

THE UNICORN

NEWS, BREWS AND VIEWS FROM ROBINSONS



St Tudwals Inn

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WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF THE UNICORN



A warm welcome to this issue of the Unicorn magazine.

Since our last issue at the start of the year, there has been a lot going on in the pub and brewing landscape. Our Operations teams have been busy learning and adapting to new legislation and regulations in both sides of our business. From the recently introduced EPR, which has been introduced as an additional charge for selling glass bottles, to increased business rates in our English pubs, changes in National Insurance contributions and changes in employment law, our industry has faced continual challenges.

We have been busy working with the British Beer and Pub Association amongst other industry bodies to raise the awareness of the impact of these new charges and gather support from our local MPs for our pubs.

Our Brewing team have been busy with the new brewhouse and we've successfully brewed over 300 beers at our Bredbury site now. We're pleased with the exceptional quality of these beers. Our Brewing and Brands team have also been busy collaborating with some of our local brewers, creating great beers with Runaway and Track Brewery. We're also pleased to see three new Robinsons beers on the shelves in the Co-op, including a Co-op Fairtrade beer, Co-op IPA, and our beloved classic, Dizzy Blonde.

Across our pubs, we've welcomed some great new Pub Partners to Robinsons, as well as saying goodbye to some great people, some of whom have been with us for over 40 years. Our Operations teams have been working away in the background trialling a few new ways of working, which we're working forward to sharing with you soon. We've also completed our five-year investment plan recently, successfully bringing a new lease of life to many pubs, and even welcomed new pubs into our pub estate. We proudly made it to the finals of the industry leading Publican Awards for Best Pub Partnership Pub Company, for the second year running. And, some of our pubs are now finalists in more industry recognised awards, which you can read about inside.

Oliver & William Robinson, Joint Managing Directors

Issue No. 33

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“Our Brewing team have been busy with the new brewhouse and we've successfully brewed over 300 beers at our Bredbury site now. We're pleased with the exceptional quality of these beers.”

Our Sustainability team have been busy working with our pubs to improve their environmental impacts, with 34 of our pubs now recognised as champions in sustainability. They've been working with our Transport team and pubs to reduce our carbon emissions, by trialling a new recycling method for all glass waste from our Managed Houses. This is due to reduce fuel expenditure by condensing our recycling to our site.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine and as always,

Oliver and William

Oliver
Managing Director, Beer Division

William
Managing Director, Pub Division

WOODMAN INN

Full refurbishment for well loved pub

The popular Yorkshire country pub, the Woodman Inn, re-opened earlier this year following a full interior refurbishment. This improvement to the well-loved pub - just outside of Huddersfield, is the second investment the pub has seen in two years, benefitting from a refurbished wedding and function space in 2024.

This recent refurbishment has seen the pub space updated into a refreshed warm and cosy pub and the wedding ceremony room revived. Due to the popularity of the pub, the design scheme focused on creating more space for both drinkers with a dedicated bar area downstairs and creating an inviting dining space upstairs featuring new booth seating, perfect for small groups. The upstairs of the building still features its function room which has been improved to create a greater versatility for events. Downstairs, the bar has been relocated to open the downstairs of the pub and enable a new informal space for socialising and drinking.

During the refurbishment of the downstairs space the team exposed a gorgeous natural stone wall behind some plaster and chose to bring this as a focal point of the pub. Keeping with the country inn style, new stone flooring has been added to the pub, alongside a colour palette of greens, neutrals and warm tones. The pub is filled with plenty of nods to the landscape too with local artwork of the area's heritage and landscape.

If you're tempted by a visit to The Woodman, the inn has 19 guest bedrooms and serves a great breakfast the next day too. If you're closer by, stop in for lunch or dinner – we recommend booking ahead at key times.



Woodman Inn menu



Woodman Inn website



“During the refurbishment of the downstairs space the team exposed a gorgeous natural stone wall behind some plaster and chose to bring this as a focal point of the pub”



ST TUDWAL'S INN

Llyn Peninsula high street venue gets glow-up

Set back from the beach in the picturesque village of Abersoch lies the newly renovated St Tudwal's Inn. The three-month long refurbishment began in January before reopening the pub with Dion Hughes, who has expanded his Robinsons pub portfolio, following the success of The Goat Inn and the Four Alls.

Dion started his hospitality career as a pot-wash in his local pub, The Goat Inn, where he fell in love with the trade, taking on the tenancy of the same pub years later. Since then, Dion has been making waves as an entrepreneur in the Welsh pub scene.

Being Welsh born and bred, Dion champions a Welsh first approach and ensures that both locals and tourists receive a warm welcome and a great experience across his pubs.

Inside the new-look St Tudwal's, the space has been transformed, with lots of internal structures removed to create more open space and a more welcoming experience for customers. The re-design of the space has also created extra space for customers and allowed the space to be more versatile for both drinkers and diners, all year around.

Due to its beach proximity, the design takes influences from the Welsh coastline. You can also expect to see coastal influences across the fabrics, décor and the paintwork – think Hamptons Beach House stripes.

The great thing about the design and layout of this pub is the all-day atmosphere the place offers, where you'll feel as comfortable post-beach visit as you would visiting for a special occasion. The ambience and lighting were carefully considered to seamlessly transition from day to night venue.

Externally the pub has new external seating areas, perfect for enjoying Abersoch's very own micro-climate, with the pub also showing off a new eye catching light pink colour.

The Designer who ran the project for Robinsons reflected on the investment saying, "Every penny has been money well spent on this design scheme. We've achieved a lot, and the pub really has transformed for the community of Abersoch".

If you're thinking of visiting the St Tudwal's check out their website where you can find their food menus. The pub operates a first come- first served policy where bookings aren't accepted – meaning everyone has the opportunity to get involved.



“You can also expect to see coastal influences across the fabrics, décor and the paintwork – think Hamptons Beach House stripes.”



St Tudwal's website

BROADOAK HOTEL

Beautiful refurbishment, honours nearly 100 years in Ashton-under-Lyne



The Broadoak Hotel in Ashton-Under-Lyne recently reopened following a beautiful, carefully thought-out refurbishment. The seven-week refurbishment pays tribute to its nearly 100-year old legacy. Originally designed in 1936 and built in 1937, the Broadoak Hotel was commissioned by Sir John Robinson, grandfather of current Managing Director, William Robinson. It forms part of a distinctive group of Robinsons pubs known as the “Interwar Roadside Inns,” which you can read about in our article later.

“The refurbishment, which began in late April and was completed in mid-June, focused on preserving and enhancing the Broadoak’s original architectural features”

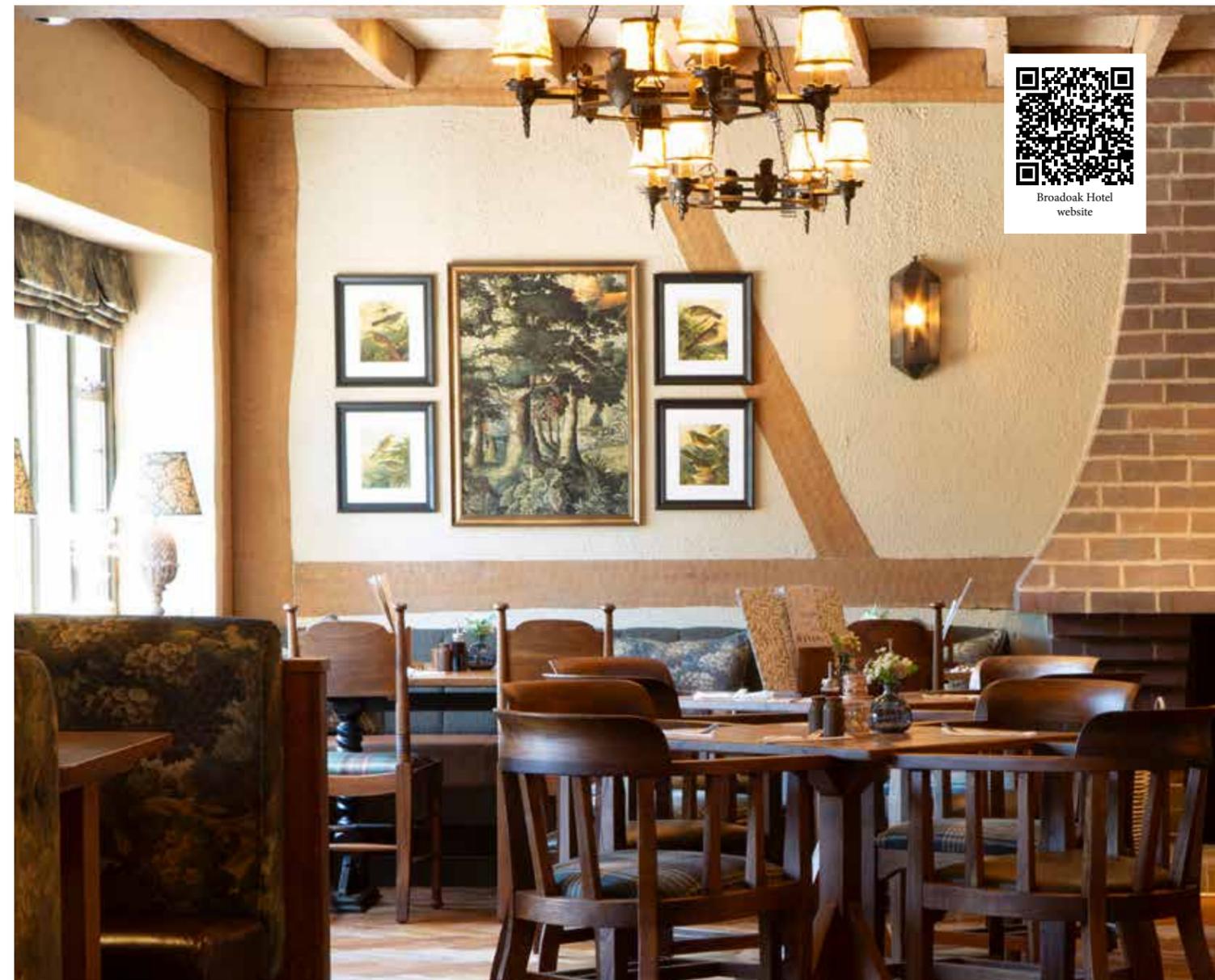
The refurbishment, which began in late April and was completed in mid-June, focused on preserving and enhancing the Broadoak’s original architectural features. All of the original Adze timber used throughout the building was carefully sandblasted to reveal its natural tone, uncovering beautiful details in the beams, wall strappings, and door frames that had covered by decades of dark varnish.

The original parquet dance floor in the function room has been retained and restored, now complemented by new timber flooring around it. Original light fittings, featuring delicate acorn motifs (a subtle nod to the pub’s name), have also been preserved. Additional historic touches

remain throughout, including carved oak leaves in the fascia boards and stone features above the entrance and intricate oak leaf detailing on the door handles.

The design approach aimed to highlight and celebrate the building’s heritage rather than alter it. New elements, such as large-scale woodland-themed wallpaper in the bar and corridor areas, were introduced to enhance the existing character and theme without overshadowing it.

Approximately half of the loose furnishings were upcycled, while all fixed seating was newly installed. Original tables have been repurposed, and both the bar and internal doors were sandblasted and re-stained. A curated collection of artwork from the archive- including vintage Old



Tom beer mats and photographs of brewery vehicles decorated for the 1937 coronation - add an authentic historic layer that connects the pub’s identity to the very year it was built.

The function room, once known as the “Singing Room,” has been thoughtfully reimagined to seamlessly blend with the rest of the pub. While it now feels like a natural extension of the main space, it retains the flexibility to be closed off for private events. Steeped in history, the Singing Room holds special significance as the original broadcast location of the very first episode of BBC Radio 4’s ‘How Does Your Garden Grow?’, now known as Gardener’s Question Time, which aired on 9th April 1947. The show returned 65 years later in 2013, to celebrate its anniversary in the very same room.

A room previously used for meetings and occasionally for storage has also been transformed into additional trading space and can now be opened up or closed off for meetings. The updated internal layout now accommodates up to 160 covers.

Externally, the Broadoak’s front area has been refreshed with lighter-

toned paint, new signage, and repainted fencing. Benches from the front garden were repurposed, restored, and relocated to the rear outdoor area. The addition of new furniture has increased capacity at the front to accommodate up to 84 covers.

Reflecting on the project, the Designer commented “I really enjoyed this project. The architecture has so much history. We’re proud to bring the Broadoak Hotel into its next chapter. This refurbishment reflects Robinsons’ commitment to maintaining the character of our historic pubs while ensuring they meet the expectations of today’s guests. The Broadoak is a much-loved local pub, and we’ve taken care to enhance everything that makes it special.”

With its thoughtful refurbishment, the Broadoak Hotel perfectly balances historic charm with modern comfort. Open seven days a week, the pub serves freshly prepared, homemade food in a beautifully restored setting that honours its rich heritage. If you around the area of Ashton-under-Lyne, pop in and enjoy everything from hearty pub classics and flame-grilled favourites to fresh salads, burgers, and sandwiches.



Broadoak Hotel
website

The Airport

New inclusive playground opens

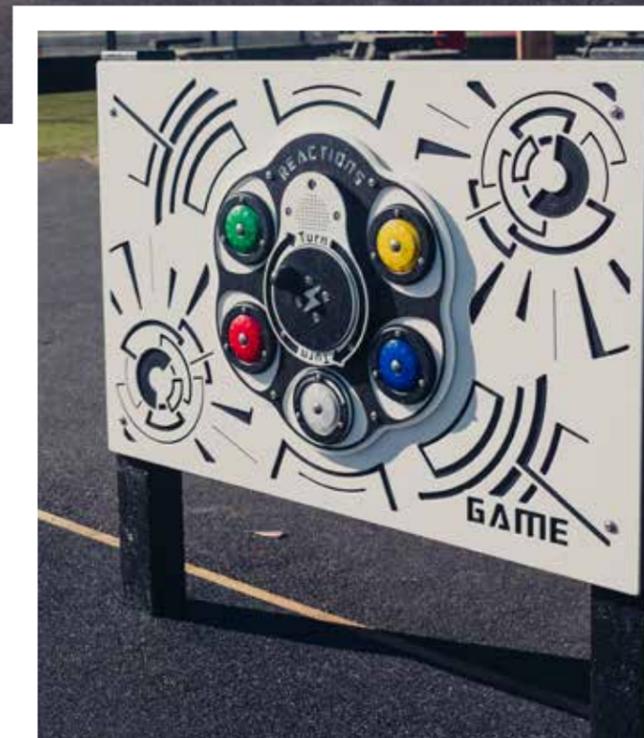
At the end of March, we were delighted to unveil The Airport Pub's newly revamped playground, designed to be more inclusive than it has ever been. Since its last refurbishment in 2018, the previous airplane and play area has been a massive hit with families and visitors. Over time, the growing popularity of the space highlighted the need for a major revamp. The main focus in the revamp has been making the space accessible to all children – particularly for those who may have a disability – so that everyone can enjoy and have fun.



The installation of the airplane is the first in this country. Made from durable, galvanised steel and powder coated for strength and longevity, the new structure is built to last for up to 25 years or more with minimal maintenance. The inclusive design of the airplane includes sensory elements, accessible entry points, and engaging features that encourage imaginative play.

In addition to the play equipment, the playground is now home to a sign language plaque, offering an educational and welcoming facility for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and their families, and to anyone who would like to learn sign language!

Playsound Services Ltd played a pivotal role in sourcing and supplying the specialised inclusive equipment, which includes features such as an inclusive roundabout suitable for wheelchair users, a toddler-friendly slide, and various play panels that are solar-powered to help



“In addition to the play equipment, the playground is now home to a sign language plaque, offering an educational and welcoming facility for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and their families, and to anyone who would like to learn sign language!”

minimise environmental impact whilst educating. To further enhance accessibility, the playground's flooring has been extended, making it easier for wheelchair users to navigate the area and engage with the play equipment.

We are so proud of our design team for creating a space that caters to everyone. The revamp was designed with inclusivity at its core, ensuring that children of all abilities can play together and enjoy the experience. We are very grateful for the help of Playsound Services Ltd for bringing the vision to life.

The playground at The Airport pub offers a fun, safe, and inclusive space for children and families to gather and create lasting memories. The team at The Airport Pub invites everyone to visit and experience the new playground for themselves.



The Airport website



PLAY, WATCH, RELAX

The Friendship in Glossop expands entertainment space

“The pub has gained an additional 20 covers and created a dedicated zone for sports fans and those who enjoy a casual game of pool or darts.”

The Friendship in Glossop has long been known as a welcoming local with a great pint and a laid-back beer garden. Now, after a thoughtful refurbishment, the pub has entered an exciting new era — one that offers even more for its loyal regulars and new faces.

There is now a new game and viewing area, which was once an old unused former storeroom, found at the back of the pub. By knocking through a wall and reimagining the unused space, the pub has gained an additional 20 covers and created a dedicated zone for sports fans and those who enjoy a casual game of pool or darts. The new space features two large TVs, a pool table, and a darts board, with rich new panelling, fittings, and finishes that blend seamlessly with the original character of the pub - as if it's always been there.

Now, the layout naturally divides into two inviting sections: the front of the pub retains its relaxed, social vibe, perfect for casual drinks and conversation, while the back offers a lively, entertainment-focused space ideal for watching live sport or challenging friends to a game. This clever separation means there's something for everyone, without compromising space.

Whether you're after a quiet pint, a seat in the sun, or a game night with friends, The Friendship now offers the best of all worlds and it's still very much your favourite local.



Friendship website



Introducing...

Gemma O'Sullivan

General Manager, Craven Heifer

We recently caught up with Gemma, one of our exceptional General Managers at one of our Managed Pubs. After a year in her role at the Craven Heifer Inn, we learnt a little more about Gemma's journey through the hospitality sector...

So, how did you get started with Robinsons. Could you tell us about your journey and how you started?

Robinsons purchased the Craven Heifer on the 28th November 2023. There was another General Manager in place at the time ready to take over, who was my original General Manager from before, but he decided to leave. So, on the first day, Ellis sat me down and said, "would you mind having a go?" ... Anyway, here we are a year later.

What has it been like since taking the responsibility on?

It has been really challenging in a positive way. At the beginning, it was a really busy time of year anyway because it was December. We were mega busy, and with the takeover all the systems had changed. There was a lot of intense learning in a very short space of time. We managed to pull through Christmas and do really well, and then when January came, reality hit. I thought "I'm actually doing this now!". It has been an interesting journey, it's been challenging, there have been tears and tantrums, highs and lows.

Was this your first General Manager role?

I've always had a manager role, within hospitality, but I had never pursued a General Manager role as I have three children. I went from doing 25-30 hours a week to fulfilling a full-time General Manager contract, which meant I had to make a lot of sacrifices spending time with my children. I think I've now found the balance after a year in. There were times where I probably overworked myself, but when I do something, I throw myself fully into it and then sort of lose sight of everything else!

What have been the biggest challenges?

Essentially, learning everything the Robinsons way, and making sure I'm doing it the right way. I'm a stickler for rules – I love a rule. I like to know what's going on and I like to know that everything is done properly. The hard work is worth it, Ellis (Retail Operations Manager) is proud of us, and I'm really proud of the team and how we've all adapted. Changing management is always difficult and some people struggle to adapt to new styles, but we seem to have found a nice balance now with a good strong team, so it's good.

What do you like best about the job and the role?

I have always loved hospitality, since I was 13 –with my first waitressing job. I love making people happy. I love customer satisfaction. That has always been my priority – making sure someone has an amazing experience. It slightly changes when you become a General Manager because you also need to make sure your team also have an amazing experience. That is something I have found challenging – trying to make sure everybody is happy. I think that stems from being a parent as well, especially with the younger ones in the team. I've gone from just making sure the customer experience is good, to balancing it with the team experience, but overall, I just want people to be happy.

How did your hospitality journey start, of course you said you started at 13...How did the passion for the industry come about?

When I first started waitressing in 1998, I worked in the little teashop in Skipton on a Saturday and Sunday and I just absolutely loved it. I've always loved hospitality, so I've always had a hospitality job. When I got to about 19, I thought – right I need to decide on a career path. I went to work for a mortgage company. I did that for around six years whilst still having hospitality jobs on the weekend. I just couldn't bear sitting down staring at a screen all day, not interacting with people, not moving.

From there, I left, and I was already working at a pub called The Angel at Hetton, which was a Michelin-star gastro-pub. I eventually became their wedding coordinator, which I loved. I love weddings; I love seeing them all come together and seeing the happiness on people's faces. I did

that for a long time, but then they sold that pub just as I was due to go on maternity leave, so I made the decision not to return.

After my maternity leave, I applied for a job here seven times, I lived just down the road. I just wanted a waitressing job and the General Manager at the time said "your cv is too much, we don't really need you", but then I came in and started at two nights a week initially while my youngest was still a little baby. Over time I just snuck into the Assistant Manager role somehow! I have been here now for about seven and a half years!

“We often get asked by customers ‘oh is it different now you’ve been taken over by a brewery?’. I think we still feel like a family-run pub because of the way we all interact with each other.”

Wow, so you have been here long before Robinsons took over!

Yeah, I know the place like the back of my hand! It's like my second home.

That's lovely... Would you say the pub has a family to feel to it then?

Definitely. We often get asked by customers 'oh is it different now you've been taken over by a brewery?'. I think we still feel like a family-run pub because of the way we all interact with each other. We all care about each other, we're all friends and to be honest, Robinsons essentially leave us to it! As long as you are doing your job and doing what you are told, you are running your own pub. I think that's the brilliant thing about it. There isn't a feeling of being controlled or anything like that.

Of course you were here before Robinsons, but why did you choose to stay after the change?

I had met Ellis a couple of times in the lead up to the sale, and I got on really well with him. Everyone that I met was really friendly too, particularly the likes of Nick Burns – I think he's an amazing person! Obviously, there's the convenience of the location for me, and I love this pub, but primarily everyone was really nice, so I didn't question whether I would stay or not.

What advice would you give to anyone wanting to get into a General Manager role or to anyone interested in running a pub?

Find a balance. It is an intense job. It's a lot and it can take over your mind, which I've learnt in the last year. It's a great experience though. You meet so many people – when it's great, it's great. You will also have incredibly tough days and then you challenge yourself and ask yourself – what am I doing! Overall, if you like people and you like making people happy, it's the perfect job!

Introducing BREW HOUSE

Brewhouse is a 4% crisp, clean lager that bridges tradition and modern craft. Inspired by the red-brick charm of our historic Stockport brewery, it pays homage to a town built on industry, grit, and community spirit.

At 4%, Brewhouse is designed to be the perfect reward after a hard day of work and a beer to bring people together every day of the week.

Scan below to find a Brewhouse stockist near you!



Scan here to find a Brewhouse stockist near you!



New Function Rooms ACROSS CHESHIRE

Discover the newly refurbished function rooms at the Red Bull in Church Lawton, Hartford Hall in Northwich and the Flower Pot in Macclesfield.



Flower Pot website



Red Bull website



Hartford Hall website

Off the Beaten Track

We're so lucky to have great pubs in lovely locations in the North West and North Wales. With busy suburban neighbourhoods and historic market towns, you can often spot a Robinsons pub on your travels. We've put together a collection of some of our most rural pubs, which you may not have spotted before.



The Sycamore, Parwich

The Sycamore, Parwich **Derbyshire**

The Sycamore Inn at Parwich sits in the quiet, unspoilt village in the Derbyshire Dales. Surrounded by green hills, stone walls and buildings, and walking trails, the pub is in a landscape that feels beautifully untouched. With its traditional cottages and peaceful lanes, Parwich has that real feeling of rural England. The Sycamore has a welcoming atmosphere and serves great food too making it a natural gathering place for locals and new visitors.

Parwich isn't a place you'd likely discover by public transport with no regular timetabled bus services running to the area. If you're looking to travel by train, travelling by car is the easiest route here, Buxton railway station is over 12 miles from the village. As far as off the beaten track goes, The Sycamore ticks quite a few boxes.



Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese

Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, Longnor **Derbyshire**

The Cheshire Cheese Inn in Longnor is located just a few winding roads away from the nearest town of Buxton. With a small local farming community, the village of Longnor lies in a quiet corner of the Peak District. If you're into hiking, you might stumble close to the village when visiting 'The Dragon's Back', a rather famous set of sharp peaks in the neighbouring area, Earl Sterndale. Public transport to Longnor is limited but possible, with the 441 and 442 buses passing through Longnor between Ashbourne and Buxton at various times between Monday and Saturday, with the latest bus leaving at 6pm.

Longnor itself is small and peaceful, with country lanes, traditional stone cottages, and sweeping views of the surrounding peaks and hills. Being a haven for walkers and nature lovers, the bedrooms at the Cheshire Cheese are the perfect place to stop for a few nights and enjoy the greenery on offer here. As well as being popular with locals popping in for a drink or two, the food on offer isn't to be missed. Expect true home cooked pub food at great prices.

The Fox, Brookbottom **Derbyshire**

The Fox at Brookbottom is wonderfully remote, tucked away in the quiet hills of the High Peak. Reached by a single-track winding country lane and surrounded by woods and walking trails, it feels a world apart from the closest villages of Marple & New Mills. The Fox truly is a hidden gem, one where the locals know the times to visit and hikers will stumble upon it with delight. But aside for that, you've really got to know it's there! The pub has been run by the same family

for over forty years and is an established part of the local community. With more grazing farm animals than people in the close proximity, the air is fresh, and mobile signal is patchy. A visit feels like a step back to simpler, slower times.

The Boot Inn, Eskdale **Cumbria**

The Boot Inn at Eskdale is one of our most remote pubs, located deep in the western Lake District. Surrounded by some of the UK's tallest peaks and natural waters, it sits at the heart of some of England's wildest scenery. With the closest motorway being the M6 at 35 miles away and only a handful of nearby cottages and farms, it feels truly off the beaten track.

By car, you'll take in some of the Lake District's most beautiful views as you weave around country roads before attempting to single track road over the notoriously steep Hard Knott pass. But, don't let us put you off – our talented Dray Drivers drive these roads weekly in their wagon to drop off the pub's beer, so it's very manageable! Travelling to The Boot Inn by public transport is possible – but you can expect it to be quite the scenic route, with a minimum of two changes if travelling from Manchester Piccadilly or Lancaster. From Manchester you can expect a train journey time of around 3.5 hours, to travel what would be approximately 48 miles by road. That said, one train journey isn't to be grumbled at, taking the route via Barrow in Furness will offer you incredible views of the North West's coastal villages and towns, including the Areas Of Natural Beauty of Silverdale and Arnside.

Queens Head, Hawkshead **Cumbria**

Hawkshead remains fairly undiscovered as far as major Lake District villages go. Sitting in the small centre of the village sits The Queens Head, one of our newly refurbished pubs. Hawkshead itself is an idyllic and rather sleepy village with narrow cobbled streets and historic cottages and the nearest major road being several miles away. The village really does provide the feeling of disconnection and escaping busy everyday life. The pub is a welcoming haven for walkers and explorers, with countless trails leading to the busier attractions of Lake Windermere or



Queens Head, Hawkshead

Grizedale Forest. Travelling to the Queens Head by public transport is an adventure in itself – expect a scenic journey with multiple changes, such as a train to Windermere followed by a bus through the winding country lanes. By car, the drive offers stunning views of the Lake District's varied landscapes, with the narrow, winding roads adding to the experience of escaping the crowds and immersing yourself in rural tranquillity. If travelling by car is your preferred option – remember that the roads are small and can lead to slow moving traffic and longer journey times in the summer months, so set off early and make the most of your day.

PUBS WITH A PAST



Interwar Roadside Inns

Of course here at Robinsons, being a sixth-generation business, there is bound to be some history behind the walls of our pubs. Interwar Roadside Inns were commissioned by Sir John Robinson in the Arts & Crafts style in the early 1930's between the World Wars. They were designed to cater to those passing by in motor car, with the new arterial roads and bypasses which emerged across the country in the 1930s. This new type of establishment provided motorists with refreshment, food and accommodation on their journeys. We still have five of the pubs in our current estate; Flower Pot, Legs of Man, Bleeding Wolf, Church House and The Broadoak (see page 8).

Legs of Man, Arclid

This is a proper, old-style pub with none other than a revolving door. Who would have thought it? From a dressed-up dining room to its vast beer garden

and hidden away seating area, the Legs of Man offers homecooked food and proper pub classics. The roof was originally thatched, but after fires in the 1950s, it was replaced with tiles. Set back in the peaceful countryside where the borders of rural Cheshire and Staffordshire meet, the Legs of Man blends timeless character with broad appeal. The Legs of Man offers the perfect space all year round and may even take you back to a different era of life...



Flower Pot, Macclesfield

Set just back from a busy road junction, the Flower Pot remains a striking example of our Interwar Roadside Inns. While it underwent a significant refurbishment in July 2020, most notably with the removal of a dividing wall to create a more open-plan, modern interior, the exterior still proudly retains its original features, which still has a sense of its architectural heritage. If you are in the Macclesfield area, pop in for some delicious food or have a drink on the front beer garden which is a sun trap during the summer months!



Bleeding Wolf, Scholar Green

With its striking thatched roof and classic interior, the Bleeding Wolf in Scholar Green is a Grade II listed pub steeped in atmosphere and local folklore. Its unusual name is said to stem from a legend in which Adam de Lauton rescued either King John or the Earl of Chester from a savage attack by a wounded wolf. In return, he was granted a thousand acres of land stretching from Sandbach to Congleton, or as much as he could walk in a week. Today, the pub still has its historical charm with the warmth of a traditional countryside inn, offering a glimpse into England's storied past while serving up delicious food.



Church House, Buglawton

Located on the edge of Congleton is another of our pubs rich in local history. When you look at the Church House from the outside, you can see the common patterns of styles within the Interwar Roadside Inns and, like the Legs of Man, its original thatched roof was replaced with tiles following fires in the 1950s. Like the other pubs in this collection, the Church House has had an interior refurbishment to refresh the inside, but not without keeping the outside looking how it always has with subtle additions, like fairy lights adorning the outdoor seating area, and you should see the inside of the pub at Christmas time! The Church House continues to serve as a true community hub as it was once designed for, rooted in tradition, and full of character.



The Broadoak Hotel, Ashton-under-Lyne

If you've read page 8, you will know all about the Broadoak's recent refurbishment and how it has had a makeover to enhance its features, without compromising the historic features. The Broadoak Hotel is perfectly situated for those in the Greater Manchester area and even the Peak District and is a beloved local landmark in Ashton-under-Lyne. With its impressive, bold Arts & Crafts-style interior and newly refurbished rooms, the Broadoak Hotel is perfect for any occasion. Whether you're popping in for a meal or planning a special event in the renowned Singing Room, it's a venue that truly stands out.



Legs of Man



Bleeding Wolf



Church House



Broadoak Hotel



STRIDING DETERMINATION

Samantha Robinson

[Warning - This article is about serious illness (cancer)]

Our General Manager, Samantha Robinson joined Robinsons eight years ago, to steer the ship at the Queens Head in Troutbeck. No stranger to Cumbria or Troutbeck, Sam and her husband Mark took over the pub ahead of the re-opening in March 2017 having already spent 31 years in our great industry. She's seen lots of changes to the operations of the pub in her eight years, but one thing that hasn't changed is her love for the pub and the area.

This year, Sam and Mark took part the Mighty Hike for Macmillan. A marathon sized walk around the Ullswater Way, starting at Dalemain Mansion to Pooley Bridge then Ullswater way and back. The challenge isn't your average sign-up-to-push-your-limits, for Sam, Mark, and her son, this a hike with so much personal connection.

Three years after opening the Queens Head as a Managed House, the world stopped business as usual as the covid pandemic hit. However, this wasn't the only challenge happening at the Queens Head. Sam was preparing to take on a second pub and oversee the Queens Head in Hawkshead too when the world re-opened in December 2020, she was ready to be the "Queen of the Queens" – title granted by our Head of Food Development, Nick Burns.

A few days prior to the opening of the Queens Head in Hawkshead, Sam was struggling with an earache and couldn't get in to see the doctor. After a couple of appointments with a nurse practitioner, with failed antibiotics and ignoring the pain to focus on work, Sam got an appointment with a locum doctor, the day before the pub was opening. The words that came out of the doctor's mouth were a shock to say the least. There and then, Sam was told she'd got cancer. An appointment to fix something she felt was straightforward was the beginning of her next challenge.

“ I went straight into ‘what do I need to do?’ mode. I called Simon, our Retail Operations Manager and headed back to the pub to see Mark, David Yip (now GM at Masons Arms). It was all very surreal. Thankfully, I had access to BUPA and was quickly referred to all the services I needed. But, one week later, I received a letter saying I'd need to isolate – I had two pubs open, and I needed to go off work. Fortunately (for me), in the coming weeks the pubs were closed for the



second big lock-down, so that was one less concern. By 1st March I was receiving intensive treatment, five days a week, travelling up and down to Preston daily. I'd had lots of difficult ‘what-if’ conversations and by the time treatment started, it had spread further. They say the mixture of treatment I received was the most toxic, but I absolutely refused to give in to it. I'd be up at 6am, I'd do my hair and my makeup, I'd clean the flat and I'd ensure there was something ready for dinner. I fought

“The time in the hospital was particularly difficult, everyone had to be alone due to covid. I made it my role to try to lift the spirits of everyone in the waiting room, talking to people and making jokes.”

through it. I took myself of painkillers three weeks after treatment which the hospital said was unheard of, but it was pure determination.

The time in the hospital was particularly difficult, everyone had to be alone due to covid. I made it my role to try to lift the spirits of everyone in the waiting room, talking to people and making jokes. I had my final treatment on 9th April, just four months after first receiving the news. It took until July to receive the results, and I'll be honest, I'd already put myself back on the rota for the following week. The oncologist thought I was crazy and advised I took it very slowly. – I felt I had pubs to run; I couldn't be taking it too easy. It was extremely hard work, and life at work has changed for me now, but I ploughed through, and I got back to work.

Nowadays I need to rest more, and I can't do the crazy hours I put myself through beforehand, I notice it and I ensure I rest sufficiently and sit down to eat. The doctors can't believe how much of my life I've got back to the level it was pre-cancer, they say it's unheard of - and I think that motivates me even more to raise both awareness and funds for the vital services of Macmillan. They are worth their weight in gold, and I want to put back into the pot, you never know when you'll depend on their support. Touch wood, I'm four years in remission this year.

The level of support I received from William (Robinson) and the company was incredible and I cannot thank them enough, even though the pubs weren't open. I'd receive messages, calls, bunches of flowers, even the BII (British Institute of Innkeeping) reached out and sent flowers, there was a lot of support there. Mark and I got through it, the hardest part was being so isolated, but there was no way I was letting someone take the reins of the Queens Head, this is my pub! ”

The Queens Head in Troutbeck has been touched by cancer recently too. Mikey, a member of the team lost his fight to cancer. His sister, Kerry, continues to work at the Queens Head, and has worked her way to Duty Manager. Sam, Mark, and the wider Robinsons family are immensely proud of everything she's continuing to achieve, and they are determined to walk for him too. The walk was more than

Samantha Robinson's JustGiving Page



SHOP US AT THE CO-OP

This summer we partnered with Fyne Ales and the Co-op to bring you a range of great new beers to get hold of at Co-op stores! We also introduced three new listings into the Co-op, two of which are new beers to our portfolio!

Introducing Munro Pale

Brewed by our family-brewer friends Fyne Ales, located in the North of Scotland, this new summer ale is a 4.2% pale ale, packed full of fruity flavours such as grapefruit and peach. The beer is named after a group

of 282 Scottish mountains known as the 'Munros'.

Sam Shrimpton, the Head Brewer at Fyne Ales has created a typical mountain ale, using a combination of American hops. Those from the east which generally have piney, more earthy characteristics and hops from the west which typically have more stone fruit characteristics.

With the water sources of Fyne Ales beers coming straight from the hills, there really isn't a more fitting name for a beer, and we're delighted to have collaborated with them.

Munro Pale Ale is the first in a series of collaborations beers between ourselves, the Co-op and other independent breweries.

What other beers can I pick up at the Co-op?

Co-op Best Bitter

This Best Bitter showcases the best of British hops. With four traditional British hop varieties in this 4% bitter, the beer has strong raw-hop characteristics such as grassy, herbal notes and flavours.

Co-op Fairtrade IPA

Brewed using Columbian Fairtrade Cane Sugar, this IPA is packed with flavour at 5%. We brew this beer with a variety of our most-loved hops, which you can find in some of our other pale beers. You can expect a well-balanced pale ale with sweeter citrus flavours.

Dizzy Blonde

New to the shelves of the Co-op, but not new to you, Dizzy Blonde is now available in 342 stores across the North West of the UK. We're delighted to have one of our most popular blonde ales stocked across our homeland. At a slightly stronger ABV than what you'd find on cask in the pub, this 4.2% is a true crowd pleaser.

Where can I find these new beers?

New beers are available in up to 1900 Co-op stores across the UK, with Dizzy Blonde maintaining exclusivity in the North-West of the UK.



50 YEARS OF IRON MAIDEN

TROOPER CELEBRATES WITH 2025 LIMITED EDITION LABEL

Up the irons! It's been 50 years since the legendary Iron Maiden first formed and in 2025, TROOPER is celebrating their gold anniversary with a special limited-edition label that pays homage to the band's incredible legacy.

bottle or pint of TROOPER and toast to the legendary Iron Maiden as they embark on their Run For Your Lives world tour, starting this Summer!

Dean Etchells, Trooper Brand Manager said:

This new beer label and pump clip for TROOPER, takes inspiration from some of Iron Maiden's most iconic records over the last half a century including nods to albums such as their debut Killers, Somewhere In Time, Piece of Mind and Fear of the Dark.

"We couldn't let this milestone pass by without somehow commemorating an epic achievement of 50 years of Iron Maiden! The much-loved Trooper beer stays the same however the limited edition label set and bottle crown have been given a look like never before. It really stands out and is the perfect celebration of the band and the beer!"

The limited-edition label and pump clip will be around until the end of 2025 in selected stores and participating Robinsons pubs, so pick up a



Celebrating 25 Years Wayne Roach



What initially drew you to the pub industry, and how did you end up in the role of BDM?

I graduated from the University of Manchester in 1983 with a degree in Recreation and Management. In 1986, I was offered an opportunity to join Greenall Whitley as a Trainee Area Manager. At the time, I hadn't considered a career in the pub industry, but it was a fantastic opportunity to join a structured training program, so I decided to pursue it.

Over the course of thirteen years at Greenalls Whitley, I progressed from Trainee Area Manager to Regional Area Manager, eventually overseeing operations across half of the UK.

What initially drew me to the trade—and what continues to excite

me—is the dynamic nature of the industry. No two days are ever the same, and it's a people-driven business, which I find incredibly rewarding.

Looking back over 25 years, what are some of the most significant changes you've seen in the pub sector?

Looking back over the past 25 years, the pub sector has undergone significant transformation. When I joined in 2000, the industry was already beginning to experience major shifts. In 2003, we saw a change with licensing, and the Licensing Act came into effect in 2005, which altered trading hours for pubs. Then, in 2007, the smoking ban had a considerable impact on the industry. Additionally, one of the most significant challenges, of course, was the impact of the pandemic in 2020. That period marked another major milestone in the evolution of the industry.

For me personally, joining Robinsons was a shift from my previous experience in a Managed House and PLC company to a more family-run business. At Robinsons, I reported directly to Peter Robinson, and at that time, we had over 400 pubs. The approach to managing these pubs was vastly different from my previous role at Greenalls, where I was part of a much larger corporate structure.

Over the years, the company has had to adapt and modernise, diversifying the way it works. Today, we work much more closely with our Pub Partners, shifting from a simple tenanted model to a collaborative business relationship. The changes have been numerous, but they've all contributed to the evolution of the sector in meaningful ways.

From your perspective, what makes a pub business successful today, and how has that changed over the years?

For me, the key to success in the pub industry is all about the people. The most successful pubs are run by individuals with the right mix of creativity, vision, and a solid business plan. It's about having the ability to execute that vision while creating the right atmosphere. Successful operators focus on building a strong team, offering comprehensive training, and setting high standards for quality across the business. However, it all starts with having the right person in the right role. While we can invest in top-notch facilities and bricks and mortar, without the right individual leading the way, it simply won't work. What would be your top three pieces of advice for someone looking to thrive in the pub business?

I believe that a sense of humour is essential in this trade—there's no question about that. Along with that, a strong work ethic and a genuine passion for people are crucial. The right personality is key, as working in the pub industry really becomes a way of life. It's not like a traditional 9-to-5 job; you're working when most others are socialising, and that requires dedication.

At the same time, it's important to have a solid business acumen. The most successful Pub Partners are those who can execute a business plan or have the flexibility to adapt one to meet the needs of their business. The ability to diversify and think creatively has become more important than ever in today's industry, and those who can navigate that successfully are the ones who thrive.

What common mistakes do you see new pub owners or managers make, and how can they avoid them?

A common mistake new Pub Partners make is jumping into a business without fully understanding it. Often, they come in with a business plan from the outside but fail to assess the operation from within or understand their customer base. Another key error is not grasping the true costs of the business. Many focus on turnover but overlook profitability. I remember years ago, we would do an induction where we'd show new tenants a pound coin and ask how much of it they thought would stay after expenses. Some were surprised to learn how little was left.

There's a great quote that says, 'network is net worth,' and it really highlights how important networking has become in this industry. As it evolves, you have to stay on top of things like social media and how you engage with others. Whether you're networking to recruit staff, communicating with customers, or collaborating with stakeholders, it's crucial. Without that network, you're missing out on opportunities and not reaching your full potential.

The way the industry has changed is remarkable, and we're lucky to work in a trade where every day can be different. One day, I might be managing finances; the next, I'm acting as a counsellor or dealing with personnel issues. It's a constantly shifting mix of responsibilities, and adaptability is key.

"Hospitality truly touches all of our lives in ways we often forget. Whether it's providing local employment, or creating a space for celebrations of life or a Christmas gathering, the pub plays a central role in our communities. It's something we should all appreciate more." — put this in a quote

What do you think sets apart the best pub operators from the rest in terms of collaboration and mutual success?

The best pub operators really stand out because they're fully committed to the business and have a clear vision of how it should work. They know how to tap into its potential and having a solid plan in place is key. The successful ones are organised, dedicated, and ready to put in the long hours. And, like I said before, having a sense of humour is essential, it helps keep things light and helps you get through the tough moments.

As you look ahead, what excites you about the future of the pub industry?

Well, I could joke about retirement, but in all seriousness, from a Robinsons perspective, the focus has been on adapting and diversifying from traditional models to work more collaboratively with our Pub Partners. This approach has helped improve the profitability and sustainability of the business. The ongoing investment program is also really exciting for everyone involved, and the innovations we're

introducing are setting us up for continued success in the future. Finally, if you could give one piece of advice to the next generation of BDMs or pub operators, what would it be?

My one piece of advice would be: enjoy what you do! This job is anything but routine—no two days are the same. Being prepared is key but also embrace the diversity of the environment and the people you work with. Support your Pub Partners with their business plans and take pleasure in the journey. One thing that's always stuck with me is the importance of 'walking the talk.' To truly understand the market and the people you're working with, you need to engage with them at different times, observe their strengths and weaknesses, and by doing so, you'll find that the business will run more smoothly.

“For me, the key to success in the pub industry is all about the people. The most successful pubs are run by individuals with the right mix of creativity, vision, and a solid business plan.”

A NEW GENERATION OF ROBINSONS BREWERY SHIRES BEGINS



Hillgate Lady Gwendolen "Gwen"

2025 has already been an exciting year at Robinsons Brewery, with the arrival of three beautiful Shire foals as part of our ongoing dedication to the preservation of this iconic breed. Since the launch of our Shire Breeding Programme in 2018, we've proudly welcomed each new addition with care, tradition, and celebration. These foals represent not only the future of the Shire horse breed but also the continuation of nearly 200 years of brewing and agricultural heritage at Robinsons.

Hillgate Lady Gwendolen "Gwen"

Robinsons Brewery is proud to announce the birth of Hillgate Lady Gwendolen, a spirited filly born to mare Dolly on the evening of Thursday 13th February 2025. Gwen is distinguished by four white socks and a blaze and was the first foal of 2025 for Robinsons' Shire Breeding Programme. Named after Lady Gwendolen Robinson, wife of Sir John Robinson, Gwen is already capturing hearts across the Robinsons Shires social media pages. The filly's sire is Acle Valentino of Thorpe Hill Stud, and both mother and foal are healthy and thriving under the care of Head Horseperson, Helen Preece.

Hillgate Harriet "Hattie"

Born on Saturday 3rd May 2025 to mare Dilly, Hillgate Harriet, fondly known as Hattie, is the second foal of the season in Robinsons Brewery's Shire Breeding Programme. With a lively spirit and a strong presence, Hattie is already making her mark in the paddock. She is named in honour of Harriet Robinson, eldest granddaughter of George Robinson, brother to Frederic Robinson. Hattie is out of Hillgate Cordelia's Charm, herself named after Cordelia Robinson, and sired by Trem Y Wyddfa Monarch—who is also the sire of "Indie," making the two foals half-siblings. Hattie is also the first second-generation foal from the programme, a truly remarkable milestone in the Brewery's growing legacy of Shire horses.

Hillgate IPA "Indie"

The final arrival of the season, Hillgate IPA- nicknamed Indie - was born on Monday 12th May 2025 to mare Rosie. This striking colt, with his bold markings and naturally inquisitive nature, is already showing signs of a confident temperament. Whilst our Shires are usually named after family members, there is no 'I' in the Robinsons family, so Hillgate IPA (Indie) is named after a great beer, in celebration of Robinsons' brewing heritage. Under the expert care of Head Horseperson Helen Preece and her team, Indie is thriving as the newest member of the Robinsons Shires family.

Interesting fact: To help keep track of the growing Robinsons Brewery Shires family, each foal is named sequentially following the alphabet, a tradition that adds a layer of organisation and charm to our Shire Breeding Programme!

Celebrating a Milestone for Helen Preece

As we welcome new life into the Robinsons stables this year, we're also proud to celebrate a very special milestone: Helen Preece, our dedicated Head Horseperson, marks over 20 years with Robinsons Brewery in 2025. Helen first came to us in 2002 for a six-week work experience placement - and she's been part of the family ever since. Over the past two decades, Helen has played an instrumental role in the care, training, and growth of our Shire horses, leading the breeding programme with passion and expertise. Her deep knowledge, unwavering commitment, and genuine love for the horses have made her a beloved figure within the team and beyond. From early morning foalings to winning ribbons at shows, Helen has been at the heart of it all, and we couldn't be more grateful for her years of service. Here's to Helen, and to many more years of hoofprints and happiness ahead!



Hillgate Harriet "Hattie"



Hillgate IPA "Indie"



Helen Preece

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS IN PROPERTY with Nokomis Heywood

Since Nokomis joined Robinsons 10 years, she's advanced her career and taken steps towards professional qualifications in the property industry. Currently she is the first port of call for our pubs when they have a property or maintenance concern and manages our Property Helpline. We caught up the Nokomis to find out more about her life at Robinsons.

You've been with Robinsons Brewery for 10 years now – what first brought you here?

Well, I actually joined through an agency and, to be honest, I was open to any kind of role at the time. The position I landed was a maternity cover, so I never expected it to turn into something permanent! But luckily, the team took to me - at least, I think they did! [laughs] And I quickly built a great relationship with everyone.

Originally, the role was in the Investments department, but right from the start I had a feeling it wasn't the right fit for me - and I think everyone else knew it too! I remember being in board meetings and asked to take

notes, which I'd never done before in my life. You could tell I was out of my depth! [laughs]

Thankfully, around that time, Josh - who used to run the Helpdesk - was moving into a surveyor role, and they needed someone to step into his old position. That's how I transitioned into the Helpdesk, and it ended up being the perfect move. Since then, the role has just grown, and I've been given so many amazing opportunities for training and development, which is the opportunity to work towards my Surveyors course came about. It was a no brainer. By then, I really understood the business inside and out, so it just felt like the natural next step.

How long have you been studying for your surveyor's qualification now?

It's a 28-month course, and I started it in April 2024, so I'm hoping to have everything completed and be officially associated with RICS by next August. I'm currently doing it as an apprenticeship, studying at college every Wednesday, and I'll be getting my exam results at the end of August.



The first year is focused on exams, and so far, I've been getting Distinctions in all my assignments, which is a huge relief going into the rest of the course! Once that part's done, I'll move on to my end-point assessment, which involves three months of work on a case study.

For mine, I'm planning to focus on falling rainwater gutters at the brewery. That project will form part of my portfolio for the RICS association where they'll review it and decide whether I meet the standard to become an Associate. It's been a lot of work, but it's exciting to see it all coming together!

How has your role evolved since you started, especially now as you're training to become a Surveyor?

I started off just plodding along on the Helpdesk! [laughs] But, over the eight years that followed, it was really all about building up my knowledge. Every company has its own way of doing things - Robinsons has a particular approach, and that's very different from, say, a housing association. That's actually one of the reasons why getting the qualification is so important - it gives you a broader understanding beyond just how things work here.

The way I see it, the qualification is like an umbrella, it covers so many aspects of the industry. And what's great is that it opens up a lot of different pathways. I don't necessarily have to stick with surveying; I could look into project management, like what Tom Wellock or Matt Heathcote are doing.

Maybe it's partly because I like staying in my comfort zone, or maybe it's just that this is what I know and where I feel confident, but it's exciting to have options now that I'm working toward the qualification.

What does a typical day look like for you in your current role?

It really varies from day to day. For example, if there's an issue at the brewery and I'm in, I'll be the one to investigate it—I'll take photos, assess the situation, and get fully involved. With our Pub Partners, it's a bit different. They'll report the issue to me, and I'll determine whether it's something that needs a contractor. If so, I arrange that, and the Pub Partner will meet the contractor and show them to the job. Whereas at the brewery, I'm often the one on-site overseeing things directly.

I also handle things like fire risk assessments. Just the other day, I was at the Bakers Vaults checking that doorways were clear

of obstructions, ensuring fire equipment is serviced, and confirming that weekly tests are being logged properly - things like alarms and extinguishers.

A big part of my job is assisting Pub Partners with maintenance and repairs. I'm usually the first point of contact before a surveyor gets involved. If it's something straightforward, I'll send a contractor out. But if it's something that can wait or might benefit from a surveyor's expertise, I'll flag it for review. Our surveyors are qualified to assess certain issues, so we try to be efficient with those decisions. I get as much detail as I can from the Pub Partner to help make that judgment call.

Our Pub Partners operate under a Schedule 1, which is part of the tenancy agreement - it outlines what repairs fall under their responsibility. That being said, it's not always black and white. A blocked toilet, for instance - if it's just a standard blockage, that's on the pub. But if it turns out to be a more serious underground drainage issue, then we might need to step in. In those cases, we send someone out, reassess, and depending on the findings, we'll either recharge the cost or take on the repair ourselves.

Any funny or memorable moments from your time on site that still make you laugh?

Oh definitely, there's many. But one that happened recently still makes me laugh! Tony [Roberts] and I were out inspecting one of the gutters on the brewery roof. We'd climbed out through the window, which is how you access that area... and while we were out there, we got locked out! So, there we were, stuck on the roof in the drizzling rain. Thankfully, someone was in the building and managed to let us back in.

How do you juggle day-to-day work with studying? Does it ever get difficult?

It does get difficult at times. I try to stay on top of things by getting most of my studying done on my designated college day. Once I've completed the work, I don't really have to think about it again until the following Wednesday, which definitely helps me stay focused on the job the rest of the week.

I still need hands-on experience in between, so I'm often applying what I've learned straight away. Days where I'm doing things like a fire risk assessment and an asbestos review back-to-back - especially when people in the office

are away, can be really stressful. The workload increases, especially with incoming issues from Pub Partners, so it's all about balancing priorities and staying organised.

Is there anything about surveying in a brewery or pubs that's surprised you or been more interesting than expected?

Absolutely! You end up going into places you'd never expect - like onto rooftops. That's still something I'm getting used to. Climbing ladders and then suddenly being at the top, looking out across Stockport! What I really enjoy though, is the diagnostic side of it. There's something really satisfying about spotting an issue, thinking that's what it is, and then having a contractor confirm you were right. It feels like a little win every time.

One of the most interesting things I've learned recently is about something called "concrete cancer." Up at UPC, because the building is so old, there's a part near the boiler house that was built with reinforced concrete, and over time, the steel inside has started to corrode. It's a bit like diagnosing an illness - it's literally called concrete cancer - and in a way, I guess we're like doctors for buildings. We figure out what's going wrong and decide who's best to treat it!

Looking back over the last 10 years, what's one moment or project you're really proud of?

Definitely the personal progression I've made. Not just staying on the Helpdesk where I was comfortable but actually pushing myself out of my comfort zone. It's so easy to stay where things feel safe, but stepping into new roles, being out and about, meeting people, and having those face-to-face conversations it's helped me grow so much. Robinsons have been brilliant for that. They really encourage development and want you to keep improving, which makes a big difference.

One achievement I'm especially proud of is completing the Dale Carnegie course back in 2017. I actually won an award for Most Reformed Individual - mainly for how much my confidence improved when speaking in front of large groups. That was a big moment for me, and it's something that's really stuck with me throughout my journey here.

NOT YOUR AVERAGE BEER GARDENS

The Swan Inn, Wybunbury, Cheshire

Besides the village church in the charming village of Wybunbury, near Nantwich, The Swan Inn boasts a beer garden adorned with vibrant, blooming greenery. This picturesque and homely pub is a true country escape - the perfect place to enjoy the summer months. Live music and outdoor events bring the garden to life throughout the season, creating a lively yet laid-back atmosphere for both locals and visitors. With its warm hospitality and peaceful setting, it's an inviting spot to unwind, enjoy a pint, and soak up the best of the British sunshine.

The Victoria Inn, Llanbedr, Gwynedd

Overlooking the River Arto in the beautiful county of Gwynedd, the Victoria Inn features a stunning beer garden where guests can enjoy a drink amidst nature. The pub's commitment to sustainability is evident in its own vegetable patch, supplying fresh herbs, fruits, and vegetables for its menu. The locally sourced food only enhances the dining experience, offering guests a taste of locally sourced goodness in a beautiful riverside setting. Enjoy our beautiful gardens at the Victoria Inn, meticulously maintained by our dedicated garden team to ensure the outdoor area is always in pristine condition. For those seeking a bit of shade, our charming pergola provides the perfect spot to relax, or you can take full advantage of the occasional Welsh sunshine and admire our vibrant flower beds on the grass.

Davenport Arms, Woodford, Cheshire

Set against a backdrop of rolling fields and grazing livestock, the Davenport Arms offers an extensive beer garden that's perfect for making the most of the warmer days. Whether you choose to relax in the peaceful rear garden, surrounded by nature, or prefer the neatly paved patio area at the front of the pub, there's a spot for everyone to unwind. Adding to its countryside charm, the Davenport Arms also proudly fields the iconic Robinsons shire horses — a nod to the brewery's rich heritage and a popular sight for visitors. With its rural charm and spacious outdoor setting, the Davenport Arms is an ideal place to enjoy a quiet pint, catch up with friends, or simply soak up the peaceful countryside atmosphere and new function space.

It is also the Church Inn in Cheadle's sister pub, which is home to a lovely terraced beer garden of its own, surrounded by greenery and perfect for al fresco drinks.



The Victoria Inn



Davenport Arms

The Friendship, Glossop, Derbyshire

For sports enthusiasts, The Friendship in Glossop offers a hidden beer garden equipped with two TV screens, allowing sports fans to catch the latest games while enjoying their drinks. The enclosed garden provides a comfortable and relaxed environment, making it an ideal spot for both families and friends to gather and cheer on their teams.

Swan & Chequers, Sandbach, Cheshire

Located in the heart of Sandbach, the Swan & Chequers features an award winning beer garden (Northern Design Awards 2023) with a large mural of Winston Churchill, paying homage to the pub's rich history. The garden's design, reminiscent of a walled kitchen garden, offers a suntrap atmosphere with seating for around 100 people and a covered area for more typical British weather. We can't forget to mention the super friendly pub dog, Turbo who loves to provide a meet and greet to his customers.

Rising Moon, Hyde, Greater Manchester

The Rising Moon is fast becoming a local favourite thanks to its inviting beer garden set in a sunny, south-facing spot that's perfect for soaking up the rays. With a welcoming play area for the kids, it's a hit with families and groups. Their exciting outdoor food concept serves up everything from stone baked pizzas and burgers to sweet treats and slushy cocktails, making it a go-to destination for relaxed summer afternoons and lively evenings. Whether you're chasing the sun or just looking for a laid-back spot to enjoy great food and drink, The Rising Moon ticks all the boxes.

The Airport Pub, Manchester Airport

The Airport Pub offers a unique and exciting experience for all ages, with its spacious beer garden providing front-row seats to the thrilling spectacle of planes taking off and landing at Manchester Airport. Whether you're jetting off, just landed, or simply plane-spotting for the day, it's the perfect stop-off. The beer garden is kitted out with an inclusive children's playground to keep little ones entertained, while grown-ups can relax with a cold pint. Don't miss out on the Hangar Bar where you can enjoy delicious food and drinks, or treat the kids to a milkshake from the Shmoo shack or the ice cream and slush van - ideal for cooling off on a sunny afternoon. With its unbeatable location, lively atmosphere, and family-friendly vibe, The Airport Pub is a high-flying favourite for pre- or post-holiday visits.

Dusty Miller, Wrenbury, Cheshire

Situated on the Llangollen Canal in the rural village of Wrenbury, the Dusty Miller offers one of the most idyllic beer gardens in Cheshire. This canal side gem is known for its welcoming atmosphere, attentive service, and beautifully maintained outdoor space. The beer garden is spacious and a real sun trap, perfect for long, leisurely lunches or evening drinks as the sun sets over the water. The pub is ideally located for a weekend activity – visitors often arrive by boat, foot or bike, drawn in by the pubs charm. Whether you're passing through or planning a quiet afternoon out, the Dusty Miller beer garden is a tranquil retreat that captures the real essence of a countryside pub.

Drum and Monkey, Alderley Edge, Cheshire

Set in the village of Alderley Edge, the Drum and Monkey offers a beautifully refurbished beer garden that's become a go-to spot for outdoor dining and drinks. The beer garden features a spacious patio,



Swan & Chequers



Drum & Monkey

a huge garden and plenty of relaxed seating, ideal for soaking up the sun or enjoying an evening outdoors. The stand out feature here has to be the gigantic life-size gorilla which watches you from every angle. A standout attraction is the weekend pizza shed, serving freshly made stone-baked pizzas that bring offer a change to traditional pub garden experience.

Gardeners Arms, Brown Lees, Stoke-on-Trent

A vibrant cornerstone of the local community, the Gardeners Arms in Stoke-on-Trent offers more than just a pint. Its expansive beer garden is truly versatile, blending relaxed, open-air seating with cosy sheltered nooks to suit the ever-unpredictable British weather. A large children's play area makes it a hit with families, giving little ones plenty of space to run, climb, and play while the grown-ups unwind nearby. With BBQs, outdoor games, and a line-up of seasonal events, the Gardeners Arms captures the spirit of summer. Whether you're a local looking for your weekend go-to or a visitor seeking a laid-back escape, this welcoming community pub invites you to relax, connect, and soak up the outdoors. owns offer a perfect blend of history, natural beauty, and vibrant culture, making them ideal for a staycation or day trip.

Foodie Pubs Well Worth a Visit!

Our pubs have long been celebrated for their delicious pub grub and inviting atmosphere. However, there have been a few of our pubs that have recently really stood out for their dining experience, offering menus that put modern twists on pub classics. Whether you're a regular or a visitor, these pubs are well worth a visit if you are a big foodie.

RED COW, NANTWICH, CHESHIRE

Located in the heart of Nantwich, Cheshire, the Red Cow is a 16th-century coaching inn that blends historic charm with contemporary comforts. Following a thoughtful refurbishment in late 2024, the pub now offers an inviting setting complete with new furnishings, an expanded bar and seating area, and a modernised kitchen that supports an impressive menu of elevated pub classics. Alongside favourites like hearty burgers and hand-cut chips, the menu showcases standout sharing platters that are perfect for a relaxed, sociable dining experience. The indulgent Chip Shop Platter brings together potato smacks, spam fritters, frickles, curry sauce, and mushy peas for a nostalgic twist, while the Artisan Cheese Platter brings together local cheeses for the cheese connoisseurs out there. Dax is a passionate and talented chef, renowned for crafting exceptional meat dishes. Under the friendly management of Suzie and Dax, the Red Cow offers a dining experience that combines the best of tradition with a creative, modern flair with an eye for excellent customer service.

HAWK INN, HASLINGTON, CHESHIRE

Situated in the centre of Haslington, the Hawk Inn offers a cosy and historic atmosphere for locals and passersby. This much-loved village pub combines 16th-century charm with a warm, welcoming vibe that keeps their regulars coming back. The Hawk Inn offers everything you would want from a proper English pub. The food is classic and comforting – think stacked burgers, fish and chips, hearty steak pies, and one of the most talked-about Sunday roasts in the area. With generous portions, great value, and consistently friendly service, the Hawk Inn delivers everything you would want from a traditional British pub. Passing through Crewe or Sandbach? Drop in and see why the locals love it!

KING WILLIAM, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE

The King William, one of the oldest pubs in the heart of Wilmslow offers a real feel of an upmarket old London tavern style pub which adds intrigue to its classic pub setting. The King William's menu features the



The Red Cow



Hawk Inn

pub classics you always want to see and expect, with the best quality meat and veg. Their standout though, must be their Sunday Roast complete with goose fat roast potatoes, honey & thyme carrots and parsnips, crispy bacon cabbage, Yorkshire pudding and pan gravy. But that's not all... If you've not got space for a Roast, they have a Sunday Burrito – a roast beef wrap in a giant Yorkshire pudding with the trimmings!

The weekend doesn't need to be the only time for a treat though, head over on Tuesday for unbeatable drink offers, perfect for a relaxed



Fletchers Arms

evening catch-up or a midweek treat. Then spice things up on Wing Wednesday, where you can tuck into a portion of chicken wings with every drink that's bought!

So, whether you are in the area, looking for somewhere to stay or looking for a pub lunch after getting back off holiday (the pub is a 10-minute drive from Manchester Airport) pop in and you won't be disappointed!

WHITE HORSE, DISLEY, DERBYSHIRE

The White Horse is located in the charming little village of Disley, run by husband-and-wife team Diane & Geof. It's just a short stroll from the stunning Lyme Park – making it the perfect stop for walkers to enjoy home cooked food in a cosy countryside pub. At the heart of the kitchen is Geof the Chef, renowned locally for his passion for creating

freshly cooked pub classics. The menu features all your pub favourites plus weekly specials and on Sundays you can delight in their extremely popular Sunday Roasts – so good that past customers follow Diane and Geof wherever they are to enjoy their great food and service!

CHURCH INN, CHEADLE, STOCKPORT

The Church Inn - the oldest pub in Cheadle Hulme. Renowned for its traditional decor, cosy nooks and roaring log fire. Alongside an exceptional dining experience, you'll find a bar offering a variety of cask ales, fine wines and spirits. The menu features a range of dishes curated from seasonal ingredients. From comforting pub classics such as the 'Church Inn Handcrafted Pie of the Moment' to signature dishes like the 'Prawn Penang' and 'Chicken Satay' - they're a must-try! We can't not mention their Sunday Roasts too, served with all the trimmings and plenty of gravy... if you're looking for a Sunday spot - this is it. Whether you're visiting for breakfast, a casual lunch or special evening out - The Church Inn delivers a memorable experience!

FLETCHERS ARMS, DENTON, GTR MANCHESTER

Part of the Almond Family Pub group, the Fletchers Arms in Denton offers a hearty menu with modern twists on classic pub dishes. Known for its carvery seven days a week, the pub serves up favourites like the Butcher's Beef Burger and beer-battered cod. With a warm, welcoming atmosphere and a great selection of drinks, it's the perfect spot for a satisfying meal. Even better, there's a stunning enclosed courtyard with a unique opening to the bar – so you don't even have to step out of the sun to recharge your glass! Fletcher's Arms is also sister to the popular Puss in Boots in Offerton, ensuring excellent food across the board. Definitely worth a visit if you're craving a mid-week roast.



Church Inn

GREAT BRITISH PUB AWARDS 2025



Meet our contenders

The Airport Pub has reached the finals in the 'Best pub for families' category, whilst the Queens Head in Troutbeck is up for 'Best pub for dogs'

The Airport Pub combines a high-volume, fast-paced environment with thoughtful touches that create an interactive and immersive experience for families and plane lovers alike.

From the moment visitors arrive, it's clear the venue is designed with families in mind. From the Real jet engine dining booths, aviation-themed interiors, and the state-of-the-art children's play area focused on accessibility and inclusivity.

Outdoors, the pub's capacity more than doubles on dry days, with an impressive beer garden, adventure playground, and a suite of family-focused food outlets including the Hangar Bar, an ice cream shack, and a milkshake shack. All are designed to give families quick, flexible dining options.

The Airport operates a walk-in-only policy, made to support the needs of families, especially those with young children or unpredictable schedules. This, combined with a children's menu starting at less than £5 speaks volumes about the pub's commitment to affordability and accessibility.

Inside, the spacious layout includes flexible tables, wide walkways for buggies and wheelchairs, and floor-to-ceiling windows with views of planes taking off and landing. It's a place where children are welcomed and the experience reflects that at every level.

Meanwhile, the Queens Head in Troutbeck is a historic country inn sitting in the Lake District, against the backdrop of some of Cumbria's most famous peaks. It offers everything a dog owner could hope for.



Owned by Robinsons for many years, the Grade II-listed pub was lovingly restored after a devastating fire in 2014. Since reopening in 2017, it continues to be a warm, welcoming hub for both locals and tourists, especially those exploring the Lakes with their dogs in tow.

Canine guests at the Queens Head are treated with as much care and thought as human visitors. Outside, there's a purpose-built paw wash and fresh water barrels with clean bowls always available. Inside, dogs are greeted with free treats on the bar, and they're welcome in all areas of the pub.

The pub offers a dedicated dog menu featuring nibbles, main meals, and even drinks from Bark Burgers and Pawstar Martinis to full doggy dinners like roast chicken or fish and chips. Guests staying overnight will find that 9 out of 10 rooms are dog friendly, complete with hard floors, dog beds on request, and welcome packs including toys, treats and even poo bags. Dogs even get a cooked breakfast, served alongside their owners in the morning.

The team have created a culture where dogs are part of the experience, not just an add-on. Staff are trained in dog-friendly service, and the pub frequently appears in lists of the best dog-friendly places to stay in the Lakes, including being named by The Telegraph in recent years.

The Great British Pub Awards, are known as the industry's Oscars and celebrate the best pubs across the UK.

Winners for this year will be announced on Wednesday 21st September 2025, and we couldn't be prouder to have both The Airport and The Queens Head recognised among the very best. Wishing the pubs the best of luck on the night!

TROOPER x PerfectDraft

The ultimate home draught beer machine

We all love the British pub, and nobody loves it more than us. And make no mistakes, we believe that's the best way to drink a beer! But, sometimes, there's also a call for a pint at home, whilst watching your favourite series, with a sigh of relief after putting the kids to bed, or whilst waiting for your partner to finish getting ready - before heading to our favourite, the pub.

Well, your perfect Robinsons pint at home is here - introducing TROOPER on PerfectDraft, the ultimate home draught beer machine.

The original TROOPER beer was first brewed in 2013 has been popular amongst beer drinkers and Iron Maiden fans ever since, selling over 40 million pints worldwide. This new product is the first time TROOPER is available in keg, for home use.

Until now, the award-winning beer, sold in over 64 countries, has only been available in cans, bottle format or on hand-pull in a British pub.

Oliver Robinson, Managing Director, reflected on partnership to say "We're delighted to be collaborating with PerfectDraft to release TROOPER in a new kegged format, reaching places where we've not distributed previously. As well as serving up TROOPER in a condition almost as great as the pub - you can't beat the atmosphere of the British pub - it's a refillable and returnable product too, meaning minimal waste production and creating a circular economy".

PerfectDraft and Robinsons are launching the beer to new customers as a bundle with a PerfectDraft machine, TROOPER keg and glassware. There will also be single TROOPER kegs and limited edition merch for current customers.

Get hold of your own 10.5 pint keg from the PerfectDraft website. It's initially available to the UK market only but will soon be rolled out across other European countries including Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands and Sweden



Shop Trooper PerfectDraft here!



Meet one of our trusted wine suppliers: Journey's End. You'll find their wines in many of our pubs. We're proud to stock them - not just because they make great wine, but because, like us, they care about doing things sustainably and responsibly.

JOURNEY'S END

A SOUTH AFRICAN SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION

Nestled amongst the Schapenberg Hills, Journey's End, founded in 1995 by the Gabb family, is a picturesque wine farm surrounded by forty hectares of vineyards. The ancient soils alongside the cool Atlantic current, known locally as the 'Cape Doctor', create one of the most prestigious terroirs in South Africa, which results in fabulous, pure & fresh wines, that we at Robinsons love.



Nick Gent at the soup kitchen

Fairtrade Certified, they are one of the first wineries in South Africa to become fully solar powered in 2014, they are a recognised WWF Conservation Champion with 10 hectares of their farm dedicated to reforestation to generate biodiversity. In 2020, they set up the Journey's End Foundation to focus on existing and ongoing community projects. This NGO was set up in response to the impact of Covid-19 to help tackle hunger and poverty. The

foundation provides meals to the local community in Sir Lowry's Pass village, and now to date has provided over 4 million meals, with help from a group of inspiring women who run the soup kitchens.

In 2019, they co-funded a new school hall in the village, providing space for 1,500 students as well as a crèche for 48 children. Keen to promote gender equality, they fund a project supporting women and girls who are victims of gender-based-violence. Given the above, it is no surprise that Journey's End have been recognised with several awards for their amazing work and commitment to sustainability. These awards include Ethical Company Drinks Business Green Award and the Footprint Drinks Sustainability Award for their social impact and sustainable use of water. To round it all off, they have just been awarded B-Corp certification.

Journey's End have created a low intervention winery and have social responsibility and sustainability at the heart of everything they do.

One of the many reasons Robinsons have chosen Journey's End as a trusted wine partner.



DRINK WELL,
DO GOOD

Look out for the '1 for 1' sticker that features on selected Journey's End wines. **For every bottle purchased with this sticker, they will provide one additional meal for someone in need in their community!**



“ WE BELIEVE IN DRINKING WELL, WHILE TRULY BEING A FORCE FOR GOOD. ”



PAWS AND PINTS

Why dogs love visiting Robinsons pubs just as much as their owners!

Otis at his favourite place, the Flying Coach in Hazel Grove with best friend Doug

At Robinsons, we're proud to be dog-friendly at many of our pubs. Whether it's a post-walk stop-off or a relaxed Sunday pint, dogs are part of the pub life here.

So far this year we have had many four-legged friends making themselves at home in our pubs, from loyal locals to weekend visitors. A few of our venues have even picked up awards for being amongst some of the best dog-friendly pubs in the country.

And speaking of stand-out awards – in May, we ran a competition to find a canine model for this issue of the Unicorn, and we were impressed by the entries. After much deliberation, we've chosen our winner...

Meet Otis, the four-legged star of this issue in the Flying Coach.



View our dog friendly pubs

CELEBRATING STOCKPORT'S MUSICAL LEGACY

ERIC HAYDOCK PLAQUE UNVEILING AT THE RED BULL

Stockport's rich musical heritage was honoured on Sunday 4th May with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque dedicated to Eric Haydock, the original bassist of The Hollies. The event, held at the Red Bull pub - once a regular venue of Haydock during his time managing the Rhythm House Music Shop- attracted around 40 attendees, including his wife, Pamela, and son, Robert.

Robert brought along a cherished memento: Eric's award from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, where he was inducted in 2010 alongside fellow Hollies members. Many reminisced about his regular visits to the Red Bull on Middle Hillgate after work, a testament to his enduring connection to Stockport.

“This initiative is part of the Stockport Music Story, a project that celebrates the town's rich musical history, from 10cc to The Blossoms”

Following the plaque presentation, attendees gathered inside the pub for a social gathering, enjoying a cold buffet and listening to music by Eric and The Hollies. Emma, our recent Pub Partner at the Red Bull, played a pivotal role in organising the event and expressed satisfaction with the turnout, noting that many visitors hadn't been to the pub in years and were impressed by its welcoming atmosphere.

The plaque adds to Stockport's growing collection of musical landmarks. This initiative is part of the Stockport Music Story, a project that celebrates the town's rich musical history, from 10cc to The Blossoms, and highlights the cultural significance of venues where groundbreaking music was made and played.

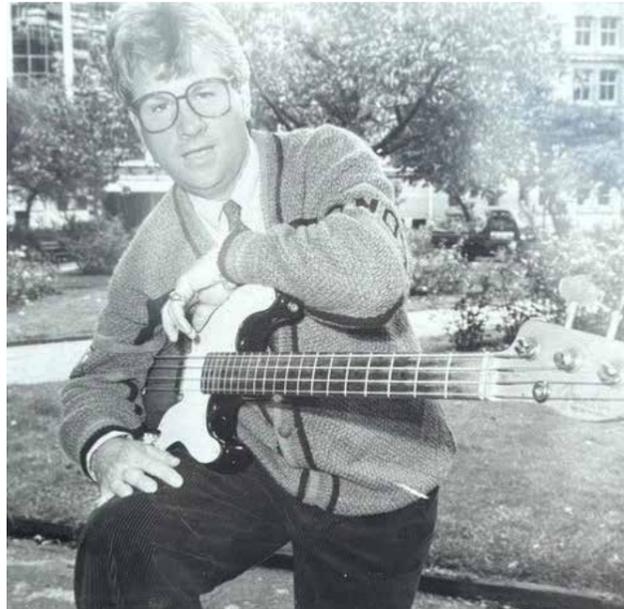
Plans are underway to finalise and distribute a Plaque Trail Map, which will include our pubs, the Red Bull and The Blossoms, across Stockport. Once completed, thousands of copies will be printed and made available to the public, inviting both locals and visitors to explore the town's musical heritage.



The Red Bull website

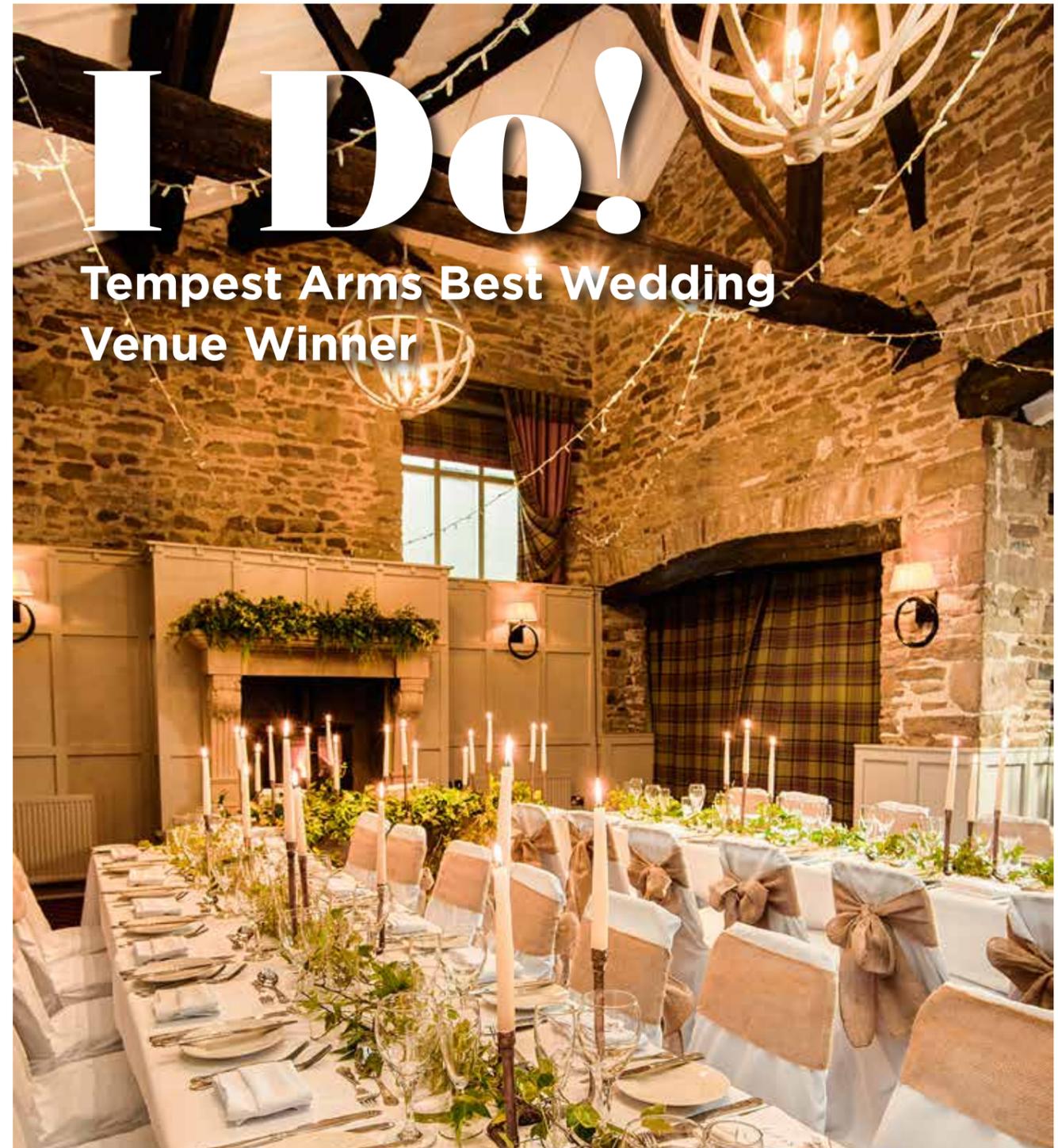


The Blossoms website



I Do!

Tempest Arms Best Wedding Venue Winner



The Tempest Arms, nestled in the charming village of Elslack, has been crowned Best Group Venue in Yorkshire at the prestigious IDO Wedding Awards 2025.

This prestigious accolade is based not by industry panels or corporate votes, but through the heartfelt testimonials of real brides. This award recognises the service, hospitality, and experiences that the team at The Tempest Arms consistently deliver.

Regional Area Manager, Simon Taylor said, "A lot of hard work has gone into creating and developing our wedding

packages and delivering the perfect experience for our bridal parties. Receiving this award is a testament to the efforts of the entire team responsible for weddings in our venues."

Simon continued "This achievement is not just a win for The Tempest Arms, but a proud moment for the entire Robinsons Brewery family. It's a shining example of the passion, professionalism, and quality that define our estate. A huge congratulations to everyone at The Tempest Arms—your hard work and dedication have truly made an impact. We can't wait to see what the future holds!"

FROM PINT TO PARTNER

Did you know that 215 of our 248 Robinsons pubs are independent businesses? We're proud to work with some of the best operators and publicans in the business to ensure you've got a great pub to visit and can enjoy a great pint too!

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes to ensure your local pub is a warm and welcoming place with plenty on offer? Or perhaps you've been wondering how you get your foot in the door and take the next step in your dream of running a pub.

We have a range of different sized pub businesses and the available opportunities to run a pub with us are forever changing. But some things don't change, our dedication to training, support and getting the right people in place to run your village's local or your favourite holiday destination.

SHOWING INTEREST IN RUNNING A PUB WITH ROBINSONS

Have a chat with Alex, our Recruitment Manager, she's ready to have an informal phone call or coffee with you to share opportunities and ideas, right through to showing you around your dream pub and discussing both partnership compatibility and suitability for the pub. She will be able to advise you on what qualifications are required and point you in the right direction if you are missing any.

TAKING THINGS TO THE NEXT STAGE

We've had a chat, we both feel we could be a great partnership in theory. You've made an application and now, it's time to discuss business. We'd be looking for you to present us with a business plan of how you'd run the pub, identify opportunities and how you'd carry them out along with a 12-month profit and loss forecast. This is where we will consider your business acumen and your suitability for the community for that pub with the Business Development Manager.

TIME FOR TRAINING

You've delivered exciting plans which we believe are achievable. You've demonstrated a commitment to the community and our business and we're sure you can turn your plans into a successful business – this is key! We must believe in you, we won't set you

up to fail. You'll then be invited to our three-day long induction program. This runs you through everything you need to know about running a pub with Robinsons. From cellar management and beer quality to price setting skills and profit control we

“Our dedication to training, support and getting the right people in place to run your village's local or your favourite holiday destination never changes.”

provide you with the skills to start or expand your business. We see this as a real welcome to the family, you'll meet over ten different departments on hand to support you with running your business, you'll taste and be given knowledge on our beers and connect with others in the same position as you. It's an intensive three-day program – but you'll leave with the great foundations and enthusiasm for your pub.

THE SUCCESS STORY STARTS HERE...

You'll receive the keys, and you can expect visits from various support departments across the business to ensure you're set up and ready to go. Just like moving house, you'll need time to settle and understand what's what – but now is the time to get going with your business plan. Don't delay! Meet your community, implement your entertainment schedule and foodie plans. Let's go! All those departments which you met on your induction course are always only a phone call away and ready to offer you guidance. On top of that, in the first few months, you'll receive dedicated visits from our Partner Engagement Manager and our new partner BDM who both ensure you're well settled in your pub, any challenges you face are being managed and can signpost and guide you further.



Sign up here for our latest vacancies



COMMUNITY HERO HONoured

Joe Farrell from the Windsor Castle recognised for her outstanding contributions in Marple



At the heart of Marple Bridge stands the Windsor Castle, a true community pub - and at the heart of the Windsor Castle is Joe Farrell, a woman whose dedication to her community has just been formally recognised in a remarkable way.

Joe, Publican at the Windsor Castle for 17 years, was recently honoured at a special ceremony at Stockport Town Hall, receiving a prestigious community award from the Mayor and Council. The award recognises her outstanding service and commitment to the residents of Marple — a testament to her tireless work supporting those in need and fostering a spirit of togetherness in the local area.

From organising food deliveries for vulnerable residents, hosting coffee mornings to create safe spaces for people to come together, or simply being a constant source of comfort and care, Joe has shown what true

community leadership looks like. Her efforts have made Windsor Castle more than just a pub - it's become a lifeline for many.

Her award from the council not only celebrates her recent efforts, but highlights the broader role pubs like the Windsor Castle play in supporting charities, strengthening neighbourhoods, and building resilient, compassionate communities.

“I would like to share my award with all of the Robinsons Brewery operators that get up every day and try their hardest to provide a nice place for people to come and eat and drink in the hardest of times”

As Joe continues her work, the people of Marple know they can always count on her - not just for a warm welcome and a cold pint, but for genuine care, connection, and support.

A heartfelt shoutout to the Windsor Castle's longest-standing regular, Mr. John Coop, who at 86 years young has been a cherished part of the pub for an incredible 60 years -that's four years before Joe was born!

We're truly grateful to Mr. Coop for his unwavering loyalty, warmth, and the many memories he's helped create over the decades. Here's to a true Windsor Castle legend - thank you for being such a valued part of the Robinsons story!



LONG LIVE THE LOCAL

Joe Farrell's award is a shining example of why the Long Live The Local campaign matters. This campaign champions the vital role pubs play in communities across the UK — not just as places to eat and drink, but as economic drivers, social lifelines, and cultural landmarks.

Each local pub contributes around £100,000 to the economy and helps employ over 600,000 people across the UK. For many, especially the 43% of under-25s who work in pubs, they're a gateway to independence — a place for first jobs, first loves, and lifelong memories. Pubs are far more than businesses — they're the backbone of British life.

If you're reading this while enjoying time in one of our pubs, chances are you love your local just as much as we do. But right now, thousands of pubs, jobs, and communities are under pressure - and your support can make a real difference. Help us protect the future of pubs across the UK. Simply scan the QR code to join the Long Live The Local campaign and stand up for the places that bring us all together.

“Each local pub contributes around £100,000 to the economy and helps employ over 600,000 people across the UK”



Sign the Long Live the Local petition here



Learn more about the campaign

VISIT LANCASHIRE

Looking for new ideas of where to spend a day or two? The Red Rose county of Lancashire is the perfect place to visit for a staycation or a day out with a special one. Our villages and towns offer a perfect blend of history, natural beauty, and vibrant culture, making them ideal for a staycation or day trip.

RAWTENSTALL

Sitting south of the Pennines, Rawtenstall is a market town in East Lancashire around 40 minutes from Manchester. Featuring a collection of independent retailers and a great artisan community, it's a great town for browsing shops and windows. Alongside shops, the town's Whitaker Museum and art gallery features local history exhibits, great for if you want to learn more about the area. Rawtenstall also sits on the East Lancashire Railway which runs through scenic countryside connecting the town with Bury and Ramsbottom, other great places to visit. If you're interested in classic transport or steam trains, a visit to the station or ride on the train provides a highlight for your visit.

Drink and Dine at the Whitchaff Inn

Break up your day with lunch at the Whitchaff, where their gorgeous interiors provide a feeling of pub luxury whilst you indulge in a selection of great food and drink. If you time your visit with a warm and sunny day, the beer garden at the rear has great views over the hills too.

WHITWORTH

Also sitting in south of the Pennines, Whitworth is quite a hidden gem. The village is situated amongst rolling valleys and hills it's a lovely setting for a day exploring the surroundings. The village sits along the River Spodden and has great walking routes along the riverbanks where you can spot a variety of birds. As well as the river, the Cown Reservoir also offers some great trails for walking or cycling and even a few places to go fishing. There is a large sense of community in this small town and if your visit is well-timed, you might experience one of the village's events too – from farmers markets selling local produced to art festivals celebrating the area's talent.

Drink and Dine at the Cock and Magpie

After stretching your legs and taking in the nature that Whitworth has to offer, stop by at the Cock and Magpie to take a pause. The pub is great for catering for everyone, if you're looking for a bite to eat and a cosy warm setting, you'll find it at the Cock and Magpie. If you wanted something a little more low-key, the bar area at the pub has a selection of entertainment like pool and darts to keep you busy and encourage your competitive nature.



Garstang Canal

CLITHEROE

Clitheroe is a charming destination offering great views of the town and beyond from its historic castle. The market town is perfect for shopping, with independent boutiques, antique stores, and local food retailers. Surrounded by the Ribble Valley and close to Forest of Bowland's Area of Natural Beauty, it also provides excellent opportunities for walking, cycling, and enjoying scenic outdoor adventures.

Stay and Dine at the Spread Eagle Inn or Craven Heifer

Enjoy both the countryside and Clitheroe centre by stopping the night. Located just down the road from Clitheroe is the Spread Eagle, offering great pub food and a great night's sleep in the newly refurbished great rooms.

RIBCHESTER

Ribchester is a charming village steeped in Roman history, making it a fascinating destination for history enthusiasts. The village is home to the Ribchester Roman Museum, which showcases artefacts from its Roman fort, Bremetennacum, and provides insight into life during Roman Britain. Visitors can also explore the remains of the Roman baths and admire the picturesque setting along the River Ribble. Ribchester offers scenic walks, quaint streets, and cosy pubs, making it a peaceful and enriching spot for a day out or a short stay.

Stay and Dine at the Ribchester Arms, Ribchester

The impressive looking pub is situated just on the edge of the village and offers both a great meal and a relaxing evening away. The guest rooms have been designed with luxury in mind featuring four poster beds and beautiful design schemes.

GARSTANG

Garstang, the world's first Fairtrade town, offers a traditional market, independent shops, and scenic walks along the Lancaster Canal. The town has a great community spirit, and you'll often find a different fete or celebration going on in the town. Surrounded by the Forest of Bowland, it's ideal for hiking, cycling, and exploring the countryside. With historic sites like Greenhalgh Castle and a welcoming atmosphere, it's perfect for a day out or a short stay.

Stay and Dine at Royal Oak, Garstang

If you're visiting for a night or even passing through, the Royal Oak is worth a visit. From a delicious menu filled with pub classics and great portions to a comfortable overnight stay with a full English breakfast to fuel you for your day ahead.

LANCASTER

Lancaster is a town steeped in history and tales to tell, and you'll never be far from a landmark with ancient significance. From evidence of the Roman period and its medieval castle to its tales of witch trials, there is a tale or two to learn for everyone. Visit Lancaster Castle, learn more about the history at the Judges Lodgings museum or discover new butterfly species at the Butterfly House. If you'd like to take a slower pace, why not stroll Williamson's Park, and then head to the Quayside and enjoy some of our great hospitality.

Drink and Dine at The Three Mariners Lancaster

Lancaster is a 'pub scene' place, but there is nowhere better to start (and stay) than The Three Mariners. With a wide selected of cask conditioned ales, hand-pulled ciders, and a roaring log burner, you'll be ready to stay for the day. Alongside an excellent selection of drinks and good pub food – The Three Mariners is also known for its spooky past.

Dine and Stay at Wagon and Horses

With so much to see and do in Lancaster a day might not be enough. Why not stay the night at the Wagon and Horses on the Quayside? As well as a restful night they also have a great menu with a great mix of British and Italian dishes, with plenty of offers throughout the week too. If you're heading there midweek – don't miss out on their happy hour which takes place Monday – Thursday between 8pm & 10pm, perfect for your night cap.



Ribchester Arms



The Whitchaff



Cock & Magpie

FROM THE CELLAR TO YOUR GLASS:

How the pub creates the perfect pint



What is cask?

Cask ale is a live beer product. It's not been pasteurised, filtered or carbonated. Cask ale also still contains yeast. There are many myths and misconceptions about Cask ale, which is worthy of an article itself, but we've added a few to the end of this article as a starter.

You can expect cask ale to be poured from a traditional hand pull, rather than the dispense taps you'd see a lager or craft ale poured from. As well as difference in how you see it poured, the process and the care required from the pub to get your pint in great condition is important.

The cask beer is delivered by the Robinsons Dray Team

Once the beer has been delivered, it needs to be stored correctly on stillage. The stillage is where the beer lays flat on its side, without further movement. This allows the sediment in the cask to settle to the bottom but also provides a small amount of space in the cask for the next step. This happens on the day of delivery.

There are several types of stillage, the majority nowadays are metal devices which auto-tilts the beer as beer is poured. Wooden stillage requires manual intervention to tilt the cask higher once about 1/3 of the product has been dispensed.

Preparing the beer ready for drinking

Between 4 and 24 hours after delivery, the cask should have adjusted to the temperature of the cellar (another important influence in the perfect pint). Then, the cask is ready to be 'tapped and vented'.

At the top of each cask is a tut and 'shive'. The tut is removed and replaced with a porous (soft) wooden peg. At the front of a cask is the "keystone". This is where a clean cask tap is inserted. This is a very important part of the process known as "tapping and venting", and one where its own myths often lie...

The "venting" process begins the conditioning of the cask beer ready for sale.

What is conditioning?

The cask contains yeast. The yeast ferments the sugars into alcohol with carbon dioxide as a by-product.

Some carbon dioxide that remains in the solution gives the beer its bubbles and tight frothy head.

During the conditioning process the hops, malt and yeast mature and develop into subtle flavours that characterise a perfect cask beer. The sediment in the beer drops with aid of finings and must not be disturbed once settled.

The process of conditioning will take between 48 and 168 hours!

Serving the beer

After the beer has been vented, tapped and conditioned for a minimum of 48hrs, a sample of beer should be taken before connecting up the lines. This is to check the beer is bright (clear and without haze) and to check the beer smells and tastes as expected. Then, the beer is connected to the line and pulled through to the bar using the handpull. From the first pint drawn, the beer is at its optimum quality for three days.

Then at the end of every day, a hard non-porous peg replaces the soft, porous peg in the top of the cask to keep it fresh. (just as you'd wrap food to keep it fresh!).

Signs of a great pint

It's chilled

The optimum cellar temperature is 11-13oC. If you've ever stood in a beer cellar, you'll notice it's chilly, this is how you'd expect your beer to be. It's not warm.

It's got a nice creamy head

You should expect to see the head of the beer lasting well and even leaving lines on the glass as you drink. This happens when the beer 'conditioning' part is done correctly. Clean and new-enough glassware is also a huge factor here. Warm or wet glassware can also affect the appearance and head retention of the beer.

It tastes great

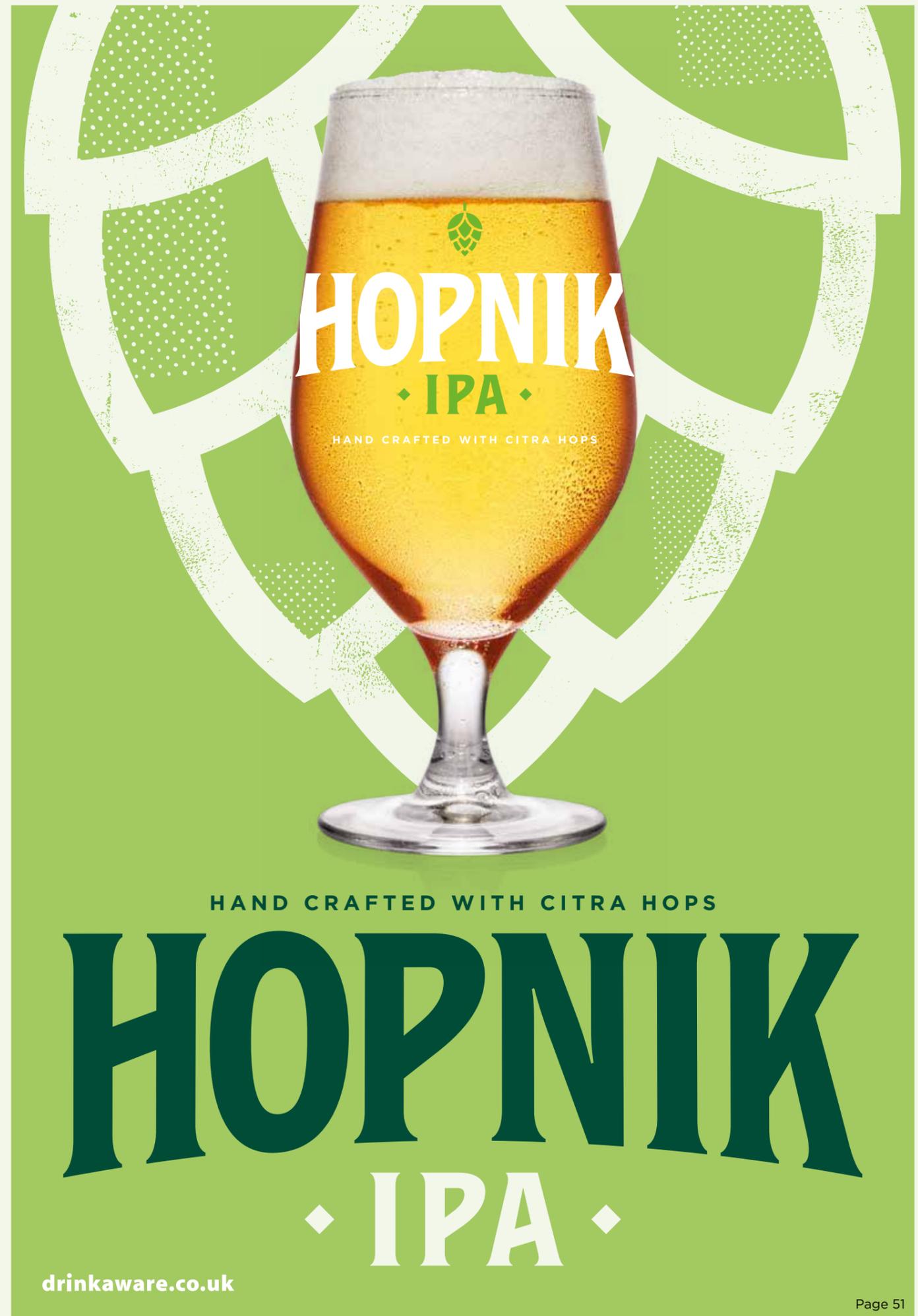
It's fresh, smooth and goes down a treat. After around three days of dispensing, the characteristics will rapidly change, and the overall quality will disappear. You'll then start to notice changes in flavour and a vinegary profile.





EXPERTLY CRAFTED
REFRESHINGLY
PREMIUM

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HAND CRAFTED WITH CITRA HOPS

HOPNIK
♦ IPA ♦

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Jo Ritchie, General Burgoyne, Great Urswick

BE PART OF SOMETHING GREAT

Run your next business venture with Robinsons

Know what makes a good pub great? Amazing people. And if you've got what it takes, we want to get to know you. It's a best of both worlds' deal. The best pubs in the heart of communities – with the freedom to think fresh and to do things differently. The confidence to make your own choices – plus the backing of a top brewery. Expert tactical support and group purchase power – with the flex to create a formula that works for your pub. Be in great company.

Join Robinsons Pub Partners. Choose Robinsons as a Pub Partner for a partnership where you feel seen, valued and supported.



Find your next opportunity



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CHECK OUT SOME OF OUR CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES:



White Lion

A great opportunity to deliver an excellent food offering in a gorgeous village near Bakewell.



Royal Oak

A wonderful blend of village life and local tourism. This Cumbrian pub is seeking for an operator wanting to be well-known for great, reliable food and a community spirit.



Three Mariners

An exciting opportunity for a budding entrepreneur who loves real ale and has an interest in a great pub food offer in Lancaster's oldest pub.