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Real Heritage Pubs Online Guide

Using this guide - The Rankings

All entries stand out as being of particular national heritage interest but there are inevitably notable variations in terms of intactness and quality, hence the ranking system we have adopted.

★★★ Three Star pubs have stayed wholly or largely intact for the last fifty years, or retain particular rooms or features that are truly rare or exceptional, or display a combination of the two.

★★ Two Star pubs have interiors where the intactness and quality levels will be somewhat lower than for Three Star

★ The interiors of One Star pubs will have either readily identifiable historic layouts or retain rooms or features of special interest but more significant changes are allowable.

These online guides provide you with up-to-date descriptions, on a region by region basis, of pubs listed on our National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. Please note that the content will differ from that in the hard-copy guides where the pub information dates to when that guide was published. The hard-copy guides also contain more editorial material.

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A Celebration Of Welsh Pub Heritage

Real Heritage Pubs of Wales is a guide to a remarkable and varied collection of pubs with the best and most interesting interiors in the whole of Wales. It is CAMRA's pioneering initiative to bring greater appreciation of the most valuable historic pub interiors in the country to both local people and visitors. Although Wales has over 4,000 public houses, this guide lists just 100 or so. There are so few because of the enormous amount of opening out, theming and general modernisation that has taken place in recent decades. Safeguarding what is now left of the country's pub heritage has become a serious conservation challenge. By publishing this guide, we aim to encourage owners and local authorities to take steps to ensure that these surviving gems remain genuine historic pubs for years to come.

This guide builds on work started by CAMRA in the early 1990s to identify those pubs in the United Kingdom that still retained their historic interiors more or less intact. The result is the, National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors details of which can be found by visiting www.heritagepubs.org.uk. Only 11 of the 289 pubs listed in the current inventory are in Wales (identified in this guide by {solid star symbol or open star symbol}). The pubs included in this guide are very largely as they were before the mid-1960s (the start of a disastrous period of refitting pub interiors and opening out rooms) or, if they have been changed, this has been done sensitively and without destroying the historic heart. The survival of multiple rooms and old furnishings and fittings has been crucial to the selection.

This guide to historic pub interiors in Wales contains a wide variety of pubs to visit, admire and enjoy. Included is an article explaining the development of the pub from a simple beer house and revealing where it is still possible to drink in what looks like someone's front room! The 'architectural style in Welsh pubs through the years' article summarises the purpose built pubs through the ages from the grand Victorian ones, through inter-war examples and even some 1950/60s examples. There are separate features on drovers' inns, coaching inns and pubs that have other businesses run from then.

Dathlu Treftadaeth Tafarnau Cymru

Llawlyfr ydyw Real Heritage Pubs of Wales: Tafarnau Treftadaeth i gasgliad hynod ac amrywiol o dafarnau gyda'r rhannau mewnol gorau a mwyaf diddorol yng Nghymru i gyd. Trwy hwn mae CAMRA yn achub y blaen wrth ddatblygu gwerthfawrogiad o du mewn tafarnau hanesyddol ymysg pobl lleol ac ymwelwyr fel ei gilydd. Er bod dros 4,000 o dafarnau yng Nghymru, dim ond tua 100 sydd yn y llawlyfr hwn. Mor ychydig ydynt o achos bod cymaint o agor i fyny, gosod themau a moderneiddio cyffredinol wedi digwydd yn y degawdau diwethaf. Mae diogelu beth sydd ar ol o dreftadaeth tafarnau ein gwlad wedi dod yn her ddifrifol yn nhermau cadwraeth. Wrth gyhoeddi y llawlyfr hwn, ein bwriad yw i annog perchnogion ac awdurdodau lleol i sicrhau bod y gemau hyn sydd wedi llwyddo i oroesi yn para fel tafarnau wirioneddol hanesyddol am flynyddoedd i ddod.

Mae'r llawlyfr yn adeiladu ar waith a ddechreuwyd gan CAMRA yn y 1990au cynnar i adnabod y tafarnau rheiny yn y Deyrnas Unedig gyda tu mewn hanesyddol yn dal mwy neu lai yn ei gyfanrwydd. Canlyniad hwn ydyw'r National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors a cheir manylion o hwn ar pubheritage.camra.org.uk. Dim ond 11 o'r 289 dafarn ar y National Inventory cyfredol sydd yng Nghymru (adnabyddir hwy yn y llawlyfr hwn gan SYMBOL). I raddau helaeth mae'r tafarnau yn y llawlyfr hwn yn dal fel oeddent cyn canol y 1960au (pryd dechreuodd cyfnod trychinebus o ail-fampio tu mewn tafarnau ac agor ystafelloedd i fyny); neu, os ydynt wedi altro, mae hwn wedi digwydd mewn ffordd sensitif heb dinistrio calon hanesyddol y lle. Mae goroesiad mwy nac un ystafell, yn ogystal a hen ddodrefn a thaclau, wedi bod yn hanfodol wrth ddethol. Ceir wybodaeth pellach am waith CAMRA i achub dafarnau hanesyddol ar dudalen.

Mae'r llawlyfr hwn i dafarnau yng Nghymru hefo tu mewn hanesyddol yn cynnwys amrywiaeth eang o dafarnau i ymweld a nhw, eu hedmygu a'u mwynhau. Mae erthygl yn esbonio datblygiad y dafarn o dy cwrw syml ac yn datgelu'r llefydd lle gall rhywun yfed mewn man debyg iawn i ystafell flaen hen-ffasiwn! Mae'r erthygl ar arddull pensaernïol y dafarn Gymreig, yn crynhoi'r tafarnau a godwyd yn bwrpasol, o rai mawreddog oes Fictoria, trwy enghreifftiau o'r cyfnod rhwng rhyfeloedd, a hyd yn oed rhai o'r 1950au a'r 1960au. Ceir ysgrifau neilltuol ar dafarnau'r porthmyn, ar dafarnau'r goetsh fawr ac ar dafarnau sydd a fusnesau eraill yn gysylltiedig a nhw.

How The Welsh Pub has Changed

Purpose-built inns reached Wales only in the last 300 years. This means that a number of the pubs featured in this guide are virtually indistinguishable from the thousands of farm houses and cottages scattered throughout the land. Often the only difference would have been a sign displaying the name and function of the building. The public drinking area would have been the main room or hall of the house, often around an inglenook fireplace.

The floor plan of the Red Lion, Llanegwad, shows how thousands of pubs operated in the past. The public room was the bar, being one of the domestic rooms allocated as such with no bar counter, just a fireplace. Beer is stored in the cellar, which is combined with the domestic pantry and is fetched from the cellar and served to your table. You have to go outside the building to the toilet. This plan also shows the remains of a malthouse as in the past some beer was produced on the premises.

Beer Houses

The best of the few surviving examples of a 'beer house' in Wales today is the Goat, Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, which is a rendered house in the middle of the village only distinguished by a pub sign on the side. The front door leads to the original main public room, which looks very domestic and small enough to appear like a hallway. Prior to the 1950s there were two other small rooms - the 'Bar bach' (small bar) situated to the rear left and another at the end of the passage but both of these are now in domestic use. In 1956 the family, who have been here for four generations, decided to convert the room on the right into the bar and installed a counter for the first time. The original main room is now used for 'overspill'.

Another rare surviving example of a beer house is the Dyffryn Arms, Pontfaen, which has been in the same family ownership since it was built in 1845. Only the small sign board above the door makes it identifiable as a pub. Walk down the passage and left into what looks like an ordinary domestic room with the only difference being an opening with horizontally-sliding sashes to the ground floor cellar which is opened for service and closed afterwards.

The snug at the Red Lion, Llansannan, is the outstanding example of settle seating arranged around the fireplace in what would have been the only public room in a domestic property with no bar counter, with beer fetched from the cellar to your table. Other excellent examples in Wales can be found at the Blue Bell, Llangurig; the Mount Inn, Llanidloes; and the Talbot, Tregaron.

Terrace Pubs

Two pubs in this guide have developed from a beer house within a row of terraced houses. The Virginia, Llanfairfechan, originally consisted of the small rooms at the front left and rear right with a counter at the end of the passageway. Then the former domestic room at the front right was combined with the rear right one and another small room at the rear left was brought into pub use. At the Grapes, Welshpool, the tiny public bar is unusually situated at the rear right and the other three rooms were brought into pub use over the years. The lounge bar at the front looks like it only came into public use in the 1950s when they cut a hatch into the wall for service to the back of the bar. Sadly, changes in 2007 saw the combination of the two rooms on the left.

Expansion of the Beer House

There are a number of pubs in this guide that remained as just one room with no bar counter and with beer fetched from the cellar until the 1950s/60s. Then they expanded, a bar counter was added and extra rooms opened as public rooms/bars. These include the Cross Inn, Glandy Cross in 1949; the Crown, Llanfihangel Glyn Mwyr in the 1950s; and the Sun, Rhewl; Rose & Crown, Graianrhyd; and New Inn, Llanddewi Brefi in the early 1960s.

Where to easily see the changes

At the White Lion, Llanellian-yn-Rhos, Conwy, you can easily see how the interiors of Welsh pubs have changed over the years as there is a photo on the wall showing how it looked some 50 or so years ago. If you compare it to the layout today you will see it shows the inglenook fireplace is unchanged; the beer came from the cellar via a hatch (now the present servery i.e. a bar counter has been added); the settle is in a new position in the extension on the left; also the lounge to the rear was a later addition (in the late 1960s).

There are examples of pubs in this guide where a hatch was replaced by a bar counter in recent years including the Prince of Wales, Cynwyd, added in c.1960. The bar fittings of 1962 at the Colomendy Arms, Cadole, probably replaced a hatch.

The left-hand door of the Globe, Maenclochog, Pembrokeshire, led into the village post office until the 1960s. The original pub was just the right-hand bar and the entrance door is on the right i.e. the one with the licensee details on it - this now leads to the domestic accommodation but some customers still use it. The 'new bar' on the left was opened for the investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales in 1969 and a doorway-sized gap was created to link the two rooms.

There are a number of pubs that were just one public bar with a counter until recent years when extra rooms/areas were added. At the Cresselly Arms, Cresswell Quay, it is easy to spot the changes where the small single bar expanded into two former domestic rooms in 1981 – the domestic cooker is still there and in use.

There is also a range fireplace at Royal Hotel, Usk – see a description of all the changes here.

Other pubs where expansions into parts of the property can be easily spotted include the New Cross, Court Henry (p. XX), where a former stable was converted into a dining room/lounge; the Old Point House, Angle where the one original room has been expanded to three; and the Carpenters Arms, Shirenewton, which has expanded from one to seven rooms!

Using this guide

The main criterion for inclusion is the existence of a genuine historic setting in which to enjoy what people have enjoyed in pubs for centuries – a drink, good conversation and perhaps a bite to eat as well. It is not to be construed as a recommendation in any other sense. As with most pubs in Wales, you will be made welcome, especially if you say why you've taken the trouble to come and say a few complimentary words about the pub.

We have made considerable efforts to ensure the accuracy of the information at the time of going to press, but the licensed trade is currently experiencing unprecedented change so there will doubtless be changes occurring during the currency of this publication.

Accommodation

We have indicated the number of rooms available for let as well as indicating how many are en-suite. We have made no inspection of these parts of the pub and are not in a position to make any assessment of quality or price. We therefore recommend you check with organisations such as the local tourist information centres that do carry out inspections and offer gradings to help you chose a suitable level of comfort and cost.

Food

Many users of this guide appreciate good food and the editors wish to point out that whilst quality food is available in many pubs in the book, searching it out is not our prime purpose and there are a number of other guides that are better placed to do it.

To be as helpful as possible, we have indicated where, at the time of going to press, a pub sells meals or snacks (at least toasted sandwiches or hot pies). If you are planning to visit a pub and require something to eat, we strongly recommend you ring in advance to check availability. Some pubs prefer you to make a booking, particularly for Friday and Saturday evenings, and kitchens can be closed at short notice, particularly if the licensee has changed or staff are not available.

Real ale

This indicates that the pub sells at least one cask-conditioned beer at the time of going to press. This is something that can change, and when you visit a pub without it on sale we encourage you to ask for real ale, as demand will result in more outlets. We also give an indication of which real ales you might expect to see on the bar.

Real Draught Cider

We indicate if the pub sells at least one Welsh draught cider (or perry) or one from a producer in England.

Opening hours

Unless stated otherwise, the pubs are open at lunchtimes and evenings. We indicate where they are open all day; if they are closed on one particular session or day; and if the opening hours are different in summer and winter. ‘Opens at 4pm’ indicates the pub is closed lunchtimes, but opens from the stated time to evening closing time, usually 11pm. Many pubs in Wales that normally close during the afternoons will extend their hours in the afternoons for international rugby matches.

A handful of pubs keep more restricted opening times and so we have tried to give an indication of these at the time of going to press. As opening hours can be subject to considerable change over time we strongly recommend you to phone ahead to check, particularly if you are travelling a long distance to a particular pub.

How Old is Old?

Many books about historic pubs and inns include details of ‘the oldest pub in the country’ but as a guide to real historic pub interiors we propose to take a different approach. Firstly, the dates we quote in this guide are properly researched, for example, in listing descriptions or the works of respected historians. There are all too many spurious and altogether hypothetical dates recycled in publications about pub ‘heritage’.

We have tried to avoid dubious ‘pub folklore’ such as ‘a secret tunnel to the church’ - we have received a few such claims but no one has showed us any and most definitely no-one has provided an actual walk up one from end to end! This is also a ‘ghost-free’ guide (which, dull though it may be, is the probable true condition of most supposedly ghost-infested hostelryes).

It is our view that what matters is the age of what we can see today – in terms of the building and, more importantly, the interior fixtures and fittings. It matters little for this guide if a building claims to be 13th century or is actually a 18th century rebuild if all the interior fittings date from 2008!

Earliest Recorded Inns

Llanthony Priory Hotel, Llanthony is part of a medieval structure making it the oldest building in this guide that is now a pub. In his excellent book *Historic Inns & Taverns of Wales & the Marches* (Stroud, 1993), Paul R Davis states there are very few genuine old inns. Most date from the 17th century or later and are linked to the improving road network from those times. Davis states that the Cross Keys, Swansea, ‘could justly be claimed the oldest public house in Wales, since it was built around 1330 ... though it only became an inn at the end of the seventeenth century’, the date of the frontage. It has a surviving 14th-century window at the rear and the building was renovated in the 1950s but is much extended and now has a modernised open-plan interior.

Pub Myth or Pub Fact?

Based on a claim of being mentioned as a pub in legal chronicles in 1110 (what these are is a mystery left to tease us), the Skirrid Mountain Inn, Llanfihangel Crucorney, states on its website that ‘The Skirrid Inn..... has stood for nine centuries’. However, the listing description of this Grade II building states that ‘the present building appears wholly mid- to late-17th century with major alterations in the 19th century’ - confirmed by John Newman in *The Buildings of Wales: Gwent/Monmouthshire* (London, 2000). As the pub interior is much changed in recent years it did not meet the criteria for inclusion in this guide.

The Groes Inn, Ty’n-y-groes, in the Conwy valley claims the oldest license in Wales, dating from 1573 but the building is much extended and modernised.

Genuine History

The Prince of Wales, Kenfig, which started life as Kenfig Corporation Guildhall and was built on pillars in the early 17th century, is an example of a genuinely old building featured in this guide. If you visit at a quiet time ask the landlord for a tour of 'the town hall' – the upstairs room with its C17 wall-panelling; the wooden benches from its days as a court room; and the wall safe containing the mace that was presented to the ancient Borough of Kenfig in 1714 to celebrate the coronation of George I. Elsewhere, the Old Nag’s Head, Monmouth incorporates a medieval round tower forming part of the old town walls, while the Blue Anchor, East Aberthaw, has been authoritatively dated to the mid-16th century (it claims ‘Established c.1380’). This splendid thatched pub still retains a characterful interior of six rooms.

Glamorgan

Barry

110 Barry Road, Barry, CF63 1BD

Tel: (01446) 734869

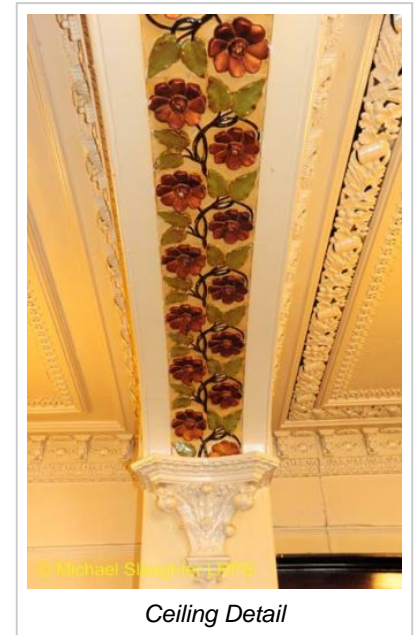
Listed Status: Not listed

Witchill Hotel ★

This Victorian corner pub, built in 1891, has some of the most ornate ceiling decoration in a Welsh pub and also retains a rare Jug and Bottle Department. The public bar, accessed from Herbert Street, was originally two rooms and had an entrance in the middle of the room. The bar-back is original with some new wood and mirrors but another one on the right has been lost; the counter originally went all along the back wall but was shortened in 1962. This high-ceilinged room has an impressive cornice featuring malt shovels, casks, and hops; large ceiling roses; impressive arches and shoulders, the latter two with detail picked out in green and purple.

The lounge, only open in the evenings, is accessed from the Barry Road mosaic floored entrance and was formerly two rooms. The bar-back with two deep drawers, one used to store cigarettes, is certainly original and the counter could also be the same age. The rear part has bar fittings that look to be mostly from the 1960s but parts are older. There is another superb cornice of grapes and leaves and a 'Smoke Room' panel in the inner door. Between the two bars is the intact Jug & Bottle Department with an etched window, a wood and glass partition, two hatches and shelving.

For other impressive ceiling decoration take a look at the frieze and ceiling roses at Halfway Hotel, Llanelli; also the bracket over the fireplace at the Slaters Arms, Corris.



Cardiff

282 Hayes Bridge Road, Cardiff, CF10 1GH

Tel: (029) 2034 3129

Email: adamjames82@hotmail.co.uk

Website: <http://www.sabrain.com/golden-cross>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Central) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Golden Cross ★★★

Built in 1903 for Brains' brewery, this city-centre pub, four minutes walk from Central Station, is the most spectacularly decorated of any in Wales and is famous for its ceramics, the bar counter in particular.

. The façade proclaims the Brains name and gives a foretaste of the riches within. Here the L-shaped counter on the left is one of fourteen remaining ceramic bar counters in the UK and the design, featuring grotesques, is one of three made by Craven Dunnill of Jackfield, Shropshire: the others are at the Mountain Daisy, Sunderland, and the Gunmakers Arms Birmingham. The frieze is almost identical to that at the White Swan, Birmingham. There are also two original pictorial tiled panels, that in the public bar showing Cardiff Castle, and the one in the left-hand room depicting the Old Town Hall as it was in 1863. In the side entrance lobby is a rather crude, modern tiled painting of the Brains' Brewery in about 1890. The impressive bar-backs remain in the public bar and lounge (to the right), but the counter in the latter is modern. In 1978 the pub was threatened by road widening but a vociferous campaign saved it and it reopened in 1986: the modern lobby panel of Brains' brewery dates from that time. Popular as a gay pub in the evenings.



Interior

Cardiff

14 Church Street, Cardiff, CF10 1BG

Tel: (029) 2021 7999

Email: W93147@msrston.co.uk

Website: <http://oldarcadecardiff.co.uk>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Central) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Old Arcade ★

One of the most famous rugby pubs in the world, the Old Arcade is well worth a visit to see a contrast of fittings with early 20th century ones in the front bar and some genuine late-Victorian fittings in the back bar. It was built in 1844 as the Birdcage Inn and later called the Arcade Vaults. In the frontbar the counter looks like inter-war work, as does the wall panelling and there is a 1920s style fireplace; several doors into the room indicate it was probably once sub-divided. Changes were made in 1995 to accommodate more rugby fans -the counter was shortened and removed from the front of the room so that service is now only from the side. Part of the old bar-back does survive though; it is in a Neo-Jacobean style and incorporates a genuine Victorian mirror formerly on the lounge wall. Note the original 'Brains Beer' etched window.

The back lounge retains a splendid late Victorian bar back fitting still with five of the six original mirrored panels plus a mahogany counter and an early 20th century fireplace.



FrontBar

Cardiff

200 Broadway, Cardiff, CF24 1QJ

Tel: (029) 2132 2289

Email: royaloak200@outlook.com

Website: <https://www.sabrainpubs.com/pubs-and-hotels/partner/royal-oak>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Queen Street) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Royal Oak ★★

A late 19th-century pub still with four rooms plus an excellent set of four stained-glass window screens along the Beresford Road frontage. More stained glass appears in the panels between the servery and the snug; both rear snugs retain their original tiled fireplaces. The lounge on the far left which doubles as a function room has modern bar fittings but the fixed seating is old.

For many years the Royal Oak was run by relatives of featherweight champion "Peerless" Jim Driscoll, including Kitty Flynn who lived here from 1946 to 2003, which may explain why the interior is little-altered. The pub still sports many boxing mementos and above the lounge was Driscoll's Boxing Gym (which closed in 2006, but may reopen).



Public Bar

Cymmer

The Old Station, Cymmer, SA13 3HY
Tel: (01639) 850901
Email: info@refreshmentrooms.co.uk
Website: <http://www.refreshmentrooms.co.uk/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Listed Status: Not listed

Refreshment Rooms ★

The original Cymmer Station building (opened 1885, closed 1970) is a single storey building of stone, unusual in that it also doubled as a refreshment room from the 1890s. The main bar has fittings from that time: a panelled bar counter (but the bar top is modern) and a five-bay mirrored bar back with a third bay. A door (has a figure '5' on it) for staff; on the right are two drawers with cupboards below them. The main bar has a dado of old panelling and a wood surround fireplace. On the mantelpiece is a photo, taken in the 1940s, in the bar.



Main Bar

There is a further mirrored bar back to the left of two bays with a row of drawers. It straddles an arch in the servery area between the main bar and a smaller bar to the left. The lefthand bar has another panelled bar counter with a black Formica top. The fireplace was opened out in the 1990s and has a large plain mirror above, some old dado panelling but 1960s (?) fixed seating. Double doors lead to a dining room at the rear left constructed in the 1990s.

A further small room on the right has more dado panelling and a metal surround fireplace. A gap leads to the far right pool room, again constructed in the 1990s, with modern dado.

East Aberthaw

, East Aberthaw, CF62 3DD
Tel: (01446) 750329
Email: enquiries@blueanchoraberthaw.com
Website: <http://www.blueanchoraberthaw.com/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II*

Blue Anchor ★

What you see here dates mainly from the 1960s when a simple two-bar pub (the present snug and front room) in a mid-16th century building was greatly expanded. This included bringing into pub use what is now the (very authentic looking) public bar. An excellent example of how to extend a pub in a characterful manner.



Right-hand Bar

Gilfach Fargoed

Park Place, Gilfach Fargoed, CF81 8LW

Tel: (01443) 566462

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Gilfach Fargoed) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Capel Hotel ★★

This traditional local built in 1912 of red brick is a rare example of a little-altered multi-room pub. Built by Philips Brewery of Newport, it is named after John Capel Hanbury, a local landowner. The original layout remains apart from the amalgamation of the Jug & Bottle with the public bar by the removal of a partition. Note the original etched glass panel in the door. The large public bar retains its original solid carved counter (shortened by some 7 feet on the left to enable access to the rear room), splendid mirrored bar-back with a still-working dumb waiter and a non-working gas light. Several windows survive recording varied room names including Commercial Room, which has a hatch/bar to the rear with intact sash windows; and Buffet Bar, which has good fixed seating but a modern counter. Beyond a partition wall on the far left is a terrazzo-floored passage: note the ornate brass door handles. The magnificent old weighing machine originally came from a railway station and has in the past been used to weigh prize-fighters. Skittles is played in an upstairs room.



Main Bar

Hendreforgan

, Hendreforgan, CF39 8YL

Directions: From Tonyrefail on A4093, turn left after Gylfach Goch village sign

Tel: (01443) 675144

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Griffin Inn ★

Built in 1881, this remotely-located pub, close to an exploratory coal-mining shaft, has been in the same family since 1961.

Behind the modern front extension is, firstly, a tiny bar still with its old bar-back featuring a glass panel in the centre, original counter, dado panelling and a heavily carved settle. A door with the figure '5' on it leads to the public bar, an L-shaped room incorporating part of a former kitchen. This bar has a Victorian counter and bar-back, a hatch facing the former kitchen part with a red-Formica shelf, a stone fireplace, old benches and a carved settle. The historic till has a special slot for guineas; a lever at the top moves from side to side and as it does it rings a bell. Through a glass panel you can see the guineas as they roll from side to side down into a drawer.

There is also a lounge (now games room) on the left side of the pub. The toilet block on the front was added in the early 1960s and a skittle alley above the pub was converted into a flat in 1995, otherwise little has changed.



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Counter

Kenfig

, Kenfig, CF33 4PR

Tel: (01656) 740356

Email: princeofwaleskenfig@hotmail.com

Website: <http://www.princeofwalesinn.co.uk>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Prince of Wales ★

Originally the Kenfig Corporation Guildhall built on pillars in the early 17th century, the Prince of Wales was largely rebuilt in 1808. It was used as a court for many years and still has the judges' wooden benches and some 17th-century wallpanelling; part was used as a Sunday school room from 1864 to 2000. The pub is still owned by the Kenfig Corporation Trust, which meets twice a year to distribute some £60,000 (the rents from this and other properties) to local groups and organisations who apply for grants.

Downstairs the pub retains three rooms. To the left of the passage with an old Worthington mirror on the wall is a little room with panelling and a fireplace from the 1970s. Beyond this is the small 'Singing Room' with old seating and a hatch to the side of the bar. In the middle of the pub lies the servery, beyond which can be seen the casks on stillage in the cellar, which was extended back in recent years. The counter was replaced in the 1970s along with removal of a tiny area to the right known as the 'Royal Box' (floor markings indicate its position) used by select customers to serve themselves. The large room in front of the servery was formerly three small rooms and a passageway, but has been like this for at least 40 years.

The Prince of Wales is run on traditional lines with no jukebox, no fruit machines, no pool table and the TV is only switched on for rugby.



Left Room

Llanwonno

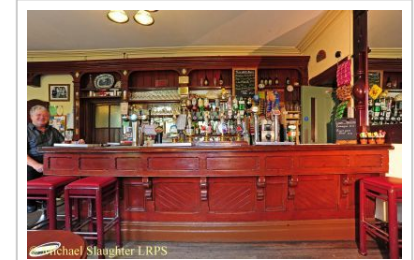
, Llanwonno, CF37 3PH
Directions: Opp the church in Llanwonno
Tel: (01443) 790272
Website: <http://brynffynonhotel.com>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Listed Status: Not listed

Monknash

, Monknash, CF71 7QQ
Tel: (01656) 890209
Email: ploughmonknash@hotmail.co.uk
Website: <https://www.ploughandharrowmonknash.co.uk/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Brynffynon Hotel ★

The 17th. century Brynffynnon Inn, situated on a wooded hillside five miles north west of Pontypridd, is worth a visit to see the public bar on the left. It has an excellent old bar-back with arches and mirrors that runs the length of the room and also retains an old counter, though this was shortened many years ago to create access to the toilets. The fireplace is modern. To the right, the lounge was once three separate rooms and has a small modern bar.



Servery

Plough & Harrow ★

A 17th. century pub which has been little-altered in over 50 years. The characterful public bar, on the right, was originally two rooms but, in the mid-1960s, a partition and a staircase to the living quarters were removed and the small bar counter was added. The quarry-tiled lounge/dining room on the left has a brick bar and a bar-back using old furniture, both added in the mid-1960s. There are two genuinely old fireplaces.



Bar

Penderyn

Chapel Road, Penderyn, CF44 9JX

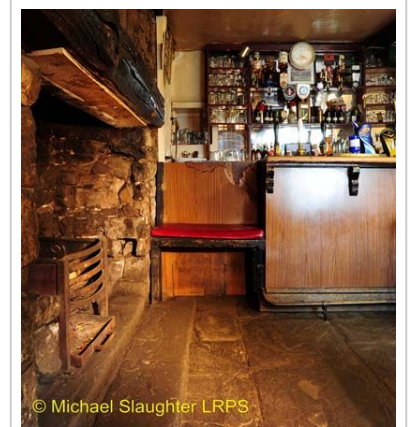
Tel: (01685) 811357

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: Not listed

Lamb Hotel ★

Traditional drinkers' pub with three simply furnished rooms and an off-sales hatch to the stone-flagged passageway. The sliding sashes work and the off-sales is in use, mainly by children for sweets; also some customers favour it for passageway drinking hence the shelves on the walls for their use. On the left with '1' on the door is the public bar where the old counter has a top with an obvious slope plus panels added to the front in the 1980s; the red leatherette benches date from the 1960s. The bar back shelves were built in c.1965 by a previous landlord's son, who was good at woodwork at school! The lounge on the right has '4' on the door, Formica top tables and a bench from the 1960s. Behind the public bar is the snug with '2' on the door, a stone flagged floor, fixed bare benches and a tiny hatch to the servery. The door with '3' on it at therear left is now a private room.



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Bar

Pontardawe

103 High Street, Pontardawe, SA8 4JN

Tel: (01792) 930976

Listed Status: Not listed

Ivy Bush Hotel ★

A big red-brick Edwardian pub where both Max Boyce and local girl Mary Hopkin started their performing careers. The impressive entrance canopy on cast-iron columns leads into a long quarry-tiled passage with Art Nouveau stained glass in the internal entrance lobby. The public bar retains its fine Edwardian mirrored bar-back fitting, with columns holding up the shelves, and an original counter with a modern red Formica top. The large bare-boarded room on the right has 'Ivy Bush' and 'Bar' etched windows, old benches lining two sides of the room and red Formica tables. The old fireplace is covered by a radiator. On the left, the Commercial Room was, until the 1960s, two small rooms and the counter, bar back and fixed seating all date from the amalgamation. The small room at the rear is mainly used by the Swansea Valley Pigeon Club and has a trophy cabinet but no old fittings. The upstairs function room has a bare wood floor, fixed seating around most of the walls and a 1950s tiled fireplace covered by a more modern one. The outside gents' features original urinals.



Bar Back

Pontypridd

20 Bridge Street, Pontypridd, CF37 4PE

Directions: opp N entrance to Ynysangharad Park, (off A470)

Tel: (01443) 403215

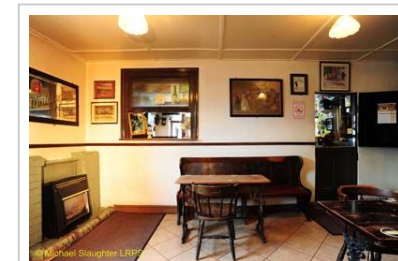
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Pontypridd) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Llanover Arms ★

A traditional three-roomed drinkers' pub in a building dating back to around 1790. The basic, lino-tiled public bar has an interestingly detailed Victorian bar-back, an attractive Edwardian Bass mirror and some very old bench seating. Note the cast-iron tables inscribed 'Gaskells Barfitter Cardiff.' The bar counter was installed in the mid 1970s. Walk along the panelled corridor through the middle of the pub and on the rear right the L-shaped back room is served from a hatch with a sliding sash window and red Formica shelf. The brick fireplace may possibly date from the inter-war years and above it are a 19th. century 'Dunville's Whisky' mirror and a probably 1920s 'Worthington' mirror. The third room with a modern floor, sadly, lost its wall in the early 1980s so is opened-up to the corridor. Outside gents with all-over terrazzo up to waist height. At the rear in the former barn is a steak house restaurant with an upstairs bar, which is run as a separate business.



Rear Room

Swansea

56 Wind Street, Swansea, SA1 1EG

Tel: (01792) 465300

Email: enquiries@nosignwinebar.com

Website: <http://nosignwinebar.com>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

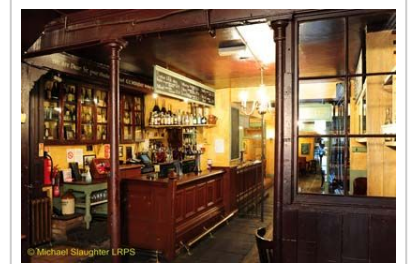
Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Swansea) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

No Sign Bar ★

Frequented by the young Dylan Thomas, this is by far the city's most interesting historic pub. Its origins are said to go back to 1690 and for many years it was run by the wine merchants, Mundays, who had here a wine shop, two bars and cellars, all of which have left traces today. If you visit at a quiet time you can take a look around and see how a Victorian Wine Merchants operated. The narrow front part was the shop and beyond the remaining third of a glazed screen and cast-iron columns that divided the shop from the drinking premises behind are two separate old bar counters, which were no doubt once in two separate rooms, and an old glass-fronted display cabinet. Entrance to this part was from Salubrious Passage to the left of the building.

The pub has been extended to the rear where there is an apparently imported bar counter. The cellars, now 'The Vault', feature two parallel brick-arched areas divided by an arcade of very old cast-iron columns; the gantry crane on rails would have been used to hoist and move heavy casks of various liquors. Munday's Bar, on the first floor, is open weekends and for functions. There are varied explanations for the 'No Sign' appellation from which you can take your pick.



Interior

Upper Killay

553 Gower Road, Upper Killay, SA2 7DS
Tel: (01792) 203946
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: Not listed

Ystalyfera

47 Wern Road, Ystalyfera, SA9 2LX
Directions: Turn off the A4067 at the 'Asda roundabout' into the village and the pub is on the main (top) rd through Ystalyfera.
Tel: (01639) 843625
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: Not listed

Railway Inn ★

A three rooms and passageway pub built in 1864 at the same time as the railway (now a cycle track) that ran alongside it. The passageway connects the rooms and the hatch/door in a part-glazed partition could once have been the off-sales. The small public bar on the left has a counter at least 60 years old with a new top; of a similar vintage are the ply-panelled walls and fixed seating, with the spindly ornamental timbering added later. A number of shelves of varying date form the bar back. Across the passage is a small room that has lost a fireplace and has been brought into use at some time. At the rear the lounge was originally half its present size but has expanded into domestic quarters in recent years and also has added timbering. The small counter here is a modern insertion replacing a hatch - there are no fittings of any great age in this room. Outside gents' and ladies' toilets.



Passage

Wern Fawr ★

The public bar here retains old bar fittings along with something rarely seen these days: an old stove with the flue rising up from it and out through the exterior wall. Note the old till drawer in the bar-back fitting; the counter survives but was moved back a few feet in the 1970s. Other features are some original etched windows on the front and old fixed seating. The stove, nicknamed 'the Nuclear Reactor', was introduced in 1968 and is still in use most days. On the left, two small rooms were knocked together in the 1970s and new bar fittings installed.



Interior

Gwent

Abergavenny

7 Flannel Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5EG

Tel: (01873) 853613

Email: HenandChickens.Abergavenny@marstons.co.uk

Website: <http://www.sabrain.com/henandchickens>

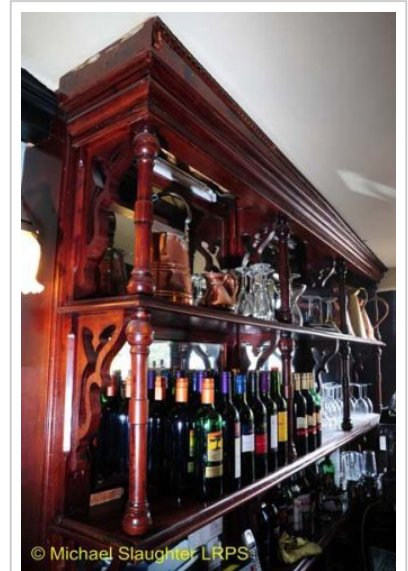
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Abergavenny) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Hen & Chickens ★

The Hen & Chickens retains its original three rooms and an old bar-back fitting. Observe how this mirrored bar-back is at right angles to the present counter - prior to 1999 there was a smaller counter directly in front of it. It is not clear if the old counter has been re-used or a new one was created in the style of the original. The bar-back fitting running along the window side is from 1999 - previously there was a settle by the entrance with its back to the window. The marble surround fireplace is old. At the rear is a small snug with shop-style windows which has been reduced in size by a new partition to create a passage to new gents' toilets (gents' was where the ladies' is now and the ladies' was previously upstairs). On the left the former coffee room is now a lounge with few if any old fittings. The pub expanded into a former hairdressers to the right in 1999. Note the numbers over the doors including a '8' on the cellar; also the original brass plates on the exterior.



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Bar Back

Abergavenny

37 Brecon Road, Abergavenny, NP7 5UH

Tel: (01873) 854759

Email: stationhotelabergavenny@gmail.com

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Abergavenny) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Station Hotel ★

This Victorian porticoed small hotel, built close to the former LMS station, has signs of an old off-sales hatch as you enter. In the small public bar, the original bar-back shelving extends across the room but the counter was shortened in the 1990s when a gap was created on the left to give access to the three linked rooms at the rear. Note the Edwardian etched 'Station' & 'Vaults' panels in the side door to the public bar. The first and second rear rooms retain their old fixed bench seating and off the second room is a further tiny room. A partition between the second and third rooms has a double door width gap in it. A small lounge is on the right. A quarry-tiled passage runs from a hatch at the back of the bar to the rear and outside gents' toilets.



Rear Room and Screen

Abersychan

Cwmavon Road, Abersychan, NP4 8PP

Tel: (01495) 773256

Email: therisingsuntorfaen@gmail.com

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Rising Sun ★

Formerly three cottages, this pub has evolved from having just a small public bar and now comprises three rooms including the original bar which has changed little for over 60 years. This characterful room has a large inglenook fireplace including a bread oven and old fixed seating down one side of the room. The bar counter and back fitting were added in the 1950s. The only change appears to be the adding of some wooden inlay to the seating some 40 years ago. In the 1960s the pub extended into another cottage to create the lounge and into the third cottage in the 1970s hence the two-part room we see today. More recently a dining room has been built onto the side.



Counter

Abersychan

2 Broad Street, Abersychan, NP4 7BQ

Tel: (01495) 774028

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Llanhennock

, Llanhennock, NP18 1LT

Directions: turn right 1 mile along Usk Road heading N from
Caerleon, then bear left at the fork

Tel: (01633) 420468

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: Not listed

White Hart Inn ★

A multi-roomed drinkers' pub last refurbished in the early 1960s. The public bar on the left is unchanged since then with ply panelling around the servery, which has some old shelves, counter (new top), and fixed seating. The passageway from the front door retains the original off-sales hatch in a part-glazed partition complete with window and old wooden shelf. The lounge at the rear, and opened up to a pool area on the right, also has 1960s fittings: counter with a copper top, more ply panelling, stone fireplace etc. A room on the front right with '3' on the door is now used for storage. At the rear right is a room with a removable skittle alley and a function room lies underneath the pub.

Wheatsheaf ★★

An old village pub retaining its traditional layout of two bars and an off-sales and little-altered for over 50 years. As you walk in the original off-sales hatch is still there complete with sliding window, but the dado panelling dates only from the 1980s. The small snug bar on the left is a real 1960s period piece with its hardboard-panelled walls, little counter with a Formica top and small brick fireplace. The bar-back shelves may be a later addition. In the bar on the right is another c.1960 brick fireplace (where you will find an open fire in winter) and a dado of more ribbed hardboard. However, the counter is no older than the early 1990s. Look for the Hancock's Brewery framed poster, and the ceramic huntsman on a barrel shaped horse, which is advertising material for the long-defunct Rhymney Brewery. Just beyond the ladies toilet is a small meeting room, which has been brought into use. .



Off Sales



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Off Sales

Monmouth

Granville Street, Monmouth, NP25 3DR

Tel: (01600) 712220

Website: <https://www.sabrain.com/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II*

Old Nags Head ★

Here you can drink in one of the East Gate's two round towers, part of Monmouth's medieval town wall, which is incorporated into the pub. This is a mainly early 19th-century four-roomed pub that last changed significantly in the early to mid 1960s. The small front 'Studio Bar' had a bar counter installed then for the first time, the room previously being served via a hatch. The wall between the 'Studio Bar' and the passage was replaced with a low partition. Panelling on the wall is of various dates and has bench seating attached; the fireplace looks 1960s. The second bar has a similar counter and was installed in the early to mid 1960s; the fireplace and all the bench seating is from the same era, but the flagstone-like floor is modern. The almost circular 'Gate Room', the old round tower, has modern panelling and floor. To the rear on a lower level is another small room with bare wood floor and old panelling that is now used as a dining room. The pub has been extended and includes a separate games room.



Right Bar

Monmouth

134 Old Hereford Road, Monmouth, NP25 3GA

Tel: (01600) 772505

Email: theroyaloakmonmouth@yahoo.co.uk

Website: <https://www.royaloakmonmouth.co.uk/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Royal Oak Inn ★

The public bar of this food-led pub has barely changed since being refitted in the late 1950s. The bar-back has 'Whitbread' illuminated panels at the top, a glass block backing and some Formica shelves. Most fittings like these have been ripped out of pubs in recent years making this one a rare survivor. The counter, wood-backed fixed seating with two baffles and stone fireplace all date from the refit, the only change being a new wood counter top above the old Formica one. Note the old Bass Blue Triangle glass-fronted sign on the wall. To the right an arch leads to a room that was extended by removing a wall and fireplace. The front section retains a two door leaded glass panel hatch to the side of the bar with a Formica top and old bare-bench bay window seating. A two-part dining room on the left has no old fittings. The function room on the right can be converted to a skittle alley.



Newport

113 Alexandra Road, Newport, NP20 2JG

Tel: (01633) 264266

Email: enquiries@thewaterloohotel.co.uk

Website: <http://www.thewaterloohotel.co.uk>

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Waterloo Hotel & Bistro Restaurant ★★

This substantial three-storey pub was rebuilt in 1904, mostly of red brick with terracotta detailing and an impressive corner turreted clock tower. Its interior is among the most impressive in the whole of Wales and includes one of only eleven ceramic bar counters in the UK (the other Welsh example is at the Golden Cross, Cardiff). The entrance in Alexandra Road leads to a terrazzo-floored lobby/reception with a dado of green tiles and Queen Anne detailing on the staircase. The Smoke Room is home to the superb counter which is of Doulton faïence in five sections separated by columns with decorative capitals in deep yellow with floral tiled panels in bright blue. This terrazzo-floored room retains its original mahogany bar-back with mirror panels but the pot shelf is a modern addition. To access the large public bar an arch was cut into the dividing in recent years. The terrazzo floor of this bar indicates there was a small separate room, possibly an off sales on the left side. It also retains its splendid original mahogany bar-back lining two sides and another L-shaped ornately-tiled bar counter. However, only half of the counter survives, the rest having been removed and reputedly sold and shipped to America in the early 1980s.

The pub closed in 2002 but reopened after renovations under its current name in 2007. With no public bar facility, it is open to diners and residents only.



Public Bar Counter

Shirenewton

Usk Road, Shirenewton, NP16 6BU

Tel: (01291) 641231

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Carpenters Arms ★

The Carpenters Arms probably has more small rooms than any other Welsh pub. The stone building was originally a bar and carpenter's shop, later a blacksmith's. The original bar was the flagstone-floored room just inside the main door with its huge settle held in place by an iron stay fixed to the ceiling, creating a passage into the pub. The bar counter was added in the 1960s replacing the original service hatch. The rear 'Smithy Bar' was formed from the blacksmiths shop in the 1960s and has a counter converted from church furniture, a flagstone floor and a Victorian-style fireplace. To the right of the original bar, the former cellar at a lower level has been made into another small bar. The room to the far right has come into pub use in recent years. Two rooms to the left of the front door were, and still look like, domestic rooms - the far one has a 1920s Tudor stone fireplace. A wonderful pub with the only downside being the amount of 1960s Artex on the walls!



Lounge Bar

Mid Wales

Carno

, Carno, SY17 5LH

Tel: (01686) 420206

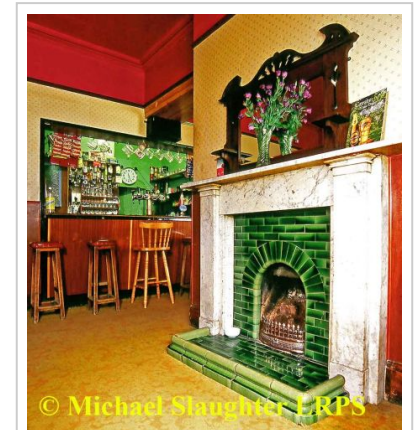
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Ty Brith ★★

A mid-19th-century Gothic-style house, later a country club that became a pub in 1959 and has changed little since. The rear entrance leads into a hallway with an intact off-sales hatch and an open staircase: note the walls have been varnished to look like they are panelled. A slatted bar counter with a Formica top and bar back shelves were added in 1959 and serve the two small rooms. Both rooms are basically furnished, one having an Edwardian tiled fireplace with a marble surround and green glazed hearth, the other a 1920s tiled fireplace. Upstairs, installed in 1959 but currently not in use, is a snooker room complete with billiard table and a small bar.



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Left Side

Cemmaes Road

, Cemmaes Road, SY20 8JZ
Tel: (01650) 511335
Email: info@doveyvalleyhotel.com
Website: <https://www.doveyvalleyhotel.com>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Dovey Valley Hotel ★★ ★

An excellent example of a small hotel-cum-pub created for the coming of the railways, in this case Cemmaes Road station across the road, which opened in 1863 (closed 1965). The main bar retains several features from a 1913 refit and is a simply-appointed delight.

The bar is entered by a door on the right-hand side of the building, but guests arriving by train would have used the front entrance where the reception hatch is still in place (the Douglas Arms, Bethesda, has a similar feature). The present servery was installed in 1913 and is equipped with glazed screen work and sashes in the popular northern English tradition. This room has a slate flagstone floor, except for the original reception area, which is marked out by boarding. The old hand pump survives against the rear wall. The fireplace may date from the 1913 changes. Note the illuminated Watney's Brown Ale sign over the side door - a reminder of the dismal days of British beer-drinking in the 1960s and '70s. In the passageway behind the servery, a pair of bells can be activated by customers in the two other public rooms (rear left and front right). In the former is a Victorian mirror advertising Salt's Burton Ale, signed by makers J. Baird Ltd in far-away Glasgow. The door of the front right-hand room is marked 'Private' and the room was probably reserved for the landlord's use: it has a wonderfully rich Victorian fireplace.



Bar

Crickhowell

High Street, Crickhowell, NP8 1BW

Directions: Town Centre

Tel: (01873) 810408

Email: info@bearhotel.co.uk

Website: <https://bearhotel.co.uk/>

Listed Status: II*

Bear Hotel ★

A coaching inn at least 17th century with a three-storey early to mid Georgian hotel building with a porticoed entrance; also, an early 19th century extension housing part of the bar. Note the etched half inner doors – one with ‘Wine Spirit & Ale Merchant’ and both having an etching of a bear.

The bar nearest to the coaching arch has a parquet floor, fielded panelled bar counter, old shelves for a bar back with no fridges, impressive Welsh Dresser, old dado panelling and an Art Deco glazed stone fireplace. Note the two sets of old bell pushes – one with ‘Ostler’, ‘Boots’, ‘Maid’, and ‘Waiter’ pushes; the other has ‘Bar’ and ‘Service’ ones. It has incorporated a separate room on the right where there is an old stone fireplace and a high-backed settle

On the right is a second bar with a wood block floor, old bar counter, old part glazed bar back, old fireplace, old dado panelling and it has been opened-up to include two small rooms. There is a dining room on the rear right and other rooms. Upstairs is a function room with a large stone fireplace and dado panelling with the odd bell push.



Right Hand Servery

Llanfihangel

Llanfihangel, Llanfyllin, Llanfihangel, SY22 5JD

Tel: (01691) 648209

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: Not listed

Goat Inn ★★

The Goat is a rendered house in the middle of the village, distinguished only by a pub sign on the side and has been in the same family for four generations. Here we have one of the last remaining examples in Wales of a traditional beer house - a domestic-style property where you can drink in a number of the rooms. The front door with the figure '1' leads to the original main public room. Looking very domestic and small enough to appear like a hallway, it now acts as the overspill room if the public bar is busy and has a 1950s tiled fireplace and a piano that is occasionally played.

Originally there were two other small rooms - the 'Bar bach' (small bar) situated to the rear left and another at the end of the passage still with the figure '3' on the door. However, both of these are now in residential use following the decision by the present licensee's parents just after they took over in 1956 to convert the room on the right, previously used by the local landowner to collect his rent from tenant farmers, into the public bar. This has a counter and bar-back shelves installed in c.1956 and an old fireplace and is otherwise unchanged with most of the seating consisting of settees, which have to be moved to play darts.

Only open from 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays; also Tuesday nights in Winter when darts matches are being played.



Public Bar

Llanfyllin

High Street, Llanfyllin, SY22 5AQ
Tel: (01691) 648366
Email: info@cainvalleyhotel.co.uk
Website: <https://www.cainvalleyhotel.net/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Llangurig

Cae Capel, Llangurig, SY18 6SG
Tel: (01686) 440254
Email: lizanddewi@hotmail.co.uk
Website: <https://www.bluebell-inn.co.uk/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Cain Valley Hotel ★

17th.century former coaching inn refitted in the 1960s and featuring full-height panelling (reputedly from a ship). The lounge bar and adjoining room are unchanged since, the former having a curved wood counter and a bar-back from the refit. Other features of note are the unusual 17th.century staircase to the rooms upstairs, a curved window in the partition wall to the hallway and the narrow door to the servery for staff. To the left, the very small dining room also has a heavily carved fireplace - the hatch to the bar is no longer in use. The restaurant has half-timbered walls and a small 1970s bar. The two-part public bar accessed from Bridge Street was refurbished in 2007.



Lounge Bar

Bluebell Inn ★

A late 18th.century building which was converted to an inn in the mid to late 19th century, the Blue Bell has exactly the same kind of cosy traditional arrangement as at the Mount Inn, Llanidloes. In the slate-floored public bar (little altered in 40/50 years) are a pair of old settles facing each other beside a range, one with a high back that rises to the ceiling to create a passage behind. Elsewhere are a smaller bar on the left, pool room at the rear and two small dining rooms - all with modern fittings.



Settle Area

Llanidloes

China Street, Llanidloes, SY18 6AB
Tel: (01686) 412247
Email: mountllani@aol.com
Website: <https://www.mountinn.com/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: Not listed

Mount Inn ★

The Mount Inn has a superb snug formed by two high-backed settles attached to the beamed ceiling by iron stays in front of a Victorian range fireplace. This half-timbered building is situated at the end of the main street, not far from the splendid Market Hall. As you enter there is an area laid with diamond shaped panels of stone set on edge where the snug is situated. To the rear is the small green terrazzo-tiled public bar with an early 20th.century wood surround fireplace (the infill is modern), two old curved benches and four Formica top tables.

Whilst the bar fittings were replaced in the early 1970s, there are four carved poker-work panels of local scenes above the counter, which has lower panels of engravings on Aberllefenni slate from the Braichgoch Quarry in Corris, Gwynedd. A slate plaque on the wall states that the artist was A D Woodvine and the engraver was R Whitfield.

The games room on the left is the venue for Medieval Welsh history lessons on a Tuesday night attended by some 30 local people. The lounge/dining room on the right has modern fittings.



Snug

Llanrhaeadr

Market Square, Llanrhaeadr, SY10 0JL

Tel: (01691) 780210

Email: wynnstayoffice@yahoo.com

Website: <http://www.wynnstay-arms-hotel.com/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Wynnstay Arms ★

A hotel built c.1850 in Gothic style whose public bar had a fine refit in the 1950s and is barely changed since. In common with a number of Welsh hotels, the public bar has its own entrance down the left hand side of the building and was separate from the rest of the pub until an archway was created, possibly in the 1950s. This bar has a splendid inter-war-style brick and timber counter that was actually installed in the 1950s and its glazed shutters are intact, though nowadays the lower ones are always raised. Also present are a large stone fireplace with a log fire, an old settle, two very old pieces of bench seating, three old tables and a framed brass relief of a domestic scene. At the rear of the bar is a small quarry-tiled pool room.

From the front stone porch you walk into a hallway/lounge bar with a bar counter added 30 or so years ago and a passage leading to an old reception hatch. Another lounge is on the right and beyond that are two dining rooms. The gents' has an unusual tiled urinal also dating from the 1950s.



Servery

Llanwrtyd Wells

The Square, Llanwrtyd Wells, LD5 4RB

Tel: (01591) 610236

Email: enquiries@neuaddarmshotel.co.uk

Website: <https://www.neuaddarmshotel.co.uk/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Llanwrtyd Wells)

Listed Status: Not listed

Neuadd Arms Hotel ★

The Bell Bar, with its own entrance on the left side of the building was originally the hotel kitchen and is virtually unchanged since being created in 1950. The name derives from the 18 service bells on the walls - the second best display of high Victorian service bells in a UK pub/hotel (the Royal Castle Hotel, Dartmouth has 43). The small room has a black and red quarry-tiled floor, solid bar counter, bar back shelves and a large stone fireplace.

On the wall you will see details of the winners of some of the large array of events held in the town, including the Man Versus Horse Marathon on the second weekend in June; and the World Bog Snorkelling Championships in August.

Beyond the bar, a quarry-tiled pool room, formerly an extension to contain the new kitchen, retains its range fireplace and has the pub game of quoits. The part- Georgian, part-early Victorian three-storey hotel has a lounge bar with a velour padded bar front, bar back shelves and stone fireplace which all look very late 1960s. The hotel also has a residents' lounge, restaurant and 21 bedrooms, plus its own brewery at the rear.



Bell Bar

Rhayader

West Street, Rhayader, LD6 5AB

Tel: (01597) 810202

Website: <https://www.severnarms.co.uk/lion-royal-hotel>

Listed Status: Not listed

Lion Royal ★★

This unashamedly old-fashioned coaching inn retains a small bar at the rear, unchanged since 1921. It has 'Bar' in an etched and frosted panel on the door, wood-block floor, a wonderful bar counter with Jacobean detailing in the frontage, and two sets of bar-back shelves at right angles to each other. One of these has a display of 'Gin', 'Brandy' and 'Rum' ceramic spirit vessels, a row of pewter mugs etc. on the shelves: even the ancient 'National' cash register is still in use. The bar fittings appear all of a piece and along with the glazed brick and marble/polished stone fireplace and two sections of bench seating almost certainly date from 1920s. An extension to the rear of the bar has a parquet-floored small room no longer in use. Note the working bell-pushes labelled 'Chambermaids' and 'Boots.'

The lounge in the front left has a large stone fireplace, settle, and a light oak bar counter by a local craftsman, installed in 1969. The bar is only usually open at weekends or for groups of people staying at the hotel.

Stabling for six horses and a 3/4 acre paddock are still in use as this is a base for horse-riding holidays (British Horse Society approved) from May to early October. You can bring your own horse or use one owned by the hotel. The hotel has been used as a courtroom, the seat of the Customs and Excise.

The pub and its old bar have permanent opening hours of every Friday from 6pm. In addition, the bar is open on a Saturday evening from 6pm if there are guests staying overnight, normally from April and over the summer months. Prior to setting off for a visit it is possible to check if the old bar will be open by ringing the 'office number' of 01597 810121.



Public Bar

Talybont-on-Usk

, Talybont-on-Usk, LD3 7YX

Directions: On B4558 between Brecon and Crickhowell

Tel: (01874) 676635

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Star Inn ★

A three-roomed pub popular with diners and drinkers, this late-Georgian rendered building has a public bar on the left little changed in 70 years. You can arrive here by narrow boat as a series of steps and a steep slope lead up to the canal tow-path of the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. The small public bar has a red quarry-tiled floor, and a fine bar-back fitting with mirrored panels and a drawer, all of which look to date from around 1930. The old stone fireplace has a bread oven to the left while the bench seating looks more post war and two oblong tables are possibly of oak. To the rear left is a small room with a 1930s brick fireplace. The bar counter continues in an island style but much of it was added in recent years. A room to the right of the passage has a Victorian fireplace with inlaid marble and a fine fender.



Bar Back

North-East Wales

Brymbo

Ael Y Bryn, Brymbo, LL11 5DA

Tel: (01978) 758515

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

George & Dragon ★

A hidden away three-roomed village pub, still with fittings from the 1930s when an extension was added to a much older pub. The front door leads to a tiny snug called McGill's Bar (named in honour of customer Dave Curtis, who resembled McGill, the man in a suitcase) which has an old, at least 1930s, counter painted cream. Take a close look at the door between the bars and you can see it was raised around 9 inches in height (in 2003) to stop customers banging their heads! Through a doorway to the left of McGill's bar is the small public bar. This has a counter of similar vintage, also painted cream, but the fireplace and fixed seating look more 1960s, The bar-back was replaced in the 1980s. To the right is the lounge, once two small rooms, which has an interesting carved counter added in the 1970s, possibly to replace a hatch. The fixed seating and distinctive fireplace look 1960s. Both Gents' and Ladies' have a 1930's panel in the door and inter-war tiles on the walls, as does the porch.



McGills Bar

Cilcain

Ffordd Y Llan, Cilcain, CH7 5NN

Directions: signed from A451 Mold-Denbigh road

Tel: (01352) 961041

Email: thewhitehorsecilcain@gmail.com

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

White Horse ★★

Multi-roomed old village pub which has expanded into the cottage next door. In around 1940 it was purchased and refitted out of Irish Sweepstake winnings and retains the fittings from a refurbishment of that date. To the right of the entrance, the door numbered '1' leads to a small bar with a quarry-tiled floor, a curved counter and an inglenook style fireplace, all installed c.1940. Through an arch to the right, another quarry-tiled small room has a c.1940 brick fireplace and an antique settle, To the rear is a tiny room, with a grandfather clock and piano, served from a small hatch to the back of the bar. From a separate entrance on the left, another bar was created out of two small rooms of a cottage with a quarry-tiled floor, bar fittings and a brick fireplace from c.1940. The only changes are the adding of a copper bar top possibly in the 1960s; and an early 1980s extension added to the rear of the right side creating a further room.



© Michael Slaughter LRPS

Bar Counter

Cyffyliog

Cyffyliog, Cyffyliog, LL15 2DN

Directions: four miles W of Ruthin, off B5105 at Llanfwrog.

Tel: (01824) 710375

Email: redlionhotelruthin@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.theredlionruthin.com/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: Not listed

Red Lion Hotel ★

This old four-roomed village pub had a most unusual refit just after the war and materials used, particularly in the loos, include items from demolished houses in Liverpool. The parquet-floored public bar has a set of six leaded glass windows with inserts of different Welsh scenes, a large limestone and brick fireplace, and a bar-back fitting all dating from the 1940s; the counter is difficult to date but could be 40 years old. The gents' accessed from this bar has amazing walls of multi-coloured pieces of tiling from Victorian houses. The lounge bar has a 1940s large limestone and brick fireplace but the bar fittings are modern. A room on a lower level has another impressive fireplace and beyond that is what looks like someone's living room. Both the ladies' and gents' toilets here are worth a look with their walls of green Art Deco vitreous glass panels; the gents' has two massive urinals from the 1930s. To the left of the rear main entrance is another (dining) room also with a large 1930s limestone and brick fireplace.



Public Bar

Gresford

The Green, Gresford, LL12

8RG

Tel: (01978) 855280

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Griffin Inn ★



Servery

Rhewl

Rhewl, Llangollen, Rhewl, LL20 7YT
Tel: (01978) 869536
Email: Suninn22Ltd@gmail.com
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Listed Status: II

Ysceifiog

Ysceifiog Village Road, Ysceifiog, CH8 8NJ
Directions: signed from B5121
Tel: (01352) 720241
Email: info@foxinnysceifiog.co.uk
Website: <https://foxinnysceifiog.co.uk/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Listed Status: II

Sun Inn ★

Deep in the countryside, this small, three-roomed drovers inn has overlooked the Dee valley for over 200 years. The small public bar on the right has old half-height panelled walls; the bar counter was not installed until the 1960s, prior to which beer was fetched from the cellar. On the left an old door leads to the lounge which is likely to once have been a kitchen with its splendid range fireplace and coal fire; it also has bench seating and a piano. Through a very low doorway is a small area near a stable door for service with some old shelves beyond. In this area is another small room, with bench seating, which clearly had an inglenook fireplace at the rear in the past. Outside gents' and ladies'. There is a games room in buildings at the rear.



Bar

Fox ★★★

This two-storey late-Georgian village pub with four small rooms is relatively little altered since the 1930s

Beyond the entrance is a slate-floored drinking lobby with a tiny hatch in the leaded screen around the servery. A sliding door on the left leads to the most important room - the small, panelled front bar which is no doubt the oldest part of the pub. It has bare bench seating, some of it, remarkably, attached to the front of the counter. At the rear left, the dining room has a disused glazed, sliding hatch to the servery, and retains inter-war fixed seating. The rear right room caters for overspill dining. At the front right is a small games room with a cast-iron fireplace.



Passage

North-West Wales

Bangor

Platform 1, Bangor Station, Bangor, LL57 1LZ

Tel: (01248) 364164

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Bangor)

Listed Status: II

Beaumaris

Castle Street, Beaumaris, LL58 8AP

Tel: (01248) 810329

Email: info@bullsheadin.co.uk

Website: <https://www.inncollectiongroup.com/bulls-head-inn/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II*

Snowdon Buffet & Bar ★★

A rare example of an intact, simple station buffet, in this case probably fitted out in 1927 when further station buildings were added. Other remaining examples can be found at Bridlington, East Yorkshire, and Stalybridge, Greater Manchester. It has an elegant panelled counter and a pair of rather spindly, mirrored bar-back fittings. The counter top is believed to have been marble originally and was probably replaced in the past 30-40 years, as the present one is Formica.



Buffet Counter

Bull ★

The marvellous unspoilt public bar and a snug annexe to the left in this 17/18th century coaching inn are barely altered in at least 50 years. The oldest pub fittings are the shelves at the rear of the public bar servery. The brick fireplace, counter and bay window seating here could well date from around 1940, which is the date on the bank of handpumps. As the 1960s photo on the wall above the fireplace shows, there were large niches left and right of the fireplace but in recent years the left one has become an arched short passageway to link a former separate business. This is now a tiny snug bar, which has a brick bar counter of c.1960 with two old wooden hatch doors above and marble bar top. The entrance hall with a flagstone and tiled floor has an Art Nouveau decoration on a window to the bar/left side. The residents' lounge on the right was a shop in 1928. In the courtyard is what the Guinness Book of Records states to be the largest simple-hinged door in Britain (11 feet wide and 13 feet high)



Hall

Caernarfon

Stryd Pedwar a Chwech, Caernarfon, LL55 1RW

Tel: (01286) 673604

Email: reception@black-boy-inn.com

Website: <https://www.black-boy-inn.com/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Welsh Highland Railway) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Black Boy Inn ★

This 17th-century inn just inside the medieval town walls was renovated in 1954 and the two bars are barely changed since. In the centre is the lounge, which was a shop prior to 1954, and retains its bar fittings from the 1950s. The chunky timber counter was slightly extended on the right in the 1970s and a new bar top was added; the bar-back shelves have Formica covering. The fine carved settles and chairs add to the room's character and a line drawing on the wall confirms the fireplace to be a replacement. The public bar on the left was two rooms before 1954 and has some genuine beams, an old stone fireplace at the front and a 1950s brick one at the rear. The dado panelling and some seating could well date back to the 1950s but the unusual area above the servery is much older. The counter is a replacement but in the same style as that in the lounge. The dining room also has an old stone fireplace at the front but recently the 1950s brick one at the rear was replaced. A passage with a quarry-tiled floor links the three rooms.



Lounge

Cemaes Bay

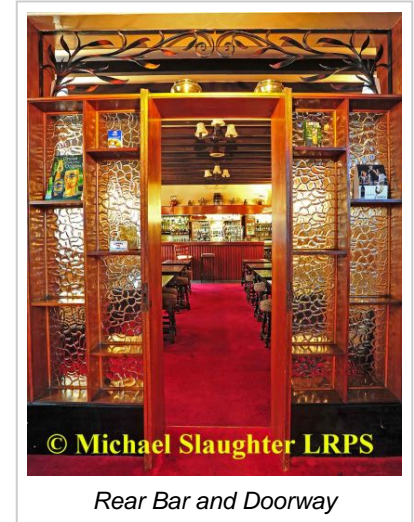
High Street, Cemaes Bay, LL67 0HH

Tel: (01407) 710205

Listed Status: Not listed

Olde Vigour Hotel ★

The lounge bar is a classic example of how pubs were refitted in the 1960s; very few of these interiors remain unchanged making this a rare survivor. The Old Vigour has been in the same family for 115 years and was little-altered until c.1960. The three existing small rooms were all refurbished and nothing much has changed since leaving the pub happily stuck in a 1960s time warp. The oldest surviving fittings are the bar-back shelves, best viewed from the small public bar. Also, note the old 'Commercial Room' wording on the door of the third room. The small smoke room at the front right, which is served from a hatch/doorway to the side of the bar, originally contained the hotel reception. Prior to the opening of the Catholic Church in 1965, church services were held in the lounge.



Rear Bar and Doorway

Conwy

Upper Gate Street, Conwy, LL32 8RF

Tel: (01492) 582484

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Conwy) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Albion Ale House ★★★

This corner local in the town's historic core is easily the best example of an inter-war pub in Wales and a great place for a drink. It closed in 2010 but was revived by a consortium of four Welsh micro-breweries two years later with the backing of a far-sighted businessman. Rebuilt in 1921, it has a brick ground floor and pebble-dashed first floor plus a touch of half-timbering.

A corridor, with attractive green tiling, gives access to three well-preserved rooms. The public bar (right front) retains its long 1920s bar counter and fine mirrored bar-back. The off-sales which led up to the far end of the counter went at some stage and the screen separating it from the bar has been placed against the wall. On the corner is a lovely smoke room, now the Lounge, with some Art Nouveau touches in the glazing and a mightily impressive inglenook fireplace set behind a timber and brick canopy. The seating and bell-pushes survive. At the rear, a second smoke room, now the Snug, retains a massive, attractively detailed brick fire-surround, fixed seating, bell-pushes and hatch to the servery: the herringbone flooring incorporates an unusual diamond shaped feature in the centre. In 2013 the Albion was awarded the CAMRA/English Heritage Conservation Award for the restoration work and also the Joe Goodwin Award for the best street-corner local. Please note - the words 'smoke room' appear on several glass door panels but not all these doors lead to one of the former smoke rooms - the panels were presumably fitted at the time of the renovation.



Public bar servery

Dinas Mawddwy

, Dinas Mawddwy, SY20 9JA
Tel: (01650) 531247
Email: berwynhughes@yahoo.co.uk
Website: <http://www.yllewcoch.co.uk/>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: Not listed

Red Lion ★

An old drovers inn with a splendid public bar that is little-altered since the 1960s but appears as though it could have been like this for much longer. This small room has a Victorian counter with a 1963 copper top, an inter-war brick fireplace under an inglenook, a high-backed settle and another 'antique' settle. The bar-back shelves are old and in 1965 part of a former decoratively-carved dressing table was added in front (other parts of the dresser are above the counter in the passage and in the lounge). The deeply-rutted scrubbed table is believed to be 400 years old. The pub was extended to the rear in the late 1960s to create a modern lounge bar (and further extended in the 1970s) which saw the removal of a tiny snug just behind the public bar. Since the hatch was added in the passageway in the 1960s this has become a popular place for drinkers. The pool room on the left was a private lounge and brought into public use in the 1980s.



Public Bar

Llanbedr-y-Cennin

, Llanbedr-y-Cennin, LL32 8JB

Tel: (01492) 660508

Listed Status: II

Olde Bull Inn ★

Few changes have occurred at this late 17th-century drovers' inn in the last 40 years. The oldest features are the partition to the right of the entrance with a bare bench attached and the massive stone fireplace taking up the whole of the right-hand wall in the flagstoned area beyond. The bar-back incorporates a large 'Patterson's Scotch Whisky' mirror - something quite common in Scottish bars, but rare in Welsh (and English) ones. The present counter, which dates from the 1960s, has a log frontage and copper top and is set back a few feet from the position of the original. A short passage and doors once led to both the right-hand side of the pub and into the left-hand side, which is on a higher level. The later removal of the doors makes the interior look similar in style to many pubs, but the actual amount of change is small. A small dining room at the rear has been brought into use.

The pub's position on a steep hillside offers splendid views over the Conwy valley from the car park and the pub is popular with bird watchers. Camping allowed in the paddock (up to five tents).



Interior

Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr

On B5105 near Cerrigydrudion, Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr, LL21 9UL

Tel: (01490) 420209

Email: info@thecrowninn.wales

Website: <https://thecrowninn.wales/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: II

Llansannan

High Street, Llansannan, LL16 5HG

Tel: (01745) 870256

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Crown Inn ★

Pubs like this are closing at an alarming rate so visit while you can; you'll find that good conversation and good beer are still the order of the day here. The building itself is from the late 18th century and is dramatically situated under a crag on a sharp bend. A Welsh slate passage runs down the centre and through a sliding door on the right is the small public bar with basic bench seating and a counter and bar-back shelves which look to date from the 1950s. Before then there was no bar and beer was fetched from the cellar and served from a jug. To accommodate the counter the original stone fireplace was blocked up and a new one created a few feet along the right hand wall. On the left is the games room with bench seating and a pool table.



Public Bar

Red Lion ★★

A visit here is a must to see the 'parlour bar' / tiny snug which typifies how many traditional Welsh 'beer houses' looked before the late 1880s and the introduction of bar counters. The left hand snug (called the 'Bull Pen' in the 1950s) features a curved settle around a range fireplace (the surround was brick until 1950s when it was plastered over - see the dated photograph by the side) with iron stays from the top of the settle to the beams above. The copper hood above the fireplace has a 1960s appearance. Nowadays you walk around the outside of the settle to go to a hatch for service - in the old days the publican would have fetched your beer from the cellar. Some very old shelves form the bar-back. Up to 40 years ago the room at the rear comprised just the left-hand half with its stone fireplace but in the 1960s it was doubled in size when the house next door was purchased by Lees Brewery (primarily to add indoor toilets) and the front pool room was created; this still has a period bar counter.



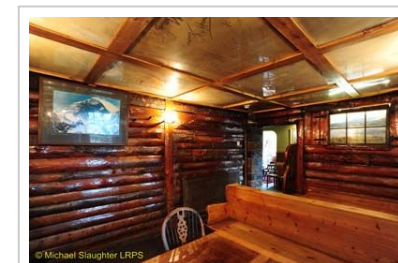
Snug

Nant Gwynant

, Nant Gwynant, LL55 4NT
Directions: at jct of A486 and A4086
Tel: (01286) 870211
Website: <http://www.pyg.co.uk>
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Pen-y-Gwryd ★★

Built in 1810 and situated high up in the heart of Snowdonia, this unspoilt inn was established in 1840 and has been in the hands of the same family since 1947. It has many mountaineering associations, not least memorabilia from the team who made the first ascent of Everest in 1953 and who used it as a training base. The theme is exemplified in the Everest Room, rear left, an amazing Austrian alpine-style log-lined room, which was fitted out in the early 1950s and has signatures on the ceiling from Everest mountaineers and other notable visitors. Off the corridor is, first, the Smoke Room, now a bar only for residents and diners; it has three-quarter-height panelling and seats round three sides focused on the open fire. Next is the dining room with a tiled fireplace then a lounge and a games room, both for residents. The family chapel at the back was built in 2000 on the site of former public toilets. Off the corridor are two other small public rooms with wide openings. The original Smoke Room, situated behind the serving counter, is now a bar for residents only, but can also be used by non-resident diners. This small room has more conventional but good-quality three-quarter-height panelling and seats round three sides, focusing upon the open fire. The dining room is on the right with a tiled fireplace. A five-course dinner is provided for residents (and non-residents, if booked) at 7.30pm and is still announced in the traditional way by a gong. There is also a residents' lounge and a games room for residents with pool and table tennis. There is a family chapel at the rear of the hotel built in 2000 on the site of the former public toilets. Services are held and at quiet times please ask the bar staff if you want to take a look.



Everest Bar

West Wales

Abergwili

22 High Street, Abergwili, SA31 2JA

Tel: (01267) 236692

Listed Status: Not listed

Angle

East Angle Bay, Angle, SA71 5AS

Tel: (01646) 792100

Website: <https://www.theoldpointhouse.wales/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Wheaten Sheaf ★

Part of a terrace, the Wheaten Sheaf (this is its actual name - it's incorrectly worded on the inn sign) was refitted around 1960 and has not changed much since. A red-tiled passage has rooms either side plus an off-sales hatch that also serves the lounge. The main bar, on the left has a red-tiled floor, a large partly-curved counter and a brick fireplace of indeterminate date. The ply panelling on the front of the counter and on the dado is very 'sixties'. The lounge, on the right, has fixed seating all round the room but has lost its fireplace.

Old Point House ★

The early 18th.century Old Point House has an unspoilt and spartan tiny snug bar, which until the 1980s was the only public room: there are now three small rooms. The approach to the pub is also unspoilt as you drive down an unmade road around Angle Bay, which can get cut-off by spring tides for up to one-and-a-half hours. Called the 'Lifeboatman's local' since the neighbouring lifeboat station opened in 1868.

The beamed bar measuring 4m x 5m has a concrete floor, range fireplace, two fine old wooden settles and just one table. It is reputed that some of the ships' biscuits for Nelson's fleet were baked in the large oven that was situated adjacent to the 19th.century cast-iron kitchen range. The bar counters may be 40 years old and have slate slabs for counter tops that were added in the 1990s. There are two other rooms each with a similar bar counter - the dining room on the rear right was brought into use in the 1980s; the lounge bar on the left was converted from living quarters in the 1990s. Recently, a former sitting room has been brought into use as a public room, when required. Outside gents' and ladies'.



Public Bar

Carmarthen

St. Marys Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1TN

Tel: (01267) 222151

Email: theplumeofficial@mail.com

Website: <https://www.smallestpub.wales>

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Carmarthen)

Listed Status: II

Court Henry

, Court Henry, SA32 8SD

Directions: 2km north of A40 at Court Henry

Tel: (01558) 668276

Listed Status: Not listed

Plume of Feathers Inn ★

Inside this three-storey, mid-19th century building is possibly the smallest pub in Wales, yet it still has two separate rooms. The tiny bar on the left has a slatted wood counter at least 30 years old, simple shelves for a bar-back, which look older, dado-panelled walls with benches attached, and a hatch on the right. An even tinier lounge on the right has some old panelling around the fireplace but the fixed seating is post-war. A famous rugby pub, it has lots of memorabilia on the walls including signed photos by international players and a team sponsored by the pub won the World Rugby Sevens in 1989. Note the trap door in the floor, through which beer is dropped into the cellar. Between the two rooms are staircases - down to the toilets and up to private quarters. Several famous actors including Richard Harris, Oliver Reed, and Richard Burton drank in the pub while filming 'Under Milk Wood' in nearby Laugharne.



Interior

New Cross Inn ★★

This externally unprepossessing pub is set at a junction in the northern part of a somewhat sprawly village and is still part of a 180-acre livestock farm. The pub opened in 1909 with a couple of celebratory dinners on 18 March – see the pair of preserved framed tickets. The small public bar with its red and black quarry-tiled floor retains a plain match-boarded counter, simple shelving behind and a wooden fire surround, above which is a Truman, Hanbury & Buxton advertising mirror. Originally there was also a smoking room (note a door on the left of the porch) but this became part of the living quarters in the 1960s. At this time the old stables to the right were converted into a large restaurant/new lounge that can hold 100 diners but this impacts scarcely at all. Open only Sat from 7pm, Sun 12–3.



Public Bar

Cresswell Quay

, Cresswell Quay, SA68 0TE
Tel: (01646) 629904
Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider
Public Transport: Near Bus Stop
Listed Status: II

Cresselly Arms ★★

A fine, delightfully simple riverside pub which was in the same family hands from 1896 to 1981, hence the lack of change. The only significant one has been the cutting of an opening in the dividing wall to the former kitchen and pantry in about 1981 to expand the public bar and slightly extend the bar counter. The old part of the public bar is a delight with its quarry-tiled floor, open cast-iron fireplace, Victorian counter, and bar-back shelves held up by slender columns. Seating includes basic benches attached to a half-height panelled dado. To the rear right is a further room, which has been brought into public use in recent years.



Public Bar

Cwmdu

, Cwmdu, SA19 7DY

Directions: off B4302 at Halfway

Tel: (01558) 685156

Website: <http://www.cwmdu.org/?location=tafarn-cwmdu>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: II

Tafarn Cwmdu ★★

The Cwmdu Inn and its separate small shop have been run by the villagers since 2000 in a unique partnership with the National Trust. A visit is highly recommended to see both, particularly the small public bar where you will soon be drawn into conversation accompanied by good beer: the essence of a traditional pub. It is part of an early 19th-century terrace including a small shop/post office and holiday cottages and has been owned by the National Trust since 1991. Both the pub and shop were in the hands of Miss Annie Griffiths for 50 years until she died in 1987 aged 98.

A flagstone corridor runs from the front door to the servery at the rear with a figure '2' on the door. On the right is the original public room; there was no bar in Annie's day, and the beer was fetched from the servery. On the left is the public bar with the figure '1' on the door and behind it the original servery. The tiny bar has a flagstone floor, two settles and just a couple of tables. This very small space was Annie's livingroom and as part of the restoration in 1994 the National Trust added a small counter/hatch by cutting a hole in the wall on the servery side.



Public Bar

Fishguard

24 Main Street, Fishguard, SA65 9HJ

Tel: (01348) 872763

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Fishguard Harbour) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Fishguard Arms ★★

A very traditional pub hidden in an early 19th-century terrace near the centre of town that looks more like a house, and still sells beer from casks behind the bar. A passage runs down the left side of the interior and at the front of the pub is a very traditional small bar where good conversation is the main draw. It has a bare wood floor, a 1930s bar counter, old barback shelves, wood-panelled ceiling, casks of Bass on astillage, old dado panelled walls and a log fire. On the ceiling are the beer prices for the period 1982 to 1988 - a pint in 1982 was 52p and in 1988 was 92p, an increase of 77% in just 6 years whereas whisky rose from 45p to 62p i.e. only 37%. At the end of the passage is another bare-floored bar with wood-panelled walls of various ages, a more modern bar counter, a new brick fireplace and an old basic bench. The outside gents' and ladies' are now under cover. Up seven steps is the recently created 'sky lounge' with tables and heaters for smokers and anyone else who wants to join them.



Servery

Llanddewi Brefi

, Llanddewi Brefi, SY25 6RS

Tel: (01974) 298452

Email: yvonneedwards@btconnect.com

Website: <https://www.newinnllanddewibrefi.co.uk/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Listed Status: Not listed

New Inn ★

Up until 1964, the splendid unaltered snug on the left was the only public room in what was then a 'no bar' pub (beer would have been jugged up from the cellar). It has an old flagstone floor with some quarry-tiles near the fireplace, old dado panelling on the walls, a small wall bench on the window side, and a range fireplace (it originally doubled up as the licensee's kitchen.) The present main bar on the right was created in 1987 by combining a small second public room with part of the living accommodation and the bar fittings are from that time. The early 20th century tiled, cast iron and wood surround fireplace survives from the former public room which was only used for special occasions such as the village Eisteddfod.



Snug and Bar

Llanelli

33 Glyncoed Terrace, Llanelli, SA15 1EZ

Tel: (01554) 759345

Email: thehalfwayhotelllanelli@gmail.com

Website: <https://thehalfwayllanelli.com/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Halfway Hotel ★

UPDATE 2023.

Recently the original brown stain on the woodwork has been overpainted with a dark brown stain (or paint?); and much of the items on the bar back removed with the overall result of reducing the impressiveness of the servery.

Please note - the photos are therefore out of date.

Rebuilt in 1894 by local firm T.P.Jones, who also erected Llanelli Town Hall in 1896, the pub has a fine wooden gallery at first floor level with 'Halfway House' leaded panels. The Victorian bar fittings are arguably the most impressive in the whole of Wales. The imposing counter and bar-back take up two sides of the front left room and, as well as displaying drinks, are replete with items like water jugs and have tall mirror-fronted cupboards to each side. How very pleasing it is to see how the original bar-back fitting has been carefully preserved - even fridges have been added without destroying one shelf, and there are signs of recent refurbishment to the wood. The original counter curves at the front left-hand side as well as at the centre.

The original interior of three rooms and a passage was, sadly, opened up by Bass in 1982. There is more elaborate ceiling decoration in the corridor to the rear. At the rear left is a dining room with modern brick bar and at the rear right a conservatory. The pub has a bar skittle table and organises its own tournaments.



Interior

Pembroke Dock

20 Bush Street, Pembroke Dock, SA72 6AX

Tel: (01646) 687999

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Pembroke Dock) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Charlton Hotel ★

Late Victorian red brick corner pub which retains splendid original bar fittings. The clientele originally comprised mostly thirsty dockyard workers and it only reluctantly allowed females onto the premises in the 1970s when forced to do so by law. The small public bar at the front has an unaltered four-bay mirrored bar -back and a sturdy Victorian panelled counter which curves on the left side. Also present are original dado panelling, colourful patterned glass in the lower parts of four windows, and old bench seating, but the vestibule entrance is more modern. Beyond this room on the Park Street side are two rooms - first a small lounge and then a larger pool room at the rear with openings between them. Apart from the odd colourful leaded window there are no old fittings. Even the original outside gents' survive with their four large Twyford's Adamant urinals, but now, for comfort, they have a roof over them.



Public Bar Fittings

Pontfaen

, Pontfaen, SA65 9SE

Directions: off B4313

Tel: (01348) 881863

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Listed Status: II

Dyffryn Arms ★★★

One of the great survivors among rural pubs, built in 1845 as recorded in the datestone at the top of the building. This also gives the name as ‘Llwyn-Celyn’ (holly bush) which might suggest this was the original name for the pub. The simple public bar, with beer served from the jug, is an all-time classic.

. Although there is a central entrance, the way in now is through a side passage with a mottled light-brown dado, said to date from 1938. The heart of the pub is the simple, squarish public bar with red and black quarry-tiled floor. It has a real mixture of furniture, including an old high-back settle by the door and a basic bench. There is no counter as such, just an opening with horizontally sliding window to the ground-floor cellar, which has tiled walling (these tiles too are probably inter-war). It's a place where everyone is drawn inevitably into conversation. The lounge (occasionally brought into use) lies across the central corridor. Outside toilets. Together with the Cresselly Arms, Cresswell Quay, this is one of only two Welsh pubs that serve beer from the cask via a jug. Until her death in December 2023 at the age of 93, it had been run for many years by Bessie Davies, hence it being affectionately known as 'Bessie's'; she had spent 72 years working at the pub.



Interior

Tregaron

The Square, Tregaron, SY25 6JL

Tel: (01974) 298208

Email: info@yतालbot.com

Website: <http://yतालbot.com>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Talbot ★

A late 18th-century drovers' inn with three rooms including a characterful snug. The latter, flagstone-floored and beamed, is at the front and has an inglenook fireplace incorporating a bread oven and two antique settles. It has changed little since the inn's days as a resting place for cattle drovers. The small lounge on the far left, with a flagstone floor, has a counter dating from c.1965 and bar back shelves possibly of similar date. Through a low doorway is the public bar with similar counter and shelves which replaced the original small counter on the opposite side of the room. In the hotel part, the office/reception room, originally a private bar for well-to-do locals, has a colourful Victorian floor and curved partition walls. To the left of the passage, with its 'Old Worthington in Bottle' mirror, is a small dado-panelled room while on the right a room with two tiled fireplaces was, until 50 years ago, two small rooms.



Front Bar

Closed Pubs

The following pubs would have been main entries in this guide had they currently been open

Glamorgan

Barry

44 Jewel Street, , Barry, CF63 3NQ

Tel: None

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Barry Docks) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: Not listed

Castle Hotel ★

A three-storey former hotel built in 1898, now a community pub retaining a number of rooms including a former Coffee & Tea Room that houses a full sized snooker table. The public bar, on the left, has its original counter and bar-back. Note the small glazed partition on the right of the bar top creating an office area. From the public bar, a stone staircase leads down to the basement where there is a skittle alley. On the right, the lounge is a combination of the hotel reception at the rear, with the staircase to the bedrooms, and the former Commercial Room (the name is in a window), which has good ceiling roses. The counter at the rear and the bar-back with its slender columns and decorative capitals do look original, but the counter to the front dates from the 1960s - the superstructure is definitely modern. The billiard room is down a passage with a colourful Victorian tiled floor. The former kitchen with its old range fireplace is now a small dining room.



Left Bar

Gwent

Usk

26 New Market Street, , Usk, NP15 1AT

Tel: (01291) 672931

Listed Status: II

Royal Hotel ★

Built in 1839 this is an example of how a pub when subject to sympathetic change can still retain an unspoilt feel. Popular with diners, the pub rooms were originally the two small ones on the right-hand side of the building beyond the fine shop front. The front door historically led to a passage to the rear of the building. The front right room was the bar and at the rear was a separate snug. The rear right area has markings on the ceiling which indicate the position of an antique settle that created a passage down the rear left side. Nowadays you will find an old bar counter placed across the passage in c.1960 and a bar back created behind it. The left bar was formerly two domestic rooms hence the range fireplace in the rear room indicating it was the kitchen in the past. The layout and fittings therefore only date back to the 1960s but the pub feels as if it has not changed for many more years. Note the one old penny billiard chalk dispenser on the front right mantelshelf.



Rear Right

Mid Wales

Llanidloes

41 Long Bridge Street, , Llanidloes, SY18 6EF

Website: <https://www.crownandanchor.wales/>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Crown & Anchor ★★★

An unspoilt small-town pub, until recently in the hands of the same family for over 100 years. It consists of five simply appointed rooms either side of a panelled corridor. The room at the front right was a haberdashery shop until around 1948

. The tiny snug on the middle right is the original public bar and retains a (probably) Victorian counter and shelving behind: the glazed screen to the corridor is the defining characteristic of the pub. In this room an old mirror advertises 'Ind Coope Burton Ales'. Another old mirror, for 'Truman's Burton Ales', survives in the rear right-hand room. A more modern mirror, in the front right-hand bar, celebrates Ruby Holmes' fifty years in charge (1965-2017).



Main Bar

North-East Wales

Corwen

Bridge Street, , Corwen, LL21 0AH

Tel: (01490) 413188

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Corwen) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Crown Hotel ★

This 17th.century coaching inn was rebuilt in the early 19th.century as a hotel to serve the London-Holyhead turnpike road. Note the 'Crown Hotel Garages' raised lettering in stone on the fascia; this was an early motor garage. Inside, in both the public bar and the small separate dining room on the rear left, the dado is old panelling and above it are high-quality panels from a 1960s refit. The bar fittings could date from this time but perhaps later and recently a small section of panelling was removed and the tiled and wood surround fireplace replaced by a modern one. A room at the rear contains a pool table but no old fittings.



Public Bar

North-West Wales

Bethesda

Ogwen Terrace, High Street (A5), , Bethesda, LL57 3AY

Tel: (01248) 600219

Email: douglas.arms@dsl.pipex.com

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Public Transport: Near Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Douglas Arms Hotel ★★

Built as a coaching inn around 1820 to serve Thomas Telford's new road to Holyhead, the Douglas Arms had, until recently, been in the hands of the Davies family since 1913. It is little changed since the 1930s and has four public rooms.

The entrance corridor, once a hotel reception area, is now incorporated into the billiard room which acquired its full-sized billiard table c1934. The public bar (rear right) was once two small rooms until a partition was removed in the 1950s. It has a bent-wood bench, a red leather bench and two old settles: the (probably) Victorian bar-back contains many drawers and a display of spirit jars, although the counter has modern refronting. At the front are two rooms, a function/dining room (left) and a smoke room with a 1930s Art Deco fireplace.



Screen

West Wales

Carmarthen

10 Queen Street, , Carmarthen, SA31 1JR

Tel: (01267) 231800

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Carmarthen) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Queen's Hotel ★

A three-storey hotel rebuilt in 1865, it retains a three-room layout last refitted in the late 1950s. On the left side are two small panelled rooms separated by a wooden folding partition, which nowadays is kept permanently open. The bar counter with its Formica top looks to be from that era and both rooms have 1950s brick fireplaces. The bar on the right has a brick fireplace of similar vintage and a brick bar, which is more modern. There is a hatch to the back of the bar at the head of the passage leading to the toilets at the rear.



Interior

Llandovery

2 Market Square, , Llandovery, SA20 0AA

Tel: (01550) 720813

Public Transport: Near Railway Station (Llandovery) and Bus Stop

Listed Status: II

Red Lion ★★★

This is a no-frills market-town time-warp pub without a bar counter.

Tucked away in the corner of the market place with no inn sign to help you, this is the Red Lion, Llandovery. Please note that you will not find it open often either. The building itself is 18th- and 19th-century and part may be older still. It has a two-storey, symmetrical frontage to the Market Square and has the attractive feature of a pentice roof (supported on iron columns running the whole length of the building and sheltering the ground floor). The front door leads to a red quarry-tiled passage and, just past the inner doors, the bar is a small room on the right with a small alcove at the front called 'the lounge' which is filled with bric-a-brac.

The public bar is a simple affair with dado panelling and movable tables and seats and a fireplace. One bench has a high back and there is no counter. There is a small hatch and a door leading to the cellar servery at the rear of the bar room and you can see a stillage with a few casks of beer sitting on it. Find a seat around the large square table and landlord John Rees (who is likely to be sitting amongst you) will take your order from a limited range of drinks. Please note the wit of John Rees is not for the faint hearted! The pub has been in his family since 1871 and very little has changed in that time. There was another public room - the smoke room - which is on the left of the passage and has a '1' on the door but it is no longer in use and is used for storage. Only open Fri. from 5.30 to 10.30; Sat. from 12 to 2 and 7 to 11.



Public Bar

Trapp

, , Trapp, SA19 6TP

Directions: Follow signs to Trapp from Llandybie (on A483 between Llandeilo and Ammanford).

Tel: (01558) 822330

Email: cennenarms@btconnect.com

Website: <http://cennenlodge.co.uk/cennen-arms-trap.html>

Real Ale & Cider: Real Ale and Real Cider

Listed Status: Not listed

Cennen Arms ★

The impressive feature of this three-roomed pub is the glazed screen around the servery, one of very few left in Wales. There is another at the Dovey Valley Hotel, Cemmaes Road and a more modest one at the Fox, Ysceifiog. Opposite a hatch there is a narrow snug with tongue-and-grooved panelling on the walls and pointed ceiling. Fixed seating runs down both sides and at the end is a small extension containing a dining room. The lounge bar at the front was two small rooms until 2000 and has a bar counter possibly added c1960 and fireplace of similar age. The public bar at the rear has bar fittings that could also date from c.1960 and a small extension containing a pool table.



Screen

Protecting Historic Pub Interiors

With so few unspoilt pub interiors in Wales, it is critically important to preserve what survives. Yet only 47 per cent of the pubs in this guide are statutorily 'listed' by Cadw, the heritage arm of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

Buildings are listed because of their special architectural or historic interest, or their value as a group. Importantly, listing relates to both the exterior and the interior of a building with three classifications:

Grade I - Buildings of exceptional, usually national, interest. (under two per cent of buildings listed in Wales qualify);

Grade II* - Particularly important buildings of more than special interest;

Grade II - Buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

The 'Listed Building Consent' Process

Cadw compiles the lists of buildings and in considering whether to list a building local authorities and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are also consulted.

Local planning authorities are then responsible for operating the system through listed building consent. The need for consent applies to all parts of the building, interior or exterior, regardless of grade and whether or not the feature is mentioned in the official list description. The local planning authority examines the application against national guidelines issued by WAG and its policies for the protection of the historic environment. In addition there will be a presumption in favour of preservation.

This process offers listed buildings protection from damaging change. However, only one of the pubs featured in this guide is Grade I listed; there are three Grade II* listed pubs; and a further 45 are Grade II listed. This means over half of the real heritage pubs of Wales are unlisted.

Many of Wales's statutorily listed pubs do not appear in this guide as they are listed for reasons other than their interiors, e.g. a fine external appearance; or their interiors have been too altered. Until recently pub interiors received little attention from mainstream planning and conservation bodies.

Historic Pub Interiors at Risk

Recent experience indicates that many of the interiors of pubs in this guide that lack listed building status are at risk from damaging changes.. Action is therefore required. The only way that proposed changes can undergo proper scrutiny by the local community is for the pub to be statutorily listed, so that applications for changes have to be made to the local authority and a statutory period of consultation allowed.

Helping to Save Historic Pub Interiors in Wales

CAMRA believes that all the pubs included in this book are worthy of protection and sensitive treatment.

CAMRA is already working with Cadw with a view to encouraging them to statutorily list more of the pubs in this guide and will be encouraging them to include the appropriate reference to the rarity of layouts/interior fittings in listed descriptions.

CAMRA will be writing to all local planning authorities to point out how few pubs with historic interiors remain asking for their help to protect them for future generations. Also, where a pub does not qualify for statutory listing we will be asking them to add the pubs to a 'local list' of historic buildings.

Saving the UK's Pub Heritage

Real Heritage Pubs of Wales and other similar guides have grown out of CAMRA's concern about the rapid disappearance of our pub heritage and the major survey it initiated in the early 1990s to identify and campaign for the survival of the best remaining examples. The main aim was to list those interiors that remained very much as they had been before the Second World War and/or still had features of exceptional historic or architectural importance.

After six years' work, CAMRA's first National Inventory of Pub Interiors of Outstanding Historic Interest (now called 'National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors') appeared - there was a total of just 179 pubs, including 5 in Wales, such had been the scale of modern change. Visit CAMRA's Heritage Pubs website, www.heritagepubs.org.uk, for an up-to-date list with full descriptions plus photographs.

The National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors comes in two parts: Part One consists of historic interiors which are listed for their intactness while Part Two contains ones which, although altered, still retain features or rooms of truly national significance.

CAMRA has already produced Regional Inventories of Historic Pub Interiors for Greater London, East Anglia, and North East England; also one for Scotland and this guide for Wales. Guides for Yorkshire and the East Midlands are in preparation and ones for other regions will follow soon. Details of Northern Ireland's Real Heritage Pubs are available on www.heritagepubs.org.uk

Protection for More Pubs

In the mid 1990s English Heritage jointly funded with CAMRA a project to statutorily list many pubs and improve the listing description of many more so that the features of their historic interior were highlighted. Following the launch of Scotland's True Heritage Pubs, Historic Scotland carried out a Thematic Review of Public Houses which resulted in the statutory listing of more pubs, raising the grade of a number and expanding the listing descriptions of many more. CAMRA is already working with Cadw with a view to encouraging them to statutorily list more of the pubs in this guide.

Conservation and Commercial Operations

It is a major aim of these guides to get genuine historic pub interiors visited and appreciated. As each guide is produced, CAMRA makes a point of drawing the

pubs included in them to the attention of planning departments of the local authorities in which they lie. We believe that with a combination of awareness by the public and pub owners on one hand and local authority vigilance on the other, the pubs listed should have a bright and long-lived future without damaging change.

Pubs, of course, are commercial businesses and have been constantly changing through time but it does seem sensible both in terms of conserving our heritage and as a matter of good business sense to look after the relatively few genuine old interiors we have left. There are examples amongst other building types such as religious and railway buildings where heritage is seen as an opportunity rather than a drawback and we encourage the owners of real heritage pubs to promote them as such.

If a pub is not included in this guide that does not mean it is devoid of historic value. We have had to draw the line somewhere, so you will still come across pubs with features like etched glass, old bar fittings and tile-work that are a joy to behold and deserve to be saved.

How You Can Help

Do you know of other pubs to include? With so many pubs across such a vast area, there may be historic examples that have escaped our notice – if you find one, do please let us know. Real Heritage Pubs of Wales, like the National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors, is an organic document to be kept under constant review and updated in the light of feedback and further research. If you have any updates, comments or suggestions for pubs to include in future editions, please email us at info.pubheritage@camra.org.uk or write to Pub Heritage Group, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans AL1 4LW.

“A Pint of Bitter & Half A Dozen Eggs Please”

Almost without exception, pubs are now stand-alone businesses but this has not always been the case. Here we give examples of combined trades that were in existence in the past and some examples of where this still continues today.

Shops Past and Present

In the tiny village of Cwmdu, near Llandeilo there is a most impressive survivor. Situated in an early 19th-century terrace, the Cwmdu Inn and its separate small shop & post office have been run by the villagers since 2000. The shop and post office is open Tue. to Fri. 9.30am to 1pm; and Sat. 9.30am to 12.30pm,

Until 1960 the Cross, Hayscastle Cross, Pembrokeshire included a shop and Post Office and although they no longer exist the pub still sells newspapers and eggs.

The present public bar at the front right of the Crown & Anchor, Llanidloes, was brought into use c.1948, having previously been a haberdashery shop. Other pubs in this guide that once included another business include the Royal Hotel, Usk where behind the front right hand shop window there was originally an undertakers;. The Carpenters Arms, Shirenewton is so named as it was previously also a carpentry business.

The Farmer Publican

Colin Blakeman is a farmer by day and landlord in his tiny public bar at the New Cross Inn, Court Henry which opens most Thursday evenings, every Saturday evening and Sunday lunchtimes. This amazing survivor is still part of a 200-acre livestock farm. The Dyffryn Arms ('Bessie's'), Pontfaen is still linked to a small-holding with ten acres of farmland plus six of woodland.

Drovers' Inns

The Welsh countryside is riddled with former drove roads created in medieval times as a vital means of transporting cattle, sheep, pigs and geese bound for market in England. Inns sprang up alongside these roads to provide refreshment and recuperation for the drovers and their charges. A number of these inns survive but the forlorn remains of many more can still be identified.

A classic example of a drovers' inn is the Rhydspence Inn right on the English border near Hay-on-Wye. The building dates from 1380 and may originally have provided comfort for pilgrims, but by the seventeenth century it had become a focal point for Welsh and Irish drovers on the Black Ox Trail from the Welsh uplands to the markets at Gloucester, Oxford and Smithfield in London.

Near Upper Chapel the small inn at Cwm Owen, astride the drove way to the Wye valley, finally succumbed as a result of the economic devastation wrought by the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001. Surviving drovers' inns elsewhere in mid Wales include the Talbot Hotel in Tregaron and the Red Lion at Llanfihangel Nant Melan east of Rhayader.

In north Wales a classic drovers route led eastwards from Anglesey, with cattle swimming the Menai Strait and then crossing the northern slopes of the Snowdonia massif before coming down by the Olde Bull at Llanbedr-y-Cennin to the Conwy valley. Other drovers' inns in the north included the Sun at Rhewl near Llangollen, the community-owned Raven at Llanarmon-yn-Ial near Mold – sole survivor of ten inns in this important droving centre – and the thirteenth century Black Lion at Babell near Holywell.

Why the Pubs in Wales Closed on Sundays

Heavy drinking in the early nineteenth century, partly fuelled by the increase in the number of public houses after the Beer Act liberalised licensing in 1830, inevitably led to calls for a more restrictive regime. By 1835 there were 25 temperance societies in Wales, originally placing an emphasis on restraint (for example the Aberystwyth Auxiliary Temperance Society urged abstinence from spirits and moderation in the consumption of beer) but later placing the emphasis on teetotalism, as with the Narberth Total Abstinence Society, founded in 1837.

Welsh temperance campaigners – supported by the strong Methodist traditions of the country – were undaunted, however, and triumphed in 1881 with the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. Astonishingly, until the late twentieth century it was illegal to buy a drink in a pub in Wales on a Sunday (clubs and hotels were exempt, and hence prospered). The introduction of local referenda in 1961 at last gave residents the opportunity to overturn this draconian legislation. Even so, it was not until 1996 that Dwyfor, the last district still observing Sunday closing, finally voted against the practice. Mercifully, these

referenda were finally abolished in 2003.

Local landowners leapt onto the temperance bandwagon with alacrity: Lady Llanover, a devout Methodist and staunch teetotaler, turned Llanover village near Abergavenny into an oasis of Welshness in the 1840s, converting the Duke Inn into a temperance hotel. And somewhat improbably, the early headquarters of Abertillery Rugby Football Club were located in Buckley's Temperance Hotel in Oak Street.

Even more improbable were some of the steps taken to get around temperance restrictions. At Pontlottyn in the Rhymney Valley the teetotal landowner refused to allow public houses to be built in the village, but the Rhymney Railway Company allowed the Railway Inn to be built beneath three arches of their viaduct. Despite strong local opposition the Railway Inn was demolished in the 1990s.

Little remains of most of these havens of temperance although travellers on the A470 in mid Wales can still see the protruding porch of the former temperance hotel in Newbridge-on-Wye, with "Temperance and Commercial" etched in the glass of the porch.

The Great Welsh Brewing Revival

There has been an astonishing growth in the number of independent breweries in Wales in the last few years. The confidence of these micro-brewers to experiment with new and exciting recipes offers drinkers a richly rewarding experience in an increasing number of pubs. The Good Beer Guide 2010 lists 42 breweries in Wales, compared with 17 only five years ago and a mere six in 1985.

Only two of the established independent brewers in Wales, Brains and Felinfoel, have survived, while others such as Buckleys in Llanelli (taken over and closed down by Brains), Crown in Pontyclun and the idiosyncratic Border Breweries of Wrexham have all bitten the dust. Some of the micro-brewing pioneers have also failed to last the course, among them the much-lamented Dyffryn Clwyd brewery, makers of the outstanding Pedwar Bawd (Four Thumbs) bitter, Samuel Powell's in Newtown and Silverthorne's in Gwent.

The New Wave

Among the older established new wave brewers are Swansea Brewery, the first commercial brewery in the district for 30 years, whose beers provide a compelling reason to visit the Railway Inn in Killay (page XX); Tomos Watkin, founded in 1995 in Llandeilo but now brewed in Swansea; Bullmastiff, operated as a craft brewery since 1987 but rarely available in the Cardiff area; and Plassey, established in 1985 and supplying 30 regular outlets including three on the leisure park south of Wrexham where the brewery is located.

A number of the new breweries were established to provide home brewed ales for one pub only, including the Bryncelyn Brewery, Heart of Wales Brewery at the Neuadd Arms (page XX) in the quirky little town of Llanwrtyd Wells, the tiny Gwynant Brewery at the Tynllidiart Arms, Capel Bangor near Aberystwyth; and the ultra-modern Zerodegrees brewery in Cardiff.

Other recently established breweries have loftier ambitions. Otley near Pontypridd has three pubs and have won many awards for their beers including O1 and

O-Garden winning CAMRA's 2008 Champion Golden Ale & Speciality Beer categories respectively; Breconshire, too, has three pubs and their golden ale Cribyn was CAMRA's Champion Best Bitter for 2009. Facers in Flint, owned by an ex-head brewer of Boddingtons, and Evan Evans in Llandeilo are other brewers who are expanding rapidly.

Beer Tourism

The growing importance of beer tourism means that many new brewers offer brewery tours and an on-site shop, as with the Waen Brewery, established at Penstrowed near Newtown in 2009 and selling its quirkily named beers such as First of the Summer Waen direct from the brewery. Kingstone near Tintern sells its own beers directly to callers, while Monty's at Hendomen near Montgomery offers brewery tours and Gwaun Valley near Fishguard welcomes sampling and visitors at its brand-new plant on Kilkiffeth Farm.

Others, including the Penlon Cottage Brewery at Llanarth, North Wales Brewery at Abergele and Jolly Brewer in Wrexham, rely on farmers markets and food festivals for a substantial element of the sales of their real ales in a bottle.

Where To Find Welsh Real Ale

In each pub entry we indicate where the real ales on sale come from one of the micro breweries set up in Wales in recent years by using the wording "Welsh Real Ale(s)". "Guest Real Ale(s)" indicates that the pub usually sells beers from micro breweries in England and these pubs could be selling locally produced real ales in the future. If all the real ales on sale are from larger independent breweries such as Brains of Cardiff, Felinfoel of Llanelli, Lees and Robinsons we say so, and if a tied house sells guest beers from other breweries we add "& guest beer(s)".

If you want to enjoy more of the products of the new breweries in pubs in Wales then please ask licensees "Do you sell a local beer?" to create a demand for them. Thank you.

The Rebirth Of Welsh Cider

Welsh cider making has enjoyed a remarkable resurgence, and can now boast around 30 producers and an enviable reputation for high quality products. It is there to be enjoyed – seek it out!

In the mid-1970s Ralph Owen started making cider initially for his own consumption. On moving in 1986 to his present Radnorshire base close to ample and under-exploited supplies of fruit he realised that cider-making could make a significant contribution to his overall farming business.

The crucial factor in the Welsh cider revival, though, was the formation of the Welsh Cider Society (later rechristened the Welsh Perry and Cider Society) in 2001 (www.welshcider.co.uk). For the first time ever, Welsh cider-makers had access to a support network offering valuable assistance and comradeship. No time was wasted in setting up an annual Welsh Perry and Cider Festival at the excellent Clytha Arms near Raglan in Monmouthshire at which the Welsh Perry and Cider Championships are judged.

And Welsh cider is second to none when it comes to quality. Set up in 2001, Gwynt y Ddraig cider, from the village of Llantwit Fardre near Pontypridd, quickly built up a reputation for both ambition and quality, so it was no great surprise when a gloriously complex and satisfying cider of theirs won the title of CAMRA's National Champion Cider of 2004. They then won the National Champion Perry award the following year – and in the same year, CAMRA's National Champion Cider was the intense, powerful 3Bs made by Ralph Owen!

In 2006, it was the turn of David Matthews' Seidr Dai perry to pick up the Champion Perry award, The impressive Blaengawney Cider picked up a bronze in 2008, and in 2009 small-scale producer Steve Hughes from Llandegla in Denbighshire gained joint silver in the cider class for Rosie's Triple D, while Seidr Dai won the silver award for perry with the delightful Painted Lady.

To find out more about cider and perry visit one of the growing number of Apple Day events that take place around the 21st of October annually including the National Trust properties Erddig and Llanerchaeron; St Fagan's National History Museum near Cardiff and the village of Cwmdru near Llandeilo.

Service In A Welsh Pub

Nowadays a customer expects to walk to a bar counter to be served. Yet the counter is a Victorian invention, with the earliest known examples dating from the 1860s.

Beer From The Cask

There are, however, still some examples in Wales of how customers were once served. Many pubs were just one simple room and the licensee fetched the beer from the cellar (where the beer was stored to keep it at a steady temperature) and brought it to your table. This still happens at the Red Lion, Llandovery (p. XX), which has no bar counter.

Another pub which has just a single room and cellar with no bar, but just a hatch is the Dyffryn Arms, Pontfaen, Here the way of serving the real ale is also old fashioned - firstly the beer is drawn from the cask into a jug; then the beer is poured from jug into the glass.

Table Service

You can still spot bell pushes on the walls of Welsh pubs. They are a reminder of the once-common practice of table service. When the bell was rung it triggered an indicator in a bell-box that was visible to bar staff, who would then come to your table to take your order. The original bell pushes (sadly no longer in working order) can still be seen at the Albion, Conwy (p. XX). We are not aware of a pub in Wales still offering table service using bell pushes.

Service Via a Hatch

Another traditional way of getting service is via a hatch rather than a bar counter and good examples can be seen at the Fox, Ysceifiog (p. XX); and Albion, Conwy (p. XX), both still with their doors; Douglas Arms, Bethesda (p. XX); and Crown & Anchor, Llanidloes amongst others.

Off Sales

In the past an active part of pub trade was drink bought for consumption off the premises, commonly known as 'Off Sales'. The sales would be from a separate small room or a hatch just inside the pub entrance as the purchasers were often women, even children, who were sent to the pub to collect the family supplies. The requirement of separation was to shield them from seeing men drinking in the bar.

Since the 1960s their importance has declined as people began to stop using the pub for take-home supplies and got them instead from off licences, supermarkets and France! Most of these tiny spaces have been absorbed into other pub rooms but there are some notable examples left. The off sales at the Slaters Arms, Corris is still active today and there are intact hatches just inside the Prince of Wales, Cynwyd and in the passageway of the Lamb, Penderyn which now act more as sweet shops for the children as shops have closed.

At the Witchell, Barry the now disused room is more like the size of a small shop and etched into the window glass is the wording 'Jug & Bottle Department', so named, of course, after the vessels used to take home the chosen liquor.

The Coaching Era In Wales

For a brief period the coaching inns of Wales provided a crucial element of the nation's transport infrastructure. From the middle of the seventeenth century existing inns were spruced up or new ones constructed to provide food, drink and beds for travellers together with teams of fresh horses for stagecoaches and, from the 1780s, the fast mail coaches introduced by the Royal Mail.

The London to Fishguard route saw the development of major coaching inns, with the Angel in Abergavenny converted from a private house to a premier coaching inn in Georgian times, and the Bear at Crickhowell still betraying hints of its former existence, with a fine archway into the inner courtyard.

In mid Wales the half-timbered Mount Inn in Llanidloes and Blue Bell in Llangurig were key coaching halts, but the Lion Royal Hotel in Rhayader played a crucial role in the development of services in the area once the turnpike road from Kington had been completed in 1779. Within two years the inn, then known as the Red Lion, had its own postchaises and was the terminus for a weekly wagon service which covered the 26 miles to Kington in a mere 12 hours.

All this enterprise was relatively short-lived, however. The 1840s was a decade of abrupt decline as increasing competition from the railways forced the

abandonment of many traditional coaching routes. Isolated Rhayader did a little better, but even here the Royal Mail coaches were withdrawn in 1858, and the final stagecoaches ran in 1864, when the railway to Aberystwyth was completed.

Architectural Style in Welsh Pubs

Until the early 19th-century, beerhouses and the public houses – unlike inns – tended to be fairly simple affairs. From c.1890 there was a massive growth in the building of purpose-built public houses, often on a grand scale. Although the majority of these once multi-roomed pubs have been much modernised there are still a number of good examples remaining in Wales that retain a good portion of their original floorplan and quality fittings.

Other stunning bar back fittings can be found at the Royal Hotel, Trealaw built 1889; and in Cardiff the Royal Oak, Splott (p. XX); and the Gower, Cathays (p. XX).

The Golden Age of Pub Building

Wales is fortunate to have retained two of the most grand of Victorian/Edwardian pub designs involving colourful ceramic tiling. The Golden Cross, Cardiff (1903) has a stunning display of both exterior and interior tiling including a ceramic bar counter and two tiled paintings. The Waterloo Hotel & Bistro, Newport also has a ceramic bar counter and both retain their original mahogany bar fittings.

Good Edwardian fittings can be found at the Capel, Gilfach Fargoed (1912) (p. XX); in two fine red brick Edwardian pubs near Neath, the Ivy Bush, Pontadawe and the Red Cow, Ystalyfera (p. XX); The small public bar at the Lion Royal Hotel, Rhayader was refitted in 1912 (p. XX).

Inter-war pubs

Sadly, we have found few pubs from the inter-war period that have retained their interior fittings and layout. However, Wales has one of the few virtually intact examples in the whole of the UK – the Albion, Conwy (1921) which we recommend is included on a visit to this splendid town. Remains of inter-war re-fits of Victorian pubs are also rare with the Oak Room at the Claude, Roath being a good example. Bangor Station Bar was refitted in 1927. Other 1930s fittings can be seen at Twthill Vaults Caernarfon (p. XX); George & Dragon, Brymbo and the Red Lion, Cyffylliog - the Art Deco toilets are rare.

Post-war pubs

We have not been able to include any new builds from the 1950/60s that are still in original form, as most appear to have been refitted. The Ridgway, Newport (1966) has a distinct style and still has two rooms but was built with three. If you come across any please let us know at info.pubheritage.org.uk

A good example of a 1950s refit based on a 1930s style can be found at the Wynnstay Arms, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant with its rare screened bar counter. For two unique re-fittings from the 1950s visit the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel to see its log bar based on Austrian design and the lounge at the Royal Oak, Llanfarian (p. XX); an even more amazing example is the White Hart, Machen (p. XX), dating from 1961 but using fittings from the 1947 refurbishment of the liner SS Empress of France. The lounge bar at the Vigour, Cemaes Bay is an example of how pubs were refitted in the 1960s.

Refurbishments

Most refurbishments take little note of the original plan form and fittings but the recent work at the White Horse Inn, Overton-on-Dee did return the interior of this Grade II listed pub to close to its original form by the addition of partitions/screens. It was highly commended in the Best Refurbishment category of CAMRA's Pub Design Awards. Another example of quality modern refitting is the Tudor-style example carried out in c.1990 at the Corvus Inn, St Clears, Carmarthenshire.

Lost Pubs

Many of the pubs in this book are small, old-fashioned and facing an uncertain future. A number of such pubs have, however, failed even to come this far, their passing mourned by locals and by connoisseurs of unspoilt and traditional pubs.

The Fountain

A classic example is the Fountain at Troedrihwgair, high in the South Wales Valleys, which originated as a farmhouse but was also in use as an inn by the 1860s. By 1871 the building was known as the Fountain Inn and was owned by Isaac Mason, ancestor of the redoubtable Marge Mason, who ran the pub for many years but died around 2000, since when the pub has been closed.

As you entered the Fountain there was an off-sales window, with the bar in front of you through stable doors and on the left up a green painted slope with lino floor was the Tap Room. To the right was a remarkable survival - the meeting room for the Royal & Ancient Order of Buffaloes, a friendly society which acted as the glue binding together local communities, providing sickness and unemployment benefits and even the funds for a decent burial.

The Ship at Pennant

A similar fate befell the Ship Inn at Pennant, south of Aberystwyth, once described as more a living museum than a pub, largely as a result of the huge collection of bric-a-brac assembled by long-serving landlady Mrs. Pegi Evans, who is quoted as saying that she kept the place as it was in the old days because a pub should be a place 'for the lads from the farms to have peace and quiet to sit and chat.' By the early 1990s Pegi had retired, taking her remarkable collection with her. However the pub continued to trade successfully, with a large extension built onto the drinking area, though the core of the pub retained its character. In 2003, however, the pub was offered for sale by a local estate agent, and in February 2009 retrospective planning consent was eventually granted for "retention of public house as residential accommodation".

Use It or Lose It!

It is of course no secret that pubs today are facing difficult trading conditions. When you read this book, please remember that the pubs within it are not just there to be read about – they are there to be used! The more that customers use them, the less likely they are to go the way of the much-loved Ship Inn and the Fountain, and countless others that have been lost over the years – and indeed are still being lost, like the New Dock Tavern in Cardiff, closed by Brains in 2009.

Architectural Ceramics in Pubs

The late Victorian period saw a wide range of decorative and colourful materials used in pub building. Here we indicate where some of the finest remaining examples can be found in Wales.

Faience, being a multi-coloured glazed version of terracotta, gave the exteriors of Victorian and Edwardian pubs an impressive look. The best remaining examples can be found on the exteriors of three pubs in Cardiff city centre – the Golden Cross (p. XX), the Vulcan and the Queens Vaults; also on the Varsity (was White Horse), Aberystwyth, which features ‘Rea’s’ in raised lettering on the fascia. Mr. Rea was the last coachman on the Aberystwyth run in the coaching era.

Glazed tiles were particularly well suited for lining pub walls, being hard wearing and easily cleaned. Occasionally, large tile pictures were commissioned for pubs and inside the Golden Cross, Cardiff there are two hand-painted pictorial panels - in the public bar is one depicting Cardiff Castle in 1903 and in the small side room on the left is one of the Old Town Hall in 1863; both of these are dated 1903 and are by Craven Dunnill of Jackfield, Shropshire. However, the most eye-catching ceramic feature at the Golden Cross is the bar counter, one of only 20 remaining left in the whole of the UK. Wales has another – at the Waterloo Hotel & Bistro, Newport (p. XX).

In the inter-war period the amount of decoration was much reduced but the Albion, Conwy (p. XX), built in 1921, has a dado of brown tiles with Art Nouveau styling

Pub Room Names In Wales

The plan of the White Horse, Overton-on-Dee gives an indication of how pubs were built around 1900; it shows a multi-roomed interior and some of the room names in use then. Today the Public Bar is the most popular name followed by Lounge but often there is little difference in the fittings to distinguish them. In the past the public bar would be the most basic and in some cases offered only standing room. The Lounge or Smoke Room would be much more comfortable and customers would be charged a higher price such as 2d more - something that has virtually disappeared in recent times.

Commercial Room relates to a better class room that would be popular with commercial travellers and other business people on the move. Other pubs in this guide still with window glass advertising a ‘Commercial Room’ include the etched glass ones at Capel, Gilfach Fargoed and the Castle Barry (p. XX); also, it is the wording on door of one of the rooms at the Vigour, Cemaes Bay (p. XX).

Another pub with unusual names in glass panels in the doors is the Ystalyfera Arms, Ystalyfera with 'Hall' and 'Smoke Room Glasses Only' ones. Finally, you can see 'Assembly Room' or 'Club Room' - there is one on the first floor of the Jeffreys Arms, Ystradgynlais (p. XX). These are a reminder of how much the pub functions as a social centre.

Numbering the rooms

Close inspection of many pubs will reveal numbers on, over or beside internal doors. The Lamb, Penderyn has '1' on the public bar door; '4' on the lounge on the right; '2' on the snug; and '3' on a room that is now for private use only, which confirms it was in public use in the past. The cellar door at the Sun, Old Colwyn has a figure '3' on it. These numbers were a requirement of HM Customs & Excise.

Mini Features

Corks – A Pub Game In The South Wales Valleys

Corks is a pub game played only in Wales and not in any other part of the UK. Based on a game seen played with metal weights in North Wales some 50 years ago that may have originated in France, nowadays it can be seen in the South Wales valleys where there are two leagues. One was set up around Abercarn and Crumlin in 1956 and the Ynysddu League, founded in 1959, takes in teams from Risca, Crosskeys, Pontywaun and Cwmfelinfach. There are about fourteen pub and club teams in each league, but it never seems to have spread any further.

The game is played on a long piece of chipboard, hinged in three pieces and unfolded flat exactly over the dartboard mat. Five corks, painted white and numbered 1 to 5, are placed on a circle. You throw three corks, painted black, underhand, one at a time, trying to knock the white corks out of the circle. Like all simple looking games, corks is harder than it looks. For a start, there is an irresistible temptation to put one foot alongside the board, to gain half a yard advantage. The locals will soon put you right on this: "Getting our feet a bit wet, then, are we? Fish biting?" – a polite way of saying "get both feet behind the throwing line or else"!

Preserving Historic Pub Features

CAMRA applauds careful conservation of historic pub features. If a pub is listed there is a statutory requirement to keep historic fabric in order and if damaged it should be accurately replaced. There are two Cardiff pubs where window glass has been damaged in recent years and the owners, in both cases Brains Brewery, have spent money on replacement or refurbishment. The set of four window screens at the Royal Oak, Cardiff had suffered damage over the years and in 2008 Brains carried out a superb restoration.

Exterior windows are the most vulnerable historic fittings and at the Old Arcade, Cardiff the window with the rare 'Luncheon Bar' wording was smashed a few years ago. While Brains are to be commended for arranging the replacement glass with the Luncheon Bar wording, sadly, it is a poor replica of the original one.

Snooker Plus / Billiard Tables in Pubs in Wales

There are three pubs in this book that have a full sized Snooker Table still in use - the Castle, Barry, the Douglas Arms, Bethesda; and the Gower, Cathays, Cardiff. Also, there is one upstairs at the Ty Brith, Carno but it is currently disused, and one was removed from the rear room of the Oak Tree, Wrexham in recent years.

On the full-sized table at the Douglas Arms, Bethesda they play the rare game of Snooker Plus. It was invented by Joe Davis in 1959 and includes two extra balls - an orange (scores 8) and a purple (scores 10). This means the possible maximum break is 210, something not even 15 times world champion Joe could score! (but it is believed to have been achieved by Jimmy White, date unknown).