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# BEER MATTERS



## WHAT WORKS?

Beerworks. Sheffield's oldest brewery opens its long-awaited taproom on Abbeydale Road

## PUBS BY OPEN-TOP BUS

Take in the ale and views of the Peaks



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# ABBEYDALE BEERWORKS

**In early May, employee-owned Abbeydale, the oldest brewery in Sheffield, opened Abbeydale Beerworks, their long-awaited tap, a mere 200 paces from the brewery.**

Using the same space as the ex-Turners Bottle & Tap (Abbeydale Road, S7 1FL), covered outside seating leads you into a cosy space. The bar is on your left, with seating on the right and to the rear. Decor includes brewery-inspired imagery on the walls and a selection of trinkets, many obtained locally or from the brewery.

Beer-wise, there are four cask beers from Abbeydale and six keg selections. Opening night saw the permanent *Moonshine* joined by *Black Mass*, *Daily Bread* and *Through the Hopback Cascade*.

On preview evening, the first award presentation at this new venue was made – no doubt, the first of many. The certificate, for a finalist in the Barley Wines & Strong Ales category in the CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain Award 2026 was for one of the Abbeydale core beers: *Black Mass*.

This was first brewed almost 30 years ago, on 6 November 1996. The 26th brew from the then new brewery was developed from a beer which the co-founder of Abbeydale, Pat Morton, had previously brewed: Kelham Island Brewery *Bête Noire*, a 5.5% stout.

Over time, the recipe for *Black Mass* has evolved. The first brew was single hopped with Cascade, and had oats and mixed cereals in the grist. The malt bill remains complex, currently featuring crystal malt, both chocolate and pale chocolate malts, black malt, and roasted barley.

Some say *Black Mass* is a stout, others say it's a well-hopped dark beer: suffice to say *Black Mass* was one of the first black IPAs. It has an IBU of over 150. IBU (International Bitterness Units) is a measure of the bitterness of beer based on the amount of bittering compounds from hops, the iso-alpha acids. The scale typically ranges from 0 to 100, with higher values indicating a more bitter taste. For example, a Pilsner would be 15-30 and a West Coast



IPA would be 50–70. With an IBU of over 150, there are a lot of hops in *Black Mass*: Columbus, Cascade, and Green Bullet. Rich and smooth on the palate, with flavours reminiscent of bitter chocolate, fruitcake and raisins, and aromas of coffee, dark chocolate, and just a hint of burnt toast: it's classic and familiar yet also unique and boundary defying.

It is also the only beer listed in the *CAMRA Good Beer Guide* with an ABV to two decimal places: 6.66%.

*Black Mass* is one of Abbeydale's many multi-award winning beers. It also recently won a major Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) award: Gold in the Bottle/Can Speciality IPA category at their flagship BeerX UK event in Liverpool, the Indie Beer Awards 2026. This is an indication of its quality, and yet another acknowledgment of the outstanding beers produced by Team Abbeydale with them well with Abbeydale Beerworks.

**Dave Pickersgill**

## INN BRIEF

**Eyam Brewery Tap & Shop** in Tideswell has now been granted its premises licence and continues to open every weekend with the bar offering a range of their cask and keg beers to drink in plus a shop selling their cans and bottles along with merch such as t-shirts and hoodies. Currently most Saturdays sees a street food trader pitching up outside. In the longer term they intend to build an open kitchen in the tap room to offer their own food.

The **Olde Bowling Green Inn** in Bradwell will be closing for a bar refurbishment on Sunday 31 May with a party on the Saturday night, 30 May, from 8pm with DJ Euan Halbert. While the pub is closed the landlords are getting married and reopening the pub as husband and wife at 4pm on Friday 12 June.

There has been a management change at the **Woodroffe Arms** in Hope. The pub is owned by Greene King but leased to independent local operators. The pub is now another one run by Atlantik Inns, who already have the Old Hall Hotel across the road. The Woodroffe is a community local with sport on TV, cask ales and an outdoor drinking area. It also offers accommodation. The food offering here will deliberately be different to the Old Hall with pizzas and bar snacks available.

## INN BRIEF (CONTINUED)

The **Tram Stop** micropub, to be located at the outbound Hillsborough Park tram stop, now has planning permission and a premises licence. This project will see the Pro Property shop converted into a bar. It is expected to open mid July, in time for Tramlines festival.

The **Pig & Whistle** micropub at Gleadless Townend has expanded its repertoire further and is now opening from 9am every day serving coffee and cake. Drinks from the bar are available from 11am and coffee service ends at 4pm, with the bar remaining open until 10pm (11pm Friday and Saturday). A range of craft beers is available across cask, keg and can. A programme of events is also advertised including live entertainment and pop up food traders – check their social media accounts for details.

The **Royal Hotel** in Woodhouse closed on 10 May for a refurbishment and is expected to reopen mid June. The pub is leased from Heineken's Star Pub Company and the new look will feature sports on TV and a games room with more community events also planned.

The **Beer House S6** in Hillsborough, located on the inbound tram platform, held their third birthday party on 24 May.

The beer festival held at the **Old Nag's Head** in Edale was deemed a huge success and they plan to repeat it next year over the weekend of 23 to 25 April.

The refurbishment work at the **Mount Pleasant** Inn at Norton Lees took a little longer than expected but the pub finally reopened on 11 May.

There was a leaving do at the **Millhouses** on 24 April with the management of the last seven years moving on. The pub is leased from Stonegate Pub Company.



Samuel Smiths Brewery have made their recruitment efforts to get live in management couples to reopen some of their pubs not currently trading a bit more prominent with blue banners on the front of the pubs, including the **Old Mother Redcap** in Bradway, which has been closed for nearly a decade now.

Meanwhile elsewhere Samuel Smith are selling some of their pubs off, which is something we've not seen in a long time, this includes the **Travellers Rest** in Oughtibridge.

Not to forget of course we do still have some that are open and successful such as the **Brown Bear** in the City Centre!

The management of the **Anvil** at Stannington are moving on after less than two years and the lease is available. It is owned by Stonegate Pub Company.

The former Southpaw boxing gym at Shalesmoor is to be converted into a retro video games arcade bar. It will be run by the same people as Retrodome in Barnsley and will charge an entry fee. Once in all the games will be free.

The **Norfolk Arms** in Grenoside, which has been closed for 6 years, has building work well underway with a new extension and other alterations along with smartening up the existing exterior.

The **Devonshire Arms** in Dore and the **Castle Inn** at Bradway are hoping to go free of tie on their cask lines soon (the pubs are leased from Stonegate Pub Company) which will allow them to order direct from local breweries and offer more variety in their guest ale rotation – watch this space! Both pubs currently have a regular quiz night and occasional live music. The Castle Inn also does food.

# Award Winning

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## ALBION

The Albion has entered a new era as local figures Joe Rugg and David Saverex officially take over the historic venue, bringing it back to independent ownership and community-focused hospitality.

Previously associated with Stancill Brewery, the Albion will now operate completely independently with a renewed focus on showcasing a broad range of beer, food and entertainment. The pair plan to offer 12 keg lines featuring four rotating independent breweries alongside three cask lines with one permanent beer and two rotating guests.

A curated wine list from Charles at Barks Wines will sit alongside a full cocktail and mocktail menu while plans are already underway to build a full kitchen serving high-quality pub food designed to perfectly accompany a pint.

David Saverex, managing director of Nivek Group that operates Sheffield institutions Corporation Nightclub and Trafalgar Wearhouse and Joe Rugg, founder of the popular social media platform Pints of Sheffield, believe the city's pub culture deserves protecting and celebrating. Rugg is also the founder of Abbeydale Road Beer Festival which has grown over the last five years into one of the city's most popular independent beer events.

"We want this place to be a space for everyone," said Joe Rugg. "A place to hang out all day, serving great food and drink while staying true to what a pub should be, somewhere for conversation with friends and family."

Saverex added: "Pubs are part of Britain's identity. Getting involved in a pub during this climate might seem risky but if we lose our pubs we lose something incredibly important about our communities."

The pair say Sheffield's independent spirit inspired the venture. Neither were born in the city but both now proudly call it home.

"Sheffield is already a national beer destination and we genuinely believe it can become a global one," said Rugg.

Plans for the Albion include live music and DJs every weekend, a giant outdoor screen for the World Cup this summer and restoring the venue as a true seven-day community pub. Until its relaunch on 5 June 2026, The Albion will remain open Thursday to Sunday.

"We'd love people to come back and give the Albion a second chance."

**Paul Crofts**

# Abbeydale BEERWORKS TAPROOM



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# PUBS BY OPEN-TOP BUS

## Stagecoach's Peak Sightseer open-top bus tour launches its 2026 season on 23 May with buses running hourly on two routes from Chatsworth House.

The **BLUE** route runs to Mam Tor, Blue John Cavern, via Baslow, Calver, Grindleford, Longshaw, Hathersage, Hope and Castleton.

The **RED** route runs on a circular route via Bakewell and Ashford In the Water.

Tours operate from 10am to 6pm daily until 19 September (then Saturdays only to 10 October) and there is also a South Sheffield feeder bus at the start and end of the day offering pick ups and drop offs at Meadowhead, Woodseats, Millhouses and Totley.

The tour ticket allows you to hop on and off as much as you like and includes both open-top tour routes, the feeder service and also various local Stagecoach buses including service 65 (Sheffield-Buxton via Calver) and 170 (Chessterfield to Bakewell via Baslow).

There are a number of pubs along the route and it can be a great day out doing the sightseeing in the morning then a few pubs in the afternoon. There are some absolutely epic landscapes to see from the top deck!

Peak Sightseer ticket prices (normal bus tickets/fares do not apply): adult £14, concessions £9.50, children £8.50, family £38, group of 5 adults £60. Tickets are available from the bus driver or on the Stagecoach app.

There are discounts for ticket holders at the following pubs: Bank House (Hathersage), Little John (Hathersage), Old Hall Hotel (Hope) and Peak Hotel (Castleton). The Hathersage venues offer the discounts weekdays only 10am to 5pm.

There is also a network of local buses in the area that run all year around. They charge single fares at £3 per ride or an all day Derbyshire Wayfarer pass is available – £9 bus only or £17 bus and train. Wayfarer ticket holders can buy the Peak Sightseer ticket at the concession price. Wayfarer tickets are available on the Travelmaster app as well as from the bus driver.

More information on the Peak Sightseer can be found online at [stagecoachbus.com](http://stagecoachbus.com) with details of other bus services at [travelderbysheire.co.uk](http://travelderbysheire.co.uk). Also do check out our map over the page.

For this feature we will take a look at the pubs along the Blue Sightseer route that are in the CAMRA Sheffield & District branch area – Calver Sough to Castleton.



## CALVER

**Bridge Inn**, Calver. A central bar divides this traditional two roomed pub with a beer garden backing onto the river Derwent. Three cask ales offered. [257](#) [257b](#) [BLUE](#)

**Calver Arms**, Calver. A sports bar and pub kitchen. The dining area and bar feature exposed beams, flag stone flooring and roaring fires (in winter). Wide ranging food menu. Carvery on Sunday. [65](#) [257](#) [257b](#) [BLUE](#)

## GRINDLEFORD

**Sir William Hotel**, Grindleford. Originally three cottages on the "green" in the centre of the village, this has been a pub and hotel for the last 150 years. Panoramic views of Froggatt Edge from the garden terrace. [65](#) [257](#) [BLUE](#)

**Maynard**, Grindleford. A large boutique hotel near Grindleford station with modern public bar, lounge and restaurant. Impressive views from the large garden. Casual walkers and dogs welcome. Snacks are served in the bar from 12pm–9pm. [Train](#) [65](#) [BLUE](#)

## HATHERSAGE

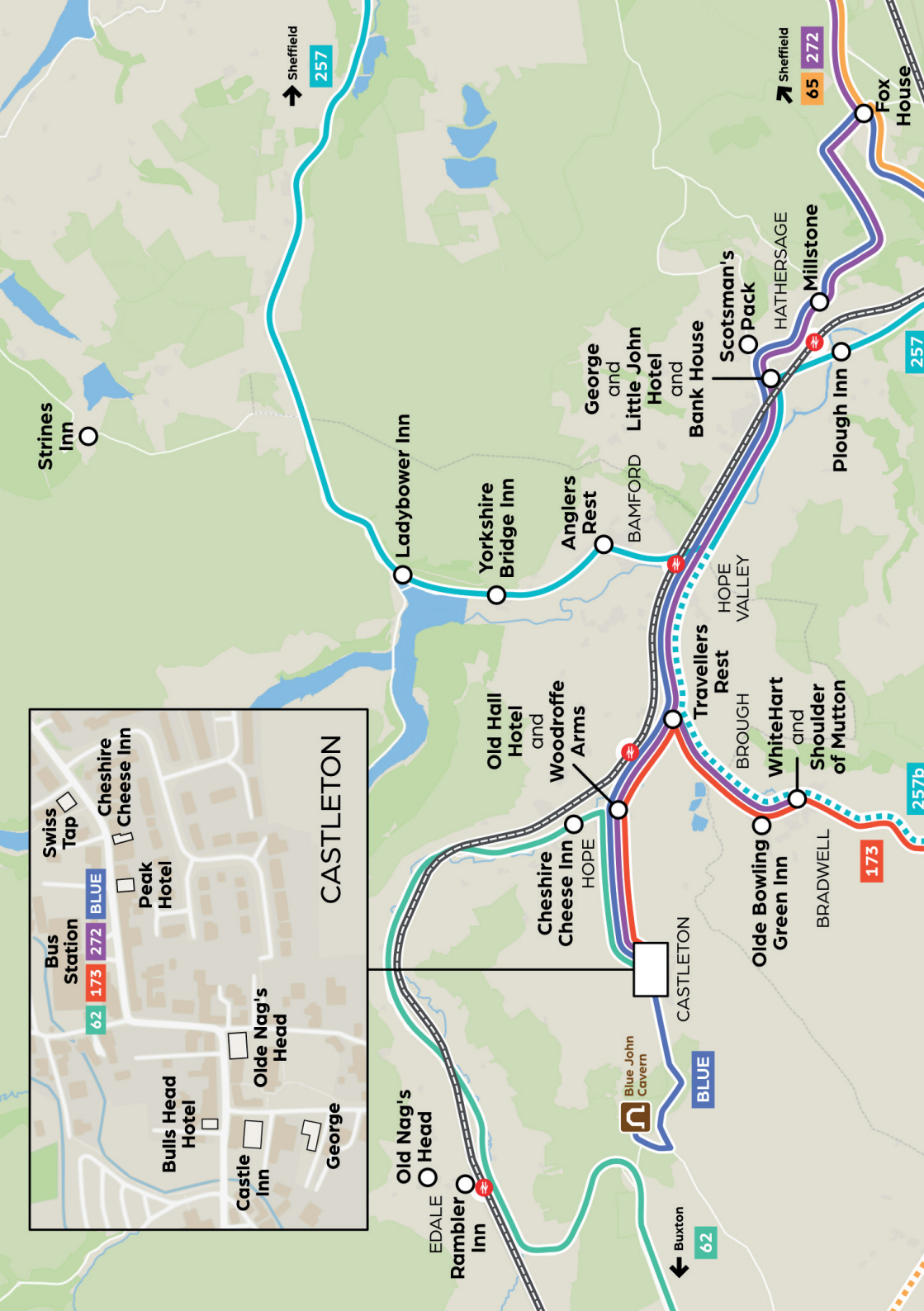
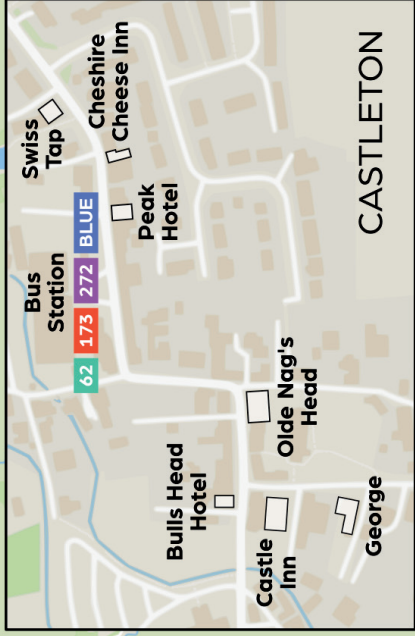
**Millstone**. Originally built to serve the nearby millstone quarry, now popular with diners. Open plan with large well furnished seating/dining areas. Extensive outdoor area partly under cover. [272](#) [BLUE](#)

**Scotsman's Pack**. Comforting pub dating from the Edwardian period decorated with horse brasses and ornamental plates. The pub features a main bar area, two seated dining areas and a bar-side room around the central bar servery. The pleasant garden overlooks a stream. [272](#) [BLUE](#)

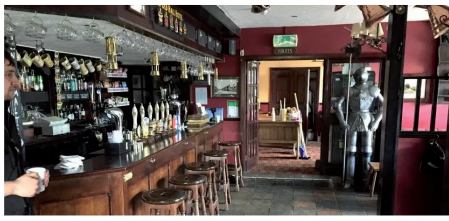
**Bank House**. Formerly a historic bank, now an award winning contemporary restaurant and bar nestling in the heart of the Peak District National Park. Bank House offers fresh locally sourced seasonal produce and the finest tipples from Europe. One cask ale available, usually a house beer from Abbeydale. [Train](#) [257](#) [272](#) [BLUE](#)

**George**. Formerly a 500 year old inn, this luxury Derbyshire hotel in the heart of the Peak District has been transformed into a pub offering a range of cask ales in their public bar. Bar is open for coffee and soft drinks from 8am, but from 11am for alcohol. [Train](#) [257](#) [272](#) [BLUE](#)

**Little John Hotel**. Pub, restaurant and hotel that has been recently refurbished with a smart new look inside and out. From one angle, looks like a street corner local, and this part of the building has the bar and pool table, however the building extends much further with dining and function rooms. Three cask ales are available on the bar, usually from a relatively local brewery such as Abbeydale. [Train](#) [257](#) [272](#) [BLUE](#)







## PUBS BY OPEN-TOP BUS (CONTINUED)

### BROUGH

173 272 BLUE

**Travellers Rest.** Large roadside pub, open plan but with distinct areas around the island bar. There is a big screen showing sporting events and good value pool table. Dogs and walkers welcome.

### HOPE

Train 62 173 272 BLUE

**Old Hall Hotel.** Typical village corner pub with a large open-plan bar area. Traditional, relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The snug features a real fire. Tea room adjoins building serving 7 days a week from 8am to 5pm. Beer festivals held most bank holiday weekends. Dogs and muddy boots welcome.

**Woodroffe Arms.** Uncomplicated Greene King owned local village pub split into two drinking areas with rear car park and outdoor seating area. Dogs, walkers and families welcome. Bar snacks available.

### CASTLETON

62 173 272 BLUE

**Swiss Tap.** Family run B&B with a bar open to non-residents offering two cask ales and sports on TV. Opening hours can vary.

**Olde Cheshire Cheese.** Traditional village inn. A central servery separates the restaurant and the bustling bar area. Names of landlords since 1746 are inscribed on low wooden beams. Homemade food served everyday. Walkers and dogs welcome. Six local cask beers.

**Peak Hotel.** Quirky pub offering en-suite B&B, good pub food, five cask beers, quiz night, live music, Outdoor drinking area at rear.

**Old Nag's Head.** Feature fireplace, exposed stone walls and carved wooden chairs. Stylish dining room and busy family food trade. Excellent range of cask ales including from several local breweries with a house ale by Intrepid.



**Bulls Head Hotel.** A spacious wood panelled diningroom, while leather sofas feature in the smaller bar area. High quality home cooked food. Six different Robinsons real ales are offered. Courtyard drinking area and barn for indoor/outdoor eating and drinking.

**Castle Inn.** A chain pub aiming to create an authentic atmosphere with local pictures adorning the walls, candlelit tables and wooden beams. Walkers welcome. Dogs allowed in the bar and water and dog treats provided.

**George.** Cosy two-roomed back-street pub. The flag stoned tap room welcomes walkers and dogs, while the carpeted restaurant is for diners only. Attractive forecourt seating. Five cask beers are offered. Homemade jams, pickles and chutneys for sale using locally sourced ingredients. PubAid Community Sustainability Hero award in 2024 and 2025, grows its own produce, uses solar power and keeps bees!



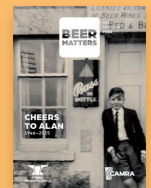
# BRANCH MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

**Your Beer Matters magazine has won an award; this year, we are officially the best!**

As none of us from Sheffield & District could make the national Members' Weekend in St Albans, our regional director Kevin Keaveney picked up the award and presented it to editor Andy Cullen at our branch AGM.

Thanks go to all those that contribute towards what makes *Beer Matters* possible – Robin who does the design, all the advertisers that help cover the costs, all of you that contribute news and articles, the volunteers that distribute copies to pubs and the Dog & Partridge pub for providing a base for the printers to deliver to and for distributors to collect from!

**[And of course thanks and congratulations to our editor Andy, who has now compiled over 200 issues of the magazine!]**





## PUB OF THE MONTH

### June 2026

The Fargate opened in the centre of Sheffield in October 2025, to much fanfare. It is a joint venture between Bakewell-based brewery Thornbridge, and York-based beer importer and pub operator Pivovar.

The building was constructed by the Yorkshire Penny Bank, and opened in 1889. The upper floors were occupied by the Albany Hotel, a 'temperance house' which provided an alcohol-free environment. Fortunately for us, well over 100 years later you can now finally purchase real ale from one of ten pumps on site.

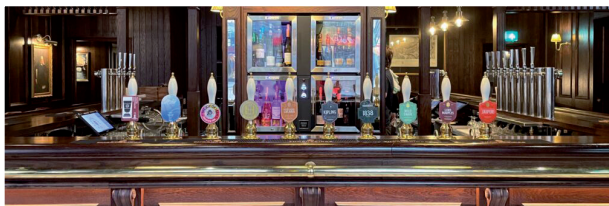
A lengthy £1m renovation was undertaken on the building prior to the Fargate opening. The ground floor is high-ceilinged and decked out in dark wood with an impressive central horseshoe-shaped bar. There are several booths, banquette seating and a snug, all with leather seats.

A spiral staircase leads upstairs to a rather different space with more contemporary seating and reclaimed wooden-panelled walls. A pizza kitchen upstairs serves food to the whole pub. In the basement, on the way to one of the bathrooms, you can spot the former bank's vault which is still in place and used as storage – the Fargate is home to perhaps the safest beer in the city. In May they added several outdoor tables to the front, where drinkers can catch some afternoon sun.

A staff of around 25 under manager Adam Swithenbank and deputy Kieron Lake serve the 300-capacity pub. Across the ten cask lines, six are Thornbridge's own with the remainder being guests. The 16 keg lines are split with Thornbridge having half, and the remainder divided between some guest craft beer and other lagers or wheat beers.

The Fargate is a welcome addition to the town centre, in an area which is still undergoing major renovations. Join us to celebrate their award on **9 June** from 8pm.

**Dan Rowe**





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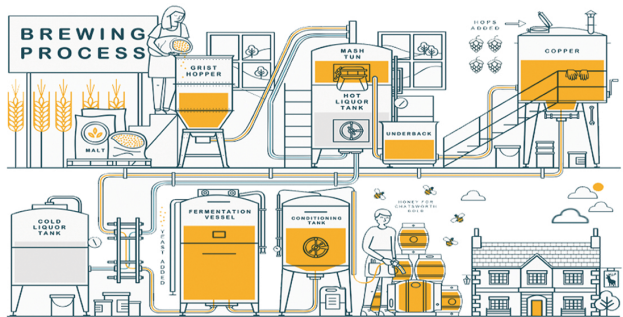


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## AREA PUB OF THE YEAR 2026 (North Sheffield)

The Blake Hotel has been voted by our members Pub of the Year 2026 (North Sheffield). This is the third time it has won the award since our regional awards were started in 2019 (previous wins being in 2022 and 2024).

Their range of guest beers from small/independent breweries include a stout or porter and always includes several beers from Neepsend Brewery (former operator of the pub). They also have real cider and both local and continental keg beers. In addition the pub provides a large selection of whiskies.

At the top of the infamously steep Blake Street (pedestrian handholds provided), this community pub reopened as a free house in 2010 after seven years of closure. In 2022 it became part of the Trust Inns estate (along with Sheaf View).

Extensively restored, it has many Victorian features, including etched windows and mirrors. At the rear is a large decked garden. No electronic games, TV or jukebox.

Join us for the award presentation and to celebrate the win with a few drinks from 8pm on **Thursday 18 June**.

Phil Ellett



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# AWARD PRESENTATIONS



**PUB OF THE MONTH April 2026**  
**GARDENERS REST** Neepsend



**AREA PUB OF THE YEAR 2026 (Central)**  
**DOG & PARTRIDGE** Trippet Lane



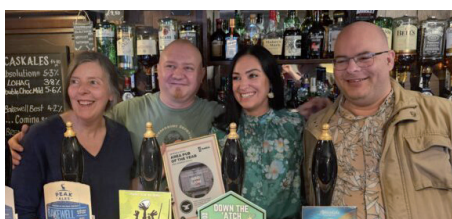
**PUB OF THE MONTH May 2026**  
**NO.3** Sharrow



**AREA PUB OF THE YEAR 2026 (South)**  
**SHEAF VIEW** Heeley



**CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2026**  
**OLD SHOE** Orchard Square



**AREA PUB OF THE YEAR 2026 (District)**  
**RED LION** Litton



**ROTHERHAM PUB OF THE SEASON**  
**Winter 2025/26**  
**ROADHOUSE BAR & BOTTLES** Broom

The Roadhouse Bar & Bottles micropub and shop has been awarded the Winter 2025/26 Pub of the Season by the Rotherham branch of CAMRA.

It was presented by Dr Steve Burns during their popular Sunday afternoon music club event. You can get there on bus X1 or X2 (Sheffield to Maltby), alight at Stag roundabout.

*5 Real Ales*

*14 Keg Lines*

*Over 30 Whiskies*



# The Crow Inn

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## GETTING MILD IN MAY

As part of a programme of campaigns to highlight classic beer styles that some may consider to be endangered CAMRA has for many years championed Mild during May. Mild is a style that is designed to be easy-drinking with subtle flavours and low bitterness. There are both dark and pale versions.

A couple of local breweries were promoting a mild in May with **Stancill** brewing a range of three!

**Mild Steel** 3.5%– If you like Stancill's *Stainless* pale ale, you'll love Mild Steel. With all the fresh, crisp character of their iconic core ale, but with a much milder ABV. *Mild Steel* is made with all-British hops.

**Tom's Mild** 3.4%, Stancill's regularly available signature mild, is named after their co-founder Tom! This is a smooth, creamy, dark mild with a nutty biscuit note. *Tom's Mild* is characteristically sweet with a gentle late hop aroma. Well balanced, moreish and extremely drinkable.

**Ruby Mild** 4.9% – It's been over five years since they brewed a ruby mild. This one is ruby red in colour with a strong nuttiness and flavours of berries. A velvety mouthfeel of melted milk chocolate make this a luxuriously pleasurable pint.

Meanwhile over at **Thornbridge** the May cask release in their year of beer programme of monthly seasonal specials was a mild, although perhaps a less traditional version being a coffee mild, although at 3.8% ABV, **Present** is still easy drinking!

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Mild Month



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## ABBEYDALE BREWERY

Joining our Legacy Series of fondly remembered beers from the archives as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations, we're bringing back **Drop Hammer** (4.3%) for a limited time only. A classic copper coloured bitter, satisfying and well-balanced.

We've got an exciting collaboration on the way with the excellent folk at Colbier, from Liverpool. In the Elements will be a 6.5% **Baltic Porter** brewed using a No 19 Maris Otter, a special heritage floor malted version of our base grain, riffing alongside UK grown Olicana and Jester hops. Expect layers of robust, toasty flavours alongside smooth waves of caramel sweetness, with a rounded bitterness encore.

And of course we have our usual vast selection of delicious pale ales available too! Returning specials this month are **Summer** (3.9%), hopped with Vic Secret, Mosaic and Galaxy for a tropical, approachable and aromatic pale ale, and **Doctor Morton's Cask Paint** (4.1%), with Amarillo and Chinook hops for notes of subtle tangerine and a punchy bitterness. Joining them we have a new addition to our botanical print inspired range, **Sunsprite Rose** (4.3%). This one is hopped with Styrian Dragon which holds delicate rose notes, and Styrian Eagle, bringing a pleasant citrusy character.

## BREWERY BITS

**St Mars of the Desert** is in preparation for this summer's SMOD fest with the acquisition of two Holzfass barrels that they are in the process of repitching.

These traditional German wooden serving vessels (pictured above) contain beer packaged during fermentation, and the beer is known as "ungespundet" in Germany.

In the meantime new releases include *Welcome to the neighbourhood* a pale NZ-hopped IPA with Nelson Sauvín and Nectarón, 5%, and fresh *Jack D'Or* their original hoppy golden Belgian-inspired saison beer, 7.4%.

A new beer from **Dead Parrot** spotted on the bar at Perch in May was *Repeat*, a 4.2% ABV Mosaic hopped pale ale.

Beers coming out of **Blue Bee** in April and May include a session pale ale brewed with the new Pink hop variety, a new IPA hopped with Idaho7 and Krush, *American Five Hop version 89* and the special for Kelham Pride which is a west coast pale hopped with Simcoe and Pink Boots. Also making a comeback is their *Ginger Beer*, although only a small batch so get it while you can!

**Bradfield Brewery's** seasonal special in May was *Nettle Nectar* which will be followed by *Farmers World Cup Ale* which is described as a light pale hoppy beer with a kick of fruit and a refreshing taste.



New from **Intrepid Brewing** is *Roke*, named after the old dialect for the valley mists often experienced in our part of the Peak District. The beer falls into the stronger end of the session strengths at 4.8% and is hopped with Centennial and Citra in the whirlpool, Idaho 7 at pitch then dry hopped with more Citra and Idaho 7. The beer is fermented with saturated yeast for those peachy esters.

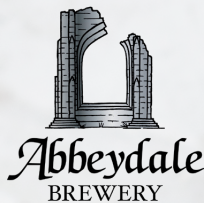
They held their first brewery open day on Saturday 2 May with a range of their beers on the bar, seating out in the year and Sunshine Pizza trading outside.

**Eyam Brewery** have again brewed the 11% ABV imperial edition of their *Black Death Vanilla Stout* and it is available in bottles from their brewery shop, with a click and collect facility available. The regular *Black Death* is 7% ABV and is available across cask, keg and bottle. Other dark beers offered include *Bring Out Your Dead*, a 4.4% ABV cappuccino stout and *Eyam Plague*, a 4.8% traditional stout. Their brewery is in Great Hucklow and the tap room is in Tideswell.

**Fuggle Bunny Brew House** continue to open for additionally tap days on the last Saturday of the month, usually with a food trader and live music planned.

**Little Mesters** have won an award for their *Royd's Bitter* in a recent SIBA competition.

**Kelham Island** have been collaborating with Blackjack Brew Co to produce *The Beautiful North*, a 4.8% ABV pale ale. The away fixture saw the keg version brewed whilst the version brewed back home at Thornbridge was the cask version, which was launched on 20 May at the Botanical Arms micropub on Ecclesall Road.



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# BELGIAN BREWERIES

**Recently, I was fortunate enough to visit several breweries and taprooms in Belgium. These included several of great age and others of a more recent vintage.**

**Roman** (Oudenaarde) showed both their now de-commissioned coppers and their new shiny brewery. The brewery dates to 1545, and founder Joos Roman: a bailliff who sold beer at an inn on the main trading route from Germany to France. The current management are the 14th generation, brothers Carlo and Lode Roman.

Founded over three centuries later (1875), **Verhaeghe** (Vichite) was visited on a Sunday morning: 90% of their production is the ruby-red, *Duchesse de Bourgogne* (6.2%)

**Silly Brewery** in the town of Silly is one of the smaller members of the Belgian

Family Brewers Association. The brewery began in 1852 in a farm bought by Marcelin Meynsbrughen and was called Meynsbrughen Brewery until 1973. They now have a handsome town-centre site with views over France. Their logo is an agricultural worker with a scythe in one hand and a beer in the other. Their most well-known beers are *Silly Saison* (5%), *Silly Scotch* (8%), and the Enghien range.

**Omer Vander Ghinste** began in 1892 when Remi Vander Ghinste bought a house with brewery buildings in Bellegem for his son Omer. The family were careful with their spending as Marguerite named her son, born in 1901, "Omer" for practical reasons, so expensive bar, and brewery windows would not have to be replaced. This was the beginning of a family tradition. The latest Omer Vander Ghinste has been in charge since 1993. Their most well-

known beers are *Omer Blond* (8%) and *VanderGhinste Roodbruin* (5.5%), a Flemish red-brown.

**Brasserie Cazeau** (Templeuve) is heir to a legacy name, the current brewery dating from 1995. It is a real mix of the old and the new, including a wood-panelled copper, lots of stairs and many 'interesting' sets of pipework. About 70% of production is secondary fermented in the bottle. Beers include the Tourney range, including *Blonde* (6.5%), *Noire* (7.6%), *Saison* (5%), *Noël* (8.2%), and *Triple* (9.4%). We were also provided with a sample of *Tourney Hop Harvest 2025* (4%) straight from the fermenting vessel. A year earlier, Brasserie 't Gaverhopke, an ancient farm, commenced brewing. All beers are unfiltered and refermented in the bottle.

**Vicaris Brewery** (Dendermonde) was founded by den-



tal engineer Vincent Dilewyns who began brewing at home in 2000 and produced a lovely Tripel. It was never the intention to go commercial, but after success at a local event the leftover crates were sold to locals and some ended up at the 2006 national Zythos Beer Festival. The current brewery opened in 2021. Their beers are unpasteurised and unfiltered and include: Vicaris NANOO, one of the best Belgian zero-alcohol beers.

Established in 2005, **De Ranke** (Dottignes) also produces unpasteurised and unfiltered beers, utilising whole hops in a traditional gravity-led set-up. Brewing to sale for their heavily hopped high IBU beers (40-70) takes between 8 and 20 weeks. Their most well-known beer is *XX Bitter* (6%).

**Deseveaux** (Bossu) were set up in 2011. Production on the old family farm commencing in 2014. They specialise in brewing with buckwheat and spelt in conjunction with malted barley and wheat. 35% of production is organic.

Mostly Belgian hops are used including some grown on-site (Cascade, Goldings, and Phoenix). Water, from their well, is treated before use. Their most well-known beers are the *Abbaye de Saint-Ghislain* and *Sarazen* ranges.

**Chateau de Leigonon** (Ciney) opened in 2024 as part of a larger complex in an ex-farm on the estate. Belgian Process Solutions installed the extensive kit. They currently brew 3-4 times/month. Beers include *Ambree* (5%), *IPA* (5.5%), and *Imperial Solstice* (8.1%).

Along the way, several visits were made to brewery taprooms. These included the **Duvel-Moortgat Maredsous Monastery** microbrewery and bar, the **Taproom Brouwerij De Brabandere** (Harelbeke, opened in 2025) and the **Trolls & Bush** restaurant and brewery tap for **Dubuisson Brewery** in Pipaix. The **Borinage** brewery tap (Boussu) provided the oddest beer name: *Urine Double IPA* (7%).

At the **Boon** taproom (Lambeek), Frank, the man who brought lambic back from the dead, appeared behind the bar, then joined us at our table: suffice to say his knowledge regarding foeders, sour beers and barrel aging is unsurpassed. Boon now has the world's largest stock of lambic beer in oak barrels, 2.1 million litres. Frank retired in 2021 and his two sons now run the brewery.

Across the country are an increasing number of high-quality low alcohol beers. For example, Ramon (in a can, 0.3%) was "Beer of the Year" at the 2025 London Beer Competition. It is brewed using a specially selected yeast that minimises alcohol production while unlocking aromatic, hop-flavours.

Thanks to Podge Beer Tours and Wakefield CAMRA for arranging the two trips which included these, and several other, visits.

**Dave Pickersgill**

# RAMBALES

RambAles are our social events that combine pub visits with a gentle walk, usually in the countryside. June sees our new social secretary Mike Cooke take over on RambAle organising duties!



**SAT 27 JUN**  
**TRAILS AROUND KILLAMARSH**

The June walk is from the **West End Hotel** in Killamarsh to **Fuggle Bunny Brew House** in Halfway with some of the route being on old railway trackbeds.

This is in a part of our branch area we rarely visit! Get there on bus 120K, meeting time is 12:20. Details of this were in last month's issue of *Beer Matters* or can be found on the website.

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## SAT 18 JUL CHESTERFIELD CANAL TO SHIREOAKS

The July walk is along the route of the Chesterfield Canal from Thorpe Salvin to Shireoaks.

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We meet up at Crystal Peaks Interchange, stand CP2, for the 12.30 no. 26 bus to Thorpe Salvin. If you're travelling from Sheffield city centre, either the 11.30 no. 120 bus from the Interchange, or the 11.45 Blue route tram from Cathedral, will get you there in plenty of time.



Alighting the 26 at Thorpe Salvin around 1.00pm, we walk just around the corner to the **Parish Oven** for pre-walk refreshments, following which we take the footpath through the fields down to the Chesterfield Canal, crossing over

at Pudding Dyke Bridge to take the towpath eastwards, past the impressive series of Thorpe staircase locks. This area is renowned for being one of the the prettiest parts of the whole UK canal network.

At Turnerwood, we can stop for tea or coffee at **Orchard Teas**, overlooking the attractive basin there. Continuing our walk, we pass through Shireoaks, past the marina, which was once the wharf for the nearby colliery, and carry on along the canal to the **Lockkeeper**, on the outskirts of Worksop. Time for a drink (food is available here) before we retrace our steps back towards Shireoaks. We leave the

canal at the bridge over Shireoaks Road, and walk through the site of the abandoned colliery to the **Ticking Clock Brewery & Taproom**. Here we have around 90 minutes to relax.



After quenching our thirsts (food is also available here, usually pizzas or burgers from outside caterers), we take the short walk back to Shireoaks station and catch the 18.14 train back to Sheffield, where the option of the **Sheffield Tap** may compete with that of catching the next bus home!

Total mileage on foot is about 6 miles, mostly level, with no significant hills, the canal between Thorpe Salvin and Worksop is all downhill (obviously only actually downhill where the locks are). It's just over 2 hours walking in total.

Note: Anyone needing to get back earlier can cut short the stop at Ticking Clock and catch the 17.08 train back to Sheffield.

Contact the RambAles Coordinator on 07922 181306 or at [rambale@sheffield.camra.org.uk](mailto:rambale@sheffield.camra.org.uk)



## STEEL CITY 50 TOURS, TALKS AND TASTINGS

Our 50th Steel City Beer & Cider Festival will be taking place 21–24 October 2026. Once again the festival is being held at the atmospheric Kelham Island Museum, a venue full of character with bars, food vendors, games, live music and more spread across the Upper Hall, Marquee, Courtyard, and Stone Garden.

The bars will all together boast a range of 200 cask ales, all of which we aim to have on sale on the first night and available until they run out, along with a list of 70 other craft beers in keg which will be on rotation. There will also be 30 different ciders and perries to try.

We have a programme of special talks, tours and tastings you can choose to add to your festival experience as an optional extra and these are now available to book.



### BEER & MUSIC PAIRING WITH PETE BROWN

TALK AND TASTING

7pm Wed

Join award-winning beer writer and broadcaster Pete Brown for a one-of-a-kind audio-visual beer tasting experience, based on the fascinating research behind his latest book – *Tasting Notes: The art and science of pairing beer and music*.



### LITTLE CHICAGO

GUIDED WALK

11:30am Thu

Historical walk in Sheffield's Little Chicago Quarter. We will explore both the pub heritage aspects of the area plus the streets which feature in the book, *Sheffield 1925: Gang Wars and Wembley Glory*, with a narrative explaining how Sheffield briefly became the most turbulent city in Britain because of an escalating gang war involving the Park Brigade, Mooney Gang, the Gas Tank Gang and many others. The walk will be led by 'Sheffield's Real Heritage Pubs' editor, Dave Pickersgill and local historian and writer, John Stocks.



## KELHAM ISLAND BREWERY

TALK

5pm Thu

This talk will be led by four key members of the team at Kelham Island Brewery: Tom Clay (Sales & Brand Director) and three of the Owner/Directors: Jim Harrison, James O'Hara and Simon Webster. The presenters will look back to the history of the Fat Cat and Kelham Island Brewery, lauding the pioneering work of Dave Wickett and celebrating the long-term influences of both the pub and the brewery on today's UK Indie beer scene before looking to the future.

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## ABBEYDALE BREWERY

TUTORED TASTING

7pm Thu

A beer tasting and discussion led by experts from the oldest established brewery in Sheffield, which as of 2024 is wholly employee owned. This event will explore the depth and breadth of the Abbeydale range as they celebrate their 30th anniversary. Last year (2023) Abbeydale produced over 200 barrels per week of which over 75% was cask. They produce at least one new beer each week, including both the Funk Dungeon and Dr.Morton's brands. The latter is a tribute to the owners with the former highlighting their barrel ageing project.

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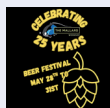
## FESTIVALS

Local beer and cider festivals we're aware of. Email the Editor if you know of any more! In **2026, all CAMRA festivals offer free entry to members (glass charges still apply).**

## EVENTS

Branch meetings, socials, heritage talks, Ram-bAles and other activities. Email our Social Secretary for more info and bookings.

## MAY



### Mallard, Worksop

**Thu 28 – Sun 31 May**

Celebrating the pub's 25th birthday.



### Red Lion, Matlock

**Fri 29 – Sat 30 May**

The **Red Lion** at Matlock Green (X17 bus from Sheffield), home to Moot Ales microbrewery, host their annual festival in the beer garden. Real ales and other craft beers, cider, gin, street food and music. Open 12–8pm both days with the pub open until 11pm.



### Sheffield Beer Census

**12pm Sat 30 May**

We survey as many pubs in Sheffield as possible to record the cask beer range. Join one of our social survey crawls or simply visit a pub and record the beers on our app. See [sheffield.camra.org.uk/sbc](http://sheffield.camra.org.uk/sbc) for more.

## JUNE



### Branch meeting

**8pm Tue 2 Jun**

All our members are welcome to come along, share pub, club and brewery news, discuss campaigning updates, get involved and enjoy a beer with us! The venue this month is **White Lion** in Heeley. Get there on bus 10/10a, 20, 24/25, 43/44 or X17.



### Club of the Year

**8pm Fri 5 Jun**

We present the award to the **Crookes Social Club** and enjoy a beer or two!



### One Valley, Dronfield

**Sat 6 Jun**

A fantastic multi venue party across a number of pubs, clubs and breweries in and near Dronfield featuring beer, music and food! All usually offer free entry. The majority of venues are walkable from Dronfield railway station, the rest are on local Stagecoach bus routes (15/16/43/44).



### Pub of the Month

**8pm Tue 9 Jun**

We present the award for June to the **Fargate** in Sheffield City Centre.



### Barnsley Civic

**Thu 11 – Sat 13 Jun**

A new festival in addition to Barnsley's regular CAMRA one which is being held at, and jointly with, the **Barnsley Civic** on Eldon Street in the town centre, just around the corner from the bus/train interchange. Regular Northern trains run there from Sheffield along with Stage-coach buses 2 and X17. Open 4–9pm Thursday and midday to 9pm Friday and Saturday. Entry tickets cost £5 and include a souvenir glass. CAMRA members can get a voucher for a pint of beer (up to 4.5% ABV).



### Festival planning meeting

**7:30pm Tue 16 Jun**

We continue work planning our 50th Steel City Beer & Cider Festival. The meeting is held upstairs at the **Gardeners Rest**. Get there on bus 7/8 which stop outside the pub, alternatively it is a 5–10 minute walk from Infirmary Road tram stop.



### Area Pub of the Year (North)

**8pm Thu 18 Jun**

Join us at the **Blake** for the award presentation.



### Stockport (CAMRA)

**Thu 18 – Sat 20 Jun**

Returning for its fourth time at the **Stockport Guildhall**, a Grade II listed building on Wellington Road South, from June 18 to 20. The Guildhall is a versatile venue with multiple rooms. Regular EMR and Transpennine Express trains run between Sheffield and Stockport. Free entry for CAMRA members requires advance booking online.



### Leicester (CAMRA)

**Thu 18 – Sat 20 Jun**

Leicester Beer Festival returns to the **Abbey Pumping Station Museum** for the third year. Featuring 50 beers and 12 ciders. The Museum will be open to the public during the day. Regular EMR trains run between Sheffield and Leicester.



### Sheaf View

**Fri 19 – Sun 21 Jun**

This pub in Heeley hosts the summer edition of their regular beer festival, which features a pop up bar in the conservatory and further festival beers in the kiosk outside. Buses 10/10a, 20, 24/25, 43/44 and X17 go there.



### Loxley

**Fri 19 – Sun 21 Jun**

The annual beer festival at the **Wise-wood Inn**, home of Loxley Brewery. This sees a marquee out back with beer and entertainment alongside the patio and garden. Pub food available. Buses 52a and 61/62 go there.



### Heeley City Farm

**Sat 20 Jun**

Fundraising event featuring food, drink, music, stalls and animals! Buses 18/18a, 73 and 252 go there.



### Social: local area pub tour

**12pm Sat 20 Jun**

The 257 bus: This service runs hourly from Sheffield to Eyam taking in Yorkshire Bridge, Bamford, Grindleford,

Calver and Stoney Middleton. We'll be using it to visit a few country pubs along the route! Bus departs Sheffield Interchange at 12:00. A Derbyshire Wayfarer all day bus pass costs £9, buy from the bus driver or on the Travellmaster app.



### Committee meeting

**8:30pm Tue 23 Jun**

The monthly business meeting for the committee. The venue is the **Dog & Partridge** on Trippet Lane in Sheffield City Centre. We also aim to have the new issue of Beer Matters from the printers ready for distribution volunteers to come and collect from the afternoon onwards. Note it is quiz night on Tuesdays.



### RambAle:

#### Trails around Killamarsh

**12:20pm Sat 27 Jun**

This month sees us head out to the edge of our branch area, starting at the **West End Hotel** in Killamarsh and walking via parts of the Transpennine Trail and Cuckoo Way to **Fuggle Bunny Brewhouse**, with a stop at the **Guzzle Micropub** on the way. See p28 and the website for more details.



### Pub of the Year

**8pm Tue 30 Jun**

We present the award for **Kelham Island & Neepsend** along with the overall winners certificate at the **Kelham Island Tavern**.

## JULY (full diary on our website)



### Swinton

**Thu 2 – Sat 4 Jul**

The annual fundraiser for **St Margaret Church** in Swinton, near Rotherham. There is a railway station on the edge of Swinton or bus 221 (Rotherham-Doncaster) goes past the venue.



### Merchant Adventurers, York

Fri 3 – Sat 4 Jul

The annual charity fundraiser event.



### Branch meeting

8pm Tue 7 Jul

All our members are welcome to come along, share pub, club and brewery news, discuss campaigning updates, get involved and more importantly enjoy a beer with us! The venue this month is the **Rambler Inn** at Edale, located next to the railway station.



### RambAle: Chesterfield Canal to Shireoaks

1pm Sat 18 Jul

This month the walk crosses the county boundary from South Yorkshire into North Nottinghamshire, beginning at the **Parish Oven** in the village of Thorpe Salvin and ending at **Ticking Clock Brewery & Taproom** in Shireoaks with a couple of refreshment stops along the way. See p29 for details.



### Festival planning meeting

7:30pm Tue 21 Jul

Upstairs at the **Gardeners Rest**.



### Smithfield, Derby

Thu 23 – Sat 25 Jul

The pub's annual event. TBC.



### Social: Torrside Brewery & New Mills pubs

11am Sat 25 Jul

We take the 11:14 train to New Mills Central for **Torrside Brewery's** monthly tap weekend followed by a couple of pubs in the town before heading back to Sheffield.



### Committee meeting

8:30pm Tue 28 Jul

**Dog & Partridge** on Trippet Lane.

# THE COMMITTEE



### Paul Manning Chair

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**Pub of the Year Coordinator**



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**Committee Meeting Secretary**



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**Press Officer**

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### Paul Rugg

**Committee Member**



### Sarah Mills

**Real Cider Champion**

cider@sheffield.camra.org.uk

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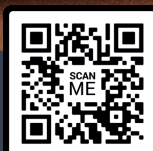
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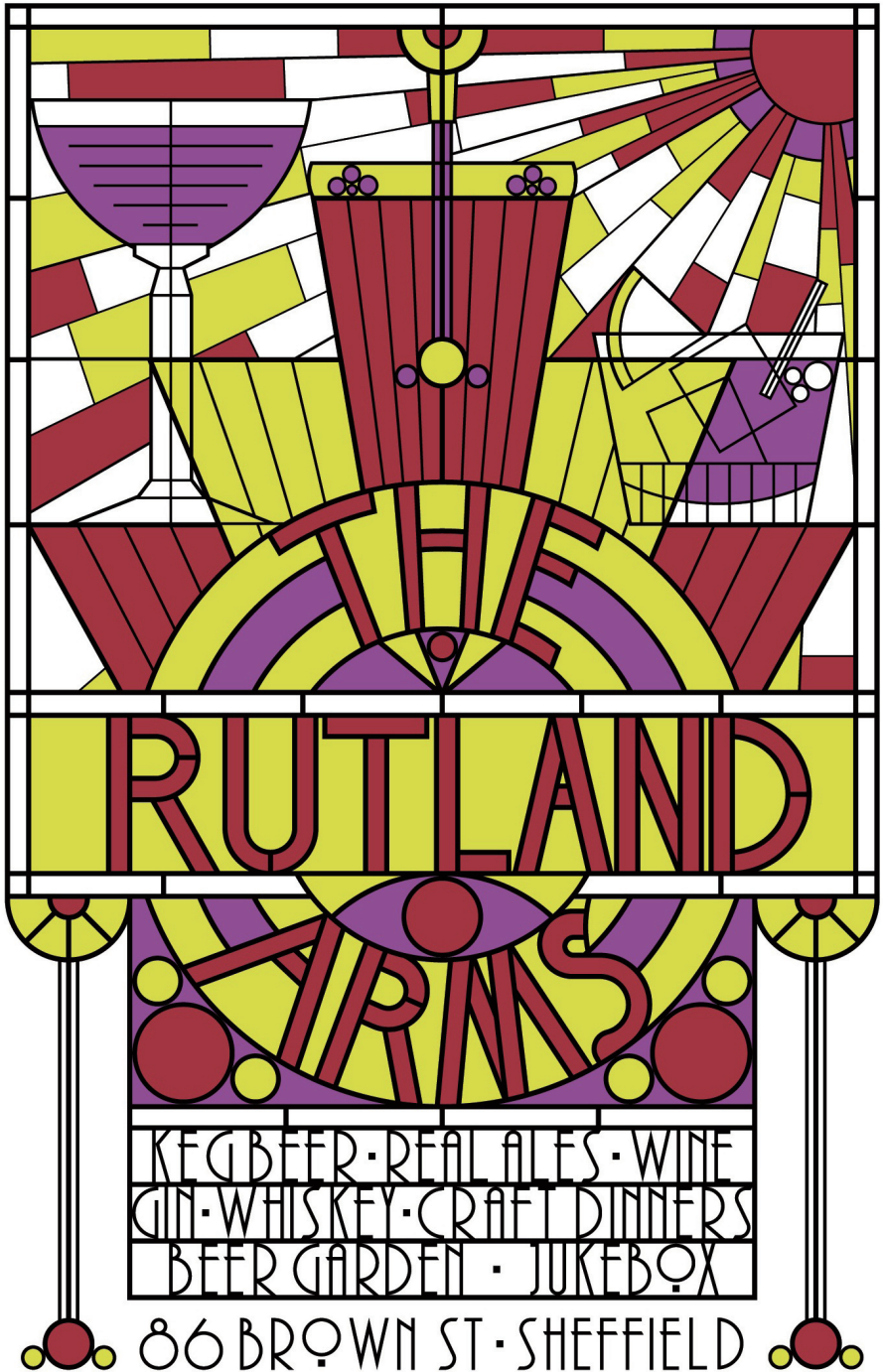


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