

The White Horse Wanderer

The magazine of The White Horse branch of CAMRA

Summer 2024
Issue 4
FREE - Please take one



Campaign
for
Real Ale



HELLO & WELCOME

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of the White Horse Wanderer and I hope that you enjoy reading it and like the brand new look!

This edition appears both online on our website and as a printed copy in many local pubs. If you'd like some more copies for your local, please get in touch and we'll get some to you.

It's been a while since our last issue, so we've got plenty to report. We've had branch socials and brewery visits, pubs closing and pubs reopening and some great successes in the CAMRA Pub Of The Year awards for 2024, so read on to discover what we've been up to.

It's been a challenging few months for the branch since the last newsletter was published, with unexpected personal situations arising which meant we had to re-jiggle the committee to keep the branch up and running. This has really shown us that our branch needs a real boost of active members to move forward in the years to come. Read on later in this issue how you can become a member and help us champion our local pubs.

As we go to press, we'll be right at the start of beer festival season - a time when all pubs and breweries should be buzzing with activity. Unfortunately, pubs and breweries are still suffering from increased costs and fewer customers - and some in our area have been forced to close. See the article later in this issue for more information.

You'll notice that this issue also includes some advertisements from establishments in our local area. If you'd like to advertise in our next issue, please get in touch. A rate card with more information can be found further on in this magazine.

Finally, with summer fast approaching, now is the perfect opportunity to get out and visit some of the many excellent pubs and clubs in the White Horse area. With beer-garden weather more likely every day, and the promise of a cool pint of excellent ale on the horizon, grab your friends and family and head to the pub.

Remember - your local pub needs you!

GET IN TOUCH

Please send all news and events details to:
press@whitehorse.camra.org.uk

The branch website can be found at
www.whitehorse.camra.org.uk



WHCAMRA



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Real Ale

PUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2024

We've had a great time visiting all the pubs we selected for inclusion in the 2025 Good Beer Guide, and have handed out some well deserved awards.



THE KINGS ARMS WANTAGE

PUB OF THE YEAR & CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR

For the second year in a row, we have awarded The Kings Arms in Wantage with the Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year accolade.

With six locally and nationally sourced real ales on continual rotation, along with six traditional ciders and perrys, The Kings Arms offers a real treat for all lovers of real ale and cider. Three craft kegs are also always available.

Landlord Simon Moore (pictured above) and his knowledgeable team of staff are always on hand to help inform your choice, and tasting notes are available too.

Visit their website at kingsarmswantage.co.uk for more information.

THE CROWN MARCHAM MOST IMPROVED PUB OF THE YEAR 2024



Re-opened by Oak Taverns in September last year, The Crown in Marcham has gone from strength to strength. Sympathetically refurbished, both inside and out, The Crown is now a lovely, welcoming pub. With four real ales on tap, along with a traditional cider or perry offering, The Crown is skillfully managed by Laura Goodwin and Ricky Dawe (pictured above with White Horse CAMRA Chairman Simon Moore and Cider Rep Di Glass)



THE PLOUGH WEST HANNEY COUNTRY PUB OF THE YEAR 2024

Winning the Country Pub Of The Year award for the second year in a row is The Plough in West Hanney. We dropped in unannounced so missed Owain, but managed to drag Luke out of the kitchen to present him and his staff the award (pictured centre above, with Simon Moore and Di and Dave Glass). The Plough serves some fantastic real ales, and is a perfect place for a pint of the best with some amazing food available too. Go check them out - you won't be disappointed!

THE ROYAL OAK WANTAGE RUNNER-UP FOR BOTH PUB OF THE YEAR AND CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2024



The Royal Oak in Wantage has won countless CAMRA awards over the years, so it was a pleasure to present Paul Hexter with two more to add to his collection! Paul and Frankie have been running the Royal Oak for over 40 years and always offer some great gravity dispensed real ales and ciders. A real, traditional pub, The Royal Oak is always worth a visit.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR WINNERS!

BOSLEY'S BANTER

WHAT HAS THE ROYAL FAMILY DONE FOR US?

Originally appearing in the Pub History Society magazine, Dick Bosley explores what the Royal Family has done for us and real ale in the second part of our series.

Look out for part three in the next issue!

The Black Death (1348/49) will have claimed the lives of many brewers - more than a quarter in Oxfordshire, but even an ardent republican like me finds this hard to blame on the monarch. Twenty years later, probably to ensure continuity of supplies, small brewers were only liable to half the tax their bigger rivals had to pay.

In 1375 an ordinance was passed stating that ale stakes over the Kings highway must not be more than seven foot in length. This led to many inns putting signs or symbols inside a metal hoop, often from an old barrel - the forerunner of the

modern pub sign. Many pubs called the Rising Sun derive their name from his coat of arms. Edward III also incorporated the French emblem of the fleur de lys after claiming the French crown - giving us another common pub name.

Richard II (1377 - 99) seems to have been quite restrained when it comes to passing laws - the only beer related one appears to be confirmation of London publicans having to display a sign - 'whosoever shall brew ale in the town with the intention of selling it must hang out a sign, otherwise he shall forfeit his ale'. It seems one of the purposes of



The sign was to show the brewer that there was a brew to be tested.

The White Hart with a golden collar was often used by Richard as a heraldic badge, a device often used in pub signs. You can also find pubs called Jack Straw's Castle in memory of Wat Tyler's lieutenant in the peasant's revolt of 1381.



Henry IV (1399 - 1413) saw the real escalation of the hopped v unhopped debate, with hopped malt liquor being imported and a petition presented to parliament asking that the 'use of wicked weed in beer' be prohibited. He used a swan as a badge, popularising this as a pub name.

Henry V (1413 - 22) may have been preoccupied by the French but in 1415 he did reach a deal with brewers agreeing when they could take water from the municipal supplies. Perhaps in return when the King asked for supplies for his army besieging Rouen the brewers sent 1000 pipes of ale.

Whilst returning from his French campaigns he stayed at the Red Lion in Sittingbourne - where he was charged a penny a pint for wine, with his final bill working out to be 9 shillings and 9 pence.

Henry VI (1422 - 61 & 1470 /1) had to reach a new agreement with the powerful and wealthy brewers. He granted the Brewers Company a

new charter - for a price - replacing the one issued in the 1290s. The Company were now to be known as 'The wardens & commonality of the mystery of brewers in the city of London'. The Company also decided that from now on they would keep their records in English as many brewers did not 'in anywise understand' the Latin or French previously used. I feel it would be remiss of me not to mention that it is unlikely that many of the brewers or ale-wives could read English either!

In 1423 a rule was passed that 'retailers of ale should sell the same in their houses, in pots of peutre, sealed'.

In 1436 the King issued a writ ordering that brewers should be allowed to continue their trade without hindrance and that beer (i.e. ale with hops) was 'notable, healthy and temperate'. He also appointed, in 1441, two surveyors and correctors of brewers who reported that 'both the malt and hops ... must be perfect, sound and sweet'...



'10 QUARTLETS OF MALT, 2 OF YEAST, TWO OF OATS WITH 11 POUNDS OF HOPS FOR MAKING 11 BARRELS OF SINGLE BEER'

'The beer must not leave the brewery for eight days, when officials should test it'. These inspectors were empowered to take a halfpenny for each barrel they, or their appointees, passed as being fit for consumption. This assize also brought beer brewers (i.e. those that used hops) under the same controls as those who didn't use them.

The sign of the White Horse is often derived from this Henry's emblem.

Edward IV (1461 – 70/1 and 1483) issued a letter patent to ensure that 'burley and hops were sweet and savourie' when used for brewing and granted a first coat of arms to the brewers company, showing their then patron saint – Thomas a Becket (see 1158).

It is a sign of the unrest at the time that a landlord was executed in 1467 for stating that his son was 'the heir to the Crown' – his defence that this was the name of his pub – that his son was due to inherit – did not save him.

Before becoming King, **Richard III** (1483 – 85) is said to have ordered that his brother be drowned in a butt of malmsey (a fortified maderia wine) in the Tower of London. He used the sign of the white boar which was also often used for pubs. However, after the battle of Bosworth, many of these were hastily changed – the simplest way being to change the boars colour. As the blue boar was also the symbol of the Earl of Oxford (a supporter of Henry II) this also was an easy way to show support for the new king. In

1483 Richard was using the Angel at Grantham as his headquarters.

Another short break in regulation took place until Henry VII (1485 – 1509) ordered, in 1495, that sureties could be taken from keepers of ale houses to ensure good behaviour. The following year he tried to restrict the number of taverns to two per town (with exceptions given to 22 named towns).

Henry VIII (1509 – 47), renowned for his love of food and drink, popularised the use of the Tudor rose in pub names and signs. The first reference to a pub named The Kings Head also dates from this time – although, of course it may well have been used by earlier loyal landlords.

The first written recipe for beer dates to 1521 – '10 quartlets of malt, 2 of wheat, two of oats with 11 pounds of hops for making 11 barrels of single beer'. The king himself was not keen on hops and the following year ordered that brewers who used hops should pay a £1 fine. This can't have been too successful as by 1530 he again ordered that his brewers should not use 'hops or brimstone'.

It is also recorded that he was a great fan of the pub game shove-halfpenny, with court records showing 'Lord William won £9 of the King at Shouvilla Bourde'.

Inevitably the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530/40s will have had a great effect on the brewing culture of England as monasteries were also the biggest, and probably best, brewers in the country. Some, however, were rescued. In Stone,

Staffordshire, a brewery continued becoming Joules in the eighteenth century, finally succumbing to the not-so-tender attention of Bass who bought the brewery and demolished it in 1974. Another example is Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese which is thought to be on the site of an ancient Carmelite monastery, having previously been called The Horn.

It was at the Crown in Rochester where Henry used a peephole for his first (unimpressed) view Anne of Cleves.

Henry also prohibited brewers from making barrels, as that was a job for coopers, and that the barrels should only be made to sizes he dictated.

Edward VI (1547 – 53), who was another who came to the throne at the age of nine and would now be considered underage, but still felt the need to stick his oar into the pub trade. In 1551 he appointed six Hop Searchers whose duty was to seize and burn any hops 'not wholesome for man's bodie'. The following year he passed the first proper licensing act which brought all pubs etc under national law and fixed the price of beer at a penny a quart. Also ale- and tipping houses had to be licensed by two justices of the peace and pay a shilling for a licence. Finally he enacted that the crafts of beer brewers and ale brewers were so distinct that they should not unite.

The third part of this article will appear in our next issue.



As White Horse CAMRA Most Improved Pub of the Year 2023, we are proud to offer a varied selection of beers - including locally brewed offerings to selections from as far as Belgium, Spain, USA and Japan. Our passion is to serve the best pint in the area.



The Blue Boar's bar houses 2 real ale pumps and 14 taps, 5 of which hold craft ales that change regularly from around the world. Our beer selection will always include 0% alcohol free choices and can go up to 16% vol.

We hold 2 draft and 5 traditional ciders along with a variety of bottled options.

In addition, we have 31 fine wines and Champagnes, and a large selection of cocktails and mocktails. Everything is hand picked by us to ensure that there is something for everyone's taste. Our signature 'Invisible' cocktail is a must for those who want something a little different.

Every month we have a guest DJ bringing the party vibe to the pub and our hidden gem of a 'suntrap' garden will host our first live band and BBQ event on Sunday 23rd June from 4pm - with further events planned for the summer.



Follow us on social media for up to date event information.

4 Newbury Street, Wantage Ox12 8BS

Tel: 01235 797477  



WE ARE OPEN

MONDAY-THURSDAY
12:00-23:00

FRIDAY-SATURDAY
12:00-00:00

SUNDAY
12:00-22:00



It's beer festival season!

With the promise of warmer weather on the horizon, pubs in the White Horse area are gearing up for a (hopefully) busy Summer season, and many are hosting their own beer festivals to boost trade and to introduce new customers to the wonderful world of real ale and ciders.

The last White Horse CAMRA beer festival was in Wantage back in 2020, just before the first COVID lockdown, and we've not been able to host another one since then for various reasons.

Luckily, **The Kings Arms** in Wantage is hosting their own festival from **Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd June**, and we'll be happily supporting them in this venture. With live music, pop-up food and at least twelve real ales and six traditional ciders over the three day event, this promises to be a great weekend. If you come along, you'll also get to meet members of our branch who'll be helping out - we'd love to have a chat with you!

Also on **Sunday 23rd June**, **The Blue Boar** in Wantage is hosting a day of live music, BBQ, beer and wine - a perfect opportunity to sample some great real ales, trad ciders and craft beers in their smart bar and large patio area.

On **Saturday 13th July**, Brunning and Price pub **The Greyhound** in Besselsleigh will be holding their



own festival. The all day event starts at 11.30am will have live music from 2-5pm and again from 8-10pm. A hog roast and garden games will also keep you occupied. With two cask and four keg beers from Renegade joining another five casks on their main bar, they'll also have bottled beers from Asahi and ciders from Cornish Orchards too.

The following weekend, **Saturday 20th - Sunday 21st July**, **The Crown** in Marcham will be hosting their first ever beer festival. A weekend of live music, fantastic cask ales and food trucks will be sure to keep you entertained. Plus, it's landlady Laura's birthday celebrations too - pop in and wish her all the best! We recently awarded them with the Most Improved Pub award, so if you haven't been to see them yet, this may be the perfect opportunity!

Organising festivals is no walk in the park, so it's really important that we support these local pubs when they put an event like this on. All of the ones above have food available at certain times during the day, so why not round up your friends and family and plan for a great day out. You'll also be supporting many local breweries, food suppliers and traditional cider producers by attending - and you may even find your new favourite tippie! Contact the individual pubs directly for more information.



Tuesday 11th June 2024 - Branch meeting at **The Swan, Faringdon**, 7.30pm

Friday 21st June - Sunday 23rd June 2024 - Branch supported beer festival at **The Kings Arms, Wantage**

Tuesday 9th July 2024 - Branch meeting at **The Plough, Hanney**, 7.30pm

Tuesday 13th August 2024 - Branch meeting at **The Plough Inn, Appleton**, 7.30pm



BRANCH VISIT TO BROADTOWN BREWERY

Branch members Di and Dave Glass enjoyed a lovely day out with Oxford Branch CAMRA in January visiting the Broadtown Brewery near Swindon.

Jason, who is the owner of BTB gave us a tour around and a very informative talk on how he started in the brewing business, he certainly has a lot of passion in what he is doing at the brewery.

We had a lovely sample of the 2 ales brewed which were Spring back session ale 3.8% and Black llama Baltic porter 4.8%, and very nice they were too!

We then went on to their tap room at The Hop Chapel where they had 4 ales on: Silent night – Christmas spiced ale 4.8%, Bobby's Tipple – Pale Ale 4.2%, Best Bitter 4.0%, Wide to Gauge – American Pale Ale 5.2%. After a few samples and a wonderful hot pie, off we went into old town. There was plenty of choice to be had between:

The Hop Inn: a wide variety of ales from Hop kettle, Electric bear, Listers, Ramsbury and various other breweries. There were also 6 ciders on offer from Green shed, Tutts clump, Cotswold cider co and Snailsbank.

Next stop was across the road to the Hop Kettle Tap & Brew which had an extensive beer menu of cask, keg and an experimental beer all from Hop Kettle and 2 ciders from Broadoak.

Next port of call was The Little Hop which is the smaller, younger sister to The Hop Inn a few doors away. On offer were 5 ales from Vocation, Arbor, Cheddar Ales, Castle Rock and Church Farm brewery. Five ciders were also on offer from Broadoak, Pulp, Hogan's, Hungerford Park Cider & Sandford.

Finally, we called in the iconic Glue Pot where a lovely pint of Summer lighting was sampled along with their Winter lightning.

We were truly spoilt for choice with the great range of ales and ciders that were available but sadly that was the end to our day out and it was time to go home, it was a thoroughly enjoyable day and well worth a visit.

We would like to say many thanks to Chairman Tony for being our wonderful, designated driver for the day.



Advertise your business in the White Horse Wanderer

If you'd like to advertise your business in future issues of this magazine, please get in touch by sending us an email to press@whitehorse.camra.org.uk and we'll get back to you with further information.

We've got some great advertising rates for local businesses, and we can arrange discounts for placing advertisements in multiple issues.

The magazine is distributed to many pubs in the White Horse catchment area, and is seen by hundreds of pub visitors. All adverts are in full colour and the magazine is professionally printed. Rates for advertising are as follows:

Full page: £75.00
Half page: £50.00
Quarter page: £25.00



If you don't wish to advertise, but feel you have a newsworthy article or story for us, please do get in touch!

The Swan

28 Market Place
Wantage
Oxfordshire
OX12 8AE



The Swan

is a unique pub at the heart of Wantage pub life. It holds a traditional selection of three real ales: Oxfordshire based Hobgoblin Gold, Courage Directors Amber and Vale Brewery Black Beauty Porter. While knowingly not boasting the most extensive or radical range of ales, the Swan aims to provide a classic, quality pint to the ale drinkers of Wantage.

Since putting on Courage Directors, there's been a nostalgic glint in the eye of certain customers when ordering as they reminisce about drinking it 25 years ago – and it's still as good as ever. As another option, Hobgoblin Gold is a light, golden ale that is perfect to be enjoyed in our vibrant and sunny beer garden as we begin to enter the summer months. Or, if a darker richer beer is more your thing, then try Vale Brewery's Black Beauty Porter – brewed only 30 miles away. It is the perfect complement to our cosy, oak-beamed front bar.

If you're a fan of live music with your pint, every Saturday from 9pm, we host local bands of a variety of genres to reflect the tastes of our music-loving customers – always with free entry. So why not join us at the Swan for a pint and a boogie?

Alternatively, if you were feeling like treating yourself to something different, why not visit the Cob and Pen Cocktail bar upstairs where we have the largest local selection of top-shelf spirits and cocktails alongside our newly introduced and extensive wine list?

Open seven days a week, from 12 until at least 12, this friendly local is home to a loyal band of beer drinkers, each with their favourite pint, who enjoy coming in knowing that the same friendly faces will be there to serve them the same good quality beer, all day, every day.

PUB AND BREWERY NEWS



White Horse Brewery, Stanford-in-the-Vale.

Although no official news has been received by the branch, it sadly looks like White Horse Brewery is no longer trading. The brewery shop is shut and no contact can be made. Branch members have spoken to ex-employees of the brewery, and they seem to confirm that it is permanently closed. This is extremely sad news. In its heyday, White Horse Brewery beers could be found all around the area - you were always guaranteed a decent pint of Village Idiot, Stable Genius or one of their spectacular Luna brews. To all of the ex-employees affected by the closure, we wish you all the best for the future.

The Extraordinary Hare, West Hendred, has closed again just two months after being reopened in October last year. Star Pubs and Bars are currently advertising for a new tenant.

The King & Queen Longcot, closed its doors at the end of March. We were lucky enough to meet with Markus and Danielle before they left in what was a very emotional evening. They emphasised the importance of pubs and local shops, but ultimately said that the business was no longer economically viable with the constant increases in overheads such as utilities and other costs. Longcot has lost an amazing pub with passionate and dedicated staff.

The Black Horse, East Hanney, has also closed, with their last trading day being 12th May. As with the Extraordinary Hare, the pub is owned by Star Pubs and Bars, and they are currently looking for a new tenant.

The Abingdon Arms, Wantage, has been sold by owners Admiral Taverns. New owners seem to have taken possession of the building, but it is unknown at this time whether it will re-open as a public house.

Although slightly outside the White Horse area, it is worth mentioning that **Butts Brewery** have ceased production from their plant. It is understood that Cheddar Ales are in the process of brewing their beers, so for fans of Barbus Barbus - don't despair - it will be available again soon in a pub near you.





CALLING TIME

The Tragedy Of Closed Pubs

According to CAMRA statistics, 29 pubs per week close in the UK. Just let that sink in for a minute. 29 pubs per week. That's an average of **four pubs closing every day** across the UK. The effects of this are being felt across the country, and as can be seen from the article on the previous page, we're not immune in our own beloved Vale of White Horse.

So why is this happening? Pub have always come and gone in the past, but never at such an alarming rate as now. Go into any pub in the country, and you'll hear tales of pubs and clubs struggling, shutting completely or reducing opening hours. The "perfect storm" of COVID-19 restrictions, the cost of living crisis, and continually increasing energy costs have had disastrous consequences for the hospitality industry.

Spiralling costs of supplies (both drink and food) have led many publicans to call time. And some of these businesses are never going to open as a pub again. In the first half of last year, over 100 pubs were converted to other uses. They now exist as supermarkets, mosques, education centres and high end restaurants.

When a pub shuts, the community doesn't just lose their watering hole, it loses history. Identity. Memories. Managers and publicans lose their home as well as their business. Staff lose their jobs and are either shifted to another pub (if the closed pub is part of a PubCo chain) or have to retrain for something new.

Local suppliers suffer - butchers, bakers, grocers - all those things that encourage us to "shop local" take a hit. And let's not forget about local breweries and drinks suppliers. Just consider Tim Wale of **Tutts Clump Cider**

Ltd. His amazing family-run cider company underwent considerable expansion in 2017, but the lockdown of 2020 had a huge impact on his business. The overheads remained the same, but no sales were being made. In January this year he started a fundraiser just to keep the business afloat after already investing all his personal money and pensions. Now this is a company whose Rhubarb cider won first place in both White Horse CAMRA's beer and cider festivals. No small business should be forced into a situation like this. Tim's still going, by the way, working a 95 hour week to supply and deliver his cider to the trade and direct to the public. You'll find him on Facebook if you want to give him a try - I know he'll appreciate the custom.

So what can we do to help stem this flow of closures? It's quite simple really - go to the pub. Pubs have always been an essential part of our community, and we cannot forget that. If you see a locally produced ale or cider on tap, or something from a smaller independent brewery, have a pint or two of that. Give it a go. The passion that the smaller producers have for their product is unmatched across the industry, and it's their innovation that keeps everyone else on their toes.

You could also join CAMRA. It only costs around £30 per year and helps fund the whole campaign. CAMRA can lobby the government on your behalf to try to keep duty down, and they campaign for the reduction of other rates that are imposed upon brewers and publicans. And if your £30 membership fee, or a night at the local pub helps in some small way to stop another pub closing, or another brewery halting production, then in my opinion that's definitely money well spent.

Simon Moore. White Horse CAMRA Chairman 2024-25

Interested in joining CAMRA?

Be part of the CAMRA story - real ale is just the beginning...

Membership with CAMRA includes: A welcome pack and membership card. Award winning quarterly BEER magazine. Access to our extensive Learn & Discover online educational resources. Local branch activities and volunteering opportunities. A benefits package that includes £30 worth of CAMRA real ale vouchers, discounted entry to many of our 180 festivals, 3000+ pubs offering local discounts and CAMRA book shop discounts Start your CAMRA story now at camra.org.uk/join





THE
SHOULDER
WANTAGE

Where Community and Craft Come Together!

Come and sample our huge range of 16 beers

Modern en-suite bedrooms

Open Mic Every Tuesday

Quiz Every Thursday

Find us, just a short walk from the market square at
38 Wallingford Street, Wantage OX12 8AX



Tel: 01235 767158 / www.thesoulder.pub

Be part of the **CAMRA** *story*

Real ale is just the start...

Our story is your story.
So join us in supporting
everything from pubs and
drinkers rights, to licensees
and breweries, uniting us
in the story we all love.

To thank you for being a hero
in our story, you receive great
membership benefits, such as
£30 of beer vouchers, quarterly
BEER magazine, access to the
online news platform **What's
Brewing**, partner **benefits and
discounts...** just a few perks
of joining us.

Join the CAMRA story
camra.org.uk/join



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, **real ale**





FOCUS ON... THE BLUE BOAR

We awarded The Blue Boar in Wantage our certificate for “Most Improved Pub” for 2023, and it’s easy to see why.

Since May 2022, landlords Sotiris and Ilze have spent a huge amount of time and effort turning The Blue Boar, a wonderful old coaching inn, into a friendly and welcoming place to visit. Passionate and proud, they strive to provide the best service in town, and you’re always guaranteed a warm welcome when visiting.

Located in the town centre, just off Market Place on Newbury Street, the pub is family and dog friendly and wheelchair accessible. Table service is also offered whether you’re sitting inside in the smartly appointed bar area, or outside in the hidden gem of a suntrap patio garden.

The Blue Boar has a welcoming atmosphere whatever the time of day and also has a great DJ once a month to bring a real party vibe to the pub. During the summer months, live music and events are also held in the spacious garden area.



The Blue Boar has a fully stocked bar with something for everyone. A large variety of premium wines, craft beers, lagers, real ales, traditional ciders and spirits are offered along with an extensive cocktail and mocktail menu. The beers are kept in exceptionally good order, and you’ll definitely be guaranteed to find something that takes your fancy.

PRIVATE BOOKINGS AVAILABLE

The Blue Boar can also make the entire bar and garden area available for private bookings - the perfect location for a celebration!

Just get in touch with them and they’ll be more than happy to discuss your requirements.



If you haven’t yet visited The Blue Boar, we really do recommend it - Sotiris and Ilze (above) would love to see you! There are always some great products on offer here, and if you love craft beer and real ale, you’re guaranteed to find something special!

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - by outgoing chair Ian Winfield

Like any successful team, party or organisation there comes a time when one decides a new Leader is needed. After eight busy and highly enjoyable years (Covid notwithstanding) as the chair of the White Horse CAMRA I was hoping someone would step forward and take up the baton as the time came for me to step down. I was particularly pleased when Simon Moore stepped forward. Simon has a fantastic knowledge of beer and breweries and will continue to take the group forwards in our ever changing world, he has the youth, enthusiasm and vitality to do so. I'm sure the future is safe in Simon and the committee's hands.

Reflecting on the past eight years, I want to thank our amazing committee members. Without their support, there is no branch. On a sad note, the branch has lost some wonderful and long-standing active members during my time as chair - I do hope they are enjoying some great beer wherever they may be now!

For me there are several stand-out moments during my tenure as chair. We ran four excellent beer festivals at The Beacon - including one of the last public events to happen in March 2020, as COVID put pay to the rest that year and much of the following year too. Covid continues to have a hangover effect on trade, as does the soaring cost of living. We still have the very real challenge of keeping British Pubs open. Other things I am proud we have delivered

(and that I hope will continue) is to have a Club of the Year Award - this award was won several times by the Stanford in the Vale Social Club and Country Pub of the Year - held for the last two years by the Plough at Hanney. There are probably other stand out moments for each of you - many I likely can't remember, having had too much wonderful real ale !!

Finally, I will still be around and attending the occasional branch meeting or social outing. The one thing I would ask of you all is to support the many fantastic pubs and clubs we have in the branch area. Please use them whenever you can. If you don't, as the saying goes, we will lose them. Once they're gone, they're gone. You Make The Difference.

Thank you to all of you, Simon your new chair, committee members, regular active members and those I haven't met but who read this publication. And a final 'Cheers' of course goes to all the Landlords, Staff and Brewers, without whom there'd be far less joy in this world !



Adieu, not goodbye and thank you all.

Ian Winfield,
CAMRA White Horse Chair

And a quick word from new Chair, Simon Moore

Well I think we can all agree that Ian has left some very big shoes to fill! I'm hoping that with all of your support I can step up to the mark and continue the good work that Ian was so adept at.

A local CAMRA branch is so important to the Vale of White Horse area. It's a real community and gives us a voice in the wider scheme of things and the fantastic ethos that CAMRA stands for.

I'd like to thank Ian and the rest of the committee for welcoming me so wholeheartedly to the branch, and for offering me all their support. It's been great to meet so many friendly people both in committee meetings and over a beer or three at a local pub!

My aims over the coming year are varied, but I think that a membership boost would be very welcome. We're so lucky in this area to have so many pubs serving some exceptional real ales and ciders, and it's great to see the younger generation embracing this too, with many preferring craft keg and cask over standard lagers. Getting a younger generation involved in the branch can only guarantee its continued growth.

More branch socials I think will be on the horizon too - it gives us all an opportunity to relax and visit places we'd never normally go. And drink some great beer too, of course!

Hopefully I'll see you all very soon, Simon.

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