



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Issue 27

Autumn/Winter 2015

Ales & Tales

*The newsletter for the Campaign for Real Ale in
Stourbridge & Halesowen and Dudley & South Staffordshire*



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Welcome Back

Well, our first issue under the new regime has been and gone. Thanks for all the lovely positive comments we received. We hope that you find this edition as interesting and as you are probably reading it in a pub or club serving real ale let's hope it goes well with whatever you choice of beverage is!

We have information on Dudley & South Staffs and Stourbridge & Halesowen Cider Pubs of the Year. October is one of CAMRA's months for promoting cider and a taster of what the campaign is doing has been highlighted. For further information visit CAMRA's website.

As you can see both branches have lots going on and a warm welcome will be extended to you at any of the events listed in our diary page. Local beer festivals are listed and they are always a good place to sample different beers and meet like-minded people as well as benefiting from being a member. If you are not a member they are also good places to join, or why not use the form in this magazine.

One of the beer festivals mentioned is Dudley & South Staffs Winter Ales Fayre. It is the branch's flagship event and volunteers (as with all CAMRA beer festivals) have worked long and hard to organise it. Volunteers (and you could be one of them) are always needed for a variety of tasks. If you can work for 1, 2 or more sessions your help would be greatly appreciated. Check the advert for dates and register to work on line at www.dudleycamra.org.uk.

You can read about the Thank You trip for festival volunteers put on by Stourbridge & Halesowen and the Dudley & South Staffs Beer of the Festival presentation in this issue which as a beer festival volunteer you could be involved with.

It may be old hat to some of you but we have included a list of the prize winning beers selected at the Great British Beer Festival. You could always use it as a checklist or even as a prompt to encourage your local landlord to get "one in".

Brewery news and pub news reflect the information we have been given. It's not extensive and we would like to say thank you to all our contributors. If your

favourite pub or brewery hasn't been included and there is news to share then let us know by 6/1/16 in time for the next edition. Send to editor@dudleycamra.org.uk

So with the next edition due in 2016, thanks for reading this Ales and Tales, yes we know, but have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year and send any comments, articles, suggestions etc to editor@dudleycamra.org.uk

Cheers

Pam and Tony

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For advertising, please contact Matelot Marketing through [neil richards n.richards@btinternet.com](mailto:neil.richards@btinternet.com)

Stourbridge & Halesowen

Rob Parsons Branch contact
email bernardbird@yahoo.com

Dudley & South Staffordshire

Steve Thompson (chair/contact)
email chairman@dudleycamra.org.uk
Jacqui Edwards
email socialsecretary@dudleycamra.org.uk

Editors Pam Stevenson and Tony Skirving
editor@dudleycamra.org.uk

Local Consumer Advice For consumer advice in our area, contact: Dudley Trading Standards
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October means Cider

October has usually been the month when CAMRA supports cider and encourages people to try this traditional drink. Part of this support resulted in a 26,000 signature petition being presented to Downing Street on June 10th calling the UK Government to act on the threat to small cider producers across the UK.

The petition responds to a move by the European Union which could remove the current tax exemption for small cider makers. This exemption applies predominantly to hobbyists and farm-gate producers, who make fewer than 70 HL of cider a year, or around 33 pints a day. They typically sell less than £10,000 of cider a year, which means that the proposed tax of up to £2,700 a year would have a huge impact.

Andrea Briers, CAMRA National Cider and Perry Committee Chairman says: "The European Union's demand to increase tax costs for small cider producers will force many to close. If these producers are driven out of business it will dramatically reduce consumer choice and cause irreparable damage to one of the nation's most historic industries."

To encourage you to try cider, why not have a walk around Shrewsbury or visit both branches cider pubs of the year to try cider at its best.

Cider in Shropshire

October tends to be the month when production of cider starts with the collection of apples and pears and May is generally when the new season cider is ready for consumption. The significant drinking tends to kick in during June and July and it was July when the Shropshire branches of CAMRA launched their Cider and Perry passport. It's a handy little booklet that lists the vast majority of pubs and clubs that sell Cider, Perry or both.

An easy venture into the mystics of these fruit drinks can easily be achieved by visiting some of the pubs in Shrewsbury. Our day started off at the Salopian Bar on Smithfield Road (SY1 1PW), a short walk from the railway station and overlooking the river. I have to be honest and say that Cider is not really my drink but I don't mind a glass or so of Perry. On the bar was Farmer Jim's Perry, a bit weak at 4.5%, the Cider drinkers got stuck in to

Renshaw's Redeye and Renshaw's Damson.

J D Wetherspoon pubs normally run a Cider festival each July and with two Wetherspoon pubs in close proximity there was plenty of choice for the Cider drinkers. The Shrewsbury Hotel (SY1 1DU), also on Smithfield Road is the closest to the Salopian Bar and the Cider of choice here was Dorset Dabinett.

The other J D Wetherspoon pub is the Montgomery Tower (SY1 1RT) on Lower Claremont Bank. Fynbury Cider seemed to be the choice of most. Disappointingly the beers were not that good. Salopian Shropshire Gold was flabby and hazy. I asked if it was the bottom of the barrel and the young lady behind the bar offered to change it. Unfortunately the Wood's beer I had as a replacement was no better. The one bright spot in here was the same young barmaid chastising four youths for swearing and when they took no notice she refused to serve them. Brilliant! I wish more pubs were like that.

A scenic walk took us to the Admiral Benbow (SY1 1NF) on Swan Hill. Unfortunately, this pub does not open on week day lunchtimes or Sunday lunchtime. Normally this pub offers 8 beers and 7 Ciders and Perries. By now I was definitely on beer and Ludlow Gold is a beer I quite like. The courtyard is a lovely area to sit and drink and is particularly pleasing in the summer with its flower baskets.

Virtually next door is the Coach & Horses. Set on a quiet corner it is a peaceful haven for drinking. A regular outlet for Stonehouse beers it also serves a couple of beers from Salopian. The Cider is often Cheddar Valley. The next pub we went to was the Masonic Arms (SY3 7LN) on Belle Vue Road, rather a long walk to the other side of the river. I ended my involvement here intending going straight to the railway station but ended up having a quick beer in the Three Fishes, a regular outlet for Timothy Taylors Landlord. The pub was one of the first pubs in the country to declare itself non-smoking, long before national legislation.

There are lots more excellent pubs in Shrewsbury and full details of opening times and addresses can be found at www.whatpub.com.

Steve Thompson

And the Winners are

The Duke William, Stourbridge

Well done to Jason Taylor, manager of the Duke William, for his support and promotion of Real Cider and Perry, a well deserved winner of the Stourbridge & Halesowen CAMRA Branch's Cider Pub of the Year 2015.

Over the past year he has had many different ciders and perrys, including Thistly Cross, Thundering Molly, Bee Sting, Farmer Jim's, and lots more. On as regulars are Gwynty-Draig's Dog Dancer and Orchard Pig's Reveller. Bottled real ciders are in the fridge but you do have to ask what's available.

A beer and cider festival is held every year in the garden, with plenty of ciders and perrys to choose from. Last year someone got a cider from a farm in Dorset because they saw that they sold cider and knew that the Duke was having a festival. The Duke also put on a meet the cider maker event to support apple month last October. The cider producer was Richard from Barbourne Cider who came along with lots of different cider apples and pears for us to try (not for eating!!!!). Finding out how the apples go from being really horrible for eating to making really great cider was interesting, and of course we had some samples of the finished product.

This year the Duke is holding another event in Apple Month with the winner of the best cider of Stourbridge Beer and Cider Festival, producer, David



Millward, giving a talk on how he makes great cider in his garage. To Jason and his team, thanks for all the hard work they do to promote REAL cider and perry and also for having the faith to take

Strongbow off the pulls. Most pubs wouldn't dream of doing this. Why, I and my fellow real cider drinkers will never know.

Chris Heardman

The Jolly Crispin

For the second year running the award for Dudley & South Staffs branch Cider Pub of the Year has been granted to the JOLLY CRISPIN, 25 Clarence Street, Upper Gornal.

The increase in popularity of real, traditional cider and perry that has grown alongside the demand for real ales in recent times has also led to an escalation in the number of pubs selling this historic beverage in our locality. In the case of the Jolly Crispin the popularity of cider and perry has developed sufficiently to justify their holding two Cider Festivals a year in addition to that regularly on sale in the pub.

Among the wide variety of ciders and perrys that were available during the first festival weekend of 2015 were Barbourne Crimson King, Sheppy's Cider with Raspberry, Celtic Marches' Lily the Pink, Farmer Jim's Copper Top, Kentish Pip Forager, Lilley's Bee Sting Perry, London Cider Bush Pig, Orchard Pig Navel Gazer, Millwhite's Rioja Cask and Waddlegoose Spadger.



Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA branch chairman Steve Thompson presented the certificate to Rob Carey, licensee of the Jolly Crispin, on the opening evening of their Spring/Summer Cider Festival which took place at the end of May and a good time was had by all. Congratulations to Rob and his team for their hard work in supporting the aims of Apple, the cider branch of CAMRA and ensuring that real cider is always available.

Their next cider festival is on 9th -10th October when you can sample some new and interesting ciders and see why this became Cider pub of the year.

Stan Stevens

Meet the Managing Director featured on front cover

Name: Jonathan Holden

Age: 43

Background before brewing:

Went straight from School to Morrell's brewery in Oxfordshire, age 18, to work as a trainee brewer.

What was your first alcoholic drink?

Springfield Bitter. Dad said it wasn't too strong so it would suit me.

What are your hobbies/interests?

I am a keen supporter of West Bromwich Albion football club. I like to watch Cricket. I am also a keen runner and have done half Marathons.

What's your favourite beer (your own)?

Holden's Special

What's your favourite beer (someone else's)?

Woods Shropshire Lad was a favourite when I was younger. Roosters Hooligan is another favourite. My favourite foreign beer is from Left Handed brewery and the beer is Left Handed Stranger.

What's your favourite drink that's not beer?

Red Wine

What's your favourite food?

Sunday Roast

What and where is your favourite pub (not one you own)?

Victoria in Salcombe, a St Austell Pub. RC Otters – Sanibel Island, Florida

How do you go about creating a new beer?

Examine the raw materials that might be available. Consider whether they would merge to create a good beer. Look to source the products we need.

What are your aspirations for the business?

We are looking to grow the business by about 30%.

Keen to get involved with the export market but wish to keep the product as a "niche" product.

What are the best & worst things to happen in the industry in the last few years?

Best: The resurgence of Cask Beer is probably the best thing that has happened in the industry. People are now prepared to choose Real Ale as their first port of call because the quality of the products are generally so much better.

Worst: Decline in the number of pubs. Too much Red Tape.

Do you think CAMRA has helped the brewing industry and your business?

CAMRA has certainly raised the profile of Real Ales and this has helped all brewers of Cask Conditioned Ales. Without CAMRA the Cask brewing industry may have been in decline.

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Brewery News

Thanks to all the Brewery Liaison Officers and breweries (and branches) for this information. If your brewery isn't mentioned then ask your Brewery Liaison Officer to get in touch with the editor, so that readers of Ales and Tales can look out for new beers etc.

Holdens

Holden's have a range of seasonal beers throughout Autumn and Winter.

For September they are brewing Golden Sunset @4.7%, a rich, perfectly balanced golden beer with a refreshing hop punch from the Green Bullet hops. October will see the company offer Devil Dunn @ 5.4%, another golden coloured beer this time using Polaris hops.

November sees the return of Tremor @4.7%, a reminder of the earthquake in the Dudley area in 2002. Hop flavours this time come from the Phoenix hop.

December sees the return of last year's seasonal beer Noddy Holden @4.2%. This honey coloured ale benefits from Bravo hops.

It is also expected that Holden's will brew Celebration Porter again, later in the year.

Fixed Wheel

At Birmingham Beer Bash there was a mixture of Cask and Keg beers plus bottles which were all well received along with the launch of our collaboration brew with Angel Ales, Cyclone 15% Triple IPA.

We have been confirmed for a bar at Birmingham Beer Festival in October along with the Burton Brewers Independent Festival too, so October is looking like a very busy month indeed.

This month sees a very special beer being brewed which will be available to keep you warm this winter, of course it's top secret for now, but it will be called Omerta.

Black Country Ales

Looking to increase production next month which will include at least 1 new employee.

We're nearly ready to have our new bigger van that can carry 60 casks as opposed to our old van that could only carry 27 casks. We're having it sign

written so people will know us as it passes them!

Our latest pub is the Imperial Tavern, 35, St Nicholas Street, Worcester WR1 1UW

Angel Ales

The 15% collaboration with Fixed Wheel called Cyclone should be available in cask form at the Wellington and KeyKeg at the BrewDog bar both in Birmingham.

There will be a shared Angel/Fixed Wheel Brewery Bar at the Birmingham Beer Festival in October and possibly also at the Dudley Winter Ales Festival. By the time you read this article Angle Ale will have been sold at GBBF this year, we hope that it was well received.

Forthcoming beers to look out for in the run up to Christmas will be Halas Ale (3.5% - 8.0%), Sambucus (4.5%), Banefyre (5%), Old Ale (10%), Rum Truffle Stout (5.7%), Harkangel (7%) and the next brew for Bob Dummons birthday, BOB65 (6.5%). Bottles of Angel Ale may be purchased from the brewery and fairly soon Cyclone should be available too.

Kinver

Production is running at full stretch at Kinver, with Cavegirl @4.0% now a regular beer.

A green hop beer for The Green Hop Festival at Knightwick is planned which you can sample as - Dudley and South Staffs branch are organising a trip there on 10th October.

Over the Edge 7.5 % and Black Ram stout 5.2% are available from now through autumn and winter.

Holy Austin 5.3%, a rich dark Christmas beer (4 ingredients) will be brewed for December (it's the first time at the new brewery).

Bottling of our beers has continued to grow and seven of our range now available as real ale in a bottle.

The latest addition is Noble golden ale @4.5 % - they are available at local bottle shops.

It was a great day at Kinver Country Fayre, with the beer tent offering a range of strengths and varieties of beer within the different styles of Kinver Brewery and Enville Ales.

Brewery News

The Festival special '3 Headed Knight' went particularly well. Thanks to the Kinver Country Fayre for the organising and Dudley & South Staffs CAMRA branch for volunteering to run the beer tent. It was a great day of campaigning for real ale.

Bathams

As usual look out for Triple X in December, but to titillate the taste buds of brewery/pub historians go on Bathams Website, Homepage>History which leads to a copy of the late Dudley CAMRA member John Richards' book on the history of Bathams Brewery and their pubs. It makes for interesting reading.

Enville

No new beers. We are at max output at 100+ barrels every week and have had to suspend any bottling as cask to on-trade is our priority. We will brew Gothic 5.2% in October/November and Blizzard 6.5% in December/January. We are taking 90 firkins to this year's Sandwell Show 11am to 5pm on 30th and 31st August. (Any budding volunteers call me and Jill) We will also be providing a 'real ale' bar on the show ground at the Envile Show. New head brewer is Martyn Powell after Tony retired last year. An offer has been accepted on our first estate pub actually owned by the brewery. It will be offering a range of cask ales and good pub grub. Can't announce the name until completion but watch the website for details of when it will open (hopefully September).



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Black Country Beer Day

Many people will have been involved in this year's Black Country Festival, either participating in or helping to promote and support the many events that took place. But were you aware that as part of the festival CAMRA organised an escorted tour of many of the Black Country brewery taps.



Thanks to Chris Sadler and his team at the new Sadler's Brewhouse & Bar our day started at 11am. Unbelievably there were about 50 people assembled here ready for a good day out. Local buses were the order of the day, so having sampled a Sadler's Mud City Stout for breakfast it was time to get the group moving. First up was the number 9 bus to Stourbridge to visit the Duke William pub and home to Craddock's brewery. Volunteer CAMRA members, dressed in red polo shirts were identified as tour guides cum escorts and the first group dispatched for the short walk to the bus stop. Some were still finishing their beer and others decided to slip in another quick half so the rest of the party were sent on their way in two sub groups. This worked really well as it gave the bar staff in the Duke William the chance to serve everyone before the next group arrived. A few more were waiting at the Duke having decided to start at this Stourbridge pub.

The next journey needed the X96 bus from Stourbridge bus station which drops everyone around the corner from the Vine in Brierley Hill, more locally known as the Bull & Bladder. Fortunately

the bus service is a 20 minute frequency, so having rounded up the stragglers we managed to get everyone to the pub only a little behind schedule. Mel and his team did us proud and everyone was served with Batham's beers swiftly. The schedule was beginning to suffer but with the use of the network bus app we identified alternative routes and eventually got everyone to the Old Swan, home to the Pardoe's beers. By now the day had become a great social day and new friends were made.

The afternoon session ended in Dudley Town Centre at Stone Street Square where events, stalls and entertainment were taking place, along with an impromptu bar. Quite a few popped into the Court House, a Black Country Ales pub opposite Dudley police station.

Eventually the tour guides were dispatched to round up their groups and board the number 1 bus adjacent to Stone Street Square to take us up to the Jolly Crispin. Fownes brewery operate from premises at the rear of this pub and the guys had set up an extra bar in the garage offering a couple of their beers.

Next port of call was the Beacon Hotel in Sedgley, home to Sarah Hughes brewery. Again, more beers had been set up outside for the weekend and the place was really humming. One or two had begun to drift away but there was still a determined group to finish off the day at Holden's brewery tap, the Park, in Woodsetton. The final bus of the day was the 229 and generally in the evening there are only one or two people for this bus. The surprise on the drivers face was a sight to behold when over 30 people were stood at the bus stop.

Steve Thompson

Chester Thank You Trip

One of the perks of helping out at Stourbridge Beer Festival is that volunteers are usually invited to attend an 'away day' to another town to sample some different beers and pubs.

This year, our destination for the day was Chester. Following a couple of pick-ups between Stourbridge and Halesowen we are were off up the A41 towards Deeside. Personally myself and the other half have been to Chester before, but for others it would be a completely new experience.

As there is always a good couple of dozen of us on the coach, the practicalities of everyone sticking together throughout the day was a bit unrealistic. Therefore, I can only review the day based on my experience, so others may have a different perspective. Why not plan a day out in Chester for yourself to see if you agree?

So, having had previous experience of the town, I headed with a small party of others towards the Bear and Billet, an excellent small pub just inside the city walls. A number of ales from Okells Brewery were on offer. They especially seemed to have a number of excellent quality low strength (sub 4.0%) beers which were very tasty. One of our party sets a good drinking pace so you try and keep up with him at your peril! A pint of their finest MPA was a great thirst quencher, but it was halves only for me after that. Remember, CAMRA promotes responsible drinking and beer quality is paramount! Over the road to the Cross Keys which seemed very busy for not-long-after Saturday Lunchtime. A Joules pub, it became apparent there was a large party from the pub going to the brewery in Market Drayton.



Not far to travel again to the next pub, the Brewery Tap. A Good Beer Guide pub, I've previously not been convinced

about it, but a number of our party rated it highly. At least Salopian's excellent Shropshire Gold was on offer here! The building itself is worth paying a visit to with its high ceilings and impressive fire place now hidden behind the bar.

Our crawl took us past the Plumbers Arms, which we had to give a miss due to the number of other pubs on our list. Unfortunately our printed guide for the day had this pub across two pages so it wasn't

noticed until it was too late. I hope we don't live to regret that decision so it's one to inspect next time! The Marlborough was the next stop. Not great for me because it served the beers without a sparkler, but that's a debate for another article... no real cider either so the other half missed out too!

A short walk up to the Old Harkers Arms was next



on our list. Great pub this is! There is always a fantastic selection of ale with a busy upmarket atmosphere. Try finding a seat on a Friday tea-time if you haven't booked...

impossible! This pub had one of the best lists of real cider we came across that day, notably the Fanny's Bramble, which at 4.2% was a nice easy drink for a pub crawl.

Other members of our coach party decided to head to our next stop, The Cellar Bar as ultimate priority. To be fair that was probably a good decision as the choice and quality of beers here was outstanding. Not limited to cask, there were also a number of 'craft' keg beers available. My choice, a Thornbridge 'Ruin', was excellent.

Stepping out of the Cellar Bar and into the Compass only a couple of yards up the road, we entered a venue which seemed to be well suited to gigs and lively Friday and Saturday nights. There were still a couple of handpulls on offer, but we perhaps didn't see the place at its best on a quiet Saturday afternoon.

Next it was over to the Pied Bull, home of the Pied Bull Brewery, which claims to be the only micro-brewery inside the city walls. We knew what to expect from the beers here but perhaps controversially I opted for a great Exit 33 IPA. Be careful ordering the Bull's Hit! A quick lunch here was a good idea, and everyone seemed to enjoy their food. Our first choice would have been a plate of American Barbeque at Hickorys Smokehouse, but that would have cut short the beer time.

As you can imagine a fair amount of beer had been drunk by then, and one of our party had to endure a little light ribbing from others thanks to his choice of a fizzy cider from our next venue, Telford's Warehouse. A new one for me, a vibrant place on the edge of town which is definitely one I will seek out again, perhaps at the start of the day and not

the end.

Conscious of the imminently departing coach, we made a swift exit, followed by a hasty dash into the Architect. In all honestly I don't remember what I had in here, apart from that it was good! It did appear very upmarket, appealing to the Cheshire 'set' so surprising perhaps that good-quality real ale was served.

Thankfully, no one was left behind and the coach departed Chester with everyone happy. One more senior member amused us by playing some unexpected reggae-style music from his phone. Maybe the beer of the day took him back to his youth!

The obligatory toilet-stop was required at a truck stop on the way back. Not wanting to be purely toilet-tourists, a couple of us had a swift half in the bar before we departed back to our drop off points closer to home.

As usual a great day was had by all. If you need another reason to consider volunteering at one of our festivals then hopefully a free day out will help sway you in the right direction...

Tim Cadwell



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Saving the Great British Pub

Champion Beer of Britain 2015

If you are reading this article, it's because you have picked up your Ales & Tales from a pub, club or any other drinking venue. Unfortunately, your local great British pub is fighting a battle, which the general public can help fight. So what can we do? Easy, use them, visit them and drink in them.

But what else can we do? The government has given us the chance to help save our pubs, (yes I know that's hard to fathom out). Basically, there is something called the Asset of Community Value (ACV) which means, once a pub is placed on the list by your local council, then a pub can have a fighting chance, in preventing it's demolition or change of use.

Getting listed as an Asset of Community Value benefits pubs, according to the majority of licensees in a survey carried out by CAMRA –the Campaign for Real Ale. Some 101 licensees responded to CAMRA's survey, with 85% saying ACV status benefits their pub, with the same percentage saying customers valued a pub being listed. According to the majority of licensees who responded, the most beneficial aspect of an ACV listing is that people in the community are more likely to feel loyal to the pub and use it more regularly.

Tim Page, CAMRA chief executive, said: "This research clearly shows Asset of Community Value status is valued by publicans and is something which they are keen to display as a badge of honour. Our new 'This Pub Matters' window stickers are our way of helping pubs shout about the fact they are listed and also to get across the message that it is local people who nominate the pub – a clear indication of how much they value it."

CAMRA's This Pub Matters campaign aims to raise the profile of ACV pubs and encourage more people across the UK to list their local, with the target of listing 3,000 pubs by the end of next year.

So how do we do that? If you are a licensee, a worried customer of your local or CAMRA member, contact your local branch Pubs Protection Officer, raise your concerns and help will be at hand.

So far in the fight to save our local British pub within the CAMRA branches of Stourbridge & Halesowen and Dudley & South Staffs, with help from the support groups, we have managed to put Haden Cross PH, Maypole PH, Hare & Hounds PH and Seven Stars PH (Sedgley) on the register. We need more on the ACV list, help us to help them.

Si Genner/ P.Stevenson

For those of you unable to attend The Great British Beer Festival these are the winners of the various categories in the Champion Beer of Britain.

Supreme Champions

Gold	Tiny Rebel – Cwtch
Silver	Kelburn – Jaguar
Bronze	Dancing Duck – Dark Drake

Mild

Gold	Williams Brother- Black
Silver	Rudgate - Ruby Mild
Bronze	Great Orme - Welsh Black

Best Bitter

Gold	Tiny Rebel – Cwtch
Silver	Highland - Scapa Special
Joint Bronze	Barnegates - Tag Lag Salopian - Darwin's Origin

Speciality

Gold	Titantic - Plum Porter
Joint Silver	Kissingate - Black Cherry Mild Saltaire - Triple Chocolate
Bronze	Hanlons - Port Stout

Bitter

Gold	Pheasantry - Best Bitter
Silver	Acorn - Barnsley Bitter
Joint Bronze	Purple Moose - Madog's Ale Timothy Taylors - Boltmaker

Golden

Gold	Kelburn – Jaguar
Silver	Adnams - Explorer
Bronze	Blue Monkey - Infinity

Strong Bitter

Gold	Dark Star – Revelation
Silver	Salopian - Golden Thread
Bronze	Grain - India Pale Ale

Champion Bottle - Conditioned Beer

Gold	Harveys - Imperial Extra Double Stout
Silver	Fyne Ales Superior IPA
Bronze	Mordue - India Pale Ale

The Plough Inn

AT WOLLASTON

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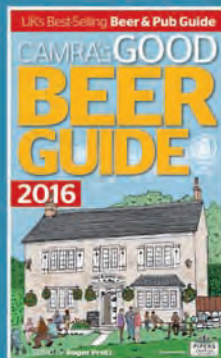
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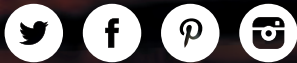
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“100 Facts On Pubs”: The Second Chapter



Well I've been badgered into serving up a second helping of Pub Facts and as it's only two days to 'deadline' this will be a 'rush-job'. Starting at Fact No.1 and sifting through the facts already used and leaving them out, seems the obvious path to take, so here goes. For those of you unfortunate to have missed my

mesmerising first chapter, this article is all about a little book, '100 Facts On Pubs', published in the early fifties containing, what people thought were 'interesting facts' about the licensing trade!

Fact No.1 was omitted from the previous chapter as I thought it rather frivolous; however, the theme for this masterpiece will be 'frivolity' and light-heartedness, dumbing down on the political aspects of brewing and its importance to local government.

Fact No.1 states..... "Pubs are called pubs because people like them; we give them an endearing nickname, as we do to children and animals and our best friends". You can just imagine a 'fifties' newsreader astounding the British public with that amazing piece of information. You don't hear many folk 'calling' the dog..... "here, Bull and Bladder" or affectionately referring to their best-mate as "The Stump".

Moving on to Fact No.28, missing out the 'political' bits, we come to a real beauty, open to discussion and even putting into practice..... "If a pub is an 'Inn' (a term which is difficult to define exactly, but is a question of fact in each case)[?] the publican

is under obligation (except possibly during periods of food-shortage) to supply food to people who demand it. If he fails, he is liable to both civil and criminal proceedings". However Fact No.29 states..... "if it is not an 'Inn', customers have no right to demand food, and it is no offence to refuse it". So here's the plan, find a pub which 'ends' with 'Inn', go there on a Friday or Saturday night, just after the kitchens have closed and exert your 'right to food', be assertive, see what response you get, if the bar-staff appear negative compromise and say you'll settle for a cheese cob, don't be too pushy and when you're discharged from hospital send your findings to the Editor. If we get enough feedback and support we could change the way pubs look after their 'hungry' customers.* Alternatively, Landlords could put lots of complimentary nuts and Scotch Eggs on the bar! Moving on.....

Pub Games. Fact No.30..... "pub games are more often indoor than outdoor. The biggest outdoor game is bowls. Many of the big pubs which serve the new housing areas of the Midland cities have their 120ft by 120ft bowling greens – the crowned greens of the Midlands and North". It would be interesting to find out how many pubs still have a bowling green in this area, again responses to the Editor please (saves my secretary dealing with it). To me the fastest growing 'outdoor' activity is 'synchronized smoking', usually in the doorway of the pub, so does it qualify! Fact No.31 tells us..... "Other outdoor games played in pub gardens are lawn tennis, quoiting on clay pitches and a mysterious game called lawn-billiards. Some pubs have built squash courts". Wow, things have changed, mind you I've heard pocket-billiards(?) is still very popular in parts of the Black Country, is there a league, anybody?

Fact No.32 informs us that..... "In the entertainment halls, which many modern pubs possess, you may dance or attend a smoking-concert or a Whist-drive". In parts of Kingswinford they used to have

“100 Facts On Pubs”: The Second Chapter

'Beetle-Drives' but they were 'stamped' out by the R.S.P.C.A. [Sorry].

Fact Nos.35/36.... "The greatest of pub games is Darts". "Twenty years ago darts was a game of the public-bar. Many saloon bar customers now demand of the publican 'a darts board for us, too'. But it is still to the public-bar that you must go for the 'rigour' of the game."

Have you ever sympathised with anyone from Carlisle? Well, I expect your Grandad did..... Fact No.39... "apart from organized competitions, you can now play darts almost everywhere, except in Carlisle's Government pubs, where the game has not been allowed. The introduction of the 1948 Licensing Bill brought this restriction into the limelight, and the Home Secretary has now given some hope to would-be darts players in Carlisle. Elsewhere, the simplest way of getting a darts-board into your local is to ask the landlord to provide one".....simples!

Another plan brewing here..... if you manage to persuade the landlord of your darts-board barren local to install one drop a line to the Editor please. (John Midwood to ask at The Unicorn Inn and, while you're there, don't forget Steak & Chips at closing-time!)

I brushed on shove-hapenny and skittles in the last chapter, so on to 'Dommies'. Fact No.41..... "In the North [probably Carlisle] Dominoes is doubtless one of the most popular games of all. It is said that when the landlord is not looking certain 'North Country Jockeys' have been known to play for as much as £5 a spot". 'Jockeys'? Dominoes on horseback, that could take over from 'The Great British Bake-off'.

Fact No.44 was obviously compiled by a Gentleman, probably a Civil Servant, who lived with his Mum and wasn't allowed out much and certainly not North of Leighton Buzzard. I quote..... "most railway trains have Third and First carriages and most pubs have Third and First Bars; some pubs have a sort of

Pullman Bar, often called the Saloon Lounge. The pub Third is commonly called the Public Bar, sometimes the 'Shades' or the 'Vaults'; in some pubs there lingers the Private Bar, not unlike the old railway Second Class. The railway First is called the Saloon Bar in South Country pubs, but the Smoke-room in the Midlands and the North. The higher prices charged in Saloon Bars are not due to differences in the articles sold; often the draught beer on sale in the Public Bar and the Saloon is coming out of the same barrel in the cellar through a double tap. The higher prices depend on better furnishings and appointments. Pubs have had to keep pace with the rise in the standard of living. Public Bars, once covered with sawdust, now flaunt..... wait for it..... linoleum and are rising to the old Saloon Bar level; Saloon Bars are aspiring to carpets, arm-chairs and indirect lighting". Fact No.45 goes on to say..... "at one time Saloon Bars were less crowded than Public Bars; that, as on railways, was one reason for paying the extra price. Nowadays, many Saloon Bars seem to be just as crowded. One reason is that women..... shock, horror..... now go to pubs with their menfolk". Oh for a return to the good-old days!

On that shocking note I'm going to knock it on the head leaving myself enough ammunition for yet 'another exciting chapter of this all consuming look at our parents' past'.....[Daily Mail]

Adrian Stevens

*[Letters to the Editor; This could be the beginning of a 'healthy' debating page ?]. Sadly, soon after the first chapter was published my father, who prompted this article, passed away. I would like to dedicate this chapter to the memory of a 'seasoned ale drinker'.

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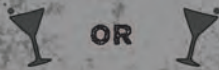
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Festival Focus

The beginning of September sees Tamworth festival taking place. Opening on Thursday 3rd September this festival is the beer tickers paradise in the local region. Held in the Assembly Rooms in Tamworth it always features a magnificent array of new breweries and unknown beers. Open from 11am until 11pm each day. Admission is £3 each day and £4 after 5pm on Friday. This year will see this festival designated a quiet festival as there is no music.

www.lstcamra.org.uk

The same weekend is the last outdoor festival of the summer at Bridgnorth SVR railway station. The event is staged in a small marquee alongside the station buffet. This festival is also planned to open on Thursday 3rd September but check the website nearer the time as work is being planned by Severn Valley Railway for times. A day out on the SVR train from Kidderminster is a fine way to get to this event but be careful when returning.

www.bridgnorth.camra.org.uk

Having enjoyed most of this years outside festivals in the glorious sunshine of Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester it is now time to move back indoors with Cannock beer festival. This will be Cannock sub-branch's second festival and if last year's is any thing to go by it should be a huge success. Relatively easy to get to with a train from Birmingham fairly frequently. The festival takes place at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Church Street, Cannock, WS11 1DE. The festival opens on Thursday 24th September and continues until Saturday 26th September. Opening times on Thursday are 5pm until 11pm, Friday and Saturday is Noon until 11pm.

www.cannockchase.camra.org.uk

The same weekend sees the Shrewsbury beer festival taking place inside the magnificent Morris Hall in the Bellstone area of Shrewsbury, SY11 1JB. The festival is open from 11am until 11pm on both the Thursday and Friday with Saturday commencing at 11am until 9pm (or until the beer runs out). Admission is £2.50 and the glass hire is also £2.50. Shrewsbury beer festival is a 'quiet' festival, no music. Virtually all beers are dispensed on handpump. Unfortunately there is not a wheelchair access available to this historic building.

www.swscamra.wordpress.com

Solihull beer festival gets underway in early October. This 2 day event commences on Friday 2nd October at the Assembly Rooms, 21 Poplar Road, B91 3AD. Offering 50+ Real Ales the festival opens from Noon until 11pm on both days. The entry package is £10 which includes glass hire, programme and beer tokens.

www.solihullcamra.org.uk

The next festival is Stoke beer festival which takes place at Fenton Manor Sports Complex, City Road, Fenton, Stoke on Trent, ST4 2RR. This festival commences on Thursday 8th October, opening at Midday until 11pm each day. Over 200 beers with Cider, Perry and fruit Wine.

www.camrapotteries.co.uk

Following on from Stoke is Birmingham festival at the end of October. This festival kicks off with a CAMRA members night on Wednesday 28th October from 5pm until 10.30pm. The festival is open to the public Thursday until Saturday from 11am until 10.30pm. The venue is the New Bingley Hall by the Hockley Circus Flyover, B18 5PP and is a short bus ride from Birmingham and is relatively close to the Jewellery Quarter Station. There will also be a dedicated bus provided from close to Birmingham New Street Station direct to the venue. Trained tasting sessions will be available with Thursday offering beer and chocolate tasting and also beer and cheese tastings. Friday will offer a cider tasting and also a walk on the dark side. Advance tickets for the festival and the tastings are available from the website.

www.birminghambeerfestival.org.uk

The final festival of the year is the hugely popular Dudley Winter Ales Fayre taking place at Dudley Town Hall, St James' Street DY1 1HP. The festival runs from Thursday 26th until Saturday 28th November. Opening on Thursday from 5.30pm, Friday from Noon and Saturday from Noon. Entertainment on Friday evening and Saturday and featuring the hugely popular Beer Memorabilia Charity Auction on Saturday afternoon. Admission package is £15 on Thursday and Friday which includes admission, drink tokens, glass hire (refundable).

www.dudleycamra.org.uk

Keeping Up with the Young'Uns!

It's great to be back! Writing articles for our brand spanking new 'Ales & Tales' that is! Every branch should have its own publication, I'm sure I don't need to emphasise that, but after a year or so of our leaflet holders looking sorry for themselves, drinkers will once again be able to pick up a copy whilst enjoying a tippie in their local. In truth, it's a back by popular demand 'kinda ting!' *Jazz hands* So what have the young members been up to I hear you ask? Well mostly drinking! Our most recent shenanigan, we embarked on a pub crawl to Worcester via Kidderminster dubbed the 'Rail ale trail' (well we don't do things in half's now do we!) Saturday, the sun was shining, the birds were singing and there was plenty of ale in the cellar! Our rendezvous point was Green Duck's Badelynge Bar, where we were greeted by members from Walsall branch who were over this neck of the woods on a crawl of their own round the Black Country. They even bought a few copies of their branch publication 'Kils 'n' Kins' to spread around. I started as I meant to go on, I went straight in there with the big hitting 5.5% Tuco Salamanca's 7 hop American style IPA from Green Duck's Breaking Bad themed beers. Next time you see brewer Scott and his trusty bobble hat, ask and see if he can list the 7 hops that were used. Sorry Scott!

Once I'd gathered the troops it was off to our first port of call, runner up of the Wyre Forest branch Pub of the Year – Weavers Real Ale House. This dinky little micro-pub is a relatively recent addition to the real ale and cider scene in Kidderminster, but not so recent as Weavers at Park Lane, landlord Rich Davis decided to open a second real ale house last year due to success of his first venture. We raise a glass to you Sir! Rich was behind the bar upon our visit and it was clear to see just how passionate and knowledgeable he is about real ale and cider. Talking of real cider, this made our apple co-ordinator Chris Heardman a very happy girl indeed (sadly I can't remember what she had!) It certainly is a small and cosy real ale lover's paradise here, situated on Comberton Hill, a stone's throw from Kiddy station. The single lounge bar is both comfortable and reminiscent of a traditional pub

having a variety of seating, old pictures, beer mats and posters on the walls and dark wood panelling. No TV's, no pool tables, no jukeboxes and more importantly NO LAGER! Just good conversation.... and beer obviously! On offer for us to sink our taste buds into was house regular Three Tuns XXX and more locally, Fownes Brewery. However, it was the Jaffa Pale Ale from Popes Brewing Company that took everyone's fancy with its stand out pump clip artwork of a giant orange! A pleasant citrus flavour as you'd expect! And if I'm not very much mistaken, all the real ales on offer under £3 a pint! Back of the net!

Making a U-turn now we headed back to the station to visit the King & Castle, as everyone knows this atmospheric recreation of a refreshment room on a GWR terminus station is the gateway to the Severn Valley Railway. For the 'old fogeys' who joined us on the day it was just like stepping back in time! I'm sure at one point I heard someone mutter the words "During the war....". Back to the beer though, many of the members were delighted by the sight of Betty Stoggs 'the Queen of Cornish ales' on one of the hand pulls. Also available were Bathams bitter and 2 guest ales. Below, some of us 'pose' for a photo on the platform along with Alfie and Sasha the dogs. We thought best that the photo was taken early on in the day, whilst we still looked intact!



Next stop, Worcester! The Firefly to be more precise. This place had a slightly different flavour from the previous drinking establishments.

According to 'Whatpub' this was once the Georgian home of an old vinegar works manager. Now a bar, it's also home to an on-site micro-brewery which brews between the months of October-March. Open fire, subtle lighting and cosy bench sofas, again very quirky, oh and something must be said of the giant stags head hanging from the wall. It's the hipster's pub of Worcester that's for sure! Firefly

also dives into the craft scene selling the likes of 'Beavertown' cans and bottles from 'The Kernel' to name just a few. These are your more 'out there' kind of beers focusing slightly more on the eccentric use of multiple varieties of hops which seem to be drawing the younger drinker in. It's at this point I need to refer to my 'untappd' check-ins to remind myself of what beer-i-ful delights I consumed! Firstly, Polaris pale ale from Bad Seed Brewery, a brewery that's really caught my attention lately! There are currently quite a few bottles from them in the man cave back home! I then went for the Blackwater Torque, an American IPA brewed by our friends at Salopian. Clear as day in fine condition, sadly there wasn't time for another as it was onto our 5th and final destination!

King Charles II aka the wonky pub! Yup you read correct, even if you're the designated driver of the group this pub may make you feel a little liquored

up seeing double due to its uneven floors and structure. For those of you who haven't visited the pub before it's a gorgeous historically important listed Tudor black and white building featuring a range of beers from Craddock's, Two Thirsty Brewers and Bridgnorth with Barbourne Cider on the pumps occasionally supplemented with their perry. At this stage I thought it was wise to finish up on something a little light, so step forward Craddock's Honey Ewe, a lovely little golden 3.8% number with a touch of honey. In fact this was the first pint of the day that I went back for more. Unfortunately this is where our adventures ends, sadly we had no time to explore the Cardinal's hat as originally intended, we had a train to catch! Suffice to say I think we all enjoyed our day out and each and everyone of us impressed with what Kiddy & Worcester had to offer. In the words of the Terminator "I'll be back!"

Matt Merrick

Back Room Tales

Outside the heat was fierce but the back room was cool and quiet. The beer had flowed and things had gotten very convivial as the afternoon progressed. Suddenly Ginny banged her glass down on the table, Meg, our tatty lurcher raised its head briefly and then flopped back down and silence descended over the table. "What is it with you lot?" she said "does it really matter whether Adam offered Eve a Golden Delicious or a Russet? Honestly!". Wizza was about to say something but a withering look from Ginny quickly made him change his mind, Dave kept silent and stared at his beer. After a suitable interval, feeling safe in the knowledge that Ginny did not have her knitting with her, I said "So what do we think Schrödinger's cat was called?" Ginny reached into her handbag and pulled out some crochet, complete with a hook that looked more like a harpoon. I was saved by Tarby who walked in and said "I were abducted by aliens last night." Dave immediately perked up and asked "Were you probed?" Ginny rolled her eyes. Tarby then said "... But that's another story.

Jeffrey Hudson writes about the doings in his Black Country local.

(some names have been changed to protect the innocent)

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Dog Inn, Burton upon Trent, DE14 3QZ	15th-18th October
Black Country Arms, Walsall, WS1 1QW	22nd-25th October
Rising Sun, Tipton, DY4 7NH	29th Oct-1st November
Lych Gate Tavern, W'ton WV1 1TX	12th-15th November
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Green Duck Festival

Did you know that it's not just CAMRA that organise beer festivals? Local clubs, pubs and breweries from time-to-time run their own festivals, choosing to offer something a little different compared to what they would normally stock.



Green Duck Brewery, in Rufford Road Stourbridge, holds a regular festival every couple of months. If you've not been before, it's a fantastic venue set in a working brewery. Some of the brewing machinery can be viewed through a glass partition, giving some insight into the processes involved. It's not like a normal pub, usually opening only on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Be careful not to walk past it though, as only a small green door is visible from the outside.

The great thing about small independent free-houses and non-chain pubs is that they're usually free to decide their own policies for example whether or not they are dog or child friendly. Everyone has their own opinions on this and is therefore free to choose an appropriate local for their tastes. However, Green Duck welcomes all! There is enough room for cyclists to park bikes inside if required, along with a quieter lounge area in one corner where a comfy sofa can be selected over the bench-style seating. Board games are provided free of charge!

The format of the bar is similar to that of a German beer hall. Seating is long wooden benches and tables, which each have capacity for a couple of dozen people, so everyone has to muck in together, adding to the friendly vibe. Sitting on your own here is rarely an option if it's busy!

Anyway, back to the festival they held back in June. A number of different beers were available directly gravity fed from the cask in Green Duck's cold room

area. Particular favourites for me were Renegade IPA by Hop Stuff, and Paradise Lost by Two Towers. Around two-dozen beers were available across keg and cask. Considering Green Duck exclusively produce their own beer, it's great to see many other breweries represented at their festival. Naturally I had to sample a few of the house brews while I was there, which were excellent as usual! Green Duck are also to be congratulated for the range of cider they had at their festival, ranging from very sweet to very dry and everything in between. I did hear that the cider had to be restocked during the event as it was so popular!

Beer festivals seem to generate a huge amount of customer interest. I visited the festival on two separate days and the place was heaving on both days! I hope that many people who would not normally visit Green Duck Brewery on a regular basis will go back again soon! Keep an eye out for their 'Octoberfest' between the 22nd and 24th of the month.

Tim Cadwell



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Spot the Pub



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These are all Holden's Pubs

Tony Skirving



2



5



3



6



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Pub Crawling in Kingswinford and Wordsley

Good pubs, good beer and good company! The timeless pleasure of pub crawling. I've always enjoyed going to pubs for the first time. The fun of trying somewhere you haven't been to before or wanted to visit for years but haven't got around to it. Well, there's plenty of scope for this in the Black Country.

I've been meaning to discover the pubs in Kingswinford and Wordsley for a while. The ideal chance came in June with Dudley CAMRA's programme of social visits for beer scoring and social activities. There's a calendar for the whole year, so loads of notice. In early June we joined the crawl of Kingswinford at the Woodman, recently reopened but still furnished in a traditional manner, and with a Thai restaurant adjacent. I drank a good pint of Ludlow Gold while the rest of the group arrived. Definitely worth the ten minute stroll from the 256/257 bus routes, then down the road to the Mount Pleasant under new management and back to serving real ales (Marston's Pedigree in my case). And so the pub crawl was in full swing, a fine summer evening and an option of 10 pubs to pop into. An evening in any of these pubs is fine of course, if pub crawls don't suit you. But we were on a mission. The Park Tavern was next, a busy pub with friendly service and a good choice of beers (Timothy Taylor Boltmaker and Enville Ginger for me), a regular in the Good Beer Guide; then the Market Hall Tavern, with its younger clientele, for Banks's Mild. Some members of the group headed for the Leopard and The Bridge, while we headed for the Union, tucked away in Water Street well worth a stroll for the Jennings Cumberland Ale and lively atmosphere. Then the Bell, with its self-confessed focus on food, but serving Masham's Black Sheep ale, and finally the Cottage for St. Austell's Tribute in a comfortable and cosy environment.

Seven pubs that I'd never been to before in three hours, and a few to visit another time. I'm not going to tell you which pubs were my favourites, that's for you to visit and decide. See Whatpub.com for details on them all. However, I was struck

by the friendly welcome wherever we went, a very enjoyable evening of discovery.

So enjoyable in fact that two weeks later we joined the group for a crawl of Wordsley. Minor research beforehand to memorise the route between pubs was helpful, and a browsing of the pub entries on Whatpub.com, to get an idea of what to expect. We started at the Samson & Lion with a very friendly welcome from the lady serving and then a fine half hour sitting by the canal in the sun, watching the fish jumping, joggers staggering and cyclists freewheeling downhill, while drinking Wychwood Hobgoblin and Banks's Mild. Then off down the hill ourselves, following the canal past the locks towards the Red House Glass Cone and then to the Bird in Hand. The pub is hidden away and many have been close by without realising it is there. It's well worth discovering though, very friendly and comfortable. The guest beer that night was Pig Iron Blonde from the new brewery in Brierley Hill up the road.

Then a 10 minute stroll past the recently sadly closed Rose & Crown to the Glasscutters in Barnett Street, again tucked away and a little tricky to find. A busy pub with Sports TV and a bowling green. We drank Olde Swan Bumblehole Bitter while watching England U21 football team letting in a couple of goals.

Next the Queens Head, which was lively, with a well-attended quiz night in full swing, and a choice of Black Country Ales or a number of interesting guest beers - I tried RCH Old Slug Porter and Hale's 3 Card Trick. Finally the short stroll for Bathams Bitter at the New Inn, a classic and popular pub, that is always very hard to leave, and another regular in the Good Beer Guide. We let the last bus go on a promise from my pal that he'd get a taxi home for us, but then declared that it would be better for us to walk 45 minutes home. Wordsley - another recommended pub crawl, where the only problem is leaving one pub to go to the next. Check the pubs out on the excellent whatpub.com.

Geoff Mills

Beer Soup Recipe

Ingredients

25g	Butter
15ml	Olive oil
2	Large Onions finely sliced
75g	White breadcrumbs
600ml	Light ale
600ml	Chicken stock
	Pinch brown sugar

Method

1. Melt butter and oil in pan and add the onions.
2. Cover and cook gently for 15 minutes (stir, check they don't burn)
3. When soft and lightly coloured add sugar and stir for 1-2 minutes.
4. Add breadcrumbs and stir again for a few minutes until lightly brown.
5. Add ale and stock and season to taste; bring to boil and lower heat, half cover pan for 30 minutes; stir occasionally.
6. Leave to cool slightly and then blend to smooth puree (if seems thick add water)
7. Pour into clean pan and reheat – serve in warm bowls with bread and grated cheese and spoon of brandy if desired.



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Amsterdam Trip

Tuesday

One of the easiest European city beer crawls to get to for us, just a one hour flight from Birmingham International, makes this an attractive destination especially as it has around 1500 bars and cafes.

We booked in at West Cord Art Hotel which was a ten minute bus ride out of the city. We unpacked and met up in the bar with our travelling companions John & Julie Gill for a draught La Chouffe 8% while we planned our next move. We decided to go for a drink, surprisingly, got on the bus 48 towards the city getting off at the corner of Westerdoksdijk and Barentszplein and into Café Westerdok overlooking the IJ, part of the former Zuiderzee. Although the gaffer had a Dutch accent he was born in Derbyshire, moved to South Africa as a child but had lived in Amsterdam for 28 years. His cafe can rightly be called a special beer cafe with ten on draught and a



Adelina & Steve

large assortment of Belgian, Dutch and English bottled beers. Naturally beers from Brouwerij t' IJ in Amsterdam were available so we all had IJ IPA 7% followed by Duvel Tripel Hop 2015, and Steve gave us some Orval cheese to enjoy with it.

We caught the bus back into the city and strolled down to In De Wildeman which used to have the biggest range of beers in Amsterdam. Almost



In de Wildeman

hidden down a pedestrian street at 3 Kolksteeg, 18 draught beers and 250 bottles makes it difficult to choose a drink. We decided to try another local brew, Jopen Hoppenbier 6.8%, which was so nice we had another

followed by a Greek beer Septem Citra Single Hop IPA 6.5% which was the find of the whole trip, superb. Starving by now, we went in search of food to a recommended restaurant, got lost and ended up in a Tibetan restaurant for a selection of their style curries. We hadn't a clue where we were when we came out but were given directions to our bus by a local.

Wednesday

Had a substantial breakfast and caught the bus into city centre, sauntered through the main drag to Dam Square where we joined a free guided tour. The entertaining young man took us all around city centre including the notorious Red Light District, which even had scantily dressed women behind windows showing off their wares at 11 o'clock in the morning. One section we went through had ladyboys on show, not sure who their customers would be?

We had a bag of chips each before catching bus 22 to the IJ Brewery. Probably the cheapest place to drink



IJ Brewery

in Amsterdam, between us we tried halves of every beer they had on:- Zatte an 8% triple, Natte a 6.5% double, IJwit a 6.5% wheat beer, Columbus a malty 9%, a 7% IPA, Flink a hoppy 4.7% blonde, Struis a 9% dark barley wine, Ikbok a German style 6.5% bock and a 5.8% American wheat beer.

Feeling much the worse for wear, Bridget and I went back for a kip, meeting John & Julie again in Arendsneest at 7:30pm. Arendsneest only sells Dutch beers, nothing like the ubiquitous Amstel, but Belgian and British style beers, 30 on draught and 100+ bottles. We enjoyed De Molen American IPA 4.5%, Kees East India Porter 6.5%, a La Trappe Dubbel 6.5% and a La Trappe tripel 8%, before moving next door to Lieve Belgian Restaurant for

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a three course meal for 20 euros each and four Troubadour Magma 8%. Stuffed full of food and beer we caught the bus back at midnight.

Thursday

After breakfast we went into the city and caught tram 1 to the explore Overtroom in the south to what the guide book says was a food market, all it was, was a delctesan and greengrocers. We had a mooch around but didn't buy anything and went next door for hot chocolate and/or coffee before returning to the city centre for a sandwich in Cafe Blue, which was at the top of a tower with a fine view over the city. After exploring the streets nearby we went to Beer Temple which mainly sold American craft ales. It had a tremendous range of beers, 30 draught and 250 bottled but it was dark, dingy and very expensive. We sat outside to drink our Flying Dog Raging Bitch 8.3% beers and then moved on to Delirium Tremens. This had only recently opened



Delirium Café

and took some finding, not even the local students knew where it was. When we found out, it was right by where the cruise ships dock. What a find, a really comfortable dockside view and 750 beers to choose from. I enjoyed some Gulden Draak 10.5% posing for a photo.

After a meal we headed for bus 48 and got off at Westerdok were we found Steve had a cellar bar with a Belgian billiard table which has no pockets! I tried to take John on but he is a regular snooker player so I had no chance. Gaffer Steve helped me and eventually took over to make it a closer game. We re-joined Bridget and Julie upstairs for several more rounds of St Bernardus 8 and 12 before heading to our hotel.

Friday

We had a trip to nearby Sloterdijk to check on the route back to the airport as the railway line from city centre was closed for repairs. Satisfied, we

returned to city central for a relaxing canal cruise with commentary from the docks.

John & Julie wanted to see Anne Frank's House which was a Tram 13 ride away. When we got there the queue was hundreds of yards long and as time was pressing on we had lunch at Cafe "t Smalle, which as its name suggests was rather small but it had a mezzanine floor accessed by a spiral staircase. We sat downstairs and enjoyed their Gouden Carolus Tripel and Dubbel on draught, with our local meatballs, served by a very friendly waitress/waiter, we were never sure which sex she/he was - dressed as a woman but had a deep voice and big hands. Bridget and I returned for our afternoon nap but John and Julie crossed the harbour on one of the three free ferries to explore the northern side of Amsterdam, including the ultra-modern Film Museum. We all met up later at Cafe Gollem, another tiny Bar with a mezzanine floor. We sat upstairs this time and enjoyed St. Bernardus 8, Corsendonk Agnus 7.5%, and two Ij IPA. We finished off the night and the holiday at a very smart Seafood Restaurant where we had razor clams, turbot, mussels and chips, washed down with a couple of Kasteel Tripel 11%.



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If you are a regular in the Stourbridge pubs you may have seen us before, we are the couple with the mismatched spoilt dogs called Alfie and Sascha (we have now adopted a third called Reggie). We hope to provide you with a list of local dog friendly pubs for you and your pooches to enjoy!

Starting off this time with a short time up the road to Audnam and Wordsley

The Bird in Hand

Extremely dog friendly! On our last visit we were made to feel very welcome. While sitting in the bar area we had to be careful with our big girl Sascha because she does like to spread out, especially creeping to the bar in search of scratchings and a bit of fuss. The garden is good for a wander around, plenty of shade in summer and walled to keep the wind out. On the bar amongst the standard choices at the time were the trusty Hobsons Town Crier and Enville brews. No real cider here, but Robinsons Flagon is a lot better than most!

The New Inn

This Batham's pub has one of the best local beer gardens! Refurbished outside last summer, there's plenty of room for families and pets alike. Usually there's a few dog bowls scattered around and one handily placed next to the bar, so both owners and dogs can drink side by side. No real cider here, which is a shame.

Next, just up the road now to....

The Queens Head

A Black Country Ales pub that allows dogs! Not all of them do, so it's best to check beforehand if you intend to pay one a visit. It is carpeted throughout so wouldn't recommend visiting after a muddy walk down the canal. Lots of space but must be careful of the dart players. Sascha is amazed by pub games and could sit there for hours watching the flying missiles! Expect to find the usual Black Country

Ales beers, plus an even bigger variety of guest ales of different styles. As usual, all displayed on wall to make choosing easier.

The Glasscutters Arms

Remember - no dogs on the bowling green! It might look lovely but it's not for dogs to go chasing the balls on. Still a great place to sit and watch a game with a pint in hand and faithful friend. From memory Wye Valley HPA was on at the time.

Tips:

Short leads are advised - pints can go tumbling when there's an excited pooch about.

Collapsible water bowl - just in case there isn't a house-bowl to hand.

A Dog towel! We appreciate being allowed in pubs so we don't want to leave a mess behind.

Treats! Like giving a baby a dummy our two are always quieter with a good bone or packet of biscuits!

Hitchmough's Lost Pubs

Here is a photograph of another mystery pub, can you identify it?



The solution to the last mystery pub is:

Shepherd's Cottage, 229, High Street, Princes End, Tipton.

The earliest licensee so far found was John Styler in 1873.

It was run by the Bradley family from 1879 until 1913.

It was a former John Seedhouse and Sons' property until it became a Banks's house.

After closing in 2010 it was demolished a year later.

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Branch Diaries

Dudley & South Staffordshire

September

Thurs 3rd - Sat 5th

Bridgnorth Beer Festival, SVR WV16 5DT

Thurs 3rd - Sat 5th

Tamworth Beer Festival, B79 7DN

Weds 9th

Delph/Quarry Bank Scores Crawl – see website

Sat 12th - Sun 13th

Boat Festival, Windmill End, Netherton, Open to public between 12-500pm. Social Saturday 12.00

***STAFFING VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED contact Stan**

Thurs 17th - Sat 19th

Cottage Spring Beer Festival, Woodsetton DY3 1AD

Fri 18th - Sat 19th

Rugby Beer Fest, Thornfield Bowl Club CV22 5L

Mon 21st

DWAF Mtg – Park Inn, Woodsetton DY1 4LW 8.00pm

Thurs 24th - Sat 26th

Cannock Chase B F, Prince of Wales Th. WS11 1DE

Mon 28th

Branch meeting Queens Head Wordsley DY8 5QS 8pm

Weds 30th

Smethwick/Bearwood Scores Crawl – route TBC

October

Thurs 1st - Sun 4th

Old Bull's Head Beer Festival Lower Gornal DY3 2NU Social Thursday 8pm

Fri 2nd - 3rd Sat

Solihull BF Assembly Rooms B91 3AD

Thurs 8th - Sat 10th

Stoke Beer Festival Fenton Manor Sports Com ST4 2RR

Fri 9th - Sat 10th

Cider & Music Fest - Jolly Crispin, DY31UL - Social Fri 8pm

Sat 10th

Green Hop Festival, The Talbot Knightwick, social by minibus contact jedwards31@btinternet.com for details

Sat 10th

Regional Meeting Woodman, Birmingham B5 5LG

Mon 12th

DWAF Mtg – Park Inn, Woodsetton DY1 4LW 8.00pm

Weds 21st

Langley/Oldbury Scores Crawl see website

Mon 26th

Brch Mtg Rose & Crown Brierley Hill DY5 3DD 8pm

Weds 28th - Sat 31st**

*Birmingham Beer & Cider Fest, New Bingley Hall Staff required see www.birminghamcamra.org.uk **Wed eve Trade / CAMRA session – social*

Thurs 29th - Sat 31st

Rising Sun Beer fest, Tipton DY4 7NH

November

Mon 2nd

DWAF Mtg – Park Inn, Woodsetton DY1 4LW 8.00pm

Weds 11th

Dudley scores crawl route TBC

Mon 16th

DWAF Mtg – Park Inn, Woodsetton DY1 4LW 8.00pm

Weds 18th

Coseley/Woodsetton Scores Crawl – route TBC

Thurs 19th - Sun 22nd

Midland Beer Festival, Bearwood B66 4BE

Mon 23rd

*DWAF SET UP - *VOLUNTEERS WELCOME*

Thurs 26th - Sat 28th

**DUDLEY WINTER ALES FESTIVAL - DY1 1LZ*

**see www.dudleycamra.org.uk for volunteer form*

Sun 29th

*DWAF TAKE DOWN - *VOLUNTEERS WELCOME*

Followed by social details TBC

December

Fri 11th

Christmas Social – details TBC contact jedwards31@btinternet.com

Sat 12th

Regional meeting Nuneaton / Bedworth – venue TBC

Mon 14th

Branch Meeting Black Bear Gornal DY3 2AE 8pm

Thurs 24th

Sedgley/Gornal Christmas Eve Social scores crawl – Route to be confirmed.

Mon 28th

West Mids Reg. Presentations –Bartons' Arms B6 4UP 12pm (Please note no buffet provided / restaurant food can be purchased)



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Stourbridge & Halesowen

September

Thurs 3rd - Sept 5th

Bridgnorth Beer Festival at the Severn Valley Railway Station

Weds 9th

8.00pm. Members Night Sadler's Brewhouse & Bar Station Approach, Lye, DY9 8ER

(Any Branch Member interested in attending please email membersnight@stourhalescamra.org.uk)

Weds 16th

8.00pm. Extra Ordinary Branch General Meeting to Approve Branch Accounts 2014 -2015 and Club of the Year Award Halesowen Athletic & Cycling Club, Manor Way, Halesowen B62 8RW

Sat 19th

Birmingham Chilli Festival- meet 12 Noon Duke William, Coventry Street, Stourbridge then travel to Birmingham. Those interested go to the Chilli Festival others visit a couple of pubs and meet up later.

Weds 23rd

8.00pm. Stourbridge Beer Festival 2016 Inaugural Working Party Meeting Duke William, Coventry Street, Stourbridge

October

Weds 7th

8.00pm. Branch Meeting Vine, Lyde Green, Halesowen B63 2PQ

Fri 9th - Sun 11th

Green Hop Festival at The Talbot Knightwick WR6 5PH

Thurs 15th

8.00pm. Stourbridge Marking Social start Plough & Harrow, Worcester St. 8.45pm. Waggon & Horses, Worcester St. 9.30pm. Chequers, 10pm. Edward Rutland, 10.30pm. Duke William.

Weds 21st

8.00pm. Stourbridge Beer Festival Working Party Meeting Duke William, Coventry St.

Thurs 22nd - Sun 25th

Green Duck Oktoberfest, DY9 7ND

November

Weds 4th

8.00pm. Branch Meeting Plough (Wollaston) (tbc)

Thurs 12th

8.00pm. Lye Marking Social Start Hadcroft then 8.45pm. Fox, 9.15pm. Shovels, 10pm. Windsor Castle Stourbridge Beer Festival Working Party Meeting Duke William, Coventry St. (tbc)

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GOOD BEER GUIDE
2015
We're in it

DWAF Award to Oakham Ales for Second Year Running



A sunny Saturday in June saw myself rising early to catch a train across country from Birmingham to Peterborough to meet Steve Thompson (Dudley & South Staffs Branch chairman) to make our appointed rendez-vous with Nigel Wattam in the Oakham brewery tap in order to make the Beer Of The Festival presentation to Oakham Brewery for its Green

Devil IPA, the beer achieving an unprecedented second successive victory as Beer of the Festival at Dudley Winter Ales Fayre at the end of November 2014. Steve had travelled the day before to partake of Peterborough's finest as we were also due to man the beer tent at Kinver Country Fayre the following day.

Last August, a group of us travelled to Peterborough Beer Festival to make the award for its first victory at the 2013 festival (well, any excuse to go to a beer festival!). Little did we expect to be repeating that process in 2015 but such was the popularity of the beer the first time around, 18 gallons sold out rapidly, making it an automatic choice for 2014! The beer weighs in at 6% and is packed full of zesty hops, imparting a crisp yet citrusy, fruity bitterness with hints of tropical fruit, thus making it very appealing. Dudley Winter Ales Fayre tries to bring a wide range of beers encompassing a multitude of styles produced nationwide, varying in strength and styles to suit everybody's tastes. Therefore, in 2014, we had a lot of IPAs, American Pale Ales, dark stouts and porters and milds alongside some innovative styles in cask form, including a Breakfast Stout and a variety of fruit beers so competition was fierce.

In order to shortlist the beers for the final, a rigorous process is undertaken. CAMRA volunteers gather at the town hall on the Wednesday before the festival opens on the Thursday and we are sub-divided into teams to taste small amounts of beers in a given section (usually around 15 beers per section with 4 teams) and each is given a score out of 5. The top three in each section are shortlisted and then the other teams taste these beers and similarly score. This leads to a shortlist of 6 or 7 beers that are then tasted by an independent panel of judges on the Thursday. These volunteers are guests and have no connection with the breweries concerned nor are they informed what the beer is during tasting. Green Devil emerged triumphant from the process. We met Nigel at the brewery tap near Peterborough Station where he treated us to lunch and a few pints (Preacher, Citra and JHB between us which were in superlative condition). The tap also specialises in Oakham's signature Thai Food style (the Chicken Satay and Thai Fries were wonderful!) which can be experienced locally at the Barton Arms in Newtown, Birmingham.

Nigel chatted about recent developments at the brewery and about plans to open a visitor's centre and a tap room at the new brewery and about the accolades the brewery receives from CAMRA festivals across the country. He also told us of plans afoot to brew Bona Nox (8%) and Attila (7.4%) which are likely to feature at the festival this year. The brewery started in 1993 but moved moved from its original home in Oakham to the imposing tap house in 2006. Having moved the brewery from its original home in Oakham into the tap house containing a gleaming 75 barrel brew plant, now only occasionally used, the brewery moved again and now produces its beers on the edge of the town in a much bigger 300 barrel brewery. Its beers are distributed nationally and to more than 350 outlets directly which is a testament to the success of the brewery and the quality of its beers.

After pictures were taken, we visited a number of other pubs including Charters, Oakham's moored barge on the banks of the River Nene which again serves a wide range of Oakham ales plus guests, from where we returned to Birmingham, thirsts suitably slaked after a great day out.

Remember Dudley Festival takes places 26th - 28th November 2015 at Dudley Town Hall. Why not come along and try a few beers, better still, volunteer your time at the festival and work in some capacity.

Pete Clarkson

Spot the Pub Answers

1. Shrubbery Cottage,
2. Rose & Crown,
3. The Mill,
4. Bull's Head,
5. New Inn,
6. Park Inn



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GOOD FOOD Mon to Sat 12 - 9pm / Sun 12 - 5pm

Spotlight on Local Pubs

We feel blessed in Wollaston with several good pubs all selling traditional ales. They have interesting histories and are survivors from a time when there were many more.

The Plough Inn, Bridgnorth Road has



been in existence for over 150 years. It is not altogether clear when the pub was established and historical data is confusing. Data available indicates the earliest licensee as Francis White (1851) but the owner is listed in 1855 as Jasper Mogg, according to the Francis White Directory. In any event, it does not appear as licensed premises until the census of 1861, so it is more likely that it was founded sometime between 1851 and 1861. Originally The Plough Hotel was located in the smaller building next to the current imposing structure. It is believed the Plough moved to its present location in 1905.

The history of the building is rather sketchy but its changing beers are marked by the beautiful engraved windows. The name Pearson's is etched over one window



and on the next one the word Entire. John and Horace G. Pearson supplied beers brewed at the nearby Cottage Spring (now Graham's Place) and they also supplied The Plough.

Some of the windows also show the famous Bass triangle and the Enville plaque which proclaims a more recent allegiance.

One of the Plough's most famous claims to fame is that Buffalo Bill is reported to have lunched there when he brought his "Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World" show to Wollaston. This was billed as part of the "Last and Final Farewell Tour of England, Wales and Scotland". Two shows were staged on 28th April 1904 on a field that formed part of Eggington Farm (current location being the area enclosed by Bridgnorth Road, Bridle Road and Meriden Avenue). It must have been quite a spectacle. The cavalcade travelled by train – according to the local paper "The County Express" – "The Wild West Show arrived via the GWR in 3 special trains consisting of 16, 19 and 20 cars respectively. ... Seventeen of the cars were laden with horses, 22 were laden with the great road wagons, and 9 sleeping cars contained 'warriors of all nations', workmen, etc." The show was transported on to

Wollaston by the road wagons. It was reported that the audience capacity was 13,000. It's hard to imagine the scene now, considering all the housing that has sprung up over the years.

The Plough has also contributed greatly to the community, an increasingly important factor given the threat many of our pubs face today. The 2nd AGM of the Wollaston Benevolent Fund was held here in September 1913 (the inaugural meeting having been held the previous year at The Foresters). The Fund was established to celebrate the Coronation of George V and was intended to 'help homes made sad by sickness and death'.

The Plough also appears to have temporarily been used as a base for a branch of Birchfield Harriers with cross country runs organised by the club in 1921-22, starting and ending at the Plough.

At one time the Plough was a hotel and there are signs of its previous use within the pub – the upstairs rooms still display numbers and the old dumb waiter now houses the wine cooler cabinet.

Step inside and you are surrounded by a miscellany of curios and wall hangings. Of particular interest to beer drinkers are the 2 plaques on the lounge wall advertising Frederick Smith's Aston Model Ales of Birmingham.



More impressive still is the row of 8 hand pumps offering a range of traditional ales. Current licensees Andy and Helen, have been in charge for the last 9 years. The Plough is owned by Punch Taverns and is renowned for its good value pub food and warm welcome. Over the last few years, regular beer festivals have been held in the garden over the August Bank Holiday

and also to mark special occasions, such as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Royal Wedding of Prince William. Acknowledgements – many thanks are extended to the History of Wollaston Group (HOW), in particular their book "A History of Wollaston" first published in 2004, from which much of the material for this article has been sourced. If any readers are interested in joining the group, please make contact via "Step-Along Shoes" on Bridgnorth Road. Also thanks to Andy and Helen who have provided other snippets of information and served excellent beers and food during the research.

Joy Stevens

DUDLEY & SOUTH STAFFS CAMRA PRESENT

DUDLEY WINTER ALES FAYRE 2015



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Join CAMRA Today

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

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to the: Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Address _____

 _____ Postcode _____

Email address _____
 Tel No(s) _____

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Email address (if different from main member) _____

	Direct Debit	Non DD
Single Membership (UK & EU)	£24 <input type="checkbox"/>	£26 <input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Membership (Partner at the same address)	£29.50 <input type="checkbox"/>	£31.50 <input type="checkbox"/>

For Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

01/15

Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

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Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager _____ Bank or Building Society
 Address _____

 _____ Postcode _____

Name(s) of Account Holder

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Reference

9 2 6 1 1 2 9

FOR CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date 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 as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

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