

**FREE**

# The Firkin



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

Magazine of CAMRA North Bedfordshire • Vol 47 No 2 Summer 2023

## More Pubs Lost



And now a new threat!

### **EDITORIAL**

**BIGGLESWADE BEER FESTIVAL**

**DAMM TAKES OVER EAGLE  
BREWERY**

**WELLINGTON ARMS IS COUNTY  
CHAMPION**

**FOX AND HOUNDS KILLED**

**BEDFORD FESTIVAL PLANS  
FIRMED UP**

### **WHAT IS LOCALE?**

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ANGLIA?**

**THE MARCH HARE IS A  
BREWERY!**

**NORTH BEDS BRANCH  
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# The Fox at Carlton



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# Editorial

The Covid-19 lockdowns were a huge blow to the brewing and licensed trades, especially the first lockdown when pubs could not open at all for months. We thought in North Bedfordshire that we'd got through the crisis fairly unscathed, with only a couple of pubs lost. The picture nationally was not disastrous.

We spoke too soon. Along came another crisis, due this time to the cost-of-living problem caused by the massive increase in energy prices. Then followed double-digit inflation, and people were forced to cut back on discretionary spending,

For real ale drinkers, pubs are crucial. Real ale is cask-conditioned. It is delivered directly from the cask into the customer's glass, through a handpump. And where do we find handpumps? In pubs, of course – but not in all pubs. Licensees and pub staff need particular skills to look after and deliver cask ale in good condition, too.

The cost in lost pubs for North Beds is worse in this second crisis than in the Covid one. The Anchor in Cardington Road is boarded up. The Bell at Cotton End is To Let – will it find a new tenant? The Anchor didn't. The Foresters Arms in Union Street is also to let. Added to the pubs lost, many pubs have ceased to sell real ale. Falling demand means a threat to real-ale breweries' existence, especially the small ones, for which it is hard enough to find retail outlets anyway. Big breweries will survive – but will cask ale? The largest cask-ale brewer was Marston's, now taken over by international lager brewer Carlsberg. How long will the loyalty to cask ale survive? Already the former Jennings brewery in Cumbria has closed, and the Eagle Brewery in Bedford has been sold to the Spanish brewer Damm and is now brewing only lager. (See page 7.) Two down; how many more ex-Marston's breweries will go? Another North Beds real ale brewery, B&T of Shefford, has closed due the retirement of its owner, and its beers are now contract-brewed in Hertfordshire.

Those pubs that have survived face

desperate times. CAMRA highlights a licensee who, when cleaning after closing time, vacuum-cleans the pub by candlelight to save energy – pubs' energy bills have risen sixfold since before the pandemic. But there are a few gleams of light. A Cheshire brewery, Weetwood, sells to 100 pubs, but recognises that for their beers to retain a good reputation they must be well kept. So they have started a training programme in cellar work at the brewery for bar staff at their customer pubs, as reported in CAMRA's *Beer* magazine. Brewpoint in Bedford does something similar. A good approach for medium-sized regional breweries, but what are the real minnows to do?

Now there is a new threat to pubs. Plans for High Street Rental Auctions are designed to bring empty buildings back into use, by letting councils auction off the leases. These leases would allow pubs to be converted to other uses, divided into multiple units, or gutted of their bars, cellars or other integral features. Concerningly, there would be no obligation to reinstate the pub fittings at the end of the lease – in fact, developers would be able to apply to make the conversion permanent. A small change to these proposals could see pubs keep their planning protection, and benefit from the High Street Rental Auction scheme, since community groups across the country would have the chance to save a local pub while supporting their local high streets.

CAMRA has already written to the minister, asking them to ensure that pubs won't lose their hard-won protection. Now we're asking you to take action as well, by e-mailing your MP to let them know that they need to stand up for pubs and oppose the plans in their current form.

A non-CAMRA friend said to me the other day "Surely CAMRA won its fight to save real ale years ago – why is it still needed?". But now look. CAMRA's campaigning is needed now more than it has been for decades. We can never rest on our laurels.

Fytton Rowland

# Bravo Biggleswade!



On 11th-13th May, the First CAMRA Biggleswade Beer and Cider Festival took place. A remarkable statement, given the difficulties that have beset CAMRA and the whole licensed trade for the last three years. The 2023 Bedford Beer and Cider Festival, due in October, will be the 45th. Across the country, many long-running series of CAMRA festivals have ceased. So, many congratulations to East Bedfordshire CAMRA branch for starting a new series.

I visited less than an hour after the festival had started at the Biggleswade Conservative Club. (The club ran the festival jointly with CAMRA.) The club's function room was already full at 4 p.m. – encouraging. A fair few people had also taken their drinks outside to picnic tables in the sunshine on the large lawn. There was a sausage and burger van.



They had thirty cask ales, four KeyKeg craft beers, and eleven ciders/perrys to choose from. All the beers were from breweries fairly nearby, but nevertheless some of them were new to me. I tried thirds of the

three least strong ones. (I was driving.) All were very acceptable beers in decent condition.



The first was from the March Hare brewpub in Dunton (see page 15), their Bitter no. 1, a traditional bitter of 3.8% abv made with entirely English ingredients. The second was from Farr's in Hertfordshire, their End the Curfew (3.6% abv), a fresh and hoppy pale ale, and the third was Hedgerow Hop (3.7% abv) from Lord Conrad's brewery of Cambridge, a golden ale made with ancient wild hops which gave it a distinctive flavour. Clearly all three of these breweries had taken advantage of small production to use some unusual ingredients.



The festival was sponsored by Brewpoint, whose DNA, Legacy and Hometown were available, together with a number of local Biggleswade companies.

*Fytton Rowland*





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## CAMRA's Summer of Pub 2023



*Join us down the pub  
this summer*

# All change at Havelock Street - Again!

From 1876 to 1976, the brewery established by Charles Wells himself operated in Horne Lane in the centre of Bedford. By 1976 the firm was expanding and needed more brewing capacity. So they invested in a new brewery in Havelock Street in Queens Park, which still stands there today. For a further thirty years, into the new millennium, little more change occurred there. It grew in size, though, until it was the seventh largest brewery in the country. At one time it brewed own-brand beers for supermarket chains, at very little profit, to fill the capacity.

In the fifteen years between 2007 and the present, though, there has been a torrent of change for Charles Wells Ltd and the Havelock Street brewery. First, in 2007, Wells sold a 40% share in the brewery to Young and Co plc, at the same time signing an agreement to brew all Young's beers there when their historic brewery in Wandsworth closed. So when I went to work there as a tour guide in 2008, my blazer pocket said "Wells and Young's". Wells also brewed Courage's beers, other than the Mild, having acquired the Courage brand from Scottish and Newcastle, and Red Stripe lager under contract with Desnoes and Geddes of Jamaica. Finally, Kirin Ichiban, a Japanese lager, was also contract-brewed. We also sold for the British market, but did not brew, Corona lager from Mexico and Estrella Damm lager from Spain. Later, the brewery stopped delivering to pubs in its own drays, and contracted the work out to Kuehne & Nagel.

But then Desnoes and Geddes got taken over by Diageo (of Guinness fame), who didn't want Wells and Young's to brew, or even sell, Red Stripe any more, and Corona decided to take their British concession away too. Things were not looking so good now, and Young's decided to undo the joint ownership of the brewery, though they still paid Wells to brew Young's beers there. Wells had to buy their 40% of the brewery back.

Perhaps not cause and effect, but in 2017 it was announced that Wells was selling the brewery to the Marston's Group, which already owned breweries in Burton, Wolverhampton, Cumbria, Hampshire and Oxfordshire. Marston's also took over the intellectual property of Wells's main brands, Eagle, Bombardier, Courage, and others, and the contract with Young's. Wells said they were going to build a new, smaller brewery in Bedford. But meanwhile they got the Wells beers brewed under contract by Marston's at Havelock Street, and a contract was signed between Wells and Marston's to the effect that for the first five years, Wells publicans could order Marston's brands as well as Wells ones. Not just the ex-Wells Marston's beers, but also other Marston's brands like Ringwood and Pedigree. The Eagle Brewery also took its dry service back from Kuehne and Nagel.

In 2020, in the midst of the Covid lockdowns, the new smaller brewery, christened Brewpoint, finally opened. It produces Wells's new range of cask ales – Origin, Legacy and DNA – plus seasonals, and a range of keg beers named '...point', which are sold in Wells pubs. Another major change, though, was the merger between Marston's – the biggest producer of cask ales in Britain, and therefore in the world – and Carlsberg, one of the big four brewery groups internationally (along with AB Inbev, Heineken and Molson Coors). Rumours began to circulate that the Eagle Brewery had ceased brewing, and that Eagle, Bombardier, etc., were being brewed at one of the other Marston's breweries. Why had Marston's bought a large brewery for which they had no use? The only possible conclusion was that this was a consequence of the relationship with Carlsberg. Now, only lagers are being brewed at the Eagle Brewery – including Kirin Ichiban, and Brooklyn Lager for the UK too. Now, under Damm, they are test-brewing Damm's recipes too. But cask ales

# All change at Havelock Street - Again! continued

at Havelock Street are no more.

Now, the latest twist emerges. The Eagle Brewery in Havelock Street has been bought by the August Damm brewery of Barcelona, the makers of Estrella Damm. The company which signed a concession for the UK market with Wells but didn't want to brew here, and whose lager sells well in Wells pubs. Now it seems they do want to brew in Bedford after all, to the extent of buying a large brewery here. What has changed their mind?

Several factors, possibly. The Wells concession with Estrella Damm went to Marston's in the 2017 deal. But the five-year agreement between Wells and Marston's to

let Wells tied houses sell Marston's beers has not been renewed. And Estrella Damm is the best-selling lager in Wells pubs these days, so Damm wants them to stay in Wells pubs. Marston's belongs to Carlsberg now, and Carlsberg is one of the biggest lager brands in the world. Does Damm want one of their largest competitors handling Estrella in the UK? And finally, what about Brexit? Importing from Europe to the UK could over time become more expensive and red-tape bound than producing here. Time will tell what its new owners will brew in Bedford!

*Fytton Rowland*

## Welly Wins CAMRA's County Award

Another month, another presentation. Five weeks after Fytton presented our branch Pub of the Year award to the Wellington Arms, it was my pleasure, as Area Organiser, to name it the Beds County Pub of the Year. A goodly number of their regular clients were there for the presentation. Although Liz has worked there for some time, she is making her mark that allows the Welly's distinctive character to shine through.

It is a typical street corner pub – somewhere to relax over a good quality pint you probably can't find anywhere else in town. That's the advantage of being a Free House – the licensee has a much broader choice to select from and the customer will always find something new to try. We may well have our favourite tippie, but sometimes it's good to change and gain a new experience.

We are all different (which is a good thing) but I have been thinking about what I want in a pub, and why I like the Welly. First, it's



unpretentious, which means it's accepting of all. Secondly, it makes you feel at home with unmatching functional furniture. You can sit quietly in a corner, acknowledge the others there, or interact with them, depending how you feel. Thirdly, they offer a reasonable choice of beers in reliably good condition. Finally, there are the little touches like hooks at the bar to hang your coat or bag.

*Roger Stokes*

# The Fox and Hounds, Goldington Road

**A**s Editor I received an e-mail from a CAMRA member at the end of April, as follows.

'May I draw your attention to the closure of the Fox and Hounds on Goldington Road in Bedford. This pub has served Bedford for many years but recently the owners of the freehold have been banging in planning applications for a change of use to convert it to flats and a supermarket. These applications have been turned down several times (by Bedford Borough Council) but freehold owners just keep banging them in. Recently the pub has massively increased its footfall by competitively priced food and drink as well as putting on live music. Last week the freehold owners closed the pub overnight and it is my belief they did so because they were running scared seeing the increase in business would upset their money-grubbing dealings. It is hard enough for pubs to survive in this day and age without these owners playing Monopoly.'

Another local member who is a councillor also drew our attention to these planning applications, and when I visited the Fox and Hounds I found this message posted on the door:

*'NOTICE*

*24th APRIL 2023*

*From today the Fox and Hounds Pub will close permanently.*

*We would like to thank you all for your custom.'*



The Fox and Hounds is the oldest-established pub on the east side of Bedford, though admittedly the present building appears to be twentieth century. It was a Greene King pub that GK sold some years ago. It has never been exactly a real-ale Mecca, but until recently it usually had at least one cask ale on.

At one time it had custom from University of Bedfordshire students, but that fell away, possibly because the campus bar charges lower prices, possibly because students drink less these days than they did in the past.

As a CAMRA branch, North Beds CAMRA has to agree with the view of our member. The planning laws are not meant to encourage someone who has been turned down for planning permission to keep applying repeatedly, presumably hoping to wear down the Planning Department's resistance. Other pub closures had more "natural" causes, due to the Covid lockdowns and then the cost-of-living crisis. This one looks a bit more like murder!

*Fytton Rowland*



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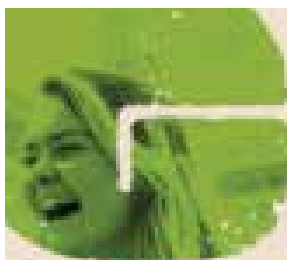
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# Bedford Beer and Cider Festival 2023



**H**i everyone, I hope you're all well and looking forward to the upcoming festival in October. This year is our 45th festival, and in that time we have seen many changes to the brewing industry. In 2000, there were around 500 breweries in the UK, while the 2015 edition of the *Good Beer Guide* listed 1,285, but by 2020, the number of breweries had increased rapidly, and the *Good Beer Guide* lists 1,850 breweries. But the fight is not won; we need to support our local brewing industry. Breweries are only part of the story; we need to support the pub trade as well. In 2019, according to the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), there were 47,200 public houses in the UK; 23,400 of these pubs were independent, 13,900 were owned by Pub Companies, and 9,900 were owned by breweries. In 2023, shockingly, there are only 26,442 Pubs & Bars in the UK a loss of 20,758. So, as you can see our trip to the pub is in danger. Are we depriving our local of valuable trade? Should we even run a beer festival at all? I believe the answer is yes, since by showcasing breweries to the local pub trade they have the opportunity to try new things, that perhaps they will put on their bar, thus

giving you, the drinking public, an even better experience in your chosen pub and the landlord money in the till. So why support the pub or beer festival? Why not buy a few bottles and sit at home? For me it's a social thing, the atmosphere, company, and the surroundings. At home you don't get the interaction with fellow drinkers – the laughter, the conversation or the opportunity to see that new beer you've never seen on the bar and give it a go. That spur of the moment opportunity to see something interesting and think I'll try that, and that's exactly what you will find at the festival. The festival also brings new drinkers into the area giving much needed new custom to our local establishments.

So, what are we planning? What delights are we planning to offer, well I'll be honest, I can't tell you at this stage as it's far too early for our beer list. But I can tell you our beer orderer, Geoff, is working hard looking for some interesting beers to tempt your taste buds and hopefully some new brews that none of us have tried before. I know I'm looking forward to that. We are intending to offer a similar number of beers to previous years (around 100), although there's always the chance that something may not settle and not be available to serve when you visit. If it's not right, it's not going on! We will be finalising our list in August so if there is something you would like to see, or think would be good to be featured, let us know. You never know, you might just find it on the bar! Included in our selection, there will



be a range of beers that fall into our LocAle (see page 13) category, this means they come from within a 25-mile radius of the festival. Last year Geoff was also involved in brewing our festival special, something that we may repeat this year.

We will have an interesting selection of ciders and perries, which again have been chosen by our resident cider bar manager Chris. His knowledge of fruit-based drinks is extensive and his passion really shows.

Three weeks after last year's festival we very suddenly and unexpectedly lost our amazing foreign/craft beer manager, Jonathan Kemp, a very deep loss, not only to our branch but to the Campaign as a whole. As a result, organising this area has had some considerable challenges. During last year's event, he and I had discussed making changes to the KeyKeg bar. We have decided to continue with the plans he made, and this year we are planning on fetching some beers from Bamberg, Bedford's twin town in Germany. We hope you'll find our selection as exciting as we do.



We will again be joined by the wonderful Christopher from Rookery Craft Mead from Scotland. His knowledge of the history of mead is second to none and he will gladly chat to you regarding the historical evidence he uses to produce an authentic product. So, if you fancy expanding your mind, I would highly recommend spending a few minutes talking to Christopher.

Our resident engraver Colin will always be a welcome addition to our festival and he will also be able to help you with all your personalisation needs. You will also be able to order your festival T-shirt or polo shirt from him.

This year entertainment is back! On Friday evening we will be joined by Bedford Town Band with a rip-roaring Last Night of the Proms, so make sure you lubricate your vocal cords, and let's raise the roof with this traditional singsong. On Saturday there may just be something for my fellow egg-chaser fans – what could be better than good beer and excellent rugby.

You will see a different layout to the hall this time, as we are planning to have more seating available complete with tables for you to sit and discuss what beer you need.

So, clear your diary, sort things out with your family and friends, and reserve the dates – 4th-7th October.

*Katherine Lilley*



# Pub News

**Falcon, Bletsoe** After a short period closed, this large former coaching inn on the A6 is open again for meals and drinks. New manager Izzie and her team offer freshly cooked meals including daily specials and home-made desserts. The large riverside garden is always popular in summer weather. Regular real ales Brewpoint Origin and DNA are joined on the pumps by a changing guest ale, often Timothy Taylor Landlord or Adnams Ghost Ship. [www.thefalconatbletsoe.co.uk](http://www.thefalconatbletsoe.co.uk)



**Chequers, Wootton Hall End** We were delighted to see this handsome old free house reopen after standing empty for several years. New French landlord Louis offers a range of meals available in the bar and restaurant, which may well have a gallic flavour. Eagle IPA is available on one of four handpumps, with more choice to follow if trade develops. The large, pleasant garden is always popular in fine weather. For more info on what's happening here, visit the Facebook page Cat at the Chequers Wootton:

[www.facebook.com/100091441299444](https://www.facebook.com/100091441299444)

**Barley Mow, Bedford** This three-room street-corner pub on the edge of the town centre recently reopened after a couple of months standing empty. One of the oldest LGBT pubs in the country, it had been a popular meeting place until tough economic times: the former management gave up. Good luck to the new operators,

though we don't expect to see any real ale on the bar.

**Fox & Hounds, Bedford** This large pub on Goldington Road, formerly popular with young people, sadly closed in late April. (See page 9.)

**King William IV, Kempston** Plans to close this prominent half-timbered pub on Kempston High Street for refurbishment have been postponed until later in the year. Brewpoint Origin and DNA, together with a selection of starters, main meals and traditional Sunday roasts on Sunday, will continue into the summer.

[thekingwilliamkempston.co.uk](http://thekingwilliamkempston.co.uk)

**Royal Oak, Roxton** This one-bar village pub closed recently as part of a new development that already encompasses a post office, village shop, several flats, a hotel with letting bedrooms and a restaurant. We don't know whether a bar may open in part of the premises, but meanwhile we understand that drinks are available at certain times at the nearby village hall.

**Queen's Head, Milton Ernest** This extensive village pub, restaurant and hotel on the A6 closed in March with prominent "to let" signs outside. Owners Greene King have previously run the complex by direct management, but now appear to be looking for a tenant. Local people are not pleased to lose their only pub and want it to reopen as soon as possible.

**Anchor, Cardington Road, Bedford** It is sad to see this pub closed and boarded up for security. There is a prominent sign advertising for new tenants. We hope someone comes forward to reopen the pub for the local community.



# LocAle

CAMRA LocAle is a national scheme to support pubs that offer locally brewed real ale. The scheme builds on growing consumer demand for quality local produce and increased awareness of “green” issues. The benefits of selling locally brewed beer include:

- Pubs – stocking local real ales can help build customer loyalty
- Consumers – enjoy greater beer choice and diversity
- Local brewers – gain from increased sales
- Local economy – more local money is spent locally
- Environment – fewer “beer miles” on deliveries, reducing road congestion and pollution
- Tourism – increasing a sense of local identity and pride, and celebrate what makes our area different!

Many CAMRA branches have launched LocAle schemes to encourage local pubs to offer locally brewed beers. The North Bedfordshire branch scheme includes all real ales brewed within 25 miles of Bedford. The North Beds branch scheme currently includes 40 active real ale breweries, including 9 brewpubs that brew mainly for their own pub, within the five counties of Beds, Bucks, Cambs, Herts and Northants. The scheme currently accredits over 30 pubs and clubs selling LocAle beers within the North Beds branch area, listed below.

All pubs and clubs accredited to the branch scheme are identified in WhatPub and are listed on the branch website. CAMRA can provide point-of-sale material and pumpclip crownners to promote beers from breweries within the scheme. If you run a local pub or club and think it should qualify for LocAle, please contact us.

## **Locale Breweries and Brewpubs (BP)**

3 Brewers of St Albans (Hatfield, Herts)  
Avalanche (Burton Latimer, Northants)  
Benjamin Franklin (BP, Ecton, Northants)  
Blackened Sun (BP, Milton Keynes)  
Blackpit (Stowe, Bucks)  
Boot Town (Burton Latimer, Northants)  
Brewhouse & Kitchen (Two BPs, Bedford and Milton Keynes)  
Brewpoint (Bedford)  
Bucks Star (BP, Milton Keynes)  
Buntingford (Royston, Herts)  
Chiltern (Terrick, Bucks)  
Concrete Cow (Milton Keynes)  
Crossover Blendery (Weston, Herts)  
Crown (BP, Little Staughton, Beds)  
Digfield (Barnwell, Northants)  
Draycott (Buckden, Cambs)  
Farr Brew (Wheathampstead, Herts)  
Garden City (BP, Letchworth, Herts)  
Grafham (Grafham, Cambs)  
Great Oakley (Tiffeld, Northants)  
Hopping Mad (Sherington, Bucks)  
Hornes (Bow Brickhill, Bucks)  
Kelchner (Amphill, Beds)  
Leighton Buzzard (Leighton Buzzard, Beds)  
Lord Conrad's (Dry Drayton, Cambs)  
Mad Squirrel (Potten End, Herts)  
March Hare (BP, Dunton, Beds)  
Maule (Northampton)  
Nene Valley (Oundle, Northants)  
Phipps NBC (Northampton)  
Pope's Yard (Hemel Hempstead, Herts)  
Potbelly (Kettering, Northants)  
Potton (Potton, Beds)  
Rocket (Great Staughton, Cambs)  
Silverstone (Syresham, Northants)  
Six Hills (BP, Stevenage, Herts)  
Three Hills (Woodford, Northants)  
Towcester Mill (Towcester, Northants)  
Tring (Tring, Herts)  
Weldon (Rushden, Northants)

# Bedford is No Longer in East Anglia!

CAMRA has a regional structure, enabling its internal democracy to function. Every CAMRA member is assigned to the branch whose area they live in, and the Firkin is the magazine of the North Bedfordshire Branch, which covers the urban area of Bedford and Kempston plus the surrounding villages up to the Northants border. Together with South Beds and East Beds branches, our borders correspond with the historic county of Bedfordshire. Our good friend Roger Stokes, a North Beds member, is Area Organiser for Beds as a whole.

Bedfordshire, along with Hertfordshire, has always been assigned by CAMRA to the East Anglia region, which hasn't been so good. We're in a different region from our near neighbours in Milton Keynes and Rushden. If regional meetings are held in Norfolk or Suffolk, travelling from Bedford is difficult and slow – and if you drive, you can't sample the local beers at the meeting, which is part of the point of going! Of course, it's equally bad the other way round – we have a regional meeting here in

Bedford soon, but few members from Norfolk and Suffolk will be there, I imagine.

Recognising the deficiencies of the current pattern, which follows the government's planning regions, a CAMRA group has been considering changes to the regional pattern. The aim – reduce bureaucracy and increase the social life and fun of meetings. This group has now reported, and proposes a new East Central CAMRA region. This would cover Beds and Herts, currently in East Anglia, Bucks (including MK), currently in Central Southern, and Northants, currently in East Midlands. It seemed to us on the committee of North Beds branch that this is a pretty good proposal for us.

It seems likely that, when a round of consultations has taken place, CAMRA will accept these recommendations. In future, regional meetings will be held in places that are much easier for us to get to. It's a shame that Stagecoach recently reduced the bus service from Bedford to Northampton...

*Fytton Rowland*

## Branch Diary

CAMRA North Bedfordshire branch business meetings are normally held on the second Thursday of alternate months. Social events are usually held on the third Thursday of each month.

Guests are welcome at social events, but members have priority on brewery visits. For latest information visit the branch website at [northbeds.camra.org.uk/diary](http://northbeds.camra.org.uk/diary).

Unless otherwise stated, for all events further details can be obtained from, and bookings made with, Gary Mudd on 01234 741871 or e-mail

[socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

**See the branch website for diary information**



Help us power  
**WhatPub**

Help keep WhatPub up to date by using the feedback form to let us know about any changes at the pub.  
[www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com)

# The March Hare – now a Brewpub

The village of Dunton with its village pub, the March Hare, comes under the East Beds CAMRA branch, but we in North Beds branch recognise it as a fine village pub that has always sold a good range of real ales and ciders. It also holds its own beer festivals. So we were very happy to learn that it now brews its own beers. The following flyer shows the range that the licensee, John, is producing.



Core real ale brewed by John at The March Hare BrewPub, Dunton



**Mr Sedgewick's Stout**, abv 3.6%, thirst quenching stout with light touch but full flavoured, made from eight different malts.

**Bitter No 2**, abv 3.6%, a light brown, lightly hopped, traditional, eminently drinkable session bitter.

**Bitter No. 1**, abv 3.8%, light brown, medium hopped traditional bitter.



**Dark Mild**, abv 4%, mildly hopped and thirst quenching. Brewed with nine types of malt for a subtle, satisfying flavour.

**Triple Star**, abv 4.2%, very light golden beer made with lager malt and generously hopped to reflect a soft fruit flavour with a citrusy pithy long lasting finish.



**BGS (British Golden Beer)**, abv 4.4%, a nice thirst quenching golden beer, lightly hopped with rounded flavours of soft fruit.

these will usually be at least one of John's real ales available at the March Hare brewpub  
east beds camra 2022 & 2023 pub of the year  
*Bedfordshire CAMRA County Pub Of The Year 2022*  
*Still the Best traditional beer pub in the area*

Real Ale Real Music Real Pub  
34 High Street, Dunton, Bedfordshire. SG88BN 01767 348921  
[janice.pritchett@outlook.com](mailto:janice.pritchett@outlook.com)



## The Firkin

Published every three months by the North Bedfordshire Branch of

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. The Firkin is produced and distributed by volunteers to most pubs and clubs in Bedfordshire north of a line joining the M1, Clophill, Shefford and Tempsford. We welcome correspondence and any relevant features for publication. Views expressed here may not be those of the Editor, the Campaign for Real Ale, or its North Bedfordshire Branch.

Items for publication in the next issue should reach the Editor by the date shown at the foot of this page. Edited by Fytton Rowland, 73 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3TA

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Printed by Zenith Media

Advertising sales by Neil Richards MBE, Paper Red Media Tel 01536 358670 Mob 07710 281381 [N.Richards@btinternet.com](mailto:N.Richards@btinternet.com)

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**Closing date for next issue 15th August 2023**



## ENGINEERS ARMS, HENLOW FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### 2023 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July  
BUNTINGFORD BREWERY TAP TAKEOVER

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July  
GRAINSTORE BREWERY TAP TAKEOVER

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August – Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August  
ANNUAL GIN FESTIVAL – Featuring over 100 Gins

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September  
MINI BEER FESTIVAL FEATURING OVER 20 DERBYSHIRE BREWERIES

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October  
"DARK SIDE OF THE MONTH" – Over 20 Porters, Stouts and Milds

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November  
"SUFFOLK n EASY" – 20+ beers from this lovely County



# THE DEVONSHIRE ARMS

*Serving Real Draught  
Cider and Fine Wines*

*A local community pub  
in the Castle Road area  
of Bedford with a warm  
welcome and friendly  
atmosphere.*



*Lovely courtyard garden  
and free Wi-Fi*

*Serving a range of Quality  
Cask Ales — Eagle IPA,  
Adnams Ghost Ship,  
Courage Directors and  
range of three guest ales.*

**Beer Festival August Bank Holiday Weekend**  
**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> - Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August**

**CAMRA North Beds Pub of the Year 2013, 2020 & 2021**  
**CAMRA North Beds Town Pub of the Year 2022**  
**Cider Pub of the Year 2018, Town Pub of the Year 2019**

**For forthcoming events please view website**

**[www.devonshirearmsbedford.co.uk](http://www.devonshirearmsbedford.co.uk)**

**32 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3TB**

**Tel: 01234 301170**