

Draught Copy



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Free Magazine

By Maidstone & Mid-Kent
CAMRA

incorporating Gravesend &
Darent Valley, Bexley,
Medway & West Kent
Branches

Winter 2022/23 No. 203

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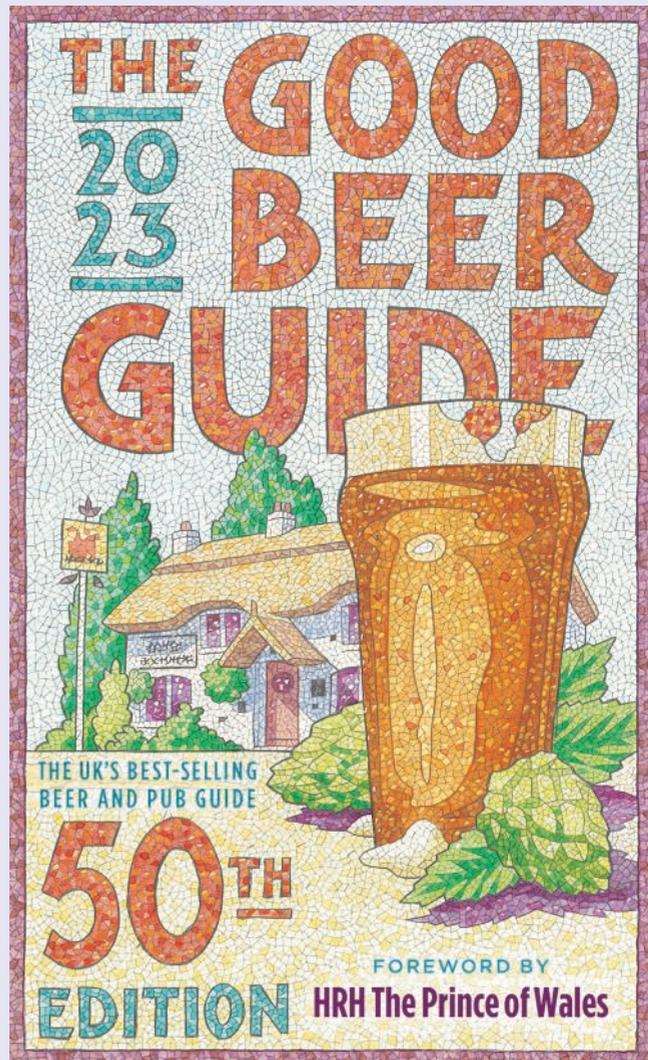
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Good Beer Guide 2023 Released

CAMRA's Good Beer Guide – the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide – is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

The Guide, which surveys 4,500 of the best pubs across the UK, is the definitive beer drinker's guide to the very best pints in the most picturesque and friendly pubs.

More on Page 5.



DRAUGHT COPY

Draught Copy is the magazine of the Maidstone and Mid-Kent branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, also incorporating news from Bexley, Gravesend & Darent Valley, Medway and West Kent branches of CAMRA. It is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December and has a circulation of 4,000 copies. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article, and need not represent those of CAMRA or its officials.

If you find a pub selling short measure, allowing smoking in the premises, or other illegal things in pubs, please have a quiet word with the landlord in the first instance. However, if you need to complain about a licensed premises in your area, report the problem to Trading Standards by contacting Citizens Advice, who will pass the details to your local Trading Standards service: Call the Citizens Advice consumer service helpline on 03454 04 05 06 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm). We should demand the very highest standards of service in our pubs.

Advertising rates: £85 / £50 / £30 for a full / half / quarter page respectively

Editor and Correspondence: *DraughtCopy.Editor@mmk.camra.org.uk*

Advertising: *DraughtCopy.Advertising@mmk.camra.org.uk*

The copy date for the next issue is 21st January 2023.

For further information about all pubs mentioned in this publication (or indeed anywhere in the UK), please refer to CAMRA's national pub database: *www.whatpub.com*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Our social diary changes faster than we can print it, so to keep up-to-date we suggest you use the below QR codes to access the branch meetings on our websites.



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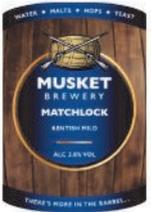
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3.8% Golden Ale



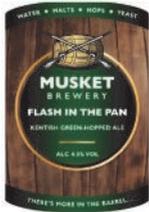
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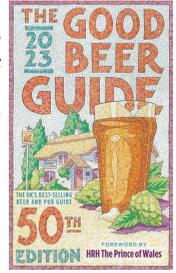
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GOOD BEER GUIDE 2023 RELEASED

The 50th anniversary edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, features a new cover design by Neil Gower, a foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales (22 August 2022) and an introduction to each region by Laura Hadland – award-winning author of *50 Years of CAMRA*.



The first edition (1972) was just 96 pages in length and listed around 1,500 pubs with a brewery section covering 105 brewing companies. Today, the *Good Beer Guide* features 1,864 breweries across the nation.

Just five pubs across the UK have made it into each edition of the Guide – known as the “famous five”. These pubs include the **Star Tavern** and the **Buckingham Arms** in London, the **Roscoe Head** in Liverpool, the **Square & Compass** in Dorset and the **Queen’s Head** in Newton, Cambridgeshire.

To be listed in CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide* is a fantastic achievement for a pub. The Guide is based entirely on personal recommendations made by local CAMRA members, which are rigorously reviewed by branches and editors.

Recommendations consider beer quality as well as the history and architecture of a pub and various aspects such as food, gardens, family and disabled facilities and special events. CAMRA does not take any fees for listings to ensure the guide remains independent and unbiased.

CAMRA's National Chairman Nik Antona said: “It is a huge achievement that we are able to celebrate 50 years of publishing the *Good Beer Guide*, and a real testament to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, who undertake the assessments. “What makes the Guide unique is that all the entries are compiled and vetted by a huge volunteer team based around the country. We work hard to ensure that all areas of the country are covered and, unlike some competitor titles, inclusion in this book is dependent on merit – not on payment. “The last few years have been an incredibly difficult time for the industry, and we need more support than ever before to keep our nation’s pubs open and thriving. I’d encourage everyone to use this year’s Guide to visit the very best pubs across the UK and support them for generations to come.”

The Good Beer Guide, is sponsored this year by Cask Marque. Paul Nunny, Director of Cask Marque said: “Cask Marque has sponsored the *Good Beer Guide* for a number of years, because it is important that we recognise great pubs with a CAMRA endorsement. 50 years of actively supporting our industry is a great achievement and coincides with Cask Marque championing beer quality for 25 years!”

To order, visit: <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/the-good-beer-guide-2023/>

Contact: Adrian Moss (01474 363102)

email: adrian.moss49@btinternet.com

The two planning applications for the **Amazon & Tiger** at Harvel mentioned in the last edition had been published by September. In mid-October a senior planner at Gravesham Council had recommended approval of the separation of the B&B business from the closed pub. A request has been made for the matter to be referred to the Planning Committee for a decision as the campaign group believe the decision was misguided. The applications had certainly attracted a sizeable number of objections.

A bid to purchase the site of the **Green Man** at Hodsoll Street has been submitted by the local campaign group who want to rebuild it. A developer is also interested but may have problems with the pub's ACV listing.



The nearby **Golden Lion** at Luddesdown now offers a guest beer alongside its three regulars. This had been *St Austell Proper Job* in October, followed by the new *Iron Pier Best Bitter*, which apparently ran out very quickly.

The **Dartford Jug** in Dartford has been renamed the **Long Dog** and there is no longer a connection between this pub and the **Malling Jug**. It seems that customers bringing a dog with them receive a discount on the price of a drink. Recently real ales were 50p a pint cheaper on Sundays, when a free cheese board was also on offer to customers from 3pm.

It was reported that the **Dartford Sports Bar** was due to have two handpumps installed in late October. The work had been delayed somewhat as it was necessary to obtain permission to drill an extra hole to the cellar of the listed building for the lines. The intention was believed to be to use the pumps to serve *Koomor* beers. There was also talk of a 10% discount for local workers or for, again, customers bringing a dog with them. At the time of writing *Koomor* beers had been brewed at *Iron Pier* for some time.

On a branch visit to Wrotham all three pubs were fairly busy. The *Shepherd Neame Summer Storm* at the **Rose and Crown** had given way to *Late Red*. This pub has a rather nice tiled back to the bar. At the **George & Dragon** a back room features a dartboard and a collection of cricket bats on the wall. The far end of the bar at the **Bull Hotel** was once a billiard room, as shown by two round windows in the wall facing the street.



The **Railway Tavern** at Longfield was under new management and was due to reopen in mid-November after a major refit estimated to cost £195,000. The pub would be completely redecorated and the intention was to improve the offer in terms of both food and drink, including real ales.

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The **Ship** at Sutton at Hone reopened quite soon after its August closure, with a new licensee. *Taylor's Landlord* was reported to be on sale in October. Nearby, the **Queen** at South Darenth has been for sale as a going concern for a while but the **Chequers** at Farningham was closed amid rumours of issues with the ownership of the pub.



Events near Christmas we've heard of in the Swanley area include a Christmas craft fair at the **Cotton Mill** on Saturday December 10. The **Chequers** at Crockenhill will host Christmas carols on the 14th. This pub serves cream teas on Mondays. Notable beers in October included three *Dorking* brews at the **Cotton Mill** and *Butcombe Chinook APA* and *Southwark Raspberry Wheat Beer* at the **Chequers**.

The **Jolly Drayman** in Gravesend has building work in progress which should be finished in December without the pub closing. The rather cramped bar will be enlarged to a horseshoe layout and the lobby area at the entrance will become more a part of the pub. Changes will extend to the boundary wall but will leave intact the garden and the railings with the pub name and nickname.



There's clearly some confidence in the future in this part of town as a planning application is now in for building work at **TJ's**. This would allow extension at the rear to provide twelve en-suite letting rooms ancillary to the pub, as well as adding disabled toilet facilities.

In the same area the **Waterloo** lost half its sign in a storm a while ago but this has now been replaced, displaying a scene from the battle. A large plaque below the TV at the front proclaims the pub as "Nanny's Pub", which fits with the family atmosphere.



Unfortunately *Dartford Wobbler* beers will not be around when this issue appears as the brewery site was put up for sale and all tenants given notice to quit by the end of October. John Millis still owns the "Dartford Wobbler" name but the equipment was placed in storage. It could therefore be revived by a future brewer on another site.



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For more information on these pubs, see CAMRA's online pub database *whatpub.com*

Bull – Barming – Now being run by Redcat Pub Co with *Dark Star Hophead* available at time of last visit report. F: thebullbarming

<https://www.redcatpubcompany.com/pubs/kent/the-bull-barming>

Oak on the Green, Bearsted – Now branded as *Shepherd Neame* and their beers are available; *Master Brew*, *Whitstable Pale* and *Bishops Finger*.

George Hotel, Cranbrook – A new manager, Victoria Ruffell, has been appointed here.

Bell & Jorrockes, Frittenden – An excellent selection of ales was found here when a party of CAMRA members recently visited. Permanent ales are *Harvey's*



Sussex Best Bitter and *Goacher's Fine Light Ale*. The guest ale was *Long Man Long Blonde*. Well worth visiting not only for the beer but also the food. Several bottled foreign beers are also kept. A pizza van is in attendance on Sundays 5pm to 7pm.

Dirty Habit, Hollingbourne – This popular 11th century building suffered an extensive fire on 9 Oct with a major part of the roof being completely destroyed. It will be closed for a considerable time for repairs.

Woodcock, Iden Green – A visit here found *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter*, *Larkins Traditional Ale* and *Long Man Long Blonde*, all in very good condition.

Chequers, Laddingford – There were 20 types of sausage and 10 beers at this year's Bangers and Beer Week. Several members visited by public transport enabling us to sample a good selection. Four ales are usually on handpump and good food is served.

Maidstone Rugby Club, Maidstone – Now has *Timothy Taylor Landlord* on the bar. So go along and watch a live rugby match and enjoy a pint (or more) at the same time.

Olde Thirsty Pig, Maidstone – This is a quaint and ancient building with two staircases to upper floor and toilets. Only brews from Kent breweries are kept here and these are frequently changed.



Stag, Maidstone – Opening hours have changed here and are now Mon-Thu 14:00-23:00; Fri&Sat 12:00-24:00; Sun 12:00-22:00.

Knoxbridge, Knoxbridge – In October this was found to be closed again. It is such a pity that this formerly excellent venue is no longer in use. It has plenty of passing traffic and is on a bus route.



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CAMRA Maidstone & Mid-Kent Club of the Year 2022
CAMRA Kent Club of the Year 2022



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Swan, Sandhurst – This has re-opened now that sufficient staff have been engaged. *Harvey's Sussex Best* is a permanent ale on the bar.

F: swaninnsandhurst <https://swaninnsandhurst.co.uk/>

Monk's Head, Snodland – Stonegate have repossessed this pub and can now install a new licensee. Hopefully this will be soon as the town needs the facilities of a pub.

Bull Inn, West Malling – Several green hopped beers were found here in October including those from *Goacher's* and *Musket*. Beers from the aforementioned breweries are always on the bar and are often joined by some interesting guest ales.

Malling Jug, West Malling – A variety of beers may be found here with numbers varying from 7 on weekdays to 10 at the weekend. Usually have *Kent Session Pale* and *Young's Bitter* or another lower gravity beer. Respected breweries such as *Deya*, *Vocation*, *Northern Monk*, *Thornbridge* and *Tiny Rebel* will often be on the lists. A monthly quiz and other events are arranged; for dates see Facebook. F: themallingjug



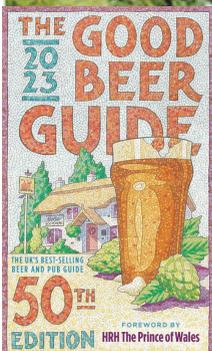
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Contact: Keith Ennis / Dave Moore

email: campaign@camrawestkent.org.uk

All images sourced from WhatPub.com

Web: <https://westkent.camra.org.uk>



CHARCOTT: The **Greyhound** continues to offer an interesting selection of ales. The regular is locally brewed *Larkin's Traditional*, with three changing guest ales, usually from small independent brewers. Some interesting ales appear here. Open all day Tuesday to Sunday, excellent food is available and the pub is easily accessible by public transport. There is a bus service (210) stopping nearby and it's a ten minute walk from Penshurst railway station.



CHIPSTEAD: The **Bricklayers Arms** (*Harvey's*) regularly has four of the Lewes brews available. *Sussex Best* is served from a stillage behind the bar, with the others on hand pump. The *Old Ale* was in very good nick on a recent visit.



COWDEN: The **Fountain** (*Harvey's*) closed on 7th October and the licensees have departed. The pub is on Harvey's website as available and new tenants are sought.

EDENBRIDGE: The micropub, the **Secret Cask**, has an interesting range of cask and keg beers available, plus a few ciders and also mead. Local brews are regularly available here and there is a large collection of pump clips displayed.



Just down the road is the **Old Eden**, which has three beers available. *Adnams Ghost Ship* and *Harvey's Sussex Best* are the regulars, with a regularly changing guest ale, *Hogs Back Hop Yard Pale* featured recently and was in very good nick and only £4 a pint. The **King & Queen** has been closed for some time and shows no sign of reopening, whilst the **Star** (closed in 2015) will not reopen as a pub. Recent building work has included the doorways being bricked up.



MARKBEECH: The **Kentish Horse** is a popular freehouse, that's open all day, seven days a week. *Harvey's Sussex Best* and *Larkin's Traditional* are the regular brews available, with a regularly changing guest beer. This is sometimes *Exmoor Gold* or *St Austell Proper Job*, although a second *Larkin's* beer may appear.

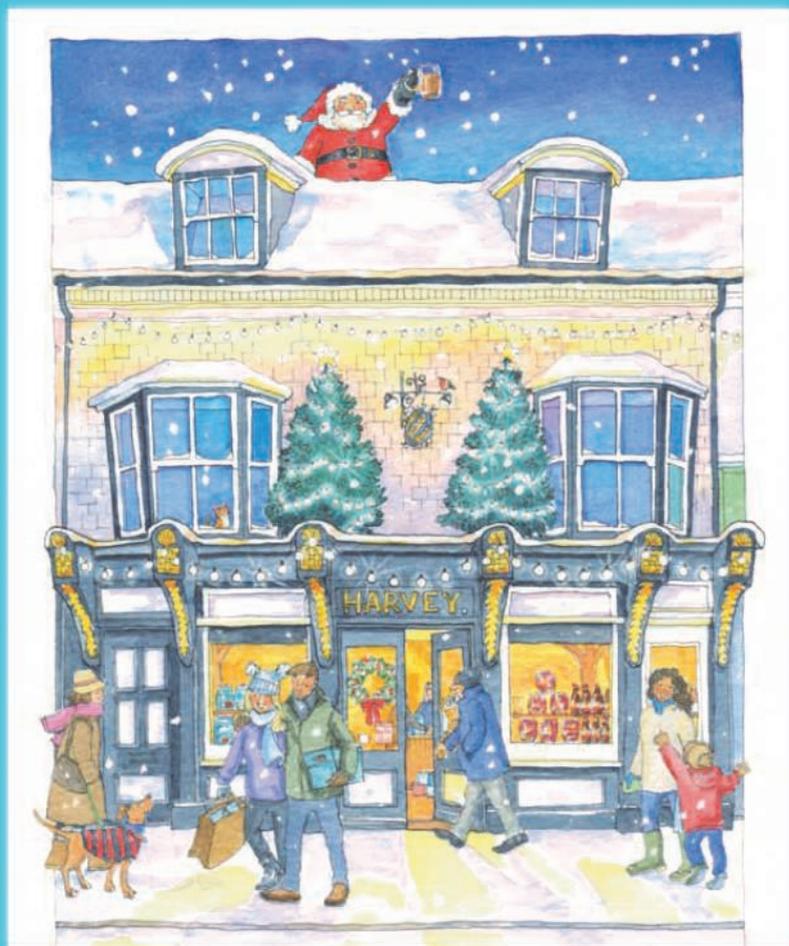




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KENT BREWERY

Seasonal Greetings from Kent Brewery

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BRASTED: There's just two pubs in the village now. The **Stanhope Arms** can be found next to the church and is free of tie. It reopened under new ownership in November 2021 and has been refurbished throughout. The regular beers seem to



be *Black Sheep Best Bitter* and *Westerham Spirit of Kent*, there is usually a third beer available, normally from another Kent brewer, *Bexley* and *Larkin's* amongst them. There is also a real cider on handpump. The other pub is the **White Hart**, which still has some memorabilia displayed in connection to the pub's links to pilots from nearby Biggin Hill, who used the pub in wartime. Very popular for food, *Fuller's London Pride* and *Sharps Doom Bar*.

CHIDDINGSTONE HOATH: The **Rock** is now open seven days a week and remains free of tie. *Larkin's Traditional* is the regular beer, plus there are two changing guests. A recent visit found these to be *Larkin's Green Hop Best* and *Tonbridge Coppernob*.



CROCKHAM HILL: The **Royal Oak** is principally food led these days and opens four days each week. The only beer available noted on a recent visit, was *Fuller's London Pride*.



FORDCOMBE: The **Chafford Arms** dominates the village and is an impressive building. *Harvey's Sussex Best* and *Larkin's Traditional* are the regular beers here.

LEIGH: The **Fleur de Lis** (Greene King) closed during the summer, a new tenant is sought.

SUNDRIDGE: The **White Horse** is the only pub in the village, found next to the traffic lights on the A25. A recent visit on a very quiet midweek evening, found just *Fuller's London Pride* available at £5.40 a pint.



WESTERHAM: The **Real Ale Way** sadly closed at the beginning of August. This micropub had been a popular addition to the town's drinking outlets. There are still three other places to enjoy a pint. The **George & Dragon** (*Fuller's*) closed a couple of years ago, but was acquired by Fuller's in November 2021 and has been fully refurbished. As can be expected, food is available but the ale drinker isn't left out, with a couple of Chiswick brews available. *London Pride* and



Oliver's Island appeared recently and both were in good nick. The **King's Head Hotel** (*Greene King*) can be found across the road, *Abbot* and *IPA* are regulars, with *Yardbird IPA* also noted recently. The third pub is the **Grasshopper On The Green**, which has several drinking areas and is free of tie. Two regularly changing ales are available, one of which is local, either from *Titsey* or *Westerham Brewery*.

NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR 2022



The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has named the best four pubs in the country as part of its Pub of the Year 2022 competition. The finalists are the **Station House** in Durham, the **Horse & Jockey** in Stapleford, the **King's Head** in Norwich, and the **Tamworth Tap** in Tamworth.

The **Station House** in Durham was opened in 2015 by CAMRA members and takes a very friendly, back-to-basics approach with an emphasis on conversation. A wedge-shaped pub in the shadow of the railway viaduct, the Station House offers a changing range of beer and cider with a dark beer always on tap.

The **Horse & Jockey** in Stapleford, Nottinghamshire is a welcoming free house boasting 13 real ales, including at least one dark beer and five of which are Lo-cAle – i.e., brewed locally. It boasts a wood burner, sports TV, light music complimented by occasional bands and a weekly pub quiz.

The **King's Head** in Norwich is a traditional two-bar city pub which has been a mandatory stop on the Norwich real ale trail since 2005, serving up to a dozen beers which are mostly from Norfolk breweries.

Finally, the **Tamworth Tap** is a 16th century part Tudor building in the shadow of Tamworth Castle. Eight handpulls usually feature one Tamworth ale, and there is a 'CAMRA corner' at the bottom of the stairs which includes a rare, complete set of *Good Beer Guides*. Themed events include beer tastings and 'paint and sip' sessions.

All the pubs in the competition are selected by CAMRA volunteers and judged on their atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, value for money, customer mix and most importantly – quality of beer. The four finalists will now have a chance to win the National Pub of the Year title for 2022, which will be announced in January 2023. The competition has been on hold over the last two years due to COVID-19 restrictions and was last won by the **Bell Inn** in Aldworth, Berkshire in 2019.

National Pub of the Year Co-ordinator Andrea Briers said: "All of these pubs should be very proud of themselves for reaching this stage in the competition. It is a huge honour to be considered one of the top four pubs across the country."

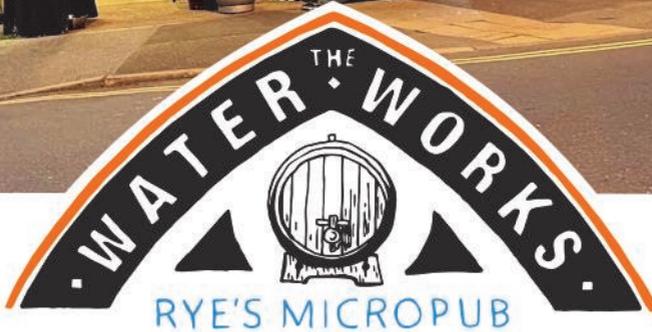
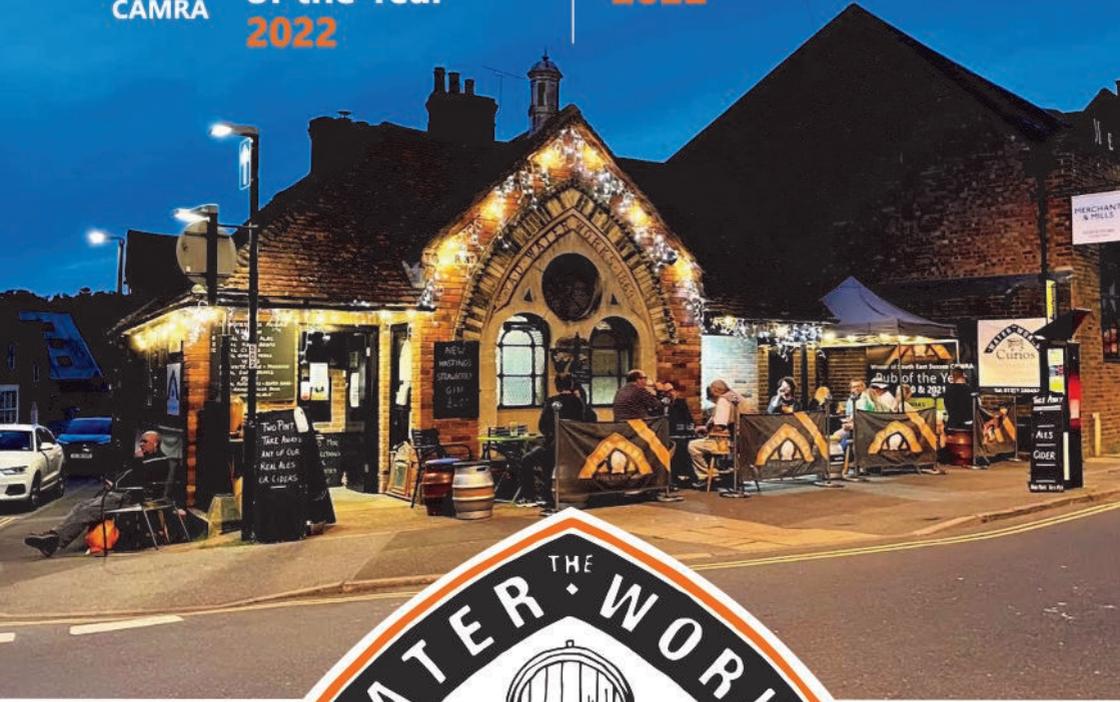
The four finalists will be presented with their awards at local events over the coming weeks.



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WEST KENT BRANCH BUS TRIPS 2022!

by Keith Ennis

Report on the West Kent CAMRA Bus Trip on 18 February 2022 to the Little Brown Jug, Chiddingstone Causeway and the Greyhound, Charcott.

Friday 18 February saw the arrival of Storm Eunice. During the morning there was an exchange of emails discussing the merits of the trip going ahead. After confirming that the buses were running, two intrepid members of the group set out on the 210 bus at 11.00 to visit the **Little Brown Jug**. There they found *Larkins Traditional*, *Tonbridge Golden Rule* and *Old Dairy Uber Brew*. Unfortunately the *Uber Brew* was not in good condition and was quickly changed for a *Larkins Traditional*. The pub has two open fires and they were experiencing problems with the wind blowing smoke back down the chimneys. The pub was almost empty due to many cancellations because of the storm.

Meanwhile two more group members were catching the 12.00 bus from Tonbridge and the driver informed us that this would be the last bus as she had been instructed to return to the depot. We decided that there was the possibility of catching a train back so proceeded with the journey. Several branches lying on the road were successfully negotiated by our driver.

We arrived at the **Greyhound** just as the other two members were getting drinks after being “blown” across the footpath from the **Little Brown Jug**. The pub was fairly empty with just two or three other customers as all of the lunchtime bookings had cancelled because of the storm. A



perusal of the hand pumps saw *Titsey Liberty Bell*, *Battle One Hop Wonder*, *Northdown Pale Ale Mary* and *Larkins Traditional* available.

All were in excellent condition as I tried all four. It was our intention to have



lunch and we could now do this in a more leisurely fashion whilst discussing the options for returning to Tonbridge. It was during this period we received information that there were now no trains running and we discussed the possibility of getting a taxi. There was no perceived rush as we were enjoying the meal and the beer. Very few more customers came into the pub and the lovely landlady, Fran, said she needed to go out and would kindly give us a lift in to Tonbridge.



This was a real act of kindness, for which we were very grateful. So, it was a quick trip to the quirky urinals made from old milk churns, and into the car for the trip back to Tonbridge.

This journey was uneventful but we did have to weave around a few branches. Quote of the day came from Tony who advised Fran to “mind the stick in the road” when it was quite a substantial branch. On arrival in Tonbridge we thought it would be rude not to visit **Fuggles Beer Cafe** to partake in the Dark Life Festival.



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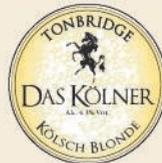
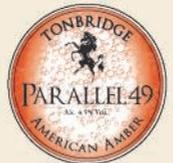
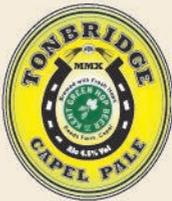
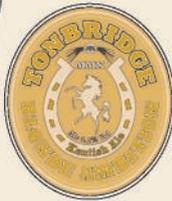
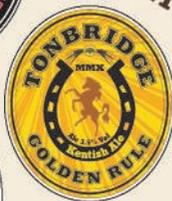
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My latest trip in this series may be one of the last, as KCC are withdrawing support for tens of rural bus routes in February. When commercial Arriva or Stagecoach routes are withdrawn, the Council might pay for a skeleton replacement service, if any at all.

From Maidstone, I caught the 12 to Tenterden then waited until 10.58, at the Town Hall, for the Thursday-only 293 which takes shoppers from Tunbridge Wells, and numerous villages, to the market in Rye. The driver obviously knew all the regulars, and we stopped at Appledore for a 'comfort stop'.



On we went, and I got off at the **Ferry Inn** at Stone-in-Oxney which opens at 11.00. This is a very remote pub on the edge of Romney Marsh, but seems to have no shortage of customers. Beers were *Oxney Ale*, which is Goacher's 'house beer', *Harvey's Best* and *Sharp's Doom Bar*.

The walk to Appledore took about 25 minutes, with no traffic except for a cyclist, and the **Black Lion** could be seen at the junction from some way off. Beers here were *Romney Marsh Best Bitter*, plus *Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Greene King IPA*.



Appledore, once a thriving place with a wide main street, has three bus services at the moment. Stagecoach 11B and the Tenterden Hopper each have one journey each way, and the 293 one journey on Thursdays only. All three routes come through Appledore between 14.09 and 14.20, so a pub visit by bus alone is not possible. Just the 11B is expected to survive the cuts.

There are no bus stops in Appledore, but I caught the 293 again, with the same passengers and bags of shopping from the market, to Tenterden, where I had an hour wait for the next 12, having just missed one. If you want to repeat my expedition, do it soon, while the Ferry Inn still has a bus service of sorts.



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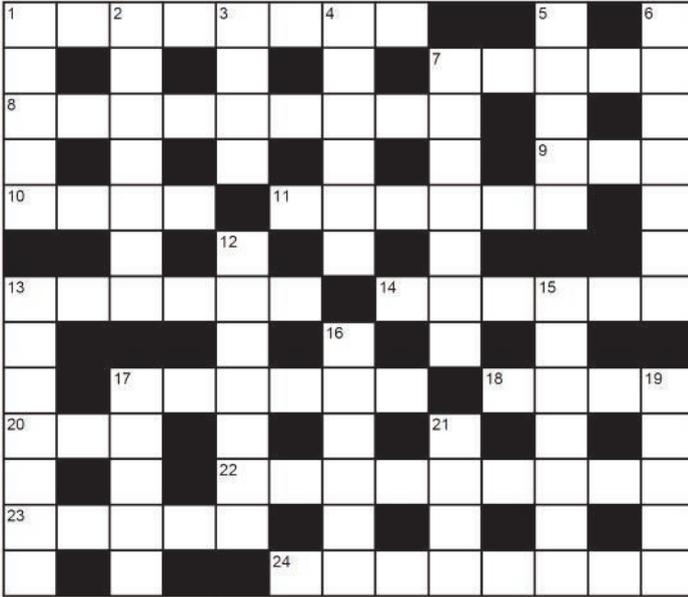
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CROSSWORD No. 38

compiled by MICK NORMAN



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*A photocopy/scanned copy can be emailed to:
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Across

- 1 Work out task (8)
- 7 A dire tangle, so put outside? (5)
- 8 Magnificent bird held by the Los Angeles Rams (9)
- 9 Head of insect removed to reveal snake (3)
- 10 Distribute wood (4)
- 11 Guitarist went on (6)
- 13 Johnny swallowed by second omnivore (6)
- 14 Dreadful misdeed by sailor? No, the reverse! (6)
- 17 Brewery hero (6)
- 18 Loving Rita needs courage! (4)
- 20 Also a number for the auditor (3)
- 22 Kill insect, swallowing sodium (9)
- 23 Assists in top class wagers (5)
- 24 Fizzy coke? Here in the reservation maybe (8)

Down

- 1 A seed planted, so relieved (5)
- 2 Spell out 'No longer ugly', perhaps (7)
- 3 Bird's call heard at the centre (4)
- 4 Clean rain (6)
- 5 Organ-grinder's complaint (5)
- 6 Found alternative use for dead PA (temp initially) (7)
- 7 Laid and distributed Disney film (7)
- 12 Useful when T S Eliot got wasted? (7)
- 13 Ah - match arranged at 17A's location (7)
- 15 Boo the ex-president, we hear (7)
- 16 Hot fur removed - no medal for this! (6)
- 17 Group without email? (5)
- 19 Subject of article on Middle English (5)
- 21 Complain about storyteller (4)

Solution to Crossword No. 37

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