

MerseyAle

LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL

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MerseyAle

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Welcome to MerseyAle

Hello and welcome to the autumn edition of MerseyAle. As we have been unable to produce a magazine for a while this is a 'bumper' edition. You will find a report from this year's beer festival (page 28), which was as successful and fun as ever, thank you to everyone who attended, sponsored and supported the event. As you can see from our front cover, dates for next year's festival have been confirmed and tickets will be available later in the year. We also have some sad news, with the death, late last year, of the legendary **Paddy Byrne**, such a stalwart of the Liverpool Real Ale scene for many years, he will be sadly missed. You can read our tribute to Paddy on pages 28-31. Following Paddy's death we had the shocking news that our Young Person's Officer **Daniel Chaney** had passed away, our condolences to his family and friends. Finally, there was more sad news when we heard of the passing of **John Armstrong**, a ex-committee member and a previous, award winning, editor of this magazine. John's contribution to the campaign was considerable both at local and national level, particularly when it came to pubs under threat, especially the much loved Roscoe Head. Our Condolences go to his wife Helen, daughter Katherine and his many friends in Liverpool and beyond. You can read our tribute to John on pages 13-15. Lastly, I would like to say a big THANK YOU! to everyone who has contributed to this edition of MerseyAle, the advertisers and, of course, to those who have submitted articles. We always welcome news or articles, so if you have anything you would like to share please forward them to me sonia.james-henry@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

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Liverpool & Districts CAMRA Branch Brewery and Pub News



BLACK LODGE

Blacklodge beers are increasingly on the pumps in 1936 pubs, and the brewery continues to brew new concept beers. Their Dream sequence range of beers include Belgian Circus and Going Down to Lincoln.

BOTELAJ

They have recently celebrated the 2nd anniversary of the first ever brew (in August this year). Four Thanes was the first beer brewed back in 2024.

For the 2nd anniversary a new brew, Merton, was brewed and is out now, it's a 4.0% pale ale with Mosaic and Rakau hops. The 5th beer in the Single Hop IPA series has just been released, it showcases the rare experimental Pink (ID-158) hop from Jackson Farms in Idaho. They are beginning to put some beers in Key keg and hope to bring out cans in the near future.

COLBIER

Now in their third year, the team of Mike, Vik & Jason from Colbier continues to expand their reach outside of Liverpool, with their beers appearing from Glasgow to London. Their collabora-



tion with Belfast-based Bullhouse Brew Co. led to their beers being poured in Northern Ireland for the first time.

They were once again nominated for the Best New Brewery Award by the Brewers Journal alongside Indie Rabble and Bearwood.

Recent reinvestment in a brew kit has allowed Colbier to produce their own nitro stout, which is available as part of their core range, they have also purchased new branded 4.5 gallon pins, and 30L and 50L kegs. Pop-up taproom days over the summer months have allowed fans to visit the brewery and taste fresh beers direct from the



tank alongside their cask and keg offerings.

Upcoming special brews include the return of the award-winning Red IPA Arpeggio, Session IPA Tempo, and an as-yet unnamed Rye Stout. Colbier has further plans to adapt more of their beers to be gluten-free. Finally, Colbier will be opening their



The Common Time

first micropub in Autumn 2026. Named The Common Time, it will be a community-focused pub in Childwall, featuring their own beers alongside other guest breweries, plus a bespoke selection of real ciders, artisanal spirits, and soft drinks, with a focus



on sourcing from either local or independently owned producers.

LOVE LANE

Love Lane have been using their small 3 barrel plant to brew some new beers which have been seen, not only at the brewery tap, but in local pubs. The Oatmeal Stout 5.2% has proved so popular it might be brewed at their regular plant. Summer Ale 4.2% has a very pleasant

balance of malt and hops beer and the Irish Red 4.2% is a red rye beer. Higsons Bitter won silver in the overall champion cask at the SIBA (small independent brewers) Competition, and gold in bitter up to 4.4% section. Higsons beers, which they also brew, are now regularly seen in pubs across Merseyside.



LIVERPOOL CITY CENTRE

This summer the Angel opened on Bold St, a 1936 PubCo conversion of Maggie May's cafe. The Angel offers a similar range to



the other 1936 pubs, with a mix of national favourites and local beers from Black Lodge, Neptune and Love Lane/Higsons. As with other 1936 PubCo con-



versions it has a traditional pub style and is decorated with breweriana and knick knacks. It has two floors and the back entrance is on Wood Street.

The Swan on Wood Street has been taken over by Fiona and Dominic who also have the Bridewell, the Denbigh Castle and the Pen Factory and reopened following a minor refurbishment.

At the top of Wood St, on Berry St, is the Black Horse & Rainbow which has been taken over and refurbished by DGB Hospitality (Three Piggies, Pogue Mahones etc). The Black Horse & Rainbow was the name of the pub when it was the home of the Liverpool Brewing Company

and had 5 barrel plant in the window, it is great to see it back again as a cask pub with four pumps in action. Historically the pub has been called the Masonic, Lemon Lounge, Metropolitan, Trader Jacks and most recently Red Door. The interior is full of interesting breweriana, there is a large garden with a massive sports screen, upstairs bar and terrace, it is already very busy at weekends and late licence.

Carol Ross has sold the Roscoe Head, so we hope that the buyer doesn't make any changes to the pub. We wish Carol well for the future.

Dave Hardman, licensee of the Lion for many years, and recently Ye Cracke decided to call time and retire. His pleasant



welcoming sigh will be missed by all. We wish him and long and happy retirement.

NORTH LIVERPOOL

In Crosby, the Norseman opened in April following a conversion from a restaurant. It has up to 5 cask beers available and a pleasant outside terraced garden. Now run by owners of the Old Tap.

Also in Crosby the George, a previous Stonegate pub, has been taken over by the people who run Murphy's Tavern and after a major, and rather magnificent transformation has a range of 3 cask beers

One final piece of Crosby news, the Angus, situated opposite

Stamps, has reopened and is now 'Goose on the Green', at the time of our committee members visit, there was no real ale available.

SOUTH LIVERPOOL WOOLTON

The Village Cat (The 4th Black Cat Pub within the Liverpool area) opened its doors on 31 July. It has 4 cask ales, with Draught Bass as a regular

Gardeners Arms - After much messing about, the Gardeners Arms has now removed its handpumps all together and no longer sells cask Ales.

GATEACRE

Hickory's Smokehouse, the ex Bear & Staff pub, opened its doors on 17 July, but sadly unlike its predecessor, it no longer sells cask Ales.

HALEWOOD

The Eagle & Child, this pub now has 2 handpumps, with one cask ale always available. The beer is always changing and is usually one of the Greene King offerings.

WAVERTREE

The Edinburgh, Sandown Lane, has reopened following 9 months of closure after the lease was taken up by DockLeaf bars who also run the Dispensary. The pub has not changed at all and still runs a Irish session on Mondays. Cask Ale offerings have included Ossett White Rat. Nearby on Wavertree High St., the Town Hall reopened in April after a refurb and now serves cask beer.

Contributors

Gary Donnelly, Steve Downing and Tony Morgan

HERITAGE PUB WALK No 2

NI Cat etc - National Inventory Categories

On 23rd May 2026 we held only the second of our new heritage pub walks. Once again, the itinerary was designed to be easily manageable and provide an opportunity to visit pubs that appear on the National Inventory of heritage pub interiors, as well as some that are recognised only locally, but all of which serve quality Cask Ales. This time we started at 12.30pm in Peter Kavanagh's on Egerton Street

1 PETER KAVANAGH'S:

2-6 Egerton Street, Liverpool L8 7LY - [NI Cat 3]
This is quite a remarkable and unique pub set within the end of a terrace which dates back to



1840. It started off in 2 Egerton St, but grew into No 4 in 1929, and into No 6 in 1977. Peter Kavanagh became its licensee in 1897 and remained so until his death in 1950. The pub was called the Grapes at that time, but was known for many years as Peter Kavanagh's, so it was no surprise when it was formally renamed in his honour in 1978.

The exterior and interior lobbies have mosaic floors. The entrance passage leads to a centrally placed public bar, which has a panelled front with a copper top. There are leaded glass windows behind the servery, but these are covered up by mirrors, and a large collection of nick-nacks hanging from the ceiling.



In the two snugs are colourful leaded windows installed

by craftsman William English, who also installed large stained-glass windows in Worcester Cathedral. The four windows in the rear snug depict an 18th-century coach and horses, the coat of arms of Oxford University, the coat of arms of Cambridge University, and one of Stephenson's famous steam locomotive 'Rocket'. In the front room there is a bay window comprising three stained windows, 'The Lighthouse', 'Galleon in full sail' and 'Crossed Oars'.

Both snugs have curved wood panelled walls with fixed seating and date back to 1929. Above



them are original paintings by Eric Robinson (a Scottish artist). The eleven feet long painting in the front snug, often referred to as 'The Pickwick Room', is a variation on a scene from the Pick-



wick Papers. The thirteen foot wide painting in the rear snug contains several scenes depicting drinking and merriment which has led to it acquiring the name 'The Hogarth Room'.

There are many examples of hand-carved oak woodwork throughout the pub, such as the four beautiful oak wood panels depicting drinking scenes in the eighteenth century that are situated either side of the two fireplaces, and the six carved heads on the end of the bench arms, believed to be caricatures of Peter Kavanagh himself. A lot of this work is said to have been done by craftsmen working on Liverpool's Anglican cathedral.

On leaving Peter Kavanagh's, walk back down Egerton St and turn right onto Catherine St. Head down Catherine St and turn left down Falkner St. The Belvedere is or your right set back from road [9 mins walk]

2 BELVEDERE:

8 Sugnall St, Liverpool L7 7EB - [NI Cat 3]



The Belvedere is set in a three-storey terrace consisting of eight houses built in the second quarter of the 19th century. It's a former hotel, which has two public rooms separated by a corridor-cum-drinking lobby which has a red herringbone and black edged tiled floor.

There is some excellent etched glass here, notably the curved panel of a Renaissance courtier entitled 'music' in a partition alongside the inner door. Wear has made this illegible from the outside but look from the inside and the words are much clearer. There is also some excellent etched and cut glass that can be found in the sashes forming the five-bay screen, situated between the drinking lobby and the servery, depicting a variety of birds in waterside settings.

The Bar on the right has a door with 'Bar' etched in the window with a stained and leaded panel above. The front windows have the words 'Hotel' and 'Bar' etched in two of four decorative windows. This room, which has limited space for drinkers, retains its early twentieth century curved bar front, and the front wall is decorated with painted tongue 'n' groove panelling on the

right-hand side. The barback is all modern work, unfortunately, as the original basic bar back was removed when the building closed as a pub between 2003 and 2006 to start its life as offices. Fortunately, the building's statutory listed status preserved the rest of the interior.



On the left of the entrance is the high-ceilinged Smoke Room which has 'Smoke Room' etched windows in the door, and the front windows. It retains a wood surround fireplace, possibly dating from 1910's, but the tiles are modern. Panelled walls have replaced the tiled dado, and the seating is modern.

On leaving Belvedere, turn right and right again to continue your walk down Falkner St, turn left on Hope St and right again onto Rice St. Ye Crake is halfway down on the right [2mins walk]



3 YE CRACKE:

13 Rice St, Liverpool L1 9BB - [NI Cat 2]

There's been a pub on this site for over 150 years. Within the pub is a small section listed by English Heritage called the 'War

Office', this is a tiny snug in which drinkers often use to discuss Britain's overseas military operations.

Ye Crake was once a regular meeting place of 'The Dissenters', namely John Lennon, Stuart Sutcliffe, Rod Murray and Bill Harry. The students were flat mates in the nearby Gambia Terrace from 1960.





It was in this pub in 1960, that the college friends vowed to put Liverpool on the Map after a particularly disappointing poetry recital

by Royston Ellis at the Art College.

The pub changed hands in early 2025, and after a lengthy, thorough and sympathetic restoration, it reopened its doors in September of that year. A full report of this restoration can be found in the Winter 2025 edition of MerseyAle.

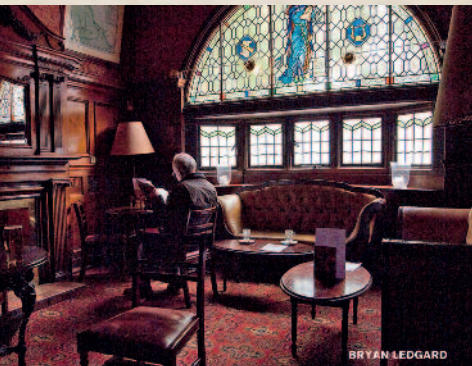
On leaving Ye Cracke, turn left and head back up to Hope St and turn left again onto Hope St and head to the junction with Hardman St & Mirtle St. [3 mins walk]



4 PHILHARMONIC DINING ROOMS:

36 Hope St, Liverpool L1 9BX -

[NI Cat 3]
The 'Phil' is one of the most architecturally significant pubs in Liverpool, and was built around 1898-1900 for the brewer Robert Cain. Its de-



signer was Walter W. Thomas who was a craftsman from the School of Architecture and Applied Arts at what was, at that time, the Liverpool University College, now the University of Liverpool.

You enter the pub through a glorious pair of metal gates which lead to a drinking lobby, off which other rooms radiate, the lobby is decorated in musical themes that relate to the nearby concert hall. The embellishment that surrounds you is what makes 'the Phil' so special, from the ornate plasterwork and the detailed mosaics, to the mahogany and copper reliefs, and stained



glass. In the fireplace-alcove are heroes of the Boer War represented in the stained glass, a war which was being fought when the pub was built.



Facing the counter are two fine panelled rooms, originally they were named the "smoke room" on the left, and the "newsroom" on the right. These rooms are now called Brahms and Liszt. At the back of the pub is a vast room which was once a billiard hall said to have been in use up until the 1960s. It is sumptuously embellished with a huge frieze incorporating the crowning of Apollo (over the entrance) and 'The Murmur of the Sea' (opposite) by artist Charles Allen: lavish fireplaces, panelling and copper reliefs (by Bare).

Of particular interest to many visitors are the high quality of the gentlemen's urinals, constructed in "a particularly attractive roseate marble".

On leaving the Phil, turn right to head down Hardman St as far as Leece St and cross over Leece Street when you reach the Bombed-out church. You will find the Dispensary on your right just a few yards up Renshaw St [5 mins walk]



5 DISPENSARY:

87 Renshaw Street, Liverpool L1 2SP - [Local Inventory]

The Dispensary Pub dates from 1857 and has an interior displaying many traditional Victorian features. Its exterior is resplendent in its cream and dark green paint, there are large windows, and traditional signage.



The pub started life as a Tetley pub called "The Grapes" but changed its name to "The Dispensary" in the early 2000's as part of a refurbishment and rebranding programme by Cains, who also owned Kelly's Dispensary on Smithdown Road. The original name 'The Grapes' is on display behind the bar and also appears on the mosaic floor in the Renshaw Street doorway.

On leaving the 'Dizzy', turn right on Renshaw St and head down towards The Adelphi Hotel.

Cross over before you reach the hotel and head down Ranelagh St, towards Central station. Cross over opposite the station and you'll find the next pub on Cases St by the entrance to Clayton Sq [7 mins walk].

6 GLOBE: 17 Cases St, Liverpool L1 1HW - [Local Inventory]

A 'local in the heart of the city', this small, cosy pub won the Liverpool and District CAMRA Best Community Pub Award in 2012, and Kitty McNicholas, who has worked there for 24 years, won



our Bar Person of the Year Award in 2014. Under the longstanding stewardship of Sue Johnson (Licensee 1997-2026) the Globe became a valued community pub, where a lively conversation could be had at any time of the day.



The pub has been restored on several occasions, the one in 2012 was sympathetically done, however in early 2026, following the retirement of Sue Johnson, it has lost some of the photographs and newspaper cuttings which provided insights into the pub's history and local characters to make space for several large TVs, unfortunately also gone is the world map that used to fill the wall of the rear lounge, but thankfully it retains most of its heritage features.

If you have any feedback or suggestions for future heritage walks, please email pete.elloy@liverpoolcamra.org.uk, but remember this is a heritage pub walk so all the pubs we visit on these particular walks must all be listed by CAMRA either nationally or locally.

Pete Elloy
Heritage Pubs Officer

Liverpool CAMRA Lime Street to Central Station PUB WALK with Gary Donnelly

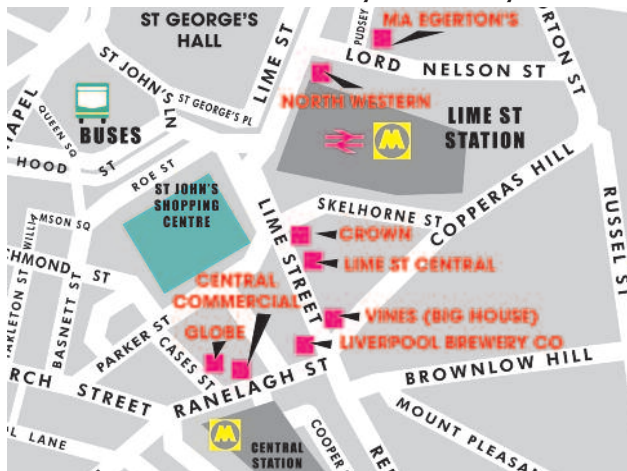
Google Maps will tell you that it's 0.2 Miles and a 5 minute walk between Lime Street and Liverpool Central Stations. What it does not tell you, is there are 8 pubs selling Cask Ales between the two stations, so all aboard and lets crack on!

If you are arriving at Lime Street via train, turn right upon departing and walk out of the side entrance past the taxi rank. Look to the right and you will see **Ma Egerton's** (Known locally as Ma Egies). This pub is



situated at the rear of the Empire Theatre and is named after its infamous landlady who ran the bar for over 30 years! It has a bar at the front and a side room full of pictures of famous legends who have both played at the Empire and then sought suitable liquid refreshment in the pub afterwards! They have 3 handpulls and on my visit 2 were actively selling cask ales (both from the Titanic Brewery). I can also personally testify that they sell a great bowl of Scouse too!

Upon leaving Ma Egies walk down the hill past the station and the **North Western** is located on your left. This is a Wetherspoon's offering which like Jars of Marmite, people tend to love or hate! Personally



I don't have any problem with an organisation that offers a wide range of cask ales at very reasonable prices. My strategy is to avoid their regular national drinks (You all know which they are!) and hone in on the guest beers. On my visit, they had 12 handpulls with 10 selling cask ales of which 7 were changing beers. This pub does have



the irritating habit of people standing in a single queue waiting to be served which is one of my pet hates. Fortunately, this is compensated for by the superb views of St George's Hall across the road should you be lucky enough to secure a window table view.

Upon leaving the pub turn left walking past Lime Street Station and you can't fail to miss the



Crown located on the corner. This is the first of 3 superb Edwardian Gin Palaces to appear on this walk and the decor is simply exquisite, particularly the highly decorative ceiling. There is a main room and a separate side-room to the rear of the bar, and an extremely decorative staircase which I have never had the good fortune to climb! The crown has 7 hand-pulls on offer, of which 4 are regularly changing and does offer CAMRA members a 20p discount on a pint of all cask ales.



Turn left out of the Crown and you will quickly arrive at the **Lime Street Central**. This is more of a foodie pub with prices to match! However, they do offer 2 regular changing cask ales, and offer a 10% discount on all cask ales sold to CAMRA members (20% if you are lucky enough to be a student!).

Once again turn left when leaving and you will quickly recognise the **Vines** (Known locally as The Big House), a very apt description for this massive Gin-Palace. The Vines probably



competes with the Philharmonic for the most architecturally superb pub in Liverpool. It has a sizeable front bar, with plenty of shrubbery to give it a "Colonial feel", a side bar, with a most impressive fire-place and an extremely impressive back room with a superb Coloured Dome which has to be seen to be believed. This pub is part of the 1936 Pub Co Group and offers 10 different hand-pulls, with 6 changing beers one of which is always from the Neptune Brewery. They have a large selection

of puzzles and games in the front bar, and also offer a 10% discount to CAMRA Members. Upon leaving the pub cross the road and immediately opposite is the **Liverpool Brewery Co** (previously known as the Sanc-



tuary). This pub offers 6 hand-pulls all changing but always has at least one classic bitter as well as a stout. If you are hungry then Momo's Street-Food is available from 1pm upstairs on a daily basis. The pub has a Poker night every Tuesday and is part of the national Red Tooth set-up.

Turn right when leaving this pub and head around the corner



when you will come to the **Central Commercial** which is basically directly opposite the main entrance to Liverpool Central Station. This pub has 4 hand-pulls selling Wainwright and Wells Bombardier as well as 2 guest beers. This is the third of the aforementioned Gin-Palaces and has an impressive coloured glass dome which you can see when just entering the bar. The pub can get extremely busy at

weekends when it has Karaoke on etc, but during the day it is a lot quieter. In my opinion, the Central sells a better quality of cask beer than it is often given credit for. Turn right when leaving the pub



and take the next right where you will see the **Globe**. This is the pub where it all began for the Liverpool & District CAMRA in 1974, and proudly has a plaque in the back room stating this fact. The Globe has recently come under new management and offers 4 hand-pulls with Timothy Taylor's Landlord being a regular. If it has a front room with a famous sloping floor which has caught some punters out when they've had a few too many! The recent introduction of TV's has split the opinion of pub regulars, but all would agree that this is a classic back-street Victorian Pub.

That is the end of our tour and whilst Google Maps might advise a walking journey of 5 minutes, it does not state how long it would take should you decide to partake a tippie in every establishment. Cheers!

Gary Donnelly



CAMRA LIVERPOOL & DISTRICTS BEER FESTIVAL 2026

Once again a big THANK YOU to everyone who made this year's beer festival a great success, from attendees to volunteers and, of course all our sponsors.

The winners of this year's beer of the festival competition were:-
Joint First: Bollington Brewery Chinook and Grapefruit
Joint First: Kissingate Brewery Black Cherry Mild
Second: Harvey's Brewery Old Ale
Third: Neptune Brewery Ventura
Congratulations to them all.



Our charity this year was Kidney Care UK, for which you raised £564.

We can announce that the dates for next year's festival will be from 18th February to 20th February. Until then enjoy these great pics from this year's festival.

Mel James-Henry
Beer Festival Organiser/Branch Chair



John Armstrong

Jean Pownceby pays tribute to John Armstrong who sadly died on August 7th (with thanks to Helen Armstrong and to Geoff Edwards for their contributions)

building!' The combination of John's witty and often appropriately acerbic writing and Dennis's designs was a truly effective campaigning tool – another great partnership!

In July 2004, within a year of John taking over the magazine, it was awarded a Highly Commended certificate for the 'most improved CAMRA newsletter' at the National CAMRA AGM which that year was held in Southport. Just two years later at the 2006 AGM, MerseyAle was awarded Newsletter of the Year!

The next few years were really busy ones in the city, with the celebration of Liverpool 800 in 2007 (800th anniversary of the granting of Liverpool's first Royal Charter by King John) and then the Capital of Culture throughout 2008. John, who was a strategic thinker by nature, was able to combine his campaigning zeal with his professional life. As the Director of the Speke and Garston Regeneration Project he was well versed in dealing with city luminaries, and could identify those who were running projects relating to the city's celebrations, organising meetings with them and always putting CAMRA at the forefront of deliberations. John's enthusiasm for getting things moving was infectious and Liverpool CAMRA was on a roll! There were Pub Festivals, starting with six participating pubs in 2005, and reaching 65 by 2008, with pub passports designed and pub maps freely available to encourage people to visit the pubs. Free outdoor

tasting events were held at different locations, including the highly successful Hope Street Cultural Festival, to encourage people to try real ale. So there were a lot of things going on to spread the CAMRA word across the city and all reported on, of course, in lively fashion in MerseyAle!

John was keen to capture the growing momentum of CAMRA awareness and create events to 'Bring New People to Real Ale', in particular capturing the growing interest of women of all ages in drinking it! A very successful Women's tasting session took place at the 2008 Beer Festival. John himself took a back seat, but he was a pivotal catalyst in sparking what later became the long-running women-led Snowball campaign. The campaign's success led to the Branch becoming the first winner of the then new prestigious CAMRA National Award for Membership Innovation. The award was presented at the National AGM in Torquay in 2012 and received jointly by John and myself, all very exciting! It was later displayed in the Dispensary pub where many of the women's events took place.

But John was never complacent – the work went on! He always had his pulse on what was going on, both locally and nationally, and MerseyAle continued to both inform and entertain its readers. He considered the social and campaigning aspects of CAMRA to be closely inter-related, so there were always

features on events that combined the two, including the long-running highly successful Beer Festival in the Cathedral Crypt, the annual Awards ceremony, the aforementioned Snowball campaign and many other events that brought people together to drink real ale! But there were also more serious articles, designed to raise awareness, for example about pub closures and the exploitative nature of PubCos and other national issues. Locally, John did not mince his words when it came to the closing of the much-loved Everyman Bistro and its replacement by a faceless corporate entity; he titled his article 'Lost the Plot- and its Heart and Soul!' And then in 2015 came the attention-grabbing front cover 'Killer Punch – then sold down the River', about the takeover of the beloved Roscoe Head by New River Retail. This spawned the full blown 'Save the Roscoe Head' campaign - with a petition that drew support not only locally but from all parts of the country and, indeed, from many parts of the world, and rallies outside the pub in both September and November with attendees sporting 'Save the Roscoe Head' T-shirts. The second rally was addressed in person by CAMRA's National Chair, Colin Valentine, who had previously sent a message of support for the first, quickly arranged, rally – word spread fast!

Colin – and indeed the whole of CAMRA's National Executive – were in Liverpool again in April 2016, when the national AGM and Members' Weekend were held here - yet another accolade for the Branch. But by then, after 15 years, John was ready for a rest and soon afterwards, he resigned as Editor and withdrew from the

committee, but his interest in CAMRA and its aims never waned, nor that in drinking real ale!

He also had a wide range of other interests, with an encyclopaedic knowledge and great love of railways. He had been very actively involved in the 1980s' lengthy fight to save the beautiful Settle-Carlisle line, a true national treasure. Campaigning was definitely in John's blood! He was a regular visitor to the Isle of Man as a keen member of the 'Isle of Man 50 Group' of transport enthusiasts and to take part in the annual summer Manx Heritage Transport Festival – and here we can link back to CAMRA and MerseyAle! On these visits he became acquainted with David Halliwell and Angela Aspin, avid CAMRA supporters and activists, and so



he began to include their news in MerseyAle and arrange shipment of a supply of the magazine to be distributed across the island, where it would not have been feasible for them to have their own magazine. Liverpool readers benefitted too from being able to read about what was going on in pubs in a very pleasant and handy holiday location! From Autumn 2011, in his opening editorial piece, John began to welcome readers to 'MerseyAlé and Manx Ale'. Besides his wide range of interests, John had taken on another very important role

from 2012, that of family man! He and Snowball campaigner Helen McCall had been friends, with many shared interests, for some time. Within days of his retirement from work, a change in that relationship was triggered in a most unlikely way! While many of us were enjoying ourselves on a CAMRA coach trip, despite the snowy January weather, Helen had been working at the university and, on leaving, had slipped on the ice and badly broken her wrist. As her friend and in recognition of the fact that she would need support, John went over to West Kirby the next day to be with her and



her daughter Katherine and, basically, 'he moved in and never moved out'! Within a month, their friendship had developed into something more and the rest, as they say, is history!

The three of them became a close and loving family unit. John was an excellent cook and he shared his skills with Katherine who loved learning them. He also actively encouraged her interest in photography and helped arrange for her to have calendars printed featuring her photographs which made very good Christmas presents. And, of course, Helen and John continued to share their many interests, begging to differ on

just one – John was an Evertonian! But they enjoyed interesting railway journeys, whisky tastings, concerts at the Philharmonic Hall and, of course real ale! Helen and Katherine started going to the Isle of Man with John and he to Whitby Folk Festival with them. Helen and John also shared a deep and spiritual religious faith and a strong and loving personal relationship. They were married at West Kirby Methodist Church in June 2017, a lovely service with many friends in attendance followed by a most enjoyable reception at the West Kirby Tap! They honeymooned in Edinburgh, travelling by train, of course!

Very sadly, in December 2019, John had a debilitating stroke, which rendered him severely physically incapacitated and no longer able to live at home, but did not affect his intellect or memory – or his sense of humour and fondness of good company! Helen saw him every

single day and ensured that, with her assistance, he got out and about as much as possible. Katherine would go along too on many occasions, and so the close and supportive family unit lived on, despite the difficult circumstances. Needless to say, many of the outings they went on involved pubs! John was living in Upton initially, where his local was the Bow-Legged Beagle, but he then moved to Hoylake, much closer to home, from where he was able to make visits to his home front garden and attend his own church with Helen and Katherine. He also became a local at the very welcoming Black Toad where he would 'hold court' most Fridays and sometimes on other days. Friends old and new from both sides of the Mersey would gather to enjoy a few pints with him, a good time had by all, I can confirm! Helen and John would also sometimes meet friends for coffee in the

mornings and did so with their very close friends Joyce and Gron just the day before John died.

John's funeral service was held on September 1st at West Kirby Methodist Church with many people in attendance to celebrate his life. Afterwards, glasses were raised and memories shared at the Black Lodge Brewery Tap which opened specially for the occasion.

Rest in peace, John, you are sadly missed. To use Geoff's words, 'greatly as a friend and of course a terrific ambassador for the Campaign for Real Ale'. Sincere condolences to Helen and Katherine whose love and devotion brought so much pleasure and comfort to John.

Jean Pownceby

Getting around Merseyside

Below are some useful contact details for transport operators in Merseyside.

Merseytravel: For Journey Planner and Timetables

Tel: 0151 330 1000

www.merseytravel.gov.uk

Merseyrail: Operators of trains across Merseyside

Tel: 0151 555 1111

www.merseyrail.org

Whatpub: Lists which buses or trains stop near the pub

www.whatpub.com
National Rail Enquiries
ojp.nationalrail.co.uk



The Vernon Arms

69 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2HJ

Putting the ale in Dale Street

7 Handpulls always live

Guaranteed White Rat and The Rev James

Regulars: Fyne Ales, Brimstage, Oakham, Bass

Cider: SeaCider, Old Rosie, Black Dragon, Thistly Cross...

All cask priced £4.00-£4.40 a pint

Exceptional food served daily

Track our ales in real time on the realalefinder app

Mon-Thurs 12pm-12am, Fri-Sun 11am-1am

info@vernonarms.net - @VernonArmsL2



Planning change success

On Monday 17th August the government announced stronger planning protections for pubs in England after months of considering watering them down.

The government were looking at protecting the last pub in an area, rather than all of them, making it easier for greedy developers to convert locals into houses, shops and takeaways. Thanks to CAMRA members, who sent thousands of emails to their MPs using the e-lobby, and conversations with civil servants and parliamentarians, CAMRA has secured a huge campaign win for vulnerable pubs and communities who want to save their locals.

tions in the planning system to stop much-loved pubs being lost to communities and giving people a better chance of saving their local from redevelopment.

It's not right that viable businesses can be run into the ground by developers who think they can make more by converting a successful pub into a house or flats.

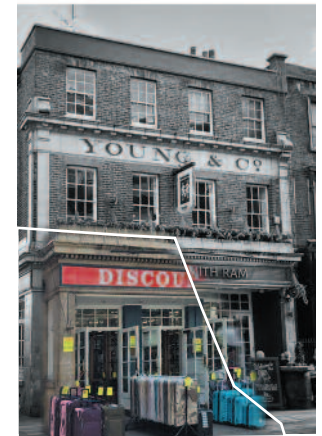
This proves that when we join together and speak out and make the case for pubs, MPs, civil servants and government ministers listen.

I want to say a big thank you. Contacting your MP, supporting your CAMRA branch or being a member of the CAMRA family makes a huge difference. We know times are still exceptionally tough for licensees and independent brewers, and that drinkers aren't getting the choice or quality they want. With the Autumn Budget coming up, we'll be asking for your support again as crucial decisions will be made on things like VAT, alcohol duty and employment costs for pubs, social clubs and breweries".

Restrictive covenants

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is also looking at restrictive covenants (legal conditions within a property's contract) when pubs in England are sold to, check if this practice is preventing communities from running community-owned locals.

If you know of any locals that



are sold with restrictive covenants that stop the building from being used as a pub, email campaigns@camra.org.uk

Brewers Access to Market review

The government carried out an Access to Market review for independent brewers who struggle to get their beers in to pubs due to the stranglehold global brewers have over bars.

Ash Corbett-Collins (chairman), Ellie Hudspith (senior campaigns and communications manager) and Tom Stainer (chief executive) met with the Business and Trade minister Kate Dearden MP to discuss plans for publication of the review, which has been delayed due to the change of prime minister and his government.

In parliament, the minister mentioned the engagement with MPs and breweries continues "as the government considers the evidence ahead of any announcements".

CAMRA will continue to talk to the government about the review and reform needed for independent brewers' access to market.



CAMRA chairman Ash Corbett-Collins said "Because of our consistent campaigning and discussions with MPs and civil servants, we have secured this rethink.

We now have better protec-

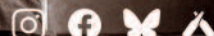
SOMETHING'S BREWING
IN CHILDWALL...

The Common Time

A COMMUNITY PUB BY Colbier
COMING SOON

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PROPER SOUND BEERS



BLACK CAT & THE VILLAGE CAT



PARR STREET

18 TAPS 4 ROTATING CASK MARG MONDAYS WEEKLY QUIZZES
ROOF TERRACE WITH BAR LIVE SPORTS

@BLACKCATPARRSTREET

SMITHDOWN

20 TAPS 2 ROTATING CASK MARG MONDAYS WEEKLY QUIZZES
TAKEAWAY FRIDGE LIVE SPORTS

@BLACKCATLIVERPOOL

ROSE LANE

14 TAPS 4 ROTATING CASK MARG MONDAYS TUESDAY QUIZ
TAKEAWAY FRIDGE BEER GARDEN
BEER TASTING & MEET THE BREWER NIGHTS

@BLACKCATROSELANE

WOOLTON

16 TAPS 4 ROTATING CASK SUNDAY QUIZ TAKEAWAY FRIDGE
BEER GARDEN LIVE SPORTS

@VILLAGECATWOOLTON

JOIN THE BLACK CAT CASK CLUB!

BUY 8 CASK PINTS, GET A FREE PINT ON US. ASK STAFF FOR A LOYALTY CARD.

This is an important issue in Liverpool & Districts CAMRA area as we have so many small, independent brewers who can't get their beers on in pub and club bars. It is good that this review recommends PubCo's are made to allow at least one guest beer in each pub, and attempts to do something about the high prices PubCo suppliers charge pub managers and licensees. Doing something that changes the big gulf between the cost of beer sold in pubs and that sold in supermarkets, in favour of draught beer sold in pubs would also help. It could help your community local stay viable and open. It could also help health outcomes as pub drinking is supervised. Drinking cheap, imitation continental beer at home often, is not. MPs and local councillors are rightly concerned about alcohol

abuse, but when they comment on it, they do not usually mention the safer nature of pub going, so if you hear or read about your local representative mentioning alcohol abuse without a context, please contact them and ask what they are doing to support safer drinking in community pubs and clubs.

Cider definition

CAMRA celebrates Cider and Perry month every July, and this year it launched an e-lobby so people could ask their MP to



back CAMRA's campaign to change the definition of cider to include products with a minimum juice content of 50 per cent. Thank you to members who have contacted their MP. The UK and EU are now talking about a deal on trade including food standards and labelling, while the EU is considering similar minimum juice contents for products labelled as cider.



Tony Morgan
Public Affairs Officer/
Vice Chair



The Pig & Whistle is an iconic Scouse boozer, with four cask ales including a local guest beer.

We are TripAdvisor's top-rated central Liverpool pub, and home to the city's most dubious Beatles attraction: The McCartney Steps.

12 Covent Garden, L2 8UA.
Open 12pm-12am every day.

Crosby pub walk

Previous walks have started in Waterloo and ended in Crosby but with so many pubs and bars selling real ale locally it was decided to split the walk this year. The Waterloo walk will be attempted in December. This way we get to visit more venues.



We met at 12.30 in **Stamps Bar**, Crown Buildings, Liverpool Road. Once the local Crown Post Office, the brass posting box which was on the outside wall can be seen inside. Usually up to four real ales and one cider (boxed, but served through a hand-pull) here. On our visit there was **Fyne Ales Jarl**, **Timothy Taylor Landlord** and **Ossett White Rat** on. We were the only customers at such an early time, but Stamps can get busy, especially at weekends when live music is on. After Stamps it was a short walk to **The George**, Moor



Lane. This pub had only reopened the day before. Closed recently by Stonegate it's future was uncertain, but the company behind the local Murphy's Tavern have taken it over and refurbished it. Original features have been revealed when recent wood cladding was removed and the wonderful glass cupola over the main entrance can be seen again. Food is available throughout and the old Pool room is now a formal dining area, but here is still lots of space for casual drinkers who today could try **Bass Premium**, **Timothy Taylor Landlord**, and **Rock the Boat Amber Sub**.

Next stop was the **Ironman** on Coronation Road. Beer choice is often two or three **Timothy Taylor** beers and **Ossett White Rat**, but today we had a bonus with **Neptune Ezili** on offer. One long bar services a large drinking area with a variety of seating areas, with a mezzanine style area upstairs. It was

rather pleasant on a Saturday afternoon watching the world



go by from the window seats. Board games are available if you want more excitement.

By now we were an hour over time so we didn't go to Birkey (Greene King), Cooks Road but went direct to the **Crows**



Nest (Star Pubs and Bars) on Victoria Road. This is a pub some avoid, possibly because it does not offer lots of real ales compared to others nearby, but it is worth a visit. The Crows is a Grade 2 listed building and retains several original features inside and Higson's Brewery windows.



Theakston Best Bitter is always available with up to three guests usually from the Heineken list, but a local beer can often be found on weekends. **Timothy Taylor Golden Best** and **Castle Rock Harvest Pale** were sampled this afternoon. Southport Brewery beers often feature.

A walk through Alexandra Park took us to the **Norseman**, Carnegie Avenue. Big, mod-



ern and square with two outside drinking areas. There is an emphasis on food and families but beer drinkers won't be disappointed with up to five real ales, often something local, and a range of styles including the occasional dark beer. **Salopian** and **Pentrich** beers were sampled today.

Onwards to College Road and

a visit to the Edinburgh. It is a shame that many overlook this pub in favour of some of the newer bars in the area. The beer choice is **Black Sheep Bitter** and **Ossett White Rat**, the Rat being very popular here, but it is a classic pub.



Planned for Robert Cain & Sons with a layout similar to that seen in the Lion Tavern in Liverpool with two lounges and a side bar. The gents toilets has tile work from the time it was run by Walkers of Warrington.

After a very nice pint of White Rat we set out to our branch **Pub of the Year, the Coop**. On offer here are up to five real ales and two boxed ciders (three in Summer). With a long narrow bar area with extra seating in a glazed side



room, the Coop can get very busy. It is also dog friendly so watch where you walk if coming back with a round of drinks. Beers change quickly in here with light beers being popular but there is usually a dark beer like a mild, stout or porter available. I can't tell you



what the range was on our visit because several of us just stuck to the **Wilde Child Double Trouble pastry stout** which was excellent. Whatever your choice of beer style, you won't be disappointed in the Coop. By now it was early evening so we all made our way home but ready for the next branch social walk. Why not join us?

Tony Morgan
Public Affairs Officer/
Vice Chair

SHIP&MITRE
WIRRAL WINTER
22ND BEER FEST
HULME HALL PORT SUNLIGHT
THURSDAY 12TH NOV - SUNDAY 15TH 2026
CASK ALE - CIDER - CRAFT - SPIRITS - FOOD - MUSIC
 FOR DETAILS AND TICKETS VISIT THESHIPANDMITRE.UK



The **LION TAVERN**
5 Hand Pumps
2 regular ales



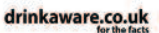


2018 LocALE Pub of the Year - 2026 Pub Of Excellence
 2020 and 2021 Pub of the Year
 Award winning locally sourced pies



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WWW.THELIONTAVERN.LIVERPOOL.CO.UK







Cider News

A big thank you to all our readers for your support with campaigning for Real Cider and Perry in our area, it is much appreciated.

Well done to **THAT BEER PLACE** in Foregate Street, Chester for winning the



Regional Cider And Perry award for the 3rd year running. Many thanks to everyone from Liverpool city centre pubs and special guests who attended my cider and Perry Tutorial at the Liverpool and Districts Camra Beer Festival. Hopefully, I will conduct another one at the next festival, it was good fun and helped spread the word in the city regarding the fantastic cider and perries we have in the UK. It was my great pleasure to present three awards for **Cider and Perry Pubs of Excellence** to **The Pen Factory**, **The Vernon** and **The Coop** in Crosby, which is also Liverpool and District Camra's Pub of the year for the second year running. These awards

where made during the branch's annual awards evening which was held this year at Love Lane Brewery. A big thank you to the brewery and staff for their hospitality – a great night was had by all! I also presented the **Augustus John** with their certificate for **Liverpool and Districts Cider pub** of the year.

I would like to thank **Carol Ross**, as she leaves the Roscoe Head, for all her support for our campaign over many years, and wish her well for the future.

Please if you are having a cider or Perry at this moment, I would like you to join me and raise a glass to **John Armstrong**, who will be sadly missed by all. I valued his support for Cider and Perry Campaigning over the many years he edited this magazine.

Wassail!

Linda Harris
Regional Cider Coordinator
Merseyside and Cheshire



Liverpool CAMRA Awards 2026

A big thank you to Love Lane Brewery for Hosting our Awards Evening and providing some complementary Higson Beers. Unfortunately a couple of our award winners couldn't make it, so were presented with their award at a later date.

List of award winners:-
Pub of the Year: Dr Duncan's
COOP Crosby: Lion Tavern
Pubs of Excellence: Roscoe Head
 Vernon Arms



Dr Duncan's



Lion Tavern



Roscoe Head



Vernon Arms

Heritage Restoration Award:
 Ye Cracke



Jean Pownceby, Steve Downing Pub of the Year Coordinator,
 Rob Willis licensee Coop and Mel James-Henry Branch Chair



AJ Cider Pub of the Year



Pen Factory



Coop

Cider Pubs of Excellence
 The Coop
 The Pen Factory
 Vernon Arms



Vernon Arms



Mild and Dark Beers Award
 The Four Ashes



Community Pub of the Year
 The Cobden, Woolton



Rock the Boat Awards

In addition to our Awards, we also presented Champion Beer of Britain Awards to:
Black Lodge for Black Lodge Baltic Best, Gold in Session Bitters Category at Liverpool Beer Festival

Rock the Boat's Sittin on the Dock won several awards - Silver in the Milds Category at Petersgate Tap Stockport and **Bronze** in the Real Ale in a Bottle 4.3% and below category at the Isle of Man Beer Festival. The Brewery's **Dragons Teeth** won **Silver** in the Real Ale in a bottle 4.3% and below category at the Isle of Man Beer Festival.

Black Lodge's Baltic Best won Gold in Session Bitters Category at Liverpool Beer Festival

CBOB Gold Award Baltic Bitter Black Lodge



Conversion to Pub Award
 St Peter's Tavern



Kissinggate Brewery

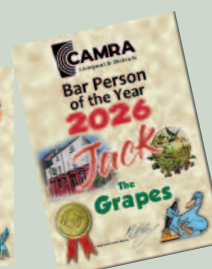
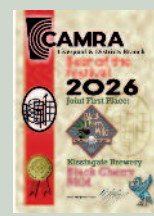


Les O'Grady
 (Neptune Brewery)



Gillian Yates
 Merseyside and Cheshire Regional Director

Liverpool Beer Festival Beers of the Festival and Cider of the Festival winners



Bar Person of the Year
 Jack Grapes (Little Grapes)

cider & Perry Officer

As many of you will know our acronym is CAMRA, campaign for real ale, however, some readers might not know that a big part of the campaigning we do is to support the many varied producers of cider and perry. Now, as we all know cider comes from pressed apple juice and perry from pressed pear juice. **There is NO SUCH THING as pear cider**, it is a marketing term dreamt up because simple people didn't think drinkers would know what perry is. During the early part of the year, we promote and support cider and perry month. With literally hundreds of different varieties of apples and pears, the range of flavours and textures that the fruit juice gives us are amazing. Ranging from very dry to very sweet it is a joy to try. There are cider and perry producers right across the country. We even have at

least two in the Merseyside region. We, the Liverpool & Districts camra committee, have a vacancy for a cider officer. As a volunteer you will be invited to help judge the cider & perry pub of the year, and also be involved in the regional competition, choosing our entry to the national competition. You will be able to contribute to the choice of ciders and perries available on the cider bar at the Liverpool beer festival, held every February. All we ask is you come forward and make yourself known at our upcoming AGM in November, and as committee members we can give you all the support and guidance you might need.

Ian Garner
Branch Secretary

From app to Good Beer Guide

Have you ever wondered how pubs get into the good beer guide? Do you have a thirst for good beer? Do you like to travel and enjoy the beers from various parts of the UK? More importantly would you like to help put pubs into the good beer guide? If you answered yes to any of those questions, as a CAMRA member, you can judge the beer you are drinking against set criteria, which over the period of a year will help the branch choose which pubs go into the guide.

How it works is this. In any pub selling real beer in any part of the country, you open the CAMRA app (free from wherever you get your apps) having entered your membership number and a little bit of admin, you can select the pub scoring symbol. Here you will be asked to judge the beer you are drinking ranging from absolutely the best beer you have ever had, to awful or no beer available. In reality it will be somewhere in-between. In my over 35 years as a CAMRA member I have never given the top score of 5, I have given the bottom score of zero if there is no beer on. What happens then is your score is recorded on the system under the pub's local branch and added to all the scores achieved in the period of a year.

At a chosen date, the entries will be collated, and those that have achieved the required score, as per branch allocation, will be put forward for entry to the next guide. You could be part of the process. It is literally as simple as downloading an app onto your phone and off you go. Incidentally, as well as scoring your beer, the app has a list of all the best pubs in every town and city in the UK, why wouldn't you want to download it.

Ian Garner
Branch Secretary



Rating	Description	Your reaction
Excellent	Superb beer, well brewed, well served, excellent value for money.	Excellent beer, well brewed, well served, excellent value for money.
Very good	Very good beer, well brewed, well served, good value for money.	Very good beer, well brewed, well served, good value for money.
Good	Good beer, well brewed, well served, reasonable value for money.	Good beer, well brewed, well served, reasonable value for money.
Acceptable	Acceptable beer, well brewed, well served, poor value for money.	Acceptable beer, well brewed, well served, poor value for money.
Poor	Poor beer, poorly brewed, poorly served, no value for money.	Poor beer, poorly brewed, poorly served, no value for money.
Unobtainable	No beer available.	No beer available.

The Coop

84 College Road Crosby Liverpool, L23 0RP

5 ever-changing beers

4 boxed ciders on at all time a selection of bottled ciders, bottled beers, cans in the fridge and 6 keg lines

Friendly and Welcoming

Five handpumps provide an ever-changing and varied beer selection and conversation is very much order of the day. Bag-in-a-box cider is available, two all year with a third in summer, usually Seacider varieties.

Opening Times

Monday-Thursday 4pm - 9pm Friday 3pm - 9:30pm
Saturday 1pm - 9:30pm Sunday 1pm - 9pm



LIVERPOOL'S HERITAGE PUBS UPDATE

In past editions I've written about our Historic pub inventories, which are the listings of Pubs in our branch area that possess Historic interiors and explained the criteria for their inclusion. Many of the Pubs which deserve recognition are already listed on the National site and can be searched for by following <https://camra.org.uk/heritage-pubs>. The shorthand for pubs recognised nationally is "National Inventory" or NI. There are three categories of which Cat 3 is the highest. There is also a list of locally recognised pubs which don't meet the criteria for National recognition (yet) which is called our "Local Inventory". This list is not yet available online however, we hope

to rectify this during a major revamp of our branch's website which we hope to complete over the next year. Once this is in place we will invite all members to investigate and critique our listings as they see fit, to ensure that all pubs that deserve recognition get it. The committee can't hope to keep all pubs under regular review but with your help we can. Watch this space.

Pete Elloy
Heritage Pubs Officer



PADDY BYRNE – A TRUE LIVERPOOL LEGEND

This article first appeared in our beer festival programme following Paddy's death in November 2025. It is reproduced here so it can reach a wider audience.



Paddy Byrne was born and bred in Liverpool and lived here all his life, but as a young man, his lifelong love of roaming and learning about different cultures and culinary traditions, began. It was the inspiration he experienced in travels across Europe that led him to joining forces with his good friend Dave Scott who shared his passion for good food, in particular delicious peasant cuisine, to embark on what was to become one of the most loved and lauded ventures that truly brought Hope to the Street of that name. On 26th September 1970 they opened the Everyman Bistro. They started in the basement of the

The passing of Paddy Byrne has left a void in the rich social fabric of the City of Liverpool. Those of us touched by his generosity and joie de vivre will all have their memories of him as their friend and colleague. Here, two of his friends pay moving tributes to the great man.

Geoff Edwards former Liverpool Branch Chair

1837 built Congregationalist Hope Hall, that became the famed Everyman Theatre, in the small space that was later the bar cellar – so, in a cramped kitchen, with just two domestic cookers, but motivated by their commitment to imaginative cooking using prime fresh ingredients, they quickly began to establish a reputation for good food at reasonable prices in a convivial atmosphere. It was revolutionary for Liverpool and soon began to attract an eclectic range of customers who all loved to descend the steps into the atmospheric space, and in particular take advantage of the late-night bar, especially at weekends, even though it usually involved queuing round the block to get in!

In the late 70s Paddy and Dave were joined by



Paddy's brother, Tim. By then, with the rebuild of the theatre having taken place, the Bistro had expanded not only its kitchen and customer space, but also the cellar areas. The latter enabled Paddy to pursue the links he had made with CAMRA in 1974 when Merseyside CAMRA held its first ever Beer Exhibition (as festivals were called in those days) with Paddy's collaboration, in the Everyman Theatre showcasing 12 real ales – quite something back then! – and the experience was successfully repeated in 1975 before the theatre's closure for refurbishment. And so, with the expansion of the bar and cellar space, Paddy introduced real ale to the Bistro – and never looked back!

Over the years the Bistro won many esteemed awards for its innovative and excellent food, with write-ups usually focusing also on the ambience and bohemian vibe, and often mentioning real ales too, as the Bistro was regularly listed in the national Good Beer Guide. Tom Gill, Head Chef for many years, was keen to give overall credit to Paddy for his knowledge, experience and passion, and his keenness to promote eating as a social activity- in the Bistro there were always long tables that could fit a dozen people, and most would seat at least four. People from a range of backgrounds and of all ages would mingle and chat and/or engage in serious discussion as they enjoyed their food and drink - students, university staff, people in suits after work, radicals and revolutionaries, folkies, jazz musicians and fans, poets, families with children, theatregoers – and the performers they'd just watched! Yes, Paddy had vision and it worked for all. His generosity of spirit, creativity and enthusiasm also enabled a great team spirit amongst the staff, many of whom worked there for 20 years or more.

There were, of course, local CAMRA awards made to Paddy including the prestigious Tony Molyneux award (Tony was Chair of Liverpool CAMRA for many years in the early days and continued to be a fervent campaigner until his untimely death in 2005) but he always

wanted to share the credit with the whole team – he was not one for personal accolades, well deserved though they were.

The Bistro truly thrived, to the extent that when the actual theatre was struggling in the 1990s, Paddy and his co-owners bought it and in so doing were instrumental in ensuring its survival.

Culture, CAMRA and family life.

Paddy was especially keen to promote the cultural life of the area. Within the Bistro itself, in what was known as the Third Room, there were various music and other cultural events, including a weekly folk club. He also had a strong sense of community and was a driving force behind the successful years of the annual Hope Street festival.

Remarkably, he brought the Bistro to CAMRA! When the annual beer festival moved nearby to the Metropolitan Cathedral Crypt, a great bonus for many years was having Bistro food 'on tap' prepared and served mostly by Paddy himself, in an area just off the main beer hall. Paddy also hosted a series of Meet the Brewer events in the Bistro on behalf of CAMRA as part of the Liverpool pubs festival in late 2008 and served an excellent selection of regional cheeses and home baked beer bread to accompany the beers!

It was at the Bistro itself that Paddy met his lifelong partner, Claudia, in 1983. She is from the United States and, like him, had done a lot of travelling in Europe before she came to Liverpool where she joined the bakery staff team at the Bistro. Paddy had been away at the time of her appointment but when he met her, it 'was love at first sight', as he later told her. They had a daughter, Tess who was born in 1986. Claudia continued to work at the Bistro – she never wanted to be 'front of house' but if you remember the delicious range of desserts that were served, and the tasteful floral arrangements on the tables – they were Claudia's creations! She was also involved in the Bistro in the crypt which she told me was a much-loved annual event for both of them.



When time allowed, they continued to enjoy their love of travel as a family, and indeed up until very recently, Paddy and Claudia enjoyed 'off the beaten track' road trips, especially in France and Spain where they would seek out little villages and enjoy their café life and local markets. They also enjoyed visits to Uppsala in Sweden where daughter Tess is now settled with her partner and children. Another great passion was their allotment close to where they live in the Sefton Park area, which Claudia told me Paddy tended lovingly for nearly 40 years. He also enjoyed walking, including locally where he was not averse to visiting other good real ale venues! He was always well known to licensees and customers alike with whom he loved to engage in conversation and people loved to be in his company. He was very much an 'unassuming celebrity' – though he probably wouldn't like the latter word!!.

End of an era and the Second Coming!

The Bistro celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2010, and then, in the Spring of the following year, came the sad news that it would be closing its doors in July as the building, which by then Paddy and co. had sold back, was to be demolished to make way for a new theatre. And so, on Saturday July 2nd 2011, the theatre and the Bistro were to close their doors. People queued to get in to say their farewells and enjoy for the final time the real food and real ale. The day drifted into Sunday 3rd when, at 3 in the morning, the plaintive notes of the Last Post echoed around the Bistro as Brendan Ball from the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra brought to an end the tumultuous final day of the Bistro and the theatre above – and the cast of both left the building.. But before that on June 22nd CAMRA held its own special celebratory farewell night with members old and new, who were all invited to contribute to a memory book. There were too many lovely comments to mention here but a small sample gives the flavour: ' RIP Bistro, we have truly loved you', ' the hub of Liver-

pool life', 'Paddy, Dave and Tim really cut the mustard', 'can't imagine Liverpool without you' and, in very large letters - 'Where do we go now?' Where indeed?

All was quiet for a few years but the word on Hope Street was that Paddy would not be fading into the night but was already hatching a new venture. It transpired that although the theatre had been sold back to the company, the annexe next door had not, and it housed a derelict basement! But not for long! A quiet retirement would not have cut it for Paddy! He was by now operating single-handedly, Dave and Tim having moved on and once again he had a vision! In December 2014, the Pen Factory opened. The design of it was totally his, the space being very different from



the subterranean Bistro, incorporating lots of natural light and a suntrap garden area, but he wanted to encompass the same essential ingredients and make it an inclusive place where everyone felt welcome, whether on their own or in company, serving quality food - albeit no longer the famed self-service arrangement- and drink, including, essentially, real ale!

Needless to say, his vision succeeded. The consensus was that the King of Hope Street had risen again! An early CAMRA award celebrated the new venue having rapidly set high standards for real ale and good food. In 2016, Sue Novak, the renowned food writer, visited Liverpool and wrote an article for MerseyAle in which she spoke very highly of the range

and quality of the food, and of the real ale, and she gave a very special mention to Paddy. In 2019, at the CAMRA Awards, Paddy was presented with a Pub of Excellence award and the Pen continued to be a Good Beer Guide entrant and Paddy a good friend of CAMRA over the next few years.

Unfortunately then health issues took over and he eventually decided to retire, but not before finding the right people to whom to hand over the mantle - Fiona and Dominic Hornsby, well known to CAMRA, and well-liked licensees across the city. They took over in late 2024.

Sadly, Paddy died in November 2025, but he leaves behind an amazing legacy both in terms of all he achieved over more than 50 years and being such a lovely friendly man, always interested in people and liking to talk on a range of subjects. He truly was an inspiration.

Goodbye, Paddy

On 15th January, which would have been his 81st birthday, an event to celebrate Paddy's life was held, very appropriately, at the Pen Factory, hosted by Dominic and Fiona. Delicious food was served in old Bistro style, all prepared and served by Lesley Lee who used to work in the Bistro, and colleagues – including helping hands from the many previous chefs and staff who came along to honour Paddy. There was also the first appearance of a special commemorative beer brewed for Paddy by Higsons Brewing Ltd. The place was packed, spilling out into the courtyard in spite of the winter night. So many memories shared and so much love and respect for Paddy. He is very sadly missed and will always be remembered.

Thank you, Paddy, rest in peace. Sincere condolences to your lovely wife Claudia and daughter Tess and her family.

With special thanks to Claudia for her help and the late John Armstrong , previous editor of MerseyAle until 2016, whose own earlier articles helped to inform some of this one. John's obituary is on pages 13-15.

By Jean Pownceby

Paddy Byrne: A man of achievement (and humour)

By John O'Dowd

It was late in 2001 during a lunch time session in the Lion Tavern when the door of the bar opened and a chorus of "Hello Paddy" went round the room. The gentleman in question seemed to be known to everyone in the room and I soon learned why.

There were his party tricks of putting his drinking companions in a taxi and setting them off to a pub on the other side of town while he ran to the pub and always beating the taxi, to waiting by Princes Park gate for a bus and then athletically haring down the Avenue to beat the bus on his way to work on Hope Street

Always, energetic and deeply immersed in food culture and informed on all aspects of it through slow travel and his legendary allotment Paddy and his team created a culinary oasis in a somewhat bleak Liverpool food and drink landscape.

On the way he created life long friendships through his personality and infectious enthusiasm for everything to do with hospital-



ity, always looking to improve and innovate he created life-long memories on Hope Street, frankly thanking everyone who helped bring his vision to life.

CAMRA LIVERPOOL & DISTRICTS

LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL

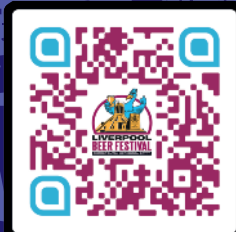
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Historically, The Brunswick Vaults was a respected cask ale pub, later rebranding to the likes of The James Monro and Kitty's showbar. In 2024 we restored the pub back to its roots, and with a nod to its heritage and our own love of real ale, we're committed to making The Brunswick Vaults a go-to destination for cask ale lovers once again, especially with the support of CAMRA.

We regularly rotate our range of Westwood cask ales, keeping things fresh and giving you the chance to try something different on each visit.

We're always on the lookout for new ales to add to our line up, so keep a look out, there's always another great pint waiting to be poured!

FIND US ON THE CAMRA MAP!

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2, ST. JOHN'S LANE, LIVERPOOL, L1 1HF

2 permanent & 3 rotating
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City Centre

Angel Inn, 90 Bold Street, L1 4HY

Augustus John, Peach Street, L3 5TX

Baltic Fleet, 33

Wapping, L1 8DQ

Black Cat, 25 Parr Street, L1 4JN

Black Lodge Brewing Taproom,

3 Kings Dock Street, L1 8JU

Blackburne Pub &

Eatery, 24 Catharine Street, L8 7NL

Brunswick Vaults, 69 Tithebarn Street, L2 2EN

Bundobust Restaurant, 17-19 Bold Street, L1 4DN

Cains Brewery Tap, 39 Stanhope Street, L8 5RE

Captain Alexander, 15 James Street, L2 7NX

Dr Duncan's, St Johns Lane, L1 1HF

Dispensary, 87 Renshaw Street, L1 2SP

Fall Well, Roe Street, L1 1LS

Grapes, 60 Roscoe Street, L1 9DW

Head of Steam, Hanover Street, 85-89 Hanover Street, L1 3DZ

Lime Kiln, Fleet Street, L1 4NR

Lion Tavern, Moorfields, L2 2BP

Liverpool Brewing Company Tap, 72 Lime Street, L1 1JN

Lock Up Bar, 2 North John Street, L2 4SA

Love Lane Bar &

Kitchen, 62-64 Bridgewater Street, L1 0AY

Ma Boyles, Tower Building, Tower Gardens, L3 1LG

The Mayflower Inn / The Pilgrim, 34 Pilgrim Street, L1 9HB

Monro, 92 Duke Street, L1 5AG

North Western, 7 Lime Street, L1 1RJ

Papillon, 35 Hope Street, L1 9BQ

Pumphouse, The Colonnades, Albert Dock, L3 4AN

Queen of Hope Street, 1-1A Myrtle Street, L7 7DN

Queens Arms, 11-13

Victoria Street, L2 5QQ

Red Lion, 36 Slater Street, L1 4BX

Richard John Blackler, 1-2, Charlotte Row, L1 1HU

Roscoe Head, 24 Roscoe Street, L1 2SX

Shandon Bells, 88 Hope Street, L1 9BW

Ship & Mitre, 133 Dale Street, L2 2JH

St Peter's Tavern, Seel Street, L1 4BH

Vernon Arms, 69 Dale Street, L2 2HJ

Vines, 81 Lime Street, L1 1JQ

Welkin, 7 Whitechapel, L1 6DS

White Hart, 23 Hope Street, L1 9BQ (Includes Engineer at rear)

Ye Cracke, 13 Rice Street, L1 9BB

Ye Hole in Ye Wall, 4 Hackins Hey, L2 2AW

Outside City Centre

Always Sometimes, 1-3 Crosby Road North, Waterloo, L22 0LH

Barkers Brewery, Archway Road, Huyton, L36 9UJ

Black Cat, 102 Rose Lane, Mossley Hill, L18 8AG

Black Cat, 174 Smithdown Road, Wavertree, L15 3JR

Butchers, Booker Avenue, L18 4QZ

Childwall Fiveways, 79 Queens Drive, L15 6XS

Cobden, 89 Qualrly Street, Woolton, L25 6HA

Coop, 84 College Road, Crosby, L23 0RP

Corner Post, 25 Bridge Road, Crosby, L23 6SA

Dovedale Towers, 60 Penny Lane, L18 1DG

Four Ashes, 23 Crosby Road, North, Waterloo, L22 0LD

Frank Hornby, 38 Eastway, Maghull, L31 6BR

Handyman Supermarket, 46, Smithdown Road, L15 3JL

Little Tap Room, 278 Aigburth Road, L17 9PJ

Masonic, 33 Lark Lane, L17 8UW

Navigator, 694 Queens Drive, Old Swan, L13 5UH

Neptune Brewery

Beerhouse, 25-27 Liverpool Road North, Maghull, L31 2HB

Old Bank, 301 Aigburth Road, Aigburth, L17 0BJ

Oxford Bar, 89 Oxford Road, Waterloo, L22 7RE

Punchbowl, Lunt Road, Sefton Village, L29 7WA

Queen's Picturehouse, 47 South Road, Waterloo, L22 5PE

Raven, 72-74 Walton Vale, Walton, L9 2BU

Stamps Bar, 5 Crown Buildings, Crosby, L23 5SR

Thomas Frost, 77-187 Walton Road, Kirkdale, L4 4AJ

Village Cat, 5-7 Allerton Road, Woolton, L25 7RA

Volunteer Canteen, 45 East Street, Waterloo, L22 8QR

Willow Bank Tavern, 329 Smithdown Road, Wavertree, L15 3JA

TOTAL 67

****New additions are highlighted in RED****

CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale. The scheme builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues.

Launched 2009 in Liverpool. We have now celebrated 17 years of LocAle in Liverpool and will be arranging periodic socials, please keep an eye on social media and Branch Newsletters.

A MESSAGE TO PUBS:

If you think your pub should be included in this list, please email: locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk giving details. A Locale beer is a REAL ALE BREWED WITHIN 30 miles of the pub by road. NB: Other terms and conditions apply

Free point of Sale (POS) materials are available including window stickers, leaflets and pump clip toppers. Email locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



You can find all these pubs on www.whatpub.com or scan the QR Code.

**Johnathan Hall
LocAle Coordinator**

Liverpool Pubs

CAMRA DISCOUNT

- **Angel Inn**, 90 Bold Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Arkles**, 77 Anfield Road: 10%.
- **Birkey**, 35 Crooks Road: 10%.
- **Black Horse**, 641 Prescott Road, Old Swan: 10%.
- **Bookbinder**, 2 Lark Lane, Aigburth: 10%.
- **Brunswick Vaults**, 69 Tithebarn Street, City Centre: 20p off a pint, 10p off a half.
- **The Crown**, 43 Lime Street, City Centre: 20p off a pint, 10p off a half.
- **Dovedale Towers**, 60 Penny Lane, Mossley Hill: 10%.
- **Endbutt**, 63-65 Endbutt Lane, Crosby: 10%.
- **The Green Man**, 43-45 Lark Lane, Aigburth: 10%.
- **Head of Steam**, 85 Hanover Street, City Centre: 20p off a pint.
- **Jolly Miller**, 176 Mill Lane, West Derby: 10%.
- **Lime Street Central**, 51 Lime Street, City Centre: 20%.
- **The Liver**, 137 South Road, Waterloo: 20%.
- **Liverpool Brewing Company Tap**, 72 Lime Street, City Centre: £3.70 up to 5.0% and £4 above 5.0% (cask pints only).
- **Love Lane Brewery, Bar and Kitchen**, 62-64 Bridgewater Street, Baltic Triangle: Ask staff when ordering for discount.
- **Ma Egerton's**, 9 Pudsey Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Masonic**, 33 Lark Lane, L17 8UW: 10%.
- **The Mayflower Inn / The Pilgrim**, 34 Pilgrim Street, City Centre: 10%.

Discount Days which are available to anyone

- **Black Bull**, Gateacre Brow, Gateacre: Loyalty Card & £3.50 pints every day (Online/APP Registration).
- **Black Cat**, 102 Rose Lane, Mossley Hill: Loyalty Card.
- **Black Cat**, 174 Smithdown Road, Wavertree: Loyalty Card.
- **Black Cat**, 25 Parr Street, City Centre: Loyalty Card.
- **Four Ashes**, 23 Crosby Road North, Waterloo: Loyalty Card.
- **Flute**, 35 Hardman Street, City Centre: Tues ONLY.
- **Hare & Hounds**, 53 Liverpool Road North,



Discounts on production of a valid CAMRA card

- **Monro**, 92 Duke Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Netherton Hotel**, Church Road, Litherland: 10%.
- **Northern Club**: Elm Avenue, Moor Park, Crosby: 10% on Thursday evenings only and also during cricket matches.
- **Papillon**, 31 Hope Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Pumphouse**, The Colonnades, Royal Albert Dock: 25p off a pint (pints only).
- **The Punchbowl**, Lunt Road, Sefton Village: 20p off a pint, 10p off a half.
- **Queen of Hope Street**, 1-1a Myrtle Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Queens Arms**, 11-13 Victoria Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Red Lion**, 36 Slater Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Royal Standard**, Deysbrook Lane, West Derby: 10%.
- **Sefton Arms**, 1 Mill Lane, West Derby: 10%.
- **Shandon Bells**, 88 Hope Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **St Peter's Tavern**, Seel Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **Three Piggies**, 77-79 Allerton Road, Allerton: 10%.
- **The Vines**, 81 Lime Street, City Centre: 10%.
- **White Hart**, 23 Hope Street, City Centre (Includes **Engineer** at rear): 10%.
- **Willow Bank Tavern**, 329 Smithdown Road, Wavertree: 10% except Tuesday.

Discount available all day every day unless stated otherwise.

- Maghull: Loyalty Card & £3.50 pints every day (Online/APP Registration).
- **The John Brodie**, Unit 1 Allerton Road, Allerton: Tues ONLY.
- **Liverpool Brewing Company Tap**, 72 Lime Street, City Centre: Sun ONLY £3.70 up to 5.0% and £4 above 5.0% (cask pints only).
- **Richmond Tavern**, Church Road, Wavertree: Loyalty Card & £3.50 pints every day (Online/APP Registration).
- **White Star**, Rainford Gardens, City Centre: Mon-Thurs selected beer only.
- **Village Cat**, 5-7 Allerton Road, Woolton; Loyalty Card.



Discounts available on production of New CAMRA Voucher

CAMRA have replaced the JD Wetherspoon Voucher scheme with a new 'CAMRA Voucher Scheme'. The new vouchers will be valid in JD Wetherspoon, Stonegate, Brains, Castle Rock and Amber Taverns managed pubs.



The New CAMRA Voucher Scheme entitles members to a discount of 50p off a pint of Real Ale, Cider or Perry. See www.camra.org.uk/vouchers for full terms and conditions.

Pubs accepting New CAMRA Voucher Scheme

- Albert**, 66-68 Lark Lane, Aigburth. (Stonegate)
- Barkers Brewery**, Archway Road, Huyton. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Captain Alexander**, 15 James Street, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Childwall Fiveways**, 179 Queens Drive, Childwall. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Fall Well**, Roe Street, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Flute**, 35 Hardman Street, City Centre. (Stonegate)
- Frank Hornby**, 38 Eastway, Maghull. (JD Wetherspoon)
- John Brodie**, Unit 1 Allerton Road, Allerton. (Stonegate)
- Lime Kiln**, Fleet Street, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)

- Navigator**, 694 Queens Drive, Old Swan. (JD Wetherspoon)
- North Western**, 7 Lime Street, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Pig & Whistle**, 12 Covent Garden, City Centre.
- Queens Picture House**, 47-49 South Road, Waterloo. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Raven**, 72-74 Walton Vale, Walton. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Richard John Blackler**, Units 1 & 2 Charlotte Row, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Thomas Frost**, 177-187 Walton Road, Kirkdale. (JD Wetherspoon)
- Welkin**, 7 Whitechapel, City Centre. (JD Wetherspoon)

Any new discount offers since the last issue are highlighted in **RED**.

All discounts are at the discretion of the Pub or Club and can be as little or as large as the pub feels suits their business needs and maybe withdrawn or changed at any time.

Please remember discounts should never be expected.

Message to licensees / real ale drinkers

This list is not exhaustive, so if we have left any one off, OR if the discount no longer applies, please let me know by emailing: locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk with details.

If you are a licensee/pub owner and are interested in joining the scheme then please email: contact@liverpoolcamra.org.uk.

This list is correct as of September 2026.

Johnathan Hall LocAle Coordinator



Branch Diary

Branch Socials.

This year I have made a concerted effort to ensure there is a social every month, with Pub Crawls filling the gaps between major events such as the beer festival. At the point of going to press we will have managed 5:

- Sat 28 March - Chester led by Steve Downing.
- Sat 23 May - Heritage Pub Walk 2 led by Pete Elloy
- Sat 20 June - Penny Lane to Lark Lane led by Pete Elloy
- Sat 22 August - Crosby led by Tony Morgan.
- Sun 20 Sept - Over the river walk led by Jean Pownceby.



Follow us



We intend running the following pub walks over the coming months, please watch our social media for updates:

- Sat 24 Oct – The recently opened/reopened city centre pubs led by Steve Downing. Meet in the Black Horse and Rainbow at noon
- Wed November 11th Liverpool and Districts CAMRA AGM in St Peters Tavern from 7.30pm
- Sat 14 Nov - MerseyAle “Southport Line” social led by Ian Garner. Meet in the Bugle Southport at 12.30pm
- Sun 20th Dec – Waterloo led by Tony Morgan. Meet in the Shipwreck at 12.30pm

If you fancy leading a walk or simply have ideas on what might make a popular pub walk for the future, please let me know via pete.elloy@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

Pete Elloy

Socials Secretary

MerseyAle Article and Photo Contributors

Gary Donnelly
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Ian Garner
Ian Holden
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Jonathan Hall

Linda Harris
Mel James-Henry
Pete Elloy
Sonia James-Henry
Steve Downing

Tony Morgan

Apologies if we have left anyone anyone out.

Advertise in MerseyAle

A fantastic way to get in front of thousands of potential new customers throughout Merseyside and the surrounding areas.



WANTED Local News Reporters

Although Liverpool CAMRA branch does cover a wide area of Merseyside, we are aware that some areas don't get the news coverage they deserve.

This includes the areas of Aigburth, Allerton, Garston, Gateacre, Huyton, Maghull, Woolton and Wavertree.

We would love more articles on pubs in these areas, these can vary from snippets for pub news to full page pieces. If any of our readers are interested please email merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



Trading Standards Departments

The Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline responds to calls from Merseyside Residents on behalf of all local authority Trading Standards departments.
Tel: 0345 404 0506 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Further details of all trading standards departments www.tradingstandards.uk

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Higsons Pale Ale 4.5% / Higsons Irish Red 4.2% / Higsons Summer Ale 4.2% / Love Lane Session 3.4% / Love Lane NEIPA 5.0%

Launching a new Higsons Special Ale 4.9% mid-October 2026



The Love Lane Brewery, Bar & Kitchen – situated in the Baltic Triangle – has a great range of our cask and keg beers along with a full range of wines, spirits & minerals and great quality food.

Open Wednesday – Sunday (unless closed for private event – please check our instagram)



For trade enquiries re stocking our range of beers please contact rod@tjmbrewing.com we have our own van and deliver direct to a growing number of customers across Merseyside.