

YOUR **FREE** MAGAZINE | WINTER/SPRING 2025/26

WETHERSPOON**NEWS**

UK EDITION

Over 50 hotels in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales



The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern) - 23 rooms



The King's Head Inn (Salisbury) - 33 rooms



The White Lady (Edinburgh) - 30 rooms



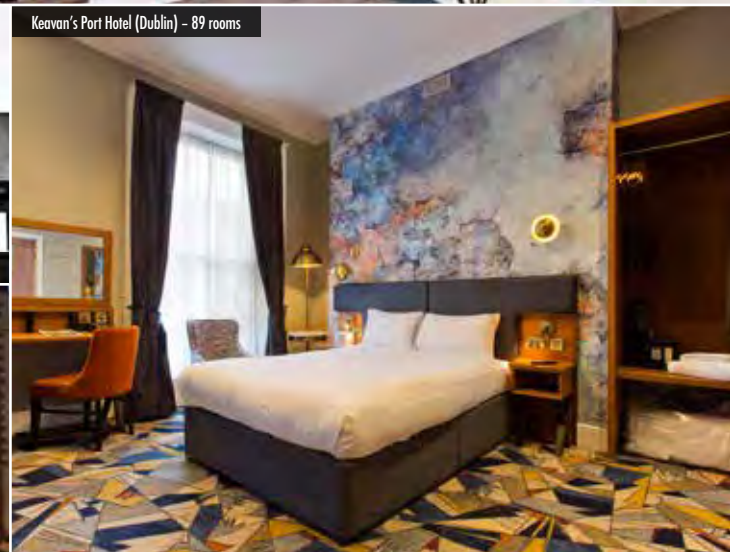
The Greenwood Hotel (Northolt, London) - 12 rooms



The Castle Hotel (Ruthin) - 17 rooms



Yarborough Hotel (Grimsby) - 36 rooms



Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin) - 89 rooms

**wetherspoon
hotels**

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apart from our own.

Our rooms[†] are only available at
jdwetherspoon.com, on the app or by phone.

[†]UK hotels only.

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ALE ENTHUSIASTS DECIDE SPOONS CAN'T BE LICKED

Two hundred and seventy-eight pubs listed in
CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026

TREAT YOURSELF TO A CRAFTY CAN

Great new brews to woo you, with independent
breweries supplying 16 craft beers



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FOR EVERY GOLDEN MOMENT



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

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

See food menu for symbol explanations. J D Wetherspoon plc reserves the right to withdraw/change offers (without notice), at any time. See website for full details: jdwwetherspoon.com. Allergen and nutritional information can be found on the customer information screen, website and Wetherspoon app.

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wetherspoon in numbers

56

hotels in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

278

pubs in CAMRA's The Good Beer Guide 2026.

98.78 per cent

of pubs achieving a top hygiene rating of five stars.

20 years

as a Top Employer United Kingdom.

£25 million

raised for Young Lives vs Cancer since 2002.

£614 million

in free shares and bonuses paid to employees since 2006.

£6.4 billion

generated in tax since 2016.

Soaring prices giving us all electric shocks

Rising energy costs are affecting everyone in the UK, yet we need a proper debate about power generation before taking the nuclear option

A main lesson of the economic crisis of the 1970s is – when energy prices increase, as they did then, inflation results... and everyone, or almost everyone, becomes poorer.

You don't need to be a revered economist like JK Galbraith or Milton Friedman to work out that increased energy costs percolate through to almost everything we buy – beer, food, cars, holidays, houses, schools – you name it; they all cost more to buy, build, own or run.

Wetherspoon was shocked, recently, to receive a bill for an extra £7 million per annum from 1 October 2025 for the so-called 'non-commodity' element of the company's electricity charge.

As a result, 62% of our 'electricity' bill isn't a payment for electricity – part is used for the national grid, yet it also subsidises renewable energy, such as solar and wind.

The additional £7 million includes a charge, we understand, for two new 'levies' or taxes.

One is a nuclear power subsidy.

The other is a subsidy for energy-intensive industries, such as steel, since they can't afford UK electricity prices, which are about the highest in the world. In exhibit 1 (opposite), we provide a list, from a government website, of businesses and other organisations which are eligible for these subsidies.

Intensive

In effect, the government, by charging a levy on non-energy-intensive businesses like pubs and on UK households, is subsidising those industries and organisations which cannot trade profitably as a result of current UK energy policies.

This is causing both cost-of-living issues for households and financial problems for many businesses, as the letter (see exhibit 2, opposite) from Emma McClarkin, of the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), to a government minister demonstrates.

Although Wetherspoon doesn't fit the government's definition of 'energy intensive', we do pay around £80 million per annum for electricity and gas (around £100,000 per pub)... which feels quite intensive to us.

Some government critics wrongly assume that attempts to achieve net-zero carbon emissions, mainly through the development of solar and wind renewable energy, are an initiative of Ed Miliband, the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

However, net zero was also enthusiastically adopted by previous prime ministers Theresa May and Boris Johnson – and when you get politicians from different parties, who attended the same university, at about the same time, proposing the same radical policies, alarm bells start ringing – and it's time for a public debate.

The main issue for debate, brushed under the carpet until now, is that, for the frequent future periods when there is no wind or sunshine, the UK will need, from new nuclear power stations, approximately the same level of energy as is generated by all of today's fossil fuel power stations.

So, how will that 'standby' energy be provided?

Surprisingly, the UK has only nine nuclear reactors, most of which are due to be phased out by 2030, as the information from the government's website (see exhibit 3, opposite) makes clear.

Contrast

In contrast, France (with a similar population and a similar-sized economy), which has successfully transitioned to nuclear energy, has 59 nuclear reactors.

However, the planned change from petrol-powered road transport to electric vehicles will require substantial extra power station capacity. Hannah Ritchie, a researcher at Our World In Data, estimates a requirement for an extra 40% – so, the UK is likely to need a total of about 83 nuclear reactors.



These are tricky issues and there is no easy solution, which is why we need to talk



A transition to nuclear power in the UK, along French lines, would surely take many decades to orchestrate and would cost many hundreds of billions of pounds – and, let's face it, we haven't really even started.

So, are our net-zero plans based on wishful thinking, rather than on hard-nosed reality?

The UK is less than half the size of France and is far more densely populated, so the issue of planning permission for new nuclear power stations is certain to be hotly contested and guaranteed to drag on for decades.

A third runway at Heathrow has been debated, for example, for 45 years – and is no nearer reality today.

People aren't keen on runways anywhere near their home, so it's probably not alarmist to assume that nuclear power stations may be even less popular.

The second issue for public debate is that several countries, which had previously relied on nuclear power (eg Germany, Italy and

Taiwan) have phased it out, mainly on the grounds of safety and long-term contamination from nuclear waste.

The question for us is whether they are right.

In the true sense of the word, is nuclear power really cleaner?

Surprisingly perhaps, Greenpeace, a passionate advocate of clean energy, is also dead against nuclear energy.

Let's be clear: these are tricky issues and there is no easy solution, which is why we need to talk.

Conflicting

There is so much conflicting evidence, and most democracies are not building multiple nuclear power stations, which seems to be the UK's plan.

It is also a plan which has no realistic chance of being implemented within the timeframe set for achieving net zero.

In the meantime, bigger bills are landing on all of our doorsteps – and many businesses, in financial distress, are approaching the government, cap in hand, for subsidies.

Over the centuries, the UK has achieved many miraculous successes in major infrastructure projects, eg railway and tube systems, road networks, power stations and a national grid. More recently, the Channel Tunnel and Crossrail have each surely been a triumph.

So, almost anything is possible. Sometimes, however, ill-thought-out projects go up the spout at devastating cost – HS2 may well be such an example, although you may disagree.

Let's pause, therefore, and ask ourselves these questions: Are the Germans, Italians, Taiwanese and Greenpeace (among many other examples) wrong in their assessment of nuclear power?

And, if we decide that they are wrong, what is a realistic timescale for switching to nuclear power, so that economic and social dislocation is minimised during the transition?

Decisions made behind closed doors, by a narrow cabal of politicians and their advisers, can go badly wrong.

Let's open up the debate on this vital subject and question all of those assumptions on which the UK's energy policy is based.

After all, we do live in a democracy where, historically, debates like this have been encouraged...

Tim Martin
Chairman

Exhibit 1

Tim says: “The information below, taken from the gov.uk website, details the large number of organisations eligible for energy subsidies.

“They range from oil and coal businesses to manufacturers, libraries and museums. In effect, the government (previous governments did the same) is raising vast sums from households, pubs, shops, restaurants and others through the ‘non-commodity’ element of energy bills – which is, apparently, over 50% of household energy costs, for example.

“The funds raised are then redistributed, according (presumably) to the preferences of ministers and civil servants.

“This sounds very like what our American cousins call ‘pork-barrel politics’ – and it’s all in the name of clean energy. It’s time for transparency and public debate – the UK’s energy policy is surely unsustainable...”

List of sectors eligible for the Energy and Trade Intensive Industries (ETII) scheme

Firms with primary operations in the sectors listed below will be eligible for support under the ETII scheme. Further detail on eligibility and the application process will be published in due course.

The ETII sectors were identified via the EBRIS review as those meeting certain thresholds for energy and trade intensity, in addition to sectors currently included in existing Energy Compensation and Exemption schemes. Energy intensity was based on electricity and gas consumption as a% of a sector’s GVA using ONS data. Trade intensity was based on goods trade using ONS data. To qualify as an ETII sector, the sector had to be above the 80th percentile for energy intensity (i.e., fall in the top 20% of sectors by energy intensity across the UK), and the 60th percentile for trade intensity (i.e., fall in the top 40% of sectors by trade intensity across the UK). The ETII scheme is subject to consideration of state aid rules.

We will publish further information on the ETII scheme by the end of March 2023, including guidance for firms that believe their operations are not correctly classified by Standard Industry Classification (SIC) code.

Sectors were defined under the SIC hierarchy.

05.10	Mining of hard coal	20.17	Manufacture of synthetic rubber in primary forms
06.10	Extraction of crude petroleum	20.20	Manufacture of pesticides and other agrochemical products
08.11	Quarrying of ornamental and building stone, limestone, gypsum, chalk and slate	20.41	Manufacture of soap and detergents, cleaning and polishing preparations
08.12	Operation of gravel and sand pits; mining of clays and kaolin	20.60	Manufacture of man-made fibres
08.99	Other mining and quarrying n.e.c.	22.11	Manufacture of rubber tyres and tubes; retreading and rebuilding of rubber tyres
10.11	Processing and preserving of meat	22.19	Manufacture of other rubber products
10.12	Processing and preserving of poultry meat	22.21	Manufacture of plastic plates, sheets, tubes and profiles
10.20	Processing and preserving of fish, crustaceans and molluscs	22.22	Manufacture of plastic packing goods
10.41	Manufacture of oils and fats	22.23	Manufacture of builders’ ware of plastic
10.42	Manufacture of margarine and similar edible fats	22.29	Manufacture of other plastic products
10.51	Operation of dairies and cheese making	23.11	Manufacture of flat glass
10.61	Manufacture of grain mill products	23.12	Shaping and processing of flat glass
10.62	Manufacture of starches and starch products	23.13	Manufacture of hollow glass
10.71	Manufacture of bread; manufacture of fresh pastry goods and cakes	23.14	Manufacture of glass fibres
10.81	Manufacture of sugar	23.19	Manufacture and processing of other glass, including technical glassware
10.82	Manufacture of cocoa, chocolate and sugar confectionery	23.20	Manufacture of refractory products
10.85	Manufacture of prepared meals and dishes	23.31	Manufacture of ceramic tiles and flags
10.86	Manufacture of homogenised food preparations and dietetic food	23.32	Manufacture of bricks, tiles and construction products, in baked clay
10.89	Manufacture of other food products n.e.c.	23.41	Manufacture of ceramic household and ornamental articles
10.91	Manufacture of prepared feeds for farm animals	23.42	Manufacture of ceramic sanitary fixtures
11.02	Manufacture of wine from grape	23.43	Manufacture of ceramic insulators and insulating fittings
11.03	Manufacture of cider and other fruit wines	23.44	Manufacture of other technical ceramic products
11.05	Manufacture of beer	23.49	Manufacture of other ceramic products
11.06	Manufacture of malt	23.51	Manufacture of cement
13.10	Preparation and spinning of textile fibres	23.52	Manufacture of lime and plaster
13.20	Weaving of textiles	23.61	Manufacture of concrete products for construction purposes
13.30	Finishing of textiles	23.62	Manufacture of plaster products for construction purposes
13.91	Manufacture of knitted and crocheted fabrics	23.63	Manufacture of ready-mixed concrete
13.92	Manufacture of made-up textile articles, except apparel	23.64	Manufacture of mortars
13.93	Manufacture of carpets and rugs	23.65	Manufacture of fibre cement
13.94	Manufacture of cordage, rope, twine and netting	23.69	Manufacture of other articles of concrete, plaster and cement
13.95	Manufacture of non-wovens and articles made from non-wovens, except apparel	23.70	Cutting, shaping and finishing of stone
13.96	Manufacture of other technical and industrial textiles	23.91	Production of abrasive products
13.99	Manufacture of other textiles n.e.c.	23.99	Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products n.e.c.
14.11	Manufacture of leather clothes	24.10	Manufacture of basic iron and steel and of ferro-alloys
14.12	Manufacture of workwear	24.20	Manufacture of tubes, pipes, hollow profiles and related fittings, of steel
14.19	Manufacture of other wearing apparel and accessories	24.31	Cold drawing of bars
14.31	Manufacture of knitted and crocheted hosiery	24.32	Cold rolling of narrow strip
14.39	Manufacture of other knitted and crocheted apparel	24.33	Cold forming or folding
15.11	Tanning and dressing of leather, dressing and dyeing of fur	24.34	Cold drawing of wire
15.12	Manufacture of luggage, handbags and the like, saddlery and harness	24.41	Precious metals production
16.10	Sawmilling and planing of wood	24.42	Aluminium production
16.21	Manufacture of veneer sheets and wood-based panels	24.43	Lead, zinc and tin production
16.22	Manufacture of assembled parquet floors	24.44	Copper production
16.29	Manufacture of other products of wood; manufacture of articles of cork, straw and plaiting materials	24.45	Other non-ferrous metal production
17.11	Manufacture of pulp	24.46	Processing of nuclear fuel
17.12	Manufacture of paper and paperboard	24.51	Casting of iron
17.21	Manufacture of corrugated paper and paperboard and of containers of paper and paperboard	24.52	Casting of steel
17.22	Manufacture of household and sanitary goods and of toilet requisites	24.53	Casting of light metals
17.23	Manufacture of paper stationery	24.54	Casting of other non-ferrous metals
17.24	Manufacture of wallpaper	25.92	Manufacture of light metal packaging
17.29	Manufacture of other articles of paper and paperboard	26.11	Manufacture of electronic components
19.10	Manufacture of coke oven products	26.12	Manufacture of watches and clocks
19.20	Manufacture of refined petroleum products	27.20	Manufacture of batteries and accumulators
20.11	Manufacture of industrial gases	27.32	Manufacture of other electronic and electric wires and cables
20.12	Manufacture of dyes and pigments	27.51	Manufacture of electric domestic appliances
20.13	Manufacture of other inorganic basic chemicals	28.91	Manufacture of machinery for metallurgy
20.14	Manufacture of other organic basic chemicals	91.01	Library and archive activities
20.15	Manufacture of fertilisers and nitrogen compounds	91.02	Museum activities
20.16	Manufacture of plastics in primary forms	91.03	Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions
		91.04	Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserve activities

Exhibit 2

Tim says: “Emma McClarkin of the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) points out that ‘businesses such as pubs are now effectively subsidising large, energy-intensive industries, despite their own precarious finances ... imposing further costs on small businesses already at risk of closure is inherently unfair’.”

ECPA

Michael Shanks MP
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

2nd October 2025

Dear Minister,

Refunding the Non-Commodity Energy Market to Support Britain's Pubs and Breweries

On behalf of the British Beer and Pub Association, may I warmly congratulate you on your appointment as Minister for Energy in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Britain's beer and pub sector is one of our most iconic and economically significant industries. It supports over one million jobs, contributes £34.3 billion in GVA, and generates £18 billion in tax revenue every year. Beyond this national contribution, our sector is deeply embedded in local economies – supporting British farmers, partnering with local food producers, and serving as a vital hub for rural and coastal communities.

However, the sector continues to face significant regulatory and economic headwinds that have hampered recovery following the pandemic. One pressing issue is the ongoing dysfunction in the non-domestic energy market. This market, which we now regard as broken, leaves our sector exposed to unsustainable suppliers and spiralling costs, with few of the protections available to domestic energy customers.

While we have maintained a constructive relationship with Ofgem, we are increasingly concerned that its role has become reactive, focused on triage rather than prevention. Although wholesale energy prices have fallen from their crisis peaks, they remain at least twice their pre-crisis levels. More recently, any benefits arising from reduced wholesale costs have been muted by escalating non-commodity charges – costs recovered through energy bills to fund network operations, green levies, and infrastructure improvements.

Reports from our members highlight both sharp increases and concerning practices within this system. Small businesses such as pubs are now effectively subsidising large, energy-intensive industries, despite their own precarious financial positions. One of our members reported a £7 million rise in non-commodity costs over the past twelve months alone, including a £2 million increase linked to new levies introduced in September to support societal projects and energy-intensive uses.

Improving further costs on small businesses already at risk of closure to support larger enterprises is inherently unfair and undermines the Government's growth agenda. We are particularly concerned that the list of energy-intensive sectors eligible for these subsidies includes organisations such as botanical gardens, libraries, museums, historic buildings, and visitor attractions.

We therefore urge the Government to review the current state of the non-domestic energy market and the conduct of suppliers, whilst focus appears increasingly on profit rather than on supporting the sustainability and growth of the British businesses they serve.

I would be delighted to meet with you to discuss these issues further and to outline our key asks of Government regarding spiralling non-commodity costs and the wider operation of the non-domestic energy market:

- A **fully costed and comprehensive impact assessment** of policies aimed at upgrading the national energy infrastructure
- **Stronger oversight and coordination** across the energy market – including Ofgem's role – to assess the cumulative impact of policy decisions and the recovery of non-commodity energy costs.

Exhibit 3

Tim says: “This extract from the UK parliament's website (House of Lords Library), published on 15 May 2025, says that 15% of the UK's energy derives from nine nuclear reactors. It then adds that ‘most existing capacity is due to be retired by 2030’. In my article on the opposite page, it is pointed out that France, which has transitioned to nuclear power, has 59 nuclear reactors. As a similar-sized economy, the UK will need an equal number, plus another 24 if we transition to electric road transport. Since one extra runway at Heathrow has been debated for 45 years, what is the realistic chance of building over 80 nuclear reactors in time for net zero? The answer, my friends, is zero. We really need to talk about this...”

House of Commons
New Cross Street
A new national policy statement for nuclear energy generation
HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY, 2025
NCLH0000000

1. Background

The UK generates around 15% of its electricity from about 6.5GW of nuclear power.^[1] There are currently nine operational reactors in the UK at five plants. However, most existing capacity is due to be retired by 2030.

In 2022, the previous Conservative government set out its ambition to increase nuclear capacity in the UK from around 6GW to up to 24GW by 2050 in its ‘British energy security’ strategy.^[2] The then government's 2023 energy strategy ‘Powering Up Britain’ included a commitment to launching Great British Nuclear (GBN), an arms-length body responsible for driving delivery of new nuclear projects. The measures required to launch GBN were passed in the Energy Act 2023.

In addition, the policy paper ‘Civil Nuclear: Roadmap to 2050’, published in January 2024, included a commitment to ‘reverse decades of under-investment and to recover the UK's global leadership in civil nuclear’. The roadmap included a commitment to ‘launching consultations on alternative routes to market for new nuclear projects and a new approach to siting nuclear within the national policy statement’.

YOUR SAY

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E-mail: editor@jdwetherspoon.co.uk

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Write to us

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

Thank you

wetherspoon



FOOD & DRINKS GIFT CARD

NO NEED FOR HAIR OF THE DOG

Dear Editor

I just wanted to give you some general feedback about how impressed I am with your pubs. I have started using them regularly when I travel, since you are the only restaurant chain I know of with a 'no pets' policy.

I have a health condition making it impossible for me to eat in places allowing dogs, so there is now almost nowhere for me to go – and I can't tell you how grateful I am that you have maintained this policy.

In addition, I have visited several of your pubs around the country and been very impressed with the efficient service from your staff, the quality of the food and the incredibly competitive prices. The obvious effort made, also, with the décor in your establishments is much appreciated.

These days, standards appear to be falling almost everywhere, but not in your case.

Thank you for the respect which you show to customers and for enabling me to have somewhere reliable to eat when I travel to a town or city with a Wetherspoon pub.

Ms Julia Pickering (via e-mail)

Tim replies: Thanks very much for your comments. The dogs issue is very difficult and very divisive (please see page 54 for comments from dog owners and my replies from previous magazines). I think the great majority, including a majority of dog owners, agrees that our pubs, which are very busy, with many children present and a high level of food sales, are not the right place for dogs (trained guide dogs and assistance dogs excepted). Despite our policy, Wetherspoon has had 10 instances, in recent months, of staff being bitten by dogs.

The situation isn't helped by the availability, online, of false papers. Believe it or not, the other day, I managed to buy assistance-dog papers for a 100-million-year-old dinosaur.



NARKED BY A NOZZLE

Dear Editor

I have been in your pubs enjoying lovely Shipyard pints, yet someone has decided to put a nozzle similar to a Guinness one, resulting in a pint which takes an absolute eternity to settle and seems too much effort for the bar staff to top up.

I now ask for the nozzle to be removed when pouring my pint, but some bar staff cannot see why. When I explain that it would result in extra work for them to top up the pint, the reply is: "We don't top up pints."

Please can the correct nozzle be installed on Shipyard pumps? This will save lots of time for everyone.

Kindest regards
Paul Roberts (via e-mail)

Tim replies: If a brewer recommends the use of a nozzle, Wetherspoon tries to adhere to that advice.

In this case, the brewer of Shipyard does, indeed, recommend a nozzle.

So, for hygiene reasons, we can't really remove the nozzle for specific requests, but we certainly can top up a pint, once the beer has settled.

While this isn't the answer you want, I hope that you understand our reasoning.

TUNA TALK – IS IT TRUE?

Dear Editor

My family and I have been dining and drinking at Wetherspoon for many years.

My daughter and I have breakfast every Tuesday at The London & County, in the centre of Eastbourne.

Our favourite has always been the avocado on a bagel (we like it with halloumi cheese).

I always read the magazine while waiting for breakfast, and a letter mentioned that jacket potato with tuna is returning to the menu – hence this letter. Keeping my fingers crossed.

Best wishes

Mrs Angela Brookman, Eastbourne

Tim replies: I always felt that 'smashed avocado' was no way to treat an avocado.

Also, I used to play tennis, with a 'bagel' being when you lose a set 6-0. Taking all of these factors into account, as you would expect for someone of my vintage, we've relented on the smashed avocado, but it's on a muffin and not a bagel.

If you can follow this reasoning, you've had more than one pint of Abbot...

MENU NOT ALL THERE

Dear Tim

My wife and I have been frequent visitors to your welcoming and comfortable pubs for years; we are also happy shareholders.

We dine in Wetherspoon at least once a week. Value and prices are unbeatable.

One slight grump is – over the last few years, we noticed that the menu has shortened a lot.

No half chickens, no steak meals and no roast dinners, all of which were very good value for money (with a drink).

We wondered what the reason is for their sad loss.

Yours sincerely
Mr Noel Royal, Moorside, Oldham

Tim replies: We've found it very tempting, over the years, to extend the menu significantly (in pub number one, at one stage, we had just shepherd's pie between noon and 2pm). We felt that, in general, the menu was getting too big. This was slowing down service and, in some cases, risking affecting quality. Hence, we've stopped selling steaks and a few other items, although the main menu is still pretty extensive, in my view.

I appreciate your comments and do hope that you can find something you like, despite these changes.

MIFFED BY MYSTERY OF THE MISSING MASH

Dear Tim

I am a frequent visitor to The William Rufus (Carlisle).

My favourite meal is bangers and mash – three Lincolnshire sausages, peas, onion and red wine gravy (pub classics).

I recently visited The Paddle Steamer (Largs) and was so disappointed, on opening the menu, to find that this dish was not listed. In fact, this was not the only difference.

Looking at pub classics and small pub classics, the following are omitted from the Largs menu, compared with that at The William Rufus: BBQ chicken melt, steak & ale pudding, bangers and mash, vegetarian bangers and mash, chilli bean non-carne and small vegetarian all-day brunch.

I thought that part of the attraction of Wetherspoon was that the menus and drinks were universal... not so.

Yours sincerely
Douglas Tetlow, Saltcoats, Ayrshire

Tim replies: There are a few dozen pubs where, because of smaller kitchens or very busy trade (eg at airport sites), we've restricted the number of menu items. When I speak to kitchen teams in these pubs, they often feel that we've made the right decision, even though it inevitably inconveniences some customers. I'll have a look at the Largs menu and see whether we can add back an item or two which you mention.

WHEN NOISE ANNOYS...

When Tim Martin opened his first Wetherspoon pub in 1979, it was music-free. That is still the case in the vast majority of the company's pubs (with the exception of its 46 Lloyds No.1 bars).

Wetherspoon's pubs also turn off the volume on its TVs showing news channels and, on occasion, major sporting events.

Now, in a world of mobile phones and laptops being used in pubs more than ever, Wetherspoon is asking customers to politely keep the noise down.

It has signs (pictured) in its pubs with the wording 'Please respect others when using phones or other personal devices. Kindly turn the sound off or use headphones.'

Wetherspoon's operations director, Martin Geoghegan, said: "Our pubs are busier than ever – and we are simply asking customers who use phones or personal devices to be respectful of others.

"We want to ensure that everyone who visits our pubs can enjoy themselves, without being disturbed by too much noise."

Sorry – no animals allowed, except for guide dogs and also assistance dogs with accredited training from Assistance Dogs UK member organisations.

Please respect others when using phones or other personal devices. Kindly turn the sound off or use headphones.

Smoking and vaping are permitted in designated outside areas only.

Thank you for your attention.

This new pub notice provides customers with guidance on dogs (see page 54), noise and smoking.

CARPET DIEM: DEBORAH ON A ROLL AFTER CATCHING RUG BUG

Wetherspoon enthusiast Deborah Galvin has visited 108 of the company's pubs – to take photographs of their carpets.

It was after reading about it in Wetherspoon News that Deborah was first alerted to the fact that each Wetherspoon pub has its own unique carpet design.

Deborah said: "I first found out about the carpets in an article in Wetherspoon News which I read while visiting Wetherspoon's pubs during caravan holidays.

"I enjoy visiting the pubs and taking photos of the various carpets.

"My most recent visit was to The Velvet Coaster, in Blackpool. I love the history of the pub names and what the buildings were previously."

Deborah's visits have taken her from her local, Walham Green (Fulham), to pubs all over the south coast, London and northwest England – and even to The Linen Weaver (Cork) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

Deborah's niece, Sally Ede, has accompanied her aunt on several of the visits.

She said: "My aunt Deborah is a huge Wetherspoon enthusiast. She spends her weekends seeking new pubs to visit – often bringing us all along when we are on holiday – and has a wonderful tradition of photographing the carpets.

"She now has a collection of more than 100 carpet photos."



ALE ENTHUSIASTS DECIDE SPOONS CAN'T BE LICKED

Two hundred and seventy-eight Wetherspoon pubs have been acclaimed for the quality of their real ale – by members of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

The pubs are listed in CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026, the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide.

Local branch members chose the Wetherspoon pubs for inclusion in the guide following regular visits to check on the quality of the real ales on offer. They also took account of customer service, décor and overall atmosphere.

A CAMRA spokesman said: "The pubs deserve their place in The Good Beer Guide 2026.

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

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, added: "We are delighted that so many of our

pubs have been recognised for the quality of their real ales by CAMRA members.

"Our pubs offer customers an excellent range of real ales at all times, including those from regional brewers and microbrewers, as well as hosting individual beer festivals.

"Staff work hard to ensure that the real ale served in the company's pubs is in first-class condition at all times."

Newcastle University's students' union's Luther's Bar is also included in the 2026 guide, the first university franchise site to be included.

● We feature descriptions from The Good Beer Guide 2026 for four Wetherspoon pubs, one from each of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

● CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026 costs £16.99 and is available from bookshops and directly from CAMRA: shop.camra.org.uk (website discount available to CAMRA's members).





Pub manager Tom Rudnicki

THE WHEATSHEAF Stoke-on-Trent

Situated in the heart of Stoke town centre, this small and cosy Wetherspoon pub is extremely popular, and has acquired a reputation for the quality and condition of the beer it sells.

All amenities are available on one well laid out floor with a well-stocked bar that is typical of the pub chain.

Of the 10 handpulls available, about five are dedicated to both local, and well-researched national beers, with Titanic a favourite.

The food is of course from the Wetherspoon menu.

Alcohol is served from 11.30am (12.30pm Sun)

● 84-92 Church Street, ST4 1BU



THE HAY STOOK

East Kilbride

A Wetherspoon pub housed within Scotland's largest covered shopping mall.

The pub is popular with shoppers, handy for the cinema complex and is a short walk from the bus station.

Bare walls and a wooden ceiling give it a rustic air.

The staircase up to the toilets neatly divides the pub between the family area to the left and the bar to the right.

There is a beer garden beside the mall entrance which is popular with smokers.

● 26–36 Princes Avenue, G74 1JU

THE CENTRAL BAR

Carrickfergus

Lively market town community local with a dedicated clientele.

This Wetherspoon pub has a bustling ground-floor public bar and a quieter family-friendly first-floor loggia-style sitting room with exposed timber trusses, affording inspirational views from its many windows.

Handpumps on both levels serve three house beers and guest ales, with local ale from Whitewater Brewery.

Alcohol is served from 11.30am (12.30pm Sun).

● 13–15 High Street, BT38 7AN (opposite castle)



Pub manager Michael Morgan



Pub manager Louise Williams

THE GOLD CAPE

Mold

Situated in the historic market town of Mold, this pub takes its name from a 4,000 year-old solid gold ceremonial cape found at a nearby burial site in 1831.

Made from a single sheet of beaten gold and embellished with intense decoration, the actual gold cape is currently housed in the British Museum in London.

It is considered one of the best examples of prehistoric craftsmanship in Europe.

There is a large sculpture in the pub offering a contemporary interpretation of the original.

● 8–8A Wrexham Street, CH7 1ES (next to Market Square crossroads)

ALE KINGS OF WOKING GIVEN HONOUR FOR 30-YEAR STREAK



The Herbert Wells (Woking) celebrated a quite remarkable achievement when the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) publication The Good Beer Guide 2026 was published.

Pub manager Gary Hollis is pictured (left) with (left to right) Ian Johnson (Surrey/Hants Borders CAMRA branch vice chairman), branch members Mark Davies and Geoff Hill, branch chairman Mick Bell and shift manager Alan Jones.

The CAMRA members presented Gary and his team with a 'special award', in recognition of 30 consecutive years' inclusion for The Herbert Wells (Woking) in The Good Beer Guide.

The Herbert Wells first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in June 1995.

Gary took over as pub manager at The Herbert Wells in December 1996, 29 years ago, while Alan has worked at the pub for 20 years.

Deputy manager Christian Millward, who has been at the pub for 24 years, said: "We have a very experienced team, not changing too much, and are all delighted to reach 30 consecutive years in the guide."

"We are all well trained and work closely with our local CAMRA branch, as well as with local breweries."

Surrey/Hants Borders CAMRA pubs officer Kevin Travers said: "It's a fantastic achievement that Gary and his team have chalked up 30 consecutive years in our Good Beer Guide."

"We select pubs from scratch every year, so it is testament to maintaining high-quality real ales over such a long period of time."

"The support for local breweries, such as Hogs Back and Surrey Hills, is also particularly welcome."



The Herbert Wells (Woking)

STARS IN BARS MAKE SURE THAT CELLARS ARE STELLAR



As of September 2025, 99.8 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs have achieved a five-star cellar rating

Wetherspoon's staff are committed to serving the perfect pint of real ale, on every occasion.

With millions of real-ale pints sold across Wetherspoon's pubs annually, achieving this is no mean feat.

Wetherspoon's staff take part regularly in in-house training, covering all aspects of keeping and serving first-class beer.

The company also works alongside organisations like independent real-ale quality assessor Cask Marque – to gauge the quality of the real ale being served across the pubs.

Cask Marque has been inspecting Wetherspoon's pubs since 1999.

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

Cask Marque carries out an 11-point audit, covering stock rotation, beer lines' cleanliness, equipment's maintenance, glass washing cleanliness and hygiene. A star rating is then awarded from one to five, with a target for all pubs of four to five stars.

As of September 2025, 99.8 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs have achieved a five-star beer and cellar hygiene rating – the highest-possible rating – that's 800 pubs.

Cask Marque's director, Paul Nunny, said: "Congratulations on the success of achieving a five-star cellar rating at 99.8 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs.

"Since 2023, Cask Marque pubs now have a cellar audit, as part of their renewal process.

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

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

In the cellar

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

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

In the bar

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

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

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

The cellar audit is conducted annually, with further assessments made of the pub by Cask Marque at six-monthly intervals to check beers' quality.

If a customer complaint is received, a pub is also subject to mystery visits.

Wetherspoon undertakes an internal monthly cellar audit in every pub to ensure that Cask Marque's cellar standards are maintained.

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

As each pub's cellar is assessed, the results of the star rating appear on the pub's entry on the app. Pubs are also provided with a window sticker to display their Cask Marque rating.

About Cask Marque

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

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

BREAKFAST AT VERITY FOR NEW BATCH OF SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES



The class of 2025 celebrates success on graduation day

Wetherspoon is proud to congratulate its latest group of graduating apprentices who have successfully completed their higher-level qualifications.

Among them were those achieving the level 5 business management practice apprenticeship with diploma in higher education and the level 6 chartered manager degree apprenticeship – both representing months of hard work, commitment and dedication to learning.

The apprenticeships comprise knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs), with a focus on: organisational performance; delivering results; interpersonal excellence; managing people; developing relationships; personal effectiveness; managing self.

They are designed to help managers to progress in their career and make an even greater contribution to their pub, kitchen, hotel and the wider company.

To mark the occasion, graduates were joined by friends and family for a celebration breakfast at The Hedley Verity (Leeds).

The event provided the perfect opportunity to reflect on their achievements before heading across the city to the First Direct Arena for the formal graduation ceremony.

Wetherspoon's recruitment, training and qualifications manager, Michelle Crooke, said: "Many congratulations to all of our graduates, who have worked extremely hard to reach this point.

"Thank you, also, to the friends, family and colleagues who have provided the support network.

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

Wetherspoon's senior recruitment, training and qualifications manager, Chris Dennis, added: "Graduating at this level is a huge achievement."

"Balancing studies with day-to-day pub responsibilities shows great determination and professionalism.

"We are very proud of what they have achieved and look forward to seeing how they use their skills to shape the future of the business."

CENTENARIAN JEANNE CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY AT THE GEORGE HOTEL

Jeanne Crow celebrated her 100th birthday at The George Hotel (Hailsham).

Jeanne meets friends at the pub and is well known to customers and staff.

Two or three times a week, she takes 15 minutes to walk (with the aid of a stroller) from her flat to the pub.

And it's not the first time that Jeanne has celebrated her birthday at The George Hotel.

Two years ago she insisted on having her 98th birthday celebrations in the pub, after reading in Wetherspoon News about a younger customer celebrating her 92nd birthday there.

Daughter-in-law Sue Crow said: "She thinks that she is Wetherspoon's oldest customer. The regulars think she's amazing and often say hello when she arrives."

Jeanne, who now has a birthday card from King Charles III and Queen Camilla, said: "I know everyone there. I've been going for about 10 years now. My friends and I like to chat and have a cup of tea. The staff there are always welcoming and always seem pleased to see me, which is nice."

Pub manager James Goldsmith said: "We all know Jeanne.

"She's a very popular lady – and we are delighted that she chose to celebrate her 100th birthday with us. Our congratulations to her."



AIMING TO MAKE EVERY BAR THE BEST BAR NONE

Wetherspoon working with organisation to centralise accreditation to scheme - so showing that every pub is a recognisably safe venue

Wetherspoon's pubs have been working with and supporting local and regional Best Bar None award schemes across the UK for many years.

The company's pubs, located in numerous towns and cities where the Best Bar None scheme is in operation, have gained accreditation to the initiative which is backed by the hospitality industry and Home Office.

Many have received additional recognition, with various awards and accolades, for their high standards of management and robust safety procedures for staff and customers.

However, although Best Bar None initiatives operate in more than 60 towns, cities and airports, not every area has a Best Bar None scheme.

Wetherspoon has been working with Best Bar None, conducting on-site assessments of all of the company's pubs, in order to centralise accreditation to the scheme.

This will ensure that all Wetherspoon pubs will now become Best Bar None accredited.

Wetherspoon's pub and hotel security co-ordinator, Lewis Hinckley-Keens, said:

"Following COVID-19, an increase in perceived crimes, such as spiking and antisocial disorder, seems to have occurred and people are, understandably, looking for safer venues to socialise with their families and friends.

"At Wetherspoon, we have always placed a high priority on the safety and security of staff and customers.

"We believe that having to pass the highly rigorous Best Bar None assessment criteria, to gain accreditation at all of the company's pubs, will go a long way in helping to ensure that every Wetherspoon pub is a recognisable safe venue to enjoy a night/day out."

Best Bar None promotes safer socialising through higher standards of venue management, ensuring safer, more welcoming environments for customers and strengthening partnerships among licensed premises, local authorities and the police.



Pub manager Susan English with her Best Bar None award at The Standing Order (Edinburgh)

Best Bar None accreditation assessment

Accreditation is awarded annually, based on four core themes:

1. venue management (including security, noise and litter control)
2. staff training and care (ensuring that staff are supported, trained and well managed)
3. customer safety and welfare (including safeguarding, preventing underage sales and supporting vulnerable people)
4. customer service and community engagement (creating welcoming environments and contributing positively to the local area)

Assessments are conducted by trained professionals, with each venue receiving a personalised feedback report with advice for further improvement.

Criteria are updated regularly to reflect current priorities, eg violence against women and girls (VAWG) and the newly introduced Martyn's Law (Protect Duty) compliance.

Accredited venues display a Best Bar None plaque or window sticker to communicate to customers and communities that the venue has met robust safety and management standards.

CHESTERFIELD

J LOWE ON RED CARPET AT CHESTERFIELD'S BBN AWARDS



The Portland Hotel (Chesterfield) was voted winner of the 'best managed venue' award at the Chesterfield Best Bar None 2025 awards.

The annual event celebrates positive steps which licensed venues are taking to improve night-time safety and recognising them for their commitment.

The Portland Hotel was among 27 licensed premises collecting their Best Bar None accreditation at the awards ceremony, as well as receiving one of the five special awards up for grabs.

Jo Lowe, pub and hotel manager at The Portland Hotel, said: "We are thrilled to be voted the winner of the 'best managed venue' at the Best Bar None awards.

"The whole team works hard to ensure that The Portland Hotel is a safe and enjoyable environment for customers and guests.

"It is lovely for that hard work to be recognised."

The Best Bar None scheme, supported by the Home Office and drinks industry, was launched in the town initially in 2024 by Chesterfield Borough Council, in partnership with Best Bar None, Chesterfield Pubwatch and Derbyshire Constabulary – with the aim of reducing alcohol-related crime and providing a safer night out.

The scheme is designed to build positive relationships among the licensed trade, police and local authorities, while also aiming to champion improvements in the way in which venues are managed and to encourage best practice to be shared.

Since the scheme's launch, Chesterfield Borough Council has expanded it – and now invites all licensed premises from all across the borough to register for Best Bar None accreditation.

Those which apply will be assessed against a set criteria, with successful businesses then invited to the annual awards ceremony to celebrate the achievement of local premises.

Jane Randall, chair of Chesterfield Pubwatch, said: "We are really pleased to see so many local businesses coming together and picking up their Best Bar None accreditation.

"It really does show how serious we all are in making sure that everyone can enjoy themselves safely on a night out."

Pictured (left to right) with the award certificates and plaque are bar associate Patrick Condron, bar team leader Reece Lucas, pub and hotel manager Jo Lowe and shift manager Chelsea Atkinson.

RUISLIP MANOR

SERIOUS SUPPERS OVER THE MOON IN RUISLIP



J.J. Moon's (Ruislip Manor) has been voted Hillingdon Borough 'pub of the year' by members of the local West Middlesex Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch.

Pub manager Sam Garvey, who has managed the pub since December 2021, said: "We are thrilled to be named 'pub of the year' for Hillingdon Borough by our local CAMRA group's members.

"We work hard to ensure that we offer a great range of quality, well-kept and value-for-money real ales – and it is lovely for that hard work to be recognised."

The pub, which is listed in CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026, had also previously (2022) picked up the local CAMRA 'pub of the year' award.

As well as Wetherspoon's three permanent ales, Greene King Abbot Ale, Ruddles Best Bitter and Sharp's Doom Bar, a selection of seven ever-changing guest ales is also available, including those from nearby Twickenham Brewery.

J.J. Moon's hosts Wetherspoon's twice-yearly real-ale festivals, as well as tap takeover events featuring local breweries.

Tracey Powell, pub promotions and awards co-ordinator, West Middlesex CAMRA, said: "Earlier in the year, members of the West Middlesex Campaign for Real Ale were invited to choose their favourite pub in the London borough of Hillingdon.

"Our members voted for J.J. Moon's in Ruislip Manor, as the pub is well liked by our members because of the large selection of cask ales kept in great condition.

"It's a worthy winner and testament to the hard work of Sam and his team."

Tracey added: "At the presentation evening, we also thanked the pub for its support of the Ealing Beer Festival.

"This year, they sponsored one of our real-ale bars and provided staff, as they do most years, to help us with the heavy work of racking our casks of beer. Thanks again to them."

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Jake Nicholson, pub manager Sam Garvey and shift leader Zak Rogers.

CHEADLE

WHEATSHEAF LEADERS REAP WHAT THEY SOW

The Wheatsheaf (Cheadle) has been voted 'pub of the season' for autumn 2025, by local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members.

Pub manager Steve Boddie, who has run the Staffordshire pub since it first opened in July 2012, is pictured (centre) with shift manager Layla Siaghi receiving a certificate and cup from Staffordshire Moorlands sub-branch CAMRA chair Steve Barton.

The pub will retain the cup, 'Presented by Staffordshire Brewery Ltd Corke's Cask Ale', for three months.

Steve Boddie said: "We last won a CAMRA award in 2013, not long after the pub first opened, so we are very pleased to win again.

"The local members voted for us and said that it was well deserved. Chair Steve Barton often uses the pub and is always very complimentary.

"Cheadle is a small town, and The Wheatsheaf is the epicentre of the town, so the locals are all delighted for us."

The pub serves up to seven real ales at all times, including four ever-changing guest beers, as well as one draught cider.

Among the guest ales are those from Acorn, Buxton, Falstaff, Limestone and Titanic breweries.



TORY GRANDEE BRAVERMAN MEETS CUSTOMERS AT THE DENMEAD QUEEN

Conservative MP and former Home Secretary Suella Braverman chatted to customers and staff when she visited The Denmead Queen (Waterlooville).

The pub is in her Fareham and Waterlooville constituency. Ms Braverman has been MP for the constituency since 2015. She said: "I was delighted to spend an afternoon at The Denmead Queen."

"Wetherspoon's pubs are the vital heart of any good British high street.

"Its pubs are vital to any town centre and its economy, allowing not only a town to grow, but also local people to have good jobs.

"My thanks go to all of the staff, both in Waterlooville and across the country, who make its pubs so successful.

"As an MP, I know how important community is – and that is what you get in The Denmead Queen.

"The country may be going through a difficult time now, but the constant will be the great beer, good atmosphere and better prices which you get in a Wetherspoon pub.

"Thanks to the staff and customers at The Denmead Queen for having me.

"I'll be back soon."

The pub's manager, Calum Millington, added: "We were delighted to host Ms Braverman.

"She spent a good amount of time in the pub chatting to customers and staff – and we look forward to welcoming her back soon."



A CRAWL TO END THEM ALL: TRIO TREKS TO 37 PUBS IN SINGLE DAY

Three friends from Reading set out on a Wetherspoon pub crawl to visit 37 London pubs in just one day.

Andy Evans (centre), who works in talent acquisition, together with self-employed Dom (left) and engineer Alex (right), recorded their May Bank Holiday challenge on social media.

3 new ones open in September
#wetherspoons #fyp #pubs |
wetherspoons | TikTok

Andy admitted: "The video took off far more than expected."

He reported: "We are based in Reading, so we got the 0543 train to London, arriving at The Barrel Vault at 0635.

"We managed to complete the crawl in just under 16 hours, arriving at 2220 at The Lion & The Unicorn, about an hour and a half ahead of schedule."

Their self-imposed rules were that they had to go to every Wetherspoon pub in zones 1 and 2 and had to buy a drink in each one.

Andy continued: "When alcohol wasn't able to be served, we stuck

to apple and orange juices; after that, we drank mainly half pints of Worthington's Creamflow and guest ales and had Sourz shots.

"We had something to eat in Wetherspoons (Victoria station), while waiting for The Willow Walk to open, having beans on toast and scrambled egg on toast."

Andy explained: "I first came up with the idea about a year ago, as it combined a couple of things which I enjoy: pubs and challenges.

"It also meant that we could go to different parts of London which we don't often visit.

"I managed to convince my two flatmates, Dom and Alex, to come along for the ride, and I think we all enjoyed it more than we had actually expected, knowing how long the day would be."

Andy concluded: "We completed the challenge over the May Bank Holiday, hence why The Plough & Harrow (no longer a Wetherspoon pub) was included and Walham Green wasn't, since it had yet to be opened."



WOW – SO MANY YOUNG LIVES TRANSFORMED BY AMAZING £25m



Wetherspoon's customers and staff have reached a major milestone in their fundraising for Young Lives vs Cancer.

They have now raised £25 million to support children and young people with cancer and their families.

Wetherspoon's partnership with the UK charity began in 2002.

Since then, staff and customers have participated in thousands of fundraising activities – from bake sales and football/darts tournaments to mountain climbs and skydives.

To mark the occasion, representatives from Young Lives v Cancer visited Wetherspoon's head office in Watford and posed for a photograph with Wetherspoon staff.

Young Lives vs Cancer's chief executive, Rachel Kirby-Rider, said: "Wetherspoon's staff and customers are true fundraising superheroes. "Their incredible support has helped us to be there for thousands of children and young people with cancer.

"We are grateful for everything they've done and continue to do.

"A huge thankyou to everyone at Wetherspoon, staff and customers, for their commitment and efforts."

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "We are immensely proud of our association with Young Lives vs Cancer.

"Our staff and customers have gone above and beyond in their fundraising efforts, and the result is a fantastic £25 million raised since 2002.

"We look forward to further fundraising milestones."

From the moment of diagnosis, Young Lives vs Cancer's specialist social workers provide day-to-day support for each child, young person and family.

The charity provides free accommodation close to hospitals, where families can stay together during treatment, together with grants to help families to navigate the costs of cancer.

KING OF ESSEX TO THE FORE AS PUBS APLENTY POP UP

Wetherspoon continues to open new pubs and refurbish its existing pubs.

In October, Wetherspoon opened Sigered, King of Essex (Basildon).

The company spent £2.75 million developing the new pub on the site at Eastgate Shopping Centre.

A total of 52 jobs has been created at the pub, which is managed by Gabby Alefounder.

A further two pubs opened in November.

They are The New Moor Farm (Cramlington) on 5 November and The Red Anchor (Stockton-on-Tees) on 10 November.

An additional four Wetherspoon pubs are set to open before Christmas – in Bristol, Croydon, Newcastle and Wetherby, along with a January opening in Beaconsfield.

The Emerson's Green (Bristol) is set to open on 3 December and Coombe Lodge (Croydon) on 10 December, plus The Blue Bell (Newcastle) on 17 December, The Angel Inn (Wetherby) on 23 December and The Chiltern Inn (Beaconsfield) on 13 January.

Wetherspoon's operations director, Martin Geoghegan, said: "We are delighted to be opening so many new pubs across the UK.

"At a time when, unfortunately, several pubs are closing down, we continue to invest in both new pubs and upgrading existing pubs.

"We thank all staff for their skill, hard work and dedication in ensuring that the pubs are always welcoming.

"And we also thank the customers for their loyalty and continued support."

● We will feature the new pub openings and refurbishments in more depth in the next Wetherspoon News edition.

FIFTY YEARS AFTER DÉBUT OF JAWS, SHARK MAKES ITS MARK AT THE ROBERT SHAW

The Robert Shaw (Westhoughton) staged a memorial weekend to mark 50 years since the first screening of blockbuster film *Jaws*.

The actor Robert Shaw, born locally, starred in the terrifying 1975 film featuring a rogue great white shark.

The All Things Robert Shaw Weekend 2025 saw fans travel all the way from the USA and Europe to join 200 locals and pub staff.

The event took over the beer garden with its Robert Shaw backdrop and featured talks and presentations, burgers and wraps with shark flags in them and even a special beer – Moorhouse's Bigger Boat.

Robert Shaw's biographer, Ryan Dacko, was there to talk about the actor – and there was even a tour of the town, taking in his house at 51 King Street.

A *Jaws* quiz raised £363 for the Basking Sharks marine conservation charity, with the winning team comprising a group which had flown in from Spain especially.

Raffles included prizes such as a 'Shark is Broken' poster, signed by Robert's son Ian, who sent his best wishes for the event.

Shift manager Julie Curless said: "All in all, it was a tremendous event, with those who came from near and far all leaving with special memories of their visit to Westhoughton."

Pictured (left to right) are event organisers shift manager Julie Curless, Haydn Wheeler of Jaws Obsession UK, author Ryan Dacko, Joe Mills of www.robertarchibaldshaw.com and Chris Buckley of Westhoughton Community Network.



ORGAN DONOR SIMON SPREADS WORD AT THE PACKET STATION



Cleaner Simon Wills has spent years raising awareness of organ donation after he donated a kidney to save a life.

Simon (pictured with a pin badge, given in recognition for his organ donation) has worked at The Packet Station (Falmouth) since 2006.

He donated the kidney following an experience involving his daughter, Olivia, who was rushed to King's College Hospital, London, after contracting an infection.

Simon said: "She was suffering from acute organ failure and we thought she would need a donor liver. In the end, she didn't need this, thanks to the excellent care she received from the hospital's doctors."

Olivia survived and made a full recovery, but the episode brought home to Simon the importance of live organ donors.

Since then, Simon, wife Harriet and Olivia have all done walks to raise money and given talks at London cultural venue Somerset House.

Simon was off work for 12 weeks after he donated an organ to Edinburgh General Hospital. He does not know who received it.

"I just hope that they're doing OK," said Simon.

He stressed: "A lot of these stories seem to portray people as heroes, but all I want to do is raise awareness of this issue. It's something I feel very strongly about."

Simon also thanked The Packet Station's manager David Rescorla and predecessors for their support. "I've always been given time off when I needed it and have moved from five mornings a week to two. They could not have supported me more."

● For more information: www.organdonation.nhs.uk

BLAZER DISPLAY IS OARSOME AT THE CATHERINE WHEEL

A collection of rowing blazers is now on display at The Catherine Wheel (Henley-on-Thames), celebrating the pub's connection to the local area and its rowing tradition.

Henley-on-Thames is renowned for its rowing regattas, the largest of which is the Henley Royal Regatta, attracting the very best competitors, including Olympians and rowing world champions from across the UK and around the world.

The annual six-day spectacle also attracts spectators from across the globe, with many of them visiting the conveniently located Wetherspoon pub.

The Catherine Wheel was first documented in Henley-on-Thames in 1499 and has, over the years, evolved and been extended into the substantial building which you see today in the town centre.

It has been a Wetherspoon pub and hotel since 2000.

The boating blazer, or rowing blazer, can be traced back to the 1850s. The word 'blazer' can be attributed to those jackets first worn by members of Lady Margaret Boat Club, Cambridge – these coats were 'blazing red' in colour, hence the inspiration behind 'blazer'.

Rowing blazers come in many shapes and colours, from eye-catching stripes to jackets trimmed in club colours.

Many events, like Henley Royal Regatta, would not be the same without these vibrant statements of fashion.

Pub and hotel manager Heather McIntyre said: "We are thrilled to have the rowing blazers on display at the pub, for locals and visitors alike to enjoy.

"We are also grateful to the people who have kindly donated the blazers and to everyone who helped to make this fantastic project possible."

The rowing blazers now framed and on display at The Catherine Wheel are:

Leander Club, Henley-on-Thames

This club was founded in 1818 and is the most historic, prestigious and successful rowing club in the world, its athletes having won 159 Olympic and Paralympic medals since 1908 – 62 of which are gold.

Oxford Brookes University Boat Club

Founded in 1992, this is now one of the most successful university clubs in the UK, with numerous wins at Henley Royal Regatta.

Star Rowing Club, Bedford

Formed in 1960 by former national service members from RAF Cardington, this club's alumni include Tim Foster, who, alongside Sir Steve Redgrave, Sir Matthew Pinsent and James Cracknell, won gold at the 2000 Olympics.

The blazer was kindly donated by the president of this club, Simon White (pictured).

Thames Rowing Club, Putney Embankment

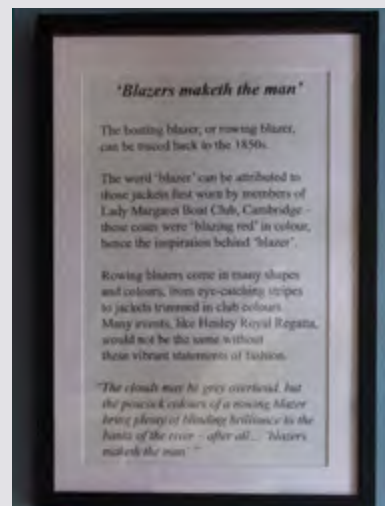
Founded in 1860, this club (which has kindly donated the blazer) has won events 94 times at Henley Royal Regatta.

Durham University Boat Club

This university club was founded in 1877. The blazer has been donated by Camilla Hadland, president of the club during 2013-14 and now an international Olympic and Paralympic rowing commentator.

Newcastle University Boat Club

Established in 1911 on the banks of the River Tyne, this club has current students and alumni over the last 20 years who have won 60 international vests for Great Britain.



FRANCHISE DEAL CREATES 15 NEW PUBS



Wetherspoon has signed a new franchise agreement with The Ale House Group Limited.

The multiunit agreement will result in 15 new Wetherspoon pubs.

The first pub, The Hykeham Manor, has opened. It is located in Gateway Park, Lincoln, on the site of a former Gateway Park Brewers Fayre.

A further three are set to open in November and December at sites in Annitsford (Cramlington), Stockton-on-Tees and Emersons Green (Bristol).

Wetherspoon currently has five pubs under franchise with Haven Holiday Parks, as well as franchise agreements with Newcastle and Hull universities, with a pub operating at each university.

It also has a franchise agreement with Thompson Holdings, which operates a pub in the Isle of Man.

Wetherspoon's commercial director, Michael Barron, said:

"We are delighted to have signed agreements with The Ale House Group Limited.

"We are looking at further opportunities and are confident that more franchise agreements will be signed."

The Ale House Group Limited's director, Andrew Papas, added: "We are absolutely thrilled to be partnering with Wetherspoon to bring 15 new pubs to life across the UK.

"These aren't just any pubs – they're beloved community spaces, thoughtfully located outside of the traditional high street, yet right at the heart of where people live, work and gather.

"This partnership is about more than just expansion: it's about restoration, revitalisation and reinvestment in our local communities.

"We're proud to be breathing new life into some fantastic venues, creating hundreds of jobs and offering unbeatable value, welcoming surroundings and the exceptional service which people expect from Wetherspoon.

"At The Ale House Group Limited, we believe in building places which bring people together – and we can't wait to open our doors."

LINCOLN AUTHOR NEST FINDS HEROES AND VILLAINS IN RITZ

Author Nest Lumsden regularly pops into Ritz (Lincoln) to write.

She arrives at 8am for a coffee and an hour's writing, before her friend Howard Ward arrives to keep her company and have a chat.

While in the pub, she has written her novel *Secret Warrior* and a children's book, *The Little Octopus*, both available on Amazon.

"I find it very conducive in there, at that time, to writing," said Nest, who added that people whom she sees inside the pub sometimes inspire characters.

"There's a guy with a feather in his hat and a pony tail who is very like the lead character in *Secret Warrior*," she said.

Her writing stops when (or shortly after) Howard arrives. "He'll say 'have you finished it yet?' or 'Scribbling again, I see,' and so I stop writing," said Nest.

Howard said: "I have spent many hours in Ritz with Nest. A lot of her writing is based on the observations and notes which she takes there."

● For more about the books, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/4wrrsybu> and <https://tinyurl.com/3mrmdev>



A MAMMOTH TASK FOR VICTORIA AS SHE ZIPS LIPS AT THE MECHANICAL ELEPHANT



Pub manager Victoria Houghton spent an entire day without talking to help to raise charity funds as The Mechanical Elephant (Margate) celebrated its 24th birthday.

Staff issued the challenge to Victoria, with some doubting that she could do it – but Victoria proved them wrong as the money poured in for Young Lives vs Cancer.

"It was difficult, at times, because of the demands of being a pub manager, but I kept telling myself about the importance of the charity," said Victoria, who has worked at the pub since December 2018, when she joined as a bar associate.

But the longest-serving staff member is cleaner Maria Gimenez Diez, who has been keeping the place ship-shape since the pub opened.

In more pub birthday fundraising, team leader Harry Collington had his head shaved – and kitchen manager Alfie Verrill agreed to have wet sponges thrown at him.

More than £550 was raised during the day as staff and customers gathered amid balloons and bunting.

The pub had a colouring table and books for children, with elephant- and birthday-themed pages.

Shift manager Emma Preston, who organised the event, said: "It was a lot of fun, and we are grateful to everyone who took part and helped with fundraising."

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Reef Baker, shift manager Emma Preston, team leader Niamh Bellingham, customer Lesley Constable, team leader Lily Kearns and floor associate Harry Sutton.

GIVE YOURSELF A PRESENT WITH A SHOPPING TRIP TO REMEMBER

Wise men (and women) choose a pre-Christmas city break at a Wetherspoon hotel

Shopping (especially for Christmas gifts) doesn't have to be hard work, if you reimagine the trip to the shops as a short city break, with a comfortable, welcoming and affordable hotel stay.

Wetherspoon's hotels offer accommodation across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, with each hotel situated above or near a Wetherspoon pub, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Book directly at jdwwetherspoon.com, on the app or by phone.

The website (hotels.jdwwetherspoon.com) is easy to use and simple to navigate, allowing for quicker and easier booking options.

Information on all hotels is available, including local attractions and great shopping destinations, ensuring that you choose the perfect location for your stay.

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

Hotel guests can also use the coffee machines in the bar for free refills of coffee[°] and tea during their stay.

The hotel rooms can accommodate a mixture of double, twin and family occupancy, some being interconnecting.

There are also accessible bedrooms, with wet-room facilities.

Here, we highlight four Wetherspoon hotels within easy reach of some fantastic shopping centres, across Britain and Ireland.

[°]Mocha not included.

wetherspoon
hotels

Not available[†] on Booking.com
or any website apart from our own.

Book
direct.



Scan to find
out more.

Our rooms[†] are only available
at jdwwetherspoon.com,
on the app or by phone.

[†]UK hotels only.

Birmingham

The Briar Rose

25 Bennetts Hill, Birmingham, B2 5RE

☎ 0121 634 8100

Birmingham city centre has everything you could possibly want, and this 40-bedroom hotel is located at its heart, a short walk from Birmingham New Street station.

Bennetts Hill and Temple Street are fast becoming the 'trendy' places to be, with a number of new additions to the already-vibrant area, with many clubs and eateries.

The famous Bullring shopping centre is a short walk from The Briar Rose, with other shopping destinations including the Mailbox shopping centre and Grand Central shopping centre.

There are concerts and events all year round at the Utilita Arena and Symphony Hall, as well as at the ICC on Broad Street, just 10 minutes' walk away.



Newcastle

The Mile Castle Hotel

19–25 Grainger Street, Newcastle, NE1 5JE

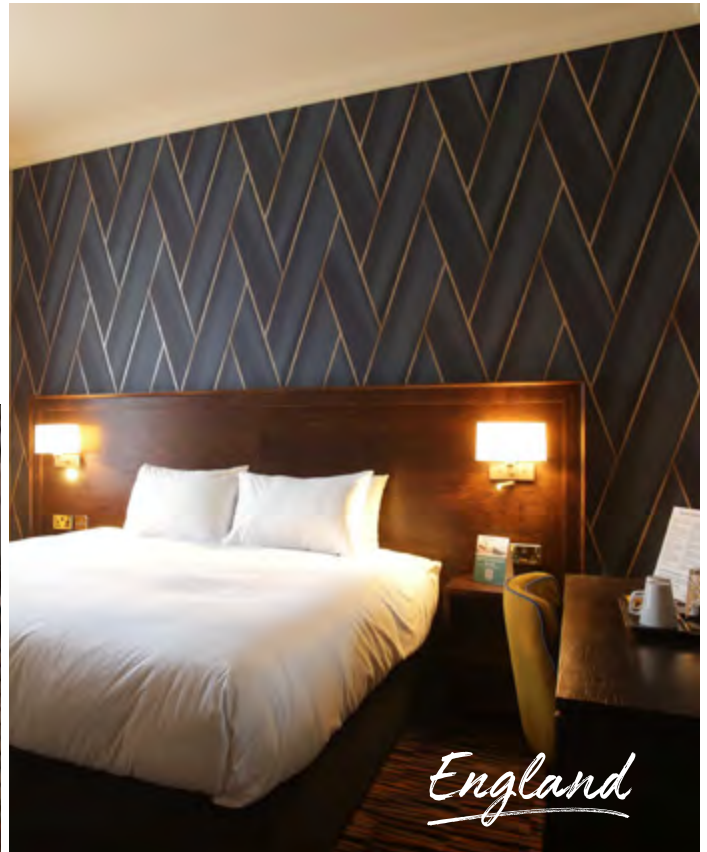
📞 0191 211 1160

A three-minute walk from Newcastle Central train station and housed in a grade II listed building, The Mile Castle Hotel is also within walking distance of the Tyne Theatre & Opera House, Theatre Royal and all that the city centre has to offer.

The 26-bedroom hotel, which opened in November 2024 and occupies four floors (lower ground, ground, first and second floors), offers double, king, twin and family room accommodation, all with en suite bathroom facilities.

The city-centre hotel is located in the former Gibbs Chambers building, adjoining The Mile Castle – which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in 2009.

The Gate, Newcastle's premier entertainment complex, the bustling Grainger Market and Eldon Square shopping centre are all within a short walk of the hotel.



Edinburgh

The White Lady

98 St John's Road, Corstorphine, Edinburgh, EH12 8AT

📞 0131 314 0680

Located in Edinburgh's trendy Corstorphine area, near to Sighthill Shopping Centre, this hotel is only a short tram ride from the city centre of Scotland's capital.

The hotel is also a short drive from the city's airport.

Once a small village on the outskirts of the capital, it is now a prosperous suburb. Corstorphine is also renowned for its boutique shops and lively social scene.

The hotel offers 30 bedrooms, five of which are family rooms, with six twin rooms and 19 double bedrooms.

Just off the city bypass and 10 minutes from Edinburgh Airport, it is close to Murrayfield, Edinburgh Zoo and all city-centre attractions, with regular bus services to the city centre (about 20 mins) and a bus stop just in front of the hotel.



Monmouth

The Kings Head Hotel

8 Agincourt Square, Monmouth, Monmouthshire, NP25 3DY

☎ 01600 710500

This hotel is at the top of the high street, a short walk from all shops, restaurants and bars in town. Attractions such as the Savoy Theatre, Blake Theatre and Monmouth Castle are also all just a short walk away.

Also situated a short walk from Monnow Street, the main shopping area in Monmouth, this 24-bedroom hotel is housed in a grade II listed building which was originally a 17th-century coaching inn.

Ancient Monmouth is a traditional county town, which has existed since Roman times, gaining importance in the medieval period, when it gained its 12th-century castle, perhaps best known as the birthplace of Henry V.

Monmouth also boasts a whole host of historical sites, famous people and buildings, from the Nelson Gardens to the town hall. It has a medieval 13th-century bridge over the River Monnow, unique in Britain, as it is the only preserved bridge of its design remaining.



Wales

Dublin

Keavan's Port Hotel

1 Camden Street Upper, Dublin, D02 TC61

☎ +353 1 405 4790

This hotel is set in Dublin's 'village quarter' and is close to Grafton Street and Stephen's Green shopping centre, as well as many of Dublin's other visitor attractions.

The hotel and its pub are housed in a redeveloped series of eight Georgian townhouses (seven of which are protected), in Dublin's city centre.

Several historical aspects of the old buildings have been retained and restored, including a circular stained-glass window and the preserved former chapel (from 1890 until the 1940s) of the convent of the Little Sisters of the Assumption.

This hotel, located on regenerated Camden Street Upper, 1km from the city centre, has 89 en suite rooms.



Ireland



BBQ chicken, bacon & Cheddar cheese panini; Jacket potato, with chilli bean non-carne; Fried halloumi-style cheese wrap

BIGGER IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER – WHY NOT TRY THE LITE BITE?

Just-launched menu range makes selecting a lighter option hassle-free

Wetherspoon has launched a new menu – **The Lite Bite**. The range showcases a selection of lite-bite meals from the main menu, with new lower-price dishes.

The lite-bite menu highlights meals which are good-value, filling, 'square' meals, yet without an excessive calorie-count, so fit well into a balanced diet.

Drink

The lite-bite range, which includes a drink, with over 150 to choose from, makes selecting a lighter option easier and hassle-free.

Among the NEW dish options are grilled chicken breast burger with side salad (461 kcal), BBQ chicken melt (grilled chicken breast, Cheddar cheese, bacon, BBQ sauce, peas and mushroom) with side salad (600 kcal) and sticky Korean grilled chicken bowl with coconut-flavour rice (616 kcal), which comprises sliced chicken breast, tossed in a Korean-style sauce, with fresh coriander and sliced chillies.

All three dishes include a soft or alcoholic drink as part of the meal price.

Lower

A number of dishes on the lite-bite range is being offered at a NEW lower price, again with a soft or alcoholic drink as part of each meal's cost.

They are grilled chicken breast & maple-cured bacon salad (384 kcal), jacket potato and tuna mayo with side salad (594 kcal) and pasta alfredo, with chicken breast (706 kcal).

New lower-price options on the menu include the NEW wrap deal, with a choice of sliced chicken breast or Quorn™ nuggets, both choices served with a soft or alcoholic drink as part of the price.

Dishes

Among the other dishes also on the lite-bite menu are katsu grilled chicken curry (542 kcal), chilli bean non-carne (629 kcal), the classic beef burger with side salad (651 kcal) and the ramen noodle bowl, with chicken breast (664 kcal).

Wetherspoon's breakfasts, served until 12 noon, also offer a selection of breakfast meals under 500 Calories, including the NEW smashed avocado muffin (guacamole, pico de gallo, on an English muffin, with rocket) (302 kcal), porridge with banana (363 kcal) and small breakfast (fried egg, bacon, Lincolnshire sausage, baked beans and hash brown) (435 kcal).

Breakfast muffins, from a range of six, include free refills of tea and coffee.

Customer information screens

Customers seeking particular menu choices, whether low in calories or tailored for specific dietary requirements, can access the customer information screen (CIS).

The digital CIS, located in every pub, has the facility to customise the menu and to help customers, with guidance on many varied dietary-need areas.

For particular allergen or dietary requirements, such as vegetarian, vegan, low carbohydrates or low calories, all of the information is at the touch of a button, with detailed guidance on each meal's ingredients, allergens, Calories and carbohydrate content.

Wetherspoon's allergen, nutritional and dietary information is also available on the website (jd.wetherspoon.com) and the Wetherspoon app.

MAKING BAKERY A BREWERY BRINGS BIG WIN FOR BRIGHTSIDE

Friedrich family's Manchester brewhouse now reaching real-ale-drinkers further afield with national listing

Brewery's name: Brightside Brewing Company, Radcliffe, Manchester



Wetherspoon's customers across the UK enjoyed Brightside Brewing Company's hoppy golden ale Time Bandit (4.2% ABV) during the summer months (July–September), thanks to the company's national guest ale listing.

The Manchester-based brewery supplies a guest ale every year to Wetherspoon's national listing – which allows customers to sample beers from a host of breweries and microbreweries from around the UK.

In turn, Brightside Brewing Company has the opportunity to reach real-ale-drinkers further afield, beyond its own direct delivery area.

Area

Director Carley Friedrich said: "Our own delivery area, across Manchester, Liverpool, Cheshire and Lancashire, includes 70 Wetherspoon pubs – and we also supply house ales to The Gateway (East Didsbury), The Thomas Burke (Leigh) and The Commercial Hotel (Accrington).

"We can't supply directly nationwide, so having the chance to do that through Wetherspoon is great for us. People get to try our beers and, when they visit Manchester, they know our products."

Brightside's beers are all suitable for vegans, with Odin Blonde (3.8% ABV) being its most popular best-selling beer.

Carley, her brother Lance and their parents, Maxine and Neil, first started brewing in 2009, initially with Neil home brewing at the back of the family's bakery.

Inspiration

Carley explained: "We got the idea and inspiration from a microbrewer at a farmers' market, where it was the busiest stall – and there weren't many microbreweries around at the time.

"Dad had previously been a butcher, before we had the bakery, so had always been in the food business.

"He was also tired of getting up so early and wanted a change."

Carley, who was working in the wine trade before joining the family business, continued: "We didn't start selling the beers until 2011, spending the first year experimenting and getting things right.

"We initially produced just 10 casks in one brewing day, working seven days a week.

"However, when we did sell, we started supplying to Wetherspoon's pubs almost straight away."

Team

The business now has a team of eight, with Carley's role including most things except brewing. Lance (pictured left) and brewer Martin Harris (right) are both responsible for the brewhouse and producing the ales.

Carley recalled: "Our first Wetherspoon delivery was in October 2011 to The Robert Peel (Bury) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub). Pub manager Rob Burgess (now at The Regal Moon (Rochdale)) got in touch to ask us to supply the pub.

"That contact turned out to be a pivotal moment, as it was how we got into Wetherspoon, with the partnership giving our brewery a lot of stability.

"Whatever is happening within the industry, Wetherspoon is always busy, so we have that regular turnover of orders, which keeps our business stable.

"We also know that Wetherspoon knows what it is doing with our beer.

"Everyone is always on the ball, with clean and tidy cellars, continually keeping on top of things – which gives us peace of mind."

KILLING OFF AN URBAN MYTH

The ludicrous fairy tale that Wetherspoon sells beer which is close to its sell-by date has never appeared in print, but was seen on a website called Quora, posted by a 'Brian Martin'.

Wetherspoon wrote to Quora and Google, asking them to remove the offending article.

Had the Quora/Google allegation appeared in a newspaper (it never has), there would have been grounds for legal action for defamation.

Giant companies like Google, very controversially, claim not to be 'publishers' and that legal action can be taken against only those making the defamatory post.

Fair play to the journalist, in the article below, who has accurately reported our comments.

By the way, the lowest-priced beer which Wetherspoon sells is normally Ruddles Bitter, brewed by Greene King – brewer of Abbot Ale, IPA, Speckled Hen and other famous beers.

The lowest-priced lager is Bud Light, brewed by Budweiser Brewing Group – the world's largest brewer, which also brews Corona, Stella Artois and many other brands.

Wetherspoon has five- to 10-year contracts with its main beer suppliers which, unsurprisingly, do not allow for 'short-dated beer'.

Indeed, also unsurprisingly, neither Greene King/Budweiser nor their competitors have ever offered Wetherspoon short-dated beer. Sorry to disappoint the conspiracy theorists.

66 WHY WETHERSPOONS IS SO CHEAP COMPARED TO OTHER LONDON PUBS

The chain's popularity is mainly due to its prices – here's how it keeps them so low

Pubs are arguably the lifeblood of British people's social lives, and since popular chain Wetherspoons opened its doors in 1979 it has taken pub culture to another level.

Wetherspoons has over 870 venues operating across the UK, with more than 100 in London alone.

Whatever draws people to the pub, one clear reason sticks out – and that is the prices.

According to the Mirror, the cheapest pint you can get from the low-cost tavern was £1.89 at The Turls Green pub in Bradford in 2019.

In contrast, according to The Good Pub Guide, the average cost of a pint in London was £4.44 in 2020.

So what makes Wetherspoons so cheap?

People have speculated on user internet forums such as Quora that the reason the pub is able to charge such low prices is because it buys stock that is close to its sell-by date.

However, this is a rumour that Wetherspoons strongly refutes.

A spokesperson for the company said: "The urban myth that Wetherspoon buys out-of-date or short-dated beer, or any other products, is ludicrous.

"Wetherspoon has been trading with most of its beer, wine and spirit suppliers, like Greene King, Marston's, AB InBev, Diageo and Heineken, or their predecessors, and other smaller brewers since opening its first pub in 1979.

"The idea that any of these companies would risk their reputation by permitting Wetherspoon, or any other customer, to sell short-dated beer is preposterous."

Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said: "Wetherspoon has more pubs in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide than any other company.

"Wetherspoon's beer is also independently assessed by Cask Marque, which has been inspecting Wetherspoon pubs since 1999, visiting each pub at least twice a year.

"The assessors test temperature, appearance, aroma and taste. Every Wetherspoon pub has passed the Cask Marque assessment.

"Wetherspoon is also the top pub company for hygiene standards, with an average of 4.97 out of a maximum of 5 in the local-authority-run 'scores-on-the-doors' scheme.

"Some people believe in conspiracy theories, however, as anyone with genuine knowledge of the pub trade knows, this one is complete nonsense."

The spokesperson for the chain went on to explain how opening hours play a part in the pub chain being able to sell at such a cheap price, and that they were able to sell at competitive prices by "accepting a lower operating margin than most companies."

They said: "Wetherspoon also opens for longer hours than most pubs (eg the pubs open for breakfast) and sell food for prolonged periods – normally until 11pm.

"High sales of a wide range of products and long-term relationships with suppliers are some of the key factors."

By Melissa Sigodo
MyLondon / 3 July 2021
Print credit: MyLondon

TREAT YOURSELF TO A CRAFTY CAN

Great new brews to woo you, with independent breweries supplying 16 craft beers

Craft-beer-lovers beware – you will be spoiled for choice with some great new brews to enjoy at Wetherspoon's pubs.

From West Dunbartonshire to Wokingham and Porthmadog to Peterborough, independent breweries are supplying a range of 16 craft beers for customers to enjoy.

The range, available until March 2026, aims to provide customers with a journey into craft beer. With the selection of styles and flavours on offer, there is something for everyone.

Punch

It includes beers ranging from 4.2% ABV (if you're seeking a sessionable beer to stick with all night) up to 7.5% ABV (for something packing more punch).

Flavours range from sweet rocky road and honeycomb to passion fruit, mango and grapefruit.

The beer styles also vary and include the first sour beer to be added to the range, with Siren Paloma Gose (5.0% ABV) from Siren Craft Brew.

The first beer cooler in the range has also been introduced – Iron Brew (4.5% ABV), from Fierce Beer, in Aberdeen.

Popular

Back by popular demand for this range, returning breweries include Wokingham-based Siren Craft Brew and Seven Bro7hers Brewing, from Manchester, with its craft beer – Buzz (6.0% ABV).

Derbyshire-based Thornbridge Brewery, makers of cask ale favourites, has also returned to the line-up, with West Side Glory (7.0% ABV) brewed in collaboration with Stone Brewing from California which has been creating amazing beers for nearly three decades.

The range is available to request – not all pubs will stock all cans at any one time.

Wetherspoon's marketing executive, Jess Schofield, responsible for craft beer projects, said: "Our aim is to ensure that we continue to offer customers the very best available of craft beers, from independent breweries around the UK."

New for autumn

**Siren
Paloma Gose**
5.0% ABV

**Siren Craft Brew,
Berkshire. Est. 2013**

This golden-pink slightly hazy beer takes you on a journey of fresh lime and grapefruit, complemented by a sprinkling of sea salt, resulting in a tart, refreshing character.

Hops: *Talus*

**Seven Bro7hers
Buzz**
6.0% ABV

**Seven Bro7hers Brewing, Greater
Manchester. Est. 2014**

This light golden beer has a predominant caramel flavour, balanced by a subtle hoppiness, with its honeycomb notes providing a clean, sweet finish.

Hops: *Lubelski*

**Thornbridge
West Side Glory**
7.0% ABV

**Thornbridge Brewery,
Derbyshire. Est. 2005**

This classic light golden west coast IPA is packed with US hops, delivering powerful pine and grapefruit aromas, along with tangerine and lemon flavours.

Hops: *Centennial, Cryo Citra, Cryo Idaho 7, HBC 1019, Krush*

**Fierce
Iron Brew**
4.5% ABV

Fierce Beer, Aberdeenshire. Est. 2016

This brilliant orange beer is light and refreshing in character, with a distinctive flavour and sweet, yet crisp, finish.

Hops: *Summit*

**Wilde Child
Eye of the Tiger**
4.2% ABV

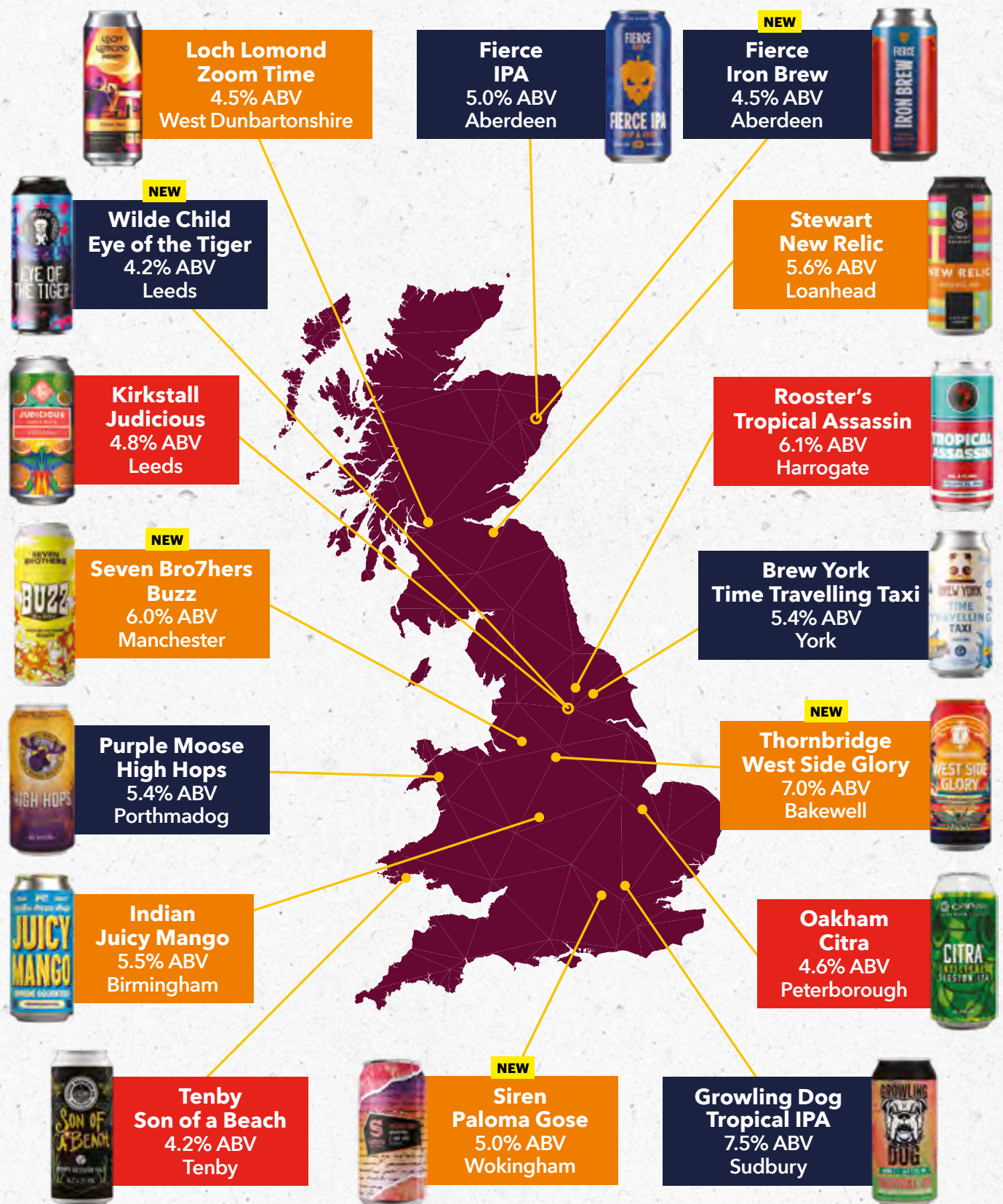
**Wilde Child Brewing,
Yorkshire. Est. 2016**

This dark stout has a sweet, decadent character, with its addition of rocky road flavouring delivering chocolate and marshmallow notes.

Hops: *Northern Brewer*

CRAFT BEER

Full range available to request



Each can is 440ml. Range may vary per pub.

Map not to scale.



Fresh fruit

TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT PRODUCE

As any amateur gardener will know – it's no easy task to grow top-quality produce, particularly when nature has a habit of making things difficult.

No matter what time of year, there is always something for growers to deal with, whether it's heavy rain and flooding or dry and hot conditions like those we've seen during the 2025 summer – and doing that on a large scale can be a real challenge at times.

That is why one of Wetherspoon's fresh fruit and vegetable suppliers, Fresh Direct, goes to extraordinary lengths to find the right farmers who can produce the tasty produce which you expect on your plate. One example is Driscoll's, an industry-leading berry company.

Fresh Direct has been working with Driscoll's for many years, growing and supplying the wonderful flavour of British berries over the summer.

But, when summer is over, it's the job of Fresh Direct and Driscoll's to ensure that we can continue to enjoy the same fantastic quality all year round, as we follow the harvest to Holland and onwards to the warmer winter climates of Spain and Morocco.

With more than a century's experience behind it, Driscoll's has a unique blend of all-natural, time-tested practices, combined with cutting-edge modern techniques to develop new berry varieties... enjoyed the world over.

When the berries arrive in Fresh Direct's temperature-controlled facilities, the quality assurance team checks every batch to ensure readiness to be sent to Wetherspoon's pubs across the land.

It's that combined strength and hard work which deliver the high-quality consistency which Wetherspoon needs to produce the great-tasting dishes customers love.

Strawberries and blueberries can be enjoyed by Wetherspoon's customers 365 days of the year – as part of the fresh fruit salad, alongside sliced apple and banana, which can also be chosen topped with a Greek-style honey yoghurt. The berries can also be a topper for the porridge and the American-style pancakes with maple-flavour syrup.

Helping deliver a sustainable future for British agriculture

Fresh Direct has taken a major step forward in sustainability by announcing that, by the end of 2025, all of its contracted British growers will be LEAF Marque certified.

The Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) Marque is an environmental assurance system, recognising more sustainably farmed products.

Fresh Direct's commitment will help to strengthen environmental standards, allowing growers to adopt sustainable farming practices, including greater energy-efficiency, carbon reduction, responsible soil and water management, waste minimisation and enhanced biodiversity.

Fresh Direct's managing director, Andy Pembroke, said: "Customers like Wetherspoon want to make a positive contribution to a more sustainable future for British farming. Working with our grower and supplier partners, our commitment to ensuring that all of our contracted growers will meet LEAF Marque standards by the end of the year is a real step forwards for our sector."

"It's fantastic news for our customers who can see our commitment to sustainability, for our growers who have stepped up to the challenge and for consumers – who can rest assured that the produce which they are eating is produced with sustainable farming in mind."

By aligning these products with LEAF Marque standards, Fresh Direct is demonstrating how sustainability can go hand in hand with supporting local growers and delivering high-quality fresh produce.

POOLED EFFORTS MAKE SPLASH AT THE SPRING

Customers at The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield) have been enjoying the pub's newsletter – The Daily Splash.

The publication (which comes out monthly, despite its headline-grabbing name) runs features on pub staff, charity events and campaigns such as Tax Equality Day.

It is the brainchild of shift leader Katie Whittington, who writes most of the content. Pub manager Ricky Brown contributes an introductory letter.

Katie said: "It's only been going since June, yet we have had a very positive response from both staff and customers.

"Some of our colleagues who have been featured in it take copies home to put on their fridge."

The Daily Splash is placed on the pub's welcome table, alongside Wetherspoon News.

"We believe that having something like this in the pub gives our regulars and new customers an opportunity to get to know us better, look forward to the events in each issue and create a community atmosphere where all feel welcome," added editor Katie.



ACTOR BRUCE SWAPS ROVERS RETURN FOR PICTURE HOUSE



Actor Bruce Jones (who played Les Battersby in Coronation Street) has written a play with writing partner Huw Roberts at The Picture House (Colwyn Bay).

The play called Listen! covers topics including the mental health of children and adults and is a sequel to Talk! – a highly successful production featuring Bruce as the sole actor.

Listen! will be performed this coming spring at local venue Theatr Colwyn – and Bruce will appear with a cast including people of all age groups talking about mental health issues amid dance and music routines.

After Talk! appeared 12 years ago, the writing pair was invited to the Senedd in Cardiff to celebrate the play's success with members of the devolved Welsh parliament.

"We were honoured to go," said Bruce.

Speaking from The Sussex (Rhyl), Bruce said: "We're trying to draw attention to the problems which people go through – either at school or at home and in their daily life."

He added: "We wrote the play in The Picture House.

"It's a great place to write, as there is no music or TV screens to distract and there are always friendly faces to chat to.

"Whichever town I go to as an actor, I look up where the Wetherspoon is. I'm a great fan," says Bruce.

Bruce (pictured left) is often recognised thanks to his 11-year stint as the outspoken Les Battersby.

"I like to talk to people wherever I go," he said.

Huw (pictured right) said: "There's a great, friendly bunch of regulars at The Picture House – and they and the staff are all used to Bruce and me being there, so it's easy for us to get on with our work."

Huw enjoys a glass of red wine, while Bruce prefers a Guinness.

But not everything is perfect about Wetherspoon. "Can you make the crossword easier in Wetherspoon News?" asked Huw.

● If you would like to donate to help to stage this important production, please search for 'Listen – The Live Show' at: gofund.me

WETHERSPOON, ITS CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE PAID £6.4 BILLION OF TAX TO THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 2016

In the financial year ended July 2025, Wetherspoon generated £837.6 million in tax – about £1 in every £1,000 of ALL UK government taxes. The average tax generated per pub in the year was £1,050,000.

The table¹ below shows the tax generated by the company in its financial years 2016–25.

During this period, taxes amounted to about 37 per cent of every pound which went ‘over the bar’, net of VAT – about 27 times the company’s profit.

Wetherspoon’s finance director, Ben Whitley, said: “Pub companies pay enormous amounts of tax, but that is not always well understood by the companies themselves or by commentators, since most taxes are hidden in a financial fog.

“Wetherspoon has provided a table which illustrates the exact amounts of tax which the company, its customers and employees have generated, highlighting the importance of the hospitality sector to the nation’s finances.”

Wetherspoon’s chairman, Tim Martin, said: “The main long-term challenge to the pub industry is the tax disparity with supermarkets, which pay zero VAT in respect of food sales, whereas pubs pay 20 per cent.

“This disparity enables supermarkets to subsidise the selling price of beer, wine and spirits, to the detriment of pubs.

“Supermarkets also pay lower business rates per pint than pubs.

“A direct consequence is that pubs’ share of beer sales, for example, has dropped from 90 per cent to less than 50 per cent, in recent decades.

“In fact, supermarkets are far more profitable than pubs – Tesco is probably more profitable than the entire pub industry.

“Even so, like Monty Python’s Dennis Moore, successive governments have robbed the poor (pubs) and given to the rich (supermarkets).

“A core principle of taxation is that it should be fair and equitable.

“Yet most large pub companies in the UK have remained silent on this vital issue, as their most recent trading statements demonstrate.

“However, surveys by Wetherspoon in the past have demonstrated great fervour for tax equality among individual tenants and free traders.

“The lack of vocal support for equality is probably an example of board rooms being out of touch with those on the front line, always a bad sign for any industry.

“Until there is tax equality between different types of business on the High Street, pubs will always be fighting with one hand tied behind their back – and will provide less in the way of jobs or taxes than they otherwise might.”

Wetherspoon’s tax payments in financial years 2016–25	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	Total 2016 to 2025
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
VAT	411.2	394.7	372.3	287.7	93.8	244.3	357.9	332.8	323.4	311.7	3,129.8
Alcohol duty	166.5	163.7	166.1	158.6	70.6	124.2	174.4	175.9	167.2	164.4	1,531.6
PAYE and NIC	153.6	134.7	124	141.9	101.5	106.6	121.4	109.2	96.2	95.1	1,184.2
Business rates	42.2	41.3	49.9	50.3	1.5	39.5	57.3	55.6	53	50.2	440.8
Corporation tax	21.9	9.9	12.2	1.5	-	21.5	19.9	26.1	20.7	19.9	153.6
Fruit/slot machine duty	18.2	16.7	15.7	12.8	4.3	9	11.6	10.5	10.5	11	120.3
Climate change levies	13.9	10.2	11.1	9.7	7.9	10	9.6	9.2	9.7	8.7	100.0
Stamp duty	1.2	1.1	0.9	2.7	1.8	4.9	3.7	1.2	5.1	2.6	25.2
Sugar tax	2.7	2.6	3.1	2.7	1.3	2	2.9	0.8	-	-	18.1
Fuel duty	1.9	2	1.9	1.9	1.1	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	19.0
Apprenticeship levy	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.7	0.6	-	16.6
Carbon tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.9	3	3.4	3.6	11.9
Premise licence and TV licences	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	6.7
Landfill tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.7	2.5	2.2	6.4
Insurance tax	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.0
Extended producer responsibility	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.8
Furlough tax	-	-	-	-4.4	-213	-124.1	-	-	-	-	-341.5
Eat Out to Help Out	-	-	-	-	-23.2	-	-	-	-	-	-23.2
Local government grants	-	-	-	-1.4	-11.1	-	-	-	-	-	-12.5
Total tax	837.6	780.2	760.4	666.9	39.1	442.1	765.1	730.7	695.3	672.4	6,389.8
Tax per pub (£m)	1.05	0.98	0.92	0.78	0.05	0.51	0.87	0.83	0.78	0.71	7.48
Tax as % of net sales	39.4%	38.3%	39.5%	38.3%	5.1%	35%	42.1%	43.1%	41.9%	41.8%	36.5%
Profit/(loss) after tax	58.2	58.5	33.8	-24.9	-146.5	-38.5	79.6	83.6	76.9	56.9	237.6

¹Source: J D Wetherspoon plc’s annual reports and accounts 2016–25



The Eva Hart (Chadwell Heath) Shift leader Jake Hutson (left) and bar associates Joshua Henry and Bradley Williams (right) get ready to serve fans their favourite tippie

METAL HEADS MOSH TO IRON MAIDEN ALE

Wetherspoon's pubs across the country hosted Iron Maiden fans as they drank a beer made by lead singer Bruce Dickinson and Stockport brewer Robinsons.

Real-ale devotee Dickinson devised the recipe for Robinsons Trooper before the band's Run For Your Lives tour.

The beer is described as a full-bodied golden ale with a rich malt and hop flavour and a long, lingering, hop-dominated, citrusy finish.

Wetherspoon's pubs close to the arenas where the heavy metal group was playing served the beer.

The beer (4.7% ABV) was on sale in Wetherspoon's pubs across London, Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester as the tour passed through in June.

Shift manager Angela Wood, at The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford), said: "We had several fans in the pub who were en route to see the group in London.

"They were in excellent spirit before the concert and welcomed the opportunity to enjoy a pint or two of Trooper in the pub beforehand."



The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford) Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Angela Wood, Iron Maiden fan and bar associate Rebekah Durrant in her tour T-shirt and shift manager Sarah Levy



The Waterhouse (Manchester) Team leader James Johnson serves customer and fan Graham Hodgson a pint of Robinsons Trooper



The Briar Rose (Birmingham) Kirin Rue-Webb enjoys a pint of Robinsons Trooper served by shift manager Jason-Lee Burrows on the night of Iron Maiden's gig at The Utilita Arena



Shift manager Tomica Ajagun at The Thomas Lloyd (Warwick)

Note from the editor: The article below outlines Wetherspoon's bonus and free shares scheme.

No company is perfect, but Wetherspoon believes that it pays a higher percentage of its profits in this way than most, or possibly any, large companies.

£614 MILLION IN FREE SHARES AND BONUSES PAID TO EMPLOYEES SINCE 2006

86.3 per cent paid to pub staff

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

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

Bonuses and share schemes provide an extra incentive for people to stay with the company: there are 31 employees who have worked for the company for more than 30 years, 715 for more than 20 years, 4,393 for more than 10 years and 11,041 for more than five years.

Since 2006, the company has paid £614 million to its employees in respect of bonuses and free shares.

BONUSES AND SHARES

Of the recipients, approximately 97.9 per cent went to employees below board level, with around 86.3 per cent paid to employees working in pubs.

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

In the year ended July 2025, bonuses and free shares of £45 million were awarded (see table¹ below), with 97 per cent of employees receiving a bonus and/or shares in that period.

As of October 2025, 25,400 of our 42,700 employees have been awarded free shares in the company.

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

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

Since the share scheme was introduced, Wetherspoon has awarded 30 million shares to employees – approximately 25 per cent of all shares in existence today.

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

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

Wetherspoon: Bonuses and free shares vs profits, 2006–25

Financial year	Bonuses and free shares	Profit after tax (loss/profit after tax) ²	Bonus etc as % of profit
	£m	£m	
2025	45	58	78
2024	49	59	83
2023	36	34	106
2022	30	-25	–
2021	23	-146	–
2020	33	-39	–
2019	46	80	58
2018	43	84	51
2017	44	77	57
2016	33	57	58
2015	31	57	53
2014	29	59	50
2013	29	65	44
2012	24	57	42
2011	23	52	43
2010	23	51	44
2009	21	45	45
2008	16	36	45
2007	19	47	41
2006	17	40	41
Total	614	748	55.1³

¹ Source: J D Wetherspoon plc's annual reports and accounts 2006–25

² International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) 16 was implemented in the year ending 26 July 2020 (FY20). From this period, all profit numbers in the above table are on a post-IFRS-16 basis. Before this date, all profit numbers are on a pre-IFRS-16 basis.

³ Shares and bonus as a percentage of profit excludes 2020, 2021 and 2022.



The overseas brewers pictured at Penderel's Oak (Holborn)

ALES FROM FRANCE AND INDIA MAKE BEER FESTIVAL DÉBUT

Wetherspoon's customers enjoyed a range of up to 30 real ales, including five from international brewers, during a 12-day beer festival.

The overseas brewers were from Australia, France and India, with two from the USA.

It was the first time that Wetherspoon's pubs had served a real ale from France and India.

Most beers on offer were brewed for the first time exclusively for the festival.

Among the festival collection were four vegan (also suitable for vegetarians) beers.

As well as featuring a range of malt and hop varieties from around the world, there were also beers which included cucumber, lime, vanilla, blackberries and spices in their ingredients.

The international beers were Newtowner (Young Henrys Brewery, Australia), Effingout (Effingout Brewery, India), Blue Coast (Ambrée Brewery, France), Automatic (Creature Comforts Brewery, USA), AleSmith IPA (AleSmith Brewery, USA).

The festival line-up also included Wave Breaker (Orkney Brewery), Velvet Curtain (Titanic Brewery), Double Dog (Elgood's Brewery), Key Lime (Hogs Back Brewery), As One Door Closes (Salopian Brewery), Storm Runner (Evan Evans Brewery).

Festival organiser Jen Swindells said: "The festival was a great celebration of real ale."

"It allowed us to showcase a superb beer selection, featuring many not previously available to customers, including those from brewers as far afield as Australia and India, as well as those closer to home, over a 12-day period."

Three third-of-a-pint tasters were available for the price of a pint.



The Bridge House (Belfast) Customers Steven Maguire (left) and Feidhlim McDonald enjoy a pint together during the festival



The Commercial Rooms (Bristol) Pouring a festival ale from the stillage is deputy manager Steph Thorndyke (right), with bar team leader Ty Petchey



The Palladium (Llandudno) Shift manager Judith Stone (left) serves a festival pint to customer Harriet Cave



The Yarborough Hotel (Grimsby) Shift manager Elisha Mardling and shift leader Ryan Parnell celebrate the beer festival's launch and the pub's inclusion in CAMRA's The Good Beer Guide 2026



The Coliseum (Abergavenny) All smiles from pub manager Chris Went (second right), with (left to right) festival customers Lyndon Cole, Dicky Merchant and Trevor Griffiths



The Corn Exchange (Arbroath) Pub manager Richard Airey serves a festival pint to satisfied customer Grant Cruickshank



The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough) Shift manager Steve Wetton serves customer Gareth Millard a festival pint



The Rawson Spring (Sheffield) Pub manager Ricky Brown serves a festival pint to customer Ian Hurst



The Queen Hotel (Aldershot) Shift leaders Lorna Hutchins (left) and Quinn Luke showcase some festival ales



The Dolphin & Anchor (Chichester) Launching the beer festival and celebrating the pub's inclusion in CAMRA's The Good Beer Guide 2026 are pub manager Stuart Laurence (left) and West Sussex CAMRA branch's chair Richard Earl

SCORES ON THE DOORS SHOW CONSISTENTLY MIGHTY MARKS

Wetherspoon's pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales clock up average food hygiene rating of 4.99 out of 5

Wetherspoon's pubs are consistently high in the charts in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

The company's pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales have an average food hygiene rating of 4.99 across 740 rated pubs, with 731 of those achieving the maximum-possible score of five.

Combined

The top two companies (see table opposite) have a rating of 5.00 each, but with a combined number of only 122 premises, compared with Wetherspoon's total of 740 rated pubs.

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

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

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

Higher

Wetherspoon was ahead of pub companies Nicholson's, Sizzling Pub Co and Young's and was also rated higher than restaurant and sandwich chains, including Greggs, McDonald's, Nando's, Prezzo and Wagamama – although all of these companies also scored highly.

Of our pubs, 740 currently have an FHRS rating, with 98.78 per cent of those achieving the highest-possible rating of five.

This now includes the franchised sites.

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

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

Ratings

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

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

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

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

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

Hygienic food-handling

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

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

Physical condition of the premises and facilities

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

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

Food safety management

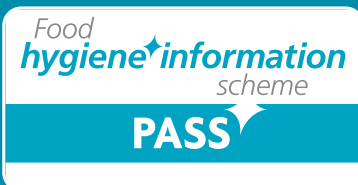
This ensures that suitable precautions are taken to keep food safe, including:

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

Did you know?

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

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



The Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) for Wetherspoon's pubs across Scotland issues either a 'pass' or an 'improvement required' rating, albeit the achievement being excellent nonetheless.

There are 55 Wetherspoon pubs in Scotland, all of which have been FHIS rated as 'pass'.

The only independent government scheme assessing food hygiene standards

FOOD HYGIENE RATING



VERY GOOD

	Total premises scored	Average premises score out of 5
Wingstop	67	5.00
Giggling Squid	55	5.00
J D Wetherspoon	740	4.99
Slug & Lettuce	71	4.99
Aldi	930	4.98
Nando's	450	4.98
Waitrose	449	4.98
McDonald's	1,382	4.97
Wagamama	163	4.97
Miller & Carter	104	4.97
Greggs	2,335	4.96
Starbucks	1,267	4.96
Prezzo	97	4.96
Turtle Bay	50	4.96
Carluccio's	27	4.96
Sainsbury's	1,449	4.95
Lidl	909	4.95
All Bar One	40	4.95
Pret	471	4.94
Zizzi	130	4.94
Nicholson's	64	4.94
The Ivy Collection	50	4.94
Cosy Club	36	4.94
Yates	19	4.94
Tesco	2,715	4.93
Coffee#1	127	4.93
Wahaca	15	4.93
KFC	914	4.92
YO! To Go	325	4.92
Toby Carvery	144	4.92
Castle	92	4.92
YO! Sushi	55	4.92
Bill's	48	4.92
Burger King	519	4.91
PizzaExpress	338	4.91
GBK	34	4.91
Costa Coffee	2,423	4.90
Côte	73	4.90
Craft Union	614	4.89
Sizzling Pub Co	167	4.89
Harvester	144	4.89
Vintage Inns	133	4.89
Marston's	1,225	4.88
Walkabout	18	4.88
Loungers	245	4.87
Premium Country Pubs	68	4.87
Geronimo	30	4.87
Ember Inns	146	4.86
Papa Johns	427	4.85
Browns	41	4.85
Asda	985	4.84
Young's	219	4.84
The Breakfast Club	24	4.83
German Döner Kebab	137	4.81
Brewers fayre	118	4.81
Subway	1,916	4.80
O'Neill's	44	4.80
Fuller's	169	4.79
Bella Italia	72	4.78
Byron	37	4.72

Information in this table was sourced in October 2025 from www.scoresonthedoor.org.uk, listing 740 Wetherspoon pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales with an average food hygiene rating of 4.99. Please note that, where councils are yet to assess or submit their pub inspection, there may be a slight gap in the number of pubs, compared with that in our records. Businesses are rated from 0 to 5 which is displayed at their premises and online. The top score is 5.

PICTURE HOUSE REELS OFF RUN OF FIVE-STAR REVIEWS

Iconic Colwyn Bay pub has won top marks for hygiene - eight years in a row



Pub manager Andrew Roberts (left) and kitchen manager Miguel Angel Camacho

Across seven, eight, nine and even 10 successive inspections, numerous Wetherspoon pubs (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) have achieved the highest-possible rating of five stars.

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

Among the pubs achieving a continuous maximum five-star rating, for the last eight consecutive inspections, is The Picture House (Colwyn Bay).

Pub manager Andrew Roberts took over at the pub in July 2025, having previously managed Yr Hen Orsaf (Aberystwyth). He has worked for Wetherspoon for 15 years.

Experienced kitchen manager Miguel Angel Camacho has been at the helm for 10 years and heads up a team of 10, including kitchen shift leader Wyn Roberts, who has worked at the pub for 20 years.

Andrew said: "A five-star hygiene rating for the pub is an essential aspect of the business and all part of the day-to-day running of the pub.

"With an experienced team, including numerous long-serving staff members, the processes and procedures to achieve and maintain those high standards are second nature."

Andrew continued: "Customers expect those high standards, and we receive regular positive comments about how well cared for our picturesque pub always looks.

"The hard work and attention to detail translate throughout the entire pub, from the front of house to the kitchen and behind the scenes."

The pub is housed in the grade-II-listed former Princess cinema, built in c1914, which was originally called the Princess Picture House. Many of the original Art Deco features still survive at the pub, which was opened by Wetherspoon in 1999.

Andrew said: "Wetherspoon has all of the processes and procedures in place, as well as excellent training, to ensure that staff members can provide the best-possible service and standards for customers.

"However, my team really is self-driven. Many of the staff members at The Picture House live in the local community and take real pride in this iconic building, which is a real community pub."

Andrew concluded: "Most staff members also work regular and set shifts, so know exactly what they are doing and when.

"That continued consistency also works well towards making the pub operate hygienically, safely and successfully."

CAMRA VETERAN ROGER BEGINS BIRTHDAY CRAWL AT GREAT HARRY

Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) supporter Roger Warhurst celebrated his 80th birthday with a pub crawl with friends – starting from The Great Harry (Woolwich).

For 30 years, Roger (pictured front, seated) was responsible for compiling the London pub list of new openings and closures in London Drinker (the magazine from the London branches of CAMRA).

Over the years, he wrote about and visited numerous Wetherspoon pubs.

A birthday cake marked the special day – featuring four of Roger's interests and achievements, including CAMRA (of which Roger has been a member since 1974) and a London Routemaster bus (representing his lifetime interest in buses).

The Great Harry's pub manager, Rafal Sroda, said: "We were delighted that Roger chose to start his pub crawl with his fellow real-ale fans and enthusiasts here."



PUB ANSWERS PRAYERS OF SCRAPTOFT PLAYERS



An amateur dramatics group which meets at The White House (Leicester) has expressed its thanks after raising almost £2,000 for local charities.

The Scraftoft Players meets regularly and rehearses plays, sketches and songs in the pub's function room, also using their productions each year to help charities.

This year saw representatives from local hospice Rainbows and Leicester Air Ambulance each receive a cheque for £975.

Scraftoft Players honorary secretary Pauline Pearce said: "We are so grateful to Aron, the pub's manager, for providing us with this space free of charge to rehearse and plan our shows."

"We wouldn't be able to raise anywhere near what we do without the pub's help."

The group has been going for 35 years and has been meeting at The White House for about 15.

Pub manager Aron Newcombe said: "The group is a delight to host – and we're always happy to have the players here."

"They do great work locally."

Pauline is pictured (centre, front row) next to Mike Damant of Leicester Air Ambulance (yellow shirt); on Pauline's right is fellow Scraftoft player Janet Harrison (pink hair) and Maria Thompson of Rainbows.

BROCKLEY BARGE MAKES AN EVEN BIGGER SPLASH



Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Cesar Kimbirima, shift leader Leian Jackman, shift manager Michelle Molloy and kitchen shift leader Tony Osbourne

Following their incredible fundraising success of last year, the team members at The Brockley Barge (Brockley) have smashed their previous best charity total of £7,060.

Pub manager Cesar Kimbirima and his team have raised more than £10,000 at the south London pub during the year-long 2024/25 fundraising campaign.

Shift leader Leian Jackman has stepped up as the pub's charity champion while shift manager Michelle Molloy recently went on maternity leave, although Michelle still helps from home, producing posters and charity event promotional material.

Bar associate Tanya Hassan also helps by selling bonus balls and raffle tickets to the morning customers.

Leian said: "Customers are so generous and support everything we do in our community pub.

"They have taken part and attended so many of our regular events and fundraisers, helping us to collect a phenomenal amount."

As well as a host of regular fundraising activities, including a monthly bingo night and quiz night, two weekly bonus ball events, raffles and tombolas, Leian organised a fun-day, hair-braiding, Mother's Day and Father's Day hampers (with gifts kindly donated by local businesses).

Leian added: "It really is a team effort, with kitchen shift leader Tony Osbourne, from The Watch House (Lewisham), still helping as bingo caller and quiz master.

"Most of the fundraisers are split 50-50, with customers having the chance to win cash prizes and the charity receiving half of the proceeds.

"We also let the other Wetherspoon pubs in the area know what we are doing, giving them ideas for their own events, to raise as much as possible for a great cause."

HOLYROOD HONOURS WISHAW WONDER NICOLA

Shift manager Nicola Goldie (pictured) has been recognised by the Scottish parliament for her 'outstanding fundraising' at The Wishaw Malt (Wishaw) for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Clare Adamson MSP (Scottish National Party) Motherwell and Wishaw put forward a motion stating that the parliament congratulates Nicola Goldie, shift manager at The Wishaw Malt, on being nominated as one of only three fundraising superheroes from across all of J D Wetherspoon's pubs in the UK.

This recognises Nicola's exceptional efforts, which raised £5,600 in 2024 for the Young Lives vs Cancer campaign; it notes that this brings the total raised by The Wishaw Malt to over £56,000, with the pub currently holding the title of the highest-fundraising J D Wetherspoon pub in Scotland in 2025; it acknowledges the importance of this support, in light of the fact that cancer remains one of the leading causes of death; it notes that, while cancer incidence has risen, the risk of dying from cancer in Scotland has fallen, through advances in early diagnosis and treatment; it commends Nicola, the staff and customers of The Wishaw Malt for their continued commitment to charitable giving and for making a real and lasting difference to the life of children and young people affected by cancer.

The motion's supporters: Bill Kidd, Jeremy Balfour, Audrey Nicoll, Stephanie Callaghan, Colin Beattie, Kenneth Gibson, Annabelle Ewing, Kevin Stewart and Miles Briggs.



KEEPING US ALL SAFE ACROSS THE LAND

Wetherspoon's pubs participating in 534 UK schemes

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

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

As of October 2025, Wetherspoon's pubs were confirmed to be participating in 534 local pubwatch schemes, across the UK.

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

Pubwatch schemes are local, independent groups, comprising those working in licensed premises. They often take part in safety and alcohol-awareness campaigns.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Here, we highlight one pub and its involvement in a successful pubwatch scheme in Cwmbran.



Pub manager Carol Cooper is pictured (second right) with (left to right) Graham Hewitt and David Jenkins (from Cwmbran town centre's shopping security team) and business crime co-ordinator Dominique De Cet (Cwmbran Business Against Crime Partnership)

The John Fielding (Cwmbran)

Pub manager Carol Cooper has been chair of Cwmbran pubwatch for the past 14 years.

She worked in the Welsh town for more than 20 years, previously in retail, before joining Wetherspoon in 2009 as a shift manager at The John Fielding, becoming pub manager 18 months later.

Before joining Wetherspoon, Carol had already helped to set up and launch the Business Against Crime Partnership group and was also its chair.

The group then joined forces with the pubwatch initiative two years later, with Carol appointed chair of pubwatch.

Carol explained: "The pubs in the town centre, including The John Fielding, are part of the daytime and night-time economy, so the two groups really go hand in hand."

"Shoplifters will often try to sell stolen goods in pubs, so we work together to identify these people."

The monthly pubwatch meetings are attended by around two-thirds of licensees in the town centre and surrounding suburbs, as well as by the police, licensing team and representatives from the local Torfaen Borough Council.

Carol said: "As a town-centre pub, we are also lucky to have the town-centre security and CCTV – but, for others, the networking can be a very useful tool."

"The council offers courses on hygiene and personal licensing, while the police provides information and advice – all free."

"The meetings are the best way to find out information and get a feel for what's going on in the town."

Carol added: "We have a website where we can share information and post reports of incidents, to warn others."

"This is data protected, so we are also able to share photos of individuals to make others aware."

"We encourage new venues and shops to join the group, and the troublemakers also know that pubwatch exists – which hopefully makes them think twice about causing problems."

ARTIST ALISON ANSWERS CALL TO ADORN OUR WALLS



Wetherspoon is proud of its reputation for rescuing and restoring historical buildings and iconic local landmarks, which may otherwise be lost for ever.

The company also places great emphasis on celebrating the history of local areas, with features and artwork displays, as well as commissioning artwork (often by local artists) to adorn the walls of its pubs.

Walham Green (Fulham) was newly opened in July 2025, with the paint quite literally still drying on the commissioned artwork pieces, now on display in the pub, when the former underground station ticket hall first opened its doors as the new pub.

London-based artist Alison Pullen produced two artwork pieces for the new pub, with the company's art and history expert Robert Renak responsible for the project's commission and fruition.

Robert said: "I've worked with artists who have featured the pub building as seen from the outside before Wetherspoon got to work on it, yet never with an artist who worked in the pub as the building work was being completed and the staff were being trained.

Remarkable

"Alison showed remarkable focus to capture the look of the interior while all that was going on.

"It was a matter of pulling out all the stops to get the two pieces finished, framed and installed at 7am on the day of opening, just before they let the customers in."

Robert continued: "Alison also uses a remarkable technique, building the image from numerous fragments, collaged from magazines and painted over, creating a mesmerising surface which is, nevertheless, a clear representation of the building's interior.

"It's a technique and a talent which have led to her receiving many prestigious commissions, the most memorable probably being from Elizabeth II, who selected Alison to make two paintings of Buckingham Palace's throne room."

Alison Pullen studied at the Royal College of Art. She has been a lecturer in graphic illustration and a visiting lecturer at several art colleges, schools, museums and National Trust properties.

Residence

She was 'artist in residence' at Osterley Park House (1999–2000) and has also illustrated for various publications, including *The Observer*, *The London Magazine*, *English National Ballet* and *Pavilion Magazine*.

Her commissions include Peterhouse, Cambridge University and, in 2020, she was commissioned to paint the Supreme Court as a leaving present for its president, Baroness Hale.

Alison's signature paintings of interiors are created in situ – to maximise her experience of a room. Her sophisticated practice explores, in depth, the medium of collage.

Alison's strength is to seek a place in each room which has a special interest, focusing on its history, its architecture or the light.

The brush work has a lightness of touch and is instantly recognisable as hers, allowing the collage below to shine through.

The result is an ethereal, semi-abstracted work which seems to melt together, the details of the room emerging with each viewing, as if the onlookers are travelling through it themselves.

Alison said: "I always work in situ, starting and finishing the painting in the room itself.

Strong

"This gives the picture a strong sense of atmosphere and also forces me to make decisions, trusting my initial instincts to make a complete and original image there and then."

She continued: "When Robert first contacted me and said that the pub was a ticket hall, my initial thoughts were that there is usually no natural light, as they are often underground.

"However, when I saw the space, I could see why he had thought of me for the commission."

Alison added: "Although so much was happening around me while I worked, including builders working, staff training and stock deliveries, everyone was really good.

"I just wanted to get the work completed quickly, so I wouldn't be in the way.

"Because of the very nature of the job, I knew that it wouldn't be easy, yet it is always good to be challenged and to step up to it.

"I have been doing this for 30 years, so am more than capable of being flexible.

"It was a good experience. I painted the bits I could see and was blessed with sun every day, making the space light and bright."

Alison concluded: "I have tried to produce two differing images of the amazing space, which I hope people will enjoy and will help to let their imaginations fly."

THE SIR JULIAN HUXLEY • SELSDON

ALL BUT ONE OF KERRIE'S CLAN FOLLOW IN MUM'S SPOON STEPS



Pictured (left to right) are (front) Charlotte, Kerrie, Lizzie, (back) Cameron, Louie and Billy

Shift leader and mum of five Kerrie Driscoll has worked for Wetherspoon for nine years, starting as a bar associate at The Richmal Crompton (Bromley).

Kerrie, who now works at The Sir Julian Huxley (Selsdon), has paved the way for four of her five children to follow in her footsteps in a career with Wetherspoon.

The family grew up in New Addington, where Kerrie still lives, and, like their mum, they all started at The Richmal Crompton.

Kerrie said: "Since I started, everyone else came and joined the company, except one.

"I was really enjoying my work, so I guess they could see that, and the next thing I knew, one by one, they were all applying for a job."

Kerrie's eldest daughter Lizzie Boast is the pub manager at The Sun (Redhill), where her husband Billy Boast (they met while working at The Richmal Crompton) is the kitchen manager.

Lizzie joined the company nine years ago, working her way up from bar associate to shift manager at The Richmal Crompton.

She took on her first pub as manager at The Harvest Moon (Orpington) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

When that pub closed, Lizzie became pub manager at The Sovereign of the Seas (Petts Wood), before taking over at The Sun.

Kerrie's son, Cameron De Silva, 22, started as a 16-year-old floor associate at The Richmal Crompton, before moving from front of house to the kitchen and progressing to shift manager.

He is now the kitchen manager at The Sir Julian Huxley.

Daughter Charlotte Juchau, 25, is a bar associate at The Sir Julian Huxley, having moved there in August 2024 from Petts Wood.

She also started as an under-18 at The Richmal Crompton and worked for her sister Lizzie at Petts Wood, before joining her mum at Selsdon.

Like his siblings, Kerrie's youngest son, Louie De Silva, 20, started at The Richmal Crompton as an under-18 and has stayed at the pub, where he works as a kitchen shift leader.

Kerrie's son, Christopher Juchau, 27, is the only one not to join the family at Wetherspoon.

He works as a roofer.

Kerrie said: "Wetherspoon is a good company to work for, and no two days are the same.

"The company also offers great benefits and you feel appreciated in your work.

"I would never have encouraged any of my kids to join Wetherspoon, if it weren't a good company and if I didn't enjoy my work.

"I'm very proud of them all."

TIME TO GET FESTIVE WITH FABULOUS FOOD

Firm favourites and brand-new dishes on seasonal menu



Christmas is a time for celebrating and indulging in fabulously festive food and drinks.

Wetherspoon's pubs are now offering the Christmas 2025 menu, from Wednesday 12 Nov until Wednesday 31 Dec (excluding Christmas Day).

Some firm favourites are back on the seasonal line-up, alongside some brand-new dishes.

For something a little more traditional, enjoy four slices of turkey breast, with a new pork, sage & onion stuffing, roasted Chantenay carrots and parsnips, Maris Piper mash, two pigs-in-blankets, peas, cranberry sauce and gravy.

Drink

All of the festive meals and Deli Deals® include a drink* (soft or alcoholic).

The ever-popular big cheese burger is available again this year, although now even more cheesy, with a new Emmental & Cheddar cheese sauce, served hot and 'on the side', for pouring or dipping.

The burger includes Brie slices, topped with two halloumi fries and served with chips – and with your choice of patty (beef, plant-based, grilled chicken breast or fried buttermilk chicken).

Celebrating

If you are celebrating the season with true cheese-lovers, check out the NEW festive loaded chips sharer dish – with lashings of Emmental & Cheddar cheese sauce, pigs-in-blankets and cranberry sauce for dipping.

The NEW Brie & garlic mushroom pizza will be available this year for all of those garlic mushroom-lovers.

This will be available as an 11" pizza which includes a drink* (soft or alcoholic) and as an 8" pizza available as part of the small-plates range.

Wetherspoon's Brie & bacon burger, as well as the chicken & stuffing burger, has also been joined on the menu by the NEW mushroom & garlic burger, suitable for vegans.

The vegan option comprises a plant-based patty, garlic & herb sauce, iceberg lettuce, tomato and red onion, topped with mushrooms and served with five onion rings.

Additional

All of the Deli Deals® (chicken, stuffing & bacon panini; Brie & cranberry panini, 12" southern-fried chicken & stuffing wrap) include a drink* (soft or alcoholic) and can be ordered with additional side dishes.

Finish off your Christmas meal with a sweet festive treat.

The NEW giant profiterole is made with choux pastry, generously filled with vanilla cream, smothered in Belgian chocolate sauce and finished with a fresh strawberry.

The cookies & cream blondie, a gooey, warm white chocolate brownie, is packed with white chocolate and crushed cookie pieces, served with ice cream, more chocolate cookie crumbs and Belgian chocolate sauce.

The chocolate-orange espresso martini cocktail is also back on the limited-time Christmas menu.

For some seasonal sparkle, try Kir Royal (175ml Prosecco with 25ml Chambord black raspberry liqueur) to toast the season.

No need to book... just turn up at your local Wetherspoon and enjoy the festive offering.



TOMMY AND GANG AVOID FUNERALS AND LOOK ALIVE

Tommy Woolhead and fellow members of The Last of the Summer Wine Club meet weekly at The William Aylmer (Harlow).

Tommy, 72, set up the group following the death of a friend.

He said: "I didn't want us to meet just at funerals.

"We have been friends for years – and it's important to make the effort to keep in touch."

Tommy and his friends are keen fans of speedway, stock car-racing and rodeo.

"We all used to go to the speedway and had a lot of fun," said Tommy, whose best friend Richard Knight, 75, has been part of the group since it started.

Tommy says he picked The William Aylmer because "it's great value for money, the food is consistently good and the staff are friendly".



Pictured (left to right) are Tommy and Denise Woolhead, Pete Bojko and Richard Knight

He added: "Wetherspoon has kept us going. The William Aylmer has got a good atmosphere and we like it there."

His wife Denise sometimes joins the group. "We call her Nora Batty," said Tommy, referring to a character from the BBC series Last of the Summer Wine, which aired during 1973–2010.

"We've been through most of the menu, like the fish and chips, fry-ups, eggs Benedict and curries. I like a pint or two of Greene King IPA."

Sometimes, daughter Claire pops in to say hello to her dad and his friends.

"They are a lovely bunch of characters," she said.

LOOP TROOP TAKES SHINE TO SPOONS ON ALE TRAIL



Two Wetherspoon pubs feature in an ale trail guide published by The Enfield Society.

Created by ale and rail enthusiast John Cole, with the support of local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branches, the pocket-sized Rail Ale Trail invites readers to discover railway stations on the Hertford Loop Line and explore pubs and local history within easy walking distance.

The Hertford Loop Line runs from Alexandra Palace to Watton-at-Stone, and the pub listings were created by Stephen Gaines.

The two Wetherspoon pubs featured are The Six Templars (Hertford) and The Moon Under Water (Enfield).

Of The Moon Under Water, the 24-page guide refers to its 'impressive high-vaulted ceilings', affording 'three separate drinking areas', while The Six Templars is mentioned for its 'unique two-storey glass frontage' and a garden 'sun-trap resting against Hertford Castle'.

Enfield Society trustee John Cole said: "We really just wanted to promote local heritage, local railway stations, real ale and pubs."

Beautifully illustrated by local artist Kremena Dimitrova, the free guide is available at venues in the areas mentioned and here: enfieldsociety.org.uk/documents/books/rail-ale-trail-ebook.pdf

Pictured (left to right) are guide author John Cole, pub manager Stuart Marden (The Moon Under Water) and Enfield & Barnet CAMRA committee members Peter Graham and Brian Willis.



THE TILLEY STONE • GATESHEAD

ROSIE RISES TO TOP JOB AT PUB WHERE CAREER BEGAN



Pub manager Rosie Mares took on her first pub as manager in June 2025, having started as an under-18 floor associate at the same pub. A sixth-form student studying for her A levels, Rosie joined the team at The Tilley Stone (Gateshead) in September 2013, before going on to the University of Sunderland to study teaching, while continuing her part-time role at the pub.

Rosie recalled: "I decided early on that the uni course wasn't for me and left after just one term.

"I had already progressed to team leader at the pub.

"So, when I left university, I joined the company full time, with the mindset of progressing further at the pub."

Rosie spent six years at The Tilley Stone, reaching shift-manager level, before moving in 2020 for a one-year spell at The Five Swans (Newcastle), followed by a further three and a half years at The Mile Castle (Newcastle).

She said: "I was deputy manager at The Mile Castle, with a lot of responsibility, which helped me to step up with a smoother transition to the pub-manager role."

Rosie made that transition when she returned to The Tilley Stone, taking over from pub manager Martyn Flatley as he moved to The Ritz (Wallsend) after 12 years at Gateshead.

Rosie continued: "Working at The Mile Castle was a different challenge, set on three floors, with two beer gardens and a hotel, so coming back to The Tilley Stone has been lovely.

"It is a very community-based pub, with many of the regular customers still here.

"The pub is very much the same as it was five years ago, and many of the team members are familiar too.

"Team leader Vicky Race has been here since the pub first opened in 2011."

Rosie, 28, who is also a mum to her five-year-old son, added:

"I really enjoy what I'm doing. I love the people, the flexibility of the job and the support which is there whenever it's needed.

"So many people have influenced my career and helped me to progress this far.

"Everyone is really supportive and very encouraging.

"I have a good relationship with colleagues, and everyone has completely believed in me."

RECYCLING TEAM WINS HIGH PRAISE

Partnership with waste-management company Veolia shortlisted for major award



Collection



Glass-recycling

Wetherspoon's partnership with waste-management company Veolia is helping to minimise the environmental impact of the business on the planet while, at the same time, winning high commendation.

The partnership was shortlisted for the Resource & Waste Management Partnership of the Year award at the Let's Recycle (letsrecycle.com) Awards for Excellence 2025.

Wetherspoon, alongside partners DHL EnviroSolutions and Veolia, was 'highly commended' for the Resource & Waste Management Partnership and joint commitment to minimising waste and finding new avenues for recycling.

The acknowledgment reflects the whole team's commitment to excellence and innovation in sustainable waste management.

Award

The 'highly commended' award celebrates the exemplary partnership and demonstrates how businesses can work together to drive positive environmental change through a shared commitment to recycling, waste reduction and sustainability.

Through innovation, collaboration and efficient logistics, the partnership has set a new standard, in the hospitality industry, for waste management.

Wetherspoon's senior manager, facilities and pub services, Mark Miller, said: "Wetherspoon aims to minimise waste and maximise recycling, across the entire business, with a company recycling target of 90 per cent of all waste."

Hard-working

"We are on our way to achieving this – with our hard-working in-house teams, as well as through partnerships with companies such as Veolia."

Steve Mitchell, managing director, commercial, at Veolia UK, added: "We're proud to be working with Wetherspoon, one of the most well-known names on the high street."

"By supporting them, we are showing how the hospitality sector can deliver real sustainability to have a positive impact on the environment and communities which we serve."

Much of Wetherspoon's waste management is achieved in house, via the company's national distribution centre and its own fleet of vehicles; however, glass, food waste and general waste are collected directly from the pubs by Veolia.

Wetherspoon's partnership with Veolia began in 2018, when food waste-recycling was introduced across the estate, helping to boost the recycling rate by 20 per cent.

Veolia, the UK's leading resource company, helps to turn recyclable materials into new products and divert waste away from landfill by transforming it, instead, into energy.

This is achieved at an energy-recovery facility where non-recyclable waste is incinerated at around 850°C and above – for the purposes of energy capture.

The incineration process superheats a boiler.

This produces steam, which then drives a turbine, producing electricity for power and hot water for local district heating networks.

While Wetherspoon is aiming to waste as little as possible, the company is also proud to work with Veolia to regenerate resources for the benefit of local communities where Wetherspoon's pubs are located.

We should be wasting only those items which we really can't eat, such as coffee grounds, egg shells and any leftover plate-scrappings.

Thanks to a process called anaerobic digestion, this organic matter can be broken down into new resources.

The food waste is sealed in closed tanks, called digesters, where microorganisms digest the organic segment of the waste and convert it into biogas – a source of renewable energy.

What remains after this process is a high-quality, nutrient-rich fertiliser which can replace environmentally harmful synthetic fertilisers in farming – to grow new crops.

Using this by-product is not only better for the soil's health, but reduces the carbon emissions of the energy-intensive synthetic fertiliser production process.



Scan the QR code to watch a short video about the story of food and glass waste at Wetherspoon.

THE FIRE STATION • WHITLEY BAY

FIRE STATION VETERANS HOSED WITH CHAMPAGNE



Two members of staff at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay) celebrated 20 years' service with the company, each receiving a bottle of Champagne.

Wetherspoon's area manager, John Hudson (far left), and pub manager Stephen Bell (far right) are pictured with kitchen manager Carl Richardson (second left) and shift manager Keith Boulton, marking the occasion.

Carl joined Wetherspoon as a part-time bar associate at The Quayside (Newcastle) and was happy to work as many hours as possible when first starting out.

He recalled: "I became full time at the pub when I graduated from uni, working my way up to shift-leader level in almost five years at the pub."

Carl moved to The Mile Castle (Newcastle), newly opened at the end of 2009, and then onto The Red Lion (Bedlington), also newly opened a year later, having progressed to shift manager.

Carl said: "I spent two years at The Fire Station and a second spell at The Red Lion, all front-of-house roles, before returning to The Fire Station in November 2015 as kitchen manager.

"The position came up and I fancied a different challenge. So, after 10 years front of house, I have spent the past 10 years in the kitchen.

"I enjoy my job, the people and my current role – and especially like training the team members and seeing them progress."

Originally from Northampton, Keith started as a bar associate at The Zachariah Pearson (Hull) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), having previously worked in retail.

Keith said: "I had been working at Woolworths for less than a year when my contract ended and it wasn't renewed. A job came up at The Zachariah Pearson – I lived just down the road, so decided to apply and, thankfully, was successful."

He spent two years at the pub in Hull, progressing to team leader level, and was cross-trained to also work in the kitchen, which he did for a year.

Keith explained: "My girlfriend got a job at King's College London, in Denmark Hill, so I transferred to The Fox on the Hill (Camberwell), where I spent six years doing front-of-house work and progressed to shift manager, before another transfer."

Keith spent a further five years at The Moon Under Water (Balham) and two years at The London & Rye (Catford) (each no longer a Wetherspoon pub), before a two-year stint at The Holland Tringham (Streatham).

He added: "My partner got another new job, this time in the northeast, so we moved again, and I joined the team at The Fire Station in 2022."

Keith, 42, concluded: "I am very happy in my job and enjoy working with like-minded colleagues. I also enjoy being busy. There is always stuff going on, and two days are never the same."



SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE IN NEWTOWNARDS

The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards), run by pub manager Maxine Macdonald, celebrated its 23rd birthday in February 2025, having first opened as a Wetherspoon in 2002.

In 2023, the company invested further in the much-loved community pub, with a £600,000 refurbishment project, including full internal redecoration of the customer area and a new carpet fitted throughout the premises.

Behind the scenes, upgrades and new kitchen and bar equipment installation also took place, with new staff room facilities added.

The name of the pub recalls the trade of James Rountree, 'spirit merchant', at the premises' Northern Ireland address from the 1950s until the late 1980s.

Victorian

These were originally two Victorian dwellings, later combined, with Rountree first listed at 54–56 Regent Street in 1950 and last recorded there in 1988.

Subsequently, the building was the short-lived Jolly Judge public house. Its name was obviously inspired by the court house next door, which stands on the site of its grand Victorian predecessor demolished in 1968.

When Wetherspoon bought the former retail premises, it originally comprised nine rooms – these were opened up to provide space and vision throughout the bar and customer area.

As you enter the pub, from the main street, memories of those existing rooms are still evident.

Beams

However, these days, instead of individual rooms, the area opens into the bar and dining space, still retaining the down stands and beams at the front of the building.

An extension was built to add extra space to the original premises, linking the old and new buildings together.

Unusually, the cellar is located remotely from the pub, in an existing outbuilding.

Bifolding doors at the flat-ceilinged rear of the pub lead out to an enclosed stone-walled courtyard garden, with outside dining tables, chairs and large umbrellas.

Warmth

The bar itself is decorated with timber strips, to give a brick-pattern-effect finish, with the interior decoration tones and furniture colours adding extra warmth to the pub's cosy, welcoming atmosphere.



As well as tables and chairs, in the dining area, the wooden booth seating also enhances this sense of warmth and intimacy.

The very traditional front exterior of the pub, on the main street, with a striking black-and-white finish, retains the original double-width arched main front entrance.

The metal-and-glass coach lamp-style lighting adds a traditional feel to the building, alluding to the past.

Early in the 19th century, Regent Street was constructed to provide a coach route through the town from Belfast to Donaghadee. It was one of two streets to provide the town's main thoroughfare and still does to this day.

The street takes its name from the Prince of Wales, who acted as prince regent for his incapacitated father.

His encouragement of the architect John Nash led to a fashion for fine buildings, including Regent House, opposite the pub, built in 1820 for a wealthy local brewer and later used as a school.

● 54-56 Regent Street, Newtownards, BT23 4LP



COMPANY ISSUES DOGGED DEFENCE OF NO-CANINE POLICY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2022

PAW TREATMENT FOR DOGGED CUSTOMERS?

Dear editor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours

Paul Lythgoe (via e-mail)

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

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

WETHERSPOON > SPRING 2022

2014

JUSTICE FOR DOGS – THAT'S ALL I WANT

Dear Tim

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

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

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

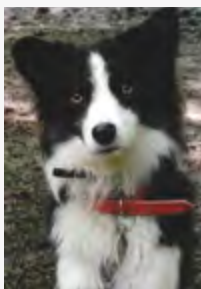
If you were to take a walk down its main street, you will see that most pubs and hotels encourage well-behaved dogs and their owners.

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

Yours, Jim Murray, Tyne & Wear

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

WETHERSPOON > AUTUMN 2014



2018

WELL, I'LL BE DOG-GONE

Dear Tim

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

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

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

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

Regards

Mr B, North Wales (via e-mail)

Tim replies: Thank you for your letter.

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

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

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

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

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

WETHERSPOON > AUTUMN 2018



LLANDUDNO'S FORMER PICTURE PALACE STILL PACKING THEM IN

The Palladium, which began life in 1920 as a cinema in the seaside resort, was opened as a Wetherspoon pub after a sensitive conversion in 2001



Wetherspoon's online pub histories series, since its launch at the end of 2016, continues to prove a hugely popular source of historical information.

Initially showcasing a handful of pubs in major UK city centres, including Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield, the website history catalogue has now grown to encompass more than 750 Wetherspoon pubs.

Wetherspoon takes immense pride in the restoration and refurbishment of some wonderful and, in several cases, unique buildings, to create the pubs – and this pub histories series has unearthed some interesting discoveries.

Interior

The online historical information, detailing the story of the pubs, includes numerous images of the artwork and old photographs on display, as well as photos of the interior, exterior and features of each building.

In this pub histories spotlight, a regular Wetherspoon News feature, we focus on The Palladium (Llandudno).

First opened as a Wetherspoon pub in August 2001, The Palladium was originally the Palladium cinema, built in 1920 on the site of the market hall, first opening its doors on Bank Holiday Monday, 30 August 1920.

The imposing Baroque stuccoed façade, with its domed side towers, flanks a central recessed entrance leading to the circular foyer, 25 feet in diameter, complete with classic columns and elevated ceiling.

Stage

Inside the splendidly robust auditorium, seating was provided on three levels: stalls, dress circle and balcony. It boasted four boxes on each side of the stage and a further three located at the rear of the dress circle.

The stage was 32 feet deep and 55 feet wide, with backstage facilities which included eight dressing rooms and a café for patrons.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Palladium predominantly became a repertory theatre which also staged revues. It was at this time that bingo was introduced on some weekday evenings.

Following a takeover by the Hutchinson Leisure Group of Burnley, the building was subdivided into a multipurpose venue. Bingo was housed in the former stalls, with a 336-seat cinema occupying the circle area. The venue closed down in September 1999.

Restoration

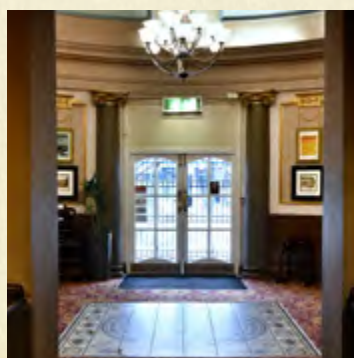
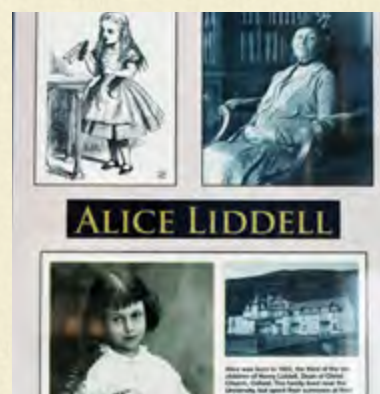
After an extensive programme of restoration to the grade II listed building and its conversion back to its original single space, it reopened in 2001 as the pub it is today.

Photographs and text about various local characters and the seaside resort's history adorn the walls, including top seaside entertainers Caitlin's Royal Pierrots, from the turn of the century, and Codmans of Llandudno, who were Romany musicians and entertainers also of that time.

A photograph of sunbathers on the beach at Llandudno's North Shore, c1918, with the Pavilion and Grand Hotel, shows the resort in its heyday, while images and information recall the history of the pier which opened originally in 1858.

Alice Liddell's story is also displayed, recounting her holidays in the area, when a family friend/storyteller would entertain her and her sisters with fantastical stories. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, known by his pen name Lewis Carroll, was that storyteller – who went on to publish Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.

7 Gloddaeth Street, Llandudno, Conwy, LL30 2DD



NOW OPEN



Kenilworth

THE DICTUM OF KENILWORTH

Pub manager Tom Clarke is pictured (centre) at the official opening of his new pub, with (left to right) shift leader Siobhan Bickley, Wetherspoon's area manager Richard Tandy, Cllr Mark Stevens and Kenilworth's mayor Cllr James Kennedy.

Tom Clarke, who previously managed The Spon Gate (Coventry) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub) for 10 years, is now at the helm of The Dictum of Kenilworth (Kenilworth).

The company has spent £3.2 million developing the pub, a former retail discount shop, which features a ground-floor outside area (1,300 square feet).

The pub's name recalls that, on 31 October 1266, a pronouncement was issued (Dictum de Kenilworth) to reconcile the rebels of the Second Barons' War with the royal government of England.

After the baronial victory at the Battle of Lewes (1264), Simon de Montfort had taken control of the royal government, but was later killed at the Battle of Evesham (1265), with Henry III restored to power.

However, a group of rebels, whose resistance proved difficult to crush, held out in the stronghold of Kenilworth Castle.

Historical photos and details of local history, as well as artwork and images of local scenes and characters of the area, are displayed in the pub, together with commissioned artwork from local artists.

Tom, who has been with the company for 15 years, said: "I'm delighted to be able to welcome customers to The Dictum of Kenilworth, a great addition to Kenilworth's social scene, celebrating the area's local history in its name."



18-24 The Square, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 1EB

☎ 01926 352930

WALHAM GREEN

Pub manager Ryan Way is pictured at his new pub, Walham Green (Fulham).

Wetherspoon spent £3 million developing the pub on Fulham Road, close to Chelsea Football Club's Stamford Bridge stadium, creating 90 new jobs.

The pub is housed in a distinctive property, comprising the grade II listed former entrance building and ticket hall of Fulham Broadway tube station.

Designed by the railway company architect Harry W Ford, the Edwardian baroque-style entrance was built in 1910 on the site of the original station entrance, which first opened on 1 March 1880.

The station was called Walham Green, after the village which occupied what is now Fulham Broadway. Over 70 years later (in 1952), the name was changed to Fulham Broadway.

The pub, which is on two floors (ground floor and first floor), also features a first-floor outside roof terrace.

Historical photos and details of local history, as well as artwork and images of local scenes and characters of the area, are also displayed in the pub, together with commissioned artwork from local artists.

Retro train station signage, on display inside and outside of the pub, recalls the building's previous life as a station.

Ryan, who was previously pub manager at The Watchman (New Malden), said: "My team and I are delighted to be able to welcome customers to Walham Green.

"The pub is housed in a local landmark building. It has been beautifully restored, with many original features refurbished and retained."

472 Fulham Road, Fulham, London, SW6 1BY

020 8106 6523



NOW OPEN

Paddington Basin

THE SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING

Pub manager Nikolay Petrov is pictured at Wetherspoon's new pub at Paddington Basin (London).

The pub, The Sir Alexander Fleming, has opened in a former restaurant near Paddington's canal basin.

Near Merchant Square, St Mary's Hospital (now part of Imperial College) is where the eminent physician Sir Alexander Fleming 'discovered' penicillin, with the new pub's name remembering him.

5 Merchant Square rises high above Paddington Basin, built as the Grand Junction Canal's terminus.

The premises has floor-to-ceiling glazing wrapped around its front, with views of Paddington's canal basin. There is also an outside area (1,474 square feet) with space for 44 customers.

The pub has an open kitchen, flanked by timber-framed glazed screens from countertop to ceiling.

Historical photos and details of local history, as well as artwork and images of local scenes and characters of the area, are also displayed in the pub.

Pub manager Nikolay Petrov (previously manager at The Rocket, Wetherspoon's pub in Putney), said: "My team and I are confident that the pub will be a great addition to the area's social scene."

5 Merchant Square, Paddington Basin, Westminster, W2 1AS

📞 020 8057 9808





London Bridge

THE SUN WHARF

Wetherspoon has opened its new pub at London Bridge.

It has invested £2.75 million in the new-look pub and created 100 new jobs.

Pub manager Aurimas Aperavicius is pictured at the pub in Tooley Street, close to London Bridge railway station.

The new pub, The Sun Wharf, is located at 50 Tooley Street, which is among distinctive brick arches.

Until 2013, for almost 40 years, the premises had been occupied by The London Dungeon visitor attraction.

Historic photos (c1900–10) record Tooley Street bustling with horses and carts and the long-serving Horse & Cart public house. The street's many railway arches were occupied by importers and 'provision agents', whose livelihoods depended on the huge produce warehouses opposite.

Many have survived (notably Hay's Wharf, now Hay's Galleria). However, Fenning's Wharf and Sun Wharf were both replaced, in 1984/85, by the massive No.1 London Bridge complex. Sun Wharf is now remembered in the name of the new pub.

With two entrances onto Tooley Street, the pub features existing brickwork throughout, with new carpet, flooring and lighting in the 4,336-square-foot customer area.

Historical photos and details of local history, as well as artwork and images of local scenes and characters of the area, are also displayed in the pub, together with sculptural features.

Aurimas said: "I am thrilled to be the manager at this stunning pub and delighted that we have created so many new jobs too."

50 Tooley Street, London Bridge, Southwark, SE1 2TF

☎ 020 8175 2515

Note from the editor:

Articles appear weekly in the press offering health advice. In 'Tim's viewpoint' (below and opposite page), some current dietary advice is questioned, with examples of false or misleading advice from the past referred to.

66 Most dietary advice has been wrong for over 50 years

If you've run a business for a long time (46 years, in my case), you become accustomed to a torrent of well-meaning advice from experts and professionals, much of it conflicting. And much of it is wrong... although some of it is right.

In fact, we all make choices in life, weighing up the evidence from both experts and non-experts, relying, as best we can, on common sense, experience and maybe even education.

There is an old political adage – 'to govern is to choose' – which is true.

But it is also relevant to our daily life – to live is to choose, which is why democracy, for all its faults, is so successful.

We try to stay on the upward escalator by making the best choices we can in life – about pints of beer, cars, brands of butter, financial advice, political parties, friends, lovers etc.

You name it – and our brains whirl away, poring over the evidence, often subconsciously.

One of the most difficult areas for decisions relates to health.

It's difficult to pick up a newspaper these days without being hit with a new theory, often from someone with some sort of scientific or medical background.

Coffee is bad for you, it used to be said.

Now, the theory goes (see article 1, opposite) that drinking four to six cups a day, as you get older, helps to avoid 'frailty'.

I can vouch for this, since I drink this much coffee on two or three days a week, when calling on pubs, and can often be found breakdancing down Britain's high streets as dusk approaches... never been arrested yet, mind you.

Experts

Seriously though, I suspect that advice from experts about the health benefits of doubling or tripling coffee consumption needs to be taken with a pinch of salt.

Ah, salt – a very interesting area!

About 10 years ago, Wetherspoon was berated for the high-ish salt content of one of our menu items.

I agreed to appear on BBC Radio 4 with renowned anti-salt campaigner Professor Graham MacGregor, founder of Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH), ready, as I've previously said, to eat low-salt humble pie.

Before the MacGregor debate, in investigating the government's salt advice, I was very surprised to find out that there was no real 'consensus' among medics about the harmful effects of salt.

Indeed, many medics (see the comments of Professor Hugh Tunstall-Pedoe in 2, opposite) appeared to believe that Professor MacGregor and other campaigners were exaggerating... or were completely wrong.

The article by Gary Taubes from The New York Times (see 3, opposite) sums up accurately the salt sceptics' arguments.

During the live radio debate, I pointed out to the professor that Italians consumed more salt, yet lived longer, on average, than we Brits do.

Indeed, many of the handful of countries whose inhabitants live longer than we do consume more salt.

His unlikely explanation was that Italian's greater longevity was due to "the Mediterranean diet".

Salt

This was a strange argument, since its logic was that a higher dietary salt content combined with the Mediterranean diet would produce health benefits – contradicting the professor's main thesis.

Incidentally, it's interesting to note that, since our debate, the name of the professor's organisation has been changed, removing the word 'consensus' in its title – as The New York Times' article illustrates, there is no medical consensus on the salt issue.

Despite our scepticism regarding aspects of official health advice, Wetherspoon has, nevertheless, complied with legislation and regulations by reducing the salt and sugar content of its menus, for example, and by publishing the calorie content of each dish, long before it was a legal requirement.

We were also the first pub company to open non-smoking pubs and we called on the then prime minister Tony Blair, in this magazine (see 4, opposite), to ban smoking in all pubs – controversial at the time, but we believe that most smokers today support our stance. Indeed, shortly thereafter, Tony took our advice.

Health

In any event, a cautious approach by the public to any claim of 'consensus' on health issues is surely advisable – so much of the 'official' advice from governments in the last 50 or 60 years has turned out to be wrong.

For example, cheese, eggs and whole milk were, for many decades, regarded as outright dangerous by an almost unanimous (and wrong) 'consensus' among the medical profession of that era.

However, that advice has mostly been rescinded, as the article in the The Daily Telegraph (see 5, opposite) demonstrates.

But the debate moves on.

Now, your pint of Doom Bar or Ruddles or your glass of sauvignon blanc is in the cross hairs of the health lobby.

It is often argued that even one drink is bad for you. See article at 6 (opposite), by Professor Devi Sridhar of Edinburgh University, which reflects a radical modern view that "there is no safe level of drinking" and that "there is a widespread consensus that alcohol poisons our bodies".

This seems to me to be yet another example of an illusory 'consensus' among medics who have lost objectivity.

I'm sure that Jeanne of Arles (see right) would have backed me up on this point...

Of course, Wetherspoon has a conflict of interest in the anti-alcohol debate; so, I beg you, take what I say with a large pinch of salt.

However, the longest-lived nations ALL seem to indulge in a few sherbets, as the list of the top 10 indicates (see 7, opposite).

Astonishingly, they ALL, also, consume more salt than we do (see worldpopulationreview.com).

The Aussies, Irish and Swedes, for example, some of the world's longest-living people, are all notorious guzzlers, yet dominate the list.

The Japanese, generally admired by the health lobby for their good dietary practices, are also partial to a tincture.

As in the salt debate, some very influential medics appear, in my view, to have lost perspective in their arguments.

Among the most prominent is Professor Ian Gilmore, a medic who doggedly opposed Wetherspoon's expansion by lobbying magistrates' courts to refuse our applications for pub licences – although he never succeeded in his objections.

Professor Gilmore is the founder of Alcohol Alliance UK (AHA), whose website classifies alcohol as being, in some respects, 'the same as tobacco and asbestos'. To me, this seems to be a wild overstatement – how does the professor explain the fact that nations with the greatest longevity are invariably enthusiastic drinkers? Or that many, or most, centenarians are drinkers?

Indeed, while doing everything in his power to stop Wetherspoon from opening new pubs, Professor Gilmore, ex-president of the Royal College of Surgeons, advocated the legalisation or 'decriminalisation' of heroin and cocaine – a strange set of priorities, in my view, for what it's worth.

Jeanne of Arles

As a bizarre aside, the longest-ever-lived human being, whose age has been officially verified, was Jeanne Calment of Arles, France (see 8, opposite). Jeanne died at 122, having lived about five years longer than anyone else, before or since – while apparently enjoying a 'port wine' with her meals, having given up smoking at 117.

Jeanne must have been designed specifically to undermine every main theme of popular health advice.

Non-drinking nations do not feature in the top-10 list, although, to be fair, factors such as relative wealth, efficiency of health systems, and so on, are also important in this area.

In conclusion, history suggests that governments and medics, with the best of intentions, often seem to get dietary advice wrong.

As in so many areas where expert opinions are concerned, we need to consider the evidence and make up our own mind.

Wetherspoon News tries to present the arguments. You, the public, will decide.

In the meantime, pour me a pint of Abbot, if you would be so kind...

Tim Martin
Chairman

Tim says: "It's hard to explain why so much quasi-medical advice in the broad area of diet has proven to be so badly misjudged over many decades. Perhaps it's because academics and researchers are subconsciously seeking a 'silver bullet' to solve all problems – what songwriter Leonard Cohen called "a card so high and wild (they'll) never need to deal another". In my view, professors like Graham MacGregor and Ian Gilmore have fallen into this trap – and their fellow medics often dispute their radical views."

1 Jenny Tucker, The Daily Telegraph, 23 June 2025

WHY OVER-60s SHOULD HAVE FOUR COFFEES A DAY

A new study has examined the link between coffee consumption and a reduced risk of frailty. Can a few daily cups really make us stronger?

It's no great surprise to any of us that with ageing comes the unavoidable deterioration of our bodies. As the years notch up, we tend to lose muscle mass, vital organs decline, we become slower, weaker and less mentally focused. So it's inevitable that the stairs seem steeper, the shopping feels heavier, our breath is more sluggish, and a favourite glass and the top shelf of the cupboard becomes frustratingly out of reach. Then there's the thing we fear more than anything: becoming "frail".

Professor Tahir Masud, clinical advisor to the Royal Osteoporosis Society (ROS) and a

consultant physician at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, adds: "Health care professionals often refer to frailty as a "lack of physiological reserve". It can lead to older people being at a higher risk of falls, reduced mobility, and being unable to look after themselves without help. In people suffering from osteoporosis and fragility fractures, frailty can increase the risk of broken bones by increasing the risk of falls..."

Read the rest of this article on page 62.

2 Professor Tunstall-Pedoe, BBC

The late Dr Michael Mosley, writing in 2014 for the BBC, following an interview with Professor Tunstall-Pedoe, summarises his views as follows: Professor Tunstall-Pedoe "believes that cutting back on salt will do us no harm and might be beneficial, so we should use less, but he doesn't believe that the scientific case for cutting salt as a direct way of reducing blood pressure has been made. He thinks that the science is controversial and there is not a consensus."

4 Wetherspoon News, autumn 2004

Tim Martin, writing in 2004 in Wetherspoon News, calls on PM Tony Blair to ban smoking in pubs

"Ban ciggies, Prime Minister, but just give us a couple of years' notice to avoid, above all, the chaos of local authorities enforcing local bans, meaning that smokers might migrate from one town or borough to another to light up in public."

3 Gary Taubes, The New York Times, 2 June 2012

SALT, WE MISJUDGED YOU

The first time I questioned the conventional wisdom on the nature of a healthy diet, I was in my salad days, almost 40 years ago, and the subject was salt. Researchers were claiming that salt supplementation was unnecessary after strenuous exercise, and this advice was being passed on by health reporters. All I knew was that I had played high school football in suburban Maryland, sweating profusely through double sessions in the swamplike 90-degree days of August...

Read the rest of this article on page 63.

5 Polly Dunbar, The Daily Telegraph, 10 June 2025

WHY MILK, CHEESE (AND EVEN A SMIDGEN OF BUTTER) IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH

As a new study finds that including dairy in your diet could help prevent diabetes, here's what type you should be going for – and how much

Queue for a coffee in your local café and you'll hear a dizzying array of orders – oat flat whites, almond macchiatos, soya lattes. Increasingly rarely will anyone order a drink made with dairy, which has fallen so far out of fashion that in some circles it's become a dirty word.

Since the 1970s, our consumption of cow's milk has halved – from an average of 140 litres per person per year to 70...

Read the rest of this article on page 64.

6 Devi Sridhar, The Guardian, 20 August 2024

BAD NEWS, RED WINE DRINKERS: ALCOHOL IS ONLY EVER BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH

We needn't be puritanical about having a drink, but we can no longer deny that it harms us, even in small quantities

To say yes to that glass of wine or beer, or just get a juice? That's the question many people face when they're at after-work drinks, relaxing on a Friday night, or at the supermarket thinking about what to pick up for the weekend. I'm not here to opine on the philosophy of drinking, and how much you should drink is a question only you can answer. But it's worth highlighting the updated advice from key health authorities on alcohol. Perhaps it will swing you one way or the other...

Read the rest of this article on page 65.

7 Steven Ross Johnson, U.S. News & World Report 13 December 2024

Countries with the longest life expectancy

COUNTRY	AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY
Liechtenstein	84.3 years
Japan	84.0 years
Switzerland	83.5 years
Australia	83.2 years
Sweden	83.1 years
Spain	83.1 years
Ireland	83.1 years
Luxembourg	83.0 years
Italy	82.9 years
Singapore	82.9 years



8 Jeanne Calment of Arles, the longest-lived person in history

1 WHY OVER-60s SHOULD HAVE FOUR COFFEES A DAY

- continued from page 61. Please read in conjunction with the leading article on page 60.

..It's no great surprise to any of us that with ageing comes the unavoidable deterioration of our bodies. As the years notch up, we tend to lose muscle mass, vital organs decline, we become slower, weaker and less mentally focused. So it's inevitable that the stairs seem steeper, the shopping feels heavier, our breath is more sluggish, and a favourite glass and the top shelf of the cupboard becomes frustratingly out of reach. Then there's the thing we fear more than anything: becoming "frail".

Professor Tahir Masud, clinical advisor to the Royal Osteoporosis Society (ROS) and a consultant physician at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, adds: "Health care professionals often refer to frailty as a "lack of physiological reserve". It can lead to older people being at a higher risk of falls, reduced mobility, and being unable to look after themselves without help. In people suffering from osteoporosis and fragility fractures, frailty can increase the risk of broken bones by increasing the risk of falls. It can also escalate the possibility of hospitalisation and the need for residential or nursing homes, as well as an earlier death."

But there is some good news: drinking coffee could be the key to staying strong as you age. A recent study published in the European Journal of Nutrition claims that regularly drinking four to six cups of coffee a day has been linked with a reduced risk of frailty. And because, for many of us, coffee is craved and revered, it could now mean we can enjoy those daily cups of Costa Rica's finest, while feeling reassured it is supporting our health...

What did the report reveal?

This research, which carried out an analysis over seven years, surveyed 1,161 adults aged 55 plus through the Longitudinal Ageing Study Amsterdam (LASA). It's the first of its kind to look at the relationship between coffee consumption and effect on frailty.

The physical health of each of the participants was evaluated using a model called Fried's five-component frailty phenotype (developed by Dr Linda Fried in 2001), which focusses on certain frailty traits: unintentional weight loss, weakness, exhaustion, slow walking speed and low physical activity.

"The results from the research support the idea that moderate to high habitual coffee consumption leads to improvement in these areas and so may reduce the risk of frailty in older adults," says Bini Suresh, British Dietetic Association (BDA) spokesperson and lead dietitian at Cleveland Clinic London, who has some reservations:

"While a seven-year study lends credibility, there are a few important limitations and caveats to consider. The study is observational, so we can't confirm cause and effect – the people who drink more coffee might engage in other health-promoting behaviours. But it does add weight to the growing evidence base linking certain dietary patterns and specific foods with functional health outcomes, particularly in the ageing."

How does coffee make us stronger?

There is growing research which advocates the benefits of moderate coffee drinking. Its

unique components each play a role in making it a positive addition to your diet as you age. The caffeine content acts as an "adenosine receptor antagonist", which in laymen's terms, means it helps reduce fatigue and enhance alertness. Plus, caffeine can improve muscle movement, thus supporting mobility and reducing weakness. The polyphenols (natural plant compounds) have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties which ward off age-related muscle loss, swelling, and support overall function. While a lesser-known compound, trigonelline, may sustain cognitive health and improve memory.

What coffee does to your body

Despite the latest study citing six cups, experts are keen to make sure we don't go overboard. Dell Stanford, senior dietitian at the British Heart Foundation, says: "Consuming two or three cups of coffee a day may be linked to lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) compared to drinking no coffee. However, drinking more than four or five cups of coffee per day, will probably raise your caffeine intake to above the recommended daily maximum of 400mg (four to five cups). Generally, the effects of too much caffeine may include temporarily increased blood pressure and heart rate, palpitations, anxiety, agitation, nausea, headache and sleep disturbance."

Can coffee substitute regular exercise?

Bini Suresh thinks not. "Coffee complements, it shouldn't replace exercise," he says. "Regular physical activity will directly improve strength, endurance and the body's ability to function well. While the caffeine in coffee might give you a performance boost and delay fatigue, it's there as a support tool. I'd always advise regular movement and a healthy balanced diet that includes antioxidant-rich foods, like coffee."

What other foods might help with frailty?

Antioxidants, like polyphenols (naturally occurring in plants), help to protect cells, including muscle and brain cells, from damage. Nicola Ludlam-Raine, dietitian and author of *How Not to Eat Ultra-Processed*, says: "Yes, coffee is a major source of polyphenols, but similar compounds are found in berries, dark chocolate, olive oil, green tea, and many vegetables. Once consumed, they're absorbed in the gut (though bioavailability varies), metabolised mainly in the liver, and act throughout the body. Protein-rich foods (like eggs, dairy, legumes, tofu, fish and lean meat) are important for muscle preservation, in addition to foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids (like oily fish, flaxseed and walnuts), and those containing vitamin D and calcium are also key (think eggs and dairy) for bone strength. Fermented foods are also important for gut health (which supports immunity), and colourful fruits and veg for their antioxidant content, which all contribute to preventing frailty."

Are there downsides to drinking four plus cups of coffee daily?

Not everyone's tolerance to coffee is the same, but, generally, an overload of caffeine can have health repercussions. "Caffeine can

interfere with calcium absorption – so older adults should balance intake with good sources of calcium and vitamin D elsewhere in their daily diet," says Ludlam-Raine. "There could be potential issues, including disturbed sleep, especially if consumed after midday (caffeine blocks adenosine, the chemical that promotes sleepiness). You could also experience increased heart rate, anxiety and raised blood pressure. Anyone who struggles with acid reflux or IBS might find too much coffee causes digestive problems."

What type of coffee is best?

In the UK, around 95 million cups of coffee are consumed per day. And although they come in a smorgasbord of flavours, add-ons and sizes, the general thinking is that a straight, black, filtered coffee (ones that have been through a paper or metal filter like a Aeropress or filter coffee machine) is the healthiest. Adding a splash of milk to your brew will provide certain essential vitamins, protein and calcium, but if you get into the cappuccino and latte territory you will also be totting up the calories.

Choosing a high-quality bean will mean it's rich in cell-protecting polyphenols, while an organic product won't have been subjected to pesticides and other contaminants. Medium roast coffee provides a balance of antioxidants (dark roast can pose potential acrylamide risk – a chemical which forms when foods are cooked at high temperature and is carcinogenic). And, although processed, decaf coffee isn't necessarily bad – it still contains all the benefits, just perhaps at slightly lower levels.

If instant is your go-to, it might be worth swapping one for a "proper" coffee. "Instant coffee tends to contain less caffeine, [and is] therefore unlikely to have an impact on bone health," explains Bini Suresh.

By Jenny Tucker

The Daily Telegraph/23 June 2025

Print credit: Jenny Tucker/Telegraph Media Group Holdings Limited.

“

3

SALT, WE MISJUDGED YOU

— continued from page 61.

Please read in conjunction with the leading article on page 60.

..Without salt pills, I couldn't make it through a two-hour practice; I couldn't walk across the parking lot afterward without cramping.

While sports nutritionists have since come around to recommend that we should indeed replenish salt when we sweat it out in physical activity, the message that we should avoid salt at all other times remains strong. Salt consumption is said to raise blood pressure, cause hypertension and increase the risk of premature death. This is why the Department of Agriculture's dietary guidelines still consider salt Public Enemy No. 1, coming before fats, sugars and alcohol. It's why the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has suggested that reducing salt consumption is as critical to long-term health as quitting cigarettes.

And yet, this eat-less-salt argument has been surprisingly controversial — and difficult to defend. Not because the food industry opposes it, but because the actual evidence to support it has always been so weak.

When I spent the better part of a year researching the state of the salt science back in 1998 — already a quarter century into the eat-less-salt recommendations — journal editors and public health administrators were still remarkably candid in their assessment of how flimsy the evidence was implicating salt as the cause of hypertension.

"You can say without any shadow of a doubt," as I was told then by Drummond Rennie, an editor for *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, that the authorities pushing the eat-less-salt message had "made a commitment to salt education that goes way beyond the scientific facts."

While, back then, the evidence merely failed to demonstrate that salt was harmful, the evidence from studies published over the past two years actually suggests that restricting how much salt we eat can increase our likelihood of dying prematurely. Put simply, the possibility has been raised that if we were to eat as little salt as the U.S.D.A. and the C.D.C. recommend, we'd be harming rather than helping ourselves.

WHY have we been told that salt is so deadly? Well, the advice has always sounded reasonable. It has what nutritionists like to call "biological plausibility." Eat more salt and your body retains water to maintain a stable concentration of sodium in your blood. This is why eating salty food tends to make us thirsty: we drink more; we retain water. The result can be a temporary increase in blood pressure, which will persist until our kidneys eliminate both salt and water.

The scientific question is whether this temporary phenomenon translates to chronic problems: if we eat too much salt for years, does it raise our blood pressure, cause hypertension, then strokes, and then kill us prematurely? It makes sense, but it's only a hypothesis. The reason scientists do experiments is to find out if hypotheses are true.

In 1972, when the National Institutes of Health introduced the National High Blood Pressure Education Program to help prevent hypertension, no meaningful experiments had yet been done. The best evidence on the connection between salt and hypertension

came from two pieces of research. One was the observation that populations that ate little salt had virtually no hypertension. But those populations didn't eat a lot of things — sugar, for instance — and any one of those could have been the causal factor. The second was a strain of "salt-sensitive" rats that reliably developed hypertension on a high-salt diet. The catch was that "high salt" to these rats was 60 times more than what the average American consumes.

Still, the program was founded to help prevent hypertension, and prevention programs require preventive measures to recommend. Eating less salt seemed to be the only available option at the time, short of losing weight. Although researchers quietly acknowledged that the data were "inconclusive and contradictory" or "inconsistent and contradictory" — two quotes from the cardiologist Jeremiah Stamler, a leading proponent of the eat-less-salt campaign, in 1967 and 1981 — publicly, the link between salt and blood pressure was upgraded from hypothesis to fact.

In the years since, the N.I.H. has spent enormous sums of money on studies to test the hypothesis, and those studies have singularly failed to make the evidence any more conclusive. Instead, the organizations advocating salt restriction today — the U.S.D.A., the Institute of Medicine, the C.D.C. and the N.I.H. — all essentially rely on the results from a 30-day trial of salt, the 2001 DASH-Sodium study. It suggested that eating significantly less salt would modestly lower blood pressure; it said nothing about whether this would reduce hypertension, prevent heart disease or lengthen life.

While influential, that trial was just one of many. When researchers have looked at all the relevant trials and tried to make sense of them, they've continued to support Dr. Stamler's "inconsistent and contradictory" assessment. Last year, two such "meta-analyses" were published by the Cochrane Collaboration, an international nonprofit organization founded to conduct unbiased reviews of medical evidence. The first of the two reviews concluded that cutting back "the amount of salt eaten reduces blood pressure, but there is insufficient evidence to confirm the predicted reductions in people dying prematurely or suffering cardiovascular disease." The second concluded that "we do not know if low salt diets improve or worsen health outcomes."

The idea that eating less salt can worsen health outcomes may sound bizarre, but it also has biological plausibility and is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, too. A 1972 paper in *The New England Journal of Medicine* reported that the less salt people ate, the higher their levels of a substance secreted by the kidneys, called renin, which set off a physiological cascade of events that seemed to end with an increased risk of heart disease. In this scenario: eat less salt, secrete more renin, get heart disease, die prematurely.

With nearly everyone focused on the supposed benefits of salt restriction, little research was done to look at the potential dangers. But four years ago, Italian researchers began publishing the results from a series of clinical trials, all of which reported that, among patients with heart failure, reducing salt consumption increased the risk of death.

Those trials have been followed by a slew of studies suggesting that reducing sodium to anything like what government policy refers to as a "safe upper limit" is likely to do more harm than good. These covered some 100,000 people in more than 30 countries and showed that salt consumption is remarkably stable among populations over time. In the United States, for instance, it has remained constant for the last 50 years, despite 40 years of the eat-less-salt message. The average salt intake in these populations — what could be called the normal salt intake — was one and a half teaspoons a day, almost 50 percent above what federal agencies consider a safe upper limit for healthy Americans under 50, and more than double what the policy advises for those who aren't so young or healthy. This consistency, between populations and over time, suggests that how much salt we eat is determined by physiological demands, not diet choices.

One could still argue that all these people should reduce their salt intake to prevent hypertension, except for the fact that four of these studies — involving Type 1 diabetics, Type 2 diabetics, healthy Europeans and patients with chronic heart failure — reported that the people eating salt at the lower limit of normal were more likely to have heart disease than those eating smack in the middle of the normal range. Effectively what the 1972 paper would have predicted.

Proponents of the eat-less-salt campaign tend to deal with this contradictory evidence by implying that anyone raising it is a shill for the food industry and doesn't care about saving lives. An N.I.H. administrator told me back in 1998 that to publicly question the science on salt was to play into the hands of the industry. "As long as there are things in the media that say the salt controversy continues," he said, "they win."

When several agencies, including the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, held a hearing last November to discuss how to go about getting Americans to eat less salt (as opposed to whether or not we should eat less salt), these proponents argued that the latest reports suggesting damage from lower-salt diets should simply be ignored. Lawrence Appel, an epidemiologist and a co-author of the DASH-Sodium trial, said "there is nothing really new." According to the cardiologist Graham MacGregor, who has been promoting low-salt diets since the 1980s, the studies were no more than "a minor irritation that causes us a bit of aggravation."

This attitude that studies that go against prevailing beliefs should be ignored on the basis that, well, they go against prevailing beliefs, has been the norm for the anti-salt campaign for decades. Maybe now the prevailing beliefs should be changed. The British scientist and educator Thomas Huxley, known as Darwin's bulldog for his advocacy of evolution, may have put it best back in 1860. "My business," he wrote, "is to teach my aspirations to conform themselves to fact, not to try and make facts harmonize with my aspirations."

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By Gary Taubes

The New York Times/2 June 2012

5 WHY MILK, CHEESE (AND EVEN A SMIDGEN OF BUTTER) IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH

– continued from page 61. Please read in conjunction with the leading article on page 60.

..Today, just under 35 per cent of British households buy plant-based alternatives, according to data firm Kantar, with annual sales of oat milk alone topping £275 million – up from £155 million five years ago.

But while vegan alternatives are generally considered better for the environment than cow's milk, is giving up dairy good for our health? The latest research suggests not. A new study from the University of Reading has found that including dairy in your diet may help control blood sugar levels more effectively than a plant-only diet – and could help prevent diabetes.

Participants were either vegetarians who included dairy in their diets, or vegans. Blood tests showed the dairy group had higher levels of acetyl carnitine – a compound that helps cells use fat for energy and reduces oxidative stress, the damage that can occur when blood sugar is too high.

And this is far from the only benefit. "Eating dairy is one of the easiest ways to get enough calcium," says Dr Emily Leeming, a microbiome scientist at King's College London, dietitian and author of *Genius Gut*.

Calcium is vital for bone health, muscle, nerve and heart function – and it's also strongly linked to protection against bowel cancer. The largest study to date on diet and bowel cancer found that people who ate more dairy tended to have a lower risk of developing the disease.

"An extra 300mg of calcium – found in a typical glass of milk – is associated with a 17 per cent lower risk of bowel cancer," says Dr Leeming.

Alongside calcium, "dairy contains a high level of protein and other important nutrients including vitamin B12, iodine, phosphorus, potassium and riboflavin," says Laura Southern, founder of London Food Therapy.

So what type of dairy should we be going for – and how much?

Milk can lower your risk of heart disease

Many adults today claim to be lactose intolerant – a condition in which the body doesn't produce enough of the enzyme lactase to break down the sugar in cow's milk. It's believed to affect around 15–20 per cent of the population. Cow's milk protein allergy is common in babies – affecting around seven per cent of those under one – but most outgrow it, and in adults it's very rare.

For most people, then, choosing a plant-based alternative is a lifestyle decision – but one that could have unintended health consequences. Our declining intake of cow's milk has led to a drop in iodine consumption – a trace mineral that's crucial for thyroid function. A 200ml glass of milk provides around 70mcg of iodine, half the adult recommended daily intake of 140mcg.

"Iodine is quite difficult to find in our diets, but it goes into cattle feed – which means it's in milk," says Southern. "We need iodine for our thyroid hormones. Thyroid disorders can cause low energy levels, poor metabolism, fertility problems and issues with foetal development during pregnancy."

Contrary to what many believe, milk isn't likely to make you gain weight or raise your cholesterol. Research from the University of Reading found that milk drinkers had lower cholesterol levels – and a

14 per cent lower risk of coronary heart disease.

And semi-skimmed or skimmed options may not be the healthier choice. A 2024 study in the US revealed that drinking whole milk was associated with lower weight, BMI and obesity prevalence.

Some plant-based drinks are fortified with calcium, vitamin B12 and iodine – others are not. Organic versions, which are the least processed, cannot legally be fortified. And while some fortified drinks contain added calcium, not all forms are equally well absorbed. The calcium in cow's milk is naturally occurring – and more readily used by the body.

"Cow's milk is a really good package of nutrients in an unprocessed bundle," says Southern.

Eat cheese to ward off dementia

Cheese has long been vilified for its high levels of saturated fat and salt – but recent research suggests it offers far greater health benefits than previously assumed.

In 2023, a review of dozens of studies by scientists in China and at Harvard University found that eating cheese – around 40g per day – was linked to a lower risk of heart disease, stroke and dementia.

A possible explanation for its cardiovascular benefits may lie in its fermentation process, says Southern. "The beneficial microbes break down the lactose – or milk sugar – and the proteins in cheese. Those are the elements that can have an inflammatory effect in the body," she explains. "What's left are the health-promoting components."

Bacteria in many cheeses – including Parmesan and cheddar – break down milk proteins into compounds similar to those found in blood pressure drugs known as ACE (angiotensin-converting-enzyme) inhibitors, potentially helping to prevent hypertension.

Fermentation also produces vitamin K, which has been shown to slow the build-up of calcium deposits in the arteries and valves of the heart. Camembert and Edam contain the highest levels.

A 2023 study of older adults in Japan found that eating cheese was associated with better cognitive function and lower rates of dementia. The cheese-eating group also had slightly lower BMIs and blood pressure – and walked faster.

Hard cheeses are particularly rich in calcium. Parmesan contains 19 per cent of the recommended daily amount in just one 30g serving. Official guidance recommends no more than 30g of cheese a day.

"We don't want to eat too much because of its fat content, but I advise clients to measure two fingers' worth of hard cheese, chop it up and sprinkle it into a salad," says Southern. "That way you're getting the benefits, plus flavour, protein and satiety."

Vegan alternatives are another matter. "They're mostly salt and fat and are very highly processed," says Southern. "Most varieties aren't health-enhancing – and cheese is notoriously difficult to replicate."

Yoghurt can reduce the risk of death from all causes

The benefits of the good bacteria in "live" yoghurt for the gut microbiome are well established – making a daily portion one of the healthiest dairy choices around. "I often advise clients to

start their day with a couple of tablespoons of fermented or Greek yoghurt with seeds," says Southern. "It's very satiating, provides a high level of protein and helps keep blood sugar steady throughout the morning."

Several major studies have highlighted further health advantages. The most recent – published in *Gut Microbes* – showed that long-term consumption of two or more servings of yoghurt per week was linked to lower rates of one type of bowel cancer.

Another study, based on data from 5,000 people, found that eating 40g of yoghurt daily lowered the risk of liver cancer by 5.4 per cent. Research from the Medical Research Council's epidemiology unit at the University of Cambridge also found that people who regularly ate natural, unsweetened yoghurt had a 28 per cent lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes than those who never consumed it.

Still not convinced? A comprehensive 2023 meta-analysis published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, which examined data from almost 900,000 participants, found that higher yogurt intake was significantly associated with a lower risk of death from all causes – and from cardiovascular disease.

Dairy-free alternatives generally contain far less calcium, protein and potassium – although some now include added probiotics to support gut health.

Butter – stick to small amounts

Who doesn't love a slice of hot toast slathered in melting butter? Delicious as it is, butter is high in saturated fat – so "moderation is key," says Southern.

One analysis, which included data from more than 600,000 people, found that moderate butter consumption wasn't linked to a higher risk of heart disease – and may even offer slight protection against type 2 diabetes.

But compared to other forms of dairy, its benefits are limited. "New research has shown that it's not just the nutrients themselves that affect health – it's how they're packaged within a food, something called the food matrix," says Dr Leeming. She points to a study comparing the matched nutrients in cheese and butter, which found that cheese lowered levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol – while butter did not. "It suggests the food matrix plays a role in how our bodies respond," she says.

A major study published earlier this year, involving more than 200,000 people followed over 30 years, found that those who consumed more plant-based oils – particularly olive, rapeseed and soya – had a 17 per cent lower risk of death than those who regularly ate butter. "We don't need to be frightened of butter," says Southern. "Although plant-based spreads are now largely free from unhealthy trans fats, I'd still choose butter for toast or baking. But for cooking, a good quality oil is much better for us."

By Polly Dunbar

The Daily Telegraph/10 June 2025

Print credit: Polly Dunbar/Telegraph Media Group Holdings Limited.

6 BAD NEWS, RED WINE DRINKERS: ALCOHOL IS ONLY EVER BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH

- continued from page 61. Please read in conjunction with the leading article on page 60.

..It's well-known that binge-drinking is harmful, but what about light to moderate drinking? In January 2023, the World Health Organization came out with a strong statement: there is no safe level of drinking for health. The agency highlighted that alcohol causes at least seven types of cancer, including breast cancer, and that ethanol (alcohol) directly causes cancer when our cells break it down.

Reviewing the current evidence, the WHO notes that no studies have shown any beneficial effects of drinking that would outweigh the harm it does to the body. A key WHO official noted that the only thing we can say for sure is that "the more you drink, the more harmful it is – or, in other words, the less you drink, the safer it is". It makes little difference to your body, or your risk of cancer, whether you pay £5 or £500 for a bottle of wine. Alcohol is harmful in whatever form it comes in.

Countries have started adopting this position in their national guidance. For example, in 2023, Canada introduced new national recommendations saying that abstinence is the only risk-free approach, and noting that two drinks (approximately four units) a week is low-risk. This was a change from 2011 when the guidance allowed a maximum of 10 drinks (about 20 units) and 15 drinks (about 30 units) for women and men respectively. The NHS has adopted the language of "no completely safe level of drinking", with the guidance not to drink more than 14 units, or about six glasses of wine/pints of beer a week.

What about red wine? Wasn't this supposed to be good for us? Two decades back, studies emerged that hinted that red wine could benefit the heart, especially as part of a Mediterranean diet. However, some of these studies didn't control for the fact that red wine drinkers were more likely to be educated, wealthy, physically active, eat vegetables and have health insurance. In 2006, in a new analysis that controlled for health-affecting variables, the benefits of drinking red wine weren't found. Since then, increasing evidence has shown that even one glass of wine a day increases the risk of high blood pressure and heart problems. The alcohol industry has been savvy here and funded studies that – surprise, surprise – show the benefits of moderate drinking. This is a lesson in why you should always look at who funds the study, and whether there's a conflict of interest. The muddying of studies by commercial interests (a tactic that was also famously used by the tobacco industry) led to statements, like from economist Emily Oster, that having one drink a day during pregnancy is safe. This has been debunked: foetal brain imaging in 2022 showed that even one alcoholic drink a week during pregnancy harms the baby's developing brain.

To summarise, there's widespread consensus that alcohol poisons our bodies. This isn't a moral judgment: it is what large-scale epidemiological studies have shown. This should inform government policies such as health warnings on alcohol labels, bans on multi-buy promotions, restrictions on marketing and advertising, and greater awareness of the health risks of drinking. Yet, we have to be careful not to descend into puritanism. We live in a democracy where people have the freedom to drink and make choices about their health.

And I'll admit that even though I work in public health, I continue to have a drink from time to time. Each day, we humans make decisions over the risks we take, and those of us who work in public health have to remember that not everyone is concerned only with living longer; feeling satisfied in how we live each day is also important. We eat that doughnut or bag of crisps, even though we know it's not great for us, just as we drive long distances on motorways knowing there's always the risk of a fatal traffic accident. And with alcohol, for many people there's happiness in sharing a bottle of wine or grabbing a few pints with friends.

There's no moral judgment in how people choose to live their life and the choices they make. But, yes, drinking carries a health risk, and it's worth us, and governments, finally acknowledging this fact, even if we'd prefer not to think about it.



Prof Devi Sridhar is chair of global public health at the University of Edinburgh

By Devi Sridhar

The Guardian/20 August 2024

Print credit: By Devi Sridhar, The Guardian, 20 August 2024

LEAMINGTON SPA

THOMAS AND BENJAMIN BOTH GIVEN BEST BAR NONE BOOST



Two Wetherspoon pubs have gained recognition at the inaugural Best Bar None Awards in Leamington and Warwick.

The Benjamin Satchwell (Leamington Spa) and The Thomas Lloyd (Warwick) have each received the Best Bar None accreditation at the first-ever event in Leamington and Warwick, recognising their track record on safety, training, management and customer service.

The Benjamin Satchwell also won a Best Bar None gold award, awarded by Warwickshire County Council's portfolio holder for community safety and chair of the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board, Councillor Dale Bridgewater.

This is in recognition of excellence and dedication, their outstanding contribution and exceptional assessment.

Rob Browning (pictured), pub manager at The Benjamin Satchwell, said: "We are delighted to achieve a gold award at the first-ever Best Bar None event in our area.

"The award highlights the hard work by the team and our commitment to the safety of customers and staff."

The scheme was run by Warwickshire County Council, in conjunction with Warwick District Council, supported by the Home Office and hospitality industry.

The awards event celebrates the best pubs, bars and nightclubs, while helping to promote good practice and raising standards.

Philip Seccombe, Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire, said: "What a fantastic evening, celebrating the venues which are now accredited and recognised as the Best Bar None across Leamington and Warwick.

"The commitment from so many premises to make our town centres safer to achieve this mark is a clear indication that we are united across all partners in making our county a safer place for all.

"The winners are here because communities have told us that these are the venues in which they feel safest.

"So, thank you to everyone who has cast their vote and had their say, and to the venues for their work in helping people to feel safe – they really are the 'best bar none'."

RIPON

UNICORN GALLOPING TOWARDS GLORY IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE



The Unicorn Hotel (Ripon) has been voted winner of 2025's 'most improved pub of the year' award by local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members.

Pub manager Rob Anghel and duty manager Dawn Tull are pictured receiving a certificate from Harrogate & Ripon CAMRA branch secretary Allan Gauld (centre).

Allan explained: "As a consumer organisation dedicated to promoting pubs and good beer, CAMRA's members have the terribly arduous task of going to pubs and trying the beer.

"We then record the beers' scores (marked out of five) on our national beer-scoring system (NBSS), with the average scores used to choose the pubs for The Good Beer Guide.

"We also track these figures and can see whether something, particularly the cask beers' quality, has changed at a pub over time.

"Members from across the country are encouraged to score beers whenever they visit a pub, no matter where they are; so it is not just local members scoring local pubs."

He continued: "The improved pub award is informed by the scores recorded on the NBSS – if the average scores show a constant improvement over time, they will be considered for the award.

"The Unicorn Hotel showed a constant improvement throughout 2024 and was ahead of any of the almost 300 pubs in our branch area.

"It's a well-deserved award."

Allan concluded: "It's always a pleasure to present awards to local pubs and important to recognise good quality, as well as the effort and expertise which go into maintaining consistently excellent cask beer."

Pub manager Rob Anghel added: "We are delighted to receive this award from our local CAMRA members, highlighting the hard work by all team members – which is a great achievement."

ROCK LEGEND BLAZE BRINGS HEAT TO THE DRAGON INN

Iron Maiden legend Blaze Bayley surprised staff at The Dragon Inn (Birmingham) when he popped in for a quick visit before the band's Utilita Arena gig in the city.

Bayley fronted the band during 1994–99, after 10 years as lead singer of Wolfsblane.

He left Iron Maiden to pursue a solo career and has since released 11 studio albums.

Pub manager Kelly Tipper said: "We weren't expecting him because we are the furthest Birmingham Wetherspoon from The Utilita Arena.

"He chose us because he wanted to avoid the crowds in the pubs closest to the venue – but was kind enough to allow us to take photos and sign some merchandise for fans."

Despite the pub's relative remoteness from the gig, it was packed with fans enjoying Robinsons Trooper, devised by current lead singer Bruce Dickinson.

Blaze Bayley is pictured with bar associate Daniel Dalton.

Earlier, the rock legend signed a Trooper T-shirt for Daniel.

Daniel said: "It really made my day."



BRISTOL RUNNERS' ROUTE PUNCTUATED WITH NINE PUBS



Pictured at The Commercial Rooms (Bristol) are (left to right) Young Lives vs Cancer's philanthropy events fundraiser Rachel Beard, shift manager El Trickey, deputy manager Steph Thorndyke, shift leader Quinn McFarlane and Young Lives vs Cancer's partnership fundraiser Sophie Hartley

Seven members of a running club jogged their way around a route which took them to all nine Wetherspoon pubs in Bristol.

David Humphreys and his friends are members of Southville Running Club.

They like to set themselves novel and quirky running challenges.

David said: "We visit our local pub, Robert Fitzharding, regularly and came up with the idea of running to all of the city's Wetherspoon pubs."

The day also featured 'silly dares', including asking a stranger for a selfie and lying on the pub's carpet for a photo.

David added: "It was tremendous fun, and the staff were brilliant, completely entering into the spirit of it."

Aged 30–40, the group's members ran a total of 15 miles on a hot summer's day, taking six hours, stopping in each pub for drinks and snacks.

Lunch was enjoyed in The Knights Templar.

The group intends to repeat the feat later in the year, raising funds for Young Lives vs Cancer.

The pubs visited, in order, were: The Kingswood Colliers; The Staple Hill Oak; The Van Dyck Forum; The Knights Templar; The Commercial Rooms; The W. G. Grace; The Berkeley; V-Shed; Robert Fitzharding.

THE MUGGLETON INN • MAIDSTONE

TIM TELLS HOW SIX MONTHS STRETCHED INTO 25 YEARS



Pub manager Tim Heathfield (second right) is pictured at his pub, The Muggleton Inn (Maidstone), marking 25 years' service with Wetherspoon.

Also pictured (left to right) are shift manager Louise Emberson, Wetherspoon's area manager Anthony Jobe and kitchen manager Ryan Pattison with a celebration cake.

Tim joined the company as a part-time bar associate at The Muggleton Inn, as a second job, quickly progressing to shift manager and a full-time role within six months.

Maidstone-born Tim recalled: "I took the job as it was a sociable job and was only going to stay six months, to top up my bank account, but I really enjoyed it and got sucked into Spoons.

"I became deputy manager at the pub within two years, before moving to The Society Rooms (Maidstone), again as a deputy manager.

"I spent 18 years there, four as deputy and 14 as pub manager."

Tim said: "When the pub-manager role came up, I was the most senior manager, so took it on, but it was the team behind me which made me want to do it.

"The rest, as they say, is history."

Tim briefly took over in 2019 as pub manager at The Thomas Waghorn (Chatham).

He explained: "I was there only six months when the pub-manager role at The Muggleton Inn came up – a position I always wanted, so I got permission to move again and take it on.

"That was in 2020, just as the pandemic and lockdowns hit."

Speaking about what has kept him with the company for 25 years, Tim explained: "In the pub industry, you can't beat Wetherspoon for a good work-life balance.

"I enjoy the life which my work allows me to have.

"Wetherspoon always looks after you – and I have had the chance to spend time with my kids growing up, now aged 10, 11 and 16, which is so important."

A SPOON FOR ALL SEASONS

Blogger Sophie Kemsley explains that the pitcher may have changed, yet her affection for Wetherspoon's pubs has not diminished in the 20 years since her first visit

“If I could go back in time and tell myself that there’d come a day when one of my favourite ways to spend a Saturday morning is in Wetherspoon, there’d be two kinds of response, dependent on how far back we’d gone:

18- to 23-year-old me: “Ahh wicked, pitcher of Blue Lagoon and some Apple Sourz to welcome the weekend innit!”

23- to sometime in mid 30s-year-old me: “Well, that’s just depressing. What a waste of a Saturday.”

I’d assume I had turned into one of those people I pass spilling out of the local establishments having a pint at 9.30am and regretting my life choices. Yes, that would feel depressing if it were so. That’s still not a point I’d ever like to reach.

But that’s not the reality.

I very rarely drink alcohol in Wetherspoon, but I’m here a lot.

Usually with a £1.56 refillable coffee and a notebook, and on the really special occasions if I want to treat myself: a bowl of nachos, made to a recipe that hasn’t changed in at least 20 years.

To me, Wetherspoon is about so much more than the historic connotations with cheap drinks and sticky tables.

Cornerstone

It’s a cornerstone of the community, a national institution, a place where people from all walks of life can feel that a decent meal out is a bit more within reach than a lot of other places.

Wetherspoon is a place for everyone... except the more snooty among society perhaps.

And who wants to be around people like that anyway?

It’s a place that leaves you to it. A place that doesn’t pressure you to leave as soon as you’ve finished your drink so that a new customer can occupy your seat.

A place where even the back of toilet doors will encourage you to stay for as long as you like – undisturbed – if it helps you to feel safe.

And often, when I look around, I sense that a lot of the clientèle come here for that quality.

Like the octogenarian – we’ll just refer to him as ‘G’ – who frequents my local branch for lunch every couple of days and explains how for him, it’s a place where he can come and feel in good company compared to the loneliness he feels at home.

“It helps me feel connected here,” G once shared with me, “I love to see familiar faces... there are so many people my age who come here and have so many great stories to tell about their lives.

“You’d never know just from looking at them just how many remarkable things they’ve done.

“I’ve found out all about them just by chatting here.”

G tells me his own life stories as we sit and chat.

We’ve spoken a few times because our favourite tables are next to each other (by the windows, to enable the act of people-watching outside).

Dialogue

Although 80% of the dialogue is from G’s side of the script, I find him a joy to listen to, and he always thanks me for the chat as he leaves, even though I’m not really sure I’ve said that much.

A recent study found that around 30% of UK residents experience regular feelings of loneliness.

While Wetherspoon may not be the solution for all, it’s important to acknowledge this value when critiquing the place.

As somebody who lives alone in a quiet estate and predominantly works from home, I find that an evening coffee trip (decaf by that time) to ‘Spoons is an important injection of life, people and reality after a virtual day, and can understand why many feel similar.

The chain has a lot of critics, for various reasons.

One of the more common concerns is that through its cheaper prices, it takes valuable custom away from the traditional, independent British pub.

This is a particularly valid concern at a time when the hospitality industry is under enormous pressure – not least from recent rises in alcohol duty – and many of our beloved ‘locals’ are pulling their final pints left, right and centre.

Different

However, what many often forget is that the two places are very different.

The two top-selling drinks at Wetherspoon aren’t even alcoholic.

They’re Pepsi Max and coffee/tea.

More to the point, it’s entirely possible to both support your local pub with your custom and appreciate your local Wetherspoon.

I’d usually pick my cosy local if it were something alcoholic I was after or if I were meeting a friend, but I’m not sure my local would necessarily appreciate a whole table being taken up for a couple of hours by someone who’s just after a coffee, and that’s fair enough.

You can make the most of both, it doesn’t have to be a case of either or.

The food is another characteristic that often attracts criticism, whether it’s the fact that the chip count can vary (as attested by the 250k strong membership of a particular Facebook group where members share/compare/condemn counts) or that it all tastes like it’s been “made in a microwave”.

Well, so what? I mean really, so what!

Quite frankly, if it’s produced in a hygienic environment, is hot, tasty and edible, then I couldn’t care less if it was prepared by a teenager monitoring a microwave or Nigella Lawson poring over her Aga oven.

At least you always know, no matter what branch you’re in, what you’re going to get.

Wetherspoon is a complete opposite of Forrest Gump’s infamous box of chocolates, (unless you’re focusing on the chip count).

There may be better-quality meals available elsewhere, but the reality is that they’re a lot more expensive, and most people can’t afford this as regularly.

Sometimes, you just want to have a break from cooking without breaking the bank. Sometimes, you just want cheap stodge.

And where do we start with the iconic buildings themselves, and their carpets?

It’s a little-known – but absolutely incredible no less – fact that each of the 850 Wetherspoon establishments in the UK has its own unique carpet, designed around something to do with local culture, history or heritage.



Take a look the next time you go into your local 'Spoons. I am in awe of the likes of Kit Caless, who visited hundreds, set up a website and even released a book to document them.

A book I proudly own and which has taught me a lot about notable figures and history from other areas.

As for the buildings, you'll often find that those now hosting the chain once served a purpose as something entirely different, and the history is usually palpable upon entry.

One of my favourite Wetherspoon buildings is The Palladium in Llandudno, Wales, not least because it means I must be near Snowdonia, but just because of the general feel of the building.

Before it became what it is today, it was a 1920s theatre, and as you gaze at the various boxes and balconies around you, you can almost hear the echoes of decades of historic performance.

You order your scampi, chips and mushy peas thinking about how the people a few decades in front of you in the queue were ordering their 'ices' at the interval, and not only does it feel exciting, but it also feels like a sentimental connection to the local past.

Opera House in Tunbridge Wells has a similar history, and the reverberations of a former Art Deco cinema are felt immediately as you enter The Peter Cushing in Whitstable (a branch which recently won platinum prize in the UK's Loo of the Year awards, in what I'm certain was a 'sparkling' ceremony).

I'm not entirely sure what my local branch, The Leading Light in Faversham, used to be, but I believe it was a carpet store, which is a little less exciting than those above perhaps, but also quite fitting when you consider the pursuits and passions of Kit Caless and Co.

Should this have piqued your interest in your own local branches, then it's worth checking out the Wetherspoon website, which contains a lot of contextual information about each branch, including explanations for the name.

Occasion

Additionally, it's a firm belief of mine that there's a Wetherspoon for every occasion, but to take inspiration from the menu and add some variety to this post I'll represent this as an amateur poem as opposed to a paragraph – a small plate compared to a main – if you will:

Turning 18 with a pitcher of Purple Rain.

A bowl of nachos before catching the train.

A pre-holiday pint before boarding the plane.

A cheap breakfast whilst taking shelter from the rain.

Buying a cup of coffee, and filling it again and again...

There's just one more characteristic about Wetherspoon I wish to praise, out of a raft of many more which I could possibly feature, and for this I'll tell a true story:

It's February 2020. Storm Ciara has swept up the UK and caused carnage everywhere, not least cancelling all the trains to London from Lancaster, where a friend and I have been visiting our former university haunts.

We're cold and miserable about it and have had to book an extra night's accommodation and buy emergency underwear in Primark, as well as inform our respective works that we won't be able to come in on Monday.

Once we have accepted this fate, we head to The Sir Richard Owen, which just so happens to be next to our hotel.

In the spirit of student memories, we order a Smirnoff Ice each and my friend tells me about a trend whereby people post their Wetherspoon table numbers on Twitter and people order food for them via the app.

I struggle to believe this is true, and so she offers to try it.

Within minutes of her posting on Twitter, a side of baked beans arrives unaccompanied by anything else, sent by a mystery donor.

We laugh. A lot. And then try and work out the best way to distribute them. British tapas.

It's utterly bizarre, utterly hilarious and also utterly Wetherspoon.

Pandemonium

Which is a way in which I'd also describe the pandemonium of summer 2024 when a bird flew into the Faversham branch and mesmerised an audience of a couple of hundred customers, who all got on board with the rescue attempt of encouraging it to fly safely back out, which it eventually did.

And really, there's so much more I could possibly say, but I'm making myself hungry, so instead I'll shawarmachickenwrap up this post to include a soft drink – £5.70.

Ordered via the app.

Never, ever, change – 'Spoons. ”

● www.sophiekemsley.com

Written in December 2024, this reproduced article refers to pricing at that time.

NEW LOOK

Bracknell

THE OLD MANOR

Pub manager Mike Daly is pictured at his new-look pub – The Old Manor (Bracknell).

Wetherspoon has spent £2.2 million fully refurbishing and upgrading the pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in June 1993.

The pub's interior has been fully redecorated throughout, with new carpet fitted.

New front-of-house air-conditioning has been installed, as well as in the kitchen.

The bar's drinks-dispense equipment has been upgraded, with new glass racks fitted.

Behind the scenes, the kitchen has been upgraded, as well as repairs and restructuring work undertaken in the cellar and bottle-storage area.

The staff room facilities have also been upgraded and the customer toilets refurbished.

General building maintenance has also taken place in the listed building, including roof repairs, drainage repairs, garden wall, fence and gate repairs, as well as new resurfacing for the car park. A retractable awning has also been installed.

Mike said: "Wetherspoon has invested a lot of money to refurbish, renovate, repair and upgrade The Old Manor, front of house as well as behind the scenes, which is fantastic news for the whole team, as well as for customers.

"It also ensures that one of Bracknell's oldest-surviving buildings continues to be correctly cared for, enabling us to serve the community for many years to come."

Grenville Place, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1BP



Lancaster

SIR RICHARD OWEN

Pub manager Tom Rossall is pictured (second left) in the new-look Sir Richard Owen (Lancaster) with (left to right) shift leader Olivia Slaney, Lancaster's mayor Cllr Margaret Pattison, Wetherspoon's area manager Dale Scurr and bar associate Zac Rossall.

The pub reopened following an extensive refurbishment project costing £2.4 million.

An additional 20 full- and part-time jobs have also been created.

First opening as a Wetherspoon in October 2001, the pub has been upgraded and extended, with a new larger beer garden added.

The customer area inside the pub has been increased, with a new side extension into the original garden space, augmenting the seating capacity from 212 to 252.

The pub's interior has also been newly redecorated throughout, with new carpet, new booth seating, a new fireplace, new roof lights and rear window installation and lobby.

New access, from the lower level, opening onto the new beer garden, has also been added.

The bar area has been refurbished, with a new bar added.

New open food serveries have been added to the ground and second floors.

Both the gents and ladies' toilets have undergone repairs and refurbishment, with new DDA-compliant toilet facilities also added.

The new larger beer garden has been built on the site of the old Hustle night club. The outside space has been expanded to 2,550 sq ft and now accommodates 152 covers.

Pub manager Tom Rossall said: "The investment highlights Wetherspoon's commitment to the pub, its staff and customers, as well as to Lancaster itself.

"We're delighted that we have also been able to create 20 new jobs for local people."

4 Spring Garden Street, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 1RQ



NEW LOOK

Chester

THE SQUARE BOTTLE

Pub manager Shaun Pearce is pictured at the reopening of The Square Bottle (Chester), following its extensive refurbishment project costing £1.1 million.

Shaun, who has been with the company for 21 years, is pictured with bar associate Sarah Astle (left), who has worked at The Square Bottle for 25 years, and kitchen shift manager Sophie Bennion (nine years' service).

The pub, which opened in September 1995, has been upgraded and extended, with a large new beer garden added.

The new split-level 2,300-square-foot beer garden, at the rear of the building, has steps and passenger lift access to the two-level outside space.

The garden features a glazed pergola canopy and festoon lighting, as well as flooring and furniture throughout.

Inside the pub, the property's rear elevation has been reconfigured to include new sliding folding doors, enabling views and access to the garden.

A glazed draught lobby has also been added.

The bar area has been refurbished, with bar drink-dispense equipment fully upgraded and overhead bar glass racks installed.

Improvements to the air-conditioning has also been undertaken, as well as a kitchen upgrade.

Shaun said: "We are delighted with the improvements in the pub, especially the beer garden."

78-92 Foregate Street, Chester, Cheshire, CH1 1HB



Saltcoats

THE SALT COT

Pub manager Kimberley Young is pictured in her new-look beer garden at The Salt Cot (Saltcoats).

The new outside space, at the back of the pub and previously a section of a car park, has been transformed into a beer garden with 30 dining tables and chairs to accommodate 80-90 customers.

Decorated with flowers, shrubs and climbing plants, as well as festoon lighting, the garden, which is also wheelchair accessible, is accessed via a new door in the pub.

The garden, which also has some shelter for inclement weather, is in addition to the original smaller outside space (at the side of the pub) which still provides eight tables.

Kimberley, who has managed the pub for two years, said: "We are a community-based pub, and this new outside space will bring a lot to the Saltcoats community."

7 Hamilton Street, Saltcoats, North Ayrshire, KA21 5DS



WENDY INSPIRES MALCOLM'S MARCH

Pub regular Malcolm Tucker raised £1,600 for a breast cancer charity by walking 100 miles in a month.

Malcolm, who is 69, drinks at The Godfrey Morgan (Newport) and was inspired to undertake the challenge by his friend Wendy Merrett, who has recovered from breast cancer.

Retired steel worker Malcolm (pictured) tracked his steps in aid of Breast Cancer Now.

He said: "When Wendy (pictured) told me that she had cancer, I said I'd do a walk for her. We were all so pleased when she got the all-clear."

Shift manager Zak Parry said:

"Wendy had the all-clear from cancer in November last year, so it was a cause close to both of their hearts.

"Lots of us in the pub supported Malcolm during his walking month."



UNBROKEN SERVICE AT THE BROKEN BRIDGE



Two team members at The Broken Bridge (Pontefract) have worked there since it first opened its doors in June 2010.

And the two, bar team leader Jayne Sandham and floor associate Julie McCauley, were on hand to celebrate the pub's (and their own) anniversary.

Jayne said: "I remember our opening day – it was a bit daunting at first, yet the time has flown by.

"I love working here because there's never a dull moment – we also have a great relationship with the customers."

Staff marked the anniversary by raising £300 for Young Lives vs Cancer with a tombola and wore paper garlands and had photos taken in a novelty frame.

Pictured (left to right) are floor associate Julie McCauley, shift leader Gemma Stanistreet, shift manager Lindsay Baines, bar team leader Jayne Sandham and kitchen manager Emma Green.

PASTY PURVEYOR PURSUES PROPER PUB PROJECT

Daniel Latham found that his job as a Cornish pasty salesman gave him a perfect opportunity to visit Wetherspoon's pubs.

Daniel (pictured) has visited more than 200, so far, while travelling as a sales rep for food supplier Proper Cornish. His travels have taken him all over England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

He said: "There's always a good pint of Stella, and I like the pizzas and also the chips.

"I started visiting Wetherspoon's pubs because they were easy to find on my travels.

"But then it became a project – and I started adding them up."

Favourites include The Counting House (Glasgow), The Caley Picture House (Edinburgh) and The Palladium (Llandudno).

But his local is The Queens Arms (Winsford), where he and wife Amanda frequent.

The couple's 11-year-old son, Lucas, sometimes accompanies Daniel on sales trips and enjoys visiting the pubs too, as does Daniel's friend Andrew Moore.



MONSTER PARTY MAESTRO IN THE PICTURE AT PRINCE ARTHUR



New artwork has been unveiled at The Prince Arthur (Fleet) to recognise regular customer, local legend and self-confessed Wetherspoon fan Alan Hope.

The two new framed artwork wall displays, with photographs and text, celebrate the achievements of long-time customer and well-known local character Alan (pictured).

The display catalogues Alan's 40-year career in politics, as leader of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party (OMRLP), his elected local council roles and his support for Wetherspoon (he has visited 732 distinct Wetherspoon pubs).

The all-time longest-serving leader of any British political party, Howling Laud Hope also celebrated his 83rd birthday at the special unveiling ceremony, attended by more than 200 people.

Also, on that significant date (16 June), the OMRLP was formed in 1982, and Alan became joint leader (with his pet cat Catmando), following the death of the first party leader Screaming Lord David Sutch, in 1999.

Alan has lived in Fleet for the past 20 years and has served the local community for 15 years on Fleet Town Council.

A street in the town, Hope Walk (near Fleet Station), is also named after him.

The new pub artwork also details Alan's early history in the 1960s as a rock and roll singer.

Alan Hope's friend and colleague Derrill Carr said: "The artwork is spectacular and will provide an ever-lasting memory of Alan's life-long achievements, including his commitment to, and support of, Wetherspoon and The Prince Arthur pub."

Alan Hope added: "I would like to thank all of those at Wetherspoon who were very instrumental in making this memorable highlight of my life happen."

The Prince Arthur pub manager, Chris Latham, said:

"We are delighted to honour Alan with the new artwork display at his favourite local Wetherspoon pub.

"He is a well-known, much-loved and active member of the local community, which he continues to serve, as well as a very loyal customer at The Prince Arthur.

"We all wish him continued success."

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, also sent congratulations, writing: "Congratulations to the Howling Laud on his 83rd birthday and for being the UK's longest-serving party leader.

"The late astronomer Sir Patrick Moore said that Monster Raving Loony candidates have an advantage over their opponents, since they know they're mad. Alan has capitalised on this factor and brought great humour to the political process. Long live the Howling Laud."



ACE SPUDS, NO DUDS

Wetherspoon's British chips, supplied by McCain since 2001, are true treasures

Wetherspoon is proud of its long partnerships with so many of its suppliers – and British producer McCain is one of them.

By choosing chips at Wetherspoon's pubs, customers not only enjoy British-grown potatoes, but also play a part in supporting farmers and building a more sustainable food system for generations to come.

As the producer of one in four chips worldwide, McCain has proudly supplied Wetherspoon since 2001, building a long-standing partnership rooted in great-tasting food and support for British farmers.

Leader

As an industry leader, McCain is committed to creating high-quality products from the very start of the supply chain.

As the largest purchaser of British potatoes, it partners with over 250 farmers across the UK, from the Highlands of Scotland to Cornwall.

Being a family-owned company, it is proud to have worked with many of these growers for three generations.

Regenerative

Together with Wetherspoon, McCain is helping to secure the future of British farming through its pledge to implement, by 2030, regenerative agriculture practices across 100 per cent of its global potato acreage.

This means investing in training and funding for farmers, enabling them to adopt sustainable techniques, such as planting wild flowers to

encourage wildlife, rotating crops to keep soil healthy and cultivating less to store more carbon in the ground.

These efforts help to protect farmers' livelihoods while ensuring that much-loved food products remain sustainable for generations to come.

Journey

Every portion of chips enjoyed at Wetherspoon's pubs supports this regenerative journey and helps British farmers to continue producing high-quality potatoes.

McCain has been working to raise awareness of why regenerative farming matters and how small changes in product choices can strengthen the food system.

You might have seen the 'Let's All Chip In' campaign – aiming to educate people about its benefits.

As McCain continues on the regenerative journey, progress would not be possible without its growers' dedication.

Their expertise, support and commitment are vital.

Through the long-term partnership, McCain and Wetherspoon are helping to protect the future of farming, ensuring that great-tasting British chips remain a staple on dinner plates across the land.



11" Margherita

11" BBQ chicken

PIZZA'S SECRET LIES IN THE SOURCE OF THE SAUCE

Expertise and fresh ingredients add up to incalculably superior formula for pie

What is the secret behind the perfect Wetherspoon pizza?

Every pizza is handmade to order, hand topped with fresh, quality ingredients, freshly baked and hand finished.

But every great creation must have the perfect foundation and, for a pizza, it's all about the tomatoes – or the tomato sauce, to be exact.

Pomodoro

Wetherspoon sources the pomodoro pizza sauce – tomato of course.

It is made using tomatoes to provide an authentic taste and high-quality pizza topping.

Made from sun-ripened tomatoes grown across Italy, primarily in Emilia-Romagna, Puglia and Tuscany, and harvested at peak freshness, Cirio pizza sauce has a thick, creamy consistency.

Enriched with a blend of Mediterranean herbs, following the traditional recipe of the pizza, it delivers an authentic flavour.

Leading

Cirio, from Conserve Italia, is Europe's leading co-operative in the preserved fruit and vegetable sector. Cirio is an iconic Italian brand, renowned for delivering truly quality tomatoes.

Cirio's expertise, which has been around since 1856, lies in more than 160 years of passion and dedication from its co-operative of farmer members.

They have handed down skills from generation to generation, guaranteeing Cirio's products 'from seed to fork'.

The Wetherspoon pizza base is made using freshly stretched sourdough, pressed by us (not premade) in the kitchen, then freshly baked.

The fresh dough is proved for the optimum length of time to ensure a perfect, soft and airy pizza base texture, with a crisp crust.

The dough, stretched in the pub's kitchens, is also dusted in semolina.

Unique

Sours are used in the dough recipe to create Wetherspoon's unique sourdough, for a great well-rounded flavour and that perfectly crispy base.

The light and crispy sourdough bases are all first topped with the rich, tomato pizza sauce.

Next, the cheese – 100 per cent diced mozzarella. The mozzarella used is made from traditional ingredients.

Fresh ingredients, such as fresh basil on a Margherita and fresh mushrooms on the ham & mushroom pizza, add further flavour and freshness to the final product.

Other fresh ingredients include mozzarella, rocket, Wiltshire-cured ham, red onion, sliced red chillies and maple-cured bacon.



A pizza history

The modern pizza, as we know it today, evolved in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, from Neapolitan flatbreads sold on market stalls and in bakeries.

The first dedicated pizza restaurant in the UK opened in 1965, in Soho, London.

In the first mention of pizza in London ('Dining Out Abroad' section, The Tatler, July 1952), Isaac Bickerstaff writes: "If you want to get away from altogether messy [Italian] dishes – and let us confess, most of them are – keep an eye open for ... pizza, a baked sandwich in many varieties, sweet or otherwise."

What's on the Wetherspoon pizza menu?

Eight choices of pizza are available, although every topping can be ordered additionally to combine for your own bespoke pizza or to add to the existing menu options, as an extra topping.

The 11" pizza choices include a drink (soft or alcoholic) as part of the meal price.

- Margherita – mozzarella, fresh basil
- NEW Spicy chicken – mozzarella, spicy pulled chicken thigh, Naga chilli and garlic & herb sauces, rocket
- Pepperoni – mozzarella, pepperoni
- Ham and mushroom – mozzarella, ham, mushroom, rocket
- BBQ chicken – mozzarella, chicken breast, BBQ sauce, red onion, rocket
- Roasted vegetable – mozzarella, mushroom, roasted pepper, courgette, onion, fresh basil
- Vegan roasted vegetable – mushroom, roasted pepper, courgette, onion, fresh basil
- Spicy meat feast – mozzarella, ham, pepperoni, chicken breast, sliced chillies, rocket

Additional toppings available: red onion; sliced chillies; mushroom; mozzarella; ham; chicken breast; maple-cured bacon; pepperoni; roasted vegetables

All eight pizza choices are available as an 8" pizza also, as part of the small-plates range and '3 for' deal, with further price reductions on Mondays.

Those pubs serving pizzas are also offering the NEW value-for-money Pizza Club, every Wednesday, with all 11" pizza selections available with a choice of over 150 drinks (soft and alcoholic) as part of the meal price.

TONI TAKES THATCHERS NORTH TO SPREAD WORD ABOUT CIDER

A Thatchers cider-tasting event was organised during Wetherspoon's cider festival at The Winter Gardens (Harrogate).

Thatchers' sales manager, Toni McNelly, spent eight hours at the pub moving from table to table offering samples and talking to customers about production methods and the Somerset-based company's history.

Customers were treated to a taste of Haze, Apple and Blackcurrant, Gold, Juicy Apple, Blood Orange, Katy and the brewery's new Cloudy Lemon brand.

Deputy manager Andy Taylor supervised the event and has tasted some of the ciders himself.

He said: "Customers really enjoyed the tasting session, with the new Cloudy Lemon emerging as a favourite.

"Toni, with us all day, definitely put in a full shift."

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Will Thornton, Toni McNelly and deputy manager Andy Taylor.



FOLEY POET KEEPS IDENTITY SECRET



An anonymous customer has written a poem about The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern). Although the customer is known to staff at the pub, he asked that the poem appear anonymously in Wetherspoon News.

His poem, The Foley Arms, waxes lyrical about the view from the pub's terrace.

It also congratulates the staff on the offer they provide and suggests that the pub is to the Wetherspoon estate what Bollinger Champagne is to alcoholic drinks.

Pub manager Lee Cartwright said: "It is a lovely poem and a very kind tribute to both the pub and its team.

"We wanted to recognise this gift. Although the customer is happy for it to be published, he doesn't want any kind of limelight or attention – and we respect that."

The Foley Arms

You have to be emotionally charged

To appreciate the view

Allowing your soul to be enveloped

By feelings that want to get through

For this is the scene at the Foley Arms

Where a breathtaking view awaits

Just stand on the terrace and look to the hills

And let your heart dictate

You'll need to have some time on your hands

To let the view sink in

Be patient and calm and focussed

And just wait for your beer or gin!

It will transport you to exalted heights

That no other pub can provide

Breathe in and enjoy this unique view

Let emotion be your guide

The pub itself must be one of the best

That you'll find in the Wetherspoon chain

If there's a drink it could be defined by

It must be Bollinger Champagne!

So if you visit Great Malvern

The Foley Arms is a 'must'

Not just for the view from the terrace

But for the offer of pure 'stardust'!

Anon

9 June 2025

SPARKS FLY AS STEEL FOUNDRY TURNS 10

The Steel Foundry (Sheffield) celebrated its 10th anniversary with festive decorations and a cake shared with customers.

Former kitchen manager Belle Astle, who now works at The Francis Newton (Sheffield), made the cake and attended the celebrations.

She joined current staff, including kitchen shift leader James Covell and pub manager Liam Costello, who have worked at the pub since its opening day.

Liam said: "We enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate our 10 year-anniversary."

Pictured (left to right) are shift managers James Duffy and Beth Watt, shift leader Danielle Tinker, pub manager Liam Costello and shift manager Alex Wood.



LIFE'S SWEET IN SLOUGH AS PUB MARKS 30 YEARS



The Moon and Spoon (Slough) celebrated its 30th birthday by sharing cakes and chocolates with staff and customers, as they reminisced about old times.

There was also a 'celebrate 30 years' hamper raffle which raised £160 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Three team members have more than a decade's experience each at the pub, including kitchen manager Mikey Eichelman and shift leader Amy Emery (15 years each) and kitchen team leader Samir Belouche (12 years).

Pub manager Alexa Popescu said: "It was a very enjoyable day.

"The pub has been an important feature of the town for the past 30 years, and we are looking forward to many more years serving the community."

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Harry Harris, kitchen manager Mikey Eichelman, shift leader Sarah Branscombe, pub manager Alexa Popescu and shift leader Amy Emery.

BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATI SHINE BRIGHT AT PARTY

The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool) raised £250 for Young Lives vs Cancer as staff and customers celebrated the pub's 10th birthday.

Staff put on a raffle and a colouring competition, over two days, to mark the anniversary of its opening in June 2015.

Current staff were joined by the pub's first manager, Becki White, who now manages The Railway Hotel (Lytham St Annes).

Many of the team have worked at The Velvet Coaster for longer than eight years, but the longest-serving among them is shift manager Rebecca Pritchard, who joined Wetherspoon in 2001.

Current pub manager Sam Slack has 10 years' service with the company.

He said: "It was brilliant to spend a whole weekend celebrating while involving customers young and old and raising money for our charity as well."

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Vicky Wilson, opening pub manager Becki White, shift leader Josh Jackson, current pub manager Sam Slack, shift managers Rebecca Pritchard and Lynne Davies and bar associate Julie Nixon.



CRAFT CIDER FESTIVAL

Round-up



The Kings Fee (Hereford) Bar team leader Kiera Bishop (left), with cleaner Annmarie Bird

CORE BLIMEY – CIDER FANS FLOCK TO FESTIVAL

Customers at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK and Ireland were able to enjoy a range of ciders, including traditional apple ciders, perries and flavoured ciders, during a summer event.

The pubs all hosted a 10-day craft cider festival.

The ciders included Barn Screecher (Hunts), Moonshine Rum & Raisin (Broadoak), Toffee Apple (Snails Bank), Midnight Special (Mr Whitehead's), Peach Mojito (Pulp), Fiery Fox (Gwynt y Ddraig), Farmhouse Dry Cider (Rich's) and Rhoobarb & Custard (Barbourne).

They were all suitable for vegans and vegetarians, with the cost of a festival pint being lower than that for the normal guest ciders.

The festival's organiser, Wetherspoon's senior marketing manager Richard Cripps, said: "The festival was a great celebration of craft cider. "It allowed us to showcase a selection of superb value-for-money ciders over a 10-day period."

Tasting notes on all of the ciders were available in this magazine (a digital version was also available on the Wetherspoon app and website).

All festival ciders were available to order at the bar and via the Wetherspoon app.



The Elihu Yale (Wrexham) Customers Sue Ellis and Michael Harry are served by bar associate Harry Leigh



The Bridge House (Belfast) Bar associate Loren McClean serves a festival pint to customer Ian Campbell



The Grand Assembly (Marlow) All smiles from team leader Evie Highgate, serving customers Dan Pritchard and Nathan Fredricks (right)



The Mount Stuart (Cardiff) Showcasing the festival are (left to right) team leader Hamish Sommerville, bar associate Keira Lewis and team leader Simeon Francis



The Salt Cot (Saltcoats) Customer James McGhee joins in the festival fun



The Penny Black (Northwich) Pub manager Garry Deakin serves customers Raymond Pettigrew and Kath Rowe



The Van Dyck Forum (Bristol) Shift leader Oliwia Kaminska, shift manager Brad Greensmith and shift leader Leah Smith (left to right)



The William Aylmer (Harlow) Shift leader Caroline Richardson serves a pint of cider for customers Richard Knight (right) and Tom Woolhead

BOURNEMOUTH

ADILSON'S PAINTINGS PAY TRIBUTE TO BOSCOMBE



Prize-winning artist Adilson Naueji, who works as kitchen manager at The Moon in The Square (Bournemouth), has had his work exhibited in his home community of Boscombe.

The six-week exhibition was entitled Boscombe Beyond your Eyes.

It challenged negative perceptions of Boscombe, which has had problems associated with drugs and alcoholism.

Adilson, who moved seven years ago to Bournemouth from Angola, said: "I wanted to do something to thank the people of Boscombe for their generosity and inclusivity.

"It is a community where everyone, including immigrants like me, can have a sense of belonging.

"My work shows happy, positive local people who are doing amazing things, through creative work or running businesses, and other happy local characters I have met."

A self-taught painter, Adilson started work at The Moon in The Square shortly after his arrival in Britain in July 2018.

He said: "I love the job. We are a great team and work well between the kitchen and the bar.

"Wetherspoon has good policies on people and is very supportive."

Adilson started painting during the COVID-19 years, as a response to the isolation of lockdown, and continues his work on his days off.

Last year, he won the Lighthouse Open Call prize – which challenged artists to submit work featuring 'life in Dorset'.

BARRY

RITA'S ROMILLY RAFFLES BRING BOOST FOR BARRY

The Sir Samuel Romilly (Barry) is regularly used by the Cadoxton Youth Group as a fundraising venue.

Chair of the local group Rita Limbrick is a frequent visitor, often arriving with bags full of gifts to raffle donated by local businesses.

The latest raffle included toys, food and drinks, perfumes and vouchers. It raised £700, split between Barry Male Voice Choir and Barry Scouts. Pub manager Nathan Warren and his team host the raffles and talked to Rita about the latest projects.

Rita said: "The pub is a great venue. People there are very generous, and Nathan is extremely helpful.

"As well as raffles, we also do bucket collections there."

Nathan said: "We have known each other a long time. This is a great community to be a part of, and Rita plays a huge part in bringing people together at the pub."

Rita is pictured outside the pub handing a cheque to Barry Male Voice Choir's members.



PONTYPRIDD

PONTYPRIDD FILM CREW FINDS FINE LOCATION AT THE TUMBLE INN

Pub manager Hannah Emberson-Marl welcomed Pontypridd business improvement district (BID) to her pub to film a promotional video.

The Tumble Inn was chosen as the location for the film, as part of the Pontypridd BID initiative to promote the local area, its businesses and the town, with the commissioning of a series of promotional films.

Pontypridd BID is a non-profit organisation responsible for investing in improvements for Pontypridd town, a business-led and -funded initiative which generates funds to spend on improving the town in the way which the businesses, themselves, choose.

Hannah, who has been pub manager at The Tumble Inn since 2021, said: "We are delighted that the BID team chose The Tumble Inn as

a venue for the promotional filming, as part of its initiative to better promote Pontypridd.

"The pub has been a community hub in the town for more than 20 years and continues as an important focal point for many local residents.

"We are pleased to be able to play our part in promoting the town's unique aspects and showcasing its businesses and community – to hopefully help in attracting visitors and investment."

BID's aim is to build on successful promotions by working with partners to bring more events to the town centre, to better promote local businesses and to encourage people to support and shop locally.

DONCASTER

SMART SCOUTS SOURCE SUPPLIES AT SPOONS



A group of scouts tasked with making a £10 budget stretch as far as possible chose to visit The Red Lion (Doncaster) to source affordable meals.

The challenge was given to them by scout leader Lucy Barratt of South West Nottinghamshire Scouts in advance of their trip to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Lucy said: "The group's members were tasked with completing various challenges, including sourcing affordable meals.

"Each scout was given a strict allowance of £10 for the day.

"Wetherspoon proved to be the perfect venue for our needs.

"The Red Lion offered a welcoming environment, budget-friendly options and a menu which catered to our dietary requirements.

"Our experience there not only satisfied our nutritional needs, but also provided a comfortable setting to strategise and bond as a team."

The scouts were taken from their own county of Nottinghamshire to neighbouring South Yorkshire, to an unfamiliar place, to further test their initiative.

The Baltic trip involves a budget-conscious backpacking and trekking expedition.

The pub's manager, Andy Haith, said: "I'd like to wish Lucy and the scouts team the very best for their expedition.

"We're proud that we could play a small part in supporting their training weekend.

"It's heartening to know that Wetherspoon was able to offer a welcoming, budget-friendly environment."

A STAY AT HOTEL IN CANTERBURY BRINGS PROXIMITY TO CATHEDRAL

This is the view from one of the hotel bedrooms at The Thomas Ingoldsby (Canterbury).

The pub offers accommodation in the 13-room hotel in the heart of Canterbury's city centre and just a three-minute walk from the historic Canterbury Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

One of the bedrooms has a fantastic view of the cathedral, which has been the focal point of the Kent city since it was founded in AD 597 by St Augustine, as England's first cathedral.

Site of the murder (1170) of Thomas Becket, Canterbury Cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Mother Church of the worldwide Anglican Communion and the resting place of royalty and saints.

It is a major pilgrimage destination, a masterpiece of art and architecture and a meeting-place of cultures, as well as one of the UK's most-visited historic sites.

Pub and hotel manager at The Thomas Ingoldsby Ali Stevenson, said: "We welcome guests from all over the world, visiting Canterbury and the world-famous cathedral, as well as the surrounding areas.

"Canterbury is a great place to explore, with so much history and heritage, and there is always a warm welcome for our guests at The Thomas Ingoldsby."

The hotel is a 12-minute walk from Canterbury East railway station and 16 minutes' walk from Canterbury West station.

● 5-9 Burgate, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2HG



CARAVANNER ROBERT MAKES MULTIPLE PIT-STOPS AT PUBS

Touring Britain by caravan, retired publican Robert Scruby has visited more than 220 Wetherspoon pubs.

Robert, who is 86, embarked on the tour after his wife Sheila passed away, following a long illness.

He said: "She and I loved to visit Wetherspoon's pubs.

"After she passed, I needed something to keep me going, to give me something to do. So, I decided on a project to visit as many Wetherspoon pubs as I could."

So far, Robert's tour has involved using caravan sites as a base, before heading out by car or on foot to visit pubs and the surrounding countryside.

"I find that I'm really able to enjoy doing this on my own.

"At first, I thought I'd just visit the pubs, but I've discovered it's also a great way to visit places I've never seen before," added Robert.

So far, his tour has taken him all over England. Though he's yet to visit Scotland, he has been to The Kings Head (Monmouth).

"I got chatting to people there and, as always, they come up with a long list of other places for me to visit," said Robert.

Robert, who hails from West Yorkshire, used to run pubs in Wakefield, Sheffield and Leeds with Sheila, before becoming a bus driver.

He finally retired at 80.

He remains fit and sometimes walks several miles between pubs to tick them off his Wetherspoon list.

Favourites include The Winter Gardens (Harrogate), canalside pub The Waterfront Inn (Brierley Hill) and The Picture House (Stafford), a former cinema with an ornately painted ceiling.



"The Picture House is beautiful – and there's a lovely walk up 60 steps to The Waterfront Inn," said Robert.

Food picks include a full English at breakfast, a tuna melt panini at lunchtime and, if the visit is in the evening, chicken wings.

"When I was running pubs, I always placed emphasis on customer care.

"I can see that Wetherspoon's staff have a similar emphasis," said Robert.

THE SAWYER'S ARMS • MAESTEG

EMMA TAKES FAB TRIP TO MARK HER 25 YEARS



Shift manager Emma Thomas has clocked up 25 years' service with Wetherspoon.

Emma, who works at The Sawyer's Arms (Maesteg), was treated to an afternoon tea celebration at a London hotel, for her and a friend, as part of the company's appreciation of her dedicated service.

Emma said: "Wetherspoon paid for the wonderful treat and expenses, for me and a friend to travel to London. The food was amazing, and it was a lovely experience.

"I also received flowers, delivered on the date of the anniversary, which was a lovely gesture.

"It's the little things that you don't expect which make you feel appreciated."

Emma was working as a supervisor with Marks & Spencer before she joined Wetherspoon as a bar associate at The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend).

She explained: "I'm very sociable and like to chat. I found working in retail boring.

"I left and got a job with Wetherspoon as a stop-gap really and not expecting to enjoy it, but here I am 25 years later."

Emma spent 23 years at The Wyndham Arms Hotel, working her way up to shift-manager level, before moving to The Sawyer's Arms two years ago.

Emma said: "I had been at The Wyndham Arms Hotel for so long that it was like a security blanket. I knew everyone and everyone knew me.

"I was asked to move and did so reluctantly. However, I am now happy at Maesteg and the customers are so lovely, which really helps.

"It's a nice pub, a lot bigger, and the beer garden is huge, so, with all the extra walking, I've dropped two stone since I've been here."

Emma added: "So many companies have struggled or didn't survive after the pandemic, yet Wetherspoon always seems to know how to react positively to any situation, change and adapt – which is key to success."

Emma concluded: "I love the company – and it's why I have stayed so long."

THE BOLE BRIDGE • TAMWORTH

TAMWORTH TWO CLOCK UP COMBINED 40-YEAR STINT



Pictured (left to right) are Anna, Jordan and Jackie

Two women who have worked at The Bole Bridge (Tamworth) for a combined 40 years have been given long-service awards.

Kitchen team leader Jackie Price and bar team leader Anna Loasby have worked at the pub for 20 years each.

Jackie was working at a nightclub when she joined Wetherspoon. She still works as a sewing machinist and credits the company's flexible approach to staff needs, allowing her to work two jobs.

For Jackie, working at The Bole Bridge is a family affair, as her sister, Samantha Rowley (who is also a nurse at Derby Hospital), and son, Joshua Price, both work there as well.

"It's a good company to work for and it suited me as a mum," added Jackie, who also took the opportunity to mention her friend Natalie Page, a kitchen team leader.

"Natalie died of ovarian cancer. She and I joined on the same day, so receiving this award of course made me think of her."

A plaque to Natalie's memory hangs inside the pub.

Anna Loasby enjoys working behind the bar because of the interaction and involvement with customers.

She said: "The Bole Bridge is a very sociable pub, and we all, customers and staff, know one another."

She added: "We have a good group of regulars who always come in at the same time on specific days."

Anna started as a bar associate after working as a dancer and bar person at a Greek restaurant.

These days, she doesn't dance as much, but still has music in her bones. "I love R&B," said Anna, who also enjoys diamond-painting in her spare time.

Pub manager Jordan Holmes said of his long-serving colleagues: "Anna and Jackie are both an absolute credit to the pub."

"When you see them working, it's clear that they have so much experience and both bring their personality to the job."

"Anna is very caring and looks after people in the bar area. Jackie, also a caring lady, is a real force in the kitchen, keeping it running as smoothly as possible."

LEANNE AND GUY CLOCK UP A COMBINED HALF CENTURY



Two Wetherspoon pub managers in northeast England have clocked up a combined 50 years' service with the company.

Leanne Surtees, pub manager at The William Jameson (Sunderland) and Guy Stoker, who runs The Bishops' Mill (Durham), have each celebrated their 25-year milestone with Wetherspoon.

Leanne started in September 2000 as a full-time bar associate at Union Rooms (Newcastle upon Tyne) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub). She spent five years there progressing up the career ladder.

She became deputy manager at The Sir William de Wessington (Washington) for a year before stepping up to pub manager there in 2006, a role she held for two years.

A spell as pub manager at The Lambton Worm (Sunderland) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub) followed, before a move to the newly opened The Five Swans (Newcastle upon Tyne) in 2011, where Leanne stayed for 10 years.

Leanne, who took over at The William Jameson in October 2021, said: "When I started with the company, I was looking for a career, but didn't know whether it would be in the pub industry.

"I received really good training, giving me the confidence to progress, and it was one step at a time as I learned more."



She added: "It has been hard work, but I have enjoyed my time in every pub. Wetherspoon is a good company, with good benefits and work-life balance."

Guy took over at The Bishops' Mill in January 2008, having started with the company as a shift manager at The Plimsoll Line (Redcar) in 2000.

He also worked at Union Rooms, as well as a brief spell as holding manager at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay) before taking on his first pub-manager role at The Forum (Hexham).

He moved to the newly opened pub The Lambton Worm in 2003, for three years, and a further two years back at Union Rooms before taking over at The Bishops' Mill.

Guy recalls: "I was out with friends at The Rohan Kanhai (Ashington) when I saw that Wetherspoon was recruiting, so gave it a go – and Martin Geoghegan interviewed me for the job.

"I saw the opportunity as a future career straight away and was so determined to be successful, completing my training within nine months.

"I was young, worked hard and travelled to Edinburgh regularly, on my days off, for training because I knew that I wanted to go further."

Guy and Leanne are pictured, each holding a framed certificate and bottle of Champagne.

TAKEOVER TURNS NEW TOWN INTO BREW TOWN

Shift manager and co-organiser Eddie Ball is pictured (left) at a meet-the-brewer evening at The Moon Under Water (Milton Keynes).

Representatives from Hook Norton Brewery hosted the event, with a presentation and question-and-answer session.

Customers also enjoyed four of the brewery's beers on a 'tap takeover' at the bar.

The ales were Off the Hook (4.3% ABV), Old Hooky (4.6% ABV), Hooky (3.4% ABV) and Haymaker (5.0% ABV).

Hook Norton Brewery's Derek Pratt (second right) and Giles Minkley (far right) also handed out ale samples for customers to try.

Local Campaign for Real Ale member Richard Hyde is also pictured. Eddie said: "The evening went really well.

"The guys from the brewery were delighted with the event, with everyone enjoying the occasion and Haymaker proving to be the most popular ale with customers."



MAKING A CLEAN GET-AWAY

Partnership with Johnsons Stalbridge involves laundering 1.7 million items of linen per year for Wetherspoon's hotels

Wetherspoon is very proud of its long working relationships with many of its suppliers, including numerous food and drinks producers, as well as breweries and microbreweries.

One long-term business partnership is with Johnsons Stalbridge, a supplier to Wetherspoon for the past 17 years and sole supplier for the UK hotels since 2023.

Johnsons Stalbridge provides a laundry service for the company's 54 hotels across England, Scotland and Wales.

Sheets

It launders all of these hotels' bed linen, including pillowcases, sheets and duvet covers, as well as bath towels and bath mats.

That's around 1.7 million items of linen, per year, across Wetherspoon's hotels.

Guided by 'The Johnsons Way', the company is committed to its environmental responsibility, social impact and long-term sustainable growth, by reducing its environmental footprint to support the communities which it serves.

Sustainability

Sustainability is more than just a responsibility at Johnsons, it's a shared value which connects it with its customers, partners and communities.

Johnsons was awarded the EcoVadis silver medal in 2025, ranking it for sustainability performance in the top four per cent of companies within its industry category.

Johnsons is committed to efficiency, eco-friendly technologies and responsible practices to ensure that it not only delivers exceptional service, but also contributes to a cleaner, greener future.

Standards

With more than 40 years' experience, it continues to offer excellent standards in the linen and laundry industry, delivering quality, reliability and sustainability.

Wetherspoon's senior manager, facilities & pub services, Mark Miller, said: "Wetherspoon is very proud of its long-term partnerships and supplier relationships, also placing huge importance on the shared values with those partners.

"Johnsons Stalbridge's commitment to sustainable practices ensures that we can offer our hotel guests the very best experience, in the knowledge that every effort is being made, along the supply chain, to protect the environment."



The Mile Castle Hotel (Newcastle)

A PICTURE OF HAPPINESS AS ARTIST DELIA CELEBRATES 80TH



Long-standing pub regular Delia Hume celebrated her 80th birthday at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay).

She was accompanied by husband Thomas and son Colin as the pub laid on a complimentary meal and a round of drinks.

Delia is a local artist and has presented the pub with a collage painting featuring flowers and animals, displayed on the day on an easel in her honour.

Shift manager Siobhan Macleod said: "I've been here nine years, and Delia and her husband have been coming twice a week for as long as I can remember.

"They are a lovely couple, and we were proud to be able to share in the celebrations on her special day."

The family is pictured with shift manager Noah Neill (right).

POSTIE STEVE DELIVERS HIMSELF TO 600 PUBS

Postman Steve Owen has visited more than 600 Wetherspoon pubs since first visiting The Clifton (Sedgley) in 1998.

The pub was recommended by a friend, and Steve was impressed with the value for money, Curry Club offers and, later, paninis.

After that, wherever he went, he always looked for a Wetherspoon pub.

"I'd been to about 30 before I started counting the ones I'd been to – and it just snowballed from there," said Steve, who has so far been to 609 of the company's venues.

He met partner Debbie Bayliss in 2007 – and they have been touring Wetherspoon's pubs together while enjoying the countryside in England, Scotland and Wales.

Steve, who lives in Erdington (West Midlands) added: "We'll agree on a destination and break up the journey at a Wetherspoon and visit a few more in the area.

Favourites include The Imperial (Exeter), Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate) and The Crosse Keys (City of London).

He plans to visit more venues in time, but is not in any rush.

"I've been doing this since 1998, so it was never the idea to set any records," said Steve.



PROMISE OF A PINT FUELS MIKE'S 90-MILE HIKE



The Sir Norman Wisdom (Deal)



The Golden Lion (Rochester)

Mike McCarthy trekked 90 miles around Kent's rugged coastline, visiting eight Wetherspoon pubs along his way.

His journey saw him wild-camping under the stars and sometimes walking 20 miles in a day.

Manchester-born Mike's journey started with a foot-passenger ferry trip from his home in Brussels.

Carrying a rucksack containing his light tent, Mike headed to Deal, where he enjoyed a late-evening pint of Doom Bar at The Sir Norman Wisdom before retiring to his hotel.

After an open-air cup of tea and a Cornish pasty, Mike reached Ramsgate, where he visited Royal Victoria Pavilion, a pub overlooking Ramsgate Harbour, where a pint of Greene King IPA washed down a burger meal.

Head cleared by a good night's sleep, Mike strode forth towards Reculver, yet, after a 19-mile walk, he could find no accommodation, so his ultra-lightweight tent (it weighs under 450g) was pitched by the beach.

A short morning walk took him to The Saxon Shore (Herne Bay) for a full English breakfast, before a longer stroll to Faversham.

Passing some beach huts along the shore, Mike headed to Whitstable.

A punnet of whelks sufficed for lunch, before a brief visit to The Peter Cushing (Whitstable) and continuing on to Faversham via views of skylarks and reed warblers at The Swale, a marshy piece of land separating Kent from the Isle of Sheppey.

Mike had arrived in Faversham too late for an evening meal.

So, in the morning, he walked to The Leading Light (Faversham) for breakfast in the pub's courtyard garden.

"Very posh!" said Mike.

The walk from there to Rainham was not pleasant, with rain forcing a shortcut involving busy roads. But Mike persevered and was relieved to reach The Golden Hope (Sittingbourne).

The light lunch he had there kept him going on the way to Rainham, where a more substantial fish-and-chip dinner was enjoyed with some Shepherd Neame ales while chatting to locals at The Railway.

Mike popped into The Golden Lion (Rochester) for a quick pint, before a stroll round the town, then his journey home.

"There was a lot more I could have done, a lot more places I could have visited, but I had miles to go and promises to keep," said Mike, borrowing a line from Robert Frost's poem Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.

CYCLIST JONATHAN TAKES GREEN JERSEY AS HE BRINGS IN £3,315

Kitchen manager Jonathan Devitt completed a leg of the Tour de France to raise money for Prostate Cancer UK.

Jonathan, who works at The Central Hotel (Shotton) decided to compete in memory of his father.

He had support from colleagues at The Central Hotel and also from those at The Elihu Yale, Wetherspoon's pub in Wrexham, where he previously worked.

The first leg of this year's tour was a flat 189km circuit starting and finishing in Lille. He finished the course in six hours, 42 minutes.

Jonathan was awarded a charity green jersey for being the first to reach the individual target of raising £1,500.

Since then, however, the total has shot up north of £3,300.

"It was a great experience – and I received a lot of support from colleagues and former colleagues, especially shift leader Carys Davies who helped to collect donations.

"They allowed me to do lots of fundraising at The Elihu Yale, where Carys works, even though I no longer work there," said Jonathan, who is pictured with Carys.



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DARK ARTS REVEALED DURING SOUTHPORT'S FIRST BEER WEEK



The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport) held a four-day light-and-dark ale festival as part of the town's first Beer Week.

The mini festival at the pub featured more than a dozen beers from local brewers, including Warrington-based Coach House and Heywood-based Phoenix.

Both breweries donated prizes for a beer week-themed hamper, a big hit with people on the town-centre 'ale trail', with proceeds donated to Young Lives vs Cancer.

Coach House rebranded its Cheshire Gold ale for the event as Segrave Gold.

Organiser and shift manager Stuart Ochiltree (pictured) said: "It was a really popular event across the town and in our pub."

The opportunity to take part in the inaugural Southport Beer Week came about through Stuart's involvement in Southport's pubwatch,

part of the business improvement district (BID) group, the body which organised the week.

With over 20 local venues taking part, this was a great opportunity for the Sir Henry Segrave to get involved with the local community.

"We had an ale trail book which people could get stamped in all of the pubs, and the BID put up £200 as a prize," said Stuart, adding that he was confident that the festival would be repeated next year.

Posters advertising the ales on sale at the pub included details of the brewing process and taste profiles.

Stuart said: "There was a lot of interest in what makes light ale different from dark ale, with a lot of good conversations had about that topic."

COLIN PROUDLY PLOTS CRIMES IN PLAIN SIGHT

Author Colin A Millar has written three books in six years, while sitting at his table at The Swan Hotel (Leighton Buzzard).

Colin (pictured) says that the pub's atmosphere inspires him in his work.

His novels, all crime thrillers, have been published on Amazon.

He draws on the way in which customers interact and even things they say, which he says help to shape the books' characters.

He said: "I love writing at The Swan Hotel.

"I can quietly observe the other customers, their behaviour, the way in which they interact, the turns of phrase they use and their varying accents."

He added: "It's great mental food for the creative process."

"I can also disappear into my own 'zone' and immerse myself in my work while still feeling part of the pub's community as the buzz of conversation washes over me."

Pub manager Beni Hevesi said: "We know Colin – he's in on a Tuesday, usually, sitting and writing in his 'office'.

"We know when he's finished for the day because he orders a Carling.

"When we bring it to him, we'll have a chat and he'll join in with the regulars and have a beer with them."

Colin's two most popular titles are Foreign Bodies and Two Weeks in the Sun, while new release Out of Mind is available (1 November 2025).

● For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/4ub9vdrw>



FULL OF BEANS SINCE 2005

LAVAZZA

TORINO, ITALIA, 1895



Customers have been enjoying Lavazza coffee at Wetherspoon's pubs for 20 years

At Wetherspoon, we have been proudly serving **100% Arabica Rainforest Alliance-certified Lavazza coffee since 2005, with customers enjoying millions of hot drinks annually.**

Founded by Luigi Lavazza in 1895, Lavazza remains family owned and is now enjoyed in more than 140 countries worldwide, with more than 30 billion cups consumed annually.

Lavazza's La Reserva de iTierra! Selection blend, co-developed with Wetherspoon, remains our signature choice.

This premium blend comprises 100% Arabica beans, sourced from Rainforest Alliance-certified farms in Central and South America, and contains coffee from territories where the Lavazza Foundation supports various coffee-producing communities.

The beans are a washed natural Arabica blend, roasted to a medium intensity, offering a delicate and balanced flavour profile, with aromatic notes of almond, jasmine flower and milk chocolate.

The blend is crafted using a gentle drum-roasting process, ideal for espresso preparation, which enhances and preserves the coffee's aromas.

Wetherspoon's hot drinks are served from easy-to-use self-service coffee machines, with free refills available on every coffee^o and Twinings tea.

All of Wetherspoon's hot drinks are served with Fairtrade sugar, supplied by Tate & Lyle Sugars, which has been a proud Fairtrade partner since 2008, ensuring a fair deal for the farmers and workers who produce the sugar.

Lavazza continues to lead in sustainability, through the Lavazza Foundation, providing training and technical assistance to coffee producers, promoting sustainable agricultural practices which improve coffee quality, productivity and community well-being.

^oMocha not included.

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REFILLS^o**
TEA AND COFFEE
— ALL DAY EVERY DAY —

Mainly through the trading of the British East India Company and the Dutch East India Company, coffee became available in England no later than the 16th century, with the first coffee house opened in 1652 by a Greek, Pasqua Rosée, in St Michael's Alley, at Cornhill, London.

By 1675, there were more than 3,000 coffee houses throughout the country – with their popularity spreading rapidly across Europe.

At that time, many believed coffee to have several medicinal properties.

Today, around 25 million people make a living from growing coffee, with 500 billion cups of coffee consumed annually around the world.



DONCASTER

SHARP OPERATORS ENSURE THAT CASH IS THROWN TO MACMILLAN

A darts marathon at The Gate House (Doncaster) raised almost £3,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Entrants threw arrows from 9am until midnight to reach a target tally of 100,000 points.

At 6pm, the event took on a festive flavour, with team members dressing up as darts heroes, such as Luke Littler, Rob Cross, Nathan Aspinall and Michael Smith.

"It went really well," said pub manager Ben Leese, adding: "Everyone who took part had a great time – and it was amazing what they did."

Some of the darts team members have family who have been affected by the disease.

The event was organised by bar associate Jordan Thorpe (wearing green wig, right), who captains the pub's Doncaster League darts team, and kitchen associate and vice-captain Rob Allen (front, third left).

A series of raffles was held during the day, boosting charity coffers.

Ben is pictured (front, second left) with darts players from the event.



KENILWORTH

KENILWORTH ARTIST DIANE PUTS DICTUM IN THE PICTURE



Local artist Diane Shores presented a picture of The Dictum of Kenilworth (Kenilworth) to its manager Tom Clarke at the pub's opening.

The framed artwork is part of Diane's efforts to bring latest events in the town to life.

It shows the pub with a banner which reads: The Dictum – fully restored!

Tom said: "We were thrilled to be gifted the artwork from Diane and proud to display it permanently in the pub."

"It was a lovely gesture of Diane's to do this."

Diane said: "People living in the town, including me, were thrilled at the prospect of a Wetherspoon opening."

"We are delighted that it has opened."

"I visited twice on opening day – and it was packed on both occasions."

The artwork, along with other postcards and prints by Diane, are on sale two doors down from the pub, at Castle Home Luxuries, run by her friend Michelle Williams.

Pictured (left to right) are Michelle Williams, pub manager Tom Clarke and Diane Shores.

● You can discover more about Diane's work on her Facebook page: Dish Design Studios

HARROGATE

NOWT BEATS YORKSHIRE DAY BASH AT THE WINTER GARDENS



Pictured are Emily Elmes (left) and Claire Kontominas from Harrogate Town AFC, with Sam Atkins who tried their football challenge

The Winter Gardens (Harrogate) held a Yorkshire Day event with local businesses.

The day took the form of an all-day fayre as the pub celebrated 'God's Own County'.

Among the local businesses running stalls at the fayre were Mohammed Ahmed and Ben Kemp from Bannatynes gym, Anna Skibinska from The Turkish Baths and Kirstin Black of Rooster's Brewery.

Another brewery, Saltaire, rebranded one of its ales for the day as Yorkshire Blonde.

Harrogate Town AFC was also represented and donated a signed shirt for a charity raffle, helping towards a total of £300 raised on the day for Young Lives vs Cancer.

The football club also helped to run a Footy Fast Feet challenge, with youngsters showing off their skills and negotiating obstacles.

The overall sum was boosted by Cube Barbers, which offered cut-price hairdos, with proceeds going to the charity.

Pub manager Will Thornton said: "It was a superb effort by everyone involved and we're definitely going to do it again – maybe two or three times a year.

"Everyone had a great time – and I would like to thank all of the businesses which ran stalls and supported the event."



Eloise Pratt (left) and Anna Skibinska from The Turkish Baths and Kirstin Black (right) of Rooster's Brewery in Harrogate



Pictured (left to right) are Cube Barbers' senior stylist Derry Hallinan, owners Joe Connolly and George Thomson and senior stylist Joe Peel

The Brandon Works (Motherwell)



Pub manager Clare Broadhurst led a team of 18 staff from The Brandon Works (Motherwell) to Conic Hill, raising £750.

Conic Hill is a 361-metre hill near Loch Lomond.

The group was almost forced to turn back because of severe weather.

"It was a nice day when we got there," said Clare, "but once we started the climb, we had some horrendous weather, heavy winds and strong rain – and, at one point, we discussed turning back."

But the intrepid fundraisers persevered and reached the summit.

The walk took place on a day when the pub was closed for maintenance.

"We couldn't work, so we decided to have a walk and raise some money instead," said Clare (pictured at the back of the group, in a black top).

The Six Chimneys (Wakefield)



The annual golf outing from The Six Chimneys (Wakefield) raised £243.

The event is organised each year by shift manager Grant May, who plays off a handicap of eight.

This year's away-day was held at Leeds Golf Centre, attracting 16 staff and customers from The Crossed Shuttle (Pudsey), The Red Lion (Doncaster), The Three Hulats (Chapel Allerton, Leeds), The Turls Green (Bradford), The Sheaf Island (Sheffield) and The Wagon & Horses (Sheffield).

They paid £37 each for a deal which included green fees and breakfast at the pub.

Grant said: "It was very enjoyable – we all had a great day and raised money for our chosen charity too."

Grant was named the winner of the competition.

He is pictured third from left (front row) in his salmon-coloured sports shirt with fellow golfers.

The Bankers Draft (Sheffield)



Cakes and tombola prizes featured at The Bankers Draft (Sheffield) as part of two fundraising days.

Cross-trained associate Jody Williamson and shift leader Alan Harrison (pictured) helped to organise the events, raising a combined total of £320.

They were assisted by colleagues who made cakes for a bake sale.

Tombola and raffle prizes included IT gadgets, beauty kits and Harry Potter books.

The Stanley Jefferson (Bishop Auckland)



Customers and staff came forward when shift manager Emily Bland called for volunteers to have their heads shaved at The Stanley Jefferson (Bishop Auckland).

Three customers and three of Emily's colleagues took part and raised £200 among them.

Emily said: "It was brilliant that some of the regulars joined in and, in a way, it shows what kind of pub we are. We are very grateful to those customers and to our colleagues."

Pictured (below) following the shave are (left to right) shift Leader Daniel Haq, customers Jordan Brown and Michael Bedford, bar associates Sean Clayton and Ben Sutherland and customer Ian Simpson.



The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew)



Well done folks!
£370
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Pub manager Donna Walker completed the Manchester half marathon – raising £370.

Accompanied by brother-in-law Satwinder Singh Hara, Donna finished the race in 2h 57min.

Donna, who runs The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew), said: “It was a great atmosphere and, although enjoyable, extremely tiring, as I didn’t have the time to train.”

There were a couple of ‘firsts’ on the day, as it was Satwinder’s first half marathon and – although she’s run similar events in the past, it was Donna’s first run in Manchester.

The Woodseats Palace (Sheffield)



Well done folks!
£250
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Staff and customers at The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats, Sheffield) took part again in the annual Woodseats Festival.

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Iona Robertson, customer Simon Coleman, shift manager Hayley Martin and floor associate Kay Slater.

Hayley said: “It is something we have been taking part in for many years. Despite the torrential rain, the event was a great success.

“Thanks to Simon for all of his efforts, dressing as a jester and hosting a shuffleboard game, which everyone got involved with, raising a lot of money.”

As well as Simon’s game, funds were raised through a book sale, cake sale and tombola, collecting £250 for the company’s charity.

The Woodseats Festival, which started in 2006, is held in July each year, providing free community events, with a parade and family fun-day.

The Angel Hotel (Whitby), The Stanley Jefferson (Bishop Auckland), The Plimsoll Line (Redcar), The William Stead (Darlington), The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond), The Swatters Carr (Middlesbrough), The Ironstone Miner (Guisborough)



Well done folks!
£5,800
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Brave bungee-jumpers from pubs all over northeast England raised £5,800 by leaping off the Marple Viaduct, with the River Esk below.

Staff from seven pubs took part in the Whitby jump, with each person being responsible for fundraising.

It was a first jump for pub manager Jonny Mahoney of The Angel Hotel (Whitby).

He said: “The instructor told us not to look down, but it’s a bit like telling people not to press ‘the big red button’ – so, I looked down. I wish I hadn’t!”

Pictured (top row, left to right) are kitchen associate Keira Griffiths of The Stanley Jefferson (Bishop Auckland), shift leader Lucy Joy of The Plimsoll Line (Redcar), bar associates Beth Basford of The William Stead (Darlington) and Angelica Osorio Munera-Wilson of The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond), pub managers Jonny Mahoney and Em Tetley of The Angel Hotel (Whitby) and shift leader Luke Oldfield of The Swatters Carr (Middlesbrough), with (bottom row, left to right) kitchen associate Sophia Kleinova of The William Stead, kitchen team leader Becca Hatton of The Ironstone Miner (Guisborough) and bar associate Harpreet Kaur of The Swatters Carr.

The Plaza (Rugeley)



Well done folks!
£250
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Pub manager Sian Siddall walked 80 miles in 24 days to raise £250.

Sian (pictured) takes the lead in charity fundraising at The Plaza (Rugeley), picking her challenge from the Young Lives vs Cancer website.

She said: “I live near Cannock Chase, where I walk the dog, and decided that this would be a good way to get out and about more, get fit and raise money all at the same time.”

Money was collected at the pub and donated online.

Sian said: “I’d like to thank everyone for donating to the cause and for the many words of encouragement which people also gave me.”

CHARITY PROVIDES SPECIAL DAY OUT FOR SELECT SQUAD OF SPOON STAFF



A handful of Wetherspoon staff was invited by Young Lives vs Cancer to the charity's Home from Home open days.

Travelling to Paul's House, in London, were two of Wetherspoon's head-office staff.

Susie Rogers, who has been involved in the partnership with the charity for many years, and Chris Smith, also involved for many years and responsible for processing all of the fundraising income and reports, made the visit.

Attending the open day at Jack's House, in Manchester, were Caryn Davenport, Wetherspoon's regional charity representative for Greater Manchester/Cheshire, and pub manager Rachael Brown, top fundraiser at The Calverts Court (Stockport).

Area and pub managers also visited Marion's House, in Glasgow, Billy's House, in Nottingham, and Bristol's CLIC House.

Sophie Hartley, Young Lives vs Cancer's partnership fundraiser, said: "The Home from Home open days offer a unique opportunity for key members of Team Young Lives to see for themselves where their fundraising is going.

"It also enables them to learn more about how Young Lives vs Cancer supports families locally.

"For Wetherspoon's staff, it's an opportunity to visit their local Home from Home for a tour and to connect with the local community, including the home's team.

"A huge thankyou to the staff who took the time to join."

Sophie added: "We are proud to have invited Wetherspoon's staff to see an example of the amazing things which our partnership is helping to provide for children and young people facing cancer."

What is a Home from Home?

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, it can tear families apart.

Families often have to travel long distances, so that their child can receive treatment at a specialist centre.

Treatment can last for months at a time, many miles away from home, leaving families consumed with worry about where they're going to stay, how they'll get there and how they can afford it – all so that their child isn't alone.

Young Lives vs Cancer's Home from Home accommodation service is a lifeline for families.

It provides a free place to stay while the child goes through treatment, relieving the financial and practical burdens of travel, accommodation and food while away from home.

But the homes are more than just a place to stay.

They're a safe, supportive space where families can relax away from the hospital. They're somewhere where they can enjoy home comforts again, like home-cooked meals and fresh pyjamas.

They're a place where they can meet others who understand what they're going through. They're a sense of calm when life is turned upside-down.

From ordering pizza to having heart-felt phone calls in privacy and sleeping in a warm, comfortable bed, these homes are a place for families to be together outside of the sights, sounds and smells of a hospital.

● **For more information and to take a virtual tour of the homes:** younglivesvscancer.org.uk/what-we-do/a-free-place-to-stay

The Golden Beam (Leeds)



Well done folks!
£600
...raised for our
chosen charity.

A team of 13 hikers (11 current and two former employees) from The Golden Beam (Leeds) climbed Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) to raise £600.

Pub manager Chris Donoghue led the trek up Wales' highest mountain, a climb of 1,080 metres.

Chris said: "The nine-hour route took approximately 27,500 steps.

"Although a high number, it is actually less than we sometimes walk for an eight-hour work shift on the pub floor."

Pictured (left to right) are some of those who took part – shift manager Jake De Sancho, pub manager Chris Donoghue, shift leader Joe Caramiello and kitchen shift leader Saul Pratt.

The Glass Blower (Castleford)



Well done folks!
£300
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Shift leader Gareth Brookes raised £300 in a charity head-shave at The Glass Blower (Castleford).

He volunteered to have his locks lopped off by local barber Sue Rogers.

Pub manager Sarah Heppinstall said: "Customers loved the spectacle and congratulated Gareth on his sacrifice, which is greatly appreciated."

Gareth is pictured before his head-shave, with Sarah Heppinstall (left) and Sue Rogers... and afterwards, alone, contemplating his new look.



The Steel Foundry, The Bankers Draft, Sheffield Water Works Company and The Scarsdale Hundred (all Sheffield)



Well done folks!
£1,352
...raised for our
chosen charity.

A team of 22 staff from four Sheffield pubs travelled to Wales to climb Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), raising £1,352.

Climbers (pictured) came from The Steel Foundry, The Bankers Draft, Sheffield Water Works Company and The Scarsdale Hundred.

They were joined by area manager Jordan Firth.

The group took three hours, with several stops to allow participants to catch their breath and take in the spectacular scenery.

The Steel Foundry's manager, Liam Costello, said: "It's the second time I've climbed Snowdon.

"This time, we chose a route which was supposed to be easier than last time, but, in fact, was harder."

The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew)



Well done folks!
£700
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Donna Walker, pub manager at The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew), raised £700 by completing the 50k Glencoe Challenge.

The total raised from the Highland hike was boosted by a raffle for Hamish The Highland Cow, organised by the pub's cleaner and charity champion Robert Maclauchlan.

Donna said: "I was delighted to complete the Glencoe Challenge and raise so much money for our chosen charity, with some wonderful assistance from Robert."

Donna is pictured proudly wearing her Glencoe Challenge medal, with Robert and shift manager Nicole Gibson.

The Thomas Ingoldsby (Canterbury)



Well done folks!

£250

...raised for our chosen charity.

A static bike ride at The Thomas Ingoldsby (Canterbury) raised £250. Staff took turns to ride on an exercise bike next to a map depicting all Wetherspoon pubs in Kent.

The Tour de Spoons covered an imaginary route around 12 of the county's venues.

Funds were raised online and through customers' donations at the pub.

Charity champion and shift manager Steph Greenstreet said: "We cycled 110 miles in 10 hours and even got some regulars involved in the cycling."

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Ali Stephenson, bar associate Joe Burgess and shift manager Steph Greenstreet.

The Bocket Arms (Wigan)



Well done folks!

£1,000

...raised for our chosen charity.

A group of hikers from The Bocket Arms (Wigan) conquered Ben Nevis – raising £1,000.

The group spent two nights in Fort William, the base for many climbing the 1,345m peak – the highest in the UK.

The pub's shift manager, Ste Higham, said: "This gave us the chance to make our attempt fresh from a night's sleep and to rest afterwards and have a meal together."

"The weather was perfect for the climb, and the group's members enjoyed the views from the summit for an hour before making their descent."

The climb's success tasted all the sweeter as a previous attempt 12 months beforehand had ended without the group completing the climb – through adverse conditions.

Ste gave a special mention to kitchen team leader Sammy Cunningham, who sadly lost her partner last year.

He said: "Sammy has been tremendous. She has lost five stone, and the Ben Nevis climb was a great personal achievement for her."

Pictured (left to right) are (front) former kitchen associate Matt Walsh and his brother Brad Walsh (not with the company), shift manager Ben Rigby, shift manager Ste Higham, kitchen team leaders Sammy Cunningham and Abbie Walker (middle), shift leader Lewis Jones, bar associate Emily Edwards (front), former pub manager Tom Quinn, former housekeeper Mair Gort (front, kneeling) and former colleague Krista Redcliffe.

The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield)



Well done folks!

£500

...raised for our chosen charity.

A team of walkers from The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield) encountered the spirit of the city on a charity walk to Castleton.

Along the way on the 15-mile walk, the group encountered extraordinary generosity, raising £500 for its chosen charity.

The pub's shift leader, Katie Whittington, said: "Our customers are great and so is the local community."

"The whole team here was wholeheartedly behind them and wished them all the best."

We are so very proud of their achievement."

The event was organised by bar team leader Cody Speight and shift leader Victoria Buttery, with most of the money collected through charity buckets.

The walkers took seven hours to cover the distance to Castleton in the scenic Hope Valley.

"There were a few sore legs in the morning!" said Katie.

Pictured (left to right) are bar team leader Laura Shippam, floor associate Maisy McGrail, bar associate Dan Fox (back), bar team leader Ellouise England, bar associate Declan Cronin and bar team leaders Cody Speight and Scott Bamford.

Northeast



A group of senior Wetherspoon managers cheered on athletes on The Great North Run, raising funds for Young Lives vs Cancer (YLvC).

Pictured at the 'cheer point' are YLVC's representative Emilie Scholes and Wetherspoon's northeast England area managers John Hudson and Lauren Bell.

They were accompanied by general manager Alistair Broome.

Lauren said: "It was great to be able to attend such a wonderful event and encourage the runners."

The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton, Sheffield)



Well done folks!
£800
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Eight hikers from The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton, Sheffield) scaled Ben Nevis – raising £800.

Led by shift manager Will Robertson, the group took seven hours to reach the 1,345m peak – Britain's highest – and then come back down again.

Luckily, Will and colleagues enjoyed warm and sunny weather for most of the day, with the rain holding off until they had made their safe descent.

Will said: "It was a great team effort. We travelled up together the day before, camping for the night."

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Alex Young, kitchen team leader Lewis Ward and shift manager Will Robertson.

The Hengler's Circus (Glasgow)



Well done folks!
£663
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Six staff from The Hengler's Circus (Glasgow) took part in a 40-metre charity bungee swing, raising £663 for two charities. Shift manager Jenny Crichton led the effort at The Highland Fling, in Killiecrankie, Perthshire.

They raised £510 for Young Lives vs Cancer (YLvC) through online sponsorship and collected a further £153 in collection buckets to go to Marion's House in Glasgow – one of YLVC's places for relatives of sick children to stay.

Jenny said: "It was scary, but a lot of fun. We're all very grateful to everyone who donated."

Pictured (left to right) are kitchen shift leader Sean Grant, bar associate Sophie Rawlinson, shift managers Jenny Crichton and Victoria McBlain, shift leader Erin Campbell and kitchen associate Ryan Monaghan.

The Six Chimneys (Wakefield)



Well done folks!
£3,860
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Seven spirited skydivers parachuted from an aircraft flying at 15,000 feet in the skies over Nottinghamshire.

The team from The Six Chimneys (Wakefield) topped off a massive fundraising event over a period of several weeks, raising £3,860.

The dive group was led by pub manager Laura Mason.

She said: "It was the first jump for us all – and there were some very nervy people on that plane."

"Fortunately, it was a clear day and we could see the city of Nottingham and the surrounding countryside. It took about two or three minutes to reach the ground, yet seemed like a lot longer."

"I'd definitely do it again."

The jump followed other fundraising feats, including a 15-mile walk from The Six Chimneys to The Lord Wilson (Huddersfield) and a static bike ride based on the 568 London-to-Paris route.

A total of £740 was raised across the two events, plus £3,120 from the skydive.

Laura added: "I'm very proud of the team and very grateful to all of those who donated money."

Pictured (left to right) are (front row) pub manager Laura Mason, shift manager Ryan Teixeira and team leader Molly Mickethwaite, with (back row) team leader Ronnie Urbonas, shift leader Valts Kasens, shift manager Thomas Green and kitchen team leader Aiden Hinchliffe.

The Briggate (Garforth)



Well done folks!
£170
...raised for our
chosen charity.

A local knitting group raised £170 through a stall selling the goods which they make at The Briggate (Garforth, Leeds).

The Knit, Stitch and Natter group (pictured) meets at the pub every Wednesday, producing seasonal products for events such as Remembrance Day and Christmas.

Goods on the stall included scarves, toys and babies' clothes.

Pub manager Aysha Reevell said: "It was a great effort – and we were obviously more than happy to host it so that the group could raise funds for our chosen charity."

CAMPAIGNING FOR
**EQUAL
TAX**
BETWEEN
PUBS AND
SUPERMARKETS

jdwetherspoon.com

The Bridge House (Belfast) Customers Rebecca Lilly (left) and Summer Jewl enjoy a meal together

SUPERMARKET STITCH-UP STILL PENALISING PUB-GOERS

Customers at Wetherspoon's pubs enjoyed a price reduction of 7.5 per cent on the price of all food and drinks – to highlight the benefit of a permanent VAT reduction in the hospitality industry.

Prices at the pubs were reduced for one day only to mark Tax Equality Day.

For example, a customer who would usually spend £10 on food and drinks paid only £9.25 on Tax Equality Day (in Scotland, in accordance with licensing laws, the reduction was on food and all non-alcoholic drinks).

All food and drinks in pubs are subject to 20 per cent VAT.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "The biggest threat to pubs and the hospitality industry in general is the vast disparity in tax treatment among pubs, restaurants and supermarkets.

"Supermarkets pay zero VAT in respect of food sales, whereas pubs, bars and restaurants pay 20 per cent.

"Pubs have been under fantastic pressure for decades because of the tax disadvantages they have when compared with supermarkets.

"The tax benefit allows supermarkets to subsidise the selling price of beer.

"It doesn't make sense for the hospitality industry to subsidise supermarkets.

"A VAT cut is needed to ensure that pubs, bars and restaurants do not continue to close, yet instead thrive, invest and create new jobs.

"We urge the chancellor to create tax equality between pubs and supermarkets."

Wetherspoon's plea for tax equality is backed by three of the leading hospitality, pub and beer organisations – UKHospitality, British Beer and Pub Association and Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).



The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend) Shift manager Hayley Todd



The Dee Hotel (West Kirby) All smiles from customers Vaughan and Caroline Williams



The Esquire House (Glasgow) Customers Marion and William Mather enjoying lunch



The Kirky Puffer (Kirkintilloch) Customers Helen Gallacher (left) and Agnes McLaughlin tuck in to breakfast



The Van Dyck Forum (Bristol) Shift leader Bridie Davis (back), with customers Linda Henley, Mary Owen and Yvonne Davidson (left to right)



The Sussex (Rhyl) Shift manager Vicky Wagstaff

LEAMINGTON SPA

ALISON POPS IN PUB WHICH TOOK ITS NAME FROM AN ANCIENT UNCLE



Alison Beale and her family popped in to The Benjamin Satchwell (Leamington Spa) after discovering that they were related to the man after whom the pub is named.

Benjamin Satchwell is known as 'the father of Leamington Spa', after discovering the springs and wells which allowed it to develop in the 18th century as a fashionable spa town.

Alison's daughter, Jennifer Hassall (pictured back), recently discovered that the family members are descendants of his.

Alison (front) said: "Jennifer was researching the family tree and came across the name Benjamin Satchwell and then researched him. It turns out he's my great great great great great uncle."

To celebrate this find, Alison and Jennifer made the journey from Lichfield and visited the town hall before adjourning to the pub.

Once inside, they were greeted by duty manager Chloë Moore.

Chloë said: "They were a lovely family to meet. I suggested that they have a good look round the pub because we have a lot of information on display about their relative."

DARTFORD

GEORGE GRINS AND BEARS IT ON TOUR OF KENT'S PUBS

Friends Jenny Godfrey and Steve McCarthy completed a tour of Kent's Wetherspoon pubs, accompanied by their mascot George the Bear.

The pair (pictured) had already taken George around all of the company's London and Essex pubs, as featured in Wetherspoon News in 2023.

The tour included 23 pubs, finishing at The Flying Boat (Dartford).

Jenny added: "We always take George with us. My mum knitted him for me and he's become our mascot."

Jenny and Steve enjoyed, among other meals, full English breakfasts, pizza with extra chilli and beef Madras.

Jenny said: We travelled to the pubs by public transport and really enjoyed visiting them.

"Our rule is that we must have at least one drink in each pub and photograph ourselves with George the Bear."

Among the pubs visited were Opera House (Tunbridge Wells), The Golden Lion (Rochester) and The Thomas Waghorn (Chatham).



KIERAN'S FRIENDS AND FAMILY RAISE £3,000 THROUGH CRAWL



A group of regulars at The Commercial Inn (Sowerby Bridge) raised more than £3,000 in a memorial walk dedicated to one of their own – Kieran Brewer, a regular for many years before illness.

Kieran passed away in February – and his daughters, Carla Denton and Nicole Heeley, and his friends including Ian Leyland wanted to raise money for Overgate Hospice, in Elland, where he was looked after and spent his final moments.

The five-mile Beers for Brewer charity pub crawl saw 60 walkers enjoy breakfast at The Commercial Inn before a train ride to Hebden Bridge and walking back to Sowerby Bridge.

Daughter Nicole said: “We had people join us along the way who we didn’t know and who didn’t know our dad, but wanted to show support for Overgate Hospice.

“It was overwhelming to see so many people come to support us to keep dad’s memory alive.

“We never expected to raise so much money.”

The pub’s shift leader, Chris Hildred, added: “It was a sight to see – and we were glad to help by hosting a raffle at the pub in aid of the hospice.”

The walkers are pictured, with Carla (right) and Nicole (left) at the front.

WORCESTER

VETERANS ASSEMBLE TO CELEBRATE 10 YEARS

Veterans held a reunion to mark 10 years of get-togethers at The Crown (Worcester).

A large group of 50–70 meets at the pub for breakfast on the first Saturday of the month.

They represent all UK armed forces and are aged ‘18–100’, according to pub manager Richard Pugh.

Worcester’s mayor, Cllr Matt Lamb, was on hand to greet those attending, as was Dereck Hardman – founder of the Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Clubs (AFVBC).

Richard said: “They look after one another really well and it’s always great to welcome them. It was a special occasion – and we were delighted to be able to host it.”

The 10th-anniversary bash saw partners and children accompany the veterans, led by Worcester armed forces champion Pat Agar.

Pictured (left to right, front row) are veteran David Carney, Worcester’s mayor Cllr Matt Lamb and AFVBC’s founder Dereck Hardman, with (back row) co-founder Clare Green, veteran Graham Greenberg and Worcester armed forces champion Pat Agar.



WAYNE THRILLED TO BE MADE AMBASSADOR FOR GRANTHAM

Kitchen associate Wayne Hasnip (pictured) has been appointed as an ambassador for Grantham Town Council.

Wayne, an independent councillor, works at The Tollemache Inn (Grantham).

His duties include representing the council at events and promoting local projects.

Wayne was elected to the role in May 2025.

He said: "It is such an honour to serve as the town's ambassador.

"As an independent, I try to stay away from national politics and focus on what's important locally."

Wayne manages to combine official duties with his job at The Tollemache Inn, thanks to support from his manager Steven Hamilton and the company.

"Steven has been great and it has been amazing to have his support – whichever way he voted."

Steven said: "We're really pleased for Wayne, who is the perfect person to serve as ambassador for Grantham."



MICK HOT-FOOTS IT TO HUGE SAVINGS



Wetherspoon fan Mick Boden visited 10 Wetherspoon pubs on Tax Equality Day – to highlight the savings available.

Wetherspoon reduced prices by 7.5% on all food and drinks on the day, so Mick decided to take full advantage with a seven-hour 15-mile walk taking in pubs in and around Nottingham.

He started at The Gooseberry Bush, visiting Lloyds No.1 Bar, The Roebuck Inn, The Joseph Else, The Samuel Hall, The Free Man, The William Peverel (Bulwell), The Woodthorpe Top (Mapperley), The Ernehale (Arnold) and Trent Bridge Inn, where he is a regular.

"I like cricket, so Trent Bridge Inn is a good place to go and it's a nice walk from the station," said Mick.

"I decided to do it on Tax Equality Day, so that I'd save as much money as the prices on the day allowed."

Mick had a pint of Bud Light (3.4% ABV) in each pub.

"There were breaks between each pint, involving a walk, so it wasn't too difficult for me," said Mick, 58. His route took him through parks and a golf club.

His favourite pubs aside from Trent Bridge Inn are The Gooseberry Bush, The Roebuck Inn and Lloyds No.1 Bar.

Mick is pictured outside The William Peverel with shift leader Morgan Salmon.

SPOON FAN SPREADS THE WORD IN DUBAI



Wetherspoon customer Matthew Windsor is pictured on a trip to the United Arab Emirates.

Matthew got in touch, with the photo, to say: "I was flying the flag for Spoons in Dubai."

Photographed with the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa, in the background, Matthew's T-shirt, proclaiming 'would rather be in Spoons', shows his support for his favourite pub company.

FORK IN THE ROAD LEADS TO 'SPOONS DETOURS'



Nottingham-based husband-and-wife Wetherspoon customers have clocked up more than 600 pub visits in just four years.

Retirees Amanda and James McGlinchey began their 'collection' in 2021 and have travelled the UK in their bid to 'tick them all off'.

Amanda explained: "We were already customers at Wetherspoon's pubs locally, as there are a few in and around Nottingham, before one of my friends asked whether I had seen the app.

"Once I discovered and downloaded it, our quest to visit all of the pubs began."

The couple has travelled to pubs in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, staying at some of the hotels, too, and has so far (as at 1 October 2025) been to 631 pubs.

Amanda said: "The hobby has made us go all over the place, and we have seen so much of the country that we probably wouldn't otherwise.

"We are both retired, so it's a great shared interest and allows us to get out and about, living life and enjoying ourselves."

Amanda names The Winter Gardens (Harrogate), The Counting House (Glasgow), Opera House (Tunbridge Wells) (their 500th pub) and Keavan's Port (Dublin) (their 600th, for Amanda's 60th birthday celebrations) among the favourites.

Amanda concluded: "Wherever we are travelling, sometimes with friends or just the two of us, we check the map and see whether there is a 'Spoons detour' for a cuppa or breakfast.

"Our visit doesn't count unless we have had a cuppa, snack or meal.

"We know that we can always get a decent drink and bite to eat, with the Wetherspoon staff always really friendly."

AIRPORT FIXTURE JACEK CAN'T WAIT TO TAKE OFF

Kitchen associate Jacek Dybas has worked at Wetherspoon's Heathrow Airport pubs for eight years.

His work day starts at 4am at The Crown Rivers (Heathrow Airport T5) for the breakfast shift, which he does five days a week.

Married with two children, Jacek spends his days off doing what he loves best, not resting, but running marathons and, more recently, extreme distance cycling.

Pub manager Graham Farr said: "Jacek is one of our long-serving staff members, having worked with us at T2 before it closed, then moving to T5 with me and Jenny.

"He is a really lovely guy and, on his days off, takes part in full, half and ultra marathons, as well as cycling."

Jacek took part in the 215km Dragon Ride, in Wales.

Graham laughed: "I've lived in Wales – I know how hilly it is!"

Graham concluded: "Jacek does these events for fun and, unfortunately, doesn't raise money for charity – I guess because he does them so often.

"However, we hope that he will agree to do at least one 'big one', to help our ongoing charity fundraising at the pub for Young Lives vs Cancer."



SCOTTISH PUB-GOERS ENJOY THEIR OWN BEER FESTIVAL WEEK



The Counting House (Dundee) Customer Rebekah Billingham toasts the festival with a pint served by shift leader Paula Wilson



The Kirky Puffer (Kirkintilloch) All smiles from pub manager John McKenna and customer Steven Sturton

A celebration of Scottish brewers took place during a 10-day festival in the company's Scottish pubs.

The festival featured a range of brewers from across Scotland, from Fierce Beer in Aberdeen to Innis & Gunn in Edinburgh.

In addition to the real ales, a range of Scottish craft cans was also available.

These included Fierce Iron Brew, a 4.5% ABV beer cooler.

Among the festival collection were vegan (also suitable for vegetarians) beers.

As well as featuring a range of malt and hop varieties from around the world, there were also beers whose ingredients included dark blackberry and spice.

Wetherspoon's marketing executive Jess Schofield said: "The festival was a great way to showcase a range of Scottish beers.

"It proved very popular with customers."



The Muckle Cross (Elgin) Team leader Edén Major serves customer Eric Thompson a festival pint



The Caley Picture House (Edinburgh) Customer Mark Leith is served a pint of festival ale by bar associate Dylan Kenny



The Carrick Stone (Cumbernauld) Customer Harry Waite is served a festival pint by bar associate Hannah Kerr



The Great Glen (Fort William) Bar shift leader Liam Robertson serves customer Alison Smith a festival ale

MEXICAN ENGINEER BECOMES BIG FAN OF CIDER AND SPOONS

Kilyan Ocampo has caught the Wetherspoon bug and, since arriving in England from Mexico in September 2023, has visited more than 50 of the company's pubs.

He says that visiting the company's pubs has helped him to explore the UK and discover new places – and new drinks.

"I love cider – we don't have that variety in Mexico," says Kilyan, who works as a mechanical design engineer.

His favourite time to visit the pubs, though, is in the morning, when he has a small English breakfast and a hot chocolate.

He added: "Whenever I arrive early in a new town, it's my go-to fuel, before setting off to explore. I also find that's when I enjoy being at Wetherspoon the most.

"There's something about that early morning atmosphere which makes me feel transported into the timeless spirit of British pub culture. I truly love that."

Kilyan travels by train, usually with his partner Paulina, yet sometimes alone.

It all started in Milton Keynes when, as a student, studying at Cranfield University, he would visit The Moon Under Water.

From there, Kilyan widened the net to include Wetherspoon's pubs in Oxfordshire, Cambridge and Birmingham.

"Wetherspoon has pushed me to go further and further afield," said Kilyan. During the last two years, he's also visited pubs in Wales, Scotland and Dublin.

His favourites include The Prince of Wales (Cardiff) and The Standing Order (Edinburgh).

He added: "Each pub has its own charm, history and character, and I genuinely enjoy how the locations often lead me to towns of the UK which I might never otherwise have visited.

"I'm also a big fan of the British pub culture which the company preserves so well."



BROADCASTER NIKKI IN TUNE WITH SPOONS



Broadcaster Nikki Latham (pictured) set herself a challenge to visit 25 Wetherspoon pubs – marking the 10th anniversary of her radio station.

Nikki travels from award-winning Weymouth-based online station Chesil Radio to Kent, to cover speedway events, and decided to visit 25 of the county's Wetherspoon pubs in just four days.

"I chose the number 25 because our radio station is celebrating its anniversary in 2025," said Nikki.

"Also, I've been meaning to visit Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate) for ages, so I thought I'd finally get to go there if I included it in the challenge."

Nikki had a drink in each of the pubs and took videos and photos of herself outside each.

Over the four days, Nikki enjoyed lunch at The Peter Cushing (Whitstable), The County Hotel (Ashford), Opera House (Tunbridge Wells) and The Golden Hope (Sittingbourne) – her final destination.

Nikki added: "The challenge made for a good story for the radio station as we marked our anniversary on air.

"With the challenge complete, I am now back to visiting my local, The William Henry (Weymouth), before my live broadcasts.

"I enjoy a coffee before the broadcasts and a pint afterwards.

"I am mad about Wetherspoon and proud to say that The William Henry was chosen as Chesil Radio's 'pub of the year'."

Chesil Radio can be found at www.chesilradio.com to hear about Nikki's latest Wetherspoon visits as she continues towards her 100th pub visit.

NO LONGER NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Dozens of pubs born in the year 2000 or before are celebrating birthdays of 25 years or more

Throughout June, July and August 2025, 19 Wetherspoon pubs celebrated their 25th anniversary.

All 19 pubs, which first opened during the summer of 2000, marked their silver jubilee quarter century, clocking up a combined 475 years' service in their respective communities.

Celebrating 25 years in June were The Panniers (Barnstaple) and The Bellwether (Wednesbury).

Marking 25 years in July were The Ivor Davies (Cardiff), The Botwell Inn (Hayes), The Linford Arms (Cannock), The Sir Henry Newbolt (Bilston), The Joseph Else (Nottingham), The Britannia (Rowley Regis), The Wheatsheaf (Ellesmere Port), The Earl of Mercia (Coventry), The Corn Exchange (Leicester), Lloyds No.1 Bar (Nottingham), Sheffield Water Works Company (Sheffield) and The Thomas Lloyd (Warwick).

Clocking up 25 years each in August were The Rupert Brooke (Rugby), The John Jacques (Portsmouth), The Church House (Wath-upon-Deane), The Crystal Palace (Glasgow) and The Moon Under Water (Milton Keynes).

Also, during the same period, marking birthdays of more than 25 years were The Herbert Wells (Woking), The Moon and Spoon (Slough), The Berkeley (Bristol), The Nonsuch Inn (North Cheam),

The Moon Under Water (Deansgate, Manchester) and The Commercial Rooms (Bristol), each celebrating 30 years since opening.

Older still were The Moon Under Water (Westminster) at 33 years, The Old Manor (Bracknell) marking 32 years, The Wrong 'Un (Bexleyheath) and The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford), both 31 years, all celebrating in June.

The Moon Under Water (Hounslow) marked 34 years in July.

In August, The Railway Bell (Barnet) notched up 35 years since first opening its doors, while The Moon in the Square (Bournemouth) marked 31 years.

Also, during that three-month spell, 10 pubs notched up 26 years, 18 pubs marked 27 years, 17 pubs reached 28 years of age and eight pubs celebrated 29 years since opening.

Congratulations to all of Wetherspoon's pubs celebrating significant milestones of 25 years or more during the three birthday months highlighted in this magazine edition.

The Railway Bell (New Barnet)

Pictured marking 35 years since The Railway Bell (New Barnet) opened are (left to right) shift manager Caitlin Woods, team leader Melissa Mathews and bar associate Rachel Tolfree.

The pub, run by pub manager Stephanie Milne since July 2023, first opened as a Wetherspoon in August 1990.

A local landmark since early Victorian times, this two-storey building was constructed shortly after the arrival of the Great Northern Railway line in 1850.

The Railway Bell helped to refresh travellers using the new railway station, built close by.

Barnet station, as it was then called, stood in what had been mostly meadowland, about a mile from the centre of High Barnet.

The area around the railway station was soon developed, with the station renamed New Barnet in 1884.



35
YEARS

The Nonsuch Inn (North Cheam)

Having served the community for three decades, this pub first opened its doors as a Wetherspoon in July 1995 and has been managed by Martin Kelly since March 2018.

The London Road premises which houses the pub partly occupies the site of the once-well-known Granada cinema.

The palatial building was opened officially in 1937 by the 'high-kicking, saucer-eyed' film star Jessie Matthews.

The building is named after what was probably the greatest of Henry VIII's palaces which stood on the west side of today's Nonsuch Park.

He built the palace to outshine the king in France (his great rival), declaring that there was 'none such like it'.

Pictured celebrating 30 years (left to right) are kitchen associate Eoin Murray, shift manager Sian Stanger, shift leader Lewis Potts and shift manager John Bell.



30
YEARS



30
YEARS

The Moon Under Water (Manchester)

It's three decades since The Moon Under Water (Manchester) first opened its doors for business as a Wetherspoon pub, in the former Deansgate Picture House building.

Pictured celebrating the 30th birthday at the pub (left to right) are shift managers Onri Gunder and Katie Halsall, with team leader Danny Donnelly.

Onri joined Wetherspoon in November 2002, while Katie started in 2011 as a 17-year-old floor associate.

Other long-serving staff are maintenance associate Ray Fox (at the pub since 2006) and kitchen associate David Tidman (since 2015).

Pub manager Chris Bradshaw took over the reins in September 2021, having first joined the company in the same month of 2005.

After lying boarded up for a while, the building, which originally opened in January 1914, was converted in August 1995 and named The Moon Under Water, retaining much of the former original cinema.

The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport)

Shift leader Craig Black, shift manager Martyna Taranczewska and team leader Kieran Bradshaw are pictured (left to right) celebrating the 30th birthday of The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport).

The pub hosted several events to mark its special occasion. These included staff wearing bright colours, with customers invited to do the same.

Staff organised various raffles, raising funds for Young Lives vs Cancer, with customers also enjoying food tasters and birthday cake.

Phoenix Brewery was also represented, with several of its beers available throughout the day.

Pub shift manager Stuart Ochiltree said: "The Sir Henry Segrave opened on 1 September 1995 – and the pub is landmark in the town.

"We are blessed to attract lots of lovely regulars, with a real sense of community here.

"We also enjoy visits from day-trippers and holidaymakers too.

"We would like to thank all of our customers and staff, past and present, for supporting the pub over the last 30 years."



30
YEARS

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

30
YEARS



The Commercial Rooms (Bristol)

Pictured marking three decades since The Commercial Rooms (Bristol) first opened its doors as a Wetherspoon pub are (left to right) bar team leader Ty Petchey, shift managers Rob Simpkins and Kai Barry.

The pub, which opened in August 1995, has been managed by Ben Grainger since November 2019.

He has worked for the company since 2011.

Other long-serving staff include shift manager Rob Simpkins, who has been at the pub for two years and joined the company 15 years ago.

Shift manager Máté Csurí has also worked at The Commercial Rooms since first joining Wetherspoon a decade ago.

Situated in the heart of Bristol's old city and opposite the historic corn exchange, The Commercial Rooms, an iconic landmark building, was built in 1810 as a meeting point for the city's traders.

The retained weathervane, above the bar, would let merchants know whether it was safe for ships to negotiate the treacherous Avon Gorge. The three statues at the top of this grade II listed building represent Bristol, commerce and navigation.

The Kings Ford (Chingford)

Staff at The Kings Ford (Chingford) took time out to celebrate the pub's 29th birthday.

There was a slice of cake for everyone, with the pub bedecked with balloons and bunting.

Kitchen team leader Paulette Taylor has worked for 20 years at The Kings Ford.

Pub manager Matt Turner said: "Paulette is a great person to have around, and we were glad to celebrate her 20 years' service earlier this year."

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Sib Hussein, kitchen team leader Tommy Sheridan, bar associate Daniel Joseph, shift leader Carol Daly, kitchen team leader Thomas Bastian and pub manager Matt Turner.

The origin of the name Chingford is still a matter of heated debate, but the traditional view is still a leading contender – with the name of this pub supporting it.

Alfred the Great had strong local connections.

The River Lea was once known as the 'king's stream', with the meadows it flows through known as the 'king's meads'. The ford at this point of the Lea's course was probably known as the 'king's ford'.

29
YEARS



27
YEARS



The Eva Hart (Chadwell Heath)

Staff and customers at The Eva Hart (Chadwell Heath), managed by Alex Whaley, are pictured enjoying the pub's 27th birthday celebrations.

Pictured (left to right) are regular customers Paul Kelly, Terance 'DJ Turbo' Turpin and John 'The Professor' Nicholas, shift manager Jake Hutson, bar associate Nancy Edgeler-Ash and (front) regular customer Titch Pretty.

Pub manager Alex joined Wetherspoon in 2013, originally at The Eva Hart, working in several pubs before returning in September 2023 as pub manager.

The pub, which opened in July 1998, is named after one of Chadwell Heath's best-known residents and one of the longest-living survivors of the Titanic disaster.

The ill-fated ship sank in April 1912, but Eva Hart lived to tell the tale. She died in 1996, aged 91.

The building was once the town's police station, the original of which had been built in 1850, on the site of the old stocks.

It was replaced, in 1891–92, by the current building.

• Alex has since moved to The Ivory Peg (Chelmsford).



The Forum (Hexham)

Pub manager Nathan Harrison (right) is pictured celebrating with shift manager Frankie Maguire and a birthday cake, marking 26 years since The Forum (Hexham) first opened in August 1999.

Nathan has been pub manager at The Forum since June 2025 and among his long-service team members are shift manager Steph Brew (10 years) and floor associate Andrew Robson (15 years).

The pub takes its name from the Forum cinema which had opened on the site in 1937 – which, itself, was built on the site of a previous cinema, the Gem Palace, which showed its first film in 1910.

Initially to be called the Savoy, the Forum took its name from the Latin for marketplace, after Hexham's Roman origins.

The Forum prospered until 1974, when, despite initiatives such as wrestling displays, competition from television forced its closure.

The foyer was then used as temporary premises for the Midland Bank, before a brief cinematic revival in 1982.

The Linford Arms (Cannock)

Pictured holding the birthday cake (front centre) is pub manager Kate Hooley, with (left to right) bar associate Jess Cooper, bar team leader Josh Groves, shift manager David Edwards, bar team leader Jacob Dickson, kitchen associate Barbara Quiruga, bar associate Archie Hodgkinson and kitchen shift leader Emma Graham.

Kate joined the company in 2002 at The Paramount (Manchester), while studying at university.

She took over in February 2025 as pub manager at The Linford Arms.

The pub's name recalls the former life of the building as Linford's long-standing ironmongery and hardware shop.

One of Cannock's oldest buildings, these timber-framed premises could date from the 1500s, yet deeds exist only from 1876.

The first name on the documents is that of the Marquis of Anglesey. In the 18th century, it was known as Manor Farm, but has also been a brewery.

It opened as a Wetherspoon pub in July 2000.



The Last Post (Beeston)

Pub manager Paul Skilling is pictured (left) celebrating his pub's 25th birthday with colleagues, cake and a regular customer.

Paul, who started with the company in 2007 and took over at The Last Post (Beeston) in January 2022, is pictured (left to right) with shift leader Laura Owen, team leader Gabie Snyders and Beeston postman and regular customer Paul Weston.

The building which houses The Last Post was once Beeston's main post office, built in the mid 1930s.

The post office, formerly on High Road, occupied a new building in the square early this century.

In 1934, the post office was rebuilt at the junction of Chilwell Road and Foster Avenue and is now the Wetherspoon pub.

Kitchen associates Carl Smith (17 years) and Lynne Duro (13 years) are among the long-serving staff members.

ART PICTURE HOUSE STARS IN DISPLAY AT HERITAGE EVENT

The history and architecture of The Art Picture House (Bury) were included in an artwork display for a national Heritage Open Day event.

The Wetherspoon pub, which first opened in the Greater Manchester town in October 2009, was built originally in the early 1920s as the Art Picture House cinema.

As part of England's free heritage festival, Lancaster Grand Theatre produced display panels celebrating theatre and cinema architect Albert Winstanley, who was responsible for the Art Picture House.

Adrian Tayler, secretary of Lancaster Footlights and Grand Theatre CIO, said: "In 1908, the theatre and cinema architect

Albert Winstanley rebuilt the interior of the Lancaster Grand Theatre, following a disastrous fire.

"For these national open days, we created a set of display panels to celebrate Winstanley and his work, much of which has disappeared, the exceptions being the Lancaster Grand, New Mills Art Theatre, Bury Art Picture Palace (now restored Wetherspoon's pub) and the Crewe Lyceum."

Wetherspoon provided photographs of the Art Picture House, a striking grade II listed three-storey building, for the project.



VETERANS ENGINEER A HAPPY REUNION AT THE BELL HANGER



A group of Royal Engineer army veterans (known as sappers) celebrated 50 years since joining up, with a reunion at The Bell Hanger (Chepstow).

Now pensioners, the group's members from 75C B Company began their career path together at Chepstow Army Apprentices College.

The group, led by Scott Murdoch, himself a retired Sapper, spent Friday evening and much of Saturday at Wetherspoon run by pub manager Sam Thomas.

They also took in a tour of their former barracks which was organised by the current Regimental Sergeant Major.

A visit to the college heritage centre and the memorial to fallen comrades was also included.

The veterans visit the pub once a year, if possible. On this occasion, the group numbered 14, including nine veterans (pictured with their bespoke flag), plus family members.

"It went exceptionally well – and we're grateful to Sam and his team for their kind hospitality over the two days," said Scott (pictured far left).

Sam said: "We are always pleased and proud to have this great group of veterans here."

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The first five correctly completed crosswords to be pulled out of the hat will win each of those entrants a Wetherspoon gift card worth £30.

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1. Yeoman warder of the Tower of London (9)
8. People of S.W. Nigeria noted for their 16c bronze sculptures (3)
9. Californian town, a centre of oil production (11)
11. Ahmed, Indonesian President 1945-66 (7)
12. "Why Didn't They Ask —?", novel by Agatha Christie (5)
13. Biblical character, sister of Mary and Lazarus (6)
15. European republic whose currency is the franc (6)

17. Earl of —, title of Robert Devereux, a favourite of Elizabeth I (5)
18. Biblical character, third son of David, killed by Joab (7)
20. Husband of Catherine Earnshaw in Wuthering Heights (5,6)
22. A vertical line marked on music, dividing it into sections of equal value (3)
23. American state whose capital is Trenton (3,6)

Down

2. Miss Herzigova, supermodel (3)
3. "Night of —", Desmond Bagley novel published posthumously (5)
4. Trademark of the polymer used to coat the inside of cooking pans to give a non-stick surface (5)
5. Small deer, Capreolus capreolus, of Europe and Asia (3,4)
6. 1824 novel by Walter Scott featuring the character Darise Latimer (11)
7. Amphitheatre in Rome built about 75-80 A.D. (9)

10. 1982 world Formula One motor racing champion (4,7)
11. 1993 film, a reworking of The Return of Martin Guerre (9)
14. Six-sided polygon (7)
16. The fatty network of connective tissue that fills the cavities of bones (6)
19. The Moluccas were formerly known as the — Islands (5)
21. "The Big Red —", 1980 war film with Lee Marvin (3)

SOLUTIONS (Summer/autumn 2025 issue)

Across: 7 Pascal; 8 Clarke; 10 Trireme; 11 Vance; 12 Igor; 13 Villa; 17 Bongo; 18 Goya; 22 Herod; 23 Apricot; 24 Pancho; 25 Carter

Down: 1 Sputnik; 2 Ustinov; 3 James; 4 Clavell; 5 Grant; 6 Betel; 9 Hemingway; 14 Hold The; 15 Toccata; 16 Walters; 19 Chaps; 20 Prune; 21 Dream

The summer /autumn 2025 issue crossword winners were:

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Ash Corbett-Collins is chairman of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

Cheers

GEN Z DISCOVERS JOY OF CASK BEER

CAMRA thrilled that younger cohort has joined army of beer-lovers determined to keep cask around, says CAMRA's chairman Ash Corbett-Collins

Cask beer is proving its resilience as more pub-goers discover it and decide that they want to come back for more, with an unexpected surge from a particular demographic.

New research from the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) shows a 50-per-cent increase in Gen Z drinkers choosing cask, compared with 2024's figure.

Quality cask beer served through the traditional hand-pull is what CAMRA campaigns for – and we're thrilled that Gen Z has joined an army of beer-lovers determined to keep cask around.

This is great news for the UK's independent brewers and pubs, especially after 2025 has seen rising pub business closures, leaving many without their local and, because of that, unable to drink locally brewed cask beer.

A local pub goes hand in hand with a local independent brewery.

HERITAGE

It's a huge part of our British heritage and culture – and it even helps pub-goers to do their bit for the environment.

When a pub stocks cask beer made nearby, there are fewer brewery miles during delivery, meaning lower emissions.

Our popular LocAle campaign encourages publicans to do their part, showing customers that they can drink locally, while also supporting their community pub.

I'm happy to say that Wetherspoon's pubs are frequent supporters of LocAle – and you should be able to spot the signs on the bar.

I know, if I see a local beer on a hand-pull, that I will prefer to order that over the usual global beers which, far too often, we see dominating the bar in pubs.

Indie brewers, at the forefront of innovation, are offering a wider variety of styles – and we know that there's consumer demand for their beers... yet we don't always see these drinks at our locals.

INDEPENDENT

That's why we're campaigning for independent brewers to have a fair shot at getting their beers onto bars.

It would be great if more independent beers were to make it into more pubs, especially now that the demand for cask, on which most global conglomerates had previously turned their back, is on the up again.

We want to see cask beer gain its deserved recognition, so that it can be protected for generations to come, which is why, earlier this year, we backed the Craft Beer Channel's petition to get UNESCO status for cask beer.



It's great when someone has found a love of cask for the first time



And thanks to the loyal beer-lovers who keep talking about cask, who keep drinking and supporting it, more people want to drink it.

Word-of-mouth is a powerful campaign tool – which is why we will keep promoting cask to each new generation.

It's great when someone has found a love of cask for the first time.

And I hope that Gen Z has had the chance to discover some of their favourite indie beers at the pub.

If you're at the start of your cask learning journey, CAMRA has some helpful learning resources.

LEARN

What I love about CAMRA's award-winning Learn and Discover platform (the go-to if you want to learn about beer, cider, perry, pubs and social clubs) is its varied content, similar to cask's varied styles.

It features invaluable content from top industry award-winning writers and videographers, alongside some of CAMRA's beer, cider, perry and pub volunteer experts, designed for beginners, enthusiasts, connoisseurs – and everyone.

You can learn more about what cask beer actually is, how it's made, the process of adding live yeast cells to make the beer live, the different hop varieties which brewers use in their recipes, how you can champion cask beer to keep it in our pubs... and much more.

There's even a full breakdown on beer styles and a dictionary to help you to keep up with beer lingo – just visit: learn.camra.org.uk

As with a lot of things, we are all at different learning stages when it comes to cask beer.

The community pub setting is especially important, because, when we come together to support our local pints, we leave with a great taste of something new.

So, please, the next time you see someone at the bar looking, with a bit of uncertainty, at a hand-pull... and you know the beer well – start the conversation.

Help them to figure out whether cask is their next favourite drink, just as you did at the start of your very own cask beer journey.



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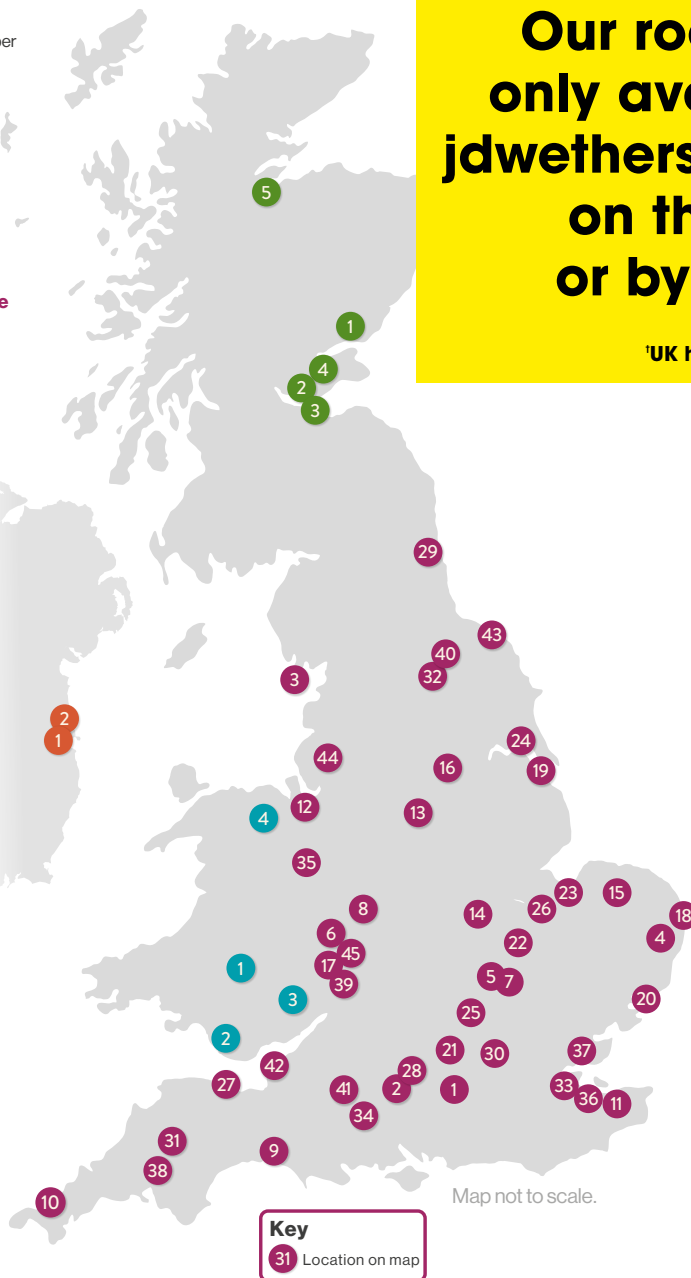
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