

YOUR **FREE** MAGAZINE | WINTER/SPRING 2023/24

# WETHERSPOON**NEWS**

UK EDITION

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## ALE FANS GO WILD FOR MAD SQUIRREL

Big Sea hazy craft keg beer on draught has been a smash hit

## DEEP DIVE INTO THREE WINES

Raise a glass to the glory of the grape

## 236 PUBS LISTED IN CAMRA'S THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2024

Wetherspoon's pubs recognised for the quality of their real ale

# THE GAME IS YOURS TO TAKE



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# WIN!

PRIZE  
CROSSWORD  
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Written and edited by Eddie Gershon, along with welcome contributions from Wetherspoon staff.

Using paper from sustainable resources, this is printed in the UK.

Pricing, participation and opening/food-service times may vary per pub.

All J D Wetherspoon food and drinks in this magazine are subject to local licensing restrictions and availability at participating free houses.

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# Trust the people - or frighten the people?

## While Sweden chose the former course during the pandemic, the UK Government and its experts chose the latter

**Some politicians, medics and academics, especially in the realm of diet and medicine, seem to have a tendency to underestimate the intelligence of the public.**

For example, dietary advice from government agencies is often categorical, even if the science on which it is based is uncertain or doubtful.

By simplifying the message, sometimes to the point of distortion, the great and good hope to maximise its impact on the public.

This was illustrated about a decade ago when, despite strenuous efforts to reduce the whole menu's salt content, Wetherspoon was taken to task regarding the salt in just one of its dishes.

Radio 4 hosted a debate on the subject between me (fully prepared to eat low-salt humble pie) and Professor Graham MacGregor, a renowned low-salt advocate.

On reading up on the subject before the radio interview, it was surprising to learn that a huge debate was raging, in both academic and medical circles, about whether salt really was as bad as Professor MacGregor, and some others, professed.

The existence of the debate and the doubt expressed by some medics about the professor's views were not evident in NHS guidelines at the time.

### **Doubts**

Wetherspoon News subsequently published an article by writer Gary Taubes, from *The New York Times* (see pages 56–57), in which doubts about the antisalt argument were summed up.

Perhaps Professor MacGregor was overstating his case.

During the radio interview, the professor was asked why Italians, who eat substantially more salt than Brits eat, live longer.

This was due to the Mediterranean diet, he replied.

The surprising and unlikely logic of the professor's answer was that higher Italian-style salt consumption, combined with the Mediterranean diet, would increase longevity – which didn't sound plausible and was certainly not in accordance with contemporary medical advice.

A similar vein of elite mistrust of public intelligence was evident during the pandemic.

Rather than following the 'trust the people' advice of Sweden's Professor Johan Giesecke (see page 58), the government and SAGE tried to frighten the public into compliance with simplified, and sometimes false, messages.

There was even a government-sponsored 'nudge unit' which, apparently, under a veil of secrecy, contributed to an online campaign of fear.

So, we ended up with some idiotic policies, with doubtful contributions to health, including curfews, moonshots, rules-of-six and other pointless soundbites.

Yet these sorts of question, which, broadly speaking, were supported by all of the main political parties, have been kicked into the long grass by means of an official government inquiry, costing an estimated £100 million, due to report in 2026, about four years after COVID-19 restrictions ended.



**What possible use is it to weigh up the alleged benefits, without the costs?**



### **Inquiry**

In contrast, the World Health Organization (WHO), for example, published its report into the pandemic in May last year – four years before the UK Government's inquiry will see the light of day.

Professor Francois Balloux, writing in *The Guardian*, and Professor Robert Dingwall, in *The Daily Telegraph*, report on the WHO investigation on pages 54–55.

Clearly, it's nigh on impossible for any of us to follow an inquiry which takes years to finish.

The inquiry's report will also be published far too late, surely, to be of much practical benefit.

If you give anyone a 500-page document to read (I'm guessing that the 2026 report will be about this long), it's incredibly difficult to

assimilate and understand – which is undoubtedly the way some people like it.

### **Brevity**

The Founding Fathers of the United States understood the need for speed, brevity and clarity, in order to achieve democratic consensus.

The Constitution of the United States took a few months to negotiate, over 200 years ago, with representatives of the various states contributing, yet ended up being only four pages long – so that you or I, in a short time, can read and understand it.

Winston Churchill, half American himself, emphasised the importance of brevity and clarity at a time of extreme peril for the free world.

His memo to government advisers in August 1940 (see opposite page) is a masterpiece in its explanation of the importance of avoiding unnecessary wordiness or detail.

In this general context, it was astounding to read an article recently (see page 59) in *The Financial Times* on a report from *The Royal Society*, which has been submitted to the government's COVID inquiry.

The FT article and the 80-page report itself seem to directly contradict the WHO's views as explained by Professors Balloux and Dingwall, referred to above.

### **Significant**

The Royal Society's report says that "stay-at-home orders" (ie lockdowns) were "repeatedly found to be associated with significant reduction in SARS-CoV-2 transmission, with more stringent measures having greater effects".

However, Professor Balloux, relying on the WHO report, says that "the stringency of mitigation measures does not seem to be a particularly strong predictor of excess deaths ... the worst performer by some margin is Peru, despite enforcing the harshest, longest lockdown".

Professor Dingwall's interpretation is similar.

He says that the data does not "support the view that the outcomes have much to do with the restrictions adopted by different governments, how soon they began or the stringency of enforcement".

## Memo from Winston Churchill to his staff, 1940

*Tim says:* “Few people in history can have been under greater pressure than Winston Churchill in 1940.

In the memo below, shortly after becoming PM, he makes the case brilliantly for brevity and clarity – essential for good decisions...”

S E C R E T.

W.P.(G)(40) 211.

COPY NO. 51

9TH AUGUST, 1940.

WAR CABINET.

BREVITY.

Memorandum by the Prime Minister.

To do our work, we all have to read a mass of papers. Nearly all of them are far too long. This wastes time, while energy has to be spent in looking for the essential points.

I ask my colleagues and their staffs to see to it that their Reports are shorter.

- (i) The aim should be Reports which set out the main points in a series of short, crisp paragraphs.
- (ii) If a Report relies on detailed analysis of some complicated factors, or on statistics, these should be set out in an Appendix.
- (iii) Often the occasion is best met by submitting not a full-dress Report, but an Aide-memoire consisting of headings only, which can be expanded orally if needed.
- (iv) Let us have an end of such phrases as these: "It is also of importance to bear in mind the following considerations.....", or "Consideration should be given to the possibility of carrying into effect.....". Most of these woolly phrases are mere padding, which can be left out altogether, or replaced by a single word. Let us not shrink from using the short expressive phrase, even if it is conversational.

Reports drawn up on the lines I propose may at first seem rough as compared with the flat surface of officialese jargon. But the saving in time will be great, while the discipline of setting out the real points concisely will prove an aid to clearer thinking.

W.S.C.

10, Downing Street.

9TH AUGUST, 1940.

In fact, Professor Dingwall concludes that Sweden, which did not lock down, produced better results – because:

“Unlike the UK, where elites assumed that people should be told what was good for them, and then compelled or frightened into doing it, Sweden explained its public health thinking and invited citizens to co-operate...

“Sweden shows that there was another path not taken that could have brought this country through the pandemic in far better shape, socially and economically.”

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of The Royal Society’s analysis, according to the Financial Times, is that “their report did not consider the broader impacts of lockdowns, such as the effects on the economy, children’s education and people’s mental health”.

It is surely odd, in the extreme, for a prestigious organisation like The Royal Society, to ignore those considerations.

What possible use is it to weigh up the alleged benefits, without the costs?

In any event, a sensible and speedy analysis of the lessons of the pandemic is clearly now needed.

Meanwhile, The Royal Society’s views have disappeared into the maw of the inquiry – and we will only know the result in about three years’ time.

A judicial inquiry, by its nature, produces a huge delay in reaching conclusions and learning lessons – it also means that, owing to delay and complexity, it’s almost impossible to see the wood for the trees.

Once again, in the meantime, the public will have to make up its own mind.

Personally, I’m not sure what the answer is to this strange set of circumstances – but, in a democracy, that doesn’t matter.

It’s what you think which counts...

**Tim Martin**  
Chairman

### Note from the editor:

The newspaper articles referred to here and the transcript of the Australian TV interview with Professor Giesecke can be found on pages 54–59.

# YOUR SAY

**Write:** The Editor, Wetherspoon News, J D Wetherspoon plc  
Central Park, Reeds Crescent, Watford, WD24 4QL

**E-mail:** editor@jdwetherspoon.co.uk

Should you have any specific feedback, to which you wish to receive a reply, please write to the customer services team at the postal address above or use the customer feedback form on our website.

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Your letter or e-mail really can make a difference. So, please do keep writing. Should you have any suggestions on how we can improve our service, please let us know.

Thank you

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FOOD & DRINKS GIFT CARD

## NO GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS?

**Dear editor**

I read in the latest Wetherspoon News edition that Thatchers Gold will be available in southwest England only.

I'm just wondering why it is not available in the rest of the UK and whether there's a chance of it coming back?

**Regards, Kieran Hutchinson (via e-mail)**

**Tim replies:**

"Gold,

*Always believe in your soul,  
You got the power to know,  
You're indestructible"*

OK, so Spandau Ballet wasn't talking about cider. The truth is (note the second allusion to a Spandau Ballet song) that Thatchers Gold, an excellent product, narrowly lost out to Strongbow in some parts of the country.

However, if there's sufficient demand, we'll try to make it available.



## STILL HUNTING FOR LEO LAGER

**Dear Tim**

As I travel around the East Midlands, I always look for one of your outlets and am never disappointed with what I find.

I am very impressed with your range of beers and lagers, particularly the foreign ones.

However, there is one which I never find.

I see that you stick to one Thai beer, namely Singha, but did you know that the biggest-selling lager in Thailand is Leo lager? It is the biggest seller among ex-pats living in Thailand, and I am sure that it would sell in your pubs.

If you accept this suggestion and wish to trial it, my local is The Shoulder of Mutton (Ashby-de-la-Zouch).

Keep up the good work Tim... and bring on the Leo.

**Yours, Paul Simon (via e-mail)**

**Tim replies:** A few of my squash-playing pals from the 70s and 80s moved to Thailand. Great weather, I understand. Will take a look at Leo – the name doesn't have the authenticity of Singha, but it's quality which counts.

John Travolta recently visited our pub in Dereham (Norfolk), Bono and The Edge from U2 visited us in Shepherd's Bush and Sydney Sweeney, star of the sensational new Rolling Stones video (Angry), visited our pub The Corn Exchange (Bury St Edmunds).

To have a letter from Paul Simon is the icing on the cake...



## ANY WHOLEMEAL BUNS IN THE OVEN?

**Dear editor**

We regularly dine at your pubs, usually enjoying burgers, and wonder whether a wholemeal bun option would be possible?

One of our regular diners is unable to eat white bread (and pasta etc), and the remainder of our party would also prefer a healthier burger bun.

**Carolyn Allanson  
Bridlington  
East Yorkshire**

**Tim replies:** Most people say that our menu is extensive.

One of the problems, though, is trying to expand it further in respect of 'relatively' minority tastes, as this causes problems for back-of-house storage. Having said that, the groovy catering team will look into your request.

## DOGGED DEFENCE OF CANINE CARRY-ON

**Dear Tim**

I keep reading customers' letters asking you to accept dogs into your pubs, yet would like to urge you not to change your mind on this matter.

I do not think that any dog owners would be pleased if an aggressive other dog were to take exception to their own dog, let alone to children or other customers.

No – busy family pubs serving food are not a place for dogs.

**Yours sincerely, Carole Ramsey, North Newington, Oxfordshire**

**Tim replies:** Wetherspoon, some regular customers will remember, was the first pub company to ban smoking in pubs, before there was a national ban.

Some smokers were a bit cross with us, but, strangely enough, most smokers I speak to today no longer seek a return to smoking indoors.

I suspect that most dog-owners are sympathetic to the dog prohibition in our big and busy pubs.

However, as we've said before, this is an area where you can't please all the people all the time.

● See dog policy article on page 44.

## WILL APP ALLOW US TO DONATE?

**Dear editor**

Every time I go to the pub, my family and I always put our loose change into the charity boxes, but we have noticed that it's not possible to donate anything via the app.

Would it be possible, please, to have a charity section on the app? Every penny counts.

Well done on your charity work.

**Thank you, Mr Michael O'Connor (via e-mail)**

**Tim replies:** An interesting comment – which we have recently debated. There is a danger of customers feeling pressurised to make donations, so we're unsure that donating via the Wetherspoon app is the right move.

As you will be aware, the company, through its customers and staff, is the biggest corporate donor to Young Lives vs Cancer; so, hopefully, the absence of app donations will not hamper our future efforts.

## PLEASE BRING BACK MY SALAD DAYS

**Dear editor**

In these Calorie-conscious times, I would like to see you offer salad cream as a condiment.

It has half the Calories of mayo – and golden oldies, like me, prefer it.

**Yours, D Roberts, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear**

**Tim replies:** As a connoisseur, in the old days of salad cream sandwiches (bread, butter and salad cream), I hear what you say.

Not everyone shares your, or my, gastronomic heritage, but I will certainly make enquiries of the groovy catering team.

# NOW NEWS FANS CAN SEE THEMSELVES ON ITS PAGES

Wetherspoon customer and 2D animator Tom Fuller got in touch with us to tell us about his 'Wetherspoon News photographic project', which took more than a year to complete.

A regular at The Last Post (Loughton) before it closed, Tom's photo shoot idea was to start a trend and encourage customers to read Wetherspoon News in their own way, while having their photo taken.

Tom explained: "I have created a collage of my favourite images, taken during the photo shoot, creating a fun and engaging visual representation of how people interact with the magazine in different settings."

Most of the images were taken at The Last Post, although some were shot around the country, in Wetherspoon's pubs from Eastbourne to Lincoln.

One obvious exception is the photo of the man reading the Wetherspoon News with a giant globe in the background.

Tom's good friend Nialle Howell took an issue of the magazine with him on holiday to Japan.

The photo was taken at Universal Studios, in Osaka.

Tom said: "I'm not pictured in this collage. I never got around to it, probably because I enjoyed the idea that the project was for my mates, for them to get involved and get as creative as they'd like. I never really understood why I enjoyed doing it.

"I suppose it was one of those things which didn't really need to have an answer – just something to enjoy.

"And, as the portfolio of photos grew, I thought of how perfect it would be to have images of us reading the Spoons News, in the Spoons News!"

Tom concluded: "Thanks to everyone involved in the project, to my friends and family and to everyone involved in working on the Wetherspoon News.

"Lastly, thanks to The Last Post – gone, but never forgotten."



## AISLE BE BACK: MARJORIE RETURNS TO FIND WEDDING VENUE TRANSFORMED

Eighty-four-year-old Marjorie Whitmore returned to the place she was married 63 years ago.

The church where she married is now The Man in The Moon (Newport, Isle of Wight).

On the visit, Marjorie was accompanied by her son Mark. The pair enjoyed a chat with the pub's duty manager Tomasz Cios.

Tomasz said: "During the conversation, it emerged that not only was Marjorie married here, but also her son Mark was baptised here too."

The Congregational Church was deconsecrated in 2002 and later became a Wetherspoon pub, opening in May 2014.

The stunning architectural features remain, including internal stone arches and stained-glass windows.

Mark said: "My mother had decidedly mixed feelings when she discovered that the church where she was married was no longer going to be a church, yet when she saw the building and how well it had been preserved, she warmed to it."

Marjorie regularly visits her local Wetherspoon pub – The William Owen (Haverfordwest).

Mark added: "She got on very well with Tomasz and thanked him for the lovely welcome and the time he spent chatting to us."

LEEDS

## HATS OFF TO THE CLASS OF 2023



This is the Wetherspoon 'class of 2023' – all of whom have successfully graduated from Leeds Beckett University.

Congratulations to everyone pictured, together with several others (not pictured) who were unable to attend the event, on gaining their new qualification.

They graduated with a BA (Hons) in business management practice – as part of their chartered manager degree apprenticeship.

To mark their achievement, the graduation event, held at Leeds Arena, was preceded by a celebration breakfast at the Wetherspoon pub The Hedley Verity (Leeds).

Wetherspoon's general manager, Ged Murphy, senior area manager Graham McCafferty and recruitment & qualifications manager Michelle Crooke, together with friends and family members, all attended.

Michelle Crooke said: "Many congratulations to all of our graduates who have worked extremely hard to reach this point.

"It is certainly no easy feat achieving any qualification, let alone while working in an often demanding, fast-paced, full-time job, with a full action-packed home life too.

"So, well done, once again, to everyone."

Pictured (left to right) are the 'Aspen' group – Emma Langdon, Kimberley Dean, Nicole Cottage, Craig Dodgson, Elena Wallis, Emma Shakeshef, Hannah Collins, Rachel Stanley, Nicola Loftus, Saffron Mansfield, Cameron Lowrie, Steph Gorchach, Ceri Gough and Joe Harrison.

Also pictured (left to right) are the 'Birch' cohort – Amy Vernon, Sam Garvey, Lydia Atkinson, Kevin Young, Paul Stevenson, Jonathan Hawkings and Michelle Milne.



# WELSH SENEDD MEMBER HAS HIGH OPINION OF PALLADIUM'S CEILING



Janet Finch-Saunders, member of the senedd for the Aberconwy constituency (with her constituency office in Llandudno), has written to the manager of The Palladium (Llandudno) to thank him for Wetherspoon's continued investment in the pub.

The pub has undergone an extensive refurbishment and restoration project costing approximately £1 million.

The project involved the full repair, restoration and redecoration of the historic fibrous decorative parts of the grade II listed former theatre, picture house and music hall building.

Ms Finch-Saunders wrote the following letter:

*Dear Jason*

*I am writing to express my sincere thanks for J D Wetherspoon's continued investment in the amazing Llandudno Palladium.*

*It was wonderful to hear that the branch has undergone a £1-million refurbishment, so that this extraordinary grade II listed building can continue to remain at the heart of Llandudno and provide an exceptional location for guests to enjoy the tremendous original features and character.*

*Indeed, I think that the Palladium is one of the best Wetherspoon pubs (if not the best) in the UK, as I am sure that no other location has such a unique setting!*

*Thank you, once again, for the company's continued investment in this spectacular grade II listed building.*

*I was astonished to hear that the ceiling void took 15 months of meticulous cleaning, before the structural engineer and plasterer could even start their work.*

*You should be proud of the careful consideration undertaken!*

*Keep up the great work, providing a great space for Llandudno's patrons to enjoy.*

Pub manager Jason Connor said: "I appreciate the fact that Ms Finch-Saunders took the time to write such a lovely letter.

"I am proud that the pub is at the heart of the community."

● **Please see page 63 for the pub's new-look article and photos.**

THE FORUM • HEXHAM

# TEACHING'S LOSS IS FORUM'S GAIN AS CLASS ACT CINDY MARKS 20 YEARS



Pub manager Cindy Elliott-Purkins is pictured (centre) receiving her 20 years' service award from area managers Lauren Bell and John Hudson.

Cindy, who celebrated two decades with the company, runs The Forum (Hexham) where she has been for the past 14 years.

Newcastle-born Cindy, 42, started her Wetherspoon career at The Quayside (Newcastle) as a bar associate, where she spent four years, quickly progressing to shift manager.

Cindy recalled: "I was at university and took on the job as a part-time role, yet when I finished university, gaining a degree and masters with a plan of becoming a teacher, I realised that I loved what I was doing at the pub.

"I had previously worked as a manager, for another pub company, so had progressed quickly and decided, instead of teaching, to make a career at Wetherspoon."

Cindy spent two years at the Metrocentre Wetherspoons (Gateshead) as shift manager and relief kitchen manager before her promotion to pub manager and a move to The Forum.

Cindy said: "I have a steady long-standing team around me.

"It is a proper community pub, where everyone knows everyone.

"We have pub quizzes and charity bonus ball draws.

"They love the domino cards, and we have a darts team, so it's a proper old-school pub."

Cindy concluded: "The flexible working is great, with a good work-home life balance, which isn't always the case in hospitality.

"At Wetherspoon, we are well looked after and paid fairly, so I'm a happy bunny.

"I am more than happy to work here until my retirement."

# LONG-SERVING LINDSEY JOINS EXCLUSIVE BAND

Kitchen associate Lindsey Wood has celebrated 30 years' service at the same pub.

Lindsey (pictured) has worked at The New Fairlop Oak (Barkingside) since 1993.

She started working at the pub after seeing a recruitment poster in the window in June 1993 and started work soon afterwards.

Lindsey said: "I enjoy working here. It's close to my home – and I enjoy the company of fellow staff and customers.

"It's like a family to me."

Pub manager Karen Burdett presented Lindsey with flowers and a cake to mark the occasion.

She added: "All of our customers know Lindsey – she is part and parcel of the pub and its success.

"She has, over the years, been a fantastic asset to me and fellow staff.

"Lindsey joins a small band of Wetherspoon staff who have completed 30 years' service with the company."



# REDRUTH RUTH HITS THE ROAD TO RECTIFY RUBBISH

Beautify Britain campaigner and Wetherspoon customer Ruth Major took her local campaign national when she set off on a four-week bus trip.

Ruth, 79, used her bus pass to travel from her home town of Redruth, in Cornwall, to its most northeasterly town, Berwick-upon-Tweed, visiting dozens of Wetherspoon pubs en route, including The Standing Order (Derby), The Avion (Aldridge) and The Bluecoat (Rotherham).

At each pub, she dropped off her campaign card and encouraged people to pick up one piece of litter each day (and not drop any).

There was also a personal angle to the trip – Ruth has researched her family history and discovered that her great-grandmother danced in theatres and music halls of the 1880s.

Ruth used her tour to visit the places where her great-grandmother, Sarah Emma Morfitt, used to sing and dance, including The Theatre Royal (York).

She said: "This country is so beautiful. It is full of such lovely countryside – and I feel that it's such a shame that so many people disrespect their environment."

Ruth said that she chose to pop in to Wetherspoon pubs because "as a woman on my own, I feel safe; the staff are always pleasant, there is Wi-Fi and the toilets are clean".

Ruth mentioned the campaign to staff at each pub, who were happy to place her card in a prominent position, so that other customers could see it.

She has styled herself 'RubbishRuth', after some college students recognised her and said: "You're that rubbish lady, aren't you?"

● For more information about Ruth's campaign, visit: [www.rubbishruthsrambles.co.uk](http://www.rubbishruthsrambles.co.uk)





# SNAP – 236 PUBS CLICK WITH CAMRA

**W**etherspoon's pubs across the UK have been acclaimed for the quality of their real ale – by members of their respective Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branches.

In total, 236 of the company's pubs are listed in CAMRA's publication, The Good Beer Guide 2024, the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide.

Local branch members chose the pubs following regular visits to check on the quality of the real ales on offer.

They also took into account customer service, décor and overall atmosphere.

A CAMRA spokesman said: "The pubs deserve their place in The Good Beer Guide 2024.

"It is our belief that, if a licensee serves an excellent pint of real ale, then everything else in the pub, including customer service, quality of food and atmosphere, is likely to be of an equally high standard."

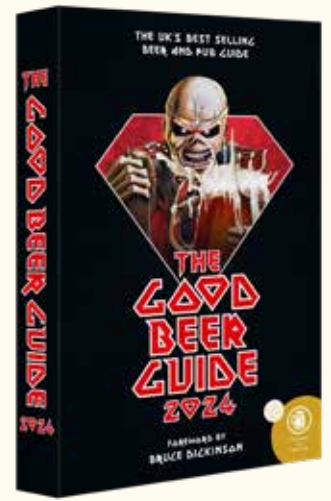
Wetherspoon's operations director, Martin Geoghegan, added: "It's great news that so many of our pubs have been recognised, once again, for the quality of the beer on offer.

"Each of the pubs always offers customers an excellent choice of real ales, including those from local and regional brewers, as well as hosting its own beer festival.

"Staff at the pubs work hard to ensure that the real ales on offer are kept in first-class condition at all times – and the pubs' inclusion in the guide highlights this."

● We feature descriptions of four Wetherspoon pubs from The Good Beer Guide 2024, one from each of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

● CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2024, 51st edition, is available from bookshops and directly from CAMRA: [shop1.camra.org.uk](http://shop1.camra.org.uk), priced at £16.99 (website discount available to CAMRA members).



## THE CASTLE HOTEL Ruthin

J D Wetherspoon pub and hotel in the historic town of Ruthin.

It has 17 guest bedrooms, and the interior is divided into different historic themes: Owain Glyndŵr, the Myddleton family and Ruthin Castle. A feature is the Barrel Room, which mentions a long-defunct brewery on the premises.

The town itself has many attractions such as the Old Gaol, Craft Centre and many fascinating buildings.

The bar is guide-dog friendly.

● St Peters Square, Ruthin, LL15 1AA

Duty manager and real-ale champion Chris Rutter



## THE SPIRIT MERCHANT

### Newtownards

A roomy one-bar Wetherspoon pub on the main road from Belfast to Newtownards.

The name recalls a previous pub that was on the same site.

There are five hand-pumps with a variety of well-kept real ales.

There is a variety of areas in which to sit inside, while, outside, there is a large enclosed beer garden.

● 54-56 Regent Street  
Newtownards, BT23 4LP

## AN RUADH -GHLEANN

### Rutherglen

Busy Wetherspoon in the town centre, taking its name from the Gaelic for Rutherglen.

The single room is long and narrow, decorated in a contemporary style.

The bar is half way down and there is a family area at the far end leading to the beer garden.

There is also a window into the cellar.

The beer garden is on two levels and affords a view of the Cathkin Braes when the weather is good.

● 40-44 Main Street  
Rutherglen, G73 2HY



Shift leader Lara McWilliams

## THE DOG BECK

### Penrith

Named after the historic Dog Beck stream which ran nearby, this Wetherspoon pub is situated conveniently between the main car park and the centre of Penrith.

It has the usual large range of real ales, and food is served all day every day.

The bar and downstairs area is a single open-plan room on different levels.

There is a large upstairs outside courtyard area in which meals can be taken alfresco on warm summer days.

● 21-22 Southend Road, Penrith, CA11 8JHJ



Pub manager Kate Fisher

## BAR UPGRADED FROM STUDENTS' UNION TO STUDENTS' SPOON-ION



Pictured (left to right) are NUSU's president Shah Yaseen Ali, NUSU's commercial and operations manager Dawn Hathaway, Wetherspoon's area manager John Hudson, NUSU's chief executive Lindsey Lockey and NUSU's commercial and operations director Graham Hattam

Newcastle University students' union (NUSU) has entered into a partnership with Wetherspoon.

The students' union bar, Luther's Bar, will continue to be run and managed by Newcastle University students' union; however, the partnership will allow the union access to the business model implemented by Wetherspoon at its pubs across the UK.

It will deliver an enhanced food and drinks menu for Newcastle's student community, while supporting the union's objectives to offer services and skills development to students.

There are currently 30 staff members employed at Luther's Bar.

With the introduction of the new refurbishment and menu, it is expected that 70 roles will be created, all of which will be suitable for students

Staff at Luther's Bar will continue to be employed and managed by the students' union.

The partnership is the second undertaken by Wetherspoon – the first was at Hull University's Sanctuary Bar, which opened in January 2022.

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "We are delighted to have entered into this partnership with the students' union and look forward to working with it to make Luther's Bar a great success."

Newcastle University students' union's president, Shah Yaseen Ali, added: "Through our partnership with Wetherspoon, students will benefit from not only its value-for-money food and drinks offering, but also the expansion of job opportunities within the bar.

"These will be welcomed by many of our students affected by the current cost-of-living crisis.

"The partnership will also strengthen our commercial endeavours, and enhance the overall student experience.

"Being only the second students' union to partner with Wetherspoon illustrates the commitment to enhancing our students' experience."

## JAMES FOLLOWING IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS WITH CAMRA FEAT

The George Hotel (Hailsham) has been included in the publication by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), The Good Beer Guide, for the 10th successive year.

Pub manager James Goldsmith (pictured), who has worked for Wetherspoon for 10 years and has run the pub for three, his first as pub manager, is understandably delighted with the achievement.

James said: "I grew up in a pub in Eastbourne, where my dad achieved 10 years in the guide too, so I'm happy with that.

"We are the only proper real-ale pub in Hailsham and like to support our local breweries, including Only With Love, Three Acre and Hurst."



THE ELECTRICAL WIZARD • MORPETH • THE RITZ • WALLSEND

# KELLY AND BROGAN RISE FAST IN THE NORTHEAST

Pub managers Kelly Graham (pictured right) and Brogan Keenan (pictured left) are enjoying running their first pubs, both in northeast England.

Both women were also born and brought up in the northeast and started working with Wetherspoon, in the region, as teenagers.

Kelly's pub is The Electrical Wizard (Morpeth) and Brogan's The Ritz (Wallsend) – just 18 miles apart. Their careers with the company have, so far, followed a remarkably similar path, although they have never worked together.

Kelly, who hails from Cullercoats, started with the company in 2011 as an 18-year-old bar associate at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay).

She progressed to team leader within six months, shift leader six months later and shift manager soon after that.

She spent four years at The Fire Station, adding to her experience and management training.

Kelly, 31, recalled: "I then dotted around the pubs, moving to The Harry Clasper (Whickham) and The Red Lion (Bedlington), with a spell here at Morpeth as kitchen manager and a spell at The Wallaw (Blyth) before taking a 12-month sabbatical.

"I spent a year travelling around southeast Asia and South America. It was a fantastic experience and something I wanted to do before continuing my career and stepping up to pub manager."

On her return to work, Kelly had a two-year stint as kitchen manager at The Resolution (Middlesbrough) before COVID-19 closures. That was followed by a 'coming home', when she took on her first pub manager role at The Electrical Wizard in May 2021 – 10 years since joining the company.

Kelly, who heads a team of 48 staff, added: "Things are going well, and I am keeping my options open for the future.

"There are so many opportunities available, if you work hard, and when I progress again, it could be a bigger pub or even a head-office role."

Brogan, 27, has enjoyed a decade with Wetherspoon, so far, having joined the company in 2013 as a 17-year-old floor associate at the newly opened The High Main (Byker), while studying for her A levels.

Born in Newcastle, she requested a full-time position at the pub, instead of going to university – and was soon climbing the career ladder, becoming team leader and shift leader in quick succession.

Brogan said: "I moved to Union Rooms (Newcastle), long since sold, and did my kitchen training during a five-month spell there.

"I then spent four and a half years at The Quayside (Newcastle) from 2016, working my way up in the management academy."

Maternity leave followed (January–September 2019), when Brogan had her son Arlo, now four years old.

Brogan recalled: "When I came back to work at The Quayside, it was tough. I was working four days a week, but my parents were a great help with Arlo... and still are.

"Then COVID-19 hit, before I returned full-time in September 2020 at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay), where I stayed for two years.

"In November 2022, I became deputy manager at The Five Swans (Newcastle), before the pub manager role at The Ritz came up around Christmas. I successfully applied and took over in January 2023."

Brogan, who heads up a complement of 53, concluded: "It's a busy community pub, with the majority of my team, as well as the customers, all being local people."

"Things are going well; I have a great team and I love my job."



# AWARDS

STOKE-ON-TRENT

## WHEATSHEAF WINS OVER POTTERIES PINT-LOVERS



Members from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) Potteries branch voted The Wheatsheaf (Stoke-on-Trent) to be their pub of the month for August 2023.

Pictured at the presentation evening (left to right) are CAMRA Potteries branch webmaster and treasurer Rob Jackson, pub manager Tom Rudnicki, shift leader and real-ale champion (for the past year) Richard Edge and CAMRA Potteries branch chair Andy Parkin.

Tom, who has been at the helm since August 2020, said: "This is our first CAMRA award since I have managed the pub – and we are delighted to receive it.

"We enjoy a good relationship with our CAMRA branch members and thank them for their support."

The Wheatsheaf, which has previously been recognised by the local CAMRA group with 'pub of the month' awards in December 2015 and April 2016, serves up to nine real ales at all times, including six ever-changing choices.

Among the popular local breweries are Heritage Brewing Company, Phoenix Brewery and Limestone Brewery, while Thornbridge Brewery's Jaipur (5.9% ABV) is always a favourite.

Tom added: "We try to offer as many ales as possible – and our real-ale customers are happy if they can have something light, something hoppy and something fairly strong."

CAMRA Potteries' webmaster and treasurer, Rob Jackson, said: "Our members' chosen 'pub of the month' for August 2023 is The Wheatsheaf – the oldest Wetherspoon pub in the Potteries.

"It was established in 1999, is small and cosy, with everything on one level, including a small patio at the rear.

"Around six guest ales are usually available, often from local breweries."

Branch member Lorna Denny added: "Congratulations to Tom and the team on getting CAMRA Potteries 'pub of the month'... well deserved."



LOUTH

# BEAUTIFUL BASKETS WIN FRIENDS IN LOVELY LOUTH



Pub manager Emma Smith and her team at The Joseph Morton (Louth) were thrilled to win an award from the local council. The pub, on its first time of entering the contest, won third place in the 'licensed premises' category of the Lovely Louth Competition. The competition, organised by Louth Town Council, is aimed at beautifying the town by encouraging floral and planting decorations of all kinds, so that locals and visitors can enjoy the many delights which Louth has to offer.

Councillor Julia Simmons (pictured right), Louth's mayor, and her husband Alan Simmons, the mayor's consort, presented a glass trophy to Emma (pictured centre) at the pub. The trophy is now on display behind the bar. Emma said: "We are delighted to win the award and to be recognised as part of this traditional town and local community. "Our hanging baskets, on display all year round, bring plenty of colour to our passageway location, a short cut to the marketplace, and really cheer the place up."

GREAT YARMOUTH

## TROLL ON A ROLL AS SOCIETY DECLARES IT BEST BUSINESS

The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth) has been chosen as 'overall best business' by Great Yarmouth Civic Society. The pub also won 'best food and drink outlet' in the awards which audited 500 local businesses over six months. Pub manager Todd Inns (pictured) was presented with a trophy and certificates from Deputy Mayor of Great Yarmouth Cllr Paula Waters-Bunn at the town hall. He said: "We are overwhelmed to have won these awards locally, ahead of 500 other businesses. "It is a great achievement and is due to the hard work and dedication of all of the staff at the pub and hotel. "We would also like to thank our wonderful customers for their loyalty." The Civic Society has a series of stringent criteria for its awards, including standards of service, quality of product, cleanliness of the establishment and value-for-money offered.





Pictured (left to right) in the Mad Squirrel brewhouse are brewers Josh Wise and Alfie Lawson, with commercial manager Jack Blesson

# ALE FANS GO WILD FOR MAD SQUIRREL

**Brewery's Big Sea hazy craft keg beer on draught has been a smash hit**

**L** launched towards the end of 2022, Wetherspoon's regional craft collection is proving a huge hit with beer-loving customers.

There has been an increased demand from customers to support locally sourced products – and the introduction of a range of specific craft beers for regions, based on geographical location, is enjoying success.

Among the trio of canned beers served at pubs in the home counties, Mad Squirrel's Big Sea (5.5% ABV) has been a smash.

The west coast IPA, served in a 440ml can, has a big citrus, big pine and big bitterness flavour and is now also available at 86 pubs (within the M25 area) on draught.

## Brewery

Established in 2010 by founder and managing director Greg Blesson, along with director Jason Duncan-Anderson, Mad Squirrel's brewery is based at Potten End, near Hemel Hempstead, in Hertfordshire.

During the past 13 years, the brewery's beers' popularity has grown, as has production and the business itself – to extend beyond the brewhouse.

Mad Squirrel now has seven taproom bars across the region, including its biggest in Watford – also home to Wetherspoon's head office.

Greg Blesson said: "We have been dealing with Wetherspoon in different capacities for more than 10 years – and I like to think that we have a good relationship."

## M25

"We have expanded from delivering mainly cask beer to the local Wetherspoon pubs in Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Watford to supplying Big Sea across the home counties and now expanding to craft keg, across the M25 region."

Greg added: "We are very hands on as a brewery and are making a personal effort to visit all of the pubs, to see the staff and ensure that our beer is in good hands."

Commercial manager Jack Blesson, who has worked at Mad Squirrel for 11 years, in various capacities since the age of 18, added: "Big Sea is the first hazy craft keg beer on draught at Wetherspoon's pubs.

"It is completely unfiltered, unfinned and vegan friendly – a brand-new premium product for Wetherspoon."

## Independent

Jack is one of a team of 65 at Mad Squirrel, still an independent and family run brewery, including its German head brewer and director Matthias Seidl.

Jack added: "The Big Sea craft cans have sold really well in Wetherspoon's pubs across the region, and this chance to now supply it in draught keg is great.

"We already supply locally to The Full House (Hemel Hempstead), The Crown (Berkhamsted) and The Moon Under Water (Watford), and I believe that we might be the only independent brewery to have draught space at so many Wetherspoon pubs, so this is quite a rare opportunity."

Wetherspoon's marketing executive, Jess Schofield, responsible for the regional craft project, said: "Since launching Mad Squirrel Big Sea cans in November 2022 across the entire home counties region, the beer has become a firm favourite.

"In August 2023, the introduction of Big Sea on draught has extended the draught craft offering at selected Wetherspoon venues within the M25."



# ARE YOU BEING SERVED (THE BEST-POSSIBLE PINT)?

**You are, you are... with all of our pubs striving, and usually succeeding, to score the highest-possible Cask Marque scores**

**W**ith millions of pints of real ale sold across Wetherspoon's pubs annually, the company's staff are committed to serving the perfect pint of real ale on every occasion.

To achieve this no-mean feat, Wetherspoon's staff regularly take part in in-house training, covering all aspects of keeping and serving first-class beer.

Since 1999, Wetherspoon has also worked alongside independent real-ale quality assessor Cask Marque – to gauge the quality of the real ale being served across the pubs.

Cask Marque has been inspecting Wetherspoon's pubs for the past 24 years.

Since January 2023, it has been a requirement for all Cask Marque pubs to have their cellars star rated.

As of August 2023, an incredible 95 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs achieved a four-star or five-star cellar rating – with 90 per cent (745 pubs) achieving the highest-possible five-star rating.

Cask Marque's director, Paul Nunny, said: "Congratulations on the success of achieving a four-star or five-star cellar rating at 95 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs.

Following a trial during 2022, all Cask Marque pubs now have a cellar audit as part of their renewal process (as of 1 January 2023).

"This is an important development to improve and maintain beers' quality, as there is a direct link between cellar standards and each beer's quality in the glass."

Cask Marque's cellar audit is carried out with a manager and is an audit of best practice, covering:

#### In the cellar

- Cellar temperature must be 11–13°C to allow the beer to undertake its second fermentation in the cellar.
- Ensure that no beer is past its sell-by date and that stock is used in date rotation.
- Gas cylinders used for lager – secure in the cellar and not a health and safety risk.
- Beer lines – clean. These need to be cleaned weekly to prevent yeast build-up which can affect flavour and pour.

- No food should be kept in the cellar. It can give off aromas which can affect the beers' taste and flavour.
- Always clean, tidy and well organised.

#### In the bar

- Cleanliness of the ice and glass-washing machines – a health and safety issue.
- Glassware passes the waterbreak test. Glasses need an extra-special wash, monthly, as a film collects on glassware from beer and is not removed by normal glass-washing detergent.

Cask Marque has 60 assessors on the road, making 20,000 pub visits per year – these are trained brewers or senior technical services personnel.

Each assessor's visit will check up to six cask beers on the bar for temperature, appearance, aroma and taste.

The cellar audit is conducted annually, with further assessments made of the pub by Cask Marque at six-monthly intervals to check beers' quality. A pub is also, if a customer complaint is received, subject to mystery visits.

Wetherspoon undertakes a monthly cellar audit in every pub to ensure that the Cask Marque cellar standards are maintained.

All Cask Marque pubs are listed on the free CaskFinder app.

As each pub's cellar is assessed, the results of the star rating appear on the pub's entry on the app.

Pubs are also provided with a window sticker to display their Cask Marque rating.

#### About Cask Marque

Cask Marque was formed in 1998 to address the void in beers' quality-control, caused partly by the 1990 'beer orders' which forced breweries to sell their pubs, or vice versa, and thus often their interest in quality itself, resulting in a major concern for the industry.

Having reached its 25th anniversary, Cask Marque remains a non-profit-making organisation, with a board comprising representatives from large and small breweries, pub companies and trade bodies – all engaged in continuing to improve the quality of beer.

# RAISE A GLASS TO THE GLORY OF THE GRAPE

**Here, we take a deep dive into three wines now on offer to Wetherspoon's customers - a very special rosé, white and red**

**W**etherspoon's ever-growing wine selection offers a great range of white, rosé and red wines, as well as sparkling, with different tastes and styles, carefully sourced from around the world.

The extensive wine range at your local Wetherspoon pub is available to enjoy by the glass (125ml, 175ml and 250ml), as well as several choices being served by the bottle (750ml) to share.

Many of the wine choices are available as part of the drinks range served with selected Wetherspoon meals, while other wines are served to just enjoy from the drinks menu.

Here, we feature three wines, with details about where they come from and the winemakers behind them



## Rosé

**The Pale by Sacha Lichine**  
(Provence, France) 12.5% ABV

*Château d'Esclans, Vin de Pays du Var, Provence*

**Aroma:** aromatic freshness

**Taste:** dry, refreshing, bright red-fruit flavours, clean, crisp finish

**Grape:** cinsault, grenache rolle, syrah

### The wine

The Pale is crafted with grapes from the Vin de Pays du Var region of Provence. This is a classic Mediterranean rosé... with a twist.

The Pale is a quality, quintessential rosé: dry and refreshing in a signature Provence grey-pink, with light fruits and a clean finish.

A blend of cinsault, grenache rolle and syrah, The Pale follows through on the

promise of its packaging. It's an energetic expression of rosé, a food-friendly wine which works just as well at the table as it does on its own.

Sacha Lichine has leaned on the same top-quality growers for The Pale as he has for his other stand-out rosés – and has included fruit from his own vineyards, too.

It is deliciously dry and refreshing, with bright red-fruit flavours and a clean, crisp finish.

Born in Provence, made for a sophisticated rosé-drinker offered at the entry level of French rosé, Lichine has once again redefined the category.

### The winery

From grapes of the best vineyards which grow parallel to the Mediterranean coast, The Pale by Sacha Lichine is strongly influenced by the fresh sea air of the French Riviera.

These salty and sun-drenched soils give the wine a dry, yet fruity, character.

The Pale comes from an assembly of softly pressed juices, selected with the greatest care and aged in stainless-steel tanks for 5–8 months, using a process called fine lees.

### The winemaker

#### Sacha Lichine

The Pale is from the creator of the iconic Provence rosé brand which sparked a worldwide phenomenon – Whispering Angel.

Sacha Lichine was born in Bordeaux, educated in the US and began working at his family's property, Château Prieuré Lichine, during the summers of his youth.

At age 23, Sacha began his career by engaging in a variety of endeavours, including organising luxury wine tours in France and establishing a wine merchant business, Sacha Lichine Estate Selections, for wines from Burgundy and the Rhône.

A defining moment in Sacha's career came about when, at age 27, he started running Château Prieuré Lichine.

Recognising the importance of innovation in an increasingly varied wine industry around the world, Sacha developed a line of New World wines from France, Sacha Lichine – Vins Sans Frontières, which today consists of a selection of growers and wines crafted throughout the regions of France.

His 2006 acquisition of Château d'Esclans, in Provence, has resulted in building a world-class brand, while providing a strong contribution to unprecedented growth across the rosé wine category.



Sacha Lichine



## White

**Cune White Rioja** (Spain) 13% ABV  
C.V.N.E., Haro, Rioja. Est. 1879

**Aroma:** apple, pear, lime

**Taste:** fresh, apple, melon, lemon

**Grape:** viura

### The wine

Exclusive to Wetherspoon, Spain's Cune (pronounced 'coo-nay') wine is made with a selection of the best viura vines from the areas of Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa, providing ideal growing conditions.

After picking, the grapes are gently pressed, then the juice transferred into stainless-steel tanks, where it is fermented at a controlled temperature.

This approach to wine-making helps to retain viura's ever-appelling fresh, citrusy and green fruit characters.

Cune White Rioja is a delicious introduction to the lesser-known white wines of Spain's Rioja, a region more famous for its reds.

The wine is crisp, dry and packed with mouth-watering citrus, apple and melon flavours. Enjoy with friends as an alternative to pinot grigio or try pairing with lighter dishes.



C.V.N.E. winery



### The winery

The history of Compañía Vinícola del Norte de España (C.V.N.E.) began in 1879, in the historic Barrio de la Estación (Station District) in the town of Haro, La Rioja.

For more than 140 years, the winery has continued to grow around the Aldea del Vino (wine village), a sunny courtyard flanked by unique stone buildings with ceramic tile roofs, which has become the central hub of C.V.N.E.

The first wine produced by C.V.N.E. took the name of the company's initials. However, a simple and fortunate spelling error, confusing the V with a U, led to the creation of the iconic Cune brand, now the number-one wine in Spain.

Today, five generations later, the winery is still run by the same family, producing high-quality and traditional wines which grace tables in more than 90 countries.

### The winemaker

**Maria Larrea - technical director**



Maria Larrea

Maria Larrea was born and raised in Rioja, a place with a long wine-making tradition.

She grew up in a wine-making family and, from a young age, experienced the exciting atmosphere of the grape harvest.

In her own words: "It was impossible not to end up fascinated by this world and wanting to know more and more about it."

The influence of these early years pointed her towards studying viticulture and oenology at university, first in Madrid and later in Montpellier and Bordeaux.

Her first harvest, once back in Rioja, was in C.V.N.E. After gathering further experience in other wineries in Rioja, La Mancha and Navarra, she returned to C.V.N.E. in 1991.

Maria now holds the position of technical director for the entire C.V.N.E. group.

Her responsibilities also include overseeing the wine-making of all Cune wines and leading an all-women team at the original winery in Haro.

Alongside being a vocal advocate and champion of women in wine, Maria is deeply passionate about sustainability and is a driving force for continual improvements in both vineyard and winery.

## Red

**Zana Pinot Noir** (Romania) 12.5% ABV  
Cramele Recas. Est. 1998

**Aroma:** rich, spicy aromatics, fruits

**Taste:** raspberry, dark cherry, cinnamon

**Grape:** pinot noir

### The wine

The gold award-winning Zana Pinot Noir is rich, dark and complex.

Made from completely estate-grown pinot noir grapes, from the Dealul Uberland vineyard in Timisoara region of Romania, this is Cramele Recas's Romanian take on the classic grape variety.

Once the pinot noir grapes have been harvested, 25 per cent are transferred directly into the fermentation tanks, without being destemmed, and are fermented for 10 days to develop

a beautiful strawberry fruit flavour.

That 25 per cent is then lightly oaked for two months with French oak staves. The remaining 75 per cent is destemmed, lightly crushed and then fermented as normal. The expert winemakers then combine the two wines into a perfectly fruity and rich blend.

With a syrupy concentration, Zana Pinot Noir has complex layers on the palate of dark cherry, raspberry and cinnamon. The nose is rich, with spicy aromatics and fruits, reminiscent of rich fruit cake.

A 'zâna' (pronounced 'zuh-na') is a word from Romanian mythology – in essence a fairy godmother who blends into her surroundings for protection and cover, while quietly guiding those who need help, keeping a safe watch over travellers.

### The winery

Founded in 1998 by Bristol-born Philip Cox and his wife Elvira, Cramele Recas is currently Romania's largest exporter of wine and the biggest seller of premium wine in the country.

Replanting on ancient vines dating from the 14th century, Cramele Recas now covers over 1,200 hectares of state-of-the-art vineyard, located in the Banat region of western Romania, where the climate is warm and continental.



Cramele Recas winery

The planting boom which happened in 2007–11, after Romania joined the EU, is evidenced in the quality of the grapes from vineyards which are now entering their optimum maturity.

The Cramele Recas range is global, producing 65 wines under 247 labels for over 25 international markets.

### The winemaker

**Nora Iriarte**

Nora Iriarte is head winemaker and has been at Cramele Recas since 2008.

She has grown into one of the team's fundamental members and has built a strong team of fellow female winemakers.

Before joining Cramele Recas, Nora trained at the University of Bordeaux. After graduating, she continued to study until she started her career at various Bordeaux châteaux.

Nora moved on to complete research in the wine industry at the University of Bordeaux.

The call back to work led her to Bodegas LAN in Rioja, Spain, where she worked for many years. After a successful time there, Nora joined the Cramele Recas team and hasn't looked back since.



Nora Iriarte

wetherspoon  
**NEW PUB**  
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**January 2024**\*

One minute's  
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# The Captain Flinders

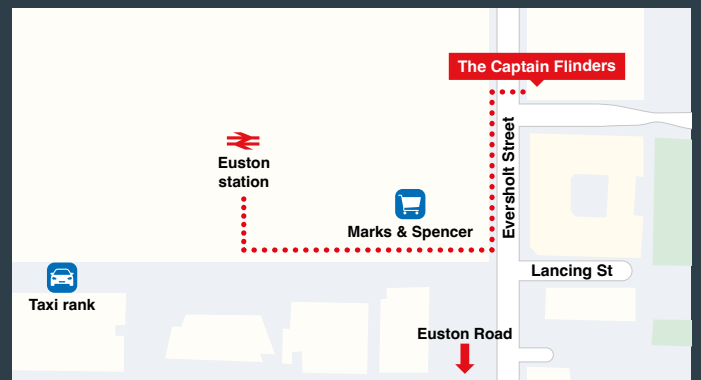
34–38 Eversholt Street, Euston, NW1 1DA



Artist's impression.



Artist's impression.



Map not to scale.

**When leaving the station's main entrance/exit,  
turn left towards Eversholt Street.**

THE OLD SWAN • UTTOXETER • THE GREEN DRAGON • LEEK

# BIDDULPH BECKONS ONCE MORE AS NICOLA AND CHARLES CELEBRATE



Husband-and-wife Wetherspoon managers Nicola and Charles Pitcher have, between them, clocked up more than 50 years' service for the company.

Both born and bred in the Black Country and with previous employment experience in the hotel sector, the couple joined Wetherspoon in December 1997, embarking on their first four months' training at The Lamb (Edmonton) (now closed), in north London.

They spent a short spell at The Sir John Oldcastle (Farringdon), before taking on their first pub management role together, almost a year to the day since joining the company, at Golden Cross Hotel (Bromsgrove).

In August 2000, they moved again to The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley) before taking over at The Bradley Green (Biddulph) in February 2003, where they spent more than a decade as pub managers.

Nicola recalled: "We were at The Bradley Green for a long time and are still in touch, through social media, with many of the regulars there."

She added: "We also won several in-house awards at the pub and enjoyed some great achievements."

It was, therefore, fitting that the couple returned to The Bradley Green for their 25-year service certificate presentation.

Nicola, who is now pub manager at The Old Swan (Uttoxeter), and Charles (shift manager at The Green Dragon (Leek)) are pictured with Wetherspoon's area manager Kat Prince (far left) and regional manager Debbie Whittingham (far right).

In March 2014, Nicola and Charles moved to The Bole Bridge (Tamworth), where they spent just over four years, before their career paths changed.

Nicola reported: "In June 2019, Charles stepped down to shift-manager level, moving to The Wye Bridge House (Buxton) before transferring in November 2021 to The Green Dragon (Leek) as kitchen manager.

"He's a very sociable person, so he reverted to a front-of-house role at The Green Dragon, where he currently works as a shift manager.

"Charles, who was 55 in August, is really enjoying being back working face to face with customers."

Nicola joined the team at The Old Swan as shift manager, stepping back up to pub manager in October 2021, and was soon enjoying success again with the pub's first inclusion in the publication by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), The Good Beer Guide 2023.

Nicola, who turned 50 this year, said: "When we joined Wetherspoon, truthfully, I didn't anticipate that we would still be here 25 years on... that is half my life!

"It's also like a silver wedding anniversary for us, which we will also be personally celebrating next year too."

She concluded: "I have always worked in hospitality and, to be honest, have always seen it as a vocation, rather than a job."

Wetherspoon's regional manager, Debbie Whittingham, said: "Thanks to Charles and Nicola for 25 years' outstanding service and dedication to the company."



# ILLUSTRATOR ROBERT DRAWN TO PUBS' ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY



Illustrations drawn by pub regular Robert Hammond hang on the walls of his local – The William Jameson (Sunderland).

The eight drawings are of The William Jameson and other Wetherspoon pubs in the area.

They have been given pride of place by pub manager Leanne Surtees.

Leanne said: "Robert is a lovely man and a talented artist – he asked whether we'd like to hang some of his work in our pub, and I said that it would be an honour to do so.

"My favourite is The Five Swans (Newcastle), which was my previous pub before moving to The William Jameson."

Robert (known as Bob), a retired shipbuilder, studied technical illustration later in life to degree level at Sunderland University.

As a customer of four Wetherspoon pubs (The William Jameson, The Cooper Rose (both in Sunderland), The Mile Castle (Newcastle) and The Job Bulman (Gosforth)), Robert enjoys an ale or a whisky and a curry, breakfast or a mixed grill – depending on the time of day.

He is also a regular Wetherspoon News reader.

He said: "I noticed in your summer 2021 issue that Wetherspoon was trying to make the vast range of pubs into the biggest art gallery in the UK.

"At the same time, I was appreciating the style and craftsmanship of the builders – and also the choice of names – for instance The Stanley Jefferson (named after Stan Laurel) in Bishop Auckland."

Robert has drawn around 40 other pubs and historical buildings in northeast England, as well as castles in Scotland.

Speaking of his Wetherspoon illustrations, he said: "My intention was to display the architectural beauty of the buildings as a collection in the pub."

Robert is pictured with his illustrations of pubs, including The William Jameson (Sunderland), The Mile Castle (Newcastle), The Harry Clasper (Wickham) and The Stanley Jefferson (Bishop Auckland).

## CROSS KEYS FOLK HELP TAKE PRIDE IN BEVERLEY

Beverley's first pride weekend was celebrated by staff and customers at The Cross Keys in the town.

Staff dressed up – and the pub was decorated in pride rainbow colours.

Curtis Suffield, a team leader at the pub, donned drag gear as he encouraged customers to take part in fundraising events which included a bake sale and raffles.

Pub manager Emma Badham said: "It was the first pride event in the town – and we were thrilled to play our part in its success.

"We're looking forward to next year's event."

The total raised for Young Lives vs Cancer was £61.

Pictured (left to right) are floor associate Ashlynn Downie, Curtis Suffield, Emma Badham and shift manager Jessica Stead.



## SWIRLING CARPET INSPIRES KATIE'S PUMP-CLIP DESIGN

Bar associate Katie Oliver turned on her artistic flair to create a pump-clip for a specially chosen ale at The Scarsdale Hundred (Sheffield).

Her design won a competition among the pub's staff.

Katie's pump-clip was chosen by pub manager Emma Walker, who recognised its subtle background as a reference to the pub's carpet.

The pub itself also features on the Scarsdale Stainless clip.

The beer – a version of Stancill Stainless, a 4.3% ABV pale ale – was brewed for the pub by Sheffield-based Stancill Brewery.

Emma said: "We asked Stancill whether we could have a beer bearing the pub's name permanently available at the bar.

"I loved Katie's design – and we have all congratulated her on winning the competition."

Katie said: "I do have an art background and wanted to create an image which reflected the pub, so I chose the swirling carpet as a backdrop."

Katie won a £20 Wetherspoon gift voucher and a bottle of her favourite Wetherspoon drink, The Kraken Black Spiced Rum, as a personal thankyou for her efforts, from pub manager Emma Walker.



## MASTERMIND GEORGE MAKES 'SPOONS HIS SPECIALIST SUBJECT

Eighteen-year-old George Hirst has begun touring Wetherspoon's pubs as part of a plan to visit each and every one.

George, who has autism, always asks his carers to take him to a Wetherspoon on days out – and his mother Deborah often takes him on day trips and overnight stays to towns and cities, where a visit to a Wetherspoon pub is a must.

On one occasion, the two of them visited Liverpool, where they popped in to The Richard John Blackler and The Captain Alexander and then moved on to York to have a look at The Postern Gate and The Punch Bowl.

George, whose local Wetherspoon is The Art Picture House (Bury), said: "I enjoy reading the pub histories and finding out about each pub's links to its local area.

"I really liked The Samuel Peto in Folkestone, which used to be a chapel."

George is also keen to visit some Wetherspoon hotels and has set his sights on The Admiral of The Humber (Hull).

He added: "I would like to stay overnight in one of the hotels."

Deborah said: "George is so enthusiastic about Wetherspoon and its pubs.

"If he were on Mastermind, Wetherspoon would definitely be his chosen specialist subject.

"He would love to meet [Wetherspoon's founder and chairman] Tim Martin one day."

Tim Martin, who sent George a signed card, said: "I'm delighted that George enjoys visiting the pubs.

"I hope he realises his ambition of, one day, visiting them all."



# WETHERSPOON'S PUBS - UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Music promoter Richard Bather has spoken of the vital role which Wetherspoon plays in the life of those bands which he manages.

Among the bands managed by Richard is four-piece indie rock band The Public Eye, formed in late 2021 in Derby.

The band's songs include 'Drinking For Two', inspired by the band members' Wetherspoon experiences during their student days at Nottingham Trent University.

The band frequently uses Wetherspoon's pubs on their tours – as do others managed by Richard.

Richard, whose local and his 'office' is The Standing Order (Derby), said: "Wetherspoon's pubs provide a vital role for bands – they are usually centrally located in towns and cities and offer great value for money.

"You often find lots of artists and musicians in Wetherspoon's pubs. They are a sort of kitemark – you know you're going to get a good standard of service and a good deal on food and drinks."

Richard also likes Wetherspoon's opening hours.

He added: "If I need to catch up with a band the night after a gig, we go to a Wetherspoon – because we know it's going to be open."

Pictured outside The Standing Order (Derby) are The Public Eye band members (left to right) Jonah Radford, Zack Bednall, Cavan Brady and Joey Greener.



## LUCKY DAD ANDY NEEDS A KNIFE, FORK AND SPOON

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY  
I OWE YOU A  
SPOONS BREAKFAST



Wetherspoon fan Andy Nash was rewarded by his daughter in the form of a special Father's Day card.

Hayley Nash, 32, gave her dad a card reading 'I Owe You A Spoons Breakfast', featuring a picture of bacon, egg, sausage, beans, tomato, hash browns and toast.

Andy said: "My daughter found the card online – and I think it's brilliant.

"I am a big fan and always find a Spoons to go to when I am in different towns and cities in the UK.

"My local Spoons is The Gary Cooper (Dunstable), where the staff are excellent."

## CENTENARIAN JEAN IS A RANDAL REGULAR



Customer Jean Lovell is a regular at The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond), visiting at least once a week for lunch.

Jean is pictured with her son, Andrew, celebrating her 100th birthday at the North Yorkshire pub earlier this year.

Speaking about her favourite local, Jean said: "It has a lovely, friendly atmosphere – and the staff are so kind and helpful."

Pub manager Martyn Swannell added: "It is always a pleasure to have Jean visit the pub – and we were delighted that she marked her very special birthday with us.

"We believe that Jean must be one of Wetherspoon's oldest regular customers."

Martyn concluded: "Guess where, in early 2024, she hopes to celebrate her 101st birthday?"

# HIGH-FLYING PUBS PUT THE HIGH IN HYGIENE

**Average rating of 4.99 out of 5, scored at 753 pubs, puts Wetherspoon above comparable operators**

**Once again, Wetherspoon has scored highly in the food hygiene rating league table ([www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk](http://www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk)), as at August 2023.**

Among the biggest pub chains, Wetherspoon's pubs consistently top the charts in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

The company's pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales have an average food hygiene rating of 4.99.

The FHRS – the only independent government scheme assessing the level of hygiene standards in pubs, restaurants, take-aways, clubs and cafés – is run by local authorities.

It scores outlets 0–5, with the highest-possible rating of five meaning 'very good' hygiene practices and safety systems in place, fully complying with the law.

Outlets with a rating of four are deemed to have 'good' hygiene standards, while three is 'generally satisfactory', two needs 'some improvement', a rating of one requires 'major improvement' and 0 requires 'urgent improvement'.

Wetherspoon was ahead of pub companies such as Hungry Horse and Nicholson's and was also rated higher than restaurant and sandwich chains, including PizzaExpress, Nando's, McDonald's and Greggs – although all of those companies also scored highly.

Of our pubs, 753 currently have an FHRS rating, with 99.2 per cent of those achieving the highest-possible rating of five.

FHRS ratings follow an independent assessment of food hygiene at the various premises, determined by local authority environmental health officers visiting venues to assess hygiene levels.

Environmental health officers assess three areas: food hygiene and safety procedures; structural compliance; confidence in management.

The ratings (as well as the date of inspection) can be found online and on stickers displayed at businesses' premises.

Wetherspoon's personnel and audit director, James Ullman, said: "We are proud of our pubs' hygiene ratings.

"However, we also take it extremely seriously when a pub does not achieve the maximum rating.

"Where a maximum score is not achieved, we work hard with each pub's team and local authority to ensure, as quickly as possible, that standards are returned to expected levels."

To achieve the highest-possible rating of five, our pubs' management and staff must achieve and maintain the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene, including:

#### **Hygienic food-handling**

This is how food is prepared, cooked, cooled, reheated and stored:

- checking fridge temperatures
- hand-washing facilities and practices
- equipment used for raw and cooked foods being kept separately
- staff members' understanding of food hygiene

#### **Physical condition of the premises and facilities**

This is the assessment of the standard of cleanliness and upkeep, including whether:

- the condition of general decoration, layout and lighting is of a good standard
- it is clean and cleaning materials meet requirements
- there is suitable ventilation and pest control
- rubbish and waste are disposed of correctly

#### **Food safety management**

This ensures that suitable precautions are taken to keep food safe, including:

- staff training records
- logs of relevant checks, such as fridges' temperatures and cleaning
- safety procedure record

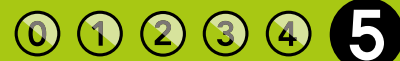
#### **Did you know?**

As well as the independent assessments by the FHRS across England, Northern Ireland and Wales (in Scotland, it's the Food Hygiene Information Scheme), Wetherspoon monitors its own pub hygiene standards.

Monthly, each pub receives at least five quality-assurance visits from a combination of its area manager, Wetherspoon's own audit department, an external 'mystery shopper' company and other head-office managers.

# The only independent government scheme assessing food hygiene standards

## FOOD HYGIENE RATING



VERY GOOD

	Total premises scored	Average premises score out of 5
Slug & Lettuce	75	5.00
Giggling Squid	49	5.00
The Ivy Collection	40	5.00
Carluccio's	31	5.00
Walkabout	20	5.00
Byron	14	5.00
<b>Wetherspoon</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>4.99</b>
Aldi	753	4.99
Nando's	430	4.97
ASK	63	4.97
Be At One	37	4.97
Greggs	1,795	4.96
Wagamama	153	4.96
Miller & Carter	121	4.96
Prezzo	117	4.96
Turtle Bay	50	4.96
All Bar One	46	4.96
Yates	30	4.96
McDonald's	1,153	4.95
Lidl	637	4.95
TGI Fridays	71	4.94
Nicholson's	65	4.94
O'Neill's	32	4.94
Starbucks	974	4.93
Sizzling Pub Co	195	4.93
Chef & Brewer	131	4.93
Pitcher & Piano	15	4.93
Giraffe	14	4.93
Browns	24	4.92
Zizzi	127	4.91
Coffee#1	116	4.91
Costa Coffee	2,383	4.89
Hungry Horse	239	4.89
GBK	37	4.89
PizzaExpress	329	4.88
Table Table	42	4.88
KFC	886	4.87
Burger King	425	4.87
YO! Sushi	54	4.87
Asda	516	4.86
Vintage Inns	162	4.86
Craft Union	385	4.85
Young's	119	4.85
Toby Carvery	136	4.84
Whitbread	122	4.84
Côte	82	4.83
Brewers Fayre	81	4.83
Geronimo	33	4.82
Papa John's	469	4.81
Bill's	48	4.81
Harvester	153	4.79
BrewDog	46	4.78
Subway	1,313	4.77
Breakfast Club	13	4.77
Loungers/Cosy Club	198	4.76
Beefeater	119	4.76
Oakman Inns	40	4.74
German Doner Kebab	117	4.71
Bella Italia	76	4.68
Las Iguanas	46	4.67
Caffè Nero	544	4.63
Café Rouge	29	4.59

Information in this table was sourced in August 2023 from [www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk](http://www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk), listing 753 Wetherspoon pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales with an average food hygiene rating of 4.99. Please note that, where councils are yet to assess or submit their pub inspection, there may be a slight gap in the number of pubs, compared with that in our records. Businesses are rated from 0 to 5 which is displayed at their premises and online. The top score is 5.

# PAIR OF CARLISLE PUBS KEEPS SHINING BRIGHT, WITH FIVE-STAR PERFORMANCES



Across six, seven, eight and even nine successive annual inspections, many of our pubs (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) have achieved the highest-possible rating of five.

To gain a maximum score is difficult enough; however, to then maintain that highly coveted rating of five requires consistently high standards.

Among the pubs achieving a continuous maximum rating of five for the last six consecutive inspections are both Wetherspoon pubs in Carlisle: Woodrow Wilson (since August 2010) and The William Rufus (since March 2011).

Both located on Botchergate, Woodrow Wilson was first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in May 1998. It is housed in the building which once formed part of the Carlisle South End Co-op Society store, built in 1904.

Opened in October 2004, The William Rufus is in a premises once the site of various shops, including JS Hope's drapery, George White's long-standing grocery and Tom Ridley's chemist's. Since taking over as pub manager in April 2023, Daryl Morrison now heads a team of 50 staff at Woodrow Wilson.

He started with the company 15 years ago as a bar associate at The William Rufus, working his way up to management, including seven years as kitchen manager.

Woodrow Wilson's kitchen manager Sam Hayton (pictured left) has worked at the pub for three years and took over the reins in the kitchen in May 2023.

He heads a team of 12 kitchen staff.

Daryl said: "The company's top-notch training is superb – and the team members are all well aware of what is required of them.

"It is not an easy job to maintain a five-star rating. It takes hard graft, especially in the kitchen.

"It comes down to training, information and hard work, with a team which has the understanding and desire to achieve it."

Matt Potts has been at The William Rufus for 19 years, taking over as pub manager in 2007.

His team numbers 70, with 15 in the kitchen under the guidance of kitchen manager Zowie Smith.

Zowie (also pictured, right) joined the company as a kitchen associate four years ago and has been in charge of the kitchen since May 2022.

Matt said: "Daryl worked with me as kitchen manager at The William Rufus before moving to Woodrow Wilson."

Matt continued: "It is so important for the pub to have a five-star rating. Customers do look at these details – with the score reflecting how well we are doing our job.

"We have had the same local environmental health officer for several visits.

"Even with our five-star rating, we still have conversations about how we can improve further, with recommendations always welcome.

"Wetherspoon always tries to go above and beyond – and our hygiene standards are no exception."

# MOUNT STUART WELCOMES VIPS AS ‘CODEBREAKERS’ STATUE UNVEILED



The Mount Stuart (Cardiff), Wetherspoon's pub at Cardiff Docks, was the venue for a special VIP reception for a statue-unveiling ceremony. Pub manager Dominic Cummings and his team (pictured) were on hand to provide refreshments and a buffet, for ministers and dignitaries, council leaders, business and community leaders, as well as guests and family members of those being honoured.

Rugby League greats Billy Boston, Gus Risman and Clive Sullivan, three Welsh rugby 'codebreakers', have been depicted and immortalised in a statue at Cardiff Bay, unveiled at Landsea Gardens, in front of The Mount Stuart.

The event to unveil the statue which commemorates the Cardiff Bay Codebreakers was hosted by the Cardiff Bay Rugby Codebreakers Fundraising Committee.

The statue celebrates three of the country's greatest sporting heroes, following a public vote which received more than 14,000 votes and selected Boston, Risman and Sullivan to adorn the statue, created by Yorkshire sculptor Steve Winterburn.

The honoured trio and so-called 'codebreakers' were among the first players to controversially switch codes, from the 'amateur' ranks of rugby union to become paid rugby league stars.

During rugby union's amateur era (1895–1995), more than 150 full Welsh union internationals and hundreds of uncapped union players made the move, considered tantamount to treason in Wales – and became heroes in the north of England.

Boston switched from rugby union to league in 1953 and scored 478 tries in 487 matches for Wigan.

Risman scored 4,052 points in 873 games for Salford and Workington, as well as playing for Great Britain in five Ashes-winning series during the 1930s and 1940s, many matches as captain.

Sullivan, who scored 250 tries for Hull and 118 for Hull Kingston Rovers, became the first black player to captain any Great Britain side and led it to Rugby League World Cup glory in 1972.

Pub manager Dominic Cummings, pictured with Billy Boston at the unveiling ceremony, said: "We were delighted and honoured to play our part in the historic celebrations to commemorate the Cardiff Bay Codebreakers.

"The Mount Stuart was the perfect venue for the post-ceremony reception because the statue can be seen clearly, in situ, from the first-floor area and balcony of the pub."

# A FACT WHICH SURPRISES PEOPLE – WE HAVE 55 HOTELS

**Rooms in Britain and Ireland’s coastal, countryside and city locations are easily booked online**

**W**etherspoon has launched a new-look website ([hotels.jdwwetherspoon.com](https://hotels.jdwwetherspoon.com)), making it easier to stay at one of the company’s hotels.

The new-look Wetherspoon hotels website is simple to navigate and easy to use.

**Quicker**

It allows for quicker and easier booking options and provides information on all 55 hotels in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

You can read all about each hotel, its facilities and staff, awards and events, as well as history, local information and nearby attractions.

**Historic**

Each of the hotels, situated above or near a Wetherspoon pub serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, has its own unique character, with many in restored historic buildings.

Whether it’s a convenient one-night stay or a much-needed short break, Wetherspoon has a collection of hotels in city, coastal and countryside locations, offering the perfect accommodation.

**Free**

Each hotel room features an en suite bathroom, complimentary tea- and coffee-making facilities, hair dryer, flat-screen television with Freeview TV (Saorview Freesat TV in Ireland) and unlimited free Wi-Fi.

Most of the hotels offer a 24-hour reception service – and the rooms can accommodate a mixture of double, twin and family occupancy, many being interconnecting.

There are also accessible bedrooms, with wet-room facilities, suitable for guests needing accessible facilities.

● **For all hotel bookings, please visit the new-look Wetherspoon hotels website [hotels.jdwwetherspoon.com](https://hotels.jdwwetherspoon.com), offering the best rates\* for customers.**

● **You can also use the telephone and the Wetherspoon app to book a hotel stay.**

\*Non-refundable advance purchase rates, available to book direct on the telephone, our website and our app.

Scan to find out more.



The Saxon Crown (Corby)



Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin)

Brand-new keycard-holders have been produced, with bespoke and individual designs for each Wetherspoon hotel.

Line drawings of each hotel building have been created by the Wetherspoon design team.

These are featured on the keycard-holders, unique to each individual hotel.

From Cornwall to Cumbria, via Powys, and Swords to Highland, these are great collectables and offer a special souvenir of your stay.







Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin)



Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin)

## City

### Keavan's Port Hotel

1 Camden Street Upper, Dublin, D02 TC61

Keavan's Port Hotel is set in Dublin's 'village quarter'. This hotel has 89 en suite rooms, including accessible rooms, complete with full DDA-compliant bathroom facilities.

The hotel is located on regenerated Camden Street Upper, with plenty of pubs, bars and restaurants to choose from, 1km from the city centre and Grafton Street.

It is located within a short distance of many of Dublin's attractions.

### The Greenwood Hotel

674 Whitton Avenue West, London, UB5 4LA

This grade II listed hotel has 12 en suite rooms with Freeview television, unlimited free Wi-Fi and digital temperature control.

A warm and inviting pub forms part of the hotel, alongside a beautiful 372m<sup>2</sup> garden, making The Greenwood Hotel a perfect stay for families, leisure or business.

Direct rail links from nearby Northolt Park station mean that Wembley Central can be reached within 10 minutes' travel and Marylebone (central London) within 20 minutes, making it the perfect location for those wanting to explore the sites of London or attend events at Wembley Stadium/Arena.

The hotel is also around a 20-minute drive from Heathrow Airport.

### The Guildhall & Linen Exchange

79-83 High Street, Dunfermline, KY12 7DR

Dunfermline is located north of Edinburgh, just across the Forth Bridge, in Fife.

It is at the heart of Scotland's history and culture, as well as having beautiful public parks, beaches and woodlands. This hotel has 19 rooms: doubles, twins and family rooms (two of which are accessible).

The bus station is a two-minute walk away, with links to Dundee, St Andrews, Perth, Stirling, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Fife.

There are two park-and-ride stations, with regular buses running to Dunfermline.

The railway station is 15 minutes' walk from the hotel, again with links to the main surrounding areas.

There is also a taxi rank within two minutes' walk of the hotel.



The Greenwood Hotel (Northolt)



The Guildhall & Linen Exchange (Dunfermline)



# Coastal

The Angel Hotel (Whitby)

## The Angel Hotel

1 New Quay Road, Whitby, YO21 1DH

Centrally situated, this hotel stands on the harbourside, overlooking the River Esk and perfectly located for exploring the historic town.

Whitby is a seaside town, port and civil parish in North Yorkshire – a true delight of the Yorkshire coast.

Only a few minutes from the main beach and adjacent to the old swing bridge, the hotel has easy access to local amenities and attractions, making it ideal for families.

There is plenty to explore in and around Whitby, including the gothic ruins of Whitby Abbey, which gave Bram Stoker the inspiration for Dracula, and the countryside and beaches of North Yorkshire.

The 34-room hotel and pub have undergone extensive renovation, with the adjoining pub having seating upstairs and downstairs for food and drinks, plus a beer garden.

Two balcony rooms at the front of the hotel overlook the harbour.

## The Furness Railway

76–80 Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 5UB

Barrow-in-Furness is at the tip of the Furness peninsula, on the northwestern edge of Morecambe Bay, south of the Duddon Estuary and east of the Irish Sea.

Being only 30 minutes' drive from the Lake District, close to Coniston Water and Windermere, Barrow-in-Furness has been referred to as a 'gateway to the lakes' and 'where the lakes meet the sea'.

## The Wyndham Arms Hotel

Dunraven Place, Bridgend, CF31 1JE

With 26 bedrooms, located in Bridgend's town centre, this hotel is perfect for both leisure and business.

With easy access to both Cardiff and Swansea, the hotel is ideal for those attending events in the region, along with enjoying its beaches.

The hotel is a short drive from some stunning beaches: Rest Bay, Ogmere and Newton.

Porthcawl is only a 10-minute drive away and a favourite with guests.



The Furness Railway (Barrow-in-Furness)



The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend)



# Countryside

## The Foley Arms Hotel

14 Worcester Road, Great Malvern, WR14 4QS

For over 200 years, the Georgian architecture of this old coaching inn has been a feature of the Victorian spa town of Malvern.

The hotel is situated in the heart of the town and has 23 en suite rooms, many of which have spectacular views across the Severn plain.

Great Malvern lies approximately eight miles southwest of the city of Worcestershire, on the eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills – a designated area of outstanding natural beauty on the eastern flanks of the Worcestershire Beacon and North Hill.

## Jolly's Hotel

43A Gray Street, Broughty Ferry, DD5 2BJ

Opened as a Wetherspoon pub and hotel in April 2014, this is a long-time feature of Broughty Ferry and a well-known hotel, situated at the town's heart.

It sits little more than 100 metres from the north shore of the Tay estuary. It was named after its owner, John Jolly.

He is first recorded in the Dundee Post Office Directory for 1850/1, in which he is described as a 'spirit dealer' in Gray Street.

Jolly was then 50 years old. Jolly's Hotel is first mentioned by name in the 1861 directory with John Jolly the proprietor until 1871.

The hotel, set over two floors, has 25 bedrooms, including one single, two twin and one interconnecting family room, as well as two accessible rooms.

Broughty Ferry is an historic seaside town – known as 'the jewel in Dundee's crown' – a perfect mix of history, hospitality, shopping and leisure.

It is located just four miles to the east of Dundee's city centre, including the new V&A Museum, and just a stone's throw from Carnoustie and St Andrews.

## The Castle Hotel

St Peters Square, Ruthin, LL15 1AA

Ruthin is a small town nestled in the Vale of Clwyd, in north Wales.

The town is the perfect location from which to explore the north Wales coast and Snowdonia National Park – both of which are within 18 miles' drive – as well as for touring northeast Wales and the north Wales borders.

The Castle Hotel opened in 2012, following a total refurbishment of the building.

It has 17 en suite bedrooms.

The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern)



Jolly's Hotel (Broughty Ferry)



The Castle Hotel (Ruthin)

# CAREFUL CHOICE OF SUPPLIERS HELPS TO CUT CARBON EMISSIONS

**Freshways, which supplies dairy products to Wetherspoon, works hard to make its practices sustainable**

**W**etherspoon is proud of its commitment to the environment, both as a company at head office and across its more than 800 pubs and hotels in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

The company is committed to operating ethically and sustainably and, through numerous initiatives and business practices, to finding ways to reduce its carbon emissions.

Among them, Wetherspoon promotes recycling throughout the business and tries to reduce energy consumption, as well as promoting efficient purchasing to minimise waste and allow for material-recycling.

The company works with the Sustainable Restaurant Association, a not-for-profit membership organisation based in the UK, which helps food-service businesses to work towards sustainability in their sector and guides customers towards more sustainable choices.

Wetherspoon also works with hundreds of suppliers which are all playing their part in helping the environment.

In this new and regular Wetherspoon News feature, we turn the spotlight on a Wetherspoon supplier and feature its decarbonisation journey.

**Freshways**

Freshways is one of Wetherspoon's larger food suppliers.

The company started in 1993 as a wholesaler and has now become one of the UK's leading dairy processors and suppliers.

Freshways produces fresh milk, prioritising nutrition and the well-being of people, animals and the environment.

Through processing millions of litres of fresh milk each year, Freshways acknowledges its responsibility, in collaboration with farmers, to mitigate its effects.

It has launched a sustainability scheme for farmers and simultaneously supports them in achieving sustainable practices.

These include cow health and welfare, human health and safety at farms, soil nutrient management (fertiliser use and

industry practice), reduction of farm emissions for a lower carbon footprint, responsible resourcing and feed management.

The use of sustainable packaging forms another aspect of Freshways' environmental impact. It has implemented carbon-neutral carton packaging which is entirely recyclable, where the cap remains attached to the carton.

This ensures that it is recycled along with the pack (no more lost caps) and can be used to make new products like paper tissues, tiles and furniture, promoting the circular economy. Annually, these cartons will reduce the UK market's plastic by 800 tonnes.

Freshways' sustainability lead, Khyati Sahu, said: "At Freshways, we believe that sustainable practices not only benefit our planet, but also contribute to the long-term success and resilience of our business.

"With the strategies we are implementing to minimise our environmental footprint, supporting farmers and ensuring animal welfare – we are proud of the progress which we have made so far.

"However, we recognise that sustainability is an ongoing journey – and we must continue to evolve and adapt."

**The paper it's written on...**

The volume of paper used by Wetherspoon to print menus and other marketing materials, including Wetherspoon News, has reduced every year in the last three years.

In 2022, the company used 515 fewer tonnes of paper. When compared with the year before, this saved around one-third of the paper.

So far in 2023, a further reduction of around 200 tonnes recorded for the early part of the year sees the company heading in the right direction.

Wetherspoon's print supplier, HH Global, has a partnership with Forest Carbon, resulting in 3,862 tonnes of captured carbon through investment in new woodland and peatland restoration projects.

The carbon capture and planting in these projects, across England and Scotland, are a direct result of the paper which HH Global has purchased for Wetherspoon's printing needs.

# ENVIRONMENT



# WILDLINGS KEPT AT BAY BY THE NIGHT'S WATCH

## Conscientious Wetherspoon pub managers put safety first by signing up to 538 separate pubwatch schemes

**N**ational Pubwatch, the licensed trade's equivalent of neighbourhood watch, has been in existence throughout the UK for more than 30 years.

The local schemes range in size from more than 200 premises in cities to small rural schemes with just a handful of premises involved.

At November 2023, Wetherspoon's pubs were confirmed to be participating, across the UK, in 538 local pubwatch schemes.

### Local

Many of these local initiatives are chaired by Wetherspoon's pub managers.

Pubwatch schemes are local, independent groups comprising those working in licensed premises.

They often take part in safety and alcohol-awareness campaigns.

The groups' objectives are to tackle and prevent antisocial behaviour and criminal activity, to promote safe drinking environments for customers and secure working environments for staff and to improve communication and information-sharing among licensees.

The basic principle involved in a pubwatch is that the licensees of the premises involved agree on several policies of action aimed at those who cause or threaten damage, disorder or violence and/or use or deal in drugs on their premises.

### Problem

Normally, this action means refusing to serve those causing, or known to have previously caused, these types of problem.

Having agreed on these policies, the premises then publicise them and stick to them.

The publicity alone can have a very significant effect on such problems, yet refusing admission and service to those who cause trouble has proven to have a significant impact on antisocial behaviour.

To operate most effectively, any pubwatch scheme must work closely with the police, local authorities and other agencies.

By working together and keeping problems outside of their premises, licensees will make it easier for the police to identify troublemakers and deal with them.

### Successes

Among Wetherspoon's pubwatch successes are Wembley pubwatch, where pub manager Lily Capillo (J.J. Moon's, Wembley) has created what we believe to be one of the largest pubwatch schemes in the country.

The pub manager of The Assembly Rooms (Epsom), Sel Devecioglu, and the deputy manager, Kara Nash, also picked up a 'highly commended' award on behalf of Epsom pubwatch and its members at the 2022 National Pubwatch Awards – for 'outstanding social responsibility'.

Here, we highlight three pubs and their pubwatch schemes – at varying stages of establishment and involvement.



Pub manager Lily Capillo (J.J. Moon's, Wembley)

### The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield)

Pub manager Josh Bell has been running The Rawson Spring since the summer of 2022, taking over as chair of the local pubwatch initiative in July 2023.

The scheme, which covers Hillsborough and surrounding areas and boasts more than 30 venues among its membership, sees licensees working together for the same aims.

Josh (pictured, left, with South Yorkshire Police's licensing officer, Catherine Jarvis, and pubwatch vice chair Garry Monk, manager of The Old Crown Inn) revealed: "I was previously at The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats, Sheffield), where I was also pubwatch chair (Sheffield postcode S8) for two and a half years.

"We have the same licensing officer here, who provides great support.

"We have a good relationship, spanning around four years.

"Hillsborough is like a town within a city, with numerous venues.

"I enjoy being involved with pubwatch and helping to make sure that things are being run well."



### The Bright Water Inn (Shirley, Southampton)

Pub manager Jen Cresswell (pictured) was part of the team which set up the local pubwatch scheme.

Jen said: "This time last year, we started to have meetings; it has taken around six months to organise completely from scratch – and we initially have five pubs involved.

"Our licensing officer has been helpful and hands on with much-needed support – and we are all in communication via WhatsApp."

Jen, who took over as pub manager at The Bright Water Inn five years ago, had previously experienced the benefits of pubwatch while working at her first pub – The Wagon Works (Eastleigh).

Jen, now with 11 years' service with the company, added: "I saw at Eastleigh, at first hand, how well a pubwatch scheme can work and its benefits.

"It is great to have everyone on the same page and working together.

"It definitely deters the unwanted element."

### The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)

Danny Nixon has been a Wetherspoon pub manager for the past 10 years and has always been involved in pubwatch schemes.

He has run The Rodboro Buildings for five years, is a true advocate for the community initiative and is a committee member of Guildford pubwatch, which encompasses around 50 venues, including pubs, bars, nightclubs and restaurants.

Danny explained: "Our pubwatch scheme is well established, has had the same chair for 20 years and has great links with the police, local businesses and agencies.

"Thanks to the business improvement district (BID), we have the town link radio system, which helps with communications among venues, as well as access to a system which aids with monitoring and barring troublemakers.

"Pubwatch is a big team effort and is naturally part of what we all do, as pub managers and hospitality business owners."

Danny concluded: "Pubwatch is vital in helping to run the pub safely and ensuring that the right people are coming in. It's also a great way of networking and gives an insight into the town."



Deputy manager Chris Latham is pictured (front right) with members of the Guildford pubwatch group

# NO NEED TO SPEED AS YOU BREAK YOUR FAST

**Extensive fresh breakfast menu is served from 8am until 12 noon, so you can take your time**

**W**etherspoon offers a huge range of breakfast options, from the traditional cooked full breakfast dish to porridge and fresh fruit.

Whatever your choice, Wetherspoon's pubs serve great-quality, fresh ingredients from UK and Irish suppliers, offering exceptional value and choice.

The breakfast menu is served from 8am until 12 noon, seven days a week, with a range of tea, coffee and hot chocolate drinks, including free refills<sup>†</sup>, all day every day.

## Gentry

The cooked full breakfast tradition comes from the 14th/15th century and begins in the country houses of the English gentry.

In the old Anglo-Saxon tradition of hospitality and famous for their breakfast feasts, the great country estates were hubs of local society and providers of hearty full breakfasts for visitors to indulge in before going hunting or embarking on a long journey.

Adopted and refined into an elegant art form by the middle- and upper-class Victorians, breakfast became an opportunity for the wealthy to display their good taste and social upbringing.

## Ingredients

The ingredients were subsequently standardised by the Edwardians, making it easier to prepare and culminating in the full breakfast which we recognise today.

The tradition spread from the middle to the working classes and reached its peak in the early 1950s, when around half of the British population began their day with a meal to see them through a full work day.

Regional variations sometimes offer varying ingredients, from the south to the north of England, over the border into Scotland and across the sea to Ireland, but the 'common' ingredients remain the same.

Here, we highlight the ingredients for a traditional breakfast at Wetherspoon.

## Also on the breakfast menu...

There's something for everyone on the breakfast menu, including plenty of healthy options, as well as vegan and vegetarian choices.

Two slices of toast (white bloomer bread) with jam or marmalade, small beans on toast (buttered white bloomer toast), fresh fruit (apple, banana, blueberries and strawberries) and porridge (plain or with various toppings) are all under 500 Calories each.

Also available is Wetherspoon's range of eggs Benedict dishes (Wiltshire cured ham, mushroom or black pudding), American-style pancakes, breakfast butties and wraps, as well as a children's breakfast menu – catering for all.





**FREE REFILLS**  
TEA, COFFEE AND  
HOT CHOCOLATE  
— ALL DAY EVERY DAY —

**LAVAZZA**

TORINO, ITALIA, 1895



### Lavazza coffee

Wetherspoon's customers have been enjoying the great taste of Lavazza coffee at the company's pubs since 2005.

Wetherspoon serves freshly ground Lavazza Arabica coffee<sup>††</sup> from Rainforest Alliance-certified farms, in a range which includes flat white, cappuccino, latte, mocha and espresso, as well as black and white coffee.

The Lavazza La Reserva de ¡Tierra! Selection blend, which remains the blend of choice still served today, is made by blending green coffee beans, grown from Rainforest Alliance-certified growers in Central and South America.

Produced using Arabica beans, it has a medium body and delicate taste, with hints of almond and milk chocolate.

Hot chocolate and Tetley tea are also available at all wetherspoon pubs, with decaffeinated tea and coffee also available.

Free refills<sup>‡</sup> are available on coffee, Tetley tea and hot chocolate all day every day.

<sup>††</sup> Excluding decaffeinated.

### Loughnane's sausages

A family-owned business, Loughnane's of Galway supplies the pork sausages for every Wetherspoon traditional breakfast and all-day breakfast.

Made with Irish pork, only ever fresh and from Bord Bia quality-assured farms, the quality sausages from Loughnane's of Galway are made with only natural ingredients and using traditional Irish recipes.

The company began with a butcher's shop, in 1970s Galway, and graduated into manufacturing during the 1990s.

Founded by Seán Loughnane, originally from Loughrea, it is now owned and run by Daire Loughnane, along with his brother Eoin, Loughnane has been making quality Irish sausages spanning four generations of butchers.

### Heinz Beanz

Wetherspoon serves only Heinz Beanz in the traditional cooked full breakfast.

Suitable for vegetarians and vegans, with no artificial colours, flavours or preservatives, the beans, naturally high in protein and fibre, are gluten free and low in fat.

Established in 1869, the Pennsylvania-based food processor HJ Heinz Company first introduced oven-baked beans at the beginning of 1896 – in a tomato sauce, using a traditional Boston recipe.

They were first brought to Britain in 1901, when Fortnum & Mason was the first to sell this brand-new Heinz product – which was instantly popular.

### McCain hash browns

Wetherspoon's long-term partner McCain has been supplying our pubs since 2001.

As well as the much-loved chips, McCain supplies the ever-popular breakfast hash browns, made from British potatoes, sourced from more than 250 Red Tractor-assured farms across the UK.

McCain has four factories across the UK and, as well as a network of trusted farmers, it also owns a potato seed business in Montrose, Scotland.

To get the best quality and taste, McCain uses 13 varieties from more than 61 seed-growers in the north and east of Scotland.

The seed potatoes are then distributed to 250 main crop-growers across the UK, ensuring consistent quality.

Many of McCain's long-standing farming partnerships span three generations of families.

### Dew Valley bacon

Dew Valley Foods has been working with Wetherspoon since 2010, developing the breakfast bacon used in all pubs. This is an independently owned family business, with its origin in the butchery trade.

It started as a craft butcher's in Thurles (County Tipperary), selling beef and pork products to the local community. The business then focused its development specifically on pork and bacon and, in 1993, moved to the current site just outside of Thurles.

Dew Valley Foods uses only natural ingredients, where possible, massaging these into the meat during the curing process. It uses only the finest raw ingredients from Ireland, the UK and selected EU sources.

### Free-range eggs

All of the fresh free-range shell eggs served at Wetherspoon's pubs are certified with the British Lion quality mark and are RSPCA assured.

All eggs are free range and fully traceable, with each one date-stamped, ensuring the best-quality eggs, produced by well-kept hens, living in high-quality conditions.

Wetherspoon also became the first pub company to gain recognition for sourcing eggs from those farms caring for their hens to higher welfare standards.

# CIRCULAR PUB GETS BEIGHTON IN A SPIN

**The Scarsdale Hundred in South Yorkshire occupies a modern building, but its name celebrates 1,000 years of history**

**A**lthough housed in a relatively new and modern building, The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton) recalls, in its name, almost 1,000 years of local history.

The pub, near the Crystal Peaks shopping centre (six miles southeast of Sheffield city centre), was opened by Wetherspoon in December 2021, following a £2.19-million redevelopment project.

Previously Damon's American diner, which launched in 1990 and closed in 2019, the circular building sits on a triangular plot opposite the shopping centre which, itself, has celebrated 35 years since it first opened in 1988.

The pub's location is just south of Skelton Lane, once a long leafy lane which bordered the area of farmland in which the premises now stands.

The lane continued on through Drake House farmyard and beyond. In the early 1800s, it was known as Well Lane, from the numerous wells and springs which supplied the area with water.

## Hundred

For hundreds of years, Beighton was in Derbyshire, in the administrative area known as the Hundred of Scarsdale.

In 1967, it was transferred to Sheffield, following the county boundary amendments, becoming one of Sheffield's 28 electoral wards.

Beighton has a long history as a rural village. In the Domesday Book of 1086, it was one of the places recorded in the Scarsdale Hundred.

The Scarsdale Hundred refers to the ancient parishes – however, there are only 71 listed settlements, in fact, including Beighton.

A map showing the settlements making up the Scarsdale Hundred is displayed prominently in the pub, with illustrations and information.

The history of Beighton, from its Anglo-Saxon origins to the present day, is also reflected in the pub's interior design.

The repetitive ceiling rafter spaces (coincidentally, there are 100 joists on display) have been used to identify each individual Scarsdale Hundred township.

A mixture of shields and banners, hanging from the beams, represents each settlement.





**Forest**

In the ninth century, Beighton was known as Bectune and it stood on the outskirts of the Great Forest, which is where the nearby Rother Valley Country Park exists today.

The central three-metre-wide circular fireplace, one of two large individually designed unique feature fireplaces in the pub, is made to represent the earliest settlement's hut's foundation, unearthed by archaeologists, dating from the ninth century.

The circular fire bed is also a replica of the Nether mill wheel, complete with ribs and stone edge.

Above it sits a bold steel-clad kettle fireplace, with five-metre-high riveted raw Sheffield steel panels, curving up into the high void.

The Nether wheel, which can still be found in the Shire Brook Valley local nature reserve, was one of several mill wheels along the Shire Brook once operated by Samuel Staniforth.

From the 17th to the 19th century, the village was noted for its edge-tool-manufacturing, with Thomas Staniforth & Co, sickle, scythe and tool smiths, based nearby at Hackenthorpe.

The Staniforth family can be traced back locally to 1560. Staniforth is now Spear and Jackson (since 1980), following Spearwell in 1967.

According to Samuel Bagshaw's Gazetteer and Directory of Derbyshire, published in 1846, Staniforth's factory was situated on Main Street and provided 'employment to the principal part of the village and many others in the neighbourhood'.

**Tools**

As well as sickles and scythes, Staniforth's manufactured reaping hooks for cutting grass or crops and many other useful tools, including hay and straw knives of every description.

The front bar of the pub has steampunk steel inset panels, while the over-bar racks reflect 200 years' industrial manufacturing of the

Staniforth edge tools, particularly the sickle and distinctive scythe (blunt) replicas, formed as part of the glass racks.

Much of the historic artwork and the pub's design inspiration reflects the long and prosperous history of this important manufacturer, which exported its tools all over the world.

The carpet also encompasses these key elements in its deep rich design.

**Ambience**

The colour also adds warmth to the ambience, alongside the rich array of eclectic timber furniture, with varying stain colours and multiple fabrics.

The main high void of the pub is filled with an array of pendant lighting, using varieties of steel finishes and colours to celebrate the success of Sheffield's prolific steel industry.

Outside, the garden on the left of the pub sits partly sunken into the hill, using a local stone retaining wall.

The whole space is level with the customer area and accessed via sliding and folding summer doors.

The surrounding area of the garden is full of plants and shrubs, boasting mature fir trees, as well as a pergola.

There is a ramped footpath dividing the gardens and providing gentle accessibility from the surrounding main public footpath.

Further garden space stretches to the right of this, decorated with plenty of lighting and festoon features, along with various colours of furniture and a variety of table tops.

● 2 Sevenairs Road, Beighton, Sheffield South Yorkshire, S20 1NZ

**Comment from the editor:** *We have reproduced these letters and replies regarding dogs, since the arguments rumble on. Please also see page 6.*

# COMPANY ISSUES DOGGED DEFENCE OF NO-CANINE POLICY

**B**ritain has a long-held and justifiable reputation as an animal-loving nation – and we appreciate that many of our customers are responsible pet owners.

However, Wetherspoon does not permit dogs or other animals in our pubs, hotels or in external areas which belong to, or are managed by, us.

This includes our beer gardens, car parks and outside pavement areas.

We understand that this exclusion is a difficult and sensitive issue for many customers, particularly dog owners wanting to enjoy a visit to the pub along with their furry four-legged family members.

We realise that this Wetherspoon policy may seem quite strict, yet our pubs are busy, often with families and children present – and we serve a lot of food.

Not everyone likes dogs present in dining areas and, with the best will in the world, even well-trained dogs can sometimes behave unpredictably... and accidents can and do happen.

We do, however, welcome assistance dogs.

Since it would be helpful for staff, we do suggest that any assistance dogs, if possible, should wear a recognisable leash/collar or harness and that their owners bring along suitable documentation (although not mandatory requirements).

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "Over the years, we have had numerous letters and e-mails asking us to change our no-dog policy.

"Of course, we understand and sympathise with dog owners, yet remain resolute on this highly emotive issue."

The Wetherspoon News 'Your Say' page has published several letters, in recent years, regarding our no-dog policy.

Here, with Tim's replies, are examples from 2014, 2018 and 2022.

2022

## PAW TREATMENT FOR DOGGED CUSTOMERS?

**Dear editor**

Having recently retired from work, I became the proud 'parent' of a puppy dog.

She soon became an important part of my life and routine.

As a regular diner at Wetherspoon's pubs, I took puppy along with us, when my wife and I went to our local in Newcastle-under-Lyme, where we sat outside and ordered breakfast.

Imagine my surprise when the manager had to tell us that dogs are not allowed – inside or outside.

It's the first time in my life that I have been kicked out of a pub... and a Wetherspoon at that! LOL

So, this e-mail is not in anger... rules are rules... but I would like to remind Tim et al that the current trend in pubs, restaurants and shops is to go 'dog friendly'.

These venues have seen the growing attraction of such places and the profitability of dog access.

Therefore, I ask please to consider looking at your rule on allowing dogs.

I suggest that outside, at least, is a step forward which would be greatly appreciated by many of your customers. You could even be radical and offer pet membership – a small fee giving the pet access permission.

Having visited quite a few pet-friendly places, I have been assured that dogs messing the floor is not happening.

I hope that my thoughts above strike a chord with you, and I am certain that they will with many others, should a poll be taken.

**Yours**

**Paul Lythgoe (via e-mail)**

**Tim replies:** A tricky area, indeed – and a very emotive one. In our busy pubs, with high food sales, not everyone likes dogs present – and accidents can happen.

This is an area in which, to paraphrase the poet John Lydgate, later made more famous still by Abraham Lincoln: "You can't please all the people all the time."

WETHERSPOON > SPRING 2022

2014

## JUSTICE FOR DOGS – THAT'S ALL I WANT

**Dear Tim**

As a family which always chooses Wetherspoon pubs first and fell walkers, we were delighted to learn about the opening of The Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, in Keswick. (editor's note: the pub opened on 30 September).

Our only concern was that it was not 'open for dogs'. We are now proud owners of Florrie (pictured), a 14-month-old collie, rescued from Ireland and we would like to take her in with us.

You may know that Keswick has been voted the most dog-friendly town in England (Kennel Club).

If you were to take a walk down its main street, you will see that most pubs and hotels encourage well-behaved dogs and their owners.

While I fully understand your general policy about allowing entry to registered assistance dogs only, would you consider having an area in the pub, where Florrie is allowed?

**Yours, Jim Murray, Tyne & Wear**

**Tim replies:** Another vexed issue. At my first pub in north London, I was persuaded to buy a Doberman, for security reasons. Before the poor dog died, I had walked the equivalent of from here to Australia, I calculated. He was useless as a guard dog, and I wanted my money back. He used to bark loudly, in panic, if another dog entered the premises – and pandemonium would often ensue. Whereas almost all dogs are well behaved, in reality, in busy pubs like ours, it's very difficult to prevent flare-ups of the nature I describe, which can be upsetting for some customers. In the end, we decided to go for 'guide dogs only'. I'm the first to admit that this policy is unfair, as far as Florrie is concerned.

WETHERSPOON > AUTUMN 2014



2018

## WELL, I'LL BE DOG-GONE

**Dear Tim**

I've been a customer of Wetherspoon for many years. I recently visited your pub in Mold, Flintshire. We sat down to have a meal at lunch time, only to be informed by a staff member that no dogs are allowed in the outside seating area.

On this occasion, Wetherspoon lost three customers – and I'm sure that there will be many more in future. You have lost me for good, with this policy.

I spoke to the manager who informed me that it was Wetherspoon's policy. My reply was: "What 'idiot' made this policy; in this day and age, how can anyone in business turn business away?"

By the way, there was a pub just up the road which allowed dogs on the premises.

**Regards**

**Mr B, North Wales (via e-mail)**

**Tim replies:** Thank you for your letter.

The idiot you refer to was, indeed, my good self. This is an emotional area, but, since our first pub, it has been our policy not to allow dogs, except guide dogs. Whereas most dog owners can control their well-trained dogs, this is not invariably the case.

The original rule, unfair on some dogs, I admit, is even more sensible today, since our pubs sell large amounts of food and admit children.

Also, in my experience, guide dog owners aren't keen on other dogs being admitted.

Most big food retailers and restaurant companies allow only guide dogs.

In this area, you can't please all of the people all of the time.

WETHERSPOON > AUTUMN 2018

*Tim says:* "We don't want to be too critical of the press, which often does a brilliant job in summarising complex information for the public.

On pages 54–59, for example, see the superb summaries, by The Guardian, the Financial Times and The Daily Telegraph, of complex reports from the World Health Organization and others.

However, the Daily Mail got a bit carried away in its reporting of several Wetherspoon pub disposals, and other matters, so we tried to set the record straight in the two press releases, issued in recent months, below..."

JD Wetherspoon plc press release

## Correction regarding Daily Mail article of 1 August 2023

A Daily Mail article of 1 August 2023 was headlined: "Wetherspoons closes more pubs with dozens of boozers across Britain earmarked for closure..."

The article then said that Wetherspoon "has closed 29 pubs so far this year..."

The article contained a number of mistakes, including the startling assertion that, "In September 2023 the company announced that it was putting 32 of its pubs up for sale." In fact, the announcement was made in 2022, nearly a year before the article appeared.

In general, the headline and article created a misleading impression.

Of the 28 pubs in question (not 29), 15 have been sold to other pub or restaurant companies and are already open, or are due to reopen soon, following temporary closure.

Describing pubs that are open as closed is inaccurate and alarmist.

The remaining 13 pubs were leaseholds and the lease had either expired, or the location had been identified by the landlord for redevelopment, resulting in a surrender of the lease to the landlord. For example, Doncaster Airport closed and therefore Wetherspoon's pub in the airport closed as well.

Wetherspoon surrendered its lease in Orpington to the landlord, as part of the landlord's plans to redevelop the shopping centre.

In Basildon, Wetherspoon surrendered its lease to the landlord, who is planning a major redevelopment in the town centre.

Wetherspoon has acquired another larger, freehold, site in Basildon, which is due to open in approximately 12 months.

The statement by the Daily Mail that "dozens of boozers across the UK (are) earmarked for closure" also creates a misleading and exaggerated impression. The article said that a recent Wetherspoon trading update "suggests the closures were due to difficult trading circumstances for the hospitality industry in recent years".

However, the trading statement made no such comment.

It said that the majority of the Wetherspoon pubs in question "had another [Wetherspoon] pub nearby".

Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said:

"Pub disposals are a sensitive issue. Hyperbole and exaggeration from the Daily Mail have created unnecessary alarm.

"Wetherspoon's annualised sales are now approximately £2 billion, the highest ever level, and are over £100m per annum more than in the year before the pandemic."

Profits, as we said in our recent trading statement, are increasing and employment is also at a record level.

That is certainly not the impression the Daily Mail article gave.

**J D Wetherspoon plc**

4 August 2023

JD Wetherspoon plc press release

## Correction regarding Mail Online article of 15 August 2023

On 4 August 2023 Wetherspoon issued a RNS statement correcting a number of factual errors in a Daily Mail article of 1 August.

The Daily Mail subsequently reissued the article online, taking account of the corrections.

Unfortunately, a Mail Online article of 15 August 2023 also contained a number of errors.

The article of 15th August 2023 was headlined: "Wetherspoons delivers a major blow to punters wanting a cheap bite to eat as it hikes food prices by 13% - how much has YOUR favourite meal gone up by?"

The article went on to review the pricing of a number meals at the Company's Oxted Inn pub in Oxted, Surrey.

The review contained a number of factual mistakes.

The price of a Ham and Cheddar Cheese Panini was stated correctly as £5.53 but failed to notify readers that this price also included a free soft drink.

The price of an All Day Brunch with an alcoholic drink was stated as £11.11 when the correct price is £10.82.

Reference was also made to "pint prices at the chain's airport and certain city pubs were revealed to have rocketed to an eye watering £7".

While one draught pint product (Leffe Blonde) has increased in price to over £7 at one pub in London (The Moon under

Water, Leicester Square), no other draught product has and it is misleading and inaccurate to state that Wetherspoon "pint prices" are now £7.00 in city pubs.

The article also contains the following statement from Martyn James who is described as "an independent consumer champion":

'People go to Wetherspoons because it's cheap. It remains to be seen if it will retain its customers now it's the same price as everywhere else'.

This statement is incorrect – Wetherspoon is not "the same price as everywhere else"

While the Company's prices do vary from location to location, a price survey carried out by the Company's pubs into pricing at their nearest competitors in April 2023 showed that the competitors' drinks prices were, on average, 43% more expensive than Wetherspoon and competitors' food prices were, on average, 33% more expensive than Wetherspoon.

Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said:

"Wetherspoon has identified a number of errors in recent Daily Mail articles. It is important for the press to maintain a reputation of providing accurate information for the public."

**J D Wetherspoon plc**

18 August 2023



Shift manager Michelle Hart at The Edwin Waugh (Heywood)

**Note from the editor:** The article below outlines Wetherspoon's bonus and free shares scheme. No company is perfect, but Wetherspoon believes that it pays a higher percentage of its profits in this way than most, or possibly any, large companies.

# £520 MILLION IN FREE SHARES AND BONUSES PAID TO EMPLOYEES SINCE 2006

83 per cent paid to pub staff

**S**ince the early 1980s, Wetherspoon has awarded bonuses, free shares and 'share options' to pub employees.

The current scheme of paying monthly bonuses to all pub employees, subject to certain criteria, started in 1998, with a government-approved free share scheme introduced in 2003.

Bonuses and share schemes provide an extra incentive for people to stay with the company: there are 18 employees who have worked for the company for over 30 years, 584 for over 20 years, 3,668 for over 10 years and 10,663 for over five years.

Since 2006, the company has paid £520 million to its employees in respect of bonuses and free shares.

# BONUSES AND SHARES

Of the recipients, approximately 96 per cent went to employees below board level, with around 83 per cent paid to employees working in pubs.

Employees are eligible for bonuses from the commencement of their employment and are eligible for free shares after 18 months.

In the financial year ended July 2023, bonuses and free shares of £36 million were awarded (see table<sup>^</sup> below), with 88 per cent of employees receiving a bonus and/or shares in that period.

At the current time, 14,317 of our 42,211 employees have been awarded free shares in the company.

It's probably true to say that no one earns a vast fortune from these schemes.

However, as far as the company is aware, Wetherspoon consistently pays a bigger percentage of its profits to its employees, by way of bonuses and free shares, than any other large pub/restaurant company or retailer.

Since the share scheme was introduced, Wetherspoon has awarded 25.9 million shares to employees – approximately 19.9 per cent of all shares in existence today.

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "People are vital to the success of the business.

"Our bonus and share schemes are a good way to share in the company's success."

## Wetherspoon: Bonuses and free shares v profits, 2006–23

Financial year	Bonuses and free shares	Profit after tax (loss/profit after tax)*	Bonus etc as % of profit
	£m	£m	
2023	36	28	129
2022	30	-25	-
2021	23	-147	-
2020	33	-39	-
2019	46	80	58
2018	43	84	51
2017	44	77	57
2016	33	57	58
2015	31	57	53
2014	29	59	50
2013	29	65	44
2012	24	57	42
2011	23	52	43
2010	23	51	44
2009	21	45	45
2008	16	36	45
2007	19	47	41
2006	17	40	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>52.5**</b>

<sup>^</sup>Source: J D Wetherspoon plc's annual reports and accounts 2006–23

\* IFRS 16 was implemented in the year ending 26 July 2020 (FY20).

From this period, all profit numbers in the above table are on a post-IFRS-16 basis. Before this date, all profit numbers are on a pre-IFRS-16 basis.

\*\* Shares and bonus as a percentage of profit excludes 2020, 2021 and 2022.

THE WHALEBONE • DOWNHAM MARKET

# FIRST DAY IN PUB CHANGED MY LIFE



Lewis Houghton describes his first day at The Whalebone (Downham Market) as “the day which changed my life”.

Lewis started at the pub in March 2018 as a kitchen associate, aged just 17.

He has since been promoted to kitchen manager and acquired a family – he and shift leader Megan Davies have a baby boy, Finlay.

His whirlwind progression began just months after he started working at The Whalebone.

Lewis said: “The manager wanted to promote me to team leader, yet then realised that I couldn’t take on the role because I was only 17.

“So, I had to wait a few weeks for my birthday, before I could do so.”

Lewis then moved through the ranks and was appointed kitchen manager in October 2022 – the same time as Michael Wiltshire started as pub manager.

The two have forged a strong working bond and meet regularly to discuss menu items and food promotions.

Lewis added: “I had harboured ambitions of joining the army, but was unable to pursue that because of a medical condition.

“Although I was allowed to continue my army apprenticeship, I just didn’t know what I wanted to do after that and was delighted to land a job with Wetherspoon.

“The truth is that I didn’t even apply for the job here – my mum did on my behalf – I just went to the interview and it changed my life.

“I thoroughly enjoy working at The Whalebone – the kitchen is always busy.

“At some stage in the future, I hope to join the Wetherspoon food-development team at head office.

“The Whalebone is one of a couple of dozen ‘trial pubs’ where new menu items appear, as a form of assessing whether to roll those out across all pubs – and I have found that process very interesting.”



LEIGH-ON-SEA

## ECHO-ING APPLAUSE RINGS OUT FOR THE ELMS



The Elms (Leigh-on-Sea) has been voted 'best local pub' of the area, by readers of the Southend Echo newspaper.

The pub first opened in March 1994 and has been managed since August 2017 (in his second stint at the pub) by pub manager Simon Bassford, together with a team of 84 staff.

The community pub attracts local groups such as parents and teachers' associations, cricket and football teams and a theatre group.

News of the pub's victory came only when a representative of the newspaper dropped off a trophy to the pub.

Simon said: "We knew that we'd been nominated, yet found out we'd won only when the newspaper representative came around with the trophy.

"We are delighted to have been named as the 'best local pub'.

"We are the community hub of Leigh-on-Sea.

"We try to make the pub an extension of people's lounge or living room.

"We are surrounded by houses – being a residential area, we get a lot of people who know one another and that makes for a great vibe.

"We attract a good cross-section of people, from ale-drinkers to coffee morning people, families and so on."

One of the pub's attractions is its garden which can cater for 400 people, in addition to 300 inside the pub itself.

Pictured (front, left to right) are pub manager Simon Bassford with the award, team leader Scout Brooks and customer Frank Cornish, who nominated the pub.

Back (left to right) are bar associate Emily Pride, team leader Magdalena Kubic, kitchen team leader Darren Day, team leader Jordan Poyser and shift leader Craig Nichols.

HAVERFORDWEST

## JON SHOWS INITIATIVE AT THE WILLIAM OWEN

Pub manager Jon Blayney has joined a local police initiative to help to improve the safety and security of his staff and customers at The William Owen (Haverfordwest).

Dyfed-Powys Police has launched a pioneering licensing scheme in local bars, pubs, clubs, restaurants and hotels, and The William Owen has joined the Licencing Security & Vulnerability Initiative (SAVI).

The scheme is available to licensees as an online self-assessment, covering areas like responsible drinking, violent behaviour, safeguarding, security and CCTV systems. It also provides consistent standards, guidance and advice.

Participating premises receive accreditation, as well as a star-rating certificate to put on display.

The William Owen achieved the highest-possible five-star rating under the scheme.

Jon said: "We are proud to have become accredited with Licensing SAVI.

"The pub takes its responsibilities seriously and works closely with the police, to ensure that it is run to a high standard at all times, with staff and customers' safety being paramount."

Licensing SAVI was developed at the request of the Home Office by Police Crime Prevention Initiatives (Police CPI), a police-owned organisation which works around the UK alongside the police service to deter and reduce crime.

Supporting the hospitality industry, Licensing SAVI aims to provide safer and more secure venues for managers, staff, customers and local communities and to reduce the demand on hard-pressed police forces, as well as NHS ambulance services and A&E departments.

## WETHERSPOON, ITS CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE PAID £6 BILLION OF TAX TO THE GOVERNMENT IN THE LAST 10 YEARS

**I**n Wetherspoon's 2023 financial year (12 months to July 2023), it generated £760.2 million in tax – about £1 in every £1,000 of ALL UK government taxes. The average tax generated per pub in 2023 was £920,000.

The table\* below shows the tax generated by the company in its financial years 2014–2023.

During this period, taxes amounted to about 39 per cent of every pound which went 'over the bar', net of VAT – about 25 times the company's profit.

Wetherspoon's finance director, Ben Whitley, said: "Pub companies pay enormous amounts of tax, but that is not always well understood by the companies themselves or by commentators, since most taxes are hidden in a financial fog.

"Wetherspoon has provided a table which illustrates the exact amounts of tax which the company, its customers and employees have generated, highlighting the importance of the hospitality sector to the nation's finances."

Wetherspoon's chairman, Tim Martin, said: "The main long-term challenge to the pub industry is the tax disparity with supermarkets, which pay zero VAT in respect of food sales, whereas pubs pay 20 per cent.

"This disparity enables supermarkets to subsidise the selling price of beer, wine and spirits, to the detriment of pubs.

"Supermarkets also pay lower business rates per pint than pubs.

"A direct consequence is that pubs' share of beer sales, for example, has dropped from 90 per cent to less than 50 per cent, in recent decades.

"In fact, supermarkets are far more profitable than pubs – Tesco is probably more profitable than the entire pub industry.

"Even so, like Monty Python's Dennis Moore, successive governments have robbed the poor (pubs) and given to the rich (supermarkets).

"A core principle of taxation is that it should be fair and equitable.

"Yet most large pub companies in the UK have remained silent on this vital issue, as their most recent trading statements demonstrate.

"However, surveys by Wetherspoon in the past have demonstrated great fervour for tax equality among individual tenants and free traders.

"The lack of vocal support for equality is probably an example of board rooms being out of touch with those on the front line, always a bad sign for any industry.

"Until there is tax equality between different types of business on the High Street, pubs will always be fighting with one hand tied behind their back – and will provide less in the way of jobs or taxes than they otherwise might."

Wetherspoon's tax payments in financial years 2014–2023	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2014–2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
VAT	372.3	287.7	93.8	244.3	357.9	332.8	323.4	311.7	294.4	275.1	2,893.4
Alcohol duty	166.1	158.6	70.6	124.2	174.4	175.9	167.2	164.4	161.4	157	1,519.8
PAYE and NIC	124.0	141.9	101.5	106.6	121.4	109.2	96.2	95.1	84.8	78.4	1,059.1
Business rates	49.9	50.3	1.5	39.5	57.3	55.6	53.0	50.2	48.7	44.9	450.9
Corporation tax	12.2	1.5	–	21.5	19.9	26.1	20.7	19.9	15.3	18.4	155.5
Corporation tax credit	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-2.0	–	-2.0
Fruit/slot machine duty	15.7	12.8	4.3	9.0	11.6	10.5	10.5	11	11.2	11.3	107.9
Climate change levies	11.1	9.7	7.9	10.0	9.6	9.2	9.7	8.7	6.4	6.3	88.6
Stamp duty	0.9	2.7	1.8	4.9	3.7	1.2	5.1	2.6	1.8	2.1	26.8
Sugar tax	3.1	2.7	1.3	2.0	2.9	0.8	–	–	–	–	12.8
Fuel duty	1.9	1.9	1.1	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.9	2.1	20.1
Apprenticeship levy	2.5	2.2	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.7	0.6	–	–	–	11.4
Carbon tax	–	–	–	–	1.9	3.0	3.4	3.6	3.7	2.7	18.3
Premise licence and	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.6	0.7	8.0
Landfill tax	–	–	–	–	–	1.7	2.5	2.2	2.2	1.5	10.1
Furlough tax rebate	–	-4.4	-213.0	-124.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	-341.5
Eat Out to Help Out	–	–	-23.2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-23.2
Local government grants	–	-1.4	-11.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-12.5
<b>TOTAL TAX</b>	<b>760.2</b>	<b>666.7</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>441.9</b>	<b>764.9</b>	<b>730.5</b>	<b>695.2</b>	<b>672.3</b>	<b>632.4</b>	<b>600.5</b>	<b>6,003.5</b>
<b>TAX PER PUB (£m)</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>6.78</b>
<b>TAX AS % OF NET SALES</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>		<b>42.1%</b>	<b>43.1%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>39.0%</b>
<b>PROFIT/(LOSS) AFTER TAX</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>-24.9</b>		<b>-38.5</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>83.6</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>58.9</b>	<b>237.3</b>

\*Source: J D Wetherspoon plc's annual reports and accounts 2014–2023

## THE DRABBET SMOCK • HAVERHILL

# HARRY IN A HURRY AS HE TAKES HAVERHILL HELM



When, in July 2023 at the age of 21, Harry Campbell was appointed pub manager at The Drabbet Smock (Haverhill), he became one of the youngest in the company to take on the role.

Harry's Wetherspoon career began at the age of 16, working on Friday and Saturday evenings, as an under-18 floor associate at The Bottle Kiln (Harwich).

His father, Peter Campbell, currently running Moon and Starfish (Clacton-on-Sea), was pub manager at Harwich at the time – and Harry quite naturally took to the work.

Harry recalled: "I knew how supportive Wetherspoon was to my parents – and I was almost born into it really.

"From the age of 16, it was always something I was going to do, although, if I'm honest, I didn't think I would become a pub manager."

His parents, Peter and Kathy, had been pub managers at The Picture Palace (Braintree) and The Battersford Court (Witham). Kathy had also been a training co-ordinator and is now a shift manager at Moon and Starfish.

Harry's younger brother Joe is also a shift manager at the Clacton-on-Sea pub.

Harry spent four years at The Bottle Kiln, progressing very quickly to 'hold' the pub for a month during Christmas 2022.

He remembered: "That was a very busy time – and I learned a lot about the business and my own capabilities."

A brief spell at The Great Glen (Fort William), a handful of shifts at The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool) and a short time at The Bell Hotel (Aylesbury) (now closed) preceded his appointment as pub manager at The Drabbet Smock.

Harry, who has been joined at Haverhill by his girlfriend, shift leader Rosie Spratt, added: "I have learned an awful lot from many people, including my mum and dad, and am continuing to learn from the very knowledgeable and experienced management team here at The Drabbet Smock.

"I am really lucky and enjoy my job very much."

Harry concluded: "The opportunities are there and, with the support which the company provides, I could definitely go further.

"For now, though, I am focusing on making this pub a success."

## GANG CLAD IN BAR TOWELS AFTER 39-YEAR PUB CRAWL



A group of men, having been on a 'pub crawl' since 1984, dropped in to Ritz (Lincoln).

The men – part of The Blackcountry Ale Tairsters – dress in jackets made of bar towels and tour pubs to raise money for various charities. Their visit to Ritz was part of a continuing fundraiser for Lincolnshire Air Ambulance.

Shift manager Jamie Metcalfe said: "I am delighted that our pub formed part of the pub crawl.

"They were a great bunch and we had a lovely chat – they told me that they had been to every single pub in Wales and to every English county on their travels.

"If they get a new member, that member gets a jacket made, especially, out of bar towels."

## NEW CHAPTER FOR V-SHED AS NOVELIST ED PUTS PUB IN BOOK

A début novel written by Wetherspoon fan Ed Burley contains detailed descriptions of a pub which might sound familiar to pub-goers in Bristol.

Ed frequents V-Shed, one of Wetherspoon's pubs in Bristol, with his wife and two children for family meals and has turned the pub into a fictional venue called 'Seven' in his 300-page crime thriller – Blame.

Ed even refers to V-Shed as 'Seven' in real life, too. He said: "It's a great pub in a great location, right by the river.

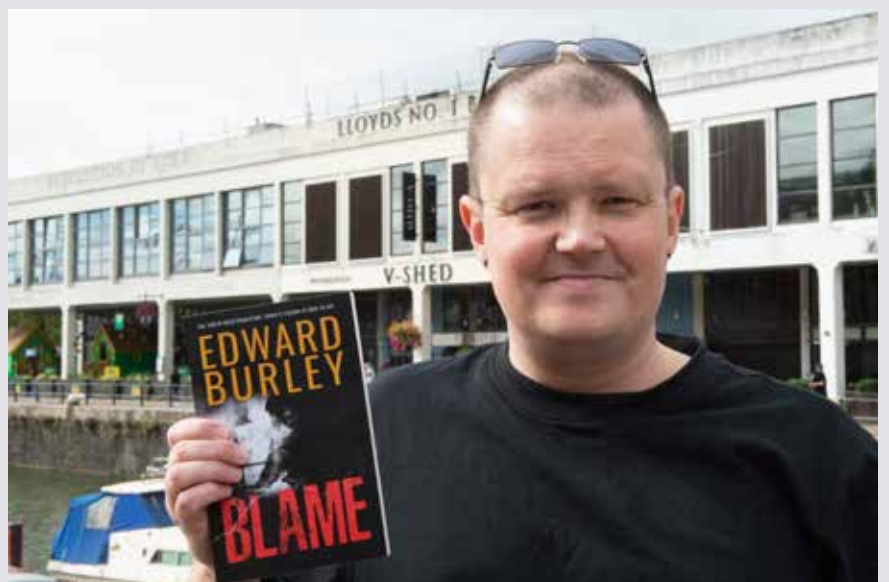
"If anyone thinks the descriptions of Seven in the book sound familiar, it's not a coincidence.

"I've been frequenting V-Shed for years with my family – and it gave me inspiration for the fictional venue in the book.

"Staff at the pub had no idea that their pub was being made into a fictional venue."

Blame is published by Foreshore and available in paperback at £8.99.

A sequel, Agency, is due for publication in autumn 2024.



# DAFYDD'S PUB POSSE CRAWLS TO FOUR NATIONS IN ONE DAY

When Dafydd Pesic-Smith mentioned a long-held pub crawl idea, over a few Father's Day pints with family and friends, his mad-cap scheme was realised within three weeks of voicing it.

Dafydd, along with his brother-in-law Mike Cullen, father-in-law Tony Cullen and Tony's work colleague Rob 'Doz' Morris, set off on a one-day pub-crawl adventure with a difference.

Dafydd explained: "I had the idea when I was about 17, as a way to celebrate my 18th birthday, yet never had been able to achieve it."

The quartet, living between Llandudno and Chester, were aiming to have a drink in four Wetherspoon pubs, in a capital city, in a single day.

Each pub would be in a different country in the UK – The Bridge House (Belfast), The Booking Office (Edinburgh), The Barrel Vault (London) and The Great Western (Cardiff).

However, the journey, which started in Liverpool and saw them fly to Belfast, fly onto Edinburgh, take a train to London, followed by another rail journey to Cardiff, wasn't without incident.

Dafydd said: "The day itself was a challenge and fraught with a few mishaps along the way.

"When we arrived at The Bridge House, we hadn't realised that alcohol wasn't served until 11.30am.

"We enjoyed a great breakfast at the pub, but had to buy a beer from a local shop to get the photo outside the premises."

No such issues in Edinburgh, where they are pictured outside The Booking Office, having enjoyed a drink and sporting home nations' head gear – (left to right) Mike (Ireland), Tony (Scotland), 'Doz' (Wales) and Dafydd (England).

Dafydd continued: "A lost rail ticket and train cancellations frustratingly reduced our time in London and, unfortunately, we didn't get to The Barrel Vault, so had to settle for a drink in the nearest pub to Paddington Station (sadly not Wetherspoon).



"We eventually arrived in Cardiff, via an unplanned route to Swansea taking in Reading and Bristol, finishing at The Great Western, 14 hours and 25 minutes after leaving Liverpool."

He added: "We also popped in to The Prince of Wales the next day, to make up for the lost London Wetherspoon pub... it seemed only fair really."

## BRAMAH BUNCH CELEBRATES AMANDA'S ANNIVERSARY

Amanda Lewis celebrated 10 years' service at The Joseph Bramah (Barnsley).

The floor associate was given a cake and flowers by colleagues to mark her achievement in a surprise celebration, among balloons and bunting.

Amanda joined the pub back in 2013 while attending job-counselling sessions at mental health charity MENCAP.

She said: "All of the people at the pub are very friendly – and I like talking to people and bumping into old schoolfriends.

"It was so nice of my colleagues to surprise me like that. I feel very proud and want to continue working here."

Pub manager Ben Dixon said: "Amanda is amazing to work with. She is always smiling and friendly – and we wanted to do a little something to recognise her anniversary here."



*Tim says:* “Professor Francois Balloux, of University College London, in this Guardian article, discusses the World Health Organization’s investigation into government responses to COVID-19 and concludes that ‘Sweden’s death rate is ... about half the UK’s and, whereas it is above those of the Nordic countries, it still looks flattering, relative to the majority of the European Union.’”

Wetherspoon News summer 2022

## “SWEDEN? JAPAN? UK? DEBATES OVER WHO HAD A ‘GOOD’ COVID WON’T END

**The WHO has spoken but even its huge new report will not settle arguments about pandemic strategies**

**National Covid death rates are, inevitably, political. How could they not be when they are viewed as evidence for good or bad government on matters of life or death? How did the UK fare compared with, say, Germany? Should both countries have been more like Sweden? However, when new data arrives, far from settling arguments over which pandemic mitigation strategies worked best, it tends to further inflame disagreements or harden pre-existing positions.**

So it is with the much-anticipated report by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Covid-associated deaths, released last week. The WHO estimates that around 15 million additional people died because of the pandemic in 2020-2021, about 2.7 times higher than officially recorded deaths.

While staggering, the estimated excess deaths didn’t really come as a surprise to those who have been closely following the situation. If anything, this estimate is lower than many may have anticipated. Indeed, two previous modelling efforts, by the Economist and the University of Washington, suggested around 18 million excess deaths.

That more people died in the pandemic than have been officially registered as Covid deaths should be largely uncontroversial. Many countries simply did not have the diagnostic infrastructure in place to identify every Covid death. The pandemic – and, to an extent, our response to it – has also been devastating to social and healthcare around the world.

Now the WHO report seems to provide ammunition for essentially any narrative and it is unlikely to check the politicisation of the Covid debate – in the UK or elsewhere.

For example, India’s own official excess death estimate is about 10 times lower than the 4.7 million people reported by the WHO. Indian authorities have vehemently rejected the methodology used by the WHO and its estimate for their country. They even opposed publication of the report and released their own 2020 death figures two to three months ahead of schedule to offer a counter-narrative.

Here, many comparisons have been made with other countries to highlight the UK as either the epitome of failure or a roaring success. In fact, according to the WHO report, the UK has fared fairly unremarkably. An estimated 109 excess deaths per 100,000 people places it at 56th in the global ranking of “best performing” countries, and middle of the table relative to the European Union, coming 15th out of the 27 EU member states. The UK’s estimated excess death toll is below Germany’s and Italy’s, but above France’s. According to the WHO estimates, Germany significantly underestimated Covid deaths, France overestimated them and the UK got it about right, suggesting that the much-criticised “death within 28 days of a positive test” approach was a reasonable proxy for Covid death before the Omicron wave.

Some countries became synonymous in the public imagination with particular pandemic mitigation strategies. Sweden has been criticised by some for the lack of stringency of its measures and hailed by others as a shining example of how to protect the rights of its citizens while navigating a health crisis.

To the possible disappointment of both its supporters and detractors, Sweden’s estimated excess death of 56/100,000 is about half the UK’s and, while it is above those of other Nordic nations, it still looks flattering relative to the majority of EU countries.

An additional reason why the WHO report won’t settle many arguments stems from Covid excess death figures being extremely difficult to measure precisely. Even in the absence of ideological disagreements, they do not offer simple, incontrovertible “follow the science” answers. Pandemic excess deaths represent the difference between the number of people who died, relative to a hypothetical number of people who might have died had the pandemic not happened.

The number of actual deaths is accurately registered in high-income countries but this is not necessarily the case in many parts of the world, where estimates can be crude. Getting an accurate number for the hypothetical number of deaths that might have occurred had the pandemic not happened is even more challenging. (The WHO relied on a fairly complex model and the extent to which some of its estimates may have been coloured by modelling assumptions will be scrutinised and criticised.)

The report paints a complex picture supporting no single straightforward narrative. Which shouldn’t be too surprising. A single number for each country is unlikely to capture the full complexity of vastly different socioeconomic situations and two years of often inconsistent policies. Lower-middle income countries in eastern Europe and South America have been particularly badly affected, probably because of a relatively unfavourable age pyramid, low vaccination coverage and disruption to their economy and healthcare systems. Richer countries tended to do better overall, with the exception of the US, which fared quite poorly with 144/100,000 excess deaths.

A few countries kept excess deaths close to, or even below zero, including Australia, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Mongolia and New Zealand. Being rich and geographically isolated helps.

The stringency of mitigation measures does not seem to be a particularly strong predictor of excess deaths. While countries that achieved low excess deaths tended to have fairly tight measures in place, the worst performer by some margin is Peru, despite enforcing the harshest, longest lockdown. This proved ineffective at reducing viral transmission and probably contributed negatively to the excess death toll.

The results from the WHO report will undoubtedly be analysed extensively by pandemic planners, though they are unlikely to be of much help to inform actionable “one-fits-all-follow-the-science” strategies. The major message is that richer, more insular countries kept excess deaths low by limiting the spread of Sars-CoV-2 until the arrival of vaccines and then achieved high vaccination coverage in elderly people. Those relative success stories largely built on pre-existing geographic and socioeconomic advantages rather than unique, well-thought-out mitigation plans.

Read that way, the main thrust of the WHO report boils down to reducing inequality, improving health and providing a robust social and healthcare system offering the best pandemic preparedness. That would be money well spent, even if the next one takes a while to hit.

*Francois Balloux is Director of the University College London Genetics Institute.*

**By Francois Balloux**

The Guardian / 8 May 2022

Print credit: Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2023

*Tim says:* "Professor Robert Dingwall, of Nottingham Trent University, like Professor Balloux, discusses the WHO report on COVID-19 and reaches broadly the same conclusion.

He says that 'unlike the UK, where elites assumed that people should be told what was good for them and then compelled or frightened into doing it, Sweden explained its public health thinking and invited citizens to co-operate'."

Wetherspoon News winter 2022/23

# SWEDEN'S WHO FIGURES MUST RADICALLY CHANGE THE TERMS OF THE COVID INQUIRY

**Unlike the UK where elites told people what was good for them, Sweden explained its public health thinking and invited people to cooperate**

**"Judge me in a year" said Anders Tegnell, Sweden's State Epidemiologist, in July 2020, when his country was being attacked for sticking to its pandemic plan rather than adopting the novel intervention of lockdown. The latest World Health Organisation figures add to the evidence that has been accumulating since summer 2021. Sweden managed the pandemic more successfully than most, with much less disruption of everyday life and economic activity.**

The WHO has published estimates of excess deaths globally for 2020 and 2021. This approach covers all deaths from Covid, whether formally diagnosed or not, together with collateral damage in deaths from other conditions that went untreated. Looking at Europe, where official data are usually robust, Sweden had half the excess death rate of the UK, Germany or Spain – and a quarter of that of many Eastern European nations.

In turn, the UK tends to be mid-table, in line with other large Western European countries, while Eastern European countries have had much worse experiences. There is a widely-circulated view that the UK has had a uniquely bad pandemic. The data simply do not support this.

Nor do they support the view that the outcomes have much to do with the restrictions adopted by different governments, how soon they began, or the stringency of enforcement. The question, then, is how governments came to adopt highly restrictive policies in the first place. This must be the starting point for any national inquiry. Why was the experience of emergency planners, and two decades of pandemic preparation, abandoned everywhere except Sweden?

Sweden never 'let it rip'. There were restrictions on large gatherings, and on restaurants and some other places of entertainment. Secondary schools and universities switched to remote learning at some points. Masks were never thought to be of benefit but social distancing was encouraged. The approach was based on the minimum intervention necessary to manage the highest risk environments.

Mistakes were made and acknowledged. In the first wave of the pandemic, Sweden had a problem with Covid deaths in care homes, which tend to be larger than in the UK. Once the virus got into a home, it could circulate around a larger number of people than would be possible in UK homes. When additional infection controls were introduced, residents were as

well shielded as anywhere. Unlike the UK where elites assumed that people should be told what was good for them, and then compelled or frightened into doing it, Sweden explained its public health thinking and invited citizens to cooperate.

Many UK problems can be traced to its top-down approach. No-one asked the academics who know about laws and rules whether they would work in this situation. Officials and politicians made those decisions on the basis of their own, often simplistic, beliefs. But rules are inflexible tools, which invite confrontation and dispute. How can anyone comply with a law that cannot differentiate between a party and a work-related gathering? The Swedish approach allowed citizens to think about applying broad public health messages to the circumstances of their own lives.

Sweden shows that there was another path not taken, that could have brought this country through the pandemic in far better shape, socially and economically. The inquiry must not be diverted into the minutiae of arguments about whether we should have locked down a week or two weeks earlier. It must be free to examine the whole strategy - in particular, why robust social science evidence on managing emergencies, and its contribution to pandemic planning since the early 2000s, was abandoned so precipitately.

*Robert Dingwall is Professor of Sociology at Nottingham Trent University.*

**By Robert Dingwall**

The Daily Telegraph / 7 May 2022

Print credit: © Robert Dingwall/Telegraph Media Group Limited 2023

*Tim says:* “Writer Gary Taubes queried the antisalt mantra in this article in The New York Times 11 years ago. Taubes said that the evidence against salt was ‘weak’ and quoted the editor of The Journal of the American Medical Association, who said that antisalt arguments ‘go way beyond scientific facts’.

Taubes may have been right or he may have been wrong – however, the existence of doubt in an area such as this should not be hidden from the public by the medical establishment.

Transparency is essential for good solutions.”

Wetherspoon News 2012

# SALT, WE MISJUDGED YOU

**THE first time I questioned the conventional wisdom on the nature of a healthy diet, I was in my salad days, almost 40 years ago, and the subject was salt. Researchers were claiming that salt supplementation was unnecessary after strenuous exercise, and this advice was being passed on by health reporters. All I knew was that I had played high school football in suburban Maryland, sweating profusely through double sessions in the swamplike 90-degree days of August. Without salt pills, I couldn't make it through a two-hour practice; I couldn't walk across the parking lot afterward without cramping.**

While sports nutritionists have since come around to recommend that we should indeed replenish salt when we sweat it out in physical activity, the message that we should avoid salt at all other times remains strong. Salt consumption is said to raise blood pressure, cause hypertension and increase the risk of premature death. This is why the Department of Agriculture's dietary guidelines still consider salt Public Enemy No. 1, coming before fats, sugars and alcohol. It's why the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has suggested that reducing salt consumption is as critical to long-term health as quitting cigarettes.

And yet, this eat-less-salt argument has been surprisingly controversial — and difficult to defend. Not because the food industry opposes it, but because the actual evidence to support it has always been so weak.

When I spent the better part of a year researching the state of the salt science back in 1998 — already a quarter century into the eat-less-salt recommendations — journal editors and public health administrators were still remarkably candid in their assessment of how flimsy the evidence was implicating salt as the cause of hypertension.

“You can say without any shadow of a doubt,” as I was told then by Drummond Rennie, an editor for The Journal of the American Medical Association, that the authorities pushing the eat-less-salt message had “made a commitment to salt education that goes way beyond the scientific facts.”

While, back then, the evidence merely failed to demonstrate that salt was harmful, the evidence from studies published over the past two

years actually suggests that restricting how much salt we eat can increase our likelihood of dying prematurely. Put simply, the possibility has been raised that if we were to eat as little salt as the U.S.D.A. and the C.D.C. recommend, we'd be harming rather than helping ourselves.

WHY have we been told that salt is so deadly? Well, the advice has always sounded reasonable. It has what nutritionists like to call “biological plausibility.” Eat more salt and your body retains water to maintain a stable concentration of sodium in your blood. This is why eating salty food tends to make us thirsty: we drink more; we retain water. The result can be a temporary increase in blood pressure, which will persist until our kidneys eliminate both salt and water.

The scientific question is whether this temporary phenomenon translates to chronic problems: if we eat too much salt for years, does it raise our blood pressure, cause hypertension, then strokes, and then kill us prematurely? It makes sense, but it's only a hypothesis. The reason scientists do experiments is to find out if hypotheses are true.

In 1972, when the National Institutes of Health introduced the National High Blood Pressure Education Program to help prevent hypertension, no meaningful experiments had yet been done. The best evidence on the connection between salt and hypertension came from two pieces of research. One was the observation that populations that ate little salt had virtually no hypertension. But those populations didn't eat a lot of things — sugar, for instance — and any one of those could have been the causal factor. The second was a strain of “salt-sensitive” rats that reliably developed hypertension on a high-salt diet. The catch was that “high salt” to these rats was 60 times more than what the average American consumes.

Still, the program was founded to help prevent hypertension, and prevention programs require preventive measures to recommend. Eating less salt seemed to be the only available option at the time, short of losing weight. Although researchers quietly acknowledged that the data were “inconclusive and contradictory” or “inconsistent and contradictory” — two quotes from the cardiologist Jeremiah Stamler, a leading proponent of the eat-less-salt campaign, in 1967 and 1981 —



publicly, the link between salt and blood pressure was upgraded from hypothesis to fact.

In the years since, the N.I.H. has spent enormous sums of money on studies to test the hypothesis, and those studies have singularly failed to make the evidence any more conclusive. Instead, the organizations advocating salt restriction today — the U.S.D.A., the Institute of Medicine, the C.D.C. and the N.I.H. — all essentially rely on the results from a 30-day trial of salt, the 2001 DASH-Sodium study. It suggested that eating significantly less salt would modestly lower blood pressure; it said nothing about whether this would reduce hypertension, prevent heart disease or lengthen life.

While influential, that trial was just one of many. When researchers have looked at all the relevant trials and tried to make sense of them, they've continued to support Dr. Stamler's "inconsistent and contradictory" assessment. Last year, two such "meta-analyses" were published by the Cochrane Collaboration, an international nonprofit organization founded to conduct unbiased reviews of medical evidence. The first of the two reviews concluded that cutting back "the amount of salt eaten reduces blood pressure, but there is insufficient evidence to confirm the predicted reductions in people dying prematurely or suffering cardiovascular disease." The second concluded that "we do not know if low salt diets improve or worsen health outcomes."

The idea that eating less salt can worsen health outcomes may sound bizarre, but it also has biological plausibility and is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, too. A 1972 paper in *The New England Journal of Medicine* reported that the less salt people ate, the higher their levels of a substance secreted by the kidneys, called renin, which set off a physiological cascade of events that seemed to end with an increased risk of heart disease. In this scenario: eat less salt, secrete more renin, get heart disease, die prematurely.

With nearly everyone focused on the supposed benefits of salt restriction, little research was done to look at the potential dangers. But four years ago, Italian researchers began publishing the results from a series of clinical trials, all of which reported that, among patients with heart failure, reducing salt consumption increased the risk of death.

Those trials have been followed by a slew of studies suggesting that reducing sodium to anything like what government policy refers to as a "safe upper limit" is likely to do more harm than good. These covered some 100,000 people in more than 30 countries and showed that salt consumption is remarkably stable among populations over time. In the United States, for instance, it has remained constant for the last 50 years, despite 40 years of the eat-less-salt message. The average salt intake in these populations — what could be called the normal salt intake — was one and a half teaspoons a day, almost 50 percent above what federal agencies consider a safe upper limit for healthy Americans under 50, and more than double what the policy advises for those who aren't so young or healthy. This consistency, between populations and over time, suggests that how much salt we eat is determined by physiological demands, not diet choices.

One could still argue that all these people should reduce their salt intake to prevent hypertension, except for the fact that four of these studies — involving Type 1 diabetics, Type 2 diabetics, healthy Europeans and patients with chronic heart failure — reported that the people eating salt at the lower limit of normal were more likely to have heart disease than those eating smack in the middle of the normal range. Effectively what the 1972 paper would have predicted.

Proponents of the eat-less-salt campaign tend to deal with this contradictory evidence by implying that anyone raising it is a shill for the food industry and doesn't care about saving lives. An N.I.H. administrator told me back in 1998 that to publicly question the science on salt was to play into the hands of the industry. "As long as there are things in the media that say the salt controversy continues," he said, "they win."

When several agencies, including the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, held a hearing last November to discuss how to go about getting Americans to eat less salt (as opposed to whether or not we should eat less salt), these proponents argued that the latest reports suggesting damage from lower-salt diets should simply be ignored. Lawrence Appel, an epidemiologist and a co-author of the DASH-Sodium trial, said "there is nothing really new."

According to the cardiologist Graham MacGregor, who has been promoting low-salt diets since the 1980s, the studies were no more than "a minor irritation that causes us a bit of aggravation."

This attitude that studies that go against prevailing beliefs should be ignored on the basis that, well, they go against prevailing beliefs, has been the norm for the anti-salt campaign for decades. Maybe now the prevailing beliefs should be changed. The British scientist and educator Thomas Huxley, known as Darwin's bulldog for his advocacy of evolution, may have put it best back in 1860. "My business," he wrote, "is to teach my aspirations to conform themselves to fact, not to try and make facts harmonize with my aspirations."

*A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Independent Investigator in Health Policy Research and the author of "Why We Get Fat."*



**By Gary Taubes**

*The New York Times* / 2 June 2012

*Tim says:* "Professor Johan Giesecke, a Swedish epidemiologist, was interviewed on Aussie TV in April 2020, in the early days of the pandemic. This is a transcript of the interview, in which Professor Giesecke explains the Swedish philosophy.

The Swedes didn't get everything right, but many people today believe that their general approach, which avoided lockdowns and heavy restrictions, produced superior results. Whether this view about Sweden is believed to be correct will determine UK and world policy for pandemics in the future.

You, the public, will decide..."

Wetherspoon News autumn 2020

**Sky News:** You've been a strong critic of the idea of lockdowns, Sweden has avoided these sort of lockdowns that we're seeing here in Australia. Tell us your thoughts - are lockdowns the correct way to go?

**Johan:** You introduced me by saying that I would say that you got it all wrong. I don't think you got it all wrong, but you painted yourself into a corner and I'm watching with interest how you and 100 other countries will climb out of the lockdown, because I don't think any government that I know gave a minute's thought about how they would get out of the different lockdowns that are installed.

Take the school closure for example, if you close the schools, when are you going to open them, what's the criteria?

I don't think anyone thought about that when the closure was decided on. Anyway, so Sweden doesn't have such a strict lockdown, there are a few things that are forbidden - the crowd can't be more than 50 people, at restaurants that are mostly open, there should be 5ft or 1.5 meters between the tables, you have to sit down to eat, there are a few things like that, but rather mild things... there are very few laws and [regulations] passed, you can go out without being stopped by the police and fined or threatened with prison and mostly we talk about trust... we trust the people - people are not stupid.

That's... the basic line [in Sweden]. If you tell people what's good for them and what's good for their neighbours and other people, they do that. You take a restriction that's sensible and understandable, people will follow it.

**Sky News:** You said that you think the results are going to be similar across most countries regardless of the approach they've taken, can you take us through that?

**Johan:** There is a tsunami of a rather mild infection spreading around the globe and I think that there's very little chance to stop it by any measure we take.

Most people will become infected by this and most people won't even notice. We have data now from Sweden that shows between 98 and 99 percent of the cases have had a very mild infection or didn't even realise they were infected.

So we have this spread of this mild disease around the globe and most of it is happening where we don't see it.

It's among people that don't get very sick, spread it to someone else that doesn't get very sick and what we're looking at is a thin layer at the top of people who do develop the disease and even thinner layer of people that go into intensive care and then even thinner layer of people who die.

But the real outbreak is happening where we don't see it.

**Sky News:** So....you're saying that at some point pretty much everybody is going to get this disease to some degree or another.

Here in Australia we've done an incredibly good job suppressing it.

I'm wondering do you think we've done too good a job, is it possible to do too good a job suppressing it in the early stages such that you won't ever be able to take the foot off the break on your restrictions to get the disease just to a manageable flow of cases that the health system, which we were told this was all about preparing for that, be allowed to handle the cases as they come through.

**Johan:** Yes... one point is to flatten the curve a bit so that the health care isn't overused.

You may succeed, and New Zealand may also succeed, but I've been asking myself when New Zealand or Australia has stamped out every case in the country, what do you do for the next 30 years.

Will you close your borders completely? Quarantine everyone who is going to Australia or New Zealand? Because the disease will be out there. I don't know how you are going to handle that.

That's your problem.

**Sky News:** You've said you think in most countries regardless of the measures we take, eg. Taiwan has been very successful and other countries like Italy have been disaster cases, but you think at the end of the day they're all pretty much going to end up with the same fatalities, the same results, the same deaths regardless of what measures they took. Explain that.

**Johan:** Yes. Basically I think it will be the same because, like I said, the real epidemic is invisible and it's going on all the time around us.

The other thing with a lockdown is when you open it, you will have more cases, so the countries who pride themselves in having a few deaths now, will get these deaths when they start lifting the lockdown.

**Sky News:** Tell us briefly about the Imperial College results that sparked this worldwide panic.

You believe they were flawed, these were the initial results that were coming out and the modelling that was saying millions are gonna die.

You thought that was flawed, tell us why.

**Johan:** Yes, there are a few procedural things... One is that the paper was never published which is normal scientific behaviour.

The second thing it wasn't peer-reviewed, which means it wasn't looked upon by other people, which is also normal scientific procedure.

So it was more like an internal departmental communication, a memo.

And then the big mistake of the Imperial group was under-estimating the proportion of the very mild cases that would never be detected, that's the main thing with that prediction.

And it's fascinating how it changed the policy of the world.

The UK made a U-turn overnight [upon] the publication of the paper which is fascinating.

So, yes, there were several other mistakes with the paper, but it gets very technical to get into that.

**Sky News:** You mention that the overwhelming majority of people that get this disease have no symptoms or very minimal symptoms.

Do we even know the real fatality rate of the coronavirus?

**Johan:** No. Well it's around 0.1%.

**Sky News:** We were told it was 3% initially, initially 2%, are you saying now that it's 0.1%, that's pretty much the same fatality rate as the regular flu isn't it?

**Johan:** I think it's a bit higher actually. I said before in Sweden that this is like a severe influenza. I don't think that's completely true - it will be a bit more severe than the influenza, maybe double, but not tenfold.

**Sky News:** With all of the health care systems focusing on flattening the curve and being prepared for these waves of infection, which aren't

necessarily coming because of the very restrictive measures, overall are we gonna see more people dying, we talked a little bit about this before on the show, of cancers, heart attacks, things like that, simply because they're too scared to go to the hospital because they think they won't get treated.

Is there going to be other deaths that are going to be caused by our overweighting focus just on this one particular disease?

**Johan:** Could well be.

The emergency rooms here in Stockholm have about 50% of the usual number of patients coming in, and one reason is probably that people are scared of contracting the disease when they go into hospitals, and another is that, I think, they say they can wait a bit until the thing is over.

**Sky News:** You've said the best policy, the correct policy, would be to simply protect the old and the frail. Is that correct?

**Johan:** Yes, and that's the Swedish model. It has... two pillars.

One is only use measures that are evidence-based.

And there are two that are evidence-based... one is washing hands... we've known that for 150 years since Semmelweis in Austria a long time ago.

The other is social distancing.

If you don't get too close to other people, they won't infect you.

And the third may be trust the people.

People are not stupid, if you tell them what's good for them they will do what you say.

You don't need soldiers on the street - and police.

It's unnecessary.

● Transcript of interview, Swedish former chief epidemiologist Johan Giesecke

By Sky News Australia  
29 April 2020

*Tim says:* “This FT article on a report for the government’s COVID inquiry concludes that ‘mask-wearing, border controls and shutdowns were most effective when introduced early ... and in combination’.

This is at odds with the view of Professor Johan Giesecke of Sweden, who, taking account of the severity of COVID, advocated social distancing, hand-washing and ‘trusting the people’ (see page 58).

It is also at odds with last year’s WHO report which found, says Professor Balloux (see page 54), that ‘the stringency of mitigation measures does not seem to be a particularly strong predictor’ of outcomes.”

# LOCKDOWNS CUT INFECTIONS DURING PANDEMIC, UK COVID INQUIRY TOLD

**Report says shutdowns, mask-wearing and border controls most effective in combination**

**Lockdowns and other social distancing measures significantly cut the transmission of the coronavirus during the pandemic, according to a report published on Thursday, which has been submitted to the UK Covid-19 inquiry.**

The Royal Society examined hundreds of studies from around the world on the effectiveness of so-called non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as mask-wearing and border controls, that were used to try to stem the spread of the virus before the development of vaccines.

In their report, researchers at the UK’s independent scientific academy found masks were highly effective at cutting transmission and that mask-wearing, border controls and shutdowns were most useful when introduced early, while case numbers were lower, and in combination.

Professor Sir Mark Walport, foreign secretary of the Royal Society and chief scientific adviser to the UK government between 2013 and 2017, said one of the main lessons to come out of the pandemic was to “be prepared”.

“Governments on the whole are better prepared [than before Covid]. The last emergency was a major pandemic and so we should be better prepared for it next time. But viruses are dangerous things,” he said.

The Covid inquiry is examining the UK’s response to the pandemic, including the decisions to lock down and introduce other social distancing measures, testing and contact tracing, and masking. It will last at least until 2026.

The Royal Society researchers concluded that lockdowns and social distancing measures were the most significant intervention, with some studies suggesting they could have reduced the reproduction number of the virus by more than 50 per cent.

In care homes, restricting visitor numbers, keeping residents apart and allocating individual staff to specific residents all reduced transmission.

The researchers pointed to Hong Kong, South Korea and New Zealand as examples of where stringently implemented lockdowns resulted in extremely low domestic transmission.

But their report did not consider the broader impacts of lockdowns such as the effects on the economy, children’s education and people’s mental health.

Chris Dye, professor of epidemiology at the University of Oxford, who examined the mask studies, said there was “surprisingly overwhelming evidence” that they cut transmission, especially N95 respirators.

He said they should be used by people working with vulnerable adults and children whenever rates of Covid or other respiratory illnesses were high.

In January 2023, a review by Cochrane, a non-profit organisation that issues medical guidance, of the randomised controlled trials found no clear link between encouraging people to wear masks and reducing infection.

But Dye said that since there were not many randomised controlled trials from which to draw conclusions, the Royal Society had looked at a broader range of studies and found they consistently reported that mask-wearing and mask mandates cut transmission.

The researchers found that border controls were less consistently effective in preventing infection. While strict quarantine policies did significantly reduce the number of infected passengers entering a given country, measures such as symptom screening or taking travellers’ temperature failed to stop the virus crossing borders.

Christl Donnelly, professor of statistical epidemiology at Imperial College London, who led the research into lockdowns, said the pandemic had been “unique” because so many countries implemented measures to curb viral spread.

“There’s absolutely no reason to think this only applies to Covid and wouldn’t apply to other respiratory diseases,” she said.

**By Hannah Kuchler**

Financial Times / 22 October 2023

Print credit: Copyright Financial Times Ltd 2023

## FILM FANS ENJOY JAWS JAMBOREE AT PUB NAMED AFTER STAR SHAW



Fans of Steven Spielberg's 1975 blockbuster hit movie *Jaws* came from all over the UK for a meeting at The Robert Shaw (Westhoughton).

The pub is named after the locally born actor who played shark-hunter Quint in the movie.

Novelist Ryan Dacko, author of *The Book of Quint* (a fictional biography of the rambunctious movie character), travelled from America to attend the event.

The group met in the pub's beer garden, which is dedicated to Shaw and features pictures and information boards about him.

Shift manager Julie Curless said that the team at the pub was "really excited" before the event and even brought in an inflatable *Jaws* for the day (which shift leader Adam Miller inflated).

Julie added: "It was fantastic to welcome so many people to the pub for this special celebration."

"Everyone was very enthusiastic and particularly pleased that Ryan Dacko flew over."

Ryan gave a brief talk to the group and then took questions. Local community groups were invited along, including Westhoughton Community Network, led by Chris Buckley.

Chris said: "The pub's team members were all so good, especially Julie and Adam – we were really pleased with the effort which they made to make us feel so welcome."

After the garden meeting, which had been announced on radio podcast *Jaws Obsession*, the group was taken on a tour, including visits to Shaw's childhood homes in King Street and Bolton Road, as well as the town hall, on which is displayed a plaque dedicated to Shaw.

Pictured (left to right) are Haydn Wheeler of *Jaws* OB UK, author Ryan Dacko and Chris Buckley of Westhoughton Community Network.

## FAMILIES FIND FESTIVAL FUN AT THE UNICORN

The Unicorn Hotel (Ripon) was chosen as one of the venues in the annual Ripon Festival.

Storyteller Gav Cross told stories to a group of 80 children and parents at the pub.

Ripon Festival team leader Katie Scott said: "The pub was chosen as a venue because of its capacity and reputation as a family-friendly pub."

"It is in the heart of the town – and we were pleased that the event there was such a great success."

Pub manager Jonny Mahoney added: "Gav's story-telling was captivating."

"His stories are aimed at children, although he is so good at what he does that I really enjoyed listening too."

As well as Gav's story-telling, children at The Unicorn Hotel were treated to a Sunday breakfast-time puppet show called *The House that Jack Built* – put on by the local Hazelsong Theatre.



# THE SARACENS HEAD INN HAS SEEN SO MUCH HISTORY

Daventry pub began life as a coaching inn, hundreds of years ago



### Revolution

As the Industrial Revolution progressed, Daventry's status as an important market town declined.

The new railway line (London to Birmingham) opened in 1838, bypassing Daventry. The only indication that Daventry was once an important place for travellers to stop was in the numerous coaching inns which remained, including The Saracens Head Inn.

Among the local history information are photographs of Moot Hall and an ariel view of the town centre in the 1950s, as well as photographs and maps of the town, market square and high street dating from 1900 onwards.

Local ancient history details the Battle of Naseby, in 1645, fought between the Royalists (led by King Charles I) and the Parliamentarian New Model Army (led by Oliver Cromwell) during the English Civil War, when Daventry was the headquarters of the king and his troops before the battle. The 10,000 strong Royalist army camped on Borough Hill.

Almost three hundred years later, in 1925, the newly created BBC constructed a broadcasting station on Borough Hill, just outside of the town. On 19 December 1932, the BBC Empire Service (later the BBC World Service) began broadcasting.

The radio announcement, 'Daventry calling', made Daventry well known across the world – with many pioneering radio developments, in shortwave broadcasting, carried out at Daventry.

**1 Brook Street, Daventry, Northamptonshire, NN11 4GG**



THE SARACENS HEAD INN  
A street in an old inn dating back to the mid-18th century. It is situated on the corner of Brook Street and High Street in Daventry's town centre. An old engraving 1840 from the Saracens Head Inn.



**Our online pub histories series continues to prove a hugely popular source of historical information, since its launch at the end of 2016.**

Initially showcasing just a handful of our pubs in major UK city centres, including Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield, our website history catalogue has now grown to encompass more than 750 of our premises.

Wetherspoon takes immense pride in the restoration and refurbishment of some wonderful and, in several cases, unique buildings, to create our pubs – and our pub histories series has unearthed some interesting discoveries.

### Historical

The online historical information, detailing the story of our pubs, includes numerous images of the artwork and old photographs on display, as well as photos of the interior, exterior and features of each building.

In this pub histories spotlight, a regular Wetherspoon News feature, we focus on The Saracens Head Inn (Daventry).

Situated at the corner of Brook Street and High Street, this pub comprises The Saracens Head and stables at the rear of the premises.

The building is dated by English Heritage as mid 18th century, since when it has been called The Saracens Head. An earlier Saracens Head had been on the site from at least the early 17th century.

### Georgian

According to Daventry Town Council museum service, the former coaching inn had stabling for 50 horses. It was the coaches and the trade which they brought with them which paid for the Georgian houses. Part of the building also once doubled as the Georgian Assembly Rooms, holding dances, auctions and plays.

The pub, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this summer, opened as a Wetherspoon in August 2003, with the artwork on the pub's walls telling the story, through photographs and text, of Daventry's history.

The town was anciently spelled 'Daintree' – originally a Saxon settlement. Daventry is historically a market town, with regular markets which date back over 800 years.

The town also held agricultural markets and hiring fairs called 'mops'. This was a special day for people looking for new employment, while also enjoying the funfair and stalls. These traditions survived well into the 20th century.

# NOW OPEN



## Heathrow Airport

### STAR LIGHT

Wetherspoon has opened a new pub at Heathrow Airport.

Star Light is in terminal 4 (airside), on the site of the former Carluccio's.

It is the company's second pub at Heathrow Airport and its eighth airport pub in the UK.

Star Light is managed by pub manager Gurwinder Jajh.

The pub has seating for approximately 140 customers and is open each day, from before the first flight until after the last flight.

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "We have operated pubs at Heathrow Airport since 1991 and are proud of our association with one of the world's largest airports."

Gurwinder (pictured) added: "I am delighted to be managing Star Light and am confident that it will be a great addition to Heathrow Airport."

The pub's name refers to the fact that, towards the end of World War II, land in and around Heathrow was requisitioned for an international airport.

On 6 December 1945, Don Bennett landed the first civil aircraft (a 13-seat Avro 691 Lancastrian 3) named Star Light.

On 26 March 1946, the new airport was officially named London Airport. In 1966, it was renamed Heathrow Airport.

**Heathrow Airport, Terminal 4 (airside)  
Nelson Road, London, TW6 2GW**



*Llandudno*

**THE PALLADIUM**

The Palladium (Llandudno) has undergone extensive refurbishment and restoration work, costing approximately £1 million.

The 15-month-long refurbishment project involved the full repair, restoration and redecoration of the historic fibrous decorative ceiling.

The pub, a grade II listed former theatre, picture house and music hall building, which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in August 2001 and is managed by Jason Connor, remained open throughout the work.

In March 2022, a full crash deck/scaffold was erected, following concerns for the safety of a small ceiling section, in line with Wetherspoon's commitment to carrying out ceiling inspections (ABTT guidance note 20).

The purpose of this guidance is to have all suspended fibrous plaster ceilings inspected and certified to ensure their safety and conservation.

Over the course of 15 months, the ceiling void was meticulously cleaned of all dust and debris to enable inspections by a structural engineer and a fibrous plaster specialist.

The timber ceiling support structure was strengthened, while plaster specialists carried out hand repairs to restore the entire plaster ceiling, along with repairs to the historical proscenium arch and the decorative elements on the front of original balconies.

Inspections and repairs were also carried out to various other ceilings around the building.

On completion of the repairs, the entire ceiling was redecorated in its existing heritage colours.

The Palladium Theatre was designed by Arthur Hewitt and originally built in 1920, initially as an early picture house, theatre, music hall, opera house and circus.

The theatre had 1,500 seats in the stalls and two balconies.

In 1972, the building was split, with a bingo hall occupying the stalls area, along with a 600-seat cinema above.

In 2001, the building was converted by Wetherspoon into the pub it is today, yet still retaining many of its original theatre features.

It is grade II listed and recognised as an impressive Baroque-style entertainment building.

Pub manager Jason Connor said: "Wetherspoon has provided further substantial investment into the local area.

"The work has ensured that the pub is safe, while also ensuring the preservation and restoration of this beautiful heritage ceiling, so that many people can appreciate and enjoy it for years to come."

**7 Gloddaeth Street, Llandudno  
Conwy, LL30 2DD**



# NEW LOOK

## Skipton

### THE DEVONSHIRE INN

A project on the full restoration of the roof at The Devonshire Inn (Skipton) has been completed.

The roof's existing sandstone roofing tiles were lifted, exposing the timber roof structure.

All damaged timbers have been replaced and a breathable roofing felt fitted, providing a secondary form of protection, before the existing sandstone roofing tiles were reused to re-cover the roof.

Additional tiles were sourced locally to replace any damaged ones.

The large chimney stacks have been repaired and repointed – with the pub's exterior redecorated.

Wetherspoon's regional property manager, Paul Turner MRICS, said: "The Devonshire Inn is housed in a grade 2 listed building, built around 1800.

"The restoration project has ensured that this well-known building will be able to serve people in the town for many years to come."

Pub manager Adam Duckworth (pictured) added: "The Devonshire Inn plays an important part in the town's social scene, with the investment in the project welcomed by customers."

**22 Newmarket Street, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 2HR**



## Southsea

### THE LORD PALMERSTON

Pub manager Meli Papanikolaou is pictured at the new-look pub in Southsea – The Lord Palmerston.

The work has included full redecoration and refurbishment of the customer area and internal alterations, with a new bespoke carpet and additional seating.

A new rooflight atrium has also been installed, together with new windows at the rear of the premises, to make the pub lighter.

A new cellar has also been added, along with new staff facilities and a projector installed for screening big sporting events.

Meli, who has managed The Lord Palmerston since 2019, said: "Wetherspoon has spent £650,000 on the pub, providing further substantial investment into the area, as well as creating 20 new jobs."

**84–90 Palmerston Road, Southsea  
Hampshire, PO5 3PT**



## Hartlepool

### THE WARD JACKSON

Shift manager Matthew Simpson is pictured in the new-look garden at The Ward Jackson (Hartlepool).

The company has invested £140,000 in extending the garden, now double the size of the original outside space, having reimagined the former car park. It can now accommodate 280 covers.

Paved throughout, the new garden features a pagoda, a central lazy lawn with picnic-style benches, festoon lighting, new planting and all new furniture.

The garden has unlimited free Wi-Fi coverage, enabling customers to access the Wetherspoon app.

The pub's manager, Lindsay Carney, said: "We are thrilled with our fantastic new larger garden – everybody loves it."

**3–9 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7EU**





## Glasgow

### THE SIR JOHN MOORE

Pub manager Ross Henderson is pictured in the new-look pub – The Sir John Moore (Glasgow).

The pub underwent an extensive expansion, redevelopment and refurbishment project, costing £1.4 million.

Wetherspoon developed two former shop units, next to the pub, to create a larger customer area, as well as upgrading the bar and installing new toilets.

The pub features new panelling and artwork, together with a featured series of reclaimed stained-glass windows.

Ross said: “The Sir John Moore has been well established in the community since first opening in June 2002.

“The redevelopment and refurbishment project has resulted in an even better pub for our customers and staff.”

“In total, 50 new jobs were created.”

**260–292 Argyle Street, Glasgow, G2 8QW**



## Birmingham

### THE SQUARE PEG

Pictured (left to right) at the new-look pub, The Square Peg (Birmingham), are kitchen shift leader Patricia Wright, shift leader Marlon Atkinson, duty manager Natalie Lammas and bar associate Gary Richards.

The pub, which first opened in January 1995, has undergone an £850,000 refurbishment.

The refurbishment has resulted in an improved customer area, with a new bar, new flooring, redecoration and additional lighting throughout, as well as additional artwork.

The toilets have also been fully refurbished, along with new staff facilities added.

Pub manager Dale Edwards said: “The Square Peg is extremely popular.

“The investment highlights the company’s commitment to offering customers the best-possible pub.”

**115 Corporation Street, Birmingham, B4 6PH**



**Opening 9 January 2024**

**The Captain Flinders, 34–38 Eversholt Street, Euston, London, NW1 1DA**



# RIVALRY LEFT SOBBERING BY BOBBING JOHN

## Sarah and her staff steer Alloa ale house to new CAMRA glory

**W**etherspoon is proud of the quality of the real ales served in its pubs.

Its staff work hard to offer first-class beers at all times.

This is evident in the high number of Wetherspoon pubs listed, over many years, in the publication from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), titled The Good Beer Guide.

Wetherspoon continues to have more pubs listed, as a proportion of its estate, than any other pub company.

### Score

Local CAMRA branch members judge and score pubs for considered inclusion in the guide. In the new 2024 edition, there are 236 Wetherspoon pubs listed.

In this regular feature, we highlight those pubs and staff who serve an excellent range of real ales from brewers across the UK.

The Bobbing John (Alloa), which opened as a Wetherspoon pub in March 2014, has now been listed in the guide for seven of the past eight years, including in the new 2024 edition.

Pub manager Sarah Hill (pictured) joined the team at The Bobbing John in 2017, having started at The Crossed Peels (Stirling). She became pub manager at the Alloa pub in 2018.

### Buzzing

Sarah said: "The pub has appeared in every Good Beer Guide since I took over as pub manager – and we are buzzing to be included again in the new 2024 edition."

The Bobbing John was also named as the 2023 winner of Forth Valley CAMRA's 'pub of the year north' award.

Sarah commented: "It is the first time that the pub has won that particular award – and it is a great achievement for the whole team."

"We have a good relationship with our local CAMRA members, who regularly hold meetings here at the pub."

### Requests

"We also have a suggestion box for our regulars to ask for particular real ales, serving as many as possible from these requests."

"Any of the lighter ales are usually very popular, anything under 5.0% ABV, and we have an ever-changing range of two or three guest ales at all times."

Among the favourite local breweries and their brews are Kelburn Cart Blanche (5.0% ABV), Harviestoun Schiehallion (4.8% ABV), Stewart Jack Back (3.7% ABV) and Williams Bros Joker IPA (5.0% ABV).

Also served at The Bobbing John are the popular Belhaven 80 Shilling, as well as alternated regular ales Sharp's Doom Bar and Greene King Abbot Ale.

Sarah said: "We have a relatively new management team, with everyone, at the moment, involved in the management of the real ale and cellar."

"We also host meet-the-brewer events, with Stewart Brewing our last visitor. These are always popular with real-ale customers."

*What The Good Beer Guide 2024 says:*

## THE BOBBING JOHN

A Wetherspoon pub in a traditional three-storey sandstone building, purpose built in 1895 for the Alloa Co-operative Society.

It is named after Alloa-born John Erskine who created industrial Alloa, developing the town as a coal-mining centre.

He was twice Secretary of State for Scotland under Queen Anne.

However, his frequent changes of political allegiance earned him the nickname 'Bobbing John'.

Much of the building's original stonework has been retained and a Victorian shop front reintroduced.

It has a warming firepit in the centre.

● 46 Drysdale Street, Alloa, FK10 1JL

### What CAMRA says:

Forth Valley CAMRA's secretary, Wendy Ross, said: "The Bobbing John was chosen as winner of our 'pub of the year north' award, for 2023, thanks to its beers' scores from our branch members throughout the year."

"We often use the pub as the venue for our regular meetings."

"The staff always reserve a nice, quieter area of the pub for us, which is much appreciated."

"As well as friendly staff, The Bobbing John offers a good selection of competitively priced local and other Scottish real ales."

## IRON DUKE TEAM SEES FREEDOM SCROLL ROLL IN



Pub manager Mat Turner (pictured right) and the team at The Iron Duke (Wellington) have received a special gift from the local council, in recognition of their place in the community.

The Worshipful the Mayor of Wellington Cllr Marcus Barr (pictured) gifted a replica of The Rifles regiment's 'freedom scroll' to The Iron Duke, as a thankyou to the pub and staff for their help with council events.

The town council had a replica made of the original scroll which was presented to The Rifles regiment when it was awarded the freedom of the town.

The original is on display at the regiment's Winchester-based museum.

For the past couple of years, the Somerset pub has provided its facilities, as well as complimentary hot and soft drinks, for council staff, councillors and volunteers.

Speaking to the Wellington Today newspaper, Cllr Barr said: "It is really important that there is somewhere where the public can come to see the freedom scroll – and what better place than The Iron Duke?"

Expressing his gratitude and crediting Wetherspoon for saving the historic building in which The Iron Duke is now housed, Cllr Barr added: "Wetherspoon brought the building back to life, and I'm really grateful to them for doing that, because it is really important that it is saved."

The Iron Duke opened as a Wetherspoon pub in August 2016, on the site of the grade II listed old town hall building, first erected in 1833,

and the adjacent municipal building, which was built in the late 19th century as a 'corn and provision market'.

The pub is named after Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, who took his title from this Somerset town.

The 'Iron Duke' twice held office as prime minister, yet is best remembered as the general who defeated Napoleon.

Wellington's 1815 victory at the Battle of Waterloo is commemorated by the three-sided obelisk situated on the highest point on the Blackdown Hills, overlooking the town.

A copy of a painting – entitled 'The Morning of Waterloo' – belonging to the Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum, a museum of The Rifles Museums Network, has also recently been installed at The Iron Duke.

It commemorates the conferring of the Honorary Freedom of Wellington upon The Rifles regiment on 17 June 2023, in recognition of the long association and cordial relations which have existed between the town and Somerset's county regiment.

The 13th (1st Somersetshire) Foot was one of two original regiments of The Rifles regiment.

The Rifles hold the Napoleonic battle honours Peninsula and Waterloo from when riflemen and red-coated light infantry fought alongside Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, otherwise known as the Iron Duke.

# JACOB SWAPS LIVERY ROOMS FOR LIONS' DEN



Eighteen-year-old kitchen associate Jacob Haigh has been selected to play for England Community Lions.

Jacob, who has worked at The Livery Rooms (Keighley) since July 2021, has been playing rugby league since he was eight.

At 16, he joined Bradford Bulls, playing mainly as a winger, but also a centre or full back.

But he was scouted by the Lions – while playing for Siddal, based in Halifax.

Following confirmation of his selection, he was presented with his match shirt and played his first two matches against Wales and Ireland.

Jacob, pictured with coaches Gary Hewer (left) and Stuart Simmons, said: "I am thrilled to play for England Community Lions.

"Its players often go on to play for the full England side... and that is my ambition."

Proud mother Natalie, who also works at the pub, as a shift manager, added: "We are so pleased for Jacob.

"He is very keen to play for England – and this is a great step in that direction."

Pub manager Sophie Turner said: "Everyone at the pub is proud of Jacob and hopes that he goes on to have a great rugby career."

## ZOE'S CAKE TAKES THE BISCUIT AT THE FIVE QUARTER

A delicious Victoria sponge cake, made by shift manager Zoe Fleet, took centre stage as The Five Quarter (Peterlee) celebrated its 20th birthday.

Zoe is a keen home baker and stepped up when shift manager Sara Malcolm asked the team to contribute to the day.

Shift leader Kimberley Atkinson organised the day, as well as a raffle and a tombola, with prizes including alcohol and a £50 Wetherspoon gift card.

The pub, which first opened its doors in June 2003, is managed by Melanie Gallagher.

Melanie said: "The team did us proud – and customers enjoyed the day. We raised £100 for Young Lives vs Cancer."



**Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Sara Malcolm, shift manager Zoe Fleet, pub manager Melanie Gallagher and shift leader Kimberley Atkinson**

## BREWER GOWER IS A GROWER AFTER 12 YEARS' EXISTENCE

Swansea operation sends its cask beer to 20 Wetherspoon pubs along M4 'corridor'

**Brewery's name:** Gower Brewery, Penclawdd, Crofty, Swansea



**G**ower Brewery is delighted to be supplying its cask beer directly to Wetherspoon's pubs within the delivery area of its Swansea brewery.

Wetherspoon's customers in around 20 pubs in a 100-mile stretch along the M4 'corridor', from Cardiff in the east to Carmarthen in the west, enjoy several Gower Brewery guest ales, with two definite firm favourites.

Gower Gold (4.5% ABV) is an award-winning ale and the brewery's flagship beer. Brewed since December 2011, it's a thirst-quenching golden ale with refreshing citrus and melon flavours, topped off with the aroma of Cascade hops.

### Strong

The fruity and strong Gower Power (5.5% ABV) is an amber ale which packs a punch. Brewed using a blend of barley, crystal, caragold and wheat malts, since December 2011, it is strong, malty and Welsh.

The idea of starting a microbrewery had been discussed many times by co-founder and director Chris Mabbett (pictured right) – the natural next step for someone who was already running two busy pubs in the Gower, Wales.

Gower Brewery was formed in September 2011.

A five-barrel brewery plant was acquired in the October, with renovation to buildings the next step and the installation of the brew plant achieved in November – the first brew (Brew One) was completed on 11/11/11.

### Awards

The following month, Brew One was joined by Gower Gold and Gower Power which, over the past 12 years, have won awards and accolades, as Gower Brewery has grown and gone from strength to strength.

The brewery moved to a new site in 2014, upscaling from a five- to a 20-barrel brewery, while continuing to collect awards, both regionally and nationally, for the brewery business and the beer.

Richard Lewis (pictured left), Gower Brewery's national account manager, who joined the team in May 2022, said: "We supplied some Wetherspoon pubs in the early days and are now regularly delivering to around 20 pubs."

### National

"We have also had confirmation of a national guest ale listing with the company. Gower Power will be available throughout January to March 2024, so that will be a great opportunity for the brewery."

Richard is responsible for cask ale supply to national companies and regularly visits the region's Wetherspoon pubs.

He said: "We sometimes host meet-the-brewer events, with tastings, which always go down well."

"Part of the reason why we like our partnership with Wetherspoon is that the staff know how to keep and serve real ale well."

"Our beers are always tip top and definitely in safe hands."

# ARTIST DAVID SHOWS WONDERS OF WIGAN AT THE BROCKET ARMS



New works of art portraying Wigan have become major conversation pieces at the town's pub – The Brocket Arms.

Paintings of the town as it used to be have proven particularly popular with older customers at the pub and hotel.

The works are by David Barrow, himself a customer at the pub.

His art work was first on show at an annual Christmas market held in the pub, organised by hotel manager Laura Quinn.

Laura said: "David's art caught the eye of customers – and he sold quite a few pieces.

"Conversations would start about memories inspired by David's work, such as the portrayal of the old swimming baths as they used to be and the times people had spent there."

Struck by the level of interest, Laura thought of a way to give David more exposure by showcasing his paintings on the pub's walls and in the hotel's reception area.

Hotel guests took to the work immediately – so much so that Laura had the brainwave of asking David to provide merchandise featuring his art for sale at the hotel, such as postcards, keyrings and fridge magnets.

Laura added: "These items give hotel guests a real memory of their stay here."

Almost all of David's paintings feature his daughter Suzanna Barrow, who works with him and has been an inspiration for his art since she was a child.

Pictured (left to right) are Suzanna Barrow, artist David Barrow and hotel manager Laura Quinn with the painting of the hotel displayed in the reception area at The Brocket Arms (Wigan).

## DRAGON FLIES GIANT GARLAND TO CELEBRATE BIRMINGHAM PRIDE

During Birmingham pride 2023, The Dragon Inn (Birmingham) showed its true colours in the form of a giant rainbow balloon garland on the pub.

Pub manager Kelly Tipper organised and assembled the balloon decoration of more than 800 balloons, with the help of team members to get it into place, as part of the city's annual LGBTQIA+ pride celebrations.

Kelly said: "I have made many balloon decorations for various events, yet have never before attempted anything on this scale.

"We managed to access the roof to display the giant garland and show our support for pride.

"Staff also dressed up and we sold pride flags and Hawaiian flower garlands, collecting money towards our charity fundraising efforts for Young Lives vs Cancer."



CAPTAIN RIDLEY'S SHOOTING PARTY • BLETCHLEY

# GEMMA HAS A BLAST AT SHOOTING PARTY



In May 2023, Gemma Hamilton was appointed pub manager at Captain Ridley's Shooting Party (Bletchley), having worked her way up from bar associate.

Gemma, who is from nearby Milton Keynes, joined the company in November 2017, a month before the new Bletchley pub's preopening training happened, having previously worked part time in a supermarket.

Gemma recalled: "I applied for the part-time role at the new pub because it was closer to home and the hours were more flexible, which was a help with raising my three boys."

Alfie is now 17 and works part time as a kitchen associate at the pub. His brothers are Oliver, aged 10, and Charlie, just seven.

Gemma, whose mum Carol used to run The Dolphin, in Bletchley, with the family home above the pub, admitted: "When I joined the team at Captain Ridley's Shooting Party, I certainly had no plans for a career at the pub."

However, within eight months of joining, Gemma had gained her first promotion, to team leader, and had progressed to shift-manager level by 2020.

She revealed: "I think it was probably with that first promotion that things clicked for me, and I realised that I could have a good career.

"I got on well with the pub manager at the time and learned a lot.

"Taking on the job of pub manager has definitely come a lot more quickly than I could have imagined, but, alongside the previous pub manager, Jessica Spooner (now at The Moon Under Water (Milton Keynes)), I learned the ropes – and everything fell into place.

"We have also become really good friends and, together with Sam Kelman, manager at Wetherspoons (Milton Keynes), who also previously managed this pub, we help out and support one another."

Gemma has four of the original pub team still on the staff, as well as a new kitchen manager, Mollie Carter, who stepped up from kitchen team leader to head the brand-new team.

Gemma said: "Mollie is getting on really well – and I have a great team here."

She concluded: "This is my pub; I love it here. It's on my doorstep and is perfect for me.

"I want to grow the business and make it as successful as possible."



# LOUIS IS LIVING PROOF OF WHAT YOUR AMAZING £22M HAS MADE POSSIBLE



## **W**etherspoon's staff and customers have reached a new milestone in their fundraising efforts for Young Lives vs Cancer.

They have now raised £22 million for the charity which supports young people (aged 0–25) with cancer... and their families.

Wetherspoon has supported the charity since 2002.

Over the years, pub staff and customers have participated in thousands of individual fundraising events.

In addition, pub staff have taken part in company-wide fundraising events, including a football tournament, KICK, a darts tournament and a London-to-Paris cycle ride.

Young Lives vs Cancer helps young people and their families from the moment of diagnosis to face everything which cancer throws at them.

Their specialist social workers offer support such as liaising with a child's school, a parent's employer and helping to navigate the costs of cancer.

The charity also provides financial grants to help families with costs such as travel to hospital, food and extra clothing.

The charity's 11 Homes from Home also offer families a free place to stay near to hospitals.

To mark the milestone, Wetherspoon's staff, including founder and chairman Tim Martin, joined Louis Brooks (pictured front) at the company's head office in Watford. Also pictured (front right) is Young Lives vs Cancer's partnership fundraiser Sam Hughes-Smith. Louis was supported by Young Lives vs Cancer when he, at 17 years old, was diagnosed with cancer.

He went on to have treatment, but, in 2020, aged 18, his cancer returned and he had to have surgery to remove it.

From the start of the diagnosis and all the way through his treatment, Louis and his family were supported by Young Lives vs Cancer.

Young Lives vs Cancer's associate director of philanthropy and partnerships, Anne-Marie Jubber, said: "Thank you so much to every employee and customer at Wetherspoon who has helped to raise this amazing amount of money to help young people with cancer."

Wetherspoon's people director, Tom Ball, added: "We are extremely proud of our association with Young Lives vs Cancer and thrilled that we have now raised £22 million.

"We look forward to raising even more for Young Lives vs Cancer in the future."

## WISE FOLK FEAR TO TREAD IN A SPOONS IN THE MED



Wetherspoon can confirm that it has no pubs outside of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

However, that didn't stop Steve and Joy Lawson enjoying a beer at Weatherspoons Fun Pub Restaurant in Marmaris, Turkey.

The photos were sent to Wetherspoon News by their good friend and Wetherspoon enthusiast Alan Hope (leader of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party).

Steve said: "When we spotted Weatherspoons Fun Pub in Marmaris, we thought that we were seeing things!

"We went in, but, unfortunately, it was not up to standard, because they didn't have any real ales, much to my disappointment.

"However, that didn't stop us from trying the local lager.

"The waiter was only too pleased to take a photo, to show friends when we returned home."

Steve added: "We're based in Fleet, Hampshire, and so are regulars at The Prince Arthur (Fleet). In fact, we were among the first customers when it opened in July 1998.

"We like the choice and quality of the always-available real ales, as well as the price – which is very reasonable.

"We meet up with friends and often visit family members. The staff are friendly and have a chat when the pub is not too busy."

## PIMM'S BUS FUELS TEACHERS' EVENT ON WET PLAY DAY

The Imperial (Exeter) hosted its annual Exeter College end-of-year summer event, despite the not-so-summery weather.

The Pimm's Bus – a mobile bar serving glasses and pitchers of the classic summer cocktail – was a huge success, as around 700 college teachers and lecturers celebrated the end of the academic year at the pub.

Pub manager Emma Gibson is pictured (right) on the bus, with (left to right) team leader Ellie Woodgate, bar associate Liam Mabin and floor associate Olivia Derbyshire.

Kitchen manager James Amos, reported: "The event was a great success, despite the bad weather.

"We put up tents and gazebos and everyone was very happy with the Pimm's Bus."

The wet weather also meant that James and his kitchen team had to prepare all of the food in the kitchen, instead of outside, including burgers, chicken strips, sausages and onion rings, served with salad.

James laughed: "Having to cook 550 beef burgers was like a military operation. It was hard work, yet good fun – and everyone enjoyed the day."



# DRIFFIELD PUB STAFF RALLY ROUND THE FLAG

Staff at The Benjamin Fawcett (Driffield) played their part in the success of the town's first pride event.

The pub hosted a 'creation station' for children where they made pride flags – and also got the chance to win toys and books in a tombola.

The pub hosted the children's part of the town-wide event, part of Yorkshire Celebrating Pride month.

Shift leader Claire Dennis said: "Approximately 50 children took part, who thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

"The pub joined forces with other pubs in the town to offer a range of activities – and other businesses chipped in with prizes for the tombola.

"We raised £100 of a total of £900 raised for LGBTQIA+ Driffield and a local youth group."



Pictured (left to right) are Kirsty Hickson from The Creation Station, shift leaders Mary Darley and Claire Dennis, shift manager Jessica Allison, bar associate Jess Baxter and Claire's partner Keleigh Flintoft

## POET BEN TRIES SCI-FI AFTER OBSERVING PUB CHARACTERS

Author Ben Robinson has taken a break from poetry to focus on a new science fiction novel called Space 2047.

Ben, who featured in our spring 2022 edition, writes down notes and ideas during visits to The Royal Oak (Dorchester) and The Greyhound (Bridport) and is well known to staff there.

He said: "I have written 30 poetry books in the past six years, yet wanted to turn my hand to something else."

Described as a 'cross between Monty Python and Douglas Adams', Space 2047 features characters based on ideas which Ben has had while relaxing and watching people in the pub.

Ben said: "The Royal Oak and The Greyhound are relaxing places to write and muse – and the staff are lovely, supportive and friendly. Some of them have even bought my poetry books."

He is already planning a sequel to Space 2047, as well as a travel book, in which he plans to feature as many Wetherspoon pubs as he can.

Ben added: "There is a lot of material there, from the people you meet to the architecture and history of the individual buildings which now house the pubs.

"Visiting lots of Wetherspoon pubs would be a great way to write and meet people, while writing my travel book, because writing can be a lonely business at times."

● A preview of Space 2047 can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/5hbbspp3>



## SNOOKER STARS SINK A FEW AT THE TROLL CART

The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth) has hosted several well-known snooker players.

Four-times World Champion Mark Selby has enjoyed the pub while staying at its hotel, while Kyren Wilson, Mark Williams, Steve Davis, John Parrot and Ronnie O'Sullivan have also either stayed overnight or dropped in for a drink and something to eat.

The Troll Cart is close to a local snooker club which regularly holds exhibition nights featuring household names from the sport.

After an event, players and fans who have attended flock to the pub.

The pub's manager, Todd Inns, said: "The players are always happy to chat to customers as a lot of them are keen snooker fans, but we do try to give them space to relax and enjoy their meals, of course.

"It's always a very good atmosphere when the players come in – people have seen a terrific spectacle across the road and are still buzzing when they come here afterwards for a drink and something to eat."

## EASTBOURNE REGULAR LIANA GOING DUTCH FOR HOSPICE

Wetherspoon customer Liana Bettles is aiming to raise £2,000 for a local hospice through personal pedal power.

Liana, a regular at The London & County (Eastbourne), is taking part in a four-day 270-mile cycling challenge from Eastbourne to Amsterdam, Holland, in September 2024.

All the money raised will go to St Wilfred's Hospice in Eastbourne, where Liana has also worked for the past year.

Liana said: "I have seen patients and families benefit so much from the care and support which they receive at the most difficult times.

"I'm not really a cyclist and will find this challenging, both mentally and physically, but I do know that I will be cycling with the most supportive people and all for an amazing cause."

● If you would like to support Liana and St Wilfred's Hospice, visit: [tinyurl.com/yw3dxcyb](https://tinyurl.com/yw3dxcyb)

## HOWLING LAUD HOPE WINS IN THE GOOD YARN, BUT NOT AT BALLOT BOX



The summer by-election in Uxbridge and South Ruislip, in the former constituency of Boris Johnson, produced the usual political drama and media attention.

Among the candidates was self-confessed Wetherspoon fanatic and Wetherspoon News regular, the Monster Raving Loony Party party leader, Alan 'Howling Laud' Hope.

Alan reported: "I was there for 10 days, staying not far from The Good Yarn (Uxbridge) which, with the kind permission of Sir Tim Martin, I was able to use as my campaign HQ.

"Jake, Charley and the team made me very welcome.

"Thank you to them all."

Alan continued: "I met a lot of nice people, all telling me that I would do very well and get maybe 500 votes or more.

"Word soon got around that I was there and a few of the 17 candidates paid me a visit, along with many other town's folk.

"I was told a few 'good yarns' and I told a good few in return.

"I managed five radio shows and several interviews, with many telling me that it seemed that I was going to do well. I had high hopes.

"The result was disappointing, however, after all the hype, as I got just 32 votes. The only saving grace was that we didn't come last."

He added: "I've now done 32 parliamentary elections, nine of those being general elections, quite a record.

"It seems quite odd – of all the things which we have promoted and got through parliament, the one people most remember is the 'all-day pub opening' – I wonder why?"

Alan concluded: "All in all, it was great fun. I would like to thank all party members for their support, plus the outside influences – I won't mention names, but they will know who they are.

"Here's to the next time."

Pictured outside party campaign HQ The Good Yarn (left to right) are Lawd Lawson and OB Joyful, both from Hampshire, Sheikh Mihand from Kent, Alan 'Howling Laud' Hope of Fleet, local member Richard ri-DICK-ulous Johnson and Mad Mike Young from the Isle of Sheppey.

## PAIR OF PUBS WINS PRAISE IN EAST NORFOLK REAL-ALE GUIDE

Two Wetherspoon pubs were listed in the East Norfolk CAMRA's Real Ale Guide Summer 2023.

Both The William Adams (Gorleston-on-Sea) and The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth) were featured in the guide.

The guide was aimed at highlighting good pubs for visitors to the region.

Both pubs serve a wide range of real ales at all times, including guest beers from local breweries across Norfolk and Suffolk, among them Green Jack Brewing Co, Lacons Brewery, Wolf Brewery, Woodforde's Brewery and Adnams Southwold.

Among the beers on offer at The William Adams are Green Jack's Lurcher Stout (4.8% ABV), Adnams Broadside (4.7% ABV) and Theakston Old Peculier (4.6% ABV), while The Troll Cart also serves Wolf Battle of Britain (3.9% ABV), Volt (4.5% ABV) from Woodforde's and Adnams Ghost Ship (4.5% ABV).

The William Adams' pub manager, Dan Bullion, said: "We were delighted to be featured in the guide.

"The pub has a very good reputation for the choice and quality of its real ales – and it is great that this has been recognised by CAMRA.

"Our pub is in a seaside town, so attracts many visitors, as well as locals."

# AM DRAM GANG ACTING CHARITABLY



An amateur dramatics group which rehearses at The White House (Leicester) has raised £1,600 for two local charities.

The Scraptoft Players, named after the suburb of Leicester from which they hail, has been rehearsing in the pub's function room since 2011. The group uses performances to raise charity funds.

Two cheques for £800 each were handed over at the pub to representatives from Guide Dogs for the Blind and Read Easy Leicester.

The money was raised earlier in the year at performances of its production Heroes and Villains.

The pub's manager, Aron Newcombe, said: "Scraptoft Players has been a patron of the pub since we opened in 2011.

"The group is an important part of the community – and we're happy that it chose to use our function room for rehearsing."

Group secretary Pauline Pearce said: "We are indebted to the pub – Aron and his team have been wonderful to us.

"They provide us with rehearsal space free of charge meaning that we can raise more money for the charities we support."

Pictured are Scraptoft Players' chairman Janet Harrison (front left), with (right) director Julie Pearce, Pauline Pearce (silver costume, behind Janet Harrison), musical director Jane French (back row, third from the right, dressed in white) and fellow actors and representatives from both charities.

# BEN AND FRIENDS WALK 100K ALONG YELLOW BRICK ROAD

Wetherspoon customer Ben Shaw walked 100k in 24 hours, finishing at The Ice Wharf (Camden).

Ben, together with fellow walkers, was raising money for charity Yellow Brick Road Project – which has supported his daughter, Autumn, aged four.

She has a rare genetic condition which affects her physical and cognitive development, making it difficult to walk. After receiving her diagnosis, the family has been supported by Yellow Brick Road Project.

While researching for a cure, the charity also supports families of those with the HNRNP2 gene defect.

In appreciation of the charity's support, Ben got together a group of walkers for the 100k challenge, beginning at Bletchley, Buckinghamshire.

Eight walkers (including Ben) undertook the entire 100k walk, with friends and family joining in at various stages.

They raised £27,000 for the charity.

Ben, a regular at Wetherspoon's pub The Crown (Berkhamstead) said:

"A lot of the walk was alongside canals and locks, so we wanted to finish somewhere by the canal which also served food early on a Sunday morning – The Ice Wharf was the perfect location."

Pictured (front, left to right) are Autumn's mother Emily Shaw, George Anderson, Autumn Shaw, Ben Shaw, Kevin Bradford, Matt Pike, Jon Symons, Geoff Owens and Sam Revell.

● For anyone wishing to donate: [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/HNRNP2](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/HNRNP2)



# TRADITIONAL DISH,

**The high-quality cod and haddock served in Wetherspoon's fish and chips are made to be praised**

**F**reshly battered fish and chips continues to be a perennial favourite with Wetherspoon's customers.

The pub classic is available every day of the week, as part of Wetherspoon's pub classics and small pub classics ranges, as well as in the afternoon deal.

The afternoon deal (Monday – Friday, 2pm – 5pm) offers the choice of a small pub classic meal or a pub classic meal and also includes a drink\*, all in a value-for-money offer.

The fish (cod – or haddock in Scotland) is freshly battered by hand, for the best-quality product, and served with chips, as well as your choice of garden peas or mushy peas – and includes a drink\* (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), with more than 150 to choose from.

## The fish...

All cod (and haddock, in Scotland) served at Wetherspoon's pubs carries the blue fish ecolabel – assuring you that the fish has been sustainably sourced. Wetherspoon is the largest pub chain in the UK certified to use the blue Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) ecolabel.

Wetherspoon serves fish which has been caught by fishermen in fisheries which have been certified to the MSC standard as sustainable.

The MSC is an international charity which wants to see the world's oceans teeming with life, so it sets globally recognised, science-based standards for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability.

The blue MSC ecolabel gives customers the assurance that seafood comes from a wild-catch fishery, independently certified to the MSC's standard for environmentally sustainable fishing – fully traceable to a sustainable source.

## The chips...

Wetherspoon chips are made from British potatoes.

The company's long-term partner McCain has been producing and supplying chips to Wetherspoon's pubs since 2001.

Market-leader McCain Foods produces every portion of Wetherspoon's British potato chips, sourced from more than 250 Red Tractor-assured farms across the UK, from the Highlands of Scotland to the tip of Cornwall.

A family-owned company, McCain cares about using simple ingredients to create simple food which tastes good.

There are no artificial colours or flavours added – and with every potato, McCain (and, therefore, Wetherspoon) has traceability right back to the farmer and the exact field where that potato started.

The McCain brothers founded the company in their hometown of Florenceville, Canada, in 1957, creating the first-ever frozen chip.

McCain in the UK began in Yorkshire and is still there today.

CERTIFIED  
SUSTAINABLE  
SEAFOOD  
MSC  
www.msc.org



Sustainable fish

Freshly battered fish

# SUSTAINABLE FISH

100% British potatoes

## The accompaniments...

Although peas are a staple food in Britain and have been grown here for roughly 10,000 years, the origin of mushy peas as an accompaniment to fish and chips is thought to date from just the 1970s.

Mushy peas are made by soaking dried marrowfat peas (mature peas which have been left to dry out) in water overnight.

They are then seasoned and cooked to produce a thick, mushy, bright green paste, originally made popular in the north of England and the Midlands.

What is tartare sauce and where does it come from?

The real origin of tartare sauce remains unclear, although it was first mentioned in 19th-century French cookbooks and was originally an accompaniment to steak tartare.

The sauce, which became commercially available in a jarred version in the 1920s, is, at its core, made from mayonnaise mixed with pickles, capers and herbs – and is perfect with fried seafood.

THE FIVE QUARTER • PETERLEE

# MEL AND CARL SPEND HALF THEIR LIFE IN THE PUB



Pub manager Mel Gallagher and kitchen manager Carl Morton both celebrated 20 years' service for the company.

They are pictured with area manager Amanda Dunn (centre) receiving their certificates to mark the occasion, having dedicated those combined 40 years all to one pub – The Five Quarter (Peterlee).

Mel started in 2003 as a part-time kitchen associate at the newly opened pub in her hometown.

She recalled: "With two young children, I was looking for a part-time role with hours which would fit in with my husband's full-time job – and it was perfect."

Within a year, Mel had moved to front of house, as a bar associate, and quickly progressed to management level, stepping up to pub manager 15 years ago.

Her children, Carly (27) and Sean (21), now both work full time as kitchen associates at the pub, having joined the team as soon as they left school.

Mel said: "I love it here. I love coming to work every day. No day is the same – and the staff and customers are all great."

"I have been here that long that I am now serving the children (now over 18) of the mums who came in here for food and coffee when they were pregnant with them."

"That makes me feel old."

Mel, 47, concluded: "I absolutely love working for Wetherspoon."

"My job has given me opportunities which I would never have had."

"I want to be here for ever."

Carl studied IT at college and had previously worked in hotels, holiday camps and barracks before he started as an 18-year-old kitchen associate when The Five Quarter newly opened in 2003.

He progressed through the ranks to step up to kitchen manager seven years ago and now heads a team of 11 in the kitchen.

Carl, who was nominated as kitchen manager of the year in 2019, at the company's annual awards, explained: "Once the opportunities started opening for me at the pub, I decided that this was what I wanted to do as my career."

"I work as I go and have smashed all of the personal targets which I had set for myself."

"I also enjoy helping out, when needed, at other pubs in the area."

"With the menu and business constantly changing, it adds to the challenge and job motivation – which is a real plus."

Wetherspoon's area manager, Amanda Dunn, concluded:

"Congratulations to both Mel and Carl on their 20-year achievement."

"I would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication over the last 20 years. They are both a great asset to the pub and company."



# FORKBEARD CHOSEN AS SITE FOR LIFE-SAVING KIT



A defibrillator has been installed on the outer wall of The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough).

The pub was chosen for the installation by West Lindsey District Council, as well as the Lindum Group, which donated the equipment, because of its central location and the pub's community record.

Pub manager Amanda Fretwell said: "We are proud to have the defibrillator outside the pub.

"We have worked with the council on community projects for many years and set up pubwatch."

The defibrillator box also contains a stab kit, containing equipment to stem bleeding in the event of a knife injury.

The donation, part of a project to revitalise the town centre, will provide vital life-saving equipment to the people of Gainsborough.

Speaking to the Gainsborough Standard newspaper, Lindum construction manager, Simon Hope, said: "It is always important to us at Lindum that we leave the communities in which we work better than when we started.

"We always strive to support these communities, be that through volunteering in the neighbourhood or donations to ultimately improve the local area."

Pictured (left to right) are council communities manager Grant White, Lindum construction manager Simon Hope, economic growth team leader Wendy Osgodby and Wetherspoon pub manager Amanda Fretwell.

## SUNDERLAND

# COOPER ROSE BUCKET BRINGS BEARS TO BAIRNS

Shift manager Richie Freeman of The Cooper Rose (Sunderland) raised £76 towards supplying Teddy bears to children in hospital.

Richie, a freemason, joined forces with fellow Durham and Northumberland freemasons, who have been placing charity buckets in retail venues and pubs, to raise cash for the charity Teddy Bears for Love and Care.

Richie said: "I am pleased to have played my part in raising funds for this wonderful charity.

"A mother brought her young son in to the pub to thank me and my colleagues, because the boy had recently been a patient at Sunderland General Hospital and had received a Teddy bear during his stay there.

"That made it all worthwhile."

Pictured (left to right) are freemason Alan Reardon, who liaises with the charity, Richie and team leader Christian McDonough.



## SUNDERLAND

# TWO HUNDRED HEROIC WALKERS WELCOMED AFTER VJ DAY HIKE



Pub manager Leanne Surtees and her team at The William Jameson (Sunderland) provided a very welcome pit-stop for some local charity fundraisers.

The Sunderland pub was the final destination for around 200 walkers completing the VJ Day Memorial Walk, who enjoyed a meal and drinks together.

Leanne reported: "It was a pleasure to have everyone at the pub for this very special memorial event.

"It's a wonderful act of remembrance and a fundraiser which really brings the local communities together."

Brian Burnie, who planned the walk, organised Wetherspoon gift vouchers (almost £2,800) for all of the walkers to have a meal and a drink.

Starting at Newcastle's Civic Centre's Burma Star Memorial, veterans joined the northeast cancer charity Daft as a Brush for the memorial walk from Newcastle to Sunderland – to mark victory over Japan (VJ) day.

The 21.6-mile route, through Gateshead and South Tyneside, followed a path through Newcastle, along the River Tyne, stopping for a special remembrance service at St Paul's Church and Monastery in Jarrow, before ending in Sunderland at the cenotaph.

Pictured arriving at The William Jameson are (left to right) Brian Burnie, volunteer Linda Collins, Dave Parker, charity honorary president Florence Fawcett, John Falcus and volunteer Marion Rutherford, with pub manager Leanne Surtees.

● **The 2024 VJ Day Memorial Walk will go from Sunderland to Newcastle and finish at The Five Swans (Newcastle).**

## SHEFFIELD

# ART CLUB MAKES WOODSEATS A PALACE FOR PRESCHOOLERS

A weekly children's art club has been launched on Tuesdays at The Woodseats Palace (Sheffield).

The club was established to give parents a break during school holidays.

But, since the new academic year began in September, it has continued for preschool-aged children.

As parents and pub staff supervise, children are given paints and plastic scissors, so that they can cut out and keep their work.

Parents pay just £1 for their children to join in – the price includes a bowl of healthy cereal – and this money is donated to Young Lives vs Cancer.

So far, £250 has been raised.

Pub manager Rick Brown said: "We are next door but one to a school, so we have lots of parents as customers, who appreciate the chance to come with their children for the art club.

"It's lovely to see the children enjoying themselves."

Pictured are youngsters Jacob Jones and (in the background) Imogen Stewart, with team leader Iona Robertson.



THE MOON IN THE SQUARE • BOURNEMOUTH

## QUIQUE BECOMES BOSS AFTER BUMPY BEGINNING TO UK LIFE



Quique Medina escaped the economic crisis in Spain in 2012, moving to England for a job promised to him by a UK holidaymaker in Spain.

Assured that there would be a job, he arrived in Bournemouth in October of that year with his pregnant girlfriend Rocio Sanchez.

But constant delays meant that Quique had to look for employment elsewhere.

In late November, he discovered that The Moon in the Square (Bournemouth) was having a recruitment open day.

Following a chat with pub manager Terri Balloni, he was offered a trial shift.

Quique said: "I was just asked to collect glasses on a Friday night, but, within an hour, I was helping to run the top floor of the pub."

He started work the following Monday as a bar associate and has been at the pub ever since, rising to the role of pub manager.

Quique concentrated on improving his very limited English and covered as many different types of shift as he could to improve his skills and his knowledge of the pub.

The couple's first child, Liam, was born in May 2013, with Quique promoted to shift leader the following month.

The couple's second child, Owen, was born in November 2016, with their third, Connor, arriving in December 2018. All three are bilingual.

Rocio and Quique were married in March 2019. In November 2021 Rocio started working at the pub and is now a team leader.

Quique added: "A lot of the other managers left in a short space of time, so I found myself the longest-serving management team member, apart from Terri.

"The Moon in the Square is a big pub with a lot of staff, so you need to know it very well to run it – and that period was a learning curve for me."

In May 2022, Terri asked for a sabbatical and, by May 2023, had decided not to return to the business.

Quique was appointed as the pub's manager in May 2023, having acted as holding manager during Terri's absence.

He said: "I really love the pub and wanted to be its manager when the opportunity arose.

"My life has changed completely in the last 10 years – and this is thanks to Wetherspoon and particularly Terri Balloni.

"Terri was such a legend, such a kind person and I learned everything from her."

## SHEFFIELD

# MUSIC ON TAP FROM TALENTED STAFF AT SHEFFIELD WATER WORKS COMPANY



A live music event at Sheffield Water Works Company (Sheffield) showcased the musical talents of staff members, as well as raising £200 for charity.

Pictured taking part in The Fringe at Tramlines event are (left to right) bar associate Francesca Cullen, bar associate Jack Walley and shift manager Nathan Dunn.

The Lloyds No.1 bar hosted the live music charity fundraiser in its pub garden, to coincide with the city-wide free music event The Fringe at Tramlines, in the run-up to the Hillsborough Park Tramlines Festival.

Nathan said: "As part of the music festival Tramlines, hosted by Sheffield, we signed up as a venue to the fringe event, along with

dozens of city-centre venues, staging the all-day event to kick off the festival.

"We're located slap bang in the heart of the city, so this was a great opportunity to showcase the pub and what we have to offer.

"There were acoustic acts throughout the day and, in the evening, I was the lead in a full-band, rock-inspired set full of favourite tunes, from the 80s to the present day, enjoyed by everyone."

Nathan concluded: "The whole day was a chance to celebrate the culture and community of the city and raise as much money as possible for our charity partner – Young Lives vs Cancer."

## ALTON

# HANTS MP HINDS ON HAND AS STUDENTS AUDIT THE IVY HOUSE



Damian Hinds MP gave his support to students from a local school and college for disabled students in his East Hampshire constituency as they carried out an audit of The Ivy House (Alton).

Mr Hinds, Minister of State for Prisons, Parole and Probation, was on hand to lend support as the students from Treloar's School and College assessed accessibility at the pub.

The audit was part of a project to improve employment prospects for disabled students in the area.

The pub was praised for its wheelchair access, ramps, lift, accessible toilets and parking area, as well as the fact that some current members of the pub's team have physical disabilities.

The students also highlighted areas for improvement which were passed on to the pub's management team.

The pub's manager, Lewis Brown, said: "We were delighted to welcome the students.

"It is important that we are inclusive for people with disabilities, both as customers and staff.

"Several of the students visit the pub for lunch every week and tell us they like it here."

Treloar's assistant head of college, teacher Hazel Wark, added: "Students and staff from Treloar's visited The Ivy House in Alton to conduct an accessibility assessment (and have lunch).

"We conducted a thorough investigation of the premises, including the parking facilities, toilet facilities and general access around the building.

"There were many positive features. The building and garden are spacious and allow freedom of movement for wheelchair users, and the toilet facilities were easy to access."

# KINGFISHER'S KNITTERS SHOW WOOL LOTTA LOVE



A community knitting group at The Kingfisher (Poynton) has been going strong for more than a decade.

Meeting every Monday (10am until noon) at the Wetherspoon pub, the Clickety Click Knitting Group creates knitted items, as well as a sense of community, bringing local retired residents together and supporting local causes.

Jayne Vaughan is one of a quartet behind the fundraising group, raising charity cash through hundreds of knitted items.

Jayne said: "Our last delivery to local hospitals consisted of our knitted items filling 12 bin bags – among them cardigans, hats and blankets for newborn and premature babies at the neonatal unit and maternity suite.

"We also make 'twiddle muffs' for dementia patients, as well as 'bonding squares' for mums and their premature babies."

Local hospitals benefiting from this mighty crafting effort are Wythenshawe Hospital in South Manchester, Saint Mary's Hospital in Manchester and Stepping Hill Hospital in Stockport.

The group also knits hats for The Wellspring, a charity supporting and helping the homeless people of Stockport.

Jayne continued: "We also organise a knitting fair twice a year, at Christmas and Easter, selling seasonal knitted items, as well as having a raffle and cake stall, with all proceeds going to Young Lives vs Cancer.

"During the last couple of years, £1,300 has been donated through these events."

Jayne concluded: "We just want to give a special mention to James (Doyle) and his team at The Kingfisher, who look after us well and are always so friendly and accommodating."

Pub manager James Doyle (pictured) added: "The knitters are a lovely group, who work so hard together for, and with, the local community.

"It is always a pleasure to have them at The Kingfisher."

## PWLLHELI

### EISTEDDFOD VISITORS HOBNOB AT PEN COB

Staff got the flags out at Pen Cob (Pwllheli) to celebrate The National Eisteddfod 2023 which was held close to the town.

The annual Welsh-language singing and poetry festival attracts 150,000 people each year, with many of them visiting the pub during the eight-day event.

They were able to enjoy Welsh ales, including Snowdonia Ale and Elderflower Ale from Purple Moose Brewery, based in Porthmadog, a short distance from the pub.

Shift manager Jon Lyon said: "We hadn't celebrated the eisteddfod before, as it moves location, but we were delighted to have it on our doorstep.

"The pub, with a wonderful atmosphere, was busy throughout the event.

"It was lovely to see all of the people coming to the eisteddfod to celebrate the event."

Pictured (left to right) are team leader Osian Jones, shift manager Jon Lyon and bar associate Natalie Jones.



# WALKING BOOTS BATTERED AS 250 STAFF HIKE ALL OVER UK



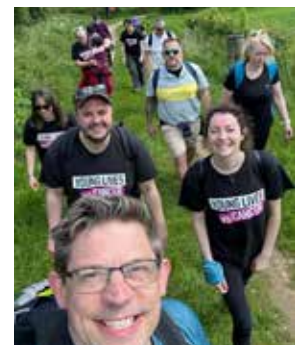
Start line at Ben Nevis



Summit of Ben Nevis



Finish line in Norfolk



Hikers in Norfolk

**M**ore than 250 Wetherspoon employees from pubs across the UK took part in a charity HIKE Challenge, to raise money for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Across seven days, staff in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland walked a collective 220km and helped to raise £90,126.73 for the charity.

In England, 37 employees tackled the Jurassic Coast in a tough 30km hike along the Dorset coastline. In Scotland, 75 employees, from as far away as Canterbury, climbed the UK's highest mountain Ben Nevis.

A marathon distance was achieved by 15 Wetherspoon staff around the capital, as they took on the London 10 peaks challenge.

Wetherspoon's charity champion and people director, Tom Ball, said: "I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in HIKE.

"It was amazing to see a team of our employees come together from across the country to raise money for our charity partner."

The three Yorkshire peaks were conquered by 15 staff members, with their 38km hike taking in the Pennine Range in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. North Wales was the next HIKE destination, as 64 hikers tackled Snowdonia.

Young Lives vs Cancer partnership fundraiser, Sam Hughes-Smith, who joined the team in Wales, said: "It was fantastic to see so many committed folk, from across the UK, come together for this challenge.

"It was a privilege to be able to join the team members to hike to Snowdonia's peak – their grit and determination really shone through."

In Northern Ireland, 11 intrepid explorers completed a tough marathon-long trek, across the famous Giant's Causeway UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Pub teams from the Republic of Ireland joined the adventure, raising funds for LauraLynn.

Young Lives vs Cancer's fundraising engagement manager for Northern Ireland, Vicki Ewart, said: "I was lucky enough to take part in the event – and it was fantastic to see so many enthusiastic faces in the early hours. The sun shone the whole day, meaning that we had fantastic views of the north coast, ones we all said that we'd never see again.

"It was a 'huge' challenge, as the terrain was so varied. They really did themselves, and Wetherspoon, proud with their achievement.

"I love working with the Northern Ireland pubs – and it's great that we can all come together at events like this as the island of Ireland to support both charities."

The week-long charity HIKE Challenge series of events came to a close in East Anglia, where 32 employees embarked on a bespoke loop of the Norfolk coastline.

Young Lives vs Cancer's strategic partnerships lead, Liz Lowrey, added: "The support for the event has been amazing.

"Thank you to every Wetherspoon employee who took on one of our seven hikes. We're so pleased that everyone enjoyed their adventures across the UK.

"With Wetherspoon's continued support and fundraising, we can be there for more children and young people with cancer."



Hikers in Snowdon



Finish line of London 10 Peaks



Start line at Jurassic Coast



Start line of Yorkshire 3 Peaks



Finish line of Yorkshire 3 Peaks

Well done folks!  
**£6,000**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

**The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley)**



Super fundraiser Michelle Hollins has been praised by proud pub manager James Mancell after she collected £6,000 for Young Lives vs Cancer in a single year.

Michelle, a team leader at The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley), runs a regular bonus ball event, alongside frequent raffles for bottles of spirit.

James said: "Michelle is a star – she spends a lot of her own time arranging events and fundraising."

As well as organising raffles and the bonus ball, Michelle rewards prize-winners with an A4 certificate to take home.

Michelle revealed that what drives her is the experience of family members suffering from cancer.

She said: "My dad... I know so many people who have suffered with it. I never give up. I just keep on going – and people are really generous when I tell them what the money is going towards."

**The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond)**



Well done folks!  
**£2,080**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

A charity day at The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond), featuring head-shaving and leg-waxing, raised £2,080.

Regular customer Karlee Franks, a corporal at the neighbouring army base, who is receiving treatment for cancer, was at the pub to show her support.

Half of the money raised helped towards Karlee's fund for a new wig.

The pub's manager, Martyn Swannell, volunteered for leg-waxing, together with kitchen associate Mark Davey and cleaner Chris Gaukroger.

Martyn is pictured (left) with (left to right) shift leader Sam Corr, kitchen associate Harvey Roberts (who later had his head shaved) and customers Karlee Franks and Dawn Wharton-Roberts.

## The James Watt (Greenock)

Young Alyssa McLellan celebrated her birthday with a bath in baked beans – raising £652 for charity.

Nine-year-old Alyssa is the daughter of Amanda McLellan, shift leader at The James Watt (Greenock).

Amanda said: “Alyssa has seen us do charity events at the pub and came up with this idea by herself. It was a bit of a surprise, but we went with it – we are all very proud of her and we all did our best to help with the fundraising.”

The charity later contacted Alyssa and Amanda to let them know that the funds raised will help to pay for a family to stay in one of its homes for 17 nights – to be closer to their child during treatment.



Well done folks!  
**£652**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

## The Navigation Inn (King's Norton)

Well done folks!  
**£428**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



Nine staff from The Navigation Inn (King's Norton, Birmingham) walked a total of 4.5 million steps – 500,000 each – in one month.

Of the staff, five of them went the extra mile (2.2 miles, to be precise) from their pub to another Wetherspoon pub, The Black Horse (Northfield, Birmingham), topping up the cash collected.

The group, led by shift manager Tom Roberts, stopped at local businesses between the two pubs to collect money and then took the buckets around The Black Horse.

They raised £203 to add to the £225 raised by those who walked 500,000 steps each, bringing the total to £428.

Tom said: “Congratulations to everyone who participated in the fundraising.”

Cleaner Deb Sherwin, pub manager Nikki Rumney, shift manager Deborah Rought and bar associate Eva Barry all did 500,000 steps each, as did shift manager Tom Roberts, shift leader Effy Andrews, shift managers Andrew York and Will Brooke-Flattery and Eva's sister and fellow bar associate Faye Barry (pictured at the start of the walk to The Black Horse, left to right).

## The Sir Daniel Arms (Swindon)

Well done folks!  
**£276**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



Staff dressed up as part of a charity weekend at The Sir Daniel Arms (Swindon).

Outfits featured fancy skirts and Care Bear pins and hats provided by Young Lives vs Cancer – and the pub was decked out in Care Bear bunting.

A bake sale with goodies made by team members helped to raise £276.

Organiser and shift manager Jaime Hessel said: “It was great fun – and we'd like to thank everyone who donated or bought a cake.”

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Ewan Lloyd, team leader Dan Curtin, kitchen associate Chris Dawson and bar associate Aimee Radley.

## The Liquorice Gardens (Worksop), The Pillar of Rock (Bolsover), The Gate House (Doncaster), The Regent (Kirkby-in-Ashfield), The Thomas Leaper (Derby) (now closed), The Standing Order (Derby), The White Horse (Brigg), Spa Lane Vaults (Chesterfield), The Widow Frost (Mansfield), The Red Lion (Doncaster), The Stag & Pheasant (Mansfield), The Ernehale (Nottingham) and The Sir John Arderne (Newark-on-Trent)



Well done folks!  
**£4,200**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Thirty walkers from 13 pubs completed a gruelling 20-mile Peak District hike, raising £4,200.

The group followed the Edale Skyline route, including 1,300-metre ascent through rugged moorland, reaching the summits of Mam Tor, Lose Hill and Win Hill along the way.

Walk leader Chris Ballantyne, kitchen manager at The Liquorice Gardens (Worksop), said: “It was a tough test of endurance for us all.

“We felt every mile of the walk, yet were rewarded with some fantastic views at each summit.”

“We are grateful to all of those who took part and contributed to the total raised.”

The group of 30 walkers from 13 pubs is pictured shortly before setting off.

## The James Watt (Greenock)

The James Watt (Greenock) held its first craft fayre, raising £100.

The event, organised by shift leader Amanda McLellan, saw customers making jewellery, crochet items, candles, fascinators and even healing crystals.

Amanda said: “It was a great success and helped to support small businesses in our local area.”

Pictured (left to right) are bar associates Tayrn Coyle and Julie Alexander on a table showcasing Tayrn's homemade Scottish souvenirs and Julie's home baking.



Well done folks!  
**£100**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



**The Woodseats Palace (Sheffield)**



Well done folks!  
**£330**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Staff from The Woodseats Palace (Sheffield) ran a stall at the annual Woodseats Festival, raising £330.

Members of the public bought tombola and raffle tickets for the chance to win a variety of prizes, including alcohol, confectionery and hygiene products.

Pub manager Rick Brown said: "We are a community pub – and our staff were only too willing to get involved."

"We all had a great day and were delighted to raise money for our chosen charity, as well as promote the pub in the community."

Rick is pictured with shift manager Hayley Martin (left) and team leader Leanne Day running the stall at the Woodseats Festival.

**The Glass Blower (Castleford)**



Well done folks!  
**£560**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Pub manager Sarah Heppinstall and shift manager Katy Walker put on their hiking boots once again... to raise funds.

In September 2022, the colleagues from The Glass Blower (Castleford) successfully completed the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge.

This latest charity fundraiser was a little closer to home, with a 20-mile walk taking in local Wetherspoon pubs.

In just over six hours, Sarah and Katy (pictured left to right) trekked from The Glass Blower to The Broken Bridge (Pontefract), then on to The Blue Bell (Hemsworth), walking back to The Winter Seam (Castleford), before returning to The Glass Blower.

Simultaneously, team members at The Glass Blower also 'walked' on a cross-trainer exercise machine in the pub, helping to raise a combined total of £560 for charity.

**The Queen's Head Hotel (Tavistock) and The Union Rooms (Plymouth)**



Well done folks!  
**£1,000**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Four keen Wetherspoon golfers played out 72 holes in a single day to raise £1,000.

The 15-hour marathon event took place at The St Mellion International course in St Mellion, Cornwall, and involved three players from The Union Rooms (Plymouth) and organiser Simon Henley, shift manager at The Queen's Head Hotel (Tavistock).

The event was facilitated by David Moon, director of golf at St Mellion, who waived greens fees and even threw in two complimentary buggies, so that the players wouldn't have to carry their golf bags around all day.

Simon said: "We started at 6.15am and finished at 9.25pm. We were very tired at the finish, yet had a lovely day. It was great – and we would like to say a big thankyou to David for his help."

Simon has been playing golf for more than 20 years and has a handicap of 28.

The four played a different format on each of the four rounds, starting with a scratch game and then moving on to a 'pairs scramble', in which players take alternate shots.

Pictured (left to right) are kitchen manager Sean Oades, Simon Henley, kitchen shift leader Harry Baker and shift manager Dan Norman.

**The Giddy Bridge (Southampton), The Bright Water Inn (Shirley) and The Red Lion (Bitterne Village)**



Well done folks!  
**£400**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Wetherspoon cleaner and avid cyclist Paul Downs has, through sheer pedal power, been continuing to help young cancer patients.

Featured in Wetherspoon News (winter 2022/23), Paul finally clocked up 9,500 miles throughout 2022.

Paul, who works at The Red Lion (Bitterne Village), has been in the saddle again, this time with static bike 'live display' challenges, each with increased elevation climbs, at three Wetherspoon pubs near his home in Southampton.

The aim was to cycle 100 miles in each of the pubs (The Giddy Bridge (Southampton), The Bright Water Inn (Shirley) and The Red Lion (Bitterne Village)) to help to raise awareness and funds for the charity.

Paul, who commutes to his cleaning job on his bike, reported: "All three pub challenges are now complete and, while I didn't manage the full mileage, I did still achieve 250 miles in total and raised £400 too."

"Staff and customers were surprised that I was 'climbing' while still doing the miles."

Paul (pictured with his parents) concluded: "I have now collected £1,600 for Young Lives vs Cancer, which means a lot to me."

## The Hengler's Circus (Glasgow)



Well done folks!  
**£350**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

A dozen staff members from The Hengler's Circus (Glasgow) embarked on a charity trek, collectively raising £350 in donations. The fundraising team travelled from Glasgow to Ardrossan, then took a ferry to Brodick, for their challenge, to climb the highest point on the Isle of Arran.



Pictured en route to the top of Goat Fell mountain (874 metres) are (left to right) bar associate Jaqueline Foyer and shift managers Fionnah Johnston and Emma McMaster.

Fionnah said: "It was a brilliant team effort and great day out. Thank you to everyone who took part and to our amazing customers for their support and donations."

Pictured at the trigpoint, at the top of Goat Fell, are (standing, left to right) shift manager Jamie McCabe, shift leader David McGookin, shift manager Dyllan Ryan, bar associate Adam Dickson and shift leader Craig Duris; front (left to right) are kitchen team leader Chloe Foyer, bar associate Kayleigh Harris and bar team leaders Natty Esplin and Jen Noga.

## 500,000-step challenge



Well done folks!  
**£6,720**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.



June saw a virtual challenge, with 324 Wetherspoon employees participating to each complete 500,000 steps in a one-month period.

They collectively raised £6,720 for the company's chosen charity.

Among those taking part in the challenge were deputy manager Laura Henry and shift manager Claire Bailey, who work at Cabot Court Hotel (Weston-super-Mare) and shift managers Kyle Bennett (with an amazing 741,000 steps) and Dale Ollerenshaw, as well as team leader Nathan Smith, all from The Smithy Fold (Glossop). They are all pictured.

## The John Fairweather (Cambuslang) and The Sir John Moore (Glasgow)



Well done folks!  
**£600**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Eight intrepid climbers from two Wetherspoon pubs topped Ben Nevis – raising £600 in the process.

Pub manager Michael Easton led a team including six of his colleagues from The John Fairweather (Cambuslang), plus shift leader Rhys Blaney from The Sir John Moore (Glasgow).

The group took five hours to climb the 1,345m peak, Scotland's highest, then a further four hours to descend.

Michael said: "It was hard going, but we had lovely blue skies, sunshine and wonderful views.

"Some of us had done it before – and we all had a great sense of achievement afterwards."

Pictured (back, left to right) are shift manager Scott Nobes, shift leader Megan Holliman, shift manager Shaun Bowman, kitchen associate Abby Fletcher and shift leader Rhys Blaney; (back, left to right) shift leader Kelsey Clark, team leader Kirsty Randalls and pub manager Michael Easton.

## The Iron Duke (Wellington)



Well done folks!  
**£1,525**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Sky-diving shift leader Alex Taylor of The Iron Duke (Wellington) raised £1,525, descending 15,000 feet, having jumped out of an aeroplane.

After completing the skydive, Alex (pictured left with instructor Adam) said: "It was an amazing thrill – and we were fortunate that the weather was excellent.

"I am so pleased with the fundraising total."

**The Childwall Fiveways Hotel (Liverpool)**



Well done folks!  
**£1,036**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

A charity fun-day held at The Childwall Fiveways Hotel (Liverpool) raised more than £1,000.

The event featured police and fire service displays, with dozens of prizes raffled.

Shift leader Emma O'Neill said: "The amount raised was a lot more than we thought – thanks to local businesses donating and the fire and police turning up with vehicles for children to have a look inside, creating an attractive spectacle which drew people in."

The final collection totalled £1,036.05.

Pictured (left to right) are team leaders Holly Brettle and Sarah Harwood, with shift leaders Emma O'Neill and Megan Bassett-Williams, plus some of the raffle prizes.

**The Ferry Boat (Runcorn)**



Well done folks!  
**£1,000**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Four staff from The Ferry Boat (Runcorn) braved terrible weather to reach the summit of Mount Snowdon – the highest peak in Wales.

The four took five hours and 20 minutes to scale the 1,085-metre mountain, raising £1,000.

The pub's manager, Emma Ford, said: "We were looking for ways to raise money for our chosen charity – and staff suggested the climb.

"It rained hard all day, yet that didn't dampen the group members' spirits, who stuck to their mission."

The four, pictured (left to right) are bar associate Jen Collett, team leader Adam Hanglin, team leader Nic Carter and shift leader Claire McGough.

**Wetherspoon northeast pubs**



Well done folks!  
**£2,589**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

A mass sponsored walk involving 75 Wetherspoon staff from nine northeast pubs raised £2,589.

The 16-mile walk started at The Hat and Feathers (Seaham), dropped in on The William Jameson (Sunderland) and finished at The Wouldhave (South Shields).

Shift manager Kelly Chrisp of The Wouldhave, said: "Morale was great and an excellent time was had by all, but, the next day, there were very sore legs and feet."

The event was organised by Kelly Dunn, pub manager at The Sir William de Wessington (Washington).

She said: "I don't know whether this is the biggest mass sponsored walk undertaken at Wetherspoon; however, the idea was to make it as big as possible, with as many people involved from as many pubs as possible in our region.

"Even two of my regular customers took part."

The other pubs represented on the walk were The Rohan Kanhai (Ashington), The Five Quarter (Peterlee), The Fire Station (Whitley Bay), The Job Bulman (Gosforth), The Ritz (Wallsend), and The Cooper Rose (Sunderland).

**The Blue Bell Inn (Scunthorpe)**



Well done folks!  
**£308**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Pokémon fan and shift manager Shelley Bown organised a themed event at The Blue Bell Inn (Scunthorpe).

A Pokémon hunt and a quiz were the highlights of the day, which also included a bake sale, a raffle and face-painting for children.

During a Pokémon hunt, competing teams of players track down cyber characters in the street, using their mobile phones.

Shelley was ably assisted on the day by bar associate James Kilty-Stapleton – pictured in the big yellow Pikachu outfit.

She is pictured at the bottom of the stairs with the rest of Team Rocket.

The event raised £308.

## The Sir Richard Owen (Lancaster)



Well done folks!  
**£142**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

A four-hour static bike ride at The Sir Richard Owen (Lancaster) raised £142.39.

During the event, a three-man team notched up a total of 200 miles.

Shift leader Samuel Wicks said: "The bike ride was a great success – and we'd like to thank everyone who contributed."

Pictured (left to right) are Samuel Wicks, bar associates Blake Green and Ben Green.

## The John Fairweather (Cambuslang)



Well done folks!  
**£350**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

A team of five cyclists from The John Fairweather (Cambuslang) raised £350 by pedalling around the island of Millport.

The team completed the 10-mile ride after taking an hour's train journey, followed by a 10-minute ferry ride across to the small, tooth-shaped island.

The idea was the brainchild of shift manager Diane Fountain, who thought that it might be an easier way than climbing Ben Nevis to raise funds – which colleagues had completed only a week or so beforehand.

Pub manager Michael Easton said: "They chose a good day to go, because the pub was extremely busy that day."

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Elisa Mason, kitchen team leader Niamh Riggins, shift manager Diane Fountain, kitchen shift leader Jamie Redmond and kitchen associate Mark McCammon.

## The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew)



Well done folks!  
**£807**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

Pub manager Donna Walker is pictured with bar associate Liam Logan, having both completed the Paisley 10k Road Race, organised by charitable trust OneRen.

Donna, who runs The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew) was raising money with bar team leader Debi Donohoe (not pictured).

They jointly collected £807.67 for Young Lives vs Cancer, through online donations and a raffle at the pub (£407.67).

Liam raised almost £400 for his chosen charity – Cerebral Palsy Scotland.

Donna, who is a keen runner and a regular fundraiser, said: "It was a lovely day and was Debi and Liam's first 10k."

## The Moon & Stars (Penge)



Well done folks!  
**£1,034**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

The team at The Moon & Stars (Penge) collected more than £1,000 during one month's fundraising at the pub.

Two family fun-day summer community events, organised by charity champion and shift leader Lisa Wragge, as well as kids' activity hampers, generated £1,034.

One event took place inside the pub, owing to wet-weather conditions, while the other was held in the beer garden (pictured), with painting, colouring, temporary tattoos and jewellery-making for the youngsters.

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Morgan Baker, floor associate Kirsty Barnes (both seated), shift leader Lisa Wragge, pub manager Clare Wragge with Lisa's sons Darnell and Jaydon Watkins, shift leader Vicky Nulty and kitchen shift leader Jack Croft (all standing), with customers.

# FREE SPIRITS BRING VA-VA-VOOM TO GLASGOW'S SOCIETY ROOM



Shift manager Michael Dolan

A week of gin-tasting featured products from four Scottish distillers at The Society Room (Glasgow).

The events took place in the run-up to World Gin Day.

Over four days, customers were treated to free samples from Boë of Stirling, Glaswegin, Edinburgh Gin and Caorunn, based in the Highlands.

Representatives from each company brought display stalls, samples and leaflets and spoke to customers about the processes used to make their own products.

Shift leader Nathan McGowan said: "We have been making every effort in recent months to bring the best of Scottish gin to our customers, so that, by now, many of them are familiar with some of the brands and open to trying new ones.

"The events went down well with customers – and we'll continue to develop our relationships with suppliers to bring customers more variety in the coming months."

# CLASSIC CAR FANS ROLL IN TO THE FLYING STANDARD

The Flying Standard (Coventry) was packed out with car aficionados visiting the city for the annual Coventry Motofest.

The city-centre pub is named after a car which used to be produced locally.

Car enthusiast Paul Dowson brought his Flying Standard to the pub for Motofest fans to see.

The Standard Motor Club set up a stall outside the pub too, as it has done since the Coventry Motofest's inception.

Pub manager Gavin Healy said: "It's a spectacular weekend, with thousands of people attending.

"The pub was packed out, and the atmosphere was fantastic."

The Motofest itself attracts hundreds of thousands of people who come to Coventry to see sports cars, motorbikes and racing events.

Gavin is pictured (right) with Paul Dowson and his Flying Standard.



## ALL-FEMALE DOOR CREW CREATES CALM IN CORNWALL

Customers visiting The John Francis Basset (Camborne), Wetherspoon's Cornish pub and hotel, are always welcomed with a warm smile at the door.

Door staff team Rebecca Booth (left) and Lisa Trevaskis, pictured, have been working at the pub and hotel since the beginning of 2023 and making positive waves within the community.

Hotel manager Liam Pidwell explained: "We have been staffed by an all-female door crew since January – and the response from the town has been overwhelmingly positive.

"They are doing an amazing job and are very proud of their work, and quite rightly, since, to our knowledge, they are the first all-female crew in Cornwall."

Liam continued: "It is not something we very often see, but we have seen such a dramatic change in terms of the number of issues, the attitude of customers and the overall atmosphere which they create.

"Rebecca and Lisa chat to everyone and always have a smile – and that approach transmits to customers.

"They are approachable and friendly, while being able to identify possible troublemakers and deal with situations without issues escalating... they just get the job done.

"They set the tone, and, with a 90-per-cent reduction in issues, the statistics speak for themselves."

He revealed: "The police have made positive comments, while the local pubwatch group has also noticed a significant decrease in incidents across the area.



"With customers often starting their evening at The John Francis Basset, Rebecca and Lisa set the tone early and this usually continues throughout the night.

"They also provide support for our hotel night staff and are on hand and happy to help, if required."

Liam concluded: "Rebecca and Lisa met here, when they started working together, and have since become firm friends too."

## BEER BUS TAKES WIGAN MOON CREW TO NEW SPOONS



Wetherspoon enthusiasts from The Bull and Stirrup Hotel (Wigan) enjoyed a visit to two Wetherspoon pubs in Chester.

The beer bus was organised by Dan Mercer, manager of the Wigan pub.

Twenty-nine customers (pictured) departed from the pub for the hour-long journey to Chester.

They visited The Bull and Stirrup Hotel and The Square Bottle, Wetherspoon's two pubs in the city.

The trip included a breakfast muffin and coffee at The Moon Under Water, before the coach headed off at 10.30am, returning home at 5.30pm.

Dan said: "It was a fantastic day out – and everyone said that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

## THREE CHAMPION BEERS STRUT THEIR STUFF IN RUN-UP TO FESTIVAL



In the run-up to Wetherspoon's autumn real-ale festival, customers had the opportunity to enjoy three champion beers. For the first 10 days of October, Wetherspoon's pubs served the three winners of the Champion Beers of Britain, from the annual Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) Great British Beer Festival, held at Olympia London.

The winning beers served were Shropshire-based Salopian Darwin's Origin (4.3% ABV), Suffolk-based Greene King Abbot Ale (5.0% ABV) and Elland Brewery 1872 Porter (6.5% ABV) from West Yorkshire.

This trio of award-winning real ales was followed, hot on its heels, by the company-wide real-ale festival which then took place during 11-22 October, inclusive.

The festival of up to 30 real ales showcased more award-winning beers and five international brewers.

Wetherspoon's marketing manager, Jen Swindells, said: "We always aim to offer customers the best choice of real ales.

"October was a fantastic month for real-ale fans, with customers able to enjoy each of the champion beers available in the pubs – which then led on to the 12-day real-ale festival itself."

## LORD JOHN BACK IN ALE GUIDE



The Lord John (Stroud) has been included in The Good Beer Guide 2024 – and was the venue for the book's launch, organised by the local Stroud Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch.

Pub manager Leah Farrel (pictured front, wearing red), who has managed the pub since November 2021 (her first as pub manager), said: "We are thrilled to be included in the CAMRA guide for the first time in a long time.

"We thank our local CAMRA branch members for their support and for choosing our pub for their launch event."

Stroud CAMRA's chair, Antony Hill (pictured front centre), said: "Many thanks to all who turned up at The Lord John to support the launch of the 2024 guide.

"Ordinarily, we choose to do the launch in a pub which is a new entry, but, since we had no new, but three returning, entries, we chose the venue which has returned after having been out of the guide for the very longest.

"The Lord John returns to The Good Beer Guide after 18 years – and its return is the result of work by the current manager, Leah, whose passion for real ale, beyond the usual Ruddles Best, Doom Bar and Greene King Abbot Ale, is clearly evident and now recognised.

"On offer at the bar, apart for the aforementioned, was Jaipur IPA, Orkney Dark Island, Salopian Darwin's Origin and Sambrook's Powerhouse Porter – a veritable real-ale banquet."

## ANGELINE HAS WALES OF A TIME VISITING EVERY PUB

Wetherspoon fan Angeline Brook has completed her visit to every Wetherspoon pub in Wales.

This was achieved after she recovered from a serious illness.

Angeline, pictured at her local, The Lord Caradoc (Port Talbot), undertook the visits by car – to each Wetherspoon pub in Wales.

Her final stop was at The Palladium (Llandudno), where she met duty manager Steve Morris.

Angeline said: "It took me 12 months to complete the pub visits, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

"I now plan to start visiting Wetherspoon's pubs in England."

One of the pubs on her list is The Hedley Verity (Leeds), named after a distant relative.

Steve Morris added: "It was a pleasure to meet Angeline and to look at the many photos which she had taken on her tour, as well as to chat with her about her adventures."



# SING, WREN, YOU'RE WINNING: FAB FURZE TAKES FOOTBALL PRIZE



The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath) Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 winner

## Congratulations to Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 tournament-winning pub The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath).

The victorious side from southeast London beat the team from The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford) 3-2 in a thrilling final at Goals (Wembley) to win the much-coveted annual five-a-side football tournament trophy and its all-important accompanying bragging rights.

The competition, which first started in 2002, featured players in 450 teams this year, from pubs across the UK and Ireland, collectively raising £265,817 for Young Lives vs Cancer (teams from the Republic of Ireland raised funds for LauraLynn).

Throughout September, regional heats took place at venues across the UK and Ireland, with pubs' staff members and customers also fundraising for the charity cause, culminating in 13 teams battling it out in the finals.

After crashing out of the 2022 tournament finals, losing in a penalty shoot-out, The Furze Wren was thrilled to be crowned 2023 Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer champion.

Deputy manager and team captain Bill Jarman said: "After coming so close in recent years, it is great to finally get our hands on the trophy."

The South Strand (Dublin), last year's fourth-placed team, beat The North Western (Liverpool) in the plate competition, the third-versus-fourth play-off match.

Wetherspoon's general manager, Richard Marriner, one of the organisers of the company's annual football competition, said: "It was great to see this tournament so well attended once again.

"Many thanks to all of the teams, as well as all of the hosts and volunteers, who helped to raise so much money from this event for Young Lives vs Cancer."

Sam Hughes-Smith, partnership fundraiser at Young Lives vs Cancer, said: "Huge thanks again to Wetherspoon's staff and customers for their continued support.

"There's an incredible sense of teamwork from all of the pubs which goes into the fundraising. For those we support, the money raised makes such a huge difference to the children and young people with cancer."

Young Lives vs Cancer helps children and young people (0–25) and their families to face cancer and everything it throws at them.

Its specialist social workers help families from the moment of diagnosis – with both emotional and financial support – from helping to access grants and benefits to liaising with schools and employers, as well as being someone to talk to and to listen to what they need. The charity's Homes from Home also offer a free place to stay near to hospitals, meaning that families can be together.

● For more information about Young Lives vs Cancer, visit: [www.younglivesvs cancer.org.uk](http://www.younglivesvs cancer.org.uk)





**The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford) Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 runner-up**



**The South Strand (Dublin) Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 plate competition winner**



**The North Western (Liverpool) Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 plate competition runner-up**



**Goals (Wembley) Kick for Young Lives vs Cancer 2023 finalists**



**Astropark (Coolock, Dublin) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Goals (Dartford) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Goals (Glasgow South) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Goals (Norwich) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Goals (Sunderland) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Gôl (Cardiff) Regional heats' competing teams**



**Powerleague (Manchester) Regional heats' competing teams**

# HOLBORN HOSTELRY HELPS CAMRA COMRADES TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS



Fifty years of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) in London were celebrated at Penderel's Oak (Holborn).

The pub hosted CAMRA members and served a range of guest ales from the capital and the home counties to mark the anniversary.

London's first three CAMRA branches were established in 1973 – two years after the national organisation was set up in 1971.

Approximately 100 CAMRA members attended the event.

The beers on offer included those from London and southeast breweries Sambrook's, Windsor & Eton and Portobello.

The event was organised by long-standing CAMRA member and beer writer Christine Cryne, pictured (front left) with CAMRA members.

She said: "It was a great event – and we had a wonderful time exchanging stories and telling anecdotes – as well as enjoying the beers on offer.

"It was great to see some faces we hadn't seen for years, turning up to help us to celebrate.

"The members are proud of their achievements over the years, which include saving pubs and campaigning for good-quality real ale.

"As part of this, our excellent relationship with Wetherspoon, other pubs and brewers has been and will remain key."

The pub's shift leader, Vladimira Binova, said: "We were delighted that CAMRA members chose our pub for this special event."

## DEE KNITS HATFUL OF CASH AT THE FIRST POST

The First Post (Cosham) hosted a fundraising event in aid of a local hospital.

Regular customer Dennise Duggan (pictured), known to everyone as Dee, took part in a sponsored knitting event, supported by staff and fellow customers at the High Street pub.

Dee was raising awareness and sponsorship donations to the tune of £167, as well as providing baby hats for the premature baby unit at Queen Alexandra Hospital.

The First Post pub manager, Emma Carrodus, said: "My team and I were delighted to host Dee's fundraising event at the pub.

"We all offered our support for her sponsored knitting event, in aid of local Queen Alexandra Hospital premature baby unit.

"Thank you also to all of our regular customers for their support and donations."



# TAX EQUALITY DAY

Round-up

Item	Price
100%	120%
120%	140%
140%	160%
160%	180%
180%	200%
200%	220%
220%	240%
240%	260%
260%	280%
280%	300%
300%	320%
320%	340%
340%	360%
360%	380%
380%	400%
400%	420%
420%	440%
440%	460%
460%	480%
480%	500%
500%	520%
520%	540%
540%	560%
560%	580%
580%	600%
600%	620%
620%	640%
640%	660%
660%	680%
680%	700%
700%	720%
720%	740%
740%	760%
760%	780%
780%	800%
800%	820%
820%	840%
840%	860%
860%	880%
880%	900%
900%	920%
920%	940%
940%	960%
960%	980%
980%	1000%



**The Bridge House (Belfast)** Bar associate Emily Rose serves a meal to customer Rachel Lilley

# ONE-DAY PRICE CUT SHOWS HOW PUB-GOERS HAVE A TAXING TIME

**C**ustomers at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK enjoyed a price reduction on all food and drinks to mark Tax Equality Day.

The pubs cut prices by 7.5 per cent to highlight the benefit of a permanent VAT reduction in the hospitality industry.

Prices at the company's pubs (not including the Republic of Ireland) were reduced for one day only.

In Scotland, prices were reduced on meals and non-alcoholic drinks only, in line with Scottish licensing laws.

All food and drinks in pubs are subject to 20 per cent VAT.

By comparison, supermarkets pay zero VAT on food and are able to use that saving to sell alcohol to customers at a discounted price.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "We were delighted to host Tax Equality Day in our pubs to highlight the unfair tax system between pubs and supermarkets.

"Supermarkets pay zero VAT in respect of food sales, whereas pubs and restaurants pay 20 per cent.

"This tax benefit allows supermarkets to subsidise the selling price of beer.

"Pubs have been under fantastic pressure for decades, because of tax disadvantages which they have with supermarkets.

"It doesn't make sense for the hospitality industry to subsidise supermarkets.

"We urge the chancellor to create tax equality between pubs and supermarkets."



**The Blue Bell (Hemsworth)** The Sinclair and Woodall families enjoy a meal together



**The Esquire House (Glasgow)** Customers Maureen Murray (left) and Helen Crawford enjoy lunch



**The Walnut Tree (Leytonstone)** Customers Michael Yiasoumi (left) and Nathan Bailey



**The Ward Jackson (Hartlepool)** Tucking in to breakfast are customers Karen and David Capper



**The Corn Exchange (Leicester)** Customers (left to right) Rio White, Ryan Ox and Winter Taylor are served by floor associate Georgio Mazzei



**The Captain James Lang (Dumbarton)** Customers Moira Smith (left) and Christina Smith tuck in to breakfast



**The Gold Cape (Mold)** Bar associate Oliver Wilson serves customer Carolyn Sage



**The Mail Rooms (Ross-on-Wye)** Shift leader James Prew serves customers Janet Robertshaw (left) and Valentyna Rallo



**The Sussex (Rhyll)** Shift leader Karen Walsh serves customers Emma and Dave Leek



**The Thomas Burke (Leigh)** Enjoying breakfast together are customers Ken and Anita Boardman

## JOHN, 83, RETIRES AGAIN - THIS TIME, HE MEANS IT



Team leader John Morrissey has retired after 16 years' service with Wetherspoon.

John started with the company during the summer of 2007 by helping for a few hours a week at The Ferry Boat (Runcorn), where his son Mike Morrissey (Wetherspoon's area manager Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire) was then pub manager.

Liverpool-born John, who celebrates his 84th birthday in March 2024, has decided to call it a day (for the third time in his working life) from his role at The Premier (Widnes).

John is pictured at his retirement celebrations (front centre) with pub manager Josh Bottomley (left), his son Mike (right), family, friends and colleagues.

John began his working life as a television and video engineer, with Radio Rentals.

He was a field engineer, senior technician and then customer care manager, before taking early retirement at the age of 55.

Unable to occupy himself with gardening and DIY, he passed his heavy goods vehicle test and became a long-haul delivery driver until his early 60s, before retiring again.

John said: "Then, one day, Mike asked me to help for a few hours at the pub – and I stayed with Wetherspoon since that day."

Mike said: "It's been a privilege to work with my dad over the past years, and I have enjoyed every moment of it.

"I am very proud of what he has achieved.

"Speaking to many of the customers and all of his colleagues at The Premier, I know that they are all going to miss his chats with them and his experience.

"I really wish him a very happy, well-deserved retirement and hope that he continues to visit the pub – yet now as a customer."

## PUB RELISHES UPHILL TASK OF TEACHING SKILLS TO CHILDREN

The Malcolm Uphill (Caerphilly) has teamed up with a local community group to stage skills workshops for children.

Shift manager Hayley Todd, who had already put on Little Spoons workshops for children at the pub, made contact with Create Caerphilly (Skills and Wellbeing) to explore ideas with the group.

The result was a series of five Thursday-morning events, attracting 50 children over the summer holidays, with plans for further events around Halloween and Christmas.

Hayley said: "We started with Little Spoons events, just decorating spoons as part of a craft club, yet needed to expand it.

"We knew that Create Caerphilly was running events at the library and the community centre, so we invited the group here as well."

Sally Morgan, a creative tutor at Create Caerphilly, said: "We were very happy to help. We help the children to make shrinking key rings, take part in painting sessions and hold themed events for them, such as 'knights and dragons'."

Pictured (left to right, back row) are Claire Donnelly of Create Caerphilly, Hayley Todd and Sally Morgan, with some of the participating children with a proud mum looking on.



# LIGHT SHONE ON MYSTERY OF RAINBOW GIN DISPLAY



Shift manager Chad Yarwood noticed something unusual about the gin display at The Eric Bartholomew (Morecambe).

Walking past the bottles, he did a double-take and thought: "This isn't the usual display – someone has changed it."

Then he looked more closely and realised that the bottles had been arranged by colour – according to the colours of the rainbow.

Chad said: "I had just come out and it was pride month. Locally, we'd had Lancaster pride festival, so I quickly realised that it must be something to do with pride celebrations."

Later in the day, the mystery was revealed when team leader Alex Daedric said that he'd rearranged the display.

Alex (pictured) added: "In the midst of pride month it had occurred to me that we currently have the most diverse team at The Eric Bartholomew that we've ever had in my nine plus years being here.

"A lot of our current employees are members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and throughout my employment here, I've never seen Wetherspoon celebrate pride in this pub.

"I decided to arrange our gins to represent a rainbow, as a subtle nod to our employees that fall under its banner, as well as any customers that would recognise its importance to show how inclusive we are."

## LITTLE LAMBS FLOCK TO SHOULDER OF MUTTON DURING PRIDE FESTIVAL

Shift manager Megan Bowers organised a family fun-day at The Shoulder of Mutton (Ashby-de-la-Zouch) as the town celebrated its first pride festival.

Megan put on events for children at the pub, including hook-a-duck, crafts and beanbag-throwing.

The pub was packed with parents and children, who thoroughly enjoyed the activities.

Megan said: "We had lots of children who had a really lovely day.

"We decorated the garden and pub in pride colours – and it was a great way to showcase the celebration of pride and inclusivity towards the LGBTQIA+ community."

Megan is pictured (right) with bar associate Olivia Parker.



## TEDDY BEAR JOINS PAIR AFTER HEDGEHOG RETIRES

Two friends – and their Teddy bear – have completed the latest chunk of their Wetherspoon tour by visiting all outlets in Essex.

Jenny Godfrey, Stephen McCarthy and a somewhat bedraggled Hedgy The Hedgehog completed their tour of London pubs back in 2020.

But Hedgy was forced to retire half-way through the London tour, owing to old age, and was replaced by George The Bear, who accompanied the friends on their latest Essex trip.

The last pub on the Essex list was The Playhouse (Colchester), after a visit to Colchester Zoo.

Jenny said: "We really enjoy our visits. Stephen and I were enjoying a drink at The Ice Wharf (Camden) and realised that we had been to a lot of Wetherspoon pubs, so we decided to do all of the London ones – and, now, we've done all of the Essex ones too."

The friends are planning another leg of their tour, but have not yet decided where to go.

What they are sure of is that George will be joining them.



ILKLEY

## VETERANS MAKE A MESS AT THE LISTER ARMS



An armed forces veterans group has started monthly breakfast club meetings at The Lister Arms (Ilkley).

The group, from Ilkley Armed Forces & Veterans Club, is led by Corporal Mark Sugrue.

The events provide a social and support network for former service personnel.

Pub manager Em Tetley said: "Group members asked me whether they could use the pub as a venue – and I was delighted to say yes."

"The breakfasts attract veterans who seem to thoroughly enjoy themselves. "They have full English breakfasts, then stay for coffees and a chat."

Corporal Mark Sugrue said: "We'd like to thank Em and her team – they are wonderful – and we'd like to invite people who may not have heard of us to join us next time."

The breakfasts are held on the last Saturday of each month at 10am.

● For details: [www.facebook.com/groups/432993785302563](https://www.facebook.com/groups/432993785302563) | [ilkleyafvbc2023@gmail.com](mailto:ilkleyafvbc2023@gmail.com)

CAMBUSLANG

## NUMBERS UP FOR CHARITY AFTER BINGO AT THE JOHN FAIRWEATHER

A bingo night at The John Fairweather (Cambuslang) raised £600 for Cambuslang Out of School Care (COSC).

The pub regularly runs charity events and agreed to donate proceeds from the bingo night after it was approached by Mhairi Henderson, who works for COSC.

The charity, set up in 2003 to provide educational and recreational facilities, is based less than half a mile from the pub.

Forty people took part in the event, held in the pub's upstairs room with its 20 tables. They competed for prizes including chocolates and bottles of whisky.

Organiser and shift manager Scott Nobes said: "It was a very busy night – and we are delighted with the amount raised."

Mhairi (pictured with Scott) added: "I would like to thank Scott, his team and everyone who took part."

"The money raised will be put to very good use."





# RUM GOINGS-ON AS BUMBU BOSS BRETT BUYS WHOLE PUB A DRINK

It's not every day that a Wetherspoon supplier is able to show an appreciation of their partnership with the company in person at one of the pubs.

Brett Berish, CEO of Sovereign Brands, did just that on a visit to The Moon Under Water (Leicester Square, London), treating all of the customers in the pub to a parting shot of Bumbu rum, before returning home to the US.

Wetherspoon's pubs serve Brett's signature rum, Bumbu Original, the number-one-selling super-premium rum in the UK. It is blended from fine Barbados rum and hand-selected spices, with hints of toffee, spice and banana, evoking the rich and colourful history of the West Indies.

Brett said: "I couldn't help myself – the day before leaving, I stopped by The Moon Under Water and met shift manager Chiara Ravaioni and the team, who are all amazing.

"I bought everyone in the pub a shot of Bumbu and, while Chiara rang the bell, I professed my love for Wetherspoon and all of its patrons."

He added: "One of the staff had to run to another Wetherspoon pub nearby to get more Bumbu, while a queue was lining up to get to the bar for the shots."

Brett concluded: "I love what you guys do."

Brett is pictured (front centre) with shift manager Chiara Ravaioni (front left), bar associate Brett Jose Alba (front right) and (back, left to right) bar associates Yilmaz Kasikci, Johnny To and Belarmino Perujo.



## A BIG DAY ALL IN ALL AT THE MOCKBEGGAR HALL



Staff at The Mockbeggar Hall (Moreton) commissioned a special cake to celebrate its 23rd birthday.

In addition, Birkenhead's Peerless Brewery staged a tap takeover, with beers available at the pub including Triple Blond and Skyline.

To celebrate its birthday, the pub hosted a bake sale and a tombola, raising funds for Young Lives vs Cancer.

As these events took place, Jemima Clarke (a customer at the pub since day one) joined in the festivities and even posed for our photograph.

Her Wetherspoon connections don't stop there.

Her son, Paul Hendry (known as Scotty), is a pub manager at The Bell Hanger (Chepstow).

The pub's manager, Ben Canavan, said: "Jemima has been coming here since we first opened.

"Our cleaner Richie Jones has also worked at the pub since the day it opened, which is a wonderful achievement.

"Richie worked as a kitchen associate at the pub for 19 years and has become a cleaner as he approaches retirement."

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Sarah Gilmour, pub manager Ben Canavan, area manager Paul Miller, Jemima Clarke and bar associate Lauren Parker.



The South Strand (Dublin) Bar associate Chaveen Dewanarayana with the festival ales range

# OVERSEAS ALES JOIN A STRONG UK LINE-UP AT FESTIVAL

**W**etherspoon's pubs served a range of real ales, including those from overseas brewers, during a 12-day real-ale festival.

The overseas brewers were from Canada, the Czech Republic, South Africa and the USA.

Among the festival collection were vegan (also suitable for vegetarians) and gluten-free beers.

As well as featuring a range of malt and hop varieties from around the world, there were also beers which included vanilla and cherries in their ingredients.

The festival line-up included Bunny Hop (Purity Brewery), Broken Dial (Harveistoun Brewery), Easy Stout (Steel & Oak Brewing, Canada), Harlequin

(Lancaster Brewery), Dos Perros (Yazoo Brewing, USA), Bohemian Pale Ale (Joe's Garage Brewery, Czech Republic), Average Joe! (St Austell Brewery), Hoptropolis IPA (New Realm Brewing, USA), Fear Of The Dark (Robinsons Brewery) and Zulu Blonde (Zululand Brewery, South Africa).

Wetherspoon's operations director, Martin Geoghegan, said: "The festival was a great celebration of real ale.

"It allowed our pubs the opportunity to showcase a selection of value-for-money beers over a 12-day period.

"It also gave customers the opportunity to enjoy several beers which had not previously been served in the pubs, including those from overseas."



The Earl of Dalkeith (Kettering) Shift leader Chloe Summerlin (left) and shift manager Elise Coleman with customer and local resident David Cairns



The Brandon Works (Motherwell) Team leader Scott Love serves regular customer Duncan McKellar



The Central Bar (Carrickfergus) Bar associate Carol Bailey serves customer Tom Craig



**The Butter Cross (Bingham)** Shift manager Jordan Goddard serves customer Lauren Savident



**The Gold Cape (Mold)** Customers Christine Wainwright (left) and Carol Jones



**The Commercial Hotel (Accrington)** Customers Shane Doyle (left) and Carl Jervis toast the festival as team leader Connor McQuade looks on from behind the bar



**The Crystal Palace (Glasgow)** Bar associate Alexander Robertson serves a festival pint to customer Paul Rodger



**The Kings Head Hotel (Beccles)** Floor/bar associate Lorraine Huckle serves customer Julie Gotsell



**The Tumble Inn (Pontypridd)** Team leader Carley Leigh with customer DR Taylor and his wife Helen



**The Humphrey Bean (Tonbridge)** Pub manager Isabel Warner (left) and team leader Bethaney Roberts serve customer David Hancock



**The Henry Bessemer (Workington)** Customer Phil Waldron with (behind the bar, left to right) pub manager Kirsty Hands, shift manager Sarah Wilson and shift leader Bradley Stewart

## LIVERPOOL

### PLAIN ABSEILING FOR VICKI

Brave shift manager Vicki Lloyd abseiled 30 metres down the main stand at Anfield to raise £510 for the Alder Hey children's charity.

Liverpool Football Club regularly facilitates charity abseiling – which can be booked through its website.

Vicki, who works at The Navigator (Liverpool), said: "It was very exciting, yet was over too quickly."

"I'm very grateful to everyone who contributed and so pleased that we raised so much money for a truly wonderful charity."



## BIRMINGHAM

### SPOKESPEOPLE SPIN FURIOUSLY IN BIRMINGHAM



Staff at six Birmingham city-centre pubs raised £1,215 for Young Lives vs Cancer – by cycling on static bikes in their pubs.

During a 17-hour period, they cycled a combined 1,241.5 miles.

The participating pubs were The Briar Rose, The Square Peg, The Dragon Inn, The Soloman Cutler, The Figure of Eight and The London and North Western.



Pictured (left to right) are shift manager and organiser Amber Oddie, bar associate Luis Xisto and shift manager Kelis Edwards at The Briar Rose, along with shift leader Marlon Atkinson and bar associate Gary Richards at The Square Peg.

## DUNDEE

### PRIDE POUNDS PILE UP AT THE COUNTING HOUSE

During pride month, staff at The Counting House (Dundee) raised £285 for a charity promoting inclusivity.

The money was raised for Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) by staff who hosted a special stall in the pub's beer garden.

The stall sold cakes and pride merchandise, such as whistles and pin badges.

Pub manager Stevie Reid said: "It was a lot of fun – and the stall proved very popular with customers."

"We are grateful for their contributions towards the charity."

Pictured (left to right) are bar shift leader Dion Watson, pub manager at The Golden Acorn (Glenrothes) and co-chair of LGBTQIA+ networking group for Wetherspoon employees Jonny Stewart, bar shift leaders Lou Burke and Erin Willox, pub manager at The Counting House (Dundee) Stevie Reid, bar associate Paula Wilson and shift manager Kieran Smith.



POOLE

# SAFETY A KEY AIM FOR QUAY BOSS CHARLEE



Pub manager Charlee Blanchard has worked for Wetherspoon for 13 years and has, since November 2021, been running The Quay (Poole).

Having grown up in the local area and having worked as a shift manager at The Lord Wimborne (Poole), Charlee is more than familiar with the local community and its residents.

As deputy chair of the Poole pubwatch scheme, Charlee also has good relations with the local pubs and licensees in the area, as well as the licensing officer and local police, who participate wholeheartedly in this pubwatch initiative.

Charlee said: "The pubwatch meetings hadn't restarted after the COVID-19 closures, so I was approached by the local licensing officer to help with the first 'restart' get-together.

"The meetings quickly became monthly again and people were assigned a role, with the deputy chair position coming to me."

With 25-30 local pubs, clubs, bars and cafés all members of the scheme, that number constitutes the majority of venues in Poole, all working together for the safety and security of their staff and customers.

Charlee continued: "We have a WhatsApp group chat, where we can all keep in touch and share information.

"Poole business improvement district (BID) is also in the process of rolling out a radio system and a monitoring app, so that we can communicate more quickly.

"We are in regular contact, with sometimes daily conversations, with licensees sharing issues and supporting one another.

"It really helps with the community spirit."

With a background in hospitality retail management, Charlee started with Wetherspoon as a shift manager at The Mary Shelley (Bournemouth), taking on her first pub as manager at The Bell (Amesbury).

She also managed The John Russell Fox (Andover) before a four-year stint at The Hatter's Inn (Bognor Regis), before taking over at The Quay.

Charlee, who embarked on a degree course with Wetherspoon this summer, was a keen pubwatch member while at Bognor, having previously held the position of deputy chair during her spell in Amesbury.

Speaking about the Poole initiative, Charlee concluded: "We all know that we are in direct competition, but, if we help and support one another, then everyone is happy."

BURGESS HILL

# BINGO BINGE BRINGS IN A GRAND AMOUNT



A regular weekly bingo event at The Six Gold Martlets (Burgess Hill) has, between January and July 2023, generated more than £1,000 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Organised by shift manager Holly Bunce (pictured far right), it takes place every Monday at noon, in the reserved rear section of the pub, where around 20 players enjoy the community event.

With pub prizes up for grabs, including discount vouchers, complimentary meals and bottles of Prosecco, the session regularly collects £100-150 each month for the charity.

Holly said: "Our regular bingo crowd really looks forward to the session.

"With thanks to regular customers Sue and Ron Bennett (pictured holding the fundraising total), who help with the calling, it has really grown in popularity since it was originally started by shift leader Alicia Brosnahan (pictured far left, with her young son).

"It's a great way to have fun, bring the local community together and raise charity funds for a great cause... all at the same time."

Players also make sure that they don't miss out when there is a Bank Holiday Monday, moving their bingo session to the Tuesday instead.

Ellie Lawrence, who has been the pub's manager since March 2023, added: "It is such a lovely community event, well supported by our regular customers."

# REGULARS BRING US THEIR BIRTHDAY PRESENCE AS MANY PUBS CELEBRATE

**F**rom 31 July to the end of October 2023, numerous Wetherspoon pubs celebrated a significant birthday of 25 years or more.

In total, 15 pubs marked their silver anniversary, clocking up a remarkable 375 years serving their respective communities since 1998.

During August, 25-year celebrations were held at The Giddy Bridge (Southampton), The Sugar Loaf (Market Harborough), The Staple Hill Oak (Bristol), The West Gate Inn (Canterbury) and The Pommelers Rest (Tower Bridge, London).

Throughout September, 25-year celebrations were held at The Kings Head (Monmouth), The Shrewsbury Hotel (Shrewsbury), The James Watt (Greenock), The Glass Blower (Castleford), The New Cross Turnpike (Welling) and The Old Swanne Inn (Eversham).

During October, The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley), The Pennsylvanian (Rickmansworth), The Temeraire (Saffron Walden) and The White Ball Inn (Tiverton) also all notched up 25 years.

Other long-serving pubs during this birthday period included The Moon Under Water (Enfield), marking 35 years since first opening, and The Railway Bell (New Barnet), celebrating 33 years.

Also clocking up a combined 96 years' service to their local communities were three pubs marking 32 years since first opening.

They were The Moon Under Water (Hounslow), The Moon and Sixpence (Hatch End) and The Beaten Docket (Cricklewood).

J.J. Moon's (Hornchurch) also marked 30 years since first opening in October 1993.

## The Moon Under Water (Hounslow)

First opening as a Wetherspoon pub at the end of July 1991, this pub was originally two shops, built in c1905 on the site of an orchard.

By World War I, number 84 was a sub post office. It was later a hardware store and expanded into number 86, which had been a grocer's for many years.

Pictured (left to right) marking the pub's 32nd birthday are customer Elvis Dsouza, shift manager Hannah Johnson, customers Keith and Wendy Smith and team leader Michael O'Neill.

Pub manager Peter Johnson joined Wetherspoon 25 years ago, in October 1998, and has managed The Moon Under Water since January 2002.

Among the pub's long-serving staff are shift managers Hannah Johnson (since October 2002), Karolina Bzdawska (since October 2016) and Gary Waller (on and off since 2005).

Also of note are kitchen shift leaders Mequeline Fernandes (since August 2014) and Alex Wright (on and off since 2011) and kitchen associate Teresa Gray (since November 2011).



25 YEARS



## The Sugar Loaf (Market Harborough)

Pictured celebrating the pub's silver anniversary are shift manager Sam Judd (front) and (standing, left to right) team leaders Jack Shutler and Matt Green, kitchen shift leader Vincenzo D'Angelo and team leader Kelly Whitlock.

Pub manager Chloe D'Angelo has been with Wetherspoon for 18 years and has managed The Sugar Loaf for the past five.

Another long-serving staff member is duty manager Luke Mighell, who has also been at the pub for five years and has worked for the company for nine.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in August 1998, was once Thomas Goward's grocer's.

Founded in 1810, Goward's traded on this site until 1910, weighing out provisions and cutting sugar by hand from a conical-shaped sugar loaf. In a warehouse behind the grocery shop, Goward's staff blended tea, ground coffee, chopped sugar, ground spices and washed and polished dried fruit for sale in the shop.

## The West Gate Inn (Canterbury)

This pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in August 1998 and takes its name from its proximity to Canterbury's fine medieval gateway, West Gate, is housed in a grade II listed building which dates from the 17th century.

Over the years, it has been modified and rebuilt, losing much of its timber frame and many original features.

Caroline and Simon Pitcher have managed The West Gate Inn since January 2017. They have both worked for Wetherspoon for 25 years, Caroline since July 1998 and Simon since August 1998.

Kitchen manager George Nobbs has also worked at the pub since August 2015, with several long-serving kitchen staff members on his team.

Pictured marking 25 years' service, as well as 25 years since the pub first opened, are Caroline and Simon (centre), with (standing left to right) team leader Jodie Finniss and shift managers Ruby-Maye Watkins and Georgia Bramhall.

Pictured (front, left to right) are kitchen team leader Shellini Kanabar and team leaders Chris Hopkins and James Chinnerly.



## The Pommeliers Rest (Tower Bridge, London)

Shift manager Berkay Degirmenci, who has worked at the pub for seven years, is pictured (standing) with customers (left to right) Scott Pinder, James Schweiger, Andy Darnley and Dylan Hey, marking the pub's 25th birthday in pints.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in August 1998, is the former Tower Bridge Hotel, taking its name from the area's centuries-old connection with the leather trade.

The earliest record of the word pommeler (one who pummels) was in c1450 and became associated with leather workers.

Pub manager Recep Cinar has managed The Pommeliers Rest since October 2010 and has worked for the company for 22 years, since October 2001.

Other long-serving staff members include shift manager Darryl Skidmore (13 years), kitchen shift leader Kagan Kùçùkkaramuklu (12 years), shift manager Viktorija Cinar (11 years), kitchen shift leader Vincenzo Bisogna, kitchen team leader Mohamed Rahman and kitchen associate Shahidur Begum (all nine years).

Shift manager Heibe Osman and kitchen team leader Simone Mattera have both been with the team for six years, while team leader Jo Payne and bar associate Michelle Borrill have for five.

## The Kings Head (Monmouth)

Pub manager Chris Jenkins is pictured (centre) with shift leader Vicki Kellaway (left) and hotel team leader Beverley Davies, marking The Kings Head's 25th birthday.

Chris joined the company in January 2002 as a shift manager at The Kings Head before moving to various pubs across south Wales.

He returned to The Kings Head as pub manager in August 2010 and heads up a team with several long-serving staff members with five or more years' service.

The Wetherspoon pub, which opened in September 1998, and 24-bedroom hotel were originally a 17th-century coaching inn and now form a grade II listed building.

It is said to have been visited in the 1640s by Charles I during the Civil War. A surviving plaster overmantel, dating from the 1670s, is probably intended to be his portrait.

In the 1800s, this was one of Monmouth's most important inns, often used for corporation dinners. One such event was held in 1840 to celebrate Queen Victoria's wedding.



## The Shrewsbury Hotel (Shrewsbury)

First opening as a Wetherspoon pub in September 1998, this was the company's first hotel. It has been welcoming pub customers and guests to the 22-bedroom hotel for a quarter of a century.

An inn called The Welsh Harp is thought to have stood on this site in the 17th century. By 1820, it had become The Britannia; in the 1960s, it changed its name for the last time to The Shrewsbury Hotel.

Pub manager Susan Richards (left) is pictured with hotel manager Jane Clarey and customer Clive Norgrove, who was at the pub on its opening day.

Susan took over at the pub in January 2004, 20 years ago, having started working for the company in June 2000, while Jane has been at the pub and hotel since February 1999.

Other long-serving staff members include kitchen manager Adam Morris (since 2015) and hotel shift leader Gail Pope (since 2000).

# MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

## The James Watt (Greenock)

Shift manager Tayrn Coyle is pictured (centre) with a celebration cake, welcoming back customers John and Bridget Wingate. They were the first customers through the door of the newly opened pub – 25 years ago.

The pub, which first opened in September 1998, is housed in an ornate building originally designed by WW Robertson and the Office of Works as the town's general post office, opening in 1899.

The premises are now named after James Watt, the inventor and mechanical engineer born in 1736, in Greenock.

His improvements to the steam engine powered the Industrial Revolution... which changed the world. Watt also introduced the word horsepower – to indicate an engine's power.

Pub manager Neil Clark took over the reins at The James Watt in April 2019, having joined the company in June 2006.

Long-serving employees include kitchen manager Julie Alexander (since February 2012), shift manager Tayrn Coyle (since July 2018), shift leaders Ben Bell (from July 2017) and Duncan Meyer (since November 2013), team leader Yvette Thorpe (from September 2010) and bar associate Kane Alexander (since March 2017).



25 YEARS

25 YEARS



## The Glass Blower (Castleford)

Pub manager Sarah Heppinstall (second right) and her team at The Glass Blower marked the pub's 25th birthday with a 90s-themed weekend, with staff in fancy dress and a cake sale and raffle, raising £185 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Also pictured (left to right), dressed for the party, are shift manager Chelsea Barker, long-time customer Mick Horan and shift leader Gareth Brookes.

Sarah has worked for the company for more than 21 years, since July 2002, and has managed The Glass Blower for more than 10 years, since February 2013.

Among the long-serving staff are Gareth (18 years), shift manager and charity cake sale baker Katy Walker (seven years), kitchen associate Steven Parker (10 years), bar associate Chelsea Mathery (15 years) and cleaner Brian Chipchase (15 years).

The pub, which opened in September 1998, is housed in the former Castleford main post office and sorting office. The pub's name recalls the local glass-making industry once synonymous with the town during the 19th century.

## The Old Swanne Inn (Evesham)

Pictured (left to right) marking the occasion with a celebration cake made by customer Helen Merriman, are team leader Jade Thomas, customer Paul Rencher (who was there on the opening day), shift leader Charlie Archer and bar associate Jim Hudson.

A Swanne Inne was recorded on the site of this Wetherspoon pub in 1586, but, by the second half of the 18th century, it had become a private house.

It was later called The Star and, during the 1970s and 1980s, had several more name changes, yet now, since opening as a Wetherspoon pub in September 1998, bears its original name.

Pub manager Robert Dudley, who has been with the company since August 2014, took over in July 2023.

Among the long-serving staff are shift leader Vicky Vernalls (16 years), shift manager Paula Duggan (nine years), team leader Charlie Craze (eight years), kitchen manager Gaby Stanley, shift manager Kyal Middleton and kitchen team leader Liam Temple-Fry (each seven years).



25 YEARS

25 YEARS



## The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley)

This pub, which remembers Hanley-born aircraft designer Reginald Mitchell, first opened as a Wetherspoon in October 1998.

Born in 1895, Mitchell invented the Spitfire, which was to become one of the best-loved aircraft in aviation history. Sadly, he died from cancer at an early age, before the aircraft flew on official action during World War II.

Pictured (left to right) celebrating the pub's birthday are bar associate Ben Findler and two of the pub's longest-serving employees, kitchen assistant Alison Higgin and cleaner Shirley Leigh, with shift manager Becca Matthews.

Alison started with the company in October 1999, while Shirley originally joined in December 1998, working front of house. Following a brief spell away from work, she returned as a cleaner in May 2021.

Other long-serving staff members include kitchen manager Shelly Nixon (20 years), shift manager Shell Salt and cleaner Matt Nolan (both 15 years), kitchen shift leader Lauren 'Boz' Belcher and cleaner Lilla Mulik (both 13 years), kitchen team leader Lauren Wright and cleaner Mary French (both 10 years).

Pub manager Jim Mancell joined the company in April 2013 and took over as pub manager at The Reginald Mitchell in March 2020.



# WIN A £30

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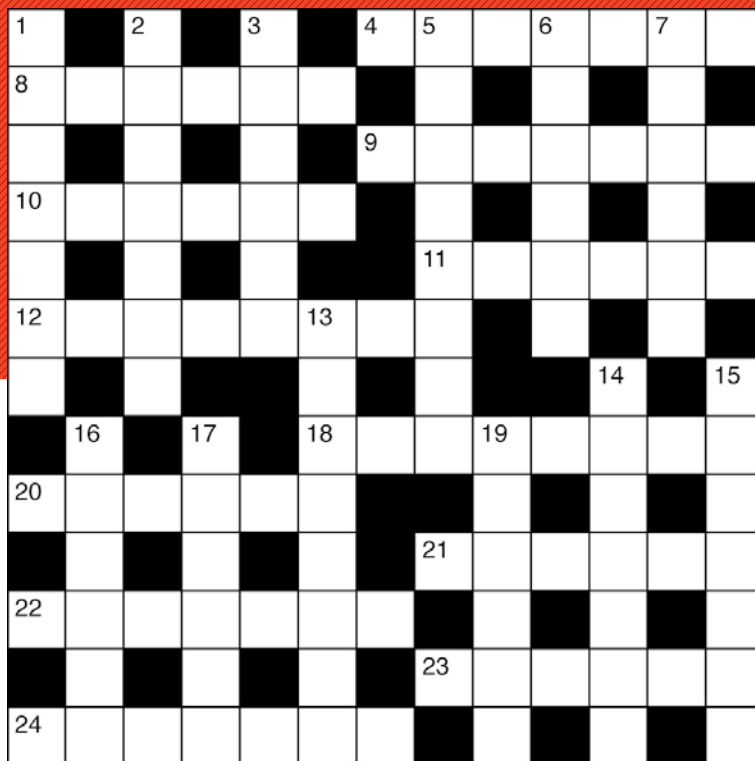
The first four correctly completed crosswords to be pulled out of the hat will win each of those entrants a Wetherspoon gift card worth £30.

Closing date for entries: 28 February 2024

**Post to:**

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## 4 x £30 PRIZES TO BE WON



### Across

- 4. See 12 Across.
- 8. Son of Daedalus in Greek mythology (6)
- 9. Town in Germany after which a type of man's felt hat is named (7)
- 10 and 23. Australian bowler whose 70 Tests from 1971-84 earned him 355 wickets (6,6)
- 11. Four-wheeled horse-drawn carriage named after a town in Bavaria (6)

- 12 & 4Ac. Name given to an 1871 arrangement of the second movement of Bach's Suite no. 3 in D for orchestra (3,2,3,1,6)
- 18. Children's play by J.M. Barrie (5,3)
- 20. Jean-Paul, French philosopher whose novels include Nausea (6)
- 21. Seventh planet from the sun (6)
- 22. South American republic whose capital is Quito (7)
- 23. See 10.
- 24. Charles, French physicist who died in 1806 (7)

### Down

- 1. "--- of Alcatraz", 1962 Burt Lancaster film (7)
- 2. "--- Row", 1944 novel by John Steinbeck (7)
- 3. S.E. Asian tree whose edible oval fruit has an unpleasant smell but pleasant taste (6)
- 5. Tobias, author of satires such as The Adventures of Roderick Random (8)
- 6. Peter Paul, Flemish painter knighted by Charles I of England (6)
- 7. "The --- Conquests", trilogy of plays by Alan Ayckbourn (6)

- 13. Parasitic ribbon-like flatworm the adult of which inhabits the intestines of vertebrates (8)
- 14. The --- tree, Euonymus europaeus, of Europe and W. Asia yields a hard wood formerly used as a component in the textile industry (7)
- 15. Liquorice-flavoured seed of the anise plant (7)
- 16. --- Panza, companion of Don Quixote (6)
- 17. State capital of Minnesota (2,4)
- 19. Insect of the order Dermoptera with an elongated body and small leathery forewings (6)

### SOLUTIONS

(Summer/autumn 2023 issue)

**Across:** 1 Jack Brabham; 9 Obi; 10 Baltimore; 11 Musil; 13 Nigeria; 14 Nelson; 16 Stapes; 18 Hotel du; 19 Brava; 20 Spinnaker; 21 Lac; 22 Benoit Dauga

**Down:** 2 Ami; 3 Kabul; 4 Roland; 5 Bridget; 6 Apocrypha; 7 Gormenghast; 8 (The) Renaissance; 12 Solitaire; 15 Orlando; 17 Musket; 19 Barna; 21 Leg

### The summer/autumn 2023 crossword winners were:

★ IS, Thornton Heath ★ MM, Enderby ★ AR, Dingwall ★ WB, Wolverhampton



### Please complete the answers and your details, as shown, and send the completed page to:

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I am over 18 years (signature): .....

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**Terms and conditions:** The crossword is open to all UK residents over the age of 18, excluding employees of the promoter, their respective families and agents or anyone directly connected with this competition. Acceptance of the rules is a condition of entry. No purchase necessary. Entries must be received no later than 28/2/24. Proof of dispatch is not proof of receipt. The winners will be the first correctly answered entries drawn. Where multiple prizes are offered, the winners will be the first relevant number of correct entries drawn. The judge's decision is final; no correspondence will be entered into. One entry per household. The winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative available. The promoter reserves the right to cancel or amend this promotion, owing to events arising beyond its control. The promoter is not responsible for any third-party acts or omissions. Once the competition has been drawn all entry slips and information provided therein will be securely destroyed and shall not be retained by J D Wetherspoon plc or its affiliates.

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Nik Antona is national chairman of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

# Cheers

## DEMOLITION OF CROOKED HOUSE SHINES LIGHT ON UK'S SHOCKING LOSS OF PUBS

**New figures show that more than 30 pubs may have been demolished or converted, without planning permission, in the first half of 2023, writes CAMRA's national chairman Nik Antona**

**As 2023 begins to draw to a close, the question of how to protect the UK's pubs and clubs has never been more pertinent.**

After surviving the pandemic and now enduring a cost-of-business crisis, venues still face threats of conversion and redevelopment.

Now, CAMRA has declared the non-enforcement of planning breaches to be a nationwide scandal.

The news of the demolition of The Crooked House, in Himley, shook landlords and pub-goers alike, setting alarms ringing for CAMRA's representatives up and down the land.

To refresh your memory, shortly after The Crooked House was sold by Marston's, a fire destroyed much of the interior of the building on the weekend of 5 August.

### PERMISSION

Under 48 hours later, the remaining structure of the building was demolished, without planning permission.

A public statement from South Staffordshire Council confirmed our worst fears: the full demolition of the building was not mandated by the safety inspection which took place after the fire.

In 2017, planning law was changed so that pubs in England could not be converted or demolished without planning permission, yet shocking figures published by CAMRA over the summer showed that more than 30 pubs may have been demolished or converted in the first half of 2023 – without planning permission.

CAMRA acted immediately, with our pub campaigns director Gary Timmins writing to Rachel Maclean MP (Minister of State for Housing and Planning) asking for central government to take action to deter unscrupulous developers.

We're working to expose the weaknesses in the planning system which affect all pubs.

We want to see councils in England get the enforcement powers needed to tackle any illegal conversion or demolition of pubs – including bolstered powers to order them to be rebuilt, brick by brick, if necessary.



**Joining CAMRA ensures that we have the volunteers and funding to be able to campaign effectively**



In Wales and Scotland, we're also campaigning for stronger planning protection for pubs and to give people a chance to take them over as community-run assets.

On other fronts, our Pub Heritage Group is leading the way in safeguarding historic pubs and fighting for them to be given the protection which they deserve as part of our cultural heritage.

### BREWERIES

It's not just pubs and clubs which need our support, however. CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2024, published in September 2023, revealed that breweries are also under threat.

Although the guide records 82 new breweries, 142 have closed.

The net loss of 60 breweries is a worrying reminder that a lack of support from the government can mean dire consequences for local businesses, in the wake of a cost-of-business crisis and the constant pressure of energy bills.

The guide's cover is graced by Iron Maiden's iconic mascot 'Eddie', while its foreword is written by the band's legendary frontman Bruce Dickinson.

In this piece, he highlights the importance of pubs and clubs as venues for live music and the path forged by many bands, like Iron Maiden, with the help of these venues.

Throughout these tough few years, more pubs have been getting creative in the ways in which they support their community to ensure that they get the footfall needed to stay afloat – such as by hosting live music, quizzes, games nights and festivals.

The easiest way for worried beer-drinkers and pub-goers to support the trade is to ensure that they're visiting their locals and seeking new tipples.

### FANTASTIC

Many locals run fantastic beer and cider festivals, offering a space on the bar for brews which you might not typically see.

Another way to show support is to find your nearest CAMRA branch and get involved in any local or national campaigning happening right now.

Joining CAMRA ensures that we have the volunteers and funding to be able to campaign effectively, whether that's keeping open the doors of a much-loved social club or lobbying the government for nationwide change to support small and independent brewers.

● **To join CAMRA, or to give a gift membership to a friend or loved-one, visit: [join.camra.org.uk](http://join.camra.org.uk)**

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