

Minutes of the Newark CAMRA Branch Meeting
Held at The Organ Grinder, Newark on Tuesday 13th October 2026

Attendees: Richard Trafford, Carolyn Gibbons, Rory Audsley-Spence, Sam Lucas, John & Jo Dunstan, Jim Power, Pip Barley, John Williams, Moira Walter, Allister Ferguson, Andy Sear, Steve Rose, John Ward, Jane Rigbye, Ian Gooden

- 1) **Apologies for absence** – Stuart Clift, Dominic Haythorne, Peter Harris.
- 2) **Review of Actions from Previous Minutes** – none.
- 3) **Chair's report** – In the absence of Stuart, Richard agreed to chair the meeting. Everyone was welcomed, and the Organ Grinder was thanked for providing the venue.
- 4) **Treasurer's Report** – Nothing much to report on transactions: bank in control with income from festival tickets being used to pay various advance expenses.
Behind schedule with putting branch finances onto the CAMRA accounting system (COBAS), due to other commitments. Consequently, planning to do year end accounts in the existing way and request HQ that we start 26/27 on the new system.

Social Media/Beer Gutter Press (BGP) – Beer festival event has been set up on Facebook. Members are asked to please like and share. The next edition of the BGP is due to be published at the end of the month.

- 5) **Secretary's report** – The AGM is taking place next month - 11th November at the Ram, Castlegate Newark @ 7.30 pm. The agenda will be sent out in a couple of weeks. At the AGM we will be forming the Branch Committee and electing members to several discretionary branch roles. In particular we are looking for a Young Members representative to join the Committee and someone to take over the role of Social media co-ordinator.
Any local member is welcome to stand. Nominations need to be submitted by email to the Branch Chair chairman@newark.camra.org.uk (please also copy in the nominee and the nomination seconder). The closing date for nominations is Wednesday 4th November 2026.
- 6) **Membership** – The branch membership, as at the end of September, was 479. Jo has been promoting membership and free entry to beer festivals on Facebook. Lapsed members have been contacted to enquire about reasons for leaving.
- 7) **Vice Chair / Pub Database / Web /Tasting Panels**
 - **Tasting Panels** - Richard, John, Jo, Rory & Dominic attended a Tasting Panel Training session in Nottingham on Saturday 26th September. Richard is planning to set up a Regional Tasting Panel for the 3 branches in North Nottinghamshire.
 - **CAMRA Pub Database** – This includes details of all pubs and clubs and the information is available [here](#). Several members have kindly volunteered to assist with a full audit of all licensed properties (including clubs) 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. Completed survey forms are to be returned to the vice chair when complete.

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

Newark Branch Pub of the Year (POTY) and Cider & Perry Pub of the Year

Judging for the Newark CAMRA 2027 Branch Pub of the Year and Cider & Perry Pub of the Year is underway. Richard thanked all those who have volunteered to help with the judging.

National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) – members are encouraged to continue beer scoring via the CAMRA website [Find Pubs & Clubs to Visit - CAMRA - The Campaign for Real Ale](#) (Log-in required).

- 9) **Cider Update** – The National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year 2026 winner is the [The Hoptician](#) in Dursley. Licensees Kirsty and Kevin transformed an old optician's shop into the go-to pub for real cider and perry in the UK. The runners up were the Black Horse in Rampton, Albert Tavern in Freuchie and That Beer Place in Chester.

10) Pub/Club Protection Officer –

The Castle & Falcon is temporarily closed. Bar 22 has re-opened (Friday & Saturday only).

11) Brewery Liaison Officers(BLOs) – no reports this month.

- 12) **Beer 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.

Tickets are on sale and we recommend buying yours in advance to make sure you get in. Tickets cost £10.

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

13) Forthcoming Social Events – Rory reported the following:

The final event this year will be the Christmas Social on December 9th at Castle Cuisine on Castle Gate. The restaurant is unlicensed so we can take our own alcohol of choice, be that beer, lager, wine or spirits. 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 let the social secretary know of any specific dietary requirements well in advance.

Numbers are initially restricted to 30 for this event and Tckty is being used to sell tickets at £10 each, which will reserve your seat at the table on a First Come, First Served basis. There will be a waiting list for cancellations, should this venue prove popular. That 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. This is a very busy time of year for hospitality so advance numbers are essential and if you need to cancel, please let the social secretary know in good time. If your ticket can be resold then you will receive a full refund, if not, then the restaurant will retain the deposit.

Please book your Christmas ticket quickly as we are fast approaching the cut-off date for final numbers to be given to the restaurant. Don't be the one to miss out because you left it too late. Buy your ticket here, now! <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/570/newark-christmas-social>

Next year's events are in the very early planning stages but the initial thought is a trip to Leicester on 30th January 2027 for a wander around the pubs and a feast on the fabulous cheese and onion rolls (baps or cobs, if you prefer).

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

Forthcoming Festivals etc

- **22 – 24 October** [Grantham Beer Festival](#)
- **21-24 October** [Steel City Beer & Cider Festival](#), Kelham Island, Sheffield
- **20 - 21 November** [Newark Winter Beer Festival](#)

CAMRA members currently 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!

14) Dates and Venues of Forthcoming Meetings

- **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** – The Prince Rupert, Newark @ 7.30 pm.
- **Wednesday 10th February** – TBC

15) Any Other Business - None

The meeting closed 8.15 pm.