

**Minutes of the Newark CAMRA Branch meeting held at the Prince Rupert
Held on Wednesday 8/1/25 @ 7:30 pm.**

Attendees: Richard Trafford, Carolyn Gibbons, Rory Audsley-Spence, Andy Bailey, Allister Ferguson, Andy Sear, Ray Spink, Mark Springham, Colin Campbell, John Dunstan, John Ward

- 1) **Apologies for absence** - Stuart Cliff, Derek Fawcett, Jim Power, Jo Dunstan, Tom Leggott, Jim Mason, Andrew Birkhead, Ian Green, Sam Lucas, John Williams
Members were asked to forward any apologies for absence direct to the Branch Secretary secretary@newark.camra.org.uk
- 2) **Chair's report** – Unfortunately Stuart was unable to attend the meeting. In his absence, Richard (Vice-Chair) agreed to take the meeting. Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and The Prince Rupert was thanked for providing the venue.
- 3) **Review of Actions from Previous Minutes**
 - a) Ray Spink reported that he had contacted local colleges to see if any links could be forged with the Branch to encourage young members to join CAMRA. So far, he had not had any response.
 - b) The Secretary had obtained a small amount of CAMRA publicity materials from HQ for members to distribute to pubs within the Branch.
- 4) **Treasurer's report** – there hadn't been any transactions on the bank account since the last meeting. The branch is currently holding a small amount in its account relating to PINT, which has now disbanded. The Treasurer has contacted some of the landlords of the pubs that were involved and it's been agreed to donate this money to charity.
- 5) **Secretary's report** - Reminder from HQ that January can be a particularly difficult month for licenses premises. Members are asked to do all they can to support their locals. Even if taking a break from alcohol, consider having low and no-alcohol beers at your local, and do what you can to support the trade in a difficult time.

The Secretary & Vice-Chair attended the East Midlands Regional meeting in Grimsby on 30/11/24 on behalf of the branch. A few items raised included:-

- A reminder to ensure all Whatpub entries are kept up to date.
- The need to check the décor in all pubs nominated for pub of the year / the Good Beer Guide to ensure there isn't anything which may cause offence.
- Judging for Nottinghamshire and East Midlands rounds of Pub of the Year (POTY) - all branches/areas were asked to provide judges for each of these rounds otherwise their nominated pub would not progress to the next round. It's therefore important that this branch provides 2 members to judge the Nottinghamshire round of POTY.
- Tasting Panels are required across the region. Rob Green, the Deputy Regional Director, agreed to help co-ordinate this for branches. Tasting Panels submit the descriptions of regular beers which are listed in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide and put forward beers to CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain Competition. Rory Audsley-Spence expressed an interest in taking part.

ACTION - Any branch member interested in taking part in tasting panels to pass their details to the Branch Secretary.

- 6) **Membership/Young Members** – no report
- 7) **Vice Chair / WhatPub / Web** – All branch email address had been migrated to HQs platform. A new Website was in the process of being built and is awaiting the new CAMRA branding which is due to be launched by CAMRA HQ on Monday 13/1/25.
- 8) **Pub of the Year (POTY) and Cider & Perry Pub of the Year (CPPOTY)** – Since the meeting the winners and runners up have been announced as follows:
Town Pub of the Year: Winner - Just Beer. Runner-up – Organ Grinder
District Pub of the Year: Winner - Final Whistle. Runner-up – Old Coach House
Arrangements for presentation of the awards will be notified in the near future.
Cider/Perry Pub of the Year: Winner - Organ Ginder. Runner up - Final Whistle

The presentation to the Organ Grinder will take place on Wednesday 29th January at 7.30 pm. All members are invited to come along to celebrate with Jason and his team at the Organ Grinder.

- 9) **Cider Update** – Judging has been taking place for the Cider & Perry Pub of the Year. Daisy Farm Cider at Upton have held their Wassailing event, held to ward off bad spirits and ensure a bountiful crop of apples in the year ahead.
- 10) **Pub Protection Officer** – it was noted that the Roaring Meg (Formerly The Vine) on Baldertongate was currently closed.
- 11) **Brewery Liaison Officer Co-ordinator** – Rory reported that BLOs have been allocated as follows:
John Ward – Milestone
Allister Ferguson – Cat Asylum & Maypole
Jim Mason – Jacaranda
ACTION – Rory to send out a copy of the BLO Job role/description to all BLOs.
- 12) **Beer Festival** – The 2025 Newark Beer & Cider Festival will not be going ahead in the castle grounds in May. This is because the Newark Castle Gatehouse Project is due to start in April which means it's not practical to hold our festival in the grounds. Given the popularity of the festival, our focus at the moment is on exploring an alternative venue in the hope to still hold a festival in 2025.
- 13) **Forthcoming Social Events** – The Social Secretary reported that the following socials have been arranged:-
 - a) The BeerMuda Triangle Beer Festival is taking place between 30th January and 2nd February with three of Newark's pubs (Fox & Crown/Organ Grinder/Just Beer) collaborating to bring a selection of more than 60 beers.

Newark Camra are running an informal social to visit all three pubs on Thursday 30th January starting at the Organ Grinder @ 7pm. Everyone's welcome to come along and meet up with other members and sample some of the fantastic beers on offer.
 - b) Hucknall Beer & Cider Festival, 13th – 16th February at the John Godber Centre, Hucknall. Newark CAMRA will be visiting the festival on Friday 14th of February. Suggested transportation is the 90 bus from Newark Bus station (£3) at 12.15 to Nottingham and then a tram out to Hucknall and a short walk to the festival. There are several ways to return via tram to Nottingham City Centre and then 90 bus or train.

It was suggested that a social/branch meeting should be arranged to the Royal Oak at Collingham which could be combined with a visit to Cat Asylum Brewery.

ACTION - Allister and Andy to liaise to see if this could be arranged for June.

- 14) **Dates and Venues of Forthcoming Meetings**
 - Wednesday 12th February 2025 – Navigation, Mill Gate, Newark @ 7.30 pm
 - Wednesday 12th March 2025 – Fox & Crown, Appletongate, Newark @ 7.30 pm
 - Saturday 12th April 2025 – Milestone Brewery Tap, Cromwell NG23 6JE @ 1.15 pm (details of public transport from Newark to be circulated nearer the time)
 - May – no branch meeting
 - June TBC (possibly Royal Oak Collingham/Cat Asylum Brewery – Allister to confirm)
 - Saturday 12th July 2025 – The Final Whistle, Southwell NG24 0ET @ 1pm (details of public transport from Newark to be circulated nearer the time)
- 15) **Any Other Business**
 - a) The following item, from Ian Green had been raised by email - *"I would like to know what CAMRA are doing to encourage pubs to take CAMRA tokens and offer the 15p per pint discount. It seems to me that there are very few pubs that take these. Unless a pub takes these tokens, or offers a discount for CAMRA members, they should not be eligible to be a CAMRA pub of the year, otherwise it makes a mockery of the whole thing. There is certainly no encouragement to the pubs that do offer the discounts"*.
Following discussion, it was agreed that this was not something to be dealt with at branch level and should be raised with CAMRA HQ.
The Members Code of Conduct says that CAMRA members or branches should not ask for, or expect a discount from any pub, club, brewery or cider maker. Pubs are struggling to make a

profit and closing at an alarming rate. We need to do everything to support pubs as best we can, and it has been deemed that not asking for discount is aligned with this aim.

ACTION - Secretary to respond to Ian in the above terms.

- b) The Treasurer offered to edit a one off edition of the Branch Magazine and asked members for content/articles.

ACTION - members to send articles for inclusion in the Branch Magazine to John Dunstan treasurer@newark.camra.org.uk

- c) The Secretary asked Branch Officials if they would submit their reports for branch meetings in writing, in advance of the meeting, particularly if they were unable to attend the meeting. This would help ensure the minutes were correct.

- d) Accessibility – branches have been encouraged to do what they can to provide accessibility to meetings for all. It was decided that Teams was the appropriate application to use for sharing meetings externally for anyone unable to attend a meeting for instance where it is being held upstairs resulting in some disabled members being unable to access the room. However, the Vice Chair reported that when trying to set this up, he realised that the branch had not renewed its Office365 subscription. Furthermore when trying to transfer our subscription to the new email address it became apparent that we were using a personal licence rather than a business version, almost certainly in breach of Microsoft's terms and conditions. The free version of Teams is time restricted, so unsuitable. Rather than bodge something it was decided to resolve the issues and to hopefully implement a correctly licensed solution for next month.

ACTION – Vice chair to make contact with CAMRA HQ to see if there is a corporate licence that can be used and if not, investigate obtaining a licence for the branch. The Treasurer agreed to carry out a cost benefit analysis for this.

Meeting Closed at 9pm