

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Newark CAMRA Branch Held at the Ram, Castlegate, Newark Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7.30 pm

Attendees: Stuart Clift, Richard Trafford, Carolyn Gibbons, John Dunstan, Sam Lucas, Rory Audsley-Spence, Derrick Fawcett, Steve Rose, John Ward, Moira Walter, John Williams, Ross Briggs, Russ Briggs, Andy Sear, Allister Ferguson, Dominic Haythorne, Trevor Gill, Pip Barley.

1. Apologies for absence

Cliff Butterworth, Diane Warner, Peter Harris, Jim Mason, Colin Campbell, Jo Dunstan, Andy Bailey.

2. Minutes of previous meeting inc accuracy/action minutes

Minutes of the AGM held on 13/11/24 were accepted as a true record.

3. Chair's Annual Report – The Chairman thanked the Ram for hosting the AGM and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Specific thanks were given to those who had given up their time to help the branch over the past year.

- **Membership** - has reduced slightly since last year (currently 497). I would like to see more of our members become “active members” over the coming year and welcome ideas for how we can engage more people in campaigning at branch level.
- **Branch Meetings** - in an effort to increase attendance, branch meetings over the past year have taken on a more social element as well as some of them being scheduled on different days of the week with dates of meetings being published much further ahead of time, allowing people to attend who otherwise have commitments on a static day.
- **Monthly Newsletters** - have been introduced which contain the latest information from HQ and upcoming social events. These include a link to the minutes of branch meetings which are also published on the branch website in an effort to reduce the email traffic going out to the members.
- **Pub of the Year** - the Newark District Pub of the Year 2025 was awarded to the Final Whistle, Southwell who went on to win the Nottinghamshire Pub of the Year award. The Town Pub of the Year winner was Just Beer and the Cider & Perry Pub of the Year was awarded to The Organ Grinder. Judging has started for Pub of the Year 2026 with the winners being announced in January.
- **Beer & Cider Festival** - our annual Beer & Cider Festival, wasn't able to go ahead in the castle grounds this year because of the Newark Castle Gatehouse Project which should have started in April. To bridge the gap, an indoor festival is taking place on 21st & 22nd November at the Newark Town Hall. As this is an indoor venue with limited capacity, we are selling tickets in advance and splitting each day into two sessions.
- **Beer Gutter Press** - the branch published an edition of its magazine for the first time since 2019.
- **Branch Website** - a new branch website was launched in April 2025. This contains a live diary/events page so please visit it regularly for updates. Thanks to Richard for setting this up.

Thanks were given to all active members, none of this could have happened without the support of the branch committee and the members.

- 4. Branch Accounts for the year** - The Treasure reported on the branch accounts for the year ended 31st October 2025. This accounting year is unusual as no beer festival has been held during the year. As such, the usual practice of making a comparison to the prior year in order to understand a set of accounts is not very helpful.

Income and Expenditure for the year to 31st October 2025 - The branch income and expenditure for the year is very simple. There are no items relating to this year's festival, as the May festival did not take place, and the winter beer festival being held in November falls outside of the accounting year. There are cash payments and receipts relating to the November beer festival that have been paid or received during the year, but these items have been deferred in the balance sheet and will be reported on next year (the accounting year in which the festival takes place). This is normal accounting practice. Advances from CAMRA HQ of £6,860 have been received to cover upfront festival expenses, along with advance ticket sales and sponsorship revenue of £2,075. Upfront festival expenses of £4,259 have been paid out as at 31st October. The balance of £4,676 continues to be used to pay festival expenses as they arise. Taking out the beer festival, there has been no income during the year and £25 has been paid out on travel. This item is simply the practice of using branch funds to subsidise travel to out of town meetings, which as per HQ policy are priced to cover costs, but which occasionally suffer from unused seats or additional costs. This policy has only been operated on one occasion. Finally it was noted that there have been significant cash payments and receipts relating to the beer festival run by local pubs during the weekend in May (usually reserved for our festival) and called 'Not The Newark Beer Festival' (NNBF). A case was made to HQ to fund some expenditure for this event, and HQ gave us £1,000. In addition, a balance of £248 was utilized that had been held on account on behalf of the now defunct Pubs In Newark Together (PINT) organisation, having sought permission to do so from representatives of that organisation. This cash was used to fund flyers, banners, beer mats and t-shirts to promote the festival, with unused funds of £274 being returned to CAMRA HQ. These items do not feature on our income and expenditure report as they are not branch income and expenditure.

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 2025 - aside from the balances held over for the November beer festival previously mentioned, there has been much tidying up done in the year. Fixed assets have increased slightly, as we have completed our investment in new racking for our festivals by the addition of chocks specially designed to fit the racking without the need for heavy boarding. Look out for these in use for the first time at the festival. This cost was largely accrued in the prior year, so that accrual has been removed from the balance sheet. Third party funds of £1,389 have also been reduced to zero. This is in part due to the utilization of £248 we had been holding on behalf of PINT for the NNBF as previously mentioned. The remainder of £1,141 was a balance from a previous festival that was collected and has now been paid to the Beaumont House Hospice charity. What remains is a balance of £5,758 in the bank and £955 in petty cash. This total of £6,713 is mostly represented by the balance we hold in respect of advance items for the November festival of £4,676. The remainder is £2,037, which is higher than CAMRA HQ require branches to retain. However, given that the beer festival in November is nearly upon us, the Treasurer has recommended that any surplus festival income is paid over after it has been completed along with any surplus branch funds, to ensure we have branch funds of lower than £1,000 as required by HQ. The accounts and records have been independently examined by Rory Audsley-Spence in accordance with the requirements of the Branch Financial Policy.

5. Appointment of an Examiner of Accounts

Rory Audsley-Spence was appointed as the Examiner of Accounts for the coming year.

6. Appointment of Branch Officials

The Chair explained the election process which had been outlined in the AGM notification and the following were elected:-

Committee Position	Nominee	Proposer	Second
Branch Chair	Stuart Clift	Carolyn Gibbons	Rory Spence
Vice Chair	Richard Trafford	Stuart Clift	John Dunstan
Branch Secretary/ Branch Contact	Carolyn Gibbons	Rory Spence	Sam Lucas
Treasurer	John Dunstan	Richard Trafford	Stuart Clift
Membership Secretary	VACANT – Carolyn agreed to cover this role until a volunteer can be found		
Beer Festival Organiser	Sam Lucas	Richard Trafford	Carolyn Gibbons
Young Members Contact	VACANT		
Good Beer Guide Submissions Co-ordinator / Pub Promotions & Awards Co-ordinator (POTY)	Richard Trafford	Rory Spence	Sam Lucas
Social Secretary	Rory Audsley-Spence	Sam Lucas	Jo Dunstan

Non-Committee Branch Positions	Nominee	Proposer	Second
Pub Protection Officer	John Ward	Stuart Clift	Carolyn Gibbons
Cider Representative	Carolyn Gibbons	Jo Dunstan	Sam Lucas
Clubs Officer	John Ward	Stuart Clift	Richard Trafford
Social Media Co-ordinator	John Dunstan	Richard Trafford	Stuart Clift
Media Contact (Press & Publicity Officer)	Sam Lucas	Carolyn Gibbons	Richard Trafford
Website Co-ordinator	Richard Trafford	Jo Dunstan	Stuart Clift
Magazine Editor	John Dunstan	Sam Lucas	Stuart Clift
Pub Data Co-ordinator/Beer Scores Co-ordinator	Richard Trafford	Jo Dunstan	Sam Lucas
Brewery Liaison Officer Co-ordinator	Allister Ferguson	Stuart Clift	Sam Lucas
BLO for Milestone	Allister Ferguson	Stuart Clift	Trevor Gill
BLO for Cat Asylum	Dominic Haythorne	Rory Spence	Stuart Clift
BLO for Jacaranda	Jim Mason	Stuart Clift	Trevor Gill

The Chairman thanked all those who had volunteered for committee and branch positions. As can be seen above, many volunteers have multiple roles and there are still some vacancies. If you are passionate about real ale or cider, or protecting pubs from closure, and feel you could do one of these roles, please come along to one of our meetings, or a social, and see what we do.

Other things branch members can do to help the thinly-stretched committee:

- Help deliver leaflets & magazines, beer festival promotional documents.
- Survey pubs and clubs – check their entries to camra.org.uk/pubs and submit amendments
- Score your beers - this helps shortlist Pub of the Year and Good Beer Guide entries.

As much as the committee tries, they can't be everywhere and ask members who may be interested in standing for any of the vacant positions to contact the secretary for further information about the roles. secretary@newark.camra.org.uk

7. Amendment to Branch Constitution

The Branch Constitution has been updated in line with the Model Branch Constitution that was adopted at Conference in 2025. This was adopted at the AGM. Carolyn agreed to forward this to the Regional Director and upload to the Branch Website.

8. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Dates and Venues of Future Branch Meetings

- **Friday 19th December** – Christmas social 7pm Fox and Crown, Appletongate, Newark. Menu choices are being taken in advance <https://www.castlerockbrewery.co.uk/pubs/fox-and-crown/>. The bar staff at the Fox will take orders at the bar up to Friday the 12th of December.
- **Wednesday 14th January** – The Prince Rupert, 46 Stodman Street, Newark at 7.30 pm
- **Tuesday 10th February** – Just Beer, 32A Castle Gate, Newark @ 7.30 pm
- **Wednesday 11th March** – The Rose & Crown, 25 Main Street, Farndon (please note that this meeting will commence at 7pm)

The AGM closed at 8.40 pm.