

UK EDITION

YOUR FREE MAGAZINE | SUMMER/AUTUMN 2026

WETHERSPOONNEWS

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MORE AWARDS THAN MERYL STREEP

Pub designs winning gongs for 33 years

AND THEN THERE WAS NONE...

Every single Wetherspoon pub is now Best Bar None accredited



Living is Calling



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*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.
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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. Allergen and nutritional information can be found on the customer information screen, website and Wetherspoon app.
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WIN!
PRIZE
CROSSWORD
129

wetherspoon in numbers

56

hotels in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

280

pubs in CAMRA's The Good Beer Guide 2026.

98.9
per cent

of pubs achieving a top hygiene rating of five.

21
years

as a Top Employer United Kingdom.

£26
million

raised for Young Lives vs Cancer since 2002.

£638
million

in free shares and bonuses paid to employees since 2006.

£6.8
billion

generated in tax since 2016.

Has Wetherspoon won more design awards than any other company in the world?

An interesting question, says Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin

Urged on by the sainted editor, Wetherspoon News usually tries to pose interesting philosophical questions for customers to weigh up.

In the last magazine, for example, it was argued that the main challenges to the beleaguered UK hospitality industry were the crazy energy policies by successive governments, the surreptitious emergence of the 19th-century temperance movement through national newspapers and the tax advantages for supermarkets over pubs (please see the article on pages 62–63).

In this edition, we are immodestly posing the interesting question as to whether Wetherspoon has won more design awards than any other company, big or small, in the history of the UK or, indeed, the world.

On pages 10–13, we list 70 pubs created by Wetherspoon which have won a design award of some description – from local authorities, English Heritage, CAMRA and various other interested organisations – between 1993 and 2015.

In the next edition of Wetherspoon News, we will feature more design awards won by the pubs between 2016 and 2026.

As the company has evolved, some of the pubs have been sold, yet, often, the award-winning design is still evident today, albeit under new ownership.

Converted

Most Wetherspoon pubs have been converted from disused shops, banks, cinemas or similar buildings, many of which have a rich local history – which is of great community interest. One of the first steps in a new pub's design is to find it a name.

Sometimes, it is the existing name by which a building has always been known – or used to be known.

Examples include The Prince of Wales (Cardiff), The Palladium (Llandudno), The Caley Picture House (Edinburgh), Opera House (Royal Tunbridge Wells) and Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate).

In the absence of an original name, for example for a former high-street bank, the company's virtuoso researchers try to find an interesting name with an historic link to the building or its surrounding area.

Examples of former banks include The Counting House (Dundee), The Twelve

Tellers (Preston), The Bank Statement (Swansea) and The Crosse Keys (City of London).

Famous

There are many variations on this theme – pubs named after historic pubs which have long since been lost to a town, those named after famous local people from the distant past and so on.

Wetherspoon's local history artwork designers Robert Renak (who has worked for the company for 35 years) and Naomi Snelgrove (who has been involved for more than 20 years) undertake detailed research and put together displays of artwork which add local interest and an individual finishing touch to the décor of every pub – and, hopefully, inform and entertain.

All in all, there is a lot of local history on Wetherspoon's pubs' walls – now available also online.

J.J. Moon's

It's worth mentioning, as an aside, that, when the company was in its infancy, in the 1980s, Wetherspoon opened several pubs called J.J. Moon's.

The name was based on a spoof character in a 1960s surfing magazine I read as a pre-teenager (see photo below) in New Zealand, where my old man was the Guinness rep for a few years.



Tim, Cecil Rd, Milford Beach, Auckland, October 1966

An October 1966 article about the JJ Moon phenomenon in America's Life magazine is reproduced on the opposite page.

In the early days, mostly in the 1980s, Wetherspoon adapted the JJ Moon theme to encompass the Moon Under Water, George Orwell's idealised pub (see Orwell's Evening Standard essay on page 64), and several other names which included the word 'moon'.

Today, there are 34 pubs with the moniker 'moon' somewhere in their name.

Apart from the 'moon' variations of the 1980s, from about the early 1990s, Wetherspoon adopted the approach of an individual and bespoke design for every pub. However, individual design goes against the grain of modern marketing and corporate philosophy.

Branding

In recent decades, possibly the biggest commercial theme in hospitality and retail has been 'branding', whereby many pubs, restaurants, cafés and shops have adopted the same name and the same, or similar, décor – the idea being to endeavour (via its name and décor) to make each venue immediately identifiable as being part of a brand.

This approach has clearly worked very well for McDonald's, Sainsbury's, Tesco and many, many other businesses.

However, Wetherspoon's contribution to business philosophy was, in the case of pubs' design, that the public prefers individuality, authenticity and 'soul' to overt 'branding'.

In reality, there is room for different types of pub and restaurant.

We certainly don't criticise successful businesses such as All Bar One, O'Neill's or PizzaExpress for their more 'branded' approach – we genuinely wish them every success.

It's a free world, after all.

However, it's undoubtedly easier and cheaper to adopt the 'branding' approach to design.

Wetherspoon's individualised approach puts far more pressure on researchers, architects, artists and designers to come up with a bespoke scheme which creates, nevertheless, the warmth, interest and atmosphere which are the difficult-to-achieve hallmarks of a successful pub.

We feature an interview (see page 65) with Bernard Lawrence and Faith Beckingham, our longest-serving architects and also Robert Renak and Naomi Snelgrove (pages 20–21), our historians and artwork specialists, who will provide an insight into the fascinating process of building a pub from scratch.

Very many thanks to Bernard, Faith, Robert, Naomi and their many hundreds of colleagues in the design and building industry who have laboured so hard over the decades to create such spectacular environments for the UK and Irish public – and for visitors from around the world.

Tim says: "It's hard to believe that a Californian surfer, with a zany sense of humour, could have loaned his name to several pubs in rainy Blighty. I sometimes wondered whether the name JJ Moon was a figment of my imagination, until the Internet unearthed this amazing 1966 article from America's Life magazine."

IS JJ REALLY KING OF THE SURF?



JJ Moon

The name is JJ Moon, and it is famous on every beach on the West Coast and in every surfing magazine. He holds more titles than there are championships. Saloons and surfing hangouts are filled to all hours with stories and arguments about his prowess. There are JJ Moon fan clubs and JJ Moon T-shirts and, naturally, JJ Moon surfboards.

JJ Moon himself is not hampered by a desire for obscurity. He is always on the move. He'll be at Malibu one day, at Makaha the next, then suddenly he will pop up at Newport Beach. He is completely a product of his place and time when surfing, once an exotic sport practiced only by a handful of daredevils in Hawaii, has become an obsessive national pastime. In California alone, half a million people have taken it up. And because of the thrill and the risk and the speed, between blazing sun and the mysterious natural force of the waves, all surfers are, in one way or another, romantics. What they lacked until recently was a true folk hero. Then along came JJ Moon. His only drawback: he isn't that good a surfer.

Some years ago, there was this young man-about-Los-Angeles by the name of Ned Eckert, a cheerful, carefree fellow known to the sporting crowd and to most of the bartenders of Beverly Hills. Eckert had speculated successfully in the stock market, then discovered the race track and quickly acquired a reputation among his friends as a handicapper.

A few years before, as destiny would have it, there had been a local handicapper named JJ Williams who peddled a tout sheet. "So one day," says Eckert, "we were sitting around this bar, and for the fun of it I thought

up a name for myself." Thus, Ned Eckert became JJ Moon.

Meanwhile, Eckert had also become an avid hobby surfer, competent but hardly outstanding. At the beaches and bars, however, he numbered many top surfers as friends. And here the fun began.

In the winter of 1964 Eckert was planning to spend a vacation in Honolulu, which happened to coincide with the Makaha International Surfing Championships, one of the toughest competitions of all. Unknown to Eckert, who hadn't yet left California, a well-known surfer named Rick Steer had entered Moon into the Makaha event. On the entry form, to get him into a preferential heat for titleholders, Steer billed Moon as the Lake Michigan wake-surfing champion. When Eckert arrived in Honolulu, he—or JJ—was already in the papers. "Those waves at Makaha get 20 feet high," he said to himself. Nevertheless, he told Steer, "It's beautiful, baby!"—and decided to brazen it out.

It rained for the next five days, and the contest was postponed, waiting for good weather and good surf. During the lull a top competition surfer named Mickey Munoz, an old friend of Eckert's from Malibu, was being interviewed on the air.

"And tell us, Mickey, who do you think will give you the most trouble in your heat? Who's the man to beat?" asked the announcer as Moon and the other Californians crowded around the radio in a nearby bar.

"Well, I don't know, there are a lot of tough guys," said Mickey. "But the guy I really fear the most is the fabulous JJ Moon."

"Who?"

"JJ Moon," said Munoz, with a who-else nonchalance.

Moon and his bar companions erupted in unrestrained hilarity. The rains passed, the surf came up, and at the appointed hour, before the eyes of thousands, there was JJ Moon, a squat 175 pounds, waddling out on the beach with a contestant's jersey over his beer paunch and lugging a borrowed surfboard.

"It was insane," Moon recalled later. "What I did was, I paddled out more than half a mile to where people lost sight of me behind the close-in swells—I wouldn't go near those 20-footers farther out. Then I turned around and glided to shore on an easy one. Everyone saw me gliding forth with a world of style—but they didn't see where I had come from."

Moon didn't advance, but his new identity was firmly established among his friends. He now was JJ Moon. One friend, Mickey Dora, a legitimate champion, wrote a surfing magazine article in which he rated the world's best surfers. Dora rated himself unblushingly as Number One. Number Two, he said, had to be JJ Moon.

By now, what had started as an improvised underground in-joke had mushroomed into a hoax. The legend grew. Moon's singular accomplishments were countless:

- JJ Moon was the winner of the Mekong Delta Monsoon Championships, a grueling event held in pouring rain and quagmire.

- JJ Moon holds the world record for noseriding with a time of five minutes on a single wave.

- JJ Moon is the only man in the world to shoot the Malibu Pier.

- JJ Moon was said not only to have shot the tube at the Banzai Pipeline but to have emerged from it completely dry, with his hair neatly combed.

Moon's peak achievement, however, is probably his feat of hanging eleven. Merely to hang five—that is, to extend five toes over the nose of the board—is a difficult enough maneuver. To hang ten is the ne plus ultra of sophisticated surfing technique. Leave it to JJ Moon to have six toes on his right foot.

"Can you really hang eleven, JJ?" the youngsters would run up and ask JJ Moon.

"Sure, hell yes, I can!" Moon would assure them, scrupulously keeping his sneakers on.

JJ recently has expanded his franchise, assuming the role of a commerce-conscious and power-hungry leader, and talking bullishly of schemes that sound like circus posters. "I am going to organize my own JJ Moon Competition Team, which will feature JJ and other top riders in an unbeatable professional cadre that will monopolize the sport. I am also thinking of founding the JJ Moon Surf Club, which for a membership fee of \$2.50 will entitle you to an official JJ Moon T-shirt and free entrance to the many miles of best surfing beaches—which will be bought up by the JJ Moon Corporation."

As usual, only a small number of people can feel absolutely sure that he isn't being serious. JJ Moon may be the greatest, as half a million people believe. But nobody has seen him with those tennis shoes off.

Life magazine
10 June 1966

YOUR SAY

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

E-mail: editor@jdwwetherspoon.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.

There's £20 of Wetherspoon gift cards for every letter we print

All letters and e-mails to the editor are read, considered and also passed onwards (if appropriate), yet, owing to correspondence volume, not all may be answered.

Write to us

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

Thank you

wetherspoon



FOOD & DRINKS GIFT CARD

RUMINATING ABOUT RUMINANTS

Dear Sir Tim Martin

I am writing to suggest a fabulous way for you to raise awareness about the issues with the tax rates on the hospitality sector and help your campaign of securing tax parity between the hospitality sector and supermarkets.

The idea is simple: have camels in your pubs. Let me explain...

First, camels would make fantastic bouncers. Their great size and intimidating appearance would naturally discourage any silliness, and although they are usually tame animals, their remarkable ability to kick in all directions would mean that any rowdy behaviour would be dealt with swiftly. They would certainly bring a more literal meaning to the phrase 'getting kicked out'!

And while creating a pleasant and enjoyable atmosphere for your guests, the camels would also maintain the pub to a high standard of cleanliness and presentation. Camels are natural scavengers, so would happily eat any food dropped on the floor. Furthermore, because of their large body weight, they can actually consume a significant amount of alcohol before starting to feel drunk, so we could safely allow them to also lick up any spilt drinks.

Second, their main food is grass and shrubbery, so they would keep your beer gardens and greenery cut and tidy, while their manure could be utilised for feeding plants. Try to come up with a more sustainable system than this! It would also provide a well-rounded diet for our lovely humped-back friends.

Speaking of their humped backs, having camels at the pubs will allow you to offer the unique service of a camel ride home. This ecofriendly method of transport not only helps your guests, but also discourages drink-driving, making the community a safer place. (Camels can walk up to 40 miles per day for 15 consecutive days, while carrying heavy loads, so there won't be any chance of their breaking down.)

Finally, having camels at your pubs will draw a tremendous amount of attention and create great publicity on social media and the news, allowing you to raise awareness of your campaign for tax rates which support local pubs and the economy.

Camels are a sign of hard work, endurance and dedication – a great way to honour the courageous people who keep this great British pub culture alive.

I hope that this letter has made you consider the fabulous opportunity which having camels at the pubs could bring and that you will pursue this idea for the good of your guests and for the benefit of an industry which creates so many great relationships and fond memories.

Yours sincerely

Zhongli Durrant (via e-mail)

Tim replies: Some people get the hump with camels and say that they're a horse designed by a committee. Even so, ever since Squeeze, in 1978, sang 'I've come across the desert ... my camel looks so tired', it's been clear that camels are a cultural phenomenon.

Indeed, well before that, Frank Zappa, in response to an unknown question, sang 'It must be a camel'. Personally, I've drunk Camel coffee and smoked Camel cigarettes, yet have never shared a pint of Abbot with a camel.

So, let's put that on our bucket list and ask customers to give your suggestion further consideration.



PRAISE FOR THESE PAGES AND FOR SMILING STAFF

Dear editor

I wanted to commend you on the latest Wetherspoon News which I picked up from my local, The Black Boy (Newtown).

It's a very interesting read... well done to those who put it together.

Also, well done to our local team members, who serve with a smile and work really hard.

Janet Davies (via e-mail)

Tim replies: Thank you so much. Wetherspoon News is put together by a very small team. It includes the UK's second-longest-serving magazine editor (after Private Eye's Ian Hislop) Eddie Gershon, who brought out the first edition in 1991.

Eddie is assisted by journalists Ashley Weller and Andy Burnyeat, headline-writer Chris Heneghan, designer Kingsley Grattrick, photographers Gill Evans and Dave Webb and grammar aficionado Matthew Male.

Wetherspoon News must be unique in its faithful recording of thousands of stories of everyday life surrounding the pub world across the UK and Ireland.

NACHOS FAN SOUR OVER CULINARY 'CRIME'

Dear editor

What have you done to your nachos?!

Nachos without salsa is a crime.

The first time we had them since the change, we thought that it was a mistake, but just went with it.

Had them again yesterday and found it to be the same.

We did not enjoy the pico de gallo replacement for salsa – it makes the dish dry to eat, with just the small amount of guacamole and sour cream.

Lee Simpson (via e-mail)

Tim replies: You are correct to say that we changed to a pico de gallo fresh salsa made from diced tomato, red onion and coriander. We also doubled the sour cream portion.

This seemed to be the recipe used by authentic Mexican restaurants; it was then successfully trialled in the airport pubs.

However, you are not alone in preferring the previous salsa.

I'll ask the groovy catering team to take a closer look at the issue.

THE FINEST DINING 'ANYWHERE ON EARTH'

Dear editor

As a retired globetrotter, I declare Wetherspoon to be one of the finest dining establishments anywhere on Earth.

I am also a keen theatre-goer, so a delicious pre-performance dinner, followed the next day by a hearty breakfast – are highlights of the occasion.

I also enjoy art and architecture and always find your premises' structure and décor most fascinating.

I always find your staff exemplary in good manners, kindness, efficiency and patience.

The choice of meals and drinks is diverse, with low prices and service always prompt.

I thoroughly concur with your dog-exclusion policy, except, of course, for guide and service canines.

Many would be the unpleasant incidents if this rule were relaxed.

I wish you well and all of the wonderful staff a bright, happy and successful future.

Yours faithfully

Brian F Smith

Yaxley, Peterborough

Tim replies: All I can say is that you are a man of legendary and impeccable taste. Thank you very much.

REMEMBER OUR DEBUT, 35 YEARS AGO? WE'VE COME A LONG WAY

First edition of magazine you are holding began in 1991 as a black-and-white eight-pager

Wetherspoon News magazine is, this year, celebrating 35 years since its launch.

The first issue, published in September 1991, comprised eight black-and-white pages printed on a basic duplicating machine, with around 3,000 copies being hand-delivered to just 25 pubs in London.

Today's full-colour glossy magazine is a far cry from those early editions, with the current edition (the one which you are reading) being the biggest yet, with 132 pages.

The company prints 300,000 copies of each edition (sometimes up to 500,000) and enjoys a readership of two million per issue.

As well as the printed version, the readership spans digital formats, with PDF downloads available through the website (jdwetherspoon.com) and via the app.

During the past 35 years, around 200 magazines have been published, including specific editions for Ireland, Scotland and Wales (including a Welsh-language version), along with regional editions and even those for individual pubs.

Under the guidance of the same editor since day one, not even a global pandemic could stop the Wetherspoon News team from producing a summer 2020 issue.

'Tim's viewpoint' – by Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin – has featured in almost every edition.

His passionate and enthusiastic thoughts and views, on numerous subjects, usually create debate and provoke discussion among customers, as well as across the media.

The aim of the magazine, which continues to be free, has always been to focus on Wetherspoon, its pubs, staff and customers.

It has featured thousands of stories and photographs over the past three and a half decades, highlighting events, history features, good causes, community issues, awards and some extra-ordinary people, not only staff members, but Wetherspoon's customers and suppliers too.

The pages continue to share stories, from the day-to-day to the quite remarkable, aiming to represent the true heart and spirit of the company.

Printed stories also regularly 'make the news', appearing in the national press, as well as being mentioned on television and radio.

Wetherspoon News is also the first port of call to find out about new products, events, promotions and initiatives.

Whether it's a new beer, brand-new dish on the menu or drinks being added to the extensive range, Wetherspoon News delivers factual and informative features, with details from provenance and production to history and innovation.

You, the readers, continue to fill the Wetherspoon News postbag and e-mail inbox with comments, views, thoughts and ideas, while the magazine's crossword competition (appearing in every edition from issue one) continues to grow in popularity.

Happy 35th birthday – Wetherspoon News.



HUNGRY PASSENGER STOPS OFF AT THE KINGS HEAD HOTEL IN BECCLES

Stephen Plume is the writer behind The Hungry Passenger, a rail-led food-and-travel project exploring how people move around Britain by train and the places they eat, stay and spend time along the way.

Here, he reviews a visit and overnight stay at The Kings Head Hotel (Beccles) as part of a trip by train to the Suffolk town.

66

Beccles by train: A practical, walkable overnight stay

One of the quiet strengths of travelling by train is discovering places that work without effort. Beccles is one of them. It is a Suffolk market town where arrival is simple, the centre is compact, and an overnight stay can be shaped almost entirely on foot.

Beccles sits on the East Suffolk line between Ipswich and Lowestoft. The station is modest and low key, fitting the scale of the town. From the platform, it is a short and largely level walk into the centre, passing residential streets rather than dual carriageways or retail parks. Within minutes you are among shops, cafés and pubs, with the river and open landscape close enough to shape the feel of the place without demanding long walks.

This is not a destination that overwhelms you with choice. That is part of its appeal. Beccles suits travellers who value ease, predictability and a sense of place over novelty.

Arriving and getting around

Trains between Ipswich and Lowestoft stop regularly at Beccles. Journey times are manageable, and connections work well for a single overnight stay or a relaxed weekend. The station sits close enough to the town centre that luggage never becomes a burden.

Once you arrive, everything important is within walking distance. Beccles is flat, compact and easy to navigate. Shops, accommodation, pubs and cafés cluster naturally around the centre, while the River Waveney and surrounding paths offer space and quiet just beyond.

For travellers arriving late or leaving early, that lack of friction matters. There is no need to plan transport or book taxis. The town works at walking pace.

Staying central

A practical overnight stay in Beccles is well served by the Wetherspoon hotel, The Kings Head Hotel, located in the town centre and attached to the pub of the same name.

The rooms follow a familiar and deliberate model. They are modern, clean and functional rather than characterful. Beds are comfortable, bathrooms contemporary, and sound insulation is generally good for a town-centre location. Heating and hot water are reliable, which matters more than style on colder evenings or early winter mornings.

The real strength of staying here is simplicity. You arrive by train, walk a few minutes, drop your bag and know that food and drink are available downstairs if you want them. For car free travel, that reliability removes risk and allows the town itself to take centre stage.

Eating and drinking

Food in Beccles reflects the town. It is unfussy, familiar and well rooted.

Downstairs at the pub, the Wetherspoon menu provides predictable meals at consistent prices. While not positioned as a showcase of local cooking, it serves a clear purpose for travellers who want an easy evening after a day of movement. Drinks are more regionally grounded. Beers from Suffolk and East Anglia often feature, including Adnams from Southwold and Greene King from Bury St Edmunds, alongside national options.

Beyond the hotel, Beccles has a small selection of independent cafés and traditional pubs within walking distance. These work well for daytime coffee, light lunches and quieter evenings. Choice is limited, but that constraint keeps the experience grounded and local rather than performative.

What to do with your time

Beccles is not a place for rushing. The centre suits gentle wandering, with a market square, historic buildings and small shops that reward slow movement. A short walk brings you towards the River Waveney, where paths and open views hint at the wider Broads landscape beyond the town.

Riverside walks, churches and quiet streets fill time easily. There is no pressure to fill an itinerary. Beccles works best when you allow the town to set the pace rather than imposing one.

Why it works

Beccles succeeds as an overnight stay because nothing pushes against the choice to travel lightly. The station is close, accommodation is central, food is nearby, and walking feels natural rather than compromised.

The presence of a dependable, centrally located hotel makes a difference. It allows visitors to arrive without anxiety and stay without overthinking. This is not about chasing the perfect experience. It is about staying somewhere that functions well and lets the town speak for itself.

For travellers who value calm, predictability and walkability, Beccles offers a convincing case. It may not shout for attention, but it supports a good night's sleep, a decent meal and an easy departure the next morning.

Sometimes that is exactly what a train journey should deliver.

● thehungrypassenger.com

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RUN-UP RAFFLES ON REPEAT IN RUGELEY

Customers at The Plaza (Rugeley) helped to raise £144.43 for Young Lives vs Cancer by buying charity raffle tickets in the run-up to two calendar events: St Patrick's Day and Mother's Day.

Locals hoping to win Guinness goods, including a belt, keyring and cans of stout, picked up tickets for the pub's St Patrick's Day raffle.

Pub manager Sian Siddall said: "Staff were busy going around with the raffle book when the Six Nations rugby was showing.

"And they carried on the fundraising on Mother's Day, when a prize of chocolates and black cherry gin liqueur was also up for grabs."

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Jonathon Titley and pub manager Sian.





DISCO SPOONS HELPS HEDLEY VERITY TOP CHARITY CHART AS TOTAL TOPS £26m

Staff and customers have reached a new milestone in their long-standing partnership with Young Lives vs Cancer, raising £26 million to support children and young people with cancer and their families.

Since 2002, when the partnership began, Wetherspoon's pub teams and customers across the UK have raised funds by participating in numerous activities, including football tournaments, mountain climbs, skydives, quizzes and raffles.

More recently 30,000 packs of special Young Lives vs Cancer Top Trumps cards, featuring Wetherspoon's pubs, were sold in the pubs to raise money.

To mark the milestone, a celebration event took place at The Hedley Verity (Leeds), being the Wetherspoon pub which has raised the most money since the partnership passed the £25-million mark.

The pub's team and customers have hosted their popular weekly Disco Spoons event, sip and paint evenings, bonus ball competitions and raffles.

Young Lives vs Cancer's chief executive, Rachel Kirby-Rider, said: "Wetherspoon's staff and customers have shown incredible dedication and generosity over more than two decades of partnership.

"Their £26 million has helped us to be there for thousands of children and young people with cancer and their families at the most difficult time in their life.

"This support helps to fund stays for families in our Homes from Home, so that they can stay close to their child during treatment, as well as ensuring that our specialist social workers can provide the vital emotional, financial and practical support on which families rely.

"We're so grateful to everyone across Wetherspoon for their continued commitment.

"Every fundraiser, every donation and every initiative have helped us to make a real difference."

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, added: "We are incredibly proud of the partnership which we have built with Young Lives vs Cancer.

"The money raised is a testament to the generosity of customers and the enthusiasm and dedication of the pubs' teams across the UK."

● To find out more about Young Lives vs Cancer:
younglivesvscancer.org.uk

MORE AWARDS THAN MERYL STREEP: PUB DESIGNS WINNING GONGS FOR 33 YEARS

Wetherspoon is renowned for, as well as proud of, its reputation for transforming old and often derelict buildings into beautiful and vibrant pubs, breathing new life into former landmark properties and unused premises.

Many iconic local landmarks may have been lost for ever, if it were not for Wetherspoon's often-timely interventions.

The company's design, restoration and conservation of old buildings, during new pub projects over the years, have gained recognition, as well as numerous titles and praise (locally, nationally and internationally) from conservation societies and design award competitions.

Organisations bestowing awards on Wetherspoon include the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), English Heritage, local councils,

heritage/civic trust societies and Royal Institute of British Architects, as well as numerous independent and industry-recognised design awards initiatives.

Among the pubs recognised, in numerous awards ceremonies, for their outstanding design and sympathetic restoration are Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate), The Caley Picture House (Edinburgh), The Greenwood Hotel (Northolt, London), The Golden Hope (Sittingbourne), The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool), The Iron Duke (Wellington) and The Old Swanne Inne (Evesham).

Here is a catalogue of the awards and accolades, dating back more than three decades... from 1993.

● In the next edition of Wetherspoon News, we will feature pub design awards of 2016–26.

1993

- ★ **The George (Croydon)** London Borough of Croydon's Design Award

1994

- ★ **The Playhouse (Colchester)** Disabled Access Award
- ★ **The Last Post (Southend-on-Sea)** Southend Borough Council's Design Award

1995

- ★ **The Standing Order (Derby)** Derby Borough Council's Design Award
- ★ **The Playhouse (Colchester)** Colchester Council Colchester Access Award



The Standing Order (Derby)

1996

- ★ **The Commercial Rooms (Bristol)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best conversion to pub use' and 'conservation award', in conjunction with English Heritage
- ★ **The Beehive (Brixton)** Scotland Yard 'pub design prevention of drugs trading'
- ★ **The Coronet (Holloway)** The Jeffrey Gribble Award 'outstanding design in the London Borough of Islington'
- ★ **The Coronet (Holloway)** Eros Award 'one of the top 10 pubs in London'

1997

- ★ **Opera House (Royal Tunbridge Wells)** Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society Conservation Awards (commendation)



The Commercial Rooms (Bristol)

1998

- ★ **The Lynd Cross (Horsham)**
Horsham District Council Design Award
- ★ **The Postal Order (Blackburn)** Blackburn Civic Society, listing in 'The Buildings of Blackburn'
- ★ **The Picture House (Stafford)**
Stafford Borough Council Conservation Award
- ★ **The Picture House (Stafford)** Stafford Historical and Civic Society Conservation Award (nomination)
- ★ **The Bank Statement (Swansea)** Swansea City and County Council Award 'built-in quality'



The Picture House (Stafford)

1999

- ★ **The Billiard Hall (West Bromwich)**
CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best pub refurbishment' (joint winner)
Judging panel commented: 'Wetherspoon is now becoming an expert in sensitive conversions of problematic, but rewarding, historic buildings.'
- ★ **The Half Moon (Mile End)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best pub refurbishment' (joint winner)
Judging panel commented: 'An unprecedented double victory for independent pub chain J D Wetherspoon.'
- ★ **The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)**
The Guildford Society Good Design Award
- ★ **The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)**
Guildford Borough Council Heritage Award 'refurbishment category'
- ★ **The James Watt (Greenock)** Design and Conservation Award 'best conservation/restoration development' (commendation)



The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)

2000

- ★ **The Richard Oastler (Brighouse)**
The Brighouse Civic Trust Award for Excellence
- ★ **Union Rooms (Newcastle upon Tyne)**
The Newcastle City Council Civic Trust Award
- ★ **The Prince of Wales (Cardiff)**
The Lord Mayor's Conservation Award
- ★ **The Archibald Simpson (Aberdeen)**
The Aberdeen Civic Society Award for Outstanding Conversion
- ★ **The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)** The Surrey Industrial History Group Preservation and Conservation Award
- ★ **The Rodboro Buildings (Guildford)**
The Guildford Society Award for Refurbishment
- ★ **The Lynd Cross (Horsham)**
Horsham District Council Design Awards
- ★ **The Sedge Lynn (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)**
CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best conversion to pub use', in conjunction with English Heritage
- ★ **The Ship of Fools (Croydon)**
The English Tourism Council Standards of Excellence Awards 'design and standard of toilet facilities'

2001

- ★ **The Samuel Peto (Folkestone)** Wheelchair-Users' Group (silver)
- ★ **The Sedge Lynn (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)**
CAMRA National Pub Design Awards
- ★ **The Isaac Merritt (Paignton)**
CAMRA South Devon Region 'pub of the year'



The Prince of Wales (Cardiff)

2002

- ★ **The Jack Phillips (Godalming)**
The Godalming Trust Civic Design Awards
- ★ **The Gatekeeper (Cardiff)**
CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best conversion to pub use'

2003

- ★ **Yr Hen Orsaf (Aberystwyth)** Railway Heritage Award
- ★ **The Winter Gardens (Harrogate)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'conversion to pub use' (highly commended)
- ★ **The Kings Fee (Hereford)**
CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best conversion to pub use', in conjunction with English Heritage (highly commended)



The Winter Gardens (Harrogate)

2004

- ★ **The Justice Mill (Aberdeen)**
Aberdeen Civic Society 'recognition of new façade'
- ★ **The Last Post (Southend-on-Sea)**
Southend Borough Council Design Award

2007

- ★ **The Thomas Burke (Leigh)**
Wigan Council Commendation Urban Design Award
- ★ **Opera House (Royal Tunbridge Wells)**
Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society Conservation Award 'restoration of upper floors'



The Last Post (Southend-on-Sea)

2009

- ★ **The Bank House (Cheltenham)** Cheltenham Civic Awards 'pub's restored façade considered among the best structure and renovation in the town in the previous 12 months' (commendation)
- ★ **The Kings Head (Monmouth)**
Monmouth Civic Society 'awarded a Monmouth Heritage blue plaque for a building of great historic and architectural interest'

2010

- ★ **The Broken Bridge (Pontefract)**
Pontefract Civic Society Heritage Awards 'design award for recognition of the way in which the former building has been transformed into a vibrant pub, also highlighting Pontefract's rich history'



The Kings Head (Monmouth)

2011

- ★ **The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern)**
Malvern Civic Society award for 'new or renovated building which the judges consider has added something outstanding to Malvern's environment'



The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern)



The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern)

2012

- ★ **The Castle Hotel (Ruthin)** Ruthin and District Civic Association Quayle Award 'recognition of restoration and the excellent quality of development work undertaken'
- ★ **The William Peveler (Bulwell)** UK and International Restaurant & Bar Design Awards 'recognising and rewarding design excellence' (nominated)
- ★ **The Joseph Bramah (Barnsley)** Barnsley Civic Trust shop award in the public house category, 'recognising business skills, innovation, architectural design and the impact of window displays on the street scene'



The Castle Hotel (Ruthin)

2013

- ★ **The Red Lion (Gatwick Airport)** FAB (Food and Beverage) awards 'best worldwide airport bar', recognising its range of food and drinks, as well as its contemporary design
- ★ **The Trent Bridge Inn (Nottingham)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best pub refurbishment', celebrating British pubs with truly memorable designs (highly commended)
- ★ **John the Clerk of Cramlington (Cramlington)** Cramlington In Bloom 'best commercial premises'
- ★ **The Bear (Melksham)** Melksham In Bloom
- ★ **The Silk Kite (Tamworth)** Tamworth Heritage Trust commemorative blue plaque 'in recognition of the town's most treasured historical sites and key buildings'
- ★ **The Smithy Fold (Glossop)** Northern Design Awards 'best restaurant/bar design' category (shortlisted)
- ★ **The Master Mariner (New Brighton)** Northern Design Awards 'best restaurant/bar design' category (shortlisted)
- ★ **The Bluecoat (Rotherham)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best pub refurbishment'

2014

- ★ **The Harry Clasper (Whickham)** Whickham & District In Bloom Summer Garden Competition (highly commended in bloom)
- ★ **The Harry Clasper (Whickham)** Northumbria In Bloom 'best effort for upkeep of external premises by a public house or hotel' (silver gilt)
- ★ **Kings Head Hotel (Beccles)** Beccles Society Dr Nicholson Award 'an architectural award honouring Dr Edward S Nicholson, the first chairman of the Beccles Society from its inception in 1966 for 21 years; an award to encourage good design, imaginative ideas and quality development through public acknowledgment of the work carried out by its recipients'



The Harry Clasper (Whickham)

2015

- ★ **The North Western (Liverpool Lime Street station)** Northern Design Awards 'commercial/restaurant & bar category', for the interior design of the pub, which complements the heritage and history of Liverpool Lime Street
- ★ **The Wallaw (Blyth)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'conversion to pub use', in conjunction with English Heritage (highly commended)
- ★ **The Quarter Jack (Wells)** Restaurant & Bar Design Awards 'best pub' (shortlisted)
- ★ **The Court Leet, (Ormskirk)** West Lancashire Design Awards 'renovation/conversion category'
- ★ **The Chief Justice of the Common Pleas (Keswick)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'best conversion to pub use', 'handled with real care and restraint and a worthy example of how to do it well'
- ★ **The Admiral Collingwood (Ilfracombe)** CAMRA National Pub Design Awards 'new build', 'rarely given, such is the mediocrity of most new pubs; judges have no hesitation in bestowing the rare accolade on this striking building'
- ★ **Rose & Crown (Maldon)** Maldon District Council's 32nd Conservation & Design Awards 'townscape regeneration prize', 'for the refurbishment of the ancient pub'
- ★ **The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool)** Blackpool Civic Trust 'best night time economy – aimed at setting the standards for new developments, while safeguarding the resort's rich heritage'
- ★ **The Man in the Moon (Newport, Isle of Wight)** Newport Parish Council Planning Committee Annual Design Awards 'special conservation award for overall quality of the work and contribution to the character and appearance of the area'



The North Western (Liverpool Lime Street station)



The Velvet Coaster (Blackpool)

See next edition of Wetherspoon News for part two of pub design awards

SMOKIN' HOT – THE SIX CHIMNEYS WINS WAKEFIELD DESIGN AWARD

Civic society judges pub project to be city's best refurbishment

The Six Chimneys (Wakefield) won the Wakefield Civic Society design award 2024, in the 'best refurbishment' category.

Running in the West Yorkshire cathedral city since 1966, these annual awards focus on design and implementation – the quality and aesthetics of the design.

They also, where appropriate, take account of how the project fits within the overall street scene and the impact which it has on neighbouring properties.

Title

Wakefield Civic Society awarded the title to Wetherspoon following the pub's £3-million refurbishment and expansion project in 2023–24. During the work, The Six Chimneys, which first opened in November 1999, more than doubled in size, with expansion into an adjoining property, as well as a new extension and beer garden being added.

Following the project, the mayor of Wakefield, Cllr Josie Pritchard, officially reopened the pub (managed by Laura Mason) in February 2024.

Extend

The award stated: 'Wetherspoon was given the award for its project to extend The Six Chimneys pub into the former New Dolphin Inn (later known as the Wakefield Pride and the Wakey Tavern).

'Under a project which had seen The Six Chimneys being closed for five months, the two buildings had been brought together into one enlarged pub, unified by a decorative scheme which runs across the properties both inside and out.

'In addition, a large beer garden has been created in the yard at the rear.

'The judges were impressed with the quality of the execution and also the focus on local history, with many illustrations featuring stories of Wakefield's history on display inside, while architectural detailing on the exterior of the New Dolphin Inn building, which had previously been hidden by signage, has been revealed.'



RACHEL'S RAILWAY TOURS MAKE STOPS AT POPULAR LONDON PUBS



Pictured (far right) is Rachel with those attending a London Bridge tour

Three Wetherspoon pubs in London rail stations feature on popular walking tours which began in 2025 as part of Railway200 celebrations commemorating the bicentennial anniversary of UK rail travel in 1825.

Organised by Network Rail, a host of events took place across the UK, including Network Rail's Southern region opening doors to the public for guided tours at Waterloo, Victoria and London Bridge stations.

Owing to popularity, those tours were extended into 2026.

They are led by Rachel Kolsky, a popular London tour guide, author and Spoons fan.

Each of the tours features a Wetherspoon pub – Wetherspools (Victoria), The Lion & The Unicorn (Waterloo) and The Sun Wharf (London Bridge) which opened in 2025.

Rachel (who runs Go London Tours – golondontours.com) remarked that the walks are attended by a combination of current and former railway workers, commuters, station enthusiasts, London history fans and tourists, with one of the joys being the shared memories and recollections.

She said: "We take a close look at the buildings, including architectural details often missed by busy commuters, plus plaques and public artwork.

"Those attending really appreciate the opportunity to stop, look at and appreciate the stations which they usually rush through."

She added: "I also like to mention pubs and eateries where there is an historical association – and The Sun Wharf perfectly encapsulates the changing nature of the area.

"It is named after a former Pool of London wharf, once opposite the Wetherspoon site, and has been built within arches previously housing the iconic London Dungeon.

"This new pub is part of the continually evolving Tooley Street neighbourhood, alongside the revitalised London Bridge station."

A Network Rail spokesperson said: "Today, these stations are much more than just transport interchanges.

"They host a wide variety of bustling retail and leisure businesses, providing a range of opportunities for people to shop, relax and enjoy a drink, including at Wetherspoon's pubs within the stations."

● **The tours cost £25 per person, with new dates for each station added for September, October and November 2026, available via Eventbrite**



Historic tour of London Bridge station

eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-historic-tour-of-london-bridge-station-tickets-1976456894777



Historic tour of Victoria station

eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-historic-tour-of-victoria-station-tickets-1976456188665



Historic tour of Waterloo station

eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-historic-tour-of-waterloo-station-tickets-1976454766411

A TEMPORARY TREAT ON TAX EQUALITY DAY



Shift leader Kerry Ford at The Crown (Worcester)

On Thursday 17 September, Wetherspoon's pubs are to cut the price of all food and drinks by 7.5 per cent – to highlight the benefits of a permanent VAT reduction in the hospitality industry.

Prices at the pubs will be reduced for one day only to mark Tax Equality Day (in Scotland, in line with Scottish licensing laws, prices will be reduced on food and non-alcoholic drinks only).

For example, a customer spending £10 on food and drinks will pay only £9.25 on Tax Equality Day.

All food and drinks in pubs are subject to 20 per cent VAT.

In comparison, supermarkets pay zero VAT on food and are able to use that saving to sell alcohol to customers at a discounted price.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "The biggest threat to the hospitality industry is the vast disparity in tax treatment among pubs, restaurants and supermarkets."

"Supermarkets pay zero VAT in respect of food sales, whereas pubs, bars and restaurants pay 20 per cent.

"This tax benefit allows supermarkets to subsidise the selling price of beer.

"Pubs have been, and continue to be, under fantastic pressure for decades because of the tax disadvantages which they have with supermarkets.

"It doesn't make sense for the hospitality industry to subsidise supermarkets.

"A VAT cut to 12.5 per cent is needed to ensure that pubs, bars and restaurants do not continue to close, but instead thrive, invest and create new jobs.

"Customers coming to Wetherspoon's pubs on Thursday 17 September will find the price of their food and drinks to be lower than usual.

"We call on the chancellor to create tax equality between the hospitality industry and supermarkets."

CAMPAGNING FOR
**EQUAL
TAX**
BETWEEN
PUBS AND
SUPERMARKETS

Thu 17
September
Tax Equality
Day

**ALL PRICES
REDUCED BY 7.5%**
Promoting the benefit of a permanent
VAT reduction in the hospitality industry.
ONE DAY ONLY

"A reduced rate of hospitality VAT across the UK means lower prices and more jobs, leading to the regeneration of our high streets and communities."

Kate Nichols OBE, chair of UK Hospitality

"Pubs are unfairly taxed, with £1 in every three spent in a pub going straight to the taxman. Tax must be cut of British life."

Emma McClellan OBE, chief executive of the British Beer and Pub Association

"CAMRA stands with pub-goers and members fighting to protect pubs from unfair tax, rising costs and market pressures. It's time for a fair deal."

Ash Corbett-Collins, chairman of the Campaign for Real Ale

Scan the QR
code for more
information:



wetherspoon

FREE YOURSELF FROM BURGER-TORY

Heavenly beef and chicken choices are an answer to diners' prayers

Wetherspoon's burgers have been a staple of the menu and popular with customers for as long as anyone can remember.

The choice and variety of combinations continue to evolve and tempt the tastebuds.

Wetherspoon's NEW burger deals promotion offers four already-popular menu options at even greater value for money – and with chips and a drink (soft or alcoholic) included in the discounted price.

There are two beef and two chicken options to choose from.

The beef choices are American (6oz beef patty, red onion, gherkin, ketchup and American-style mustard) and American cheese (6oz beef patty, American-style cheese, red onion, gherkin, ketchup and American-style mustard).

Choose chicken from crunchy chicken (two southern-fried chicken strips, iceberg lettuce and mayonnaise) or Korean fried chicken (two fried chicken strips, iceberg lettuce, gherkin and Korean-style sauce).

Enjoy great choice, great taste and great value for money with the NEW burger deals at Wetherspoon.

Irish company Dunbia, a division of Dawn Meats established in 1980, 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.

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?

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.

All beef patties are made using 100-per-cent British (Irish in Ireland) beef.

History of the burger

The 'Hamburg steak', made from ground beef, onion and seasoning, originated in Germany in the 19th century and was taken to the US by German immigrants.

The dish subsequently became popular in America of the 1870s, in New York restaurants.

It is believed that it was around 1880–1900 when the meat was married with the bun, for a convenient portable sandwich.

Early claims to the first sandwich, or burger in a bun as we know it today, include Charlie Nagreen (Wisconsin, 1885), Frank and Charles Menches (Ohio, 1885), Oscar Bilby (Oklahoma, 1891) and Louis Lassen (Connecticut, 1900) at Louis's Lunch, serving the first 'hamburger sandwich' as a quick meal.

The burger went on to gain huge popularity at the St Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Fried chicken origins

Many cultures and cuisines from around the world have their own distinct recipes for fried chicken, although the US southern-fried version is probably the most iconic... but why?

The early history for fried chicken remains something of a culinary mystery, although the US southerners were probably its most fervent foodie advocates, helping to spread the popularity of the dish across the US and, subsequently, the world.

The first printed recipe for fried chicken appeared in 1824, in a regional American cookbook called *The Virginia House-Wife*, by Mary Randolph, setting the fried chicken standard for generations of southern cooks.

INCLUDES CHIPS AND A DRINK

Choose from over 150 drinks



Crunchy chicken burger



American cheese burger

AND THEN THERE WAS NONE...

Every single Wetherspoon pub is now Best Bar None accredited, in recognition of the company's pursuit of safer socialising and responsible hospitality



Best Bar None Awards ceremony at the House of Lords, March 2026. Pictured (left to right) are Best Bar None national scheme manager Sylvia Oates, Best Bar None chairman Lord Smith of Hindhead, Wetherspoon personnel and audit director James Ullman, Wetherspoon security co-ordinator Lewis Hinckley-Keens and Best Bar None scheme manager Iwona Kossek

All 795 Wetherspoon pubs are now Best Bar None accredited, having received an estate-wide accreditation from the nationally recognised initiative.

Best Bar None is the UK's leading accreditation scheme for responsible, safe and well-managed licensed venues, providing a nationally recognised benchmark for safer socialising.

The industry-backed initiative, supported by the Home Office and the hospitality sector, is designed to reward those venues which put safety, customer care and community at the heart of what they do.

Proven

The scheme is widely recognised by police, local authorities and industry stakeholders as a proven model for raising standards and supporting safer town and city centres.

The scheme is built on strong local partnerships among venues, police and local authorities, working together to improve safety and standards.

Accreditation is awarded following a detailed and robust assessment process, with operators required to demonstrate clear evidence of best practice across nationally recognised standards.

This ensures consistency, credibility and confidence for customers, partners and regulators.

Robust

Wetherspoon's security co-ordinator, Lewis Hinckley-Keens, said: "Best Bar None has a very robust accreditation process, which helps to highlight best practice and to ensure that premises are operating to nationally recognised safety standards."

"The pubs are evaluated against criteria covering safety, management, staff training and customer welfare."

"By achieving accreditation across its estate, Wetherspoon is helping to lead the way in demonstrating how large operators can support safer socialising and responsible hospitality."

Wetherspoon is also proud to be one of Best Bar None's sponsors.

Proud

Wetherspoon's personnel and audit director, James Ullman, said: "We are proud that all of our pubs have now achieved Best Bar None accreditation."

"A lot of hard work by the pubs' managers and teams has resulted in these awards, as well as more hard work, strategically, from Best Bar None and Wetherspoon to support the initiative's success."

"Wetherspoon will continue to encourage all pubs to participate in their local Best Bar None scheme, supporting these important partnerships and contributing to the ongoing work to strengthen local hospitality environments."

"This plays an important role in creating safer, more welcoming places for customers to enjoy their social time."

What Best Bar None says about Wetherspoon:

Lord Smith of Hindhead, chairman of Best Bar None, said: "Congratulations to Wetherspoon on achieving Best Bar None accreditation across its entire estate through our central scheme."

"This is a significant milestone and a clear demonstration of the company's commitment to safer socialising and continually raising standards across its portfolio of pubs and hotels."

"Wetherspoon's commitment to working closely with our national team to achieve this through the central scheme sets a powerful example, and we hope that it will continue to encourage others to follow suit."

Sylvia Oates, manager of the national Best Bar None scheme, said: "We are now seeing a growing number of major pub operators accrediting all or part of their estates through Best Bar None, which is a hugely positive step for the sector."

"It shows a shared recognition that high standards, good management and customer safety are not just aspirations, but essential foundations of a successful and sustainable hospitality industry."

Iwona Kossek of Best Bar None, who worked closely with the team at Wetherspoon to assess its policies, procedures and practices against the requirements of the accreditation, said: "Working with Wetherspoon on this programme has been fantastic."

"The level of organisation, consistency and commitment shown across the estate has been extremely impressive."

"Achieving accreditation at this scale is no small feat – and it reflects a genuine commitment to creating safe, well-managed environments for customers."

Best Bar None's assessment criteria:

* Venue management

Security measures – steps Wetherspoon takes as a business to reduce noise, litter and any other impact which pubs may have locally.

* Staff training and care

How Wetherspoon's staff are supported by the company, as a business, to perform their roles, develop and grow – and how Wetherspoon supports staff's well-being.

* Customer safety and welfare

The steps which all Wetherspoon pubs take to look after customers and the wider public, assisting with vulnerable individuals and upholding the licensing objectives.

* Customer service and community

How Wetherspoon's pubs work hard to provide a warm welcome to all customers and how the pubs participate in respective local communities.

● **For further information about Best Bar None, please visit: bestbarnone.com**

DUNFERMLINE • GLENROTHES • KIRKCALDY

NONE BUT THE BRAVE – BEST BAR WINS FOR SCOTTISH TRIO



Three Wetherspoon pubs in Scotland have been recognised at the Best Bar None awards.

The Guildhall & Linen Exchange (Dunfermline) won gold, while The Golden Acorn (Glenrothes) and The Robert Nairn (Kirkcaldy) won gold and platinum awards at Fife's Best Bar None awards 2026.

Pictured with their awards (left to right) are pub managers Michele Park (The Guildhall & Linen Exchange), Jonny Stewart (The Golden Acorn) and Craig Matheson (The Robert Nairn), along with area manager Sarah Kyle-Playford.

Fife's Best Bar None awards, a long-established annual event, celebrates and rewards the work done by licensed premises in the region, the role they play in their respective communities and how they provide safe, welcoming and well-run pubs, bars and clubs.

Police chief superintendent John Anderson, of Fife Division, made the presentations to the winners at the awards ceremony.

He also paid tribute to the venues which support so many local community charities and groups, as well as opening their doors to a wide range of fundraising events.

Sarah Kyle-Playford said: "Congratulations to Michele, Jonny, Craig and their teams on achieving their awards.

"Wetherspoon is proud to support the Best Bar None initiative – and we work hard to ensure that the pubs are safe and welcoming spaces for customers, as well as for our staff to come to work."

CROWBOROUGH

PRAISE FOR CROWBOROUGH CROSS PLEASES PUB BOSS

The Crowborough Cross (Crowborough) has been recognised for its commitment to providing customers with a varied selection of good-quality ales.

The pub was named runner-up in the local 'pub of the year' competition by the North East Sussex (NESx) branch of Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

Members of that branch assess and mark pubs on various measures, including the quality of the real ale, community focus and prices being clearly displayed.

NESx CAMRA chair Keith Brown said: "The Crowborough Cross is an easy-going place, always looked after, with a good atmosphere and very good prices."

Among Keith's favourite tipples at the pub so far in 2026 are Three Acre Aged Old Ale (5.5% ABV), Thornbridge Jaipur (5.9% ABV) and Black Hole Super Nova (4.8% ABV).

Pub manager Craig Bland, who has been in that role since 2019, said that some of the best-selling beers behind the bar during spring included Jaipur, Wobbly Bob and several from local brewery Three Acre.

Craig said: "We're absolutely thrilled to have been named 'pub of the year' runner-up. It's fantastic to see the hard work and dedication of the whole team recognised. Together, we've always focused on delivering quality beer with consistency, and this acknowledgement really means a lot to us all."

He added: "We'll take this as motivation and strive to go one better and take the top spot next year."

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Craig Bland (front), NESx CAMRA chair Keith Brown, CAMRA committee members Ron Mason and Chris Guiton and CAMRA branch secretary John Quick.



IS IT A PUB... OR IS IT A WORK OF ART?

Architects, authors, artists and antiques authorities - all work as allies to anchor all-new and adapted pubs to their respective areas



The Charles Henry Roe (Crossgates, Leeds)



The Grand Assembly (Marlow)



Keavan's Port Hotel (Dublin)

When considering the interior design features and artwork for new and refurbished pubs, Wetherspoon is renowned for placing great emphasis on the history of the building and local area.

The company is rightly proud of its reputation for rescuing and restoring many iconic local landmark buildings and bringing the history and stories to life, through artwork displays and designs. The team behind the history on display has an impressive history of its own.

Robert Renak is one of the people behind the history artwork displays, at some of Wetherspoon's pubs, taking on his first project for the company 35 years ago.

Robert, of London-based AFI, recalled: "It all began, as I remember it, in 1991.

"I did the first artwork, incorporating informative text pieces, covering some of the main topics of local history, at The Moon on the Hill (Harrow on the Hill)."



The Chiltern (Beaconsfield)

History

Working with one of Wetherspoon's handful of architects, Robert, along with historian Ray Colvin, undertakes research and writes up the local history topics, as well as working with local artists for commissioned pieces, local people and groups, providing additional information.

Robert's approach has continued along similar lines for more than three decades, creating a focal point to illustrate the buildings' historical development, providing individual spaces, setting high décor standards and giving back some identity to areas which may have lost touch with their past.

Robert added: "Because each Wetherspoon pub is a unique development, it's difficult to make generalisations, but, typically for me, each artwork project will require a three-month lead time (less for refurbishments) and intensive work for the last four weeks up to installation.

"Again, typically, a pub will have around 30–50 pieces of work, all of which must be installed during a single day, a day or two before the pub is handed over to the operations team."

His three most recent projects have been Walham Green (Fulham Broadway), The Chiltern (Beaconsfield) and The Old Post Office (Bath).

Intensive

Robert said: "It was, and still is, very labour intensive, and has not, as far as I am aware, been replicated by any other pub group, at least not as a standard part of all pub fit-outs and refurbishments.

"Other suppliers have become involved since then, yet it's not work which many artwork suppliers are in a position to carry out, certainly not regularly, as opposed to a one-off project."

Naomi Snelgrove, artwork manager at Inn Gear, has been working on Wetherspoon's new and refurbished pub projects for 20 of her 26 years with the Salisbury-based company.

Naomi, together with colleagues Mark Butson and Jacquie Yeates, receives initial design briefs from several of Wetherspoon's architects, creates artwork proposals and provides historical write-ups, also working with commissioned artists and procuring artwork.

As well as history and artwork, Inn Gear's brief extends to wallpaper and carpets, bespoke furniture designs and feature lighting – all site specific to each individual pub.

Network

Naomi said: "We work with the designers and architects and have a vast network of artists, artisans, tradespeople and creatives, from Edinburgh to St Ives in Cornwall.

"For the past five years, we have included information about the bespoke carpets' design, called 'The art beneath your feet', with details about what each carpet's design depicts and represents. We research and draft the text for this.

"More recently, we have added 'The art above your head'.

"This is a similar information display, referring to the bespoke design of the glass racks installed over the pubs' bars."

Among some stand-out project pieces, Naomi selects the owl sculptures on the bar at The Charles Henry Roe (Crossgates, Leeds), made by local artists and referring to Leeds' coat of arms.

Naomi also recalls the antique rowing memorabilia adorning the walls on the staircase at The Grand Assembly (Marlow), as well as the roe deer wicker sculptures at the newly opened pub The Round Coppice (Whiteley).



The Round Coppice (Whiteley)

Naomi added: "The Dublin pub Keavan's Port (and its associated hotel called Keavan's Port Hotel) was a huge project, and I particularly liked the chainsaw sculptures in the courtyard, as well as the stained-glass window features.

"Another memorable piece is a table at The Clothier's Arms (Yeadon, Leeds), made to look like cloth coming off a loom... it's pretty impressive.

"We have worked on so many during the past two decades, but it's the little touches and the attention to detail which often make certain projects memorable."

BOOK YOURSELF A ROOM WITH A SPOON

More than 50 hotels in operation across Great Britain and Ireland

Planning a get-away or break this season? Then, look no further than Wetherspoon.

For Wetherspoon hotel accommodation this summer, or at any time, book directly – at jdwwetherspoon.com, on the app or by phone.

Book direct – not available[^] on Booking.com or any website apart from jdwwetherspoon.com.

Whether it's a much-needed short break, an extended stay or a convenient one-night stop-over, Wetherspoon has a collection of hotels in city, coastal and countryside locations, across Great Britain and Ireland, offering the perfect accommodation.

Food

Each of the hotels is situated above or near a Wetherspoon pub, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Hotel pubs serve food from 7am until 11pm.

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

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

Information on more than 50 Wetherspoon hotels is also available, ensuring that you choose the perfect location for your stay.

Free

Each hotel room features an ensuite bathroom, complimentary tea- and coffee-making facilities, biscuits and bottled still water, hair dryer, iron and ironing board, 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 tea and Lavazza coffee (with unlimited refills).

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

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

Included with every booking	Available in every room
	Unlimited free Wi-Fi
	Biscuits, kettle, tea, coffee and hot chocolate
	Complimentary bottles of still water
	Freeview TV
Free tea and Lavazza coffee (with unlimited refills) in hotel pubs	Hair dryer, iron and ironing board
	An en suite bathroom...
	Don't worry – not as far away as pubs' toilets

The majority of Wetherspoon's hotels offer adapted accessible rooms, including either a wet room or walk-in shower facilities.

There are 35 hotels which have accessible rooms available across the estate, ranging from hotels with one, two or three accessible rooms up to five.

Please contact each hotel before booking to check further details/restrictions, especially for guests with larger mobility support needs, those who need additional access and for suitable space requirements.

[^]UK hotels only.

The Angel Hotel

1 New Quay Road, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1DH

☎ 01947 824730

Five minutes' walk from the train station and main car parks, this hotel is centrally situated, perfect for exploring the historic town of Whitby – a true delight of the Yorkshire coast.

The hotel stands on the harbour side, overlooking the river Esk.

Only a few minutes from the main beach and adjacent to the old swing bridge, the hotel offers easy access to most local amenities and attractions, making it ideal for families.

Whitby Abbey is a 20-minute walk away, where you can take the 199 steps and reward yourself with stunning views. For something more relaxing, fishing trips can be booked at the Quayside, just across the road.

The hotel offers 34 en suite bedrooms, including two designed specifically for guests needing accessible facilities, as well as two balcony rooms, at the front of the hotel, which overlook the harbour.



The George Hotel

George Street, Brecon, LD3 7LD

☎ 01874 403231

This 16th-century coaching inn offers four en suite bedrooms, including one designed specifically for guests needing accessible facilities.

It's the perfect base from which to explore the beautiful surroundings of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

A thriving market town in the Usk Valley, Brecon was established as a town in Norman times. Narrow compact streets, Georgian façades and the restored canal basin all tell tales of times gone by.

For culture, seek the 12th-century cathedral, The Royal Welsh Museum and Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery.



Countryside

The Mile Castle Hotel

19–25 Grainger Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5JE

☎ 0191 211 1160

This hotel is housed in the grade II listed Gibb Chambers building, in the city centre, conveniently located for its attractions and night life, including Tyne Theatre & Opera House and Theatre Royal.

It is a short walk from Newcastle Central train station and a 10-minute walk from St James' Park, home to Newcastle United Football Club.

Situated in the building adjoining the existing pub, which first opened in 2009, the hotel (opened in 2024) occupies four floors of the building (lower, ground, first and second floors), offering double, king, twin and family room accommodation.

All 26-bedrooms offer en suite bathroom, with two rooms designed specifically for guests needing accessible facilities.



City

WETHERSPOON, ITS CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE PAID £6.8 BILLION OF TAX TO THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 2016

In the six months ended January 2026, Wetherspoon generated £438.4 million in tax – about £1 in every £1,000 of ALL UK government taxes. The average tax generated per pub in six months was £550,000.

The table¹ below shows the tax generated by the company in its financial years 2016–26.

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 2016–26	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	Total 2016 to 2026
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
VAT	210.3	411.2	394.7	372.3	287.7	93.8	244.3	357.9	332.8	323.4	311.7	3,340.1
Alcohol duty	86.9	166.5	163.7	166.1	158.6	70.6	124.2	174.4	175.9	167.2	164.4	1,618.5
PAYE and NIC	84.1	153.6	134.7	124	141.9	101.5	106.6	121.4	109.2	96.2	95.1	1,268.3
Business rates	22.5	42.2	41.3	49.9	50.3	1.5	39.5	57.3	55.6	53	50.2	463.3
Corporation tax	12.4	21.9	9.9	12.2	1.5	-	21.5	19.9	26.1	20.7	19.9	166.0
Fruit/slot machine duty	9.6	18.2	16.7	15.7	12.8	4.3	9	11.6	10.5	10.5	11	130.0
Climate change levies	6.7	13.9	10.2	11.1	9.7	7.9	10	9.6	9.2	9.7	8.7	106.7
Stamp duty	0.2	1.2	1.1	0.9	2.7	1.8	4.9	3.7	1.2	5.1	2.6	25.4
Sugar tax	1.3	2.7	2.6	3.1	2.7	1.3	2	2.9	0.8	-	-	19.4
Fuel duty	1.0	1.9	2	1.9	1.9	1.1	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	20.0
Apprenticeship levy	1.5	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.7	0.6	-	18.1
Carbon tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.9	3	3.4	3.6	11.9
Premise licence and TV licences	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	7.0
Landfill tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.7	2.5	2.2	6.4
Insurance tax	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.3
Extended producer responsibility	1.3	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.1
Furlough tax	-	-	-	-	-4.4	-213	-124.1	-	-	-	-	-341.5
Eat Out to Help Out	-	-	-	-	-	-23.2	-	-	-	-	-	-23.2
Local government grants	-	-	-	-	-1.4	-11.1	-	-	-	-	-	-12.5
Total tax	438.4	837.6	780.2	760.4	666.9	39.1	442.1	765.1	730.7	695.3	672.4	6828.3
Tax per pub (£m)	0.55	1.05	0.98	0.92	0.78	0.05	0.51	0.87	0.83	0.78	0.71	8.03
Tax as % of net sales	40.3%	39.4%	38.3%	39.5%	38.3%	5.1%	35%	42.1%	43.1%	41.9%	41.8%	36.8%
Profit/(loss) after tax	16.1	58.2	58.5	33.8	-24.9	-146.5	-38.5	79.6	83.6	76.9	56.9	253.1

¹Source: J D Wetherspoon plc's annual reports and accounts 2016–26

CRAWLERS BREAK RECORD BY NOTCHING 38 PUBS IN ONE DAY

Stephen Angell and friends are claiming a record after they visited 38 Wetherspoon pubs in a single day.

The group of six young men began their marathon at The Barrel Vault (St Pancras International station) at 7am on a Saturday.

The merry band compiled a photo diary of their visits, here: <https://tinyurl.com/mu2mr376>

Group spokesperson Stephen Angell said: "I'm pleased to share that we managed to drink in 38 Wetherspoon establishments over a period of 17 hours and 30 minutes, covering a total distance of 78 miles across London."

They had planned to end their visits at The Sir John Hawkshaw (Cannon Street station), but it was closed when they arrived.

The group – Stephen and friends Cam, Ed, Ryan N, Ryan M and Doug – travelled by tube, bus and boat, as well as covering 26 miles (a whole marathon) on foot.

The entire journey was planned meticulously in advance, in order to give the group the maximum success of beating the previous record of 37 pubs, a feat achieved in September 2025 by a group of three men from Reading (featured in Wetherspoon News).

Not all of the six completed the mission, as Doug had to leave at 6pm to attend his sister's birthday party, according to Stephen: "Arguably even more admirable than completing the crawl."

He concluded: "We're heading back out next year to hopefully hit 40 pubs in a single day."

SPOONS STIR OLLIE TO CREATE SUBSTACK

Writers can find inspiration from many places – and, for Manchester-based Ollie Matthews, that place is Wetherspoon.

Ollie has been creating a series of 'Wetherspools Diaries' posts on online publishing platform Substack.

These range from short stories and sketches, based on his observations and snippets of overheard conversations, to explaining what has brought him to a certain pub.

Reviewers have said that Ollie's writing is a 'lyrical sojourn in the softer shadows of Englishness'.

He has also been making videos which he uploads to YouTube, including one in which he documented his experience of spending 18 hours (from opening time at 8am to closing time (2am)) at The Moon Under Water (Manchester).

Ollie, who is 30, said: "I have long been a fan of the business; at a certain point, I decided I wanted to go to as many Wetherspoon pubs as possible. It's my equivalent of collecting things.

"It also gives me a pretext to visit other parts of the country where I otherwise wouldn't go."

Ollie's goal is to visit every one of Wetherspoon's more than 800 pubs.

To date, he has been to over 160, some of which have featured in his 'Wetherspools Diaries'.

The Barum Top Inn (Halifax), The Old Borough (Swords) and The Postal Order (Blackburn) are among the raft of pubs he has visited so far this year.

The writer's go-to drinks are refillable white coffee, for a non-alcoholic choice, and a Greene King IPA or Ruddles Best, for the alcoholic option.

His favourite meal at the pub is the ultimate burger.

Ollie said: "I consider Wetherspoon to be a major cultural institution.

"The affordable pricing and pleasant atmospheres have provided me with reliable and stimulating spaces to work.

"Wetherspoon works hard to not only preserve local history, but encourage artistic expression which seeks to comment on our times."

● **Wetherspools Diaries on Substack:**
substack.com/@olliemattthews

● **YouTube:** youtube.com/@olliemattthewswriter



STUDENT BREWERS H AC



Meet the brewer

Dr Chris O'Malley

A senior lecturer in chemical engineering at Newcastle University, Chris is the academic lead and driving force behind Stu Brew.

His primary focus is around students' education, holding a senior management role in the science, agriculture and engineering (SAgE) faculty.

He is also an external examiner for the Chartered Institute of Brewing & Distilling.

With more than 15 years' practical brewing experience, Chris first fell in love with the brewing process while doing part-time work at the Scottish and Newcastle Brewery, during the summer holidays of 2001.

He cites, as a highlight of his brewing career, being asked to judge the 'technical' category of the 2024 British Guild of Beer Writers awards.

Dr Chris O'Malley (front) with students in the Stu Brew brewhouse

HELP UNI BAR ACHIEVE AMAZING FIRST



Luther's Bar (Newcastle University's students' union) makes history with CAMRA listing

Luther's Bar (Newcastle University's students' union) becomes the first franchised pub at a university to be listed in the publication by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) – The Good Beer Guide.

The bar, which Newcastle University's students' union opened in September 2023, in partnership with Wetherspoon, serves guest ales produced at the students' union's own sustainable microbrewery.

Stu Brew is Europe's first student-run brewery and, as well as its ales being enjoyed by the students on campus, the beer has also been included in the Wetherspoon beer festival.

Customers at the company's pubs across the UK enjoyed Stu Brew Exam Room Tears (5.5% ABV), during the autumn 2025 festival, a rare ale usually available only within a 20-mile radius of Newcastle.

The brewing team from Stu Brew travelled to Cornwall's St Austell Brewery to brew the festival ale especially for the event.

A special, collaborative version, it was a complex stout, brewed using maple syrup and pecan nuts.

First brewed for CAMRA's 2019 Newcastle Beer & Cider Festival, as Stu Brew's entry to the Battle of the Beers competition, it came in as runner-up in the judging and was voted 'canniest beer' by festival-goers.

Stu Brew is an extra-curricular student experience project operated through the Newcastle University students' union's Go Volunteer initiative.

Established in 2013, with production beginning a year later, Stu Brew was founded by Red Kellie (now of First & Last Brewery).

Stu Brew aims to upskill students through running a six-barrel microbrewery, giving them opportunities and experiences beyond the classroom.

A 10-strong team of dedicated volunteer students, supported by brewer Dr Chris O'Malley and students' union colleagues Sandy Tse and Lawrie Shrimpton, oversees the production of around 15,000 litres of beer each year.

Students gain know-how in brewing, marketing, sales, design, finance and much more by volunteering to help in running the commercial enterprise, with some going on to a career in the sector.

Luther's Bar – What's in a name?

When Martin Luther King visited Newcastle upon Tyne to receive a Newcastle University honorary doctorate in civil law, it was the culmination of more than a year's planning, involving the university, Mr King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference HQ staff in Atlanta.

On 13 November 1967, Newcastle University became the only British institution to award King an honorary degree, with Newcastle being the only other place in Britain which King ever visited, aside from London.

What The Good Beer Guide 2026 says:

LUTHER'S BAR

This is one of the few Wetherspoon pubs to be run in partnership with a university's 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 Bar 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 Newcastle, NE1 8QB



Shift manager Katy Owen at The Full Moon (Dudley)

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.

£638 MILLION IN FREE SHARES AND BONUSES PAID TO EMPLOYEES SINCE 2006

86.3 per cent paid to pub staff

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

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

Bonuses and share schemes provide an extra incentive for people to stay with the company: there are 34 employees who have worked for the company for more than 30 years, 759 for more than 20 years, 4,502 for more than 10 years and 10,300 for more than five years.

Since 2006, the company has paid £638 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 six months to January 2026, bonuses and free shares of £24 million were awarded (see table¹ below), with 97 per cent of employees receiving a bonus and/or shares in that period.

As of January 2026, 27,000 of our 42,050 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 32 million shares to employees – approximately 29 per cent of all shares in existence today.

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

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

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

Financial year	Bonuses and free shares	Profit after tax (loss/profit after tax) ²	Bonus etc as % of profit
	£m	£m	
2026 H1	24	16	150
2025	45	58	78
2024	49	59	83
2023	36	34	106
2022	30	-25	–
2021	23	-146	–
2020	33	-39	–
2019	46	80	58
2018	43	84	51
2017	44	77	57
2016	33	57	58
2015	31	57	53
2014	29	59	50
2013	29	65	44
2012	24	57	42
2011	23	52	43
2010	23	51	44
2009	21	45	45
2008	16	36	45
2007	19	47	41
2006	17	40	41
Total	638	764	56.7³

¹ Source: J D Wetherspoon plc's annual reports and accounts 2006–26

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

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

NOW OPEN

University of Birmingham

JOE'S

Pub manager Cody Mardenborough is pictured at the opening of Joe's at the University of Birmingham.

Also pictured (left to right) are Guild of Students welfare & community officer Abby Kenrick, postgraduate officer Aliasgar Gandhi, activities and employability officer Emeline Brown, sports officer Abhjeet Patel and international officer Simrah Inamdar.

Wetherspoon has entered into a partnership with the university's Guild of Students.

Located on the university's campus, Joe's is the official students' union bar at the Guild of Students and will be open to students and members of the public.

Joe's takes its name from the much-loved landmark at the heart of the university: the iconic Joseph Chamberlain Memorial Clock Tower, named after the university's first chancellor.

Known fondly as Old Joe and completed in the early 20th century, it is the tallest free-standing clock tower in the world.

To this day, Old Joe remains a symbol of the university and the city of Birmingham.

A full refurbishment and expansion of the premises, knocking through into the adjoining Mermaid bar to create one pub, has taken place.

Refurbishment work also includes a new bar and drinks-dispense system, allowing for a new range of drinks, as well as a new kitchen with gantry, enabling the pub to offer the full Wetherspoon menu.

The new-look pub's interior also includes new carpet, lighting, artwork and fixtures and fittings.

Joe's will continue to be run and managed by the Guild of Students; however, the partnership will allow the guild access to the business model implemented by Wetherspoon at its pubs across the UK.

Staff working in Joe's will continue to be employed and managed by the Guild of Students.

Wetherspoon's chief executive, John Hutson, said: "We are delighted to have entered into partnership with the Guild of Students and look forward to working with it to make Joe's a great success."

The University of Birmingham's Guild of Students activities and employability officer, Emeline Brown, added: "This exciting new partnership with J D Wetherspoon offers students greater access to affordable food and drinks, alongside increased employment opportunities.

"We also look forward to welcoming members of the public, helping to create an even more vibrant and lively atmosphere within the students' union."

University of Birmingham Guild of Students
Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham
West Midlands, B15 2TU



HEAVENLY ADDITIONS TO FOUR MORE HAVEN PARKS

Four new Wetherspoon pubs have opened at Haven holiday parks.

It takes the total number of Wetherspoon pubs at the UK-wide holiday parks to nine, with more set to open.

A total of £9 million was invested in the new pubs.

The Alfred Wainwright (Lakeland, Cumbria) was the first of the four new pubs to open. It is managed by Garreth Whalley.

This was followed by The White Clover (Hopton Holiday Village, Great Yarmouth) managed by Isaac Owen, The Springfield (Cala Gran Holiday Park, Fleetwood) managed by Rob Clarke and The Bluff Inn (Riviere Sands Holiday Park, Hayle) managed by Steve Leverton.

Each of the pubs offers Wetherspoon's full range of food and drinks in a music-free environment.

Haven's chief executive officer, Simon Palethorpe, said: "We are delighted that the four new pubs are now open."

"Haven is all about giving customers more of what they love – and our partnership with Wetherspoon does just that."

"We are looking forward to further openings at our holiday parks."

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

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



Pub manager Garreth Whalley at The Alfred Wainwright (Lakeland, Cumbria)



Pub manager Steve Leverton at The Bluff Inn (Riviere Sands Holiday Park, Hayle)



Pub manager Isaac Owen at The White Clover (Hopton Holiday Village, Great Yarmouth)



Pub manager Rob Clarke and front-of-house manager Lynne Southern at The Springfield (Cala Gran Holiday Park, Fleetwood)

CHAIRMAN TIM TAKES THE STAGE TO RECEIVE NATIONAL PUBWATCH HONOUR



National Pubwatch has honoured Wetherspoon's founder and chairman Tim Martin with an 'award of merit', in recognition of his long-time support for pubwatch schemes and his commitment to improving the safety of customers and staff in the licensed trade.

The award recognises individuals who have made a significant contribution to the success of pubwatch and the safety of the late-night economy.

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

Tim accepted the award at the National Pubwatch's annual conference in Liverpool.

National Pubwatch chair Steve Baker OBE said: "Tim Martin has been a strong supporter of National Pubwatch and local pubwatches for over 30 years.

"His dedication to the sector and support for National Pubwatch and schemes across the country have directly contributed to making the night-time economy a safer place.

"The National Pubwatch committee was unanimous in wanting to recognise his great contribution to the industry and to pubwatches nationwide."

Tim Martin added: "I am proud to be honoured by National Pubwatch.

"Wetherspoon has more than 500 pubs signed up to pubwatch – and our managers play an important part in its success.

"National Pubwatch is a vitally important organisation within the pub sector.

"I thank all of those involved for this honour."

One of the most notable examples of Tim Martin's support was his intervention to provide legal backing for the Buckingham and Haverhill pubwatch schemes when they faced judicial review challenges.

The landmark rulings in 2008 and 2010 upheld the long-established common law right of licensees to meet, share information and reach collective decisions to exclude problematic individuals.

J D Wetherspoon has also provided sponsorship for National Pubwatch, funding several specific initiatives, including two UK-wide research projects carried out in 2012 and 2025.

In addition, the company sponsors the annual National Pubwatch awards, presented at the House of Lords.

Tim Martin is pictured receiving his National Pubwatch 'award of merit', with (left to right) National Pubwatch chair Steve Baker OBE, Licensing Connect solicitor Natasha Nunn and National Pubwatch honorary president Lord Graham Evans.

PEN COB • PWLLHELI

KRISTIAN MAKING A SPLASH AT PEN COB AND ON PERILOUS SEAS



Kitchen manager Kristian Prychodko has been volunteering for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for two years in the seaside town Pwllheli.

Kristian, who is 36, is on call for the charity (which aims to save lives at sea) whenever he is not on shift at Pen Cob (Pwllheli), where he has worked for a decade.

He organised a stall to sell RNLI merchandise, including hats and teddies, outside the pub this spring, with money raised going to Pwllheli lifeboat station. It is the first time that it took place there, and he hopes to do more stalls later in 2026.

The lifeboat station from which Kristian operates covers the area from Penychain to Llanbedrog headland.

Kristian, who is trained in casualty care, said: "I am originally from Nottingham, yet have lived in Wales (always by the sea) since I was 12.

"I love being near the water, but it needs to be treated with care and respect.

"I started volunteering, as I wanted to be a good role model to my son and thought that a special way to do that would be serving the local community."

He added: "Where I work is a happy environment with friendly customers, so I am pleased to do something which helps the community where the pub is based."



DON'T TELL HIM PYKE! HOW MONTAGU PUB GOT ITS NAME

Central London property, built in 1911 by a colourful cinema pioneer, now in its 30th year as a Wetherspoon pub, was later home to the famous Marquee Club music venue



Wetherspoon's online pub histories series, since its launch almost a decade ago, 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.

Montagu

In this pub histories spotlight, a regular Wetherspoon News feature, we focus on The Montagu Pyke (Charing Cross Road, London), which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in December 1996 – almost 30 years ago.

The main part of the building, fronting on to Charing Cross Road, was originally Pyke's Cambridge Circus Cinematograph Theatre.

Built in 1911, it was the 16th and final cinema opened by Montagu Pyke. Badly damaged by fire in 1915, it was restored as the Super cinema. It was later the Tatler, Filmcenta and then the three-screen Cannon.

Montagu Alexander Pyke was a successful pioneer of cinema circuit-building in London.

Disaster

However, disaster was looming. In 1915, Pyke was storing a ton of waste film in the basement of the Charing Cross Road cinema, when an employee accidentally set it alight. The employee died in the flames, with Pyke then prosecuted for manslaughter.

Pyke's troubles were compounded by bankruptcy and material difficulties. On one day in 1915, Pyke was due to appear at the Old Bailey on a manslaughter charge, to apply for a discharge at the bankruptcy court and to appear before Mr Justice Deane in the divorce court.

In 1988, the building became home to the Marquee Club – “the most important venue in the history of European pop music”.

The Marquee Club first opened its doors in April 1958, in nearby Oxford Street. Initially, a jazz venue, from the early 1960s it was at the forefront of Rhythm and Blues, led by Cyril Davies and Alexis Kroners' Bluesbreakers.

In 1964, with the advent of rock music, the Marquee Club moved again, to Wardour Street, with the next 24 years seeing the venue presenting cutting-edge rock and punk performers.

Pistols

These included The Who, Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd, plus David Bowie, Sex Pistols and The Clash.

The Marquee Club moved to its final site in 1988, in London's Soho, showcasing hard rock bands Kiss and Silverwing. It remained for eight years, continuing to reinvent itself as a major rock venue.

● 105–107 Charing Cross Road, London, WC2H 0BP



JET ENGINE GENIUS HONoured AS FOUR NEW AIRPORT PUBS LAUNCH



The Sir Frank Whittle (Heathrow Airport)

Artist's impression.



The Sir Frank Whittle (Heathrow Airport)

Artist's impression.

Wetherspoon continues to open new pubs at airports across the UK and overseas.

At present, the company has eight airport pubs in the UK, as well as one at Alicante airport (Spain).

A new one opens at Heathrow Airport (terminal two, after security) in July, with a second opening at Manchester Airport (terminal two, after security) in September.

A further two are to open at Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat Airport, with the first opening in October and the second in January 2026 (both after security).

The new pub at Heathrow Airport will be called The Sir Frank Whittle, with its name relating to Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle, born in 1907. He was a British Royal Air Force officer and engineering genius who invented the turbojet engine.

His designs revolutionised global transport, as well as military aviation.

The pub will be open seven days a week, from the first flight to the last flight.

It will offer more than 3,000 square feet of customer space, with the design celebrating the best of Britain.

The new pub at Manchester Airport will be called The Belle Vue.

It will offer more than 3,600 square feet of customer space, with the design celebrating the history of sport and sporting achievements in northwest England.

For nearly 150 years, Belle Vue Zoological Gardens were 'one of the most popular entertainment venues' in the north of England.

They opened in 1836, behind the Belle Vue pub, with a wide variety of animals and thrilling fairground rides.

Speedway and greyhound-racing were added later.

The pub closed in the 1980s.

The Belle Vue pub will be open seven days a week, from the first flight to the last flight.



The Belle Vue (Manchester Airport)

Artist's impression.



The Belle Vue (Manchester Airport)

Artist's impression.



ARE YOU READY FOR A WIDER CIDER CHOICE?

A range of up to 15 craft ciders from across the UK will be available at Wetherspoon's pubs during a 10-day festival.

The pubs will host the festival from Friday 31 July to Sunday 9 August, inclusive.

The craft ciders include traditional apple ciders, perries and flavoured ciders.

Wetherspoon's marketing manager, Rich Cripps, said: "The festival is a great celebration of craft cider."

"It will allow us to showcase several craft ciders not previously available to customers in the pubs."

Three third-of-a-pint tasters will also be available for the price of a pint.

Tasting notes on all of the craft ciders will be available in the pub (with a digital version also available on the Wetherspoon app and website).

All craft ciders will be available to order at the bar and via the Wetherspoon app.



Barbourne Vumpy 3.4% ABV

Barbourne Cider, Worcestershire. Est. 2014

This hazy purple medium-sweet cider has a zingy character, with flavours of grape, blackcurrant and raspberry.



Hunts Mango & Passionfruit 3.4% ABV

Hunts Devon Cider, Devon. Est. 1805

This orange sweet cider delivers ripe mango and tangy passion fruit flavours, resulting in a refreshing, tropical character.



Lilley's Elderflower Cider 3.4% ABV

Lilley's Cider, Somerset. Est. 2003

This pale golden sweet cider is infused with elderflower, creating floral hints above its apple notes, along with a refreshing character.



Pulp Razberry Rush 3.4% ABV

Celtic Marches, Herefordshire. Est. 2011

This dark red medium-sweet cider is smooth and lightly sparkling, with rich raspberry and zesty lime flavours.



Sandford Orchards Blackberry 3.4% ABV

Sandford Orchards, Devon. Est. 2002

This ruby sweet cider has a delicious blend of blackberry juice and fresh apples, resulting in a balanced, refreshing character.



Broadoak Lemon Haze 4.0% ABV

Broadoak Cider, Somerset. Est. 1984

This hazy pale lemon-coloured medium cider is bursting with lemon flavours, imparting a refreshing, zesty character.



Gwynt y Ddraig Happy Daze 4.5% ABV

Gwynt y Ddraig, Rhondda Cynon Taff. Est. 2001

This clear golden medium cider has a smooth, balanced and fruity flavour, leading to a refreshing finish.



Rich's Sunset Gold 4.5% ABV

Rich's Cider, Somerset. Est. 1954

This clear golden dry cider is made with local Somerset apples, delivering a traditional, refreshing apple flavour.



Farmer Jims Prickly Pear 4.8% ABV

Farmer Jims, Devon. Est. 1980

This hazy light green perry is produced with a blend of pear varieties, resulting in a zingy, distinctive and easy-drinking character.



Purbeck Dandy Dab 5.0% ABV

Purbeck Cider, Dorset. Est. 2014

This clear golden medium cider is made using solely Dabinett apples, giving a rich aroma and an unmistakable depth of flavour.



Harry's Scrummage 6.0% ABV

Harry's Cider, Somerset. Est. 2012

This clear golden award-winning medium cider has a fresh apple aroma and a well-balanced, full-bodied, fresh and fruity flavour.



Weymouth Portland Bill 6.0% ABV

Weymouth Cider, Dorset. Est. 2014

This hazy plum-coloured medium cider has an inviting apple aroma, leading to a smooth and easy-drinking character.



Hecks Slack-Ma-Girdle Cider 6.5% ABV

Hecks Cider, Somerset. Est. 1896

Named after its single apple variety used, this hazy golden medium-dry cider has a full-bodied character and a fruity, dry finish.



Thistly Cross Jaggy Thistle 6.9% ABV

Thistly Cross, East Lothian. Est. 2008

This clear amber medium-dry cider has a crisp apple flavour and balanced acidity, leading to a clean, rounded palate.



Mr Whitehead's Novo Pyrus 7.0% ABV

Mr Whitehead's Cider, Hampshire. Est. 2003

This hazy straw-coloured dry perry is made with a blend of pear varieties, delivering a balanced, refreshing flavour with a punch in the finish.



100%

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SCORES ON THE DOORS SHOW CONSISTENTLY MIGHTY MARKS

Wetherspoon's pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales clock up average food hygiene rating of 4.98 out of 5

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

The company's pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales have an average food hygiene rating of 4.98 across 748 rated pubs, with 740 of those achieving the maximum-possible score of five.

Combined

The top five companies (see table opposite) have a rating of 5.00 each, but with a combined number of only 225 premises, compared with Wetherspoon's total of 748 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 and Prezzo – although all of these companies also scored highly.

Of our pubs, 748 currently have an FHRS rating, with 98.9 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

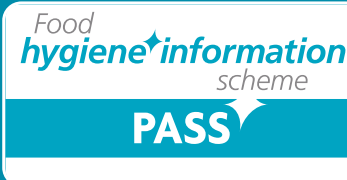
This is the assessment of the standard of cleanliness and upkeep, including whether:

- 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



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

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 only independent government scheme assessing food hygiene standards

FOOD HYGIENE RATING



	Total premises scored	Average premises score out of 5
Wingstop	70	5.00
Slug & Lettuce	60	5.00
Giggling Squid	54	5.00
Carluccio's	25	5.00
Yates	16	5.00
Wagamama	160	4.99
Aldi	920	4.98
J D Wetherspoon	748	4.98
Nando's	446	4.98
Waitrose	432	4.98
Turtle Bay	48	4.98
McDonald's	1,392	4.97
Starbucks	1,147	4.97
Zizzi	128	4.97
All Bar One	37	4.97
Cosy Club	35	4.97
Greggs	2,390	4.96
Lidl	898	4.96
Sainsbury's	1,419	4.95
Pret	482	4.95
Miller & Carter	102	4.95
Coffee#1	124	4.94
Nicholson's	64	4.94
The Ivy Collection	50	4.94
Tesco	2,668	4.93
KFC	936	4.93
PizzaExpress	332	4.93
Loungers	265	4.93
Toby Carvery	142	4.93
Wahaca	15	4.93
Walkabout	15	4.93
Burger King	503	4.92
Prezzo	99	4.92
Browns	39	4.92
YO! To Go	313	4.91
Vintage Inns	128	4.91
Bill's	48	4.91
Costa Coffee	2,436	4.90
Craft Union	609	4.90
Ember Inns	145	4.90
Sizzling Pub Co	166	4.89
Harvester	141	4.89
Asda	954	4.88
Brewers fayre	113	4.88
Côte	72	4.88
Premium Country Pubs	67	4.88
Geronimo	30	4.87
GBK	28	4.85
German Döner Kebab	135	4.84
O'Neill's	44	4.84
Young's	217	4.81
Bella Italia	71	4.81
Byron	27	4.81
Papa Johns	415	4.80
The Breakfast Club	21	4.80
Las Iguanas	48	4.79
Subway	1,865	4.78
YO! Sushi	53	4.78
Morrisons	1,645	4.76
Fuller's	164	4.75
Shepherd Neame	228	4.64
Caffè Nero	592	4.61

Information in this table was sourced in June 2026 from www.scoresonthedoors.org.uk, listing 748 Wetherspoon pubs in England, Northern Ireland and Wales with an average food hygiene rating of 4.98. 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.

BRIGHT SPARKS AT THE ELECTRICAL WIZARD MAINTAIN MAGICAL RUN

Northumberland pub clocks up continuous maximum five-star rating for eight consecutive hygiene inspections



Shift manager Rachael Clarke and kitchen manager Callum Oxby

Across seven, eight, nine and even 11 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 Electrical Wizard (Morpeth).

Manager

Pub manager Johnny Crawford has managed the pub since 2024, assisted by nine managers and a front-of-house team of 16.

Kitchen manager Callum Oxby has been in the role at The Electrical Wizard since January, managing a kitchen team of 16. He has worked for the company since 2014.

Shift manager Rachael Clarke has been at the pub since March 2025, having started with the company a decade ago at The Wallaw (Blyth) and also worked at Wetherspoons (Metrocentre, Gateshead).

Importance

Rachael said: "A five-star hygiene rating is of utmost importance to the pub, with customers being more than aware of the rating.

"To achieve and maintain a five-star rating is a team effort, because it doesn't involve just the kitchen, but everyone knows what is expected of them."

Rachael, who began her Wetherspoon career as an under-18 floor associate, appreciates that the company's training and procedures help to ensure a successful pub.

Training

She said: "There is a lot of training involved and, when the procedures are repeated every day, you get used to it and everything becomes second nature.

"Everyone needs to keep on top of things, all of the time, because you don't get any advance warning of a hygiene inspection visit.

"They just turn up unannounced."

Rachael added: "At The Electrical Wizard, front-of-house staff also work one shift per month in the kitchen, and vice versa, so we all get an insight into what is involved for the whole team.

"We get to see, at first hand, what is needed in the kitchen, or front of house, appreciate one another's roles and what we can all do to make the whole team work well together.

"As a manager, I have to be aware of what is required and ensure that I pass on relevant information to the team and keep on top of its performance – to achieve and maintain the high standards expected."

KILLING OFF AN URBAN MYTH

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

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

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

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

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

By the way, the lowest-priced beer which Wetherspoon sells is usually 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

THE O2, GREENWICH

STARGAZER'S JUSTIN LAUDED FOR PERFORMANCE AT THE O2

Bar and floor associate Justin Memfah has been named as a 'service star winner' in The O2's Spotlight newsletter.

Justin, who has worked at The Stargazer (The O2, Greenwich) since October 2025, was awarded as the monthly service star for The Entertainment District at The O2.

The award recognises outstanding team members across bars and restaurants operating at the venue.

Justin received a certificate and will be put forward, along with other winners, for the 'service star of the year' award at The O2's 2027 annual brand awards, where he will have the opportunity to win a prize.

Justin said: "I really enjoy working here. It is nice to be recognised with this award."

Pub manager Kylee Garwood said: "Justin is a reliable and consistent staff member, who just gets on with tasks, is always on the go and strives to do the best he can every time he is on shift."

Kylee added: "He is an asset to the team at The Stargazer, which is why the management team thought that he would be a good nomination for service star."



GAINSBOROUGH

NO SWEYN NO GAIN AS FORKBEARD ALE BRINGS TWO-PRONGED VICTORY



Pub manager Amanda Fretwell and her team at The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough) have bagged two titles for their real ale.

Amanda's pub has been named 'pub of the season winter 2026' and 'pub of the year 2025' by members of the Gainsborough Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) branch.

Amanda, who has been pub manager at The Sweyn Forkbeard since November 2013, said: "We are delighted to win these two awards, particularly the 'pub of the year' title, and thank the Gainsborough CAMRA members for their continued support."

The pub was last named 'pub of the season' for summer 2024 – and previously did the 'double' in 2022/23, winning the 'pub of the season winter' title, as well as the 'pub of the year' accolade.

Amanda added: "The whole team works hard to ensure that our real ale is the best it can be – and this recognition means so much to us all, especially to shift manager and cellar champion Hollie Forrest."

Gainsborough CAMRA chairman, Scott Young, said: "The Sweyn Forkbeard winning Gainsborough CAMRA 'pub of the winter season' 2025/26 and going on to win 'pub of the year' for 2025 are huge achievements.

"It is a testament to the pub's quality, community involvement and the welcoming atmosphere it provides.

"Wetherspoon's pubs are known for their consistent standards, but this recognition from CAMRA shows that the Gainsborough pub is going above and beyond, offering a fantastic selection of real ales and great service.

"It is great to see our local Wetherspoon pubs being celebrated for their commitment to preserving good beer."

The Sweyn Forkbeard has 10 hand-pumps serving Sharp's Doom Bar, Greene King Abbot Ale and Ruddles, as well as three ever-changing guest ales, during weekdays, and up to five at weekends.

Among the popular ales are those from Milestone Brewing Co, Pheasantry Brewery, Shadow Bridge Brewery and Thornbridge Brewery.

Pub manager Amanda Fretwell is pictured (front centre) at The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough) receiving award certificates from Gainsborough CAMRA's chairman, Scott Young (third from right), and branch members.

JUDGED TO BE ONE OF EUROPE'S BEST AT HELPING STAFF PROGRESS

Wetherspoon has been named among 'Europe's Best Employers 2026' in The Financial Times and Statista report.

Company evaluations were collected in the independent process, with Wetherspoon being named among the most highly recommended employers in Europe.

Wetherspoon's head of people, Tom Ball, said: "We are delighted to be named in the report.

"Our employees are vitally important to the overall success of the individual pubs and the company.

"We strive to offer each of our employees the opportunity to progress within the company."

BROKER BLOWN AWAY TO BEHOLD BOLD BLOWER BUNCH



Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Katy Walker, The Yorkshire Broker's Martin Weaver-Parker and pub manager Sarah Heppinstall

Pub manager Sarah Heppinstall and shift manager Katy Walker have each completed a 75-mile event launched by a former Wetherspoon colleague-turned insurance broker.

The pair from The Glass Blower (Castleford) did The Yorkshire Broker's Walk, Run, Ride Challenge, keeping a record of all of their steps.

They chose to exclude any walking done at work – to make it even more challenging; together, they raised £350 for Wetherspoon's chosen charity.

Sarah said: "It was difficult to do, with a lot of walking and running when we weren't on shift. That was tough at times, after a long day's work."

Insurance specialist The Yorkshire Broker organised the event, set up to raise money for a local Pontefract charity, The Prince of Wales Hospice; participants can also choose to raise additional funds for other charities.

Martin Weaver-Parker is the firm's managing director, but, before that career, he worked in the noughties for a year at The Glass Blower, starting as a bar associate.

He also spent five years collectively at The Winter Seam (Castleford) and The Prior John (Bridlington).

Martin said: "It's great to still have a connection, particularly for a good cause, with The Glass Blower, where, in fact, I also met my husband – who still works there today."



STOUT-STANDING VALUE

Two of the most iconic brands of stout are now being served at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK.

Ever-popular Guinness and NEW Murphy's Irish stout offer an astonishing combined brewing heritage of more than 435 years.

Guinness has been on the Wetherspoon drinks menu for 46 years – and Wetherspoon's pubs, now selling more than 20 million pints a year, are among the biggest sellers of the black stuff in Britain.

A fresh, perfectly creamy pint is guaranteed, with 100 per cent of Wetherspoon's pubs having passed the annual Guinness quality accreditation programme.

Famous for its silky-smooth palate and creamy finish, Murphy's Irish stout offers another option for lovers of stouts and dark beers.

With a flavour profile including well-fired toast, toffee, coffee and chocolate, Murphy's Irish stout is now available alongside Guinness on draught and Guinness 0.0 (in a 538ml can).

James J Murphy

Born on 10 November 1825, in Cork, James Jeremiah Murphy was the eldest of the 15 children (six sons and nine daughters) of merchant and distiller Jeremiah James Murphy and his wife Catherine.

The Murphy family business, established by his grandfather, James Murphy Senior, included shipping and distilling interests.

James J Murphy worked initially in the family business at the Midleton Distillery, in east Cork, founded (1825) by his grandfather, along with his brothers.

He married Ellen in 1852, and the couple had eight sons and one daughter.

Murphy sold his Midleton shares and established a brewery in 1856 with the proceeds on a site known as Lady's Well, near Blackpool, in Cork.

It was to be called James J Murphy & Co – and it still exists on the same site today.

Guinness – a brief history

Born in 1725, in County Kildare, Ireland, Arthur Guinness inherited £100 from his godfather, Archbishop Price, using the money to set up his own ale brewery in neighbouring town, Leixlip.

At 34, Arthur decided to try his luck in the capital, signing a 9,000-year lease on a small, disused property at St James' Gate, Dublin, from which to start his brewing journey.

The original lease is still available to view at the Dublin archive.

A failing brewing industry in Ireland led Arthur to begin exporting, sending just six and a half barrels of Guinness beer on a ship bound for England.

The rapid growth of a new beer, 'porter', in London resulted in Arthur's halting ale production and concentrating on perfecting a bold, black beer, the West Indian porter (a precursor to Guinness Foreign Extra Stout) which remains part of Guinness's range to this day.

Over the next 200 years, Guinness quickly became part of the world's cultural fabric.

Today, it is brewed in more than 60 locations worldwide, with Nigeria opening the first brewery (1963) outside of the UK and Ireland.

TELFORD POET THOMAS FINDS RHYME AND REASON



Poets can get inspiration from many places, and for Michael Pymm a trip to his local, The Thomas Botfield (Telford), encouraged him to put pen to paper.

Michael, who is 71, retired in 2014 and was an IT project manager before that. He enjoys writing poems for fun and is a fan of Benjamin Zephaniah and Liz Berry. He said: "I would say that my poems are about community and connections."

"The piece called Our Spoons came to me while enjoying a coffee in The Thomas Botfield."

He added: "As I looked around from my vantage position on a stool under the TV, I could see people of all ages enjoying their meals and drinks. It struck me that Spoons attracts customers from all walks of life."

Michael said that now that he is retired, there is more time to observe, rather than rush everywhere.

Our Spoons

*In the heart of every town, the doors swing wide,
Where history lines the walls with local pride.
From framed old photos to the tales of yore,
The spirit of the borough sits by the door.
While other bars stay quiet, dark and still,
Our Spoons is humming with a lively thrill.
From early light until the stars appear,
The value flows as freely as the beer.
On Monday, the ale is priced to please,
A bargain pint enjoyed with perfect ease.
No need to stand or jostle at the bar,
The app will bring your order from afar.
The menu turns with every passing day,
To keep the hungry cravings well at bay.
With pizza Wednesdays, bubbling hot and fresh,
And Thursday curries – spices for the flesh.
Free refill of the coffee, steam against the glass,
And watch the busy, bustling morning pass.
A place for everyone, a common ground,
Where the best and warmest welcome can be found.*

LOCH LOMOND BREWERY GETS STUCK IN AT HAY STOOK

Loch Lomond Brewery took over the taps at The Hay Stook (East Kilbride) while customers chatted to brewery rep Chris Queen.

The brewery is just 21 miles from the Lanarkshire pub and supplies it with ales such as Lost in Mosaic, Silkie Stout, Southern Summit and Bonnie and Blonde.

All of the above were available to try or buy at the tap takeover and meet-the-brewer night, held on 17 March to celebrate the pub's 10th anniversary.

Members of Lanarkshire Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) joined in with the event after their branch meeting.

Pub manager Michael Easton said: "It was a great night, and the CAMRA members really enjoyed it, as did all those who took part."

Chris said: "We were delighted to be invited to The Hay Stook's 10th anniversary; great to see the place so busy on a Tuesday afternoon."

"It was lovely to chat to a bunch of beer enthusiasts who all had great things to say, and I think we helped some homebrewers, too, which is always a pleasure."

"Many thanks to Michael, shift manager Tony Hills and the team who have been really supportive in getting our beers on the bar."

In addition, the pub held a raffle for Young Lives vs Cancer, raising £200 as customers enjoyed free birthday cake.

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Michael Easton, bar associate Ann Milne and shift manager Tony Hills.



NEW £10M TRAVEL FUND WILL BE 'TRANSFORMATIVE', SAYS YOUNG LIVES VS CANCER



Victoria Ward

Following nearly a decade's campaigning by our charity partner, Young Lives vs Cancer, a 'transformative' travel fund is coming to support children and young people with cancer and their families, in England, with the cost of travel to hospital.

As part of the recently published National Cancer Plan for England, the UK Government announced a £10-million travel fund, launching in 2027, to help children/young people with cancer and their families, in England, with the cost of travel to hospital.

The charity says that this news will make a huge difference to the life of those they support and thanks everyone who got behind its campaign.

Delaying

Research by Young Lives vs Cancer found that 71% of young people and families were struggling to pay for travel, with one in 10 missing or delaying treatment and care because of costs.

When children or young people are diagnosed with cancer, they (or their families) face an immediate rise of £700, on average, in extra costs, such as food, heating bills and childcare.

Travel is often the biggest single cost, at an average £250 extra each month.

The charity's chief executive says that the new travel fund will be transformative in taking away some of these financial worries at an already-stressful time.

Young Lives vs Cancer's chief executive, Rachel Kirby-Rider, says: "This is the news that children and young people with cancer, and their families, have been waiting for.

"Our charity was founded 60 years ago to help young people and families struggling with travel costs – and it has continued as one of the biggest pressures being faced.

Juggling

"I've heard from families struggling to pay rent, others juggling mounting credit-card debt and some even missing or delaying treatment because of these costs.

"Now, we have finally secured the support needed to help to ensure that children, young people and families can afford to get to hospital – without facing impossible financial choices.

"We haven't achieved this alone. Thank you to the young people and families who have shared their experiences as part of our campaign – and to every supporter who backed our call for change.

"We've been proud to champion our travel fund proposal through the Children and Young People's Cancer Taskforce, alongside sector partners, as part of the development of the National Cancer Plan."

Young cancer survivor Victoria Ward, 25, from the Isle of Wight, was delighted to hear about the announcement, having campaigned for a young cancer patient travel fund with Young Lives vs Cancer.

Treatment

Victoria was diagnosed with lymphoma at 21 years old and received treatment at Southampton General Hospital.

She would have to travel from her home, crossing via ferry from the island to the mainland, then either driving and paying for hospital parking or taking a taxi to the hospital.

The ferry return ticket alone could cost anywhere between £80 and £200 at peak times. The effect of these costs led to her losing her flat and even, at one point, contemplating stopping treatment.

She said: "It's brilliant news.

"I really struggled to keep on top of the costs of getting to and from hospital, so it's great to know that other young people will get support to face these challenges and can focus on getting their treatment."

Victoria has been central to the campaign for a travel fund and even (on 12 September 2023) knocked on the door of 10 Downing Street to hand in Young Lives vs Cancer's petition for a travel fund.

The new travel fund is set to come in effect from 2027 and will support the 3,600 children and young people diagnosed with cancer every year, and their families, across England.

STIRRED TO HIS CORE, CHRIS PROCLAIMS PUB HE ADORES



Chris is pictured with his daughter, Caitlin, in the garden at The Rawson Spring

Wetherspoon fan Chris Wells was inspired by a recent article in Wetherspoon News (see inset) to wax lyrical about his favourite pub – The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield).

Chris, from Burton upon Trent, is a massive Sheffield Wednesday supporter and visits the pub before a match.

The pub is located 10 minutes' walk from Hillsborough, home to Sheffield Wednesday.

Chris said: "Sophie's 'Ode to Spoons' was a joy to read and reached to my very core, firmly reminding me of my adoration for Wetherspoon.

"We all have our happy place – and mine happens to be a quiet corner outside the back of The Rawson Spring, with the sound of the River Loxley beyond the flower-laden beer garden.

"Screw your eyes a little and you could be somewhere exotic, far from Hillsborough corner.

"However, there's no place I would rather be than sitting here, all weathers, any occasion, though most often with predrinks, before watching my beloved Sheffield Wednesday.

"I've drunk here with family and friends, but many times by myself, though, as we all know – are we ever alone in a Spoons?"

"You'll do well to visit without finding a friendly face, a haven of good-natured folk with common ground: beer, football and enjoying some time away from life's stresses.

"I totally agree with Sophie that Wetherspoon's pubs are the cornerstone of the community, whatever their size or location.

"A Spoons visit is, of course, essential at each match we attend, any holiday we take and day trips we make.

"To date, I have visited 240 and counting, with my partner Pip and daughter Caitlin.

"Build them Tim Martin – and we shall come."



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE IN CRAFT BEER LINE-UP

Fifteen beers available in a can, with another five on draught

Wetherspoon has been supporting and championing breweries and microbreweries throughout the UK for more than 45 years.

Launched in autumn 2022, the regional craft initiative offers specific locally sourced craft beers at Wetherspoon's pubs.

The initiative's craft beer list now extends across the UK and is available to request.

The range of craft beer, each in a 440ml can (15 beers), from independent breweries from West Dunbartonshire to Wokingham and Porthmadog to Peterborough, aims to provide customers with a journey into craft.

With the selection of styles and flavours on offer (2.4–7.5% ABV), there is something for everyone, with flavours from honeycomb to passion fruit, mango, grapefruit and lime.

Craft beer-lovers are spoiled for choice, with various beer styles too, including a wheat beer, an unfiltered IPA, a sour beer, a stout and a beer cooler.

There are five craft beers on draught too – Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA and Mad Squirrel \$umo across England, Northern Ireland and Wales, Williams Brothers Joker and Stewart Hazy IPA in Scotland and BrewDog Punk IPA served at all Wetherspoon pubs.

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



BrewDog Punk IPA
5.2% ABV, golden, fruity and bitter

Seven Bro7hers Easy IPA
4.7% ABV, straw-coloured, fruity and hoppy

Mad Squirrel \$umo
4.7% ABV, golden-orange, hazy and citrus

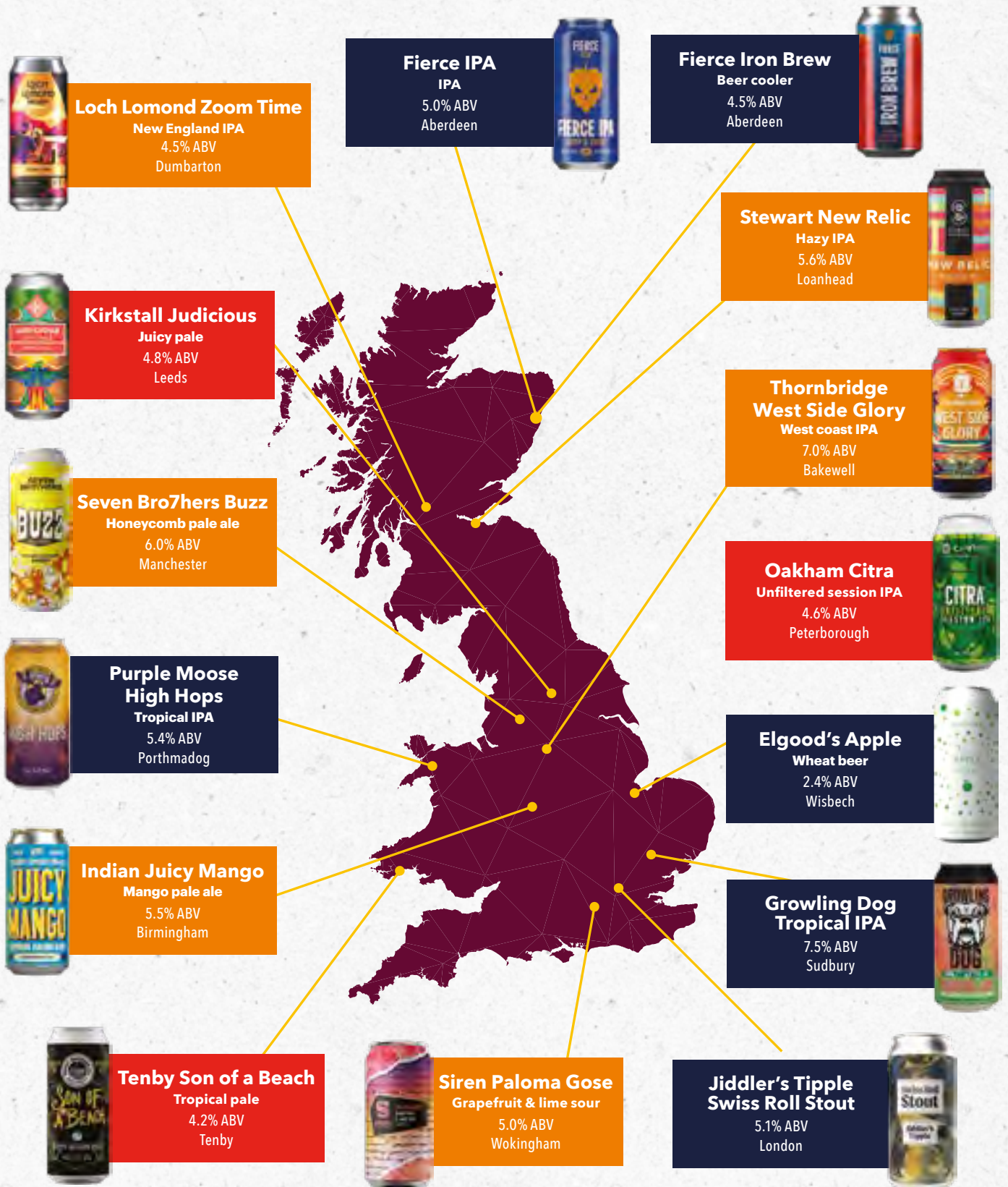
Williams Brothers Joker IPA
5.0% ABV, golden, fruity and biscuity

Stewart Hazy IPA
5.0% ABV, hazy, juicy and tropical

CRAFT ON DRAUGHT

CRAFT BEER

Full range available to request



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

ALL-WOMAN TEAM CREATES A SHAKESPEAREAN BREW

Juliet Pale Ale from Hogs Back pleases star-crossed beer-lovers at spring event

Brewery's name: Hogs Back Brewery, Manor Farm, Tongham, Surrey



Pictured (left to right) are the women from Hogs Back Brewery – tap supervisor Brooke Hockerday, financial controller Sylvia Levick, head of sales Gina Fletcher, trade sales executive Isabel Bennett, assistant manager retail and e-commerce Lindsey Winrow-Winder, retail assistant Paula Andrews, events manager Becky Ray and tap supervisor Molly Taylor; the ninth team member (not pictured, as taking the photo) is director of marketing Jill Adams



Wetherspoon's real-ale enthusiasts and beer festival-goers may, during the spring event, have enjoyed a pint (or two) of the pale ale Juliet (3.8% ABV).

Brewed by Hogs Back Brewery, the beer was produced as part of the International Women's Collaboration Brew Day initiative – and the new beer was included in the Wetherspoon festival for spring 2026.

Inspired by the strength and spirit embodied by Shakespeare's Juliet – a character defined not only by love, but by courage, conviction and the willingness to defy expectation – Juliet is refreshing, approachable and full of character.

Led by head of sales Gina Fletcher, a team of nine women from across the Hogs Back Brewery business signed up to learn more about brewing from their all-male brew team colleagues.

As this pale ale was produced, they all participated in the brewing process, interacting and contributing to the various stages.

Experience

Gina said: "It was a thoroughly enjoyable project and an opportunity for us to gain a deeper understanding of how beer is made and the whole brewing process – plus it was a real hands-on experience.

"We were also absolutely thrilled to supply Wetherspoon, nationally, for the festival."

She continued: "We wanted the beer to have character and be a celebration of women within the industry, as well as the men who support them.

"Juliet was a refreshing style for Hogs Back Brewery and was all about strength, courage and inclusivity.

"The project was a great collaboration with Mondo Brewing Company in Battersea, which was involved with the concept of this new, fresh brew."

Gina concluded: "It was great going online and seeing where the beer was being enjoyed, across the UK, and receiving some lovely reviews.

"Who knows, Juliet might have a sister or cousin next year."

Community

Hogs Back Brewery has been rooted in the Surrey village of Tongham since 1992 and is an integral part of the community.

Over the past almost 35 years, the brewery has produced a wide variety of award-winning beers, ales and lagers, including its flagship ale – Tongham TEA (traditional English ale).

In 2014, the brewery planted its own hop garden to make brewing more sustainable, cultivating 6,000 plants over eight acres, making Hogs Back Brewery the largest integrated hop-grower and brewer in the UK.

Hogs Back Brewery grows, harvests, dries, packs and stores its own hops on site, until they are ready to go into the brewhouse.

The hops travel from 'field to firkin' in under a mile.

From a typical harvest, the brewery can source 70 per cent of its hop requirements from its own garden or the Hampton Estate, within four miles of the brewery.

In 2025, Hogs Back Brewery celebrated its 8,000th brew and continues to supply beers and ales across the southeast, including to Wetherspoon's pubs.

COMFORTABLY NUMB BACK IN THE UK CHARTS

Music-inspired beer from Triple fff brewery making big noise thanks to national guest ale listing

Brewery's name: Triple fff Brewery, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire



Graham Trott (left) and Xen Gladstone

During the spring months (April to June), Wetherspoon's customers across the UK have been enjoying Triple fff Comfortably Numb (5.0% ABV), thanks to the company's national guest ale listing.

This is Triple fff Brewery's first national listing for 15–20 years and a 'very big deal' for the 20-strong team at the Hampshire-based brewery.

Triple fff was launched in 1997 by Graham Trott. A wood worker by trade, Graham was a keen home brewer and music fan. Starting with a five-barrel plant, the brewery's name refers to the musical term 'fortississimo', meaning 'very very loud'.

With the exception of its ale Alton's Pride, the brewery's beers are named after songs and album titles, with an eclectic mix from many genres.

Recipes

Overall head brewer Graham is still very hands on and very active overseeing the brewhouse and determining the beers' recipes.

Managing director Xen Gladstone came on board in 2023, adding his business acumen to the brewery's arsenal.

Originally from Scotland, having also spent 25 years in Hong Kong, Xen said: "Although my background is in finance and business, I have always been passionate about beer.

"I love beer and the industry and have always had my 'toe in the water'.

"I have worked as a business analyst for the Asian brewery market and, at university, worked with a friend on his wholesale beer business.

Reinvigorate

"Triple fff has always had a stronger beer culture than a business one and, following the struggles coming out of the pandemic, I came in to reinvigorate the business at a difficult time."

Triple fff is no stranger to success for its brews, with Alton's Pride picking up 2025 World Beer Awards – 'best best bitter in the world (under 5.4%)'.

Xen reported: "Graham must be one of the most awarded brewers, still brewing today, in the industry."

The brewery has been supplying its beers to Wetherspoon for more than 20 years, delivering directly to around 50 pubs across Hampshire, Berkshire, Surrey and southeast London.

Excellent

Xen smiled: "I can't verify, but have it on good authority that Tim Martin tried Comfortably Numb at The John Russell Fox (Andover), saying 'this is excellent ale!'"

Xen continued: "Having Comfortably Numb on Wetherspoon's national listing helps to raise our profile; more people get to try a product in which we believe and of which we are proud.

"It gives Triple fff a step up."

He added: "Wetherspoon is a great partner to work with, with great people. The company's cellaring strategy is among the best in class – and that is crucial to us.

"We can't control the beer, once it goes out of our door, but we know that Wetherspoon will care for it and serve it well.

"That is very important to us."

Xen concluded: "We have huge respect for the way in which Wetherspoon looks after its beers.

"And, as for the myth about short-dated beer, it's complete nonsense. Wetherspoon is one of the strictest customers, when it comes to good shelf life."



EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSÉ

Wine enthusiasts can think pink by choosing from four fantastic rosé varieties - from Provence, New Zealand, California and Chile

Wine-lovers have an outstanding range of options to choose from on the Wetherspoon wine menu, whatever your preferred favourite.

A cool glass of rosé wine may be your ideal accompaniment on long summer's days and warm balmy evenings while socialising or dining al fresco in a pub garden.

In the selection of rosé wines on the menu, there are four fabulous choices for all tastes, ranging from dry and refreshing to medium sweet and juicy.

With differing styles and tastes available, carefully sourced from around the world, all wines can be enjoyed by the glass (125ml, 175ml and 250ml), as well as several choices served by the bottle (750ml) to share.

Think pink... and enjoy a glass of summer rosé (or bottle to share) at Wetherspoon.

The Pale

by Sacha Lichine

13% ABV

Chateau d'Esclans, Vin de Pays du Var Provence, France

Aroma: aromatic freshness

Taste: dry, refreshing, bright red-fruit flavours, clean, crisp finish

Grape: cinsault, grenache rolle, syrah

THE WINE

The Pale is crafted with grapes from the Vin de Pays du Var region of Provence.

This is a classic Mediterranean rosé... with a twist.

The Pale is a quality, quintessential rosé: dry and refreshing in a signature Provence grey-pink, with light fruits and a clean finish.

A blend of cinsault, grenache rolle and syrah, The Pale follows through on the promise of its packaging.

It's an energetic expression of rosé, a food-friendly wine which works just as well at the table as it does on its own.

Sacha Lichine has leaned on the same top-quality growers for The Pale as he has for his other stand-out rosés - and has included fruit from his own vineyards, too.

It is deliciously dry and refreshing, with bright red-fruit flavours and a clean, crisp finish.

THE WINERY AND WINEMAKER

From grapes of the best vineyards which grow parallel to the Mediterranean coast, The Pale by Sacha Lichine is strongly influenced by the fresh sea air of the French Riviera.

These salty and sun-drenched soils give the wine a dry, yet fruity, character.

The Pale comes from an assembly of softly pressed juices, selected with the greatest care and aged in stainless-steel tanks for five to eight months, using a process called fine lees.

The wine is from the creator of the iconic Provence rosé brand which sparked a worldwide phenomenon - Whispering Angel.

Sacha Lichine was born in Bordeaux, educated in the US and began working at his family's property, Château Prieuré Lichine, during the summers of his youth.

A defining moment in Sacha's career came about when, at age 27, he started running Château Prieuré Lichine.

Recognising the importance of innovation in an increasingly varied wine industry around the world, Sacha developed a line of New World wines from France, Sacha Lichine - Vins Sans Frontières, which today comprises a selection of growers and wines crafted throughout the regions of France.



Villa Maria

Blush Sauvignon

12% ABV
New Zealand

Aroma: pink grapefruit, lime, fresh herbs

Taste: floral, passion fruit, delicate red berries

Grape: sauvignon blanc, cabernet franc

THE WINE

The fresh twist on everyone's Kiwi favourite, this attractively pale pink wine has been crafted to deliver a glass of crisp aromatic refreshment which is easy to love.

The sauvignon reveals vibrant aromas of passion fruit and fresh herbs, with a splash of cabernet franc contributing floral blossom and delicate red berry notes.

The cool climate of New Zealand's wine-growing regions provides freshness and natural acidity.

THE WINERY AND WINEMAKER

With more than 60 years' wine-making, Villa Maria's six-decade journey at the forefront of New Zealand's wine industry has shaped the company as it stands today.

The extensive portfolio is one of the most geographically and stylistically diverse and highly awarded ranges of premium wines by any New Zealand producer.

Today, Villa Maria is globally recognised and known for its bold, expressive and exceptional wines.

Group winemaker Dave Roper began his career in wine at Villa Maria in 2002 as a cellar hand.

His flair for wine-making was apparent from the outset.

Having developed his skills and knowledge across all of Villa Maria's wines, he was promoted, in February 2025, to group winemaker.



White Zinfandel

Gallo Family Vineyards

8% ABV
Central Valley, California

Aroma: summer berries, juicy watermelon

Taste: medium sweet, juicy, strawberry, citrus

Grape: white Zinfandel

THE WINE

The creation of this rosé involves a meticulous wine-making process.

Optimal ripeness is key, with grapes carefully selected during lower night temperatures to preserve the natural fruit flavours.

This wine is juicy, with jammy strawberry and citrus flavours.

THE WINERY AND WINEMAKER

The story of E & J Gallo Winery began in 1933, at the end of prohibition, when Ernest and Julio Gallo (two brothers in their early 20s, with family roots in Italy) founded a winery in California with very little except a love of wine and a lot of determination.

From day one, the mission was simple: to produce great-tasting wines for everyday moments, which everyone could enjoy.

Four generations later, with more than 90 years' dedication, experience and knowledge, the Gallo family follows the same philosophy, seeking constant improvement to meet wine-lovers' evolving tastes.

It is one of the largest wine producers in the world and the largest family-owned winery in the United States.



Coldwater Creek wine

by Concha y Toro

Rosé 11.5%, sweet
Valle Central, Chile

Also available:

Chardonnay 12% ABV, medium dry

Pinot Grigio 12% ABV, medium dry

Merlot 12%, light bodied

THE WINES

All four wines are available as a 125ml, 175ml and 250ml glass and, with selected meals, are part of the 'includes a drink' range. See food menu for details.

While draught wine seems like an innovation, it was, in fact, pioneered in the old-world nation of Italy, later gaining traction in the new-world regions of Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

Wetherspoon's pubs have been selling draught wine since 2005.

The quality of draught Coldwater Creek wines, contrary to what many may think, is exactly the same as that from a bottle – fresh every time, served at the perfect temperature.

Serving draught is better for the planet too – with lower carbon emissions (24 times lower) than bottled wine.



THE WINERY AND WINEMAKER

Concha y Toro, which produces Wetherspoon's draught wine, began in 1883 with its founder, Don Melchor, dreaming about creating 'the best wines'.

Today, Concha y Toro is one of the most-admired wine producers in the world.

Its various multiaward-winning wines and brands are enjoyed by consumers around the world, in more than 140 countries.

Coldwater Creek wines hail from Chile's Valle Central wine region, where the iconic Andes Mountains provide a natural barrier, protecting vineyards from the elements.

This unique geography, combined with the warm climate and cooling breezes, creates perfect wine-producing conditions.

The wines are expertly crafted under the experienced eyes of Concha y Toro's principal winemaker, Max Weinlaub, and senior winemaker, Marcelo Gangas, based at the Cono Sur winery, in Chile.

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."

NOW OPEN

Bath

THE OLD POST OFFICE

Pub manager Tyler Baird is pictured at The Old Post Office (Bath).

Wetherspoon spent £2.2 million developing the pub on the site of a former Revolution bar, which was originally Bath's main post office.

On the front of the building housing the new pub (located in a grade II listed Georgian terrace), at no.2 York Buildings, is carved 'The Old Post Office'.

During 1854–1927, these premises housed Bath's main post office, with Oldham T Barlow its postmaster for nearly 30 years (1863–90). Thomas Moore Musgrave was also a long-serving postmaster here.

On 2 May 1840, Thomas famously posted 'an item of mail' from the Bath post office (then at 8 Broad Street) with the newly invented Penny Black postage stamp – this was the world's first adhesive postage stamp's earliest use.

The ground- and first-floor bars, decorated throughout with a heritage colour palette, have traditional rich polished timber bar fronts and granite tops.

Original windows, previously blocked, have been opened up, allowing daylight to flood in.

The bespoke carpet's design incorporates elements of Bath's Georgian architecture, the Roman baths and the story of King Blaudad, including his pigs, creating a rich, bold (yet traditional) design over the two customer floors.

There is also an outside pavement café area (257sq ft) with 10 tables at the front of the building.

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 Tyler said: "We are delighted to have created 100 new jobs in Bath and pleased that the pub has proven a success from its opening day."

2 York Buildings, Bath, Somerset, BA1 2EB



THE ROUND COPPICE

Pub manager Lucy Dempsey is pictured at her new pub – The Round Coppice.

The pub is located in Whiteley shopping centre, Fareham.

Wetherspoon spent £1.3 million developing the pub on the site of a former restaurant.

Built on what was farmland and coppices, Whiteley shopping centre first opened in 2013.

More than 300 trees planted in its open spaces connect it with the copses in the surrounding landscape – which had long been coppiced for timber and firewood.

Sawpit Copse incorporates the once-separate Round Copse, just north of the pub.

To the south are 16 acres of ancient woodland, called Round Coppice, now a site of importance for nature conservation (SINC).

The Round Coppice features a 10-metre-long bar, as well as a beer garden for outside drinking and eating.

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.

Lucy said: “We are delighted that the pub has quickly proven popular with customers.”

Mia Gordon, centre director at Whiteley shopping centre, added: “Wetherspoon is a fantastic addition to Whiteley, with The Round Coppice giving visitors even more choice when it comes to dining and socialising at the centre.”

**Whiteley Shopping Centre, Whiteley, Fareham
Hampshire, PO15 7PD**



OLYMPIC HOPEFUL LEWIS FLIPS FROM BEER MATS TO JUDO MATS

Bar associate Lewis Uttley's judo career is going from strength to strength as he works towards a possible Olympic dream.

Lewis, 20, joined the team at The Square Bottle (Chester) in September 2025.

He regularly represents the GB team in international events, most recently in The Netherlands and Denmark.

He also does well in individual competitions, gaining gold in April in a seniors event in the 2026 Northern Ireland Open.

He said: "This was my best result so far.

"I do go abroad a fair bit – and the team and the management at the pub always do what they can to enable me to go when I need to."

It all started for Lewis when he was 12.

He added: "I was a slightly overweight child, so was looking to do some sport and chose judo."

Lewis joined Wirral Judo Club and was soon recognised for his talent.

He still attends three or four times a week.

He is currently ranked eighth, at his level, in the country.

Lewis concluded: "It would be amazing to get to the Olympics one day."



PUB CRAWL EVOLVES TO PUB ROLL, AS SKATEBOARDER TAKES 275-MILE TRIP

Lawrence Hargrove has been touring the Wetherspoon estate – by skateboard.

In what is believed to be the first journey of its kind, Lawrence covered 275 miles on a route from London to north Wales, where he finished his journey by climbing Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) – the highest mountain in Wales and England.

His journey, designed to raise awareness of mental health issues, started at The Greenwood Hotel (Northolt, London) before he moved on to J.J. Moon's (Ruislip Manor).

He said: "I'm a long-time Wetherspoon customer.

"I've been coming in for breakfast and working from the pubs for years and have had plenty of visits there.

"As a keen boarder, I decided to put the two together."

Via smaller roads and byways, Lawrence moved north to visit pubs in Watford, St Albans, Northampton, Milton Keynes and Birmingham, before heading west to Wales.

"I had been thinking of a way to draw attention to the issues I care about," he added.

The two-week journey saw Lawrence cover up to 30 miles a day.

His aching limbs have been rested in hotels along the way, including at The Briar Rose, Wetherspoon's pub and hotel in Birmingham, where his accommodation was complimentary.

Speaking about why he undertook the venture, Lawrence said: "I lost a friend to suicide and have been looking at mental health issues and those services which exist to help people – very often, people don't know they exist."

● Readers can find out more on: [@Official.Lskin](#)



SPANISH AIRPORT PUBS ARE REALLY TAKING OFF

Wetherspoon is to open two pubs at Josep Tarradellas Barcelona – El Prat Airport.

It follows on from the opening (February 2026) of the company's first pub in Spain at Alicante Airport.

The first of the two pubs is set to open at terminal 1 in October 2026, with the second, in terminal 2, opening during January 2027.

They are both situated after security.

The pubs, as yet unnamed, will have a combined customer area of more than 5,700 square feet (530 square metres), with room for almost 600 customers.

They will be operated by Ibersol Group, one of the largest franchised brand operators in Spanish and Portuguese travel.

The pubs will be open 5am to 11pm, seven days a week.

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

The menu will include many meals available in Wetherspoon's UK pubs, including breakfast dishes, burgers and pizzas, as well as local dishes.

The pubs, serving real ale too, will be partly carpeted, with an individual carpet bespoke at each venue.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said: "We are delighted to have secured two fantastic sites at Barcelona airport.

"In the short time since opening, the Alicante Airport pub has proven popular with travellers – and we are confident we can replicate that at our two new pubs in Barcelona.

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

MERRY VERSION OF MOZART GEM THRILLS CROWDS AT OPERA HOUSE



Opera-lovers once again filled Opera House (Tunbridge Wells) – as the pub hosted two performances of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* ('So do they all').

The performances by the Merry Opera Company sold out at the pub, originally built as an opera house in 1902.

Audiences at the two shows enjoyed a choice of seats from the balcony (without dining) or from boxes or stall seats with preshow dining included in the ticket price.

Pub manager Greg Wilkins said: "We were thrilled to once again welcome the Merry Opera Company to the pub.

"It was the 16th consecutive year that the group has performed.

"Once again, the two performances were outstanding in their quality and creativity, and the audiences thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

Merry Opera's founder, Matthew Quirk, who also sings in the productions, added: "Coming to Opera House each year is a real treat for us.

"Wetherspoon makes a great occasion of it and our cast loves singing there to such an enthusiastic audience."

Past performances at the pub have included *Die Fledermaus*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Mikado*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *La bohème* and *Kiss me, Figaro!*

● **Merry Opera hopes to return in February 2027 to stage Rossini's *Barber of Seville*.**



GLENROTHES

THE BEST PUB IN SCOTLAND – THE GOLDEN ACORN STRIKES GOLD

Pub manager Jonny Stewart and his team at The Golden Acorn (Glenrothes) are celebrating a huge achievement – being voted best pub in Scotland.

At the Best Bar None Scotland national awards, The Golden Acorn was named winner of the best pub/bar 2025.

Jonny (pictured) said: “This was the third time the pub had been nominated – and just getting to the final on three occasions was a big deal.

“We were up against some larger city-centre venues, and I never dreamed we had a chance.

“When our pub was announced, my jaw hit the table!

“It was a big surprise.”

Jonny continued: “It is a massive deal for us to win this.

“A lot of effort goes into making the pub a safe place, for staff and customers, and it is nice to be recognised for that hard work.”

As well as the Wetherspoon training, practices and procedures, the local police force offers additional training in various aspects of safety, including counter terrorism and safe bystander intervention training, as well as administering naloxone (a life-saving medication for drug overdose).

Several members of Jonny’s team have received this additional training, voluntarily, adding to the already-stringent safety procedures at the pub.

Jonny added: “In terms of crime prevention, we have installed extra cameras and monitors and work closely with the local police and members of parliament on safety issues.

“The local police are very supportive, with our community safety and crime reduction officer Emma Fisher helping to put training in place.”

Wetherspoon’s general manager, Helen Dumbreck, who was also at the national awards ceremony in Dunblane, concluded: “Huge congratulations to Jonny and his team for this well-deserved accolade.”



LIFE STILL SWEET FOR PUB VETERAN JENA

Jena Turnbull was a child in the 1980s, hoping to get sweets or a book on a trip to Woolworths in Byker.

She couldn’t have known that she would one day be working at a pub on the same site.

That pub is The High Main (Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne), where shift leader Jena received Champagne and flowers to toast 25 years as a Wetherspoon employee.

In total, Jena, who is 46, has worked at seven of the firm’s pubs in Newcastle.

She says: “I love talking to the customers and still enjoy the job today.”

Her first role with the business was as a bar associate at The Quayside (Newcastle upon Tyne).

She recalls: “It was a really busy pub and gets chock-a-block when the sun shines.”

Among later roles, in 2013, Jena was a pub manager and helped to open The High Main, which is where a former wallpaper store was and, at some point, a Woolworths.

Jena says: “The pub has a good community spirit.”

She went on to work on another opening before returning to The High Main, working fewer hours per week to enjoy family time with her husband and son.

Pub manager Steph Graveson said: “Having someone like Jena, who has that level of experience and knowledge at your fingertips, has been great for helping teams to develop across the area.”



Pictured (left to right) are Wetherspoon’s area manager John Hudson, shift leader Jena Turnbull and pub manager Steph Graveson

THE O2, GREENWICH

THE STARGAZER SHINES BRIGHTLY AT O2 AWARDS

The Stargazer (The O2, Greenwich) has won a 'health and safety excellence' award at The O2 Brand Awards.

The pub, which is popular with concert-goers, is among businesses based in and around The O2 arena.

A spokesperson from The O2 said: "Ahead of our annual Brand Awards, we undertook a comprehensive review of the restaurants, retailers and attractions at The O2, and the team members from The Stargazer truly stood out for their unwavering dedication to creating a stronger and safer workplace for everyone."

"This award recognised J D Wetherspoon's outstanding compliance with our on-site health & safety system, achieving a remarkable 100 per cent compliance rating."

The spokesperson added that the achievement is a 'true testament' to J D Wetherspoon's leadership team and commitment to high standards, ensuring that all visitors and staff members can enjoy their experiences with confidence and care.

Kylee Garwood (pictured), who has been with Wetherspoon for 24 years, 16 of which have been as a pub manager, has managed The Stargazer since September 2024.

Kylee said: "We work very hard to maintain the very high standards which the company has in place regarding health and safety."

"This win was definitely a team effort and gave us all a real buzz."

"It is a massive achievement to get this at The O2."



MOTHERWELL • WISHAW • EAST KILBRIDE • RUTHERGLEN • CAMBUSLANG

LANARKSHIRE FIVE GRAB FISTFUL OF GOLD MEDALS



Area manager Mairi Ramsay is understandably proud of five of her Scottish pub teams, each of which has been recognised for its best practice.

The five Wetherspoon pubs struck gold at the annual Lanarkshire Best Bar None Awards, achieving a coveted gold award for 2025–26.

The golden pubs are The Brandon Works (Motherwell), The Wishaw Malt (Wishaw), The Hay Stook (East Kilbride), An Ruadh-Ghleann (Rutherglen) and The John Fairweather (Cambuslang).

Pictured with their awards (left to right) are pub managers Clare Broadhurst (The Brandon Works), Jude Graham (The Wishaw Malt), Michael Easton (The Hay Stook), Kat Scouller (An Ruadh-Ghleann) and Shannon Beck (The John Fairweather).

Mairi said: "Congratulations to all five pub managers and their teams for achieving a highly coveted gold award."

"Judged independently, these awards underline the hard work which the teams have put in to make our pubs welcoming for customers and safe for customers and staff."

Best Bar None is a national award scheme for licensed premises, championing best practice and safety, backed by the drinks industry in Scotland, as well as Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Scottish Licensed Trade Association.

It is also supported by councils, business improvement districts (BIDs) and the Scottish Government.

Note from the editor: In the last magazine, Tim raised some important points about the future of pubs, by exposing the fact that two-thirds of so-called electricity bills are not for electricity at all – they are ‘non-commodity charges’.

He also exposed, perhaps for the first time, how the 19th-century temperance movement, under a ‘health’ banner, is being used by some national newspapers to make extravagant claims about drinking.

These issues matter to customers, so we continue to make the case in Wetherspoon News.

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

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 Elson, 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.

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 Sevir 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.

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.”



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?”

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 Harm Alliance UK in 2007.^[1] He was knighted in the 2010 Queen’s Birthday Honours.^[2]

In August 2010, Sir Ian said that “making drugs such as heroin and cocaine legal would ‘dramatically’ cut crime and addicts’ health problems” in interviews with both newspapers and the BBC.^{[3][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 2015.^[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.”



Tim says: “Here is famous writer George Orwell’s legendary essay on his imaginary ideal pub – written 33 years before Wetherspoon opened its first pub...”

THE MOON UNDER WATER

66 **My favourite public-house, the Moon Under Water, is only two minutes from a bus stop, but it is on a side-street, and drunks and rowdies never seem to find their way there, even on Saturday nights.**

Its clientele, though fairly large, consists mostly of ‘regulars’ who occupy the same chair every evening and go there for conversation as much as for the beer.

If you are asked why you favour a particular public-house, it would seem natural to put the beer first, but the thing that most appeals to me about the Moon Under Water is what people call its ‘atmosphere’.

To begin with, its whole architecture and fittings are uncompromisingly Victorian. It has no glass-topped tables or other modern miseries, and, on the other hand, no sham roof-beams, ingle-nooks or plastic panels masquerading as oak.

The grained woodwork, the ornamental mirrors behind the bar, the cast-iron fireplaces, the florid ceiling stained dark yellow by tobacco-smoke, the stuffed bull’s head over the mantelpiece — everything has the solid, comfortable ugliness of the nineteenth century.

In winter there is generally a good fire burning in at least two of the bars, and the Victorian lay-out of the place gives one plenty of elbow-room.

There are a public bar, a saloon bar, a ladies’ bar, a bottle-and-jug for those who are too bashful to buy their supper beer publicly, and, upstairs, a dining-room.

Games are only played in the public, so that in the other bars you can walk about without constantly ducking to avoid flying darts.

In the Moon Under Water it is always quiet enough to talk. The house possesses neither a radio nor a piano, and even on Christmas Eve and such occasions the singing that happens is of a decorous kind.

The barmaids know most of their customers by name, and take a personal interest in everyone.

They are all middle-aged women—two of them have their hair dyed in quite surprising shades—and they call everyone ‘dear,’ irrespective of age or sex. (‘Dear,’ not ‘Ducky’: pubs where the barmaid calls you ‘ducky’ always have a disagreeable raffish atmosphere.)

Unlike most pubs, the Moon Under Water sells tobacco as well as cigarettes, and it also sells aspirins and stamps, and is obliging about letting you use the telephone.

You cannot get dinner at the Moon Under Water, but there is always the snack counter where you can get liver-sausage sandwiches, mussels (a speciality of the house), cheese, pickles and those large biscuits with caraway seeds in them which only seem to exist in public-houses.

Upstairs, six days a week, you can get a good, solid lunch—for example, a cut off the joint, two vegetables and boiled jam roll—for about three shillings.

The special pleasure of this lunch is that you can have draught stout with it. I doubt whether as many as 10 per cent of London pubs serve draught stout, but the Moon Under Water is one of them. It is a soft, creamy sort of stout, and it goes better in a pewter pot.

They are particular about their drinking vessels at the Moon Under Water, and never, for example, make the mistake of serving a pint of beer in a handleless glass.

Apart from glass and pewter mugs, they have some of those pleasant strawberry-pink china ones which are now seldom seen in London. China mugs went out about 30 years ago, because most people like their drink to be transparent, but in my opinion beer tastes better out of china.

The great surprise of the Moon Under Water is its garden. You go through a narrow passage leading out of the saloon, and find yourself in a fairly large garden with plane trees, under which there are little green tables with iron chairs round them.

Up at one end of the garden there are swings and a chute for the children. On summer evenings there are family parties, and you sit under the plane trees having beer or draught cider to the tune of delighted squeals from children going down the chute. The prams with the younger children are parked near the gate.

Many as are the virtues of the Moon Under Water, I think that the garden is its best feature, because it allows whole families to go there instead of Mum having to stay at home and mind the baby while Dad goes out alone.

And though, strictly speaking, they are only allowed in the garden, the children tend to seep into the pub and even to fetch drinks for their parents. This, I believe, is against the law, but it is a law that deserves to be broken, for it is the puritanical nonsense of excluding children—and therefore, to some extent, women—from pubs that has turned these places into mere boozing-shops instead of the family gathering-places that they ought to be.

The Moon Under Water is my ideal of what a pub should be—at any rate, in the London area. (The qualities one expects of a country pub are slightly different.)

But now is the time to reveal something which the discerning and disillusioned reader will probably have guessed already. There is no such place as the Moon Under Water.

That is to say, there may well be a pub of that name, but I don’t know of it, nor do I know any pub with just that combination of qualities.

I know pubs where the beer is good but you can’t get meals, others where you can get meals but which are noisy and crowded, and others which are quiet but where the beer is generally sour.

As for gardens, offhand I can only think of three London pubs that possess them.

But, to be fair, I do know of a few pubs that almost come up to the Moon Under Water.

I have mentioned above ten qualities that the perfect pub should have and I know one pub that has eight of them.

Even there, however, there is no draught stout, and no china mugs.

And if anyone knows of a pub that has draught stout, open fires, cheap meals, a garden, motherly barmaids and no radio, I should be glad to hear of it, even though its name were something as prosaic as the Red Lion or the Railway Arms.

By George Orwell

Evening Standard/9 February 1946

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THE ARCHITECTS WHO MAKE DREAMS A REALITY

When it comes to creating fantastic pubs, you gotta have Faith (and Bernard)

When it comes to designing and building great pubs, Wetherspoon has an unrivalled reputation.

From delivering comfortable customer spaces, staff-friendly working environments and award-winning projects to saving numerous locally iconic landmark buildings, Wetherspoon is proud of its achievements.

Among the group of architects making the dreams and ideas a reality are Bernard Lawrence and Faith Beckingham (both pictured) of LBF Architects.

First

Bernard first met Tim Martin in October 1984, with his first project being J.J. Moon's (Markfield Road, Tottenham, London) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), when there were just five Wetherspoon pubs in existence.

Faith joined the team in 1993 – between them, they have created more than 350 new pubs, from new builds to conversions of banks, cinemas and an opera house, as well as working on numerous refurbishment projects.

Among the most memorable, Bernard lists Hamilton Hall (Liverpool Street station, London), which opened in 1991, The Union Rooms (Newcastle) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), in a building which had been empty for 20 years, and The Golden Beam (Headingley).

Faith said: "Because no two projects or buildings are the same, every pub is different, challenging, memorable, exciting and special, although in particular the listed-building projects.

Exciting

"They provide an exciting challenge, co-ordinating the operational practicalities with heritage features and the intertwining of pub aesthetics appropriate to the building itself."

Faith lists The Ledger Building (London Docklands), an old warehouse housing the ledgers to the dock trade, and Walham Green (Fulham), a grade II listed building, where the old ticket booths had to be retained.

She said: "We had the challenge of making these operate as a bar, as well as operating a site just above a very active station."

In terms of how the process works, from start to finish for a new pub, Faith explained: "We have a very defined operational arrangement.

Standards

"Wetherspoon has the operation of its pubs down to a T, with incredibly high standards, so it is important to ensure that any design does not compromise this.

"Thereafter, we are pretty much given carte blanche when it comes to design, which is the major joy of working as an architect with Wetherspoon.

"Of course, we have to be budget aware, but the opportunities for expression of design are wonderful, alongside researching the history of the building and local area to incorporate design features linking to these and the selected name for each venue.

"Understanding true pub values, from a design perspective, yet at the same time being able to push the boundaries, is an enjoyable challenge."

Bernard concluded: "The fact that each property is a challenge, whether it's a glass box beneath a student tower block or a dilapidated listed building, makes it a pleasure to work with Wetherspoon."

ANGEL DELIGHT IS ICING ON THE CAKE FOR SPOON COLLECTOR STEVE

Retired rail worker Steve Manning (pictured right) achieved his ambition of visiting 1,000 Wetherspoon pubs with a visit to The Angel Inn (Wetherby). Steve has been featured in these pages before, when he achieved another milestone in October 2022 – visiting all of the company's pubs ever opened. Since then, he has been adding to his tally, with his trip from London to Wetherby providing the icing on the cake.

His friend Steve Hargreaves (pictured left), who sometimes goes along on the visits, revealed: "Steve is also half way through visiting all of the pubs again!"

London-based Arsenal fan Steve (Manning) has also visited all 92 football league stadia, as well as ticking off conference grounds, along with every horseracing circuit in Britain.

In February this year, the friends enjoyed a trip to the Isle of Man to visit The Conister Arms, which opened in May 2025.

Steve (Hargreaves) added: "All of his friends follow his trips with interest and ask him where he has been and where he is going next."

"He has a lot of fans."



FAB TIMES FOR FIVEWAYS AS PUB-GOERS LEAP BACK IN TIME



Beatlemania returned to The Childwall Fiveways Hotel (Liverpool) as the pub celebrated its 16th anniversary as a Wetherspoon venue.

Staff and customers gathered outside the pub to re-create a famous photo of the Fab Four, with other local artists and friends, including Gerry and Freddie Marsden of Gerry and The Pacemakers.

The photo, taken on 18 June 1963, features John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr leaping off the wall of the pub's car park.

It later became part of the collection of artwork belonging to Brian Epstein, manager of The Beatles.

The pub's connections with The Beatles do not stop there.

Manager Terry Clarke said: "Brian used to live across the road, John lived two streets away and Paul celebrated his 21st birthday here."

The Childwall Fiveways Hotel first opened its doors in 1945 and was bought by Wetherspoon in February 2010.

"We thought that this would be an excellent way to involve staff and customers in celebrating our anniversary," added Terry.



SPANISH SPOON SPURS ALEXANDER TO TAKE FLIGHT

Spurred on by a wave of support from friends and social media, former Wetherspoon employee Alexander Ellis took to the skies to attend the launch of Castell de Santa Bàrbara – Wetherspoon's new pub in Spain's Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernández Airport.

One day, while sitting in The Catherine Wheel (Henley-on-Thames), Alexander read in Wetherspoon News about plans to open the pub in the airport, after security.

"I said on social media that if 100 people wanted me to do it, I would," said Alex, a former bar associate at The King and Castle (Windsor).

The target was exceeded many times over, so Alexander booked a €26 flight and a €32 hotel, before heading off for the official opening.

He met staff and customers and enjoyed a few pints of Spanish Pilsener-style lager Cruzcampo.

He also ordered an all-day breakfast and broken eggs – which he reviewed saying: "The eggs are better here."

Alexander's exploits were covered in The Sun, The Mirror and the Liverpool Echo.

He said: "Everyone at work saw the newspaper stories and thought it was hilarious.

"It was a fun day – and I am pleased that I went."



STAR AUTHOR SERVES UP FICTIONAL PUB REGULAR

Author Thomas Forster works as a shift manager at The Star (Hoddesdon).

Earlier this year, Thomas published *The Old Man* – a collection of eight short stories featuring a solitary pub regular, his thoughts and relationships.

He started writing while studying philosophy and working at The Playhouse (Colchester).

Thomas said: "He's the bloke you see in the pub to whom no one really talks – I just gave him a voice.

"Turns out he's got quite a lot to say; some of it's not so nice, but that's what makes him so relatable."

He added: "Although the character is not based on any particular individual, I think a lot of people will recognise him."

It's Thomas's second book, the first being a semi-fictional treatise on philosophy. Before that, he enjoyed blogging.

He intends to pursue his twin careers and is studying for a qualification which will allow him to become a Wetherspoon pub manager.

"Shift work helps with the writing – it gives me plenty of time to write, and my manager and the team here are always supportive of what I do," said Thomas.

Pub manager Costa Evangelides said: "This fantastic personal accomplishment reflects very positively on both Thomas and our wider company culture.

"I am extremely proud of his success and the dedication he has shown in pursuing this alongside his professional role.

"I believe that his story will be inspiring and engaging for our readers, and highlights the diverse talents and achievements within our team.

"The book is a really good read – especially if you visit pubs or work in hospitality."

● **The Old Man is available on Amazon at £7.99 and on Kindle for £2.99. It can be found here: amazon.co.uk/dp/BoGH1HCCN1**





MILLIONS SPENT TO RELAUNCH THE WHALEBONE AS BIG BEAST OF THE EAST

Historic pub has been a fixture of Downham Market, in Norfolk, since the 1740s

Wetherspoon spent £2.5 million developing The Whalebone (Downham Market) in a long-standing two-storey grade II listed property, on the site of the former White Hart public house.

The Whalebone, which opened in March 2018, reinstated the pub's original name, which reflects the whaling trade which had flourished in the area at the time.

Originally two buildings, combined in the 1980s, the taller of the two, on the left-hand side, was originally a private residence built in the early 18th century.

It was owned by Philip Winearls and tenanted by Charles Mumford, his wife Louisa (née Woolnough) and, in 1841, their four small children, their young governess Fanny Allcock and two live-in girl servants, Lydia and Sally Banham.

The Mumford sisters later ran a school for young gentlemen (1863–72) at Dial House, which later moved to the Hollies.

The adjoining premises is the original pub, trading since the 1700s.

It was originally called The Whalebone, with its sign hanging from a whale's jawbone, from as early as the 1740s until the early 1800s, when the name was changed to The White Hart.

Port

At that time, nearby King's Lynn was a flourishing whaling port, with ships fishing the waters around Greenland.

The port's famous Greenland Fishery public house was frequented by 'whalers'.

Perhaps, this is how The Whalebone got its name or possibly from a whalebone brought back as a souvenir.

Whales' bones were used in ship-making and, on a smaller scale, in brush handles and cutlery.

In the mid 1700s, when the bounty on whale oil was doubled to 40 shillings per ton, it made whaling a financially attractive undertaking (although whaling is recorded as early as 1626).

Whaling ships were often converted merchant ships, often capable of carrying cargo of 250–400 tons.

Nine ships are believed to have sailed from King's Lynn to Greenland and the Davis Strait during 1774–1821.

By the mid 19th century, there was no longer such high demand for whale oil. Paraffin and coal gas were already lighting streets and houses and, in 1859, oil was discovered in Pennsylvania.

This, along with the declining numbers of whales (through overfishing) and the abolition in 1820, signalled the end of the whaling industry.

A late 19th-century sketch of the premises shows a whalebone placed upright against the front wall of the public house.

In July 1808, The White Hart was 'offered for sale'. Isaac Bell had 'been at the premises for 17 years' and wanted to retire.

Brew-house

The pub had a 'brew-house, hayloft, dove house, stabling for 12 horses, outbuildings and a well-planted garden'.

The sale particulars also stated that the premises has 'been occupied as such with full trade upwards of 60 years' (since c1748). During these years, the inn at Downham Market was called The Whalebone.

Downham Market is on the edge of The Fens, in west Norfolk, a vast flat plain reclaimed from the sea.

It gets its name from the Anglo-Saxon words 'dun' (hill) and 'ham' (settlement), meaning 'settlement on a hill'.

The Domesday Book of 1086 refers to Duneham and Dunham. Later spellings include Dounham, Downham and Downham Market.



From Anglo-Saxon times until the 19th century, it was part of the administrative area known as the Hundred of Clackclose.

The Clackclose Hundred was centred on Downham Market and included 34 nearby villages.

The Whalebone pub features one bar and a large garden with a courtyard accessed through a traditional cart access at the front of the building, as well as a turfed garden at the rear.

The cellar is in a separate stone-and-brick building, with a feature viewing window, showing the ales.

The original front interior has lime-washed walls and traditional panelling, with some traditional timber floors retained, and an eclectic mix of furniture enhancing the design, with subtle references to Downham Market's history.

Oil

There are whalebone replicas on display throughout the pub, together with an early (c1795) whale-oil lamp.

Historical photos and details of local history, as well as artwork and images of local scenes and characters of the area, are displayed in the pub, together with information boards relating to events.

Members of the Downham Market & District Heritage Society and Lynn Museum provided guidance, suggestions and images which helped to form the basis of the local history artwork displayed.

One such display explains that the unique landscape of The Fens has, over the centuries, provided inspiration for many writers, with information and photos relating to Charles Kingsley and Antony Trollope. Photographs and text about 2018 Squadron and RAF Downham Market are also on show.

Some of the text reads: 'No. 218 Squadron was formed on 24 April 1918 and, during five months of operations, made 117 raids on enemy targets in Belgium and France.'

'Disbanded in 1919, the Squadron was reformed in 1936. It was based at nearby Marham from November 1940 until July 1942, when it became the first and longest-serving Squadron at Downham Market, remaining here until March 1944.'

A print and text about George William Manby is also among the collection, describing him as 'the local man whose inventions saved thousands of lives'.

The text reads: 'Manby invented the apparatus for throwing a line to stranded ships by means of a gun. He also built an 'unsinkable' ship, the first portable pressurised fire extinguisher and a device to save people who had fallen through ice.'

'He was the first to advocate a national fire brigade and is considered by some to be a true founder of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.'

Commissioned artwork includes Field and Fen, by local sculptor Christine Pike, who lives in Downham Market, and The Whaling Grounds, by printmaker and textile artist Caroline Hack, from nearby Thetford.

● 58-64 Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk, PE38 9DJ

NEW LOOK

Wallasey

THE CLAIRVILLE

Pub manager John Gilfoyle is pictured in the new beer garden at The Clairville (Wallasey).

The pub's car park has been redeveloped to create 750sq ft of outside customer space, with seats for 64 customers.

The new-look fully paved garden features a brickwork perimeter with railings, a new timber pergola, festoon lighting and new furniture throughout.

Inside the pub, improvements have also been made to the bar, with upgraded drinks-dispense equipment and glass racks installed, as well as new timber panelling and decoration added to the bar area.

John said: "The Clairville is an extremely popular community pub.

"We aim to offer customers the best-possible pub – and the brand-new beer garden is a great addition."

48 Wallasey Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 4NW



Kingston upon Thames

THE KINGS TUN

A new 1,500-square-foot beer garden has opened at The Kings Tun (Kingston upon Thames).

It has seating for 120 customers.

Food and drinks can be ordered via the app.

Pub manager Danielle Stephen said: "Customers are delighted that we have added a beer garden for their enjoyment."

153-157 Clarence Street, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1QT



Great Malvern

THE FOLEY ARMS HOTEL

The Foley Arms Hotel (Great Malvern) has undergone a full external repair, refurbishment and redecoration project, at a cost of £600,000.

The pub and hotel, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in December 2010 and are housed in a landmark, listed Georgian-style coaching inn building, remained opened during all work.

As well as a full external refurbishment and sympathetic redecoration (matching the building's original colours), the rear roof terrace has also been replaced.

Newly fabricated and installed railings have been added, along with new external lighting.

The sash windows have been repaired and redecorated, while the historic coat of arms, displayed at the front of the pub, has also been refurbished.

The Morgan Bar, a downstairs function room in the pub, has also undergone redecoration, with upgraded TV and speakers installed.

Named after the local Morgan Motor Company, Morgan Bar is available for function bookings.

Replacement flags for the front of the pub and new planting have also taken place.

Located at the foot of the Malvern Hills, the hotel is perfect accommodation for walkers and visitors to the area.

Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, said that several of the hotel's rooms have "probably the best view in Wetherspoon", across the River Severn plain.

The pub's manager, Lee Cartwright (pictured), said: "The investment in repairs and refurbishment highlights Wetherspoon's commitment to the pub and hotel, as well as to its staff and customers.

"This substantial and essential work will also help to maintain the continual upkeep of this important and historic landmark building."

14 Worcester Road, Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4QS



TRIP THE LITE FANTASTIC

Lite bite menu highlights meals without an excessive Calorie-count

There is something on the Wetherspoon menu for everyone, whether breakfast, lunch or dinner, as well as snacks and sharing dishes.

The 'lite bite' menu offers a selection of lite-bite meals from the main menu, with new and new lower-price dishes.

Showcasing great-value, filling, 'square' meals, the lite-bite range highlights meals without an excessive Calorie-count, to fit into a well-balanced diet.

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

Korean

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

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

Also on the 'lite bite' menu being offered at a lower price and with a soft or alcoholic drink as part of each meal's cost (and weighing in at under 500 Calories) are grilled chicken breast & maple-cured bacon salad

bacon salad (384 kcal), sliced chicken breast wrap (485 kcal) and Quorn™ nugget wrap (490 kcal).

Vegetarian

Other lite-bite dishes are jacket potato and tuna mayo with side salad (594 kcal), katsu grilled chicken curry (542 kcal) and vegetarian bangers and mash (598 kcal).

Chilli bean non-carne (629 kcal), the classic beef burger with side salad (651 kcal), the ramen noodle bowl with chicken breast (664 kcal), pasta alfredo with chicken breast (706 kcal) and sticky Korean fried chicken bowl with coconut-flavour rice (866 kcal) complete the menu range.

Wetherspoon's breakfasts, served until 12 noon, also offer a selection of breakfast meals under 500 Calories, including fresh fruit and yoghurt (apple, banana, blueberries, strawberries, with Greek-style honey yoghurt) (320 kcal), porridge with banana (363 kcal) and small breakfast (fried egg, bacon, Lincolnshire sausage, baked beans and a hash brown) (435 kcal).

Unlimited

All breakfast choices include unlimited free refills on tea and coffee.

For more meal options, on any meal with chips, you can swap them for a side salad (111 kcal), spicy rice (203 kcal), Mediterranean side salad (214 kcal), Maris Piper mash (280 kcal) or a jacket potato (282 kcal).



Grilled chicken breast & maple-cured bacon salad



Jacket potato and tuna mayo with side salad



Katsu grilled chicken curry



Ramen noodle bowl

THE LITE BITE

For more options, on any meal with chips, you can swap them for: Side salad 🥗 (111 kcal); Spicy rice 🌶️ 🥗 (203 kcal); Mediterranean side salad 🥗 (214 kcal); Maris Piper mash 🍷 (280 kcal); Jacket potato 🍷 (282 kcal)
Swapping items may result in changes to allergens contained in the dish.

A selection of lite-bite meals from the food menu.

NEW Chicken and Tenderstem® broccoli 🍷 5% 596 kcal

Chicken breast, Maris Piper mash, Tenderstem® broccoli, peas, gravy

NEW Chicken pomodoro 🌶️ 5% UNDER 500 470 kcal

Chicken breast, Italian tomato sauce, roasted pepper, courgette, red onion, spicy rice, Tenderstem® broccoli, fresh basil

BBQ chicken melt with side salad 642 kcal

Chicken breast, Cheddar cheese, bacon, BBQ sauce, peas, mushroom

Grilled chicken breast burger with side salad 🍷 5% 502 kcal

Sticky Korean grilled chicken bowl with coconut-flavour rice 🌶️ 🍷 5% 641 kcal

Sliced chicken breast, tossed in a Korean-style sauce, sliced chilli, coriander

Chicken & maple-cured bacon salad UNDER 500 477 kcal

Cold chicken breast wrap 🌶️ 🍷 5% 512 kcal

Quorn™ nugget wrap 🌶️ 🥗 535 kcal

Jacket potato and tuna mayo 634 kcal

Katsu grilled chicken curry 🌶️ 🍷 5% 558 kcal

Simple sweet potato, chickpea & spinach curry with basmati pilau rice 🌶️ 🥗 🍷 5% 552 kcal

Vegetarian bangers and mash 🍷 598 kcal

Chilli bean non-carne 🌶️ 🥗 🍷 5% 644 kcal

The classic beef burger with side salad 652 kcal

Ramen noodle bowl, with chicken breast 🌶️ 🍷 5% 664 kcal

Pasta alfredo, with chicken breast 🍷 5% 679 kcal

British beef & pancetta lasagne with side salad 815 kcal

Sticky Korean fried chicken bowl with coconut-flavour rice 🌶️ 883 kcal

BREAKFAST | Served until 12 noon

A selection of breakfast meals under 500 Calories, more choices available; see food menu for details.

Smashed avocado muffin 🥗 5% UNDER 500 302 kcal. Guacamole, pico de gallo, on an English muffin, rocket
Includes tea, coffee (free refills[†]), hot chocolate or a soft drink.

Fresh fruit and yoghurt 🍷 5% UNDER 500 320 kcal

Apple, banana, blueberries, strawberries, Greek-style honey yoghurt

Porridge, creamy jumbo oats, with banana 🍷 5% UNDER 500 298 kcal

Small breakfast UNDER 500 435 kcal. Fried egg, bacon, Lincolnshire sausage, baked beans, hash brown

Adults need around 2000 kcal a day.[†]

Specifications may change periodically, and Calories and other nutritional values stated (which exclude drinks options) are subject to change.

for the facts
drinkaware.co.uk jdwetherspoon.com

wetherspoon

LOTS OF TWISTS IN STORE, WITH COCKTAILS OF THE UNEXPECTED

Customers 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 Tommy's Margarita, Strawberry Daiquiri and Espresso Martini.

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 originally 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[^].

Cocktail pitchers are also being served, made to share, with a mix-and-match 'any 2 for' deal[^].

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.



Long Island Iced Tea; Tommy's Margarita
Strawberry Daiquiri; Piña Colada; Espresso Martini

Spritz cocktails

There are now six spritz cocktails in the Wetherspoon range, including NEW Strawberry Spritz, which joins Mango & Passionfruit Spritz, Hugo Spritz, Limoncello Spritz, Classic Aperol 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



Mango & Passionfruit Spritz; Hugo Spritz; Limoncello Spritz; Strawberry Spritz; Classic Aperol Spritz; Peach Blush Spritz

[^]Participating pubs only.

Spritz cocktails



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

NEW

TiNTO DE VERANO

Coldwater Creek merlot wine (125ml),
lemonade. With lemon and orange



A celebration of new
and forthcoming
Wetherspoon pubs
in Spain



GOOD FOR THE PLANET; GOOD FOR YOUR PINT

How the pub and hospitality industry is cleaning up its act - and why it matters for us all

Here's something which might surprise you. The biggest reason why pubs, restaurants and breweries across the UK are cutting their carbon emissions isn't ideology... it's good old-fashioned common sense.

Running a leaner, greener business means lower energy bills, less waste and fewer nasty surprises when storms or heatwaves ruin the barley crop.

It turns out that doing the right thing also helps the bottom line – and that's good news for the future of the great British pint.

Why it matters for all of us

Climate change isn't an abstract worry. It's already affecting the price and availability of everyday ingredients.

Extreme weather increasingly hits staples, such as tomato harvests, olive oil supplies and, importantly, hops and barley – the two ingredients at the heart of your favourite beers.

When harvests fail or become unpredictable, costs go up and quality suffers.

That's a problem for every pub and every customer who walks through the door.

The good news? Alongside many others in the brewing and hospitality sector, Wetherspoon has been quietly getting on with it.

Progress worth raising a glass to

Over the past five years, the UK's brewing and hospitality industry has made genuinely impressive strides.

The Zero Carbon Forum, a collaboration of more than 70 operators, including Wetherspoon, has been at the heart of this effort, helping businesses to share knowledge, cut costs and reduce emissions.

The headline numbers are striking.

Electricity-related emissions have been cut by 52%, with gas emissions down 22%.

That's 825,000 tonnes of CO₂ saved every year across the members of the collaboration, the equivalent of taking hundreds of thousands of petrol and diesel cars off the road.

Along the way, pubs and restaurants have collectively recovered more than £5 million in energy savings.

What Wetherspoon is doing

Wetherspoon has been a member of the Zero Carbon Forum from the start, and the business has committed itself to science-based emissions targets – the gold standard of climate commitments.

Across the estate, every pub has an energy and recycling champion, whose role is to encourage smarter use of equipment and technologies like heat-recovery systems, together with better habits around closing time.

LED lighting with motion sensors uses around half the energy of traditional bulbs. Smart meters track consumption in real time, flagging wasteful patterns early.

The food on your plate

Energy is only part of the picture.

The food and drinks served in pubs and restaurants accounts for more than half of the hospitality sector's total carbon footprint... and it's also where the sector is most exposed to climate risk.

The industry has been working hard to understand and improve this, working with farmers and suppliers, looking at where food comes from.

It isn't glamorous, but it is important.

Understanding what's in the supply chain and making it more resilient are how the sector protects the quality and availability of everything – from a bag of crisps to a family meal.

The bigger picture

None of this is about politics. It's about ensuring that pubs thrive for decades to come, where the lights stay on, the supply chain holds up and the food and beers stay delicious.

Customers and staff increasingly want to spend time with, and work for, businesses whose values they can respect – and a more efficient pub is a more sustainable pub, in every sense.

The work is far from finished, yet the progress is real.

The hospitality sector is proving that being smarter about energy and resources isn't a sacrifice... it's smart business.

So, next time you're coming in for a cold one, you can feel quietly good about the fact that we're all working hard to ensure that there are many more rounds to come.

Cheers to that.

ARBROATH

CAMRA GIVES BIG PRIZE TO THE CORN EXCHANGE



The Corn Exchange (Arbroath) has been named as 'county pub of the year Angus' for 2026.

Members of the Tayside branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) voted the Wetherspoon pub as winner, based on the CAMRA national beer scoring system votes and CAMRA (Scottish branches) 'pub of the year' judging criteria.

They took account of the quality and condition of the real ale and cider served, the promotion and knowledge of real ale shown by staff and sympathy with CAMRA's aims, as well as the pub's cleanliness, décor and community focus, together with the service and welcome.

The Corn Exchange, run by pub manager Richard Airey since February 2015, last won the title two years ago and has been included in CAMRA's publication The Good Beer Guide for the past 23 consecutive years, up to and including its 2026 edition.

Richard said: "We are delighted to be named 'county pub of the year Angus' again this year, adding to our 2024 award, and thank the Tayside CAMRA branch members for their continued support."

Richard is pictured (left) behind the bar with shift managers Stephen Brown and Lauren Robb.

Also pictured at the special awards evening, part of the branch meeting at the pub, are (in front of the bar, left to right) Tayside CAMRA branch members James McMillan, Martin Fox (treasurer), Bill Hoy (branch secretary and vice chair) and Willie Tanner.

Martin Fox, branch treasurer and magazine editor (Hooked on Ale), Tayside CAMRA, said: "The Corn Exchange is a deserving recipient of Tayside CAMRA's Angus 'pub of the year' for 2026.

"It has been a constant entry in The Good Beer Guide for more than 20 years.

"Living in Arbroath, I certainly appreciate the ever-changing range of guest ales from all over the UK, with each visit offering something different to try.

"The cask ales are always served in excellent condition and The Corn Exchange's staff are friendly, welcoming and supportive of the local CAMRA branch."

BRISTOL

APPRENTICE ABIGAIL FLIES HIGH AT NATIONAL AWARDS



Shift manager Abigail Mardani made it as a finalist in the hospitality apprentice of the year category in an awards ceremony which toasts workers who go above and beyond.

Abigail, who is 22, has worked at The Commercial Rooms (Bristol) for four years, starting initially as a bar associate.

She has undertaken an apprenticeship programme since 2024, delivered by Lifetime Training, an external company with which Wetherspoon partners to offer apprenticeships for pub-based employees.

The apprenticeships are development programmes taking place in both the workplace and remotely, all while the staff members do their day-to-day role.

There were more than 500 nominations from employers to put their staff forward to be recognised in the annual Lifetime Learning Awards.

The event took place in Birmingham, and Abigail made the final-five shortlist in her category.

She was praised for demonstrating resilience and professional excellence.

Abigail said: "Stepping into this apprenticeship was a complete departure from anything I've done before, and I am so proud of how far I've come."

She added: "Being nominated was a huge surprise, and I'm incredibly grateful to the mentors and team mates who have supported me along the way."

Deputy pub manager Steph Thorndyke said: "We are all proud of Abigail and her nomination for apprentice of the year.

"She is a truly deserving candidate and a credit to the team at The Commercial Rooms.

"She has a strong willingness to learn, takes initiative and often deals with responsibilities beyond her level of experience.

"She showed growth and progression within her job role, while working alongside the apprenticeship."



NEW

NEW

Chicken pomodoro; BBQ chicken melt; Chicken and Tenderstem® broccoli

THE CHICKEN HAS LANDED

Two healthy new choices deliver lashings of veg too

Chicken is the nation's favourite meat, by far, making up more than 40 per cent of the meat we eat in Britain.

Wetherspoon's chicken dishes continue to be ever popular, with a great choice of chicken meals available.

Greater

Two new chicken dishes have now been added to the menu, to make that choice even greater.

NEW chicken and Tenderstem® broccoli (596 kcal, 46g protein) comprises chicken breast, Maris Piper mash, Tenderstem® broccoli, peas and gravy.

A hearty and healthy meat-and-two-veg meal, this is available with a drink (soft or alcoholic) as part of the price – and discounted further as part of the Wetherspoon afternoon deal.

Pomodoro

Weighing in at under 500 Calories, another healthy, yet substantial, option is the NEW chicken pomodoro (470 kcal, 44g protein).

The dish includes chicken breast, Italian tomato sauce, roasted pepper, courgette, red onion, spicy rice, Tenderstem® broccoli and fresh basil.

This new addition includes a drink (soft or alcoholic) in its meal price and is also available as part of the afternoon deal.

Already on the chicken menu and a hugely popular dish with customers is BBQ chicken melt.

The dish, which comes with chicken breast, Cheddar cheese, bacon, BBQ sauce, peas, mushroom and chips, also includes a drink (soft or alcoholic), with more than 150 to choose from, and is also part of the discounted afternoon deal.

Afternoon deal

Customers at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK can enjoy weekly club deals and greater value-for-money meals and drinks.

The afternoon deal promotion is available Mon – Fri, 2pm – 5pm.

The deal offers great-value pub classic meals and small pub classics at a lower price, with a drink (soft or alcoholic) also included in the price of each meal.

Among the dishes in the deal are freshly battered fish and chips, Whitby breaded scampi, Wiltshire cured ham, eggs and chips, all-day brunch and vegetarian all-day brunch (all available as small pub classics also – a smaller portion), as well as bangers and mash and chilli bean non-carne, among others.

● See menu for full selection of pub classics and small pub classics.

THE JACK FAIRMAN • HORLEY

PRESENTS PILE UP AS KITCHEN KING ED CELEBRATES 20 YEARS



Kitchen manager Ed Isaac is pictured (left) with area manager Anthony Jobe marking a celebration at The Jack Fairman (Horley).

With a certificate, cake and bottle of wine, Ed was awarded for two decades as a Wetherspoon employee.

He recalls what has remained the same since 2006 and what looks drastically different for him.

Ed, who is 38 and grew up in Redhill, says: "Trends I have observed which were popular then and are still firm customer favourites now are fish and chips and Curry Club®."

But what is different for Ed is the pub and job: "I have worked at several pubs in various roles."

The then 18-year-old started his career at Wetherspoon as a part-time bar associate at The Sun (Redhill) while studying.

Part way through a mechanical engineering degree, he decided that that was not an industry he wanted to pursue, so he left and took on full-time work at Wetherspoon.

He has worked at seven of the company's pubs, including The Ounce & Ivy Bush (East Grinstead), where he moved from front-of-house work to become a kitchen manager in 2011.

Ed said: "It was exciting to have the opportunity to have a department which I could really get involved in helping to shape."

"I enjoyed cooking as a child and love working as part of a team in a fun environment."

Ed's favourite thing to make in The Jack Fairman's kitchen, which he has been responsible for since late 2025, is pizza.

Commenting on his employer, Ed says: "It is a company which appeals to many people, as it offers flexible working and is full of people who are fun and great to be around."

Anthony said: "I have worked with Ed for seven years now, and he has run multiple kitchens in my area. His wealth of experience and service is a welcome asset."

BEER UMPIRES LEARN LAWS OF ALE-JUDGING AT TRENT BRIDGE SESSION



Trent Bridge Inn (Nottingham) welcomed a mixture of ale enthusiasts, CAMRA members and some Wetherspoon team members for a beer-judging training course.

Customers who bought tickets for the training, led by Christine Cryne, a master trainer and international beer judge, assessed 13 beers.

The training is to improve judging ability, particularly for CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain competition.

Among the beers sampled were Redemption Yard Work, Hogs Back Juliet and Adnams Old Ale.

Two rounds of practice used draught beer, with the final round being judging the champion bottled beer of Wales 4.4% ABV and above. The winner of the Wales competition was Conwy Telford Porter.

Christine said: "The aim of the training is for people to understand what influences beer-judging, from the organisation of a judging event to the judges themselves.

"One key aspect is the difference between subjectivity and objectivity – and everyone's palate is different.

"For example, if a judge doesn't rate a beer, is it because that judge just does not like that beer or is it a bad beer? Regardless of the serious side of the training, we always aim to make it fun."

Pub manager Philippa McFadden, whose favourite product of the day was Oakham Citra, said: "The course broadened my knowledge and understanding of what makes a good beer."

Philippa added that there was a 'fun element' to the day and that tables were mixed, saying: "There was such an array of experts to learn from."

TEARS ON THE TYNE AS STUDENTS TAKE WING AT THE FIVE SWANS

A beer-tasting event was enjoyed at The Five Swans (Newcastle), where among the drinks sampled was one from a local student-run microbrewery.

CAMRA branch chairman Paul Hillhouse and committee member Jan Anderson guided a tasting of nine ales, discussing the history of the beers, the hops used in them and their styles.

In addition, team members from Stu Brew, a microbrewery managed by students at Newcastle University, made a guest appearance to share insights about the beer called Exam Room Tears.

Shift manager at The Five Swans Adam Bettinson said: "The event went really well – and there was a great reception from those customers involved. We are looking forward to the next ale event."



SMART STUDENT WANGLES A WAY TO STUDY SPOONS

Geography undergraduate Josh Griffiths spent months visiting Wetherspoon pubs, all in the name of research.

As part of his student dissertation at the University of Leeds, Josh, 21, looked at the large variety of people coming through the doors, what they buy and drink and how popular deals are.

Josh said: "I wanted to explore how Wetherspoon acts as a third space for so many people.

"It feels like a social melting pot, so I wanted to see, more in depth, how customers use the pub, whether that is working on a laptop with coffee or having pints with friends.

"At a time when many pubs are closing, I was interested to see why Wetherspoon is expanding and performing well."

Josh, from Bromley in southeast London, submitted his dissertation, with analysis of what he observed at four pubs: Beckett's Bank (Leeds), The Golden Beam (Headingley, Leeds), The Crosse Keys (City of London) and The Sovereign of the Seas (Bromley).

Josh, who has now graduated, said: "I spend a lot of time in Wetherspoon, including usually meeting friends there every Saturday morning for breakfast, before going to watch the football.

"I also spent time working in Wetherspoon (at The Golden Beam), since it was closer to my house than the university library.

"I was really interested to outline what makes Wetherspoon appeal to what seems like a big and varied customer base, and to use data and GIS mapping to explore where new venues could potentially open."



ORLAGH SWAPS BISHOP FOR THE BBC TO DIG FOR BRITAIN

Keen watchers of the BBC's popular archaeology show Digging for Britain may have spotted shift leader Orlagh Carlin, who works at The Bishop Vesey (Sutton Coldfield).

Orlagh, 22, has a first-class degree in archaeology from Durham University, where she met honorary fellow Gary Bankhead, who leads dives in the River Wear, looking for artefacts and historical finds.

"Gary has been on the show and thought that I could appear on it as well, as we share an interest in maritime archaeology," said Orlagh, who began working at The Bishop Vesey aged 16.

In the BBC Two show, Orlagh helps to uncover unprecedented Roman whetstone assemblage and possible industry, essential in the making of weapons and sharpening tools.

She added: "I've been interested in history from a young age. It was very exciting to learn that I'd be on the show and I really enjoyed the dig."

Looking forward, though, Orlagh's interests lie less in getting her hands dirty on digs and more in research which can be used to shape environmental and energy policies.

Pub manager Jess Griffiths said:

"We are all so proud of Orlagh and so are the regular customers.

"She stayed with the company while doing her degree (working at The Bishops' Mill (Durham) and The Bishop Vesey) and I am delighted that she is featuring in Wetherspoon News."



Pictured (left to right) are Orlagh Carlin and Digging for Britain's presenter Dr Tori Herridge

PLAYWRIGHT BRINGS ICE, PEAS AND PANIC!! TO REGAL IN GLOUCESTER



A play has been written set in a fictional Wetherspoon pub called The Sir Lance A. Boyle.

The comedy play called Ice, Peas and Panic!! is by customer Gordon King – a regular at The Regal (Gloucester).

Describing it, he says: “It is a celebration of everything that makes the pub chain iconic: the mix of students and regulars; the affordable pints; the frantic dash to clear tables; characters behind the bar.”

In one scene in the four-act play, chaos is caused by a student trying to order a single pea from the Wetherspoon app.

In another, a barman tries to make a Flaming Lamborghini cocktail out of vinegar.

Gordon added: “I have written songs and other plays, producing audiovisual plays about the characters I have met and all the things which can happen in a Wetherspoon pub.”

Gordon, a care services manager and former amateur comedian, is inspired by such legends as John Cleese and Spike Milligan.

He says: “The Regal’s customers and staff love the play.”

● **Gordon’s YouTube channel can be found:**
@The-Wireless-Theatre

THE CRICKETERS HIT FOR SIX BY WOODFORDE ALES

The Cricketers (Ipswich) teamed up with a local brewery for a special tap-takeover and meet-the-brewer event.

The pub, managed by Katy Ash, hosted the week-long real-ale event, along with Norwich-based Woodforde’s Brewery.

The six ales from the brewery being showcased were Bure Gold (4.0% ABV), Nelson’s (4.5% ABV), Nog (4.6% ABV), Tap and Go (4.0% ABV) and Volt (4.2% ABV), together with Wherry (3.8% ABV).

The meet-the-brewer events, on two evenings throughout the week, saw Woodforde’s Brewery’s sales development manager Thomas Gallally chatting to customers and answering questions about the brewery and its ales.

There were also prizes donated by the brewery up for grabs, via a ticket issued for every pint of Woodforde’s Brewery ale purchased.

Event organiser and shift manager André Eluecque said: “This tap-takeover and meet-the-brewer event was a fantastic opportunity for real-ale fans and all customers to enjoy some very local ales. It also helped us to support a great local brewery.”

André and Thomas are pictured (left to right) behind the bar at the meet-the-brewer evening.



SARAH BRINGS STARR INTO MOON'S ORBIT



Children's author Sarah Lipman did a reading from her new book at The Moon Under Water (Norbury).

A regular at the pub for seven years, London-based writer Sarah (pictured front) read the introduction of *Sophia Starr and a Dog to Love*.

The tale, aimed at six- to 10-year-olds (available on Amazon), is about a little girl who desperately wants to own a pet dog.

She has to prove to her parents (during a year) that she is responsible enough, encountering friendship, humour and a touch of mystery along the way.

Sarah said: "It was lovely to present the book to local children in my regular haunt and see them engage with Sophia Starr and the dog characters."

Sarah, who has been touring the book around local schools and fairs, often takes her two children for dinner at the pub, with her husband and her mother, and curry is a family favourite.

Pub manager Jennifer Bray (pictured centre back) said: "Sarah's story was a hit. The kids seemed to really enjoy it."

"We hosted the fun-day during a half term, with colouring-in competitions, arts and crafts and scavenger hunts taking place inside the pub."

It was the first time the pub had hosted this event – and it plans to do more during school holidays, including in the beer garden, where there is plenty of space.

Jennifer said: "It is a way to give parents a bit of a break and a chance to eat and drink while the children are entertained free."

● Follow Sarah Lipman on Instagram: [@storiesbysarahlipman](https://www.instagram.com/storiesbysarahlipman)

SWEET HARMONY BAKED IN

Shift leader Angel Horner made Wetherspoon cupcakes to reward new staff at The Angel Inn (Wetherby).

Angel saw the effort put in by staff and baked some delicious sweet treats to reward them.

Angel herself joined The Angel Inn from The Winter Seam (Castleford).

She said: "Some of them hadn't worked for Wetherspoon before, so it was great to see how they all took to it."

"They all did brilliantly. All cakes were gone within the day, so I think it's safe to say that they enjoyed them."





Pub manager Andrew Daish (left) and shift leader Michael Smyth

LOVE OF ALE BRINGS ROBERT THE BRUCE AN 11TH CAMRA LISTING

Manager Andrew and shift leader Michael kept on the hop by real-ale and craft beer devotees in Dumfries

Wetherspoon 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 (CAMRA) – 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.

Excellent

In this regular feature, we highlight those pubs and staff who serve an excellent range of real ales from brewers across the UK.

Robert the Bruce (Dumfries), which first opened as a Wetherspoon pub in September 2000, has been listed in the guide for 11 of the past 12 years, including in the 2026 edition.

Pub manager Andrew Daish has worked for Wetherspoon for 11 years, taking over in June 2024 as pub manager at Robert the Bruce.

He said: “We have a really good following for real ale, as well as the craft beer now, with lots of regular real-ale-drinking customers, some of whom are CAMRA members.”

Andrew first started working at the pub in 2015, joining as a shift leader, having previously worked as a night supervisor in a local off-licence.

He recalled: “I had a good rapport with the, then, pub manager, Bev Pearson, who used to be a customer and encouraged me to apply for a job at Robert the Bruce.

“I worked my way up, was kitchen manager for a while and already the pub’s number-two, when the pub manager’s position came up.

Lucky

“I thought that I would go for it – and was lucky enough to get the role.”

Andrew is assisted in all things real ale and craft beer by shift leader Michael Smyth.

Andrew reported: “Michael has done a great job on the craft cans, with a display and talking to customers.

“He knows his stuff and is very engaged in the beer side of the business.

“We all do our bit though... it is a huge part of the business for us.”

The pub serves three permanent ales, Belhaven 80/-, Sharp’s Doom Bar and Greene King Abbot Ale, as well as six ever-changing guest ales.

Among the breweries supplying guest ales to the pub are Scottish producers Loch Lomond Brewery, Sulwath Brewers and Broughton Ales, Cumbria-based Hawkshead Brewery and Hadrian Border Brewery, in Newcastle upon Tyne.

National

Andrew continued: “We tend to rotate the guest ales among four or five breweries, as well as serving beers from the national listing.

“Our real-ale customers tend to prefer the stronger, higher-percentage ales, generally anything over 5.0% ABV.

“Loch Lomond’s Lost in Mosaic (5.0% ABV) is a particular favourite.”

Andrew added: “We don’t tend to hold tap takeovers, but always have a good selection of style varieties from regional and Scottish breweries, as well as from the national listing.

“The regular customers sometimes request particular ales, and we always listen to their suggestions, as well as showing them the quarterly national listing.

“They are always happy to try something new and, when they see something on the bar which they have requested, it inspires loyalty and a good relationship.”

What The Good Beer Guide 2026 says:

ROBERT THE BRUCE

This former Methodist church, sensitively converted by Wetherspoon in 2001, has a relaxed atmosphere and is a popular meeting place in the town centre.

The pub stands near the site where Robert the Bruce killed John Comyn in 1306, in an incident linked to Scotland’s fight for independence.

A bar refurbishment in 2024 has improved the range of beers offered.

There is a pleasant outside seating area at the rear. The food menu offers a range of good-value meals, served all day. Alcohol is available from 10am.

● 81-83 Buccleuch Street, Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway, DG1 1DJ

JOE TAKES BUS TO CONDUCT ALPHABETICAL ODYSSEY

When Joe Scullion turned 60, he got his free bus pass and decided to set off on a tour of Scotland's 55 Wetherspoon pubs... in alphabetical order.

In keeping with the alphabetical tour, the first two pubs which Joe visited were The Alexander Graham Bell (Edinburgh) and An Ruadh-Ghleann (Rutherglen).

He has now visited pubs up to the letter 'B'.

As Joe, who lives in Glasgow, said: "Some people said that it was going to take a long time to do this alphabetically, but I'm not in any rush."

"I like to plan little day trips and spend enough time in each pub to see what it's like, have something to eat and enjoy a few pints."

Joe takes photos of himself at each venue and stays in a pub's hotel, if it has one, so that he can explore the local countryside.

Since then, he has been to more pubs, including The Archibald Simpson (Aberdeen), The Auld Brig (Irvine), Black Bear (Uddingston), The Bobbing John (Alloa) and The Booking Office (Edinburgh).

Joe puzzled over how to tick off The Sir Walter Scott (Edinburgh Airport, after security), since it's an airside venue.

"Then, I read about the opening a Spoons in Alicante Airport, so I will just have to book a flight to Alicante and will then be able to enjoy my Spoons breakfast in Edinburgh and my Spoons dinner in Alicante," he said.



Joe is pictured outside The Booking Office (Edinburgh)

THE IMPERIAL WELCOMES 30-YEAR PARTY PEOPLE

Pub manager Emma Gibson is pictured (centre, holding the celebration cake) at The Imperial (Exeter), marking her pub's 30th anniversary.

Emma, who has managed The Imperial for the past 10 years and has worked for Wetherspoon for 22 years, is pictured with bar associate Graham Rust (left) and shift manager Charles Johnston (both standing).

Also donning party hats for the occasion are (sitting front, left to right) shift manager Sasha Ousley, bar team leader Dulcie Cruwys and bar associate Millie Martin.

Staff wore party clothes and hats for the party-themed day and held a raffle and tombola, as well as selling party bags and offering face-painting, raising £100 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Emma said: "It was a lovely occasion and marked a special day for the pub."

"We also had a group of customers visiting, all dressed in black tie, which really added to the spectacle."



NAVY VETERAN BILL CALLS TIME ON HIS PUB VOYAGE



Pub manager Bill Alderson has retired after almost 26 years' service with Wetherspoon.

He is pictured with area manager Amanda Dunn (left) and kitchen manager Leanne Davis at The Wouldhave (South Shields), where he worked briefly as a shift manager before his departure.

Bill first joined the company in September 2000 as a shift manager at The Isaac Wilson (Middlesbrough) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub), having already accomplished a 23-year-long career with the Royal Navy.

Sunderland-born Bill was 17 when he joined the Royal Navy, progressing to petty officer in the supply department, before his Armed Forces retirement.

Bill then embarked on a licensed trade diploma, as part of his Royal Navy resettlement and retraining programme, before applying for a job

with Wetherspoon, taking on his first pub manager role at The Company Row (Consett) in 2004/5.

He was pub manager at Wetherspools (Metrocentre, Gateshead) from 2007, until just before his retirement.

Bill said: "I consider myself a loyal person and if I get something that I enjoy, I stick at it.

"I have worked with some great teams during my years with Wetherspoon and express my gratitude to all of the staff I have worked alongside."

Area manager Amanda Dunn said: "In thanking Bill for his incredible service, we wish him every happiness in his well-earned retirement.

"He will be greatly missed."

FLIGHT BAN GOT SUPERFANS STARTED ON COMPLETIST QUEST

Two Wetherspoon superfans have made it their mission to visit as many pubs as they can on holidays and days out.

Andy Knight and Janet Blueman, 57 and 58 (respectively), are a couple living in Preston.

The former is a delivery assistant for fashion retailer New Look, while the latter is a sector controller for SP Electricity North West.

They have been keeping track of their visits for around eight years. As at spring, Andy had been to 872 Wetherspoon pubs and his partner had sampled 869.

Janet said: "We started taking our Wetherspoon road and rail trips more seriously when we couldn't go abroad during the pandemic.

"We used it as an opportunity to travel across the UK and Ireland."

Pubs visited this year include The Captain Flinders (Euston), Sigered, King of Essex (Basildon) and The Conister Arms (Douglas, Isle of Man).

Andy said: "We are heading to Alicante later in the year to try Wetherspoon's first pub in Spain – and will visit the other Spanish pubs when they open."

They have only one regret about their Wetherspoon tour.

"We've never met Wetherspoon's founder and chairman, Tim Martin, even though we've been to Exeter," said Janet.





Abraham Darby (Brierley Hill) Bar associate Kelly Chapman (centre) serves customers Alan and Rebecca Barker

FESTIVAL DÉBUT BRINGS A REAL TASTE OF MEXICO

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

The international brewers were from Brazil, Italy, Mexico, Spain and the USA.

The festival featured several beers not previously available at the pubs, including three vegan (also suitable for vegetarians) beers.

It was also the first time the pubs had served a real ale from Mexico.

As well as featuring a range of malt and hop varieties from around the world, there were also beers which included coffee, elderflower, hibiscus, maple syrup, orange and vanilla in their ingredients.

The international beers were Tropical (Cervejaria Bodebrown, Brazil),

Nigredo (Birrificio Italiano, Italy), Session IPA (Malteza, Mexico), Vicious IPA (Almogàver, Spain) and Read the Room (Good Word Brewing, USA).

The festival line-up also included Lucky 'Lips (Shepherd Neame), Pitch Perfect (Vale), Crimson Legend (Brains), Salem Coastal Confusion (Batemans), Shug Monkey (Elgood's) and Brewed Awakening (Hook Norton).

Wetherspoon's marketing manager, Jen Swindells, who organised the festival, said: "The festival is always a great celebration of real ale.

"It allowed us to showcase a selection of superb beers, featuring many not previously available to customers, including those from brewers as far afield as Mexico, for the first time, and Brazil, as well as those closer to home."



The Winter Gardens (Harrogate) Customer Sophie Carrington is served a festival pint by shift leader James Leonard



The Bluecoat (Rotherham) Pub manager Adam Gill showcases the festival ales



The Aneurin Bevan (Cardiff) Bar associate Polly Judd (left) and team leader Emma Howard



The Admiral of the Humber (Hull) Former shift manager Andrea Brown serves a festival pint to customer Brian Larter



An Ruadh-Ghleann (Rutherglen) Bar associate Brendan Bullock serves a festival beer to Robert Coyne



The Talk of the Town (Paignton) Team leader Emily Sibley serves festival ales to customers Phil Gerrish and Tonia Taylor



Waterend Barn (St Albans) Toasting the festival (left to right) are bar associates Zak Maroudial, Robert Hextall and Myles Donkin



The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards) Enjoying a festival pint together are customers Kieran Savage (left) and Ian Burrige



The Palladium (Llandudno) Customers Dave Illingworth (left) and Phil Matthews are served by bar associate Seren Williams



The Brandon Works (Motherwell) Customer Jim McDonald toasts the festival

MIXOLOGICAL TIPPLES AT THE TIP OF YOUR TONGUE

Wetherspoon serves a selection of spirits... for the discerning drinker

Wetherspoon's pubs offer outstanding value for money on food and drinks to suit everyone.

If your tittle is a particular spirit, the drinks menu offers a selection of choices at unbeatable value, all with a mixer included in the price.

Whether you prefer gin, whisky, vodka, rum, tequila or schnapps, Wetherspoon serves a selection of spirits for the discerning drinker.

Oldest

From the world's oldest licensed distillery in Latin America, dating from 1795, Jose Cuervo Especial Silver tequila is in the line-up.

Beefeater London blood orange gin is a popular choice, with fresh citrus flavours of blood orange balanced with the classic notes of juniper and citrus in Beefeater gin.

XIX Vodka mixed berry is a fruity choice, blending premium British XIX Original Vodka with blackberry, blueberry, raspberry and strawberry flavours.

Different

Two different flavour offerings from Smirnoff add to the vodka range, with Smirnoff mango & passionfruit, as well as Smirnoff raspberry crush.

A perfectly balanced blend of Caribbean rums, Captain Morgan white rum is among the spirit choices, all of which have a mixer included in the price.

Archers peach schnapps is a highly popular premium fruit schnapps created in England, using the fresh flavours of ripe peaches in a refreshingly sweet liqueur.

Selection

If your tittle of choice is whisky or whiskey, Scottish or Irish, respectively, there are three to choose from in the 'That's the Spirit' selection.

Bell's original blended whisky is a distinctive blend with a recipe dating from the 19th century, while Johnnie Walker Black Label is a premium 12-year-old blended Scotch whisky.

Since 1780, Jameson is a triple-distilled blended Irish whiskey produced in Cork, Ireland, combining pot still and grain whiskeys.

There are also two Scottish single malt whisky choices – NEW Glenmorangie triple cask reserve and Glenfiddich, together with a choice of two Cognacs: NEW Hennessy Very Special Cognac and Courvoisier VS Cognac.



CROSS GATES, LEEDS

POUNDS PILE UP AFTER PUB BOSS TOM POUNDS PAVEMENT

Pub manager Tom Reeve ran the 13-mile London Landmarks Half Marathon to raise £900 for a charity which helps the bereaved fathers of babies lost during pregnancy.

Tom, who runs The Charles Henry Roe (Cross Gates, Leeds), completed the route in 1hr 42m. It ran past Big Ben, the Tower of London and The London Eye.

"It was very enjoyable, and the weather was perfect. I'd definitely do it again," said Tom, part of a team of runners representing The Vilomah Foundation (thevilomahfoundation.org.uk).

The foundation was established by Tom's friend Simon Johns and his wife, Charlotte Johns.



ROCHDALE

MIGHTY MURAL BRIGHTENS THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON



The external wall of The Regal Moon (Rochdale) now features a mural painted by local award-winning artist Hayley Garner (pictured), who is also known as AYLO.

The mural artist co-designed the piece, getting ideas from primary school pupils in the town and a youth steering group, as part of the FAB Youth Arts Festival.

The project was part of Rochdale's year as Greater Manchester Town of Culture 2025-26.

Hayley (@aylo_nomad) said that when the young people she worked with were asked what Rochdale means to them, they shared a wide range of ideas, stories and experiences, which she brought together into a single, cohesive piece.

Hayley, whose website is www.aylonomad.com said: "The mural centres around a child reading a book of Rochdale.

"One side reflects the past, while the other looks towards the present and future."

It features on a wall which is 31.7x9.7m and took nine days to paint.

Pub manager Rob Burgess said the mural "is colourful and interesting". He added: "It has a lot of attention from customers who really like it."

The mural, commissioned by Rochdale Development Agency, has been match funded by Rochdale Borough Council and J D Wetherspoon.



The Gold Cape (Mold) Shift manager Molly Lewis

WELSH DRINKS PUT PUBS IN THE SPIRIT FOR ST DAVID'S DAY

Customers at Wetherspoon's pubs across Wales enjoyed a range of Welsh drinks to celebrate St David's Day.

The drinks included Purple Moose Calon Lân (4.0% ABV), Gwynt y Ddraig Old Crow Cider (7.4% ABV), Au Vodka (four flavours), Penderyn whisky and Brecon special reserve gin.

Wetherspoon's general manager, south Wales, Steve Edge, said: "Customers were happy that there were so many Welsh products available in the pubs for them to choose from to mark St David's Day."



The Castle Hotel (Ruthin) Customers Melvyn Harrison (left) and Bowen Darby



The Sirhowy (Blackwood) Customers Steven Harry and Diane Hands



The Elihu Yale (Wrexham) Bar associate Calan Jones serves customers Michael Harry and Kaela Armstrong



The Kings Head (Monmouth) Customers Ashleigh Morris and Ryan Longman

THE RICHMAL CROMPTON • BROMLEY • THE SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS • PETTS WOOD

GROOMSMAN AND GROOM HAPPILY WEDDED TO THE JOB



Two Wetherspoon pub managers in Kent have clocked up a combined 45 years' service with the company.

Pictured (left to right) are general manager Richard Marriner, pub managers Louie Scott and Ripon Kazi and area manager Steve Meeke. Ripon has been pub manager at The Richmal Crompton (Bromley) since 2012, having first joined Wetherspoon in 2000 as a shift manager, working at The Brockley Barge (Brockley).

He also worked as a relief manager and as pub manager at several other pubs in and around south London.

Speaking about his 25 years with the company, Ripon said: "Wetherspoon is the most stable company I know."

"I enjoy working with the team. I like the philosophy, standards, customer service focus and community aspect of the pubs."

"Wetherspoon's pubs have an open-door policy, which isn't true of all pubs, welcoming everyone."

"The pricing is also in place for the cost-of-living issues, which helps with the continued success."

Ripon continued: "Most of all, it's about the team and all of the people I have worked with, at all levels, over the past 25 years, which has made it enjoyable."

"It is the people in the company who make the company."

"From the training and audits, from the directors to the cleaners, everyone is always trying to improve things."

Louie took over in 2024 at The Sovereign of the Seas (Petts Wood), having previously run several pubs.

He also joined the company as a shift manager, with previous pub manager experience with Scottish & Newcastle, starting at The Great Harry (Woolwich).

After a brief spell at The Brockley Barge, his career path crossed with Ripon in 2006, at The Capitol (Forest Hill) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

Louie recalled: "I spent a year, year and a half, at The Capitol and have been mates with Ripon ever since – so much so that he was a groomsman and usher at my wedding."

Louie's first pub as pub manager was The Brockley Barge (2008–10), before taking over The Furze Wren (Bexleyheath), from Ripon, where Louie stayed for five years from 2010.

He spent one year in Ireland, opening The Linen Weaver (Cork), before returning to the UK to take on The White House (Stockley Park) in 2016 (both no longer a Wetherspoon pub).

A year at The Kentish Drovers (Peckham) and five years at The George (Croydon) preceded his move to The Sovereign of the Seas.

Louie laughed: "I'm done with moving now!"

He added: "When I joined the company, I took a step down, yet knew, having met people at the recruitment day who had been here 15–20 years, that I would step up and progress."

"For structure, training, support and progression, there's not better out there."

"Together with the benefits, shares and working hours, offering an achievable work-life balance, Wetherspoon is great."

BIG SCREEN FLICKERS INTO LIFE AS FORMER CINEMA JOINS BLYTH FESTIVAL

The Wallaw (Blyth) got into the spirit of the Blyth Festival of Energy with some one-off events.

Customers had the chance to watch a video, on a 30-minute loop, on a four-by-three-metre screen.

It featured updates on what is going on in Blyth now, along with pictures of how the town used to look.

A table display, titled 'a walk down Wallaw lane', was also set up inside the grade II listed venue, which had been a cinema before it became a Wetherspoon pub.

People could write down memories of when the building showed films. These were then put in a scrapbook.

The special activity and video-screening took place during the town's festival aimed at celebrating Blyth's heritage, people and work on renewable energy.

Blyth was home to the UK's first offshore wind turbines.

Shift leader Nicola Taylor, who has worked at The Wallaw since it opened in 2013, said: "The atmosphere was buzzing – with lots of people travelling here to see what was going on at the pub."

She added: "This was an amazing way to become more involved in the town's community projects, and The Wallaw looks forward to more schemes in the future."

Pictured (left to right) are one of the pub event organisers Dan Ellis and shift leader Ellie Burgess.



WIZARD MAKES CAKE VANISH AT MAGICAL BIRTHDAY PARTY



The Electrical Wizard (Morpeth) celebrated its 15th birthday by raising £100 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Shift leader Vikki Peverley organised a children's colouring session, while prizes were raffled off to the grown-ups.

Cake was shared with customers. Balloons and a birthday banner adorned the pub.

Pub manager Johnny Crawford said: "It was a lovely day, and the children really enjoyed the colouring session."

"We were glad to have our longest-serving staff members with us on the day," he added.

These included kitchen team leader Cory Brydon, who has worked at the pub for 12 years, and kitchen manager Callum Oxby (11 years).

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Rachael Clarke, kitchen manager Callum Oxby, pub manager Johnny Crawford and shift manager Cameron Rowell.

ASHLEY'S CELLAR SKILLS KEEP SUMMERSKILLS' ALES FLOWING

Summerskills Brewery took over the taps at The Britannia Inn (Plymouth), with 10 of its beers on sale over a three-day period.

Beer champion and shift manager Ashley Wallace organised the event and also hosted a cellar tour for Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members.

Five of the 10 beers were on sale at any one time – a feat made possible by Ashley's expertise with real ale.

The beers from the Plymouth brewery included Tamar Best, Plymouth Porter and Bolt Head.

Ashley said: "The CAMRA members were very impressed with the cellar, where I use a combination of stillage and cask widges (upright dispense systems) to increase the number of ales we can sell during a takeover or a festival."

Ashley organises several seasonal ale festivals each year, including during spring and at Christmas – in addition to the national Wetherspoon events.

These have included a two-week 'winter warmer' event, featuring mid-strength, milds and amber ales.



Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Thomas Jeacock, shift manager Ashley Wallace, Summerskills Brewery's owner and brewer David Lewis (known as Norm) and brewery assistant Michelle Young

Ashley sources all of the pub's publicity material and tasting notes, consulting customers on their preferences too, including CAMRA members.

He added: "I wanted to bring more variety to what we were doing. I run training and tasting sessions for staff and talk regularly to customers, so I can take their choices into account while ordering."

"I am very proud of our real-ale offering and the events to promote real ale for customers."

Prizes donated by local businesses were raffled during the Summerskills Brewery tap takeover, raising £100 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

PHIL, RITA AND MASCOT BAGGIE IDENTIFY PUB WHICH IS A PERFECT 10

Phil and Rita Vanes have been touring the Wetherspoon estate with their mascot Baggie, awarding scores and writing reviews.

The retired Stourbridge couple has been visiting the company's pubs for many years.

It was not until April 2025 that they took up the role of informal pub judges.

Phil said: "We thought that it might be a good idea to start making a note on each of the visits, which then led to our writing a bit of a funny/witty review of them (not for TripAdvisor or to be publicly critical or anything, but purely for our own personal enjoyment)."

Points are awarded for service, food quality and the style and décor of the building.

Among the highest scorers across the more than 150 pubs reviewed by the couple to date is The Imperial (Exeter), which scored 9.5 out of 10.

"We were blown away by the sheer size of the grounds, the building, the number of rooms and, of course, the orangery," said Phil.

But it was topped by The Court of Requests (Oldbury), which scored a perfect 10.

Phil added: "The pub's character, history of the building, the service, the food and the warm welcoming ambience meant that it deserved a perfect 10."

Phil and Rita always take a picture of Baggie on their pub visits – a miniature version of West Bromwich Albion FC's mascot Baggie Bird.

Their mission continues, so look out for Baggie, as he's still appearing at one or two Wetherspoon pubs each week.



GIN SPRINGS ETERNAL AT SPIRITED SHEFFIELD EVENT

A gin-tasting night at The Rawson Spring (Hillsborough, Sheffield) proved a successful hit, with more similar events now planned.

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Katie Whittington and team leader Leanne Day, who hand-picked six gins for customers to sample, paired with various mixers and garnishes.

The sale of tickets (£20 each, which also included nibbles), coupled with donations taken on the day, raised £460 for the company's charity – Young Lives vs Cancer.

Pub manager Ricky Brown said that the most popular drink was Chase pink grapefruit gin, with tonic water and a grapefruit slice.

Ricky said: "It's the first time we've hosted this event at The Rawson Spring. It was a success – and we will definitely do it again."

"I will look at more offers like this, such as a tasting night on real ales and craft cans, with all proceeds to charity."



'SUPERMAN' FREDDIE RUNS 40 MARATHONS IN 40 DAYS

Bar associate Freddie Skarbek has completed a run from Land's End to John o' Groats, covering the entire length of Britain and raising more than £30,000 for Young Lives vs Cancer.

Freddie, who is 18 and started working last year at Opera House (Tunbridge Wells), did the challenge over 40 consecutive days.

He averaged more than a marathon every single day as he travelled the route from Cornwall to the north of Scotland.

Freddie was inspired to complete the journey through Young Lives vs Cancer's long-term partnership with Wetherspoon and wanted to push himself to raise funds for children and young people facing cancer.

On the route, he visited one of the charity's Home from Home properties in Bristol to see the help offered to families.

Freddie said that he'd found the Peak District section the most physically tough part of the route, adding: "It's been a hard challenge, but an extremely enjoyable experience."

Freddie also made Wetherspoon part of his experience.



He said: "I visited Spoons' pubs in Exeter, Bristol, Hexham, Edinburgh and Blairgowrie, to name just a few."

Opera House's pub manager, Greg Wilkins, said: "Freddie is a bit like Superman. He is fast behind the bar, fast on the floor and now he has done this amazing run across the length of Great Britain."

"We are really proud of him."

Pictured (left to right) are bar associate Freddie Skarbek and pub manager Greg Wilkins.

Also pictured – Freddie at John o' Groats.

CHRIS BACK AT THE PACKET AS IT TURNS 23

The Packet Station (Falmouth) celebrated its 23rd birthday, with a balloon arch to decorate the venue and staff wearing party hats.

Area manager Chris Martin was among those attending for the fun event – with fond memories from the early days of the pub.

He was part of the team which first opened The Packet Station, originally employed as a shift manager before becoming pub manager.

Chris went on to work across parts of the Wetherspoon estate in southwest England and has been area manager for the company in Cornwall for the last eight years.

Chris recalls the community being very welcoming when The Packet Station opened its doors in 2003.

He said: "I felt very proud then... and am still very proud. It's a beautiful pub, still enjoyed by the town."

Pictured (left to right) are bar associates Soph Bissex and Anna Haldenby-Hill, bar shift leader Georgie Brace and bar team leader Rachel Davey.



CARMEN GETS RAP REIMAGINING AS OPERA HOUSE HOSTS MUSIC VIDEO



Opera House (Tunbridge Wells), originally built to stage opera, has once again welcomed the arts, with a music producer filming a video at the pub.

Louis Ryan, 36, who lives in London and is originally from Dublin, is behind Century Artists – which takes classical music and reinterprets it with modern production.

Before the shoot, he recorded 'Habanera' from 'Carmen' with an opera singer, sped it up and mixed it with a UK rap-style production. Then artist Lavida Loca recorded a rap over the beat.

The video-filming for that song, released in the summer and called Carmen, took place on a Wednesday morning and afternoon at Opera House.

The grade II listed building, where, today, pints are pulled, was originally constructed as an opera house, opening in 1902, before becoming a cinema, then a bingo hall, and finally a pub.

The building still features grand chandeliers and original booths and stalls. Over the past two decades, it has had annual opera performances taking place inside.

Louis said: "We were blown away when we went inside the pub. It is spectacular and just the sort of location we were after."

"Filming took place while the pub was open, with both staff and customers very friendly. We filmed Lavida Loca performing in various parts of the building, including on a balcony."

Opera House's pub manager Greg Wilkins said: "It's not every day that we get someone asking to film a video here. We are very glad they loved the building."

Greg added: "It was a fun atmosphere, and the customers liked seeing their local used for music."

Pictured (left to right) are Lavida Loca, Louis Ryan and cameraman Callum Lindsay.

THE PICTURE HOUSE • MORLEY

PICTURE HOUSE MANAGER ANDREW REELS OFF 25 YEARS



Pub manager Andrew Reynolds is pictured (front right) marking 25 years' service with Wetherspoon.

Area manager Dave Jenkins is pictured (front left) presenting a cake, especially made for the occasion, to the pub manager at The Picture House (Morley), surrounded by colleagues and friends.

Andrew started with the company as a part-time bar associate during his student days while studying history and sociology at Anglia Polytechnic University (now Anglia Ruskin University), in Cambridge.

Originally from Wakefield, he worked initially at The Regal (Cambridge), as well as at The Six Chimneys (Wakefield) during holidays.

Andrew recalled: "When I finished my degree, I wasn't sure what to do with it, so stayed on at the pub, where I was promoted to shift-manager level."

Andrew met his wife-to-be, Amy, while working at The Six Chimneys. The couple then decided to move away, with Andrew spending a year working at The Quayside (Newcastle).

Amy now works as a prison officer, and they have two children – Zach (13 years) and Alice (aged 10).

Andrew continued: "I returned home to West Yorkshire in 2006, when I took on my first pub as pub manager at The Richard Oastler (Brighouse), where I stayed for three or four years.

"I then spent eight years at The Cherry Tree (Huddersfield), before moving to The Picture House in 2018, where I am still."

Reflecting on his 25-year career so far and what has made him stay with the company for so long, Andrew said: "I enjoy the work and love the social aspect of things.

"Working late shifts might seem antisocial, yet it has been helpful for things like childcare arrangements for my family.

"Wetherspoon is the only company I have worked for – and I've never felt the need to move."

He added: "I have always felt comfortable and secure with the company and known many people leave... only to return.

"The grass isn't always greener."

Andrew concluded: "Thanks to all the staff who have worked for me over the past 25 years and to those who have helped me during my career, including the pub managers and area manager Dave Jenkins."



The Chequers Inn (Stourbridge) All smiles from customers Michael Whittingham (left) and Robert Burton

CELEBRATIONS FOR ST GEORGE DRAG ON

St George's Day was marked at Wetherspoon's pubs across England with a range of drinks on special offer.

Customers could toast England's patron saint with a pint of guest ale Elgood's Patron Saint (4.3% ABV), Worthington's Creamflow or Carling, as well as Camden Hells lager in cans.

Tanqueray London Dry Gin (mixer included) was also on offer, along with the quintessential Classic Pimm's, with lemonade and fruit.



The Church House (Wath-upon-Deerne) Customers Chaz Parker and Mia O'Ward cheers St George



The George (Staines-upon-Thames) Team leader Brandon Furey (left) and shift leader Pauithera Sakkori with a pint of Patron Saint



The Moon and Cross (Waltham Cross) Toasting St George with a G&T are customers Theresa and Martyn Ryland



The Shoulder of Mutton (Ashby-de-la-Zouch) Enjoying a St George's Day pint in the sun are customers Connor Hampson (left) and Jake Delaney

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE TEAM SCORES 21

A group of friends, four of whom met at university, staged a reunion pub crawl around numerous London pubs.

Five of the group visited a total of 21 pubs, while a further seven friends joined the tour at various stages en route.

Led by Rebecca Roberts (pictured back row, second left), the group members began their day with breakfast at The Sir Alexander Fleming (Paddington) and finished some time around 9pm at The Moon Under Water (Leicester Square).

Everyone had a drink in each pub, but there were breaks for lunch to line the stomach and to allow time to walk between venues.

The pubs included The Masque Haunt (Old Street), The Sir John Hawkshaw (Cannon Street), The Sun Wharf (London Bridge) and The Montagu Pyke (Westminster).

Rebecca said: "We went for the lower-strength alcoholic drinks, and our stamina held out really well."

"Some of us met 10 years ago at Birmingham Uni and thought that it would be great to get together to see some of London's sights."

They chose Wetherspoon for their pub crawl because of the value for money, giving each venue marks out of 10 for that criterion, as well as marks for the setting and vibe.

Rebecca added: "We had an enjoyable time, with the top-scoring pub being The Sir Alexander Fleming."



ALE FANS HOP ALONG TO TAP TAKEOVER



South Buckinghamshire Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) members turned out in force for a tap takeover at Wetherspoons (Milton Keynes).

London's Southwark Brewery took over the taps, offering nine of its ales: The Clink Pale Ale, Nugget, London Pale Ale, Potters Fields Porter, Mayflower Session IPA, Bermondsey Best, Bankside Blonde, Routemaster Red and Harvard APA.

Head brewer Sam Cook, assistant brewer Leo Blanning and managing director Peter Jackson were all on hand to mix with the CAMRA members and other customers.

Peter Jackson said: "It was great to meet the pub's customers and answer their intelligent questions about what we do and what we put into each ale."

Part of the answer regarding ingredients came in the form of glass jars containing specific malts or hops, so that customers could see and smell them.

The event was organised by duty manager Tony Czarnik.

Tony said: "It was a great night and a lot of fun."

"We'd like to thank Peter and his team for coming and also the CAMRA branch for accepting our invitation."

Pictured (left to right) are assistant brewer Leo Blanning (standing), head brewer Sam Cook (seated), managing director Peter Jackson (seated) and duty manager Tony Czarnik (carrying tray), with South Bucks CAMRA members and other customers.

THE FIVE SWANS • NEWCASTLE

SWANS BOSS MIKE CLOCKS UP 20 YEARS



Pub manager Mike Graveson has marked 20 years' service with Wetherspoon.

He is pictured holding his long-service certificate, alongside (left to right) shift managers Mark Brennan and Niamh McCann, area manager John Hudson, shift managers Kyle Moore and Lauren Fitzgerald and shift leader Lizzie Bell.

Mike, who runs The Five Swans (Newcastle), is originally from Lancaster, but moved to Newcastle to study and loved the city so much that he stayed.

He joined the company as a part-time bar associate at The Union Rooms (Newcastle) (no longer a Wetherspoon pub) while studying civil and structural engineering at university in the city.

When The Mile Castle (Newcastle) newly opened in December 2009, he joined the team there, working his way up the career ladder to become deputy manager.

Mike took on his first pub as pub manager at The Wicket Gate (Chester-le-Street), where he stayed for nine years, before moving in autumn 2022 to The Five Swans.

Reflecting on the past 20 years, Mike said: "I enjoy my job – every day is different, with different challenges."

Moving from a real community pub at The Wicket Gate to a city-centre pub more than double in size, with a team more than three times larger, Mike is enjoying the challenge.

He admitted: "I love the pub and my role. I am very much a hands-on pub manager, love the people contact and breaking records with the team."

"The Five Swans is a good-size pub and a big enough challenge and, as long as I am enjoying the job, I'm content."

St Piran's Day ROUND-UP



The King Doniert (Liskeard) Shift leader Aisling Delaney

YEGHES DA! CORNISH CHEERS ON ST PIRAN'S DAY

Customers at Wetherspoon's nine pubs in Cornwall were able to toast their patron saint with Cornish-made drinks.

St Piran's Day was marked at the pubs with Cornish ales, including Tintagel Brewery's Sir Lancelot Pale Ale (4.2% ABV), as well as

Cornish Knocker (4.5% ABV) and Seven Hop (5.0% ABV), both from Skinner's Brewery.

Healey's Flattler original still Cornish cider and Cornish Rattler cyder were also served.



The John Francis Basset (Camborne) Shift manager Aaron Wilce (left) and bar associate Tadgh Cleere



Try Dowl (Truro) Team leader William Harvery serves a pint of Cornish cyder



The Green Parrot (Perranporth) Customer John Stanforth enjoys his pint served by shift leader Guy Hillary



The Towan Blystra (Newquay) Shift leader Katy Gible serves customer Jay Sheppard

BEAUTY WITHOUT AND WITHIN AS GOWER GOES TO SWANSEA

The Red Lion (Morriston, Swansea) showcased beers from the scenic Gower Peninsula in a tap takeover.

Gower Brewery is just 12 miles from the pub and has been supplying it for some years now and was allowed to take over the taps for an evening.

The beers on offer were Gower Power, Gower Gold, Gower Original, Oxwich and Spring Tide.

Customers enjoyed samples of the beer handed out by head of sales Richard Lewis, who explained the brewing process and what goes into each of the products.

Pub manager Nat Mayes said: "The evening went very well, further cementing a relationship which has been working well for as long as anyone here can remember."

On the night, bar team leader Dylan Stewart played a leading role in proceedings, managing the cellar to ensure that beers were served in top condition.

Pictured (left to right) are head brewer Adam Hathaway, bar team leader Dylan Stewart and Gower Brewery head of sales Richard Lewis.



ABERDONIAN AUTHOR FINDS AVID FANS AT THE ARCHIBALD SIMPSON

Author Graeme Galloway signed copies of his work at The Archibald Simpson (Aberdeen), a pub which gets a mention in two of his books.

Graeme, lives in Solihull, yet is originally from Aberdeen.

He autographed works such as an Aberdeen pub-crawl guidebook and The Dons 50/50... which he wrote with his brother David.

The latter is a non-fiction book published in March 2026 which highlights the brothers' best 50 Aberdeen FC players over the last 50 years.

Both titles mention the pub, with The Dons 50/50 suggesting that readers should go to The Archibald Simpson to discuss the list.

Graeme, a former economics teacher, said: "The day was enjoyable."

"I got to chat to interesting people and sold quite a few books."

"I hope to do another signing again."

Pub manager Sam Pinington said he loves it that The Archibald Simpson features in the pub-crawl guidebook.

"We are a really proud team here and love supporting the local community."

Sam added: "Graeme will have found, while in the pub, that he was in the company of avid readers."

"We have lots of customers who regularly use a book swap shelf which we have."

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Jennifer Spence and author Graeme Galloway.



● **Graeme's books are available here:**
books.by/graeme-galloway

ROB AND CLAIRE – WEDDED BLISS AND A WETHERSPOON BLITZ



When Rob Wigley asked his fiancée to marry him in a Wetherspoon pub in 2015, he had no idea that a 1,000-pub tour lay ahead of him. Rob asked Claire on 8 October that year in The Clairville (Wallasey) to marry him. They got married in 2017 in Las Vegas. Shortly afterwards, Claire posted on social media that she and Rob were going to visit every Wetherspoon – and, before the pandemic, they had been to 963.

It took them another six years to get round the remaining 37, which they did by January 2026 at The Hykeham Manor (South Hykeham, Lincoln).

The couple took friends to the pub as they celebrated their milestone.

Claire said: “It started as a kind of a joke, really, but we’re both so glad we’ve done what we’ve done – it’s taken us to so many fantastic places in this country which, otherwise, we would probably never have seen.”

The couple have 4,000 followers on Facebook who regularly send in pictures asking Claire or Rob to guess which pub they are in, and to cheer them on their way.

Rob and Claire once visited 13 establishments in a single day and 49 in one week.

Rob said: “We try, when we visit the pubs, to make sure that we double up and visit friends or local sites as well.”

One example of this was when they flew to Hong Kong to see a relative, so that they could tick off the airside pub Wetherspoon (Birmingham Airport) from their list.

He added: “What I find really interesting is the thought that has been put in to converting the buildings from their previous iterations.”

Rob and Claire have recently visited newly opened pubs, including Walham Green (Fulham).

Rob said: “It’s fantastic, easily one of my favourites.”

Retired train driver Rob appreciated the preservation of the booking office and other features of the former railway station.

Rob and Claire still want to visit the company’s pubs on Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the Isle of Man.

AUTHOR CHERYL BOOKS HER PLACE AT PUB WHERE SHE ONCE SERVED

Former Wetherspoon staff member Cheryl Whitehead returns regularly to The Ward Jackson (Hartlepool) to write her books.

Cheryl, a bar associate at the pub during 2019–22, is now a published author.

Cheryl’s first book, *A Successful Suicide*, came out in February this year. It is the first half of a fictionalised autobiography which highlights love, loss, grief and growth.

She is currently writing the sequel, *What I Did for Love*, detailing the grief and growth which can come in the years which follow when processing a life-changing event.

When talking about her books, Cheryl said: “My overall goal is to help people. I read a quote in the early days of my writing which said: ‘Tell people the story of the mountain you climbed.’

“Your words could become a page in someone else’s survival guide.”

“With my book coming from a real-life perspective (together, the two books span over a decade of my life), you can see my highs and lows – all the different decisions and detours which ultimately help me to discover my resilience.

“I never thought that suicide would be a part of my story, but now it is.

“I want to show that just because you could be going through a hard time, even years of struggle... it can get better.”

Both books are published under the pseudonym Cheryl Saint-Leigh.

Cheryl finds a quiet corner of the pub to write a few times a week.

She attracts interest from both past and current colleagues, along with regular pub-goers.

The regulars have taken a keen interest, offering support and encouragement, which is both welcome and genuine.

Of the pub, which is on Church Square, a stone’s throw from a flat Cheryl rented throughout her twenties, Cheryl says: “The pub has always felt like home. Even before I worked there, it was my local, feeling both comfortable and safe to spend time there alone.

“Now, after having worked there and become a part of the close-knit family environment, there is nowhere else I would want to spend writing.”



Pub manager Lindsay Carney said: “Cheryl and I worked together here. She comes in for lunch, a coffee and a chat, then starts her writing.

“We all support her in what she’s doing, and she knows a lot of the customers here and is always happy to tell them about the books.”

● **A Successful Suicide is published by UK Publishing of Whitley Bay, available in Waterstones and on Amazon.**

SHAUN TAKES THE HIGH ROAD TO DELIVER TO SCOTTISH SPOONS



Driver Shaun Talbot has been delivering to Wetherspoon's pubs since the very beginning, launched 22 years ago, of the company's partnership with DHL.

Originally from Wishaw and now living with his partner in Coatbridge, Shaun, 52, has worked for DHL for 31 years.

Based at Bellshill Outbase, DHL's only main depot in Scotland, located 10 miles southeast of Glasgow city centre, Shaun travels along the west coast as far north as Oban and Fort William and east to Arbroath.

Shaun explained: "The lorries are loaded during the night, and we usually know where we are heading just the day beforehand.

"We must also do final checks in the morning, before getting out on the road.

"It's a heavy job, with the delivery comprising all of the food and soft drinks (not alcohol), as well as cleaning products, but it's a very enjoyable job."

Shaun continued: "We are consistently busy all year round, which is a good thing.

"It is always better to be busy, then there is always work."

Although employed by DHL, Shaun works solely on Wetherspoon's deliveries and has become a familiar face at the pubs across Scotland during more than two decades' deliveries.

He confirmed: "I see the same faces all the time and have made a lot of friends over the years.

"It is more like a big family than a working relationship – and everyone is dead friendly.

"I get on well with all of the pubs' staff, have a good rapport with people and have even, through regular visits, got to know some of the pubs' customers."

Shaun admitted: "I thoroughly enjoy my job.

"I enjoy a bit of banter with people and catch up regularly with those I have known for years.

"Another good thing is that I get to see some spectacular scenery – literally earning my living from touring Scotland.

"People travel from all over and pay a lot of money to do what I get paid to do."

Shaun, who particularly enjoys the route north to Oban and Fort William, through Glen Coe, added: "Glen Coe is amazingly spectacular, whatever the weather."

St Patrick's Day ROUND-UP



The Bridge House (Belfast) All smiles from customers (left to right) Fiona Johnston, Uwineza Lapitre-Rusimbi and Nora Abdelkader

BIG HATS AND FROTHY HEADS ON ST PATRICK'S DAY

Customers at Wetherspoon's pubs across the UK and Ireland celebrated St Patrick's Day with a special offer on a range of drinks.

As well as serving Guinness at a special St Patrick's Day price, the pubs also served a beer brewed exclusively for the occasion.

Brogue Irish Red, brewed by Rye River Brewing (based in County Kildare, Ireland), was also available at a special price.

The beer (4.4% ABV) is described as malty in character, with notes of biscuit, caramel and dark fruit.

In addition, the pubs offered a Baby Guinness shot containing 50ml spirit (Kahlúa coffee liqueur, topped with Baileys) and Jameson Irish whiskey (with a mixer included).



The Hay Stook (East Kilbride) Customers Fraser Mackie and Grace McDaid toast St Patrick



The Kings Tun (Kingston upon Thames) Serving Guinness in the sunshine are (left to right) pub manager Danielle Stephen and shift manager Rosie Heasman



The Picture House (Colwyn Bay) Team leader Bobbi-Lea Wood serves customers (left to right) Frank Gormally and Chris Daniels



The Old Borough (Swords) The DoYLES are dressed to impress for St Patrick's Day

GINGERBREAD MEN CARPET CONTEST TAKES THE BISCUIT AT HIPPODROME



A new carpet at The Hippodrome (Market Drayton) was the focus for a competition to mark the pub's reopening.

The pub closed for five days, following fire damage, for remedial work and refurbishment.

The eye-catching new carpet's design features gingerbread men.

The pub hosted several charity activities to mark its reopening, including guessing the number of gingerbread men on the carpet.

Pub manager Vicky Dixon said: "Staff and customers were delighted to see the pub reopen and joined in with the charity activities.

"We were pleased to split the money raised between Young Lives vs Cancer and Market Drayton Carnival Committee."

Pictured (left to right) are shift leader Letitia Lovatt, pub manager Vicky Dixon and shift manager Ethan Hunter.

CUSTOMERS DIVE INTO POOLE PUB FOR TAP TAKEOVER

Devon's Salcombe Brewery took over the taps at The Lord Wimborne (Poole), while sales manager Joe Dixon spoke to customers.

It was a busy afternoon for Joe as the pub was packed with customers.

Many of them got to taste Salcombe's ales, including Island Street Porter, Lifesaver and Seahorse.

Shift leader Dom Taylor said: "We are always aiming to promote regional beers from smaller breweries and were delighted that Salcombe Brewery visited the pub."

Dom handed out the beers while Joe set out his stall with tasting notes, leaflets and decorative bar towels.

Dom added: "Joe explained the brewing process and was asked questions about the history of the brewery and its beer styles."

Dom is pictured (right) with Joe Dixon.



STEVE TICKS OFF ALICANTE ON HIS SPOONS BINGO CARD

Steve Autton, who is aiming to visit every Wetherspoon pub, headed to Spain to tick off the group's first continental Europe venue from his list.

Steve, who is 68 and retired as a payroll manager in 2023, flew to Alicante to visit Castell de Santa Bàrbara which opened earlier this year.

That brings the total number of Wetherspoon pubs he has visited to more than 800 – and he enjoys recounting his tales of the trips to staff at his local, The Mannamead (Plymouth).

Steve will often buy a real ale at each pub and take a photo of any table '5', to send to a group WhatsApp chat.

One of Steve's friends had regularly sat at table 5 at The Britannia Inn (Milehouse, Plymouth) with his wife, who has since passed away, so the group was set up, with pals sending travel snaps of tables numbered 5 they spot.

Steve said: "It's great to get around the UK and further afield to visit Wetherspoon's pubs.

"I have seen several during journeys to watch Plymouth Argyle's away games – and from going to meet my son at bases when he was in the Royal Air Force."

Pub manager Willy Shambrook said: "When Steve comes to The Mannamead, I am always keen to hear what he has to say about the other Wetherspoon pubs he has visited.

"Steve has a ready knowledge of all things Wetherspoon."



Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Willy Shambrook, Steve Autton and travelling companion Larry Reed

ALE CHAMPION CHLOE GOES FORTH FOR CAMRA

Shift manager and ale champion Chloe McDowell spent one of her days off from The Carron Works (Falkirk) to serve behind another bar.

Chloe, who has worked at the Falkirk pub for eight years, having started as a bar associate at The David Macbeth Moir (Musselburgh), was a volunteer at the Forth Valley CAMRA Larbert Beer Festival.

Chloe was one of four judges at the festival for the 'champion beer of Britain' competition, tasting and scoring eight Scottish ales.

She said: "It was a great experience; really fun to taste all the beers and to have such responsibility."

A CAMRA member herself, Chloe also helped to assemble and set up the bar, before serving real ale to the festival-goers at the annual event.

Chloe said: "I saw so many familiar faces, meeting up with customers from the pub, who did a double take when they saw me behind the bar."

Also a volunteer at the Alloa Beer Festival, in November, Chloe added: "These events rely on volunteers... and the more volunteers, the more successful the festivals are.

"I worked on the bar because that is something I am most comfortable with, but CAMRA members can get involved in all different aspects of these events."

Chloe, who also attends and has hosted CAMRA meetings, is pictured at the festival with fellow Forth Valley CAMRA members and festival committee members (left to right) Graeme Ross, George Thomson and Stuart Batchelor.



AVTAR, 80, TOASTS BIG DAY FAR FROM HOME

Wetherspoon fan Avtar Attalia was far from his local when he toasted his 80th birthday, some 400 miles away at another one of the company's pubs.

Avtar (pictured right) and his son Ranjit, who both live in London, raised a glass to celebrate in The Sir John Moore (Glasgow).

Ranjit said: "It is always nice to share a couple of whiskies with my father at a Wetherspoon pub, although, on this occasion, we opted for lager.

"My father is a regular visitor to Wetherspoon's pubs, often popping in The Walnut Tree (Leytonstone), but it was good to try somewhere further afield for a change."



CUSTOMERS DIG DEEP TO GO ON CELEBRATORY CELLAR TOUR



The Benjamin Fawcett (Driffield) celebrated its 15th anniversary with chocolate cake for staff and customers.

The pub also offered a range of beer and spirit deals over 15 days, as well as offering cellar tours to customers.

Customers paid £5 each to see how the beer is prepared, before being served, enjoying two drinks for the cost.

Any leftover money raised was donated to Young Lives vs Cancer.

Shift leader Claire Dennis has worked at The Benjamin Fawcett since it opened.

She said: "I started working at the pub 15 years ago as a stopgap to decide what I wanted to do at university.

"I ended up doing an Open University degree in management and never left the pub.

"I love being at work and I love the team and customers here."

Pictured (front, left to right) are shift manager Gareth Howard, bar associate Jess Milnes, shift leader Claire Dennis and bar associate Shannon Fenn, with customers.

CRAIG'S T-SHIRT COLLECTION IS AN ARMLESS HOBBY

Kitchen associate Craig Flindall has, for many years, been collecting Wetherspoon promotional T-shirts sent to The New Fairlop Oak (Barkingside).

Craig has worked at the pub since March 1999, having transferred from its previous iteration as a Berni Inn.

His collection of more than 50 T-shirts includes those from Shipyard Brewery, Jack Daniel's, Captain Morgan, Carlsberg, Corona and other drinks brands which send them to pubs to support promotions.

Craig said: "I enjoy collecting them – I don't usually bring them in to work."

Shift manager Burhan Pazar said: "Craig has collected one of every promo T-shirt we've ever been sent."

"It's a superb collection."



Craig is pictured with some of his collection

OPERA BACK AT PRINCE OF WALES 80 YEARS AFTER DÉBUT



Composer Geraint Lewis and opera singer Beverley Humphreys MBE visited The Prince of Wales (Cardiff) to celebrate 80 years of the Welsh National Opera (WNO).

The WNO first performed on the same site (then The Prince of Wales Theatre) on 15 April 1946.

The pair were interviewed by BBC reporter Owain Evans, discussing how popular opera was in the 1940s and how the WNO grew from a tradition of amateur opera in Wales.

Welsh baritone Owain Rowlands, a 26-year-old associate artist with WNO, also sang in the pub.

His rendition of 'Non più andrai', from Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, was broadcast live on BBC Radio Wales Breakfast.

The pub's manager, Andy Greenhill, said: "They performed a segment of music to celebrate the anniversary. We were very proud to be able to host them and wish them well for all the celebrations of the WNO."

BBC Radio Wales producer Nathan Archer added: "The pub is just down the road from us, and it was wonderful to do the interview in the original home of the WNO."

"We are grateful to Andy and his team for facilitating the interview."

Pictured (left to right) are Geraint Lewis, Beverley Humphreys MBE and Owain Evans.

MARK MAKES PURSUIT OF REAL ALE AS EASY AS ABC

Belfast-based real-ale enthusiast Mark Hutchinson has been a supporter of Wetherspoon and its pubs for more than 25 years.

Over the years, he has organised events and visits to the company's pubs to enjoy real ale... once a rare commodity in Ireland.

Mark said: "When Wetherspoon first moved into Belfast in 2000, I got to know some of the people well, including now-retired pub manager (and once area manager) Phil Annett at The Bridge House (Belfast).

"I was so sorry to see him leave for his retirement, but my best wishes to him."

Mark continues to work with Wetherspoon's pub managers, including Michael Morgan at The Central Bar (Carrickfergus), organising trips for groups of fellow real-ale fans to visit Wetherspoon's pubs.

In 2017, Mark set up Beer from the Wood Northern Ireland (BFTWNI, trademark UK00003278222), a non-profit organisation, which boasts 60 members in and around Belfast, as well as across the UK and Ireland.

Annual membership is £5 (each), with benefits and discounts for members, thanks to the support of various businesses.

Mark and fellow BFTWNI members are pictured at The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards) on an organised visit from Belfast, called the 'As Easy as ABC – Ards-Bus-Cask' event.

He hopes that this will become a monthly chance to meet, if the bus service runs as it should.

Mark concluded: "Our group supports the three Northern Ireland Wetherspoon establishments with outings and catch-ups, as well as 'pub of the year' awards – and we enjoy working with the managers and teams.

"We thank them for their support of local ales and produce."



Pictured (left to right) at The Spirit Merchant (Newtownards) are David Edwards, Fe Edwards, Susan Ravina and Mark Hutchinson

COLDSTREAM GUARD VETERANS SWAP SWORDS FOR SPOONS



Veterans of The Coldstream Guards regiment met at Wetherspoons (Victoria station) for the first all-day event of its kind.

The London branch of the Coldstream Guards Association meets monthly (the end of each month) at Wellington Barracks.

But honorary secretary Paul Blakelock decided to approach the pub manager to see whether he would host a couple of special meetings each year and was delighted with the positive response.

Regular meet-ups at the barracks last from noon until 8pm, but the Victoria event lasted from breakfast until after dinner in the evening.

Paul had read in Wetherspoon News about other Wetherspoon pubs supporting veterans' events.

He said: "It's great that the pubs do this."

He and about 30 fellow serving and former guards enjoyed a good social time.

Paul (pictured front, centre) added: "The branch members had a great time and have already asked when we can do this again."

The group is now expected to return in late October.

Pub manager Dan Wonders said: "It was my first time hosting the guards for one of their meet-ups – and we enjoyed the day and found them to be excellent guests.

"I noticed a few of the other customers requesting to have their picture taken with the uniformed guard as well; so, overall, a very enjoyable experience for everyone in the pub.

"We will be happy to host more events in the future."

MULTIPLE ARMS HELP STARFISH GET A GRIP ON DARTS TROPHY



The 2026 winning team Moon and Starfish (Clacton-on-Sea)

Moon and Starfish (Clacton-on-Sea) won Wetherspoon's annual staff fundraising darts tournament this year, in aid of Young Lives vs Cancer.

The team from the Essex coastal town pub beat The Old Market Hall (Mexborough), 4-1 in the final, to claim the title and take home the coveted trophy.

The hugely popular contest, which starts in January, with regional and area heats taking place across the UK, saw more than 500 pub teams participating in the tournament and helping to raise charity funds.

The tournament was set up in 2012 to raise money for Wetherspoon's charity partner Young Lives vs Cancer – with the 2026 darts event adding £250,000 to the charity's total.

The national winners were decided on at a special final event, hosted by Trent Bridge Inn (West Bridgford, Nottingham), with the regional winners competing for the cup.

Also taking part were defeated semi-finalists The White Ball Inn (Tiverton) and The Royal Tiger (Wednesfield), as well as losing quarter-finalists The Six Gold Martlets (Burgess Hill), The Five Swans (Newcastle), The Standing Order (Edinburgh) and last year's winner – The Rocket (Putney, London).

Young Lives vs Cancer partnership fundraiser, Sophie Hartley, said: "We want to say a huge thankyou to all staff involved in this year's darts tournament. It was great to see so many teams from across the UK competing for the trophy.

"Massive congratulations to the winning team from Moon and Starfish, who played an excellent game in Nottingham.



The 2026 runner-up **The Old Market Hall (Mexborough)**

"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."

Since its first beginnings in 2002, the partnership between Wetherspoon and Young Lives vs Cancer has raised more than £26 million.

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, its 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 of the 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.



All teams taking part in the national final at **Trent Bridge Inn (Nottingham)**, together with partnership fundraiser at Young Lives vs Cancer **Sophie Hartley**, shift manager **Amber Oddie**, charity champion at **The Briar Rose (Birmingham)** and Wetherspoon's general manager **Richard Marriner** (pictured front, left to right)

Participating teams in some of the area heats across the UK and Ireland



The Society Room (Glasgow)



The Bridge House (Belfast)



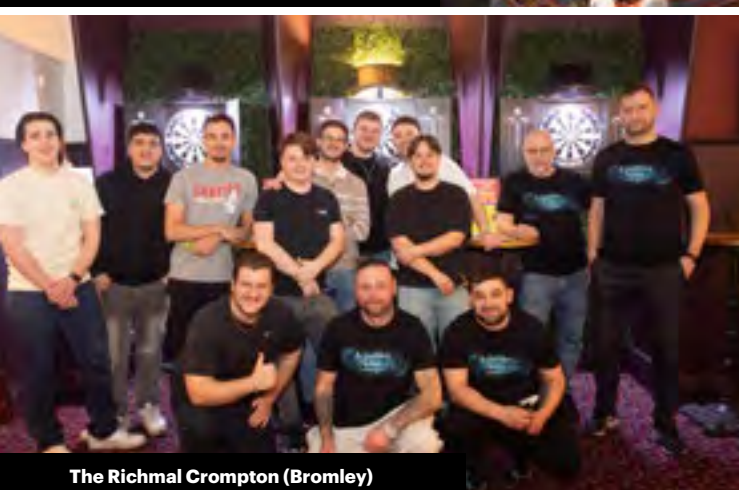
The Bishop Blaize (Stretford)



The Kings Tun (Kingston upon Thames)



The Last Post (Paisley)



The Richmal Crompton (Bromley)



The Soloman Cutler (Birmingham)

HEN, COCK AND PIGEON CAUSES FLAP AT BELFAST'S BRIDGE HOUSE

A four-day tap takeover took place at The Bridge House (Belfast).

Whitewater Brewery supplied three ales for the duration of the event – Hen, Cock and Pigeon Rock, Maggie's Leap and Hallion.

Owner Gerry McKenna dropped in to talk to customers about the beers and his brewery, nestled in the Mourne Mountains at Castlewellan, County Down.

The pub's manager, Alice Treasure, said: "Running the event over a few days gave customers plenty of opportunity to spend time getting to know the beers.

"They also enjoyed the chance to ask Gerry questions about the beers and the brewery."

Pictured are Whitewater Brewery's owner Gerry McKenna and shift manager Rob Brazendale.



SPECIAL GUESTS HELP THE REGAL TO CELEBRATE DOUBLE BIRTHDAY



There was a double celebration at The Regal (Gloucester) when staff marked 30 years since the pub opened and a glass was raised to cheer the 70th anniversary of the building's opening.

The property was first used as the Regal cinema, welcoming customers from 1956, and it also went on to host stage shows.

It had 1,468 seats across stalls and in the circle. In 1963, the name was changed to ABC, with The Beatles, Gene Pitney and Tommy Steele among those who performed there.

A move to a triple-screen complex followed, with J D Wetherspoon getting the keys in 1996.

Celebrations for the 70th anniversary were led by husband-and-wife team Ross and Lorraine Campbell.

Ross is a local cinema historian who has written two books about the history of The Regal, while Lorraine is a councillor and former mayor of Gloucester who grew up in the area.

Ross brought cake and fizz for a gathering at The Regal.

He invited guests who had memories of the site from its older days.

Ross said: "How wonderful it was to be joined by our special guest Pamela Wright Brogan, who was there on opening night in 1956, reminding all present of how special a place The Regal is and continues to be... 70 years later."

Pub manager Hatty Wright, who has been in that role for more than eight years, had The Regal decorated with balloons and banners for its anniversary.

She said: "The customers all have a soft spot for the building which is now home to a vibrant community pub."

Hatty added: "Even though it is a big city-centre pub, everyone knows everyone. It is a friendly place."

Pictured (left to right) are Ross Campbell, Gloucester's town crier Alan Myatt and Lorraine Campbell.

HEYWOOD

PAINTER DRAWS UP A CHAIR AT PUB ART CLUB



A Spoons art group takes place every Tuesday at The Edwin Waugh (Heywood) and includes member Malcolm Fish, who has painted, among other work, portraits of some staff and their pets.

Malcolm (left), 65, started doing acrylic paintings in the pub for fun more regularly after he retired as an engineer.

Dave Flood, 45, who has previously worked as a mental health art therapist, came up with the idea of an art club at Malcolm's local.

Dave (right) said: "I met Malcolm randomly; he was painting in the pub.

"I wondered whether there are other folk like us creatives who are bored of sitting in the house, so I made a few Facebook posts to see whether there was interest in meeting weekly."

Malcolm, who usually enjoys a beer when he paints, said it is a social event.

He said: "People turn up, bring their supplies and do their own thing.

"We can have a chat and pass on advice and tips."

His forthcoming projects include a painting of a local couple.

The Edwin Waugh's pub manager, Siobhan Higgins, said that it is the first art group she has seen at the pub.

Siobhan said: "From our point of view, we are happy to see the pub used as a community space where people can socialise.

"They are a very friendly and welcoming bunch."

MALTBY

MALTBY MEGASTARS GET ROYAL APPROVAL FROM QUEENS HOTEL'S BETH

Pub manager Beth Burns has praised efforts from local businesses and not-for-profit organisations in helping The Queens Hotel (Maltby) to create a busy events calendar for the area.

Beth said: "We really are a community pub, and it is wonderful to have the support of the community in helping us to create a fun and enjoyable atmosphere. We are very grateful for everyone's help."

A summer market is taking place in August, at which vendors pay £10 for a stall in the beer garden, with money going to Wetherspoon's chosen charity – Young Lives vs Cancer.

Meanwhile, a sample of those activities which the venue was able to offer over the last 12 months (aided by support from groups) includes an Easter fun-day, working with Maltby Community Hub CIC. Kids enjoyed sunflower-planting, rock-painting and a visit from the Easter bunny.

There was also a free Christmas party for senior citizens in the pub.

While the venue itself gave out some tickets, donations from Maltby Community Hub CIC and Milton Street Dental Laboratory meant that even more customers could be invited – and Churches Together choir performed free of charge.

Pictured (front left, in green jumper) is pub manager Beth Burns, with volunteers from the donors and carol singers at the Christmas event.



ILKLEY

MAYOR JANE SIGNS COVENANT FOR VETERANS AT LISTER ARMS



Dignitaries met military veterans to sign the Armed Forces Covenant at The Lister Arms (Ilkley).

The covenant is a promise by elected officials to treat current and/or former servicemen and women fairly.

The ceremony took place as part of a meeting of Ilkley Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club, which has been meeting at the pub for almost four years.

The document was signed by Ilkley's mayor, Cllr Jane Gibson, and group founders Mark Surgue, Paul Wilson and Jason Sands.

Mark said: "As well as the signing ceremony, it was great to be back at The Lister Arms. We had 60 people there and were very well looked after by the wonderful team."

Members range in age from an 18-year-old RAF reservist to a 96-year-old former national serviceman.

Sometimes, they are treated to a guest speaker, with meetings often attracting lord lieutenants and regional mayors.

Shift leader Wendy Blenkhorn, whose Saturday shifts often coincide with the club's meetings, said: "It is a really great bunch, always polite, as you'd expect."

"We reserve the back area for them while they chat over coffee and breakfast – and I've got to know some of them very well."

● **The group meets on the last Saturday each month and can be contacted via the QR code and: Ilkleyafvbc2023@gmail.com**



STROUD

MINISTER, MP AND NIGHT ANGELS GET SERIOUS ABOUT SPIKING AT THE LORD JOHN



Former justice minister Alex Davies-Jones and Stroud MP Simon Opher joined The Night Angels for a media launch at The Lord John (Stroud).

The MPs listened as The Night Angels' CEO, Chrissie Lowery, presented an antispiiking demonstration as part of a bid to protect women on a night out.

The Lord John became a recognised 'safe space' three years ago and regularly works with the angels as they tour pubs looking for signs of women in danger.

"The staff at The Lord John are really good," said Chrissie.

"They came to us and asked us how to become a safe space – and I would encourage all other pubs to do the same."

Becoming a safe space involves training and the adoption of procedures designed to promote women's safety.

Shift manager Ryan Gingell said: "The event went really well – it was really positive speaking to the angels about how we work together and make the streets that little bit safer by working as a team."

Ryan is pictured (centre) with The Night Angels and (to his right) Stroud MP Simon Opher, Chrissie Lowery and former justice minister Alex Davies-Jones.

The Lord Rosebery (Scarborough)



Well done folks!
£701
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Four staff from The Lord Rosebery (Scarborough) took the plunge when they joined the seaside town's annual new year's dip.

They raised £701 through donations at the pub and personal sponsorship.

"It was absolutely freezing, but a lot of fun," said shift manager Nic Coulson, describing cold conditions on a day after it had snowed in Scarborough.

The fearless four joined approximately 250 others raising charity funds through Scarborough Lions' annual new year's dip, as thousands cheered them on amid strong winds.

"At one point, we were wiped out by a rogue wave," said Nic.

But all was well in the end, with hot drinks, towels and blankets on hand for participants.

Pictured (left to right) are bar team leader Kyle Siddall-White, bar shift leader Libbie Williams, shift manager Nic Coulson, bar associate Cara Butler.

The Shoulder of Mutton (Ashby-de-la-Zouch)



Well done folks!
£348
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Shift leader Megan Hawcroft and shift manager Dani Rogers helped to organise a Jurassic-Spoons Easter fun-day at The Shoulder of Mutton (Ashby-de-la-Zouch).

The fun-day and weekend donations raised £348.65.

Around 25 children took part, enjoying arts and crafts, making mini dinosaurs and playing with sand.

A dinosaur egg hunt also took place in the beer garden, with plastic eggs up for grabs, featuring a toy inside.

The event was free, but donations were collected in buckets during the weekend. In addition, raffle tickets were sold for a hamper featuring an Easter egg, toys and a dinosaur mug.

Dani, who has worked at The Shoulder of Mutton for three years, said: "It was a fun-packed day, with lots of people attending. 'Jurassic-Spoons returns' could be on the cards for next year."

Pictured (left to right, front row) are youngsters James Hawcroft, Mirri-Anne Stone, Kaitlyn Hawcroft; (back row) shift manager Dani Rogers and associate Megan Bowers.

The Turls Green (Bradford)



Well done folks!
£1,685
...raised for our
chosen charity.

A daring dozen from The Turls Green (Bradford) travelled to Liverpool for a 100ft charity abseil down Anfield Stadium's main stand.

Anfield, home to Liverpool FC, regularly puts the stand at the disposal of abseilers raising money for good causes.

Bar associate Katie-Mae Rule came up with the idea as staff were discussing ways to boost the coffers of Young Lives vs Cancer.

Shift manager Toni Duffy said: "Some of Katie-Mae's friends had done it – and it seemed like a fun and original idea to go with."

She added that some of the team did feel those first-time nerves when the moment came to put their trust in the abseil harness.

Only one of the 12, kitchen associate Angel Harrison, had abseiled before.

Pictured (left to right, back) are shift manager Scott Wignall, bar associate James Greenwood, bar shift leader Callum Scott, kitchen shift manager Stacey Bateman, floor associate Saffron Konya, bar associate Andrew Parkin and kitchen associate Angel Harrison; (left to right, front) bar associate Katie-Mae Rule, bar shift leader Ellie Beardsley, bar team leader Harley Dawn, bar associate Amber Williams and kitchen associate Grace Riggall.

The Winter Gardens (Harrogate)



Well done folks!
£180
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Sixteen staff and two customers enjoyed a cut-price haircut at The Winter Gardens (Harrogate), raising £180.

The pub once again drew on its excellent relationship with award-winning local barber's, Cube, which regularly visits to raise money for the pub's chosen charity.

And with Cube's £10-a-head offer, they find, perhaps, more willing volunteers than those who bravely step forward for a head-shave.

Pub manager Will Thornton explained: "Cube comes here three times a year and has been doing so for a while now. It offers award-winning hairdos for just £10 and is very popular with people here on both sides of the bar."

Pictured (left to right) are Cube's barbers George Thomson, Nico Mori and Joseph Connolly, with pub manager Will Thornton and youngster Kobi McCracken getting their hair cut.

The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport)



Well done folks!
£1,200
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Colleagues Abbie Crane and Charlie Hinchy (pictured) raised £1,200 by skydiving above the fields of Lancashire.

Abbie is a shift manager at The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport) while Charlie is a shift leader at The Lifeboat (Formby).

Abbie and Charlie (who used to work together at the Southport pub) travelled to The Black Knights Skydiving Centre at Cockerham, near Lancaster.

Abbie said: "I was very nervous. It was just surreal, like nothing else."

Charlie added: "I was OK until I got in the plane, then I was absolutely terrified."

But both overcame their fears enough to enjoy the view on the way down, which included Blackpool Tower.

Abbie and Charlie both expressed their gratitude to each pub's customers, friends and family for their donations.

The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats, Sheffield)



Well done folks!
£260
...raised for our
chosen charity.

The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats, Sheffield) raised £260 at a regular race night.

Up to 100 customers, including eight prebooked tables of six, took part in the event organised by duty manager Hayley Candon and colleagues.

The event is held at the pub four times a year.

Hayley said: "It was a very successful night, and I'd like to thank everyone who took part."

Pictured (left to right) are team leader Zane Bradley, floor associate Erin Poleykett and duty manager Hayley Candon.

The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton), The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats) and The Bankers Draft (Sheffield)



Well done folks!
£3,063
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Six Wetherspoon employees from three pubs in Sheffield teamed up to do a 15,000-foot skydive for charity.

Pub manager Emma Walker, who has worked at The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton) since it opened in 2021, organised the event at Skydive Hibaldstow, in Brigg, Lincolnshire.

She said: "The tandem jump was scary and exciting – and for a good cause."

"It was far from my average day at the office."

The group, which included team members from The Scarsdale Hundred (Beighton), The Woodseats Palace (Woodseats) and The Bankers Draft (Sheffield), collectively raised £3,063.

Pictured (left to right) are bar shift leader Alex Young, bar team leader Anna-Jay Collis, bar shift leader Iona Roberston, pub manager Emma Walker, bar team leader Sophie James and kitchen associate Keavy Scott-Caven.

The Packet Station (Falmouth)



Well done folks!
£1,000
...raised for our
chosen charity.

When not working at The Packet Station (Falmouth), shift leader Josh Blackwood has spent much of his time hitting the gym and running outside, regardless of the weather.

On top of that, Josh has organised fundraising events at the pub since autumn, including bingo and raffles. A total of £1,000 has been raised.

The training was all to prepare him for the London Landmarks Half Marathon, running on behalf of Wetherspoon's chosen charity.

Josh, who is 26 and has worked at The Packet Station for five years, completed the 13.1-mile route in one hour, 35 minutes and 56 seconds.

He passed well-known landmarks as he ran, including St Paul's Cathedral, Nelson's Column and The Shard.

Josh said: "It was a really good day. It was sunny, which was perfect for seeing the sights, and I even managed to spot a Wetherspoon pub."

Pub manager David Rescorla said: "I've had the pleasure of watching Josh balance his shifts with a gruelling training schedule, so seeing that hard work pay off is truly inspiring. Josh has managed to raise £1,000 for charity – a testament to his dedication both inside and outside the pub."

The Henry Bell (Helensburgh)

Well done folks!
£854
...raised for our
chosen charity.



Staff members at The Henry Bell (Helensburgh) have completed two fitness-related fundraising events to support Wetherspoon's chosen charity.

Pictured at a Kiltwalk event (left to right) are kitchen associate Euan Davidson, shift leader Liam Gairns, shift manager James Garner, team leader Bill Cullen and shift leader Lizzie Hartley.

They completed the 14.5-mile Big Stroll – a route which starts at Clydebank, passes through picturesque Bowling Basin, through Dumbarton, over Bonhill bridge and through Renton, before finishing in Balloch.

James said: "It started overcast and got brighter and hotter. The weather was definitely on our side."

An exercise-bike event also took place at the pub, where three Wetherspoon employees collectively cycled 85 miles in under five hours.

That activity and donations for Kiltwalk and fun charity events in the pub collectively raised £854 for charity.

James added: "I want to say a massive thankyou to everyone who donated, and to all of the staff who have been supportive and helped with organising."

The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford)

Well done folks!
£150
...raised for our
chosen charity.



Shift managers Angela Wood and Sarah Levy ran an Easter fun-day for children at The Great Spoon of Ilford (Ilford).

The event featured an Easter egg hunt, colouring and a raffle for a festive hamper, raising £150.

Angela, who brought along her grandson Harry and her nine-month-old baby granddaughter Megan, said: "It was a lot of fun and was great to raise a bit of money along the way for our charity."

Pictured (left to right) are local children Harry Wood, Stliyan Ivanov and Andrei Leonard Tanase, with shift manager Angela Wood, baby Megan and shift manager Sarah Levy.

The Wheatsheaf (Cheadle)

Well done folks!
£1,937
...raised for our
chosen charity.



Dynamic duo Layla Siaghi and Emily Davies of The Wheatsheaf (Cheadle) set out to skydive 10,000ft above the Shropshire countryside.

And the two women got to speak to each other during the descent as they calmly enjoyed views of 'green and cows' above Tilstock Airfield.

Shift manager Layla said: "We wanted to do something we hadn't done before."

"But we were absolutely fine, even in the plane. It was really chilled; no fear."

"The instructors had obviously done it many times before and survived, so that was reassuring."

The jump raised £1,937.

Pictured (left to right) are kitchen manager Emily Davies and shift manager Layla Siaghi.

The Queens Hotel (Maltby)

Well done folks!
£1,138
...raised for our
chosen charity.



An Easter fundraiser at The Queens Hotel (Maltby) amassed more than £1,100.

Organised by shift manager Sophie Wilcox, along with pub manager Beth Burns, Sophie's sons, Archie and Charlie, also helped at the charity event.

The boys are pictured with the Easter bunny... aka team leader Chandler Mee.

Craft work with the youngsters, including rock-painting, making bird feeders and colouring, as well as a tombola and a spring seed sale, collected £400 on the day.

An Easter egg raffle, with chocolate eggs donated by the pub's staff, as well as donations from Asda and Tesco supermarkets, added £738, to bring the fundraising total to £1,138.

**The Coliseum (Abergavenny),
The John Fielding (Cwmbran)**


Well done folks!
£4,836
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Pictured (left to right) are pub manager Chris Went and shift manager Sean Wassall, who took their trainers from Wales to the UK capital to run the London Marathon.

Chris, who has been at The Coliseum (Abergavenny) for nine years, achieved a personal best during his third marathon – at 3 hours 33 minutes.

He praised the “electric atmosphere”, raising £2,100 for Wetherspoon’s chosen charity.

Sean, who has worked at The John Fielding (Cwmbran) for 18 years, did 3 hours 45 minutes on his debut London Marathon.

“The crowds were great – and I couldn’t have asked for better support.”

He raised £2,736 through a combination of sponsors and money collected from raffle tickets for a series of hampers which pub manager Carol Cooper had made.

The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew)


Well done folks!
£186
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Shift leader Shannon Grant, from The Lord of the Isles (Renfrew), undertook a 40-metre bungee jump, raising £186. She travelled from Glasgow to Pitlochry to do the jump at The Highland Fling Bungee.

She said: “I have always wanted to do a bungee jump, saw that it was on offer and decided to just go for it!”

Shannon, whose sister had cancer as a child, had previously completed a Highland Swing event, in which participants drop up to 18 metres, before swinging across the River Garry at the Pass of Killiecrankie.

Describing her feelings afterwards, Shannon said: “I had lots of adrenaline, but was also thinking ‘What the heck did I just do?’” Yet she added: “I’d definitely do it again.”

Shannon is pictured with the certificate which bungee jumpers receive once they’ve completed The Highland Fling Bungee.

**The Peter Cushing (Whitstable), The Mechanical Elephant (Margate),
Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate), The Thomas Ingoldsby
(Canterbury) and The Eight Bells (Dover)**


Well done folks!
£7,700
...raised for our
chosen charity.

A group of representatives from five of Wetherspoon’s Kent pubs completed a 12,000ft skydive at Headcorn, raising a bumper £7,700 for charity.

Shift manager Steph Greenstreet, who has worked at The Thomas Ingoldsby (Canterbury) for three years, planned the event... with some doing the jump last year and Steph herself planning to brave it later in 2026.

She said: “My dive was cancelled owing to bad weather, but make no mistake, I will be doing it. I’m so proud of everyone who got involved.”

Donations via GoFundMe, activities in the pubs and more all helped to raise money for Wetherspoon’s chosen charity.

The following was collected: £1,375 from The Peter Cushing (Whitstable); £1,000 from The Mechanical Elephant (Margate); £1,725 from Royal Victoria Pavilion (Ramsgate); £2,800 from The Thomas Ingoldsby; £800 from The Eight Bells (Dover).

Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Amelia Walbank, shift leader Grace Goldsmith, team leader Judy Walker and shift leader Ben Garrett.

The Felix Holt (Nuneaton)


Well done folks!
£768
...raised for our
chosen charity.

Pictured (left to right) are Nic Webb, Oliver Briers and Olly Webb

Team members from The Felix Holt (Nuneaton) were out in force at the Coventry Half Marathon to raise money for Wetherspoon’s chosen charity.

Pub manager Nic Webb, shift manager Olly Webb, shift leader Oliver Briers and cross-trained associate Rachel Watkins-Webb each completed the course.

They collectively raised £768.58 from a mix of in-house social events and donations for doing the route – which covers city-centre streets, the nearby countryside and then goes towards Warwickshire.

Nic, who has been pub manager at The Felix Holt for 16 years, said: “None of us is a seasoned runner, but we wanted to do something good for charity.”

Several colleagues and family members came to cheer on the group.

Nic added: “I’m very proud of everyone involved and very impressed that we got over the finish line.”

SOUTHPORT

PUB-GOERS STEER TROLLEY TO FOODBANK

The team at The Sir Henry Segrave (Southport) has won praise for collecting a trolley load of essentials for a local foodbank.

The foodbank posted a thankyou message on its Facebook page and listed the pub as being among its 'amazing donors'.

Shift manager Martyna Taranczewska (pictured left, with fellow shift manager Gabbi Watkinson) lives near Compassion Acts foodbank and often passes it.

"I previously donated some clothes and wanted to help them again, so I suggested that the team at work should get involved to support our local community," said Martyna.

But she was quick to stress that fellow shift managers Jane Martin and Gabbi Watkinson collected most of the items which she delivered to Compassion Acts.

The Facebook post also included a picture of Martyna delivering the goods, including food, hygiene products and baby formula.

"I would like to thank all of the customers who donated items," added Martyna.



BOSTON

BOSTON'S MAYOR ON THE SPOT AS MOON BRINGS IN BIG BUCKS



Pictured (left to right) are shift manager Jared Parker and the mayor of Boston, Cllr Barrie Pierpoint

The Moon Under Water (Boston) supported the borough mayor's chosen charity causes by hosting a fundraising event.

The pub hosted a charity quiz night, raffle and tombola.

The mayor of Boston, Councillor Barrie Pierpoint, was in attendance and drew the charity raffle, which had been running for a month, with tickets being sold at the pub.

Raffle prizes were also donated from local businesses and included a £50 Wetherspoon gift card.

A total of £880 was raised, with proceeds split equally among Mayor Pierpoint's four chosen charities and local support groups Headway Lincolnshire, Boston Men's Shed, Boston Foodbank and Centrepoint

Outreach, as well as Wetherspoon's charity partner Young Lives vs Cancer.

Pub manager Andy Sands said: "The Moon Under Water is a real community pub, so we were delighted when Mayor Pierpoint asked us to host this charity fundraiser.

"Our regular Sunday quizmaster, shift manager Jared Parker, devised and posed the questions, including a few Boston-themed general-knowledge rounds.

"We are delighted with the money raised for the excellent charities, thanks to the continued support and kind generosity of customers, local people and businesses."

GAINSBOROUGH

VETERANS SHOW APPRECIATION FOR FORKBEARD FOLK



A veterans' group presented a certificate of appreciation to thank staff at The Sweyn Forkbeard (Gainsborough) for their hospitality.

The Gainsborough Armed Forces Veterans' Breakfast Club has been meeting at the pub for two years, although it was formed in 2008.

About 30 current and former service personnel meet every other Sunday for breakfast and a natter, served by staff led by pub manager Amanda Fretwell.

The rear of the pub is cordoned off for them, and the group's banner is displayed for each meeting's duration, usually lasting two hours.

Amanda (pictured holding the certificate), herself an armed forces veteran, having served 10 years with the Royal Navy, said: "It is a thriving group and always great to see them."

"We are very grateful for the certificate."

Group co-ordinator Richard Lindsay added: "The certificate was to say thank you to Amanda and her team."

"They are all excellent, and we are made to feel very welcome."

He is pictured (fourth from right, back row) wearing his RAF beret.

WISHAW

CRAFTY CUSTOMERS IN NEEDLE MATCH AT THE WISHAW MALT



A knitting and crocheting group called Wetherspoon Crafts enjoys meeting weekly at The Wishaw Malt (Wishaw).

Jacqueline Tudhope, a retired nurse who volunteers for local mental health charity LAMH, said that the idea for the group (and the socialising it could bring) came after meeting a friend, for a coffee, who was lonely.

It started in 2025 and now has 15 regulars attending, who enjoy breakfast and coffee at The Wishaw Malt. After that, they pull tables together to enjoy crafts.

Handmade poppies are created to raise money for Help for Heroes, while donations which the gathering receives (of items such as toys and cardigans) are contributed to Young Lives vs Cancer, Wetherspoon's chosen charity.

Jacqueline, who is 68, said: "It is a really good group. It allows us all to chat, socialise and have fun – while raising money for charity."

She added: "The Wetherspoon team couldn't be any more accommodating towards us."

Pub manager Jude Graham, who has been with the company for eight years, said: "The Wetherspoon Crafts group brings a community feel to the pub and is very thoughtful."

Jude said that staff have received handmade presents, such as little ducks at Easter.

Pictured (left to right) are Wetherspoon Crafts members Helen Elliott, Judith Reilly, Jacqueline Tudhope, Shona MacMillian, Andrea Murphy, Kathy Campbell and Debs Cloke.

PUBS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY BASHES ALL OVER BRITAIN

From Abergavenny to Margate, clutch of pubs celebrates a quarter century's service

Throughout March, April and May this year, 17 Wetherspoon pubs celebrated a particularly significant birthday.

All 17 pubs, which first opened during the spring of 2001, marked their 25-year anniversary, clocking up a combined 425 years' service in their respective communities.

Celebrating 25 years in March were The Golden Lion (Newmarket), The Sir Nigel Gresley (Swadlincote), The Coliseum (Abergavenny), The Bottle of Sack (Sutton Coldfield), The Seven Stars (Manchester) and The Sir John Baker (Portsmouth).

The Bole Bridge (Tamworth) marked 25 years, in April, while clocking up the same milestone throughout May were The Friar Penketh (Warrington), The Star (Gosport), The Glass House (St Helens), The Bright Helm (Brighton), The Gatekeeper (Cardiff), The Brass Balance (Birkenhead), The Mail Rooms (Ross-on-Wye), The Trawl Boat Inn (Lytham St Annes), Globe Hotel (King's Lynn) and The Mechanical Elephant (Margate).

Blackburn

Also, during the same period, marking significant milestone birthdays were The Postal Order (Blackburn), The Potters Wheel (Swansea),

The Regal (Gloucester), The Isambard Kingdom Brunel (Portsmouth), The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth) and The College Arms (Peterborough), each celebrating 30 years since first opening its doors.

The Sovereign of the Seas (Petts Wood), The Moon on the Square (Feltham) and The Moon Under Water (Wolverhampton) celebrated 31 years since opening.

Older still were J.J. Moon's (Tooting, London) at 35 years and The Elms (Leigh-on-Sea) marking 32 years, both pubs celebrating in March.

Croydon

In April, The Moon Under Water (Norbury, Croydon) clocked up 33 years, while The Moon on the Hill (Harrow) marked 35 years since opening.

The company's oldest pub, The Rochester Castle (Stoke Newington), notched up 43 years in May. The same month saw Goldengrove (Stratford) reach 33 years old and The Moon and Stars (Romford) mark 32 years since opening.

Congratulations to all of the Wetherspoon pubs celebrating significant milestones of 25 years or more during the three birthday months highlighted this time.

J.J. Moon's (Tooting)

Shift leader Shakur 'Shak' Blackman and team leader Bonnie McClure are pictured marking 35 years since J.J. Moon's (Tooting) first opened (March 1991).

Pub manager Grant Hearne took over at J.J. Moon's in April 2024, having started with Wetherspoon in October 2006.

Among his longest-serving staff are shift manager Emma Pain (started with Wetherspoon in 2008), shift leader Tony Wakenell (with the company since 2004), kitchen associate Kate Kania (eight years at the pub, having begun with Wetherspoon in 2013) and kitchen shift leader Anna Yasar (with the company since 2016).

The 1868 OS map of the area records a National School for Infants on the site of this pub.

It was later replaced by Tooting Public Baths, opening in 1907 and demolished in 1981.



35
YEARS



The Moon on the Hill (Harrow)

First opened as a Wetherspoon pub in 1991, The Moon on the Hill (Harrow) celebrated 35 years' service to the local community, in April. The pub building was previously a general store. Until 1979, it had been Wheatlands Furniture Shop for over 60 years.

Pub manager David Jonak and bar associate Amara Macleod are pictured marking the 35th anniversary.

David took over as pub manager in May 2025 and has worked for Wetherspoon since 2015.

Among the longest-serving staff members are shift leaders Alisha Okosi (eight years at the pub) and Fiona Gair (six years), as well as shift manager Tom Moran (five years).

The Potters Wheel (Swansea)

The Potters Wheel (Swansea) first opened its doors to the people of Swansea 30 years ago, in April 1996.

Pictured celebrating the 30th anniversary are (left to right) team leader Nimisha Joy, bar associate Kelly Owen and kitchen associate Callum Pickett.

Pub manager Jamie Philpin has worked for the company since 2013 and took over at The Potters Wheel in October 2022.

His longest-serving team members are bar associate Karen James (since 2013), shift manager Callum Devoy (since 2015), cleaner Paul Wells (since 2014) and maintenance/kitchen associate Martyn Brooks (since 2019).

The pub is located on the corner of Kingsway and Dillwyn Street, named after the Dillwyn family which owned the local Cambrian Pottery.

Famous for its fine porcelain, the pottery was run (1802-17) by Lewis Weston Dillwyn, who later became Swansea's mayor.

30
YEARS



30
YEARS



The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth)

The Troll Cart (Great Yarmouth) marked 30 years since it first opened back in 1996, in April this year.

The pub stands near the site of the medieval town wall's Theatre Gate, the walls having surrounded Great Yarmouth on three sides.

The west side was protected by the River Yare.

Thousands of people lived within the old walls, in cramped, narrow lanes known as The Rows – where goods were carried on specially made troll carts.

Pub manager Dan Bullion is pictured (back right) with regular customers Tom Kelly (back left) and Jim Gee, together with bar associate Jess Gribble (front left) and kitchen team leader Louise Haynes.

Dan has been pub manager at The Troll Cart since August 2025 and with the company since 2010, when he started at The Troll Cart.

Jess has worked for Wetherspoon since 2022 and Louise since 2008.

Other long-serving staff members include shift managers Amy Oldham (2001), Flick Burroughes (2008) and Laura Jones (2011), bar team leader Aaron Pitts and bar associate Alex Jones (both 2007), night shift leader Matthew Hutson (2012) and kitchen manager DJ Goddard (2013).

MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

25
YEARS



The Glass House (St Helens)

Celebrating the 25th birthday of The Glass House (St Helens) are kitchen shift leader Kyle Ahmed, shift manager Cara Toppon, floor associate James Richardson and shift manager Rhys Briscoe.

The pub first opened in April 2001, with its name recalling St Helens' link with the glass industry since the early 18th century.

The town's award-winning World of Glass visitors' centre is a short distance from the pub.

The pub building, first built in 1939, was shared by the Wine and Spirit Merchants Gallies & Co, along with Twists – dealers in hardware and fancy goods, until the 1970s.

Pub manager Ash Briscoe-Williams took over at The Glass House in August 2020, having worked for Wetherspoon since November 2008.

Among Ash's long-serving staff members are shift manager Alex Ball (since 2014), floor associate Thomas Hawkins (since 2012), team leader Jasmin Croughan-Pillage, kitchen team leader Helen Curran and kitchen shift leader Kyle Ahmed (all since 2013).

The Bole Bridge (Tamworth)

Pub manager Jordan Holmes is pictured (right) with bar team leader Sophie Gilmore (left) and bar associate Fay Holmes, marking 25 years at The Bole Bridge (Tamworth).

The pub opened in April 2001 in the grade II listed building, originally a house with Regency-style features, dating to c1810.

The Bole Bridge takes its name from the pack-horse bridge which stood, until 1877, at the end of Bolebridge Street.

It was named after the bolles, or measures of grain, carried across the river.

Jordan has been pub manager since April 2022, having worked for Wetherspoon since May 2016.

Among his team are several staff members who have worked at the pub for more than five years and a handful of staff with 18 or more years' service with the company.



25
YEARS

25
YEARS



The Bottle of Sack (Sutton Coldfield)

First opened as a Wetherspoon pub in March 2001, The Bottle of Sack (Sutton Coldfield) has celebrated its 25th birthday.

Pictured (left to right) marking the occasion are kitchen manager Alex Pagett, pub manager David Morris and shift manager Alex Cooper.

David has been pub manager at The Bottle of Sack for 11 and a half years and has worked for Wetherspoon for 23 years.

Among his longest-serving staff members are Alex Pagett (11 and a half years), kitchen shift leader Lee Mathews (11 years), team leader Robert Hanson (almost 10 and a half years) and shift managers Dan Hawthorne (eight years) and Chloe Rawlins (seven years).

The pub's name comes from a quote in Shakespeare's Henry IV play: 'Fill me a bottle of sack: our soldiers shall march through; we'll to Sutton Co'fil' tonight.'

Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, was a member of a leading local family.

25
YEARS



The Friar Penketh (Warrington)

Marking the 25th anniversary of The Friar Penketh (Warrington) are (left to right) kitchen associate Dave Archer, shift leader Hollie Welsh, shift manager Hannah Harding, shift leader Natasha Fegan and kitchen associate Kam Szczytowski.

The pub, which first opened as a Wetherspoon in April 2001, stands on the site of a 13th-century Augustinian friary.

One of the friars, a scholar called Friar Penketh, is mentioned in Shakespeare's Richard III play.

Today, the street names of Friars Gate and St Augustin's Lane are reminders of the religious house which once stood here.

The Friar Penketh has been managed by Jess Bowman since July 2022, who first started with the company in 2015.

Long-serving staff members including Hannah Harding, who has worked for the company since July 2013, and kitchen manager Sarah Booth, a Wetherspoon employee since November 2006.

The Brass Balance (Birkenhead)

The Brass Balance (Birkenhead) first opened its doors as a Wetherspoon pub in April 2001 on the site once occupied by W&T Avery, manufacturer (from the early 1900s until after World War II) of brass balances and other weighing machines.

The pub has been managed by Rich Forster since June 2019, who first joined Wetherspoon in July 2003.

Pictured toasting the 25th birthday are (left to right) kitchen manager Darren Evans, shift leader Emma Rowlands and shift manager Gary Hamill.

Among Rich's longest-serving staff members are shift manager Karen Barnes and floor associate John Pugh (both with more than 28 years' service each with Wetherspoon).

Karen has been at the pub since 2017 and John since 2010.

Bar associate Paul Wilson has been at the pub since 2018, having worked for the company for 21 years.



25
YEARS

25
YEARS



The Mechanical Elephant (Margate)

Pub manager Victoria Houghton is pictured (front) celebrating the 25th birthday of her pub – The Mechanical Elephant (Margate).

Also pictured (left to right) are (back row) kitchen shift manager Jack Mallett and team leader Andrew Creed, (middle row) kitchen manager Alfie Verrill, shift leader Aaron Sykes and shift manager Matt McClelland.

Victoria took over the pub in April 2025, having rejoined the company in 2018.

She originally first started working for Wetherspoon in 2005, leaving in 2014 for four years.

Alfie took over as kitchen manager in 2024, having joined the company in 2016, while Matt has worked for Wetherspoon since 2015, joining the team in March this year, in Margate.

Cleaner Maria Gimenez Diez is also a long-serving staff member, on the team since 2010.

The pub, which opened in May 2001, is named after a popular Margate attraction which once gave hundreds of children rides along the promenade.

Driven by a petrol engine, the life-size mechanical elephant was one of many seaside attractions, including a circus.

ROCHDALE

VISION OF 'HAUNTED' REGAL MOON APPEARS IN ROCHDALE



The Regal Moon (Rochdale) has appeared in a series of panels in the town centre which commend key buildings in the area.

The Hidden Heritage Stories project is run by Rochdale Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), with the addition of the pub bringing the total number of panels in the outdoor gallery to 40.

The Regal Moon board features pictures of the venue, as well as history about the site which originally opened as a cinema in 1938 and eventually became a Wetherspoon in 1997.

One tale says that the building is apparently haunted.

Pub manager Rob Burgess, who has been in that role for six years, joked: "When you are on your own in the pub, there can be some

creepy noises from upstairs. If there are ghosts, clearly the pub is just too good for them to leave."

Rob added that the newly installed work is a "good way to show what an important part of Rochdale we are".

Rochdale Town Centre BID manager Paul Ambrose (pictured with the Hidden Heritage Stories outdoor gallery) said that the series "brings Rochdale's rich history to life, making it one of the town's most important cultural attractions for visitors and locals alike".

Paul added: "It has been a pleasure to work with the team at The Regal Moon to create the hidden history story to celebrate the building's rich history."

WEDNESBURY

EGGS-CELLENT WORK FROM BELLWETHER FOLK

Bar shift leader Megan Smith and bar team leader Ellie Hamblin (pictured left to right) delivered Easter eggs from The Bellwether (Wednesbury) to local hospitals.

In total, the pub had 238 eggs to hand out.

This came from a mixture of staff and customers donating chocolate treats or cash donations for Wetherspoon to purchase eggs.

There were also eggs collected by, and donated from, J&F Butchers.

Half were dropped off at Walsall Manor Hospital to be enjoyed by its children and elderly patients, while the remainder went to Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital.

Megan, who has worked at Wetherspoon for nine years, including five at The Bellwether, said: "It was lovely to see how generous the community is.

"Also, the team did well, spreading the word and donating Easter eggs."



WIN A £30

WETHERSPOON GIFT CARD

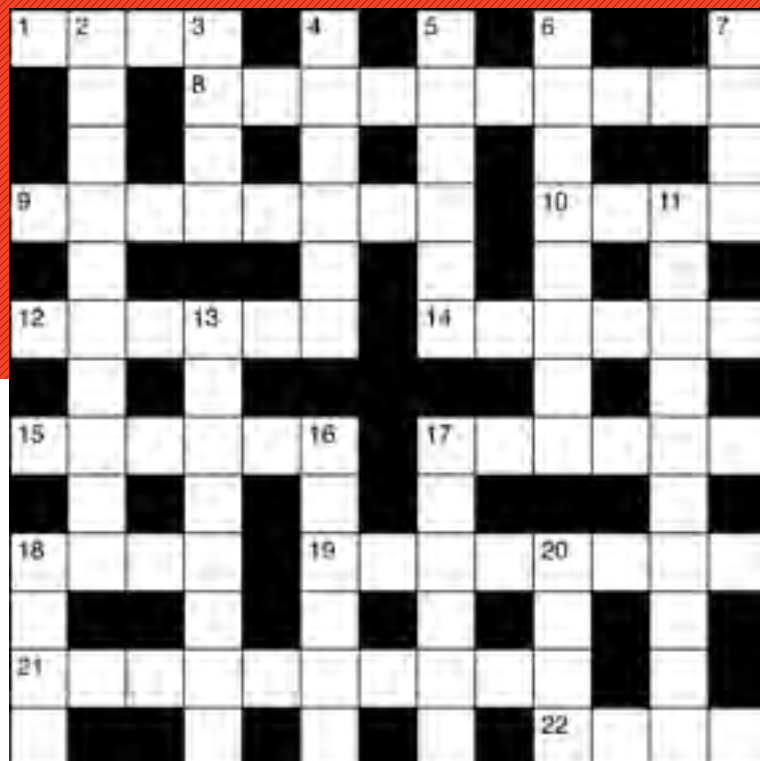
The first five correctly completed crosswords to be pulled out of the hat will win each of those entrants a Wetherspoon gift card worth £30.

Closing date for entries: 12 October 2026

Post to:

Wetherspoon News Magazine Competition
PO Box 2330, Watford, WD18 1NW

5 x £30 PRIZES TO BE WON



Across

1. Unit of area equal to 4840 square yards (4)
 8. In bridge, a hand of cards in which no card is higher than nine (10)
 9. "The —", 1948 comedy western with Bob Hope as a dentist (8)
 10. "The —", 1976 novel by Peter Benchley (4)
 12. Seaport in the Ukraine, the leading Black Sea port (6)
 14. — foot is a form of frostbite (6)
 15. Garden in Athens where Aristotle taught (6)
 17. "The Caucasian Chalk —", play by Bertolt Brecht (6)
 18. Mr. Walesa, former President of Poland (4)
 19. Another name for the trachea (8)
 21. Tubular pieces of pasta filled with meat or cheese (10)
 22. Lion in the 1966 film Born Free (4)

Down

2. Arthur, author of the Sherlock Holmes tales (5,5)
 3. "Jane —", novel by Charlotte Brontë (4)
 4. Name given to the fleet of Spanish ship sent to attack England in 1588 (6)
 5, and 13. Film and theatre actor whose screen roles included Teddy Lloyd in The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (6,8)
 6. Charles, American inventor of vulcanised rubber (8)
 7. In electronics, a wafer of semiconductor material processed to form a type of integrated circuit (4)
 11. Australian genus of trees whose leaves and bark are eaten by the koala (10)
 13. See 5
 16. Wolf-boy in Kipling's The Jungle Books (6)
 17. In Judaism, a man employed to lead synagogue services (6)
 18. "The Rape of the —", poem by Alexander Pope (4)
 20. A classic ballet practice posture with erect back and bent knees (4)

SOLUTIONS (spring/summer 2026 edition)

Across: 7 Adela; 8 Quested; 9 Cedilla; 10 Yerba; 12 Robert Culp; 15 Toad of Toad; 18 Raven; 19 Rickets; 21 Gorilla; 22 Astor.

Down: 1 Manchester; 2 Meade; 3 Hall; 4 Square; 5 Kenyatta; 6 Sternum; 11 Aspidistra; 13 O'Connell; 14 (Mrs.) Danvers; 16 Tarzan; 17 Yentl; 20 Coal.

The spring/summer 2026 edition crossword winners were:

★ MR, North Shields ★ GL, Keighley ★ MG, Soham ★ NL, Swadlincote ★ SB, Skipton



Please complete the answers and your details, as shown, and send the completed page to:

Wetherspoon News Magazine Competition
PO Box 2330, Watford, WD18 1NW

Your details:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

I am over 18 years (signature):

Age:

Year of birth:

Terms and conditions: The crossword is open to all UK residents over the age of 18, excluding employees of the promoter, their respective families and agents or anyone directly connected with this competition. Acceptance of the rules is a condition of entry. No purchase necessary. Entries must be received no later than 12/10/26. Proof of dispatch is not proof of receipt. The winners will be the first correctly answered entries drawn. Where multiple prizes are offered, the winners will be the first relevant number of correct entries drawn. The judge's decision is final; no correspondence will be entered into. One entry per household. The winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative available. The promoter reserves the right to cancel or amend this promotion, owing to events arising beyond its control. The promoter is not responsible for any third-party acts or omissions. Once the competition has been drawn all entry slips and information provided therein will be securely destroyed and shall not be retained by J D Wetherspoon plc or its affiliates.

Promoter: J D Wetherspoon plc, Wetherspoon House, Central Park, Reeds Crescent, Watford, WD24 4QL



Ash Corbett-Collins is chairman of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

Cheers

ALL THOSE WHO LOVE PUBS... JOIN US

CAMRA has been battling to protect pubs and cask beer for more than 50 years, yet foes are never far away, including the politicians making planning law, says CAMRA's chairman Ash Corbett-Collins

The backbone to CAMRA's campaigning is protecting pubs as vital community hubs in all parts of the UK.

Our volunteer members, branches and campaigners work tirelessly, day in, day out, to support local pubs, social clubs, breweries and cider-makers – and to convince governments and decision-makers that pubs deserve support and protection.

One of the biggest threats to pubs which we must fight (to safeguard them for the future) comes from developers looking to extract capital from our communities by converting pubs into houses, flats, shops or take-aways.

This is at odds with local communities, which sometimes don't even get the opportunity to object to proposals.

In 2017, CAMRA successfully campaigned to secure legal protection for all pubs in England.

Following decades of our campaigning against those developers which were seemingly converting and demolishing pubs as they pleased, the UK Government removed permitted development rights, meaning that no pub in England could be demolished or converted without planning permission.

It was a scandal that this had been done so often, up until 2017, with few measures in place to stop it.

LAWS

At the time of writing, these laws still stand.

However, there's now a risk that this protection will be watered down.

Proposed changes to the government's national planning policy framework mean that councils will find it harder to reject planning applications to convert pubs into houses, shops or take-aways, against local communities' wishes.

Instead of all pubs being protected, only the last pub in an area would have planning law protection.

When a treasured local is under threat, local people need the upper hand to stop developers from cashing in by converting or demolishing

a perfectly viable pub for another use, if that will make them more money faster.

Pubs are a vital part of community life and must be protected and safeguarded as places to spend time with family, friends and neighbours.

BURDEN

We know that pubs are already facing big challenges from rising costs and energy bills, along with a huge tax burden (of course) through things like VAT, business rates, alcohol duty and increased employers' national insurance contributions.



Pubs should not be an easy route for developers to make money



The pub trade has enough to deal with at the moment, without the government weakening the planning system, making it easier for pubs in England to be converted and lost to communities for ever – all to benefit developers' profit margins.

It's not a problem unique to England either.

In Scotland, our campaigning helped to convince the Scottish Government to ditch plans to allow pubs in town and city centres to be closed and converted into housing, even against local people's wishes.

We are campaigning to close a loophole in planning laws which means that freestanding pubs can be demolished without planning permission and without local people having a say about the decision.

In Wales, there is hardly any protection in the planning system for pubs, making it far easier for them to be lost through conversion into houses, flats or shops.

In Northern Ireland, pubs are also being demolished without communities having their say in the planning-permission process.

The biggest threat here, however, is that in order to open a new pub, an existing business with an alcohol licence has to close.

MADNESS

This madness pushes up prices for alcohol licences to £100,000 or more – meaning that it is almost impossible to open a new pub, micropub or brewery taproom.

We are urging the government and political parties in Northern Ireland to end this madness and allow new pubs to open to improve choice for drinkers.

I am frustrated and angry about various governments failing to give pubs proper protection in planning law, so that local people can save them as pubs – and about the UK Government's bonkers plans (in England) to weaken existing protection.

I need your help, so that we can keep making the case to governments to protect and support pubs properly.

You can take part in CAMRA's campaigns and contact your local politicians using our template e-mail tools by visiting: camra.org.uk/take-action

Joining CAMRA will also help us to take up the fight for great pubs and great beer – and comes with a host of benefits and discounts on cask beer, cider and perry in Wetherspoon's pubs.

You can join CAMRA online: camra.org.uk/join

Pubs should not be an easy route for developers to make money.

They should, themselves, be viable, thriving businesses at the centre of local communities.

With your support, we can and will increase protection and support for our great pubs, so that they can continue to survive and thrive in the years to come, in every corner of our great nation.

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- 11 Canterbury**
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Key
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