

FREE

Inn Touch

Rugby & District Branch



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Spring / Summer 2024

CAMRA awards for Stars & Raglan



THESE & MUCH MORE INSIDE

Real Ale Trail

www.rugby.camra.co.uk



National Beer Scoring Guide (submit scores online at www.whatpub.com)

- 0. No cask ale available.
- 1. Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
- 2. Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
- 3. Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.
- 4. Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.
- 5. Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

The Merchants

THE PUB OF RUGBY

100+
CIDERS

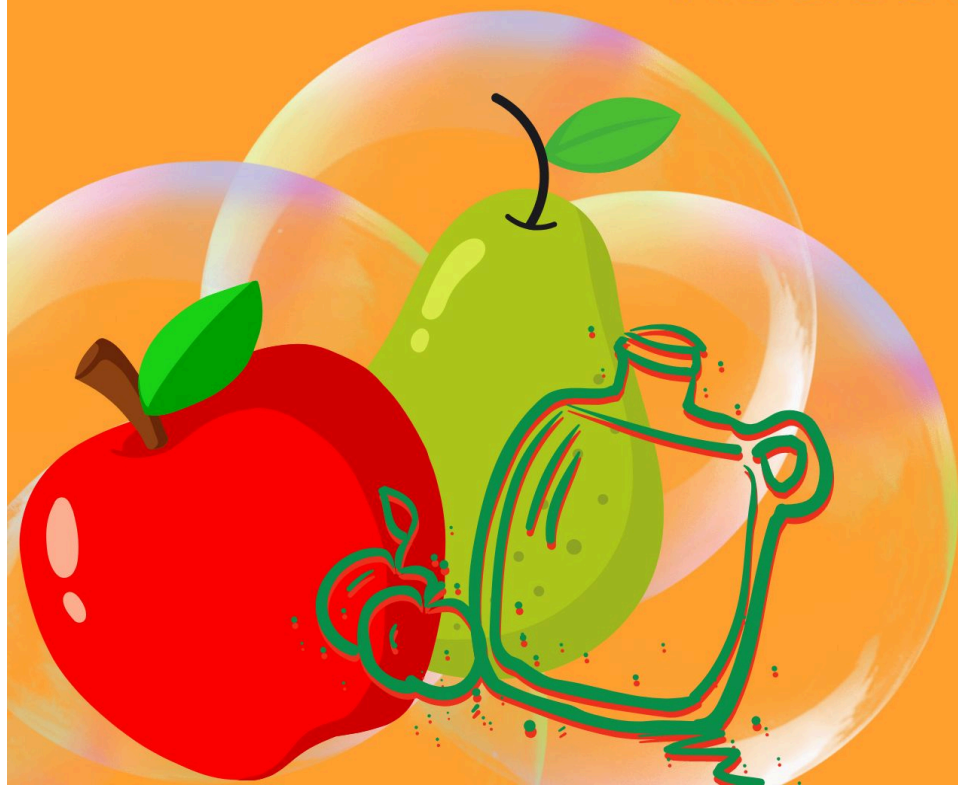
CIDER FEST

A WEEK OF CIDER,

LIVE MUSIC AND

STREET FOOD 21st - 26th

AUGUST





About Inn Touch

Inn Touch is the quarterly magazine of the Rugby and District branch of CAMRA. It has a print run of 2000 copies and is distributed by branch members to over 100 pubs in the local area.

Editor's intro

Hello and welcome to the spring edition of Inn Touch.

There has been plenty going on in the pub world since the last issue. This edition sees the Stars and the Raglan receiving well deserved awards. And, as a complete surprise, this newsletter also bagged one (Most Improved Branch Magazine 2023).

Outside of Rugby town centre, the Save the White Lion group have secured significant funding and in Lutterworth the Shambles is back, and newbie Cork and Hop is popping!

A group of branch members met in the Raglan with local councillors (pre-local election) to

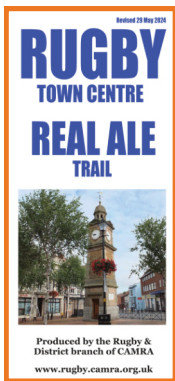
glean what they are doing to protect our local pubs. Richard has penned an article asking why there is no pub (or pubs) in Houlton?

Also, the branch has produced a Rugby town centre Real Ale trail for visitors. Plenty to read over a decent jar.

I've not mentioned everything, so have a browse through the pages.

Cheers,

Steve - editor



Above: the new Ale Trail (download from rugby.camra.org.uk)

Right: this time Richard had to wear one of his award-presenting shirts for me.



Campaign for Real Ale

Rugby & District Branch info

rugby.camra.org.uk



Join the CAMRA story
camra.org.uk/join

*Price for paying by Direct Debit correct from July 2023. Prices subject to change. Please check our website for the latest rates.



Council Summit

Date: March 2024 **Venue:** Raglan Arms

In late March Rugby CAMRA sent out an email to all 42 Rugby Borough Councillors. We raised the issues of the many recent pub closures and the complete lack of any new pubs being built on our burgeoning housing estates. At the time seven pubs had closed, although as of going to press the Courthouse and the Arnold Arms have reopened and the prospects for the Rugby Tap are looking good.

We had 18 replies to the email with the majority supporting our views. So we took the next step and organised a meeting between us and some of councillors that were interested. In April we sat down in the snug of the Raglan with members from all three main political parties and stressed to them that we wanted them to work together and CAMRA is a totally non-political organisation.

We raised the issue of the Half Moon. It has been altered beyond recognition inside, but no

planning permission was gained. It's still under offer as a pub, but the changes mean it almost certainly won't be. We see it as our Crooked House/Sarah Mansfield. The councillors pointed out the need to report any unauthorised work, then they can investigate such matters. The case of the Sarah Mansfield is still ongoing.

Then we discussed the lack of new pubs being built on our housing estates. The branch have raised the issue with officials from both Houlton and Cawston. There was much agreement over the lack of facilities to make communities viable in these locations. We have continued our campaigning and now a local pub chain has written to the Houlton management team about the issue.

The meeting was very valuable in getting our opinion across. Let's hope Rugby councillors can now think of pubs as part of the town's social fabric.



Shambles Rises From The Ashes

In February 2023 a devastating fire ripped through the Shambles in Lutterworth. The thatched roof and the top floor of this iconic 16th century building in the centre of the town was in ruins. The rest of the pub had suffered smoke and water damage and its future looked bleak.

Fourteen months later in April 2024 the Shambles has risen like a Phoenix from the ashes and reopened to the great delight of the town. The renovation was carried out by Baytree Construction from Wilmslow and was project managed by Simone Lake from Marstons. They have carefully retained most of the beams downstairs and created a stylish interior, fit for the 21st century. It looks fantastic- a renovation they should be rightly proud of.

Manageress Stacey Castle has a wonderful looking pub to run. It serves Banks's Bitter and Marstons Pedigree and offers food seven days a week. Monday night is cask ale night, when the beers are at £2.90. The pub also has rooms to let in the completely new upstairs section.

It's great to see the Shambles open again. It goes to show that even when things look bad, good times are never far away.

Richard



Left: Stacey the Shambles manageress



Stars Takes County Prize

Warwickshire Pub of the Year Winner

The Seven Stars has gone on from winning the Rugby CAMRA Pub of the Year 2023 to claim the Warwickshire CAMRA Pub of the Year. It will now go forward to a very competitive regional competition, but there is no reason why the pub cannot prevail in that too.

In the Warwickshire competition the Stars was up against the Griffin from Shustoke, the Church End Brewery Tap, the Old Bakery in Kenilworth, Thirst Edition from Shipston-on-Stour and the Three Tuns in Henley-in-

Arden. That was quite some competition.

Lisa from the Seven Stars said, "Winning Warwickshire CAMRA Pub of the Year means so much to us this year after the challenges over the last 3 or 4 years. It means that despite everything, we have continued to supply great ale and provide a fabulous experience for all our customers, without whose support we would not be here today so thank you for continuing to drink our beer! We must also thank our amazing team who work hard to make sure that everyone is welcomed and is served an excellent pint."

Below: Lisa and Graham from the Seven Stars

Richard





Sausage & Cider Festival

FRIDAY 5 - SUNDAY 7 JULY

Live music Sat @ 9pm, Sun @ 4pm

SUNDAY 25 AUG - Ultrafade 80s Synth Classics

SEVEN STARS

— RUGBY —



A PROUD PUB
WARWICKSHIRE CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2019

Serving an ever-changing range of cask and craft ales plus real ciders. Fine wines and a good selection of spirits also available. Bar snacks available including hand-crafted scotch eggs, pork pies and rolls.

Pie & Pint Wednesday 5.30 pm - 8.30 pm

Check out our Facebook page for events including coaches to Leicester Tigers, charity quizzes and live music.



01788 535478

40 Albert Square,
Rugby CV21 2SH
sevenstarsrugby.co.uk

Pub news

Arnold Arms, Barby

The Arnold re-opened on 25th May and currently offers two real ales – St Austell Tribute and Timothy Taylor Landlord. Lunchtime and evening meals, including pizzas, will be available from the beginning of July. Open from 12 noon to 11pm every day.

Lutterworth Golf Club

The View Restaurant and Bar and adjoining terrace, part of the new club house, is open to all. Two real ales, Fuller's London Pride and Timothy Taylor Landlord, are available. Breakfasts and lunches are served. Visit <https://www.lutterworthgc.co.uk/> for more details.

Raglan Arms

Pub of the Year 2023 Runner Up

Rugby CAMRA are pleased to announce that The Raglan Arms has finished runner up in this year's competition. Although a former multiple time winner in the past, it has had a few years not being recognised as one of Rugby's premier real ale outlets.

Since its takeover by Black Country Ales there have been a few changes of licensee. For the last 18 months Mark Mulkeen has been at the helm and has brought the fortunes of the pub back to being one of the best around.

Alongside Black Country Ales beers, up to six guest beers are always available including a mild, stout or porter. Good food is available from local suppliers including pork pies, scotch eggs and filled rolls. Outside there is a sun-trap garden with ample tables to sit at while enjoying the sunshine. The pub can also cater for small functions. A warm and friendly welcome awaits all who visit from Mark and his staff.

Darts and skittles teams play in the local league and on a Wednesday night you can come and learn how to play poker.

Quiz nights are held every other Thursday and major sporting events are shown on the large screen and TVs. Occasional live music nights take place.

Rugby CAMRA would like to say congratulations to Mark and the team for what he has achieved at the Raglan. It is now a must try pub in the heart of Rugby. Here's hoping it goes from strength to strength. Cheers!

Steve Durrant

Below: landlord Mark receiving the award from Richard





THE RAGLAN ARMS , RUGBY

50 Dunchurch Road, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 6AD

Mon - Thurs & Sun: 12pm - 11pm
Fri & Sat: 12pm - 12am

TUESDAY
Rugby Board
Games club

WEDNESDAY
Learn to play
Poker

THURSDAY
(Every other)
Quiz Night

Join the CAMRA story

Real ale is just the start...



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Join the CAMRA story
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*Price for paying by Direct Debit correct from July 2023.
Prices subject to change. Please check our website for the latest rates.

Join
CAMRA
from
£30.50*

Real stories, real people, real ale



Handpump “hijack” will confuse consumers says CAMRA



Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company risks confusing drinkers about cask conditioned beers, warns the Campaign for Real Ale, in reaction to a new beer launch which plans to hijack the iconic handpump.

CMBC has announced its plans to start serving keg beer through handpumps, which beer drinkers widely understand as usually being exclusively used for cask conditioned beer.

Keg beer is not a “live” beer, in that once it leaves the brewery it contains no viable yeast, and does not undergo further

conditioning, unlike cask-conditioned beers which continue to develop flavour and carbonation in the pub cellar.

While CMBC has indicated that, following feedback from CAMRA, it will label so-called “fresh ale” served through handpumps as “brewery conditioned beer”, the Campaign fears this will still confuse customers and erode their long-held understanding that only cask beer is served in this way.

Beer handpumps on bars have long been the easily recognisable sign of the freshness and quality of cask beer – and CAMRA fully intends to enforce its long-standing policy that beer drinkers should not be misled at the point of dispense through the sale of non-live, non-cask beer through handpumps.

**BONKERS
BINGO**

3rd Aug 7:30pm

**Proceeds to
prostrate cancer**

Chequers
SWINFORD

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**A WARM WELCOME AWAITS YOU AT
OUR TRADITIONAL VILLAGE PUB**



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A Mild Evening In Rugby

Earlier this year, local drinkers of the Mild persuasion were treated to the delights of four different real ale mild beers being available in four different drinking establishments in Rugby town centre.

It is common knowledge that mild beer struggles to remain in existence (it may represent only 1% of beer sales in the UK). However, Rugby pubs and clubs are doing their bit to keep things going, much to the delight of those of us who favour a dark, sweeter brew which is usually less hopped than other beers.

The pubs in which the quartet of beers were found are:

The **Seven Stars**, where mild can be found on a reasonably frequent basis, offered Meow Mild 3.8%, from the Fat Cat Brewery of Norwich – related to the famous Fat Cat Pub in the same city. The very dark brew was full bodied and had a satisfying flavour (evidently two types of malt were used alongside light hopping). A superb pint!

As an aside, preceding the Meow Mild, the Stars had on White Mild from Byatts. It was a pale coloured mild with malty sweetness and, again, light hopping. It tasted refreshing but I must admit I found it difficult to think of it as a mild because of its colour.

Moving on to the **Merchant's Inn** we found Nethergate's Melford Mild 3.7% - described as

a fine Suffolk sweet mild. It has a good depth to it and was full of flavour. Lovely! The Merchant's is another pub where mild can be found on a reasonably frequent basis.

The **Raglan Arms** is a constant for mild and Mark keeps a sound pint of Pig on the Wall Mild 4.3% (Black Country Brewery). The beer's weird name supposedly comes from Black Country folklore about someone putting a live pig on top of a wall to watch the local band march through the town! It's chestnut brown with a bitter/sweet blend of roasted malt. According to the brewer it also has suggestion of chocolate.

Gravediggers Mild 3.8% from Church End is an ever present at the **Town and County Club**. It's a black beer with a mixture of chocolate and roast flavours. It has a complex taste and smooth finish. One of my favourites!

Well done to the establishments that continue to offer mild beer for the delectation of local drinkers.

As John Lennon said, 'All we are saying is give Mild a chance', or something like that....

John Robson



Houlton Needs a Pub

Houlton needs a pub - in fact in my view they need 4 or 5. The need is there too in Cawston, Eden Park and Ashlawn Fields. So much of our town has become a beer desert, it's time something was done about it. Our meeting in April with the Rugby Borough Councillors highlighted the fact that there were no new pubs being built on our estates. There are no community hubs being built either, so that a micro pub or a takeaway can be situated there as well.

Below: the Ale Hub in Warwick
Right: manager Grace

I took a trip over to Warwick to see the Ale Hub Micropub on the Chase Meadow estate. Chase Meadow is on the south side of our county town and is made up of 1250 private and housing association homes, plus it has a primary and a secondary school. It also has a central shopping hub with a Tesco Express, an opticians, a chemist, a Chinese takeaway and, most importantly,



a micropub.

Ale Hub is a company that was founded by the McDiarmid family during lockdown. They now run 9 pubs, with the majority situated on housing estates. They say that Ale Hubs are more than just pubs, they are gathering places where neighbours become friends. Surely this is exactly what we need in Rugby on our estates. Their aim as a company is to revitalise the local pub scene and to provide the community with a choice of refreshing and well kept beverages.

On the bar are four hand pumps and on sale were Wye Valley Butty Bach and my choice Oakham Inferno. Manager Grace Pratt said the pub is very much part of the community, having already worked with the Warwickshire Blood Bikes,



Myton Hospice and have set up bars for the nearby community centre. It is also open every day of the week, which is a refreshing rarity these days.

Micro pubs can really be situated anywhere. They just need an unoccupied place to be housed. As a branch we will be contacting Connor McDiarmid from Ale Hub to suggest what a great fit they would be in Rugby. We have already contacted our councillors to say housing estates are not just about boxes to exist in.

P.S. The lack of pubs on estates in town was nailed home when I got to Chase Meadow. Right next to the Ale Hub is the Unicorn, a large Marstons family pub. So on the estate, that's one pub per 625 households. On this measure,

Houlton should have at least nine pubs when it's fully built!!!

Richard

**PATFEST
MUSIC & BEER
FESTIVAL**
24th August
*In aid of Bowel
Cancer UK*

The Red Lion Kilsby Pub and Dining.



A family run, freehouse in the heart of Kilsby. Serving real ales, premium lagers & ciders, wines & spirits.

Delicious, fresh food from a seasonal menu served seven days a week.

Tapas menu available all day from Tuesday to Saturday.

Quiz Night - Last Sunday of the Month
Open Mic Night - 2nd Sunday of the Month

10% Discount for CAMRA Members

10% Weekday lunch discount for over 65's.



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Saving the White Lion, Pailton

Update - £2M Lottery Grant

Pailton Parish Council has received a £2,040,170 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for an exciting heritage project, Save the White Lion, Pailton. Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the project focuses on restoring and renewing the much loved, grade II listed 18th century coaching inn to become a community hub at the heart of the village.

Supported through The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the new hub will provide the community with a pub, restaurant, café, shop, post office, accommodation, enterprise units, co-working space and landscaped gardens to the front and rear.

The last village shop closed in 2008 and no village resident has been able to visit or be involved with the White Lion due to its closure in 2014. Pailton is a diverse village with people from different backgrounds and facing different challenges. The Community Hub will be a new and unique opportunity for this wide range of people to gather together, enjoy each other's company and experience each other's perspectives.

The project will benefit the whole community from offering family fun activities, a co-working space, work experience and volunteering opportunities, to helping those suffering from

rural isolation. It is part of our mission to make sure the rich heritage of the building that is being discovered is told to future generations.

It's likely that the White Lion began life in the late 16th century or early 17th century as a small 2 bay timber framed farmhouse. During the 18th century it became a coaching inn to service the turnpike road and the first tenant/landlord was recorded in 1791. By the mid-19th century there were six pubs in Pailton of which the White Lion is the last standing. The first Post Office in Pailton was at the White Lion in 1850 and so there's a neat circle that brings it back to where it started. The Odd Fellows Society held meetings on the top floor of the White Lion. Their purpose was to raise money for the relief of the poor of the village so again it is entirely fitting that the building should be used for the benefit of the community.

Commenting on the award, Tina Simpson, Parish Councillor and Project Lead, said: "We are delighted to have received this support thanks to National Lottery players and are confident the project will put the heart back into Pailton, bringing much needed facilities and telling the heritage story to the wider community."

What a Corker!

In early May the Cork & Hop finally opened its doors to the public. The Lutterworth bottle shop and tasting room will open 4 days a week, Wednesday to Saturday and on Friday evenings they are running special tasting events.

The shop has a small bar and an arrangement of tables and chairs. It's well stocked with beers from such breweries as Twisted Barrel, Borderlines, Tynt Meadow and their own subsidiary brewery Zero Six. While I was there I sampled a vinous Czech style dark lager from the Tunnel Brewery. I also got to sample Zero Six's new green tea, lychee and watermelon beer, yes really!!!

On the evening that I was there they were holding a Belgian evening. On offer were a selection of Trappist ales, including the seldom seen Westvleteren 12. A real rarity in this country. Future events include beers from South Carolina, Tunnel and Blue Monkey.

Good luck from all at Rugby CAMRA.

Richard



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11 B&B ROOMS.
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Regular local pub entertainment

Subject to change. Please check with the host's website or Facebook for more detail.

Monday

Quiz night

Black Horse, Bilton
Green Man, Dunchurch
Real Ale Classroom, Lutterworth
Merchants (last in month)

Music / Other

Newbold Crown - Open Mic (every other)
Quigleys - Folk Night

Tuesday

Quiz night / Other

The Bear
Waterside, Hillmorton
Raglan - Board Games Club

Wednesday

Quiz night

George, Bilton
Royal Oak, Crick

Music / Other

Squirrel Inn - open mic
Bear - Classic Car & Bike night (monthly)
Raglan - Learn to play Poker

Thursday

Quiz night

Town & County Club (last in month)
Admiral Nelson, Braunston
Friendly Inn, Frankton (last in month)
Raglan (alt.Thursdays)

Victoria Inn
Save the White Lion - Pailton
Village Hall (monthly)

Music

Town & County Club - jam session (1st & 3rd in month)
Quigleys - live music
Knightley Arms, Yelvertoft - folk (2nd in month)

Bingo

Royal Oak, Crick

Friday

Music

Quigleys - live music
Prince of Wales - karaoke

Saturday

Music

Quigleys - traditional Irish music
Prince of Wales - live music
Squirrel Inn - live music

Sunday

Quiz night

Red Lion, Crick (last in month)
Red Lion, Kilsby (last in month)
Seven Stars (4th in month)
William Webb Ellis
Victoria Inn

Music

Red Lion, Kilsby - open mic (1 each month)
Wheatsheaf, Crick - open mic (3rd in month)
Squirrel (most Sundays)

