

# Q&As from Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference 2021

## AGM

### **Q: Has CAMRA looked into starting a monthly members' lottery?**

A: The CAMRA staff team has been asked to prepare a paper giving their recommendations on this for consideration by both Finance Committee and Commercial Committee.

### **Q: Is there any opportunity for income from Brew2You?**

A: Yes there is but we believe at the moment we have the balance right but shall keep it in mind and keep reviewing it. Brew2You was only envisaged as a short-term initiative and should be wound up once all restrictions have been lifted on pubs.

### **Q: As a life member since 2003 at the Exeter AGM, I am getting all the benefits at a now bargain price. I would be quite happy to pay for the quarterly Beer magazine. Indeed, I would be quite happy to set up a Direct Debit to CAMRA in order to help out the finances.**

A: The person in question would be most welcome to make a donation by sending a cheque to head office and it would be very gratefully received. In terms of inviting donations from life members more widely, I would suggest we keep this under review - it's a nuclear button we may need to press at some point but I'd rather save it for when it's absolutely necessary.

### **Q: What actions have the NE / Campaigns Committee taken to follow the 2019 conference instruction to campaign for the urgent introduction of MUP for England?**

A: It hasn't been forgotten but has been put on the back burner during the pandemic as we needed to concentrate resources elsewhere. As things get back to normal, we will revive this campaign. The advice I have received on this is that contacting Government at present about this would get zero response so we need to wait until such time as we can have a discussion with them rather than get blanked.

### **Q: Can you advise of the total number of electors who actually voted and as a percentage of those eligible to vote?**

A: There were 7,813 votes cast this year from a total of 170,452 who were invited to do so. That is 4.58%. Last year 6,613 votes were cast from an electorate total of 191,335.

## CONFERENCE – GUEST SPEAKER (IAN FOZARD)

### **Q: You mentioned CAMRA producing guidance around costs of running pubs and breweries, could SIBA produce them?**

A: We could work together on this.

### **Q: What does Ian feel about CAMRA run beer festivals, in general? Do they assist pubs in the area they are in and do they help breweries?**

A: Yes they help brewers, they don't harm pubs as attendees will go to pubs too.



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**Q: CAMRA doesn't seem to have woken up to the idea of having recommended serving temperatures for different beer styles. Cellarmanship recommends a cellar range of 11-13C. Does SIBA have specific guidance/policies on beer temperatures for different styles?**

A: No. SIBA isn't prescriptive, it has become more tolerant, therefore no guidelines. However, some beer could be presented better. There could be scope for better guidance.

**Q: Do beer festivals help pubs, and would it be a kick in the teeth to hold a beer festival this year?**

A: Ian's personal view: No, it wouldn't be a kick in the teeth, Ian is optimistic about this year. Publicans don't resent beer festivals.

**Q: Cloudwater's deal with Tesco has come in for some criticism - not least from other brewers. Any views?**

**The Manchester-based brewery – which for many years avoided mass market retail – will hit the supermarket's shelves this month with a quartet of beers in a collaborative four-pack with minority-owned breweries called 'Cloudwater & Friends', comprising four single-hopped IPAs brewed at BrewDog's brewery in Ellon, Scotland (rsp: £10).**

A: Ian has no particular views. Ian has some beers in supermarkets, not Tesco. We may not like supermarkets however breweries need to survive.

**Q: What is your view on Key Keg?**

A: Too expensive & create plastic waste. Useful for export.

**Q: Is there a way CAMRA can improve its tasting panels to support brewers and pubs?**

A: Ian refers to engagement with brewers, there could be better engagement with beers from Brewery Liaison Officers (BLOs). He doesn't have a lot of experience of current tasting panels though.

**Q: Do Wetherspoon help or harm brewers? Is it true that they demand end of life stock?**

A: Ian has never experienced it. First question, it's a difficult balance. To grow a brewery, you want beer exposed to market, 'spoons helps that. You get a relatively low price but do get a wide exposure.

**Q: Have you had many problems with the changes in exporting beer due to Brexit?**

A: Not yet but it might happen. There is not a lot of purchase in Europe at the moment. He believes there shouldn't be major obstacles.

## **CAMPAIGNER OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION**

**Q: Will others nominated for Campaigner of the Year be told they had been?**

A: Yes, this is an ongoing task although some have not responded to calls/emails.



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## PEOPLE COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

**Q: Can the Direct Debit instruction have a monthly option in addition to annual?**

A: This is something we could explore – but there are some reservations about how it would work in practice.

**Q: How many members are aged 65+?**

A: We have just over 57,000 members aged 65+. Of those members we have a D.O.B for.

Roger - This would mean that 16,500 members +65 have never used the internet, roughly 10% of total membership. I suspect that a proportion of -65 would also have not used the internet, maybe another 10%?

**Q: As membership director how important do you feel is frequent and regular communication with all members in effective membership retention? Did monthly delivery of What's Brewing to all members promote membership retention and foster their relationship of 'belonging' to CAMRA?**

A: Regular and effective communication tailored to the member is one of many “tools” to assist in both recruitment as part of the proposition, retention, engagement and activation of members.

In June 2018 CAMRA removed paper copies from members and asked them to opt back in if they required a copy. Approximately 28,000 of the 190,000 members (15%) opted to receive the paper copies. At the time retention was 88% per annum, at the same time in 2019 retention was at 88.69%. Regular email communication both nationally and locally, where requested and compliant with preferences as per GDPR, along with a regularly updated website, local magazine etc combine to provide a network of information.

In March 2021, CAMRA sent the last printed What's Brewing to its members (April edition). Subsequently launching a new website, What's Brewing Online, and augmenting the quarterly BEER magazine to include more WB type information. We have not seen an increase in the number of postal copies requested which has remained at approximately 29,000 copies.

Since 1 March 2021 we have had 6300 members lapse. A total of 25 of those members have cancelled citing the removal of What's Brewing as the reason for leaving. In the same time period, 107 members passed away, 26 said they disagreed with the campaign, and 72 were just related to the current uncertain climate.

Members, quite rightly, under General Data Protection Regulations, have the right to manage how we process their data. Managing their communication preferences is a key factor in this. Sending too much communication that is unwanted can be counterproductive, as is a member not receiving any. Where possible, in the joining and renewing process, we provide information about members' communication preferences so they can make an informed decision regarding how CAMRA can contact them.

Table 1 below shows the opted in to receive communications from members, of those joining since 1 May 2018, (GDPR came into effect 25 May 2018). Over 40% have said yes to emails from Branches. Under 29% have said yes to third party marketing.



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**Table 1:** Preference choices opted Yes. Members joining since 1 May 2018 (24,575)

Category	Email	%
Festivals & Events	10928	44.5
News	10035	40.8
Branch	10012	40.7
Offers	9149	37.2
Ale & Cider	9039	36.8
Campaigns	8156	33.2
Fundraising	7132	29.0
Third Party	7111	28.9

Since May 2021, all members on joining CAMRA, have been able to choose marketing preferences. We currently have 24,575 members who joined after 1 May 2018 who are still members. Bear in mind not all will have emails. However, members are proactively making decisions with regards to their marketing preferences.

**Q: Membership rates, compared to other organisations I'm a member of, seem low. Admittedly many of them are registered charities and can attract a further 25% in Gift Aid. Given that pursuing political (as opposed to party political) objectives are explicitly recognised as legitimate charitable aims, though commercial not so much (many charities run these through separate subsidiaries that then transfer Gift Aid-able surpluses to the parent body). Has the board recently considered, or is it considering, looking at registering as a charity? It has plenty of characteristics that are similar - education, for example.**

A: This is something that is regularly looked at by the Board, but as an organisation that is promoting alcohol, we are prevented from obtaining charitable status.

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE PRESENTATION**

**Q: Looking forward do you think the experiences gained on use of virtual meetings etc will form part of our campaigning in the future?**

A: Definitely. Lockdown has shown us how effective we can be even when we can't meet in person, and in many cases has allowed meetings to take place, and decisions to be made more quickly and without expecting members to travel across the country. However, it's also highlighted how important the social aspects of CAMRA are, as well as how we can all do a little bit of campaigning by supporting pubs by having meetings at them! I'd expect us to use a mix of physical and virtual meetings in future to get the benefits of both.

**Q: Are there plans to extend Brew2You?**

A: Brew2you was set up to support breweries and pubs at a time they couldn't get income elsewhere. As lockdown has eased, we've seen use of B2U reduce, which is great to see, as pubs and breweries welcome back customers. We've not got any plans to develop the platform further, but equally, as long as some businesses and customers still find it useful, we shouldn't shut it down.



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## **CHAIRMAN'S PRESENTATION**

**Q: Are there plans for lobbying in the forthcoming elections?**

A: Yes.

**Q: What is the Beer Festival strategy going forward?**

A: At the moment we cannot commit finances to beer festivals. We shall run test festivals.

**Q: Should we use Discourse to collate poor media representations to allow members to write in and complain?**

A: It's one source we could use, we haven't formulated, as yet, a full way of working.

**Q: There are a lot of problems finding information since the governance exercise will the Internal Policy Document be reinstated?**

A: The Internal Policy Document (IPD) has been broken down into department policy documents for various committees. These cover the same elements of the old IPD and are on the website [here](#).

**Q: Why are we not promoting What pub more widely, it's surely one of our best assets in the modern age, but many out there still don't know about it?**

A: We do need to do that more. We have done some but can do a lot better.

**Q: You announced that Members' Weekend 2022 is in Eastbourne. Do we have likely/possible venue yet for it?**

A: Yes. It will be at the Winter Garden complex from 8-10<sup>th</sup> April. Find out more [here](#).

## **COMMERCIAL AND COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTATION**

**Q: A very active EBCU member from The Netherlands tried to order the new book on the 50 Years of CAMRA, but publications are saying they will not deliver to her because she has an address which is abroad. Hardly a sign of support for the EBCU and supporting beer drinking colleagues overseas?**

A: International postage is something that we used to offer as part of the contract we had with our shipping supplier. Unfortunately, due to complications with Brexit, they have chosen not to offer international shipping at this time, and it is not currently viable for us to offer this separately ourselves.

**Q: Has CAMRA considered using text campaigning to text members with information and links to the website?**

A: Thank you for the suggestion. This will be investigated.

**Q: Are there any plans to produce more polo shirts in CAMRA member sizes?**

A: Stocks are now replenished, and we continue to monitor these. Please visit the [CAMRA shop](#).



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**Q: *What's Brewing: Is it known how many members do not have, or do not care, to use the internet and what impact this might have on their continuing membership?***

A: 3% of households do not have internet access, therefore the majority do. Beer magazine will be available in print. Essentially, we are changing frequency of WB content.

**Q: *Has CAMRA considered discontinuing the quarterly magazine Beer rather than the monthly What's Brewing?***

A: As part of the proposal, volunteers asked members to share their opinion on both What's Brewing and BEER magazine. Of the thousands who responded, there was a clear indication that they valued BEER magazine more highly.

**Q: *What about producing CAMRA blankets in gold colour, with 50-year logo - so we can take them to sit in beer gardens?***

A: While a great idea, we have no plans to increase the range at this time. However, we'll bear this in mind for future merchandise lines.

**Q: *When will the online replacement for What's Brewing be available? Shouldn't this have been made available and proven before axing the monthly newspaper?***

A: WB online goes live in early May and will be well tested. Yes, we had originally planned to have it available earlier. However, the pandemic caused emergency cost saving meetings, one decision was to bring forward the WB project.

**Q: *Your answer (to John Cryne) clearly admits age discrimination please comment.***

A: We have looked into this, and Beer is continuing which will still provide key CAMRA information, but quarterly instead of monthly.

**Q: *With the newer online What's Brewing, will there be links for the local branches to submit some of their articles (if relevance to national)? As currently, What's Brewing is limited with the number of pages they have. The new online format would allow extra space for this.***

A: We are currently training a cohort of local volunteers to write and submit articles for What's Brewing. We will continue to grow this team over the coming months and years. We will also provide opportunity to link to local publications, where applicable.

**Q: *Why does Beer magazine frequently fail to distinguish between real ale and keg 'craft'? Is this CAMRA editorial policy? If we think any beer is good simply because it tastes nice then we are simply the campaign for drinking beer!***

A: Part of CAMRA's remit is to help drinkers learn more, both in terms of real ale and other drinks. BEER is also designed to be read by both CAMRA members and the wider public (when left on the bar at your local!). Therefore, we have a duty to report on both real ale and the wider drinks industry as part of our campaigning efforts.

**Q: *Is there a date for announcing the 50 award winners?***

A: There is no specific date as they are being spaced out throughout the year - starting with Pubs. Then Pints and People. All will be listed on our dedicated Golden Awards page [here](#)



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**Q: Is there any chance of enhancing WhatPub to offer links to brewery details - for instance a clickable link to breweries shown for a particular pub? Or a facility, similar to the Mobile GBG app, so brewery details can be accessed?**

A: We're constantly reviewing our offerings to make sure they give members what they want and support our overall aims. We'll take this into consideration.

**Q: Is there any chance that the additional information for Covid as shown against a pub in WhatPub could be also shown in the Mobile GBG app as well? I don't know what the usage of the Mobile App is but whilst the pandemic is still affecting ability of pubs to operate normally or if at all.**

A: The link between WhatPub and GBG app is currently broken and is being worked on. It is unlikely to be fixed before Covid restrictions are lifted.

**Q: What about my suggestion of having a regional insert in 'Beer', in the style of The National Trust?**

A: This is still part of considerations. It won't be available in the next edition, but we'll get costings to see if this is viable.

**Q: Will there be a Talking Newspaper version of WB for visually impaired members?**

A: Every article on the [What's Brewing platform](#) has an audio recording version.

**Q: Can somebody tell us if each edition of BEER is proposed to have the 8-page WB pull out?**

A: Yes, the eight pages of What's Brewing content is a permanent fixture in BEER from the next edition.

**Q: Visual impairments come into various categories. Reading back lit screens is completely different to reading on paper?**

A: If anybody requires assistance with using the accessibility options on their device, such as laptop or mobile phone, then there should be information from the manufacturer to help with this.

**Q: Nick Bosley used the word Hybrid earlier. Is there not a way that we can produce a hybrid printed WB that's perhaps not as pretty as before, but contains the essential information and maybe could be printed using cheaper technology?**

A: Unfortunately, a number of the fixed costs for What's Brewing, such as paper quality, were as low as they could possibly be, or could not be reduced, such as staffing cost. This is coupled with the lack of income due to advertising no longer being of interest to relevant agencies.

**Q: I hope the NE will take on board the feeling that those who are digitally excluded are not being catered for and ask that Ash and his committee relook at ways that this can be done?**

A: All members who wish to receive it are encouraged to [opt-in](#) for the printed BEER magazine, as well as take advantage of their local branch magazine, where possible.

