

# LOOK

# YEAST!

ISSUE 3

SPRING/SUMMER 2025



The Official East Beds CAMRA Magazine



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

Back this year..... Biggleswade Beer & Cider Festival  
Potton Community Orchard

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## Branch Diary (all dates and venues subject to confirmation)

When	What	Where
8th May – 10th May	3rd Biggleswade Beer Festival	Biggleswade Conservative Club, St Andrews St, Biggleswade, SG18 8BA (volunteers needed from 2nd May until 12th May)
Saturday 17th May	AGM	Engineers Arms, Henlow
19th - 24th May	(CAMRA) – Cambridge Beer Festival	Jesus Green, Cambridge, CB4 3AX
23rd - 26th May	King of the Belgians Beer Festival	27 Main Street, Huntingdon, PE29 1XU
5th - 7th June	Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival	Rugby Club, Hitchin, Old Hale Way, SG5 1XL
28th June	Trip to Tring Brewery	Tring Brewery
6th - 8th June	Admiral Beer Festival	1 Broad Street, Clifton, SG17 5RJ

## East Bedfordshire CAMRA Committee

Chairman	Barry Price
Vice-Chairman	Chris Overman
Secretary/Contact	Peter Josling
Treasurer	Rob Pullinger
Membership Secretary	Barry Price
Public Affairs Contact	Dave Strong
Pubs Data Coordinator	Barry Price
Look Yeast Editor	Peter Josling
Brewery Liaison Officer	Dave Strong
Cider Representative	Tim Naisbitt
Pub Protection Officer	Andrew McWhir
Social Secretary	Peter Josling

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# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

East Bedfordshire CAMRA Branch

There have been many activities and interesting events—mostly good, with a few less so. Thankfully, the former far outweighed the latter.

Several pub beer festivals took place—thanks to the licensees for sourcing some rarer beers for the area. Some may recall little of being “Homeward Bound” (a song written by Paul Simon at Widnes Railway Station, for those too young to remember the Sixties).

CAMRA beer festivals, lively (occasionally chaotic) Branch Meetings—my fault entirely—a great Winter social, and the challenge of selecting our 2026 Good Beer Guide entries and Pubs of the Year all stood out.



Peter organised our first-ever Ale Trail—an enjoyable diversion, especially for those who completed all twelve pubs.

Less happily, the March Hare Brew Pub in Dunton closed—its final night marred by John and Janice’s difficult journey home. Dave and Caryn also said farewell at the Chequers, Wrestlingworth, though it’s now under the Admiral/Cock ownership, both known for well-kept ales.

The biggest shock is the news that Kevin Machin is leaving the Engineers Arms in Henlow, with Punch Taverns set to take over. Hopefully little will change—Kevin is a tough act to follow. He remains until September, so there’s time for a final drink (or “disappearance” if he and Sharon leave Henlow).

Finally, do visit the Biggleswade Beer Festival in May, run by East Beds CAMRA and Biggleswade Conservative Club. If you can volunteer, even for a few hours, visit [www.bigbeerfest.org/](http://www.bigbeerfest.org/) volunteer. And don’t forget the AGM at the Engineers on 17th May from 1.00pm.

Cheers for now!

Barry

## DISCLAIMER

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## ARTICLES & CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome contributions that will benefit our readers, to submit an article, please email [secretary@eastbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@eastbeds.camra.org.uk)

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## EAST BEDFORDSHIRE CAMRA

# REAL ALE TRAIL by Peter Josling

The branch ran its first Real Ale Trail in February, starting on Saturday 1st February and ending on Friday 28th February.

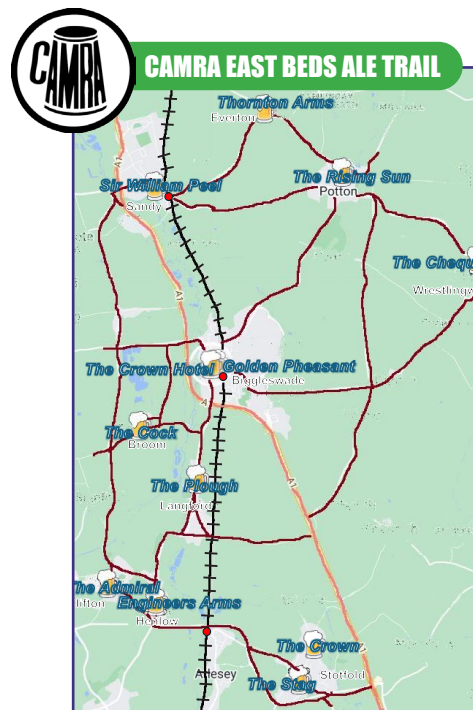
12 pubs took part. These being: *The Engineers Arms, Henlow, The Admiral, Clifton. The Cock, Broom, The Plough, Langford, The Crown, Biggleswade, The Golden Pheasant, Biggleswade, The Sir William Peel, Sandy, The Thornton Arms, Everton, The Rising Sun, Potton, The Stag, Stotfold, The Crown, Stotfold, & The Chequers, Wrestlingworth.*

The trail was taken up by some 40 people of which 7 completed the trail. A draw was taken at the Engineers Arms on Saturday 15th March 2025.

The first prize **A Pair of Brewery Trip Vouchers from Buntingford Brewery** was won by **Martin Allen**.

The second prize **A Brewery Experience Day Voucher from Potton Brewery** was won by **Louise Mann**.

The Third Prize **A Gift Pack of 3 bottles from Potton Brewery** was won by **Alan Britcher**.



All winners were notified and the reply from Martin Allen I think confirms he deserved 1st prize.

*“I started the trail on Monday 24th, and finished on Thursday 27th. It would have been on Wednesday, but for a minor misunderstanding about opening times. To add to the challenge, I walked between all the pubs, covering 49km on foot. On Monday I visited The Cock in Broom, Engineer’s Arms in Henlow, and The Admiral in Clifton. On Tuesday it was the turn of The Stag and The Crown in Stotfold, followed by the Plough in Langford (my home village). Wednesday was the big day starting with The Crown Hotel and the Golden Pheasant in Biggleswade. This was followed by the Sir William Peel in Sandy, then after a particularly muddy walk, the Thornton Arms in Everton, The Rising Sun in Potton and finally The Chequers in Wrestlingworth. The Rising Sun necessitated a return trip (by car) on Thursday as it was not open when I visited the day before.”*

Thank you to all those who took part both trailers & pubs involved. From feedback, next year we will run it for 2 months, possibly February to end of March.

# THE BIGGLESWADE BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

by Mark Knight

The Biggleswade Beer & Cider Festival is a joint venture between East Bedfordshire CAMRA and the Biggleswade Conservative Club.

This is the third time that we have run this festival and it will run for 3 days from 3pm on Thursday 8th May until last orders on Saturday 10th May 2025. Entry to this event is free to everyone.

This year's local charity that we are supporting is Biggleswade and District Scouts

We have a branded glass available in both pint and ½ pint sizes for which you will be asked to make a deposit of £3. You can keep the glass and take it away when you leave (bags will be provided) or you can reclaim your deposit or donated the deposit to the event charity.

We will again be using a token payment system. Token sheets to the value of £10 will be available at the entry point and are used for purchasing beers, ciders and craft ales. Any unused balance on the sheet can be reclaimed or donated to the local charity when you leave.

The Beers and Ciders are set up in the concert room where we will have seating available and which also gives access to the garden, where there will be further seating.

Similar to previous years we are going to showcase LocAle beers, this is a CAMRA defined term for breweries that are within a 30-mile radius of the event. For reference there are 52 breweries that CAMRA lists as operating in this area most of which are very rarely if ever available in Biggleswade.

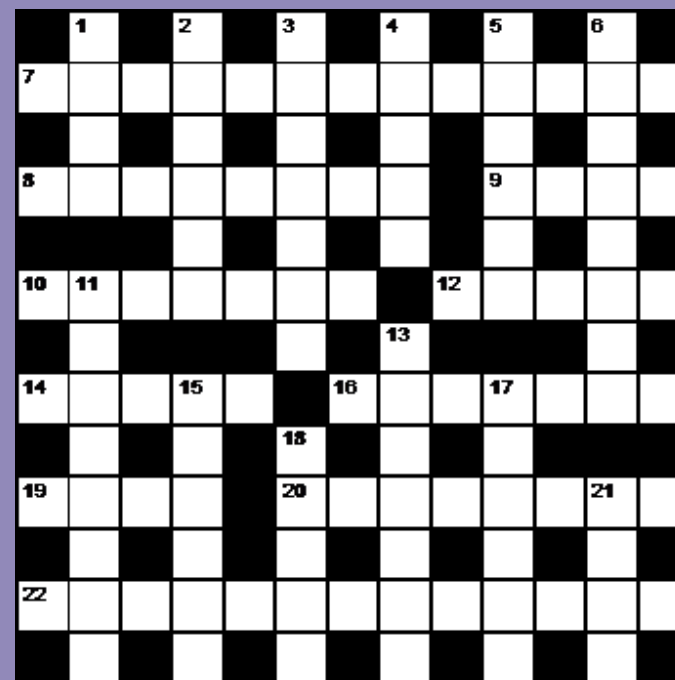
We also try to obtain real Ciders from producers within the same area. This year we will be expanding the Craft Ales range and numbers with help from the team at Drink. Food will be available from a caterer based in the garden area. Soft drinks will be available from the Club bar and we are hoping to have at least one low alcohol (0.5%) beer available as well.

On Saturday there will be live acoustic music in the garden. For further information, including details of sponsorship opportunities, please visit [www.bigbeerfest.org](http://www.bigbeerfest.org) or email [organisers@bigbeerfest.org](mailto:organisers@bigbeerfest.org)



# THE YEAST CROSSWORD

Can you complete our tricky crossword? Answers on P12



## ACROSS

- 7 To fraternise so takes the biscuit (6)  
 8 Retool to adjust whilst he takes stock (6)  
 9 Glues back smashed glasses. Pleased with themselves! (4)  
 10/20 Maiden work of veterinary anaesthetist perhaps? (6,2,3,5)  
 11 Deans leave unsanctioned assembly for anointing (7)  
 13 Tonic for a sound guy (5)  
 15 A chair is to be covered in this? (5)  
 17 Fellow I crossed is a bad person (7)  
 20 See 10  
 21 The additional part of a pint (4)  
 22 14 soldiers approach Norfolk town (6)  
 23 See 21 Down

## DOWN

- 1 Weed on bloke who takes your glass (6)  
 2 Put up arms in the bar (4)  
 3 Noisy pub may have this, causing to leave. (7)  
 4 Crest portrays local union members early origins (5)  
 5 Spy high ground but can't make it out as a mountain (8)  
 6 Crack is hidden in home made cod enchiladas (6)  
 12 Tautological traffic problem? (8)  
 14 Substandard shelter is said to be the shape of things to come (7)  
 16 Residue of mineral source is not on board (6)  
 18 Pole might have this amount of ale (6)  
 19 Doctor is not fond of this beer in Denmark (5)  
 21/23 After a little drink admiral gets a grip (4,6)

# POTTON COMMUNITY ORCHARD

by Sally Wileman

**P**otton Community Orchard held its sixth Wassail this year as the sun went down on Sunday 19 January. Single variety ciders were sampled under the trees that had born the fruit last autumn, underlining the circular nature of life.

Colloggett Pippin was chosen as it makes a light, slightly floral 'Ladies cider', more champagne than scrumpy. Late Gold, a cross of Yarlington Mill and Medaille d'Or, is yet to crop. But as a new cultivar, and the only one brought to market in the Easter Region, we're waiting with baited breath.



A couple of brasiers hissed and spat while hot mulled cider, cheese scones and Christmas cake were handed round. While there are a couple of lesser-known Wassail songs in the folk books, we like to go our own way in Potton. We celebrate our orchard with songs about pigeons, our stolen mower and the lack of loos. Mostly to the tune of old Wurzels hits.

In a contemplative pause in proceedings, everyone is invited to take piece of toast, dip it in cider and hang it onto their chosen tree. The act is a blessing on your chosen tree and a gift to help the tree crop well next year (in truth it just might encourage the blue-tits that are voracious feeders on orchard pests).



After some more rowdy Wassailing and glass-raising, there follows a raucous conga round the trees banging and crashing saucepan lids and whooping to frighten the evil spirits. It worked last year.

We were delighted to be joined this year by a number of stalwart East Beds CAMRA cider folk. Their support of our annual Apple Day each September is much appreciated and enjoyed.

Pubs, Pints, People.



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# HERTFORD PUB TOUR by Phil Crate

On one cloudy December day a group of 13 drinkers from the Engineers Arms visited the delights of the public houses of Hertford. Arriving by train at Hertford North station, our first port of call involved a ten minute walk to the Millstream in Port Vale road, where the following McMullen's beer were on offer AK (a 3.7% light mild), Bootwarmer (5.2% Xmas Beer) and Country (4.3%) a good clear beer enjoyed by most people (excepting the Lager Drinkers amongst the party).

## The Millstream Public House

We left the Millstream and walked down the road passing on the way the McMullen's Brewery



## McMullen's Brewery

to the Woolpack (another McMullen's pub) where AK, Bootwarmer, Country and IPA (4.3%) were available. I enjoyed a good pint of AK there.



## The Woodpack

Leaving the Woolpack and crossing the river, passing the Six Templars (J.D.Wetherspoon) and the impressive façade of the Green Dragon Hotel opposite (sadly the hotel no longer exists). We headed for the Black Horse in West Street (passing the White Horse on the way)

## Green Dragon Hotel Facade

Arriving at the Black Horse, the following beers were available. Butcombe Original (4.0%), Ruddles Best (3.4%), Abbot (Greene King 5.0%), Fireside Winter Ale (Greene King 4.5%), Starry Night (Tring 4.0%) and their own Black Horse Ale (4.1%). I had a good clear pint of the latter ale.



Leaving the Black Horse we then walked back to the White Horse in Castle Street. This has two small bars which got quite cramped once the thirteen of us entered. The beers on offer were Santa's Little Helper (Tring 4.8%), London Pride (Fullers 4.1%), Ridgeway (Tring 4.0%). I enjoyed a half of the latter.

## The White Horse

Leaving the White Horse, we walked to the Quiet Man in Parliament Square where I enjoyed a good pint of London Pride with Tribute (St Austell 4.2%) and Hophead (Dark Star 3.4%) also on offer.

We then walked back across the river to St Andrew Street where the Old Cross Tavern resides. The beers on offer were Hullaballoo (Loddon 4.2%), Clementine Chameleon (Brew York 4.1%), White Christmas (Saltaire 4.8%), Landlord (Timothy Taylor 4.3%), Sonas (Neptune 4.2%), and Captain Bob (Mighty Oak 3.8%). I had a nice pint of Captain Bob.

After this port of call the party from the Engineers Arms broke up with most including me heading to the railway station, but a few diehards went on to the Hertford Club and the Old Barge.



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# HITCHIN BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

by Jeremy Kitson

Hitchin Beer & Cider festival will be held between the 5th to 7th of June. Our venue for the event will once again be Hitchin Rugby Club on Old Hale Way Hitchin SG5 1XL. The opening times for the festival are 5-11pm Thursday 5th of June, noon to 11pm on Friday 6th and noon until 10pm on Saturday 7th. The Rugby Club is within walking distance of the railway station, and



there are bus stops close to the site on Bedford Road and Old Hale Way with connections to Bedford, Biggleswade, Stevenage and Hitchin town centre.

The festival is held in a large marquee with plenty of outdoor space to enjoy the sunshine, and will feature an extensive range of drinks. We will have over 100 Cask Ales, and a range of exciting craft beers on the key keg bar. Over 50 Real Ciders & Perrys will be available at the cider bar, and will have some sparkling cider available again this year. The Mead bar will have a selection of Meads which have proved very popular at recent festivals. The international bar will have several quality beers on draught, as well as an extensive range of bottled beers from around the world covering every style from pilsner to lambics. A range of food will be available to satisfy all tastes.

Ticket packages, consisting of an entrance ticket, beer tokens and festival glass, can be purchased on the door or online in advance. There is a discount on tickets purchased in advance, which are on sale now. Please go to Facebook@HitchinBeerCiderFestival and our festival website

[www.HitchinBeerCiderFestival.org.uk](http://www.HitchinBeerCiderFestival.org.uk) for the latest information and links to advance ticket sales.



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## Tring Brewery Trip 28th June 2025

The Brewery Trip is Free and the cost of the Mini Bus is £22.00 per person. Payable-by Bank Transfer to East Beds CAMRA. Sort Code 40-28-14 Account No 91287478 if payment by other means let me know to arrange.

### Itinerary

- Pick up Arlesey Rail Station & Engineers Arms
- Robin Hood, Tring Lunch
- Brewery Trip Tring Brewery
- Stone Jug, Clophill
- The Admiral. Clifton
- Drop off Engineers Arms & Arlesey Rail Station

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS FOR THIS EDITION

P	S	A	P	M	D				
O	B	N	O	B	L	O	O	T	E
T	U	A	U	L	C				
M	U	G	N	U	M	B	E	R	O
A	D	E	H	D					
N	C	T	I	O	N	M	I	X	E
A	N	P	L						
A	T	I	N	L	O	W	L	I	F
S	L	D	R	L					
H	E	B	E	A	S	T	H	E	A
O	A	L	E	A	G				
R	A	C	L	E	N	E	L	S	O
E	K	K	T	F	N				

## THE CROWN PRE-FESTIVAL TASTING by Dave Strong

Wetherspoons pubs can often be hit-and-miss. In some, the beer is barely drinkable and the managers do not look after their ales well, and these pubs are highly unlikely to feature in the Good Beer Guide. In others, there is top-quality beer in a carefully-managed cellar, with a manager who cares deeply about the product being sold. For the residents of East Bedfordshire and the surrounding area, we are lucky that **The Crown Hotel in Biggleswade** falls into the latter category. The manager, David, is a firm believer and sympathiser in the aims of CAMRA, and he and his staff serve an interesting range of high-quality ales. In order to get some feedback on the beers that would be offered over their March beer festival, David invited the branch to sample the brews the day before the festival kicked off. A small brigade of 'martyrs to the cause' took him up on his generous offer.



balanced with zesty citrus fruit notes. This was very drinkable! Next up was Bateman's Loopy Loo – a nice easy-drinking golden ale, but nothing to write home about otherwise. The last 'standard' beer we tried was Stewart's ESB – a stronger beer at 5.2%, but very easy drinking for the ABV. A nice sweet malty caramel flavour with a well-balanced finish.

As always, the cellar was...cellar temperature, so jumpers and coats were kept on by most while sampling. As always, the beer was well kept and on top form. We were lucky enough to sample a small amount of a handful of beers, many of the favourites of which I have summarised below.

The first beer we got to sample was the New River Brewery's Chadwell. A lovely best bitter, with good caramel and fruity notes and a smooth bitter finish. I could have had another for sure! Next up was the Lost in Mosaic by Loch Lomond – I was a particular fan of this, with big hits of citrus and bitterness that you'd expect from a hop like mosaic, but not too overpowering like you get from some 'hop bomb' beers nowadays. New River also supplied the next offering – their Riverbed Red. I'm a big fan of red ales, and this one didn't disappoint. It was done in the 'American Red' style, so a little drier than its British cousins, but still loads of malt and roasted caramel notes that you'd expect. Liberation Brewing Company's St Clem was next on offer, with a biscuity maltiness

There were a couple of beers that were brewed exclusively for the March 2025 'Spoons beer festival. The first we had was JDW Terrapin Hey Pal, a russet-coloured American brown ale. Super smooth and easy drinking, with toasted malt and chocolate notes perfectly balanced with a hoppy bite on the finish. The second exclusive beer was JDW Birra Perugia – Chocolate Porter. A collaboration Italian beer in the style of a British porter, this deepest ruby beer was full of roasted chocolatey notes and complex underlying flavours, with a lovely smoothness to it.

Overall, we were impressed by the beers sampled and left suitably imbibed and satiated. The beer festival kicked off successfully the next day, and we felt comforted that the discerning festival-goers of East Bedfordshire could drink easy, knowing their beer quality and variety was in safe hands with The Crown.

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