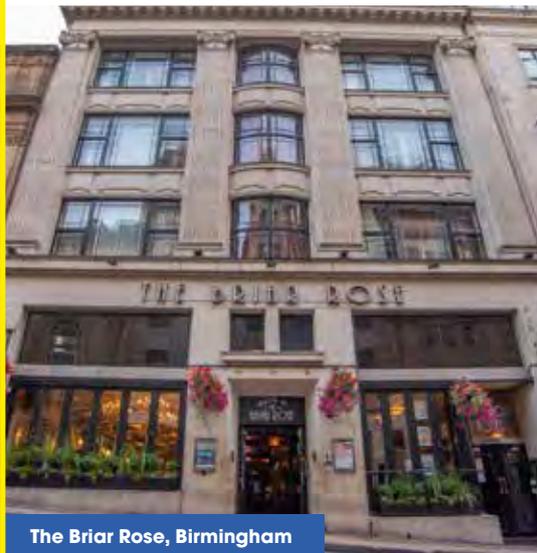


YOUR **FREE** MAGAZINE | SPRING/SUMMER 2026

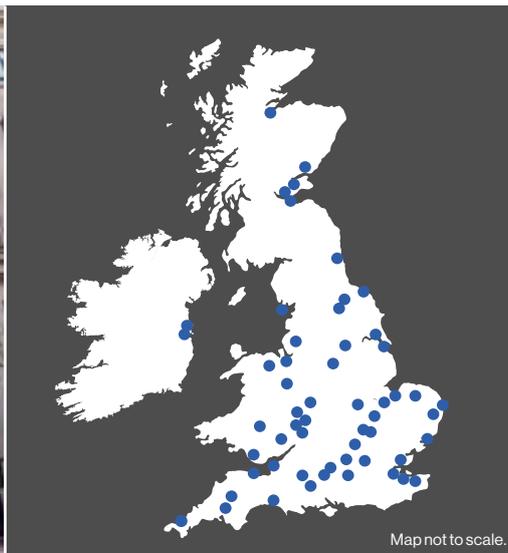
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UK EDITION

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The Briar Rose, Birmingham



Map not to scale.



The Mile Castle Hotel, Newcastle

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**WETHERSPOON CALLS ON HOSPITALITY  
INDUSTRY TO BACK POLITICAL  
SUPPORT FOR TAX REFORM**

See page 66

**HELPING CRAFTY CUSTOMERS QUENCH  
THEIR CRAVINGS**

Draught craft beer now available in pubs  
across the UK

See page 30

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# INSIDE

*Biggest  
-ever  
edition*

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Written and edited by Eddie Gershon, along with welcome contributions from Wetherspoon staff.  
Using paper from sustainable resources, this is printed in the UK.  
Pricing, participation and opening/food-service times may vary per pub.  
All J D Wetherspoon food and drinks in this magazine are subject to local licensing restrictions and availability at participating free houses.  
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: [jdwetherspoon.com](http://jdwetherspoon.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.

280

pubs in CAMRA's The Good Beer Guide 2026.

99.2 per cent

of pubs achieving a top hygiene rating of five.

21 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.

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# Three reasons for pub industry turmoil

## Pub closures, and the colossal economic pressures facing the pub industry, are all over the news – and politicians of all parties are having to take notice.

This edition of the magazine has tried to identify the key issues causing the crisis – there are three:

### 1. The cost of energy

In the last Wetherspoon News edition, we discussed (reproduced on page 62) an unexpected autumn bill of £7 million for 'non-domestic' electricity charges, relating mainly to 'green levies' and 'nuclear subsidies', bringing Wetherspoon's total energy costs to £80 million – an average of about £100,000 per pub.

In fact, pub-industry energy costs have approximately doubled since before COVID-19. As indicated in that last magazine, UK energy costs, apparently the highest in the developed world, affect the price of everything we buy, including the price of a pint, stoking inflation and reducing living standards.

In the planned move to 'net zero' (the replacement of fossil fuels by wind and solar), the elephant in the room seems to be how 'standby' energy is to be generated for the substantial periods in the UK when there is no (or little) wind or sun.

Unfortunately, if there is no wind or sun, the power required to keep the lights on is equal to the ENTIRE fossil fuel capacity we have today – even though it would be needed only intermittently.

In the absence of fossil fuels, the standby solution, we are told, is nuclear.

However, as the last Wetherspoon News edition said (reproduced on page 63), this will mean (based on the French experience) that the UK will need around 80 nuclear reactors, yet we have only nine, with most due to be decommissioned by 2030.

If we're serious about net zero, it's essential to know soon, if not now, where and when these new UK nuclear reactors will be commissioned. If we don't have a concrete plan for nuclear, there can be no net zero – or, alternatively, for days or weeks on end, when there is no wind or sun, blackouts will be inevitable.

In the meantime, perhaps understandably, most people are implacably opposed to having nuclear reactors built anywhere near them – and organisations such as Greenpeace say that nuclear isn't clean energy anyway.

Therefore, Wetherspoon News is respectfully asking those politicians who initiated the net-zero plans, Theresa May, Boris Johnson and their zealous successor, Ed Miliband, to square this circle – and explain their plan.

Do they actually have a plan, we wonder, or are they just hoping that something will turn up?

The absence of a realistic plan is perhaps evidenced by the gobsmacking news that Ed Miliband's very own government agency (see number 1, opposite) is using fossil fuels rather than going green 'because it considered renewable tariffs offered poor value for money'.

We're starting to get a bit worried out here in the real world, as bigger bills keep hitting the doorstep.

### 2. The demonisation of the demon drink

In the last Wetherspoon News edition (reproduced on page 64), we suggested that much of the quasi-medical dietary advice of the last 50 years had not survived the test of time.

Coffee, eggs and milk, for example, which had been demonised as life-shortening in the 70s and 80s, seem to have been rehabilitated.

However, as Wetherspoon News said in that magazine, beer, wine and spirits seem to be in the crosshairs of the health lobby today.

For example, a recent article in the Times (27/1/26) by health correspondent Poppy Koronka (see number 2, opposite) says: 'A third of those in early retirement ... were drinking at "risky levels", which is defined as more than six medium (175ml) glasses of wine a week.'

Ms Koronka quotes Katherine Severi, of the Institute of Alcohol Studies, who says that 'older age groups are the most likely to drink at risk levels', but that young people are stopping drinking 'because of deeper concerns ... from economic insecurity to climate anxiety'.

The views expressed by Ms Severi seem rather extreme, if not eccentric.

### Institute of Alcohol Studies

So, it's worth investigating the origins of the mysterious Institute of Alcohol Studies.

It turns out that the 'institute' is financed by an organisation known as the Alliance House Foundation; this appears to have its origins in a temperance movement founded in 1853, which has the following mission statement:

*...to procure the total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in all intoxicating liquors.'*

So, the temperance movement of 200 years ago is reincarnated today, in heavy modern disguise, and is advanced by the Times of London's 'health correspondent' – and, indeed, by the health correspondents of most newspapers.

### Alcohol Change

Another Times article, by Peta Bee (23/1/26), also a health journalist, appearing only a few days apart from the Koronka article, sings from the same temperance hymn sheet.

As an aside, Ms Bee is the author of the Ice Diet (see number 3, opposite), from 2015, which (according to AI) 'is considered to be a fad diet with no scientific evidence to produce weight loss'. Ms Bee has now moved on and is encouraging us to adopt a diet which includes cold potatoes and underripe bananas – I kid you not.

Ms Bee describes alcohol as 'a toxic substance' and says that 'just one (drink) can be harmful'.

The article quotes Dr Jeevan Fernando (not the ABBA guy), of Alcohol Change, who says that 'we are rolling the dice ... every time we ingest alcohol'.

So, who or what, I hear you cry, is Alcohol Change?

I'm glad you asked.

It turns out that Alcohol Change is closely linked to Alcohol Health Alliance UK – an organisation chaired by Professor Ian Gilmore, who lobbied magistrates' courts in the past to refuse Wetherspoon's applications for pub licences and has previously advocated the decriminalisation of heroin and cocaine (see number 4, opposite), and whose website compared alcohol with tobacco and asbestos.

### Infiltration

What these examples demonstrate is that the temperance and extreme antialcohol lobby, dormant for many decades, has fully infiltrated mainstream media and, probably, the upper echelons of the medical profession as well.

Wetherspoon has a clear conflict of interest in this area, so we can understand a certain scepticism.

However, according to market researchers CGA Brandtrack, Wetherspoon is the 'most visited licensed brand', with 23.6 million visits in a six-month period (see number 5, opposite), so we probably represent more mainstream views than the articles mentioned above. It should not be forgotten, perhaps, that our number-one draught product is Pepsi and we sell even more coffee than we do Pepsi. So, maybe the Alliance House Foundation is reaching the parts which the brewers cannot...

In any case, as we have previously said (reproduced on page 65), it can't be denied that the longest-lived person in history, Jeanne Calment of Arles, France, liked a 'port wine' with her meals.

And, as we also argued (reproduced on page 65), the 10 longest-lived nations in the world are all enthusiastic imbibers – outliving their non-drinking cousins.

Indeed, most centenarians in this country like a sherbet, it appears, undermining the current obsession of the health lobby.

The current oldest person in the world is reported to be Ethel Caterham of Surrey, England, who drank wine and sherry 'in moderation', but apparently became teetotal at 110 – a fair compromise, in my view.

### 3. Tax inequality

The third item on our list is probably the greatest threat to the future of pubs: tax.

Wetherspoon has long campaigned for tax equality between pubs and supermarkets.

Pubs pay 20% VAT on food sales, whereas supermarkets pay zero.

Pubs also pay much higher business rates per pint.

Wetherspoon and the family brewers (Fuller's, Shepherd Neame, St Austell and many others) have stressed the many benefits of pubs to the community and to the treasury's coffers.

We acknowledge that supermarkets have done a great job for their customers and the economy, but we strongly feel that the financially weaker pub industry should not be hobbled by a tax disadvantage.

I wrote an article on this subject (see page 66) which has been quoted widely in the trade and national press.

### Summary

In summary, the pub industry, as the press has widely reported, is struggling to retain its historic role as a melting pot for the country's social life – mainly because of the three key issues outlined above.

Taxation and energy costs are probably the urgent issues – they're pushing up the price of a pint in a pub far more than that from a supermarket. Who cares if a supermarket is chilly? Meanwhile, the modern-day temperance movement, travelling under the health banner, is gaining influence in the media, in academia, in government and in the medical profession.

In the end, you, the public, will decide.

Wetherspoon News, as always, is grateful for your attention – and is happy to make our case for your consideration.

**Tim Martin**  
Chairman

**1**  
*Tim says:* "This extract from The Times demonstrates the chaos at the heart of the net-zero plans: departments working for the net-zero czar opting for cheaper fossil-fuel power, while businesses are being urged to go green at almost any cost."

## ED MILIBAND'S ENERGY DEPARTMENT HQ POWERED BY FOSSIL FUELS

**The government has been accused of hypocrisy because many departments do not use green energy, while it encourages councils and businesses to target net zero**

Andrew Ellson, The Times, February 8 2026

**The headquarters of Ed Miliband's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero is powered by fossil fuels, despite the ministry promoting renewable energy.**

Freedom of Information (FoI) requests to more than 400 public sector bodies reveal that several government departments and agencies, including the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, are shunning "green" energy deals in favour of cheaper "brown" tariffs.

One government agency sponsored by Miliband's department said that it had not gone green because it considered renewable tariffs offered poor value for money.

The FoI requests found that more than four fifths of electricity used by Whitehall comes from a standard grid mix, which is known as "brown" power because a significant proportion of it is generated by burning fossil fuels. ”

**2**  
*Tim says:* "A concern of the beleaguered pub industry is that fairly extreme antialcohol views, and therefore antipub views, are being surreptitiously touted under a health banner.

In this case, Poppy Koronka, a health correspondent for The Times, quotes (27/1/26) Katherine Sevira from the Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS). The IAS is funded mainly by the Alliance House Foundation, which was previously the United Temperance Alliance (see below) – which purported to 'spread the principles of total abstinence from drink'."

**The Alliance House Foundation's website says:**

Originally founded in 1942 as the United Temperance Alliance, Alliance House has origins stretching back to 1st June, 1853 when the UKA was founded.

The UKTA was later established under a memorandum, and articles of association incorporated, on 23rd February 1942 with the aims and objectives:

*"To spread the principles of total abstinence from alcoholic drinks and to promote the moral and physical welfare of the community."*

*"To promote the scientific study of the properties of alcohol and the effect of its use upon the human system, the social and moral consequences and the distribution of information on the subject."*

*To this day, we continue to promote total abstinence as a lifestyle choice, but we are not seeking to enforce it by legislation.*

*We believe a totally alcohol free society would be one reached by agreement.*

**The Alliance House Name**

In 1937, the directors of the United Kingdom Alliance took the decision that the temperance movement would benefit from building a HQ in London. The building was built and opened in 1938.

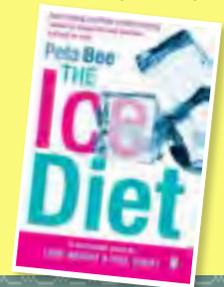
In 1942, the United Kingdom Temperance Alliance was created and registered as a charity to carry on the educational work of the Temperance Alliance. As a charity, Alliance House would be able to receive legacies and charitable donations.

The building was passed to the charity and UKTA were able to receive charitable legacies and donations.

In June 2003, the name UKTA Ltd was officially changed to Alliance House Foundation.

**3**  
*Tim says:* "In 2015, Peta Bee wrote a book called the Ice Diet which promised to 'supercharge your body's calorie-burning powers to change the way you look and feel for ever'.

None of these schemes, or many others on which Peta has reported (including the cold-potato diet), seems to have caught on, so let's take Peta's views on drinking with a teaspoon of invigorating sea salt."



**4**  
*Tim says:* "Professor Sir Ian Gilmore, a renowned antialcohol campaigner, and former president of the Royal College of Surgeons, doggedly opposed Wetherspoon's pub licences in magistrates' courts in years gone by. This extract from the professor's Wikipedia page outlines his antialcohol credentials and his advocacy of the legalisation of heroin and cocaine."

Public statements

In 2001, he chaired a Royal College of Physicians working party that produced the report 'Alcohol – can the NHS afford it?' [1]

During his time as president of the College from 2006 to 2010 he made several public statements on alcohol misuse in the United Kingdom, and under his leadership the Royal College initiated the Alcohol Health Alliance (AHL) in 2007. [2] He was knighted in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours. [3]

In August 2010, Sir Ian said that "making drugs such as heroin and cocaine legal would 'drastically' cut crime and addicts' health problems" in interviews with both newspapers and the BBC. [4]

He resigned from his position with Public Health England when the agency refused to break their connection with Drinkaware in their Drink Free Days campaign in 2018. [5]

**5**  
*Tim says:* "As the CGA research shows, Wetherspoon has 23.6 million visitors every six months, representing a large cross-section of UK society. In contrast, the views expressed by Professor Sir Ian Gilmore and organisations such as Alcohol Change, based on zero alcohol, are shared by only a small minority."



# YOUR SAY

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

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

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

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## Write to us

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Thank you

wetherspoon



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## IN-HOUSE BEER-BREWING WOULD BE A 'SPOON BOON

**Dear Sir Tim**

Question: Why do Wetherspoon's pubs not offer their own signature draught lager or best bitter?

If successful, it could be an opportunity to take on your supermarket competitors and stock it there as well.

Walham Green (Fulham) is now my go-to London pub – what a beautiful, inspired choice and, with a 30-year lease, it will be there for my lifetime.

**Neil Ferrier, via e-mail**

**Tim replies:** Thanks for your comments about Walham Green – a masterpiece of design. Thanks also to the architects, contractors, tradesmen, suppliers and everyone else connected with the project.

Regarding signature beers, I'm not so sure. As a customer, I was attracted to our first pub in north London because I'd heard that it sold Ruddles County beer, rarely available in London at the time. I marvelled at the range of beers, from small and regional brewers, put together by the, then, owner Andrew Marler. I'm not sure that Wetherspoon's Best Bitter has the same allure – or that we could match the quality and heritage of the many excellent beers brewed by third parties.



## BASINGSTOKE BANISHED FROM YOUR BULLETINS?

**Dear Mr Martin**

I'm a long-time fan of Wetherspoon, but have to say – I'm shocked at how little attention Basingstoke gets in Wetherspoon News.

Seriously, the town has pubs like The Angel and The Maidenhead Inn with proper histories, yet the magazine gives them barely a nod.

A passing mention in a sidebar? That's it.

It feels a bit like Basingstoke doesn't exist in your eyes – and, as someone who cares about your pubs and your magazine, that stings.

Basingstoke's loyal punters deserve more than just a fleeting line. A feature, a proper story, maybe a cheeky nod to the canal or Jane Austen? Come on... it's not that hard.

I'd love to know whether there's any plan to give Basingstoke the recognition it deserves in future issues.

Otherwise, I'm starting to wonder whether Wetherspoon News is more of a 'London-centric' thing than a nationwide publication.

Looking forward to seeing Basingstoke get its day in the sun.

**Cheers**

**Gregory Donald Lee, via e-mail**

**Tim replies:** I feel your pain and apologise for under-reporting Basingstoke in Wetherspoon News. It's always been Paris, Rome and Basingstoke, in my book.

I will certainly reprimand the magazine's editor, a Leyton Orient supporter, who, I suspect, was humbled by Basingstoke Town in some distant fixture – which he can't get over...

## KING CASH USURPED BY COMMONER APP

**Dear editor**

I'm 64 and having doubts about your app to order everything?

It seems to me that it's taking away the atmosphere of chatting to the bar staff or people in the queue.

My local in Morecambe has great staff who will chat while pouring your drink.

I have your app, yet enjoy the interaction when paying by cash. Cash should be king. What happens if power gets cut?

A pub visit is just going to become a sterile experience, with people chatting only to their little group... not making friends with other drinkers.

**Alan Kelly, via e-mail**

**Tim replies:** Don't tell anyone, I beg you, but I agree.

What is a pub visit without shooting the breeze with the bar team and impressing them with our witty observations? I was sure that the app would never work... for the reasons you have outlined.

My colleagues mistakenly think that you and I are wrong, but it's only a matter of time until we're proven right, in my view.

As Bob Dylan sang – the times they are a-changin'...

## WE HAVE NO NEED FOR HAIR OF THE DOG

**Dear Sir Tim**

I would just like to commend Wetherspoon for its continuing resistance to dogs in pubs.

Here in Edinburgh, virtually all pubs now advertise themselves as 'dog friendly' – in some establishments, this is taken to mean having dogs off their lead, roaming freely around the pub, bothering other customers, sniffing customers' food and clothing, sitting up on seats and generally taking over the place.

The staff at these pubs often compound the problem by patting the dogs, giving them treats and allowing large dogs to stand on their hind legs with their front paws on the bar counter, much to the dog-lovers' amusement and the dismay of people like me.

It has become quite awful, which is why I take a great deal of persuasion, these days, to go to any pub other than a Wetherspoon.

Thank you for sticking to your policy.

**Yours sincerely**

**Robert Drysdale**

**Edinburgh, Scotland**

**Tim replies:** Many thanks for your comments. Believe it or not, I had a dog, Moose, at pub number-one.

I once calculated that, by the time he was seven, I'd walked with Moose from here to Australia.

But I realised that his place wasn't in the pub when he ate my accountant Gary's sandwich.

In the early days, we had a pub called The Dog, with a picture of Moose on the hanging sign – not a lot of people know that...

## TAP ON THE APP IN NZ GETS ALE FLOWING IN UK

**Dear editor**

Thought you might like to know that our Sunday-evening drinking companion used your app to order us a beer last night.

He is currently in Dunedin, New Zealand, about 19,100km from The Moon and Sixpence (Hatch End). Great service, thanks.

Could this be the longest distance order?

**Ian Quinlan, via e-mail**

**Tim replies:** Interesting point. Stewart Island, south of Dunedin, could pip your Guinness World Records attempt. Nice of your lucky pal to think of you in rainy Blighty while enjoying the glorious antipodean summer.



**Lakeland (Cumbria)**  
*Artist's impression.*

# FOUR NEW PUBS SPREAD MORE JOY TO HAVEN HOLIDAY PARKS

**W**etherspoon has opened a new pub at Haven (the UK's leading holiday park operator) – with a further three opening by the start of April.

This builds on the exclusive partnership and brings the total number of pubs to nine across Haven's parks.

The Alfred Wainwright (Lakeland, Cumbria) has opened and will be followed by The White Clover (Hopton, Norfolk), The Springfield (Cala Gran, Blackpool) and The Bluff Inn (Riviere Sands, Cornwall).

As part of an exclusive arrangement with Haven, the first Wetherspoon pub opened in March 2024 at its Primrose Valley Holiday Park, in Filey, north Yorkshire.

It was followed by openings at Haggerston Castle (near Berwick, Northumberland), Cleethorpes Beach (Lincolnshire), Devon Cliffs (near Exmouth) and Kent Coast (near Rochester).

A total of £9 million has been invested in the four new pubs.

Haven's chief executive officer, Simon Palethorpe, said: "Haven is all about giving our customers more of what they love – and our partnership with Wetherspoon does just that."

"We are preparing to welcome up to four million guests in 2026."

"I am confident that the new Wetherspoon pubs will prove a great addition to the holiday parks and even more reason to holiday with Haven in 2026."

Wetherspoon's senior commercial manager, Joe Argyle, said: "Our partnership with Haven continues to go from strength to strength."

"Its Wetherspoon pubs have proven extremely popular across all age groups – and we look forward to continued success with Haven."



**Hopton (Norfolk)**  
*Artist's impression.*

# wetherspoon

castell de santa bàrbara

## bar restaurant



Pictured (left to right) are Lagardère Travel Retail Spain & Portugal's chief commercial and purchasing officer Ana de Soto, its chief executive officer Javier Cagigal, AENA's commercial services director Marta Abardía, Wetherspoon's senior commercial manager Joe Argyle, Wetherspoon's regional manager Barry Brewster and Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernández Airport's head of commercial division Maria Garcia Sanz

# SPOON IN SPAIN IS HOLIDAY HIGH

**W**etherspoon has opened its first pub in continental Europe – in Spain's Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernandez Airport.

The pub, called Castell de Santa Bàrbara, is located in departures (airside).

The new-build pub is open from 6am to 9pm, seven days a week.

It offers almost 1,000 square feet of customer space on one level, together with an external terrace with customer seating.

Food is served at all times, up to an hour before closing.

The menu includes many meals available in Wetherspoon's UK pubs, including breakfast dishes, burgers and pizzas, as well as local dishes, including garlic prawns and Spanish omelette.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "We are thrilled to have opened our first pub in Spain.

"We believe that it will be popular with a wide range of customers, including those travelling home to the UK and those using the terminal for other destinations.

"We aim to open several pubs overseas in the coming months and years, including those at airports."



BEXLEYHEATH

## WRONG 'UN MAKES THE RIGHT IMPRESSION WITH BID JUDGES



The Wrong 'Un (Bexleyheath) has been recognised, with a business award, for its contribution to the local community.

The pub, which first opened in June 1994, achieved second place (highly commended) in the 'best established business (10+ years) – high street' category, at the 2025 Bexley Business Awards, organised by Bexleyheath business improvement district (BID).

Bexley Business Awards joined forces with the Bexleyheath High Street Awards for the first time, creating a single event to recognise the full extent of local enterprise – from high-street independents and community groups to long-standing businesses and new ventures.

The annual initiative highlights the dedication, creativity and resilience of businesses across the borough.

Pub manager Harvey Hamilton said: "We are delighted to have been recognised with a 'highly commended' award at the 2025 Bexley Business Awards.

"The Wrong 'Un, much loved by local people, has been an important community hub for more than 30 years."

Wetherspoon's area manager, Lauren De Souza, added: "Congratulations to Harvey and the team on their deserved award."

Pictured outside the pub, with the award and certificates, are (left to right) shift leader Leon Hulyer, team leader Ben Silver, shift manager Jason Batty (back), pub manager Harvey Hamilton, shift manager Annmarie Burke and area manager Lauren De Souza.

## FINANCE TEAM REWARDED FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION

Wetherspoon's finance department won the 'responsible finance team of the year' award at the AICPA & CIMA ENGAGE 25 UK & Ireland Finance Awards.

At the awards, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) recognised outstanding accounting and finance individuals, teams and organisations.

The finance team, led by finance director Ben Whitley, was honoured for embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals into finance operations – a stand-out achievement in a traditionally conservative sector.

The awards' judges said, by creating a dedicated environment, utilities and facilities team, that Wetherspoon delivered zero waste to landfill, improved recycling and improved processes showing how finance can lead on sustainability, while strengthening business performance.

Sponsored by Sage and Corpay, the ENGAGE 25 UK & Ireland Awards shined a spotlight on the achievements of CGMA candidates, CIMA members and partners, celebrating excellence, innovation and leadership.

Each award winner was selected by a panel of judges, all of whom are CIMA members with extensive experience in the category which they were judging.

Wetherspoon's finance director, Ben Whitley, said: "I am proud of the team members for their hard work, skill and dedication – which enabled us to win the award."

Pictured (left to right) are Wetherspoon's senior finance managers Mark Miller and Hannah Barrow, Wetherspoon's finance director Ben Whitley and the 92nd president of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) John Graham.



# PROUD TO BE PATRONS OF PUBWATCH AS PRIZES PRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT



Wetherspoon, once again, was proud to sponsor the National Pubwatch awards.

The awards took place at the House of Lords.

Judged by National Pubwatch committee members, the awards recognise the work of local pubwatch schemes and their efforts to provide safe drinking environments for customers and staff.

National Pubwatch is a voluntary organisation, supporting more than 800 local pubwatch schemes across the UK and working to promote safe, secure and social drinking environments in all licensed premises throughout the UK.

Colchester pubwatch won the top accolade at the awards.

It was rewarded for its proactive and forward-thinking approach to managing the night-time economy, including its partnership with the police, business improvement district (BID) and Colchester's city council.

Two pubwatches, Newcastle City Centre and Padstow, were awarded 'highly commended'.

Rita King, who works as honorary secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group, was awarded the National Pubwatch 'award of merit', in recognition of her professionalism and commitment in supporting the pub and hospitality sector and her efforts to raise standards and promote partnership working.

National Pubwatch's chairman, Steve Baker OBE, said: "It has been an honour to celebrate the winners and finalists at this awards event in the House of Lords.

"The 'National Pubwatch of the year' award is so important in recognising the hard work of local pubwatch schemes, their members and individuals.

"We would also like to thank J D Wetherspoon for all of its support for National Pubwatch and the awards."

Wetherspoon has been a supporter of National Pubwatch since its inauguration in 1997.

The company's pubs are involved in 532 local pubwatch schemes.

Wetherspoon's legal director, Nigel Connor, added: "This year has again seen some fantastic entries, reflecting the strength and importance of local pubwatch schemes throughout the United Kingdom in helping to create safe towns and cities.

"Colchester pubwatch is a worthy winner – and congratulations are due to everyone involved in that scheme.

"This is our sixth year of awards sponsorship – and Wetherspoon is pleased to be able to help in recognising the work done by all pubwatch members, as well as the authorities which co-operate with them through our continued support."

Pictured (left to right) are Padstow pubwatch member Alex Clark, Colchester BID manager Vinnie Geaves, Padstow pubwatch member Miss Lee Mills, Newcastle City Centre pubwatch chair Jack Taylor, Newcastle City Centre pubwatch secretary Elizabeth Mason, Colchester pubwatch chair Andy Starr, Wetherspoon's legal director Nigel Connor, National Pubwatch's honorary president Lord Evans, All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group's honorary secretary Rita King and National Pubwatch's chair Steve Baker OBE.

## SUFFRAGETTES HONoured AT SITE OF THEIR 1913 PROTEST

A plaque has been installed to honour the actions of two Suffragettes who interrupted a party conference in 1913 at Opera House (Royal Tunbridge Wells).

The building, which has been a Wetherspoon pub since 1997, was the 1913 venue for a meeting of the ruling Liberal Party.

It was disrupted by protestors Emily Wilding Davison and Olive Walton, who emerged from their cellar hiding place demanding 'votes for women'!

Just a few weeks later, Emily Wilding Davison was killed after throwing herself under the king's horse at the Epsom Derby.

The pub was approached by Caroline Auckland of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society.

Pub manager Greg Wilkins and kitchen manager Ruth Longley met Caroline and were happy to oversee the installation of the heritage plaque (pictured).

Afterwards, Caroline wrote to thank Greg and Ruth. "You couldn't have been more helpful or enthusiastic throughout the process."

Greg said: "I hadn't heard of the incident, so we were happy to bring this event in history to people's attention by means of the plaque."

The plaque is located outside, to the right of the building's front doors.



**Pictured (left to right) at Opera House (Royal Tunbridge Wells) are pub manager Greg Wilkins, marketing and social media co-ordinator of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society Heritage Plaques committee 2025 Caroline Auckland and kitchen manager Ruth Longley**

## SMOOTH LANDING FOR ERROLL AS HE RETIRES FROM AIRPORT ROLE



Pub manager Adrian Ryan has paid tribute to Erroll Johnson, who has retired from his job as a bar associate at Wetherspoon (Birmingham Airport).

Erroll joined the company in May 2010 and worked at three Birmingham airport Wetherspoon pubs during his career.

They were Wetherspoon T2 (after security) and The Dragonfly (before security) (each no longer a Wetherspoon pub), along with Wetherspoon (after security).

Adrian said: "Over the years, Erroll became much loved by customers and colleagues.

"He is a real character.

"He was exceptional with customers and we often received many a compliment about his service.

"He was always good to talk to and a really good source of comfort, especially for the younger staff members.

"He had a fantastic attitude and genuinely brought not just hard work to the team, but an inspirational personality."

Erroll is pictured (front) with colleagues on the occasion of his retirement.

NOTTINGHAM

# HARD WORK, NOT LUCK, LEADS TO RAPID RISE OF ROEBUCK



Pub manager Alex Darby is pictured with deputy manager Laura Hitchcock proudly showing off an award.

The Roebuck Inn (Nottingham) was named winner of the 'national bar or pub' category at the Nottingham Best Bar None 2025 awards.

Alex said: "We are thrilled to win the award, one of only 12 presented at the annual awards ceremony.

"This recognition highlights our hard work and commitment to the safety of staff and customers at The Roebuck Inn."

Nottingham's top pubs, bars, clubs, restaurants and entertainment venues were recognised for excellence in safety, customer care and community at the awards celebration.

Best Bar None is an industry-backed accreditation scheme, supported by the Home Office and the hospitality sector, designed to reward those venues which put safety, customer care and community at the heart of what they do.

In each of the 12 categories, only the very highest-scoring venue won — one category, one winner, the best of the best — with The Roebuck Inn winning the national bar or pub category.

Since 2010, the city's business improvement district (BID), called 'It's in Nottingham', has run the scheme and hosted the annual awards.

Working closely with both national chains and independent operators, the BID team assesses venues on their efforts to prevent crime and disorder, protect children, enhance public safety and safeguard women and girls as part of the Safe Space Pledge.

For 2025, 89 venues across the 12 categories earned accreditation, making Nottingham's Best Bar None scheme the largest in the UK.

Alex Flint, CEO of It's in Nottingham, said: "The Best Bar None awards are an annual highlight for Nottingham's night-time economy.

"They recognise the hard work and dedication which venues put into creating safe, welcoming and vibrant spaces.

"Over 85 city-centre leisure and hospitality venues have met and exceeded the Best Bar None standards this year.

"Visitors can enjoy Nottingham's pubs, bars, clubs and hotels with confidence, knowing they're experiencing the best in customer care, safety and community."

## WORKING HARD TO STAY A TOP EMPLOYER



Wetherspoon has been recognised by the Top Employers Institute as a Top Employer United Kingdom 2026.

It is the 21st time that the company has been certified by the Top Employers

Institute (TEI) – the independent organisation behind the Top Employers accreditation.

To achieve Top Employer certification, participating organisations are assessed by the TEI via a rigorous analysis of their people practices.

The HR Best Practices survey covers six HR domains, comprising 20 topics across the business and employee life cycle – including people strategy, work environment, talent acquisition, learning, well-being and diversity & inclusion.

The information is then validated and audited independently by the TEI to ensure the integrity of the processes and data.

Wetherspoon's people director, Tom Ball, said: "We are extremely proud to be considered among the best employers in the United Kingdom, particularly as the recognition comes from an independent organisation which researches numerous companies.

"The company employs more than 42,000 staff across its pubs in the UK and the Republic of Ireland, as well as at head office.

"It is committed to offering employees the best opportunities to succeed and grow within the company, including studying for qualifications and apprenticeships.

"This is evident in the number of staff progressing to more senior positions in Wetherspoon."

THE KINGS FORD • CHINGFORD

# PAULETTE STILL ON A HOT STREAK, FOLLOWING 20 YEARS IN KITCHEN



With area manager Rob Churley (right) and general manager Richard Marriner, kitchen team leader Paulette Taylor is pictured receiving her long-service 20-year company award.

Paulette, who works at The Kings Ford (Chingford), started with Wetherspoon in 2002 at The Ice Wharf (Camden), but left briefly before resuming a five-year spell at the busy north London Lloyds No.1 bar.

Paulette said: "I started as a kitchen associate, yet ended up helping to run the kitchen there.

"I had to step down, as I was also helping my sister with her new baby, and it was too much to be kitchen manager as well."

Paulette went on to work at The White Swan (Islington) and The Coronet (Holloway) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), before helping to train the new kitchen team at the opening of The Mossy Well (Muswell Hill).

Paulette said: "I was helping to get the new staff acquainted with the equipment and procedures, which was good experience."

Paulette returned for a brief spell at The Coronet before a house move, in 2016, took her from Wood Green to Chingford.

She recalled: "After a couple of months, I applied for a transfer to The Kings Ford, as the travelling by public transport was getting too much. "I had always worked in big, busy pubs – yet this one has a smaller kitchen and team, but I enjoy it."

Paulette concluded: "My motto is always to treat people how you want to be treated. It is similar working in the kitchen – always serve food which you would want to eat.

"We work hard, but it isn't all about the work – you need to have a laugh and smile along the way."

# WHOLE LOT OF GROATS SPENT REPAIRING AND PRESERVING ANCIENT TYNESIDE PUB



The extensive repair, maintenance and conservation work at The Quayside (Newcastle) is now complete.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in March 2000, has undergone continuous work over the past two years, with an overall reinvestment cost of just over £3.1 million.

The most recent work (phase 2), which was completed in November 2025 at a cost of £1.65 million, focused on repairing the 500-year-old timber frame of the building's 'south range'.

Wetherspoon's property manager, Nathan McGovern, said:

"The Quayside pub is housed in a building of historical significance, having originally been constructed during the 1500s.

"The work has been painstaking, using traditional timber frame repair methods. The timber frame and render repairs alone have taken the best part of six months to complete."

Because of the building's unique historic construction, the project attracted significant interest from both Newcastle City Council's local planners and Historic England.

The grade II\* listed building stands on Newcastle's Quayside, in the shadow of the famous High Level Bridge over the River Tyne.

Previously, the building was Dove's Warehouse, storing goods for being moved along the river. Dove's premises actually comprises 'a collection of warehouse buildings grouped in three ranges around a courtyard'.

Dating from the late 16th century, the building had stood at the water's edge, before a pedestrian walkway was built in 1984.

For the restoration work at The Quayside pub, specialist consultants were engaged on advice by Historic England to ensure that the work was carried out to the appropriate standards.

The three expert consultants involved were building archaeologists, conservation timber repair specialists and conservation consulting engineers.

Each consultant also contributed a selection of detailed documentation and images to support both the listed building application and the refurbishment work.

Pub manager Tyler Hudson, pictured (centre) at the pub reopening ceremony, said: "The investment in repairs and conservation highlights Wetherspoon's commitment to the pub, housed in this historic building, as well as to its staff and customers.

"The company takes great pride in the restoration and continued maintenance of many iconic and historically significant buildings, The Quayside being just one of those.

"Wetherspoon is simply the current custodian – and accepts the great responsibility which that involves in preserving such important local history for future generations."



# NO TOILET DUCK AS SPOON LOOS MAKE SPLASH AGAIN



The South Strand (Dublin)

**H**undreds of Wetherspoon pubs have gained high grades for the quality and standard of their toilets – in the Loo of the Year Awards 2025.

In addition, the company won national awards, with some pubs also winning individual national awards.

In the 'pubs' category, The Captain Flinders (Euston, London), The South Strand (Dublin), The Hay Stook (East Kilbride) and Yr Hen Dderwen (Carmarthen) were named as individual category award-winners.

In the 'hotels' category, Sandford House (Huntingdon), Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin), Jolly's Hotel (Broughty Ferry) and The George Hotel (Brecon) were named as the individual category award-winners.

In the 'historic buildings' category, The Bell Hotel (Norwich) and The Mount Stuart (Cardiff) won.

The Mount Stuart (Cardiff) was also named national winner, with The Hedgeford Lodge (Hednesford) highly commended in the accessible toilet category.

The awards are aimed at highlighting and improving standards of away-from-home washrooms across the UK.

Inspectors for Loo of the Year Awards make unannounced visits to thousands of toilets at sites across the UK, in order to judge them.

Toilets are graded bronze, silver, gold, platinum, platinum-plus or diamond, with unacceptable toilets not graded at all.

A diamond grading (the highest-possible rating) is awarded to those venues offering 'the highest standards of cleaning and the provision of facilities to meet all users' needs'.

Toilets are judged against numerous criteria, including décor and maintenance, cleanliness, accessibility, hand-washing and -drying equipment, safety and overall management.

Wetherspoon's pubs and hotels received 10 diamond awards, 217 platinum-plus awards and 545 platinum awards.

The company's head of retail audit, Mark Latham, said: "Staff at the pubs and hotels ensure, at all times, that their toilets are in excellent condition – and it is great that this has been recognised by inspectors.

"Offering customers clean and well-maintained toilets, designed to the highest level, is of utmost importance to us."

Once again, Wetherspoon won the overall trophy for corporate provider entries.

It was also named in the 2025 'champions' league standards of excellence'.

The champions' league is for those organisations with eight or more entries, where five or more have been graded as diamond, platinum or platinum-plus and, in the judges' opinion, maintain a consistently high level of standards.



**Yr Hen Dderwen (Carmarthen)**



**Sandford House (Huntingdon)**



**The Mount Stuart (Cardiff)**

## PUNK-POWERED PLOTTER PENS HIS PIRATES' EXPLOITS IN PUB

A group of time-travelling pirates, Wetherspoon Warriors, plans adventures in a science fiction book written in The White Swan (Solihull).

Author Graeme Galloway wrote most of the book – Pirates, Smugglers and Time Trawling (Wetherspoon Warriors) – in the pub, ending his writing sessions with a pint of Punk IPA and a plate of chicken wings.

Graeme (pictured) is well known to staff, who chat to him about his writings – he even bought some cufflinks for shift leader Connor Galligan, engraved with the letters 'WW' (Wetherspoon Warriors).

Connor said: "It was a nice surprise and is always good to chat to Graeme when he comes in to do some writing."

Graeme, whose daughter-in-law is the author Holly Bourne, said: "I find the pub a peaceful place to get work done – and the staff are always happy to have a chat."

"I just really loved the idea of time travellers plotting adventures in Wetherspoon's pubs and trying to work out plot lines around that."

● **Graeme's book is available here:**  
[books.by/Graeme-Galloway](https://books.by/Graeme-Galloway)



## ELAINE SHOCKED IN A GOOD WAY BY LATE-SHIFT SURPRISE



A well-loved team member at The Captain Noel Newton (Oakham) enjoyed a surprise farewell party.

Shift manager Elaine Carnie, pictured (front centre) with colleagues and former colleagues, including pub manager Cayley Stubbins (far right), has retired after more than a decade working at the pub.

Cayley said: "Elaine usually worked a morning shift, but I had asked her to come in for a later shift – and she wasn't very pleased."

"When she arrived to start work and realised that it was for a party, which was a complete surprise, she was very shocked and emotional."

Elaine, 66, joined the team on the opening day at The Captain Noel Newton as a bar associate, progressing to shift manager in her 12 years there.

Cayley added: "Around 150 people came, throughout the afternoon and evening, to wish her all the best, including former colleagues and managers."

"Elaine is a well-known and much-loved staff member, as well as being the heart and soul of the local community."

"We all wish her the very best for her retirement, giving her time for herself and with her young grandchildren."

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME • HANLEY • STOKE-ON-TRENT

## POTTERIES' PUBS STOKED TO WIN CAMRA AWARDS

Three Wetherspoon pubs in the Potteries have been recognised by their local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch members.

Each of The Arnold Machin (Newcastle-under-Lyme), The Reginald Mitchell (Hanley) and The Wheatsheaf (Stoke-on-Trent) has won a bronze merit certificate at the Potteries CAMRA pub of the year 2025 awards.

The awards took place at King's Hall, Kingsway, Stoke-on-Trent, just one minute's walk from The Wheatsheaf and the venue for the Potteries CAMRA Stoke Beer & Cider Festival which was celebrating its 40th year.

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Tom Rudnicki (The Wheatsheaf), Potteries CAMRA chair Andy Parkin, pub manager Cassie Leech (The Arnold Machin) and pub manager James Mancell (The Reginald Mitchell).

Wetherspoon's area manager, Debbie Whittingham, responsible for all three pubs, said: "Congratulations to Tom, Cassie and James and their teams on these well-deserved awards.

"We know how hard each pub team works, so it's lovely to receive independent recognition from the local CAMRA branch members."



CLEETHORPES • EXMOUTH

## PUBS JUDGED TO BE HAVENS FOR FANS OF INTERIOR DESIGN



The Red Rocks (Devon Cliffs Holiday Park, Exmouth)



The Humber Stone (Cleethorpes Beach Holiday Park, Cleethorpes)

**DESIGN AWARDS**

Two Wetherspoon pubs, operated by Haven, were finalists in the Northern Design Awards.

Founded 24 years ago, the awards champion design excellence.

The two Wetherspoon/Haven pubs named as finalists were The Humber Stone (Cleethorpes Beach Holiday Park, Cleethorpes) and The Red Rocks (Devon Cliffs Holiday Park, Exmouth).

They were finalists in the 'interior design - restaurant/dining over £1 million' category.

Both projects were undertaken by Manchester-based architect Harrison Ince.

Wetherspoon's head of property development, Paul Curran, said: "We are delighted that two Wetherspoon/Haven projects were acknowledged for the quality of their interior design.

"We work closely with the architect teams to ensure that the pubs are built and designed to the highest standards."

SOUTHPORT

# CAMRA BESTOWS NEW HONOURS ON SIR HENRY



The team at The Sir Henry Segrave is celebrating two accolades from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

The pub, managed by Daniel Mercer, has been included in CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026.

The Sir Henry Segrave has also been awarded the 'pub of the season' title for autumn 2025 by Southport and West Lancs CAMRA branch members.

Shift manager and cellar champion Stuart Ochiltree said: "We are delighted to be named 'pub of the season' and thank our local CAMRA branch members for their support."

The Sir Henry Segrave serves up to 14 real ales at all times, including eight ever-changing guest ales and six permanent beers.

The permanent selection includes Exmoor Ales Exmoor Gold, Moorhouse's Pendle Witches Brew, Phoenix Wobbly Bob, Ruddles Best, Sharp's Doom Bar and Thornbridge Jaipur IPA.

Southport and West Lancs CAMRA's chairman Doug Macadam, said: "The award is decided on by nominations from branch members – and, when nominating, we ask members to bear the season in mind."

"The Sir Henry Segrave does definitely have one of the best real-ale selections in Southport and, obviously, the price always helps."

Pictured (left to right) at the presentation event are Southport and West Lancs CAMRA's chairman Doug Macadam, shift manager and cellar champion Stuart Ochiltree and branch vice chairman Dave Williams.

PUB NEWS

## DOCTOR PRAISES SPOON-FED HEALTH ADVICE

Wetherspoon has been praised, by medic Dr Ruth Chambers OBE, for providing health advice.

Retired GP Dr Chambers recognised the company in her book, Our NHS For Better or Worse, in which she lists 77 ways to save the health service.

In the book, her 84th, she praises Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, for the dietary advice which he has given in his regular column, Tim's viewpoint, in the Wetherspoon News magazine's summer/autumn 2025 edition.

Dr Chambers then goes on to highlight pages 62–65 of the same issue, which contain more detailed advice for Wetherspoon's customers.

She sent a copy to Tim, as well as a letter saying: "Your viewpoint content giving dietary advice and 'quasi-medical advice' is great, with all the follow-on stories on more detailed pages, from news columns focusing on coffee, salt intake and minimising health conditions."

Her book contains a cartoon depicting a Wetherspoon pub advertising 'cheap beer' and 'free health advice' in banners in its windows.

Tim wrote back to Dr Chambers, saying: "Thanks ever so much for the book – and the accolade."

"84 books! Stroll on... and hats off for your astounding energy. Best of luck in your endeavours. Best wishes, Tim."



# SIOBHAN SAYS IT'S NOT EASY TO LEAVE BISHOP VESEY BEHIND



Siobhan Hayward (pictured) has retired after more than 19 years running The Bishop Vesey (Sutton Coldfield).

Siobhan took over as pub manager in July 2006, having first joined the company in December 2004.

During her time at The Bishop Vesey, the pub was named West Midlands' 'pub of the year' for 11 consecutive years, by Lichfield, Tamworth & Sutton Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch members.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in December 1997, is also included, for the 25th year in succession, in CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide 2026.

Siobhan, 55, said: "I can't believe how quickly the time has flown by.

"I love the pub, the team and all of the regular customers. That is what has made me stay for so long."

Siobhan plans to spend her retirement travelling abroad, first to South Africa and then around Europe.

She added: "I have worked hard and want to enjoy life now, doing all the things I love to do. I will have the time to go walking and enjoy lots of holidays."

Siobhan concluded: "The Bishop Vesey has been a massive part of my life. I'll keep in touch with the team and pop in from time to time.

"They know, if they need anything, that they can always message me."

# PICTURE HER SURPRISE – KATIE SHOCKED AT DESTINY OF HER ART

Katie Lally works as a housekeeper at the 14-bedroom hotel – The Red Lion (Doncaster).

She originally joined the staff in 2021 at the South Yorkshire pub as a bar associate and progressed to team leader before switching to the hotel staff.

Katie had been working at the pub for around six months when a colleague mentioned a piece of art on display in the hotel which might be of interest.

Katie explained: "I didn't know it was there and was mortified!"

The subject of her embarrassment was a picture which Katie had drawn, herself, as a 12-year-old schoolgirl, as part of an artwork competition.

She recalled: "In 2015, I was in year 7 at school when we were asked to draw a place of interest in Doncaster for a project.

"Some of the others chose established sites in Doncaster, like the racecourse, but I wanted to draw somewhere new.

"Whitby's fish and chip restaurant had recently opened, so I chose that as my subject.

"All the artwork pieces were then used to decorate the newly opened hotel at The Red Lion, and my artwork is still on display."

In the decade since, Katie has become a mum to two-year-old Arlo and qualified as a primary school teacher after three years' study.

Katie added: "I enjoy my role as housekeeper.

"The hours fit in with taking care of Arlo, as well as the studying to be a primary teacher, something I have always wanted to do.

"As a result, I am still drawing – and the fish and chip restaurant is still there."



# WHEN YOU NEED A HOTEL, TRY THE 'PRUDENT CHOICE'

## Professional travel writers take turns to praise the Wetherspoon experience

**I**f you are looking to stay at a Wetherspoon hotel this spring, summer, or at any time, book directly – at [jdwwetherspoon.com](https://jdwwetherspoon.com), on the app or by phone.

Whether it's a much-needed short break, an extended stay or a convenient one-night stop-over, Wetherspoon has a collection of hotels across Britain and Ireland, offering comfortable, welcoming and affordable stay.

Book directly at [jdwwetherspoon.com](https://jdwwetherspoon.com), on the app or by phone.

### Unique

Each of the hotels is situated above or near a Wetherspoon pub, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Each has its own unique style and character, with many housed in beautifully restored historic buildings.

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

Information on all Wetherspoon hotels is also available, ensuring that you choose the perfect location for your stay.

### Unlimited

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, during their stay, for free refills of tea and coffee.

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

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

Towards the end of 2025, Wetherspoon was rated highly for its hotels in the Which? survey of the best and worst hotel chains in the UK.

In total, 4,631 guests were asked to score their stay out of five stars across eight categories, including cleanliness, customer service, breakfast quality, bed comfort and value for money.

Which? researchers then calculated an overall customer score by combining overall guest satisfaction and their likelihood to recommend.

Wetherspoon was rated fifth, ahead of hotel chains including Holiday Inn, Novotel, Premier Inn, Radisson Blu, Best Western and Hilton.

The company was also the only one to be awarded both a Which? Great Value badge and Which? Recommended Providers (WRP) status.

Several national newspapers subsequently visited and reviewed some of the Wetherspoon hotels. Here, we highlight four hotels in England which were featured:

## Wigan

### The Brocket Arms

38 Mesnes Road, Wigan, Great Manchester, WN1 2DD

☎ 01942 823800

This hotel is 20 minutes' walk from Wigan town centre and has 28 individual en suite bedrooms.

The town itself has an eclectic mix of shops and has a vibrant nightlife, with a wide variety of restaurants, as well as a cinema, bowling, the Museum of Wigan Life and Wigan Little Theatre.

Wigan also has both a League One football team (Wigan Athletic) and a Super League team (Wigan Warriors), with the DW Stadium (home to both) within walking distance of the hotel.

The hotel is near many of the town's attractions, including Haigh Woodland Park – events are held there throughout the year, and it also has its own golf course. It is close to Haydock Park Racecourse, making it an idea place to stay for a day at the races.

### Review extract:

'My usual go-to, Premier Inn, was nudging towards £100 a night. So, I cast my net wider and decided to give Wetherspoon's Brocket Arms hotel a try. At just £50.40 a night, it was a prudent choice.

'My room had recently been refurbished. Clean and comfortable, with still and sparkling bottles of water, tea and coffee, decent wi-fi and a lighting system which does not require a training course to operate.

'The Brocket Arms does not offer 24-hour room service, but almost anything you want is on tap. Next morning, from 7am, an industrial-sized breakfast was on offer for £6.59.'

*Simon Calder, travel correspondent, The Independent – 17 November 2025*



## Northolt, London

### The Greenwood Hotel

This grade II listed hotel has 12 en suite rooms.

A warm and inviting pub forms part of the hotel, alongside a beautiful 4,000-square-foot garden, making this hotel a perfect stay for families, leisure or business.

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

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



674 Whitton Avenue West, Northolt, London, UB5 4LA

☎ 020 8423 6169

#### Review extract:

'A generously sized corner room, with an aspect over the beer garden ... there's so much space ... elegant pleated lamps set the tone.

'There's even a framed drawing by a child from a local primary school beside the bed, which is a nice touch.

'Plenty of tea and coffee, plus sachets of shortbread and even oat milk. One big perk is that check-in is from 2pm, rather than the standard 3pm.'

*Cathy Adams, travel news features editor, The Sunday Times*  
– 12 November 2025



## Henley-on-Thames

### The Catherine Wheel

This hotel is located in Henley's oldest street, in the historic heart of the town, best known for its annual Henley Regatta.

The hotel has 30 bedrooms, many with feature original beams, and is located near to Oxford and Reading, in the surrounding Chiltern countryside and Thames Valley.

Whether you would prefer to relax on a boat travelling down the River Thames, shop till you drop or fill your days with adventure and excitement at a choice of amusement parks.

There is a variety of attractions within a short distance of the hotel.



7–15 Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 2AR

☎ 01491 848484

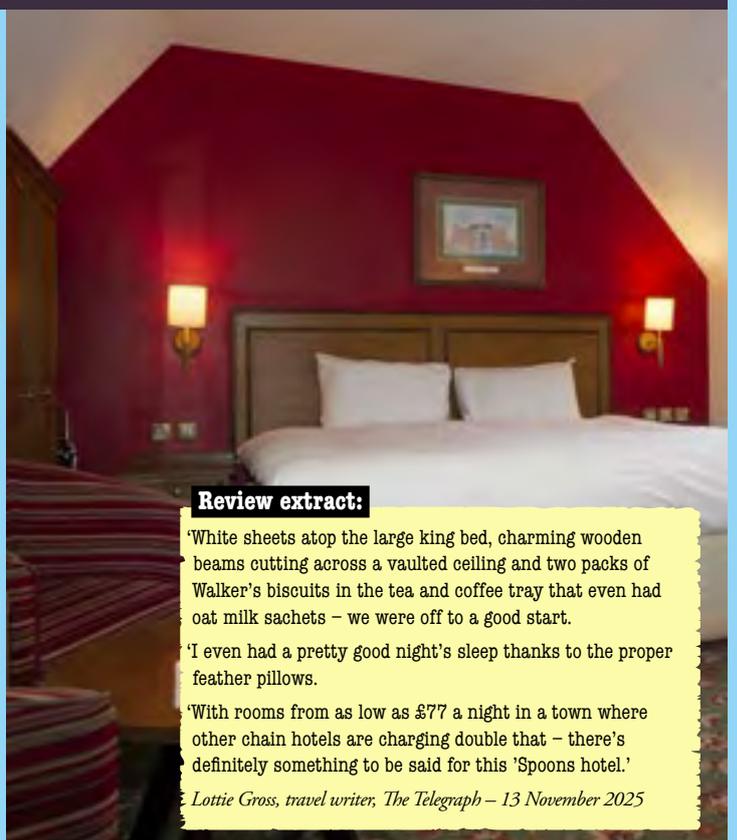
#### Review extract:

'White sheets atop the large king bed, charming wooden beams cutting across a vaulted ceiling and two packs of Walker's biscuits in the tea and coffee tray that even had oat milk sachets – we were off to a good start.

'I even had a pretty good night's sleep thanks to the proper feather pillows.

'With rooms from as low as £77 a night in a town where other chain hotels are charging double that – there's definitely something to be said for this 'Spoons hotel.'

*Lottie Gross, travel writer, The Telegraph* – 13 November 2025



## Canterbury

### *The Thomas Ingoldsby*

5–9 Burgate, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2HG

☎ 01227 463339

A 13-bedroom hotel, in the heart of Canterbury's city centre, The Thomas Ingoldsby is a three-minute walk from the historic Canterbury Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

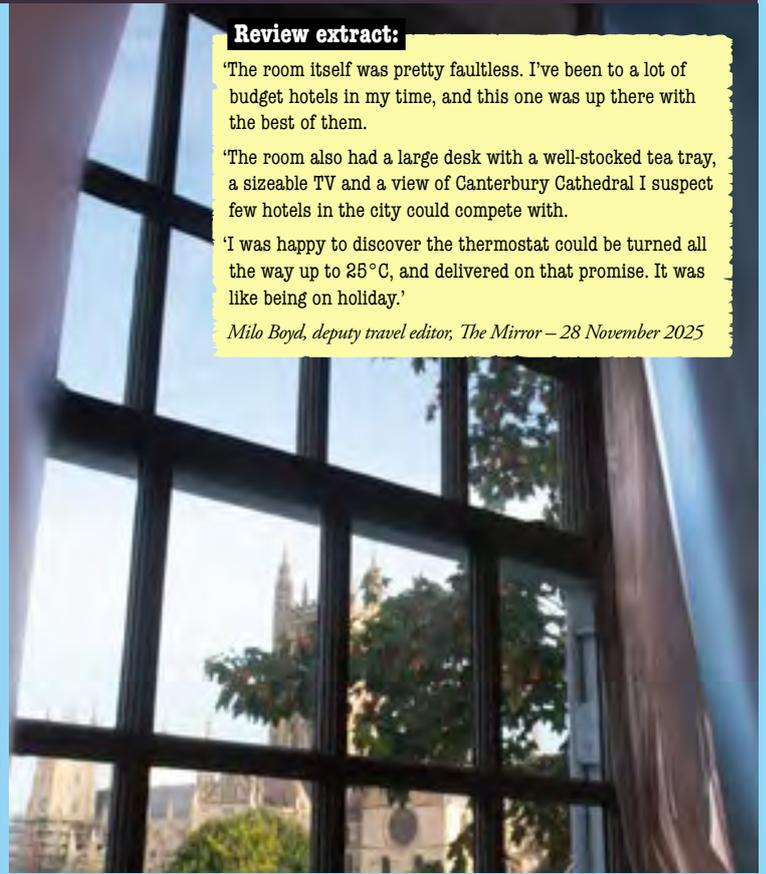
High Street, with its assortment of shops, restaurants and bars, is also just a short walk from the hotel, which boasts two bedrooms with views of the cathedral.

Some rooms do not have forward-facing windows – these are, instead, fitted with skylight windows. If this is a concern, contact the hotel before booking.

As well as the famous Canterbury Cathedral, the city also offers many historical places to visit including a city wall founded in Roman times and rebuilt in the 14th century, the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey and a Norman castle.

Modern attractions include the Marlowe Theatre and the St Lawrence Ground, home of Kent County Cricket Club.

The hotel is a 12-minute walk from Canterbury East train station and 16 minutes from Canterbury West station.



#### Review extract:

'The room itself was pretty faultless. I've been to a lot of budget hotels in my time, and this one was up there with the best of them.'

'The room also had a large desk with a well-stocked tea tray, a sizeable TV and a view of Canterbury Cathedral I suspect few hotels in the city could compete with.'

'I was happy to discover the thermostat could be turned all the way up to 25°C, and delivered on that promise. It was like being on holiday.'

*Milo Boyd, deputy travel editor, The Mirror – 28 November 2025*

## Dublin

### *Keavan's Port Hotel*

1 Camden Street Upper, Dublin, D02 TC61

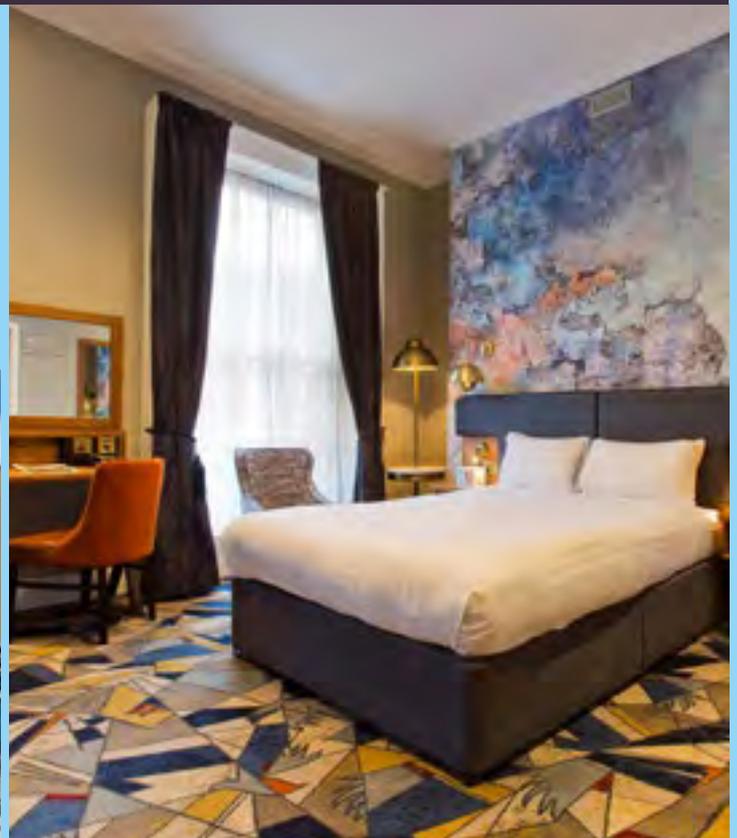
☎ +353 1 405 4790

This hotel is set in Dublin's 'village quarter', 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, including accessible rooms, complete with full DDA-compliant bathroom facilities.



## HOTELS DO THE DOUBLE IN NEW WHICH? SURVEY

Wetherspoon has been rated highly for its hotels in the Which? survey of the best and worst hotel chains in the UK.

The company operates 56 hotels, alongside its pubs in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

A total of 4,631 guests were asked to score their stays out of five stars across eight categories, including cleanliness, customer service, the breakfasts' quality, beds' comfort and value for money.

Which? researchers then calculated an overall customer score by combining overall guest satisfaction and their likelihood to recommend.

Wetherspoon rated fifth ahead of hotel chains including Holiday Inn, Novotel, Premier Inn, Radisson Blu, Best Western and Hilton.

The company was also the only one to be awarded both a Which? Great Value badge and Which? Recommended Providers (WRP) status.

The survey highlighted that, at a cost of £70 for an average night's stay, Wetherspoon's hotels received four stars for value for money and for the majority of other categories, including customer service.

It stated that one guest commented that the hotel was "clean, comfortable and good value".

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "We are thrilled that our hotels have been rated so highly by hotel visitors themselves.

"We believe that our hotels offer excellent standards and value, in great locations, alongside our pubs.

"This view has been backed by the survey's respondents.

"Our thanks to the hard-working staff for ensuring that the hotels are in first-class condition and always welcoming to guests at all times."

● **Book directly – available only at [jdwwetherspoon.com](http://jdwwetherspoon.com), on the app or by phone.**

### CLEETHORPES

## THE COLISEUM TOPS THE BILL FOR CLEETHORPES'S SUMMER SEASON



The Coliseum Picture Theatre (Cleethorpes) has been named winner of 'pub of the season' award for summer 2025 by local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members.

A CAMRA member himself, shift leader and ale champion Dan Croft is pictured (front, centre) receiving a certificate from branch chair Dawn Stannard and branch secretary and vice chair Brian Calladine (front, second left) surrounded by branch members and colleagues.

The Coliseum Picture Theatre was selected for the seasonal accolade by the Grimsby & North East Lincolnshire CAMRA members.

The presentation evening took place during the autumn beer festival, so members were spoiled for choice, with a range of festival ales being served.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in July 2014, is managed by Leanne Gerrard and usually serves seven real ales, at all times, including four ever-changing guest beers.

Dan, whose self-confessed passion is all things real ale, said: "It is absolutely fantastic to receive this accolade again, following the award from the branch members back in autumn 2024."

Dan is assisted with the ales by shift manager and fellow ale champion Michael Evans, who previously worked at Yarborough Hotel (Grimsby).

Branch secretary and vice chair Grimsby & North East Lincolnshire CAMRA Brian Calladine said: "The Coliseum Picture Theatre is a great Wetherspoon pub, in the heart of Cleethorpes, serving a fantastic selection of real ales, so this is a well-deserved winner. Congratulations to all involved."

# FANCY A GUINNESS? YES, 20 MILLION PINTS PLEASE

**W**etherspoon and drinks company Diageo have been working in partnership for 46 years.

The British business supplies Wetherspoon's pubs with premium spirits, including gin, rum, vodka and whisky – with Gordon's, Tanqueray, Captain Morgan, Smirnoff, Bell's and Johnnie Walker among the well-known brands.

However, there is one drink from Diageo's drinks list which outsells all others – Guinness.

Wetherspoon has been buying Guinness for 46 years, longer than Diageo has been the owner and distributor of the black stuff – now selling over 20 million pints a year.

## Quality

One of the quality-assurance programmes on which Diageo and Wetherspoon have worked, over the years, is the Guinness Quality Accreditation.

Long-serving managers Jan and Gerry Swords were filmed at their pub, Penderel's Oak (London), to explain how the quality accreditation works.

Gerry said: "Wetherspoon takes pride in delivering the best-quality products. To ensure this, we follow consistent processes, train our teams from day one and complete regular quality checks.

"The Guinness Quality Accreditation programme helps us to double check that we have it right."

Diageo's national account manager Holly Swinn said: "A team of Guinness quality executives is tasked with visiting every Wetherspoon pub. Armed with an 18-point survey, a pass rate is nothing short of 100%.

"We believe that Wetherspoon is probably the most consistent at perfectly served Guinness."

Jan Swords said: "It's all about clean equipment, from the nozzle to the fount, to the glass itself.

"The right angle and the famous 'settle' – it takes patience to create the perfect pint, together with its distinctive creamy head.

## Accreditation

"Wetherspoon's pubs have a 100-per-cent pass rate in their annual Guinness Quality Accreditation, underlining the company's reputation and that its commitment to serving the perfect pint is second to none."

Holly added: "Diageo dedicates a huge amount of time and resource to the Guinness Quality Accreditation programme.

"We really appreciate the commitment which Wetherspoon makes to quality and consistency... and we know that customers do too – when they get the perfect pint, every time."

## Biggest

Wetherspoon is also one of the biggest sellers, in Britain, of Guinness 0.0.

Whether it's St Patrick's Day, international rugby events or just a few pints on a Saturday afternoon, Guinness at Wetherspoon is the most consistent all year round – with a fresh, perfectly creamy pint guaranteed.

The results speak for themselves.



Scan the QR code to view the video.



Jan and Gerry Swords

# KILLING OFF AN URBAN MYTH

**T**he 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.

## “ 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



# NEW ENTRIES SLIDE INTO THE GOOD BEER GUIDE

**W**etherspoon is proud to have so many of its pubs listed in the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) publication – **The Good Beer Guide 2026**.

In its latest edition, the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide lists 280 Wetherspoon pubs.

Among them are three new entries for the company (one in each of England, Scotland and Wales), each being acclaimed by CAMRA members for the quality of its real ale and included for the first time in the 2026 guide.

Included are The Post & Telegraph (Brighton), run by pub manager Matthew Scott, Pen Cob (Pwllheli), with Jonathan Jarvis at the helm, and pub manager David McAuley's pub – The Carron Works (Falkirk).

Local branch members chose the Wetherspoon pubs for inclusion in the guide following regular visits to check on the quality of their real ales on offer.

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

Luther's Bar (Newcastle University students' union) has also been included in the guide, Wetherspoon's first pub in a university to be listed.

Among its guest ales, Luther's Bar serves Stu Brew beers produced at Newcastle University's own sustainable microbrewery. Stu Brew is Europe's first student-run brewery.

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 operations director, Martin Geoghegan, added:

"We are delighted that so many of our pubs have been recognised by CAMRA members for the quality of their real ales.

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

"Congratulations to them all, including the three new-entry pubs, as well as Luther's Bar."



● We feature descriptions from **The Good Beer Guide 2026** for the four new-entry pubs, one from each of England, Scotland and Wales, as well as the university site in Newcastle.

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



Shift leader Cameron Nelson and team leader Frankae Brown

## THE POST & TELEGRAPH Brighton

J D Wetherspoon balcony pub in the centre of Brighton, in what was once the offices of the Post and Telegraph newspapers.

They have recently introduced local Burning Sky beers from the Sussex village of Firle to complement other rotating beers, along with their four core beers of Doom Bar, Old Peculier, Greene King Abbot and Ruddles Best.

The pub can get extremely busy.

● 155–158 North Street, BN1 1EA



Shift leader Emma Roberts

## PEN COB

### Pwllheli

This Wetherspoon pub was formerly a Bon Marché outlet, before being tastefully refurbished into a light and airy pub in 2013.

It is opposite the train station at the start of the scenic Cambrian line and popular with locals and tourists – it is especially busy during the holiday season.

The area is popular for sailing, with a marina nearby and excellent coastal walking.

- Station Square, LL53 5HG

## THE CARRON WORKS

### Falkirk

An excellent Wetherspoon pub in a converted cinema.

Keen and helpful staff serve the chain's regular and guest beers from around the country.

The interior is spacious, and there is a small outdoor area downstairs at the rear.

It is popular with locals, visitors and CAMRA members.

It has frequent festivals and is keen to promote real ale, holding occasional meet-the-brewer nights.

The standard Wetherspoon menu is available all day.

It is licensed from 9.30am (11am on Sun).

- 18–20 Bank Steet, FK1 1NB



Shift leader and ale champion Dean Jamieson



Stu Brew's Will Tyson (left) and Chris O'Malley

## LUTHER'S BAR

### Newcastle upon Tyne: City Centre

This is one of the few Wetherspoon pubs to be run in partnership with a university students' union.

The pub is on two floors, with the main restaurant and bar on the top level – and further seating and booths downstairs.

You can get to Luther's by heading down the staircase off the student forum on campus or by using the ramped entrance to the left of the students' union building.

There's a standard Spoons menu, and the guest beers frequently feature those from Newcastle University's own microbrewery – Stu Brew.

- Newcastle University Students' Union, King's Road, NE1 8QB

# HELPING CRAFTY CUSTOMERS QUENCH THEIR CRAVINGS



**Draught craft beer now available in pubs across UK, including brews from Mad Squirrel and Seven Bro7hers - along with Williams Brothers and Stewart Brewing in Scotland**

**W**etherspoon has been supporting and championing breweries and microbreweries throughout the UK for more than 45 years, with a commitment to serving the best range of beers available.

For the past three years, the successful regional craft beer initiative has offered customers a varied range of craft beers in every pub.

This is a range of 16 beers, eight of which rotate bi-annually.

The selection encompasses a range of flavours and styles, including stouts, sours and IPAs.

It also varies in strength, from 4.2% to 7.5% ABV, with pubs across England serving a selection of craft beers in cans and regional variations available in Scottish and Welsh pubs.

Now, draught craft beer is available in pubs across the UK, subject to availability, including craft brews from Hertfordshire brewery Mad Squirrel and Manchester-based Seven Bro7hers.

A separate range is available in Scotland, featuring beers from Stewart Brewing and Williams Brothers.

Wetherspoon's marketing executive, Jess Schofield, responsible for the craft beer projects, said: "Our craft beer selection continues to prove very popular with customers.

"We always aim to offer customers the very best of craft beers available, from breweries around the UK."



## Mad Squirrel \$umo

4.7% ABV

### Hertfordshire

This golden-orange hazy pale ale combines citrus, grapefruit and mango flavours, leading to a dry, bitter finish.

Mad Squirrel prides itself on continued evolution, with a focus on quality, innovation and exploration. Its mission is simple – to craft fantastic beer which excites, satisfies and pushes new boundaries.

It wants to share its passion and products with as many people as possible.

At the heart of the operation are the skilled brewers, blending traditional beer craft with new approaches to create an ever-changing selection of beers.

## Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA

4.7% ABV

### Greater Manchester

This hazy, straw-coloured pale ale delivers a perfect balance of fruit and resinous hop flavours, complemented by subtle pine notes.

Built and led by the McAvoy family – Guy, Keith, Luke, Dan, Nathan, Kit and Greg – Seven Bro7hers Brewing has instilled an ethos of hard work, fairness and adventure into all areas of the business.

The brewery's aim is to make the entry into the craft beer world fun and easy by being 'clear with beer'. It aims to do so by creating good-quality, flavoursome products to enjoy.

Seven Bro7hers also has a beer in Wetherspoon's craft can range – Buzz, a 6.0% ABV honeycomb beer.

See pages 32 and 33 to meet the brewers at Mad Squirrel and Seven Bro7hers.

# CELLAR STARS PUSH LANCASHIRE PUBS INTO CAMRA'S GOOD BOOK

Pub manager John Rogers at The Boot Inn (Burnley)



Two Wetherspoon pubs within six miles of each other have returned, for 2026, to the publication from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) – The Good Beer Guide.

The teams at both Lancashire pubs, The Wallace Hartley (Colne) and The Boot Inn (Burnley), are delighted to be included in the guide.

Pub manager Alex Robinson said: “Our previous cellar/ale champion, shift manager George Ashworth, has been working hard to get The Wallace Hartley back in the guide.

“Although George has now passed the baton to shift leader Leah Sunderland, it reflects his work, ensuring that we have the best-possible selection of ales to please the regulars.

“Leah has carried on that work brilliantly and is passionate about maintaining the best-quality ales.”

Alex added: “We have Ruddles, Abbot and Doom Bar on permanently, allowing us to have eight pumps available for ever-changing guest ales.

“The most popular are generally the darker ales, as well as the stronger ones (5.0% ABV and over), including Phoenix Wobbly Bob, Peerless Knee Buckler and Goose Eye Over & Stout – which always sells particularly quickly.

“Customers definitely seem to prefer the local breweries, although Theakston Old Peculier always goes down well.”

Alex concluded: “I am proud of the team for continually maintaining the quality and for having the best selection of ales in Colne. Nowhere else has as many ales on at any one time – with customers frequently commenting on how our ales are the best kept locally.”

At The Boot Inn, pub manager John Rogers and the team serve 10 ales at all times.

John said: “Ales from Reedley Hallows, Moorhouse’s and Phoenix are all very popular, especially Reedley Hallows Nook of Pendle which we serve as a permanent ale.”

He added: “Shift manager Chris Fewster is the cellar champion, working hard to ensure that we offer a varied selection of ales for customers to choose from.”

John concluded: “We want to be the hub of the community, bringing people together to enjoy a good pint of ale and to meet friends new and old.”



Shift leader and ale champion Leah Sunderland at The Wallace Hartley (Colne)

## McAVOY SIBLINGS' BREWERY WAS NEVER IN DOUBT

Guy, Keith, Luke, Dan, Nathan, Kit and Greg, of Manchester-based Seven Bro7hers Brewing Co, are now supplying Easy IPA and Buzz to Wetherspoon's pubs across UK

**Brewery's name:** Seven Bro7hers Brewing Co, Waybridge Enterprise Centre, Salford, Greater Manchester



Pictured (left to right) are Nathan, Dan, Keith, Luke, Guy, Greg and Kit



**C**raft beer fans can now enjoy Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA (4.7% ABV) on draught at all Wetherspoon pubs across the UK.

Introduced this spring, the hazy pale ale joins the Manchester-based brewery's canned honeycomb beer Buzz (6.0% ABV) in the craft beer range.

Launched in the summer of 2014, Seven Bro7hers is (quite literally) founded, owned and run by seven brothers.

The McAvoy brothers are project and estate manager Guy, commercial and business strategy Keith, IT and systems Luke, warehouse and operations Dan, planning and selling Nathan, head of export Kit and brewer Greg.

### Sisters

One of the four McAvoy sisters, Hayley Robinson, also works for the family business as HR manager.

Keith explained: "Our dad, Eric, was an avid home brewer, so I guess we were always being trained for this role."

"Our dad and mum, Freda, were the ones who gave us our work ethic."

Keith continued: "We have always been entrepreneurial – and most of us have an engineering background."

"I was a professional photographer previously and it was while on an assignment in Oslo, 14 years ago, that I was really inspired by the craft beer scene."

### Original

"BrewDog was leading the way in the UK, and our original idea was to have a brewpub, but, when we looked into it further, we decided to go the whole way and start a brewery."

"Kit was the first head brewer, moving into sales as the company progressed, with Greg taking over at brewing."

"Today, Greg oversees the technical aspects of the process."

"We have an unbelievable team of brewers, including Jack Connell, Harry Grimshaw and James Hatfield."

Seven Bro7hers started supplying cask beer to Wetherspoon's pubs in and around Manchester's city centre six or seven years ago, initially to The Paramount (Manchester), before word spread.

Now that it's on draught at Wetherspoon's pubs nationwide, Keith admitted: "This is a huge deal for a brewery of our size."

"It's like winning the brewery lottery."

### Favourite

Having been shortlisted, Easy IPA was voted, in a taste testing session at Wetherspoon's head office, where Keith visited, to be the overwhelming favourite beer.

Talking about that visit, Keith said: "What struck me about it was that everyone was really lovely, from the receptionist to the employees and directors, many having worked for the company for a long while."

"You don't get that if things aren't working well."

"The working culture at Wetherspoon is spot on – and we definitely want to work with people like that."

He added: "The opportunity for us to expand into all of Wetherspoon's pubs is exciting."

"Also, knowing how the company trains all of its pub staff and managers, we know that our beer will be kept and served in great condition."

Keith concluded: "After a tough few years with Brexit and COVID-19, as well as the war in Ukraine, affecting raw ingredients, this incredible opportunity is very timely and allows us to grow as a business."

# HAZY HEAVYWEIGHT HOPS PULL NO PUNCHES IN \$UMO

Craft beer from Mad Squirrel now available on draught at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK

**Brewery's name:** Mad Squirrel Brewery, Boxted Farm, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire



Pictured (left to right) are brewing director Matthias Seidl, managing director Greg Blesson and commercial manager Jack Blesson

**W**etherspoon's pubs across the UK are now serving new craft beer options on draught, including Hertfordshire-based brewery Mad Squirrel's \$umo APA (4.7% ABV).

Named after its two US hop ingredients, Summit and the irrepressible Mosaic, delivering a real tropical fruit punch, \$umo APA is unfiltered, vegan friendly and naturally hazy.

The haziness comes from the protein in the beer and the unfiltered process, producing in-depth flavours which have cemented \$umo's big reputation for consistent quality and flavours with impact.

The beer is brewed at Mad Squirrel Brewery, which was established in 2010 by joint founders managing director Greg Blesson and finance director Jason Duncan-Anderson.

### Original

Based just outside of London, at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, there is a team of 68 at Mad Squirrel – and the brewery is still managed and run by the core management and original founders.

During the past 16 years, the brewery's beers' popularity has grown exponentially and established a firm foothold in the craft beer market, with brewing director Matthias Seidl's Bavarian roots heavily influencing the beers' style and brewery's philosophy.

### Relationship

Greg Blesson said: "We have been dealing with Wetherspoon, in various capacities, for more than 14 years – and I like to think that our business relationship has grown."

"I believe that this is due to our positive attitude towards the ever-developing and ever-evolving Wetherspoon business model, which encompasses great beer and food for all demographics."

He continued: "Our brewery has always supported cask beer in Wetherspoon and continues to do so; however, the surge and demand for our craft keg offering, particularly in the last six years, have increased."

### Forefront

"With the \$umo APA brand at the forefront, it has allowed our craft keg offering to develop for Mad Squirrel across Wetherspoon's pubs, initially in the home counties regions and inside the M25."

"We are now thrilled to launch \$umo APA nationally with Wetherspoon, allowing beer aficionados to experience our hazy craft keg beer on draught in their favourite Wetherspoon pub."

Greg added: "Craft beer is all about authenticity – often, recently, pubs' pouring taps have been dominated by former premium craft beer brands."

"However, Wetherspoon's strategy is to support and nurture brands such as \$umo APA, produced and supported by genuine independent breweries like Mad Squirrel, allowing customers to have access to an authentic craft beer."

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



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

**I**n 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 table<sup>1</sup> 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
<b>Total tax</b>	<b>837.6</b>	<b>780.2</b>	<b>760.4</b>	<b>666.9</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>442.1</b>	<b>765.1</b>	<b>730.7</b>	<b>695.3</b>	<b>672.4</b>	<b>6,389.8</b>
<b>Tax per pub (£m)</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>7.48</b>
<b>Tax as % of net sales</b>	<b>39.4%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>43.1%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>
<b>Profit/(loss) after tax</b>	<b>58.2</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>-24.9</b>	<b>-146.5</b>	<b>-38.5</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>83.6</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>237.6</b>

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

# TIM TALKS TAX WITH TOP TORIES

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman Tim Martin met the leader of the Conservative Party, Kemi Badenoch MP, and shadow chancellor of the exchequer, Mel Stride MP, in the run-up to the budget.

The meeting, which took place at The Metropolitan Bar, in London's West End, was arranged by the Conservative Party.

Tim (pictured with the MPs) said: "Kemi and Mel asked to meet me to discuss my views on the forthcoming budget and the pub industry.

"I was delighted to meet them, as I would be with any politician, including the prime minister and chancellor of the exchequer, to discuss the threats facing the pub industry.

"I pointed out the issue that pubs are overtaxed relative to supermarkets and that they should be on an equal footing.

"Pubs pay 20 per cent VAT on food sales versus nothing for supermarkets, which can, in effect, lower beer prices with this tax advantage.

"I also highlighted that pubs pay about 25p a pint on business rates versus about 2p for supermarkets.

"As a consequence, the pricing differential between pubs and supermarkets has widened enormously in recent decades, contributing to dereliction in high streets and town centres.

"Eventually, it will erode jobs in the pub industry."

Mel Stride added: "Pubs are right at the centre of our local communities and need a government which is firmly on their side.

"I gave Tim Martin a clear commitment that a future Conservative government will back business, back jobs and back our pubs.

"Labour's tax hikes are draining confidence and choking opportunity – we will restore it.

"Britain succeeds when business can invest, grow and hire – and that's the future we will deliver."



# CULTURED COLIN GETS CREATIVE IN COLNE

Author Colin Morgan has written and illustrated a book about a knitting dinosaur at The Wallace Hartley (Colne).

TiaRex (the one who Invented knitting!) features a small-armed dinosaur who discovers knitting to occupy those small arms and as a distraction from itchiness.

Accompanied by friends, she embarks on magnificent adventures and makes astounding new discoveries.

Colin describes himself as a huge Wetherspoon fan, visiting the pub two or three times a week to write, always enjoying a pint of real ale, preferably a dark porter, often followed by a coffee.

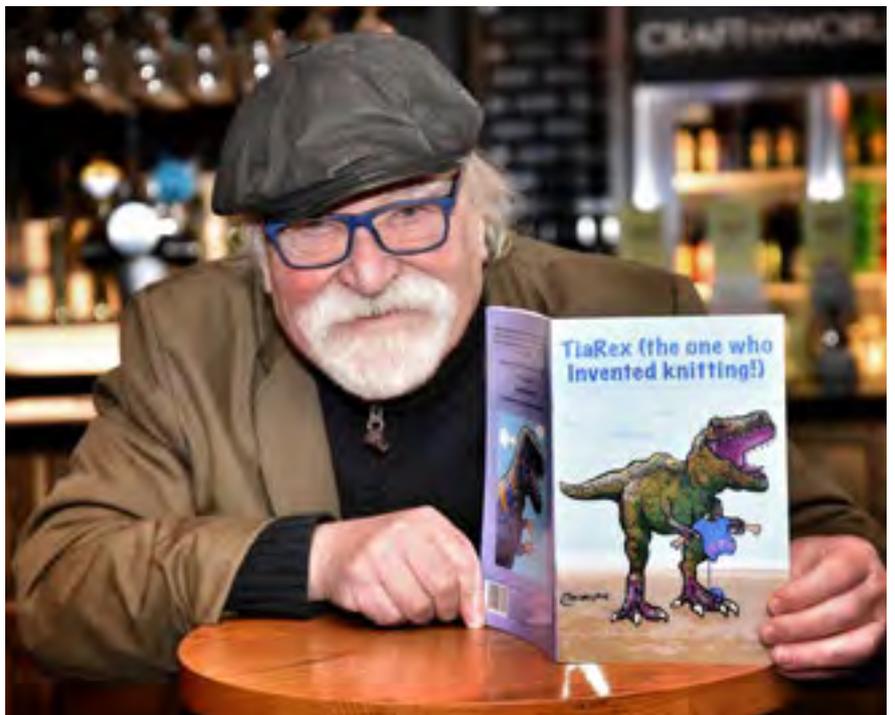
He said: "I wrote the whole of this book in The Wallace Hartley and also did some of the illustrations there."

Colin added: "I also seek other Wetherspoon pubs, when visiting different towns, as I am a big fan of cultural and historical attractions.

"I think that, more than anyone, Tim Martin has transformed the face of Britain, converting all of these redundant banks, cinemas and other buildings into great pubs."

Pub manager Alex Robinson said: "Colin wrote the entire book during his many visits to the pub and has mentioned us in the acknowledgements (in the back of the book) – a lovely thing to do."

● **TiaRex (the one who Invented knitting!)** is available on Amazon



## THE STANDING ORDER • EDINBURGH

# IRYNA STANDS OUT AT STANDING ORDER, AFTER FORCED FLEE FROM KYIV



When Iryna Chaika and her identical twin sister, Maryna, arrived in 2022 in the UK from their home in Kyiv, they were aged just 20 and a long way from their Ukrainian home.

A complete stranger sponsored the sisters, welcoming them into their home near Carlisle.

Iryna recalled: "She was a lovely lady and, apart from a telephone conversation with her, she was a total stranger yet welcomed us into her home.

"I was struggling to find a job and worked part time at a hotel, before starting as a bar associate at The William Rufus (Carlisle)."

Iryna said: "I had just basic school English and zero experience of bar work before I joined Wetherspoon in November 2022.

"It was a very busy time and especially hard. I didn't drink alcohol and everything was unknown."

Iryna spent six months at the pub in Carlisle before leaving for somewhere new.

She explained: "Carlisle is not big. We are from Kyiv, a capital city and, although we could stay as long as we wanted with our sponsor, because of her kindness and support, it was time to move on and progress.

"The choice was among Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh – and we chose Edinburgh."

Iryna, now 24, said: "I was going to quit my job at The William Rufus, until I was told I could transfer.

"It was a great opportunity not to lose my job."

Iryna joined the team at The Standing Order (Edinburgh), while Maryna works as a clothing store merchandiser, with a company she worked with at home in Kyiv.

Maryna continues to develop within the company and has also achieved promotion.

Iryna progressed to team leader and has now stepped up to shift-leader level.

She said: "I like customer service and people. I meet so many different people and improve my English every day.

"I really like working for Wetherspoon. I am just going with the flow and, if I have an opportunity, I will take it. With Wetherspoon, I can progress.

"I didn't expect to become a shift leader, but my team is lovely, trusts me and I am grateful."

Robert Drysdale, a regular customer, wrote: "The staff at The Standing Order are excellent and obviously very well trained.

"A stand-out member of the team is Iryna.

"Despite the language barrier and the distressing reasons for being here in Scotland from her home in Ukraine, she is a remarkably dedicated team member, immensely personable and vivacious, engaging eagerly and empathetically with customers and working so very hard.

"As with so many Ukrainians now living in the UK, she has a moving story to tell – and it seems to me that Wetherspoon has been an important part of her success in coping with the enforced move from home."

# SMARTER SPUDS, SNAZZY JACKETS

**Wetherspoon's potato array jazzed up with three new jackets**

**W**etherspoon's classic jackets just became smarter spuds – not just dinner (or lunch) jackets... but gourmet jackets.

The jacket potato has been a traditional menu staple, a huge favourite with customers and a great lunchtime or lite-bite option for many years.

Now, Wetherspoon's pubs are serving even more choice – with three NEW jazzed-up jackets.

Wetherspoon's menu has introduced a new gourmet range of fully loaded jacket potatoes, with three super spuds to choose from.

One of the three is the loaded spud – a traditional British tattie, topped with garlic butter, mozzarella, Cheddar cheese, maple-cured bacon and sour cream.

The Mexican spud, a flavour-packed vegetarian option, is loaded with chilli bean non-carne, mozzarella, Cheddar cheese, guacamole made with Hass avocados, crushed tortilla chips for an irresistible crunch, sliced chilli and coriander.

The smoky spud is loaded with pulled BBQ British beef brisket, topped with mozzarella and Cheddar cheese, drizzled with smoky chipotle mayo and garnished with sliced chilli.

The classic jackets continue to offer a choice of six potato fillings, although extra fillings can be added for an additional cost.

A side salad is also included in the price of the meal.

The classic jackets are tuna mayo, coleslaw, cheese, baked beans, chilli bean non-carne and Mediterranean vegetables.

All jacket potatoes, both classic and gourmet, come with a soft or alcoholic drink included from a huge selection on offer – as part of the meal's price.

Wetherspoon's jackets are 100-per-cent British baked potatoes from long-standing supplier Bannisters Yorkshire Family Farm, from Bridlington, East Riding of Yorkshire.

● See pages 68–69 for more information about the company supplying Wetherspoon's jacket potatoes.



*The loaded spud*



*The Mexican spud*



*The smoky spud*

# 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**

**W**etherspoon'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 747 rated pubs, with 741 of those achieving the maximum-possible score of five.

**Combined**

The top three companies (see table opposite) have a rating of 5.00 each, but with a combined number of only 152 premises, compared with Wetherspoon's total of 747 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, 747 currently have an FHRS rating, with 99.2 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	72	5.00
Giggling Squid	54	5.00
Carluccio's	26	5.00
<b>J D Wetherspoon</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>4.99</b>
Wagamama	160	4.99
Aldi	926	4.98
Nando's	448	4.98
Waitrose	444	4.98
Zizzi	129	4.97
All Bar One	39	4.97
Greggs	2299	4.96
Starbucks	1219	4.96
Miller & Carter	102	4.96
Prezzo	97	4.96
Turtle Bay	49	4.96
Sainsbury's	1435	4.95
McDonald's	1367	4.95
Lidl	903	4.95
Nicholson's	64	4.95
Pret	464	4.94
Slug & Lettuce	67	4.94
The Ivy Collection	50	4.94
Cosy Club	36	4.94
Yates	19	4.94
Castle	92	4.93
Wahaca	15	4.93
Walkabout	15	4.93
Tesco	2694	4.92
KFC	926	4.91
YO! To Go	300	4.91
Coffee#1	126	4.91
Costa Coffee	2476	4.90
Burger King	511	4.90
Ember Inns	146	4.90
Toby Carvery	145	4.90
Côte	73	4.90
Bill's	48	4.90
Craft Union	604	4.89
PizzaExpress	338	4.89
Loungers	244	4.89
Vintage Inns	132	4.88
Sizzling Pub Co	167	4.87
Premium Country Pubs	68	4.87
Geronimo	30	4.87
Young's	217	4.86
Harvester	144	4.86
YO! Sushi	51	4.86
Asda	962	4.85
O'Neill's	44	4.84
Papa Johns	409	4.83
Bella Italia	70	4.81
German Döner Kebab	134	4.80
Brewers fayre	113	4.80
Subway	1871	4.79
The Breakfast Club	23	4.77
Fuller's	168	4.76
Browns	39	4.76
GBK	29	4.74
Morrisons	1680	4.73
BrewDog	44	4.73
Las Iguanas	49	4.69
Byron	35	4.69

Information in this table was sourced in January 2026 from [www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk](http://www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk), listing 747 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.

# STICKERS ON THE DOORS HELP DRAW CROWDS TO TANNERS HALL

**Darlington pub has won maximum five-star hygiene rating for eight consecutive inspections**



**A**cross 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 Tanners Hall (Darlington).

Pub manager Ashleigh Connolly (pictured left) was promoted to the role in June 2024 and has been at the pub for five years.

Ashleigh, who is originally from Blyth, started with the company 10 years ago, as a bar associate at The Red Lion (Bedlington) and also worked at The William Stead (Darlington).

### Team

Kitchen manager Martyn Swannell (pictured right) joined the team at The Tanners Hall in September 2024, having previously been pub manager at The Ralph Fitz Randal (Richmond).

Ashleigh said: "A five-star hygiene rating is so important for the pub's reputation.

"We have the stickers on the door, so customers are more than aware.

"I would always check the rating of a venue, if I were going somewhere, so expect others to do the same.

"As a pub manager, I always want the best, in every aspect, for my pub."

### Stringent

Wetherspoon has stringent procedures and policies in place for hygiene and food safety, with monthly visits to every pub for checks and reports – by the company's own audit team.

Ashleigh confirmed: "Wetherspoon's internal audit and monthly visits ensure that we keep up to standard and, if there are any issues, we know there and then what they are and how to address them.

"This system, in turn, helps to achieve and maintain the independent five-star rating."

She added: "Wetherspoon makes it really easy to be able to achieve the highest level of hygiene and food safety, yet these inspections also take account of the general condition of the pub.

"Thanks to the maintenance associates now in place, we can move quickly on any issues on this side of things too.

### Best

"Any repairs or problems can be addressed quickly, with the company helping you to do everything possible to make your pub the best it can be."

Speaking about her team, Ashleigh said: "Our core team, front of house, has worked at the pub for three plus years... which is great for consistency.

"Martyn is passionate about high standards, which is essential.

"Kitchen associate Dale Yates is a great kitchen team member, having worked for the company since 1998, so is the most experienced."

Ashleigh concluded: "Martyn and I work well together and share the same work ethic and goals, so make a great team.

"We each arrived at the same time at The Tanners Hall as a manager and both want the best for our pub."

## BREWER MATT FLAT OUT AT ILKESTON TAP TAKE-OVER

Brewery owner Matt Beeby spent time with customers, including Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members as his Grainstore Brewery took over the taps at The Observatory (Ilkeston).

The pub has been serving the Oakham brewer's beers for several years, including Three Kings, Tapping Ale and Rutland Osprey.

Shift manager Anouska Abraham said: "Customers here include several CAMRA members who enjoy, and are knowledgeable about, real ale.

"They thoroughly enjoyed the event – and we are grateful to Matt for bringing in some samples of the brewery's other beers for customers to enjoy, as well as chatting to customers."

Matt is pictured with bar associate Lily Domleo.



## SWANSEA'S SONNY DELIVERS DOGG ON A PLATE TO SNOOP



When Snoop Dogg became a co-owner of Swansea City Football Club, Wetherspoon customer Sonny D decided to give him a proper south Wales welcome.

Sonny (pictured), who regularly visits The Potters Wheel (Swansea) is a keen Swansea City fan and, as a musician himself, decided to write a comedy song commemorating the occasion.

It was while at the pub that he wrote Welcome to Swansea Snoop Dogg. Hoping to attract the attention of the American rapper and actor, Sonny had two large posters put up for a fortnight in Swansea's railway station, two digital posters on electronic billboards, as well as some printed flags for the stadium.

"With actors Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney being owners of Wrexham, as well as Snoop Dogg involved at Swansea, I thought that it was sure to be an excellent and fun opportunity," said Sonny, who works as an ESL teacher.

In addition, Sonny had a plate-shaped concrete sculpture of Snoop Dogg's face which he hopes to give to him when he visits the Swansea.com stadium this year.

● Search 'Welcome to Swansea Snoop Dogg' on YouTube or scan the QR code to listen.



# SENIOR STAFF REVEAL WHY THEY ARE HAPPY TO STICK WITH SPOONS

**Career progression chances help make company a popular employer**

**F**or many, working at Wetherspoon is not just a job – it’s a career.

Across the estate, managers are choosing to build their career for the long term.

The average pub manager has been with Wetherspoon for 15 years and four months, while kitchen managers average 11 years and five months’ service.

These milestones reflect not just loyalty, but genuine progression – the chance to grow, develop and take pride in creating great pubs, kitchens and hotels.

Here, two pub managers share how their long-standing career has evolved, from early beginnings to leading busy, successful pubs at the heart of their communities.

Also, a hotel manager and colleague (whose partnership proves that teamwork, trust and shared experience can create something truly unique) share their stories.

A kitchen manager at a pub in Scotland also recalls her Wetherspoon career journey, so far.



*Sean O'Farrell*

**Pub manager, The William Webb Ellis (Twickenham)**

Joining Wetherspoon in June 2001, shortly after moving from South Africa to the UK, Sean began his journey as a shift manager at The Old Suffolk Punch (Turnpike Lane, north London) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

With a background in managing pubs and restaurants back home, the role felt like a natural fit – and the attractive salary and work-life balance were a welcome change from the 70-hour weeks to which he had become accustomed.

His early days were memorable for all the right reasons – despite his first attempt at pouring a pint of real ale, which ended up mostly as foam.

“I looked like a real first-time barman,” Sean joked.

Today, Sean is pub manager at The William Webb Ellis (Twickenham), having moved there in January 2026 from The Botwell Inn (Hayes).

He enjoys the variety of his role, particularly stock control and regular interaction with customers, both of which have changed significantly – and for the better – since he took over the pub.

Progression, for Sean, has been built on hard work, dedication and doing things the right way.

Along the way, several colleagues have played a key part in his development: Pete Johnson, in Hounslow, taught him the importance of strong stock control, while Graham and Jenny Farr, at Heathrow, reinforced that shortcuts never pay off – and that following the Wetherspoon way leads to success.

Courses in health and safety proved especially valuable, offering training which had been limited in his previous roles in South Africa.

Like many managers, Sean has faced challenges, particularly around building confidence when dealing with employee issues, yet has always worked to meet them head on.

One of his proudest achievements was earning four greens (top marks) on his first audit while holding the pub manager role, a milestone which contributed to his being recommended for further progression.

Sean’s stand-out memory at Wetherspoon is a personal one: during a difficult period in his early management career, senior managers showed genuine empathy and support.

“It showed me that I wasn’t just a number in the company,” Sean said.

Now a single parent of two daughters, Sean values the flexibility which his role provides.

While he’s happy in his current role, he hasn’t ruled out a future return to the fast-paced airport pubs, where he spent seven years and thrived on the constant energy.

Sean’s advice to new starters is simple: “Don’t be afraid to ask questions. If you want to progress, prove to your line manager that you’re capable.”



## Sylwester Jaroszewicz

### Pub manager, The Sir Michael Balcon (Ealing)

Sylwester joined Wetherspoon in October 2009, taking his first job as a kitchen associate at The George (Staines-upon-Thames), shortly after arriving in the UK from Poland.

With limited English and no previous experience of working in a kitchen in the UK, those first few weeks were daunting – so daunting, in fact, that he tried to hand in his notice on more than one occasion.

But with support from the team around him, he stayed – and began his career.

Today, Sylwester is a pub manager responsible for running the business, supporting the team, looking after customers and resolving those challenges which come with a busy pub.

Of all his responsibilities, it is the customer interaction which he enjoys the most, seeing it as the heart of good hospitality.

Sylwester's progression from kitchen associate to pub manager was shaped by structured training, hands-on learning and strong support from those around him.

Auditors, area managers and his former pub manager all played a part, encouraging him to push forward and giving him the confidence and skills he needed.

The Wetherspoon kitchen training programme provided a strong foundation for his progression.

The biggest challenge he faced along the way was learning how to run a business – something which had once felt completely out of reach.

One of his proudest achievements is simply reaching the role which he holds today, something he'd never thought possible, when he first joined.

Alongside that, he has also celebrated record-breaking pub profits with his team on several occasions.

He has collected 'hundreds of memories' over the years – good, bad and everything in between – each shaped by those he has worked with and the teams he has led.

Looking ahead, he hasn't ruled out aiming even higher to an area-manager role in the future.

Sylwester said: "Wetherspoon rewards honesty, hard work and determination.

"Anyone can progress – from kitchen to manager and beyond – if they stay committed and make use of the opportunities which the company provides."



## Jane Clarey

### Hotel manager, The Shrewsbury Hotel (Shrewsbury)

Jane first joined Wetherspoon in February 1999 as a part-time receptionist, working a total of nine hours a week at The Shrewsbury Hotel (Shrewsbury).

Before that, she worked at the hotel (from November 1992) until the owners sold to Wetherspoon. The hotel closed while being refurbished, with the premises reopening in September 1998 as Wetherspoon's first hotel.

Jane said: "I remember in my first few weeks using a computer, with a built-in hotel PMS (property management system) for the first time and a PDQ machine – and thinking to myself: 'What have I got myself into?' With no computer experience, it was a massive culture shock for me.

"So, I enrolled at night school to learn the basic skills, taught myself the 'Wetherspoon Way' from a manual and soon realised the benefits of working for a larger established company – and Wetherspoon became my way of life.

"I had three young children, at the time, and was able to work evenings and weekends, so as not to miss out on family life.

"I am now a grandparent and work three days a week, allowing me time to help with childcare and to not miss out on precious family occasions.

"My children have all worked for the company while at college and university, on the bar, in the kitchen or on reception.

"One of my sisters, a nephew and four nieces have all worked for the company, too, at various times.

"I was lucky enough to progress in my role quickly to hotel manager, the first in the company, and have worked for the preopening hotel team, taking part in the opening of 26 hotels.

"I have made great memories and life-long friends, one of those being my 'partner-in-crime', Lisa Driscoll, hotel manager at The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend).

"We always have a good story to share.

"No two days are ever the same in hotel life. We have dealt with a gas explosion, a fire and many floods, to name just a few incidents.

"The job can be challenging, however, working alongside an amazing team, with great support always from my pub manager Sue Richards and from my colleague Gail Pope (the three of us have worked together for more than 25 years), we make it happen.

"I am very proud of my achievements over the years and can't ever imagine myself not working for Wetherspoon."



*Gail Pope*

**Hotel shift leader, The Shrewsbury Hotel (Shrewsbury)**

Gail started with Wetherspoon on 30 October 2000. It was the start of what turned out to be the worst flooding in Shrewsbury for many years.

The town was cut off for several days – and the pub had to close because of flooding, a closure which lasted several weeks.

However, staff, including Gail, managed to keep the hotel open (the water didn't quite reach reception's door), with guests having to walk along planks.

Gail said: "I knew from that first day that it was going to be fun to work here, as we had a great team, all working together to keep the guests safe and happy.

"Following redundancy from previous part-time employment, I applied initially for the Wetherspoon job as a hotel receptionist to get back to full-time work when my last child (now aged 36) started senior school.

"Hotel manager Jane Clarey has always been my mentor and work colleague, now a very good friend.

"We have worked together for 25 years, supported each other and learned together (especially the tech side of things).

"My son also worked for the hotel, in the bar, for a couple of years, rising to shift leader before moving on.

"My daughter also worked in housekeeping for a while, to help when short-staffed one summer.

"In the past year, I have reduced my hours to fit around looking after my granddaughter.

"Wetherspoon is always accommodating, when it comes to work-life balance.

"The day-to-day is always busy – with every day different. I enjoy the interaction with our guests the most.

"It's interesting to know why they have come to Shrewsbury and why they have chosen a Wetherspoon hotel for their stay.

"I have loved the new hotel openings as a trainer over the years.

"It's hard work, but great to be able to pass on all my skills and Wetherspoon hotel knowledge, as I have worked and helped in every department, including housekeeping and night portering.

"In the future, maybe within the next two years, it will probably be my time to retire, for the younger generation to take over.

"If someone asked me whether Wetherspoon is a good company to work for, I would always say yes.

"It is caring, informative and progressive, with great opportunities to further your career in all departments."



*Heather Cuthbert*

**Kitchen manager, The Capital Asset (Perth)**

Heather first joined Wetherspoon in 2015 as a kitchen associate at The Robert Nairn (Kirkcaldy), where she stayed for a few months before becoming a housekeeper at The Guildhall & Linen Exchange (Dunfermline).

Heather admitted: "I left briefly and tried working for another company, before coming back as a kitchen associate at Dunfermline.

"I was then there for a good few years, before another small break, then returning and staying."

Heather then applied for a kitchen shift leader position at The Bourtree (Hawick).

She recalled: "When I had my interview, I ended up getting a kitchen-manager role and was there for around three years."

A six-month spell at The Caley Picture House (Edinburgh) followed, before a move to her current pub – The Capital Asset (Perth).

Heather added: My mum Yvonne is a brilliant kitchen manager and has been for the last 20 odd years. She works at The Guildhall & Linen Exchange, and I knew that her knowledge and training would be my biggest support.

"I have recently become a mum myself, for the first time, so I'm getting back, right now, into the swing of a working week."

Heather said: "As a kitchen manager, the responsibility I enjoy the most is the training. I enjoy seeing new recruits, as well as more experienced staff members, who want to progress and learn more."

Heather names several key people who have supported her on her career journey, including her mum, Yvonne, and sister, Jenny Cuthbert, who also works at The Guildhall & Linen Exchange as a shift manager, as well as her partner, Harris Bevin, kitchen manager at Jolly's Hotel (Broughty Ferry).

She added: "Also Rich and Terri Conway, pub manager and kitchen manager at The Bourtree, who genuinely couldn't have supported me more at the start of my kitchen-manager journey.

"The role of kitchen manager is great for me; finding a good family life while being successful at that is what we will be figuring out next."

When asked what advice she would give to someone just starting with Wetherspoon, Heather replies: "Ask, ask, ask.

"If you're struggling with something or trying to do something and don't know how to, or want to know why we do something, always ask someone. Help is there."

MARLOW

# GRAND ASSEMBLY FITS IN AT THE FIT OUT AWARDS



The Grand Assembly (Marlow) has been named 'fit-out project of the year – hospitality' winner, at the Fit Out Awards UK.

The awards honour outstanding achievements (and the talent behind them) in the design and execution of fit-out projects across the UK.

The Grand Assembly opened in September 2024 on the site of a former M&Co store, following a £3.5-million development project.

The pub's interior design is inspired by traditional pubs, gin palaces and the grand assembly halls of the Victorian era, with a modern industrial twist, amalgamating old and new design elements.

Links to the site's history, as the premises of Batting & Son's ironmonger's (from the 1820s until c1960), are also included, while giving subtle nods to Frankenstein – written by Mary Shelley, who lived in a cottage a stone's throw from the site in 1817, while writing the Gothic novel.

Design elements have also been inspired heavily by the town's connection to The Thames – notably the industry which it brought to the area in the town's early establishment, as well as its rich rowing heritage.

There is also a terraced courtyard beer garden at the back of the pub.

Wetherspoon worked with local charities Wild Marlow and Bisham Nest Box Group to provide swifts (a recently red-listed species) and bats with nesting sites, while promoting pollinating insects and bees through tailored planting in the garden.

The fit-out was designed by architect KDPA and was recognised for its blend of historical and modern design, with a focus on sustainability and, wherever possible, locally sourced materials.

The judges recognised the pub for its thoughtful integration of local character and historical context.

They said that the blend of eras, expressed through bold ceiling contrasts, striking lighting and layered materials, delivers an eclectic (yet refined) aesthetic.

They also praised the fit-out for showcasing a creative, story-driven approach which respects the past, while embracing the present.

# NOW OPEN

## Glasgow

### BLACK BEAR

Pub manager Kayleigh McMenemy is pictured at Black Bear, Wetherspoon's newest pub in Uddingston, near Glasgow.

The pub has opened on the site of a former Beefeater restaurant.

It is the company's eighth pub in and around the city.

This pub takes its name from a traditional Scottish pipe march.

Although its exact composer remains unknown, The Black Bear march has been traced to the 19th century.

Its rhythm makes it fitting for marching-off parades and leading troops home.

Often heard at ceremonies, parades and gatherings, the tune is still widely performed today by Scottish regiments and civilian pipe bands.

The pub has a ground-floor bar and a large beer garden at the front of the property.

The pub is wheelchair accessible and has a specially adapted toilet for customers with disabilities.

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 Kayleigh McMenemy said: "My team and I are delighted with the new-look pub."

Wetherspoon's other pubs in and around Glasgow are The Counting House in St Vincents Place, The Crystal Palace on Jamaica Street, The Hengler's Circus on Sauchiehall Street, The Society Room on West George Street, The Sir John Moore on Argyle Street, The Kirky Puffer in Townhead, Kirkintilloch and The Esquire House on Great Western Road, Anniesland.

**2 Calderpark, Uddingston, Glasgow, G71 7SA**





## Beaconsfield

### THE CHILTERN

Pub manager Sam Garvey is pictured at The Chiltern, Wetherspoon's new pub in Beaconsfield.

The company has spent £3.4 million developing the pub in Station Road, in a former Prezzo restaurant, which was once a cinema.

The first film shown at the 500-seat Picture House was a silent war film – Mare Nostrum, soon after which 'talkies' were introduced.

In the mid 1950s, the cinema's capacity was reduced to accommodate a new wide screen.

In 1961, it was purchased by the local council and 'extensively modernised' soon afterwards.

It was also renamed The Chiltern.

The cinema closed its doors for the last time on 29 September 1989, with the site sold five years later.

The ground-floor customer area (2,700sq ft) has an opening shopfront and an enclosed pavement terrace beer garden (484sq ft) at the front of the building.

An additional enclosed rear terrace garden area (1,246sq ft) is accessed via the pub, through large bi-folding doors.

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 a large projector and a cabinet full of smaller 20th-century projectors.

Pub manager Sam Garvey said: "The Chiltern is housed in a landmark building in the town.

"Customers are delighted with the redevelopment – and we are delighted at how busy the pub has been since opening day."



**12 Station Road, Beaconsfield  
Buckinghamshire, HP9 1QR**

# NOW OPEN

## Basildon

### SIGERED, KING OF ESSEX

Basildon MP Richard Holden is pictured officially opening the new Wetherspoon pub in his constituency, alongside pub manager Gabby Alefounder and colleagues (pictured left to right) shift manager Abby Richards, area manager Martin Dearden, kitchen manager Bryan Simmons, shift leader Sam Casey and shift manager Kye Skilton.

The pub, Sigered, King of Essex, is located in Basildon's town centre.

As a place name, Basildon's origin is Saxon, meaning 'Beorthel's Hill'. During the 7th century, the area was part of the Kingdom of the East Saxons – now referred to as the Kingdom of Essex. It was then one of the seven Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England.

During c604–16, it was ruled by Sebert, thought to have been buried at Great Burstead, now part of the Basildon district. The last king of Essex was Sigered, reigning during 798–825.

Sigered, King of Essex, cost £2.75 million to develop and features a bar on its ground level and an outside customer area.

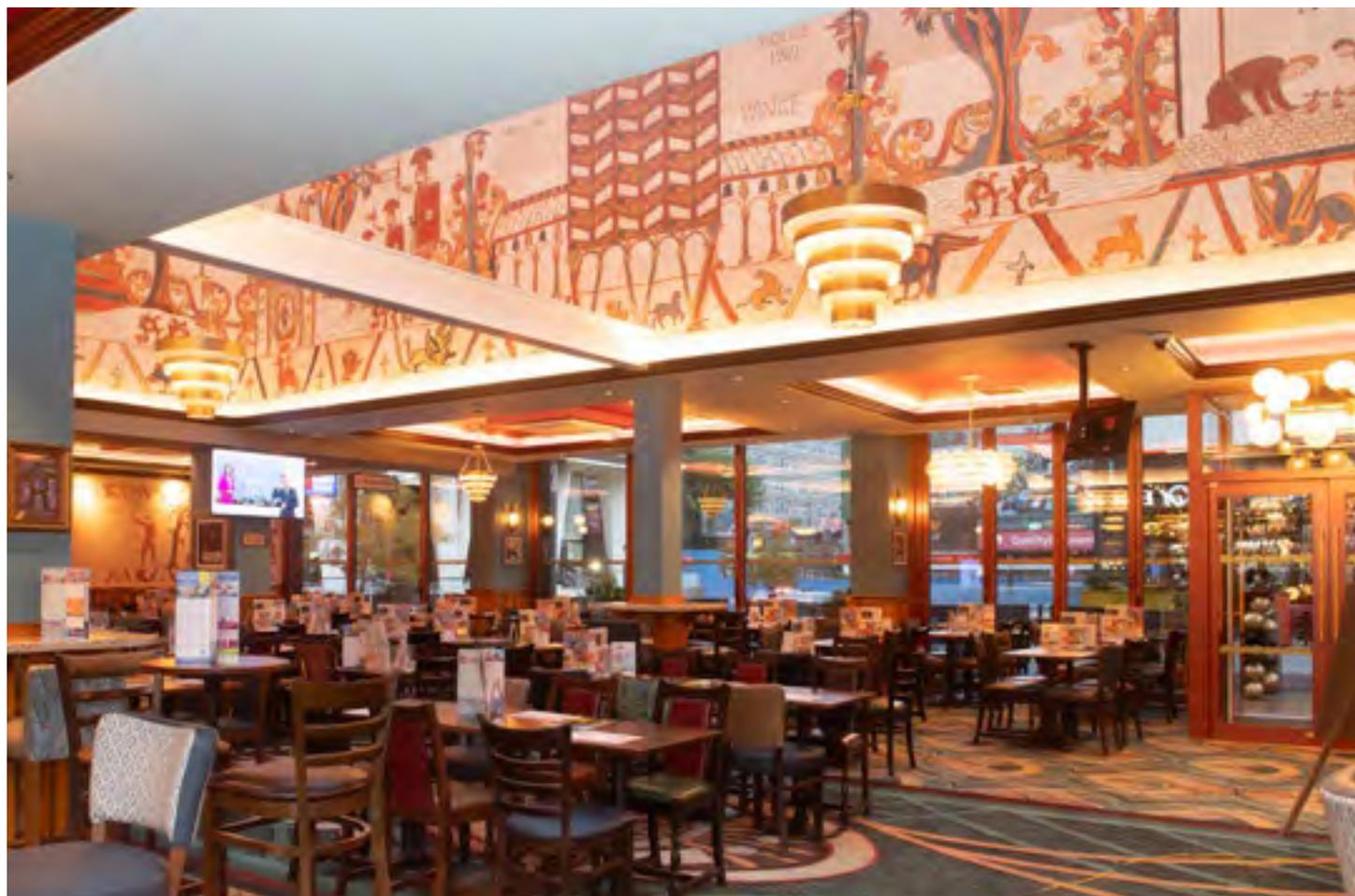
The pub's interior design reflects the heritage of the local area, including a bespoke carpet design.

A skylight has been installed, as well as a three-storey light well, to maximise natural light inside the pub.

Pub manager Gabby Alefounder said: "Since opening, the pub has become a firm favourite with people in the town – and we look forward to serving them for many years to come."



8–10 East Walk, Eastgate Shopping Centre  
Basildon, Essex, SS14 1HG



# Bristol

## EMERSONS GREEN

Pub manager Lauren Hooper is pictured at Emersons Green (Bristol).

The pub has opened on the site of a former Beefeater restaurant in Emersons Green, following a £1-million development project.

The pub's name refers to the history of the local area.

The suburb was built on farmland, an area recorded on an 1830 map simply as Hows Moor. Starting as just a hamlet, long before South Gloucestershire existed, it has grown steadily into a residential Bristol suburb.

For 88 years (until 2015), it was in the civil parish of Mangotsfield Rural (derived from Old English 'Mangod's Feld' and mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) as 'Manegodesfelle' and in 1377 as 'Manegodesfeld'). The parish was renamed Emersons Green.

The pub, which has a ground floor bar, also has a large beer garden at the front of the property.

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 Lauren Hooper said: "I'm delighted with the new-look pub and the positive reaction from customers."

**200-202 Westerleigh Road  
Emersons Green, Bristol, BS16 7AN**



# Holystone

## THE BLUE BELL

Pub manager Keeley Hine is pictured with shift manager Ivan Jackson-Lunn (left) and kitchen manager Kevin Wilkinson at the opening of The Blue Bell (Holystone).

The pub has opened on the site of the former Cookhouse and Pub restaurant, following a £1-million development project.

This pub's name refers to the mining history of the local area.

Nearby Backworth Colliery was actually a group of separate collieries sharing the Backworth name. The first shaft was sunk in 1813 at Backworth A pit. As well as B, C, D and E pits, there were also pits called the Blue Bell and the Prosperous.

Both The Blue Bell pub and the Blue Bell railway crossing were named after the pit. The Backworth pits are all long gone, with the long-standing pub now converted into apartments.

The pub has a large beer garden around the property.

Pub manager Keeley Hine said: "We are delighted to have created 70 new jobs and brought the former restaurant back to life as a pub serving the local community."

**Edmund Road, Holystone, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE27 0UN**



# NOW OPEN

## Cramlington

### THE NEW MOOR FARM

Pub manager Sarah Perfect is pictured centre with shift manager Zak Crosley and bar associate Tracy Lowther at the opening of The New Moor Farm (Cramlington).

The pub has opened on the site of the former Moor Farm Beefeater restaurant, following a development project costing more than £1 million.

This pub's name refers to the land where it stands, which once formed the fields of Moor Farm.

The farm was first recorded in 1769 on a map as 'New Moor' and on later maps as 'Moor House', 'Cramlington Moor Farm' and also 'Moor Farm'.

However, by the late 1980s, it had been abandoned.

In the early 2000s, the farmhouse and its outbuildings were redeveloped.

The pub has a large beer garden.

Pub manager Sarah Perfect said: "My team and I are confident that the pub will be a great addition to the area."



**Moor Farm, Annitsford, Cramlington  
Tyne and Wear, NE23 7QA**



## Stockton-on-Tees

### THE RED ANCHOR

Pub manager Steph Sweet is pictured (centre) at The Red Anchor (Stockton-on-Tees), with kitchen shift leader Ryan Jones and shift leader Diane Johnson.

The pub has opened on the site of the former Brewers Fayre at Preston Farm Industrial Estate, following a £1-million development project.

The pub's name refers to the local area's shipbuilding history.

Ropner's shipbuilding company was on the north shore of the River Tees, where there were several smaller yards. Centuries earlier, nearby Yarm was the first port to develop on the river, yet could not compete with Stockton-on-Tees.

The importance of ships and shipping is reflected in the borough's coat of arms, with its background of six white-and-blue waves and a red anchor reflecting the area's seafaring traditions.

The pub has a beer garden at the front and back of the property.

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 Steph Sweet said: "We are delighted to be part of the Stockton-on-Tees community and look forward to welcoming customers to The Red Anchor long into the future."



**Preston Farm, Yarm Road, Stockton-on-Tees  
County Durham, TS18 3RT**

## Wetherby

### THE ANGEL INN

The mayor of Wetherby, Cllr Connor Mulhall, officially opened The Angel Inn (Wetherby).

He is pictured with pub manager Aysha Reeve and (left to right) auditor Allan Thomas, area manager Dan Nicholas and shift manager Daniel McConnell.

Wetherspoon spent £2.9 million developing the pub on High Street, in the former Sant' Angelo Italian restaurant.

The well-known grade II listed building occupies a prominent town-centre location.

Closed since 2022, it had been a restaurant and ice cream parlour for 13 years. Until then, it was The Angel pub.

Photos from c1900 show that it was previously known as The Angel Hotel. In older drawings and on the 1824 map of Wetherby, it is The Angel Inn.

During 1760–1840, it was the town's leading coaching inn, where passengers stopped for refreshment and stagecoaches harnessed fresh teams of horses.

The new pub's design is inspired by the rich architectural and cultural heritage of Wetherby, while breathing new life into an historic landmark building.

The redevelopment pays careful respect to the building's historic fabric, preserving original features, including stone fireplaces and sash windows.

The interior's scheme incorporates traditional timber ceiling beams, flagstone-inspired flooring and heritage-inspired panelling, as well as feature tiling.

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.

A landscaped beer garden provides outside seating in a setting designed to complement the historic building.

Pub manager Aysha Reeve said: "My team and I have been warmly welcomed by the people of Wetherby – and we look forward to playing our part in the town's social scene."

**30 High Street, Wetherby  
West Yorkshire, LS22 6LT**



## Croydon

### COOMBE LODGE

Pub manager Mike Sketchley is pictured at Coombe Lodge (Croydon).

The pub has opened on the site of a former Beefeater restaurant.

This pub's name refers to the local area's history.

This area of Croydon has retained much of its rural character and many of its older grand houses, one of which was Coombe Lodge.

The grade-II-listed building, originally part of the Coombe Estate, is 'probably mid 18th century', with a large 19th-century conservatory. The grand house, previously Coombe Gate House or Coombe Green House, is first listed as Coombe Lodge in the 1851 Post Office Directory.

The pub has two bars on the ground floor, as well as a very large beer garden at the front of the property.

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.

Pub manager Mike Sketchley said: "Customers are delighted that such an important building in Croydon has been brought back to life."

**104 Coombe Road, Croydon, CR0 5RB**



## FIRST-CLASS SERVICE FOR ALL AT TWO NEW UNIVERSITY PUBS

Wetherspoon is opening pubs at Birmingham University and Surrey University.

It adds to its pubs at Hull and Newcastle universities.

The Sir Ronald Wates, at Surrey University, is set to open mid May.

Joe's, named after Birmingham University's iconic clock tower, is also set to reopen mid May and will continue to be run and managed by the Guild of Students.

The new-look pubs will deliver an enhanced food and drinks menu for the universities' student community, providing a range of high-quality dishes with a focus on affordability, including popular weekly club deals, such as the Thursday Curry Club®.

Wetherspoon's senior commercial manager, Joe Argyle, said: "We are delighted to have entered into partnerships with both Birmingham and Surrey University.

"Our existing pubs at both Hull and Newcastle University have proven extremely popular with students.

"To highlight this, Hull University has signed a new 10-year contract to run the pub there."

The president of the Guild of Students (Birmingham University), Antonia Listrat, added: "Through our partnership with Wetherspoon, students will benefit from not only its value-for-money food and drinks offering, but also the expansion of job opportunities in the bar.

"As a charity and the students' union for over 36,000 students, any surplus we make gets invested back into supporting students' activities.

"This partnership will strengthen our commercial endeavours to support a vibrant future for the guild and enhance the overall student experience."

## SAM'S SIZE NINE FEAT GIVES CHILTERN A LEG-UP



Pub manager Sam Garvey is pictured at his pub The Chiltern (Beaconsfield) serving beers from the nearby Chiltern Brewery.

The pub, which opened in January 2026, is stocking three ales from the Buckinghamshire-based brewery, its first listing at a Wetherspoon pub.

The ales being served are Chiltern Pale Ale, Beechwood Bitter and Chiltern Black.

Sam, who was previously the pub manager at J.J. Moon's (Ruislip Manor), said: "I am an avid real-ale-drinker and passionate about supporting microbreweries.

"When I found out that I would be the pub manager of the newly opened pub The Chiltern, in Beaconsfield, I visited The Chiltern Brewery for an excellent tour and tasting session.

"I spoke to Rob Horn while at the brewery and expressed interest in getting it listed as a new local supplier for Wetherspoon.

"Since opening the pub, the beers have been a hit with customers.

"On our opening day, we sold a whole nine-gallon firkin of Chiltern Pale Ale within six hours."

Rob Horn, trade team The Chiltern Brewery, added: "Chiltern Brewery has been brewing traditional real ales in the heart of the Chiltern Hills since 1980.

"Using time-honoured methods and natural ingredients, we craft balanced, characterful ales which reflect both our local landscape and our brewing heritage.

"Proudly independent and family run, we are delighted to see our beers now listed at The Chiltern, in Beaconsfield.

"We are really thrilled to be working with Wetherspoon, a company which continues to champion quality cask ale and celebrate great British brewing."

# SPICE BAG HERE TO STAY AFTER INITIAL FORAY

**It's not posh or scary - or even sporty, ginger or baby - but it is delicious and has now been given a permanent berth on Wetherspoon's UK menus**

**A** limited-time meal offer has now become a permanent fixture on the Wetherspoon menu, owing to popularity.

Spice bag has proven such a huge hit with customers at pubs across the UK, following its popularity in Ireland, that the dish has been added to the main menu.

Ireland's favourite take-away order, and Dublin's unofficial dish, spice bag is similar in flavour to salt-and-pepper chicken which you may enjoy from the local Chinese take-away.

**Tossed**

Wetherspoon's spice bag dish comprises chicken strips and chicken breast bites, all tossed and coated in a special seasoning blend with salt and chilli Chinese-style spice mix, together with red onion, sliced fresh chilli and fresh coriander.

The authentic spice bag spice mix is supplied by an Irish company, Key Ingredients Europe, based in County Limerick.

Initially devised and purchased at Chinese take-aways in the Irish capital, the spice bag is being served for Wetherspoon's customers to enjoy.

**Option**

The menu option, which has been added to the chicken range, includes a soft or alcoholic drink as part of the meal's price.

There is also a vegan 'no chicken' option available, served with Quorn™ nuggets, instead of chicken.

Both meals are served with your choice of coconut-flavour rice or chips.

A portion of curry sauce can be added to the spice bag, for a small additional cost.

**History**

Ireland's RTÉ Radio has reported that the spice bag dish was first created in around 2006.

It was originally an off-the-menu meal, concocted by staff at the Sunflower Chinese take-away and restaurant in Templeogue, Dublin, to enjoy as an after-work alternative dish.

Following repeated requests from staff's friends, spice bag was added to the menu at the Sunflower restaurant and subsequently developed something of a cult following.

Popularity and availability grew, with Chinese take-aways and chip shops joining the spice bag phenomenon, predominantly in Dublin... although across Ireland too.

In 2020, the menu option was voted 'IRELAND'S favourite take-away dish' at Ireland's Just Eat national take-away awards.

A Facebook group also exists (Spice Bag Appreciation Society) with thousands of members.

The group's aficionados warn members not to even think about putting ketchup on a spice bag, with curry sauce being its popular accompaniment.



# BBC AND ASSISTANCE DOGS BODY BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE

*Tim says:* "Wetherspoon took issue with a BBC article about Wetherspoon's dogs policy, which failed to explain Wetherspoon's legal duty to ensure the safety of employees and the public.

Both the BBC and Wetherspoon are clear that bona fide assistance dogs and guide dogs are allowed in pubs. The difference of opinion relates to whether Wetherspoon is justified in asking for documentary proof of training.

The BBC and ADUK indicate that it is not.

Wetherspoon says that documentation is a necessary requirement, in practice, otherwise staff have to assess whether a dog has the requisite training from its behaviour once it is in the pub.

Please see the BBC article below and Wetherspoon's published response on the opposite page."

## WETHERSPOON DOG POLICY COULD BE BREAKING THE LAW, WATCHDOG SAYS

BBC Online By Sean Dilley and Molly Stazicker

JD Wetherspoon's policy to refuse to serve disabled customers who do not have photo ID for their assistance dogs could be breaking the law, the equality watchdog has said.

The pub chain has had a ban on dogs – with the exception of assistance dogs – in its UK pubs for a number of years.

However, in May last year the firm introduced a new policy to ask anyone wanting admission with an assistance dog to produce identification from a charity called Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK).

The BBC has spoken to a number of disabled people who said they have been challenged and refused service if they do not have ID.

One woman said she felt sick and humiliated when she was challenged to show identification for her guide dog.

Wetherspoon said it believed its policy, which was an adjustment to its usual "no dogs" rule, was lawful and reasonable and that they had taken legal advice on it.

It said it was brought in to protect customers after seeing an increase in the number of people trying to gain access to its premises with dogs, using ID and jackets, which can be purchased online without showing proof of training or a medical need.

However, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) said it had now written to the pub chain after it received complaints from disabled people and said it was concerned the policy may not comply with UK law.

The charity Assistance Dogs UK said it believed, from its understanding of the law, that the pub chain's policy was discriminatory and that no identification was legally required.

'I just felt so sick'

Megan Stephenson is visually-impaired and has an ADUK ID card. She said she felt humiliated when she visited a Wetherspoon pub on

three occasions between May and September last year and bar staff asked her for her identification.

"The staff stopped me as I walked in and were like 'we need to see your dog's ID'. Bobby was in harness, had the flash in her lead, was very obviously a guide dog, but they wouldn't let me go if I didn't have an ID for her.

"Fortunately, on this occasion, I did actually have it with me so they thankfully let us in. But I was still stopped, still singled out, still treated differently. I just felt so sick, so stressed."

She said she no longer uses Wetherspoon pubs after feeling discriminated against.

The BBC has spoken to more than a dozen people who use assistance dogs and were asked to produce ID, including many who were then asked to leave pubs. The charity Guide Dogs said it had received 27 complaints about Wetherspoon from people either being challenged or refused entry.

Liberal Democrat MP Steve Darling said he was challenged for ID last August. He said he felt a duty to stand his ground, saying the policy would also impact people with a range of other disabilities, including those with conditions such as PTSD.

While he said he understood Wetherspoon wanting to crack down on dogs who are misbehaving in its pubs, he added: "Why tarnish all assistance dog users with that brush?"

The law on access to businesses and restaurants for disabled people with assistance dogs is ambiguous.

Under the Equality Act 2010, service providers have a duty to make "a reasonable adjustment" to accommodate the needs of disabled people and not to treat them less favourably than other customers.



A reasonable adjustment might include waiving a no dogs policy, but in this context the law does not set training standards for assistance dogs or explicitly say they must be allowed access. Only a court can decide, based on the individual circumstances of a case, whether a policy is unlawful.

Exceptions to the pub chain's policy on dogs include trained guide dogs and assistance dogs with accredited training from ADUK member organisations.

JD Wetherspoon said: "We consider the requirement for assistance dogs to have accredited training from ADUK member organisations to be a reasonable adjustment to our policy, as required by the relevant legislation.

"Our pubs are large and very busy. Bearing in mind the significant increase in dog bites and hospitalisations, common sense indicates a clear need for documentary proof of training in our pubs."

But ADUK, the umbrella charity representing many assistance dog users, said it believed the policy was discriminatory.

It said its identification was not a legal requirement and not all assistance dog users will carry ID.

Its chief executive, Vicky Worthington, said Wetherspoon had approached the charity for guidance before establishing the policy, but added: "Sadly they didn't take on board any of the advice we provided."

The charity separately said it had seen a "huge surge" in businesses contacting it for advice, some increasingly confronted with people "misrepresenting pet dogs as assistance dogs".

A spokesperson for the Equality and Human Rights Commission told the BBC: "We are aware that a significant number of disabled people with assistance dogs have been refused entry from JD Wetherspoon venues because they aren't carrying formal identification for their assistance dogs."

"We have written to JD Wetherspoon to ensure they are aware of their duties under the law."



**By Sean Dilley and Molly Stazicker**  
BBC Online / 6 February 2026

# WETHERSPOON'S RESPONSE TO THE BBC

Published by the Regulatory News Service (RNS) on 9 February 2026

The BBC published an article online ("Wetherspoon dog policy could be breaking the law, watchdog says", 6 February 2026), which gives a misleading impression of Wetherspoon's dogs policy and the reasons for it.

Wetherspoon allows assistance dogs, but asks for proof of training documentation from ADUK, an umbrella organisation, which states that its "member organisations work to the highest internal standards of assistance and guide dog training."

Wetherspoon has taken advice from senior counsel and understands that it should make "reasonable adjustments" to accommodate those with disabilities, but must take into account, also, its responsibilities for the safety of employees and the public.

The main legislation protecting those with disabilities is in the Equality Act 2010.

The duties towards the public and employees are contained in a range of legislation, including the Licensing Act 2003, the Occupiers Liability Act 1957, the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

In formulating policies, account has to be taken of a substantial increase in what the police call "dog incidents".

For example, the BBC reported (8 October 2025) that there were "31,920 dog attacks on people in England and Wales in 2024".

The BBC also said (11 April 2025) that Cleveland Police had reported a 163% increase in dog incidents since 2019.

In another example, Gloucester Police reported a 70% increase in dog incidents between 2019 and 2024.

The Financial Times reported (1 August 2025) that "the number of hospitalisations from dog bites has doubled over the last twenty years."

A graphic example of problems in the hospitality industry is in a BBC report (14 November 2025) in which "a child was bitten by a dog while visiting a Costa Coffee in Kidderminster".

Wetherspoon itself has seen a big increase in dog incidents, even though only assistance dogs are allowed.

15 staff were bitten by dogs in 2025, compared to one in 2020.

All parties agree that bona fide assistance dogs should be permitted in pubs.

The only issue is whether pubs should request documentary proof of training.

Surprisingly, perhaps, ADUK, an organisation which upholds the need for training and issues documentation accordingly, offers legal advice to the public which conflicts with Wetherspoon's.

ADUK told the BBC that "identification", or documentation, was not a legal requirement.

ADUK say, in effect, that documentation should not be requested and that pub staff should judge a dog, after entry, by its behaviour.

The flaw in this approach is that the first sign of bad behaviour may be an incident of a customer or employee being bitten.

Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin said: "This is a complex area for pubs and other organisations.

"The interests of those with disabilities need to be protected while, at the same time, employees and the public have to be protected from a substantial increase in dog incidents.

"The BBC article, unfortunately, did not explain Wetherspoon's broader legal responsibility for the safety of its customers and staff, which we set out in detail for them, and which is the reason for our policy.

"ADUK is an organisation which itself demands high levels of training for assistance dogs, for which it issues documentary proof.

"Yet it is offering, in effect, legal advice to the public, which states that pub companies should not ask for documentation.

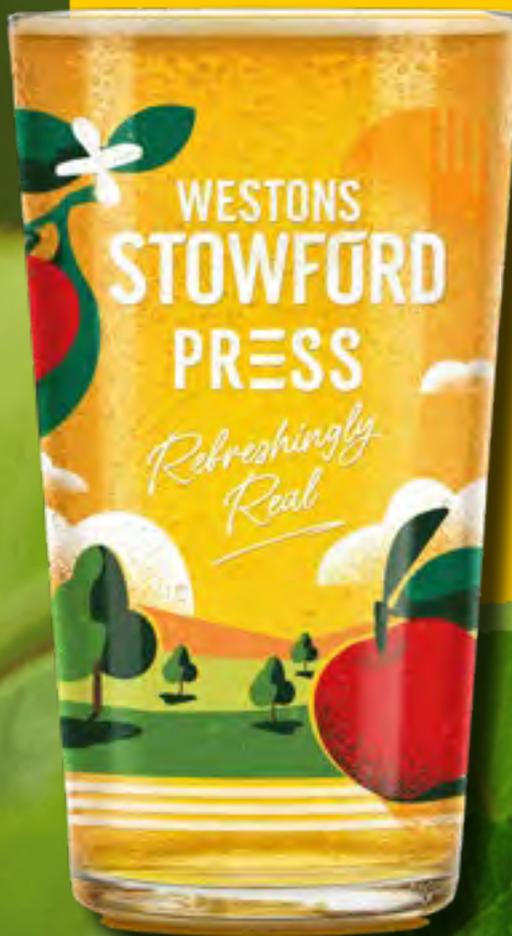
"Instead, according to ADUK, pub staff should be asked to make a judgement, after a dog is already in the pub, as to whether it is trained or not.

"It is inevitable, as a matter of common sense, that ADUK's advice, if followed, will lead to an increase in dog incidents in pubs, and may already have done so, in the absence of sensible checks in advance of entry.

"In contrast, Wetherspoon's policy clearly provides greater protection for employees and the public, and is consistent with established regulations in areas such as proof of age in pubs and blue badges for parking."

# WOULD YOU ADAM AND EVE IT?

**Authentic cider served at Martin's Free House 45 years ago is still served in Wetherspoon's pubs today**



**W**estons Cider has been supplying cider to Wetherspoon's pubs since 1980, although the Herefordshire-based cider-maker had already been in existence, by then, for a century.

It is more than 45 years since that first delivery of Westons Vintage and Farmhouse cider, served from glass jars at Martin's Free House (Tim Martin's first-ever Wetherspoon pub), in Colney Hatch Lane, north London.

The proud, family-owned Westons Cider continues to supply great premium cider for today's customers to enjoy at pubs across the UK.

Cider drinkers have been enjoying Stowford Press (4.5% ABV) draught cider, made by Westons Cider, at Wetherspoon since it was first introduced in 2010.

Now with a fresh new look on the bar, customers can continue to enjoy Stowford Press in the knowledge that it is the same exceptional-tasting, authentic cider it has always been.

A refreshing medium-dry sparkling cider, Stowford Press is bursting with the delicious flavour of crisp cider apples.

It is made using only 100 per cent cider apples from local farmers and the Westons Cider orchards, all grown within 50 miles of the Much Marcle cider mill.

Westons Cider's sales director, Martyn Jones, said: "We're incredibly proud of our partnership with Wetherspoon in ensuring that Stowford Press is available in its pubs across the UK – cheers!"

## *The Westons history*

Managing director and fourth-generation Weston, Helen Thomas, said: "It all began in 1878 when Henry Weston, my great grandfather, settled here and began to produce ciders and perries.

"Using the wide variety of regional fruit grown in the surrounding orchards, he started pressing and blending. The fermented juice soon proved so popular that his work evolved into a business.

"Today, the charming 17th-century farmhouse and cider mill where it all began, called The Bounds, remain home to his craft.

"I've been managing director since 1996 and have been privileged to see some of the most exciting changes yet.

"Everyone remains passionate about producing the best cider. It's in our family's DNA, in our very nature to be pioneering and original in our approach.

"I like to think, if my great-grandfather were here, that he'd be amazed – and also proud."

THE ERIC BARTHOLOMEW • MORECAMBE

# LIAM HITS ALL THE RIGHT NOTES IN MORECAMBE



In five short years, Liam Pyle went from a bar associate, working just four hours a week, to pub manager.

Liam, 25, joined Wetherspoon in February 2020, as a bar associate at The Eric Bartholomew (Morecambe).

Hailing from Morecambe, where he has lived all of his life, Liam had been made redundant from his old job as an assistant manager of an independent pub on the seafront in the coastal town.

Liam recalled: "Having been made redundant from my old job literally just before COVID-19 hit, I knew the pub manager at The Eric Bartholomew, who offered me a few hours' work a week.

"After lockdown, I applied to be a shift leader and quickly progressed at the pub to become shift manager."

Liam continued: "I had always wanted to work at a bigger and busier pub, particularly a Lloyds No.1 bar, so moved to The Twelve Tellers (Preston)."

Liam had been at The Twelve Tellers for a year, when the chance came up to return to his home town of Morecambe.

He said: "It was a unique opportunity for me to come back to the pub where I started... where I had come as a child with my family... to now be pub manager. I jumped at the chance."

That was in March 2025, just five years after he first joined the company.

A year on – and things are going well for Liam and his team at The Eric Bartholomew.

Liam confirmed: "Business is going well – and we have a lot to be pleased about.

"I have been lucky to have an experienced team to help, as some staff members have been with the company for 18–20 years.

"If it weren't for their experience and support, I would have found the job way more difficult.

"Knowing the team and many of the regular customers was a great help."

Liam concluded: "I took the job initially to tide me over, following redundancy, but, in the end, really enjoyed it.

"I have taken every opportunity which has come my way – and will continue to do so.

"I always tell anyone who joins the company – if you are prepared to work hard, you can go as far as you want with Wetherspoon."

WINDSOR

## HIGH HONOUR GIVEN TO VAL, QUEEN OF THE KING AND CASTLE



Pub manager Val Docherty's long service has been recognised by local Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch members.

Val, who runs The King and Castle (Windsor), has been awarded the Keith Smith Award 2026, presented annually by Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead CAMRA to a person who has promoted real ale or cider.

Long-serving pub manager Val is pictured (front centre) with her award after receiving the accolade from branch chairman Mark Newcombe (front left) at a special presentation night at the pub attended by CAMRA members.

Val said: "I really appreciate the award and continued support from the CAMRA members.

"We have a strong and dedicated core team of staff here – and we just couldn't do what we do without their hard work and commitment."

In February 2026, pub manager Val marked 30 years' work with Wetherspoon, having started in 1996 as a bar associate at The Savoy (Swindon).

Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead CAMRA wrote: "Val took over as pub manager at The King and Castle in 2006, where she is assisted by her two deputy managers, Jasmin Cunningham and Barbara Pleave, both also long-serving staff members.

"The King and Castle has three bars, across four floors of the pub, and a huge garden, which serves a core of regular customers, but, during the summer especially, the pub (whose biggest-selling meal being fish and chips) is jam packed full of tourists from all over the world."

Keith Smith was a very active member of the branch CAMRA team and prolific collector of apples destined for Salt Hill Cider, a Slough-based award-winning cider maker.

Keith sadly passed away in 2016 – so, to commemorate his life, the local team created an award in his name which would reflect an outstanding contribution to the cask ale and cider scene.

## AIRPORT PUBS FLY HIGHER THAN HIGH-PRICED LOUNGES

A report by Which? into airport lounges says that airport passengers are better off eating and drinking at a Wetherspoon pub.

The consumer champion reviewed 28 UK airport lounges between May 2024 and September 2025.

None of the lounges scored higher than 3.5 stars out of five.

It stated that the 'luxurious' lounge at Gatwick South was priced from £44 to £50.

The report highlighted prices at The Beehive (Gatwick Airport – South Terminal, before security), including a smashed avocado & poached egg muffin at £9.90.

It also reported that travellers could enjoy a large breakfast at The Crown Rivers (Heathrow Airport – Terminal 5, after security) for £14.50.

According to Which?, the average price of an airport lounge in 2025 is £42.

Rory Boland, editor of Which? Travel, said: "There was once a time when an airport lounge was a special treat, but our latest results say quite the opposite.

"Instead of paying over £40 for a lukewarm buffet breakfast on a dirty plate, you can get a lot more for your money by visiting a bar or restaurant inside the airport."

### Wetherspoon's airport pubs

- ➔ [Star Light \(Heathrow Airport – Terminal 4, after security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Beehive \(Gatwick Airport – South Terminal, before security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Crown Rivers \(Heathrow Airport – Terminal 5, after security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Flying Horse \(Gatwick Airport – South Terminal, after security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Red Lion \(Gatwick Airport – North Terminal, after security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Sir Walter Scott \(Edinburgh Airport – after security\)](#)
- ➔ [The Windmill \(Stansted Airport – after security\)](#)
- ➔ [Wetherspoon \(Birmingham Airport – after security\)](#)

# UNIQUE BESPOKE BURGERS – EATEN, BUT NEVER BEATEN

**County Waterford-headquartered company has been beefing up Wetherspoon's menu since 2007**

**W**etherspoon is proud of its long-standing partnerships with many suppliers and companies, all helping to make the pubs and hotels successful.

The company has forged many long-standing collaborations with numerous suppliers throughout the years – and takes great pride in those successful relationships, as well as supporting UK and Irish businesses and produce.

Dunbia, a division of Dawn Meats, has been supplying beef burgers to Wetherspoon since 2007.

It supplies all of the beef burgers served at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK and Ireland, for your enjoyment.

## Recipe

Did you know that the burgers served at Wetherspoon's pubs are made to a bespoke recipe, unique to Wetherspoon and cannot be enjoyed anywhere else?

Dunbia is a leader in burger production, with a closed-loop supply chain. This means that all of the beef used in the burgers comes from its dedicated farmer suppliers.

All burgers can be traced from farm to fork and are delivered directly to Wetherspoon's pubs.

## Trusted

A trusted supplier and meat producer, with a commitment to sustainable practices, Dunbia is successfully working hard to reduce emissions, recycle, reuse, restore and recover resources during production, as part of the company's sustainability target of operational net zero by 2040.

Niall Browne, chief executive of Dawn Meats, said: "At Dawn Meats and Dunbia, we are committed to providing consistent, high-quality meat products from sustainable sources to support our rural communities."

Dunbia has been producing Wetherspoon's burgers for almost 20 years.

## Best

The company uses internal supply from its own primary sites and works closely with Wetherspoon to ensure that it provides the best-possible product.

Wetherspoon's burgers are gently pressed to give a loose open texture, with a meaty bite, and are lightly seasoned with salt and black pepper to that unique recipe.

Every one of the 100-per-cent British (Irish in Ireland) beef patties is always fresh, never frozen.

As well as beef burgers, Dunbia also supplies the spiced chicken thighs for the pubs' shawarma chicken dishes.



Dawn Meats was established in 1980 in County Waterford, Ireland, and has grown to a business with more than €3 billion in annual revenue, employing over 8,000 staff across 10 countries.

The company works with some of the world's leading food companies, including Wetherspoon – all attracted by a commitment to sustainability and quality.

Trading as Dunbia in the UK and Dawn Meats in Ireland, the combined businesses process approximately 1m cattle annually.





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

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

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

Bonuses and share schemes provide an extra incentive for people to stay with the company: there are 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 table<sup>1</sup> 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) <sup>2</sup>	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
<b>Total</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>55.1<sup>3</sup></b>

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Shares and bonus as a percentage of profit excludes 2020, 2021 and 2022.

# 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 EBRS review as those meeting certain thresholds for energy and trade intensity. The ETII sectors were identified via the EBRS review as those meeting certain thresholds for energy and trade intensity. 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.

Table with 2 columns listing SIC codes and sector names, such as 05.10 Mining of hard coal, 06.10 Extraction of crude petroleum, etc.

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 letterhead and text regarding energy subsidies, dated 19 October 2020. The letter discusses the impact of energy subsidies on various industries and the government's role in supporting them.

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..."

Document titled 'A new national policy statement for nuclear energy generation' with a section on 'Background' discussing the UK's electricity generation mix and nuclear power capacity.

## 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](http://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**

*Tim says:* "In about 2010, Frenchman Jacques Borel led a campaign to lower VAT for pubs and restaurants in the UK, having successfully launched similar campaigns in several other countries, including France.

Wetherspoon and the family brewers, including Fuller's, Shepherd Neame and St Austell, vociferously backed Jacques, yet several of the major pub owners were strangely muted in their support.

The campaign for tax equality with supermarkets gained ground when UK political party Reform recently backed lower VAT and other taxes for pubs. Angela Rayner and Andy Burnham of the Labour Party called for lower VAT, business rates and energy costs a few days after Reform's initiative.

In the Regulatory News Service (RNS) article below, I comment on these issues and criticise the powers-that-be in the pub industry for their reticence."

# WETHERSPOON CALLS ON HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TO BACK POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR TAX REFORM

**A few days ago, the leader of the political party which is leading in the latest polls, offered the hospitality industry something many had assumed impossible - in effect, tax parity with supermarkets.**

There's no question that this initiative would utterly transform the competitiveness of pubs, which have lost 50% of their beer trade to supermarkets since the millennium, according to analysts at bankers Morgan Stanley.

In this plan, VAT would be reduced to 10% for the hospitality industry, with further reductions in excise duty and business rates to come.

Most pubs could probably, for example, offer one beer, one lager and one cider for, say £2.99, with these tax reductions - and STILL have a higher gross margin than today.

By eliminating the tax differential between supermarkets and the hospitality industry, and restoring margins to devastated businesses, these changes would enable pubs to regain some, or all, of their lost trade.

You would think that this offer from Reform would have been greeted by a crescendo of enthusiasm, ecstasy and support from the licensed trade and its supporters.

However, surprisingly, initial support has been underwhelming, at least from the great and the good in the hospitality industry.

For example, Mark Brumby of Langton Capital, a widely read pub trade publication, damned the proposals with bland reporting, by saying:

"A 10% cut could either see the price of a pint drop by 5p or operators widen their margins. Reform has also said it would halve the rate of VAT for the ...hospitality sector".

Try and control your excitement, Mr Brumby, we beg you..

And one of the main industry umbrella organisations, the BBPA (British Beer and Pub Association) said:

"We're pleased that political parties are recognising the value of the local and want to ensure their success..."

Not exactly a ringing endorsement of the best offer any politician has ever made to the hospitality industry in history, is it?

But, weirdly, we've been here before. A Frenchman, Jacques Borel, started a VAT Club in 2010, aimed at reducing VAT for food in the UK hospitality industry to 5%, having successfully achieved similar reductions in a substantial number of countries.

Bizarrely, the then CEOs of two of the biggest pub companies, Enterprise Inns and Greene King were openly hostile to Jacques' tax equality argument - others were indifferent or agnostic.

Even more bizarrely, the then editor of the biggest pub trade publication, the Morning Advertiser, withdrew support for the VAT campaign, since, he told me, Jacques was "having a bad game". Not as bad a game as you, mate, I thought.

Sometimes, you are at a loss to understand what appears to be perverse human behaviour. What could the motivations of the CEOs and the editor possibly have been?

Perplexed, Wetherspoon, at considerable cost, decided, at the time, to conduct a major survey of UK publicans, those on the frontline that the CEOs and editor purported to represent - especially the employees of the recalcitrant CEOs of Enterprise and Greene King.

Unsurprisingly, sanity prevailed in the lounge bars of UK pubs. Cardinal Research reported in 2013 that "96% of licensees think the pub and restaurant industry should campaign for a reduction of VAT on food".

Cardinal added that "94% support the campaign by the VAT Club" and that "86% agree that it's unfair that supermarkets pay no VAT on food but pubs/restaurants have to".

Needless to say, Greene King's and Enterprise Inns' licensees strongly supported the VAT Club and disagreed with the views of their own CEOs. But here we go again! So what goes through the minds of the directors of the biggest pub companies as they watch their trade switch, almost weekly, to supermarkets, due to the vast

tax-supported price differential between the on and off-trade?

A range of thoughts, probably. I suspect, but don't know, that the CEOs in the Borel era were closet, or not-so-closet supporters of the government of the time - and didn't want to rock the boat. Chancellor George Osborne, not really a pub guy, was outright hostile to Jacques the Lad.

Some others mistakenly thought they weren't competing with supermarkets, so why bother. Yet others were short-termists: I'm off in a year or two, so I'm alright, Jacques.

But credit where it's due, the family brewers, long-termists and driven by principle, not politics, were on board. Well done to Fuller's, Shepherd Neame, St Austell and many others.

The principle in question is that the beleaguered hospitality industry needs to get behind whatever organisation or political party promises a fair and equitable tax regime.

So here's the question for the British public - and for the senior figures in the hospitality industry. Do you believe in tax equality with supermarkets?

If you don't, pubs may increasingly become a "special occasion" experience, as a result of high prices, rather than the melting pot for daily rendezvous between neighbours, workers and lovers of the glorious past.

If you do believe in tax equality, then you'd better support it, because the supermarket industry has nicked half your trade in recent years - and it will gobble up most of the rest in no time flat.

Finally, it's not your job to worry about how tax equality is funded. As someone once said, the tax system needs a "sensible rebalancing". And as a former Treasury official said to Jacques Borel and myself - don't tell us how to raise the money. It's not a lot in the scheme of things. Tell us what's wrong and we'll do the number crunching.

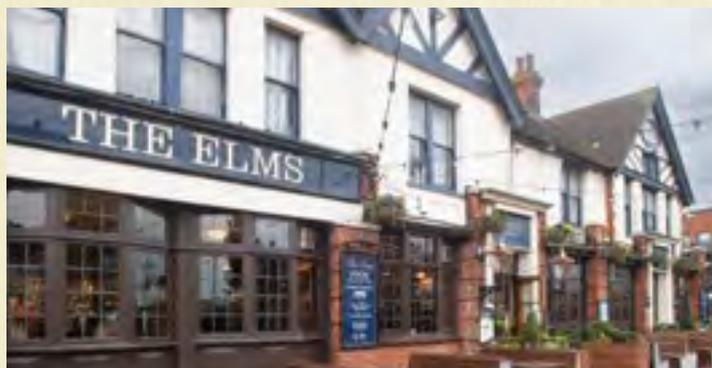
RNS

9 February 2026



# THE ELMS – SAVED FROM THE CHOP AFTER FAKE NAME FIASCO

**Huge tree, now long gone, inspired name of Leigh-on-Sea venue which became a Wetherspoon pub in 1994**



**W**etherspoon'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.

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.

### Spotlight

In this pub histories spotlight, a regular Wetherspoon News feature, we focus on The Elms (Leigh-on-Sea), which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in March 1994.

The pub is named after Adam's elm, a magnificent tree which stood for many years between what is now Station Road and Cranleigh Drive.

The elm, which was 9.2 metres in circumference and hollow, gave its name to the farm and also the nearby area.

### Hollow

Kegs of brandy were supposedly left in the hollow tree by Leigh's smugglers, for collection by their overland counterparts.

In 1780, the farm was sold to William Webb. In 1861, it was purchased by Lawrence Davies, who was bankrupted when farming slumped, with the land then sold for development.

On Michaelmas Day (29 September) of 1880, Davies left a nine-page manuscript, sealed in a bottle, in the rafters of the farmhouse.

The bottle was found in the 1930s, when the farmhouse was being converted into The Elms Hotel.

### Shilling

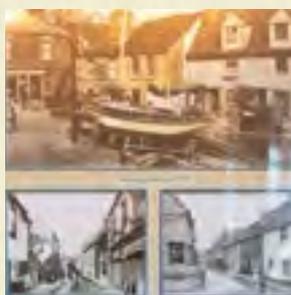
The letter told of the agricultural depression, how the work was slavery and how, in 20 years, Davies had not made a shilling's profit.

In 1980, a new landlord tried to alter the name from The Elms to The Hadleigh Fourpenny, wrongly believing that this horse-drawn service had been connected with his inn. Locals soon put him right.

The premises was subsequently purchased by Wetherspoon, redeveloped and opened in 1994, retaining the name The Elms.

Old black-and-white photographs on display in the pub document some of The Elms' history, with images of how the site looked in c1908, of the gardens in c1930, of the 'new lounge' in c1937 and of brewery deliveries, along with a staff group photo (including a dog!) in 1943.

● 1060 London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3ND



# POSH POTATOES LOOK SMART IN A JACKET

**Yorkshire family business has been supplying  
Wetherspoon's baked potatoes for decades**



## **W**etherspoon continues to pride itself on long-standing partnerships with so many of its suppliers.

Bannisters Yorkshire Family Farm has been supplying jacket potatoes to Wetherspoon since the summer of 2004 – almost 22 years.

The family business was founded in 1985 by Rob and Hilary Bannister, as part of a diversification project to support the farm on the Yorkshire Wolds, where the family has been farming for generations.

### **Land**

Still a proud Yorkshire farming family business 40 years on, a love of the land runs through the family's veins.

The company business is now spearheaded by the founders' daughters, joint managing directors Zoe Bannister and Marie Medhurst.

The supplier of Wetherspoon's jacket potatoes, Bannisters Yorkshire Family Farm's 100-per-cent British baked potatoes have become known as the best-quality baking potatoes available to the hospitality trade.

### **Farms**

While some of the potatoes still come from Bannisters' own farm, the majority is grown on other farms around the country.

The company uses potatoes grown mainly on neighbouring farms and those across Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, plus, at certain times of the year (or in specific, more difficult seasons) from further afield – both north and south. One thing is for certain, though, they only ever source British potatoes.

Daughter Marie Medhurst (née Bannister) said: "Baking is an art, not a science, and we are now masters of our niche – baking and freezing potatoes to perfection is what we have been doing for the past 40 years.

"Our passion for farming and to source the best of the British potato crop is what pushes our own business forward.

"Our skills in baking potatoes, honed over many years' experience, mean that we are proud of every product we make."

### **Batches**

Bannisters uses traditional ovens, so that its potatoes are baked in batches, just as you would bake them at home, then quickly frozen



**The Bannister family (photo taken in 2014)**

to lock in the flavour and keep them fresh, until needed in Wetherspoon's kitchens.

One of the oldest forms of preservation, freezing not only locks in the traditionally baked taste, but also the many baked-potato nutrients.

This also ensures consistent quality, convenience and helps substantially to control and reduce waste.

Marie added: "We're delighted to have been a partner of Wetherspoon for more than 20 years, supplying it with Bannisters Farm's traditionally baked potatoes.

"We love its ethos of providing customers with delicious and fabulous-quality food, while creating a real community – and we are so pleased that Wetherspoon's customers have been enjoying our jacket potatoes for so many years.

"Our teams work seamlessly together, which we attribute to our shared values, and we look forward to many more years of growing and baking potatoes for Wetherspoon."

When it comes to nutrition, you really can't beat a jacket potato.

Jam-packed with vitamins and minerals (B1, B6, C, zinc and potassium, to name just a few), they also contain no cholesterol, are low in fat and calories and are naturally low in sodium and full of fibre.



# BIG DEALS FOR SMALLER PEOPLE'S MEALS

£4.99

For the smaller appetite meals  
and pizzas

£5.75

On bigger appetite meals

Applicable for all pubs, except airport  
sites, the NEC and Haven pubs.

**Award-winning children's menu is packed full of healthy  
and appetising options**

### Calling all superheroes!

Wetherspoon's activity sheets and children's menus have a superhero twist, featuring six characters, each with a separate personality, mission and superpower.

Two new Wetherspoon superheroes on the menu (Gadget and Aqua) have now joined Green Guardian, Ruby Kind, Swift and Veggie Avenger.



**T**he award-winning Wetherspoon children's menu continues to offer great-quality food, family favourites, value for money and healthy options for hungry little mouths.

Whether it's breakfast (served until 12 noon), lunch or dinner, there are numerous choices for smaller appetites, including pasta dishes and jacket potatoes.

Youngsters with bigger appetites have a range of options to choose from, with a main dish (including sausages and Wiltshire cured ham and egg) plus a vegetable portion and potato type (jacket potato, chips or mash) – for a bespoke one-price meal.

### Pizzas

A pizza menu is available, because what child doesn't love a pizza?

Wetherspoon has pledged that every one of its children's meals will be served with at least two portions of fruit or vegetables, with many meals containing more.

### Fruit

In addition to fruit or vegetables included in each dish, all meals are served with a portion of fruit (apple, banana or a strawberry Bear Yoyo fruit snack) and a drink as part of the price, containing another one of your five-a-day.

Water is also freely available, alongside a drinks range which is included in the meal's price.

Wetherspoon was recognised in the Out to Lunch league table (Soil Association), an independently run secret-diner survey, which judges 20 top family restaurant chains on family friendliness, healthy options, food quality, value, sustainability and ingredients' provenance.

### Salt

To enable parents to make informed decisions about meal choices, salt content is also displayed next to each meal.

To make this even simpler, parents can now pick from options with a salt symbol for those meals under 1.71g of salt.

To suit all ages and appetites, different-sized meals and a variety of Calorie values are available.

Parents can check the full nutritional information for all meals, including allergen and ingredient declarations, on each pub's customer information screen.

## Quality ingredients

### Free-range eggs

All shell eggs used in Wetherspoon's pubs are free-range eggs which are RSPCA assured, meaning that the hens laying the eggs are allowed ample space to roam as freely as they like, ensuring laying hens' welfare. Any egg used as a product ingredient is also free range.

### Chicken

Wetherspoon's chicken nuggets are always pieces of whole breast fillet, never formed or reformed.

The chickens are cage free and have access to clean water, with their feed including sustainable soy.

### Sausages

The sausages served in Wetherspoon's pubs come from farms with higher welfare standards.

These are made in small-batch sizes by an independent and family-run Irish business.

### Ice cream dessert

Wetherspoon has worked closely with Beechdean and developed a small ice cream pot which contains 10.3g sugar.

This falls below the Public Health England standard for a child for a single 120g portion of ice cream, so makes it a suitable treat for a child to enjoy.

### Activity sheets and origami

To keep the little-ones entertained while you enjoy your meal, children's sheets are available with puzzles, colouring activities and origami featuring Lionel the dog and Dilly the cat, named after staff members' pets at Wetherspoon's head office.



## BRIDGEND

# BRIDGEND PUB CREW PRAISED FOR BACKING OLD STONE BRIDGE'S 600TH BIRTHDAY BASH



The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend) has won praise for supporting local celebrations of the 600th anniversary of the bridge after which the town is named.

The medieval Old Stone Bridge (Yr Hen Bont) was built in 1425 over the River Ogmore to replace a ford.

To celebrate the anniversary, the town council organised events on the bridge, including Morris dancers, knights mock-swordfighting and a special floral arrangement featuring the number 600.

The pub was decorated in renaissance themes and staff dressed as medieval ladies and gentlemen.

Cllr David Unwin, the town's longest-serving councillor, said afterwards: "As ever, The Wyndham Arms Hotel pulled out all of the stops to help the town of Bridgend in its special events.

"Hotel manager Lisa Driscoll was magnificent in her efforts with her dedicated staff. I was particularly impressed at the splendid way the hotel/pub had been decorated to reflect the 15th-century atmosphere.

"Staff at The Wyndham Arms Hotel never cease in their efforts to bring the community together at important event times for Bridgend."

Hotel manager Lisa Driscoll said: "We always try to support local council initiatives when we can.

"The bridge is a truly iconic local feature – and we were delighted to be able to support the anniversary. It was a lot of fun."



## THE IRON DUKE • WELLINGTON

# FRANCESCA MAKES SEVERAL STOPS ON 20-YEAR JOURNEY



Kitchen manager Francesca Williams is pictured (centre) with general manager Rob Gibson and area manager Emma Simpson.

Francesca celebrated 20 years' service with Wetherspoon at The Iron Duke (Wellington), but has since moved to The Powder Monkey (Exmouth), nearer to her home in Exeter.

Francesca started in 2005 at The Imperial (Exeter) as a bar associate, where she progressed to team leader in eight years.

During her time at The Imperial, she also had both her children, daughter Haidee (now 19 and working at The Iron Duke as a kitchen team leader) and son Myles (17).

Francesca said: "It was good working at The Imperial. I enjoyed my time there, and the job was very accommodating while my children were young."

In July 2013, Francesca moved to the newly opened The Star Inn (Honiton).

She recalled: "I helped with the opening training and took on more responsibilities as a shift leader, still front of house, as my children were a bit older.

"I went back and forth at Honiton, from front of house to the kitchen, becoming kitchen manager there in 2017.

"I had a lovely time at The Star Inn, staying for seven years – and that pub still feels like home."

Francesca continued: "I was then asked to help out at The Chevalier Inn (Exeter) for its busy Christmas season and ended up staying just over a year – two Christmases in fact!"

In October 2022, she moved again to The Iron Duke, where she worked for just over three years and marked her 20th anniversary with the company.

Francesca concluded: "I always like new challenges and working with new teams, training and improving. I like the challenge of a change and meeting new people.

"Unlike some people, I couldn't have worked for 20 years at one pub, but I love what I do.

"I have been lucky with my area managers and pub managers. The company has been very good to me... and I have a lovely job."

OPERA HOUSE • TUNBRIDGE WELLS

# 20-YEAR VETERAN SAM LOVING HER TIME AT OPERA HOUSE



Pictured marking a milestone at Opera House (Tunbridge Wells) is deputy manager Sam Stone (front) with (left to right) general manager Tim Hine, area manager Anthony Jobe and pub manager Greg Wilkins.

When she first joined the company in 2005, as a part-time bar associate at The Plaza, in her home town of Rugeley, Sam was an 18-year-old hospitality student.

She joined the full-time staff at the Staffordshire pub when she left college, progressing to shift manager level within four years.

In 2009, Sam made the move south to Kent, when she joined the team at The Humphrey Bean (Tonbridge).

Sam recalled: "Tim Hine, my pub manager at Rugeley, was moving to Tonbridge and asked me whether I wanted to go with him.

"It was a big move for me, but the best move ever."

Two years later, Tim, with Sam as his deputy manager, was on the move again, to Tunbridge Wells and the iconic Opera House pub.

Sam said: "I have been very lucky during my 20-year career – I have worked with only four or five pub managers.

"That consistency has been a great help."

Sam added: "Before I had my two children, I did think about having my own pub, but it is a huge commitment and, alongside my job, I really appreciate the time I have now with my family.

"My working hours have always been convenient around the family, which is something so important to me, as they grow up so quickly and it is easy to miss so much."

Speaking about Opera House, the pub she has worked at since 2011, Sam said: "It's like walking into my nan's front room, so familiar and like a second home.

"I love my pub so much – and I like the variety which the job provides.

"It is never stagnant. There is always something new to keep work life interesting."

# HOTEL BUILT BY AN EARL NOW MANAGED BY PEARL



Yarborough Hotel (Grimsby) opened its doors to showcase the excellent facilities available to its guests.

There were tours of the rooms and the opportunity to discuss special business rates and corporate accounts for local businesses.

Hotel manager Pearl Hartshorn is pictured showing customers Leon Stevenson, Stephen Hepton and Tracey Pratt (left to right) around the guest rooms, during the hotel's open-day event.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in May 1997, with the hotel completed in November 2016, was originally purpose built in 1851 by the 2nd Earl of Yarborough, to serve Grimsby's first railway.

Once very nearly demolished, this local historical landmark four-storey building, with its imposing elegance, is now a listed building.

The hotel, which took its name from the Earl of Yarborough, a director of the railway company, was a symbol of the town's transition from an 18th-century fishing village to become a great Victorian port.



Today, Yarborough Hotel offers accommodation for guests in a mixture of twin, double, family and accessible rooms, on the first, second and third floors above the ground-floor pub.

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

Pearl said: "It was lovely to welcome customers to Yarborough Hotel for our special open day and have the opportunity to showcase what our beautiful 36-bedroom hotel has to offer guests."

**Bookings available only at [jdwetherspoon.com](http://jdwetherspoon.com), on the app or by phone.**

## ALE ARBITERS ARRIVE TO SEEK HOLY GRAIL OF ALE

A group of ale aficionados from The Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood (SPBW) arrived at The Central Bar (Carrickfergus) to taste the pub's festival ales.

Ales available included those from overseas, such as Effingut from India and Blue Coast from Ambrée Brewery in France, as well as British ales Orkney's Wave Breaker and Velvet Curtain from Titanic Brewery.

SPBW's Mark Hutchinson chatted to customers as he tasted several of the beers on offer during Wetherspoon's autumn beer festival.

The pub's beer champion, shift manager Danielle Hume, said: "It was nice that the group visited us during the festival to sample our expanded range of real ales."

Pictured is Mark Hutchinson with shift leader Carol Bailey.



# NEW LOOK

## Camberley

### THE CLAUDE DU VALL

Pub manager Paul Read is pictured at the new-look pub The Claude du Vall (Camberley) with the mayor of Surrey Heath Cllr Louise Ashbery and deputy mayor Cllr Cliff Betton.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in March 2002, has been upgraded – following a £1.7-million development project.

The pub's interior has been fully refurbished and redecorated, with some new furniture added and large booths removed to allow for more natural light.

A new feature fireplace has also been installed at the rear of the customer area.

New flooring, including a new carpet and new bar walk, has been installed. The bar area has also been upgraded, with new drinks-dispense equipment.

Both the gents and ladies' toilets have also been completely refurbished.

Behind the scenes, staff room facilities have also been upgraded.

To accommodate access to the new beer garden, alterations at the rear of the pub include the installation of full summer opening doors.

A new 737-square-foot beer garden has been developed, using the current Mews building area, at the rear of the premises, with lighting, art and planting.

Pub manager Paul Read said: "We're delighted that we have also been able to create 35 new jobs for local people."

**77-81 High Street, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3RB**



## Stretford

### THE BISHOP BLAIZE

The Bishop Blaize (Stretford) has undergone a full refurbishment and upgrade project, at a cost of £850,000.

The pub, which first opened in May 2000, has been managed by Ben Plunkett (pictured) since February 2010.

The Bishop Blaize has been fully redecorated, with new flooring fitted throughout.

A new heating and cooling system has been installed, as well as two new self-service coffee machines in the customer area.

On the bar, new glass racks have been added and, behind the scenes, a new kitchen has been installed.

Ben said: "The team and I are delighted with the new-look pub and upgraded front-of-house facilities, as well as those behind the scenes."

"The Bishop Blaize has been a popular community pub for more than 25 years... and continues to be."

**708 Chester Road, Stretford  
Manchester, M32 0SF**



*Horley*

**THE JACK FAIRMAN**

The Jack Fairman (Horley) has reopened following extensive repair, upgrade and refurbishment work at a cost of £1.3 million.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in February 2007, was closed for 15 weeks for the work to be carried out.

Thirty new full- and part-time jobs have been created at the pub managed by Justin More.

The Jack Fairman has undergone major roof repairs, with all external roofs fully replaced. Full external redecoration of the building has also taken place.

Inside the pub, which has been completely redecorated, new carpet has been installed throughout the customer area.

A new heating and cooling system has also been added, with soft furnishings and artwork upgraded, as well as improvements to lighting undertaken.

There have also been upgrades to the kitchen and bar-dispense equipment.

Pub manager Justin, pictured with shift manager Lucy Ung, said: "Customers are delighted with the improvements which have taken place – and we look forward to serving the community for many years to come."

**30 Victoria Rd, Horley, RH6 7PZ**



*Sale*

**THE J. P. JOULE**

The J. P. Joule (Sale) has undergone refurbishment work and a comprehensive upgrade at a cost of £1.1 million.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in July 1997, closed for five weeks for the work to be carried out.

Externally, The J. P. Joule has undergone replacement of the roof and air-conditioning system, with new signage installed.

Inside the pub, which has been completely redecorated and reimagined, new carpet has been installed throughout the customer area.

Its design reflects the art of micrography, developed by Greater Manchester-based physicist James Prescott Joule.

As well as a new heating and cooling system, improvements to lighting have also been undertaken, together with the refurbishment of furniture and seating.

A new feature fireplace has also been added.

Behind the scenes, a full new kitchen has been installed.

Pub manager Kev Muldoon (pictured) said: "The investment in repairs and refurbishment highlights Wetherspoon's commitment to the pub, as well as to its staff and customers."

**2a Northenden Road, Sale, M33 3BR**





Bar team leader Olivia Gregory

# WESSYNGTON IN THE GOOD BOOK ONCE AGAIN

## The Sir William de Wessynton, in Washington, listed in real-ale guide once more

**W**etherspoon is proud of the quality of the real ales served in its pubs.

Its staff work hard to offer first-class beer, at all times.

This is evident in the high number of Wetherspoon pubs listed, over many years, in the publication from the Campaign for Real Ale – The Good Beer Guide.

Wetherspoon continues to have more pubs listed, as a proportion of its estate, than any other pub company.

Local CAMRA branch members judge and score pubs for considered inclusion in the guide. In the 2026 edition, there are 280 Wetherspoon pubs listed.

In this regular feature, we highlight those pubs and staff who serve an excellent range of real ales from brewers across the UK.

### Consecutive

The Sir William de Wessynton (Washington), which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in February 2002, has now been listed in the guide for the past 17 consecutive years, including the 2026 edition.

Pub manager Ashleigh Whitwell, who has worked for Wetherspoon for 10 years and took over at The Sir William de Wessynton in 2024, said: “It is a must for the pub to be in The Good Beer Guide – and we are delighted to be included again this year.”

Ashleigh joined Wetherspoon in 2015 as a bar associate at The Quayside (Newcastle), while studying social care in her third year at university – and never left the company.

She spent eight years at The Quayside, progressing from bar associate to deputy manager, as well as helping out at several pubs across the region.

Speaking about The Sir William de Wessynton, her first pub as manager, Ashleigh said: “It’s a real community pub, very different from working in the city centre, but very lovely.”

### Regular

“We have many regular customers, so we see the same people, drinking the same drink, regularly.

“They are all so lovely and genuinely interested in the staff and we are in them.”

Many of those regular customers are real-ale drinkers – and Ashleigh and her management team are responsible for ordering what they like to drink, as well as encouraging them to try different beers, in familiar and favourite styles.

Ashleigh confirmed: “Many of them know what they like and are reluctant to change, but we have been offering more variety and changing things up, every other week, and the new beers are being well received.

“The real ales are also starting to appeal to the younger customers, too, unlike the city centre, where real ale is more fashionable.

“During the autumn beer festival 2025, Hook Norton Pick Me Up (3.4% ABV) was a favourite and flew out.”

### Festivals

As well as the twice-yearly festivals, The Sir William de Wessynton also hosts tap-takeover events, every 10–12 weeks, featuring local breweries including Black Sheep Brewery in Masham, Maxim Brewery in Houghton-le-Spring and Newcastle-based Hadrian Border Brewery.

Ashleigh continued: “Customers like to support the local breweries, as we do, and they particularly like Maxim Double Maxim (4.7% ABV).

“Our bestsellers also include blond and ruby-style beers, as well as plum porters.”

Alongside the three permanent ales (Sharp’s Doom Bar, Greene King Abbot Ale and Ruddles), customers have the choice of an additional seven ever-changing guest ales.

The Wetherspoon beer festivals in the spring and autumn offer even more choice, when the pub is also decked out in bunting.

Ashleigh said: “The research and ordering are a real team effort.

“We still encourage suggestions from customers and share ideas with other pubs about what is popular.

“It can be trial and error, but you are never going to build your business if you don’t venture out and take a risk.”

Ashleigh concluded: “We offer a wide variety of ales at a great price – a perfect combination for real-ale customers.”

*What The Good Beer Guide 2026 says:*

## THE SIR WILLIAM DE WESSYNTON

This former snooker hall and ice cream parlour is named after a Norman knight and lord of the manor whose descendants emigrated to the United States.

The large, open-plan pub serves three regular real ales and at least four guests, some from local microbreweries. Good-value food is available all day.

Twice-yearly beer festivals are held in spring and autumn. It is opposite Concord bus station.

● 2–3 Victoria Road, Washington, NE37 2SY

## ED'S TRAIN WRECKERS ARE GIVEN A '(THEATRE) ROYAL' SEAL OF APPROVAL

Northumberland-born playwright Ed Waugh's latest show, *The Cramlington Train Wreckers*, is transferring in July 2026 to the prestigious 1,200-seat Newcastle Theatre Royal.

Actors Micky Cochrane and Alex Tahnee, who appear in the production, are pictured outside John the Clerk of Cramlington (Cramlington), promoting the show.

Wetherspoon's pubs across northeast England have previously supported several of Ed's popular theatre plays, which retell tales about forgotten heroes from across the region.

Playwright Ed said: "It's brilliant having Wetherspoon on board, excuse the pun.

"The company proudly preserves working-class heritage in its pubs and supports our work enormously.

"It is great to continue working with Wetherspoon to promote this incredible story."

Ed's latest play, supported by Arts Council England, is set almost a century ago and is the story of the Cramlington Train Wreckers.

Following the première in November 2024, the play, telling the story of the Northumberland miners who inadvertently derailed the Flying Scotsman during the 1926 General Strike, completely sold out seven venues (12 performances).

This year, 2026, marks the centenary of the General Strike, which started at a minute to midnight on 3 May.

It lasted until 12 May when the TUC leaders controversially called it off unconditionally. This betrayal led to claims of a sell-out from the millions on strike.

For their part in the derailment on 10 May 1926, eight Cramlington miners received a combined penal sentence of 48 years in Maidstone Prison, Kent: 300 miles from their home.

No one died in the crash and only one person was slightly injured (the strikers had flagged the train down, so it was going slow).

All eight of the miners were released early, owing to a nationally organised campaign. Even sections of the judiciary felt that their original sentences were too harsh.

The Cramlington Train Wreckers will be at Newcastle Theatre Royal on Sunday 12 July.

● For details: [www.cramlingtontrainwreckers.co.uk](http://www.cramlingtontrainwreckers.co.uk)



## YOUTUBER AIRS TRIBUTE TO AIR PIONEER WHO LIVES ON AT PUB

YouTuber Wynford Emanuel has made a video all about The Ernest Willows (Cardiff).

The 11-minute film features interior and exterior footage of the pub and commentary about the early 20th-century airship pioneer after whom the pub is named.

Wynford, a former journalist and public relations professional, said: "I am a big fan of Wetherspoon's policy of naming lots of its pubs after people who did great things, but those whom many people have forgotten."

Wynford has made around 60 videos for his YouTube channel Tales from Welsh History, using a small high-definition camera.

He added: "This is a retirement hobby for me. It started during COVID-19.

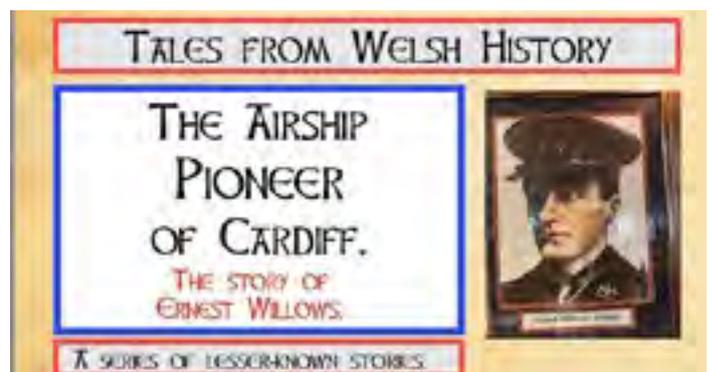
"I just happened to visit The Ernest Willows and was inspired by his story to make the video."

Wynford visits Wetherspoon's pubs in Cardiff regularly, such as The Gatekeeper and The Central Bar, for an early morning coffee.

He added: "Like many of the pubs, these are very impressive old buildings which have been renovated and preserved to ensure their survival, which I believe is very important.

"I like to pop in for a real ale now and then. The selection during the beer festivals is fantastic."

● The video is available to watch: [youtube.com/watch?v=mktrkzthJUs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=mktrkzthJUs)



# JACKIE AND PUBWATCH PALS HONOURED AT HOUSE OF LORDS

**Manager of The Playhouse (Colchester) is committed member of city's scheme, newly crowned with 'National Pubwatch of the year' award**



Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Jackie Dungey, Colchester pubwatch chair Andy Starr and Colchester BID manager Vinnie Geaves

**P**ub manager Jackie Dungey has run The Playhouse (Colchester) since September 1995, nine months after it first opened as a Wetherspoon pub.

A member of the highly successful Colchester pubwatch scheme, Jackie regularly attends the monthly meetings along with fellow licensees in the Essex city.

Colchester pubwatch was named 'National Pubwatch of the year', at the National Pubwatch awards 2025, rewarded for its proactive and forward-thinking approach to managing the night-time economy, including its partnership with the police, business improvement district (BID) and Colchester's city council.

The annual awards ceremony, which takes place at the House of Lords, has been sponsored by Wetherspoon for the past six years.

The company has been a supporter of the initiative since its inception in 1997.

#### Welcoming

Colchester pubwatch's chair, Andy Starr, said: "Our aim is to make the city of Colchester a safe and welcoming place for all.

"This recognition is for the teamwork and commitment shown by everyone involved in Colchester pubwatch.

"The award celebrates the dedication of members who work as conduits among authorities, licensees and the many partners – to ensure a safe night out for everyone."

#### Worthy

Jackie, who celebrated 35 years with the company in December 2025, said: "Colchester pubwatch is a very successful scheme and worthy winner of the National Pubwatch award."

She continued: "The success of the scheme is down to the input and dedication of everyone involved, from the chair Andy to all of those who turn up regularly to the meetings.

"As well as fellow licensees, which includes restaurants, bars and clubs, as well as the university, we regularly have representatives from the council's licensing team, the police, street pastors, the army barracks, BID and the Colchester events team.

"It's information- and idea-sharing, as well as the communication among all of these integral community groups which make the pubwatch work so well."

THE SWAN • WEYMOUTH

# SWAN BOSS KIM GLIDES SERENELY INTO 30TH YEAR



Pub manager Kim Newstead marks 30 years with the company this year, having first joined Wetherspoon in March 1996 as a shift manager at The Moon on the Hill (Sutton).

Kim (pictured front, second left) has been pub manager at The Swan (Weymouth) for more than 25 years, taking over the south coast pub in October 2000. The Swan first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in July 1999.

Kim recalled: "My son Tom was six weeks old when we first arrived.

"He is now 25 and a shift manager at The Swan.

"He started as a 16-year-old floor associate and worked his way up."

Kim's other son, James, who is studying performing arts at LMA Stratford, also works part time for the company at The Mossy Well (Muswell Hill). Daughter Lucy, not yet 16, is also a student.

Kim worked as a shift manager at Hamilton Hall (Liverpool Street, London), before taking on her first pub The Coronation Hall (Surbiton) as manager, in the area where she was brought up.

She also managed The Kings Tun (Kingston upon Thames) before moving to Weymouth.

Kim said: "Weymouth is the hidden gem of Dorset. In winter, it really has a village element to it; in summer, it's busy, great fun, with lots going on.

"The Swan is a big part of the community. We are involved with the local church, local school and community events. The team spirit and camaraderie are so fantastic.

"I love the busy, hands-on aspect of my job and the fact that every day is different."

Among Kim's long-serving staff at The Swan are shift managers Kevin Fox (17 years), Rob Kelly (12 years) and Neil Robinson (11 years), kitchen manager Patrick Ward (17 years), shift leaders Nigel Broughton (25 years) and Emma Crawford (16 years), kitchen shift leader Simon Parsonage (12 years), team leader Karen Jury (17 years), kitchen associate Jason Crawford (16 years) and bar associate Jamie Stone (11 years).

# THAT'S A WRAP - STUDENTS FILM KEBAB TALE IN THE GREAT WOOD

Creative digital media students from TU Dublin: Technological University Dublin filmed part of their college short film project at The Great Wood (Blanchardstown).

Eric O'Leary, Adam Mooney, Conor Nelson, Nia Dunne and Briana Haruta (pictured left to right), as well as writer Morgan Murphy (not pictured), collaborated on the six-minute short comedy film called The Irish Stand-off.

Director Adam Mooney said: "The film is about three guys on their way home from a night out drinking, when they find a kebab.

"What follows is a comedic argument about who gets to have the kebab."

Wetherspoon's regional manager, Craig Coombes, was happy for the group's members to make part of their film in the upstairs bar at The Great Wood.

The college short film assignment, part of the course's narrative film module, is worth at least half of the module grade and will have a large impact on each student's final mark.

Adam continued: "We are customers at The Great Wood and try to go there at least once each week.

"The staff are always very friendly and helpful – and our experience filming there was great.

"We will return to the pub to celebrate, once the film is complete."



# GEORGE AND DANNY EAT UP THE MILES AND THE MENU TOO



A map of Wetherspoon's pubs in Kent inspired George Newman and his friend Danny Jones to arrange a walking tour.

Pictured (left to right), George and Danny are regulars at The Humphrey Bean (Tonbridge) and made their plans there, visiting the pubs and staying in the company's hotels.

George said: "We saw the map in Wetherspoon News and decided there and then to do it."

Since then, the friends have followed up with a tour of Hertfordshire's Wetherspoon pubs – and its head office in Watford.

They have also been to all of the pubs in Edinburgh and have since embarked on a tour of London.

This makes a total (so far) of 59 pubs, over a walked distance of 599km (649,000 steps), taking 100 hours and 20 minutes.

And while working their way through the pubs, George and Danny have also been working their way through the menu.

"We try to eat something different each time," said George. "We've had all of the paninis and all of the wraps, but our favourite is the southern-fried chicken wrap."

Favourite pubs on their walking tour included The Samuel Peto (Folkestone), Opera House (Tonbridge Wells), The Full House (Hemel Hempstead) and in Edinburgh – The Caley Picture House.

● **George and Danny's exploits can be followed on Instagram: [instagram.com/thewetherspoonswalkers](https://www.instagram.com/thewetherspoonswalkers)**

# COME ON YOU FURZE...



**The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath) KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 winner**

**The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath) have made it a hat-trick of victories in the annual pub staff charity football tournament.**

The team from southeast London, captained by deputy manager Bill Jarman, won the KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 tournament.

The Furze team beat The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford) 2-0 in the final, to take home the coveted trophy for the third consecutive year.

Bill said: “Last year, it was good to be the first pub to win back-to-back titles, but this year we have made a little bit of history, winning three times in a row, which feels brilliant.

“It was a good day. We all enjoyed it – and it was great to raise funds for a fantastic charity.”

The five-a-side football fundraising event, which first kicked off in 2002, raised £365,000, for young people with cancer, throughout the 2025 tournament.

In the national finals, held at Goals (Wembley), the teams battled it out to take the trophy, as well as the bragging rights for 2025.

The tournament began in September, when more than 400 pub teams, from across England, Scotland and Wales, took part in regional heats across the UK.

The winners of each of those regional competitions went through to compete in the national final at Wembley.

The other national finalists were The Black Boy (Newtown), The Imperial (Exeter), The London and South Western (Battersea), The Sir Samuel Romilly (Barry), Abraham Darby (Brierley Hill), The Francis Newton (Sheffield), The Admiral Byng (Potters Bar) and The White House (Luton).

In the runners-up plate competition, The Black Boy beat The London and South Western 2-1 in that final.

Sophie Hartley, partnership fundraiser at Young Lives vs Cancer, said: “We want to say a huge thankyou to all of the staff involved in this year’s KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 tournament.

“It’s been great to see so many teams from across the UK competing for the trophy.

“Massive congratulations to the winning team from The Furze Wren pub, who are officially Team Young Lives Legends, with their incredible dedication to KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer.

“This event raises a huge amount every year and we’re so grateful to everyone involved, as it really makes a difference to the young cancer patients and families we’re here to support.”

The partnership between Wetherspoon and Young Lives vs Cancer has raised more than £26 million since it first began in 2002.

Young Lives vs Cancer is the leading UK charity for children and young people (0–25) with cancer and their families.

From the moment of diagnosis, specialist social workers provide day-to-day support for each child, young person and family, from information and guidance to financial support.

The charity works in all main children’s cancer treatment centres across the UK, working closely with doctors, nurses and other NHS professionals as an integral part of the team caring for children and young people with cancer.

● **For more information about Young Lives vs Cancer, visit: [www.younglivesvs cancer.org.uk](http://www.younglivesvs cancer.org.uk)**



**The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford) KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 runner-up**



**The Black Boy (Newtown) KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 plate competition winner**



**The London and South Western (Battersea) KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 plate competition runner-up**



**(Goals Wembley) KICK for Young Lives vs Cancer 2025 finalists**



**(Astropark Dublin)** All-Ireland tournament competing teams



**(Goals Bexleyheath)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Birmingham)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Cardiff)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Glasgow)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Manchester)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Norwich)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Sheffield)** Regional heats' competing teams



**(Goals Southampton)** Regional heats' competing team



**(Goals Sunderland)** Regional heats' competing teams

THE POSTE OF STONE • STONE

# TEACHING'S LOSS PROVES TO BE POSTE OF STONE'S GAIN



Shift manager Andrew Best is pictured celebrating 20 years' work with Wetherspoon.

Andrew has spent the past decade at The Poste of Stone (Stone), in the Staffordshire town where he was born and brought up and where he started his career with the company.

Andrew's Wetherspoon career came about by (happy) accident, after deciding that a career path in teaching "wasn't for me".

He was cheering himself up with a drink at his local pub when the manager offered him a job.

Andrew recalled: "I walked in The Poste of Stone to drown my sorrows, having moved back home – and the pub manager said 'come and work for me instead'."

That was 20 years ago, when he started as a bar associate at Stone, before several moves and career progressions – at The Picture House (Stafford), The Old Swan (Uttoxeter), The Thomas Botfield (Telford), The Wheatsheaf (Cheadle) and The Acorn Inn (Lichfield).

He returned to The Poste of Stone in 2015, as a shift manager, where he has worked ever since.

Andrew said: "I have three children (16, 13 and nine), who have all grown up knowing that I work for Wetherspoon.

"They have not known anything else, which puts into perspective how long that has been.

"Like every job, it has its ups and downs, but I have had an enjoyable career, so far."

Andrew, who is also a local councillor, as well as deputy mayor of Stone for 2025–26, continued: "When, 10 years ago, I came back to The Poste of Stone, I felt at home and settled and really felt like I wanted to stay at the pub for a long time.

"My future aim would be to become a pub manager, once I have finished all of my mayoral responsibilities, which take up a lot of my time away from work.

"At this stage, it would be too much to be responsible for a pub as well, but it's something I would like to do."

# SUPERFAN STEVE STRIVING TO STICK NEW SITES IN SCRAPBOOK

Steve Hawkes, who by 2023 had achieved his ambition of visiting all of Wetherspoon's pubs, has been working hard to keep up with new pub openings.

Steve started his tour of the estate at The Three Hulats (Leeds) and spent years planning visits of whole regions and cities, travelling by car and (in London) public transport.

But now the challenge is harder.

"If you're starting from scratch, you can plan to get around all the pubs in a city, but now I find that I have pubs to visit which are a long way from one another," said Steve while on a visit to The Conister Arms (Douglas, Isle of Man).

The task also involves visiting venues which now include Wetherspoon's ever-increasing franchised sites, such as The New Moor Farm, Annitsford, Cramlington, where Steve is pictured.

He added: "I love beautiful architecture – and the way in which Wetherspoon maintains and restores old buildings.

"Walham Green (Fulham) is a wonderful-looking pub."

Steve, a retired wholesaler and marketing worker, intends to continue his Wetherspoon visits.

"It's just a lovely way to see places and really interesting buildings," he said.



# BRASS BAND BRINGS A MIGHTY WIND TO THE RAWSON SPRING

Pub manager Ricky Brown has invited brass bands to play at five of the pubs he has managed in Yorkshire.

Unite, the brass band of the union of the same name, came to The Rawson Spring (Sheffield) to play festive favourites at Christmas time.

Players drawn from several other local brass bands came together for the occasion.

Ricky said: "This year was their first time at The Rawson Spring, but I have contact with quite a few brass bands – making this the fifth pub to which I have introduced a brass band at Christmas time."

All of the other pubs have invited the players back each Christmas, thus helping to maintain the Yorkshire brass band tradition.



## FRIENDS SAY FAREWELL TO SPOON SUPERFAN

A group of friends has paid tribute to one of its own, Mike Edwards, who died suddenly at the age of 43.

He was a Wetherspoon superfan who had visited scores of the company's pubs.

His close friend, Rob Beck, said: "One of Mike's biggest loves in life was Wetherspoon."

"No matter where we went as a group, a visit to a Wetherspoon was always on the agenda."

Rob and Mike grew up in Ulverston, Cumbria, and they and Carl, Stevo, Ste (his brother), Dicko, Fish, Ben, Jimmy, Mason, Dan and Roy remained friends through the years.

Mike became a successful finance director with a London company and loved to travel.

He leaves his beloved wife Kathy and two teenage children.

He was a proud lifetime Campaign for Real Ale member, often using its discount tickets, accepted in Wetherspoon's pubs.

Rob added: "Through his energy, Mike (nicknamed 'The Catalyst') always made nights out and life in general such fun.

"Mike would post pictures of his friends with pints he was drinking and comment on them.

"His last one followed a trip to Serbia and Dubai, where he hadn't enjoyed the local beer.

"On his return to England, his last-ever message to the group read: 'Happy Friday - proper pint in Spoons.'"



## ALAN AND AGNIESZKA AIM TO ADD TO 900-PUB TALLY



Alan and Agnieszka Forbes are completing a 2,700-mile walk around the English coast, visiting as many Wetherspoon venues as possible on the way and raising funds for Young Lives vs Cancer into the bargain.

The couple, having featured in Wetherspoon News before, have now visited more than 900 of the company's pubs and hotels - including some now no longer Wetherspoon venues.

There are more than 120 Wetherspoon pubs and hotels within walking distance of the 2,700-mile King Charles III England Coast Path.

They have raised £800 towards their £2,700 minimum target, corresponding to £1 for every mile walked.

"We do it because we love real ale and because it shows us parts of the country we'd never otherwise have seen," said Alan.

They have now completed all but 400 miles of the trek.

Alan said: "We need to walk from Great Yarmouth to Maldon (over 300 miles) and around Isle of Wight - and we're done!"

On the way, they will add to the tally of Wetherspoon pubs and hotels visited, as well as revisiting many others.

Favourites along the way have included The Samuel Peto (Folkestone) and The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool), together with The Green Parrot (Perranporth) and Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate).

- **Two books about their travels (BUT I Digress... and Let Me Finish) are available on Amazon.**
- **To donate to Young Lives vs Cancer, scan the QR code (above).**

PALLADIUM ELECTRIC • MIDSOMER NORTON

# CHRIS SHINING AT PALLADIUM ELECTRIC AFTER 20-YEAR CAREER



Kitchen manager Chris Gunningham is pictured (centre) with general manager Rob Gibson and area manager Emma Simpson receiving a 20-year continuous-service certificate and celebratory cake.

Chris started with the company in 2002, at V-Shed (Bristol). He was studying for three NVQ qualifications at college, in silver service and bakery, when he took on the part-time kitchen associate job at the pub.

Chris recalled: "I was at college full time and working as many hours as possible at V-Shed, progressing to kitchen shift leader there, before leaving the company.

"Two years later, I successfully reapplied for a job at The Reeds Arms (Burnham-on-Sea) and worked my way up to kitchen manager, as well as shift manager front of house."

A kitchen-manager role at The Maidenhead Inn (Basingstoke) followed, before another shift front of house at The Claude du Vall (Camberley).

In the summer of 2011, Chris moved to the newly opened The Hatchet Inn (Newbury) as shift manager and kitchen support, before becoming a pub manager at The Gig House (Wokingham) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

In 2015, Chris reverted to being a part-time kitchen shift leader at The William Morris (Cowley), along with a driving job, before returning to Bristol in 2017 for family commitments.

He reported: "I spent three months at The W. G. Grace (Bristol) as a kitchen shift leader, before being promoted in 2017 to kitchen manager at Thorn's Farm (Yate), where I met my partner Rhiannon Buttrey, who was pub manager there."

In September 2018, the couple moved to the newly opened Palladium Electric (Midsomer Norton), where Chris is currently kitchen manager and his fiancée Rhiannon is pub manager.

Chris said: "Working for Wetherspoon provides good job security and, as long as you do what is asked of you, career progression is always possible, with opportunities available.

"We have great staff retention at Palladium Electric – and I love the team I have here in the kitchen."

## SPOON FANATIC CAROL CELEBRATES 70TH WITH SHEAF ISLAND GET-AWAY



Former pub landlady and Wetherspoon superfan Carol Fiveash celebrated her 70th birthday at The Sheaf Island (Sheffield).

Carol (who ran pubs in London, including The Sultan, Brixton) has visited more than 60 Wetherspoon venues and was given two books about the company to mark her milestone birthday – The Unofficial Wetherspoons Guide and Spoon's Carpets, An Appreciation.

Daughter-in-law Katie Strobin said: "No matter where we are, we will always find her in one or on the hunt to find the nearest one."

"We've been dragged for miles down Blackpool sea front in gale-force wind and torrential rain to get to a Spoons (The Velvet Coaster). We were all miserable until Carol got her hot chocolate – and our chicken bites baskets arrived."

Carol had never before been to The Sheaf Island, so was able to tick another Wetherspoon off the list while celebrating with Katie, daughter Rachel and her husband Steve.

Pictured (left to right) are Rachel, Carol, Katie and Steve.

## SPOONS FAN TORN BETWEEN TWO PUBS AS HE TURNS 70



One of Wetherspoon's most committed customers has celebrated his 70th birthday at The Star (Gosport).

Retired senior aircraft engineer Michael Bojas visits either The Star or The Crown Inn (Fareham) each day to read the racing pages and enjoy a few beers before returning home by bus.

He and partner Jane enjoy Sunday lunches at the pubs and visit Wetherspoon's pubs even when away on holiday in Eastbourne, where they pop in to Cornfield Garage and The London & County.

"He is your number-one best customer, I'm sure," said devoted daughter Jemma, who joined in the 70th birthday celebrations.

She added: "For Christmas every year, dad wants Wetherspoon vouchers; for his birthdays, yes, you've guessed it, Wetherspoon vouchers – and Father's Day, the same too."

Jemma said: "I just wanted to give my dad a big shout-out for his birthday."

Pictured (left to right) are Jemma, Michael and Jane.

## WARM WELCOME FOR WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS AT THE CROWN



The Knaresborough Widows and Widowers members (pictured) meet on a Thursday morning at The Crown Inn (Knaresborough) for breakfast and a chat.

The group supports those who have lost their spouse – offering advice, company and friendship.

Pub manager Vanessa Gill said: "They give one another little presents on the anniversary of their spouse's death... and just generally provide a network of support for one another."

"They love us and they love chatting to one another."

A letter from the whole group to the pub read: "Thank you for letting us use your premises, moving tables and chairs to enable [us] to come together to share friendship, conversation and worries."

# ONCE MORE INTO THE BREECHES - ALE STRIDES PAST MEDIEVAL TROUSER TEST



An ancient annual tradition took place again at two pubs in Gloucester – The Regal and The Lord High Constable of England.

The 'sheriff's assize of ale', which dates from medieval times, when the sheriff was responsible for ensuring that ale on sale in the city was of a palatable quality, took place, raising funds for local charities.

The sheriff of Gloucester and an army of followers (pictured) dressed in medieval clothing to tour the pubs in the city's historic core, including the two Wetherspoon pubs.

They collect cash for charity and carry out a slightly bizarre ritual, involving a wooden stool, someone dressed in leather breeches and an egg timer.

The sheriff has an 'ale conner', whose job it is, wearing a pair of leather breeches, to sit on a wooden stool on which a small amount of ale has been poured. If, after three minutes, the trousers stick to the stool, the ale does not pass the test.

Conversely, if the ale conner can move freely at the end of the three minutes, it does pass.

The ancient tradition was reintroduced in 2003 by former leader of the city council Paul James, during his year as sheriff of Gloucester. It has taken place each year since (except during COVID-19), raising more than £20,000 for charity.

The Regal has been involved since the tradition was reintroduced in 2003, with The Lord High Constable of England joining in every year since it opened in 2015.

Paul, an occasional customer at both pubs and event organiser, said: "We always love taking the assize to the two Wetherspoon pubs in the city.

"The staff are always very welcoming, with customers joining in with the spirit of it and giving generously to our supported charities."



# TASTE THE WORLD WITH OUR CLASSY COLLECTION

Wetherspoon's pubs continue to offer the very best quality and value for money on a vast range of drinks styles. Whatever your bevvvy or budget, Wetherspoon serves something for everyone.

For customers to enjoy something different, pubs are offering a real 'class act', with a selection of premium products from around the world, including spritz cocktails, wines, beers and spirits.

Enjoy your favourite tippie or try something new from the huge selection at your local Wetherspoon.

## SPRITZ COCKTAILS

### **NEW** Strawberry Spritz

Flåvar strawberry & lime vodka (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), lemonade. With strawberry and cucumber.

### Classic Aperol Spritz

Aperol (50ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda. With orange.

### Hugo Spritz

Tanqueray London dry gin (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda, elderflower cordial. With lime and mint.

### Peach Blush Spritz

Archers peach schnapps (25ml), Coldwater Creek rosé wine (125ml), lemonade. With strawberry.

### Mango & Passionfruit Spritz

Smirnoff Mango & Passionfruit vodka (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), lemonade. With lemon.

### Limoncello Spritz

Limoncello (50ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda. With lemon.

## WINES

### Teresa Rizzi Prosecco DOC (11% ABV)

Available as a 175ml glass, 200ml and 750ml bottle

Medium-dry, sparkling white wine from Veneto, Italy, with fine bubbles and a clean, soft and fresh taste, as well as elegant tones of pear, honeydew and apple.

### Villa Maria Blush Sauvignon (12% ABV)

Available as a 125ml, 175ml and 250ml glass and 750ml bottle

From New Zealand's east coast, this dry and delicate wine is a fresh twist on a Kiwi favourite – attractively pale pink and bursting with fresh grapefruit and berry flavours.

## CRAFT ON DRAUGHT

### **NEW** Mad Squirrel \$umo (4.7% ABV)

This golden-orange hazy pale ale combines citrus, grapefruit and mango flavours, leading to a dry, bitter finish.

### **NEW** Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA (4.7% ABV)

This hazy, straw-coloured pale ale delivers a perfect balance of fruit and resinous hop flavours, complemented by subtle pine notes.

### Shipyards American Pale Ale (4.5% ABV)

Known for its fruity, citrusy, American hop flavour (Cascade, Columbus, Chinook and Centennial), this is a classic, easy-drinking pale ale.

### BrewDog Punk IPA (5.2% ABV)

This light, golden IPA is known for its bold, hoppy and tropical flavour profile, with notes of caramel, grapefruit, pineapple and lychee, finishing with a characteristic spiky bitterness.

## SPIRITS (mixer<sup>†</sup> included)

### **NEW** Johnnie Walker Black Label (40% ABV)

As many as 40 whiskies, aged 12 years or more, make up this smooth silky blended Scotch, with great depth and its balance of raisin fruit and smoky notes on the finish.

### Tanqueray London Dry Gin (41.3% ABV)

This is distilled four times for absolute smoothness and to allow the four classic gin botanicals' flavours to shine through.

### Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey (40% ABV)

Known for its smooth flavour, made by filtering through sugar maple charcoal. Established in 1866 and produced in Lynchburg, Tennessee.

### Grey Goose Vodka (40% ABV)

This premium vodka combines soft winter wheat from Picardie and pure spring water from the Cognac region, distilled only once to let their natural character shine through.

## BEERS

### Budweiser (4.5% ABV)

The King of Beers was first brewed in 1876. This smooth, crisp, American-style lager is characterised by a subtle malt sweetness and hop bitterness.

### 1664 Bière (4.6% ABV)

With more than 360 years' brewing heritage (since 1664), this is refreshing, crisp and perfectly balanced, with floral notes and a delicate bitterness.

### Poretti (4.8% ABV)

Characterised by a pillowy white head, brilliant clarity and a polished golden colour, this is brewed by combining four hop varieties to produce a great-tasting, balanced beer.

### Corona Extra (4.5% ABV)

The number-one world beer in the UK, this refreshing, flavourful golden liquid was first brewed in 1925 by Cerveceria Modelo, in Mexico.

### Lefte (6.0% ABV)

L'Abbaye Notre-Dame de Lefte was founded in 1152, in southern Belgium. Almost a century later (1240), the canons of the abbey started brewing Lefte, with its strong malty aroma, sweet bitterness and notes of vanilla and clove.

A selection of ever-changing guest ales of differing styles with various ABVs is also available.

# CLASS ACT

 <p><b>FEATURING</b> <b>APEROL SPRITZ</b></p> <p>Classic Aperol Spritz Hugo Spritz Peach Blush Spritz Mango &amp; Passionfruit Spritz Limoncello Spritz</p> <p><b>SPRITZ COCKTAILS</b></p> <p><b>NEW</b> Strawberry Spritz</p>	 <p>Teresa Rizzi Prosecco DOC</p> <p>11% ABV</p>	<p><b>NEW</b></p>  <p><b>CRAFT ON DRAUGHT</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="861 784 1021 940"> <p>Shipyard IPA</p> <p>4.5% ABV</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1021 784 1300 940"> <p>Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA</p> <p>Mad Squirrel \$umo</p> <p>4.7% ABV</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1300 784 1522 940"> <p>BrewDog Punk IPA</p> <p>5.2% ABV</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Shipyard IPA</p> <p>4.5% ABV</p>	<p>Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA</p> <p>Mad Squirrel \$umo</p> <p>4.7% ABV</p>	<p>BrewDog Punk IPA</p> <p>5.2% ABV</p>
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 <p><b>NEW</b></p> <p>Johnnie Walker Black Label</p> <p>Mixer* included</p> <p>40% ABV</p>	 <p>Tanqueray</p> <p>Mixer* included</p> <p>41.3% ABV</p>	 <p>Jack Daniel's</p> <p>Mixer* included</p> <p>40% ABV</p>	 <p>Grey Goose</p> <p>Mixer* included</p> <p>40% ABV</p>	 <p>Villa Maria Blush Sauvignon</p> <p>12% ABV</p>
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 <p>4.5% ABV</p>	 <p>4.6% ABV 4.8% ABV</p>	 <p>4.5% ABV</p>	 <p>6.0% ABV</p>	 <p>various ABVs</p>
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\*Mixers exclude J20 and all canned soft drinks, except Monster.

THE CARNIVAL INN • BRIDGWATER

# SIX CHILDREN KEEP AMY IN A SPIN AT THE CARNIVAL INN



Shift manager Amy Dean has spent all of her 20 years' service at The Carnival Inn (Bridgwater), where she still works.

Pictured (right) with area manager Emma Simpson, receiving a certificate for her long service, Amy started as a 19-year-old part-time bar associate, while studying health and social care at college.

Amy recalled: "I was a student when I started working at The Carnival Inn, but, when I finished college, I stayed at the pub.

"It wasn't what I intended to do, but I enjoyed it, got more hours and progressed to team leader, then shift leader – and it was going well."

Amy continued: "At 23, I fell pregnant and went on maternity leave, came back to work – and everything continued to fit in around the baby.

"It just worked out really well for me, both work and home life."

It worked so well that Amy now has six children, three girls and three boys, aged from two years old to 14, and juggles motherhood with her Wetherspoon career.

She admitted: "I was an only child and always wanted to have a big family."

Amy, 39, said: "I now work three shifts per week, mostly evenings, while my husband works a similar amount during the day with his job.

"The shifts and our work-life balance have meant that we haven't had to spend a fortune on childcare – and I have been able to go to school events, like sports days and nativity plays, and be there for my children."

She added: "After my third child, I stepped down from shift manager to shift leader, because it was quite intense, but I have now worked my way back up again to shift manager.

"For me, work is all about the people. I work with some lovely people – and we support one another.

"I have been so lucky – to meet my best friend at work, kitchen associate Tara Bryant. We have been great friends, now, for more than 15 years."

Amy concluded: "Some of my colleagues joke that I haven't really worked for 20 years with the company, because I have been on maternity leave six times.

"I've always come back, though, and would say that work is a lot easier than looking after six children."

# LOTS OF TWISTS IN STORE, WITH COCKTAILS OF THE UNEXPECTED

**C**ustomers can enjoy a cheeky cocktail at Wetherspoon, without the huge price tag of a traditional cocktail bar.

The pubs' range of mixology drinks appeals to all tastes – and some fantastic new additions have now expanded the classic cocktail and spritz cocktail selections further.

Two NEW classic cocktails have been added to the choice, joining the already-popular Strawberry Daiquiri, Espresso Martini and Tommy's Margarita.

NEW Long Island Iced Tea comprises British vodka, rum, tequila, London dry gin, triple sec, lemon, lime and Pepsi Max, served with lime.

This classic drink has two varying origin stories: while one is from Long Island New York c1972, courtesy of Oak Beach Inn bartender Robert 'Rosebud' Butt, the other dates from the 1920s, in Long Island, Kingsport, Tennessee, with its creator being 'Old Man' Charles Bishop.

Wherever and whoever first created this first tea-like alcoholic drink, you can enjoy it today at your local Wetherspoon.

NEW Piña Colada marries white rum with pineapple, coconut and a squeeze of pressed lime, served with lemon.

Puerto Rico's national drink since 1978, piña colada is likely to originate around 1954 in San Juan, at the Caribe Hilton, with bartender Ramón 'Monchito' Marrero.

Whereas many legends mention 19th-century pirate drinks, Marrero is credited for creating the modern version with rum, coconut cream and pineapple juice – capturing the island's tropical essence, synonymous with Caribbean refreshment.

All classic cocktails are available in a mix-and-match 'any 2 for' deal<sup>^</sup>.

Cocktail pitchers are also being served, made to share, with a mix-and-match 'any 2 for' deal<sup>^</sup>.

Each pitcher contains 100ml spirit (except Classic Pimm's, 150ml); choose from Blue Lagoon, Sex on the Beach, Mango Monster Mash, Porn Star Martini, Candy Rosá, Woo Woo, Purple Rain, Hawaiian Pipeline Punch, The Godfather and Classic Pimm's.

## *Spritz cocktails*

There are now six spritz cocktails in the Wetherspoon range, including NEW Strawberry Spritz, which joins Classic Aperol Spritz, Limoncello Spritz, Hugo Spritz, Mango & Passionfruit Spritz and Peach Blush Spritz.

All of the cocktails are served in a wine glass, with ice and a fruit garnish.

**NEW STRAWBERRY SPRITZ**: Strawberry and lime vodka (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), lemonade. With strawberry and cucumber

**MANGO & PASSIONFRUIT SPRITZ**: Smirnoff Mango & Passionfruit vodka (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), lemonade. With lemon

**HUGO SPRITZ**: Tanqueray London dry gin (25ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda, elderflower cordial. With lime and mint

**LIMONCELLO SPRITZ**: Isolabella Limoncello (50ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda. With lemon

**CLASSIC APEROL SPRITZ**: Aperol (50ml), Prosecco (125ml), soda. With orange

**PEACH BLUSH SPRITZ**: Archers peach schnapps (25ml), Coldwater Creek rosé wine (125ml), lemonade. With strawberry



<sup>^</sup>Participating pubs only.

# TIME TO TRY A TRIO OF TEQUILAS?

## Drinks menu now features three superb varieties of the central American spirit

Wetherspoon's drinks range, featuring various choices from around the world, offers something for everyone.

Tequila is growing in popularity with customers – and the company's pubs are now serving three varieties of the spirit synonymous with Mexico.

NEW to the range is Cazcabel coffee tequila liqueur. It joins Jose Cuervo Especial Silver tequila in the line-up, along with El Sueño MODA pineapple tequila.

### Cazcabel coffee tequila liqueur

Cazcabel tequila comes from Los Altos, the Highlands region of Jalisco – having done so through four generations.

Dedication to the agave yields has led to its agave being heavier and having a higher brix content (sweetness) than the average.

Cazcabel agave is cooked in one of three brick ovens, steamed for two hours, then rested for a further 24.

Master distiller Yadira Hernandez has been recognised as one of the pioneering women in the spirits industry.

Cazcabel produces a range of tequilas and tequila liqueurs.

Cazcabel is a rich fusion of tequila blanco and premium Mexican coffee essence. It delivers the sweet, bold taste of freshly roasted coffee, with layers of chocolate, vanilla and subtle agave sweetness.

### Jose Cuervo

The world's oldest licensed distillery in Latin America belongs to Jose Cuervo, dating from 1795. The brand has shaped the category for the last 225 years.

Through the 1800s and early 1900s, tequila became a symbol of Mexican identity, particularly during the Mexican Revolution.

After Prohibition in the United States ended, tequila grew rapidly in popularity abroad, especially in cocktails.

By the mid 20th century, Jose Cuervo was the first tequila to export in glass bottles, making it easier to be shipped widely internationally, helping to introduce the spirit to Europe and North America.

Many classic tequila drinks found their footing thanks to Cuervo's availability around the world.

### El Sueño MODA pineapple tequila

This drink is 100 per cent agave tequila.

El Sueño MODA was born from the experience of five generations of agave growers and tequila-makers, as well as the love for the spirit which two good friends shared.

The product has been made with only the finest mature highland and lowland blue Weber agave quality natural ingredients, then perfected using traditional batch production methods.

The results form a wonderfully smooth tequila, blended with fresh pineapple – perfect neat or with a mixer.

### What is tequila?

Tequila is a distilled spirit made in Mexico, crafted specifically from the blue Weber agave plant.

It is protected by law (just like Champagne), meaning that it can be produced only in designated Mexican regions, primarily in the state of Jalisco.

Agave isn't a cactus (despite how it looks) – it is a succulent which can take six–10 years to mature.

Once ready, its core, known as the 'piña' (because it looks like a giant pineapple), is steamed, crushed, fermented and distilled to create tequila.

Every certified tequila producer has a unique NOM number which appears on every bottle made.

The NOM stands for 'norma oficial Mexicana', representing the official Mexican standard for tequila.

This ensures that the tequila is an authentic product, informs exactly which distillery made the tequila and guarantees that it was made using the correct methods of distillation and labelling.

### How is it made?

Skilled farmers, called jimadores, hand-cut the agave, removing the leaves to get to the piña core – which can weigh up to 55kg. The piñas are slowly roasted to convert the natural starches into sugars.

The cooked piñas are then crushed to release all of their juices and liquid.

The liquid is fermented with yeast to turn the sugar into alcohol.

The alcohol is then double distilled for clarity and purity.

If the end product is a blanco, this will then be bottled. Otherwise, it will be placed in barrels for ageing, before being bottled.



Try the NEW BuzzBallz ready-to-go cocktails, now being served in three flavours at Wetherspoon's pubs. The premixed single-serve cocktail brand from the US is spirit based (13.5% ABV) and served cold, in a distinctive ball (200ml).

**Strawberry 'rita** – a fruity cocktail with tequila flavour and vodka.

**Lime 'rita** – a zesty lime cocktail with vodka and triple sec.

**Berry cherry limeade** – a vodka cocktail with cherry and raspberry flavours and a hint of lemon and lime.

CASTLE IN THE AIR • MANCHESTER

# SUMMER JOB NEVER ENDED FOR MAN FOR ALL SEASONS EDD



Pub manager Edd Clarke is pictured receiving his long-service award from Wetherspoon's area manager, Sarah Leather.

Edd, who has been the pub manager at Castle in the Air (Manchester) for the past 14 years, started his career in his home town of Gainsborough.

Edd recalled: "I worked as a bar associate at The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough) before going to university, but it was after my uni management course, when I took a summer job back at the same pub, that my career with the company really took off."

Edd subsequently moved from Gainsborough to Manchester, where he had studied, to live permanently, transferring to The Bishop Blaize (Stretford).

It was during his almost five years at that Manchester pub that Edd progressed from bar associate to shift-manager level.

He spent further spells at The Seven Stars, The Mardi Gras and Wetherspools, all in and around Manchester's city centre, before taking on his first pub as manager in 2012, at Castle in the Air.

Edd said: "When I left university, my original plan was to work in HR and it wasn't my intention to stay with Wetherspoon for very long.

"But I was enjoying the job, which I had discovered almost by mistake.

"I couldn't, and wouldn't, have stayed this long if it weren't something I enjoyed."

## BUCK INN BONANZA AS TEAM SCORES HYGIENE HAT-TRICK

The team at The Buck Inn (Northallerton) celebrated a hat-trick of hygiene top marks, with the third successive five-star rating in the local council's Scores on the Doors initiative.

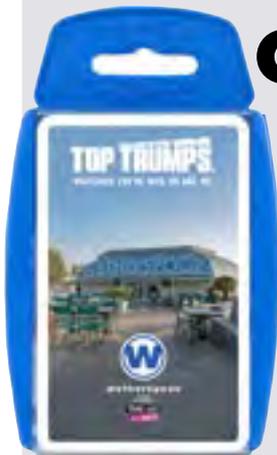
Scores on the Doors aims to highlight hygiene standards nationwide in pubs, restaurants, take-aways and clubs.

Inspectors judge outlets on how hygienic and well managed the food preparation at the premises is, with each business benchmarked against the same criteria, namely: hygiene, structural and confidence in management.

Holding pub manager Katy Diamond, pictured with kitchen manager Hany Ishak, said: "Standards of hygiene at The Buck Inn are of paramount importance, and these ratings are judged independently from Wetherspoon's already-rigorous procedures.

"The team works hard to ensure that the pub offers customers the highest levels of hygiene at all times.

"We are all delighted that those efforts have been recognised, again, with our third successive five-star rating and are sure that customers will welcome the news too."



## CHARITY FUNDS GIVEN A BUMP BY SALE OF PUB TOP TRUMPS

A Top Trumps card game featuring 30 Wetherspoon pubs has raised £160,000 (so far) for Young Lives vs Cancer.

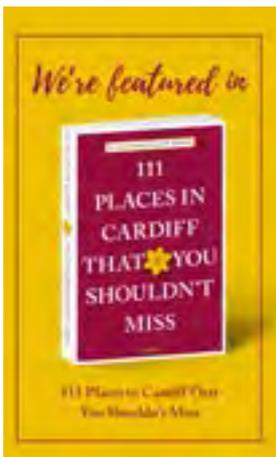
The card game was devised by Wetherspoon's charity partner Young Lives vs Cancer (supporting children and young people with cancer), with all the proceeds from sales going directly to the charity.

The Top Trumps game costs £9 and is available only in Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK.

It features facts and figures about the individual pubs, including the year the pub opened, the size of the pub and the number of steps to reach the toilets.

A fact file on each pub, as well as how much each has raised for the charity, is also included, alongside colour images of the pubs.

Among the featured pubs are Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate), The Standing Order (Edinburgh), The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool), The Prince of Wales (Cardiff) and The Imperial (Exeter).



## PRINCE OF WALES FINDS FAME IN EXPLORER'S GUIDE TO CARDIFF

The Prince of Wales (Cardiff) has been featured in a book titled 111 Places in Cardiff That You Shouldn't Miss.

Written and compiled by author, speaker and explorer of Britain's hidden stories Julia Goodfellow-Smith, the book is a guide to discovering Cardiff's hidden heart, with 111 unique and surprising places across the city.

The Wetherspoon pub is among just a handful of pubs mentioned throughout the 240 pages.

The Prince of Wales, in St Mary Street, which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in July 1999, was previously the New Royal theatre (built in 1878), the Prince of Wales theatre, a cinema, casino, bingo hall, nightclub and Laser

Quest arena, before being converted and restored to become the pub it is today.

On two levels with a large ground-floor bar, the pub also underwent a £1.9-million refurbishment, in December 2023, with many of the old theatre features still in evidence.

Pub manager Andy Greenhill said: "We are delighted that The Prince of Wales is featured in the book.

"The pub is hugely popular with locals and visitors alike and has such a great history as a grade II listed building – once the Prince of Wales theatre."

● Published by Emons Verlag, visit: [www.juliags.com/books/111-places-in-cardiff](http://www.juliags.com/books/111-places-in-cardiff)



Mediterranean side salad

# CHIPS CAN'T BE BEATEN, BUT OTHER SIDES CAN BE EATEN

**You can now swap your chips for a great selection of lower-calorie carb alternatives**

**E**verybody (well, probably almost everybody) loves Wetherspoon's chips.

However, sometimes, for whatever reason, you might want to choose a different option.

From now on, on any main meal usually served with chips, you can swap your chips for a great selection of lower-calorie alternative carb sides or salads.

## Swap

If your meal comes with chips (602 kcal), you can swap for a side salad (111 kcal), spicy rice (203 kcal), a Mediterranean side salad (214 kcal), mash (280 kcal) or a jacket potato (282 kcal).

Enjoy your burger with salad, instead of chips, or tuck in to a boneless basket with spicy rice.

Wetherspoon's spicy rice, with just a slight kick (one chilli spice rating), is long-grain rice with a Mexican-style seasoning, including sea salt, garlic, paprika, black pepper, oregano, parsley, chilli and cumin.

This is also a vegan option.

## Salad

Supplied by Natures Way Foods, based on the south coast of England, Wetherspoon's side salad is made with four salad leaf types – for colour, texture and flavour (green Batavia, baby spinach,

red Salanova and bull's blood chard), together with cucumber, tomato, red onion and a creamy, sharp salad dressing.

This is a vegan option.

Wetherspoon's Mediterranean side salad, also vegan, comprises pearl barley, quinoa, butternut squash, wheat berries, red pepper, pumpkin seeds, basil and dressing.

Still want potato, yet not chips – how about mash or a jacket potato?

Wetherspoon's mash is supplied by Ireland-based company Mash Direct and is made with British-grown Maris Piper potatoes, double cream, butter, salt and white pepper. All ingredients (except the white pepper) are sourced in the UK.

## Spuds

Bridlington-based Bannisters Yorkshire Family Farm, in East Riding of Yorkshire, supplies the vegetarian-option jacket spuds – all grown in the UK.

These are oven baked, crispy on the outside and fluffy in the middle, served with butter.

Swapping items may result in changes to allergens contained in the meal.

Allergen and nutritional information can be found on the customer information screen in the pub, website and Wetherspoon app.

## The Sir John Baker (Portsmouth)



A team of skydivers from The Sir John Baker (Portsmouth) jumped 15,000 feet to raise £2,400.

Led by shift leader Oskar Mitrovic, the group of five travelled in nervous silence at 6am to Old Sarum Airfield, in Wiltshire, to complete the jump.

"We couldn't believe that we were actually going to jump out of an aircraft," said Oskar. "We were kind of terrified... kind of excited."

As they jumped, the team descended through clouds before views of the ground opened up beneath them.

"The clouds were warm - I thought they'd be freezing," said Oskar, adding "with the ground looking like a lot of toy villages."

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Oskar Mitrovic, bar associate Adam Smith, kitchen manager Mark Priseman, shift manager Lucy Wimberley and pub manager Cheryl Geen.

Well done folks!  
**£2,400**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

## The Sir Samuel Romilly (Barry)



A charity trip from The Sir Samuel Romilly (Barry) to Pen Y Fan, south Wales' highest peak, raised £862.

Nine hikers and two dogs, led by shift leader Nicola Andresen, topped the 886-metre Brecon Beacons peak in just one hour and 15 minutes.

She said: "It was a really nice day - and we enjoyed the lovely views."

Pictured (left to right, standing) are Natalie Ingram's son Owen Hillman (aged nine), former bar associate Julian Coulibaly, bar associate Jacob Griffiths, maintenance manager Liam Beechey and shift leader Nicola Andresen; (front, crouching) Caz Taylor's daughter Mia Taylor (16), shift manager Caz Taylor (with dog Seren), team leader Katie Shields (behind sign) and shift leader Natalie Ingram (with dog Cookie).

Well done folks!  
**£862**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

## The Winter Seam (Castleford)



Staff from The Winter Seam (Castleford) put in the extra mile to complete the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge to raise £900.

The team - some of whom finished their shifts just at 9pm on the evening beforehand - had to get up in time to catch a 4am coach before a two-hour drive to the Yorkshire Dales.

They then walked for 12 hours, covering 26 miles, with ascents totalling 5,000 feet - before climbing back on board the coach at around 10pm, arriving back at the pub around midnight.

"It was a long day," said shift manager Sam Jamieson. "But after dawn broke, it was a lovely sunny day - and I completed the walk in shorts and a T-shirt. The views from the peaks were amazing."

Sam gave credit for the day's success to shift leader Lucy Bell. "Lucy organised everything and deserves a shout-out," he said.

The Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge is a circular walk in the Yorkshire Dales National Park summiting the peaks of Pen-y-Ghent, Wharfedale, and Ingleborough.

Pictured (left to right) (back row) are bar shift leader Ellee Roper, kitchen associates Evan Haslam, Jake Shaw and Lewis Potts, bar team leader Ryan Woodley, shift manager Sam Jamieson, kitchen team leader Dom Karbowski, bar associates Joel Bell and Luke Purcell, bar team leader Jacob Hudson and bar associates Jack Middleton and Hannah Kelly; (front row, crouched) kitchen associate Ben Glassford, former kitchen associate Harvey Green and bar shift leader Lucy Bell.

Well done folks!  
**£900**  
...raised for our chosen charity.

## The William Owen (Haverfordwest)



Six staff had their head shaved by a colleague at The William Owen (Haverfordwest), raising £500.

Bar associate Sioned Povey had the pleasure of wielding the clippers.

"The event was part of our fundraising and community Halloween week, with events every day," said pub manager Nicola Morris. Activities included 'meet a monster', 'witch school', a quiz and 'messy play'.

Pictured (left to right) before the head-shave are Nicola Morris, Beth Sanders Thomas, Tyra Sanders, Ian Morris; (front) Calvin Sladden, Summer Bevington and Sioned Povey; after the head-shave (left to right) are Summer Bevington, Tyra Sanders, Beth Sanders Thomas, Nicola Morris, Ian Morris and Calvin Sanders.

Well done folks!  
**£500**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



**The Bridge House (Belfast), The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards) and The Central Bar (Carrickfergus)**

Well done folks!  
**£400**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



Three Northern Ireland pubs competed against one another in a charity pool competition – raising £400.

The event pitted teams of five from each of The Bridge House (Belfast), The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards) and The Central Bar (Carrickfergus) against one another.

Held at Lavery's Bar, in Belfast, which donated the venue free of charge to support the charity effort, the competition was won by the team from The Central Bar.

Players contributed £5 each to enter, with each team bringing prizes of chocolate and alcohol to be raffled during the evening.

"It was a great success," said Alice Treasure, pub manager at The Bridge House.

"We're looking forward to it becoming an annual event."

**The Jolie Brise (Teignmouth)**

Well done folks!  
**£600**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



Shift manager Lucy Burt led a team of nine walkers from The Jolie Brise (Teignmouth) on an 18-mile charity walk, raising £600.

The group braved poor visibility amid drizzly rain on the eight-hour walk along the Templar Way, a former granite transport route which leads to the River Teign, where the Devon pub is located.

Lucy said: "It was good to do the walk, but a bit of a pity about the weather."

Pictured (left to right) are shift managers Lydia Foyle and Lucy Burt, kitchen shift leader Owain Hart, kitchen team leader Noah Bray, bar associate Kaliagh Hughes, shift managers Charlotte Ashley, Jacob Racey and Lottie Armstrong and bar team leader Ash Houlahan.

**The Briar Rose (Birmingham)**

Well done folks!  
**£6,132**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



Eleven skydivers from The Briar Rose (Birmingham) jumped 13,000 feet in the skies above Northamptonshire.

The event was the brainchild of shift manager Amber Oddie, who has twice run the London Marathon, yet, this year, had to rule herself out because of injury.

She said: "I was wondering what I could do instead and came up with the idea of a skydive. I asked the team – and lots of people volunteered to do it with me."

Each skydiver was tasked with raising funds, with a total of £6,132 collected online or from the pub's customers.

"It was really exciting," said Amber, adding "we got to jump through the clouds, which was amazing, then we could see the ground below us."

Afterwards, Amber said: "I'm just really proud of the team and would recommend it to anyone."

Pictured (back row, left to right) are Ellie Baker, Loyal Judie Titus and Loyal Marie Titus; (middle row) Wayne Jarvis, Abigail Walker and Robert Garland (holding T-shirt); (front) Amber Oddie.

Not pictured, yet also taking part, were kitchen manager Naz Khizar, bar associate Thomas Jacques and his friends Eve Green and Connor Upton.

**The Central Bar (Carrickfergus)**

Well done folks!  
**£1,000**  
...raised for our chosen charity.



The Central Bar (Carrickfergus) hosted its 'big Christmas quiz' – raising £1,000.

More than 30 local Carrick town-centre businesses generously donated prizes, with a ballot held on the quiz night, including food and drinks vouchers, floral bouquets and tattoo vouchers.

The Central Bar served pizza for every participating team, with the local Sainsbury's store donating chocolates and mince pies for quiz-goers to enjoy.

Shift leader and organiser Carol Bailey, pictured (left) with shift manager Danielle Hume, said: "We were thrilled by the response from local businesses, large and small, which kindly contributed to the event."

"We thank customers for helping us to raise as much money as possible for a great cause."

THE WRONG 'UN • BEXLEYHEATH

# EACH CAREER A LONG 'UN FOR TRIO AT THE WRONG 'UN



Three staff members at The Wrong 'Un (Bexleyheath) have clocked up a combined 55 years' service with Wetherspoon.

Pictured (left to right) are Wetherspoon's general manager Richard Marriner, shift manager Annmarie Burke, shift leader Leon Hulyer, shift manager Jason Batty and area manager Lauren De Souza.

Annmarie has worked at The Wrong 'Un for the past year and a half, having joined the team following a six-month spell at The Tailor's Chalk (Sidcup).

She joined the company originally in 2005 as a bar associate at The Tiger's Head (Catford) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), where she spent six months, before moving to The Banker's Draft (Eltham) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

Annmarie progressed from bar associate to shift-manager level, during her 18 years' work at The Banker's Draft.

She said: "I love the fact that every day is different – and you get to meet new people.

"I like chatting to the customers, especially the older ones and, once very shy, have gained in confidence since working for Wetherspoon."

Jason started his Wetherspoon career in 2005 as a bar associate at The New Cross Turnpike (Welling), working his way up at the pub to shift-manager level in nine years.

He spent 10 years at The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath) before joining the team a year ago at The Wrong 'Un.

Dad-of-three Jason said: "I first got the bar associate job having originally applied to be a kitchen associate. I stuck at it and progressed to where I am now.

"Wetherspoon has been part of, and supported me with, every major event in my life.

"I've been loyal to the company – and the company has been good to me."

Leon joined the company in 2010 as a bar associate at The Great Harry (Woolwich), where he progressed to team leader.

He spent 11 months at The Furze Wren, two years at The Wrong 'Un, where he was promoted to shift leader, plus a subsequent eight years at The Harvest Moon (Orpington) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

Leon said: "When The Harvest Moon closed, I returned to The Wrong 'Un in September 2022 – and have stayed."

Leon, also a dad of two, added: "Wetherspoon is a good company to work for. I feel looked after as a staff member.

"The people you work with also make the job great."

MILTON KEYNES

# BALLOONS AT THE MOON LIFT PRIDE PARTICIPANTS

The Moon Under Water (Milton Keynes) decorated its doors and walls with balloons and rainbow flags as it welcomed people celebrating pride in the adjacent Campbell Park.

An estimated 4,000 people turned out for the annual event, with many of those visiting the pub during the day – many in colourful outfits (see picture).

Pub manager Sam Kelman said: “We always support the LGBTQIA+ community and were happy to facilitate and take part in the celebrations.”

The pub was open from 8am until 2am on the day.



STOCKTON

# MP SAYS THE RED ANCHOR IS JUST THE JOB FOR STOCKTON

Conservative MP for Stockton West Matt Vickers is pictured with pub manager Steph Sweet at The Red Anchor in Mr Vickers’ constituency.

Mr Vickers visited the newly opened pub to chat with customers and staff.

He said: “It was cracking to visit The Red Anchor – the latest Wetherspoon addition to Stockton, bringing 60 local jobs.

“I love Wetherspoon, and this is another great venue, with great pints, great pubs and great value.

“It is brilliant to see so many local people already enjoying it.”

Steph Sweet added: “We were delighted to welcome our local MP into the pub. Both the pub’s staff and its customers enjoyed meeting him – and he is always welcome in here as a customer.”

● For more information on the new pub, please see page 50.



CHELMSFORD

# ROB’S RUNNERS ARE STIRRED BY SPOONS

School teacher Rob Mills, together with fellow runners and club founders Chris Purse and Paul Stukas, heads up a local running club based at The Ivory Peg (Chelmsford).

The 18-strong group starts its weekly five-mile run opposite the pub in Central Park, taking a circular route which finishes at the pub.

They then order breakfast and chat with one another and pub staff.

Rob said: “We do get some funny looks – 18 joggers arriving all at once, especially as we change our tops outside.”

The runners catch the eye as they have their own Spoons Athletic Club T-shirts.

“At first, it was just me and a couple of mates, but there are now 18 of us... and we regularly get 10–15 on the Friday-morning run,” said Rob.

He added: “The staff know who we are and ask about the run – we’ve invited some of them to join in.”



# SAVING WATER, MANY PINTS AT A TIME

**Project making reductions in amount of water wasted at pubs and hotels**

**A** water-management and water-efficiency project for Wetherspoon's pubs was launched in 2025.

Working in conjunction with partners Water Plus, the UK's biggest business water retailer, the project is already delivering water savings, which helps the planet too.

Water-saving audits have been completed at around 200 Wetherspoon pubs and hotels, during 2025, with more than 570 efficiency devices installed.

These include:

- 💧 25 flush-saving technology air-gap devices at The Union Rooms (Plymouth)
- 💧 28 water-efficient showerheads at The Bocket Arms (Wigan) hotel
- 💧 25 water-efficient showerheads at The Duke of Wellington (Minehead) hotel
- 💧 187 tap-efficiency fittings at pubs in Scotland, including Jolly's Hotel (Broughty Ferry), The Standing Order (Edinburgh), The Guildhall & Linen Exchange (Dunfermline) and The Bobbing John (Alloa)
- 💧 309 tap-efficiency fittings at 11 pubs in England, including 17 at Wetherspoon's head office, in Watford

Wetherspoon has been working with water retail partner Water Plus for four years, at pubs and hotels across England and Scotland.

## Greener

Water Plus won a UK Customer Satisfaction Award in 2025, for sustainable customer service, for its work in helping customers to save water and increase greener actions.

Wetherspoon's senior manager facilities and pub services, Mark Miller, said: "During 2025, work has been completed at numerous pubs and hotels to reduce the amount of water being wasted.

"In partnership with Water Plus, we have installed automated meter readers in 100 pubs and hotels to help to identify potential leaks and faulty equipment.

"Trials are also under way using water-efficient taps, WC cisterns and showerhead fittings."

## Opportunities

Mark added: "With site visits (audits) now completed at around 200 pubs, to identify opportunities to reduce water consumption and water being wasted, we are well on our way to achieving the five-year audit commitment at all 800 Wetherspoon pubs."

Rich Cain, advanced services operations manager, who is leading on the project with Wetherspoon for Water Plus, said: "Wetherspoon and its facilities team have a real focus on water usage, reductions and sustainability.

"This project also shows opportunities which many sites can explore to save water and reduce utility bills."

## Knowledge

The key account manager at Water Plus, Frazer Guderre, has also been sharing water-saving knowledge with Wetherspoon's pub managers during site visits.

Frazer added: "It's been great meeting more of Wetherspoon's managers, who have been really engaged with this water management programme."

Using less water overall means that there is more around to keep supplies flowing for everyone.

The devices being installed at Wetherspoon's pubs and hotels are also reducing energy use for taps and showers.

Improving water-efficiency also helps to reduce carbon emissions which supports Wetherspoon's progress on its sustainability targets.

● **Free water-saving tips and resources for businesses of all sizes are available: [www.water-plus.co.uk/better-ways-with-water](http://www.water-plus.co.uk/better-ways-with-water)**

## THE PLIMSOLL LINE • REDCAR

# AMY ON CREST OF A WAVE AFTER 25 YEARS AT THE PLIMSOLL LINE

Kitchen shift manager Amy Pearson has celebrated 25 years' work with Wetherspoon.

Amy has spent that dedicated long service at the same pub, The Plimsoll Line (Redcar), which also marked its 25th birthday in October 2025.

Amy, 47, said: "I started working at the pub on the day it opened, in the kitchen, and have stayed here for ever."

She smiled: "Some days, it feels like it's been 25 years; other days, it feels longer!"

Mum-of-two Amy, pictured with pub manager Thomas Paterson, continued: "Over the years, I have taken on several roles, working as shift leader on the bar, as well as kitchen manager for a while.

"When I had my youngest, I stood down from kitchen manager, and the job has always fitted in well around my family."

Amy explained: "We have a great team in the kitchen. We work hard and have a laugh together.

"I wouldn't have been here so long if I didn't enjoy the job – and it works well for me.

"It's all about family life."



## THE STANDING ORDER • EDINBURGH

# SUSAN STANDING TALL AFTER 20-YEAR CAREER



Pub manager Susan English (pictured) has celebrated a significant milestone in her Wetherspoon career – 20 years' service.

To mark the occasion, she was presented with a certificate and Champagne at her pub – The Standing Order (Edinburgh).

Susan started with the company in 2005 as a bar associate at The Almond Bank (Livingston) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), progressing at the pub to shift-manager level in seven years.

Her first pub-manager role, as maternity cover, came at The Brandon Works (Motherwell) where she spent a year.

Susan recalled: "On my last day at The Brandon Works, I was offered my own pub and spent the next two and half years managing Hunters Hall (Galashiels).

"I then moved to Edinburgh as pub manager at The Playfair, before coming to The Standing Order four years ago."

Managing her biggest team yet (88 staff members), Susan is enjoying success at The Standing Order.

Also, in her role as area employee relations champion, she helps area manager Duncan McSporry with development, training and personnel issues at pubs across the region.

Susan said: "I love the diversity of my job, have enjoyed working at various pubs, each with its own challenges and experiences.

"The company is always changing and evolving, which adds to keeping the job interesting."

Susan concluded: "Wetherspoon is a very good company to work for; I wouldn't have stayed so long if it weren't."

STONE

## POSTE MAN DELIVERS ADVICE ALONG WITH PINTS



The Poste of Stone (Stone) is a real community hub and a central focus for the local people in the Staffordshire town.

Shift manager Andrew Best (pictured right), who has worked at the pub for the past 10 years, is also a local councillor and deputy mayor of Stone for 2025–26.

Enjoying his second spell in the deputy mayor role (previously in 2022–23), he said: “It is great, when local people come in to the pub, that they know me not only as a staff member, but as a councillor.

“The pub gives people the chance to ask for advice about local issues, face to face. I can serve them a great pint and also point them in the right direction for help or good advice.”

Among The Poste of Stone’s regular customers is local man Jason Metters (left), who has been appointed as the town mayor of Stone for 2025–26.

On his appointment, Jason said: “I joined the town council with the intention of representing constituents who are passionate about the value of community.

“As mayor, I am proud to be in a position which recognises the fantastic work in which others in Stone participate each day.”

Jason’s partner, Sarah Goodall (centre), who has been made mayoress consort, works as a shift leader at The Poste of Stone.

Andrew said: “I interviewed Sarah for her job at the pub and she successfully joined the team as a bar associate in 2017 and has since progressed well.

“I have known Jason for a few years now – and he was a very popular choice for the mayoral role.

“They are a lovely couple, live locally in the town and know a lot of local people.”

Speaking about his role as a local councillor, Andrew concluded: “It is not so much about the politics, but ensuring that local people look after the town and its residents, making sure that Stone gets what it needs.”

### HATCH END

## DIWALI NIGHT BATHES THE MOON IN LIGHTS

A fantastic total of £3,016 was raised as staff and customers celebrated Diwali at The Moon and Sixpence (Hatch End).

Shift leader Serena Talwar (pictured front row, far left) who also runs an events company, led the arrangements with kitchen manager Chernise Gaffney (front row, second left).

Serena provided dresses and costumes for staff to wear, while some customers also dressed up to celebrate the Indian festival of lights.

There were also Indian drummers – and the pub was brightly decorated to suit the occasion.

More music and a raffle helped the evening to go with a swing.

The money raised was split evenly between disaster charity Khalsa Aid and Young Lives vs Cancer.

Serena said: “It was a tremendous evening – and customers were very generous. Last year’s event raised £600, so we were thrilled to raise so much more this year.”



HITCHIN

# ANGELIC DUO'S WREATHS PILE CASH INTO VAULTS

Sisters Zoe and Sophie Quinlin foraged for festive ferns as they set the scene for a Christmas wreath-making event at The Angel Vaults Inn (Hitchin).

Pub manager Zoe and shift manager Sophie brought back pinecones, acorns and willow branches and put them into packs with baubles, so that customers could make them into wreaths at the pub to take home with them.

Customers young and old paid £5 each to join in and were given free hot drinks. All proceeds went to Young Lives vs Cancer.

Zoe (pictured left with Sophie) said: "We asked people at a recent quiz night what they'd like to do here in the run-up to Christmas.

"They told us that they'd seen wreath-making being advertised at £75 per person elsewhere in the town, so we decided to do a more affordable version."

A total of 26 people turned up to the event, which also featured team leader and charity champion Claire Kirby hosting a Christmas card stall, itself also contributing to the total of £150 raised.



SHEFFIELD

# BANKER'S DRAFT BINGO HELPS HOMELESS FOLK

Staff at The Bankers Draft (Sheffield) used bingo proceeds to raise money for charities at Christmas.

In addition, customers also donated much needed items for the charities.

Led by pub manager Jon Atkinson (pictured holding a box of goods), the team, on behalf of homeless people, purchased and collected hats, gloves, socks, boxer shorts, toothpaste, shower gel, hand warmers, pot noodles, biscuits and coffee.

The project was driven by Tracey Ford from Help Us Help (pictured next to Jon, with representatives from the other charities).

Jon estimated the value of the items purchased at £200, based on money collected on the pub's regular bingo night.

He said: "We directed customers to the 'Help us Help' cabin, located at Sheffield's Christmas markets, by displaying posters and leaflets in the pub.

"We acquired items to the value of around £200 from the shopping list of essential winter items."

The six charities involved were Homeless and Rootless at Christmas, South Yorkshire Homeless Assistance, Soup Kitchen, The Sunday Centre, Project 6 and Street Outreach.



MILE END, LONDON

# GENTLEMAN NICK GOES THE EXTRA MILE IN MILE END

Retired market trader Nick Phillips has once again come up with the goods, donating a luxury Christmas hamper to The Half Moon (Mile End, east London).

Nick (pictured with shift leader Brandi Quidlet) has a generous history of putting together hampers for Wetherspoon's pubs, so that they can raffle them to raise funds for Wetherspoon's chosen charity – Young Lives vs Cancer.

Nick, a self-described 'old-school east London gentleman', used his contacts to find special quality items, including mulled wine, cakes, wines and chocolates.

The draw took place just before Christmas, raising £164.

Nick said: "This year, I didn't have a basket to put all the things in, so I went to John Lewis, explained what it was for – and they gave me a 50% discount!"

Nick returned the next day with a Christmas card and a packet of biscuits for the staff.

The pub's manager, Marcus Grainger, said: "It's always good to see Nick, who really keeps the old traditions of generosity and respect alive – he always brightens up my day when I see him."



## HARROGATE

# POPPIES PROLIFERATE IN WINTER GARDENS, THANKS TO BRITISH LEGION AND SCHOOLS



Staff at The Winter Gardens (Harrogate) linked up with two local schools and a large branch of the Royal British Legion to raise £1,068 for the poppy appeal.

Children from Saltergate School and Willow Tree School drew poppies, which were attached to a special display netting which was taken to the pub and put on view (inset).

In return for donations, customers were offered poppies and badges.

The event was attended by Riders RBL, including committee members Steve Greasley, Bob Terry and Roy Kirkham.

Pub manager Will Thornton said: "It was a great community event and a great pleasure to see the children enjoying the people looking at their work."

Pictured (left to right) are Steve Greasley, Bob Terry and Roy Kirkham of the Riders RBL.

## KEIGHLEY

# PRIMARY PUPILS' POPPIES GET PRIDE OF PLACE AT PUB

Pub manager Jess McGrattan is pictured proudly showing off the poppy window display at her pub The Livery Rooms (Keighley).

It was handmade by children at the nearby Oakworth Primary School, where Jess's four-year-old son, Myles, is a reception-class pupil.

Jess explained: "The pub is located in the town centre, just across the road from the cenotaph. We host veteran breakfast events before and after the Remembrance Sunday commemorations.

"Myles started at the local school in reception this year – and I asked whether they were doing anything to mark poppy day 2025.

"I put forward my idea for the children to each make a small poppy – and we would display them, in the form of a large poppy, in the window."

The children got to work with their different designs, some painted and coloured in, others decorated with tissue paper. The reception children also made painted handprints.

Jess concluded: "The display looked so lovely and it was a great community collaboration which I hope could become a regular event."



THE FORUM, HEXHAM • THE ROHAN KANHAI, ASHINGTON  
THE RED LION, BEDLINGTON • THE ELECTRICAL WIZARD, MORPETH

## SIX OF THE BEST IN NORTHUMBERLAND



Managers and team members from pubs across Northumberland are pictured receiving award certificates for their long service with Wetherspoon.

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Steph Brew (The Forum, Hexham), shift leader Marie Hill (The Rohan Kanhai, Ashington), shift manager Scott Forster (The Red Lion, Bedlington), area manager Lauren Bell and pub manager Helen Wailes (The Red Lion, Bedlington).

Also receiving a certificate for 10 years' service, yet not pictured, was pub manager Johnny Crawford (The Electrical Wizard, Morpeth).

Lauren became an area manager for all the pubs concerned almost three years ago, having started in 2010 as a part-time bar associate at The Mile Castle (Newcastle), while studying business at university.

She progressed through the ranks to become a shift manager in 2015 at The Quayside (Newcastle), taking her first pub-manager role in 2018 at The Wallaw (Blyth).

Lauren said: "The progression opportunities and great support are the main things which have made me stay with the company these 15 years."

Helen started in 2010 as a kitchen associate at The Red Lion (Bedlington), gaining promotion by May 2012 to kitchen team leader and kitchen shift leader, stepping up in September 2013 to kitchen manager.

After nine years in the kitchen, she decided to work towards pub management and was promoted in December 2022 to pub manager at The Red Lion.

Helen said: "I've spent all of my career at The Red Lion, although I have helped with cover in numerous pubs."

She added: "I've stayed with Wetherspoon because of the stability which it provides and the progression opportunities across the company. The flexibility of shifts has also benefited my family life.

"Those I've met along the way have been great, some of whom are now great friends."

Johnny started with the company in 2015 as a shift manager at The Grand Electric Hall (Spennymoor), transferring six months later to The Water House (Durham) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub) where he spent three years.

He worked at The Harry Clasper (Whickham), The Sir William de Wessington (Washington) and The Company Row (Consett), before taking on his first pub manager role in October 2024 at The Electrical Wizard.

Johnny said: "I've been with the company for so many years because of the benefits and company culture which Wetherspoon offers."

Scott began his Wetherspoon career in 2010 as a bar associate at The Mile Castle, progressing in 2012 to team leader.

He moved to The High Main (Byker) in 2013, progressing by 2016 to shift manager, before working at various pubs across the region – front of house, as well as in the kitchen.

Scott, who joined the team at The Red Lion in 2025, said: "I have stayed with Wetherspoon for so long because of the stability of the job and the company.

"The flexibility of the shift patterns fit around my family life and I've met some great people at every pub I've worked at over the years."

Steph has worked at the same pub, The Forum, for a decade, having started in 2015 as a part-time bar associate.

She quickly progressed to team leader and shift leader after a year, before working her way up through the shift-manager levels.

Steph stepped up to pub manager in December 2024, a role she carried out for 18 months, before stepping back to shift manager.

Steph said: "The stability of the job, the progression possibilities and the day-to-day variety have kept me with the company for so long.

"No day is the same – and I learn something new all of the time."

Marie started in 2010 as a bar associate at The Fire Station (Whitley Bay).

She was there for two years before transferring to her current pub, The Rohan Kanhai, where she has progressed through the ranks to shift leader.

Marie said: "I love the community feel in the pub and enjoy helping to raise funds for the company's great charity – Young Lives vs Cancer."



**The Giant Bellflower (Selby) Bar associate Sue Collinson with poppies**



**The Moon Under Water (Hounslow) Shift manager Karolina Bzeawska, team leader Ella Doyle and kitchen team leader Terri Gray (left to right) support the appeal**

# PUTTING SHOULDERS TO THE WHEEL FOR POPPY APPEAL

**W**etherspoon's pubs across England, Scotland and Wales proudly supported the annual Royal British Legion (RBL) Poppy Appeal 2025.

Each pub had a collection box on the bar and displayed poppies for staff members and customers to receive in exchange for a donation. Wetherspoon's head-office staff, based in Watford, also supported the Poppy Appeal, as they do every year.

Numerous pubs also created their own displays of red poppies, the symbol of remembrance, to show their support for the Armed Forces community and to mark the annual remembrance period.

Wetherspoon's people director, Tom Ball, said: "Every year, Wetherspoon proudly supports the annual RBL Poppy Appeal – and 2025 was no exception.

"The poppies sold at the company's pubs across the UK, as well as at head office, help the life of many serving and ex-serving personnel and their families.

"Thank you to all staff and customers who continue to donate to the appeal, helping us in our support of a great cause."

The RBL's head of corporate partnerships, Ben France, said: "On behalf of RBL and the Armed Forces community, I would like to thank Wetherspoon's pubs for their amazing fundraising efforts this year.

"Through the generosity of Wetherspoon's customers and staff, we can continue to provide vital practical, emotional and financial support to service personnel, veterans and their families, whenever they turn to us in their time of need."



**The Castle Hotel (Ruthin) Customer Befan Gadd buys a poppy from shift manager Dan Gill**



**The Wheatsheaf Inn (Kilmarnock) Customer Peter Shedden receives a poppy from shift leader Nicola Whyte, in return for his donation**



**The William Henry (Weymouth) Pub manager Jye Dixey (left) and shift manager Adam Cawton support the poppy appeal with a poppy display at the pub, which also served Exeter Memorial Ale**

CHORLEY

# LINDSAY DOUBLES TAKE AT THE SIR HENRY TATE



Team leader and charity champion Lindsay Fisher has more than doubled the take from the Christmas hamper raffle at The Sir Henry Tate (Chorley).

Lindsay (pictured) put together 15 hampers as raffle prizes, with alcohol, chocolates and other festive treats.

"We had never raised more than £300 for Young Lives vs Cancer at Christmas before, yet this time we raised £685," she said.

The achievement was just part of Lindsay's efforts over the past year as charity champion, a title she was given after 12 years' charity fundraising at the pub.

In November, she drafted in her mum, Catherine Williams, and sister, Emma Williams, to knit poppies for Remembrance Day to help in the Royal British Legion's appeal.

Fellow team leader Linda Brandwood helped the Christmas cause by knitting Santa Hats - she put Terry's Chocolate Oranges in them, selling them for £4 each.

Shift manager Jennifer Lamb said: "Lindsay is amazing at raising money with different hamper raffles and tombolas.

"She puts a lot of her own time, effort and money into it... and we all appreciate what she does."

WETHERBY

# ROB PUTS WETHERBY'S NEW PUB IN THE PICTURE



Local historian and author Rob Gray (pictured) helped with photo images for one of the history artwork displays at the newly opened The Angel Inn (Wetherby).

Rob got in touch with Wetherspoon to offer his assistance. His local knowledge and archive were an asset.

Author of *The Drovers are Coming to Town - Wetherby a Droving History*, Rob, 62, is a life-long resident of the town.

His self-published book offers a comprehensive look at the 'droving trade' in the Yorkshire market town (the historical practice of droving, where large herds of cattle and sheep were walked long distances

from the Scottish Highlands along ancient routes to market in southern England), with 250 years' history, where Wetherby was central as a growing market town.

He is also an organiser of brass band events, concerts and competitions, as well as an organiser of the Wetherby Christmas lights team.

Rob, who was awarded 'townsperson of the year' by Wetherby Lions, said: "I wanted to offer positive promotion for the new pub in the town and was delighted to help in producing some of the artwork for its walls, by way of photo images."



RENFREW

# CHOIR DOES LORD'S WORK AT LORD OF THE ISLES

A Christmas choir from a local church sang carols at The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew).

Reverend Philip Wallace led the choir formed from the congregation at North Renfrew Parish Church.

It was the third year in a row that the choir has performed at the pub and it has already agreed to return for Christmas 2026.

A range of local charities benefited from a collection which raised £180.

"It was an absolutely fantastic night, very well received by the customers," said pub manager Donna Walker (pictured far right).

## WHITEHAVEN

# CLASSICS FROM CATHY AND CHOIR PUT BRANSTY ARCH AT TOP OF CASH CHARTS



A successful link-up with a local choir has boosted fundraising, helping to raise more than £18,000 at The Bransty Arch (Whitehaven).

Keeping the charity coffers climbing was Cathy Marcangelo of The Committed2Rock Choir, with its powerful renditions of pop and rock classics... in choral form.

While the choir belts out the tunes, shift manager Abby Pearson and her team raffle super prizes bought with funds raised throughout the year.

In the past 12 months, prizes have included a barbecue, a top-of-the-range cooler and a hot tub.

Abby said: "It works really well with the choir – people love it and there is a fantastic atmosphere from the singing."

Wetherspoon has confirmed that the total raised (£18,126.87) is the highest-ever amount banked by a single pub in one financial year.

"That's a feat for which we worked very hard, along with the customers, and we were delighted when our efforts came to fruition and we hit our goal," said Abby.

Back in July 2025, the pub put on a summer fun and music day, again featuring the choir, as well as a tombola, and a 'guess the bear's name' competition.

Abby added: "We're not a very big pub, in not a very big town – yet The Bransty Arch's staff-and-customer team members always dig deep to give what they can."

## FALKIRK

# FALKIRK ARTISTS' GROUP PAINTS THE TOWN RED

The Carron Works (Falkirk) hosts a monthly gathering of artists.

Experienced and novice artists come to the pub to paint, draw and learn from one another.

The session, open to all, lasts for approximately four hours.

Shift manager Maria Louise said: "The art sessions are very popular – and it is lovely to see the artists at work in the pub."

At a recent event, funds were raised for the pub's chosen charity – Young Lives vs Cancer.

Pictured (left to right) are artists Tony Cooper, Maria Vargiolu, seven-year-old Ella Kerr and her mum Loren Kerr.



BRIDGEND

**HALLOWEEN FUN-DAY BRINGS IN THOUSANDS FOR CHILDREN**

A Halloween fun-day at The Wyndham Arms Hotel (Bridgend) raised £2,620 for two local charities.

The pub was packed with children eager to take part in apple-bobbing, pumpkin-carving and even having their fortunes told.

Meanwhile, adults bought raffle tickets for a chance to win prizes donated by customers and local businesses.

Proceeds were split between Y Bont (providing specialist care and support for children with disabilities, including those with learning difficulties) and RR81 (funding educational and other opportunities for children who would otherwise struggle to afford them).

Hotel manager Lisa Driscoll said: "We had an incredible turn-out from the community of Bridgend, where everyone came together to support these amazing charities.

"There was an insane amount of children, all enjoying themselves."

Bridgend's town mayor, Cllr Ian Spiller, and his wife, Jareerat Spiller, were on hand to encourage the charity effort.

Pictured (left to right) are Jareerat Spiller, Cllr David Unwin, Cllr Ian Spiller, hotel manager Lisa Driscoll and team leader Lilly Colarusso.



LEEDS

**LEEDS PUBS BRING TOY JOY FOR GIRLS AND BOYS**

Staff across Wetherspoon's pubs in Leeds delivered more than £700 worth of toys to donate to the city's Children's Hospital.

Funds were raised from customers' donations, with the toys delivered in good time for the children to open on Christmas Day.

Jayde Smyth, pub manager at The Hedley Verity, said: "It was a lot of fun – and we are delighted that we were able to help those children spending Christmas in the Children's Hospital."

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Abbie McGowan and pub manager Jayde Smyth (The Hedley Verity), pub manager John Tondeur (Wetherspoons), pub manager Odhran Feeney (Beckett's Bank), pub manager Elliot Hughes (Stick or Twist) and kitchen shift leader Regan Edden (The Hedley Verity).

BEIGHTON, SHEFFIELD

**SHELVES ARE STACKED AFTER SARAH PUSHES TROLLEY IDEA**

Shift manager Sarah Edwards borrowed a supermarket trolley to fill with donations at The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton, Sheffield).

Customers packed the trolley, donated by Aldi, with items for the S20 Foodbank in Beighton.

Fellow shift manager Jake Dunn said: "It was Sarah's idea. She's always coming up with great charity ideas and went out to get support from local businesses.

"As well as donations from customers, staff were very generous too."

The trolley caught the eye of area manager Jordan Firth, who said: "It looked great and is an amazing effort from the team."

One of the team members who helped was shift leader Angel Claxton – pictured with just some of the items donated.





**The Esquire House (Annieisland, Glasgow)** Customers Steph (left) and Rebecca Margey

# A WARM WELCOME DURING BURNS' WEEK

**W**etherspoon's pubs hosted a seven-day celebration to celebrate the life of Robert Burns.

The pubs served haggis, neeps and tatties (with the award-winning haggis from Grants of Speyside), as well as a Caledonian burger (6oz beef patty, with haggis, whisky sauce, chips and six onion rings).

A Scottish beer, Auld Acquaintance (4.0% ABV), from Dumbarton-based Loch Lomond Brewery, was also available to mark the occasion.

This is a golden ale with light floral and citrus notes in both its aroma and flavour.

Wetherspoon's marketing executive, James Vaughan, said: "The seven-day celebration offered customers the opportunity to enjoy some traditional Scottish food and drinks and to celebrate Burns' week."



**The Captain James Lang (Dumbarton)** Customers Claire Murray and daughter Lily enjoy a Burns' week meal together



**The Pump House (Shirley, Solihull)** Pub manager Emma Farren with customers Thomas Fahy, Des McHugh and Thomas Leydon (left to right)



**The Packhorse Inn (Sleaford)** Raising a toast to Robert Burns are customers Ryan McGowan (left) and Paul Astle



**The Great Glen (Fort William)** Visiting Scotland from south of the border and celebrating Burns' week are customers Dean Combs (left) and Chris Taylor

MALTBY

## QUEENS HOTEL FEEDS A MULTITUDE IN MALTBY

Pensioners were treated to a Christmas feast at The Queens Hotel (Maltby).

The pub and hotel raise money for the event all year round and issue tickets to local people, including some from care homes.

Sixty pensioners enjoyed treats including roast turkey with all the trimmings, served to them by staff including duty manager Sophie Wilcox.

Sophie said: "It was a pleasure to see so many of our citizens enjoying a Christmas meal with us, swapping stories and having fun."

Pub manager Beth Burns is pictured (front left) with the group, including those from Maltby CIC (Community Interest Company) and Churches Together.



SPALDING

## FAMILY OF 19 HOP TO IT ON CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

Nineteen members of one family attended their annual Christmas jumper day at The Ivy Wall (Spalding).

The group – now including four generations of women and girls – decided to meet at the pub wearing festive sweaters in 2015... and a tradition was born.

Two of the group, Nick and Susan Rayner, have appeared in these pages before, thanks to their visits to 130 Wetherspoon pubs.

Their daughter, Zoe Thorpe, said: "Christmas jumper day is great fun and has grown from just a few of us to 19."

The family's most senior participant, at 90, is great-grandmother Jean Dobson.

Cousins Mila Thorpe and Maeve Andrew are both just four years old.

"It was lovely for all of us, but especially to have the young ones there, with uncles, aunties, mums and dads," added Zoe.



GLASGOW

## BIG-SCREEN HEROES PUT CHILDREN IN THE PICTURE



Pubs in and around Glasgow collectively raised £2,700 to buy some new televisions for Young Lives vs Cancer's Marion's House, in Glasgow.

With each pub aiming to raise £150, staff went above and beyond, managing to collect enough money to purchase 11 TVs, one for each room at the charity's Home from Home, a 10-minute drive from Glasgow city centre.

Nathan McGowan, deputy manager at The Society Room (Glasgow), said: "We managed to collect £650, with The Counting House raising more than £1,000 to take the fundraising top spot, thanks to charity champion Fiona McPherson."

He added: "I visited Marion's House, for its open-day back in the summer, and noticed that the rooms had rather outdated and small TVs.

"I thought to myself – one thing I enjoy at home is watching TV and, with Marion's House being a home away from home, I figured that this small detail could make a massive difference in someone's day, especially if recovering from treatment and bed-bound."

Nathan concluded: "A huge thankyou to Marco Tennie from Curry's, East Kilbride.

"He managed to get 11 43" HD smart TVs, 11 wall-mounted brackets and added 11 TV-cleaning kits, all within the £2,700 budget."

## The Esquire House (Annieisland, Glasgow)



Well done folks!  
**£467**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Kitchen manager Anneliese McDaid led a team of seven runners from The Esquire House (Annieisland, Glasgow) in the AJ Bell Great Scottish Run 10k and Half Marathon.

Five of the team ran the half marathon, while two others took part in the 10k event.

Among them all, the group's members raised £467.39 for the Young Lives vs Cancer Home from Home called Marion House, in Glasgow, specifically to buy new TVs for those families using the facility.

The run was the culmination of a year's activities of the Mental Health Run Club for staff, led by Anneliese. She said: "I am truly amazed at how far these guys have come – to be able to carry a medal for this achievement, as well as raising money for a great cause."

Joining Anneliese on the half marathon were kitchen shift leader Matthew McDaid, shift manager Jamie Laverock and kitchen associates Scott Johnstone and John McBride. John managed the fastest time of the group, finishing the distance in 1:43:02.

Shift Leader Alex Maguire and shift manager Sophie Barton ran the 10k. Anneliese added: "Once we were out there running it, it was thrilling.

"It was hard and a mental battle, yet we made it. The rest of the runners, including our family, were all there at the end waiting on us and cheering us across the finish line."

Pictured above (left to right) are shift manager Jamie Laverock, kitchen associates John McBride and Scott Johnstone, kitchen shift leader Matthew McDaid, kitchen manager Anneliese McDaid, shift leader Alex Maguire and shift manager Sophie Barton.

Pictured below (left to right) are shift manager Jamie Laverock, kitchen shift leader Matthew McDaid and kitchen manager Anneliese McDaid.



## The Wishaw Malt (Wishaw), The John Fairweather (Cambuslang), The Hay Stook (East Kilbride), Robert The Bruce (Dumfries), The Carron Works (Falkirk), An Ruadh-Ghleann (Rutherglen) and The Brandon Works (Motherwell)



Well done folks!  
**£4,559**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Area manager Mairi Ramsay led a team of 18 staff from seven pubs in The Great Scottish Run, raising £4,559.

In lovely sunshine, the team ran the race for the first time – and would love to do it again next year.

Mairi said: "The run is a great route around Glasgow – I was delighted with the level of support from across my area from all of the participants and all the amazing fundraising for such a fantastic charity."

The group comprised shift manager Nicola Goldie, shift leader Vicky Rankine and bar associates Bobbi Kennedy and Rachael Mair from The Wishaw Malt (Wishaw), pub manager Shannon Beck, shift managers Diane Fountain and Scott Nobes, bar associates Rebecca Redmond and Claudia Cairns and team leader Natalie Clark from The John Fairweather (Cambuslang), shift manager Tony Hillis from The Hay Stook (East Kilbride), shift manager William Longrigg-Sawley and shift leader Lisa Haxton of Robert The Bruce (Dumfries), bar associate Lucy Ferguson and Louis Fraser of The Carron Works (Falkirk), shift manager Lara McWilliams and kitchen team leader Jamie Weir of An Ruadh-Ghleann (Rutherglen) and pub manager Clare Broadhurst from The Brandon Works (Motherwell).

## The Queens Hotel (Maltby)



Well done folks!  
**£100**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Children were given the chance to meet Mrs Claus at The Queens Hotel (Maltby).

Team leader Samantha Ridley donned an outfit and entertained the young ones, giving each a present.

Customers donated money for children to participate.

Duty manager Sophie Wilcox said: "The children really enjoyed themselves, and Samantha did a great job as Mrs Claus."

Pictured with Mrs Claus (Samantha Ridley) are youngsters Sam and Carla.

**The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew)**



Well done folks!  
**£1,203**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Cleaner and charity champion Robert McLauchlan pulled out all the stops to raise more than £1,200 for the pub's chosen charity at The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew).

Robert, a retired jeweller, sold rings, bracelets and earrings from his collection, raising £1,000.

In addition, Robert, who puts on a weekly Wednesday quiz, organised a special Christmas pub quiz with 14 teams, raising another £203.

Pub manager Donna Walker said: "Robert is the quizmaster and has his own regulars who attend the quizzes.

"He is a brilliant charity champion and does very well with the quiz."

**The Broken Bridge (Pontefract)**



Well done folks!  
**£467**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Determined shift leader Tommy Horsfield had a hard time completing the Yorkshire Dales Three Peaks Challenge – but complete it he did!

Tommy, who works at The Broken Bridge (Pontefract), was alone, facing a 'horrible gale' on the 24.2 miles for all of the 11 hours and 25 minutes it took him to complete it.

He said: "Parts of the route were flooded. It was very difficult."

Asked how he felt afterwards, Tommy (pictured) said modestly: "It was good to get to the pub afterwards."

Tommy is not a seasoned walker, opting to undertake the challenge purely to raise money for Young Lives vs Cancer.

He added: "I struggled at work the next day; I could barely stand up."

**The Layton Rakes (Blackpool)**



Well done folks!  
**£1,400**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Skydivers Chloe Burgess and Hollie Fisher of The Layton Rakes (Blackpool) showed no fear as they jumped from an aircraft over Lancashire to raise £1,400.

Shift manager Chloe and shift leader Hollie dropped 15,000 feet from the plane above Black Knights Airfield, at Cockerham, Lancaster.

"I had my eyes closed most of the way down, but did open them a bit and there was lots to see," said Chloe.

Chloe (pictured left, with Hollie) added: "I don't think I'd rush to do it again, but I might if it were for charity. The customers and all of our colleagues were very supportive – and I'd like to thank them for that."

**The Pillar of Rock (Bolsover)**

Youngsters at The Pillar of Rock (Bolsover) enjoyed breakfast with Santa, raising charity funds into the bargain.

Over the two days, 41 children (paying £10 each) enjoyed the festive breakfast.

Other festive activities, as well as Christmas items and reindeer food for sale, collected a combined £727.

Organiser and team leader Janet Straker said: "The breakfast event proved so popular and everyone had such a fantastic time that an extra date was added."



Well done folks!  
**£727**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

**Pictured (left to right) are team leaders Janet Straker and Charlie Allsop, with regular customer Allie Jarvis**

**The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford)**



Well done folks!  
**£350**  
...raised for our  
chosen charity.

Staff at The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford) dressed in festive gear to raise £350.

They were joined by regulars Alan Higgins and Brenda Freeman, who visit the pub each year as Santa and Mrs Claus to bring a smile on the face of all the children.

Parents paid for their children to meet the pair, who handed out presents, including confectionery selection boxes.

Bar associate Angela Wood said: "Alan and Brenda are a lovely couple, and it was a pleasure to have them at the pub."

Angela and shift manager Sarah Levy dressed as elves on the day.

Angela is pictured next to Santa, while Sarah is next to Mrs Claus.

**JANUARY  
SALE**

*Round-up*



**The Winter Seam (Castleford) Customer Natalie Atkins and her son, Sam, enjoy a January sale lunch**

# NOT JUST ALE IN THE JANUARY SALE

**W**etherspoon's pubs hosted their annual January sale, with the majority offering a pint of Worthington's beer at 99p.

The sale ran from Friday 2 to Thursday January 15 inclusive (from Saturday 3 January in Scottish pubs).

The drinks featured in the sale were Coldwater Creek wine (Chardonnay, pinot grigio, rosé and merlot, 250ml glass), Johnnie Walker Black Label and Tanqueray gin (25ml, mixer included), plus a full range of low-alcohol and alcohol-free drinks – Guinness 0.0, Corona Cero, BrewDog Punk AF, Stella Artois Alcohol Free, Erdinger Isotonic, Thatchers Zero, Kopparberg Alcohol Free, Gordon's 0.0 pink gin. Also, Beck's Blue and Sanpellegrino Aranciata Rossa were available.

Customers also enjoyed savings on food in the sale too, with an 11-inch Margherita pizza and a crunchy chicken burger, served with chips or side salad.

In addition, there was a choice of six jacket potatoes and three new gourmet jackets.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "Department stores and shops hold their sales in January, so it is the perfect time to have a sale in the pub too.

"The range of drinks and food on sale in the pub was aimed at suiting a wide variety of tastes.

"We included a large selection of low-alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks.

"As always, staff at the pub served customers responsibly."



**The Crown Inn (Fareham) Pub manager Lucy Dempsey**



**The Rupert Brooke (Rugby) Shift manager Liane Grzeszczyk serves customers Mark Rogers (left) and Jay Newell**



**The Gold Cape (Mold)** Shift leader Ewa Stolarek



**The Bishop Blaize (Stretford)** Pub manager Ben Plunkett (right) serves customers Larissa Gallagher and Thomas Plunkett



**The Crystal Palace (Glasgow)** Customers Charlotte Clark and Cameron Taylor enjoy a bite to eat



**John the Clerk of Cramlington (Cramlington)** All smiles from customers Valerie Rea and Keith Teasdale



**The Sir Samuel Romilly (Barry)** Customer Terence John Phillips toasts the sale



**The Hengler's Circus (Glasgow)** Enjoying lunch together are customers Elizabeth McCabe (left) and Debbie Todd



**The Posset Cup (Portishead)** Customers Leah Sellars (left) and Lucy MacDonald toast the sale



**The Central Bar (Carrickfergus)** Customers Rebecca Lily and Chris Cushley enjoy a meal together

BLETCHLEY

## ONE MAYOR, THREE MPS AND 140 VETERANS SHOOT THE BREEZE



Approximately 140 military veterans enjoyed their annual Christmas breakfast at Captain Ridley's Shooting Party (Bletchley).

The event was also attended by an array of dignitaries including three MPs and the mayor of Milton Keynes, Cllr James Lancaster.

Guests chose between a traditional English and a vegetarian breakfast and, according to military tradition, were served by officers still with the armed forces.

A brass band provided a backdrop of festive music.

Pub manager Gemma Hamilton said: "It was a tremendous event and great to see so many former service people enjoying themselves – they took over the whole of the lower dining area."

The group is led by army veteran, Simon Wilkinson, who said: "It was another great event, with more attending than last year.

"It's a chance for old friends to get together and socialise and for serving officers to honour those no longer with the forces."

He added: "There aren't many places which could accommodate such numbers in such an affordable way, so Captain Ridley's Shooting Party is ideal – and the staff are always friendly towards us."

Pictured (left to right) are Army Reservist Col Dr Thao Nguyen, Lt Col (retired) Simon Wilkinson (Rifles Regiment), Lt Col (retired) Lyndon Robinson (Royal Logistic Corps), Callum Anderson MP, mayor of Milton Keynes Cllr James Lancaster, Chris Curtis MP, Emily Darlington MP, Milton Keynes Council Armed Forces Officer and Army Reservist Capt Johanna Hrycak, Army Reservist Lt Col Michael Hrycak (Rifles Regiment).



GARFORTH, LEEDS

## LEEDS' KNITTERS WEAVE MAGIC

The knitting group at The Briggate (Garforth, Leeds) has raised funds for Young Lives vs Cancer with a special assortment of knitted festive goods.

The Knit, Stitch and Natter group meets at the pub every Wednesday and creates novel products for events such as poppy day and Christmas.

Goods on the stall this year included scarves, toys and baby clothes.

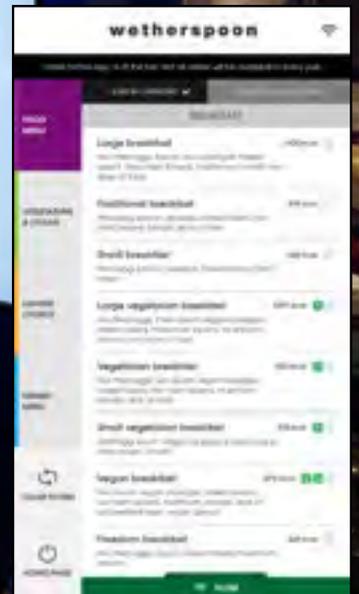
Pub manager Aysha Reevell (now manager at The Angel Inn, Wetherby) said: "Last year, the group knitted a Christmas tree – and this year's Santas, snowmen and angels were just lovely."

The event raised £200.

Pictured with knitted ornaments are knitters Elizabeth Ware (left) and Anne Hebden.

# DON'T BE ALLERGIC TO NUTRITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Take the time to tap the screen, scroll on and let dietary info be seen



## Nutritional and allergen information for food and drinks served at Wetherspoon's pubs is available to customers.

Every pub has a digital customer information screen (CIS) which provides information for all customers, including those with specific dietary requirements.

The CIS gives detailed guidance on the allergens and ingredients contained in each dish, as well as on nutrients and calories.

The same information is also available on the website ([jd.wetherspoon.com](http://jd.wetherspoon.com)) and Wetherspoon app.

### Filters for choice

Filters can be applied on the CIS to exclude dishes containing one of the 14 allergens specified by the Food Standards Agency and also to identify those meals suitable for customers looking for vegetarian and/or vegan meals. For instance, if customers have a milk (lactose) allergy, they can use the CIS to filter out all meals containing milk.

Additional filters can be applied to limit dishes to a maximum calorie or carbohydrate value. A full list of ingredients, for the components of each dish, can also be found on the CIS to help those customers who need to avoid certain ingredients outside of the 14 key allergens.

### Nutritional information

Information about calories, carbohydrate, salt, sugar, fat, fibre and protein content is also available for every dish.

Although pub staff are unable to offer specific advice or recommendations relating to dietary requirements, they will be able to direct customers to the CIS and help in getting them started.

As well as food menu items, information on the allergens in all of Wetherspoon's drinks, including hundreds of guest ales found across the estate, is also available on the CIS.

### How to create individual dietary menus, using the digital customer information screen:

- Step 1** Select 'touch here to get started'.
- Step 2** Select 'view menus'.
- Step 3** Click on the filter line to create your own dietary menu.
- Step 4** Use the sliders...

### If accessing from the app or website, use the steps below:

- Step 1** Enter the pub's name or location for pub-specific information.
- Step 2** Select a meal.
- Step 3** Click on the box 'view full allergen and nutritional information'.

● In airport pubs, customer information is provided on a hand-held screen.

# AGEING LIKE FINE WINE: PUBS MARKING BIG ANNIVERSARIES

**T**hroughout November and December 2025, as well as during January 2026, 11 Wetherspoon pubs celebrated their 25th anniversary.

All 11 pubs, which first opened during the winter of 2000/1, marked their silver jubilee quarter century, clocking up a combined 275 years' service in their respective communities.

Celebrating 25 years in November were The Rockingham Arms (Elephant and Castle), The Jack Phillips (Godalming) and The Obediah Brooke (Cleckheaton).

Marking 25 years in December were The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough), The Admiral of the Humber (Hull), The White Swan (Islington), The Catherine Wheel (Henley-on-Thames).

Clocking up 25 years each in January were Beckett's Bank (Leeds), The Black Bull Inn (Bangor), The Wheatsheaf Inn (Wisbech) and The Corn Exchange (Arbroath).

Also, during the same period celebrating 30 years since opening were The Exchange (Banbury), Wetherspoons (Milton Keynes), Wetherspoons (Manchester), The Muggleton Inn (Maidstone), The Tollemache Inn (Grantham), The Jubilee Oak (Crawley), The Hatter's Inn (Bognor Regis) and The New Crown (Southgate).

Older still were J.J. Moon's (Ruislip Manor) and The Moon Under Water (Colindale), both at 35 years, Hamilton Hall (Liverpool Street

station) marking 34 years, The Whispering Moon (Wallington) clocking up 33 years, The Fox on the Hill (Camberwell) 32 years old and The Red Lion (Gatwick Airport), notching up 31 years, all celebrating in November.

J.J. Moon's (Kingsbury) marked 37 years, The New Fairlop Oak (Barkingside) clocked up 34 years, Wetherspoons (Victoria station) reached 33 years, while The Moon on the Hill (Sutton), The Bell Hotel (Norwich) and The Red Lion & Pineapple (Acton) each marked 32 years, all in December.

Also in December, each celebrating 31 years were The Good Yarn (Uxbridge), The Playhouse (Colchester), The Moon Under Water (Watford), The Falcon (High Wycombe), Golden Cross Hotel (Bromsgrove), The Masque Haunt (Old Street) and The Moon & Stars (Penge).

In January, J.J. Moon's (Wembley) notched up 35 years since first opening its doors, while The Square Peg (Birmingham) marked 31 years. Also, during that three-month spell, 18 pubs notched up 26 years, 15 pubs marked 27 years, eight pubs reached 28 years of age and seven pubs celebrated 29 years since opening.

Congratulations to all of those Wetherspoon pubs celebrating significant milestones, of 25 years or more, during the three birthday months highlighted this time.

## The Moon Under Water (Colindale)

Members of the team at The Moon Under Water (Colindale) are pictured celebrating the pub's 35th birthday.

Back row (left to right) are bar team leader Josh Carey, kitchen manager Gareth Neil, pub manager Scott Doman, shift manager Abbey Foster and kitchen shift leader Gosia Kominek; front is bar associate Bella Greenhalgh.

Scott has been pub manager here since December 2013, more than 12 years, having started with the company in January 2008.

There are many long-serving staff members at the pub, including bar associate Comfort Frimpomaa (18 years), shift manager Jai Jivabhai (11 years), kitchen manager Gareth Neil and kitchen shift leader Gosia Kominek (both 10 years), as well as cleaners Jane Hopkinson and Amba Gostelow (both seven years) and kitchen associate Jacob Isava (six years).

The pub first opened in November 1990, in the purpose-built premises which was once a branch of Woolworths - which had opened in early summer of 1939 and traded for 45 years, closing in 1984.



35  
YEARS



### J.J. Moon's (Wembley)

Shift managers Emily John and Zach Khaldi are pictured marking the pub's 35th birthday with balloons.

The pub, which first opened on New Year's Day 1991, has been managed by Lily Capillo since December 2021. She joined Wetherspoon initially in May 2011.

Among Lily's long-serving staff members are team leader Jean-Luc Julienne (since 2010), kitchen shift leader Dennis D'souza (since 2013), bar associate Andre Dominique (since 2017), cleaners Monica Anokye (since 2018) and Mags Harte (since 2019), team leader Peter Moir and bar team leader Doeke Dobma (both since 2019).

Since at least 1932 (and for around 50 years), the property now occupied by the pub accommodated house furnisher William Perring & Co Ltd.

J.J. Moon's is named after a fictional character, playing on the George Orwell 'Moon Under Water' theme of some of the company's earliest pubs.

### The New Fairlop Oak (Barkingside)

First opened as a Wetherspoon pub in December 1991, The New Fairlop Oak is named after the oak tree planted in 1951 on the green at Fullwell Cross. The original tree was blown down in 1820.

Pictured (left to right), marking the birthday with cake and balloons, are floor associate Remmie Everitt, kitchen associate Craig Flindall, bar associate Deborah Stuart and cleaner Lindsay Wood.

Having joined the team in July 1993, Lindsay is the longest-serving staff member, with almost 33 years' service.

Craig has clocked up almost 27 years' service at the pub, having first arrived in March 1999.

Pub manager Karen Burdett took over at The New Fairlop Oak in August 2007 and has worked for Wetherspoon for 25 years this year, having joined the company in October 2001.

Almost half of Karen's team has been at the pub for more than five years, including shift leader Elaine Grizzle (14 years), kitchen associate Daniel Iosif (12 years) and shift managers Ben Witchell and Valerie Orlovaite (both nine years).



34  
YEARS

30  
YEARS



### The Tollemache Inn (Grantham)

Pictured celebrating 30 years since The Tollemache Inn (Grantham) first opened are (left to right) team leader Nicola Epton, shift manager Yasmine Croft, kitchen team leader Alice Metcalfe and shift leader Kyla Scoffin.

The pub, which opened in December 1995, is named after the Hon Frederick Tollemache, the Lincolnshire town's MP for much of the 19th century.

A statue of him stands outside the property's front doors.

Pub manager Steven Hamilton took over at the pub in October 2017. He has been with the company since September 1999.

Among his long-serving staff members are kitchen manager Peter Churchyard (since January 2008) and shift leader Kelly Samuels (since February 2007).

All first joining the team in 2013 are shift manager Gemma King and kitchen shift leaders Tristan Durham and Jade Manning.

Working at the pub since 2015 are shift manager Roxie Ball and team leader Yolanda Beckford.

# MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

30  
YEARS



## The Hatter's Inn (Bognor Regis)

For many years, the area around this pub, which first opened in January 1996, was the site of Merchant Taylor's Convalescent Home.

Surrounded by trees and high walls, the home was demolished in the 1950s to make way for the, then, new Queensway shopping area.

The Hatter's Inn is named after Sir Richard Hotham, an 18th-century property developer who turned Bognor into a seaside resort.

The former hatter's apprentice purchased around 1,600 acres of land in Bognor for his new seaside resort.

Pub manager Maddie Arnold (left) and bar associate Maria Elsdon are pictured toasting the pub's 30th birthday.

Maddie has managed the pub since August 2025, having first joined the company in September 2012.

Among the long-serving staff on the team are kitchen manager Jana Elliott (since 2010), shift manager Rebecca Staunton (since 2015), shift manager Chelsea Read and kitchen shift leader Adam Franklin (both since 2019).

## The Counting House (Glasgow)

The Counting House (Glasgow) first opened its doors as a Wetherspoon pub in December 1996, in the premises previously owned by the Bank of Scotland.

The building was designed and built for the bank during 1867-70 by JT Ruchead.

Pictured celebrating the pub's 29th birthday (left to right) are shift manager Dara Dineen, floor associate Charlotte Thompson, bar associate Andy Frew, shift manager Ali McDonald (back), shift leader Fiona McPherson and bar team leader Aran Fountain.

Pub manager Mick Murphy first joined Wetherspoon in July 1999, taking over at The Counting House in March 2008.

Deputy manager Louise McDonald has worked at the pub for 17 years.

Among the other long-serving staff members are kitchen manager Craig Windsor (since 2005), team leader Karen Hamilton, kitchen team leader Gary Porter (both since 2014), kitchen shift leader Lisa Mclachlan, shift leader Kirsty McInch (both since 2016), kitchen associate Abe Musumar-Mbambu (since 2017), bar associate Robyn Gunning, kitchen associate Anne Bruce and cleaners Magdalena Swenda and James Peebles (all since 2018).



29  
YEARS

27  
YEARS



## The Elihu Yale (Wrexham)

Andy Hodgson has been pub manager at The Elihu Yale since June 2010; however, he was a customer at the Wrexham pub on its opening day back in December 1998.

Andy, who has worked for Wetherspoon for 19 years, is pictured (centre) with cleaner Gaynor Spurdle (11 years' service) and long-standing customer Ron Evans.

Among the other long-serving staff members on Andy's team are kitchen associate Sharon Griffiths (25 years), cleaner Andrea Hayley Jones (21 years), kitchen manager Adam Samuels, bar associate Calan Jones (both 16 years), shift manager Anna Rose (14 years) and kitchen shift manager Will Green (12 years).

The pub's building was once The Majestic Cinema and later housed Cantors furniture store.

The Elihu Yale is named after the founder of Yale University, who lies buried in Wrexham churchyard.

Born in America, of an ancient Welsh family, Yale worked in India, where he rose to become the governor of Fort St George.

During the last 22 years of his life, he divided his time, living at his estate near Wrexham and his home in London, where he died in 1721.

27  
YEARS



### The Clifton (Sedgley)

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Shan Wilding, team leader George Stones and pub manager Rachel Donet celebrating the 27th birthday at The Clifton (Sedgley).

Rachel has worked for Wetherspoon since August 2011, becoming pub manager at The Clifton in May 2023.

Among her long-serving staff members are shift manager Thomas Jackson, who joined Wetherspoon in July 2014 and moved to The Clifton in 2022.

Others include bar associate Sarah Forster (March 2010), shift leader River Perry (since August 2016), cleaners Mandy Pitt and Margaret Taylor (both since July 2017) and kitchen manager Bobby Stephenson (October 2019).

The pub, which first opened in December 1998, is housed in the former Clifton Cinema, opened in May 1937 by Captain Sidney Clift, the founder of the Black Country cinemas bearing his name.

The Sedgley Clifton screened its last film in 1978.

### The Sedge Lynn (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)

The Sedge Lynn first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in December 1999, in a former billiards hall built in c1907, on a field sandwiched between a house called Sedge Lynn (demolished to make way for a cinema) and Red Gate Farm.

Now a grade II listed building, the original billiards hall (and others like this one, in and around Manchester and south London) was erected to remove billiards from its usual setting of the public house and to further the aims of the Temperance Movement.

The Sedge Lynn pub has been managed by Kirstin Nicholls since September 2013, who first joined the company in March 2005.

Bar associate Amber Grimshaw is the longest-serving staff member, having worked at The Sedge Lynn since September 2017.

Pictured with a birthday cake are (left to right) bar associate Katie Marsden, shift manager Lex Archer and kitchen associate Saeed Shariffard.



26  
YEARS

### The Corn Exchange (Arbroath)

First opened as a Wetherspoon pub in January 2001, The Corn Exchange occupies the former corn exchange building constructed in the 1800s.

Pictured celebrating the silver anniversary are (back row, left to right) kitchen associate Kian Low, shift manager Lynette Craig, pub manager Richard Airey and area manager Sarah Kyle-Playford; (front, left to right) bar associate Ellie Cassidy, kitchen manager Karagh Begg and kitchen shift leader Kat Begg.

Richard first joined Wetherspoon almost 20 years ago, in May 2006, and has run The Corn Exchange since February 2015. Sarah has been a Wetherspoon area manager for 12 years, having worked for the company for 22 years.

Lynette has been at the pub since it first opened 25 years ago, while Karagh has worked for Wetherspoon since December 2011, becoming kitchen manager here in August 2019.

Work started on building Arbroath's corn exchange in 1852 and was completed two years later.

Unfortunately, few stallholders used the new building; so, for the next 50 years, it was used mostly for auctions and other events.

In 1912, the building was converted into the Olympia Picture Palace.

25  
YEARS





## WETHERBY

### GEORGE STIRRED AS A NEW SPOON BOWLS IN

Wetherspoon fan George Hirst (pictured) was more than thrilled when The Angel Inn (Wetherby) newly opened just before Christmas.

George, previously featured in Wetherspoon News (winter/spring 2023/24), lives nearby.

He watched the new pub being redeveloped and was among the first of the customers on its opening day.

His mum, Deborah, who often accompanies George on his Wetherspoon pub visits, said: "George was so excited about this new opening, as it is so close to where we live.

"He was too excited to speak on the morning of the opening."

George, who has autism, enjoys reading the various pubs' histories and finding out about each pub's links with its local area.

Deborah laughed: "We will have a job keeping George out of The Angel Inn now that he's 21."

## EDINBURGH

### KIND EDINBURGH CUSTOMERS HELP AMANDA TO HELP HOMELESS

Wetherspoons Game and Giveaway organiser Amanda McDuff spent two hours at The Alexander Graham Bell (Edinburgh) collecting donations for the homeless and hungry at Christmas.

Giveaway is a version of Wetherspoons The Game, where members buy drinks for others via app orders.

Amanda collected 130 packs of biscuits, 85 packets of crisps, 32 soft drinks and 36 packets of nuts for St Augustine's food bank, Glasgow, and homeless charities.

Pub manager Stephen Nesbitt said: "This is the second time that Amanda and I have teamed up to do this, having done so previously in 2023 in The Guildhall & Linen Exchange (Dunfermline) while I was pub manager there."

He added: "Amanda is a great organiser – and we were delighted to be able to help her to help others at Christmas."

## SOUTHPORT

### SOUTHPORT SHOPPERS SLEIGHED BY SIR HENRY'S SPECIAL TRIP

A bus to Manchester's markets set off from The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport) with 36 customers aboard.

Each paid £25 for a ticket which included a breakfast muffin and a coffee at the pub before the 10am departure.

Shift manager Jane Martin arranged the trip for customers.

She said: "The coach trip was a success and enjoyed by all.

"The Manchester Christmas markets create a special atmosphere in the city centre.

"Lots of customers bought presents and enjoyed some mulled wine and mince pies."

## HUYTON

### BARKER'S BREWERY MARKS 15 YEARS, WITH TRIO THERE SINCE BEGINNING

Staff at The Barker's Brewery (Huyton) celebrated its 15th birthday by presenting flowers to three staff who have been there since its opening day.

Deputy manager Pamela Rustage, kitchen shift leader Rosheen Buchanan and bar associate Julie Graham-Crawley have worked at the pub since January 2011.

Celebrations also saw a big raffle in aid of Young Lives vs Cancer and cake for customers and staff, against a backdrop of bunting and balloons.

The event was organised by the pub's charity champion, bar associate Debs Fisher.

She said: "The flowers were a surprise to recognise Pamela, Rosheen and Julie's service and dedication to the pub. It was a really great day, with customers and staff enjoying it."

The pub's manager, Jonathan Blundell, said: "These three staff have been a hugely important part of the team from day one."



**Pictured (left to right) are charity champion and bar associate Debs Fisher, bar associate Julie Graham-Crawley, deputy manager Pamela Rustage, kitchen shift leader Rosheen Buchanan, shift leader Suzanne Bleasdale and pub manager Jonathan Blundell**

# WIN A £30

## WETHERSPOON GIFT CARD

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.

Closing date for entries: 15 June 2026

**Post to:**

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PO Box 2330, Watford, WD18 1NW

## 5 x £30 PRIZES TO BE WON



### Across

- 7, and 8. Central character in Forster's A Passage to India (5,7)
- 8. See 7.
- 9. Character placed under a c in certain languages denoting that it is to be pronounced s not k (7)
- 10. — maté, stimulating milky beverage (5)
- 12. American actor who starred with Bill Cosby in the 60's t.v. show I Spy (6,4)

- 15, and 3 Down. Dramatisation by A. A. Milne of the children's story The Wind in the Willows (4,2,4,4)
- 18. Large member of the crow family, Corvus corax (5)
- 19. Disease of children caused by a deficiency of vitamin D (7)
- 21. Anthropoid ape of the forests of W. Africa (7)
- 22. John Jacob, chairman of the Times Publishing Company who died in 1971

### Down

- 1. City in N.W. England (10)
- 2. Richard, 1972 Olympic individual Three-Day Event winner (5)
- 3. See 15 Across.
- 4. "Washington —", novel by Henry James (6)
- 5. Jomo, President of the Republic of Kenya 1964-78 (8)
- 6. Broad vertical bone in the chest to which the ribs are attached (7)

- 11. "Keep the — Flying", novel by George Orwell (10)
- 13. Daniel, Irish nationalist leader known as 'The Liberator' (8)
- 14. Surname of the housekeeper in the novel Rebecca (7)
- 16. "— of the Apes", Edgar Rice Burroughs novel (6)
- 17. 1983 Barbra Streisand film (5)
- 20. Compact carbonaceous rock used as a fuel (4)

### SOLUTIONS (Winter/spring 2025/26 edition)

**Across:** 1 Beefeater; 8 Edo; 9 Bakersfield; 11 Sukarno; 12 Evans; 13 Martha; 15 France; 17 Essex; 18 Absalom; 20 Edgar Linton; 22 Bar; 23 New Jersey

**Down:** 2 Eva; 3 Error; 4 Teflon; 5 Roe deer; 6 Redgauntlet; 7 Colosseum; 10 Keke Rosberg; 11 Sommersby; 14 Hexagon; 16 Marrow; 19 Spice; 21 One

### The winter/spring 2025/26 edition crossword winners were:

★ YS, Lanark ★ AC, Manchester ★ DH, Pudsey ★ AB, Kilmarnock ★ PE, Skelmersdale



### Please complete the answers and your details, as shown, and send the completed page to:

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Ash Corbett-Collins is chairman of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

# Cheers

## BATTLE BEGUN IN 1971 HAS NOT YET BEEN WON

**CAMRA was born when flares and long hair were big, yet ale choice was small. Things have improved since then, but there's much more work to be done, says CAMRA's chairman Ash Corbett-Collins**

**It's CAMRA's 55th birthday – and we are needed more than ever!**

Colchester Brewery's Brazilian is my needle-in-a-haystack beer. One of the first years I volunteered with CAMRA, I got the chance to try it straight from the cask in perfect condition.

The depth of flavour was incredible.

But sadly, I am yet to see it available in a pub anywhere near me, so it continues as just a memory.

Being unable to find interesting beers from a decent range of styles is exactly why CAMRA was founded back in 1971 – and it is still what fuels our campaigning today, 55 years later.

I joined CAMRA because I wanted to support local pubs as the best place to find high-quality and independent beers at the bar.

I've spent the last 14 years of my membership figuring out why the independent beers I love so much can unfortunately be so hard to find in local bars.

Thanks to the hard work of CAMRA's volunteers over the past half century, UK drinkers have more rights than they did in the past.

The choice of great local and independent beers and ciders is thankfully better than it was many years ago.

But there's more work to be done to get a fairer deal for pubs, breweries and their customers.

### CHOICE

Our four founders were sick of not enough choice – especially access to traditional cask, which was rapidly being replaced by bland lagers from global brewers – which saw CAMRA born. We share their ethos today.

Hard-hitting and committed campaigning against mass-produced beer quickly cemented CAMRA as the voice to support the rights of UK beer-drinkers.

In the 1980s, we started campaigning for real cider and perry, too.

We are now regarded as one of the most successful consumer organisations in Europe.

For too long, large global breweries have controlled the supply of beer in this country, and they didn't want great cask beer.

But consumers did and still do.

We listened, took action and got your voices heard.

Pubs, pints and people are at the heart of everything we do.

We will continue tirelessly to promote and protect great cask beer, the fantastic pubs which serve it and you – the consumers who are essential to all we do.

Our local festivals showcase the very best brewers and cider-makers across the UK, with beer and cider from hundreds of independent producers under one roof.

For the first time ever, in 2026, we're giving CAMRA's members free entry to all festivals, putting independent beer in the spotlight for every corner of the UK – a fantastic membership benefit, bringing our campaigns to current and future members.

But the brewers and cider-makers at our festivals are the same independent producers which are struggling to get behind the bars in pubs for local customers.

This has to change.

We cannot do this without you – we need pub-goers and beer and cider enthusiasts to help us to make our four original campaigners' vision and dreams a reality.

### FIGHT

CAMRA's members help us to fight to save much-loved pubs and breweries, vital to local communities.

Helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation, these are a social hub, bringing people together to enjoy a pint and spending time with family, friends and neighbours.

It is absolutely devastating when a pub is lost for ever, against the wishes of local people, and converted into housing, a shop or a take-away.

In our experience, once an unscrupulous developer has a pub in its sight... it won't be coming back.

The wider scandal of potentially unlawful pub conversions and demolitions is a stain on the industry, so we continue to demand tighter, stronger planning policies and a requirement in law to rebuild pubs brick by brick.

We want governments across the UK to give local people the right to save their local pub from conversion or demolition.

We want communities to have strengthened rights and funding to save their pub and take it over as a community-owned business.

We're also fighting for better access, in more pubs, to the beers which you love.

We have campaigned successfully for new rights for those who run pubs in Scotland to serve a guest beer of their choosing from a local or independent brewery, improving choice at the bar.

Now, we're calling on the UK Government to introduce the same 'guest beer right' for tied pubs across England and Wales.

I often wonder when I'll next see Colchester Brewery's Brazilian on a bar near me.

### FAVOURITE

And I know, from speaking to our members and volunteers, that others aren't able to find their favourite beers either.

We won't rest until we have better choice from independent brewers and cider-makers in pubs, social clubs and brewery taprooms in all parts of the UK.

We are demanding thriving pubs in every community, recognised and protected as a force for good.

You are likely reading this magazine in a pub – if we don't take further action, the stark reality is that we are in danger of losing even more pubs.

If this continues, the UK's landscape changes for ever.

If you're not yet a CAMRA member and want to find out more, visit: [camra.org.uk/join](http://camra.org.uk/join)

Your voice and support will help to not only strengthen our fight for better choice, but save our pubs and play an essential role in our campaigning movement.

You will also enjoy great benefits, such as free entry to our festivals, money-off vouchers which are accepted in Wetherspoon's pubs and meeting like-minded people across our 220 branches across the UK.

Your membership really will help us to fight to secure the future of the UK's beer and pubs.

Let's work together to see pubs not just survive... but thrive.

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| 23 <b>King's Lynn</b><br>Globe Hotel<br>01553 668000              |   |



Map not to scale.

**Key**  
31 Location on map

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