

Chairman's report – bimonthly meeting Mid Gloucestershire Branch - CAMRA 2nd December 2025

Since our last meeting, the outcome of the budget has posed a significant threat to pubs, clubs, and breweries and will become one of the biggest challenges facing our sector. Rising business costs, tax pressures, the increase in the minimum wage and the general financial climate continue to put enormous strain on the licensed trade. This remains an area where CAMRA must stay active and vigilant.

Gloucestershire's pubs and clubs have finished in the top four nationally, these are The Pelican in Gloucester, The Carpenters Arms at Westrip and the Cheltenham Motor Club. This is an exceptional achievement and reflects the hard work, quality, and commitment of licensees across the county. We await the announcement of the Top Pub nationally, scheduled for release in January, this highlights the strength of our local pub scene.

However, our own branch membership is declining, and this remains a serious concern. In particular, we continue to see a complete lack of member engagement in Gloucester, with very few members participating in events or meetings. I would like to invite anyone to share any ideas or suggestions on how we might re-engage Gloucester members and encourage greater involvement.

Financially, I can confirm that a share of the profits from the Cotswold Beer Festival have been sent to CAMRA HQ, in line with national requirements. I extend thanks to all volunteers involved in delivering the festival.

We will be discussing the branch constitution later in this meeting and I have sent out a proposal. This is an important piece of governance work and we will finalise it today.

We now need to focus on selecting our pubs, cider pubs, and clubs for inclusion in the Good Beer Guide. I want to emphasise that GBG selection is based solely on ale and cider quality, as the Guide is intended to reflect beer quality and consistency. The 2028 selection must demonstrate consistency with NBSS scoring. Pubs and Clubs of the Year require a different and broader assessment, and we will address that as a separate discussion later.

Finally, it is important to note that CAMRA nationally is in a difficult financial situation. Eight staff have been made redundant, and there has been a significant tightening of expense policies across the organisation. These measures underline the serious financial pressures CAMRA is under.

I thank the committee and members for their continued support, and I look forward to our discussions this evening as we work through these important issues.