

## Scots lead the way at SIBA's Beer Awards



Jamie Delap and the Fyne Ales team

SIBA has presented its 2025 Independent Beer Awards and, for the first time ever, all of the overall champions are from Scotland.

Cross Borders Brewing was named champion in the cask beer category with their India Pale Ale, Fyne Ales won the bottled/canned beer section with Mills & Hills Vintage — a barrel aged imperial stout — and Swannay took the keg championship with their strong Orkney Porter.

The awards are presented at the national finals of SIBA's beer competition. In order to earn a place in the final, brewers must first win gold at a regional competition.

"I think, in Scotland, we're proud we've got lots of brewers doing some really good things, and this just validates that great work going on in Scotland," said Jamie Delap, of Fyne Ales.

"There must be something in the water

up there!" joked SIBA chief executive Andy Slee.

Northern Ireland's Bullhouse Brewing Co was named brewery business of the year at the SIBA Business Awards. Bullhouse took the top prize after winning the commercial achievement and best city pub awards.

"We're thrilled to win the award," said Bullhouse's William Mayne. "It's a huge recognition for the work that the team do, and also with the challenges in the Northern Ireland beer market. For any Northern Irish brewery to be recognised on a UK-wide platform is massive for us."

Another big winner on the night was Liverpool's Colbier, who were named the UK's best new independent brewery.

The new diversity champion of the year award, given in partnership with industry group Women on Tap, is Hand Brew Co.

### IN BRIEF

- The next beer in Northern Monk's Northern Wild series is actually a beer/cider hybrid. The 4.6% ABV brew has been made using wild yeast from apples and Brett Bruxellensis. Expect funky, tart flavours, and a clear apple character, with a hint of smoke and malt sweetness on the finish.
- DJ Calvin Harries and friend Mark Irving have acquired the Coach and Horses pub, in their home town of Dumfries. Irving will be the venue's landlord.



- Table Skanking is a new 3.4% ABV pale ale from Bluntrock. They've blended their house pale ale yeast with a classic wheat beer strain to showcase some distinctive continental characters in a subtle, delicate way. Dry hopped with Vic Secret and Nectarone it has light notes of ripe banana, cloves, and orange zest from the yeast, backed up with a tangy kick of nectarine and kiwi from the hops. Zappa hops in the whirlpool round it off with a nice bit of spice."
- Chester-based Admiral Taverns has chosen Merseyside-based Claire House Children's Hospice as its 2025 charity partner.
- The beer that started the UnBarred journey is back, in cask. Benchmark IPA (4.7% ABV) boasts a fragrance of fresh hops and soft fruitiness, alongside a palate of gentle, biscuity malts.
- Black Country Ales has acquired its 53rd pub site, The Bitter Suite, in Lichfield. The pub will re-open in the summer following a refurbishment.



## It's the vinyl countdown to Record Store Day

DEYA Brewing Co is releasing a special edition pale ale to celebrate this year's Record Store Day, which takes place on 12th April.

The pale ale is a vibrant, easy-drinking brew at 4% ABV. Striking the perfect balance of juicy hop character and a smooth, hazy body, it's crafted to be the ideal companion for a day of crate-digging and music discovery.

The can design pays homage to Record Store Day with a cartoon-style illustration of a queue outside a record shop, capturing the excitement of the annual celebration. The brew will be available exclusively at DEYA's Taproom, on their website, and at selected independent record stores across the UK. DEYA will be hosting a Record Store Day afterparty on 12th April.



## WHAT'S ON HIGHLIGHTS

### 22nd March

Open Day at Mysterious Brewing, Silchester.

### 26th March

Charity auction for Ukraine at Brewery Market, Twickenham

### 26th-29th March

Wandsworth Common Beer Festival at Le Gothique, London.

### 26th-30th March

Spring Beer Festival at Billericay Brewery.

### 27th-29th March

Burton and South Derbyshire Beer Festival at the Town Hall, Burton.

### 28th and 29th March

Larbert Real Ale Festival at Dobbie Hall, Stenhuismuir.

Chelmsford Craft Beer Festival at Chelmsford Social Club.

### 29th March

12th Anniversary Beer Festival at Siren Craft Brew, Finchampstead.

## PLAN AHEAD ...

### 2nd-5th April

Egham Beer Festival at the United Services Club.

Maldon Beer Festival at the Swan Hotel, Maldon.

### 3rd-5th April

Weetwood Brewery tap takeover at Cromwell's Tap House, Shrewsbury.

### 3rd-6th April

Beer Festival at Wigan Central, Wigan

### 4th and 5th April

Nottingham Independents' Castle Beer Festival at Nottingham Castle.

**There are more — many more — listings, with maps, at [beertoday.co.uk/events](https://beertoday.co.uk/events)**  
**The biggest beery events guide in the UK? Could be...**

# New brewery and taproom projects for Amity Brewing



Amity Brewing team members at the new brewery site

Amity Brew Co have received planning permission to create a new brewery at Albion Mills in Greengates, Bradford, with work getting under way next week.

The move will allow Amity to expand its production capacity and meet growing demand. They have outgrown their current site at Sunny Bank Mills, in Farsley.

Known for their innovative craft beers and award-winning brews, such as the 2023 SIBA Independent Beer Award-winning Waterpistol pale ale, the brewery will be relocating just three miles from

their current location to a space that offers more room for both production and customer experiences.

The old premises, however, will be home to an upgraded taproom, which has been the subject of a crowdfunding campaign. A £50,000 target was set and exceeded, so this has now been stretched to £100,000.

The new premises at Albion Mills will allow Amity to expand its operations, moving beyond the constraints of the current site at Sunny Bank Mills, where brewing can only take place when the bar is closed.

## Powder Monkey Group acquires Empress Ale

Powder Monkey Group has acquired Midlands-based Empress Ale, with Empress founder Surj Virk joining the senior PMG management team as sales director.

Empress supplies beers to some of the finest Michelin-starred restaurants, gastropubs and up-and-coming eateries across the UK.

The acquisition provides Powder Monkey with not only top-quality additional beers for its direct-to-consumer portfolio, but also a notable established client base in some of London's prime restaurants, and grocers such as Waitrose and Ocado.

The news follows the announcement that Powder Monkey Group Ltd shares are now trading on JP Jenkins.



## Carbon Positive Malt is here

Muntons says it is redefining the future of brewing with its Climate Positive Malt — the UK's lowest-carbon malt for the craft brewing industry.

"Malt, as a raw material, accounts for around 22% of CO2 emissions of a litre of craft beer," said Mark Tyldesley, Muntons' managing director. "And the biggest proportion (59%) of the carbon footprint for traditional maltings comes from growing of barley."

Muntons' Climate Positive Malt offers up to 30% lower CO2 emissions per tonne, compared to the UK malt average. The achievement comes from a combination of low-carbon maltings and sustainable barley farming practices. This helps brewers meet rising consumer demand for more eco-conscious products.

## Perry from a forgotten orchard

Devon-based Sandford Orchards has launched a limited edition 2024 Vintage Perry (7.5% ABV), which will be available in 750ml bottles.

"I planted a small perry orchard on a friend's farm 15 years ago, and completely forgot about it," said Barney Butterfield, chief cidermaker at Sandford Orchards.

"This autumn, Tom picked up the phone and asked what we were going to do with all these pears. Nothing for a decade and a half, then a trailer load!

"As with cider apples, perry pears are grown only for the amazing drink they produce — they are essentially inedible. But if you do the job well, the results are sublime."