

# beer buzz



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

**FREE**

**March - June 2020, Issue Number 6**



## **In this issue:**

Tapping and tipping  
in the contactless age.  
Meet Pomona Island.  
What makes beer hazy?  
Stretford reborn.

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# Welcome to beer buzz

## March - June 2020 Edition

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

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## Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of Beer Buzz.

Whether you are reading this over a crystal-clear pint or a murky glass of New England IPA (see page 18), take a moment to think about the working conditions of those who have brewed and served your pint.

In this issue, we look at how the rise of contactless payments is hitting our undervalued bar staff's incomes from tips (and how you can help).

As it seems the relentless tide of pub closures is on the turn - we Focus on Stretford, an area which is leading the way with new openings and visit two very different Salford success stories.

Our Barr Buzz section has news of more new openings but sadly also reports on clouds hanging over some well loved pubs.

Plus loads more news and features as usual.

Happy Drinking...

*John O'D*

The next issue of Beer Buzz will be published on 19th June 2020

### Deadlines for adverts:

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Cover Photo ©John O'Donnell



### Flixton & Urmston

The team behind Urmston's **BrewChimp** bar have opened a second outlet in nearby Flixton.

The new **BrewChimp** is located at 432 Flixton Road opposite Flixton train station in what was previously Bistro 432 and before that AT's Café. It follows a similar beer/wine bar hybrid model to the Urmston original.

A small bar sits at the far corner as you enter with four handpumps serving two beers from Beartown, one of which is the house BrewChimp Session ale and two guests. CAMRA members are offered a 10% discount on cask ales.

The bar has launched a regular series of Foodie Thursdays where they welcome a local independent street food trader to serve up food to accompany your drinks.



Urmston's **The Assembly** recently celebrated its second birthday. After completing an initial arrangement with Thornbridge Brewery, it is now sourcing cask ales from a wide range of breweries both local and national and has plans to add a third cask pump before the summer.

When Beer Buzz called the day before the second Birthday party, the two

handpumps offered Tiny Rebel's Pango and Pomona Island's Session IPA (an early offer of the Pomona Island tap takeover planned for the birthday weekend). In keeping with the bar's policy, both were on sale at keen prices for the local area.

**The Assembly** are also in the early stages of planning a nano-brewery for the bar. They plan to install a 100 litre brew kit (just over two 9 gallon casks or three 30 litre kegs per brew) on the bar's upper floor and will add two additional keg lines to sell their own brewed beers.

The bar has been voted as Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's Pub of The Season for Spring 2020.

### GRUB expansion

Street food and bar operator **GRUB** has raised over £18,000 to develop their Red Bank home (pictured below) through a crowdfunding campaign.



Plans to develop the space, on the outskirts of Manchester's Green Quarter, include providing free space to charities and other groups who work to help the people of Manchester and provide opportunities for artists, makers and creatives to run events, workshops and exhibitions.

The funds will be used to build a new garden including a covered seating and workshop area using recycled materials. They will also develop a market hall to house a weekly arts market and build a 60-seater performance space.



**GRUB** also intend to develop their programme of free mentoring and training for amateur chefs looking to start a street food business. They will be investing in equipment to help them further this project including providing free training to potential operators.

### **New Scandi café bar for city**

Beatnikz Republic Brewery's owners are opening a new Scandi-style cafe bar on Spring Gardens in the city centre.

**Lättsam**, which means easy-going or light-hearted in Swedish, will serve ten lines of craft beer from Beatnikz Republic and Nordic breweries such as Lervig, Mikkeller and Dry & Bitter. There will also be artisan coffee, cocktails and natural wines.

There will be an all-day food offering starting with breakfasts, soups, salads and sandwiches for lunch and then an after-work meal menu.

Décor will follow the Scandinavian theme with pale concrete brickwork and splashes of timber.

Subject to planning and licensing, the café-bar should open late May or early June. Intended opening hours will be from 8am until late on weekdays, and 9am until later at weekends.

### **Fresh beer & bar billiards**

The Smithfield Market Tavern has a brand new cellar install with six cask lines, one handpump cider line and thirteen keg lines replaced (including new handpulls on the bar).

After being out of action for a couple of years, the pub's bar billiards table is now back in operation. The traditional pub game was developed in the 1930s from the French/Belgian game billard russe. It is played on a table with no side or corner pockets but with nine holes in the playing surface which are assigned various point values ranging from 10 to 200. Seven

# Pi (Altrincham)





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white and one red ball must be potted through the holes to score points while not knocking down pegs which stand in front of the 100 and 200 point holes.

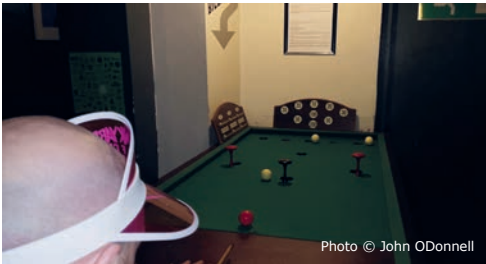


Photo © John O'Donnell

### City Centre shorts

The **Salisbury Ale House** has been awarded the 'Pint Perfection' accolade at this year's Star Pubs and Bars Awards. 2500 pubs from the Heineken owned pub chain were eligible for the award which recognises the highest standards of cellarman'ship in keeping both cask and keg beers. The pub scored 10/10 in all ten of the judging criteria – faultless

from the range of brands on offer, staff friendliness and product knowledge, to quality of serve and the fresh smell and taste of the beer.



Operations Manager Joe Gaskin and Bar Supervisor Jordan Murray  
Photo © Bernard Platt

**The Molly House** on Richmond Street in the Village is planning a beer festival on the Spring bank holiday weekend (22 – 25th May).

Vegetarian Indian Street food restaurant and craft beer bar **Bundobust** have announced plans for a second restaurant in the city and that the new venue will include their own microbrewery. The



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group which began life in Leeds and now also has a restaurant in Liverpool has taken over a space known as The Cartway in the St James Building on Oxford Street (next door to the Palace Theatre). Formerly an indoor car park, the glass roofed restaurant will have space for 150 covers alongside the new Bundobust brewery. It is expected to open in May.

### Trafford & Hulme shorts

Trafford & Hulme CAMRA named Hulme's **The Salutation** as its Pub Of The Season for Winter 2019/20. The pub which is operated by Manchester Metropolitan University in partnership with Bollington Brewery was praised for serving top quality cask ales to a diverse clientele ranging from students, university staff and Hulme locals.

**The Carter's Arms** in Northern Moor has introduced a discount on cask ales to card carrying CAMRA members who now receive 10% off.

Chorlton's **The Royal Oak** may not be a pub where craft beer fans are likely to head to worship their DIPAs and TIPAs but it is attracting another kind of worshipper. Every Sunday morning, the function room at the Greene King owned pub hosts The Redeemer Church where the faithful gather together to sing songs, hear from the Bible & pray together.

The owner of Cumbria's **Fell Brewery** has applied for a licence to open a bar in Chorlton. The premises at 518 Wilbraham Road, opposite **The Lloyds** pub, was previously women's clothing store Freds.

The application plans to open a "relaxed and informal craft beer bar" with opening hours of 11am to 12:30am every day of the week.

### Threatened Pubs

The concerns over the future of **The Stonemasons Arms** in Timperley reported in the previous issue of Beer Buzz have been confirmed.



Continuing his brutally honest Facebook video updates, landlord Simon Delaney confirmed in January that the pub had been in difficulty, laying the blame firmly on the financial information provided by owners Greene King prior to signing a five-year lease in 2018 having massively understated the overheads of the pub.

Greene King went to court to get a repossession order on the pub but Simon and his partner Rachel, who also operate **The Firbank Pub & Kitchen** in Wythenshawe, remained in negotiations and hopeful of being able to reach agreement to continue at the pub.

However, on 20th February, Simon announced, in another emotional video blog, that they would be leaving the pub in April. Although committing to business as usual until they leave, they could not provide any information on what Greene King's plans for the pub are.

Beer Buzz wishes Simon and Rachel all the best for the future and thanks them for their efforts during 18 months in Timperley. We continue to have concerns for the pub's future under Greene King's control who will now have seen three tenants walk away in three years.

**The Railway** in Broadheath remains closed while the building's owners and potential tenant negotiate on who is to pay for sorting out the building's aged electrical system.

The Grade II listed pub which sits on the edge of Altrincham's massive retail park is included on CAMRA's National Inventory



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Photo © Mick Slaughter

of Historic Pub Interiors (pubheritage.camra.org.uk) which describes it as "an unpretentious Victorian pub". The cut and etched glass door panels, fixed seating, bell pushes and curvaceous panelled counter in the drinking lobby are all considered of historical worth.

Trafford & Hulme CAMRA submitted an application to have the pub listed as an Asset Of Community Value (ACV) on 4th December. Trafford council have once again failed to meet the expectations of national guidelines which say that a determination should have been made by 29th January. As Beer Buzz went to press, CAMRA had only just received acknowledgement of the application.

Regular readers will know that it took Trafford Council over six months to list Stretford's **The Robin Hood** as an ACV. The developer who owns the building appealed against the listing but at a hearing in January attended by representatives of applicants The Friends Of The Robin Hood and CAMRA, their appeal was dismissed.



Photo © Bob Dunbar

The planning application to turn the pub building into eleven apartments and build ten houses on the car park was suddenly and unexpectedly withdrawn in early February. It is not known what the developers next move will be but local campaigners continue to make the case for at least some of the building being retained for use by the community.

The fight to save Hulme's The Church Inn goes on. The former JW Lees pub has been closed for a number of years with developers hoping to build a tower block of apartments for students on the site. After a previous application was rejected, revised plans lowering the height of the tower were submitted but at a hearing on 13th February, the Planning & Highways committee recommended refusal on the grounds of overdevelopment and loss of local amenity.

### **Pub becomes laughing stock**

A new comedy night at Chorlton's **The Font** bar became rather more successful than anticipated.

The January debut of a monthly night of jokes and laughter at the Manchester Road bar was a total sell out, so much so that the bar had to be closed to non-ticket holders for three hours on a Monday evening.

The next night will be held on March 16th with Vikki Stone - "The bastard love child of Victoria Wood & Tim Minchin", comedian Steve Royale & Resident MC Tony Vino. The date for April's night has yet to be confirmed but is expected to be Monday 20th April.

### **Lee's tame the Lion**

Middleton brewer JW Lees has bought Withington's Red Lion from Marston's. The extended former coaching inn on Wilmslow Road between Withington & Didsbury dates from the 17th Century. It features a bowling green surrounded by an extensive outdoor seating area which makes this a popular pub in summer.

Apart from a new menu, changes to food offers and the installation of Lees' beers on the bar, there have been no major changes as of yet.

### One less slice of Pi

While outside of the Beer Buzz area, we were saddened to hear that **Pi (Rose Lane)**, the Liverpool suburban sibling of **Pi Altrincham** and **Pi Chorlton** closed on 31st January due to what a statement on their Facebook page called "a sudden and unexpected surge in overheads". Opening in 2011 as the second Pi bar, it was a Good Beer Guide regular. The standing room only closing night was testimony to how highly regarded the bar was.

The closure does not affect the Chorlton and Altrincham bars and while describing the decision to close the Liverpool venue as "heart wrenching", the owners have indicated that they are working on a plan to stay in the area.



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## Award winning pubs National and local winners

**The Bell Inn** in Aldworth, Berkshire, has been named CAMRA's Pub Of The Year for 2020, beating off competition from over 45,000 pubs. Judges hailed its strong community focus, relaxed atmosphere and top-quality beer. It's a no-frills village pub with a Grade II listed interior, unashamedly stuck in a timewarp and run by the same family for 250 years. It last won the coveted pub of the year title nearly 30 years ago.

### Greater Manchester Winners

Locally two of the contenders for Greater Manchester Pub Of The Year 2020 have been confirmed as **The Grocers**, Cadishead (Salford & District Branch POTY) and **The Old Packet House**, Altrincham (Trafford & Hulme branch), with **The Beer House**, Chorlton being the runner up.

Trafford & Hulme Branch have also announced other winners in their annual awards:

Cider Pub Of The Year:  
**The Font**, Chorlton

Club Of The Year:  
**Flixton Conservative Club**, Urmston

Community Pub Of The Year:  
**The Sip Club**, Stretford

Best Newcomer:  
**Longford Tap**, Stretford

Most Improved Pub or Club:  
**The Salutation**, Hulme

Local Pub Of The Year:  
**The Hillary Step**, Whalley Range



# Beer Hive

## Destination pub - The New Oxford, Salford

**The New Oxford** is a multi-award winning genuine Free House that has twenty hand pulls serving seventeen different rotating cask beers and three real ciders. Five keg fonts feature rotating UK beers with a further seventeen fonts of international beers and a magic selection of 98 Belgian bottled beers.



It's a far cry from when Tim Flynn and Paulette Scanlon took over the pub back in December 2005. Then it served one cask beer from one of two hand pulls and four normal keg beers from one T-bar.

Tim had worked in pubs in his hometown of Tralee, County Kerry from the age of 13. He met Paulette, also from Tralee, in a pub ("of course") when he was DJ-ing. Two years after meeting the couple decided to "travel" for a holiday and took a lease out on a flat near to the New Oxford. Tim started to work in the bar but the owner was looking to convert it into flats as the pub was not doing so well. Tim and Paulette offered to take the pub on a short-term lease of six months and haven't looked back since.

Under their lead, the pub has won many CAMRA awards at both local and regional level and even won a very prestigious Community Pub Award from the "All Party Parliamentary Beer Group" (having been nominated by the then Salford MP Hazel Blears) in October 2011.



Located in Bexley Square, just off Chapel Street, a community use square in the City, the pub plays host to events for Salford's "Sounds in the City" festival and many other gatherings - birthdays, wakes and general knees ups. There's a regular quiz on Tuesday nights, an acoustic/open mic night on the last Sunday of each month plus live football and rugby matches are regularly shown. Outdoor seating is available in the summer with a heated area for smokers in the colder months.

It also plays host to the local CAMRA Branch's annual Independents Day Treasure Hunt, a very popular day in early July that involves visits to many other pubs gathering the answers to clues before ending up back at **The New Oxford** for free buffet, beer and craic!

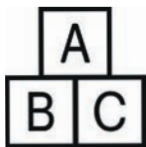
The pub hosts regular beer festivals which draw in beer lovers from across the country seeking to 'tick' the rare and sought-after beers that are regularly featured. For non-beer drinkers, the pub has also become a gin lovers paradise, boasting a large variety of premium gins to satisfy even the most discerning tastes.

For more information on what's on at the pub, follow them on twitter @ **thenewoxfordpub** and **thenewoxford** on Facebook and Instagram.

*Graham Donning*

# Making Nectar

## News from our local breweries



### Alphabet Brewing Company / Chorlton Brewing Co

Alphabet have recently collaborated with Chorlton Brewing to produce a non-sour Black IPA version of Chorlton's Dark Matter to be called Dank Matter. The beer was brewed in mid-February and will be available from the brewery tap room in mid March.

They have also just brewed a collab with Brewgooder as part of their Global Gathering on 20th March; the beer, a Lime and Chilli Gose, will be one of hundreds of beers being released on that day to raise money for clean drinking water in Malawi.

### BEATNIKZ REPUBLIC

### Beatnikz Republic

The brewery has expanded to a second unit on Red Bank adjacent to the existing brewery. The new unit will be home to the brewery's barrel aging project with the first barrels due to be filled with a new imperial stout as Beer Buzz went to press. The unit will also be a new and permanent home for the brewery tap room which reopened in its new home on 7th March.

The brewery has also been busy on the collaboration front including trips to Sheffield's Abbeydale Brewery and Birkenhead's Glenn Affric brewery. Liverpool brewers Top Rope came to Manchester to brew Canadian Riot, a maple and pecan variant on Kentucky Riot bourbon stout. They also welcomed representatives from pubs on Chorlton's

Beer Mile (including **The Beagle**, **The Font**, and **Pi**) to brew Brandy Snap, a 6% ginger pale ale.

The brewery's owner has also announced plans for a new bar & restaurant in the city centre – see Bar Buzz for more news.



### Blackjack

Restructuring of the brewery and bar businesses following last year's departure of founder Rob Hamilton has been completed. The brewing side has also completed a refresh of their core cask ale range which is now made up of eight beers. The former New Deck and Bramling Cross beers have been renamed Golden Bitter and Pub Ale respectively, joining Mosaic Light and 2019 additions Pale, Session IPA and IPA. A new 4.5% Manchester Stout replaces the earlier 5% version with the range completed by new addition Carousel Blonde. Helles Lager is now their core keg lager.



### Dunham Massey

A new permanent addition to the range has been added in the form of Dunham XPA, a 4.2% straw coloured pale ale brewed with a blend of modern English hops. The new brew has gained very positive feedback in

the brewery's bars in Altrincham, Lymm & Stockton Heath leading to the decision to make it permanent.



## Joseph Holt

The latest in Holt's 170 Programme series of cask beers to mark their 170th anniversary) is G4 - Ruby 40. So named to mark fifth generation and chief executive Richard Kershaw's 40 year Ruby anniversary at the brewery. Ruby 40 is a red ale made with red ale crystal malts.



## Manchester Union

Co-owner Will Evans has left his role as director of Cave Direct North to concentrate full time of developing Manchester Union Brewery. The brewery celebrated one year since its launch on 1st February and in that year has already expanded with new tanks and a second member of staff on the brewing team. Their Manchester Union Lager is already permanent on the bars of many pubs and bars across Manchester and the brewery plans to increase production to be able to offer even more bars the chance to put authentic locally brewed lager on their bars in place of inferior multi-national brands.



## Runaway

The brewery were asked to brew not one, but two new beers for the 5th Anniversary of **Hawksmoor Manchester** which took place in early March - the first, a Vienna Lager, is designed to be enjoyed with Hawksmoor's infamous Chicken Poutine Barn; and the second, a Rhubarb Spritz, has been designed

to showcase seasonality of a quality regional ingredient. Both are brewed with speciality yeasts and conditioned in KeyKeg and bottle.

Runaway also have two returning dark favourites available this month: a classic Dry Irish Stout (4.5%) and a Chocolate, Chipotle Chilli and Vanilla Porter (6.5%), both conditioned in bottle and keg.



## Squawk

The Ancoats brewery launched two new additions to its permanent range of cask ales at Manchester Beer & Cider Festival.

Aquila is a 6.2% IPA with big tropical aromas from Citra, Simcoe and Ekuanot hops. Otis is a 3.9% session pale ale with white grapefruit, papaya and lime on the nose and a light haze to the lotus flower pale body.

Although other cask beers in the Squawk range are fined (cleared) with vegetarian friendly finings, the two new additions are completely unfined to retain the maximum flavour.

The brewery recently produced a collaboration with Blackjack Beers a 4.4% 'hoppy little Bitter' called Tringa.



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## Wander Beyond

The Great Western Street brewery have just installed six new 35 hectolitre (that's 6,000 pints) fermentation vessels. The new tanks will more than double fermentation capacity. With more capacity, they will be hosting a number of tap-takeover and Meet The Brewer events at sister bar **The Knott**.





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# Worker Beers

**Beer Buzz meets the team behind Pomona Island Brew Co**



Pomona Island Brew Co was set up just over two years ago (their second birthday bash was on the 16th November 2019) by Gareth ('Gaz') Kimura Bee

and the co-owners of Manchester's **The Gas Lamp**, Nick Greenhalgh and Ryan Thompson. Gaz had known Nick since his university days with the trio later working together in the bar trade. Today there is an additional partner in the business with head brewer James Dyer becoming a fourth partner in May 2019.

Gaz has always worked in the brewing trade having spent his formative years with Marble Brewery starting as a drayman then Brewery Assistant under then head brewer James Campbell. He then moved behind the bar with a period as manager of the **Marble Arch Inn** followed by two years as manager of the **Marble Beer House** (now **The Beer House**) in Chorlton. He has been a keen (and talented) home brewer for many years – a hobby he kept up during his time in pub management.



Nick, Gaz & James  
©Pomona Island

Having worked and managed bars in and around Manchester for many years, Ryan Thompson opened **The Art of Tea** in Didsbury with partner Karen Schofield in 2007. The quirky cross between English tea-room and continental café-bar with a second-hand bookshop in the rear became a firm favourite in a 'village' dominated by chain bar and restaurants.

Nick Greenhalgh also worked in bars for many years, including a spell as manager of Northern Quarter stalwart **The Bay Horse**. The pair came together in 2010 to transform a Victorian basement on Bridge Street, Manchester which had once housed the Manchester and Salford Street Mission into **The Gas Lamp**. Their ethos was to set up a 'Northern Quarter style' indie bar on a side of town which was just starting to boom from the Spinningfields development. Thompson exited **The Art Of Tea** in 2011 but nine years on, **The Gas Lamp** is still going strong.

After deciding that they wanted to open a brewery together, the original trio spent some months looking for a suitable site before Seven Bro7hers 2019 expansion gave rise to an unexpected opportunity to acquire both the former premises and installed brewing kit of their Salford neighbours (pictured below as Pomona moved in). The sibling brewers moved just a few yards across the car park at Waybridge Enterprise Centre – located between MediaCity and Weaste.

Head brewer James has a Masters degree in Brewing and Distilling from the highly regarded Herriot-Watt University in Edinburgh plus a BA in Business & Marketing from Westminster University. The Pomona Island team recruited him from Galashiels' Tempest Brewing



©Pomona Island

Co where he had spent two and a half years in the Scottish borders following graduation honing his brewing skills.

James leads the brewing side of the business, assisted by Gaz. Completing the current Pomona team is brewery assistant George Charlton.

The brewery currently has a ten-barrel brew length (making 40 nine-gallon casks per brew) with nine fermenting vessels with a total capacity of 18,700 litres - a 500% increase in capacity since first starting up two years ago. James has also led a programme of upgrades to the plant (which was originally supplied by Porter Brewery Installations) to increase efficiency and consistency. There are no plans to further increase the brew length or FV capacity as they, literally, can't fit anything else in their unit! However, they are looking at turning an old FV into a larger mash tun allowing James & Gaz to brew stronger beers.

Most of their production is sold in cask form across five core beers – Pale (3.8%), Session IPA (4.1%) and APA (5.3%) - all of which rotate their hop bill from brew to brew - plus a 4.5% Stout and a 5.7% Porter regularly too. As well as the core cask range, the same beers are regularly packaged into 30 litre Kegstar steel rental kegs and occasionally more experimental and stronger beers into 20 litre Polykegs or KeyKegs (keg beers are force carbonated rather than keg-conditioned).

Specialist beers are packaged in 750ml sharing bottles, while 440ml cans are

produced using the services of mobile canning company 'Them That Can'.



©Pomona Island

In 2019 the brewery added a second unit on the same industrial estate which acts as their warehouse and houses their fledgling barrel aging programme. The unit also allows them to run a Tap Room which normally opens Fridays 4 – 8pm(ish) and Saturdays 12 noon to 8pm.

The beers are permanent fixtures in **The Gaslamp** but can also be regularly found in most of the region's top beer bars including **Port Street Beer House, Café Beermoth, Jack In The Box, Pi, The Beer House** and many more.

And the name – for those that only know Pomona by its tram stop – Pomona Island is a real island situated between the River Irwell and the Bridgewater Canal on the border of Manchester, Salford & Trafford. Once home to botanical gardens and entertainment centre the Royal Pomona Palace, the island has lain abandoned for decades before being targeted by developers in the current property boom.

**[www.pomonaislandbrew.co.uk](http://www.pomonaislandbrew.co.uk)**  
**@PomonaIsland**

*Graham Donning / John O'Donnell*





## Review of organisation's' governance leads to changes

CAMRA has completed a year-long review of its internal organisation resulting in a new structure of committees and working groups plus proposals to change the tenure of governing National Executive members.

The changes to committee structures are intended to speed up CAMRA's decision making. The proposals to extend the terms of National Executive members from three to four years whilst limiting members to serving two terms follow recommendations of the review group based on best practice from other not for profit organisations.

Members can learn more about the Governance Review at [camra.org.uk/volunteers-area/governance-review/](http://camra.org.uk/volunteers-area/governance-review/)

The changes to structures came into effect on 1st January while members of

CAMRA will vote on special resolutions to change the National Executive rules at the CAMRA AGM and Members Weekend in York from 3rd to 5th April.

The Members Weekend is seeking volunteers for roles including serving on the Members Bar, CAMRA Shop, Conference telling and supervising brewery trips. CAMRA members can volunteer at [www.agm.camra.org.uk](http://www.agm.camra.org.uk)

### Changes in Salford & District Branch

Branch chairman Gordon Allen has stepped down from his role. Beer Buzz thanks Gordon for his long service to CAMRA and the real ale cause. Vice-chair Ian Massey has adopted the role until a new chair can be elected at the branch Annual General Meeting which will be held at **The Salford Arms** on 15 April (7.30pm).

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CAMRA Members' Weekend,  
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3-5 April 2020  
Central Hall, West Campus,  
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# Talking Tech

## Beer - not as crystal clear a subject as it used to be....

For decades, cask ale has been expected to be crystal clear and any pint with even the slightest haze assumed to either not be ready or to have a brewing fault.

Recent trends have changed this with more and more beers intentionally presented with a haze and some even positively opaque – their brewers either stating a desire to make their beers suitable for vegetarians or some arguing that the particles which cause haze also enhance flavour and aroma.

Historically, when most beer was drunk from metal, earthenware or leather tankards, taste rather than clarity was the drinker's main concern. It was only the move to serving beer in glass from the late 18th century when drinkers started paying attention to clarity. However, clear is not beer's natural state - it is only by the intervention of the brewer at several stages in the brewing process that clear beer can result.

### What's your haze?

Haze and cloudiness in beer can be caused by several factors. Biological hazes are caused by bacteria resulting from infection in the process – they cannot be corrected. Non-biological hazes result from particles introduced from the brewing ingredients – yeast, proteins, polyphenols (mostly tannins) and carbohydrates (mostly starch) from the grains and hops.



Photo © CAMRA



Cloudwater 5th Birthday IPA and Wylam Hickey The Rake  
Photo © John O'Donnell

Although popular belief would be that hazy or even cloudy beers are 'full of yeast', an unclarified beer sample will typically contain between 0.5 to 2 million yeast cells per millilitre and between 1 and 3 million particles of other materials. The higher hopping rates and the increased use of dry hopping in some popular styles today only increases the amount of non-yeast solid particles.

Some brewers of hazy beers would contest that they go to great expense adding hops to beer to give aroma and flavour so, to them, it is counter-intuitive to then go to further expense to remove the results of this hopping from the finished product.

### Is my beer 'unfined'?

Drinkers have come to associate the modern trend for hazy beers with them being described as 'unfined' – however this is commonly an abbreviation for 'not been fined using isinglass' (more on this below). The term 'fining' technically covers additions to aid clarity at various stages of the brewing process - beers described as 'unfined' may have had non-isinglass finings added during brewing.

Given enough time, most particles will

drop out of suspension naturally but unaided this process could take several weeks. The laws of physics say the larger the particle, the quicker it will drop out. Therefore, to speed up the process of clearing beer, particles in suspension must be encouraged to 'flocculate' – to gather together to form larger particles which then precipitate out of the beer (i.e. drop to the bottom of the cask, keg or brewery tank). The addition of finings, along with control of factors such as temperature and pH (acidity), encourage flocculation.

### Kettle Finings – Irish Moss

However unlikely sounding, often the first form of finings added to a beer is derived from seaweed. Relatively small amounts of a chemical called carrageenan, which is found in red seaweeds, added to the copper (or kettle – hence 'kettle finings') help to coagulate haze forming proteins and other solids as the wort is cooled at

the end of the boil (rapid cooling itself encouraging precipitation of solids).

Widely known as 'Irish Moss' after a type of seaweed that is commonplace around the shores of Ireland, today carrageenan is more likely to be added in form of refined powders or tablets such as Protafloc or Whirlfloc.

### Fermentation

As yeast begins its work converting sugars to alcohol, it reproduces rapidly to the point where a fermenting beer can contain as many as 40 million yeast cells per millilitre of beer (that's 22 billion in a pint) reducing to closer to 1 million active cells per millilitre as fermentation completes.

Brewers will rapidly cool the fermented beer ('cold crashing') to encourage both yeast and proteins to coagulate at the end of fermentation, holding the chilled beer to allow the particles to drop out of the beer.

# Pi (Chorlton)

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How much yeast drops out naturally will depend on the strain of yeast. Some yeast strains are naturally flocculant, starting to clump together as fermentation slows, while others are powdery and need encouragement to drop out of suspension.

Many modern brewers' yeasts are a mixture of strains with different flocculation properties.

### Isinglass finings

The most effective and therefore most common fining agent to drop yeast from cask beer has been isinglass - a substance derived from the dried swim bladders of certain types of fish such as sturgeon, catfish or threadfin - and hence not approved of by vegetarians.

Isinglass' active ingredient is collagen, a large molecule with a positive atomic charge which attracts the comparatively small sized and negatively charged molecules of brewing yeasts. Each collagen molecule gathers many yeast cells to form a 'floc' and gravity takes over to drop the meshed cells to the bottom of the cask.

Isinglass is highly effective at removing yeast particles from beer but less so on other particles which can cause haze. Therefore, isinglass is commonly used in conjunction with 'auxiliary finings' to remove other haze forming material.

### Auxiliary Finings

The most common types of auxiliary finings are those which are silica based and 'polysaccharides', based on gums such as acacia (also known as gum arabic) - commonly blended together in commercially sold products.

Their theory of operation is the same as isinglass except they are negatively charged to attract the positively charged proteins and polyphenols to form flocs.

### Vegan haze?

The avoidance of isinglass (and other



animal derived finings) to produce beers suitable for vegetarians, commonly leads to 'unfined' beers being expected to be hazy - an assumption which does not always hold true. Manchester's own Marble Beers have been producing clear beers without

isinglass for over twenty years, more recently joined by the likes of Moor Beer and our own Blackjack Beers.

While clear beer can be achieved by careful control of brewing and the application of time, many modern brewers are happy to accept a slight 'craft haze' while others use vegetarian finings agents to speed clarification. At the opposite end of the spectrum, some beers are produced to be intentionally 'murky' - styles such as New England IPA (NEIPAs) being intended to taste 'juicy'.

### Does clear beer taste better?

There is only one person who can decide this and that is you, the drinker.

Brewers can't agree - those who add different sorts of finings, cold crash fermenters and even filter their beers will say that taste is unaffected. Others argue that some of these measures do remove flavour and opt for haze instead.

The way something smells and the way it looks affects what your brain interprets as taste. If you prefer clear, then drink clear. If you don't mind haze, drink haze. If you don't know, close your eyes and let your taste buds decide.

*John O'Donnell*

To learn more, read the full version of this article visit [www.beerbuzz.beer/EXTRA](http://www.beerbuzz.beer/EXTRA)



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# How We Make Cider

## Part Two – Fermentation, from the Orchard to the Barn

In this series we look at 'How We Make Cider and Perry' - alcoholic drinks fermented from apples and pears. In part one we looked at the Apple, the Harvest and the Pressing – you can catch up at [www.beerbuzz.beer](http://www.beerbuzz.beer)

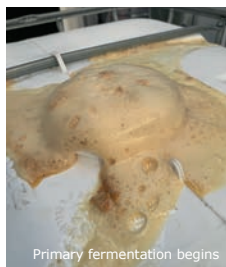
This time we look at fermentation

So, you have your apple juice, how does this turn to cider or perry? Fermentation is the process whereby sugars in the juice is converted to alcohol by yeasts.

### Primary fermentation – starting with the froth

There are two stages to the fermentation process; a primary fermentation followed by a slower 'malolactic' secondary fermentation.

Primary fermentation starts quickly, but the time taken for yeasts to use up all the sugars in the apple juice is dependent on the type of yeast used and on the temperature at which fermentation takes place. Fermentation starts with an aggressive froth, as this slows airlocks will keep out exposure to bacteria in the air.



Primary fermentation begins

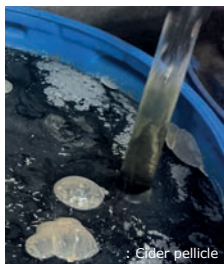
Warmer ambient temperatures will help yeasts work quicker but many cider makers will leave the cider over winter for a longer slower fermentation.

### Keeping it sweet

When fully fermented, with all the sugars consumed, the cider will be described as dry.

Pears and perry contain natural sorbitol, a non-fermentable sugar alcohol, which gives the perry a residual sweetness

In the next issue we will discuss processes such as keeving or forms of racking off that can be used to halt the fermentation process of cider before all of the apple sugars have been consumed; leading to a naturally sweet, lower alcohol cider.



Cider pellicle

Here cider is being siphoned off the lees (the deposit of yeast at the bottom of the vessel), through the wild ferment pellicle layer, a bio-film which floats on the top.

### Slowly maturing – malolactic fermentation

During the secondary fermentation the sharper malic acid is converted into softer lactic acid. This is carried out by lactic acid bacteria which are present in the apple juice and in the area in which the fermentation is carried out and normally happens in the late spring or early summer.

This maturation process takes anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of years and is essential for a good flavour balance. It is during this period that apples high in tannins, cultivated especially for cider, can develop their broad aromas and will need longer to mature than the more acidic eating and cooking apples.

### Choice of yeast

This step is probably the most widely discussed stage in cider making and as always there are many ways of going about it – but they essentially break down into using a cultured yeast or relying on wild fermentation.

In a similar manner to brewers, lots of cider makers will add sulphites to kill

the wild yeasts (either immediately or after a few days) then add a specifically chosen strain of yeast to carry out their fermentation.

### **The search for consistency**

The idea of using cultivated yeasts is to get consistency from batch to batch of both flavour and fermentation time.

The choice of yeast will influence the characteristics of the final cider - for example, the use of wine yeast will produce a more vinous crisp cider.

The use of specific yeasts can also produce ciders with a particular flavour profile, for example Hogan's Cider use *Brettanomyces* yeast to create the sour flavours in their 'Killer Sharp' Cider; Hawkes Cider use a Sauvignon Blanc yeast in their Soul Trader Cider, to add citrus flavours to the Braeburn apple; others use Champagne yeasts to produce Traditional Method sparkling ciders.

This approach to using cultured yeasts is used by both small-scale craft producers as well as some large-scale cider makers who aim to complete the whole fermentation in just seven days!

### **Wild fermentation - from the orchard to the barn**

Many excellent ciders are made using commercial yeasts but minimum intervention wild ferment ciders and perries by producers such as Tom Oliver, Little Pomona and Ross Cider are produced differently.

In this spontaneous fermentation the yeast used to turn the apple sugars into alcohol exists within the fruits' environment (in the air or on their skins) rather than grown in a lab.

The resulting fermentation reflects the place and the environment which is part of what in the world of wine would be called 'terroir'; and provides deeper, more natural flavours.



This is where tradition meets modernity. Cider makers, such as Tom Oliver, have championed the return to traditional wild ferment cider making, but to be presented in a modern way, much like the Natural Wine movement

Wild yeasts are everywhere, on the apple skins and collecting in the orchard. With each pressing they stay on the cloths, the equipment and in the barn.

Just like in natural wine or Belgian Lambic beer production the wild ferment ciders will take on a style reflecting the age and form of the orchard and the yeasts of the orchard and the barn.

### **The modern craft cider makers ambition**

The modern craft cider makers' ambition is to express the flavours of the chosen apples or pears and to make a cider that truly reflects their local environment, their terroir if you like.

**Part Three of this series – Process and styles - will appear in the June 2020 issue of Beer Buzz**

*Richard Withecombe*



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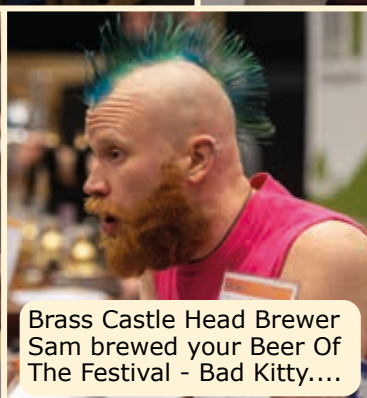
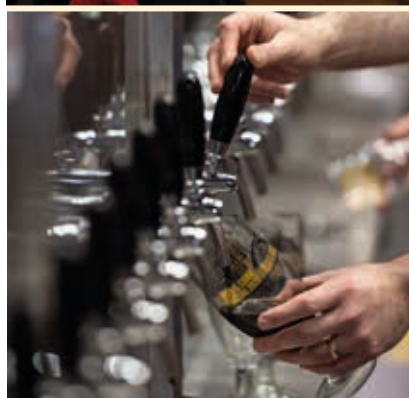
Legendary beer writer Roger Protz led a tutored tasting



The new Games Zone was enjoyed by young and old



Pommellier Cath Potter, one of the #ReThinkCider bar managers.

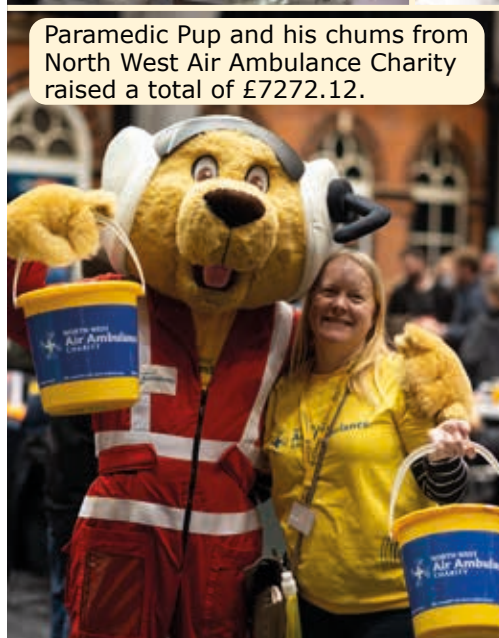


Brass Castle Head Brewer Sam brewed your Beer Of The Festival - Bad Kitty...

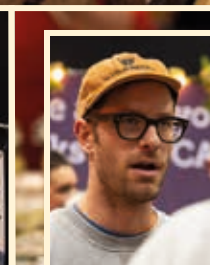


Cooper Euan Findlay

T&R Theakston's coopers demonstrated their craft on Friday 24th January.



Paramedic Pup and his chums from North West Air Ambulance Charity raised a total of £7272.12.



The Discovery Zone welcomed brewers including Cloudwater, Hawkshead & Wild Beer Co founder Brett Ellis



Once again, you drank all the Beers From The Wood



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# Cider Women and CAMRA

## MBCF20 hosts Cider Women Reception



Last year, the Great British Beer Festival followed the earlier lead of Manchester Beer & Cider Festival in taking an important stand against sexist advertising in beer and cider. This was widely and favourably covered in the press and has led to CAMRA being seen as a more progressive voice within the alcohol industry.

The Manchester Beer and Cider Festival 2020 showcased Cider Women, the pan-industry and consumer group that champions the role of women in cider (and perry). We were privileged to be able to host a reception during the Trade and CAMRA members session sponsored by The Real Ale company. We were able to introduce several women cider makers whose ciders and perries were on sale at the cider bar to 50+ people who attended the gathering.

The following day Gillian Hough, CAMRA's Real Ale, Cider & Perry Campaigns Director staffed the Learning and Discovery Zone and



offered tastings of some of the ciders and perries made by women. This led to customers arriving at the Cider Bar with copies of our Cider Women cider and perry leaflet buying the drinks and ticking off the makers on the list!

This experience should be built on for the future and we would aim to involve some of the women's groups who champion women in beer as well as cider. Watch this space!

*Cath Potter*

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# Buzzin In The Orchards

## Cider and Perry news and events



### Manchester Cider Club

The monthly Manchester Cider Club continues to grow with attendance at meetings having risen as high as 50 people at some meetings.



A new leaflet is now available listing a whole year of monthly events with leading cider makers and cider writers from around the country.

Meetings are now available to book on Eventbrite (search 'Mcr Cider Club'), with many of them selling out in advance.

Coming up on April 9th, Gabe Cook, aka The Ciderologist, will showcase tastings of six international ciders from America to Spain.

On May 14th, Sam Nightingale will present six of his wild ferment ciders from Kent, many of them single variety or blends of Kent eating and cooking apples while June's meeting will welcome Bermondsey's Hawkes Cider.

For the latest cider club news follow them on twitter @ManchesterCider, Facebook ManchesterCiderClub or e-mail [cidercentralmcr@gmail.com](mailto:cidercentralmcr@gmail.com)

### Trip to the National Cider Pub Of the Year

Manchester Cider Club is also teaming up with Central Manchester CAMRA to organise a coach trip to CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year, The New Union in Kendal. The trip on July 4th is timed to coincide with a cider festival at the pub which was also Westmorland CAMRA's Pub of the Year for 2019.

For those that are interested, there will also be the opportunity to continue on to visit Hawkshead Brewery's Beer Hall in nearby Staveley.

For full details and booking through Eventbrite please contact ManchesterCiderClub on Facebook.

### North of England Cider & Perry Competition 2020

The winners of this year's competition, judged at Manchester Beer & Cider Festival 2020 were:

Cider: SiDa Holmes Chapel Apple

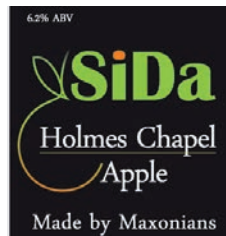
Perry: Dunham Press Peterloo Perry  
**#MBCF20 Cider Of The Festival**

The winners of the Customers' Choice Cider and Perry Of The Festival, sponsored by Manchester Cider Club were:

Cider Of The Festival: Pilton Cider - Pomme Pomme

Perry Of The Festival: Dunham Press - Peterloo Perry

The winning voter was Philip Hurst of Wigan, winning a box of Tom Oliver Perry, a fine cider from Wilding Cider and a bottle of sweet cider from Pilton Cider.



### Redbank Cider Fête 2020

The former Fairfield Cider Fete is moving to GRUB's new home in the Green Quarter. Tickets are now on sale for this year's event which will be held from 22nd to 24th May at GRUB at Redbank, a short walk from Victoria Station.

# Microbreweries – before the boom...

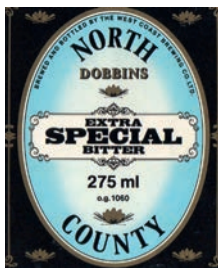


## A look at the foundations of Manchester's plethora of microbreweries

Greater Manchester is now awash with microbreweries, but it wasn't always so. The explosion of growth in the last decade having its foundation in pioneers operating in a twenty-year period from the late 80s.

Beer production in the 70s was dominated by the 'big six' national brewers with Manchester being almost unique with four of our family brewers bucking national trends and not selling out. There had of course been a handful of microbreweries in the big six era, names such as Pollards in Reddish which brewed from 1975 to 1982. They produced an excellent malty strong bitter called John Barleycorn (JB) which your writer remembers drinking and loving at the now demolished **Coach and Horses** (opposite the bottom of Piccadilly Approach) soon after I moved to Manchester in 1978.

However, micros in those days tended to be short-lived - Failsworth Brewery for example lasting just three years from 1982-85. Between the domination of the 'big 6' and the local family brewers, free houses that would take microbrewery beers in the Manchester area were thin on the ground. Clubs were an alternative market as they had more freedom to choose their beers but the landscape was a long way from what we know today.



The year that many cite as the start of Manchester's brewing renaissance is 1989 – the year that Brendan Dobbin came to Manchester and set up his West Coast Brewery at the

**Kings Arms** in Chorlton-On-Medlock. Brendan had previously worked at Hilden in Northern Ireland and Ringwood and spent time in the USA but his brewing was a revelation; he introduced local drinkers to New World hops and produced a full range of styles. **The Kings Arms** was a destination for beer-drinkers, but it was in a run-down area surrounded by flats between the Mancunian Way and Ardwick Green, which made the walk there interesting! The brewery was short-lived and closed in 1994 but its influence was huge.

There were a few breweries who set up in the area in the early 90s that still survive to this day. Heywood's Phoenix began life in 1986 as Oak Brewery based in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire - their 'Wobbly Bob' was ubiquitous at CAMRA beer festivals of that era. In 1991 they relocated to Heywood into part of the premises of the earlier Phoenix Brewery Co. Ltd which closed in 1960, adopting their predecessor's name in 1996. Another long-term survivor is Bank Top brewery in Bolton, started by Dave Sweeney in 1995 with Dave and the brewery still going strong.

The 90s saw a few brewpubs open locally. In Manchester city centre the **Lass O'Gowrie**, a Whitbread pub, had trailblazed in the 80s when a brewery was installed in the cellar and a public competition was held to name the initial 3.5% and 4.2% ABV beers, the winners were the uninspiring names LOG35 and LOG42 (I remember the beers being uninspiring as well). It does make you think how bad the losing names were. The 90s were also the era of the Firkin' chain of brewpubs, with Manchester's

outlet being **The Flea and Firkin'** on Grosvenor Street (now **The Footage**), opening in 1990.



With thanks to David Sheldon

One short-lived brewpub from the 90s was the Old Pint Pot Brewery (96-2000) at the **Old Pint Pot** just off the Crescent in Salford (now a Marston's pub). An interesting establishment opening in 1996 was **Mash and Air** on Canal Street in Manchester. This was a restaurant 'Air' and bar 'Mash' set up by London-based restaurateur Oliver Peyton (now better known for judging TV cookery programmes). The beers were stored in tanks and kept under pressure so not 'real ale' but the brewer was Alastair Hook who later went on to set up Meantime brewery in London - so **Mash and Air** could be considered one of the first UK 'craft' breweries.



Other brewpubs included Saddleworth at the **Church Inn**, Uppermill (1997-Present) and McGuinness Brewery (1991-2006) at the **Cask and Feathers** pub in Rochdale (which was also home to. Green Mill

brewery from 2010 to 2013).

Then in 1998 Marble Brewery began at the **Marble Arch Inn** on Rochdale Road - with one Brendan Dobbin designing and installing the equipment. Marble with their full flavour organic beers became a flagbearer for Manchester micros on the national stage and remain one of the most respected names in UK microbrewing to this day. They have also gifted other breweries an impressive list of alumni - including Dominic Driscoll (Thornbridge), Colin Strong (Salt Beer Factory, via Buxton & Northern Monk), Rich Andrew and Rob Hamilton (currently and formerly of Blackjack Beers) and Gaz Bee (Pomona Island).

The new millennium saw more microbreweries starting up as more outlets that would take microbrewery beers opened up. Pictish began brewing in 2000, followed by Millstone in 2003, Prospect in 2007 and Outstanding a year later. Others have come and gone



including Boggart Hole set up in 2001 by ex-Marble brewer Mark Dade, Bazen's in Salford (2002 - 2010), Stockport's 3 Rivers (2003 - 2009) and recently Saddleworth's Greenfield (2002 - 2019).

The 2010 Good Beer Guide lists 25 breweries in Greater Manchester, that figure has now exploded in the last decade to almost seventy. How many of these will still be around in 20 years' time? Who knows but I do know it takes a combination of brewing skill, business acumen and stamina to persevere and prosper and I admire anyone who takes on the challenge.

Steve Davis

*Except where marked, images from the collection of Peter Alexander, used with permission.*





## *Bee Orchid*

**Bee Orchid is set to open in April 2020 as a waterfront bar within the Clippers Quay, Grainger development in Salford.**

"We the directors have been working hard to develop our concept to be in keeping with the history of the surrounding area Pomona and feel that we have achieved this in the **Bee Orchid.**"

"Pomona, named after the goddess of fruit, has historically always been a place abundant with horticulture where families and workers could meet just a short distance away from the hustle and bustle of city life. We plan to recreate this appeal within our concept and design as much as possible, starting with the name of our venue **Bee Orchid.**"

The Bee Orchid is Mediterranean in distribution and only four species are found as far north as the UK. In order to survive the Bee Orchid routinely self-pollinates, as visiting insects are scarcer in colder, wetter climates. The Bee Orchid was one of the flowers to always be found in Pomona.

The design takes inspiration from the Oasis and botanical gardens of

Pomona bringing the bar to life with plants, flowers and vibrant colours throughout.

Benefitting from the sites floor to ceiling curved wall of windows and waterfront views of the canal and the river Irwell, inside will feature a raised cosy chesterfield area, window seating, sharing tables and a bespoke bar design. There will also be external seating for customers to relax and enjoy warmer summer days on the waterfront.

**Bee Orchid** will be offering a quality range of drinks for you to choose from with a classic cocktail list, organic wines, eight beer taps, two cask pumps, spirit mixers, hot beverages and a range of soft drinks.

Open 7 days a week the entire venue will be dog friendly, with a strong focus on friendly, non-intrusive customer service. Our aim is to become a friendly neighbourhood bar for the area, our ethos is to just Bee Humble.



CAMRA  
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FRIDAY & SATURDAY : 12 - 9PM

MONDAY : CLOSED

EMAIL : [houseofhopsm27@gmail.com](mailto:houseofhopsm27@gmail.com)

# And Yours!

## The subtleties of tipping

Long ago, around 2002, I wrote an article about tipping in pubs for the long-gone magazine *What's Doing*. Back then tipping was something of a Manchester institution. So how is the practice faring in the age of contactless cards and coinless trouser pockets?

Tipping is not that common in British pubs, or at any rate, not the wet-led ones. People often leave tips if they've enjoyed a good meal, but they don't routinely tip for a drink. In and around Manchester though, it's another story. Go into many of the cheaper pubs, particularly those of our local family brewers, and you'll invariably find that the regulars offer tips to the bar staff - even if they've only bought one pint.

It's a practice generally reckoned to stem from the days of waiter service. You may notice the push buttons that survive in some of our older pubs - they no longer function but they once used to ring a bell at the bar to summon staff. When the drinks arrived, you paid for them and included a tip. But, with the occasional exception, that system fell into general disuse in mainstream pubs many decades ago.

So how did general tipping for drinks persist in the Manchester area? I grew up in Wigan where no-one, then or now, would even dream of tipping for a single pint. A round of drinks, perhaps, or on some special occasion like a birthday. But not for a pint of bitter. And yet when I moved to Urmston some 20 years ago, I was taken to task by one elderly barman: "Ee, you CAMRA lot, you're all tight buggers. You never tip!".

Amongst pub staff that I've talked to, the consensus is that it was encouraged by the breweries in the days before the

minimum wage was introduced in 1999. Back then, it was just £3.60 an hour for workers aged 22 and over, and only £3.00 for 18-21s. Imagine how tough it was to survive on even less!

But then and now, what I find remarkable is the modest amount that bar staff take. In 2002 I noted that it was generally just 20p. If anything, that's actually gone down.

The policy on tipping is determined by licensees. They will tell their staff that if a tip is offered, then they can take say 10p, or 20p, out of the change. If the customer says "and have a drink on me", or words to that effect, then they may be able to take the price of half a pint of a house brand. But the magic word is "drink". If the customer just says "take one for yourself", or more commonly, "and yours", then the staff can only take the defined amount - whether it's half a pint of mild or a round of lagers, bitters, barley wines and whisky chasers, it's just 10p or 20p - maybe 50p in the city centre.

Make the same offer in the South of England and you'll end up paying for a half pint of something, usually lager. Or the staff will take a pound. For them, it's a rarity. Some of them don't quite know how to react.

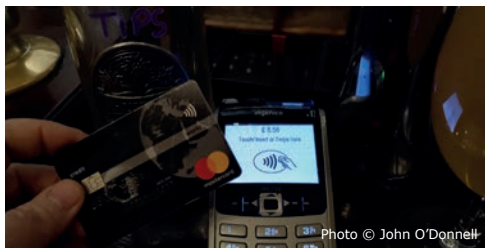


Photo © John O'Donnell

And now we have the rise of contactless cashless payments. A quick "beep" and



you're done. Adding even fifty pence to a transaction worth £4 slows the whole business right down. Even suggesting it, in the way that restaurants leave a space for an "optional gratuity", would feel awkward. Staff tell me it has reduced their income from tips.

Some drinkers do persist in tipping - routinely using contactless but still carrying a few loose coins to leave on the bar. Those who have had their trouser pockets sewn up either no longer tip or have had to find another way.

Reviving that magic phrase "have a drink on me" means the staff can then ring up the price of half a pint of lager shandy, or whatever before presenting the terminal. It's a bigger tip so single large tip in a visit rather than multiple 20p tips on each purchase. It works fine if you're planning a session in the same pub, as most regulars will do, but not so well if you're having one drink in each of several pubs.

Tipping by way of "have a drink on me" also depends on the pub still taking coin of the realm from some customers - otherwise there's nothing for the staff to take out of the till and put in the tips jar. However, with a number of pubs have already gone completely cash free (to cut down on banking charges and to reduce the risk of theft) there's further erosion of the staff income from tips.

Tips are still something that bar staff appreciate and often rely on. Minimum wage has gone up but it's still not great - even when it rises in April most bar staff will only be paid £8.20/hour (and under 21s could be as little as £6.45) - with few staff working full time and with hours that are anti-social by definition.

Tips, even 10p tips, soon mount up and can mean an extra £10 or more over the course of a busy evening - that can add 20% to their income.



Some more enterprising bar teams have developed quirky ways of eliciting more tips from us with decorated tip jars and sometimes humorous encouragement to contribute to the staff escape committee....

Of course, the unwritten rule is that tipping drinkers get a certain amount of preferential treatment, but rarely to the detriment of other drinkers. The regular tippers have their regular drinks and good bar staff know what that is. They develop the knack of spotting a regular out of the corner of their eye. They can get a glass and start pulling a pint for the regular tipper while they're waiting for the head to settle on someone else's Guinness.

If you don't already tip, think about offering something when you next order a round. If you've gone cashless, tell them to take the price of a drink. If you already leave a cash tip, consider saying "keep the change" if that will give them a bit more than 20p. Or do as the Continentals do and round up the bill. If it's for £7.55 and you're paying with a tenner, you can say "call it £8" or "give us change for £8". And if you're a licensee, see if you can make tipping a simpler business for your cashless customers. Our bar staff deserve a proper reward for their contribution to the Great British Pub.

Cheers!

*Neil Worthington*

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# Beering without the booze...

Andy Heggs has been exploring beer drinking without the alcohol



For various health reasons the first part of 2020 has required the curbing of my alcohol intake. I do love my beer though, so rather than go completely without I thought it would be a good idea to spend this booze-lite period seeing what the world of No/Lo (No or low alcohol) beers had to offer. It's early days yet, and I've still plenty more to try, but this is my little summary of what I've discovered and enjoyed (or endured in a couple of instances!).



**Thornbridge**  
- **Big Easy** (@  
**The Assembly**,  
Urmston) Brewed  
with Amarillo and  
Cascade hops,  
it has all the  
appearance of a

regular pale ale, amber in colour. The aroma is fairly sweet and malty, with quite a hint of soap (something I'd heard can be common in low alcohol beers). In the mouth it's got quite the soapy taste too, though once you get accustomed to this, there is a bitterness that comes through. It's really highly carbonated and almost like one of those flavoured sparkling waters - albeit lacking any real sweetness.



**Lervig** - **No Worries IPA** (@  
**Craft Brewtique**,  
Urmston)

OK, so this pours  
and looks like a  
proper hazy IPA.  
On the nose it's  
got a real veggie-

like aroma - not particularly pleasant at all. But the taste, the taste is something

else! I had to keep checking that I was drinking a low alcohol beer, I'd say you'd struggle to discern it as one in a blind tasting. It's got a great tropical fruit base with a slightly bitter finish - it would benefit from a smidge more for my tastes, but otherwise it's an excellent beer and one I've been recommending to folk wanting to dip their toes in low/no waters.



Photo © Mark Reeves

**Brewdog - Hazy AF / Wake Up Call**  
(@ **Brewdog Outpost**, Manchester)

I took advantage of Brewdog's January 50% food offer and free refills of any of their AF beers and took my first visit to their Outpost on Oxford Road. First up was Hazy AF, a 0.5% take on their NEIPA. Of course, you couldn't compare the two side by side, but it's a really smooth and full flavoured pint - lots of juicy tropical notes with a hint of grassy bitterness and pretty sweet. There's definitely plenty of oats in here to give it that mouthfeel, but ultimately, it's still quite thin - again something which seems pretty inescapable for No/Lo beers.

Next up was Brewdog's newest addition to their AF range, Wake Up Call. Now I'm not a go-to stout person, so probably not best placed to review this critically, but it definitely had all of the coffee/mocha flavours and the lactose smooth

mouthfeel. Although not really to my taste, it didn't have any characteristics that gave it away as being booze free. Maybe to a more educated palate it would, but for me I felt like I was drinking a regular stout.



### **Infinite Session Pils / IPA** (cans from **Beerhawk**)

Bought as part of a Lo/No pack from online retailer Beerhawk were two from London's alcohol-free specialists Infinite Session.

First up was the Pils which is vegan friendly as it doesn't

contain any lactose – an ingredient often added to AF beers to give some of the body and mouthfeel which might be missing otherwise. What it did here was

allow some of the more herby notes to come through which lingers really nicely. It's still a bit smoother than a regular lager but there's plenty of body and a really good level of carbonation. I was really quite impressed with this one!

With their IPA, Infinite have again avoided the use of lactose. I expected more of a hop aroma than the Pils and indeed when cracking the can there's an initial floral scent, which does have a hint of the soapiness that I got from the Thornbridge Big Easy, though not as pronounced. Poured a lovely golden colour and smooth and soft in the mouth. A bit on the thin side, but again I've expected this with these beers so it's not a negative observation per se.

### **Adnams Ghost Ship 0.5%** (can from **Beerhawk**)

A canned version of one of Adnam's flagship beers, done as an 0.5% take on the pale. Looks like a classic bitter on pour – a deepish amber colour. I found it

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really heavily bitter, a little too much for me and there's clearly quite a bit of rye in the malt bill which is a characteristic in a beer I can't really get with so it's probably clouded my judgement of this beer. I'd probably need to try a regular pint of Ghost Ship

(not had one in years that I recall) alongside this as I think both are not for me! Having a snoop around reviews online it's pretty well regarded so I'll bow to the wider opinion on this one.

All beers advertised as 0.5% ABV, the legal limit to be called "alcohol free".



# Focus on... Stretford

An emerging beer destination well worth visiting

Stretford is undergoing a renaissance and is emerging as a beer destination well worth visiting.

For most, the easiest public transport to the area will be the Metrolink stop on Edge Lane or the numerous and frequent buses which run down Chester Road (including the 245, 255 & 256) or the 23 & 25 from Chorlton and beyond.



The furthest of the area's pubs from the centre is **The Melville Hotel** on Barton Road, which is the only traditional pub remaining in the town from the area's heyday. A large "50's estate" style pub which has retained many of its original features through several refits; today its main focus is on dining and TV sports. Serving Holt's bitter and IPA through hand pumps, as well as keg and bottled versions of other Holts offerings, it remains an important part of the community with regular live music and other entertainment such as regular Friday DJ's, Saturday live music and karaoke on Sundays. Landlord Danny Chambers has been there for 8 years and has an excellent relationship with his customers. The pub is dog friendly and accessible - it also features an enclosed beer garden to the rear away from the main road.



Following Barton Road back onto Park Road towards Stretford Mall you will come across the unassuming door of **The Sip Club**. Their tagline is 'a living room with a licence' and with its standing lamps, tablecloths and pot plants it

really is. Opened by local businesswoman Heather Garlick (pictured) in April 2014 it was the first of a new breed of bars for Stretford putting local people, businesses and produce in focus (the pub recently retained Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's 'Community Pub Of the Year' award for a second year). Two hand pumps serve locally sourced ales, typically Brightside, Marble or Pomona Island and local cider also available. Events range from Speak Easy poetry, prose and music nights, watercolour painting, ukulele jam nights, canine socials and French conversation cafes (to name but a few)! If you feel anything's missing The Common Room is available for functions and other events. Your little four-legged friend is also welcome.

Diagonally across the junction with Urmston Lane lies the imposing, former **Robin Hood Hotel**. Having served the locals from the traditional heart of Stretford for many years, it was closed just over a year ago having been sold off by brewer turned 'pub co' Greene King to a property developer, RGI Property Group. A traditional meeting place for families and friends and a favoured venue for many local groups right up to its sudden closure, the pub is felt to

still be viable and not surprisingly, its absence has caused much concern.

Elsewhere in Stretford the latest focus on development is taking place in the vacant units on the Chester Road side of Stretford Mall.

First to open in December 2018 was **Head.** The former branch of HSBC was converted with a double-sided bar (pictured opposite) with décor very much like a 1960s/1970s pub, or indeed lounge. Eclectic furniture completes the effect. The brainchild of Jim Giblyn it is dog friendly and fully accessible. There are regular live music and DJ nights and the pub hosts events from quizzes to craft fayres. Two hand pumps serve cask from independent breweries from near and far and there are 10 keg lines. Tiny Rebel, Burton Road Brewery, Torrside and Saltaire are among the regular guests while Shindigger are a permanent fixture on the keg lines.



Photo © Bob Dunbar

July 2019 saw the opening of **Stretford Food Hall**, combining an artisan shopping experience with space for food and drink. It includes a convenience store, florist, merchandise, a rotating selection of street food outlets and a permanent bar. Keg only but does include a couple of local options in its draught range while the shop offers a very good selection of cans and bottles from a wide range of 'craft' breweries. Focus is on local, organic and sustainable offerings. Dog friendly and fully accessible.

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**The Longford Tap** opened in an unoccupied shop unit in early September 2019. The brainchild of local businessmen and brothers Paul and David Burgess it serves ales from across the region from four hand pumps in addition to five keg taps and an offering of cider. The house beer is 'Longford Tap' brewed exclusively for the pub by Beatnikz Republic.



Regular guest breweries are Beatnikz Republic, Marble and Manchester Brewing, along with Blackjack and Squawk. Bottles are available for takeaway. Traditional bar snacks are available as well as coffee and cake during the day. There is live music on Friday nights, along with "Open Mic" nights and themed offerings during the week. Opening early at 10am it is dog friendly. Trafford & Hulme branch have named the pub their 'Best Newcomer' for 2020.

Two more bars are set to open on the Mall's Chester Road frontage in the coming months – **Soul Juice** has been in the planning for over a year and is expected to open mid-March just as this issue hits the pubs. Meanwhile **Hive** is due to open next door to **Head** later in the year. Next time you are passing through Stretford – don't! Stop and have a beer or two. It's well worth a look.

*Caz O'Donnell & Bob Dunbar*

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# The Neil Richardson Award 2020

Salford's The Eagle wins traditional pub accolade

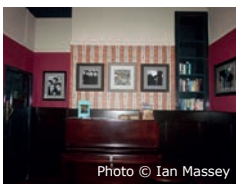


Salford has many historic and unusual buildings especially in the Blackfriars and Greengate area.

These include one of the few real tennis courts in the country and two former public baths, one of which is on Collier Street opposite **The Eagle**. Known to many as The Lamp Oil in memory of John Stone who would open up in the afternoon coming from his other business of selling paraffin oil and coal.



This grade two listed building has recently been the target of brewery Joseph Holt's latest refurbishments. It has been freshly decorated and new floor coverings have been laid over the parquet, other than in the front room where it has been restored.



All of the bench seating and stools have been recovered to a high standard. The useable bar area has been increased

by about sixteen square feet with plumbing and electrics fitted to modern standards, with additional storage for glasses added. The bow fronted windows which were Perspex, have been replaced with glass and the frames repaired accordingly.

Above the front door THE EAGLE lettering has had the gilding restored. The piano (which doubles as a leaflet stand) has been retained in the rear room having gained a padlock to the delight of music lovers. Shelves have been added on which a library is quickly developing.

If you are able, I recommend a visit, not just to see the changes which have taken place, but for the excellently kept beers from Joseph Holt (and sub-brand Bootleg). Weston's Old Rosie is on hand pump (although no longer considered 'real' cider).

The refurbishment has kept the character of Salford's last beer house which was built in 1901 at a cost of £2,300. I think the recent works may have cost a little more.



This is why Salford & District CAMRA has awarded The Eagle the Neil Richardson Award for 2020. This accolade is awarded for the best example of a 'traditional unspoilt pub'.

Neil Richardson was a beer and local historian who edited and printed 369 issues of Beer Buzz's predecessor "What's Doing" prior to his passing in 2007. In addition he published many short run local history books or including many local pub history's, regional drinking guides, (including Greater Grotley) and assorted historical pieces. He and his wife Sue were long-term active members of CAMRA contributing articles to many magazines.

*Ian Massey*

## Forthcoming Beer & Cider Festivals

Isle Of Man Beer Festival  
9th – 11th April  
The Royal Hall, Douglas  
[iombeerfestival.com](http://iombeerfestival.com)

Oldham Beer Festival  
17 - 18 April  
Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham  
[rob.camra.org.uk](http://rob.camra.org.uk)

Great Welsh Beer Festival  
22 - 25th April  
Sophia Gardens, Cardiff  
[gwbf.org.uk](http://gwbf.org.uk)

Redbank Cider Fête 2020  
22nd - 24th May  
GRUB, Redbank, Manchester

Stockport Beer & Cider Festival  
7th – 9th May  
Edgley Park, Stockport  
[stockportfestival.org.uk](http://stockportfestival.org.uk)

Summer Beer Thing  
26-28th June  
Sadler's Yard, Manchester  
[summerbeerthing.co.uk](http://summerbeerthing.co.uk)

Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival  
9 – 11th July  
St Clements Church, Edge Lane, Chorlton  
[chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk](http://chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk)

Great British Beer Festival  
4 - 8th August  
Olympia, London  
[GBBF.org.uk](http://GBBF.org.uk)

For CAMRA Festivals nationwide, visit [www.camra.org.uk/events](http://www.camra.org.uk/events)  
For up to date Manchester beer event listings, Beer Buzz recommends:  
[thealeinkaleigh.wordpress.com](http://thealeinkaleigh.wordpress.com)



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# Buzzin' Around

## CAMRA Meetings & events

This is a summary of meetings & key socials across Central Manchester (CM), Salford (S&D) and Trafford & Hulme (T&H) branches. For more events & full details see [beerbuzz.beer/diary](http://beerbuzz.beer/diary)

### 2nd Apr 8pm

Branch Meeting (T&H), TBC

### 3rd – 5th Apr

CAMRA AGM & Members Weekend, York

**7th Apr 6pm** Branch Meeting (CM), The Angel, Manchester M4 4BQ

**15th Apr 7.30pm** Branch Meeting and AGM (S&D), Salford Arms, 146 Chapel Street, Salford, M3 6AF

**18th Apr 11am** Away Day (CM), Clitheroe, 11.45 train from Victoria

**25th Apr 1pm** Regional Annual General Meeting (GM), Atherton Arms, 6 Tyldesley Rd, Atherton, M46 9DD

### 5th May 8pm

Branch Meeting (T&H), TBC

### 6th May 6pm

Branch Meeting (CM), TBC

**23rd May 11am** Trip to Thornbridge Brewery Bakewell (T&H)

### 1st Jun 6pm

Branch Meeting (CM)

### 4th Jun 8pm

Branch Meeting (T&H)

**4th Jul 10.30am** Cider Trip to The New Union, Kendal (CM)

**4th Jul 11am** Independents Day Treasure Hunt (S&D)

**7th Jul 6pm** Branch Meeting (CM)

**9th -11th Jul** Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival (T&H)

[beerbuzz.beer/diary](http://beerbuzz.beer/diary)

# Contacts

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📞 SalfordCAMRA

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📞 thcamra

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

📞 01727 867201

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

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📧 [asa.org.uk](http://asa.org.uk)

📞 020 7492 2222

## Public Transport

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📧 [tfgm.com](http://tfgm.com)



# Support Your Local Club

Dave Wade has an alternative kind of local....



Yes, that's right Club. Although much of CAMRAs focus is on the pub, for many years when I wanted a pint, I made a trip to my local club. Not a late-night entertainment centre but our village cricket club. Owned and run by the villagers, it offered a wide range of facilities in addition to cricket.

Similar establishments are dotted around the country. Some date back to the 1800's but the majority were formed in the 20th century with the aim of bringing together like-minded people with common interest such as a sport (e.g. cricket, bowls or rugby), a political party or workers in a local industry.



Bowling Green @ Sale United Services Club  
Photo © Dave Wade

Historically the licencing rules meant that although getting a club licence was easier than a normal 'Pub' licence, they could only sell alcohol to their members (and 'signed-in' guests of members). While the 2003 Licencing Act relaxed the rules somewhat, most clubs still require regular visitors to be members. Some clubs treat some other recognised clubs and groups – including CAMRA – as associates and welcome their members.

Most clubs are keen to attract new members and will welcome guests who are interested in joining to visit for a drink before signing up. Most sports clubs offer associate or social membership who want to use the facilities and contribute to the club funds by using the bar.

## What can I expect if I visit?

Clubs vary widely in the facilities they offer. Many have cask ale on offer, sometimes just a single pump with a national beer, in others one or two local beers. In exceptional cases, such as in **Flixton Conservative Club** (below), the 2018 CAMRA National Club Of The Year you will find up to six changing beers from local and regional breweries such as Dunham Massey & Pictish.



As they exist to serve their members rather than being driven by profit, they usually have space for

activities which the pub companies find unprofitable. So outside you may find bowling greens, tennis courts and more. Inside many have function rooms, full sized snooker tables and projection TV for watching sporting action.

Of course sports clubs prefer to show 'their' sports on TV so when, for example, football and rugby clash, where a pub may opt for showing football, a club like Trafford MV RFC in Sale will only have the rugby on their screens (which you can enjoy with a pint of their own label beer from Dunham Massey brewery).

## The Future

CAMRA recognizes that members clubs provide a valuable community resource and encourages all drinkers to support them. Many clubs are facing financial pressures from dwindling membership or the closure of their supporting businesses. So if you fancy taking up snooker or bowls or just want to watch TV sport check out your local members club. You may enjoy it.



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