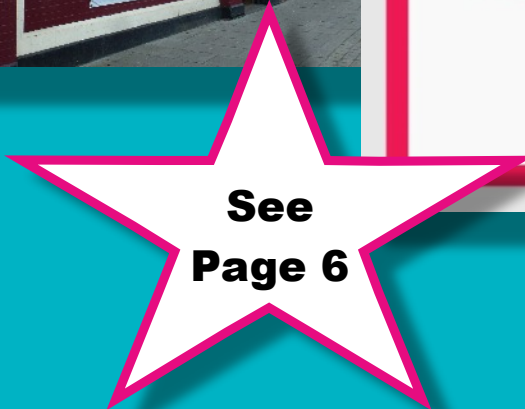




CAMRA ANGLE

ISSUE 71



SUMMER 2025

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WELCOME TO THIS EDITION OF CAMRA ANGLE.

There is a distinct regional feel about this issue, with no less than five articles covering the North East including a review of the most unusual pub I have ever been in. These stories start on page 15.

Our cover story concerns the retirement of Keith and Julie Dewart from the Guide Post in Ryhope. A group of us journeyed south to see them presented with a CAMRA Community Award.

On the subject of presentations, our pub and club winners are pictured with their respective awards on Page 13. The Blue Bell in Fulwell had a make over recently so the opportunity has been taken to review the pub, which play host to the North East Regional meeting in August this year.

The day after we left copies of CAMRA Angle 70 at The Mountain Daisy in Sunderland, it's sudden closure was announced. An update can be found on page 8.

There is the usual pub and brewery news, with the latest on the reopening of Jennings Brewery in Cockermouth.

Finally, thanks to our advertisers and contributors, without whom this magazine would not be possible.

Enjoy the read - Ken Paul

Contributors :- Brewery Liaison Officers, Ian Monteith Preston, Ken Paul, Hugh Price, Mark Taylor, Peter Tong, Wandering Bear and Michael Wynne. All photographs are by the editor unless stated. Uncredited pieces are by the editor.

The Branch would like to thank The Mid Boldon Club and The Marine for hosting our last two branch meetings.

CAMRA ANGLE is produced in house and published by the Sunderland & South Tyneside Branch of CAMRA © 2025. Views or comments expressed in this publication may not be necessarily those of the Editor, contributors or CAMRA. 2000 copies are distributed across the branch and beyond. Printed by Pblprint of Drum Industrial Estate, Chester le Street.

CONTRIBUTIONS are welcome and can be sent to :- magazine01@sst.camra.org.uk

BRANCH CONTACTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 27

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IN THIS ISSUE

Pub News	6	The Pele Corbridge	15
Mountain Daisy Update	8	OCR Pubs	16
Packaging	8	Community Pubs	17
Brewery News	9	Coxhoe Beer Festival	19
Keep Cask Alive	11	Pub Tenancies Explained	21
Beer on The Box	11	Family Trip to York Outskirts	24
The Blue Bell	12	Pub Quiz	27
Winners Photo Page	13	Quiz Answers	26

DIARY DATES

June 2025	
Maxim Open Night	Friday 6 th 5pm -10pm Maxim Brewery, Gladwell Rd, Rainton Bridge, Houghton, DH4 5NL
North Pier Open days	Friday 6 th (5pm-8pm), 7 th (Noon - 8pm), 8 th (Noon-6pm) Harbour View North, Sunderland, SR6 0PQ
Brewlab Taproom Open days	Friday 13 th June 2pm-8pm., Saturday 14 th June 10am-4pm and Friday 27 th June 2pm-8pm Unit 1, West Quay Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park SR5 2TE
Regional Cider Pub of the Year Presentation	Saturday 21 st June 1pm. Blue's Micro Pub, 1a Percy Ter, Whitburn, Sunderland SR6 7EW,
Exploring Co. Durham's Real Ale establishments in a Vintage Bus.	Saturday 28th June. Contact Robin Sanderson for more information :- social@sst.camra.org.uk
July 2025	
North Pier Open Days	4 th - 6 th July and 25 th - 27 th July. Address and times as above
Branch Meeting	24 rd July 8pm. North Pier Brewery Tap
August 2025	
Maxim Open Night	Friday 1 st August - Details as per June
Great British Beer Festival	Tuesday 5 th August - Saturday 9 th August NEC Birmingham
North East Regional Meeting	Saturday 30 th August, 1pm. Blue Bell, 93 Fulwell Rd, Roker, Sunderland SR6 9AD
Look out for announcements on social media or our online FUTURE EVENTS page https://sst.camra.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=42	



https://sst.camra.org.uk/wordpress/?page_id=2126

Locale promotes pubs stocking locally brewed ale in order to reduce the number of beer miles from brewery to cellar. Online is a list of those in our branch that sell beer brewed in Northumberland, Tyne & Wear and County Durham. Any updates please email the branch Pubs Officer sst.pubsofficer@gmail.com



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North Sea

OPENING HOURS

MONDAY - THURSDAY 11AM-11PM • FRIDAY - SATURDAY 11AM-MIDNIGHT
SUNDAY 12 NOON-10.30PM

COVER STORY The “headline news” in this issue concerns **The Guide Post**. Landlord Keith Dewart and his wife Julie retired from the pub at the end of April. They have been running this popular community local for nine years, during which time they have offered excellent quality real ales. They have featured in CAMRA’s Good Beer Guide since 2020. Branch Chair Ian Monteith Preston presented Keith and Julie with a CAMRA Community Award certificate. The branch wishes them well; they will be very much missed.



Photo by Peter Tong

CAMRA’s **Outstanding Conversion and Renovation (OCR)** website. A full description of the pub’s merits can be found here :-
<https://camra.org.uk/pubs/bridge-hotel-vaults-sunderland-198356>

There is more information about OCR pubs in our region on page 16.

Washington

The Woodlands in Rickleton has closed again, with owners Stonegate looking for a new licensee.

Cleadow

There is internal renovation going on at **The New Ship** and a reopening is expected soon. . Also in Cleadow, a new bar bistro called The Raven is expected to open when this issue goes to press. This new venue adjoins the Parish hall and is a former old school room.

South Shields

The Riverview in Mill Dam, South Shields is under new management and has been renamed **The Rivers Edge**

The Pickwick Arms South Tyneside Council have reported that the building

and land in Biddick Hall is back under their control and after years of the pub standing empty and having become an eyesore, demolition is imminent.

Formerly known as Ziggy's/Charlie's/ Trocadero, **Sinia's** in the town centre reopened on May 25th

The aforementioned Sinia has moved from the **New Cyprus**. We await confirmation of who the new licensee will be and whether real ale will return.

Sunderland

The Bridge Hotel Vaults, pictured right, has successfully been added to



There is more about community pubs on page 17.

Pubs, Pints, People.



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The Mountain Daisy - The Story So Far

Ian Monteith Preston explains

The Mountain Daisy, Sunderland, closed in March with shocking news that owners Trust Inns had sold the venue for development, not as a pub! This is very worrying as the venue, a grade 2 listed building with Historic England, is also included in **CAMRA Pub Heritage Group's (PHG)** national Inventory as a pub with a historic interior of national interest, graded 3 star, the highest level!

The local community, led by Pallion ward councillor Steve Donkin, has immediately taken action to oppose any attempts to lose this popular community pub. PHG, Historic England and Sunderland Council



planning enforcement officers have all been made aware and are concerned re any likelihood of loss or damage to the pub's beautiful and historic interior! The story has been featured in local press and TV, including an interview with our branch Pub Protection Officer!

The issue was raised on 26th March as a question in a full meeting of Sunderland Council and the

community is currently applying for an Asset of Community Value (ACV). Meanwhile, the new owners have chosen to remain anonymous and their plans for the future of the venue are uncertain; however, CAMRA stands ready to support the local community and will help fight any attempt to damage or change the use of this important historic Sunderland venue!

<https://www.sunderlandecho.com/lifestyle/food-and-drink/bid-lodged-to-keep-sunderlands-historic-mountain-daisy-as-a-community-pub-5065003>

Packaging Levy

A new packaging levy that will affect breweries and eventually consumers will be coming into force from 1st April 2025. This will apply to those brewers that use packaging that could end up as household waste.

It is estimated this will raise over £1 billion to pay councils collect, recycle or

dispose of any waste such as beer bottles. It is also estimated that the cost to brewers of glass beer bottles will be more than £150m a year So for a small brewer, the British Brewer and Pub Association has stated that works out at approx 7p per bottle every year. While that in itself doesn't sound much

a 3.66% duty increase kicked in on 1st February, And not forgetting the rise in employment costs, also from April, it is estimated this will add up to 30p per bottle in a pub.

With thanks to Mark Anderson at Maxim Brewery

Brewery News

Reports by Branch Brewery Liaison Officers (BLO's)

Brewlab. Forthcoming taproom events will be 13th and 27th June. (See Diary on Page Four.)

Additionally, Brewlab will be open on Saturday 14 June from 10: to 16:00. Alongside the usual bar opening, the Sunderland Youth Orchestra will be playing, and street food will be available.

In a change from recent years, there were beers available from three of our breweries, including Brewlab at the recent Newcastle Beer and Cider Festival. The beers were Snowstorm (white stout) and English IPA.

At a previous event in May, three new beers ; Elderflower and Thyme Sour, Verbena Lemon and Lime Pale (pictured) and Sauvignon Blonde were available..



Maxim Brewery. Samson is on the national Wetherspoon's list for April - June 2025. It is the only North East beer to do so. As well as the core beers, the following will appear during June ; Raspberry Porter,



Photo :- Mark Anderson

Mosaic, Pacific Sunrise (see photo) and Simcoe Kid. The latter will also be available in bottles. See the diary page for forthcoming open nights.

North Pier Brewery Early in April North Pier had a "soft launch" of their new taproom, located in the brewery behind the Queen Vic in Roker. This was followed by an open weekend over Easter. Once a month openings are planned with four cask handpulls and five keg lines. The dates are on the Diary, page four. Check their Facebook page for more dates. A 5% IPA called Cashmere is now available and look out for a session stout in the summer. **See also panel below.**

More news next page

Success for North Pier

The Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) hold regional beer awards throughout the year, culminating in Beer X in Liverpool in March 2026. The North East judging of cask ales was held at Gateshead Rugby Club Beer Festival in April 2025. The blind tasting covered 10 categories. The results can be found here :-

[Harrogate Brewing Co take home the top two medals at Indie Beer Awards North East - SIBA - Society of Independent Brewers and Associates](#)

One brewery in our branch, **North Pier** had much to be pleased about. Their Midas Pale Ale took Gold in the Cask Session Pale Ale (up to 4.4.%) category, ahead of a strong field including Pennine Pale from Allendale and White Rat from Ossett.

Congratulations to North Pier's Josh Atkinson.

Brewery News continued

Vaux **Brewery** A new bar and restaurant has been taking shape on Roker sea front for some time now. Called Elephant Rock, after the cliff that overlooks Roker Beach, it occupies the former shelter on Marine Walk (right). A report in the Sunderland Echo suggests keg lines with no mention of cask. There will be more news in the next issue.

Wear Beer is continuing to attend local markets with regular spots at Sunnyside, Sunderland and Hebburn. There were one off attendances in May at



Blackfriars Beer Festival in Newcastle plus Living North Live @ Newcastle Racecourse, Look out for the brewery at the Sunderland Food & Drink Fest 6th -8th June.

A new Green Hop lager was available from the end of May. This is brewed with locally grown hops. Brewer Julio is continuing his hop growing project with hop

plants available at each of the aforementioned markets. Hops from these plants are hoped to be included in future green hop beers. He is looking to increase capacity with the purchase of a new 300ltr unitank which will allow him to ferment and condition bigger batches. The 4th episode of the podcast is now available.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/2e4y9TBtjhfgHQY8dVtqyd?si=borCWHM6T7O8ZhjSirhfcQ>

Jennings Brewery.

In the last issue of CAMRA Angle we reported that Jennings Brewery in Cockermouth has new owners and that a head brewer would be appointed. That has now happened in the form of Buster Grant former head brewer at Batemans Brewery in Lincolnshire. The four core beers have been announced : Castle Bitter, Cocker Hoop, Cumberland Ale and the strongest, the magnificent dark red Sneck Lifter. Brewing was scheduled to start at the end of May with the first brews being ready Mid June.



Photo by Hugh Price

An article in a recent What's Brewing reported the worrying news that there had been a drop in the number of independent breweries in the last year; down by 136, year on year. The North East, which includes our area plus the Yorkshire's and Humberside, has seen a net loss of 19 breweries up to March 2025. All the figures can be found here :-

<https://www.siba.co.uk/brewerytracker/>



Keep Cask Alive!

We are campaigning to get cask beer listed with UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage!

The campaign, started by the Craft Beer Channel, is asking the UK Government to support an application to UNESCO for cask beer to be included on their Heritage Register.

To do this, they have set up a petition on the UK Parliament petitions website: [Recognise the production and serving of cask ale as Intangible Cultural Heritage –Petitions](https://www.parliament.uk/petitions/signatures/cask-beer-heritage)

We are aiming to get 100,000 signatures on the petition.

The Craft Beer Channel revealed the UNESCO petition as part of their Keep Cask Alive video campaign, which CAMRA has sponsored.

You can see our episode of Keep Cask Alive, featuring Chair Ash Corbett-Collins, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cY_krjt0K1U&list=PLyDTS7ZG3zc07XACFuZOR-nPxMDhCwYdd&index=13&t=1529s

You can read more from Jonny Garrett, Craft Beer Channel Founder, about why he started the UNESCO petition <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/716686>

Beer on the Box :- Tech Now , BBC News 17th May 2025

Review by Michael Wynne

This technology magazine concluded with a piece on Non and Low Alcohol Beers (NABLABS) It focused on Wiper and True Brewery from Bristol. Since 2020, NABLABS have accounted for around 15% of their production and is expected to reach around 45%.

The simplest way to produce NABLABS is to force stopping fermentation at the required strength NABLABS are usually up to 0.5% ABV. But their method is one of reverse osmosis. The beer is filtered to remove water and alcohol leaving a syrup. Fresh water is then added

before packaging. The base beer is higher than the regular 5%. The price of the NABLAB is similar to the regular beer due to the production process. The segment ended with a taste comparison between the two versions. Verdict:- virtually indistinguishable.

The Blue Bell, Fulwell

Mark Taylor Reports

On March 13th 2025 , the well known Blue Bell in Fulwell , Sunderland re-opened its doors following a complete re-furbishment that took more than a month. Thankfully the pub has retained its familiar feel and layout, but with a fresh more contemporary look.

Much to the relief of this scribe, the four cask ale wickets have been retained along with a 'real' cider. There is scope to increase the range of cask to five if customer demand dictates. A potential that could be realised as since reopening according to staff the 'cask ales have been flying out'. Cask ale sales have increased by two firkins a week since the reopening after the refurbishment. The pub still offers three thirds paddles.

Further good news on the continuity front is that the Cask Ale loyalty card has been retained, as well as the CAMRA membership discount. As this landmark ex- Vaux pub is now managed by the Stonegate group CAMRA discount vouchers are also accepted here still.

The Blue Bell's location ensures its popularity as match day venue was not affected by Sunderland AFC's (SAFC) move from



Roker Park to Stadium of Light . This is reflected in a 10% discount on Cask Ales offer to SAFC season ticket holders on home match-days.



It's a pub many Wearsiders have visited over the years and the new fresh look has certainly seen a positive



upturn in trade in this friendly, spacious, local.

Since reopening the cask beer quality has improved from decent to good, in my opinion, as well. Directly due to improved turnover and the management dedication to local cask ales.

The pub also boasts a stacked weekly events schedule with discounted drinks on Monday, Quiz Night on Tuesday, and free pool and darts on Thursday. Guests can get double stamps on their cask card on Friday and sports are shown throughout the weekend with a special carvery available every Sunday. Something for everyone- with a popular beer garden just right for the summer.

Allied with great transport connections by bus and Metro - Seaburn station is five minutes walk - the Blue Bell is an easy location to reach from most of Tyne & Wear. (Buses 23, E2 and E6 from the city Centre stop nearby). If you haven't visited the Blue Bell in a while you will be as pleasantly surprised at the changes as much as the first time visitors first impression.

***The Blue Bell, Fulwell
Road, Sunderland,
SR6 9AD***

Winners Photo Page



Local musician and **Mid Boldon Club** director Jim Murray pictured with the **Branch Club of the Year Award**. Runner up was Boldon Cricket Club with Ryhope Catholic Club third. *Photo by Steve Drummond*

Callum and Alice Watson of **Blues Micropub** with their award for **Branch Cider Pub of the Year**. The runner up was The Avenue in Sunderland. Blues have also been awarded the North East Regional Cider award, ahead of The Station House in Durham, There will be a presentation on Saturday 21st June (time TBA). *Photo Robin Sanderson*



Megan Gray of **The Ship Isis**, Sunderland is presented with the **Pub of the Year** trophy by branch chair Ian Monteith Preston. This is the fourth time the pub has achieved this, the previous years being 2013, 2014 and 2019. *Photo by Robin Sanderson* Runner up was The Marine (below) and The Dun Cow, Sunderland

Alex and Steph of **The Marine** are presented with their Runner Up certificate by branch chair



Public Affairs by Michael Wynne

Business rates.

The chancellor announced a reform of the unfair business rates system at her Autumn Budget 2024, with a lower multiplier rate promised for retail, leisure and hospitality businesses. To review how the current system can be reformed into a fairer rate, the government has held discussions and consultations with industry bodies.

Earlier this year, CAMRA's senior campaigns and communications manager Ellie Hudspith met Treasury officials to discuss business rates reform at a roundtable consultation

An interim report with "a clear direction of travel for the business rates system" is expected to be published by the Treasury, and "further policy detail" will be revealed in the Autumn Budget 2025.

Licensing hours extension:

Victory in Europe day [England and Wales] To mark VE day on 8 May, the government brought forward secondary legislation which allowed pubs in England and Wales to stay open later. The team sent a briefing to MP's in England and Wales ahead of the parliamentary debate that was held to approve

the legislation.

The Campaign welcomed extended opening hours for pubs but emphasised government support is necessary to allow the beer and pub sector to survive and thrive.

Andrew Ranger MP (Labour, Wrexham) has a Private Members Bill calling for an easier licensing hours extension for pubs during special occasions. It is currently before parliament, and CAMRA hopes it receives government support and becomes law.

. Please sign the petition here.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/716686>



The poster features the Great British Beer Festival logo at the top left, which is a stylized 'G' and 'B' in yellow and blue. Below the logo, the text reads: "OVER 100,000 'CHEERS' BEING SERVED WHICH BEER WILL YOU BE SAYING CHEERS TO?". To the right of the text is a large, detailed image of a dark beer in a tulip-shaped glass with a white head of foam. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and the text "BOOK NOW NEC BIRMINGHAM 5-9 AUG 25" and "WWW.GREATBRITISHBEERFESTIVAL.CO.UK". At the bottom right, the CAMRA logo is visible.

A Pub Like No Other - The Pele, Corbridge

Being a CAMRA member is not just about the beer. There are some wonderful pubs out there waiting to be discovered. This is the story of one such gem.

Located on the banks of the River Tyne, Corbridge has several real ale pubs, including three that are in the 2025 Good Beer Guide. One such is **The Pele**. Also known as The Vicars Pele, the building itself dates from 1296 when pele towers were built as fortified keeps in the North of England and the Scottish Borders. The one in Corbridge was also the residence of the priests of St Andrews Church next door.



making it the fine pub it is now. It can be found in the Market Place in the centre of town.

I visited in March 2025.

Passing through the heavy door takes you into the small, but cosy bar (left).

There are two handpulls which usually serve First & Last Brewery from Bellingham. A large selection of local bottled beers are also available. .



Fast forward to 1910 and the then Duke of Northumberland carried out a restoration turning the building into a museum. In 1969 it was listed as a Grade I building and scheduled monument. In 2013 the Pele was sold to current owners Shaun and Jane Cutler who, over the next two years carried out further restoration work



To the immediate left of the front door is a narrow stone staircase leading up to the first floor. This is where most of the seating can be found, as well as a cosy real fire. Looking up can be seen a steel and glass walkway around the top floor (see photo bottom of page). Access is gained by climbing another steep narrow stone staircase, where more seating can be found, plus a view looking down on the drinkers below. Each staircase entrance is very low so "Mind Your Head" signs should be noted. I would suggest care needs to be taken going up and down these staircases, especially after a few beers.

I would like to thank Pele owner Shaun for his hospitality while on my visit. As well as two well kept beers, an excellent leaflet is available at the bar explaining the history of the building. There is also a useful website

www.thepele.co.uk

The renovations that were carried are recognised by CAMRA as an **Outstanding Conversion and Restoration (OCR)**. There are several more OCR pubs in the North East . See the next page.



<https://camra.org.uk/ocr-pubs>

Besides **The Pele** in Northumberland on the previous page there are more pubs with **Outstanding Conversions and Refurbishment** in the North East Region, with three in our branch.



In Northumberland can be found **The Lord Crewe Arms**, Blanchland and a converted cinema, **The Wallaw** in Blyth. There is even a film projector in the pub entrance.



They are **The Maltings** in South Shields, (above and

Ship Isis by Terry Ford



In Newcastle is **The Centurion** and the former Union Rooms, now called **Liberty House**.



Finally a pub you have to pay to get to, **The Sun Inn** (above) in Beamish Museum.

Fuller descriptions and more photographs can be found on the OCR website. A search by postcode will reveal pubs in your area. Finally, if any readers think they know of a pub that would merit consideration for inclusion, please get in touch. Photographs would be beneficial.

below)

The Ship Isis in Sunderland (middle column top)

A recent addition to the to the OCR website, **The Bridge Hotel Vaults** in



throughout with a simple, no frills design (above and below)



<https://camra.org.uk/community-pubs>

CAMRA members who read What's Brewing may have spotted that there will now be quarterly news bulletins every quarter, starting with April 2025.

<https://wb.camra.org.uk/2025/04/11/community-pub-ownership-bulletin-april>

No pubs in our region were mentioned in the first issue so I thought it's time to redress the balance.

Pubs in the UK have been closing all too frequently in recent years. Some pubs are regarded as being more valuable if their use can be changed to a convenience store or even to be demolished and converted into housing. In parts of the country local communities have been fighting back, raising money and buying a pub themselves, then running it for the benefit of the local community.

There are no community pubs in our branch but there are several in the North East, as well as a rural gem in the North Lakes.

First is The **George & Dragon**, Hudswell near Richmond. This came to prominence in 2016 when it won the coveted CAMRA Pub of the Year. It had



The George & Dragon

closed in 2008 then saved two years later.

The Globe, found in the west of Newcastle near the end of the Redheugh Bridge, is a small music venue which became community owned in 2016.

The Gun Inn is a Northumberland pub on the A68 in the village of Ridsdale. The only pub in the village, The Gun was saved from developers in 2020.

The Olde Cross can be found in Ryton Village, about half a mile from the main road that runs from Gateshead west towards Hexham. It had closed in 2018 and was rescued in 2019.

The Rose and Crown is in the village of Slaley, due south of Corbridge. It has been community owned since 2013.

The Travellers Rest, (above) in the village of



Skeeby, is often passed on the way to Richmond and the Dales. 15 years after closure in 2008, it reopened in 2023.

The above are all community owned and run. The exception is **The Woodman** below in



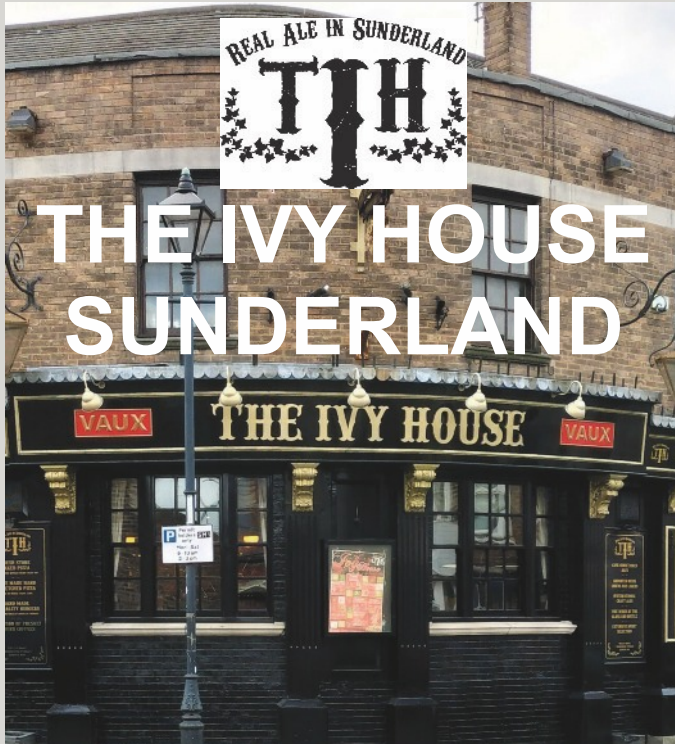
Durham, which is community supported. The difference being a local group failed to buy the closed pub in 2022, but a local businessman was successful on their behalf.

Finally **The Old Crown**, in Heskett Newmarket; the first co-operatively owned pub in the country. It had been visited by the then Prince of Wales before I arrived in 2015 for my only claim of fame; I stood on the same carpet as the prince. I wrote an article for Angle issue



Thanks to Will Drennan for spotting it.

40, which then turned up framed in the pub. (See also CAMRA Angle issues 40 and 66).



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Gung Ho for Coxhoe - Mark Taylor Reports

The Beer Festival season for 2025 will be in full swing by the time you read this article. Our own CAMRA branch Sunderland Beer and Cider Festival is coming up in September for example. For a list of forthcoming CAMRA Beer festivals, click on the link at the end.*

However, I wish to throw the spotlight on a village hall Beer Festival in mid-County Durham. It may have escaped your attention, but is certainly recommended to visit. It ran for its third year in succession, for three consecutive days in mid March 2025.

The Coxhoe Beer Festival may be held in a small scale environment but is big on ambition. An amazing variety of 50 beers and ciders were on offer, with many stored in wooden casks for additional unique flavour. Beers of all styles are present; one-off productions and specials along with popular favourites from all around these isles. Something for everyone and plenty to discover.

A £3 entry fee includes a half pint glass to keep. £10 for six half pint tokens representing good value. A continuous food offering was available; (via the



volunteers in the village hall kitchen) throughout the duration of the 3 day event

All proceeds go to keep this village hall and the community events it supports and provides, going.

The village hall itself opened in 1938. Yet almost 90 years on, we now find ourselves in an era when several years of cuts within Government support for vital community services are now taking their serious toll. Eroding the community spirit & purpose places like this village hall were set up to support. So much for living in enlightening times?

Therefore, it's refreshing to see the trustees of Coxhoe Village Hall seize this initiative to raise funds, allied with the positive of bringing people to Coxhoe for a beer and good cheer. One has to applaud their initiative in taking on the enormous effort, required, to bring this excellent beer festival together. Ensuring

their quaint village hall, is sustainable for generations to come.

So make a note in your diary for the 4th Coxhoe Beer Festival provisionally penciled in for 19th -21st March 2026. Please come along and give it your full support.

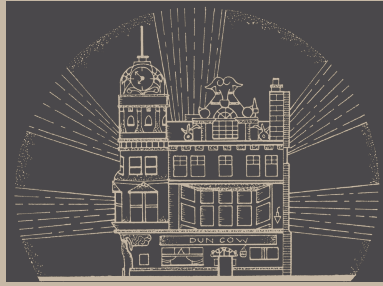
For the beer tickers amongst you on my visit earlier this year I tried :

- Durham - Bollihope Blonde
- Three Kings - Shield Maiden (from the wood)
- North Riding - Darwin Rare Stout (also served from the wood)
- Harvey's - Old Ale (my favourite on the day)
- Magpie - Angry Bird Red Ale
- Thornbridge- Jaipur

PS - it was noted in the 2025 programme the festival sponsor for Harviestoun Schiehallion was Ryhope Cricket Club. Any chance of this appearing as a cask behind the Cricket Club bar, I wonder?

*CAMRA website events -

<https://camra.org.uk/events?category=1>



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A CULTURE QUARTER PUB

Pub Tenancies Explained

By Hugh Price

Historically, it was pub owning brewers who rented out some or all of the pubs in their estates to self employed tenants. This could work well for both parties, as although the brewer could tie the tenant to their drinks products, the brewer would often set the rent at a very reasonable level.

A typical brewery tenancy was 3 years in duration, perhaps renewable if both parties were in agreement and the tenant would only be asked for a modest ingoing bond to be held by the brewer, fully redeemable at the end of the tenancy if the premises left in good order. Given that many tenants only last a few years before they become disillusioned with the trade, a 3 year tenancy made sense - easy in and easy out.

Also, as pubs were much busier before the 1990's the big brewers such as Bass and Whitbread had long waiting lists of prospective pub tenants and could carefully pick and choose who they put into pubs.

However, after the ill conceived Beer Orders in 1989, which restricted the number of pubs that a brewer could tie to 2000, the industry responded by spinning off their tied estates into separate pub companies, the so-called

Pubcos. Crazy as it may sound, these Pubcos were lawfully permitted to tie their unfortunate tenants to various drinks products at inflated prices, despite the stark fact that the landlord was neither a brewer nor a soft drinks manufacturer. It gets even more bizarre, as a typical Pubco lease was for up to 30 years and often with big cash ingoings required from the leaseholder. It was never going to work and it didn't.

Huge numbers of Pubco tenants failed to survive financially and many are said to have lost everything. Unlike the big brewers of yesteryear, it is reported that some Pubcos were less selective as to who they signed up, as long as the new tenant came up with the required cash input to effectively buy the lease.

PUB JOINT-OPERATION TYPE TENANCIES

Some non-brewing pub owning property companies are now advertising a different sort of lease, usually called something on the lines of a partnership.

The pub company states that it picks up all or most of the bills, so the tenant does not have to buy any stock, which on the face of it sounds attractive. The tenant(s) is simply paid a fixed percentage of the pub

turnover, usually not a big percentage. The big downside is that the tenant must recruit and pay all the staff, which is by far the biggest outgoings in a pub and the most challenging.

From the pub company point of view they do not have to pay any wages and the poor self-employed tenant may well have to work maybe 80 hours a week in an effort to keep the wage bill down and to eke a living out of the pub.

And as the pub company is paying for all the drinks, their stocktaker will no doubt keep a sharp eye on the stocks and deduct from the tenant's monthly remuneration at retail price any deficiencies - which in the case of real ales is down to unavoidable wastage. NOTE : While a stocktaker can quickly calculate a stock deficiency, the stressed out licensee is usually left baffled as to how this has occurred.

(The writer has noticed that some pubs he has visited that have subscribed to this type of lease tend to give short measure pints of beer, presumably in an effort to reduce stock penalties and such tenants in general do not seem to last long)

Continued

FAST FORWARD TO 2025

The pub trade has never been as challenging. Fewer people are using pubs and all overheads have gone through the proverbial roof. Survival is the name of the game.

Prospective tenants that are considering signing a partnership type lease with a pub company should look very carefully at the projected level of wages, given that the Living Wage keeps rising and in April 2025 employers' National Insurance contributions for staff are being hiked by the current government.

There may well be some decent smaller brewers who lease off their pubs on very favourable terms, but they are probably few and far between.

Someone new to the trade would be strongly advised to look carefully at the option of buying a pub at a good price, as this might make a lot more financial sense than leasing one. At the end of the day they would still own the bricks and motor if everything else failed.

Maybe there should be a Wealth Warning attached to all pub tenancy agreements, as not many

tenants survive long term. Although the Beer Orders were abolished in 2003, it was too little too late, as irreparable damage had been done and thousands of pubs have closed as a direct consequence of forcing the big brewers of yesteryear to sell off their large estates of well run pubs and to dispose or close many of their breweries as well, resulting in huge job losses

**Thanks to Hugh Price,
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A Family Trip to York Outskirts

The Wandering Bear goes camping

For a birthday trip the two boys and myself stayed on a lovely little campsite in Skelton, just to the north of York, which only took about 2 hours to get to. I was able to pitch our tent in sunshine and on dry grass. I had been anxious about getting the tent up single-handedly but the boys played a blinder and were the best help I could have asked for. Which was just as well, as the site was otherwise empty!

Once pitched and settled, I enjoyed a beer and basked in my own self-glory. First order of the evening was to get fed, and thankfully there was a Greene King pub a short walk away; **The Riverside Farm**. Abbott Ale was on and was superb, so I quickly got another one! The pub is as you would expect, with fairly standard Greene King / Hungry Horse décor and choice, but it was cheap and clean and the service was excellent. A carvery was available, but as I have some dietary requirements we ordered a la carte and we all ate well after our long day. It was quite busy, possibly due to the school holidays, but we had no problem finding a comfy booth to relax in. The kids were happy, which made me very happy.

The pub is child and vegan friendly, and there is



a 20% discount off drinks for Military and Emergency Services workers. As a bonus, there is a Wacky Warehouse attached and we partook of their wares later in the week. Again, the kids loved it. However, since our visit it has been renamed Hickory's Smokehouse and no longer sells real ale!

As one of our days was spent at the cinema nearby, we also attended **The Flying Legends** pub, another Greene King / Hungry Horse establishment. The IPA was off, so it was another pint of Abbott. Again, excellent service and the food was lovely. This pub had an outside play area for the kids and is handy for the large Retail Park / Entertainment area at Clifton Moor.

I found a pub called **The Lysander Arms** (above) on my map and as we were close by, we walked there. This is a beautiful pub in Rawcliffe on the northern edge of the York City Centre. According to the licensee the pub used to be in the countryside however, had been built up all around

it, making its position in the estate rather unusual. Opposite the front door is a small caravan park popular with Dutch and German tourists I'm told.

A pint of Doom Bar was the real ale, and as the weather was lovely we moved to the stunning rear garden. Large conifers shielded the garden from the urban sprawl around it, and there were flowers in full bloom in the borders. The grass was immaculate and there was an outside bar area and different seating options from standard picnic tables to private cubicles.

Back into the bar, it was quiet there but had lots of character. A regular in the bar stated that he was from Roker and that he had moved down a number of years ago. Small world!

The whole area used to be an airfield; as a relief site for nearby Linton-on-Ouse, until reclaimed and rebuilt. Towards the end of its use as an airfield, it was used to strip down old Halifax aeroplanes. At its peak, a pile of metal 80 ft high could be seen from miles around.

If you are ever in the area and fancy sleeping under canvas (or if you have a camper van or motor home) I can wholeheartedly recommend the Grantchester Campsite in Skelton.

Pub Quiz (Answers on Page 26)

- 1 Name the only person to have met James Bond and Paddington Bear on separate occasions.
- 2 In which athletics event did Jonathan Edwards win an Olympic Gold Medal?
- 3 Which Monopoly property is in a set with Park Lane?
- 4 Name the Australian golfer also known as The Great White Shark
- 5 Who was the athlete who founded the Great North Run?
- 6 Cate Blanchett won Best Supporting Actress in 2004 in the film The Aviator for portraying which four times Oscar winning actress. A unique achievement by both actresses !
- 7 The Big Easy is the also the informal name for which US city?
- 8 Who directed and starred in the film Dances with Wolves?
- 9 Near which North Wales seaside town is The Great Orme?
- 10 What nationality is former tennis champion Ilie Nastase ?
- 11 Who wrote the 1817 novel Persuasion?
- 12 Which subject of an English nursery rhyme had Arachnophobia?
- 13 By what name is singer Declan Patrick MacManus better known?
- 14 Which A road passes through the Tyne Tunnel?
- 15 Catch The Wind was which singer's debut hit single in 1965?
- 16 Which four letters follow QWERTY?
- 17 Hamilton is the capital of either The Bahamas or Bermuda. Which ?
- 18 The Borders Railway runs from Tweedbank to which Scottish City ?
- 19 What do the initials UNESCO stand for ?
- 20 Name this popular pub.



Quiz Answers

1	Queen Elizabeth II	11	Jane Austen
2	Triple Jump	12	Little Miss Muffet
3	Mayfair	13	Elvis Costello
4	Greg Norman	14	A19
5	Brendan Foster	15	Donovan
6	Katherine Hepburn	16	UIOP
7	New Orleans	17	Bermuda
8	Kevin Costner	18	Edinburgh
9	Llandudno	19	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
10	Romanian	20	The Steps in Washington

TRADING STANDARDS

If you have any complaint about your beer or cider, such as poor quality, short measures or no price list displayed, you should mention it to the pub management in the first instance. If you need to pursue the complaint further, we recommend contacting the local Trading Standards Office.

Contact details are given below :-

SOUTH TYNESIDE	https://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/article/68067/Make-a-complaint
SUNDERLAND	Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

Some useful contact details for Tyne & Wear Metro and local bus services.

Arriva - 0344 800 44 11	www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east/
Go North East - 0191 420 5050	https://www.gonortheast.co.uk/services
Nexus (Metro & Buses) - 0191 2020747	www.nexus.org.uk/
Stagecoach - 0191 566 0231	www.stagecoachbus.com/about/north-east
Traveline North East 0871 2002233	www.travelinenortheast.info

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Website	https://heritagepubs.sst.camra.org.uk/ -

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Branch Brewery Liaison Officers (BLO's).		
Each of the five breweries in our branch has a dedicated BLO'S Please contact them with any news.		
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Wear Beer	Steve Thompson	wearbeerBLO@sst.camra.org.uk



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Friday 29th August : noon – 22:30

Saturday 30th August : noon – 22:30

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www.durhambeerfestival.org.uk



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