals popping up – these are great places for us to promote our produce and to promote real cider and perry in general.

*At this point we paused the interview to sample some of Simon's produce – sometime later; we got back to the matter in hand! (We sampled a bottle of his Short Stirling, very nice it was too!)*

## **What in your eyes are the perfect food accompaniments for your Cider and Perry?**

For cider, definitely a slow roasted belly of pork joint nice and fatty, the acidity of the cider cuts through the fat of the pork, you then get the apple flavour of the cider and for me, it is the perfect accompaniment. For perry, chicken casserole or some-such, with its soft and gentle, subtle flavours perry does not want to be drunk with stronger tasting meats or dishes – cheese and biscuits are a perfect foil for both cider and perry.

## **You told us earlier how much you produced in the last year, where do you see your operation in say, five years' time?**

Apart from being in a dry secure building with plenty of space, I would like to be working more with other local cider and perry producers, and

# Simon Gibson – Simon's Cider

be part of a sort of cider circle where we all work together supplying local pubs etc. so one week they have Simon's Cider, the next week it's Cassells; then Potton Press; Pickled Pig; Cromwell's and so on, working on a cyclical basis – the locals know what's coming and it also gives them the opportunity to get to taste the varied real ciders and perries we are all working hard to produce. Working together will surely benefit all of us. We can all build up our client base and move on together.



On a personal level, in five years I'd like to see myself producing 15,000 – 20,000 litres of cider which

would make it a viable business. One of the problems is the current tax situation, at the moment I can produce 7000 litres per year with

no alcohol duty to pay but as soon as I make 7001 litres, I am liable to pay duty, not just on the 1 litre over the 7k free of alcohol duty but on all 7001 litres – meaning it's almost impossible to grow slowly! With an escalator in place it would give producers the chance to expand in a more sustainable way. (Note to self: maybe this is something CAMRA can look into and help with)

*Another opportunity to sample some of Simon's produce then came to light – this time we went for Dark Side, a dry cider infused with molasses, drinkable nicely chilled or indeed as a mulled cider – we went for the chilled option – the intensity of flavours, plum, caramel, roast was incredible. This was a real surprise.*

## **How many people do you employ?**

Just me! With help from the likes of Alan who is here today helping me out and volunteers who assist with picking the fruit, the landowners who allow me access to their orchards and gardens.

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# Cambridge Beer Festival



As I write this it's a little under three months until we open the 43rd Cambridge Beer Festival. This year the festival is the 23rd-28th May.

We always need more volunteers so if you're able to help, even for a few hours, please go to [www.cambridgebeerfestival.com/volunteer](http://www.cambridgebeerfestival.com/volunteer) and sign up. As well as people to help behind the bars we need people to help all around the festival.

We're also looking for people who are able to provide more time to help the cellar team. Training will be provided on how to look after beer through the whole process. If you're interested in doing that then please email [cellar@cambridgebeerfestival.com](mailto:cellar@cambridgebeerfestival.com).



Planning is well under way already - changes to the site are being discussed, posters are being produced, and beers, ciders, perries, wines and meads are being chosen. Food stalls are being booked and cheese ordered. All this is being done by a team of around 20 volunteers. By the time we open the doors we'll have around 150 volunteers on site. At our busiest sessions on Thursday and Friday there will be over 200 volunteers.

**Bert Kenward**  
*Festival Organiser*

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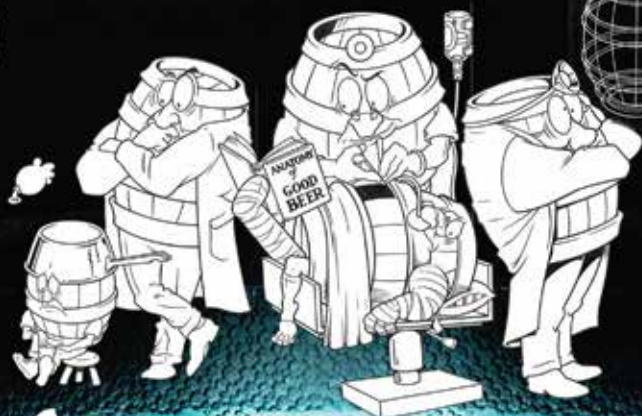


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# December Tour of Rural Pubs



It was a damp and grey Saturday in mid-December for our latest tour of rural pubs. As always, only the organiser knew

which pubs we would visit but this tour differed slightly as it wasn't entirely restricted by geography. One of the main aims of this tour was to visit pubs that were on the shortlist for inclusion in the 2017 Good Beer Guide. This tour gave its participants a chance to refresh their memories or possibly discover a new gem.



Our first stop was at the Plough in Duxford. One of three pubs in the village, the Plough is part of the Everards estate

but they have been very helpful to licensees Bill & Sandra Johnson and their son Ben. They have been allowed a fair degree of freedom. We had a choice of four well-kept ales, Everards Tiger and Synergy (a limited edition), Woodforde's Wherry and Adnam's Southwold Bitter. Weston's Old Rosie Cider was also available on handpump and they are considering getting a second cider. Ben's enthusiasm was clear as he told us of his plans for their April Grain & Cheese Festival (grain including whisky as well as beer) and a summer Cider & Sausage Festival. Having informed us that they had sold over 400 different ales in 3 ½ years he disappeared into the cellar and returned with jugs of Everards Original and Castle Rock First Mo-EI for us to try.

Our second stop was at the Ickleton Lion, a Greene King owned, 300 year old pub in Ickleton. Our choice here was a bit more limited, Greene King IPA, their seasonal ale Fireside and St Austell's Proper Job. I chose halves of the latter two and sadly neither were at their best. Waiting to appear was Castle Rock Harvest Pale and the seldom seen Elgood's CXXX. Licensee Chris told us how the pub sits

at the village's sporting heart. In the summer it is frequented by the Ickleton Cricket Club, which he helped revive, and in the winter by two football teams. In 2015 a group from the pub raised £10,000 for charity by cycling to Paris. Plans are already in hand for 2016's cycle ride to Lille.



Next up was a firm favourite of many, the Three Horseshoes in Stapleford, and true to form we were faced with

our widest choice. I selected halves of the two I'd not previously tasted. The Derventio Barbarian was a tasty, dark, 5.5% porter. The Nethergate 4.2% Red Santa was billed by the barman as being like Old Speckled Hen as it used to be. I have to agree. Also on offer were Adnam's Ghost Ship & Broadside, Woodforde's Wherry, Nene Valley New Age Chestnut, and Crouch Vale Yakima Gold. Cider drinkers could choose between Weston's Old Rosie and Bottle Kicking Cider's Scrambler.



From here we continued our north-easterly journey until we reached the Carpenters Arms in Great

Wilbraham which is home to the Crafty Beers Brewery. The two beers available, Carpenters Cask and Wilbraham Wobble Juice had both been brewed in the brewery. The latter was new to me so I was keen to try it as well as renewing my acquaintance with the former. Both were very tasty best bitters.

Our next stop satisfied our hunger as well as our thirst as we called in at the Red Lion in Kirtling. Hazel & Steve have worked hard to put this former Greene King pub at the heart of their community and they made us most welcome as well. Despite little warning they could still offer a choice of delicious filled ciabattas. The choice of

ales was their regular, Adnam's Southwold Bitter plus Greene King's Hardys & Hansons Rocking Rudolf. You know, the one with the little red flashing lights on the pump-clip. I spied some local clear honey for sale on the bar and purchased a jar.

After Kirtling we travelled north-west to another former Greene King pub, the Boot in Dullingham where we were welcomed by licensee Mark. As well as their regulars, Greene King IPA and Adnam's Southwold Bitter he also had Greene King St Edmunds and Warwickshire Beer's Warwickshire's Best. I had halves of the guests but both were a bit lacking in condition. The Boot is another pub with sport at its heart. It has four darts teams, a petanque team and also plays host to the cricket team and a veterans' football team. If the thought of all that exercise is too much, you can always play crib and watch the horseracing on the TV. It was at the Boot that we held our tour raffle that contributes towards the cost of the coach. The prize I had donated, a bottle of Rochefort 10, was one of several that winners would carry home to drink another day.



By now it was dark as we headed to the Reindeer in Saxon Street which we thought was due to open at

5. We could see licensee Martin through the window and Clive went to ask if he would let us in a few minutes early. He returned with mixed news. The Reindeer's winter opening hours are more limited than a year ago. Wednesdays from 8 to 11pm plus prearranged beer tastings and other events. The good news was that Martin was happy to open for us. The Reindeer is an oddity, part breweriana shop, part pub, part bottled beer shop. Cask beers in the Reindeer are mostly from the Pitfield and Dominion breweries but I selected a half of the Bartram's Comrade Bill Bartram's Egalitarian Anti-Imperialist Soviet Stout that is always a firm favourite at Cambridge CAMRA beer festivals. All cask ales here are gravity fed from the taproom out the back. On our visit the December chill had left them a bit too cold to fully appreciate. I look forward to Easter when the Reindeer's opening

hours will be longer and the beers a little warmer on the taste buds. Having relinquished my Rochefort 10 to the raffle one pub earlier I decided to revive my home beer stock by buying a bottle of Pitfield's 1792 Imperial Chocolate Stout.

Our tour then took us to our branch's easternmost pub, the Crown Inn in Ashley where a warm fire and a chatty barmaid welcomed us in. The Crown always has Mighty Oak IPA on but also offers at least two guest ales. On our visit they were Mauldon's Bitter and Bateman's Colonel's Whiskers. The Crown also had 4 real ciders. I was drawn to the Whiskers, a 4.3% rich, dark ale and it was the pleasures of dark ales that made our barmaid most loquacious.

From Ashley we turned our coach towards Cambridge calling in first at our 2014 Pub of the Year, the Chestnut Tree in West Wrating. Greene King IPA & Abbot Ale were joined by two from the west country, Skinner's Cornish Knocker, a refreshing 4.5% golden ale, and, a new one on me, Yeovil Ales' Glory, a 3.8% bitter.

Our last port of call was at the bustling Six Bells in Fulbourn. Our beer selection here included Adnam's Southwold Bitter & Broadside, Greene King IPA, Woodforde's Wherry, Oakham Bishop's Farewell and, the one I opted for, Exmoor Dark at 4.2%. Our last pub is also the place where we select our pub and beer of the tour. The favourite pub votes were spread over 7 of those we had visited. It took a second round of voting to separate the Plough in Duxford from the Crown Inn in Ashley with our first pub of the tour taking finally the accolade. Opinions were also diverse on the best beer. Again there were



7 contenders and it took a second round of voting to decide between two dark ales, the Derventio Barbarian at the Three

Horseshoes and the Exmoor Dark at the Six Bells. The Exmoor Dark triumphed. It was a strong mild that had been supplied via the Punch Finest range. Licensee Hugo described it as a fruity old ale with caramel and tobacco notes.

**Ali Cook**



# Reversing the Trend

Back in Spring 2014 (ALE 366), Fred Laband looked at what defined a MICROPUB. At the time there were about 30 micropubs nationally. There are now about 160, and here in Cambridgeshire our two examples are thriving:

In Willingham, landlord Chris has given up his day job running the adjacent Post Office in order to devote more time to running The Bank. Little has changed in the 3 years since this pioneering micropub first opened. There are still 4 real ales on at any time, but Chris now has 2 key keg beers that cater for the burgeoning craft beer market. Originally Chris balked at the prospect of stocking lager beer, but Adnam's Dry Hopped Lager has become a mainstay. Chris offers me a taste of the similarly key-kegged Weird Beard (Hanwell, London) Mariana Trench (5.3%) which has an amazing aroma of mango/passion fruit. It is very hoppy too; I like it very much but do find it a little fizzy for my personal preference. I try a pint of Colchester Brass Monkey (3.8%) which has a lovely copper appearance topped off with a fine foaming crown.

Reasonably priced at £3.30 this is a fine session ale. The Bank still occasionally sells out of real ale on a Friday or Saturday evening so Chris now stocks quite a range of canned beer including the marvellously titled Big Bang Theory from the Nene Valley Brewery. At £3.50 (£2.95 for take away) this beer packs a punch – I have yet to encounter a beer from NVB which has not been top notch! Now that Chris has more time and energy for the pub, he can make a few changes. For example, on 24th April The Bank will make a rare Sunday opening for Steve Lockwood to play harmonica live. This is a ticket only event so be sure to get in early!

The Drayman's Son in Ely changed hands (and name from The Liberty Belle) earlier in 2015. Jo and Andy took over the reins and they now showcase upwards of ten real ales on at any one time! There is slightly less decoration/film memorabilia on the walls, the small bubble car is gone too, replaced by a gleaming motorbike.

This too is soon set to go, possibly with a piano to take its place! Sadly, Elbie, the old pub mascot is gone, but there is otherwise much to cheer about.



Of the ten beers on tap, Norfolk Kiwi from the Jo'C brewery in Norfolk is still a regular. I am surprised to see Three Blind Mice "Beyond Wonderland IPA" being stocked as this brewery's fare was previously only available elsewhere in Ely at The Townhouse. At 7.4% I avoid it is only lunchtime! I do however opt for the Tydd Steam Iron Brew (3.8%) which is £3.80 for a pint. This is a malty slightly honeyed treat with a kick of rye... The Drayman's Son now offers a 10p discount to CAMRA card carriers. This pub now opens every day of the week, all day Thursday to Sunday. Monday night is chess, backgammon and games night, but there will of course be no iPads, Xboxes or PlayStations here.

Landlady Jo is teetotal, which staggers me, especially with 10 real ales and about 20 (yes, twenty) real ciders. Since taking over, she has ensured that there is now diet cola; lemonade which isn't cloudy and also coffee which is served in cafetieres; a great evolution on the previous incarnation which did not always cater for the non-alcoholic drinker.

Both pubs have adhered to their initial values with beer served on gravity, quality local pub snacks, no TVs/piped music, no gaming machines and a real emphasis on fostering a local pub feel where people go for a pint and a chat.





One of the UK's most recent micropubs to open is The Lord Hop in Nuneaton. Nuneaton was home to George Eliot (Silas Marner) and Larry Grayson (Generation Game) and one wonders whether either of them had their nails done in this ex-nail salon.

We enter to see a bar, two tables with chairs and 4 umbrellas seemingly waiting for customers. I place my recently bought shoes on a table and am immediately warned by another drinker that this is something that I should never do.

The chatty landlord Gary knows his beer and is also something of a local historian. Not wishing to hear about the ups and downs of the manicure industry, we ask about "Lord Hop." A real person, Lord Hop once owned nearby Horestone Grange and according to local folklore fell from his horse and died after a night drinking in Nuneaton. (Is Gary trying to scare us away?)

But enough of the distant past; what of today's Lord Hop? It has only been open for 19 days! Gary initially had tried to keep the pub low key, but it is already attracting attention from Warwickshire drinkers that are in the know.

There are 3 beers on tap and 2 ciders. The Board D'Eau (4.5%, £3 pint) from The Slaughterhouse Brewery is grassy and has a real bite to it. The Death or Glory (7.2%, £3.60) from Tring is quite complex and has a mysterious rosehip quality... While drinking, I explore to find a dart board ready to put up somewhere, some James Bond film posters and

also an upstairs area which has seating for a good 20 to 30 drinkers. Not so small a pub after all then. But a micropub does not necessarily need to be that small.

I can think of many other pubs that are much smaller, but they have TVs, slot machines, hot food, music and most probably beer that came from one of 4 or 5 national big breweries.

With roughly 2 micropubs opening every week, they clearly are appealing to run and to drink in. Nevertheless there can be obstacles...

Taking the example of The Lord Hop, Gary reported how a handshake or verbal agreement could soon be forgotten when a bigger business came along to take on a lease that had been agreed.

Additionally some local residents were opposed to a new pub opening with all the associated drunken behaviour, loud music and brawling. It is possible that The Campaign for Real Nails had tried to register "Complexions" in Nuneaton as an ACV (Asset of Cosmetic Value) in order to block the shop's change of use...

So is there any chance of a new micropub anywhere in Cambridgeshire soon? This is difficult to predict, as they tend to spring up almost anywhere. The national trend of 29 pubs closing every week is slowly being reversed by the micropub revolution, so it does seem likely.

**Fred Laband**

# Beer Festivals Page

## MARCH:

11-27 Wetherspoon Real Ale Festival

## APRIL:

1-3 Beer Festival, Plough, Duxford

2 – 29 Battle of the Brewers, Mill, Mill lane, Cambridge

20-23 East Anglian Beer Festival, Apex, Bury St Edmunds

21-23 St George's Day Beer Festival, Chestnut Tree, West Watting

21-23 First Ever Beer Festival, Little Rose, Haslingfield

22-24 St George's Day Beer Festival, Chequers, Little Gransden

30 Pigfest, Flying Pig, Cambridge

## MAY:

29 April - 1 May Sun Inn Beer Festival, Waterbeach, Cambs

14 Wicken Beer Festival, Cambs

23-28 Cambridge Beer Festival

26-30 Lion & Lamb Beer Festival, Milton, Cambs

27-29 Tickell Arms Beer Festival, Whittlesford, Cambs

27-30 King of the Belgians Beer Fest, Hartford, Cambs

29 Mayfest Beer Festival, White Horse, Swavesey

26 MAY – 6 JUNE Norwich City of Ale

## JUNE:

9-11 Hitchin Beer Festival, Herts

17-19 Crown Inn Beer Festival, Ashley, Cambs

17-19 Up the Creek Beer & Music Festival, Ship Inn, Brandon Creek, Cambs

18-19 Wilburton Beer Festival, Cambs

## JULY

1-3 Haddenham Beer Festival, Cambs

1-2 Grafham Beer Festival, Grafham Village Hall, Cambs

28-30 Sutton Summer Beer Festival, Cambs

## AUGUST:

4-6 Angel Inn Beer Festival, Larling, Norfolk

13 Tharp Arms Beer Festival, Chippenham, Cambs

23-27 Peterborough Beer Festival

26 Railway Vue Beer Festival, Impington, Cambs

## SEPTEMBER:

5-9 Red Lion Beer Festival, Histon, Cambs

22 – 2 OCTOBER Cask Ale Week

## OCTOBER:

6-8 Booze on the Ouse, St Ives

24-29 Norwich Beer Festival

With thanks to the Pints and Pubs Blog, <https://pintsandpubs.wordpress.com>

## The Plough, Duxford



*Welcome to The Plough pub, Duxford  
from Ben and the team*

Everards Tiger & Adnams Southwold  
Two guest ales from national breweries,  
one guest ale from a local brewery  
(from within 30 miles of the pub)  
and four real ciders and perries  
(from our new 'Cider Wall')

Open 11am - 11pm every day  
Food 12-2.30pm, 6-9pm (Tue-Sat);  
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# Patricia "Pat" Wood



Friday January 15th and a large part of Swavesey had ground to a halt to say farewell to & celebrate the life of Pat, who had been the Landlady @ The White Horse Inn for some 15 years. Though originally from Wolverhampton Pat had moved to London to set up home with soul-mate, life partner & Swavesey boy Will

in the mid 1980s and from then on began to visit Swavesey regularly until they took the opportunity to buy the lease on the village pub in spring 1999. With her out-going and fun-loving personality, coupled with her ability to handle people and manage situations, whilst not being afraid of hard work she rapidly took to her new position and indeed became "Momma Pat" to many of the younger members of staff in their first part-time work experience.

In early December 2011 Pat tripped on the stairs breaking her right leg & 3 ribs which was sadly the start of 4 years of what is best described as relentless physical & mental torture resulting in numerous operations, more than 24 weeks in hospital ended with an above the knee amputation - a result of an incurable bone infection. Pat typically bore all this misfortune with remarkable fortitude but began to suffer further health complications as she became wheel-chair bound and sadly passed away in the early hours of Dec 20th after a short period in Addenbrookes Intensive Care unit.

She will be remembered by so many of the village residents and visitors to the White Horse and also to the visitors of CAMRA's summer beer festivals, where she could be seen trawling the bars in search of her favourite ale - Sarah Hughes "Dark Ruby"

God Bless and Rest in Peace at last.

- 9 Cask Ales and always a Mild ale available
- Westons Perry and Porkers Snout available
- *The New Imbiber* on sale
- Free Wi-Fi
- Two annual beer festivals
  - The Aperitif at Easter
  - The Histon Beer Festival (Early September)



- Large selection of Belgian and German Bottles
  - Erdinger, Meister pils, Kostritzer, Leifmans Fruitesse, Konig pils, Bitburger on draught
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Home  
of the "Histon  
Mariners"

# On your Bike!

Branch Pubs Officer Ali Cook reports:

I went on one of my jaunts last Saturday. I put my bike on the train to Newmarket and checked out a few pubs around there.

First up was the Packhorse Inn in Moulton, which is in the neck of Suffolk that leads to Newmarket. Actually if you search for Moulton on the WhatPub website (<http://whatpub.com/>) it offers Cambridgeshire rather than Suffolk as the county option. The Packhorse is part of the Chestnut Group, which also includes the Rupert Brooke in Grantchester. Both pubs are pretty foodie, though both have bars and places where drinkers can sit. On Saturday the bar stools in The Packhorse were taken and the seats around the drinkers' low table were occupied. All the other tables were set for dining or at least partly so. I checked out the small side rooms. The bar man told me it was fine to sit anywhere. I had a couple of halves, Woodforde's Wherry & Nelson's Revenge. The Wherry was OK but the Nelson's Revenge was a little tired.



My next stop was back in Cambridgeshire, the Crown Inn in Ashley, and was the main reason I was out that way. I wasn't disappointed. The pub has a real community feel, helped on this occasion by the rugby on TV. I just missed the first game but was there for the first half of an England game. It is a family friendly pub. Children are welcome. It also dog friendly with dogs narrowly out-numbering children on the day. The beers were good. The Mighty Oak, IPA (3.5%) was fine though not what I'd class as an IPA. The Black Sheep bitter was pretty good and must be popular as it soon ran out to be replaced by Mauldon's Three Lions. Pick of the

bunch was XT 8 (4.5%) with its rich, chocolate, dark roast colour and flavour with hops lingering in the background. This was easily my favourite beer of the trip. Add to that the ample hand made pork pie, sourced from the Cambridge area, and I was a very happy visitor. On my previous visit in December they also had an excellent dark ale so I asked if it was always the case. It appears that it isn't. The styles of beer on offer often change, but aren't planned, it just depends what's up next. A "what's coming" chalk board told me that Strummer (presumably Shortt's Farm), Adnam's Ghost Ship and XT 2 Gold, were next in line. A note for cider drinkers: Cornwall Cider Co, Rhubarb & Custard and Hogan's Poacher's Perry were available, served from boxes on the bar. Later on that evening they were due to have one of their monthly music nights. They were also already advertising for their Beer & Cider Festival (17th to 19th June). Hopefully I'll be returning before then.



Cycling onwards to the Red Lion in Cheveley. Where I was given a warm greeting. It is a smartly

decorated pub and dining is a priority, but one half of the pub is given over to drinkers. The first meal booking had yet to arrive, so owners Kim & Dean joined me in the bar. We chatted about the challenges of running a village pub and how the presence of a pub in a village makes it a more desirable place to live. If only people would use it a bit more frequently. Dean & Kim are CAMRA members and they reminisced how much they enjoy the Cambridge beer festivals and remembered attending them in the Corn Exchange, the City Football Ground as well as on Jesus Green. The Red Lion often has Cambridge beer festival glasses behind the bar. I had a half of St Austell Ruck & Roll. The bar has four hand pumps, but this was the only one



available at that time (Wadworth 6X was due to appear soon). They don't normally serve more than two beers and those are bought in pins (four and a half gallon containers), which ensures a quick turnover and maintains good quality, even if trade is slow.

We also talked about the place I planned to cycle to next, the Reindeer in Saxon Street. I held out little hope that it would be open. Dean was even more certain that I'd find it closed. He also reported that when one of his customers had recently been there, only bottled beers were available. That does make sense I guess given that its winter opening hours are Wed 8pm to 11pm. I cycled past at 7pm on Saturday and there wasn't a light on in the place.



I cycled on to the very welcoming Three Blackbirds in Woodditton. The pub has

different licensees (arrived about a year ago) to my last visit. I'm glad to say that they haven't altered the winning formula. One side of the two roomed pub is set aside for dining whilst the other is for drinkers. Woodforde's Wherry is their regular beer. The guest ale on this occasion was St Peter's Golden Ale (4.0%). Both were enjoyable.

From there I cycled back to Newmarket and had an Old Thumper at the White Hart Hotel before catching the train back to Cambridge.



Once back in Cambridge I headed to the lively Geldart and had Uphem Stakes (4.8%), a fine

example of a best bitter, and a delicious Dancing Duck Dark Drake (4.5%).

**Ali Cook**

# TIGER

## BEST BITTER



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# A Bizarre Judgement!



Cambridge City Council, the Guildhall

In what has been described by Paul Ainsworth, CAMRA national pubs officer, as a “truly bizarre

judgement,” Labour led Cambridge City Council has rejected the Asset of Community Value (ACV) nominations for both The Castle, Castle Street, and for The Hopbine, Fair Street. The judgement appears to be based upon an opinion that the main use of pubs as pubs doesn’t in itself further the social well-being or social interests of local communities.

This flies in the face of the judgement of Labour MP Daniel Zeichner who earlier this year told representatives from Cambridge CAMRA that he would like to see “... every pub in Cambridge registered as an ACV.”

## Going to the pub is good for your well-being

This report, which was released on 16th January, also suggests that, if they care at all about community spirit and well-being, they have made the wrong decision.

New research from Oxford University reveals that people who have a ‘local’ pub are not only significantly happier than those who do not, but also have higher life satisfaction and have more close friends.

The report, written by Professor Robin Dunbar for CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) outlines that having a strong social network significantly improves both your happiness and your overall health. The more people you know, and the more often you see them, the better you feel and the healthier you are.

Face-to-face meetings are absolutely vital to maintaining friendships, because these are particularly susceptible to decay over time.

Given the integral role of pubs in providing a venue to meet people and build up friendships, Professor Dunbar undertook a series of studies, which found that:

People who have a ‘local’ and those patronising community-type pubs have more close friends on whom they can call for support, and are happier and more trusting of others than those who do not have a local. They also feel more engaged with their wider community

Those who were casual visitors to the pub, and those in larger pubs, scored themselves as having consumed significantly more alcohol than those drinking in their “local” or smaller community pubs

A pub is more likely to be seen as someone’s ‘local’ if it is close to where they live or work

People in city centre bars may be in larger social groups than those in more community-oriented pubs, but they are less engaged with those with whom they are associating and have significantly shorter conversations

A limited alcohol intake improves wellbeing and some (though not all) social skills, just as it has been shown to improve other cognitive abilities and health, but these abilities decline as alcohol intake increases beyond a moderate level

Professor Robin Dunbar, Oxford University, says: *“Friendship and community are probably the two most important factors influencing our health and wellbeing. Making and maintaining friendships, however, is something that has to be done face-to-face: the digital world is simply no substitute. Given the increasing tendency for our social life to be online rather than face-to-face, having relaxed accessible venues where people can meet old friends and make new ones becomes ever more necessary.”*

Tim Page, CAMRA Chief Executive, says: *“Whilst we are delighted that such robust research highlights some of the many benefits of visiting a pub, I hardly expect the findings will*

*be a great surprise to CAMRA members! Pubs offer a social environment to enjoy a drink with friends in a responsible, supervised community setting. Nothing is more significant for individuals, the social groupings to which they belong and the country as a whole as our personal and collective wellbeing. The role of community pubs in ensuring that wellbeing cannot be overstated. For that reason, we all need to do what we can to ensure that everyone has a 'local' near to where they live or work."*

If Cambridge City Council is allowed to continue with its current reasoning not one pub within the city boundary will be registered as an ACV.

Do the Hopbine and the Castle support a community? Of course they do. It may be a working community in addition to, as in the case for both pubs, a local resident community, but it is still a community.

A year ago, the incumbent city council was prepared to go out of its way to protect pubs.

***This council is raising the white flag***



## **Little Rose Pub, Haslingfield**

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**Camra Rural Community Pub of the Year 2015**

**First Ever Real Ale Festival  
15 Ales plus 3 Ciders  
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**Live Music from the  
Melody Beats from  
8pm on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>  
April. Food Available.**

**Festival Opening Hours  
Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup>: 1pm-10.30pm  
Friday April 22<sup>nd</sup>: 1pm-10.30pm  
Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>: 1pm-11pm**

# Heart of the community



I popped over to The Duke of Wellington, Church Street, Willingham, a couple of weeks ago; ostensibly in order to congratulate landlord and landlady Barry and Fran Todd for achieving their 10th year of tenancy, but The Duke has long been one of my favourite village pubs and I was more than happy to have an excuse to visit.

Barry joined me for a pint of Greene King mild, straight from the cask. We sat by the open fire and he told me how much they had enjoyed their 10 years in charge.

Like so many of us, the couple, who hail from Sunderland fell into the job they love rather than took it by design. In 2006 they lived in nearby Rampton. Barry worked in IT and had become a trainer for O2. He and Fran liked pubs and they would often pop over to Willingham, where in those days pubs were more plentiful, for a drink.



The Duke of Wellington of 2006 had a pretty unsavoury reputation. Barry recalled that one

renowned Cambridge newspaper had labelled it a "Den of Iniquity!" Consequently, they were not frequent visitors to the pub. It was on a rare visit that the then licensee mentioned that he would be leaving soon, and asked quite innocently, "Do you fancy running a pub?"

The idea was an appealing one. Barry had

ebecome disillusioned with the IT industry, so he and Fran decided to give it a go. They contacted pub owner Greene King, who seemed to be very pleased that they had found a couple willing to take it on and within a fortnight the pub was theirs to run.

But at first they had an uphill struggle. The pub's reputation was working against them and they realised that they would have to take drastic measures if they were ever to gain the trust of the local community.

Deciding that the pub needed a completely fresh start, they invested a large sum of their own money, ripped out the Greene King décor, and returned the pub to its original, and traditional, glory. This effort remains evident. Exposed beams and a plain wooden boarded floor ooze rustic charm, and the open fires are especially welcoming on a cold winter's day.

## It is not just a pub, it is our home!

After a time, the village began to trust their new publicans. A strong relationship has been maintained and The Duke is very much a community pub. On my not infrequent visits I have often been treated to the wisdom of locals expressing their opinions whilst sat at the bar. It is a successful restaurant too; well known for its pies, which Barry recalls had customers queuing to try when they were first introduced.

"But, what about the beers? We read so much about the Greene King ethic of limiting choice, and then charging tenants over the top prices".

Barry had nothing but praise for his landlord. "At the end of the day," he told me, "we signed a tie."

"We have a choice of 25 beers a month and we sell an average of 18 casks a week."

"And what of the future?" I asked. "Where do





you go from here."

"Apart from building up trade in The Porterhouse (formerly the Black Bull, Station Road, Willingham, which the couple recently bought from Greene King) not very far."

"We have been here 10 years, I expect we'll be here another 10. This isn't just a pub, it's our home!"

**Will Smith**

# WATERBEACH SUN

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*Four Real Ales  
every week*

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*Home Cooked Food  
Six Days a Week*

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*Big Screen Sports -  
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*1st May 3 - 10pm  
With live music from  
Split Whiskers & Friends  
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*Function Room  
Available*



**Sun Inn Waterbeach**

**Tel: 01223 861254**



# The Crown Inn

Sarah and Larry welcome you to the Crown Inn. We have been in the pub for three years and it has undergone a major refurbishment with more improvements planned.

## Food

Bar snacks are available all the time – pork pies, pasties, chips, pizzas, and jacket potatoes. Able to cater and open for large groups (booked in advance) or events including meetings. Plate and a pint nights: 15th April burger night, burger and a pint for £10. 6th May fish & chips and a pint for £10 (5pm until 8.30pm).

## Facilities

Large enclosed garden with pétanque terrains  
Big Screen • BT Sports • Pool and Darts  
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Cask ales with regularly changing guest ales  
Able to accommodate and welcome coaches (preferably by appointment)

## Upcoming events

Live music every month  
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7th May Junk Yard Preachers

## Beer and Cider Festival

Friday 17th June live music in the evening TBC,  
Saturday 18th June live music in the evening with Dr Jak, finishing Sunday 19th. Over eight real ales and 6 ciders. BBQ all weekend.

**www.thecrowninnashley.co.uk**  
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**Facebook: thecrowninnashley**

**24 Newmarket Road, Ashley, CB8 9DR**  
**(01638) 730117**

# PUBS that Offer Discounts to CAMRA Members



The following local pubs offer a discount to CAMRA members on production of a signed and up to date CAMRA membership card: Please ask at the bar for further details.

The Alexandra Arms, 10% off a pint.

The Architect, 20p off a pint

The Blue Moon, Norfolk Street, 30p off a pint.

The Cambridge Brewhouse, King Street, 10% off Cambridge Brewing Company Beers.

The Emperor pub and Latin Tapas bar, Hills Road ( 20p off a pint)

The Golden Hind, Milton Road, 10% off a pint.

The Hopbine, Fair Street, 10% off a pint.

The Kingston Arms, Kingston Street, 20p off a pint.

The Maypole, Portugal Place, 20p off a pint.

The Mill, Mill Lane, 10% off a pint.

The Pickerel, Magdalene Street, 10% off a pint.

The Portland Arms, Chesterton Road 10% off a pint.

The St Radegund, King Street, 30p off a pint

The White Horse Inn, Barton.

The Three Tuns, Fen Drayton offers 20p off a pint.

The Crown, Linton, Happy Hour at all times for CAMRA members.

The Black Bull Sawston, offers 10p off a pint.

The White Horse, Swavesey, offers 20p a pint.

The Bridge, Waterbeach. 10% off a pint

## A Campaign of Two Halves

**Join CAMRA Today**

**Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.**

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Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

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Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (if different from main member) \_\_\_\_\_

01/15

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**The Direct Debit Guarantee**

• This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debit.

• If there are any changes to the amounts due or frequency of your Direct Debit, The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or an alternative period of time, except The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd will notify a payment's withdrawal of the account and this will be given to you at the time of the payment.

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# East Anglian Beers by FRED

From each blank pump clip, can you name the brewery and beer?



M - - - -

P - - - -



B - - - - -

T - - - - -



A - - - -

O - - A - -



W - - - - -

W - - - -



O - - - - -

J - -



G - - - J - -

T - - - - -

B - - - B - - - -



L - - - - -

F - - - - -



E - - - - -

B - - - - D - -



O - - C - - - -

G - - - - -

D - - - - -

Answers: Milton Pegasus, Buntingford Twitcheil, Adams Old Ale, Woodfordes Wherry, Oakhams JHB, Green Jack Travellerboys Best Bitter, Lacons Falcon, Elgoods Black Dog, Old Cannon Gunners Daughter



**Big Breakfast**  
every Sat 8 to 11am  
Help yourself from the carvery,  
as much as you can eat for  
**only £5.95!**

**At Least Three  
Real Ales!**



# More than just a Carvery!



## Open Every Day

10am - 5.30pm All Day Menu & Coffee

Midday - 2:30pm Carvery & Specials Menu

5:30pm - LATE Carvery & Grill Menu

Sunday Open From 12 Noon - 9pm

All Day Carvery

A great welcome awaits you at The Farmers, Yaxley. We are famous for our fresh vegetables and great carvery meats, succulent and served with all the trimmings, then finished off with a tantalising hot or cold dessert!

Check out our lunch time grill menu's and our ever changing specials boards. Put it all together with three fine cask ales and you have the perfect place to enjoy dinner with friends or a family celebration. We have a self contained function suite which is ideal for parties, weddings and all of life's celebrations.

So if you've not been before give us a try and you'll be pleasantly surprised.



200 Broadway, Yaxley Tel: 01733 244885

Email: [thefarmers@btconnect.com](mailto:thefarmers@btconnect.com)

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

**The Farmers**

**CARVERY  
& GRILL**

