

Minutes of the Newark CAMRA Branch Meeting
Held at The Rose & Crown, Farndon on Wednesday 9 September 2026

Attendees: Stuart Clift, Richard Trafford, Carolyn Gibbons, Sam Lucas, Rory Audsley-Spence, John Ward, Colin Campbell, Dominic Hathorne, John Williams, Moira Walter, Ian Gooden, David Wright, Andrew Birkhead, Andy Sear.

- 1) **Apologies for absence** – Jim Power, Allister Ferguson, John & Jo Dunstan, Peter Harris, Ros & Russ Briggs, Jim Mason.
- 2) **Review of Actions from Previous Minutes** - none
- 3) **Chair's report** –Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and the Rose & Crown was thanked for providing the venue. The Chair also thanked those who covered for him over the summer whilst he was unable to attend meetings.
- 4) **Treasurer's Report** – No significant items to report. Beer Festival income has started to be received.

Social Media/Beer Gutter Press (BGP) – It is hoped that an Autumn edition will be published, but this will be dependent on members submitting articles for inclusion in the magazine. If you'd like some inspiration, archived versions of previous editions are on the branch [website](#). The branch are also looking for businesses to advertise in the magazine. Please forward any articles or information about possible advertisers to the branch [treasurer](#) by 26th of October.

- 5) **Secretary's report** – nominations are now open for the [Champion Beer of Britain](#) 2028 (CBOB).
Email received from **Scott at Micropub Adventures**. He has compiled a list of beer festivals on his website and has asked us to confirm our festival details. He is also happy to include information about local pub-run festivals. If anyone is aware of any upcoming events, please contact him directly. His details are available on the website:
<https://micropubadventures.co.uk/beer-festival-listings/>
- 6) **Membership** – The branch membership, as at the end of August, was 488.
Young Members – The Secretary has received a message from the National Young Members Contact, **Sean O'Mahoney**. He recently circulated a survey for branches to share with their young members. At present, the discount for young members applies to those **under 26**, but the official definition of a young member is **under 30**. Sean is looking to bring these into alignment, potentially raising the upper age limit to **35**. He also offered to support branches that don't currently have a Young Members Contact (including us) and is willing to help recruit someone for the role. The contact does not need to be a young member themselves—just someone enthusiastic about the work. In addition, Sean is happy to advise branches on ways to engage with existing young members and improve recruitment at festivals.

7) **Vice Chair / Pub Database / Web /Tasting Panels**

Tasting Panels - Rob Green, The Deputy Regional Director, is setting up a tasting panel for Nottinghamshire. Patricia Savill, from CAMRA HQ, is delivering Tasting Panel Training in Nottingham on Saturday 26th September at **The Trent Navigation Inn, 17 Meadow Lane, Nottingham. NG2 3HS** 1:00pm – 5:00pm. The cost is £20 per person (includes tasting beers and cards etc).

CAMRA Pub Database – this includes details of all pubs and clubs [here](#) . Over the next few months the branch will be carrying out a full audit of all licensed properties in our area to check details are up to date (particularly opening hours). Licensees will be encouraged to check their own information and keep the branch updated with amendments. Several members have already kindly volunteered to survey and distribute CAMRA leaflets and copies of the Beer Gutter Press to many of our pubs. Anyone who would also like to assist with this please contact secretary@newark.camra.org.uk

8) **Good Beer Guide (GBG) / Pub of the Year (POTY) / NBSS**

GBG – The 2027 edition will be published on 24th September. Our GBG entries will be notified over the next couple of weeks.

Newark Branch Pub of the Year (POTY) and Cider & Perry Pub of the Year – The branch is getting ready to kick off judging for the **2027 Branch Pub of the Year** and **Cider & Perry Pub of the Year**, and we'd love members to help with this. We're looking for volunteers to be assessors, as well as nominations for both awards. Any CAMRA member can put a pub forward.

Assessors should be CAMRA members who regularly enjoy **cask ale** or **real cider/perry**. You'll need to be available to visit each nominated pub at least twice, and for Pub of the Year, enter beer scores on the CAMRA website after each visit. Judging runs from October 2026 to 12th January 2027.

If you'd like to **join the judging panel** or **nominate a pub** for either award, please email POTY@newark.camra.org.uk . Make sure to include your name, email address, and CAMRA membership number. The deadline for both nominations and volunteer assessors is **Friday 25 September 2026**.

After being awarded, Nottinghamshire Pub of the Year, the Final Whistle Southwell went through to the East Midlands round of the award and has come second in that round. The winner was the Railway Inn at Ketton, Nr Stamford.

National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) – the scoring system for NBSS has been updated and everything about the new ratings and descriptions are on the beer scoring [web page](#). Reminder given that NBSS is used as a “significant” factor when determining GBG entries. Members are asked to regularly enter beer scores for pubs they visit via the CAMRA website [Find Pubs & Clubs to Visit - CAMRA - The Campaign for Real Ale](#) (Log-in required). Richard gave details of the pubs in our area which are currently receiving the highest scores. CAMRA HQ has suggested branches offer an “incentive” to members to encourage them to enter beer scores. As our branch doesn't have funds to offer prizes, Richard will personally buy whoever scores the most beers each month, a pint if they attend the branch meeting. This month he will be buying himself a pint!!

9) **Cider Update** – Currently busy sourcing ciders for the beer festival.

10) **Pub/Club Protection Officer** – Old Coach House, Southwell no longer gives CAMRA discount. Instead they provide a collectors card (buy 8 pints, get one free). The Prince Rupert is closed for refurbishment (due to open on 15/9/26). Roman Way (Brewers Fayre) closed on 10/9/26. Sam reported that the Willow Tree, Barnby in the Willows is currently closed.

11) **Brewery Liaison Officers(BLOs)**

Allister Ferguson (Milestone) – Allister has reviewed the CBOB information on Pilgrim with Ken, who has been very busy supporting festivals that Milestone are supplying beer for. There are no significant changes to the beers being brewed, as most of the new additions are short-run beers produced to mark special events and therefore not eligible for CBOB.

Jim Mason (Jacaranda) – Nothing new to report. No-one at the brewery when visited recently and no news of new brews. Jim has tasted the 'Rail' beer, the Final Whistle's house beer, which was very good.

Dominic Haythorne (Cat Asylum) – Henry has reported that his “Catstock” festival went well and will be repeated next year. He is holding a “birthday” party at the end of September – all beers £3 a pint!

- 12) **Newark Beer & Cider Festival Update** – The 2026 [Newark Beer Festival \(Winter Edition\)](#) is taking place **Friday 20th & Saturday 21st November 2026** in the Ballroom at the Newark Town Hall. There will be around 50 beers and 20 ciders on offer. Food will be available and there will be acoustic music in the evenings and a quiz in the afternoons.

Festival Volunteering – We are once again looking for **keen volunteers** to help out. Not just at the festival but also with set-up and take-down. For full details, please follow this link [Festival Staffing - Newark CAMRA](#) where you will find a copy of the online [staffing form](#) which should be completed and forwarded to Sam at staffing@newark.camra.org.uk. If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact Sam

Tickets are on sale and it's recommended buying yours in advance to make sure you get in. Tickets cost £10.

- CAMRA members: You will need to purchase a ticket. When you arrive and show a valid membership card, you'll receive **£10 of beer tokens**, effectively refunding your ticket price.
- Non-members: You'll receive **£5 of beer tokens** on arrival as part of your ticket.
[To buy tickets follow this link.](#)

The festival's chosen charity this year is the Newark EMMAUS Trust, which supports young people experiencing homelessness.

13) **Forthcoming Social Events**

The next trip is the York Half-Pint Marathon on Saturday September 19th. Departing on the 09:19 train from Northgate, direct to York by 10:03. We plan to visit thirteen pubs, (all GBG listed), taking at least a half pint in each venue. The first venue opens at 10am and the second at 11am so we get a decent full day. The return train is at 17:55 getting back to Newark at 18:40. If you have a rail pass the return ticket is approximately £28. If you don't have a rail pass then hopefully there will be enough people to benefit from a group-save discount, if there is one. Rory will endeavour to get the best ticket price for everyone. Please let Rory know if you are coming and which, if any, rail cards you have, no later than Sunday 13th September.

The final event this year will be our Christmas Social on December 9th at Castle Cuisine on Castle Gate. The restaurant is unlicensed so we can take our own alcohol of choice. They do sell soft drinks and request that we do not supply our own. They have kindly allowed us to provide a cask of ale for general consumption which will be for sale at a discounted price, to be announced once we know what it costs us. The restaurant runs a party menu at £23.95 per head which includes a poppadum, mixed starter and a main of choice per person, plus a side dish of choice and a naan of choice, shared between two people. Please notify Rory of any specific dietary requirements well in advance.

Numbers are initially restricted to 30 for this event and we are using Tckty to sell tickets at £10 each, which will reserve your seat at the table on a first come, first served basis. The initial £10 will go towards your bill with the balance of £13.95, plus any tip you may like to leave, payable on the night by cash or card.

Please book your Christmas tickets by 15th October as Rory needs to give numbers to the restaurant. Tickets are selling extremely well and you don't want to wait, only to miss out. Buy your ticket now, before they all go: <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/570/newark-christmas-social>

Non-CAMRA members are welcome at all socials in an effort to encourage new members, so please invite your friends.

Forthcoming Festivals etc

For 2026, CAMRA members can get free access to all CAMRA organised Beer Festivals around the country. Could all members please promote this to friends and family to help encourage new membership sign-ups!

- **7 – 10 October** [Nottingham Beer & Cider Festival](#)
- **14 - 17 October** [Derby CAMRA Heritage Beer Festival](#)
- **22 – 24 October** [Grantham Beer Festival](#)
- **21 - 24 October** [Steel City Beer & Cider Festival](#), Kelham Island, Sheffield
- **20 - 21 November** [Newark Winter Beer Festival](#)

Events are subject to change – check websites/socials for updates.

14) Dates and Venues of Forthcoming Meetings

- **Tuesday 13th October 2026** – Organ Grinder, Newark @ 7.30 pm.
- **Wednesday 11th November 2026** – Branch AGM to be held at the Ram, Castlegate Newark @ 7.30 pm.
- **Wednesday 9th December – Christmas Social** at Castle Cuisine, Castle Gate, Newark. book your ticket <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/570/newark-christmas-social>
- **Wednesday 13th January** – venue TBC

- 15) **Any Other Business** – Richard reported that the Collingham Beer Festival held over the August bank holiday weekend went really well. The branch supported them by assisting with staffing and cooling for the beers.

The meeting closed 8.45 pm.