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FULL PINTS

Published by



SPRING 2026



*Branch Area
Pub of the Year
Winners 2025 -
see page 7*





NUMBER 47

ALES FROM:

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Volume 28, Issue 1 SPRING 2026

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About Us

CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) is an independent, voluntary, consumer organisation whose vision is to have quality real ale, cider & perry and thriving pubs in every community.

Membership is open to all individuals and we currently represent around 142,000 members across the UK. We are governed by a voluntary unpaid national executive, elected by the membership. There is a local branch structure where members can join a CAMRA branch and campaign and socialise locally.

We currently have around 580 members in the Ayrshire & Wigtownshire Branch. We have four social group areas – namely North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and Wigtownshire, each of whom organise regular events and meetings. Details on page 4.

Printed copies of our multi award-winning magazine *Full Pints* are available in our real ale outlets thanks to the generosity of our advertisers – please try and support them. It is also emailed to all our Branch members, and can be downloaded from our website.

Many of our real ale pubs still have limited or reduced availability of real ale – **camra.org.uk** should show the latest status but please check with any outlets directly to confirm their opening times and availability of real ale, particularly in rural areas with limited public transport.

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The next edition of Full Pints will be published in June 2026.

Articles, photos and other contributions are welcomed and should be sent to the editor at fullpints@ayr.camra.org.uk no later than **Friday 15th May 2026.**



Quarterly Diary of Events

These are our confirmed events when Full Pints went to print. Any late changes or additions will be shared on our Facebook group.

Our CAMRA Calling monthly email and Facebook page will have full details nearer the time.

TUES 17 MAR

South Ayrshire Social, 2pm
The Portland, Troon

THURS 19 MAR

North Ayrshire Social, 7.30pm
Village Inn, Fairlie

WED 25 MAR

East Ayrshire Social, 7.30pm
First Edition, Kilmarnock

SAT 28 MAR

Branch AGM, 2pm
St Columba Church Hall, Midton Rd, Ayr KA7 2SL followed by local pub social including The Twa Dugs at approx 3.30pm and Wellingtons around 4.30pm.

FRI 3 / SAT 4 APRIL

Larbert Beer Festival, Dobbie Hall, Larbert.
Branch Social on Fri 3 April from 1pm. Free entry for CAMRA members - just £2 for glass & programme plus beer tokens.

SAT 11 APRIL

Two-Pub Social: East Ayrshire
Mill House, Stewarton, 2pm then Weston Tavern, Kilmaurs, 3.45pm

THURS 16 APRIL

North Ayrshire Social, 7.30pm
Salt Cot, Saltcoats

FRI 24 / SAT 25 APRIL

CAMRA Beer Tent at Paisley Food & Drink Festival
Volunteers required. Contact David Cassidy for info - chair@renfrewshire.camra.org.uk

WED 29 APRIL

East Ayrshire Social, 2.30pm
The Auchans, Dundonald

SAT 9 MAY

SCOTB Regional Meeting and AGM, 1pm
Speedwell Bar, Dundee

MON 11 MAY

Branch Committee Meeting, 8pm
Harbour Bar, Troon

MON 18 MAY

Beer Festival Planning Meeting, 7.30pm
Railway Inn, Glengarnock

WED 20 MAY

East Ayrshire Social, 7.30pm
The Wheatsheaf, Kilmarnock

THURS 21 MAY

North Ayrshire Social, 2.30pm
Frasers, Millport

TUES 26-FRI 29 MAY

East Ayrshire Trip to Preston area
See page 19. Details from Alex Burt at east.ayrshire@ayr.camra.org.uk

SAT 13 JUNE

Joint Social with Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch - Ayr. Times TBC
Smoking Goat, West Kirk, Wellingtons, and The Twa Dugs. The Growler may also be visited to try some of their live 'craft' ales.

THURS 18 JUNE

North Ayrshire Social, 7.30pm
Venue TBC

WED 24 JUNE

East Ayrshire Social, 2.30pm
Black Bull, Darvel

THURS 6 - SAT 8 AUG

Glasgow Real Ale Festival
The Briggait, Glasgow

THURS 1 - SAT 3 OCT

Ayrshire Beer & Cider Festival
Troon Concert Hall, Troon

Tamworth Tap takes UK's best pub title for record breaking third time

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year 2025 title has been won by the Tamworth Tap in Staffordshire, bagging an unprecedented trilogy of top titles.

Since the start of CAMRA's Pub of the Year competition in 1988, no pub has ever won the Campaign's most prestigious award three times – until now.

The award is the highest honour the Campaign gives to a pub, helping to showcase quality pubs across the UK that are worth seeking out and visiting. Beating thousands of entries, the Tamworth Tap was judged on its atmosphere, décor, welcome, service, inclusivity, overall impression and, most importantly, quality cask beer, real cider and perry.

Home to Tamworth Brewing Company, the multi-award-winning pub boasts a range of eight cask beers from both local brewers and across the UK, along with a wide selection of ciders, gins, wines, and bottled beers. The Tudor building with a 16th century shop front and its historic courtyard beer terrace offers stunning views of Tamworth's Norman Castle for a scenic spot to enjoy a pint. As part of the pub's popular 'CAMRA Corner', the Tamworth Tap's stairs have been decorated to look like a display of Good Beer Guides, along with a rare complete collection of CAMRA's pub guidebooks.

The pub is the centre of its community, becoming a social hub by hosting a huge range of daily events, from craft clubs, painting nights, and faith groups to sell-out tutored tasting sessions. Owners George and Louise Greenaway (pictured far right) and their team support local charities, including the Royal British Legion Tamworth branch, and making Christmas hampers for St Editha's Parish Church. George and Louise were awarded the town's Freedom of the Borough in recognition of their commitment to the town and community.

Reacting to the win, George and Louise Greenaway said: "It's not often either of us are stuck for words – ask anyone! – but we really are struggling to express how we feel today. When we won the first time we believed we'd reached the pinnacle of our achievements and were absolutely astounded with our second consecutive win.

"To have won for an unprecedented third time is beyond our wildest dreams; we are in awe of this recognition. The pub and its people are at the centre of everything we do. We don't just pour pints at the Tap, we strive to give a true sense of community and give our beloved Tappers a place they like to call home, with the warmest welcome, great atmosphere and beautiful surroundings. Quality beer comes first, yet the passion, knowledge and friendliness of our incredible 'Team Tap' is key. A heartfelt thanks to every single person who has been part of our journey, from day one when we opened a 'pop-up' in a shop window, with a make-shift counter and two barrels of beer.

The other three finalists were *Blackfriars Tavern*, Great Yarmouth; *Pelican Inn*, Gloucester; and our own regional entry, *Stags Bar*, Musselburgh.



The team at the award-winning Tamworth Tap.
 Photo: Tamworth Tap.

New CAMRA Director for Scotland

At CAMRA's Regional Meeting held in the community-owned Dean Tavern, Newtongrange on Saturday 7 February, Stewart Campbell was unanimously elected as our new Regional Director, replacing Stuart McMahon who had been in the role for four years. His position was formally ratified by CAMRA's National Executive a week later.



As a bit of background, Stewart is now a member of the Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch, and he provided the following biography as part of his hustings in the run-up to his election.

"I have been a CAMRA member nearly 30 years and have held numerous positions, at branch, regional and national level, during that time.

In Hull & East Yorkshire branch I was Chair (6 years), Treasurer (6 years), Magazine Editor (5 years), plus other roles including Beer Festival Organiser (7 years) and responsible for negotiating with the vicar and parish council for hosting the festival in Hull Minster. When I transferred to Scarborough branch in 2016, I organised their first four beer festivals whilst holding other roles including Chair, Treasurer and Pubs Officer.

I am currently the Brewery Liaison Coordinator for three regions, Scotland, Yorkshire and Northern Ireland as well as being Vice Chair of the Brewery Liaison Advisory Group. I am also the CBOB Coordinator for the North East & Yorkshire Area. In addition, I work in conjunction with Emma Haines on the brewery section of the Good Beer Guide. I sit on a number of national committees, BLAG, CBOB plus Beer and Cider Campaigns Committee (formerly Real Ale, Cider & Perry Campaigns Committee). Therefore, I am well-known to many senior CAMRA volunteers and staff.

Prior to my retirement I owned a basement bar in Hull; winning CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year and being in the final four twice more. Prior to that I was a civil servant and then a senior clerical officer for a railway company.

I am an IT-literate, committed CAMRA member that is process-led and very organised with a problem-solving attitude. My intention is to represent the regions members and their views in a constructive but persuasive manner."



Outgoing director Stuart McMahon welcoming Stewart Campbell to the role.

CAMRA's election rules mean that any new candidate is initially elected for one year, so in a year's time there will be another election where if Stewart wishes to continue he will be able to stand for either one year or three years.

We look forward to meeting Stewart, who is hoping to be able to attend our AGM on 28 March.



Newtongrange Station



Dean Tavern, Newtongrange



Dean Tavern, Newtongrange

Branch Pub of the Year: Area Winners 2025

Thanks to everyone who submitted their nominations for our Pub of the Year competition. The winning pubs were:

- **North Ayrshire:** The Two Dugs, West Kilbride
- **East Ayrshire:** The Weston Tavern, Kilmaurs
- **South Ayrshire:** Number Forty-Seven, Troon
- **Wigtownshire:** The Steam Packet Inn, Isle of Whithorn

Congratulations to each of the winners. Each area nominated a judge to visit all the pubs, and once the scores are collated from the four judges we'll announce our overall Branch Pub of the Year 2026 by mid-March. The overall winner then goes forward to the Scottish heats to be assessed against the other nine Scottish branch winners. Presentations for three of the pubs have taken place and are pictured below – the Wigtownshire presentation was due to take place after Full Pints went to print, on Fri 6 March, and will be pictured in the next edition of *Full Pints*.

NORTH AYRSHIRE: THE TWA DUGS



Ian Middleditch presenting the North Ayrshire Award to Debbie Riddex (middle) and Denise Burns (right)

EAST AYRSHIRE: THE WESTON TAVERN



Alex Burt presenting the East Ayrshire Award to John Cairns

SOUTH AYRSHIRE: NUMBER FORTY-SEVEN



Donald Clark presenting the South Ayrshire Award to Chris Morrison

Ayrshire Beer & Cider Festival 2026

The eagle-eyed amongst you will have noticed that we've changed the name of our annual festival which is held in Troon. Previously it was the Ayrshire Real Ale Festival but the committee felt that Beer & Cider Festival was now more appropriate.

SAVE THE DATE: This year's festival will be held in Troon's Concert Hall and adjoining Walker Hall on **Thursday 1st October – Saturday 3rd October 2026**.



Planning meetings have commenced – if you'd like to contribute to or make suggestions about the festival, the next meetings are scheduled for **Mon 9 March** in the *Harbour Bar*, Troon at 7.30pm, and then **Mon 11 May** at the *Railway Inn*, Glengarnock at 7.30pm.



The Ship Inn at Drummore

Open Tues-Sun from 3pm.
Food served between 5pm and 8pm.

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and a selection of both bottled and keg beers available

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latest cask ales and our selection of delicious home-baked cakes.

Bookings also accepted via Facebook.
(Search for "The Ship Inn at Drummore")



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www.creebridge.co.uk Email: info@creebridge.co.uk

Creebridge House Hotel, Newton Stewart, Wigtonshire DG8 6NP

Historic Pubs

By Alan Graham

Over the years that CAMRA has been going, we have campaigned to save pubs, as well as real ale and breweries. One of the ways a pub can be saved is by highlighting any historic features it may have, inside or out. Pubs which are unspoiled by progress are often listed with Historic Scotland, which makes it difficult for the owners to carry out drastic alterations, which a change of use would probably involve.

Others, though, may have had some alterations, so don't qualify for listing but have kept a few traditional features. The Ayrshire & Wigtownshire CAMRA Branch is now looking for your help in finding any hidden gems that you may know of, to compile a Local Inventory of historic pub interiors and exteriors, to join a national database. They still deserve recognition and respect in any proposed alterations or refurbishments and it doesn't matter if no cask ale is sold. Age-wise, 1970 or before.

HISTORIC FEATURES could include old seating, counter, bar back or gantry, doors or windows, panelling, fireplaces, bell-pushes, decorative ceilings, original toilets and screens. It's unlikely you will find all of these but some old bench seating and wall-panelling could be enough to qualify.

HISTORIC PLANS may be those where there are still some remains of a multi-roomed layout, even if parts of walls have been removed, or an island bar. If the interior has been completely altered, it wouldn't qualify.

HISTORIC EXTERIORS are most likely to be found on multi-roomed pubs which have been opened out inside but have kept some of the original frontage.

At the moment the only historic pubs we are aware of in our branch area are the *Market Inn, Ayr*; *Volunteer Arms, Dalry*; *Turf Hotel, Irvine*; *Fanny by Gaslight, Kilmarnock*, *The Grapes, Stranraer* and the *Tavern Bar, Millport*. In a branch area that extends for a hundred miles, there must be some others, so I look forward to hearing from you.

You can send any updates to Alan Graham at pub.heritage@scotb.camra.org.uk



BRANCH CODE OF CONDUCT

Our wish is for everyone to enjoy themselves and have fun on our trips and events. However please remember that trip organisers have only volunteered to arrange times and /or travel arrangements and to provide information about the venue(s). CAMRA promotes responsible drinking and so excessive drinking will not be tolerated on CAMRA outings. Members should not behave in any manner that may bring the Campaign into disrepute. Any member doing so may be barred from future events. You are responsible for your own safety and wellbeing. If you have an existing medical condition that requires support you must bring your own backup/carer with you.

Beer Street crowned CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain

Beer Street (4.0%), an amber rye bitter by London Brewing has won CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain award, held at Liverpool Beer Festival.

After a year of local and regional blind judging heats, the Campaign's winter winners have been crowned. The category winners now go forward to the final judging in May at CAMRA's Cambridge Beer Festival where they'll battle it out to take the crown of Supreme Champion 2026.

Cairngorm's session stout, **Black Gold (4.4%)**, took home silver, and **Green Jack's Baltic Trader Export Stout (10.5%)** won bronze.

Judges were blown away by the winner, with judging panel coordinator Christine Cryne describing **Beer Street (4.0%)** as: *"A sparkling golden amber bitter, with spicy rye and a roasty nose, sweet biscuit on the flavour, where the spicy rye notes increase and linger in the dry and slightly bitter finish. Very easy drinking."*

Reacting to the win, Director of London Brewing Senan Sexton said: *"We're absolutely delighted that our best bitter, Beer Street, has been named Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2026 by CAMRA. We've been brewing Beer Street since we founded the brewery in 2011, and it's a real testament to the skill and dedication of our head brewer, Alex, that he has continued to refine and elevate the recipe over the years. This accolade means a tremendous amount to a brewery of our size. It's not only a proud moment for our team, but also a fantastic boost that celebrates the enduring appeal of high-quality cask ales enjoyed in pubs across the UK."*



Doom and Gloom

Molson Coors are shutting the Sharp's brewery at Rock and will move all production, including Cornish favourite *Doom Bar*, elsewhere.

CAMRA Cornwall are calling for a Cornish pasty style protection for iconic local beers to prevent beers marketed as Cornish being brewed elsewhere in the UK. They have issued a stern warning to the global brewing giant, telling them that any attempts to market **Doom Bar**, and Sharp's award-winning beer range, made outside the Duchy as a 'Cornish' product will be met with a robust and vocal campaign in response.

CAMRA fears that the brewing giant could follow in the footsteps of Carlsberg, who market **Wainwrights** as a 'Lake District Original' despite brewing it over 100 miles away in Wolverhampton.

CAMRA Chief Executive Tom Stainer said: "This news is just another example of a global brewing giant destroying the nation's cask brewing heritage. We are losing far too many cask brands and the breweries who craft them at the hands of global brewers more interested in profit than our brewing heritage, and making sure drinkers can enjoy authentic products. Not only does it impact our local pubs and consumer choice, but it damages Cornish and UK brewing heritage, culture and of course jobs."



Members' Weekend 2026 – Check out St Albans: City of Ale

By Emily Ryans

With CAMRA's Members' Weekend coming up from 17–19 April, I'm thrilled to share the launch of a project that our South Herts organising team has been building especially for you: the St Albans: City of Ale website – now live at stalbanscityofale.org.uk.

City of Ale is our name for a St Albans-wide programme of beer, cider and pub-focused activity taking place around Members' Weekend and beyond (16–20 April 2026). Rather than everyone huddling in one hall, we want you to get out and explore St Albans' vibrant and welcoming pubs, clubs and venues – many of which have something special lined up just for this occasion.

The new website brings all of this together in one place. You'll find:

- **Confirmed events** – from tastings and tap takeovers to live music and special presentations.
- **Pub trails** – great routes for sampling the city's best real ales, ciders and perries while taking in historic sights.
- **Travel and accommodation info** – handy advice on getting here and where to stay.

Already featured are lively festivals, tastings and entertainment across a range of great venues – and more events are being added all the time. There's something for everyone, whether you're a passionate cask ale fan, a modern craft beer enthusiast, a cider devotee or just looking forward to a fun spring weekend in a beautiful, historic city.

If you haven't taken a look yet, please do – and keep coming back as the programme grows. We can't wait to welcome you to St Albans: City of Ale in April!

St Albans: City of Ale events are open to members and non-members alike. If you are unable to attend in person, then this year the conference will be a hybrid event – meaning that everyone can watch along and vote, whether that's in person at Members' Weekend, or from your own home. Register to attend the Members' Weekend, either in person or online, at camra.org.uk/members-weekend.



In Brief...

WHATPUB CLOSED DOWN

WhatPub finally closed on 10 December, with all clicks and links to the site now being redirected to the Pubs and Clubs page of the national website instead: camra.org.uk/pubs.

Just bookmark that link on your phone's homescreen for quick access to beer scoring.

FREE FESTIVAL ENTRY

CAMRA members can now get FREE entry to all CAMRA-run festivals across the UK. Because no two festivals are the same, there are different methods to claim your free entry. Some festivals may require you to purchase a free ticket in advance via Tkty, CAMRA's in-house ticket website. Others may simply need you to show your valid membership card at the door. Most festivals however will offer an admission package, which will include the cost of a glass, programme and token card as well as your free entry. Any admission will still be subject to venue capacity restrictions, and "in association" festivals (eg in partnership with a pub/club) may not offer the free entry. Check in advance as to what is available for each festival.

ALCOHOL LABELLING

Last year the Department of Health published its 10 Year Plan which included proposals for health warnings on alcohol labels, as well as reviewing the threshold for products to be described as low-alcohol and no-alcohol. CAMRA's Campaigns and communications manager Paul Edgeworth attended an industry roundtable with civil servants on 27 January to discuss the proposals as part of the policy development process. No firm decisions have been taken on what health warnings may look like. Further details and a public consultation are expected in the autumn.

ALCOHOL DUTY

Alcohol duty increased by 3.66% from 1 February 2026. Further details are available on the Treasury website here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/alcohol-duty-rates-change/alcohol-duty-uprating

In summer 2026 the Treasury will review the new alcohol duty system, which was introduced three years ago, including the draught duty rate charged on qualifying beer and cider served in the on trade.

FUTURE FESTIVAL DATES

Larbert Real Ale & Cider Festival:

Dobbie Hall, Main Street, Larbert
Friday 3 April, 1pm – 10.30pm
Saturday 4 April, 12 noon – 10.30pm

Beer Tent at Paisley Food & Drink Festival:

Abbey Close and Bridge Street, Paisley
Friday 24 (from 4pm) / Sat 25 April (from noon)

Glasgow Real Ale Festival:

The Briggait, 141 Bridgegate, Glasgow
Thursday 6 August – Saturday 8 August

Ayrshire Beer & Cider Festival:

Tron Concert Hall, South Beach, Troon
Thursday 1 October – Saturday 3 October

BURTON UNION SAVED

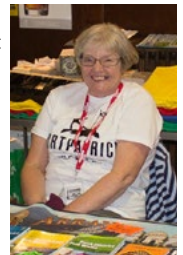
The six barrel Burton Union brewing kit that was gifted to Epochal Ales in Glasgow in 2024 has been saved following the demise of Epochal. A brand new brewery, Springbanks Brewery of Wolverhampton, made an offer that the landlords of the Glasgow premises accepted. Springbanks only came into being following the impending closure of Banks's brewery early in 2025.

REGIONAL CAMRA CHANGES

At the Scottish Branches Meeting on Saturday 7 February, Stewart Campbell, the only candidate, was unanimously ratified as Scottish Director to replace Stuart McMahon. Stuart has taken over as Regional Secretary from the retiring Lindsay Grant. Lindsay has also retired as Western Scotland Tasting Panel Chair (replaced by Ian Martin) and Scotland & Northern Ireland Champion Beer of Britain Co-ordinator (replacement still to be confirmed).

TRICIA TURPIE

It is with sadness that we report the death of Tricia Turpie on Sunday 22 February. Tricia was a regular volunteer festival staff member for many years and supported her husband Ray in his many CAMRA roles. Our condolences are extended to Ray and his family. Tricia's funeral will take place in Troon St Meddan's Church on Mon 16 March at 11.30am and thereafter to Holmsford Bridge Crematorium, Dregthorn at 12.30pm.



Volunteering

JOINING NEED ONLY BE THE START OF YOUR CAMRA ADVENTURE...

Get involved to get the most out of your membership!

Join the committee or attend a branch meeting

– If you are passionate about real ale or cider, joining the committee and helping promote real ale and cider is the most rewarding thing you can do. We're a friendly bunch who love real ale and cider, and you can give as much time as you are able. We're a small committee with many members juggling multiple roles, so any help would be great!

Come along on our socials – You don't have to be a CAMRA member to come on our socials, but it's a chance to socialise with other real ale lovers, discover new pubs, places and ales.

Write an article for the magazine – *Full Pints* currently relies on members providing interesting stories on places, pubs and breweries that they've visited. Why not tell us why your local is the best pub in the branch, review a beer festival you've attended, or share a favourite weekend-away destination? All contributions are welcome.

SMALL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE BRANCH...

Assist the Pub Data Coordinator by surveying pubs to keep our pubs database up-to-date. This is easily done by going to the pub's page on the national website and checking if the information is correct. Updates can be added by simply clicking the 'Suggest an Edit' button and filling in the relevant sections. This includes making sure the photo is up-to-date, too.

Help to distribute Full Pints each quarter – Full Pints is currently distributed across the branch by a couple of volunteers. We would always welcome help in this area. Also checking that there are current membership forms and magazine holders available in each pub.

THINGS THAT TAKE TWO MINUTES...

Adopt a pub (or more) in your locality and keep us informed of what's on the bar, or any news and events. Posting the ale line-up on our Facebook page, for instance.

Score your beer when you are out and about. This ensures the best pubs make it into the Good Beer Guide and helps us to monitor how a pub is doing. If you don't know how to score a beer, see our 'Beer Scoring' article on page 31 for a step-by-step guide.

...AND LASTLY...

Make sure you've signed up for our monthly branch communications! Roughly half of our members don't currently receive branch communications, and that means missing out on the latest pub news, as well as our branch diary and national goings-on, straight to their inbox each month. All you have to do is log into your CAMRA account, go to 'Marketing Preferences' and slide the 'Branch Email' tab on.

CURRENT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

We've got a couple of vacancies in our branch which we're keen to fill. Would you be interested in helping us? There's no specific time commitment but a few hours each month would be expected. Contact our branch chair Lindsay Grant for more information if you are interested in either of the roles. Email: branchchair@ayr.camra.org.uk

FULL PINTS ADVERTISING MANAGER

We are looking for someone to contact existing and potential advertisers for *Full Pints* and to coordinate any required amendments or new artwork with the Editor and Treasurer. Current requirement is to make contact four times a year, plus any follow-up calls.

SOUTH AYRSHIRE SOCIAL SECRETARY

The role is to organise regular social events, currently monthly, around South Ayrshire real ale pubs and to let them know in advance of the social.

WIGTOWNSHIRE SOCIAL SECRETARY

This role is to organise regular social events around the Wigtownshire pubs, at times that suitable for the limited public transport available in the area. Feed back to the committee any news or updates about the outlets in the area.

YOUNG PERSONS' CONTACT

This role is to be a point of contact for any of our younger members (we tend to look at that as being under 40!) and to organise socials and events for them on a regular basis, some of which may be based around non-cask outlets.

Rock and Ale

By Graeme Perry

Did you know that the Ayrshire Real Ale Festival is not the only successful annual festival held in Troon? Winterstorm is a rock music festival held in the Troon concert halls in November each year. Winterstorm 2025, the ninth festival, was held from 27–29 November, featuring over 40 bands across the weekend. The headliners were Ugly Kid Joe, Sweet and Praying Mantis. Rock royalty was also present when Steve Harris of Iron Maiden, played on the Saturday night with his second band, British Lion.

During Winterstorm, members of Ayrshire & Wigtownshire CAMRA Branch staff a real ale bar operated by the Harbour Bar, Troon. This year we sold six different ales, including Robinsons' Trooper – Iron Maiden's ale. How could we not sell Trooper when Steve Harris was going to be there? I managed to persuade Steve to pose for a photo behind our bar with me and Sandy. We sold a humungous amount of ale over the weekend, approximately 1,440 pints, with the biggest seller by far being Trooper!

Winterstorm was, as always, a great and very well run festival which featured new, not so new, famous and want to be famous, rock bands. Three days and nights of good music, with real ale on tap. Other drinks and food were available throughout the weekend and a well-stocked merchandise stall. We met a lot of rockers from across the UK and beyond – some come to Winterstorm every year and it was great to chat and have a laugh with them about music, ale and loads of other stuff. It was a tough gig but someone had to do it!

Winterstorm 2026 is on **26–28 November 2026**. I anticipate the real ale bar will be there again and I will be able to serve fine ales and see and hear more great rock bands. If you'd like to help out, then please have a chat with me. Full details of this year's festival are at: www.winterstorm.co.uk



Happy bar staff at Winterstorm



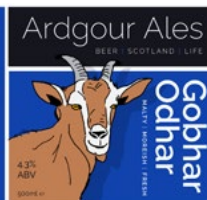
Steve Harris with Graeme Perry and Sandy Stirton

Champion Beer of Britain Heat

The Champion Beer of Britain Session Bottled Beer heat was hosted by the Renfrewshire Branch on 30 November. The results were:

SESSION BOTTLED BEERS:

- 1st Ardgor Gobhar Odhar
- 2nd Five Kingdoms Summerisle
- 3rd Five Kingdoms McGregor's Mild
- 4th Five Kingdoms Hillbillie
- 5th Abernyste Listening Post Pilsner
- 6th Ardgor Gobhar Shamna
- 7th Abernyste Ballo Blonde



Hospitality Business Rates

Thanks to everyone who took part in CAMRA's e-lobby ahead of the various budgets in contacting your MPs and MSPs asking for greater support for pubs and clubs, and to overhaul the whole business rates system. It's fair to say the the UK Government's initial proposals did not go down well, and a new proposal was announced, which will still cost most businesses significantly more than they are currently paying.

The Scottish Parliament voted to pass the Scottish Government's Budget, which was announced in January. As the SNP Scottish Government doesn't have a majority, they came to an agreement with the Scottish Liberal Democrats to pass the Budget.

This deal included re-instating the 40% business rates discount for hospitality business for the next three years, which was going to be reduced to 15%.

A summary of where things are at with business rates in each nation is as follows:

SCOTLAND:

- The current 40% discount is being retained for three years.
- The revaluation is still going ahead, so there will still be rises in bills.
- Transitional relief will be available so that any rises in rates bills will be capped at 15% for small businesses and 30% for medium-sized businesses.
- Pubs in island communities will continue to receive 100% relief on their business rates bills.
- Ahead of May's Scottish Parliament elections we are asking parties to commit to fundamental reform of the business rates system for pubs.

ENGLAND:

- A new, lower multiplier has been introduced.
- Transitional reliefs will limit bill increases as a result of revaluation
- A further 15% discount will then be applied.
- Bills will be frozen in 2027/28 and 2028/29
- The Government are reviewing methodology for calculating business rates bills for pubs.

WALES:

- The current 40% discount is ending in April at the same time as bills are rising due to the revaluation.
- The discount is being reduced to 15% for 2026/27 only.
- Ahead of May's Senedd/Welsh Parliament elections we are asking parties to commit to fundamental reform of the business rates system for pubs.

NORTHERN IRELAND:

- The rates revaluation due in April 2026 has been scrapped.
- The Minister for Finance is considering next steps.

Festive Meals and Charity Donations



South Ayrshire Festive Lunch in the Anchorage Hotel, Troon on 29 November. The raffle raised £100 which was donated to Return To Life, our beer festival's nominated charity for 2025.



North Ayrshire Festive Lunch in The Twa Dugs, West Kilbride on 17 December. The raffle raised £225 which was donated to Motor Neuron Disease Research.



East Ayrshire Festive Lunch in the Weston Tavern, Kilmours on 29 November. The raffle raised £127 which was donated to Ayrshire Cancer Support.



Jennings Jaunt: BEER OF THE FESTIVAL PRESENTATION

By Stuart McMahon

Twenty members and supporters of our CAMRA Branch headed to Cockermouth in Cumbria to attend our Beer of the Festival presentation, for Jennings' Sneck Lifter, on Tuesday 24 February 2026.

Sneck Lifter was the clear winner from customer's votes at the Ayrshire Real Ale Festival held in Troon back in October 2025. As has been customary for the past few years now, our Social Secretary Matt Miller managed to organise a trip down to the winning brewery so that we could present the certificate in person.

Branch Chair Lindsay Grant presented the award to Head Brewer Buster Grant. Following the presentation, attendees were then given a tour of the brewery, which only reopened in June 2025 having been closed by Carlsberg Marstons in 2022.

There are ambitious plans to develop the site under the new ownership. These include installing some new brewing kit and converting the former maltings building into some on-site hotel accommodation.





Cock & Bull



Sandy in his corner



The Swan Inn



Lanes Café for breakfast



Jennings Tour



Jennings Taproom

Most folk travelled to Cockermouth on Monday 23 February, either via Carlisle or Penrith. Matt Miller and myself were sharing an apartment in Cockermouth, so after dropping our bags off and a quick wander around the town centre and across the river towards the old castle we headed to the *Cock & Bull* for our first pint, where we met up with Jim Frater. Of the five ales on offer **Coniston Bluebird Bitter** was in good condition and very enjoyable.

With a few others having joined us, we then headed over to *The Swan* and enjoyed a **Brakspear Oxford Gold**. Sandy Morris chose an appropriate corner to sit in! With stomachs rumbling, we managed to get some tables and food at *The Bitter End*, just a short walk down from *The Swan*.

The Bitter End had five beers available and has it's own in-house micro-brewery, with two of their own beers on tap – **Jewkle** and **Bitter Beck** – plus a nice **Silloth Stout** from **Andrew Paul Rowe Brewing** based in Silloth – a brewery I'd never heard of before.

We finished the evening at *The Castle Bar* which had four ales and a cider available. **Bowness Bay Swift Best** was my bedtime tipple.

An early reconaissance on Tuesday morning by Ian Middleditch located the lovely Lanes Café which did some good value breakfasts – we ate here every day of the trip.

Most folk did their own thing in the morning, with some of the group having a quick pint in *The Brown Cow* where **Theakston Best Bitter** and **Lancaster**



The Bitter End

Blonde were available. Then it was just a short walk over to the brewery for the presentation.

After leaving the brewery it was time for food again and my choice was to go to *The Bush* where **Wainwright's Gold** and **Jennings Cumberland Ale** were on tap. The evening finished back up at the *Cock & Bull* for a lovely pint of **Ennerdale Darkest** porter.

Some folk left us to go home on Wednesday, but everyone else got the bus over to Keswick. Surprisingly this was to be my first visit to the bustling town.

Somehow we managed to split into two groups as soon as we got off the bus, with one group walking down towards the lake, but the rest headed to the town centre, with the first pub being *The Bank Tavern* and a **Tirril Borrowdale Bitter** being the day's starter. From there we tried to get in to the *Dog & Gun* but it was really busy with no seats. As we were heading out, the other group were also trying to get in to no avail! A quick hello and goodbye to them, we then headed down to *The Wainwright*.



The Wainwright

Six ales were available here, and what was to be my best pint of the trip was partaken here – **Fell Crag**, a 3.8% bitter in excellent condition.

With the rain still coming down, it was just a two-minute walk to a **Robinson's** pub, the *Lake Road Inn*, where **Dizzy Blonde** and **Derwent Winter Dip** were on offer.

Next door was the *Dog & Gun*, and so on our second attempt, we managed to squeeze in and get a table for the five of us. Of the seven ales available I had **Allendale Wagtail** and **Kirkby Lonsdale Dark Side of the Lune**.

The map we'd printed out from the CAMRA website with all the real ale pubs was slightly deceptive in that it was of a really large scale, and what looked like quite a long walk to *The Fox Tap* was actually only a few minute's away, hidden behind the main street. This is the taproom for the **Keswick Brewery** and the taproom and outdoor seating areas are all very modern and fresh looking. Yet again, another six ales, all from **Keswick**, were available. My initial choices – **Keswick Gold** and **Dark Horse** – were both very enjoyable, and as it was still raining we decided to stay here for a second pint.

The other group had headed back on an earlier bus to Cockermouth for food in a restaurant that they had



The Fox Tap

prebooked, but the remaining five of us stayed in Keswick and had a meal in the *Golden Lion*, a Greene King pub, where I had **Scrumdown** plus a tasty burger.

On arrival back in Cockermouth we had a small nightcap in the *Castle Inn*, although others went back up to *The Swan*.

Thursday saw us all heading home – some direct via Carlisle, others via Penrith, and then Carlisle.

We were a wee bit early for the first pub to open in Penrith – the *Board & Elbow*, but after a 20 minute wait we enjoyed a good pint of **Timothy Taylor Landlord**. Then it was across the road to the *Dockray Hall*, where the others had gone on arrival (they got the bus after our one, but were getting an earlier train). We had a quick rendezvous with them, whilst supping a pint of **Keswick Brewery's Keswick Bitter** or **Cumbrian Ales' Loweswater Gold**.

Unfortunately, the *Fell Brewery taproom* wasn't going to be open until 4pm so we then went into a very quiet *Robin Hood* located next door, and had some **Lancaster Blonde**.

A short walk up the hill towards the station and a visit in to a recently opened pub, *The Old Victoria*, was a good decision. There was only one ale available – **Bowness Bay Fell Walker** – but it was very good.



The Old Victoria

Final stop in Penrith was also a fairly recently reopened pub – *The Agricultural Inn*. Four beers were available – I had **Carlisle Cumbrian Bitter** and **Bowness Bay Swan Blonde**.

That should have been our last pub of the trip, but word had reached us the previous day that **Lancaster Brewery's** new pub at Carlisle Station, the *Scott & Brassey*, had just opened following a £400k renovation, so we managed to get on the train before our booked one, and had time for pint in the new pub. There's seven handpumps available for cask ales, plus one for ciders and numerous 'craft' taps as well. I had the **Lancaster IPA** which was excellent (so it should have been for only it's second day on tap!) A worthy addition to Carlisle's beer scene.

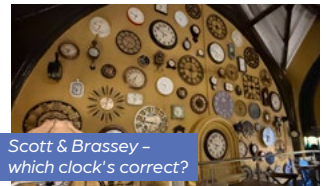
Another great and enjoyable trip. Where will it be next year? You'll need to nominate your favourite beer at this year's Ayrshire Beer & Cider Festival in Troon from 1-3 October 2026.



Scott & Brassey



Scott & Brassey



Scott & Brassey – which clock's correct?

East Ayrshire head to Preston

Our East Ayrshire social group is planning a trip by train to Preston for three nights from Tues 26 May 2026.

Accommodation will be in a city centre hotel with the intention of visiting some of Preston's best pubs as well as others reachable using the local transport system.



The Black Horse will be one of the pubs visited

Return train travel will be on Friday 29 May. Attendees need to book their own hotel rooms and travel. Anyone interested in going, or looking for more information, please contact our East Ayrshire Social Secretary Alex Burt as soon as possible at east-ayrshire@ayr.camra.org.uk

Voting for CAMRA AGM open soon

Voting in CAMRA's National Executive elections will be available after Monday 9 March, the results of which will be announced at the Members' Weekend in St Albans in April.



Every CAMRA member is entitled to vote and will receive details either by email or post – please take a few moments to check out the candidates' hustings on the CAMRA website and Discourse forum and use your vote.

Conference motions have now been published – if you feel strongly about any of them, why not plan a short break down to the St Albans Members' Weekend and take part in some of the debates.

Failing that, you can also join in and vote online this year.



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Branch AGM 2024

The branch AGM will be held on **Saturday 28 March 2026** in **St Columba Church Hall, Midton Road, Ayr KA7 2SL** at 2pm.

Any motions for debate (agenda item 9) should be sent to Branch Chair Lindsay Grant at branchchair@ayr.camra.org.uk by close of play on Saturday 21 March. Such motions need to be proposed and seconded by branch members.

AGENDA:

Attendance and Apologies

1. Minutes of 2025 AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. Branch Chair's Report
4. Treasurer's Report, Adoption of Accounts and Appointment of Examiners of Accounts
5. Branch Constitution
6. Election of Office Bearers
- 6a) Branch Committee
- 6b) Area Social Secretaries
- 6c) Corresponding Committee Members
7. Campaigning Targets 2025–2026 (listed below)
8. Campaigning Targets 2026–2027 (proposed)
9. Competent Motions (notified to Chair prior to meeting)
10. Any Other Competent Business
11. Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

CAMPAIGNING TARGETS

2025-26



Our targets for 2026–27 will be agreed at our forthcoming AGM. Current suggestions include increasing the number of beer scores submitted by our members, and better promotion of the benefits of CAMRA membership.

Have you any ideas or suggestions as to what our branch could do to improve our campaigning locally? Please send any suggestions to Andrew Middleditch at campaigns@ayr.camra.org.uk.

Below is a reminder of our current targets – we'll present an update on how successful, or not, they were at our AGM on 28 March.



1

Encourage younger people to attend CAMRA supported social events.



3

Increase member awareness, engagement and participation in branch events.



2

Raise the branch profile within local media and utilise advertising to promote it.



4

Promote the availability of real ale pils to publicans.

Donald Clark has intimated his retirement as South Ayrshire Social Coordinator come the AGM. Thanks to Donald for all his input over many years. Janis Wood will also retire as Full Pints Advertising Manager and Five Kingdoms Brewery Liaison Officer come the AGM. Thanks to Janis for her work in fulfilling these roles. Janis will continue as a Festival Volunteer Manager. Additionally, although Mick Lee wishes to continue as Pubs Coordinator, he seeks someone to assist him with that role. Anybody interested in taking up a role or, indeed, just being an 'ordinary' committee member should contact Lindsay Grant branchchair@ayr.camra.org.uk in advance of the AGM.

Branch Committee and Corresponding Members

Chair	Lindsay Grant	branchchair@ayr.camra.org.uk
Vice-chair 1/North Ayrshire Socials	Ian Middleditch	north-ayrshire@ayr.camra.org.uk
Vice-chair 2	Ronnie Beveridge	website@ayr.camra.org.uk
Branch Secretary	Kenneth Middleditch	secretary@ayr.camra.org.uk
Treasurer	Ian Fairbairn	treasurer@ayr.camra.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Graeme Watt	membership@ayr.camra.org.uk
Social Secretary	Matt Miller	social@ayr.camra.org.uk
Press & Publicity Officer	Stuart McMahon	press@ayr.camra.org.uk
Full Pints Editor	Stuart McMahon	fullpints@ayr.camra.org.uk
Full Pints Advertising	Vacant	advertising@ayr.camra.org.uk
Pubs Coordinator	Mick Lee	pubs@ayr.camra.org.uk
Clubs Coordinator	Ian Martin	clubs@ayr.camra.org.uk
Website Coordinator	Ronnie Beveridge	website@ayr.camra.org.uk
Beer Festival Organiser	Matt Miller	festival@ayr.camra.org.uk
East Ayrshire Socials	Alex Burt	east-ayrshire@ayr.camra.org.uk
Wigtownshire Socials	Vacant	wigtownshire@ayr.camra.org.uk
Campaigns Coordinator	Andrew Middleditch	campaigns@ayr.camra.org.uk
Public Affairs Coordinator	Ray Turpie	public_affairs@ayr.camra.org.uk
Public Transport Liaison	Charles Fisher	transport@ayr.camra.org.uk
Young Members' Contact	Vacant	
Ordinary Member	Eric Johns	
CORRESPONDING MEMBERS		
South Ayrshire Socials	Vacant	south-ayrshire@ayr.camra.org.uk
Kenny Gillies, Douglas Graham, Jon Mansell Malcolm McNeill, Tony Scott, Bob Wallace, Roger Cope		

Every CAMRA branch adheres to CAMRA's privacy policy. Within our branch we use a centralised communications tool for sending out our monthly emails to our branch members.

However, for certain aspects of our work, for example, the beer festival, we will occasionally need to contact folk directly by way of having a 'legitimate interest'. Any communications from our branch will contain details of how to unsubscribe from the emails if that is your desire. However, our hope is that as a member of CAMRA, you value the information that is sent to you, and that it is useful, particularly at branch level. If it isn't, then please talk to us in the first instance so we can understand your concerns.

You can check your email address is correct at www.camra.org.uk. Log in using your membership details, and select 'Edit your membership information'.

GETTING AROUND



Listed below are some useful contact details for transport providers in our Branch area.

STAGECOACH WEST SCOTLAND stagecoachbus.com

Tel: 01294 607007 (Ardrossan)
01292 613500 (Ayr)
01770 302000 (Arran)
0345 121 0190 (Disability Helpdesk)

SHUTTLE BUSES shuttlebuses.co.uk

Tel: 0800 072 0373

MCGILL'S BUSES mccgillsbuses.co.uk

Tel: 08000 51 56 51

SCOTRAIL scotrail.co.uk

Tel: 0344 811 0141

CALEDONIAN MACBRAYNE calmac.co.uk

Tel: 0800 066 5000

TRAVELINE SCOTLAND travelinescotland.com

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY BUS OPERATORS LIST
<https://bit.ly/3HnE8gH>



LARBERT REAL ALE AND CIDER FESTIVAL

Fri 3 / Sat 4 April

Dobbie Hall, Main Street, Larbert
5 mins walk from Larbert Rail Station

OPENING TIMES:

Fri 3rd: 1pm - 10.30pm. Sat 4th: Noon - 10.30pm.

50-60 Real Ales plus 15+ Ciders

Also Gin, Prosecco and Wine Bar

Free Admission for CAMRA Members (£2 glass/programme)
Non-members: £8

Brewery News

FIVE KINGDOMS

www.fivekingdomsbrewery.com

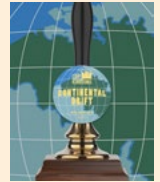
Just the usual busy-ness from Scotland's most southerly brewery...

We kicked 2026 off by releasing a collab brew with BrewToon from Peterhead which we are excited about. *2manyipas* is a 6.5% Belgian IPA packed with European hops and Belgian yeast giving the perfect balance of fruit and spice flavours.



Our diary is already filling up with beer festivals and events throughout 2026. We are continuing our 'Cask Only' series with a few new beers being released exclusively to pubs in the coming months. One of them is *Continental Drift* - a 4.8%

Golden Ale. It's a bright, easy drinking Belgian style golden ale that gently pulls together brewing traditions from across Europe.



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Brewery News contd...

ARRAN BREWERY

www.arranbrewery.co.uk

The brewery's been busy stocking up with most of their beers including some seasonal specials. The Special Reserve versions of **Milestone** and **Clyde Puffer** have been put into their wooden casks to mature. In addition **Sleeping Warrior** has been given the Special Reserve treatment in a Sauternes cask and will emerge as an 8.3% Barley Wine. **Arran Id**, their Black IPA has also been brewed and bottled for the first time in several years. And in between the brewing, Yorick has also found time to polish the copper tanks in the brewhouse – they are now gleaming!



BLACKSHAW BREWERY

www.facebook.com/BlackshawBrewery

SEAGATE BREWERY

www.seagatebrewery.co.uk

The brewery is looking to get cask into the Glenisle Hotel, Lamlash. A new porter called **Dockyard** is due to be released soon. Will be attending the Arran Farmers Markets at Bellevue Farm throughout the year. **Monday Morning Mocha** was an entry in this year's Champion Winter Beer of Britain competitions in Liverpool, but didn't reach the overall finals. Collaborations happening with two Belgian brewers later this year to produce a 9% Tripel, and a monster 18% Quintuple!

ROCK BREWERY

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61575147310819>

or [instagram.com/rockbreweryarran](https://www.instagram.com/rockbreweryarran)

Their first cask ale, brewed exclusively for the **Ormidale Hotel**, was a 4.5% Amber Ale called **Dale Ale** and was available at the end of November. Some bigger and better brewing kit was getting installed at their premises in **Lamlash** over the Christmas period. Rock is now contract brewing the ales for the **Cladach Beach House**, formerly known as **Arran Botanical Drinks**. The in-house brewkit that resided there is now with **Rock Brewery**.

WIGTOWN BREWERY

www.wigtownbrewery.co.uk

PORTPATRICK BREWERY

www.facebook.com/portpatrickbrewery

Local Real Ale Pub News

In this roundup, demand or no demand...?

The **Railway Inn, Glengarnock**, located next to the railway station is now fully open, with one ale available, plus a varied range of bottle conditioned beers – well worth a quick stop off if passing by on the train. The enthusiastic owners are CAMRA members and are actively encouraging customers to try the ales. See page 29 for a Q&A with the new owners.

Not to be confused with the above, but the **Railway Inn, Whithorn** has reopened. We're awaiting confirmation on beer availability.

Souters Inn, Kirkoswald, which is now owned by the RAD Group, is reported to have stopped selling real ale due to low demand, but hopes to reintroduce it come the summer.

However, the nearby **Kirkmichael Arms, Kirkmichael**, is preparing to install a second handpump due to demand...

It has been reported that in **Irvine, Bar 10** located in Bridgegate has recently opened and has two handpumps.

The **Anchorage, Troon** is still promising to have real ale but has yet to introduce it regularly. The former **Glen Park Hotel, Ayr** reopened as the **Savoy 5** before Christmas. They indicated on Facebook that real ale would be available, but that has yet to be introduced...

Fanny By Gaslight, a former ale outlet in **Kilmarnock**, reopened briefly, then closed again shortly afterwards, and has just reopened again... How long will it last this time? In the same category is **McKays, Troon** which has closed again. Landlord Greene King is actively looking again for someone to take on the tenancy, tempting them with a potential refurbishment... Time will tell.

The **Crown Hotel, Newton Stewart** no longer sells real ale or bottle-conditioned ales

Henry's Bay House, Stranraer has closed down and is now a private house.

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Breaking News

BREWDOG ENTERS ADMINISTRATION AND IS SOLD OFF

Tilray Brands has reportedly purchased BrewDog for just £33m, despite being valued at around £1-2bn in recent times.



Tilray is a leading global lifestyle and consumer packaged goods company and one of the largest diversified craft beverage platforms globally, with a growing portfolio of other craft beer brands. Tilray CEO Irwin Simon said, *"BrewDog is one of the most recognized craft beer brands in the world, built on creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and a passionate community. Our focus is not to change what makes BrewDog special, but to strengthen the business fundamentals behind it."*

As part of the transaction, Tilray has acquired certain strategic assets of BrewDog UK brewing and its subsidiaries, including just 11 of their bars located in Birmingham, Canary Wharf, DogTap Ellon, DogHouse Edinburgh, Edinburgh Lothian Road, Manchester Peter Street, Paddington, Seven Dials, Tower Hill, Waterloo and Dublin.

However, this has left 484 staff immediately redundant following the closure of 38 bars, after being given just 25 minutes' notice of a 15-minute all-hands call, on which there was no chance to ask questions. Investors in Brewdog's Equity for Punks crowdfunding scheme will also lose all of their investments.

There will no doubt be further updates to this story over the coming weeks.

OVERTONE BREWERY ENTERS LIQUIDATION - BUT IS TAKEN OVER

Glasgow-based Overtone Brewery was founded in 2018



by Bowei Wang and Dan Miller, and gained a reputation for producing some decent craft beers. The company, sadly, became insolvent and was wound up after a court order on 13 February.

However a few days later, the business and assets were acquired by the owners of Williams Brothers Brewing under a new company called Playlist Brewing Ltd.

It is reported that they hope to re-employ former staff and keep the Overtone brand in production.

CAMRA and SIBA Promote Indie Beer

Beer drinkers can now quickly spot which breweries are independent and which pubs serve indie beer, thanks to the addition of SIBA's INDIE BEER mark across the CAMRA website.



The INDIE BEER campaign, launched by the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA), is designed to help drinkers know who really brews their beer. Research commissioned by SIBA found that three-quarters of people feel the marketing of previously independent brands that are now in the ownership of global brewers is misleading. To address this, the campaign offers a simple brewery checker tool at indiebeer.uk and an 'assured' mark that independent brewers can display with pride.

CAMRA Chairman, Ash Corbett-Collins, said: *"Unfortunately, global brewers often market their own brands as if they were independent. They limit market access for independents, cutting consumer choice, and that's why this campaign matters. It is vital that consumers have access to information about where their beer is being brewed, and whether it's in independent ownership. Next time you're at the bar, look out for the logo and enjoy discovering something truly independent."*

Indie Beer campaign spokesperson Neil Walker, said: *"I'd like to thank CAMRA for their continued support of the Indie Beer campaign, which continues to go from strength to strength and is now fully integrated into their website, making it even easier to find out which breweries are indie."*

"The demand for independent beer has never been stronger but too many people are still being tricked by global brands masquerading as 'craft' – so look out for the Indie Beer mark and you can be sure the beer you're buying is from a genuine independent brewery."

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thethreereasonslargs

Coming to a cinema near you...

A heartwarming film is set to hit cinema screens across the UK at the start of March, focusing on pubs, pints and people.

Mother's Pride – released on 6 March – is rooted in our historic pub culture, with a stellar cast including Martin Clunes, Jonno Davies, James Buckley, Josie Lawrence, and Mark Addy.

Centring on a family with just 14 days to save their ailing pub, they start their journey into brewing their own cask beer as a last-ditch attempt to keep their doors open.

What starts as a practical way to keep the pub running, they soon enter the 'Great British Beer Awards', not only changing their lives but mending a grieving family and bringing a fractured village together.

Featuring CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain competition, some of you may recognise where the filming took place and some of the people featured!

A bartender smiles while serving drinks in a cozy, dimly lit pub with a rustic stone interior. Glass bottles and people are visible in the background.

The film shows what can be achieved by working together to protect our pubs – and the power of the people campaigning for their survival. It is a reminder that sometimes the smallest ideas can spark the biggest change.

Reinvigorating pride in pubs, 'Mother's Pride' places the pub at the heart of the village – reminding locals it is still the life and soul of the community.



With UK pubs battling against a backdrop of rising costs, the film's release couldn't come at a better time to shine a spotlight on the day-to-day struggles pubs face. Which we – with your help – are campaigning to reverse.

Sky high energy bills and hikes in Employer National Insurance contributions, alongside the short-term and short-sighted government decisions on business rates, means an increasing number of pubs are facing the harsh reality of having to close their doors for good.

We need to see a meaningful support package for pubs – and we need to see it now. Without support to protect our pubs and our pints, we will lose an essential lifeline, wiping out the heart of our communities.

This beautiful film will appeal to CAMRA members while reminding the public of the power of the pub. Check your local cinema listings for dates, and take a look at the trailer for a taster – www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyDJXrMhWSI – we look forward to 'Disco Morris' featuring at CAMRA festivals across the UK!

Learn with CAMRA

Did you know that CAMRA has over 169 articles and courses related to pubs, beers and ciders? You can find them all at learn.camra.org.uk/discover

One of the most recent additions is [A Beginners Guide to Cask Carbonation](#), written by Rachel Hendry, a prominent wine and cider writer who also works in a large bar. This initial article explains what carbonation is, and why it is important in beer.



FRASERS BAR

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Tel: 01475 530518



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THE TWA DUGS
GOOD TO THE LAST

SAVE THE DATE: Our next beer festival – 28/29 August 2026

Ask the Publican...

The next participant in our series of 'Ask the Publican' is **Stuart Cambridge**, the new owner of the **Railway Inn, Glengarnock**, along with his wife **Yvonne**.



Pictured above:
Yvonne and Stuart Cambridge

- Q1. How long have you been at the Railway Inn?**
Yvonne and I bought the Railway Inn on 13 November 2025 and opened the door to the public on 20 November 2025.
- Q2. What encouraged you to become part of the hospitality industry?**
Both Yvonne and I believe that hospitality sits at the intersection of service, creativity and human connection; not only did it offer us a career path but also a purpose to bring an environment where guests leave with a story worth telling.
- Q3. What advice would you give someone thinking of taking on a pub?**
Taking on a pub is exciting, where passion has to be matched with planning, getting to understand the community that you will be serving, be prepared for a change of life style including long hours, late nights and constant problem solving whilst having the ability to stay calm under pressure matter just as much as a good drinks menu.
- Q4. What's the biggest challenge facing you at present?**
At the moment one of the biggest challenges we are facing is finding the balance with leading the business and leading it with confidence, it's a steep learning curve from managing stock and finances to understanding regulations but also to building a reliable team, working hard to earn the trust of our customers, many of whom have long standing connections to the pub, all have clear expectations of what it should be.
- Q5. What's the one item in the pub you couldn't live without?**
One item we truly couldn't live without is the cash till, it's the heartbeat of the pub, keeping service flowing, tracking every sale and helping us stay on top of the day to day running of the business, it represents the rhythm of a busy shift, the steady stream of orders, friendly exchanges with customers and a buzz that makes the place feel alive. Its more than just a piece of equipment, it's a small but essential part of the pub.
- Q6. What's the pub's Best Food / Beer pairing?**
Yvonne likes prosecco with any food, I like a nice Wensleydale cheese along with a La Trappe Tripel.
- Q7. Favourite holiday destination?**
We both love travelling and have recently discovered a love for cruising however Florida is our favourite family holiday destination.
- Q8. Favourite pub/restaurant in the UK?**
We both love food and try to visit a variety of places, Yvonne's favourite bar is the Champagne Bar in Glasgow where she can be found on most days out...
- Q9. Favourite music to play during the day?**
Yvonne likes chilled out music and at the moment her favourite song is Tennessee Whiskey by Chris Stapleton, I have a wide diverse taste in music from Cat Stevens to Devo, my music playlist has been commented on several times.....all good.
- Q10. If you weren't in the hospitality industry, what would you like to be doing?**
Yvonne was enjoying her retirement, helping out at her friend's doggy day care business whilst I would still be helping out my friend with his electrical business.
- Q11. What's your favourite interest/hobby outside of the pub?**
We both like travelling and socialising with friends.
- Q12. What's next for the Railway Inn?**
The Railway Inn is an exciting blend of building on our roots and exploring fresh ideas that will make the pub even more central to the community. We are both focused on strengthening a warm service, great drinks and a welcoming atmosphere. Further ahead we would love to expand the pub's role as a place where traditions thrive and new memories are made – our journey is just the beginning and we are both excited for what comes next.

Recent Socials

Around 50 people joined our Festive Crawl around Prestwick and Troon on Monday 29 December 2025 at some point during the day's wanderings.

The day started in the Prestwick Pioneer, after which folks jumped on either the No. 14 bus service or ScotRail train to Troon. First stop in Troon was The Portland, followed by the Harbour Bar and finally Number Forty-Seven.



The Portland



Enjoying The Portland



Prestwick Pioneer



Number Forty-Seven



Three Stuarts (Armstrong, Dunbar & McMahon) on the 2-Pub social in Largs on 31 January.



Good turnout for our first social in the Railway Inn, Glengarnock on 19 February.



Your editor joined some of the Dumfries & Stewarty members for a 3-pub social in Dumfries on 24 Jan.

The UK's No. 1 beer and pub guide



Recognise the best, with the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2026. The definitive beer drinker's guide for those seeking the best pints in the nation's pubs.

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Beers you've never heard of with people you won't forget

Real stories > reels & stories



Get free entry to over 100 beer festivals across the UK with a CAMRA membership.



Beer Scoring

WhatPub finally closed on the 10 December, with all clicks and links to the site now being redirected to the Pubs and Clubs page of the national website instead: camra.org.uk/pubs

All CAMRA members are encouraged to score any real ales you may drink in pubs around the country. Whilst on the website if you notice any errors in the content of the listing you can also submit an update.

There are three very simple steps to score beers on your smartphone or computer:

- 1. Sign in** to camra.org.uk/pubs with your CAMRA membership number and password. You can access this on any smartphone or computer – it is useful to save this link as shortcut to your phone's homescreen for quick and easy access.
- 2. Select the pub** you wish to score.
- 3. Score your beer** using the criteria opposite, select the brewery and then the beer and finally click the Submit button.

The **Top Scorer** from our branch over the past three months once again was Kenneth Middleditch with 52 scores. Stuart McMahon was second with 37 scores.

Our **Top 5 pubs for the past three months** (with more than one visit) with average scores over 3.0 are the *Crown Hotel*, Portpatrick (4.33); *Grapes*, Stranraer (4.1); *Railway Inn*, Glengarnock (3.82); *Kirkmichael Arms*, Kirkmichael (3.8); *Ship Inn*, Drummore (3.8).

Pubs with the most scores for the past three months are the *Twa Dugs*, West Kilbride (67); *Number Forty Seven*, Troon (25); *Railway Inn*, Glengarnock (25); *Grapes*, Stranraer (24); and the *Village Inn*, Fairlie (20).

HOW TO SCORE A BEER

0	Should only be used if no cask ale is available at all.
0.5 - 1 POOR	Beer is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment. Add a comment why it's poor.
2 AVERAGE	Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way.
3 GOOD	Good beer in good form. You want to stay for another pint and may have the beer again
4 VERY GOOD	Excellent beer in excellent condition. You stay put!
5 PERFECT	Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

If scoring a pub with a very low score (0 or 0.5) it is helpful to include a comment why that score has been given. Also, please remember that **a score of 5 should only be awarded where a beer is in exceptional condition.** The majority of 'good beers' in our area would normally only merit a score of 4, or occasionally 4.5.

Over the past year we received 1,627 scores submitted, down from 1,870 scores in 2025 and 2,292 submissions in 2024. It's still a highly respectable number but please try to score your beers every time you visit a pub – it really does help our branch in selecting entries for the Good Beer Guide and help us to monitor beer quality and identify if any pubs may be struggling. Score your beers at camra.org.uk/pubs.

Branch Communications

As a CAMRA member, do you receive our branch updates by email?

Our monthly 'CAMRA Calling' newsletter covers everything from upcoming social events and the Pub of the Year, to festivals and info about our real ale outlets. Make sure to check your inbox for all the details and stay connected with our fantastic community!

If you don't receive it and would like local news, check your marketing preferences at account.camra.org.uk and make sure that the Branch email option is selected. There's lots of other options available as well. Not a CAMRA member yet? Join the fun at join.camra.org.uk and stay in the loop. Cheers!



Pubs, Pints, People.

**FREE
ENTRY**
to all 100+
CAMRA-run
beer
festivals



Ever seen a Ginger Panther? No, but we've tried one!

CAMRA membership expands your choice of beer, pubs and festivals. Find the best pints, and the places you want to drink them.

Get £30 of beer vouchers, discounts on real ale, free entry to 100+ beer festivals around the UK and more with membership.



Join and save on beer.
camra.org.uk/join



Spring 2026 Wordsearch

Find 30 Beer Festivals in the grid below – maybe you’ve been at some? The names are printed below to assist you! They can go in any direction. Solution in the next edition of Full Pints.

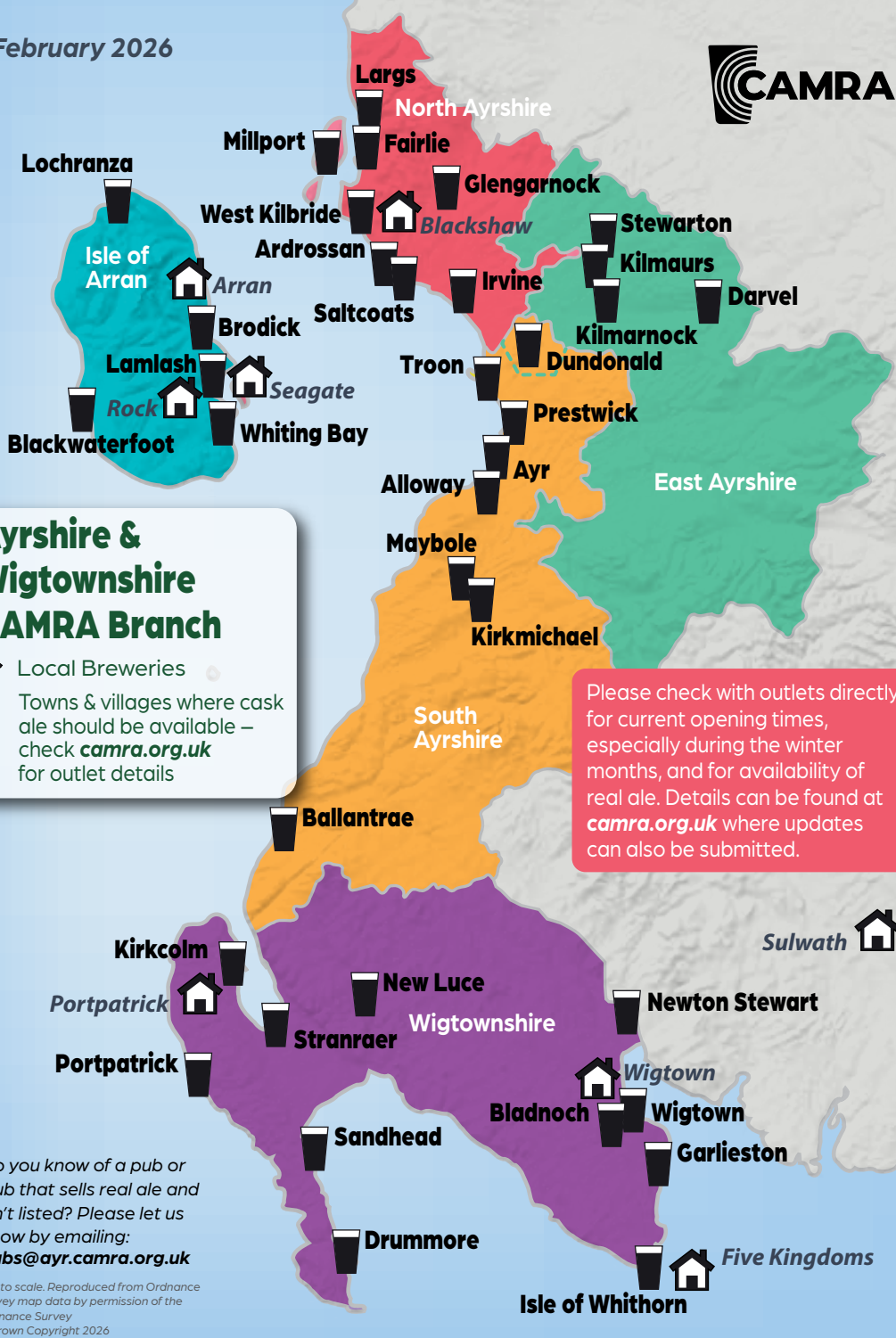


- | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| AYRSHIRE | CAMBRIDGE | ELYSIAN | LARBERT | ST ALBANS |
| BENTANDBONGS | CARLISLE | EQUINOX | LIVERPOOL | TEWKESBURY |
| BOOEONTHEOUSE | CHELMSFORD | GIBBERDGARDEN | MALDON | THURROCK |
| BRADFORD | COLCHESTER | GLASGOW | PETERBOROUGH | TOTNES |
| BRAINTREE | COTSWOLD | HARBURY | PIGSEAR | WORCESTER |
| BRIDGNORTH | DURHAM | KINGSTON | SOUTHDOWN | YORK |

WINTER 2025 WORDSEARCH – SOLUTION

We asked you to find the names of 24 Christmas Beers in the last edition. The answers were:

B	A	D	R	U	D	O	L	P	H	.	F	E	S	T	I	V	U	S	A	L	E	.	A BEER IN A MANGER	JINGLE HELLES
.	E	R	E	S	O	O	M	X	Y	R	R	E	M	C	BAD RUDOLPH	MAD ELF
.	L	E	.	.	B	E	E	R	Y	X	M	A	S	H	BEERY XMAS	MERRY MALTAS
G	P	G	N	I	L	P	M	U	D	E	I	T	O	O	L	C	.	.	.	.	R	CHRISTMAS BOMB	MERRY XMOOSE
I	P	N	.	.	.	.	.	.	S	A	M	T	L	A	M	Y	R	R	E	M	I	CLOOTIE DUMPLING	MISTLEBEER
F	I	A	.	R	E	M	M	A	H	E	G	D	E	L	S	S	A	T	N	A	S	DASHERS PRANCER	NAUGHTY NOEL	
T	T	M	.	.	.	.	.	.	R	E	M	R	A	W	R	E	T	N	I	W	T	DOWN THE CHIMNEY	PINTMAS
W	Y	A	H	O	L	Y	S	P	I	R	I	T	.	.	P	I	N	T	M	A	S	M	FESTIVUS ALE	REINBEER
R	E	N	.	.	.	S	E	O	T	L	E	S	N	I	T	.	.	.	.	A	GIFT WRAP	SANTAS SLEDGEHAMMER	
A	K	I	O	.	.	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y	C	H	E	E	R	.	.	S	HOLIDAY CHEER	ST NICK		
P	R	R	H	.	.	.	.	.	R	E	E	B	E	L	T	S	I	M	.	B	HOLY SPIRIT	TINSEL TOES	
.	U	E	O	N	A	U	G	H	T	Y	N	O	E	L	S	T	N	I	C	K	.	O	WINTER WARMER	
.	T	E	H	.	.	.	D	O	W	N	T	H	E	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	M			
.	B	O	.	.	.	J	I	N	G	L	E	H	E	L	L	E	S	.	B					
.	A	H	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	R	E	I	N	B	E	E	R	.					
.	D	A	S	H	E	R	S	P	R	A	N	C	E	R	F	L	E	D	A	M	.			



Ayrshire & Wigtownshire CAMRA Branch

- Local Breweries
- Towns & villages where cask ale should be available – check camra.org.uk for outlet details

Please check with outlets directly for current opening times, especially during the winter months, and for availability of real ale. Details can be found at camra.org.uk where updates can also be submitted.

Do you know of a pub or club that sells real ale and isn't listed? Please let us know by emailing: pubs@ayr.camra.org.uk

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AYRSHIRE & WIGTOWNSHIRE REAL ALE OUTLETS

NORTH AYRSHIRE

ARDROSSAN

Ardrossan Rugby Club

FAIRLIE

Village Inn ☞

IRVINE

The Auld Brig ☑
Bar 10 *

GLENGARNOCK

The Railway Inn

LARGS

Largs Sailing Club
(Summer, during
events)
The Paddle Steamer
☑

Sharps
Three Reasons

MILLPORT

Fraser's Bar

SALTCOATS

Salt Cot ☑

WEST KILBRIDE

The Twa Dugs ☞

EAST AYRSHIRE

DARVEL

Black Bull

KILMAURS

Weston Tavern ☞ §

KILMARNOCK

First Edition ☑
Wheatsheaf Inn ☑

STEWARTON

The Mill House

DUNDONALD

The Auchans
(Located in South
Ayrshire but East
Ayrshire for socials)

WIGTOWNSHIRE

BLADNOCH

Bladnoch Inn **

DRUMMORE

Ship Inn

GARLIESTON

Harbour Inn

ISLE OF WHITHORN

Steam Packet Inn ☞ §

KIRKCOLM

Blue Peter Hotel **

NEW LUCE

Kenmuir Arms *

NEWTON STEWART

Creebridge House
Hotel
Vault **

PORTPATRICK

Crown Hotel

SANDHEAD

Tigh na Mara Hotel

STRANRAER

Grapes §

WIGTOWN

Wigtown Ploughman

ISLE OF ARRAN

BLACKWATERFOOT

Kinloch Hotel

BRODICK

Arran Brewery § ☑
Cladach Beach
House **
Ormidale Hotel
Wine Port

LAMLASH

Glenisle Hotel **
Pierhead Tavern

LOCHRANZA

Lochranza
Country Inn

WHITING BAY

Burlington Hotel **

SOUTH AYRSHIRE

ALLOWAY

Cambusdoon Sports
Club

AYR

Chestnuts Hotel
Tam o' Shanter *
The Growler **
The Smoking Goat
The Twa Dugs

Wellingtons Bar

West Kirk ☑

BALLANTRAE

Kings Arms **

KIRKMICHAEL

Kirkmichael Arms

MAYBOLE

Maybole Arms

PRESTWICK

Prestwick Pioneer ☑

TROON

The Anchorage *
(Coming Soon)

Harbour Bar

Marr Rugby Club #

Number Forty-Seven ☞
The Portland

* CAMRA members have noted limited opening hours and/or that real ale is not always available at these outlets.

§ Special offers for card-carrying CAMRA members

** Bottle/Can-conditioned/Membrane-keg live ales may be available

☑ CAMRA vouchers accepted

Match weekends only

☞ Current Branch Area Pub of the Year

☞ Overall Branch Pub of the Year 2025

Please remember that many outlets may operate seasonal hours – check before visiting

CAMRA members are encouraged to score ales they drink in their local pub, as it assists the committee in considering outlets for inclusion in the Good Beer Guide. Please take a few moments to score your beers at camra.org.uk if you visit them.

FIVE KINGDOMS



CAMRA
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of Scotland 2025

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