

# beer buzz



Buzzing about beer, cider, pubs and breweries across Manchester, Salford and Trafford

**FREE**

**April - June 2019, Issue Number 2**

## **In this issue:**

Meet the Czechmate  
and the Dunham  
Cider Man. Take a  
tour of Urmston.  
Beer news galore  
and much more...



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# Welcome to beer buzz

## April - June 2019 Edition

Beer Buzz is published by the Central Manchester, Trafford & Hulme and Salford & District branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

5000 copies are distributed free of charge to pubs, bars & other outlets across Manchester, Trafford & Salford.

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## Editorial

A warm welcome to the second issue of Beer Buzz.

We got some great feedback on Issue 1. For this issue we have aimed to build on what you liked while making some improvements to design and layout. You'll also find the start of what should become regular features in future issues. Keep the feedback coming.

Since our last issue, our city has seen two major festivals which brought thousands to our city to enjoy great beer. Almost 15,000 attended Manchester Beer & Cider Festival (see elsewhere in this issue) and barely a month later, Cloudwater's Friends & Family Festival had beer fans all over the world talking about Manchester. With venues across the region hosting tap takeovers, meet the brewer events and brewery taps, there is no doubt the city is buzzing about beer.

In this issue alongside lots of news about our local pubs and breweries, we meet the team behind the city's first dedicated lager brewery, take a look round a suburb with a fast growing beer scene and hear why one blogger believes our small micro-breweries are under threat. Read on and enjoy.

Steve Smith

The next issue of Beer Buzz will be published on 1st July 2019

Artwork deadline is 5th June 2019

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We reported in our last issue on concerns about the future of Altrincham's **Old Market Tavern**. After a brief closure the pub reopened under new management in December. With all fixtures and fittings removed by the previous tenant, it has taken time to get the pub back to anything like normal operation, but the team have been working hard, keeping the beer flowing and the regular music nights going in the meantime. Their efforts were rewarded with being named Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's Pub of The Season for Spring 2019.

The kitchen has been refurbished but at the time of writing, food service had yet to recommence. Reports are that the kitchen will be specialising in American style meals. Cross Bay Zenith and Sunset Blonde have been installed as permanent beers.

Meanwhile, new owners commenced work on converting the upstairs of the pub into letting rooms, seemingly before they gained the necessary planning consent for alterations to the listed building. A retrospective planning application was before Trafford Council as Beer Buzz went to press.

Also in Altrincham, **Rustic** bar and restaurant has been put on the market due to the retirement of one of its co-owners. The Stamford New Road bar originally opened in 2015 as The Craftsman before being rebranded as Rustic when a new kitchen was installed in mid-2017. The venue is listed as a going concern with an asking price of £120,000. The former Barringtons is currently under refurbishment and set to reopen as **The Icon Bar & Terrace**.

**The Elk** in Hale has been sold. Its sister bar **The Elk** in Chorlton was also

advertised for sale at the same time with the reason for sale being to free cash for a new business venture from the current owners. As Beer Buzz went to press it was not clear if both bars have been included in the sale. Unfortunately, the sale of the Hale venue seems to have coincided with its two handpumps being removed with the bar now being promoted as a cocktail bar.



Hydes Brewery's **The Plough** in Ashton-on-Mersey has undergone a major refit which saw it closed for several weeks. The major changes are to the rear where the outside dining area has been greatly enlarged. The internal layout has largely been retained with the room in front of the bar divided into two by a wall with a fire. One half is set out very much like a traditional vault with TV and dart board; the other has more comfortable seating. The retention of a small snug is something of a rarity in modern pub refurbishments. The raised dining area has been fully screened off so it can be used as a 34 seat function room. Regular beers are "Old Plough" (re-badged Hydes Original), 1863 and Lowry plus up to three guests from the Hydes seasonal and Beer Studio ranges.

There is still no news on the future of Stretford's **Robin Hood** which closed suddenly in October having been sold by pub company Greene King. However, it's not all bad news for drinkers in the town with new bar **Head** opening on the Chester Road frontage of Stretford Mall in December and potentially three more new bars on the way.



Photo © John O'Donnell

**Head** has been opened by Jim 'Gib' Gilbyn, a well-known figure on the Manchester beer and music scene. It's an interesting design with a double-sided bar dividing the space into front and back rooms. There are two cask ales (when we buzzed in, these were from Tiny Rebel and RedWillow) and a range of five guest 'craft' kegs complementing five permanent keg lines. The bar hosts a range of events including a Tuesday Open Mic night and Wednesday quiz.

Plans were approved in February for a new bar in a former recruitment agency premises on the same run. **Souljuice** will be opened by Stretford born Paul Dean with space for around 35 covers and plans to sell cask ale alongside 'craft' ales and ciders, continental lagers, hand crafted wines and premium spirits.

The owner of **Ancoats General Store** is in progress of converting the former Argos

# Pi (Altrincham)



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## Award winners

CAMRA's Central Manchester & Trafford & Hulme branches have been busy selecting their pubs & clubs of the year which will go on to compete for Greater Manchester & national titles.

### Central Manchester Pub Of The Year:

The Crown & Kettle,  
2 Oldham Rd, Manchester

### Trafford & Hulme Pub Of The Year



The Old Packet House,  
Navigation Road, Altrincham

### Runner Up:

The Beer House, Manchester Road,  
Chorlton

### Trafford & Hulme Club Of The Year:



Flixton Conservative Club,  
193 Flixton Rd, Urmston

### Cider Pubs of The Year

Please see page 11

unit at the northern end of the mall into **Stretford Foodhall** - a new food court, bar and store. The plans from owner Mital Morar will follow a similar format to the Ancoats store but with a larger bar/coffee shop area covering around 3000 square feet. The project will also incorporate a kitchen which will host a rotating street food traders residency – an expansion of the successful Scrancoats Thursday night pop ups at Ancoats.

A licence application has been submitted for a fourth bar, **The Longford Tap**, at Unit 107 of the Mall.

A radical change has been made at **The Burton Arms** on Swan Street Manchester with the coming of new proprietors Chris Slater and Leigh Handford. A new colour scheme gives the interior a relaxing feel. Gone are the many wall mounted televisions in favour of music related framed items which is the hallmark now of the pub as a live music venue which they plan to rename The Rose and Monkey.

Chris and Leigh are also behind the music venue, **Night People & The Twisted Wheel** at 105 Princess Street in the city. Their future plans include offering accommodation with up to 9 rooms.

Chris and Leigh previously ran the Albion in Hammersmith West London where under their stewardship it became runner up for CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year for two years. Chris and Leigh's ambition for the Burton is to create an additional quality live music venue in the Northern Quarter offering three changing real ales – currently including Timothy Taylors Boltmaker and Wainwright with the desire to provide Dark Star, Theakstons and Holt's Bootleg. There is one real cider, currently Big Stan's Cheddar Valley with the ambition to increase this to two.

In West Didsbury, **Mary and Archie** which closed in July last year has reopened as.... **Mary and Archie**. The

Burton Road bar reopened as The Shack in September, advertising itself as a cocktail and taco bar. Unfortunately, the sale to the new operators fell through causing owners Ellie & Tom Peake to reopen under the original name.



Photo © John O'Donnell

Urmston's ever-growing beer scene has another cask ales outlet with the installation of two permanent handpumps at **The Assembly**. The bar which celebrated its first birthday in February has entered a deal with Thornbridge to have two permanent lines across its two cask and eight keg lines. Other changes at the bar include a new upstairs seating area, a new beer list blackboard and an Untappd verified account meaning users of the beer scoring app can see what's on tap at any time.

**Flixton Conservative Club** has a new steward and stewardess. Pat and Andrea Doherty took over at the former national Club Of The Year at the start of March. As Beer Buzz went to press they were still settling into the club. In the meantime, the award-winning cask beer range remains in the safe hands of the team of Hayley, Tom and Chas. CAMRA members are welcome to visit and new members are welcome.

Urmston's **Prairie Schooner Taphouse** has launched a series of regional beer showcases - the first weekend of May will feature Welsh breweries with the

Peak District featured over late May bank holiday weekend.

Levenshulme's latest beer bar opened at the start of March. **Nordie**, located in a former motoring shop at 1044 Stockport Rd, has been opened by Oddie McClintock and his partner Megan Hyland. Oddie was formerly bar manager at **The Pilcrow** pub so has great beer pedigree. There's no cask ale but the back bar hosts eight taps offering a range of great beers alongside wines and cocktails. Opening times are 5 to 10.30 Tuesday to Thursday and Noon to Midnight Friday to Sunday.

In stop press news, Beer Buzz learnt that Joseph Holt has purchased Ancoats' **The Shamrock**. The 200-year-old Irish pub on Bengal Street closed in June last year when owners Marstons gave long time landlord Gerry Ellis notice that his lease would not be renewed. Now, Joseph Holt will be giving it a new name and making a substantial investment in the property, reported to be up to £1.5 million.


  
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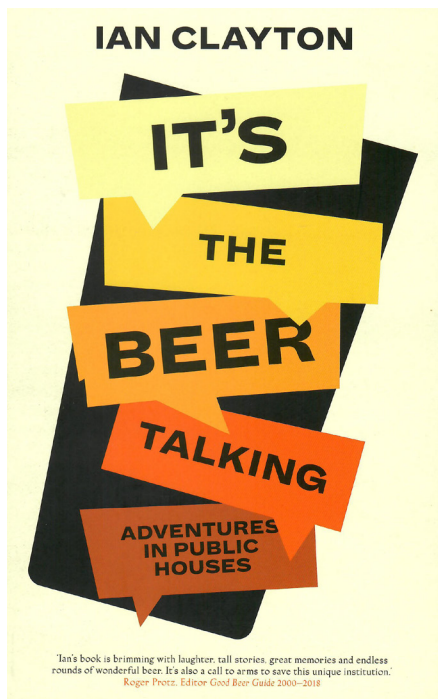


Image courtesy of Ian Davey at Route Publishing

This book is described as 'A journey to the soul of the British pub' and is the author's memoirs of a life spent in public houses. Ian Clayton's writing is laced with anecdotal encounters with eclectic and eccentric characters. He's obviously a seasoned traveller and imbibor and he certainly knows his stuff.

Reading through it, one has to say it is witty, funny and delightfully set out. Beginning with a foreword by that erstwhile doyen of beer literature Roger Protz, then following on from this there is an introductory piece entitled 'Spitting Feathers' where our author confesses to having his first taste of beer at four years old! His grandad took him to his local after a hard day at the Yorkshire coal

mine and set the boy on his way to more beers in many more pubs.

The rest of the book divides into three parts: Good Journeys Start With A Pint Of Bitter; Don't Get Too Much And Spoil Your Dinner; and finally I Raise A Glass To Them Still. Depicting drinkers and bar persons ancient and modern with a merry little quip from the likes of Frank Randle, Geoffrey Chaucer, Alan Sillitoe and Tom Waits. A picture of the author, naturally stood drinking at the bar, completes this photo gallery.

Jump forward a few years, to when he's just turned eighteen. The scene is the Girnhill Lane Working Men's Club in Featherstone, known by its affectionate nickname of 'The Corra'. *"My gran walked the two hundred yards from her kitchen to the games room with his dinner between two warm plates. 'If you'd rather stop in here than come home and eat a meal I've been preparing all morning, you can have it here and don't bother coming home!'"*

*"My first membership card for that club contained a phrase on the first page that I still hold dear. It read 'For the purpose of social intercourse'."*

Roger Protz states that 'Ian's book is brimming with laughter, tall stories, great memories and endless rounds of wonderful beer. It's also a call to arms to save this unique institution.' And it does exactly that – it positively talks beer – screams it even.

'Do you fancy a pint?' adorns the back cover and you will after reading this. Go out and buy a copy, you'll not be disappointed.

Steve Smith

# Buzzin In The Orchards

## Meet The Dunham Cider Man.



Boundary Farm on Sawpit Street, Dunham Massey has been in the Hewitt family since 1938, three generations leasing land from the National Trust. Alan Hewitt used to press apples from the farm's garden to make apple juice but in 2009 his son Chris began a plan to make cider. Beer Buzz joined him in February to discover his story.

Chris Hewitt (aka Twitter's @DunhamCiderMan) is continuing his father Alan's skills with apple trees but where Alan makes fresh apple juices, Chris applies them to making cider - pruning, picking and pressing (see below) by hand.



It has taken Chris (pictured above hard at work at his cider press) nearly ten years to build up orchards of west country cider apple varieties: Dabinett, Kingston Black, Porters Perfection, Slack-Ma-Girdle ... the names slip off his tongue as he walks us around his orchards.

Some trees are just reaching maturity, others he has just planted with three-

year-old trees, he'll have to wait years to get a real crop off those. But his older trees are now just beginning to produce enough juice to begin to really take off as a major influence in the Manchester and North West cider market.

Just like his Dad, who led Dunham Massey Apple Juice to win the National Trust Fine Food Award 2014, Chris sets about things very seriously. First, he studied with the internationally renowned Peter Mitchel, in the Cider & Perry Academy. Then year by year, producing more juice each year, he perfected his techniques of cider making.

More recently Chris has attended the Beer and Cider Academy courses on cider delivered by Gabe Cook - aka The Ciderologist. In September Chris is on track to qualify as Manchester's first Cider Pommelier.

Dunham Press are the only cider makers in the area with their own orchards surrounding their cider barns based on healthy sandy loam soils. In the orchards, they keep beehives and every spring they care for hundreds of bumble bees. They apply the principles of sustainability wherever possible, using no chemical sprays and producing organic juice. They work alongside the National Trust in replanting old orchards with heritage apple varieties, preserving them for future generations.

Patiently they have built up their orchard and their skills. They have both the skills and the quantity of apples to really assert a presence in the cider world. Over that time, they have learnt what works, and what doesn't, which apple varieties thrive and which do not on the Cheshire plains of the north.



Their key task for the future is to develop the style of 'Northern Cider' with a different climate and length of season than the West Country; their ciders are beginning to take on a unique style. They are now confident in their skills and have sought now to learn the skills of 'spontaneous fermentation', making ciders with the funky wild yeasts from the apple skins and from the environment in their barns. What will be of interest to cider drinkers will be how those wild flavours of 'Natural Ciders' develop a unique northern taste.

*Author: Richard Withecombe*

### **The ciders**

'Dabbler' is a Medium Dry cider, made from single variety Dabinett bittersweet cider apples grown in the Orchards of Boundary Farm near Altrincham. It is a medium sparkling one at 5.7% ABV.

Other regular produced ciders are ciders are the medium-sweet blends, Redeye (6.3%) and Sawpit (6.2%)

## **Where can you buy quality authentic cider?**

A colour CAMRA leaflet and guide '**Greater Manchester Real Cider Pub Guide 2019**' is soon to be published. Until then you can use the online Greater Manchester Cider Map, produced independently by a Central Manchester CAMRA member as 'Cider Buzz Mcr':

**<http://bit.ly/GtrMcrcidermap>**

Cider Buzz Mcr's pick of the top cider pubs in the area includes The Crown & Kettle, The Smithfield, The Brink, GRUB / Fairfield Social Club (all Manchester); The Font, Chorlton; Browtons, Ashton; Petersgate Tap, Stockport; The Silly Country, Hyde and Wigan Central.

## **CAMRA branches have released details of their Cider Pubs of the Year.**

They are:

### **Central Manchester –**

The Smithfield Tavern, who stock premium bottled Fine Ciders and Halletts Real Cider on handpump.

### **Trafford & Hulme –**

The Font, Chorlton for a super range of Hogan's Cider and bottles of local Moss Cider.

### **Salford & District –**

The New Oxford

Other branches in the area:

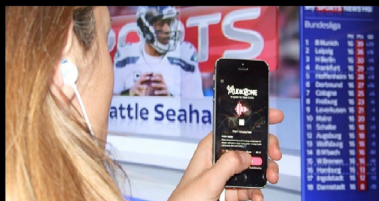
Stockport & South Manchester:

Petersgate Tap; High Peak and NE Cheshire: Silly Country, Droylsden;

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# Making Nectar

## News from the breweries of Manchester, Salford & Trafford



### Blackjack

Blackjack Beers have got a busy few months coming up with a host of tap takeovers and collaboration beers

lined up taking them from Newcastle Upon Tyne to Burton on Trent.

The popular Blackjack Brewtap events have returned for the summer – the brewery will be open on the last weekend of the month throughout the summer with the next one taking place 26th & 27th April. Expect the usual line up of great beers, tunes and pop-up food vendors in great company.

The brewery has recently taken delivery of a new 'hop gun', a device which improves the consistency and efficiency of dry hopping by ensuring that all of the beer comes in contact with the hops and will result in a defined increase in hop aromas in the finished beer.

Kees Bubblerman, the innovative former head brewer of Dutch pioneers Emelisse, was recently at the Green Quarter brewery to produce a Blackjack / Brouwerij Kees collaboration. More collaboration brews lined up over the coming months include Keighley's Wishbone Brewery and a return to Manchester for former Marble head brewer James 'JK' Kemp, now the top man at Yeastie Boys. Many more are also in the pipeline.

In June owner Rob Hamilton and the team will set off on the first of six regional tours building on January's Tryanuary tour, spreading the Blackjack word beyond our immediate area. The first jaunt will take them to the North East including events in Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle and more.



### Marble Beers

By the time you are reading this, Marble Beers should be brewing at their new brewery near Media City in

Salford. The brewery has outgrown their existing site in the Green Quarter so their new home will give them much needed operating space, including the opportunity to expand their barrel ageing programme. While the new brew kit is only slightly larger than the existing 12.5BBL brewery (which is now for sale), it will be more efficient and more flexible and provide additional fermentation capacity. They have also been granted a licence to have a tap room at the brewery.



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Fool Hardy Ales at The Hope Inn



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As they leave the old brewery, they have launched a series of specially dry hopped cask specials building on classic recipes. The Mash Up series includes M/cr Pint (Pint at Manchester Bitter's 4.2% ABV), Lagonda at 2.8% and Baby Barley Wine (4.9%).



## ÖL Brewery and Bar

Oxford Road based nano-brewery and bar ÖL have announced

their first home brew competition. They are working with some of Manchester's top breweries - Blackjack, Cloudwater, Runaway and Track - who will judge the entries. The winning recipe will then be brewed at the brewery housed in a shipping container at the Hatch project under the Mancunian Way.

Entries are already open but home brewers have until 1st June 2019 to submit their brew. All you need to do is to bring 5 bottles of your homebrewed beer to the bar and fill in a quick form about the beer. The winning beer will be announced in late July. Contact [olhomebrew@gmail.com](mailto:olhomebrew@gmail.com) or [@olhomebrew](https://twitter.com/olhomebrew) for more details.



**RUNAWAY  
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## Runaway

Runaway Brewery turns five over the weekend of 25th & 26th of May and they are hosting a party to celebrate. As well as the permanent brewery bar with its 8 fonts, there will be a cask bar

manned by Central Manchester CAMRA serving four handpumped cask beers by Runaway (get there early to try them) and real cider. A third bar will be collated by Independent Salford Beer Festival guru Jim 'Beers Manchester' Cullen. Food

will be provided by Oh Mei Dumplings and Arepa Arepa Arepa (Saturday) and Mackie Mayer favourites Honest Crust plus Manchester Tarts (Sunday). There will be talks, music, tastings across the weekend - keep an eye on social media for details.

Owner & Head Brewer Mark Welsby recently reached his milestone 500th brew which will be on the bar for the birthday weekend alongside five special birthday collaborations. He kicked off in February making an Imperial Stout with Squawk Brewing Co, following that up in March with a Mai Bock with Hartlepool lager specialists Donzoko Beer. The third is a collaboration with the bar team from Deansgate restaurant Hawksmoor and then returning to a brewery he helped get off the ground will be former Marble & Cloudwater head brewer James Campbell. Last but by no means least will be a brew with The Mad Hatter himself - the man now known as Gibberish Gaz - given his reputation, we doubt the outcome will be a 4% best bitter!



## Squawk

Squawk Brewing co have expanded with new equipment and

new personnel. Brewer James Horrocks has joined the existing team of Oliver, Graham and Bernie the dog from Chorlton Brewing Co. The expansion of the brewing kit now includes two double size conical fermenters meaning the team can look forward to the joys of double brew days.

The core cask range is now well established with only minor improvements being made along the way but they have plans to revamp their range of keg beers with all new recipes to differentiate them from our current cask range.

By the time you read this, their collaboration with Nottingham's Black

Iris brewery should be on bars across the city. Future collabs lined up include Rivington Brew Co and Time & Tide - all the way from Eastry in Kent - as well as a couple of more local ones with Pomona Island and Runaway.

You'll be able to meet the team during a Tap Takeover at The Brink on Bridge Street, Manchester on 27th June.



★ STUBBORN MULE ★  
BREWERY

## Stubborn Mule

Altrincham's Stubborn Mule released a new brew at their February Brew Tap. The Mandarin Candidate is a 3.4% Table Pale flavoured with mandarins. Head brewer Ed Bright told Beer Buzz

that he's already planning a tweak to the recipe for its next brew to lower the ABV whilst maintaining all its current character.

The brewery also won their very first Beer of the Festival award, taking gold at Bradford Beer Festival 2019 for their Gingerbread Milk Stout.

## Brewery Shorts

Manchester Union Brewery have opened a tap room at the brewery which is located at 96D North Western Street, M12 6JL. The tap will be open every Saturday Noon until 7pm. Card payments only.

Alphabet Brewery Tap has a new manager with Alex Parkinson, formerly of the Alphabet bar in Chorlton and Bundobust, at the helm. The tap opens Friday and Saturdays. Also card payments only.

Federation Brewery based at The Con Club in Altrincham have a new 5.9% IPA called A NEW HOP and will be launching a new wheat beer Weiss So Serious. The beers are currently only available at **The Con Club** and sister venue **The George**

**Charles** in West Didsbury but they have applied for registration to sell to the free trade.

Gin and mead producer **Zymurgorium**, set up by brothers Callum and Aaron Drake in 2012, have told Beer Buzz that they plan to open a new brewery adjacent to their Irlam distillery.

OneCircle, the recycling initiative set up by the manufacturers of KeyKegs, has begun collecting empty KeyKegs from bars and breweries across the region. Through their new North West partner WDS, used KeyKegs will be collected, dismantled and the materials reused for making new KeyKegs at the company's factories in Seaham, County Durham & in the Netherlands.

Pubs bars and breweries interested in taking part should contact OneCircle on [earth@onecircle.world](mailto:earth@onecircle.world) or by phone on **+31888 225 700**.

## International Women's Day

International Women's Day on 8th March was marked by a group of women representing many facets of the local beer scene gathering at Cloudwater brewery for a day of talks, learning, discussions and cultivation. Staff from brewers including Marble, Wander Beyond & North Brewing were joined by bar managers, CAMRA volunteers, beer bloggers and many more.



Photo @ Magda Moczdlo @MagdaM13646986

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# Focus on... Urmston

A once quiet suburb is becoming a beer lovers dream

In the last few years the village of Urmston has benefited from an influx of independent bars and restaurants adding to the traditional pubs in the area.

**Get Chucked** was the toe in the water for brothers-in law Sean Robinson and Scott Power, building on the success of their Guerrilla Eats pop-up street food events in the city centre. Essentially a licensed burger bar with good beer, they started out on Gloucester Road before quickly expanding to a central location on Flixton Road. There is no real ale but plenty of keg fonts and bottles to accompany the food offering.



Photo © John O'Donnell

The pair then opened **The Assembly** in a former cycle shop on Station Road just over a year ago (wall mural above). Run by Sean and his wife Sophie this is a definite 'craft beer' bar. It recently added two handpumps dispensing cask ale to its range of eight keg and key-keg offerings from far and wide. There is now a small space on the first floor with a sofa as an alternative to the more spartan canteen style of the ground floor.

Near to Get Chucked is the bottle shop **Craft Brewtique** (right). Opened two years ago by Jay King, this has proved

very popular with locals who don't wish to linger too long in a bar. Whilst you are buying your bottles or cans you can have a drink on the premises. There is one table in the centre of the room and a bar table with bar stools at the window.

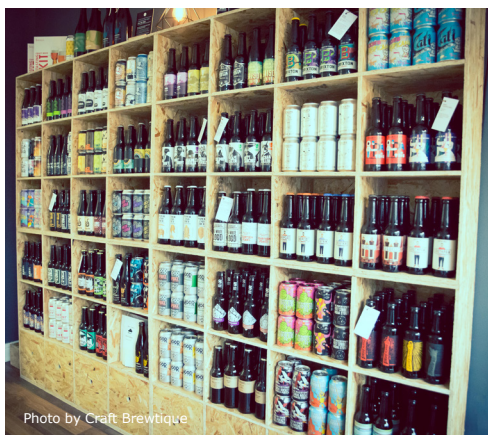


Photo by Craft Brewtique

Opposite is the more established **Prairie Schooner Taphouse** opened in 2014 by Kansas native Robert McCrea. A little too large to be called a micropub, this has everything to offer the discerning drinker. As well as four handpumps and six keg fonts with an emphasis on local ales, one wall of the front room is stocked with cans and bottles from all over the world and the bartop has gins and whiskeys along with more exotic fruit liqueurs. No background music or TV disturb the relaxed atmosphere.

Another notable addition near the centre of town, on Higher Road, is **The Barking Dog**. Opened by Mark Rackham in 2017, this is the former post office - the new one has moved next door. Many of the

building's features have remained and been adapted for their new uses - a safe for instance with a glass front added is now a bottle display. There are four handpumps dispensing mainly regional beers including a Barking Dog badged one from Marston's.

The aforementioned are the newer offerings on the beer scene in the centre of Urmston. These are of course alongside the more traditional pubs in the area: **Chadwicks** on Flixton Road has been closed for some time but still going strong is **The Tim Bobbin**, the local Wetherspoon pub, and **Champs** is a sports bar.

**The Steamhouse**, which was the old railway station building, sells a good array of local and national brands. No review of Urmston would be complete without mention of **The Lord Nelson**. A short walk away, this is a traditional, wet led Joseph Holt pub which has won many awards for the community work done by the Landlord and Landlady Ian and Julie.

Down Church Road on the way to Flixton Village stands Holts flagship pub **The Roebuck**. It has recently been joined by **Brew Chimp** (below), converted from a tool hire shop by owner Dave Leape. Four handpumps feature, but not exclusively, the Congleton-based Beartown Brewery.



Six keg beers are dispensed from a wall of taps at the back of the bar giving the bartop a clean look. By its very nature this shopfront type of bar is quite small, however there is a generous pavement area with seating and umbrellas outside. This bar is the worthy winner of Trafford and Hulme's Best Newcomer 2019 award.



Nearby at the other end of Chassen Road is **Flixton Conservative Club**, CAMRA National Club of the Year in 2018. The club has built up a reputation over recent years for serving excellent quality beers. They have a regular monthly tap takeover from local and regional brewers. Although the stewards who did much to enhance this reputation, Nigel and Sharon Porter, have moved on to pastures new, the cellar team including Hayley, Chas and Tom remain to keep up the good work. A new stewarding team, Pat and Andrea Docherty have recently taken over. We look forward to the same quality and attention to detail from them in the future. Although the club is only open to members, CAMRA members are welcome to visit and new club members are welcome.

*Author: George Elmslie*

In our last article we looked at the some of the containers that beer comes in. This time we are taking a look at something which divides many beer lovers – the role of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in beer.

Let's start by getting one thing out in the open – all beer should have CO<sub>2</sub> dissolved in it. Whether it is a pint of Holt's cask conditioned mild or Fosters made in Heineken's factory in Moss Side, there is CO<sub>2</sub> in your beer. There are many things that make the two drinks different - that one would be considered 'flat' and the other 'fizzy' is just one of them.

Carbonation, also referred to in brewing as 'condition', is measured in 'volumes'. A volume is the space that the CO<sub>2</sub> would take up at a standard atmospheric pressure at a temperature of 0°C. In other words, if a gallon of beer contained 2 volumes of CO<sub>2</sub>, the CO<sub>2</sub> by itself would occupy the same space as two gallons of beer.

A well-kept cask ale at cellar temperature should contain approximately 1.1 volumes of CO<sub>2</sub>. A typical mass-market lager would be expected to contain 2.4 to 2.6 volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> where a carbonated soft drink will typically have between 3 and 3.5 volumes. The reaction of the palate to the CO<sub>2</sub> in your beer is part of the flavour profile – be it the gentle tingle on the tongue of good cask ale or the more pronounced 'bite' of a keg beer. There are several ways CO<sub>2</sub> gets dissolved in beer, but the most common is that it is generated naturally during the fermentation process. As yeast sets to work converting sugars in the wort to alcohol, the main by-product is CO<sub>2</sub>.

Many brewers will ferment in sealed tanks (as photo) so that the naturally generated CO<sub>2</sub> carbonates the beer while others 'force carbonate' either by



applying CO<sub>2</sub> at high pressure and low temperature or by forcing CO<sub>2</sub> through the beer using a device known as a carbonation stone (for those of a certain age – think of a SodaStream in action).

During cask conditioning, the CO<sub>2</sub> generated during secondary fermentation in the cask is trapped in the sealed cask and absorbed into the beer. Contrary to what some believe, fermentation in a cask does not stop under pressure. There is a relationship between pressure and fermentation rate but at the pressures found in beer production, the effect is negligible.

The levels of carbonation in a sealed cask can be significantly in excess of the expected final 1.1 volumes but the brewer must take care not to allow too much fermentation as the closures on a cask – the shive where a cask will be 'vented' and the keystone where the tap will be placed - will only hold back a relatively low pressure.

The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> which remains dissolved in a beer is determined by two factors – temperature and pressure. Physics determines the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> which will remain soluble in a liquid at a given temperature – the lower the temperature, the more CO<sub>2</sub> will



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Photo Brian North

remain dissolved.

In a cask ale the  $\text{CO}_2$  produced during secondary fermentation stays dissolved in the beer until cask is 'vented' in the pub cellar - at which point any excess  $\text{CO}_2$  will then slowly escape to the atmosphere

until it reaches the level which is soluble at cellar temperature. At  $13^\circ\text{C}$  this is 1.1 volumes. In a kegged beer higher carbonation levels are maintained by applying pressure to the liquid and serving them at a lower temperature to keep the  $\text{CO}_2$  in solution (the skills of applying the right pressures in the cellar are for another day).

In many mass market lagers, carbonation is used to stimulate the taste receptors in the tongue and mask the generally low flavour profile. However, for many modern brewers producing 'craft' beers for keg dispense, the intended carbonation is very much part of the design of a beer.

'Craft' brewers will design their keg beers to have anything from 1.2 to 3.0 volumes of  $\text{CO}_2$ . Lower levels are often used for stouts and porters while highly hopped IPAs may use higher volumes to push out hop aromas from and prevent them

tasting cloying. Too high a carbonation for a given style and 'carbonic bite' can become overpowering and masks flavour.

It's important to remember that all CO<sub>2</sub> is the same gas – there is not 'good' and 'bad' CO<sub>2</sub>. Whether it is generated during fermentation or comes from a canister, it is all made up of one molecule of carbon and two of oxygen and once it is in your beer, you have no way of telling how it got there.

Whether you enjoy your beer gently carbonated, highly carbonated or somewhere in between is a matter of personal taste. Cask ale lovers enjoy the creaminess that comes with low carbonation while other drinkers find cask ales 'flat' and 'dull' and seek the lift from carbonation. Different beer styles suit different levels of carbonation. There is no right and wrong. Just enjoy the great variety of tastes in beer in 2019.

*Author: John O'Donnell*



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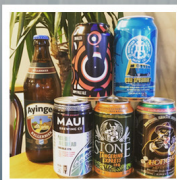
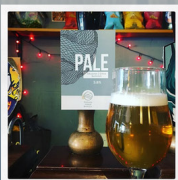
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
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# Roll out the barrels



## Beer festival organisers herald another successful festival

There was a treat in store for visitors to the preview session of January's Manchester Beer and Cider Festival when the UK's only independent Master Cooper gave a demonstration of his craft.

Alastair Simms from Yorkshire Cooperage was there to complement one of the new attractions, the Beers from the Wood bar. Arranged with support from the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood, the bar proved a big hit with festival goers. The bar was so popular, it had been drunk dry three hours before Saturday's closing time.



A team of more than 330 volunteers built the festival in under four days, served an incredible selection of drinks across 24 bars and dismantled the whole event in just over a day. Over 14,500 visitors came to drink over 50,000 pints - reinforcing the festival's position as the biggest beer and cider festival in the North.

Tiny Rebel of Newport won the race to be the first beer to sell out as its 'Hazelnut Stay Puft' disappeared, with local brewer Cloudwater not far behind with the first cask of 'Pale'.

With a strong selection of ales brewed exclusively for the festival, put in cask or in wooden barrels, beer tickers were in their element but there was something for everyone from the historic brewers of The Hundred Club to the modern range on the Kegstar bar.

The new gin bar was also a success with more than 60 bottles of locally produced gin consumed.

CAMRA's Information and Education team piloted a new Learning & Discovery Zone targeting the Campaign's aim to improve the knowledge around beer ingredients, production, quality and dispense. Beatnikz Republic Brewery provided casks and kegs of Kentucky Riot stout for a side by side cask and keg tasting.

The Manchester Brewers' Challenge was won by a beer packaged in KeyKeg for the second year in a row with Pomona Island's Love Buzz a 3.3% table beer narrowly beating Hophurst brewery's cask Porteresque (5.5%), a full-bodied milkshake porter to the title.

Last year's runner-up in the North of England Cider competition went one better. Ampleforth Abbey's 'Traditional Still' won the gold, but customers voted Hedge-Hoggers 'Old Aged Pig', produced in Seamer, North Yorkshire as their favourite. Udders Orchard from Huddersfield took the Perry honours with 'Waterloo Sunset' which was also the customer's choice.

North Yorkshire's Brass Castle brewery recorded an astonishing double success, with two of its brews topping the Customers' Beer Of The Festival poll.

A new beer launched at the festival proved the customers' favourite. Fruit Lupe, a 4.8% ABV single hop pale ale was available in both cask-conditioned and keg styles and drinkers clearly

enjoyed the marriage of Mosaic hops with blueberry. In second place was Bad Kitty, a 5.5% ABV chocolate vanilla porter which took top spot in 2017, and second place last year.

Third place went to Thornbridge's Lucaria Rocky Road.



The festival's charity partner, North West Air Ambulance was also grateful to visitors. An impressive £5,300 was donated by drinkers to support the essential life saving work of the helicopter crews.

Festival organiser Adrian Saunders was full of praise for those contributing to the success of the festival saying "We have a great band of key volunteers from all over the UK who worked their socks off to make the event a success. But the biggest thanks has to go to those who turn out in their thousands to support the festival. If you were one of them, cheers!"

Author: David Rigby

## Forthcoming Beer & Cider Festivals

### Stockport Beer & Cider Festival

30th May – 1st June

Edgeley Park, Stockport

[stockportfestival.org.uk](http://stockportfestival.org.uk)

### Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival

11th – 13th July

St Clement Church,

Edge Lane, Chorlton

[chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk](http://chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk)

### Fairfield Cider Fete 2019

26th May

Fairfield Social Club,

Temperance Street, Manchester

[www.facebook.com/FSCMCR](https://www.facebook.com/FSCMCR)

### Summer Beer Thing 2019

28th – 30th June

Sadlers Yard, Manchester

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

### The Beer Up Here Northern beer festival

3rd – 5th July

Fairfield Social Club,

Temperance Street, Manchester

[www.facebook.com/FSCMCR](https://www.facebook.com/FSCMCR)

### Great British Beer Festival

6th – 10th August 2019

Olympia, London

[gbbf.org.uk](http://gbbf.org.uk)

## Picture Quiz Answer

Our picture quiz in issue 1 asked

*"Can you guess on the side of which Manchester pub wall this is?"*

It's on the wall of The Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street, Manchester.



# Worker Bees

## The Road to Manchester Union Brewery

Manchester Union Brewery, based on North Western Street in the city, was launched in January by brewer Dr Ian Johnson and sales guru Will Evans. Beer Buzz correspondent Graham Donning met the team behind Manchester's first dedicated lager brewery.

Ian's background is in engineering with a PhD in a branch of Artificial intelligence called 'Deep Learning'. With a full-time job in IT software, he began brewing part-time in 2013 under the Six O'Clock Brewery brand, renting space at Blackjack Beers.



Manchester Union Will Evans.  
Photo © John O'Donnell

Will Evans (above) is well known in the local pub and brewery scene as manager of beer importer and distributor Cave Direct North. Born in Derry, as a mid-teenager his bedroom was festooned with brewery memorabilia. He recounted a tale about Tennent's beer and a particular advert – sounded a bit like the Man from Cadburys Milk Tray! His quest in beer started from then on, deciding from a young age that he needed to have his own brand of beer.

Moving to Preston to study multimedia at the University of Central Lancashire he started to work in bars, gaining minor fame as a cocktail waiter - coming 62nd in the World Flair Bartending Competition.

He opened Hush Lounge in Preston in 2003 and at the time thought he had the best range of bottled beers around - until a customer introduced him to Duvel! The bar's beer range expanded with Lindeboom, Leifmans Kreik, Schneider Weisse, Brooklyn and many more. By the time he left the bar he had a range of 100 bottled beers.

In 2008 he went to work for Diageo selling Guinness but progressing higher up in the business meant less contact with people - if you know Will he likes a craic! In 2012, he went back into craft beer joining Duvel-Moortgat as National Sales Manager and a year later set up Cave Direct North, a franchise of distributor Cave Direct South, sharing a North Western Street railway arch with Beer Nouveau brewery.

In 2015 Ian Johnson (pictured overleaf) teamed up with a friend who studied a Brewery Science course in the Czech Republic to develop a Six O'Clock brewery pilsner named P45 Czechmate – a beer that would be the forerunner of Manchester Union Lager. From that point on, Ian had the idea to set up a lager brewery in Manchester. He registered the company in late 2016 but finding financial backing took some time.

Meanwhile Cave Direct had expanded into a larger arch at 101 North Western Street, complete with a tap room selling growlers of craft keg beers, cans and bottles. Will Evans had moved into Marketing and Strategy with Cave Direct,



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Manchester Union - Ian Johnson. Photo © John O'Donnell

by now a much more joined up company with national accounts including Paulaner and being the Northern outlet for Beavertown.

Will saw the need for a local pale ale in his portfolio, but it needed to be quality, local & artisanal – he needed a local lager. Attending a Blackjack Brewtap event, he tasted P45 Czechmate for the first time and since then, neither Will nor Ian have looked back.

Recruiting marketing professional Jamie Scahill and Simon Pogson as fellow directors and gaining financial backers, Manchester Union Brewery began to come together.

Ian had originally wanted to source the kit from a manufacturer in the Czech Republic, but their financier dictated otherwise, so Johnson Brewery Installations in Bury were contracted to design the kit based on a 12 page document drawn up by Ian as to how he wanted to brew the beer.

Ian was determined that the brewery should use the decoction mashing - a brewing method employed by most German and Czech brewers to give the beer the subtle taste characteristic of Czech Pilsners. Decoction involves removing part of the mash into another mash tun and boiling it before returning it to the original mash tun with the

remainder of the wort. The process releases melanoidin, giving the beer its mouth feel and silky smoothness. Some brewers use melanoidin malt to try and replicate the feel but Ian reckons that the methods he uses produce far superior beer!

To learn more about the science behind decoction we recommend this piece <https://byo.com/article/decoction-mashing-techniques/>

Each pint of Manchester Union Lager takes 8 weeks to produce – four times more than most micro-brewed ales. The beer spends around two weeks in the fermenting vessels then a minimum of a month in conditioning tanks before packaging. It is only then that the beer is released as ready to drink!

Manchester Union's second beer will launch at April's We Are Lager festival in Upper Campfield Market. Future plans include other styles from mid-European countries such as Doppelbocks and Bohemian lagers. Bottled beers will also be added at some stage in the future when capacity allows.

In the meantime, Manchester Union Lager is available at selected bars across the region and from the brewery Tap Room at 96D North Western Street Saturdays Noon – 7pm. Wherever you see it on a bar give it a try – you may be pleasantly surprised.

*Author: Graham Donning*



Manchester Union Brewery - Photo © Graham Donning



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# Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival

Community festival returns to  
St Clement Church 11th to 13th July

July will see the 15th Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival. The festival has grown massively since its first incarnation which was genuinely to raise funds to repair the decaying structure of the Grade II listed church on Edge Lane. It's in no small part responsible for St Clement's Buildings now being a near irreplaceable community centre.

For 2019, the festival will emphasise its role at the heart of, and for the benefit of, the Chorlton community. In recent years the beer range has included feature bars including Celtic and London brewers but for 2019 it will focus on our local brewers with their very best beers in cask, KeyKeg & keg.

It's early days of planning but already confirmed is the return of the popular relaxed Thursday evening preview session, while Saturday will see families welcomed to the beautiful grounds of the Grade II listed church.

For all the details, visit [www.chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk)

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## Beer Day Britain

Saturday June 15th

The day when we celebrate Britain's amazing brewing scene and heritage.

Organised since 2015 to raise the profile of beer as Britain's national drink and encourage people to drink beer, this year is the first time the celebration has fallen on a Saturday. Look out for special events in pubs, bars, taprooms and bottle shops.

The focus of Beer Day Britain is the National Cheers To Beer at 7pm. At that time, raise a glass and say 'Cheers To Beer'.

Post a message or photo to social media using the hashtag **#CheersToBeer**.



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# Seven Bro7hers Brewery

## Trafford & Hulme branch visit the Salford brewery

For a glorious Saturday afternoon in February, CAMRA's Trafford & Hulme Branch organised a tour of the Seven Bro7hers brewery (originally to be followed by a visit to the bars of Salford Quays, but that was scuppered due to a Tommy Robinson demonstration). Arriving slightly late as Metrolink rescheduled services due to said demonstration, we were welcomed by 'Brother' Nathan McAvoy, our tour guide for the afternoon (ably assisted in part by 'Brother' Dan, who explained the technical aspects of his self-built automated systems).



The tour, which can be booked online at a discount, lasted approximately an hour (probably due to our party being composed of inquisitive CAMRA members and full of questions) after which we returned to the bar.

Here there was a novel and welcome change from usual brewery trips; Nathan gave a tutored tasting of four of the beers.

Starting with Watermelon Wheat, a 4.2% abv beer, an ideal refresher for a summer day and in my opinion much improved from the last time I tried it several years ago!

Honeycombe Pale Ale at 4% abv had more body and was sweeter with vanilla and caramel tones and was very well received.

A Red IPA at 6% abv was pleasant but not outstanding considering the strength.

Do A DIPA at 10% abv was dangerously moreish and the highlight of the afternoon – wow!

The tap itself is comfortable and convivial so, tasting over, we stayed a little longer, finishing off with one last drink – Lupo Nero, a very intense 5% abv coffee stout.

On the same industrial estate and virtually opposite are Pomona Island Brewery (based at Seven Bro7hers former home) and also 4 Sisters Distillery – an enterprise from the female side of the McAvoy family – well worth a visit in its own right even if you're not a gin drinker. Once all are fully open and running, open days, taps and the like, this industrial estate will be the place to be!

Unfortunately the demonstration was still running when we came out so some of the group went back into Manchester, while two of us went into Eccles to visit the excellent Northern Type.

*Author: Sue Barker*



# Buzzin' Around

Social events & trips from your local branches

## April

### Tues 16th 12.30pm

Tuesday Tipples in Bury (T&H)  
Meet at Bury Interchange

**Thu 18th 8pm** Pub Of The Season  
Presentation (T&H) Old Market Tavern  
Altrincham, WA14 4DN

**Sat 20th 11am** Leeds Explorer Day  
Trip (CM) Nomadic Brewery & more  
Meet Manchester Piccadilly

### Wed 24th 7.30pm

Trip to Bolton (S&D)  
Start Spinning Mule, Nelson Sq, BL1 1JT

### Sat 27th Noon

Trip to Peerless Brewery (T&H)  
Meet at Victoria for 10.55 train

## May

### Wed 1st 7.30pm

Social to Atherton (S&D)  
Start at Taphouse, Market St, M46 0DF

### Thu 2nd 8pm

Social to Chorlton Green (T&H)  
Start Bowling Green, M21 9ES

**Sat 4th Noon** May the 4th Beer With  
You Cantina Crawl (CM)  
Grub and crawling around NQ venues that  
have great kitchens and beers.

**Wed 8th 7.30pm** Cider Pub Of the Year  
Presentation (S&D) New Oxford  
Bexley Square, Salford, M3 6DB

### Thu 16th 6pm

Thirst Back Thursday Social (CM)  
Start at Café Beermoth

### Fri 17th 7.30pm

Social to Urmston (T&H)  
Meet Brew Chimp, Church Rd, M41 9FD

**Sun 19th 5pm** Post Manchester 10k  
Stagger Social (CMA)  
Meeting at 5pm at The Gas Lamp

## Tue 21st Noon

Tuesday Tipples in Glossop (T&H)  
Meet at Manchester Piccadilly for 11.59 train

### Wed 22nd 7.30pm

Social to Manchester (S&D)  
Start Crown & Kettle, Oldham Rd, M4 5FE

**Sat 25th Noon** Runaway Brewery Big  
Day (CM & T&H)  
Runaway Brewery, Dantzic St, M4 4JW

**Wed 29th** Club Of the Year  
Presentation (S&D)

## June

**Sat 1st 10.30am** Dronfield Explorer  
and Beer Festival Day Trip (CM)  
Meet at Manchester Piccadilly at 10.30 to  
catch 10.43 train

### Thu 13th 8pm

Social to Ashton-On-Mersey (T&H)  
Start Buck Inn, Green Ln, M33 5PN

### Sat 15th 12.30pm

Beer Day Britain Brewery Crawl (CM)  
Meet at Beer Nouveau

### Tue 18th Noon

Tuesday Tipples in Eccles (T&H)  
Meet at Cornbrook Metrolink

### Thu 27th 8pm

Social to Altrincham (T&H)  
Start at Jack In The Box, Market Hall, WA14  
1SA

**Thu 27th 6pm** Thirst Back Social Crawl  
(CM) MOSI to Deansgate  
Meet at Oxnoble, Liverpool Road

## July

### 6th 11am

Independents' Day Treasure Hunt  
Meet New Oxford, Bexley Square

### 11th - 13th

Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival (T&H)  
St Clement Church, Edge Ln, M21 9AE

**Sat 20th 10am** Coach trip to the  
Hawkshead Brewery Beer Festival (CM)

# CAMRA Meetings

## Greater Manchester Region

**Sat 13th July 1pm** Waldorf,  
Manchester (TBC)

## Central Manchester (all 6pm)

**Wed 1st May** The Gas Lamp 50A  
Bridge St, Manchester M3 3BW

**Mon 3rd June** Port Street Beer House  
Manchester M1 2EQ

**Tue 2nd July** To be confirmed

## Salford & District (all 7.30pm)

**Wed 16th April** Salford Arms Chapel  
Street, M3 6AF

**Wed 15th May** Worsley Road Sports &  
Social Club Swinton, M27 5WN

## Trafford & Hulme (all 8pm)

**Tue 7th May** Pi (Altrincham) WA14 1QU

**Thu 6th June** To be confirmed

**Tue 2nd July** The Lloyds, Chorlton  
Wilbraham Rd, M21 9AN

## Picture Quiz

*In the grounds of which suburban  
Salford pub is this sign?*

Answer online at  
**beerbuzz.beer/EXTRA**



## Contacts

### Central Manchester (CM)

③ [centralmanchester.camra.org.uk](http://centralmanchester.camra.org.uk)

📧 [mrcrcentralcamra](mailto:mrcrcentralcamra)

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✉ [treasurer@centralmanchester.camra.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@centralmanchester.camra.org.uk)

☎ 07531 263615

### Salford & District (S&D)

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📧 [SalfordCAMRA](mailto:SalfordCAMRA)

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### Trafford & Hulme (T&H)

③ [thcamra.org.uk](http://thcamra.org.uk)

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### CAMRA Headquarters

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③ [camra.org.uk](http://camra.org.uk)

✉ [camra@camra.org.uk](mailto:camra@camra.org.uk)

☎ 01727 867201

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③ [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk)

☎ 0345 04 05 06.

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### Public Transport

For information on buses, trams & trains

③ [tfgm.com](http://tfgm.com)

# Bee In My Bonnet

## The Vultures are Circling



Beer blogger and Independent Salford Beer Festival organiser Jim 'Beers Manchester' Cullen is worried for the future of our small independent brewers.

In January 2017 an organisation called The Small Brewers Duty Reform Coalition (henceforth SBDRC) was formed. Their stated intention was to campaign for the reform of Progressive Beer Duty (otherwise known as Small Brewers Duty Relief).

Progressive Beer Duty was introduced by Government in 2002 with the express intention of helping small breweries compete with the economies of scale held by larger breweries. The then Chancellor utilised the maximum relief allowable under EU law (50%) and applied that figure of relief to breweries producing up to 5000hl. 500000 litres. Over that figure, it tapers down up to 60,000hl, above which, full duty is payable.

This relief has directly led to the levels of choice and excellence that you see on the bars of freehouses today.

In short, it works.

I don't wish to bore you with maths, but trust me, this 5000hl figure equals a just over 15bbl brewery brewing 4 times a week. You will currently drink beer from breweries of this size. And enjoy them.

What the SBDRC wish, is that the Government reduce that relief for small brewers, brewing above 500hl per year. That's smaller than "micro". This will hit every Micro in the area.

What the SBDRC is, is an existential threat to the Micro Breweries of the UK.

They view the Micro sector (or "Craft" if you will) as a threat. They see that sector gaining market share and actually

growing, whilst their members market share drops.

Almost to a member, the breweries and businesses comprising the SBDRC are also members of two other organisations. The Independent Family Brewers of Britain (IFBB) & The British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA). Mendaciously, they portray themselves as 3 separate entities that are campaigning for the same thing.

To increase pressure on The Treasury.

They portray themselves as "The Squeezed Middle" of British beer. They aren't. They are Big Beer UK. And they want to squash the small guys like bugs.

And destroy choice.

If you value choice. If you love the range and diversity of breweries and beers that you currently have in the Greater Manchester area, then make your voices heard. Email your MP. Fight back.

Because if you don't, you WILL lose what you've got. The breweries. The brewtaps. The beers that you love in this city? Many will disappear. IF the SBDRC succeed. And get the Treasury to do their dirty work.

Read more from Beers Manchester at **[beersmanchester.wordpress.com](http://beersmanchester.wordpress.com)**

Jim Cullen is organiser of the Sixth Independent Salford Beer Festival which will take place 31st October to 2nd November 2019.

**[www.salfordbeerfest.com](http://www.salfordbeerfest.com)**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [BLACKJACK-BEERS.COM](http://BLACKJACK-BEERS.COM)  
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