

Shropshire Tales

FREE

Issue 7
Winter '18/19

Inside...

Awards presented to Shropshire pubs and breweries

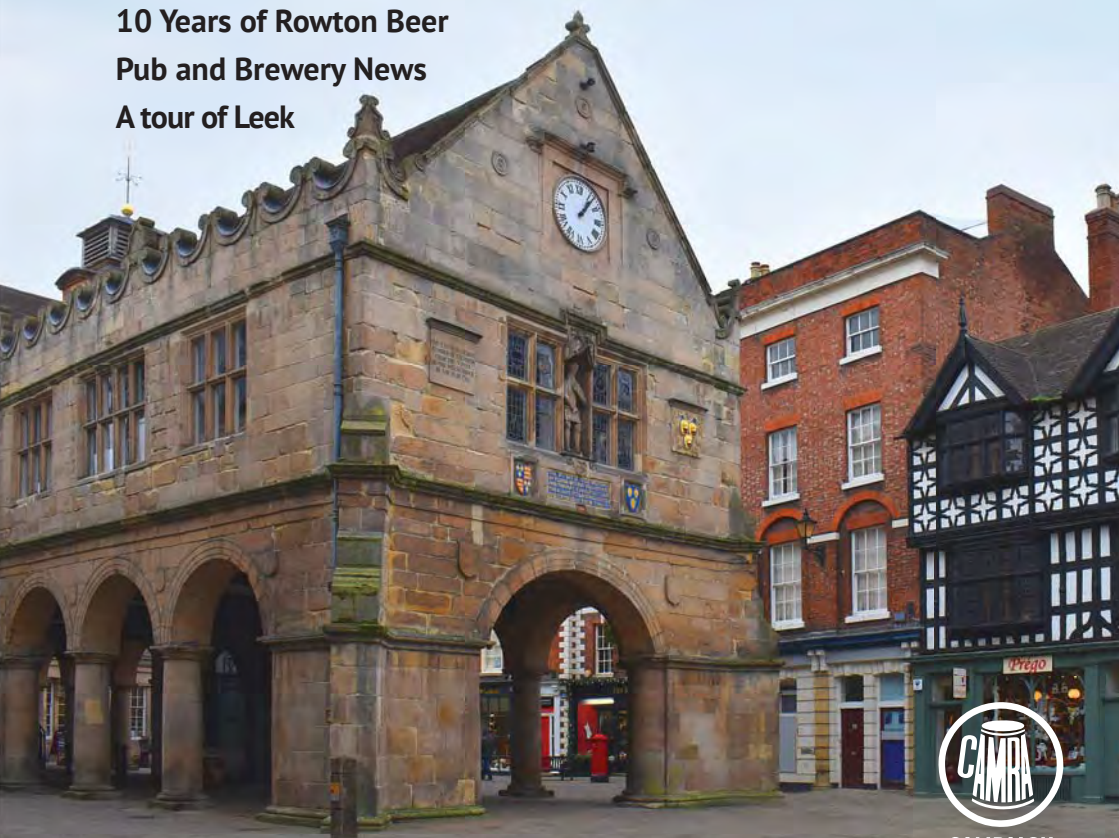
Sampling the ales in Shrewsbury

Results of the Revitalization Project

10 Years of Rowton Beer

Pub and Brewery News

A tour of Leek



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Editor's Welcome

Hello and welcome to Issue 7 of **Shropshire TAles**

We are approaching a very busy and important period for the hard working CAMRA members. Good Beer Guide selection and Pub and Club of the Year voting. Can I please add my voice to the request to all CAMRA members with the Shropshire Branches to make sure that you submit your votes for your favourite pubs. It could be your vote that helps a pub get into the Good Beer Guide or winning Pub (or Club) of the Year and going on further in the regional competition which will only help the landlord.

I have been asked a few times about the cover photo of our last issue. It was Wenlock Priory, Much Wenlock and was taken by Dave Haddon.

This issues cover photo is Shrewbury's Old Market Hall taken by Danielle Preston and I am told that it can be seen in one of the best Christmas films ever but it doesn't look like Nakatomi Plaza to me.

I wish you all a great festival period and please remember to get your votes in.

Thank you for all the articles, keep them coming!

Lee Bradbury | Editor

email: editor.tescamramagazine@gmail.com

This newsletter is published by the Telford & East Shropshire and Shrewsbury & West Shropshire Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale. However, the views or opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor, local branch of CAMRA or CAMRA Ltd. © Copyright CAMRA Ltd.

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This magazine is solely funded by advertising revenue. If any additional monies are raised then this will help to fund other TES & SWS CAMRA initiatives.

Articles and suggestions for the next issue of **Shropshire TAles** should be submitted by **1st March 2019**.

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email: editor.tescamramagazine@gmail.com



A word from T.E.S CAMRA Chairman

Thanks must go to all who were involved in the organisation and running of the recent Shifnal Beer Festival which was a success. Also a thank you to all of you who supported it by turning up and drinking.

We are coming up to period where the main focus of the branch is the selection of entries to go into the next edition of the campaign's flagship publication the Good Beer Guide, and determining the recipients of the various awards to pubs and clubs in our branch area. Can I ask you make sure you submit beer scores for those establishments you are frequenting by the end of January so we have a more accurate view of the quality of beers served in our pubs.

Details of the selection meeting are on the Branch Diary page and the Branch website.

In 2018 the branch has been involved with a number of successful events including festivals, trips and enjoyable social meetings. A big thank you all those involved with setting up and running these for the branch. Here's to 2019 being bigger and better again for the branch, cheers, good drinking and campaigning.

Adrian Zawierka
T.E.S Branch Chairman



A word from S.W.S CAMRA Chairman

I would not, by any stretch of the imagination, call myself a 'trend setter', but I see the recent increase in demand for darker beers as welcome. What had previously been seen as unfashionable is now the beer to be drinking.

This year's Supreme Champion Beer of Britain is Broken Dream Breakfast Stout from Siren Brewery in Berkshire, leading the way against Cairngorm Black Gold and Fixed Wheel Blackheath Stout. Locally we are spoilt for choice with Stonehouse's Ballast, Three Tuns Stout, Ludlow's Black Knight, and Salopian Midnight Express amongst many others.

Winter beer styles seem to come into their own at this time of year with Red Cat's Mr M's Porter, Dunham Massey's Dunham Porter and Grain's Slate all taking national awards.

If you have not tried Mild, Stout, Old Ale or Porter, we suggest that in the New Year, when our Tryanuary campaign gets under way, would be a good time to start. The pubs need the business in January and it is a good time for them and us to try something new.

We shall be running the popular Mild in May trail again next year to show that dark beer is not just for Christmas, it can be enjoyed all year round, and I shall be just one of many that will be following that trend!
Enjoy the festive season.

Dave Roll
S.W.S Branch Chairman

CAMRA branches are always looking for CAMRA members to volunteer to help with organising trips, beer festivals and regional promotions. If you have some spare time then please come along to any of our branch meetings. For further information see branch diaries (pg 32-33).



A word from our Market Drayton sub-branch

I am writing this in the middle of November and already many of the pubs have their decorations and Christmas trees up with the Christmas fayre tempting you into their warm and cosy bars for a grand evening, but spare a thought about how they survive all the year round.

That is where the worth of CAMRA comes in, supporting and campaigning for your local, selling good ale that can be consumed not just at this time of year but throughout the year.

We probably all know this but now it is more poignant than ever with more pubs closing. I bet a pub in your local community has closed down recently? Here in the Market Drayton area, we have lost nearly a third of the pubs over the past few years. So this Christmas why not buy yourself or a friend a membership and support a great cause. Cheers and I hope you all have had a great festive season.

Bryn Pass
Market Drayton sub-branch

Pub of the Season - Winter 2018

Bridgnorth CAMRA Bell and Talbot

2 Salop Street, Bridgnorth WV16 4QU



Telford CAMRA Compasses

72 Beveley Road, Telford TF2 6SD
Presentation - 3rd Jan 2019 - Time TBA



Call for votes for the Telford and Bridgnorth Region Winter Pubs of the Season

To be eligible for selection a pub needs to not be in the Good Beer Guide and currently achieving a minimum of 3.0 for their beer quality score (an up to date beer score will be checked following nomination).

Telford nominations will be taken at branch meetings and a list of the nominated pubs and email voting details will be sent out in February. Votes can also be cast at branch meetings.

Bridgnorth nomination and voting are taken at sub-branch meetings.



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Shropshire Oktoberfest 2018

By Norrie Porter

In 2017 when Shropshire Festivals announced a large marquee event based on separate brewery bars there was a bit of scepticism about the concept. However, attendance far exceeded expectations and Shropshire Oktoberfest returned this year much bigger (and with more toilets).

Running from Friday to Sunday and involving 150+ ales, ciders and perries plus some keg beers and lagers, the festival attracted tens of thousands of customers of all ages. Entry is £5-10 with family tickets available. Beer and cider prices were reasonable at £3 to £3.60 for most beers, and gins, wines and cocktails were also on offer. The festival is undoubtedly drinks-led, but food was plentiful, if relatively more costly at £6 for a meal-sized portion. There was live music accompanied by a video projection light show in the main tent. Alternative entertainment included the comedy tent and giant games. In general, the beer was of more than acceptable quality and the event was great fun.

Oktoberfest isn't a rip-off beirkeller, although a couple of brass bands did attempt some oompah numbers. Almost all the beers would have qualified as LocAles under the CAMRA scheme, with the only German beers a couple of pilsners on the round-up Hoppportunity Bar. Shropshire Breweries with their own bars were Corvedale, Hobsons, Joule's, Ludlow, Rowton, Three Tuns and Wood. Salopian and Stonehouse had brewery open days but their beers were available on the Hoppportunity Bar along with offerings from St. Annes. Other real ale brewery bars were Brecon, Swan, Bewdley and Wye Valley and some smaller craft breweries. Hobsons brought Oldfield Ciders and Gwatkin was a major presence, with again some smaller producers represented.



Festival Organiser Beth once more offered Shrewsbury and West Shropshire CAMRA space for a membership stall, and this year we went for the official version. The Central Office stand includes a number of different themes, including membership, shop and campaigns which you can mix and match. We also ordered pull-up banners, a display stand and a selection of books and merchandise on sale or return. Shipping to and from St Alban's was very reasonable, and made the whole thing worthwhile, as we recruited more new members alone than we needed to cover the costs to the campaign! Running a stand at other events where we don't have a bar is definitely something we would think about doing again and we'll definitely be back at Oktoberfest next year.

Save the date

**Shropshire
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returns on
**4th - 5th
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2019**

The festival website is
www.shropshireoktoberfest.co.uk/
and the Facebook page
[@shropshireoktoberfest](https://www.facebook.com/shropshireoktoberfest)

A tour of Leek

Words and photos by **Paul Barrow**

In early November TES CAMRA organised a coach trip to the historic Staffordshire market town of Leek, the administrative centre for the Staffordshire Moorlands and once an industrial centre for the manufacture of textiles. Upon arrival the atmosphere and architecture was reminiscent of a smaller version of Burton-upon-Trent.

Not a bad start then for lovers of cask ale, but the real advantage of Leek is in the number of wonderful pubs crammed into a relatively small town centre. The local CAMRA branch for the potteries had kindly provided us with maps and pub guide to the centre of Leek which enabled us to plan ahead. This was extremely useful as there are upwards of 16 pubs serving real ale within easy walking distance of the central bus station.

Our small subgroup had decided that with four hours to spend, around nine carefully chosen pubs would be about right, so with an intention to have only a half in each we set off from the bus station towards Ashbourne and The Earl Grey. A relatively small, multi-award winning, traditional free house this pub re-opened in 2014 and judging by the number of pump clips adorning the bar area it really has lived up to its intention to specialise in beers that are unusual for the area. The Froth Blowers Jolly Brewer was on true form being served in a hugely over-sized glass to accommodate the effusive head.

Leaving here we left the main road and followed the back streets to the Blue Mugge, another free house nestling unobtrusively among the terraced houses. Going in through the Out Door, signed as such with a stained glass window reminding us that



pubs used to have a separate area for off sales, we found a large wooden central bar surrounded by several rooms with comfortable seating and dark wooden panelling. Millstone Stout went down well but was a little on the cold side.

Heading back towards the centre of Leek, our next stop was The Fountain on Fountain Street, yet another free house and boasting the title of West Midlands Regional Pub of the Year 2018. Eight ales were on handpull plus two real ciders, all supplemented by a convivial welcome. The range of beers was impressive and interesting with my choice of Downton Hopoholic proving to be an inspired one. From here we headed past the clock tower and into the centre of Leek.



The Roebuck Hotel is an attractive early 17th century timbered building adjacent to a Methodist church(!). In this Titanic Brewery tap house, the wood panelled bar offered six Titanic beers and three other. The award-winning food menu features locally sourced burger, but I settled for Titanic White Star, and I was not disappointed.



From there it was a short hop across the road to the Joule's Brewery-owned Cock Inn. While it was rather predictably adorned with the usual Joule's trappings the bar offered a range of Joule's permanent and seasonal beers, the guest ale turned out to be far too much temptation to resist and the Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby was in magnificent form to boot. Reluctantly leaving the Sedgley sensation behind we headed slightly out of the centre to Benks, formerly the Union Inn, which had only just opened. A relatively stark interior compared with what we had experienced previously would have benefitted from some lively customer banter, but the welcome was warm and the Draught Bass was in fine order.

From there we headed to the opposite side of the former market place to the Wilkes Head, a long-standing Good Beer Guide listing which serves Whim ales and other guests. The Engine Shed Project Ubiquitous was a good choice and at 6% ABV persuaded me to stick to my resolution of halves only.

From there we decided to go modern in the shape of the Beer Dock on Market Place. Predominantly a craft beer pub with a trendy 'beer wall' and shelves of bottled and canned beer for sale, it does offer two handpulls and real cider. However on this occasion I decided to go craft and had a snifter of Harviestoun Old Engine Oil, which being another 6% beer showed that moderation if not Methodism can be a virtue.



Our final stop of the afternoon was on the way back to the bus station. The Cobblers is a small, modern free house which often features offerings from Winkle Brewery. A half of their Burke's Special proved to be a fine way to end the tour of just some of Leek's finest hostelrys before boarding the bus for home. These days out have often shown us sufficient delights subsequently to warrant a more protracted stay; I'm sure this will become another such destination.



Pub and Brewery News



Ludlow Brewery

Micro plant now sourced to allow new beers to be developed. New mash tun planned together with improvements to help move materials around brewery and to allow used malt to be delivered direct from mash tun to for collection outside of the brewery. There are also plans to build an on-site kitchen to provide food for events rather than have to employ off site caterers.

Six Bells Brewery

Having reported on staff changes last time more of the same as in Douglas the current brewer moves on to another non-brewing job in Bishops Castle. At the time of writing I have no details of the new brewer.

Joule's Brewery

Joule's have announce that they have appointed a new permanent Head Brewer Nigel Haighton. Nigel has an enormous amount of experience in the brewing industry, running many different breweries for Bass over the years, and more recently, Head Brewer for Battlefield Brewery. Nigel replaces Martin Cullimore who has been keeping the brewery ticking over whilst we recruited for a permanent Head Brewer.

The new seasonal beers, Old Number 6 is due out in December followed by Penny Pincher that will be launched early in the New Year.

Clun Brewery

Not a lot of change since last time but brewing can now take place every two days – this includes weekends - as there are now four fermenters installed. A new beer brewed in the summer was Unk IPA ABV 7.5% which was supplied to the Shrewsbury Beer Festival in a pin (it went into one more pin) the rest has been bottled and is only available from the White Horse Clun. There is an intention to brew more. The pin supplied to the Shrewsbury Festival was the first beer to sell out.

Rowton Brewery

Rowton Brewery currently has a couple of projects on the go. They are increasing their capacity by adding another fermenter and also increasing the size of their cold store. They are also working with Harper Adams with their 'Hands Free Hectare' project (which is based on robotics for the whole growing process) using the barley in your beer. Alongside this they are also running bottling trials so hopefully in 2019 bottle conditioned Rowton ales will be available at a local shop near you.

Stonehouse Brewery

Stonehouse Brewery have a special Christmas beer available. The Kentucky Sleigh Ride, is a deliciously smooth coffee, vanilla and bourbon porter which is sure to keep you warm this winter!

Let us know your brewery news. Please contact **Lee Bradbury**
email: editor.tescamramagazine@gmail.com

Hobsons Brewery The Golden Dip Stick

The annual challenge to claim the ultimate 'Golden Dip Stick' took place on Saturday 3rd November between Hobsons Brewery and Wye Valley Brewery. The challenge started back in 2005 and each year the two breweries meet up to battle it out for the glory of the claiming the Golden Dip Stick, in the past the staff teams have competed in Cricket, Rounders, Ten Pin Bowling, Pub Olympics, a skills course and an Omelette making competition! This year 'Pub Olympics' returned which was hosted at the Barrels in Hereford, teams took part in table football, pool, darts, skittles and quoits. Hobsons Brewery staff team took the victory over Wye Valley and claimed the Golden Dip Stick for 2018!

Seasonal Beer

Hobsons Plum Porter will be back late November in cask for the festive season, the 5% dark porter is made with the juiciest Shropshire Prune Damsons sourced from Augernik Fruit Farm, Hopton Wafers. The Shropshire Damson Prune has a distinguished heritage as possibly the oldest known variety of damson in the UK, and a fruit enjoyed by the Romans. The Damson prune with its tartness and intense flavour has provided Hobsons with an unique seasonal ingredient for its winter beer Postman's Plum Porter. The beer has an aroma of sweet juicy plums, rich treacly roasted malts, a smooth chocolate finish and a touch of spice.

* All information correct at the time of publication.



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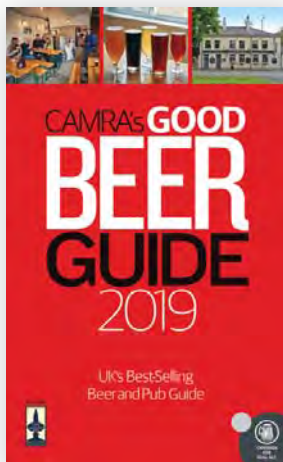
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Why isn't my pub in the Good Beer Guide?

Words by **Paul Jones** | photos by **Bob Eastwick**

Chatting to pub landlords on my travels around the pubs of Shropshire, I am frequently asked 'why isn't my pub in the Good Beer Guide (GBG)?', and very often I have to admit that their pub does have all the attributes needed of a typical GBG pub. So why isn't it in the guide?

In the last resort it boils down to not enough of our members voting for them. In Telford and East Shropshire Branch we have a very important branch meeting 'Selection Night' in February each year when 25 or 26 pubs are deemed suitable for inclusion to the next edition of the GBG. Branch meetings usually have 10 to 20 attendees, but Selection Night in February mushrooms into 40 or 50. The result of this meeting lays down the direction of the branch for the next 12 months. Those selected have to be monitored to ensure they all maintain their standards, and similarly those that don't get selected also need to be monitored to see whether they may be one of the upcoming pubs suitable for consideration for next year.



How many pubs do we have to keep our eyes on?

Well, at present, there are a total of 394 pubs listed for our Branch, 231 from Telford, 133 from Bridgnorth and 30 from Market Drayton. Our sister branch Shrewsbury and West Shropshire will have a similar quantity, and thereby hangs the reason for that duplicitous figure of 25 or 26 pubs mentioned above. The powers that be in St. Albans deem Shropshire can have only 51 pubs entered in each GBG, so one year we get 26, the next year 25; ditto West Shropshire. The number was worked out many years ago, before I was ever involved and relates to the population and what tourist appeal the county has. Leicestershire for example have 67, and Devon 125.

How do we render 25/6 pubs down from 394?

Over the years we have developed systems to monitor as many of the pubs as continuously as possible. We send out busloads of volunteers on surveys of the outlying areas, and we rely on individual members to report back to our monthly meetings

Shropshire is the largest inland county in the country. Our 'patch' runs from Woore, above Market Drayton in the North to Tenbury Wells beyond Cleobury Mortimer in the South and by road it is 64 miles. We call the bus trips 'surveys', cynics call them pub crawls.



Whatever they are called our brave members complete quality scores which are religiously compiled into reports and running totals by our Pubs Survey Officer, Dave Haddon. He is also aided by members scoring the beer on Whatpub. These are not just East Shropshire members but members from all over the country who visit the area and take time to do this. It is also a good reason why we should reciprocate to help other branches when we are away from home in other branches areas.

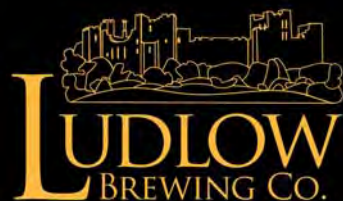
We always carry forward the current entries in the GBG to Selection Night unless something untoward excludes them i.e. change of landlord or god forbid, closure or poor beer quality. The rest of the pack will be those pubs that have been nominated by members, and in all cases, they must have a minimum number of 5 visits and attain an average beer score of 3 or over. The final list can be 50 or 60 pubs, and in view of the number we have (395), to get to that point is praise enough. However this must be reduced to that annoying 25 or 26, and that is what Selection Night is all about.

We do give members the opportunity to vote and submit their choices before Selection Night by email or if not electronically savvy, by post, but nothing beats the frisson of Selection Night. Of course quite a number of the pubs are stalwarts and figure year after year and that is no bad thing. They are popular and deservedly so, and of course people do tend to vote for their 'local'. However there are always those pubs that have all the right credentials and are just waiting to be 'recognised'. Selection Night sometimes surprises and sometimes disappoints. Not everyone will be happy but many will be delighted.

I hope this helps to explain how we select our Good Beer Guide pubs. We don't have a list which is sacrosanct. Every pub is capable of going in, and every pub is capable of being voted out. However it is a fact that we have over 750 members but we estimate only about 100 vote each year. After many years of refining the process we think we have made it as democratic as possible. And therein lies the flaw. We can't force people to vote and it's votes that count.



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Five go mad in Southport...?

Words by Alan Ashurst

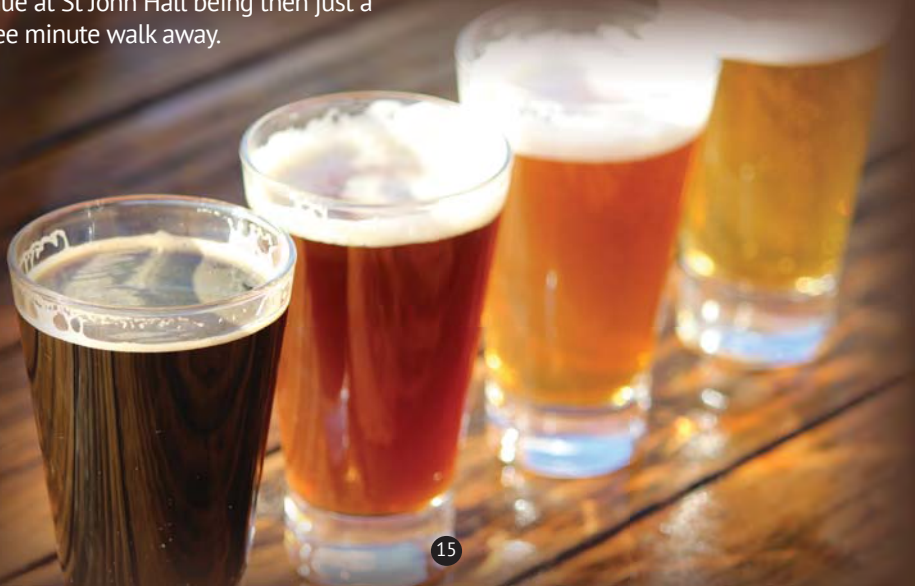
Not quite Enid Blyton stuff I guess, but there were some parallels when a little group of SAWS members took flight to the North to investigate Southport Beer Festival on Saturday, 27th October.

Thus myself, Doreen, Dave and Kevin initially met up at Chester Station just after 10am, to be joined at the venue later by Mark. With four of us being able to enjoy the benefits of rail staff travel facilities price obviously was not an issue, but even for Dave the superb value Merseytravel 'Saveaway' day rover ticket at an amazing £5.30 covering all trains, buses and even ferries throughout Merseyside (and in some cases beyond) proved that a visit to these parts need not inflict too much damage on anyone's wallet.

Proceeding through the Wirral then in nice sunshine to change at Liverpool Moorfields brought us via the Sefton Coast and into Southport just after 12 noon, with the venue at St John Hall being then just a three minute walk away.

Fairly compact it must be said, but quite adequate for the range of 60 or so beers and a dozen ciders on offer, with comfortable seating and hot & cold food options too. Three hours or so were enjoyed sampling the various brews available, with me seeking out the Dark Side as usual - with plenty of choice available. New breweries and some rarer offerings kept Dave happy too.

We left in time to allow passage through Liverpool before Anfield spilled out its contents, then separated for individual journeys home in the late afternoon. Altogether a fully rewarding day, albeit at some distance from base camp. We do though have plenty of other regular options for days out somewhat closer to home (see fixtures list in this issue) so if you fancy joining us sometime then please do come along. I promise mind you, there will be no further nods towards Enid Blyton storytelling!



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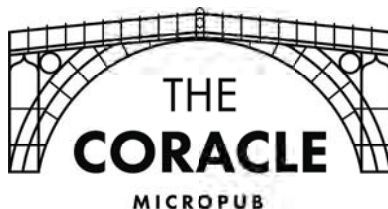
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Awards presented to Shropshire pubs and breweries

There are many award winning pubs and breweries in Shropshire.

The Lion O'Morfe, Upper Farmcote

is West Midlands Region Runner-up Pub of the Year, Marches Pub of the Year and Shropshire Pub of the Year. This is an amazing achievement for Brian and Sam Jervis and their team. It was hoped to present them with their awards at the Telford and East Shropshire Christmas Social but unfortunately this was not possible and they will be presented to them at a later date.



St Georges Sports and Social Club has also received a regional award by getting West Midlands Region

Joint Runner-up Club of the Year. Another great result for this club that welcomes CAMRA members, congratulations to Helen and Garry Keable.



Adam and Jodie at **The White Hart, Shifnal** received awards for Marches Runner-up Pub of the Year and Shropshire Runner-up Pub of the Year.



The Bailey Head, Oswestry continued their success by being awarded Marches Third Place Pub of the Year and Shropshire Runner-up Pub of the Year.



The Prince of Wales, Shrewsbury has been awarded Shrewsbury Pub of the Year.



Ludlow Brewery have won the Shropshire Brewers Challenge for the second time. Judged by "blind" tasting, Ludlow Blonde won this year's challenge. This is an award that has been judged at the Shrewsbury Beer Festival since 2006.



Chapel Brewery won the Public Beer of the Festival at this years Shrewsbury Beer Festival.





Joule's Fat Mouse was the Beer of the Festival from Shifnal Beer Festival with Rowton's Jim's Special Reserve and Wilde Child Absolute Impeachment being joint runners-up.

Autumn Pub of the Season winners from around the county:

The Vault Micro Bar, Ellesmere opened last year, it is tucked away under the Town Hall in the centre of town. Being a large building the vaulted under-croft that now houses the bar is not quite as 'micro' as the name suggests, but is able to comfortably accommodate a large and varied clientele. From up to three hand pumps real ale is on offer, drawing beers from the likes of Stonehouse, Salopian and the nearby Chapel breweries.

With food and live music on offer the Vault is a welcome addition to the Ellesmere social scene and beer drinking community. Congratulations to Paul and the staff for an excellent start to their venture.



The Harp Hotel, Albrighton in Telford

was voted as Telford Pub of the Season for Autumn and we were delighted to present their certificate to John Gilbert, founder and brewer of Hopback Brewery, who retired earlier this year, and Alison Freezer. We enjoyed some Hopback beers, Summer Lightning and Crop Circle, which are regular beers, but they also had on offer Purple Moose Elderflower Ale, Ludlow Gold and Three Tuns XXX, all in good form thanks to John Lonergan.

Following the presentation of the award by our chairman, Adrian Zawierka, John Gilbert gave a short speech discussing the future renovation of the pub, a meet the brewer evening and perhaps a trip down to their Brewery next year.



Fosters Arms, Bridgnorth is a traditional free house in the Low Town area and is very popular with sports-loving regulars boasting 2 darts and 5 dominoes teams. It usually

features 4 real ales; Banks's Mild, Amber & Sunbeam accompanied by their best seller Hobsons Town Crier. When David Brown took over the

Fosters Arms he was then the youngest Bridgnorth pub landlord and is now the towns longest serving landlord having been there for 29 years.



10 Years of Rowton Beer

Rowton Brewery's 10th Birthday celebrations were in full swing when we presented Jim and Steve Preston with their award for 'Jim's Special Reserve - Portly Stout' which was voted as runner up at Shifnal Beer Festival earlier this year.



We presented it at their pop up outside bar (fortunately undercover as it was a little damp outside) where they were serving a special one off '10th Hoppy Birthday Beer' - which sold out very quickly! Congratulations to Rowton on your first successful 10 years and another certificate for your wall!



Jim and Steve Preston of Rowton Brewery receive their Beer of The Festival competition award from the organiser of the 4th Shifnal Beer Festival



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Richard and Russ are the new owners of The Three Horseshoes (the Shoes) in Alveley and are keeping the tradition of the English pub alive with every pint served; after all it is believed a drinking establishment has stood on this site since 1406.

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Monday 4pm to 10pm - Bank Holidays Open from 12pm
Tues - Thurs 12:00 to 11:00pm
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Find us on Facebook @3horseshoesalveley
www.thethreehorseshoesalveley.co.uk



Crossways, Somerset

Words and photos by **Bob Eastwick**

Imagine, you've just arrived at a beautiful bed & breakfast in Somerset. After a cup of tea to recover from your journey, you go downstairs and through a door to enter the bar of a lovely country pub.

You walk up to the bar to be confronted by eight pumps serving a range of ales between 3.7% & 6.4%. Instead of saying to you, "What'll it be?", the barman says, "Are you a member of CAMRA?" (20p a pint discount). You will probably think exactly as I did at this point. "I must have died and gone to heaven".

The pub is the Crossways Inn at Highbridge which is close to Burnham-on-Sea and is CAMRA Somerset's pub of the year for 2018. This place is everything a country pub should be, there is a B&B attached – although this is operated independently of the pub. On the first night I tried three of the beers as I had to get up early the next morning. However, all those I tried were in absolutely tip-top condition. These were Dartmoor Best, Exmoor Wild Cat and Gloucester American Pale.

By the following evening, five of those eight beers had been changed and I made a point of trying them all - plus the ones I hadn't tried the previous day (This is probably why I couldn't remember what they were next morning).



There was a wide range of beers available, you could choose from blonde, pale, bitter, amber, copper-coloured or stout. The food served here is very good but it's best to book as it is VERY popular. Don't miss the Strawberry Meringue Roulade - it's amazing but order it early as it quickly sells out! If all the food tables are booked, they still keep a couple of non-food areas for those who just want a drink.

There were no music and games machines. However, they do have occasional live bands on Saturday nights.

All the management and staff are really helpful and friendly, they go about their work in a cheerful manner and always have time to stop and chat to customers.

There were about five choices for breakfast. I had the full English and can say that it was the best I've had.

Finally, make a point of visiting Wilkins Cider Farm on the edge of the Mendips - the first round is always FREE. (check opening times before your visit).





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ALE**

LIGHT, CITRUS & MOREISH 4.8

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BITTER**

LIGHT, HOPPY & QUAFFABLE 3.8

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Cask Ale Week

Words by **Tim Hockenhull**

The 15th - 23rd of September was this year's national Cask Ale "Week" while next years "Week" is to be from the 19th - 29th of September. It is a national initiative to which CAMRA members are more than happy to give their support.

For this year, as in the past, Shrewsbury and West Shropshire CAMRA branch organised a walkabout on the 21st in the Belle Vue area of Shrewsbury. A lot of the pubs in this area don't open before 4pm these days which is an unfortunate consequence of the decline in the numbers who regularly visit pubs these days. SAWS members started at the Belle View Tavern followed by a visit to the Masonic Arms. Also as we were in the area we could not miss out the Prince of Wales - described in **whatpub.com** as a "back street local".

From there, as we had been encouraged by Marstons web site that as part of cask ale "Week" they would have real ale, we called in at the Boars Head in Coleham. Filled more with hope than expectancy, as this pub has not been able to have real ale for some time and so it proved still to be the case. On the other hand our next port of call the Cross Foxes, privately owned and run by the same family for many years now, has been serving real ale for ever! After that we finished up at the Seven Stars also in Coleham (Head), having helped a little we hope in promoting the adage use them or lose them! After which the party split, some into town, while the remainder of us went to finish at the Bricklayers on Abbey Foregate. Here the new Landlord is trying to build back trade and have on two real ales. On this occasion there was only Wye Valley Bitter. A good choice nevertheless.

Notices & emails

How to advertise in **Shropshire TAles**

If you would like further information about advertising in the next edition of **Shropshire TAles** please contact **Lee Bradbury**
email: **editor.tescamramagazine@gmail.com**

Remember...

Articles and suggestions
for the next issue of
Shropshire TAles
should be submitted by
1st March 2019

Thanks to
everyone who
has supported us
by contributing to
this issue.

CAMRA members vote for major changes – the results of the Revitalization Project

By **Ian Stamp** Chair Norwich and Norfolk CAMRA



What does CAMRA stand for? A good question, with several meanings and several answers. Initially it was the Campaign for the Revitalization of Ale, started by four beer drinkers who were appalled by the lack of choice available to beer drinkers in pubs, which were almost all owned by just six brewers, who only sold their own, increasingly bland products.

At the start, there was no specific mention of real ale – the term had not been coined – and as Michael Hardman, one of the four founders, said at CAMRA's AGM in Coventry in April, the original goal was to improve choice and quality, rather than support a particular type of beer or dispense method. Of course, at that time there were only two major 'types' of beer – brewery-conditioned in keg, and cask-conditioned in well, cask, and it was the latter which was dying out, as it was more difficult to keep, and had a shorter shelf-life. This meant that CAMRA soon came to focus on support for breweries producing, and pubs serving, what became known as 'real ale', and changed its name to reflect that focus.

Forty-something years later, the beer 'scene' is almost unbelievably different from the 1970s, with hundreds of inventive small breweries producing an incredible range of beer styles and types, from gose to NEIPA, lambic to weisse, as well as of course all the traditional styles. There are far fewer pubs, but those which survive provide, in most cases and places, a far better choice of beer than when CAMRA was founded.

Which begs the question: has CAMRA achieved its original objective? What should it "stand for" now, if anything?

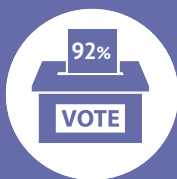
Revitalization

The Revitalization Project was launched to discover what members thought the organisation should be doing in the 21st century. The results included three major surveys of members and meetings across the country, were ten proposals to change CAMRA's Articles of Association – the organisations guiding principles. The proposals were put to the annual AGM as Special Resolutions, for three main reasons: changing the Articles would embed the changes in the "DNA" of the organisation; all members, not just those in attendance, would be able to vote; and to pass, the resolutions would need 75% of the total votes in favour*, meaning that they were supported by a significant majority of the membership (not just a marginal 52-48 majority!). (As CAMRA is a company limited by guarantee, it is a legal requirement that changes to the Articles attract a 75% vote in favour.)

So what were the proposals? In brief, excluding technical legalities, they were:

- To secure the long-term future of real ale, cider and perry by ensuring their quality, availability and popularity
- To promote and protect pubs and clubs
- To increase recognition of the benefits of moderate social drinking
- To play a leading role in the provision of information to those with an interest in beer, cider and perry
- To act as the voice of all pub-goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers
- To ensure that producers and retailers act in the best interests of the consumer
- To operate in a transparent, inclusive, enthusiastic and welcoming manner

To be honest, there's nothing particularly revolutionary there, except perhaps the use in a couple of the word 'beer' instead of 'real ale', and to me at least, it was no great surprise that members voted massively in favour of all the resolutions, with majorities of up to 92%.



Other important changes

In fact, it is when we come to the motions for debate at CAMRA's Conference (after, and separate from, the AGM) that some of the more surprising and previously controversial changes were made. Again, I can't go into a lot of detail, but the following motions were also debated, and passed, this time (as they only affect policy) by simple majorities:

- The National Executive to set key performance indicators for equality and diversity
- CAMRA members and Branches should not ask for, or expect, discounts
- NE to implement a neutral position on cask-breathers (something the vast majority of the public know nothing about, but which has been in the past a subject of huge rows, now hopefully never to raise its head again!). Although

Does that mean that we'll see banks of lager fonts at CAMRA festivals? No, of course not. Some festivals already sell real ales in KeyKegs, some have in fact already sold UK beer which was not real ale, because they believe it to be good beer, and because part of our remit, even before the resolution to "play a leading role in the provision of information" has always been education about beer styles. But as was stated by several speakers, and by members of the NE, CAMRA festivals are organised by CAMRA members, and will always primarily feature real ales.

One, however, 'To act as the voice of all pub-goers', only achieved a 72% vote in favour, and was not added to CAMRA's 'objectives' in the Articles of Association. This does not mean that CAMRA has "rejected" anything, or will not be the voice of all pub-goers, in campaigns around beer duty and the tie, for example. It just means that those activities won't be enshrined in the articles.

it is notable that chairman Colin Valentine, at his last Conference, passed the Chair to his successor Jackie Parker for this motion, so he could speak against it.

- CAMRA to campaign against the imposition by property owners of any supply tie - this was opposed by the NE, on the basis that it should be the abuse of the tie we campaign against (among other things).
- To reject calls to reduce and reform the Small Brewers Duty Rebate scheme
- And lastly, potentially the most controversial of the lot:
- To remove the restriction that beer festivals should only sell real ale, cider and perry.
- That's right - CAMRA Beer Festivals may - and that is the operative word! - sell beers which are not real ale.

So to sum up, CAMRA is far from dead, and in fact is embracing change, with almost three-quarters of its active members voting for proposals to modernise and streamline the Articles, and well over half of attendees at Conference voting in favour of progressive motions.

And we all had a great time in the pubs of Coventry afterwards!



Sampling the ales in Shrewsbury

Words by **Steve James**

Set within a loop of the River Severn is Shrewsbury, the county town of Shropshire. This market town retains its medieval street pattern, with over 600 listed buildings, including several timber-framed buildings from the 15th & 16th century, along with its 11th century castle, abbey, school and A E Houseman's "steeped crest" of St Mary's, St Chad's & St Alkmund's churches.

The town is the commercial centre for Shropshire and mid-Wales, but also has an excellent range of pubs and bars, including some very old ones. CAMRA's What Pub actually lists over 60 pubs in and around the town centre. July is a good time to visit, when the annual CAMRA beer festival is held.



We arrived at Shrewsbury railway station and our first port-of-call was the **Station Hotel**, just opposite in Castle Foregate. Here is a small craft beer bar with 9 taps and over 70 bottles or cans of excellent craft beer, including those from Tiny Rebel, Cloudwater and Beavertown. We then headed along Chester Street and up Coton Hill to the **Royal Oak**.

This pub has been refurbished by Black Country Ales and offers their 3 beers along with up to 7 guest ales, including Fixed Wheel Chain Reaction. A little further on is the **Woodman Inn**, a half-timbered pub rebuilt in 1923. From its range of 6 real ales, we sampled Ossett Silver King and Wolf Rock.

Retracing our steps to the railway station, we walked along Smithfield Road alongside the river and soon spotted the **Salopian Bar**. Always popular with real ale fans, from its 5 handpulls we sampled Stonehouse Station Bitter and Marble Stout. Continuing along the riverside, it's worth taking a side trip up Mardol to visit the **King's Head**, with its 15th century timber-framed exterior, pre-Reformation wall paintings, low beams and wooden benches. Back on Mardol Quay, we spotted the first of the town's Wetherspoons pubs, the **Shrewsbury Hotel** in Bridge Street. A familiar range of beers, from which we sampled Batemans Yella Belly Gold. Further along the riverside on Victoria Quay is the **Armoury**, converted to a bar/restaurant from its former use. A posh Edwardian-style interior, where we had a glass of their rather expensive house beer, Brunning & Price Original. Nearby, in Lower Claremount Bank, is the second Wetherspoons pub, **Montgomery's Tower**, with a range of 10 less expensive real ales.



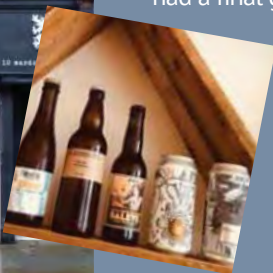
Time for a walk up to St John's Hill to visit the **Coach & Horses**, dating back to the early 19th century, with wood panelling, for a quick glass of Salopian Oracle. Close by in Swan Hill, just off the main square, is the **Admiral Benbow**. A good range of Wye Valley, Salopian and Ludlow beers is available from its 7 handpulls, of which we sampled Salopian Hop Twister and local Battlefield Brewery 1066. Into the main town centre, in Mardol Head, we spotted a real surprise, **Chez Sophie** (or "Sophies"). This is basically a bar/café in the Flanders style, with quirky nick-nacks and old French cinema seats, serving waffles, crepes and milkshakes. But it also has an unusual beer range chosen by Mat, the in-house beer specialist. He offers an extensive range of Belgian and craft beers, including the new English Trappist beer, Tynt Meadow amongst the 70 or so bottles and cans. A real find, if you like these beer styles.



Turning into Market Street, we passed by the **Golden Cross** in Princess Street, the oldest licensed premises in the town, dating back to at least 1428, since it is an up-market hotel and restaurant with a small bar and only a couple of real ales. Passing through Shrewsbury Square and right into High Street, we turned left into the cobbled streets of Grope Lane (so named as a former hangout of local prostitutes) and right into Fish Street to reach our next hostelry, the **Three Fishes**. This small traditional one-roomed Tudor building dates from the late 15th century and is Grade II listed, but is sometimes closed in the afternoon. From the 6 handpulls, we sampled a nice pint of Timothy Taylors Landlord. Returning to the High Street, just off Wyle Cop in Barracks Passage, we found **Henry Tudor's House**, a Grade I listed 15th century pub, which now offers beers from the Stonehouse (Oswestry) brewery. Close by, we spotted the **Nag's Head**, another historic Grade II listed pub, and a good old fashioned-boozery where we had a glass of Hobson's Best.

By now, it was time to walk back down the hill to the railway station, passing close to **Loggerheads (Marstons)**, an unspoilt 18th century pub, making a quick visit to the **Vaults** in Castle Street, for a glass of Hobson's Town Crier. Almost next to the station is the **Albion Vaults**, now owned by the local St Annes Brewery, where we had a final glass of their Tumbledown

Dick and Cross Dark beers. An excellent day's beer-hunting, visiting this historic town and sampling some of Shropshire's best ales and other craft beers.



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Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinup or call 01727 798440. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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Beer Festivals 2018-19



December

Thu 13th | Event: **Fixed Wheel Christmas Beer Festival, Blackheath, West Midlands**

January

Fri 18th | Event: **Lichfield Arts Winter Beer Festival**

Wed 23rd | Event: **Manchester Beer & Cider Festival (CAMRA)**

Thu 31st | Event: **Liverpool, St George's Hall, Winter Beer Festival**

Thu 31st | Event: **Tewkesbury Winter Ale Festival (CAMRA)**

February

Wed 20th | Event: **Great British Beer Festival Winter, Norwich (CAMRA)**

If you know of any beer festivals which are taking place in the future then please contact **Lee Bradbury**
email: editor.tescamramagazine@gmail.com

All information correct at time of print.
Please check prior to event.

Bridgnorth Sub-Branch Diary 2019



January

Tue 22nd 8pm | Event: **Branch meeting**

Venue: Stable Tavern, Cleobury Mortimer

February

Wed 27th 7:30pm | Event: **Branch meeting**

Venue: Fosters Arms, Bridgnorth

March

Tue 26th 8pm | Event: **Sub-branch meeting**

Venue: Davenport Arms (The Dog), Worfield

why not come along
and join us?

All information correct at time of print. Please check prior to event by contacting the Social Secretary.

T.E.S Branch Diary 2018-19

December

Sat 8th | Event: Christmas Social

Venue: Bridgnorth

Tues 18th | Event: Beer scoring by local service bus to Madeley/Ironbridge areas

Service 8 Bus at 11.30am at Telford Bus Station - Contact Paul Bradburn for details.

January

Thurs 3rd | Event: Beer scoring Oakengates area pubs

Meet at the Crown, Oakengates at 12noon for a great New Year day out!

Tue 8th 8pm | Event: Branch meeting

Venue: Railway Inn, Wellington

Sat 12th | Event: Beer scoring trip

Venue: We expect to concentrate on Little Wenlock, Much Wenlock, Stottesdon, Kinlet and Highley. Members cost is only £5 each with completed beer scores. Contact Paul Bradburn for details including pick-ups.

Tues 22nd | Event: Beer scoring Wellington area pubs

Meet at the William Withering at 1200hrs.

Sat 26th | Event: Joule's Brewery Trip and Beer scoring Market Drayton

Members cost is only £5 ph with completed beer scores. Contact Paul Bradburn for details including pick-ups.

February

Tue 14th 8pm | Event: Good Beer Guide 2019 Selection Evening

Venue: The Plough, Shifnal

March

Tue 12th 8pm | Event: Branch meeting

Venue: The Golden Lion, Bridgnorth

Sat 16th Time 12:30 | Event: Inter-branch Quiz

Venue: The Anvil, Shifnal

why not come along
and join us?

* Providing that members
complete beer survey forms the
cost is only £5 per head

All information correct at time of
print. Please check prior to event
by contacting the Social Secretary.

S.W.S Branch Diary 2018-19

December

Sat 8th | Event: **Wolverhampton Camra have their Xmas social in Shrewsbury**

Venue: If you want to join them, it will be at the Train Station around noon.

Tue 11th 7pm | Event: **Beerfest meeting**

Venue: Admiral Benbow, Shrewsbury.

Tue 18th | Event: **PTG trip by rail to Ludlow 1116 train ex SHR**

Mon 24th | Event: **Xmas eve walkabout**

Meet: Starting at Bucks Head, Frankwell at 2pm, then Wheatsheaf, Anchor etc.

Fri 28th | Event: **Beerbus beerscoring trip**

Venue: Depart Salopian Bar 7pm. (Oswestry direction).

January

Wed 2nd 8pm | Event: **Branch meeting**

Venue: Old Post Office, Shrewsbury.

Tue 8th 7pm | Event: **Beerfest meeting**

Venue: Admiral Benbow, Shrewsbury.

Tue 15th | Event: **PTG "holiday" trip to Leominster by rail. 1039 ex SHR**

Fri 18th | Event: **Xmas meal**

Venue: Prince Rupert Hotel, Shrewsbury

Fri 25th | Event: **Beerbus beerscoring trip**

Venue: Depart Salopian Bar 7pm.

February

Wed 6th 8pm | Event: **Branch meeting**

Venue: Buck's Head, Shrewsbury.

Tue 12th 7pm | Event: **Beerfest meeting**

Venue: Admiral Benbow, Shrewsbury.

Tue 19th | Event: **PTG trip - detail to follow**

Fri 22nd | Event: **Beerbus beerscoring trip**

Venue: Depart Salopian Bar 7pm.

All CAMRA members are very welcome to join us on these events where we will concentrate on visiting some superb pubs, completing beer scoring and enjoying good company.

Contacts and Consumer Information

The official Telford CAMRA branch contacts

Chairman: **Adrian Zawierka**
email: atoz@caskale.net

Secretary: **Eleanor Haddon**
email: ehaddon1@hotmail.com

Treasurer: **David Jones**
email: safejones@aol.com

Media Liaison: **Alan Thwaites**
email: hat.deecie@btinternet.com

Pub Surveys Officer: **Dave Haddon**
email: dhaddon@hotmail.com

Membership: **Paul Jones** tel: **01952 460456** or
email: paul.jones@caskale.net

Social Secretary: **Paul Bradburn**
tel: **01952 510611**
email: paulbradburn8439@btinternet.com

Bridgnorth CAMRA main contacts

Branch Chairman: **Eleanor Haddon**
tel: **07711 739007** or **01746 862884**
email: ehaddon1@hotmail.com

Branch Secretary: **Alan Thwaites**
tel: **07813 571956**
email: hat.deecie@btinternet.com

Social Secretary: **Position Vacant**

Membership Secretary: **David Jones**
email: safejones@aol.com

Market Drayton CAMRA main contacts

Branch Chair: **Bryn Pass**
tel: **07949 321442**
email: bpas@btinternet.com
www.facebook.com/groups/199617536785775/

The official Shrewsbury and West Shropshire CAMRA branch contacts

Chairman: **Dave Roll**
email: chair@saws.camra.org.uk

Secretary: **Nigel Bevan**
email: secretary@saws.camra.org.uk

Treasurer: **Jonny Sutton**
email: treasurer@saws.camra.org.uk

Membership Secretary: **Dave Ricketts**
email: membership@saws.camra.org.uk

Press and social media: **Norrie Porter**
email: press@saws.camra.org.uk

Social Secretary: **Dave Grainger**
tel: **01743 358975**

Please contact via website and Facebook
(see cover for details)

Consumer Information

If you have any complaints over short measures etc. and have no satisfaction from the pub in question please contact

Telford & Wrekin Trading Standards

Tel: **01952 381999**

Email: tradingstandards@telford.gov.uk

Address: **Telford & Wrekin Council, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford TF3 4JA**

Shropshire Trading Standards

Tel: **0345 678 9000**

Email: customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk

Address: **Shirehall, Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 6ND**

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