



*Lockdown special*

CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

# Durham Drinker



## Inside:

- Which pubs and breweries are keeping their customers satisfied
- The rest of the Pub and Club of the Year pictures
- All the CAMRA links to keep you going
- What happened to Forsters of Bishop Middleham?

***Hello and welcome to this special, limited edition, online only, advert-free, paperless issue of Durham Drinker.***

With the current situation regarding licenced premises meaning that they are closed for the foreseeable future—with the exception of off-sales, which you can find details of later in this missive—there is little CAMRA Durham can do as a campaign “on the ground.” We can’t get to pubs and clubs to sample their beers, but we can keep you up to date with what is happening with our breweries, pubs, and clubs during this period of lockdown. The best way to keep up with this information is to refer to our Facebook page, check the details in our fortnightly-ish information emails, and visit Whatpub.

You’ll probably be aware that this year’s Durham Beer Festival will not be taking place when planned—even if the licenced trade has re-opened by then, we feel that we’d rather put our efforts into supporting the pubs and clubs which have served us so well over the years, and help them get back on their feet. We hope to arrange some visits to towns and villages across our area to assist with this, so please watch out for any information as and when lockdown is lifted.

As ever, we rely on our members to keep feeding us any information they come across, so if your local pub or brewery is offering their wares on an off-sale basis, please let us know and we’ll update our records. In other news, the proposed refurbishment of the Half Moon in Durham has been shelved. I’d like to think that the comments and input of CAMRA Durham and its members had a bearing on this decision.

As a bit of light relief, we give you another of Dr Jones’s ever-popular pieces on the changing pub scene in our county, and also some images of those recipients of our recent Pub and Club of the Year awards that we didn’t get in issue 136 of DD, as well as a list of which pubs and breweries are doing what in terms of keeping their customers happy during these difficult times.

As we can’t physically meet up at the moment, we’re holding an online social every Tuesday at 8pm, at the Dunelm Arms, unless it’s the Tuesday of the online branch meeting. Please look out for the invitation to these events, which should be included in our fortnightly-ish email, and the link also appears on the CAMRA Durham webpage. The socials give us the chance to catch up with other members, compare beers and their availability, and generally indulge in normal pub chat while comparing bookcases. A recent one even featured the Northumbrian pipes, so you never know what might crop up.

We have put together a page which links to CAMRA’s WhatPub site showing which outlets are providing these services and also details on our local breweries and their activities. We urge you to visit this page at <https://www.camradurham.org.uk/covid-19> on a regular basis to see what is going on. There are also links on that page to email the Branch to update us on any missing or inaccurate information. We really need your help; but please only find this information while keeping in-line with current UK Government guidance.

You may also wish to engage with CAMRA’s national campaign, #pullingtogether, through the national website at <https://camra.org.uk/pullingtogether/> or over on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pullingtogetherforpubspintsandpeople/>

Above all, please remain safe at this time. Remember there are ways to continue to enjoy and support real ale and local businesses without putting yourself or others at risk. We look forward to seeing you all in the, hopefully, not too distant future.

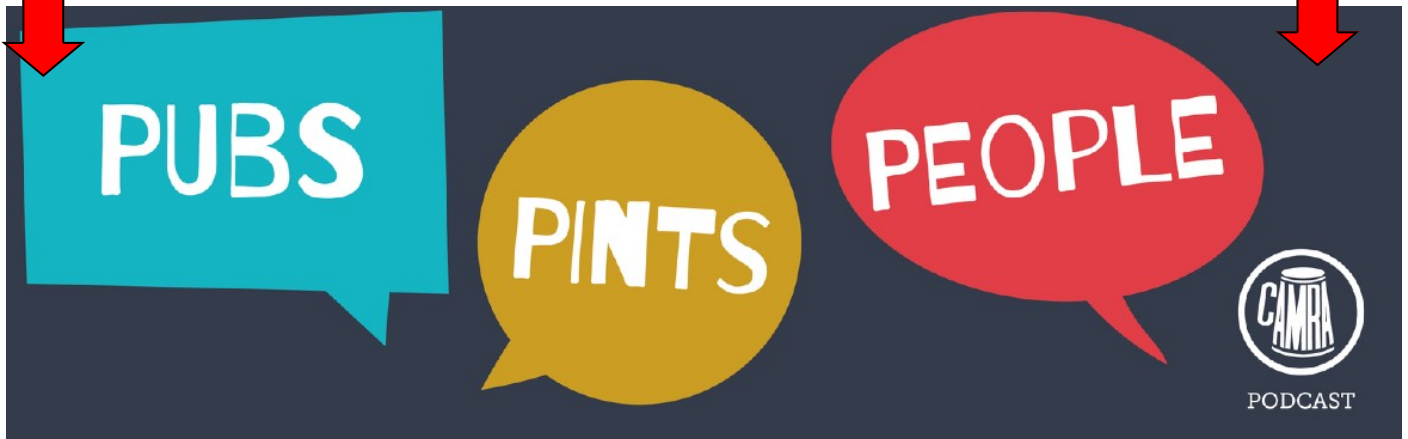
*Paul Dobson*



<https://camra.org.uk/pullingtogether/>

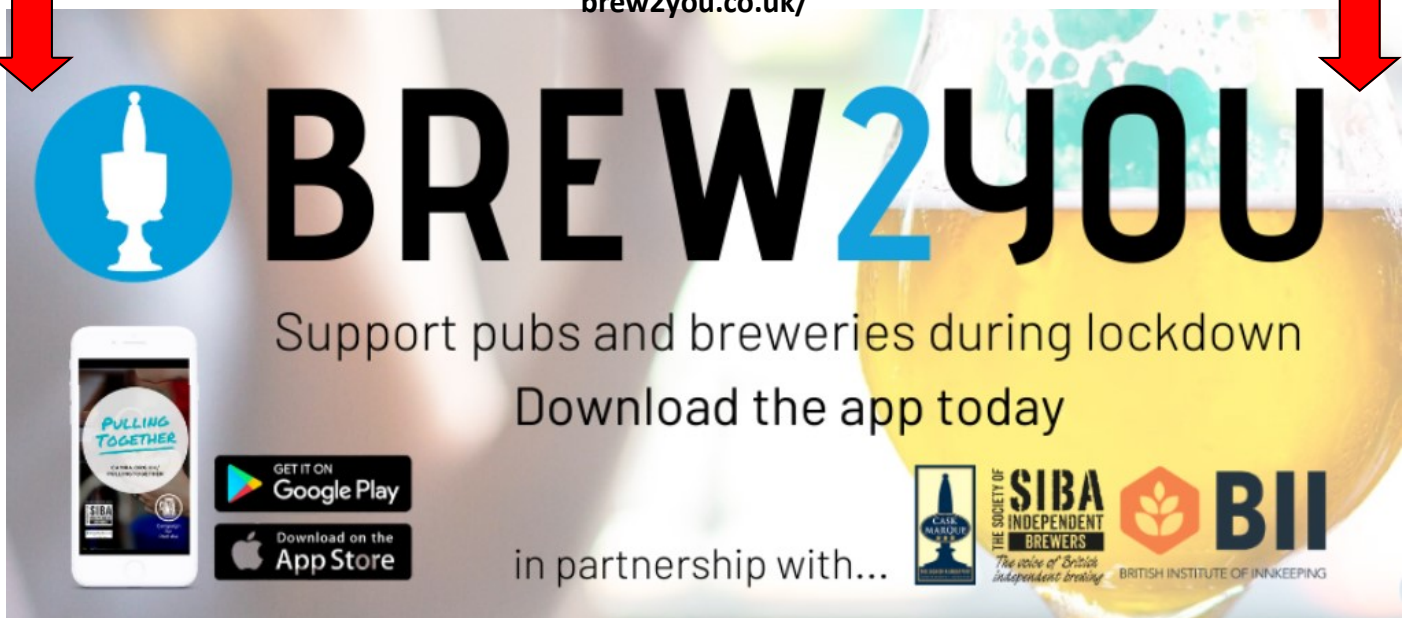


If Peter Crouch can do Podcasts, so can CAMRA! <https://camra.org.uk/podcast/>



CAMRA can help you find and order beer and cider to be delivered to your door  
[brew2you.co.uk/](https://brew2you.co.uk/)

[https://](https://brew2you.co.uk/)







Craig and Gemma at Chester le Street's Masonic Centre, Club of the Year



Try CAMRA's national online pub for chat and socialising





Chris at the Station House, North Road, Durham  
- City Cider Pub of the Year, and City Pub of the Year runner-up



Libby at the Victoria, Hallgarth Street,  
Durham, City Pub of the Year



Joan at the Butchers Arms, Chester le Street, Town Pub of the Year runner-up





Above is Sara-Jane (honest, it is) at the Black Lion, Wolsingham, Country Cider Pub of the Year



Left is Rob at the Black Bull, Frosterley, Country Cider Pub of the Year runner-up

## The history page

# And Sunderland

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## ARY, COMMERCIAL, AGRICULTURAL,

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THE LARGEST AND MOST EXTENSIVELY CIRCULATED PAPER PRINTED BETW

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FRIDAY, JULY 4, 1834.

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**HALF MOON INN, DURHAM.**  
**ROBERT BROWN,**  
*(Late of the Three Tuns, Bishop Auckland.)*

**R**ESPECTFULLY announces that he has entered upon the old-established INN, called the **HALF MOON**, at the Foot of New Elvet, DURHAM, where he trusts he shall receive a share of the favours of his friends and the public.

R. B. has laid in a Stock of excellent Wines, Spirits, &c.; and begs to assure the public that no exertion shall be wanting, on his part, to promote the comfort of his guests.

Convenient STABLING is attached to the House, which is well adapted for the accommodation of Commercial Gentlemen, being in the very centre of the town. Charges, in every respect, on the most moderate scale.

The TELEGRAPH COACH changes horses at the Half Moon every morning and evening.

**GOOD HACK HORSES and NEAT GIGS.**  
 Durham, June 25th, 1834.

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**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,**  
**THAT THOMAS BARTON BOVER,**  
 Esquire, one of His Majesty's Commissioners for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors will, on the 26th

**MINERAL SUCCE**  
**FOR FILLING DECAYED TEETH WITHOUT**  
**And Inevitable Pain**  
**PLACED WITHOUT WIRES, SPRINGS, &c.**

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**MONSIEUR M**  
**SURGEON DENT**

*Of the Firm of Mathon and Sons, 92, Great Broad-Street, Bl*  
*London; 36, Mosley-Street, Manchester; an*

**R**ESPECTFULLY acquaints the Nobility and Gentry surrounding Visitation, after repeated applications at th induced to visit those places professionally, and may be now on

**ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, AN**  
 At No. 47, Blackett-Street,

*And on Thursdays and Fridays (from 10 till 4),*  
*Fenwick's, Grocer, Head of Fleet Bridge,*

**MONS. MALLAN and SONS** continue to RESTORE small the Cavity, with their celebrated MINERAL SUCCE the Faculty of England, France, and other Continental Cities. performed in a few seconds; the Mineral is put into the cavity

Landlord Graeme Draper of the Half Moon in Durham recently sent us this newspaper cutting from 1834, detailing the purchase of the Half Moon by Robert Brown, formerly of the Three Tuns in Bishop Auckland.

It's a great piece of history, but there's a slight hitch, as Bishop Auckland had two Three Tuns, conveniently called the Big Three Tuns and the Little Three Tuns. One was in Newgate Street, and was demolished in the early 1970s, with the site now occupied by Boots the chemist. The other was at 9 Fore Bondgate, closed many years ago, run by John Hall in 1910 and Thomas Gash in 1939, and demolished in the early 1980s. A clothes shop now occupies the site. If anyone has traced their family back to publican Robert Brown, perhaps they can tell us which of the Three Tuns was his.



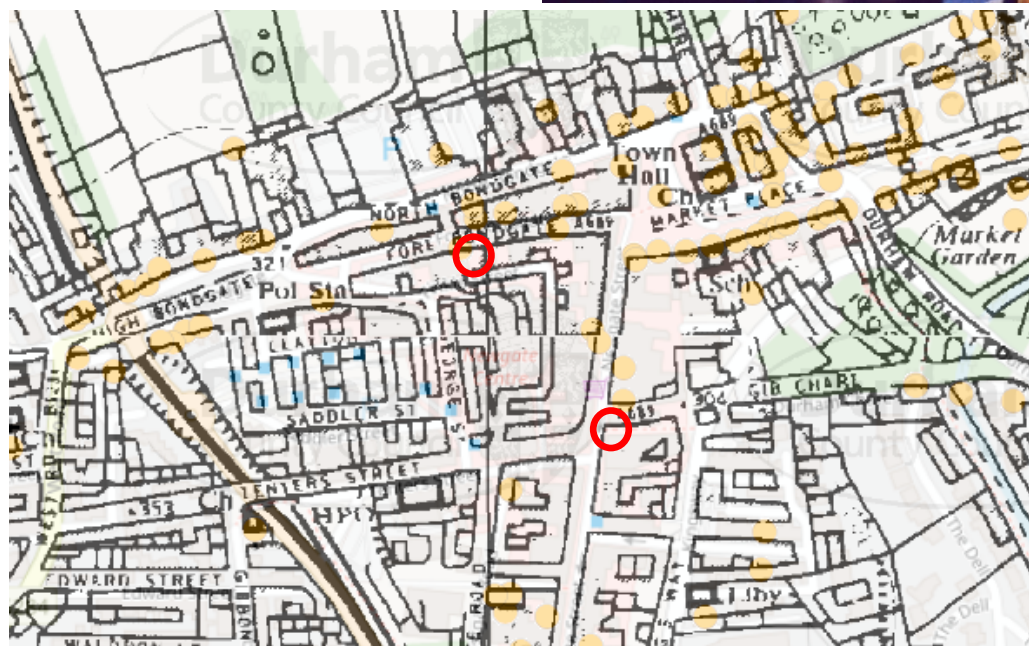


**Left** - the Newgate Street Three Tuns, date unknown, being passed by what was possibly an Ascension Day Parade. Could it be former landlady Mary O'Dowd in the upstairs window?

**Below** - the same Three Tuns in 1968, which means that our editor is probably one of the youngsters following local jockey Brian Fletcher as he brings Grand National winner Red Alligator back to town



**Below** - Bishop Auckland in the 1960s, showing the location of both Three Tuns

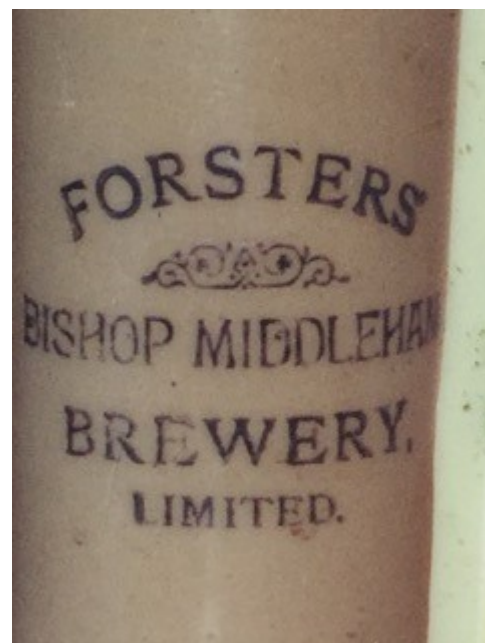




## Bygone breweries of County Durham

### Forsters Brewery

Forsters brewery (please note the 'R', and the lack of the apostrophe was obviously a "thing" amongst brewers many years ago, therefore not started by Camerons) was a small to medium sized brewery in the village of Bishop Middleham, about two miles to east of Ferryhill. Its origins are somewhat cloudy but in about 1820 an Anthony Reed started the brewery, then his brother Robert took it over. Robert then sold it to the Hodgeson family, who had married into the into Forster Family in 1870. The moderately extensive brewery was burnt down in 1899 and rebuilt in 1901.



The new brewery was designed by a Stephen Wilkinson from Pelton, and was a specular four-storey tower brewery with an oriental style cupola in the centre, three corner towers, and a large tower- like chimney on the South West corner. This prestigious construction, if around today, would certainly be a listed building.

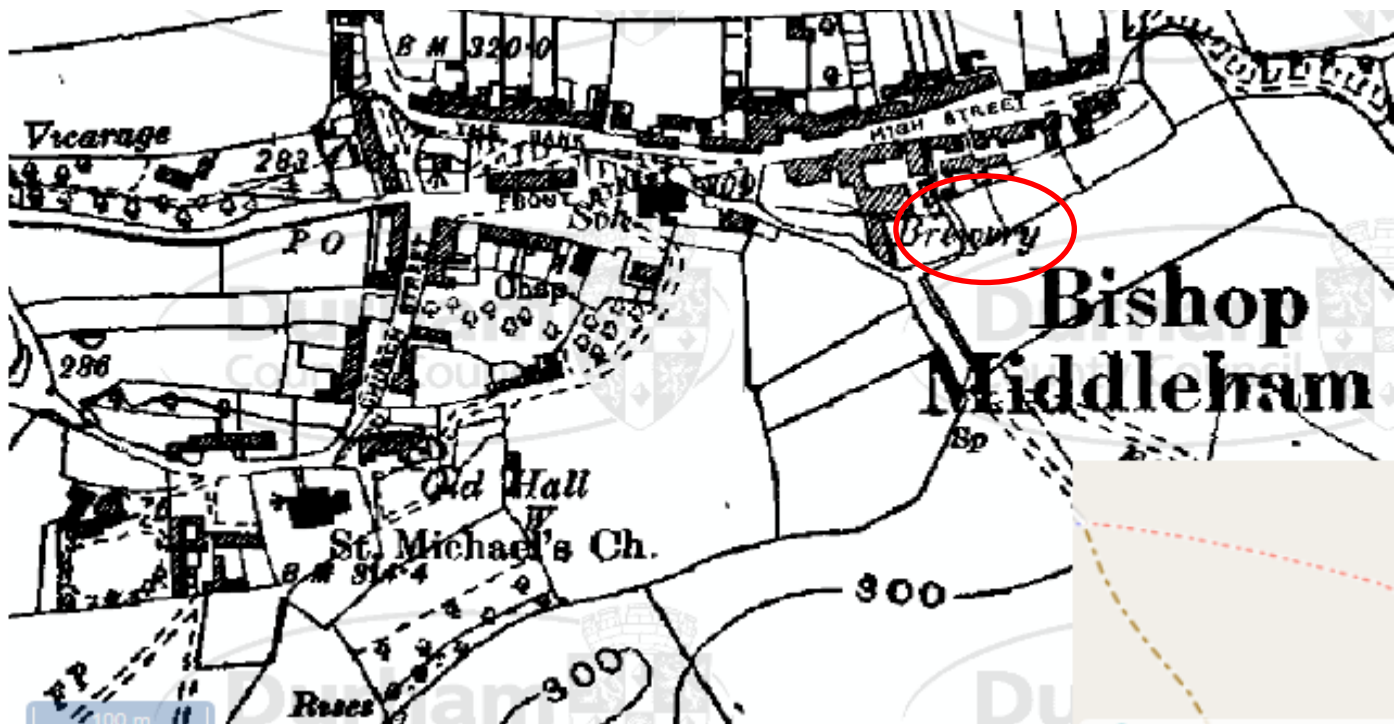
The cost of the rebuild and the start of rationalisation in the brewing industry led to Forsters being bought out by Newcastle Breweries in 1909 and brewing ceased in

1930, with the Tyneside brewery maintaining it as a bottling and storage plant. During world war one, when most of the brewery's workers where away on service, boys and girls were employed in the bottling process.

In the mid-thirties the brewery became a Government sponsored adult school for the retraining of the unemployed. It was later abandoned, but during the second world war it became a prisoner of war camp for Italian and later German POWs. Newcastle breweries took it back again in 1950s as a distribution centre employing twenty men. It was finally abandoned in 1960 and demolished in 1964.



The site of the brewery, opposite the Cross Keys pub, remains an open space grassed over and with a children's play area, to the rear of which remains what may have been where the drays collected the barrels.



The brewery owned thirty six pubs, situated mainly within ten miles of Bishop Middleham, but they did have six in North Yorkshire. The furthest north was The Oddfellows Arms, one of eight pubs that existed in Witton Gilbert in 1894, and the furthest south The Royal Hotel in Thirsk, which still stands. The furthest east was the Stockton Hotel in Redcar and on the west side in Willington, The Lion & Unicorn, both of which still stand, although the latter closed a few years ago.

Sadly, of the thirty six listed, a mere fifteen are still open, although it's possible some pubs may have changed their names. Oddly, only one of the four pubs in Bishop Middleham itself was owned by the brewery: The Dun Cow, which closed only twenty years ago after a spell as a Castle Eden house during which it was a CAMRA favourite. The Cross Keys opposite the brewery doesn't appear on the list, and the brewery had no pubs in Sedgefield, a mere three miles away.

But what about the beers? Well this may be for another day. The brewery's archives are part of the huge S&N archives, which are now in the Newcastle archives. I contacted them, and they said the archives concerning Forsters brewery have yet to be catalogued—a situation further complicated by the current Covid pandemic. Give me time, and I'll do my best to find out some details—obviously, if you have any information, I'd be glad to hear it, so please get in touch by emailing [publications@camradurham.org.uk](mailto:publications@camradurham.org.uk)



*P. Jones*

**Right** All that remains of the brewery now is a fragment of the foundations of the eastern boundary wall





## The Virtual Pub

Cast your mind back a few short months. Think of January.

Now think of telling your mates you want to meet them in a 'virtual pub'. "A what?" "Well, we will all sit in our front rooms, with bottles from a supermarket or a little container from a brewery, stare at our phone or iPad, maybe at a laptop, and have a natter", you might explain, with the almost inevitable answer being "Why would we want to do that?"

I think most people would have been of this view, finding the idea of converting our electronic boxes and the rooms of our houses into some form of virtual pub to be vaguely ridiculous. I certainly would have, and that is despite having drinking buddies spread far and wide. It just seemed more logical to wait until I could visit in person to see them. In fact the idea of a drink over a video link never crossed my mind.

Yet, now in June, this virtual pub idea has become a feature of life that is marked in the diary, enjoyed and will in all likelihood remain after we are back to 'normal'. It has opened up the possibility of having 'pub' conversations with distant friends whenever it suits. Far from being socially distanced, having to be 'virtual' has led to more beers with friends than before we entered this strange lockdown world.

So, is there still a place for the pub? I think the short answer is yes and the way I have come to think about it is this. If you know people already, this sitting at home, beer in hand, chatting away, works well. It is a continuation of a friendship, or in the case of our CAMRA socials, a shared interest. What you don't get is the unexpected. There is no stranger to start talking to about the football, no incident in the other bar that everybody stops to look at, a lack of an unexpected beer to try out, an absence of the sights/smells and sounds that accompany the regulation hand to mouth movement that is such a part of an ale drinker's daily exercise regime.

I think we all miss the pub, even the bits we choose to ignore - like the smell in the gents! But I for one am thankful that a combination of inventive breweries, living in the age of the Internet, and having more time to fill has resulted in discovering, and in many ways defining, the 'virtual pub'. As the weeks have gone by, each group (for there are different groups in different imaginary pubs now) that I am a part of has developed its own rhythm, its conversational favourites, its method of dealing with nipping off for a necessary visit and it is noticeable that when someone new joins, it takes a little time for them to settle into the group. In short, over time, it has become like being in a pub with friends.

It is thanks to the virtual pub that I will remember this time as being punctuated by drinks with friends in places that range from York to Toronto, socials and meetings with the CAMRA Durham crowd and even virtual beer festivals. Virtual pubs have added colour to an otherwise monochrome spring, and for that I am thankful.



*Steven Spencer*

***Here's the list of the pubs and breweries that are offering service to their customers – please note that this may be beer, food, or both, so give them a ring to see what it is they are offering, as things can change quite quickly at the moment. Search online for WHATPUB, then enter DURHAM (CAMRA) and the list should appear.***

Ram's Head, Langley Park

Black Lion, Wolsingham

Ship Inn, Middlestone Village

Grey Horse, Consett

Daleside, Croxdale

Court Inn, Durham

Barley Mow, Birtley

Head of Steam, Durham

Surtees Arms/Yard of Ale, Ferryhill Station

Three Horse Shoes, Leamside

Travellers Rest, Belmont

Victoria, Witton le Wear

Drunken Duck, Durham

Village Inn, Kirk Merrington

Quarry Burn, Hunwick

Joiners Arms, Hunwick

Copper Mine, High Jobs Hill

Duke of York, Fir Tree

Red Alligator, South Church

Farmers Arms, Shadforth

Stapylton Arms, Hawthorn

Hardwick Arms, Sedgefield

Castle Eden Inn, Castle Eden

Royal Oak, Cornsay Colliery

Royal George, Old Shotton

Old Mill, Knitsley

Italian Farmhouse, West Rainton

Royal Oak, Medomsley

Owl and Otter, Burnopfield

Black Bull, Trimdon

Hill Island Brewery, Durham

Crown and Crossed Swords, Shotley Bridge

Newmarket, Tow Law

Moors Tavern, Spennymoor

Eden Arms, West Auckland

Crinnion's of Lanchester

Durham Brewery, Bowburn

Caps Off, Bishop Auckland

Hop Knocker, Gilesgate

McColl's Brewery, Evenwood

Hopper House Farm Brewery, Sedgefield

Smokehouse, Bishop Auckland

Fram Ferment, Framwellgate Moor

Red Lion, North Bitchburn

S43 Brewery, Coxhoe

***Please let us know if we've missed anywhere!***