

# Solihull



# Drinker

Issue No 107  
Winter 2025

*Free*  
*Please take one*

## **Solihull CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival - CANCELLED**

Yes, that's right - the 2026 Solihull CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival is **cancelled** - *unless* someone volunteers to take on the role of organiser. I have been organising the festival for over a decade, and I feel it's time to hand over the reins to someone else.

As well as an organiser, we need a Bar Manager - the person who's responsible for looking after the casks of real ale from when they're delivered through to the end of the festival - and a Site Manager. In addition, ideally we'd have deputies in place for those, and the other festival committee posts - Beer Orderer and Staffing.

Be reassured that, if you want to give it a try, you'll be supported all the way. None of us are walking away, we'll provide all the help and guidance needed - we're still fully committed to putting on the best festival possible. However, if we don't get any volunteers, there won't be a festival - and none of us want that.

While asking for festival volunteers, I'll do the same for the overall branch committee. The situation here is different; none of the current committee members are standing down. As with the festival committee, we'd like to have deputies for the various roles - both so there's someone able to take up the slack if a committee member is away on holiday or unwell, and so there are more people involved in organising and running the branch.

Please do consider getting involved; we'd love to have more involvement from our branch members. If you're interested, get in touch by sending me an email at [chair@solihull.camra.org.uk](mailto:chair@solihull.camra.org.uk).

Martin Buck  
Solihull & District Branch Chair,  
Solihull Beer & Cider Festival  
Organiser



The Station Bar

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## Dates for your diary

### Branch Meetings

(Branch meetings start at 8.00pm except where noted otherwise)

Tuesday 6 January	White Lion, Hampton in Arden
Monday 2 February - AGM	KDCC, Dorridge
Monday 2 March	Wharf, Hockley Heath

For more details and contacts for the above, please call Secretary Allan Duffy on 01564 200431 or visit our website [www.solihull.camra.org.uk](http://www.solihull.camra.org.uk)

### Committee Meetings

(8.00 start. Members may attend but only participate if invited to do so)

Monday 15 December	Forest, Dorridge
Monday 16 February	Bull's Head, Barston

### Socials

Sat 13 December	Xmas crawl - Coventry
January (Date TBC)	GBG Crawl
Fri 20 February	Trip to Nottingham
March (Dates TBC)	Weekend Away - Halifax

For more details of socials please contact us at [www.solihull.camra.org.uk](http://www.solihull.camra.org.uk)

***Most, though not all, of our local pubs have disabled access. If you wish to attend a meeting and require assistance please contact us beforehand and we will do our best to help***

## Upcoming Midlands Area Beer Festivals and Events

**FOR NATIONAL BEER FESTIVALS PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING LINK:**

[www.camra.org.uk/beer-festivals-events/](http://www.camra.org.uk/beer-festivals-events/)

**19 - 21 February (Thu – Sat)**

Warwick University Real Ale Festival

Copper Rooms

Gibbet Hill Road

Coventry CV4 7AL

NB: Dates to be confirmed

### Features in this issue include:

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Contributions, comments and advertising enquiries should be sent to

[editor@solihull.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@solihull.camra.org.uk)

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Leeds



The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten any items in the newsletter, but will always strive to honour the spirit & intention of the contribution

## Notice of Branch Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of the Solihull & District CAMRA Annual General Meeting, which will take place at the Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, starting at 8:30 pm.

The AGM will be preceded by a short branch meeting, starting at 8:00 pm.

If any current committee member wishes to stand down, or if anyone wishes to apply to take up a committee post (all committee posts are open to any Solihull & District branch member), in both instances it would be appreciated if you would please email your intentions at least two weeks before the AGM to the Chair, Martin Buck, at [chair@solihull.camra.org.uk](mailto:chair@solihull.camra.org.uk).

There will be the usual beery raffle, to go towards the costs of running the branch (principally, the Solihull Drinker magazine); beer-related donations will be gratefully received on the night.

*Solihull*  
**THE FLUTE & FLAGON**

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**Solihull B91 3SB**

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 	6 Real Ales & 3 Craft Beers	<b>Opening Hours</b> 09.00 - 23.00 Sun - Thur 09.00 - 24.00 Fri - Sat
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KNOWLE AND DORRIDGE CRICKET CLUB  
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## A Trip to Bewdley and Kidderminster

A direct train service from Solihull makes this crawl very easy to do. The bus service to Bewdley is less frequent but can be done with a little careful planning. We all gathered at Kidderminster station for a brisk walk down to the bus station in time to catch the 125 bus to Bewdley. An alternative is to use the Severn Valley Railway if the timetable works for you.

Opening at 11.30 the Great Western is under an arch of the Severn Valley Railway viaduct and is an ideal start point as the bus stops right outside the pub. It was quite busy when we arrived. We were met by 6 handpulls

- from Bewdley Brewery were 2845, a 5% pale ale; Worcestershire Way and William Mucklow's 6% Dark Mild. Wye Valley HPA and Butty Bach were also on offer. Completing the list was Holden's Black Country Special. A cider was also available. Bar snacks are available such as pork pies and cobs. The photo shows us relaxing in the pub.

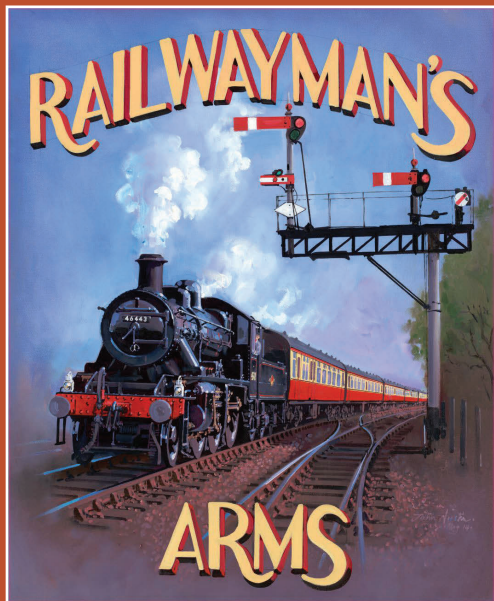
A walk across the bridge and a short walk along the river front bought us to the Bewdley Brewery Tap. Situated alongside the brewery itself it has recently been considerably extended inside providing adequate seating



## TWO CAMRA Good Beer Guide Free Houses!

Travel by train between the two.

For details, see [SVR.CO.UK](http://SVR.CO.UK)



and

### THE KING & CASTLE

on the concourse at

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWN Station**

8 real ales including:

Batham's Best Bitter,

Bewdley Brewery Worcestershire Way,

Hobsons Best Bitter

also

Hobsons Oldfield Cider

### THE RAILWAYMAN'S ARMS

on Platform 1 at

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Serving 9 Real Ales including:

Hobsons Town Crier,

Hobsons Best Bitter,

Bewdley Brewery's Station Porter &

Worcestershire Way,

Batham's Best Bitter

plus one Traditional Cider



both inside and outside on a sheltered terrace. The well-stocked bar had 7 beers from the Bewdley Brewery on offer, Worcestershire Way, Worcestershire Sway, Jubilee Ale, Baldwin IPA, Red Hill, William Mucklow's Dark Ale, and a 3.8% pale ale Sunshine with mango and citrus



flavour. This was my choice and very nice it was too.

We now headed to the main street (Load Street) via a pleasant walk through Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Gardens. This brought us out almost opposite our last pub on our visit to Bewdley, the Real Ale Tavern - a Black Country Ales pub. For choice of beer it is hard for any other pub in Bewdley to beat it. The usual BCA beers were available supplemented by Sharp's Twin Coast, Titanic Plum Porter Grand Reserve, St Austell Maverick, Tatton Blonde, Kinver Noble, Downton Slovenian Hopped Pilsner and 3 ciders - quite a choice. Being adventurous I went for the Pilsner. Expecting something weak

and insipid I was surprised at how it was both hoppy and tasty. (As an aside, Steve was also persuaded to try the Black Dragon cider, from Gwynt Y Ddraig - and liked it!)

That concluded our visit to Bewdley. There is however a Wetherspoons almost next door to the Real Ale Tavern if you have time. We needed to get back to Kidderminster to visit the pubs there. Bear in mind that at present Load Street operates only one way, so no buses returning to Bewdley go this way. The 125 stops just round the corner near the small island near the car park. From Load Street go left past the church then right and right again bring you to the bus stop. The 292 does not come into the town centre.

Our plan in Kidderminster was to visit the Fownd Brewery tap. Luckily one of our crew had found out the Tap had closed for the winter. This news although disappointing saved us a long and pointless (and pintless!) walk. Not too far from the bus station is the Bear and Wolf. It's a modern micropub in a shop unit; amongst its accolades are the local CAMRA branch Gold Pub of the Year 2022 and 2023 and Silver for 2025. It is also a noted music venue on Friday and Saturday nights. Let's get to the beers now. Goff's Cryo Hop Pale Ale, a New Zealand hopped beer which I thoroughly enjoyed. Another Goff's beer, Tournament. From Vocation, Pride and Joy is an American Pale;

New Bristol Brewery Cinder Toffee Stout lived up to its name. Last but not least was Bristol Beer Factories Line Up, a Pacific pale ale.

Time was passing so we made our way back to the station but not without popping into the Weavers Real Ale pub, again housed in an old shop - don't confuse it with the Weavers on Park Lane. It has been here for quite a few years having been voted Wyre Forest CAMRA's Silver Pub of the Year 2022 and one of four National Pub of the Year finalists in 2018. Furthermore it was the local CAMRA branch Silver Cider Pub of the Year 2019. It had 3 ciders on when we visited and a number of keg taps. Our interest lay with the real ales. Gold is one of their house ales. Two Fownd beers were on offer:

Frost Hammer and King Korvak's Champion Porter. Others were Holden's Black Country Bitter, Vale Scarecrow, Bristol Beer Factory Daydreamin', Church End Hellekin, Brew York Calmer Camelion Pale and lastly again from Brew York Protocol a pumpkin spiced stout. Quite a few to choose from here.

Finally we made our way to the King and Castle prior to catching our train home. I never used to rate this pub highly as its range of beers were quite limited. No more. This pub is a must. I'm afraid I can't provide any details of the beers as I forgot to record them but there was at least 6. A two minute walk bought us to the station and a direct train home.

Steve Dyson

# CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2026



Ember Inns Pub of the Year 2024

## THE FIELDHOUSE



10 Knightcote Drive  
Solihull B91 3JU  
0121 703 9209



[www.emberinns.co.uk/the-fieldhouse-solihull](http://www.emberinns.co.uk/the-fieldhouse-solihull)  
6 Real Ales on at all times  
CAMRA members (membership card required) 20p off pint of cask ale every day (except Mon/Thurs)  
CAMRA members 10% off food bill

Open Mon – Thurs 11.00 – 23.00;  
Fri 10.00 – 23.30; Sat 10.00 – 24.00;  
Sun 10.00 – 23.00  
Hot & cold meals from 12.00 noon to 9.00pm  
Brunch 10am – 11.30am Sat & Sun

### Live Music & Events

Quiz nights Tues & Sun from 8.45pm  
Steak nights Thurs from 5.0pm  
Curry night Wednesday from 5.0pm  
Music Quiz first Monday every month  
We are taking festive bookings now - 10% off food for CAMRA members

<p>MONDAY <del>THURSDAY</del></p> <p><b>CASK</b> </p> <p>Ales £3.50</p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	<p><i>Cocktails</i></p> <p>2 FOR £13.50 <small>ANY 2</small></p> <p>SHOTS</p> <p>4 FOR £14.50 <small>ANY 4</small></p>
<p>THURSDAY <del>SUNDAY</del></p> <p>WINE Club</p> <p>Bottles FROM</p> <p>£13.99 <small>ADD optional DECK</small></p>	<p>FRIDAY <del>SATURDAY</del></p> <p>FIZZ WEEKEND</p> <p>Bottles FROM</p> <p>£15.00 <small>ADD optional DECK</small></p>

## Red Lion, Knowle

The Grade II listed Red Lion in Knowle is described by Historic England as “an early 17<sup>th</sup> century timber framed building.” A section of the original wattle and daub construction can be seen on the first floor of the south side, near the entrance to the car park. Inside, there is an original 17<sup>th</sup> century fireplace in the public bar that bears the date 1779 stamped on the urns at



each end, and a cruck beam on the first floor. There is no pictorial record of the timber framing on the front of the building, as the facade was plastered over during the Georgian era. Early photographs show a much larger range of outbuildings than exist today. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Red Lion consisted of a public bar, tap room and parlour, with flagstones throughout the ground floor.

Entries in contemporary trade directories from 1828, and also the 1841 census, list Richard Chinn as the licensee. During the 1840s he was

succeeded by Henry Cotterell who died in 1852 and his wife, Elizabeth, then became licensee. During Elizabeth’s tenure tokens were issued inscribed E. Cotterell, Red Lion Inn, Knowle (photo, below); the purpose of these are unknown. Elizabeth remained the licensee until George Blakemore succeeded her in the 1880’s. In the 1888 Kelly’s directory we learn that the Red Lion was supplied by the Warwick brewery Dutton & Co, which became Dutton & Hudson from 1888. Dutton was taken over by the Leamington brewery, Lucas in 1896; the photo, left, shows the pub a year before this took place.

By 1904 Mrs Rosa Green was the licensee and at about this time Knowle acquired its own fire engine, which was housed in the outbuildings of the pub. Just before the outbreak of the First World War an hourly Midland Red Omnibus



service from the Bull Ring to the Red Lion was introduced at a fare of 9d.

During the 1920s William Cresswell was the licensee and in 1928 Birmingham brewer Ansells took over the Red Lion when it acquired Lucas's estate. Fred Hotchkiss was the licensee in 1938, having previously been the licensee of the adjacent White Swan that had also been owned by Ansells The White Swan was closed in 1937 and demolished two years later (see Spring 2024 Drinker article). Fortunately the ornate sign was saved and now adorns the Red Lion.

A notable event occurred in 1749 when John Wesley visited the yard of the Red Lion to preach but found Knowle a "furious turbulent place". In 1938 objections were made at Solihull Licensing Sessions to the renewal of the Red Lion's licence due to "rowdyism and drunkenness" So no change after almost two centuries!

Between 1995 and 2001, when owned by the Firkin chain, the pub was known as the Felon & Firkin. Since 2002 it has been part of the Ember Inns (Mitchells & Butlers) chain and reverted to its original name.

(Dr) Iain Wells

### Useful Contact Numbers

<b>Chair</b> Martin Buck.	01564 770708	<b>Pubs Campaigning / Cider &amp; Perry</b> Paul Wigley	07402 312457
<b>Secretary</b> Allan Duffy	01564 200431	<b>Treasurer</b> Brenda Duffy	01564 200431
<b>Membership</b> Dave Mckowen	01564 778955	<b>Social co-ordinator</b> Steve Dyson <a href="mailto:steve_dyson@solihull.camra.org.uk">steve_dyson@solihull.camra.org.uk</a>	
<b>Social media</b> Martin Robins	07771 842046	<b>Young Members</b> Iain Wells	07810 827043
<b>Website</b> Keith Whitehouse <a href="mailto:webmaster@solihull.camra.org.uk">webmaster@solihull.camra.org.uk</a>			

#### **Trading Standards contacts:**

For local consumer advice in our area please contact the following

Solihull – [www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

Warwickshire – [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/contactustradingstandards](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/contactustradingstandards)

Citizens Advice Consumer Service – phone 03454 040506

# THE PUP & DUCKLING



1 Hatchford Brook Road,  
Solihull B92 9AG  
0121 247 8358

Open Wednesday –  
Saturday 4.0 – 10pm  
Sunday 12 – 3.0pm

Charity Quiz every  
Thursday from 7.30pm



Find our beers at [www.pupandduckling.co.uk](http://www.pupandduckling.co.uk)  
or [www.Realalefinder.com](http://www.Realalefinder.com)

Solihull CAMRA Pub  
of the Year 2017, 2020,  
2023 and 2024

West Midlands County  
CAMRA Pub of the  
Year 2024



## Advertise Your Business Here With Us

We distribute around 2500 free copies to some 80 pubs (and some clubs, restaurants and off licences) around Solihull, and local parts of Warwickshire and Birmingham. This magazine also goes onto our website and onto our social media pages. This gives you the opportunity to put your business in front of people who are in the habit of visiting pubs and restaurants, etc.

You definitely don't have to be a pub or restaurant to advertise. Any business seeking local reach (tradespeople, take aways, taxi companies etc) could benefit. For further details or information about advertising, or to discuss any proposed advert, please contact [editor@solihull.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@solihull.camra.org.uk)

It might be possible for us to offer adverts for certain sectors on an exclusive basis, so if you run a taxi company (as an example) we might be able to agree that yours would be the only such advertiser benefitting from being in our magazine.

Our advertising is competitively priced, see rates set out below.

We offer a 10% discount for advertisements by CAMRA members (membership number required). We also offer a 10% discount for advertisers taking out an advert for 4 consecutive editions (the advert can be amended for each edition, if you needed to include time related offers for example). If both discounts are applied, it is 20% off the advertising rate quoted below.

SIZE	INNER PAGES	FRONT COVER
<b>Full (A5) page</b>	<b>£120.00</b>	<b>Not available</b>
<b>1 / 2 page</b>	<b>£90.00</b>	<b>£120 (landscape only)</b>
<b>1 / 3 page</b>	<b>£66.00</b>	<b>£90.00</b>
<b>1 / 4 page</b>	<b>£54.00</b>	<b>£72.00</b>
<b>1 / 6 page</b>	<b>£42.00</b>	<b>£56.00</b>

## CAMRA Real Ale, Cider and Perry Vouchers

The CAMRA Voucher scheme is a member benefit that entitles members to £30 (60 x 50p) vouchers off a pint of Real Ale, Cider or Perry. The vouchers in this CAMRA owned and operated scheme remain valid for the length of membership for added flexibility.

They are redeemable at over 1,550 pubs nationwide, including Wetherspoon, Proper Pubs, and City Taverns. To get an up-to-date listing for pubs participating near you, enter your postcode at [https://camra.org.uk/membership/camra-discount-scheme?landing\\_style=discount\\_scheme&benefits\[0\]=MemberDiscountScheme&sort=nearest#pubs](https://camra.org.uk/membership/camra-discount-scheme?landing_style=discount_scheme&benefits[0]=MemberDiscountScheme&sort=nearest#pubs)

CAMRA promotes responsible drinking and thus encourages all vouchers to be used responsibly at all times.



## Crowdfunding the Drinker - Update

In our January issue we announced the introduction of a new initiative – a kind of ‘crowdfunding’ approach to help support the Drinker magazine. As we explained, the magazine needs to be self-funding; without businesses placing adverts (if you do want to advertise with us please see page 15 for details) there simply wouldn’t be a magazine, so many thanks to our advertisers, old and new.

To supplement that, and to allow businesses to support us without committing to advertising, we’re asking for contributions of a nominal £10 per quarter. I’m delighted that we have four businesses doing just that – **huge**

**thanks to the Pup & Duckling, the Station (Henley-in-Arden), Tap & Tandoor and the White Lion.**

As we explained in the previous issue, if you make this contribution for six issues, you’ll be entitled to a free ¼ page ad in the magazine – consider it micropayments towards your own ad.

Please do consider joining the scheme; the magazine is our main tool for campaigning for clubs, pubs and real ale, as well as informing people of local matters and events. If you’re interested, just get in touch.

## Hail to the Ale

This is the section where we update you on news related to pubs, clubs, off licences or breweries in our area. We rely heavily on you, our readers, to keep us updated so, as always, if you hear of anything you feel we or others should know about then please do drop us a line at [pubs@solihull.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubs@solihull.camra.org.uk).

Confirming last month's report, the Henley Mile Tap has opened, just across the entry way from the White Swan. At least four real ales on offer, including two from the Henley Mile brewery (10 yards away, further up the entry - can't get much more LocAle!) plus two rotating guests.

Staying in Henley in Arden, the Station now offers a discount on real ale to CAMRA members.

Thwaites brewery has taken over the Blue Bell Cider House, Warings Green; this is only a few hundred yards from the Bull's Head, Earlswood, also a Thwaites pub.

The Bulls Head in Barston is under new management, and closed for several weeks for refurbishment. It has now reopened.

Paul Wigley - Pubs Officer

# Give a gift membership to the beer lover in your life!

Beers are best shared with others. So, treat someone you like to a CAMRA gift membership and bring them along to the pubs and festivals that matter.

**Set the membership to start on someone's special day!**

They'll receive all the great discounts, benefits and vouchers your do, through the post.

Gift a membership today!  
[camra.org.uk/gift-membership](https://camra.org.uk/gift-membership)



## Membership Matters

It's that time of year again, when you're struggling to find a Christmas present for a relative/friend/loved one who is also a real ale fan/drinker; well, forget the hassle of traipsing up and down the high street, I have the answer to your problem. A year's CAMRA membership could be the solution and with some membership packages starting from as little as £30.50 per annum (Direct Debit) which equates to about 58p per week, and some of the Christmas gift memberships include a copy of the 2026 Good Beer Guide. Personally I feel even in these constrained financial times this still represents value for money.

So what would they get if they were to become members of CAMRA as a Christmas present I hear you ask. Well, new for 2026, they will get free entry to the many beer festivals organised by local CAMRA branches all over the country, and they will also get £30 pounds worth of Real Ale/Cider vouchers which can be used at numerous pub chains including Wetherspoons, Stonegate, Brains etc.

If you know somebody who was a CAMRA member and has not renewed his/her membership can you please persuade them to rejoin the campaign; many factors including the cost of living have contributed to a decline in CAMRA member numbers.

So why bother joining CAMRA? We are not just about real ale even though the interest in real ale continues to grow

which is reflected by an ever increasing choice of real ale in pubs. We also support the brewing industry, publicans, consumers rights and community groups nationwide who are either trying to prevent their local from being sold to developers or being closed for good. Some of the membership fee helps to provide funds for campaigning and for some of the groups indicated above. We hold monthly meetings at a local pub with good real ale, but if you don't fancy that, come along to one of our social events; we are a friendly bunch and will make you more than welcome, someone might even buy you a pint! Please see the Dates for your Diary section in this magazine or visit [www.solihull.camra.org.uk](http://www.solihull.camra.org.uk)

Furthermore this year we once again organised and ran the Solihull Beer Festival, where as a local CAMRA member you could have joined like minded volunteers and help us run the Festival where we showcase real ale/cider to the general public, so if you fancy a slightly more active social life CAMRA membership could be just the ticket.

Finally I would like to wish all of you reading this publication a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and enjoy whatever ale you try/buy over the festive season and beyond.

Dave Mckowen  
Membership Secretary

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The 108<sup>th</sup> edition of the Solihull Drinker will be published on Monday 2 February 2026. Please note that the deadline for copy, advertising and any other contribution for this issue is **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January**. Thank you in advance to all contributors.

# THE THREE TUNS HENLEY IN ARDEN



**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2025**

**Serving 5 real ales, including Batham's Best Bitter  
Consistently good real ales**

**in**

**16<sup>th</sup> century, family run pub**

**Solihull CAMRA branch overall Pub of the Year 2025  
Solihull CAMRA branch Warwickshire Pub of the Year  
2022 - 2025**

**Opening times:**

**Mon – Thurs: 3.30 – 10.00pm, Fri – Sat: 12.00 – 11.00pm**

**Sun: 12.00 - 10.00pm**

**Come and visit Eliza  
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Henley in Arden  
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**The three tuns**



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