REDRAFT NOVEMBER 2022

Cheltenham Branch GBG Selection Process

This proposal is designed to formalise a system for judging and selecting branch venues for inclusion in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide. With around one hundred venues eligible for just eight places, it is important to put in place a robust and transparent process, to ensure that the best candidates make it into the GBG on merit. The venues we recommend for inclusion in the guide should be ones that we are proud to recommend and are included primarily due to the high quality of the real ale served.

The criteria for selection must be:

- The venue must be in one of the four Cheltenham Branch Post Codes - GL50 to GL53;
- The consistent quality of the real ale served at each venue. Establishing this will require frequent assessment and scoring, over a period of time, by multiple individuals;
- In any numerical analysis of the combined WhatPub scores for each pub, the score for beer quality must be an important factor in choosing GBG entries. WhatPub scores are listed as both average scores, and an algorithm that determines confidence ranking. Other factors (i.e. sympathy with CAMRA aims, community focus and value for money) are **EQUALLY IMPORTANT FACTORS** and will be taken into account when evaluating pubs, particularly when WhatPubs comparison scores are close.
- The number of real ales available at each venue is secondary to quality.
- Inducements such as CAMRA member discounts, or loyalty cards, should not be factors in selecting pubs for the guide.
- The cost of real ales served by venues is not the same thing as value for money and should not be a prime factor in selecting venues.

As soon as the final GBG selection process is determined, and agreed, it should be circulated to the branch membership together with details of how to participate.

SELECTION TIMETABLE

The GBG Selection Process will run between April and March the following year, when the results are submitted to the Regional Director. Branch members will be encouraged to submit WhatPub scores throughout the year and to nominate venues that members feel are good candidates for GBG inclusion.

Each step is explained below:

October:

Immediately following the launch event for the Good Beer Guide, Branch members will be invited to recommend GBG candidate pubs for the following year's Guide. The advantage of this is that it will create a sense of continuity, and branch membership engagement, in assessing and selecting pubs for the GBG. Any pub in the Branch area is eligible, providing they serve real ale in accordance with CAMRA guidelines, and have not changed hands in the recent past (subject to exceptions agreed by the Committee).

Details of how to survey and score will be included, together with guidance notes on how to complete WhatPub scores, Green Card Survey Forms and the criteria for scoring real ale.

November:

In response to member recommendations, and WhatPub scores, a **"FINAL LIST"** of GBG contenders is finalised by branch committee/branch pubs officer (maximum 20 venues). For criteria see below.

December - January:

Individual member WhatPub/Green Card scoring, and organised surveys continue. Committee focus will be on the **"FINAL LIST"** venues only.

Late January:

Pub surveying ends. Survey forms are returned for the February Branch meeting or used to update directly to WhatPub.

February:

Final WhatPub scores are downloaded and analysed for scoring anomalies. Short Listing Meeting takes place to list the final 12 venues. Reasons for rejecting the other venues at this stage are recorded. The **"FINAL LIST"** is sent to members for voting.

Exclusion criteria will include:

- Any venue that has not been surveyed by at least three separate members;
- Any venue with less than 6 real ale scores (not necessarily 6 different real ales);
- Poor beer quality scores or reports, i.e. repeated scores below 2.5 out of 5;
- Any evidence/pattern of scoring that suggests an attempt at vote rigging;
- Reports of 'short measuring';
- Temporary closure, or a change of licensee (or brewer in the case of a brewpub), during the assessment period. Exclusion will only take place if, following a review, this change has had a material effect on real ale quality or availability at the venue.
- Any verified discriminatory behaviour reported at a venue on any grounds, including race, faith, gender, sexual orientation or membership of any lawful organisation.

Other than the above, the selection of the 12 shortlisted pubs will be based primarily on the quality of the real ale.

For transparency reasons details of all deselected pubs, and the reasons why, should be recorded and divulged to the licensees concerned if requested.

Late February:

GBG Selection meeting takes place to decide the 8 entries plus 2 reserves. Selection is based on a combination of WhatPub scoring, Cheltenham Branch Tasting Panel recommendation/assessment scores, membership votes and partly on other factors (i.e. sympathy with CAMRA aims, community focus and value for money).

Early March:

Results submitted to Regional Director.

April – May:

Proof reading phase.

June:

Early June is the final opportunity to remove a pub from the GBG.

October:

GBG Publication and launch event at a Cheltenham GBG venue.

NOTES: Selecting the November "FINAL LIST"

Members can nominate a pub, club or bar at any time to the branch Pubs Officer via email, face to face or at branch meetings. For consideration for the next GBG these need to be received by the November branch meeting.

After the call to the membership for nominations, from late October, the best (max 20 venues) are selected as a **"FINAL LIST".** This will take place at the November Business Meeting.

These venues will be selected from:

- All venues in the current GBG and the previous two GBGs;
- + Pubs nominated by branch CAMRA members and Committee;
- + All pubs from the **COMMITTEE PRELIMINARY SHORTLIST**;

This **"FINAL LIST" is for Branch Officers only to enable us to focus on these strong candidates.**

All venues should be targeted for intense surveying.

GBG SELECTION MEETING

The GBG Selection Meeting will take place mid to late February. The date, time and venue must be publicised to all branch members with an invitation to attend.

Every effort should be made by committee members to visit the bottom 6 pubs ranked on beer score in the shortlisted 12 before the final selection meeting to make a comparative judgement of their beer quality.

Licensees, or anyone with a vested interest in any pub, must leave the room whilst that pub is debated as a candidate. In order to assist in the selection process, prior to a vote on each pub, the Chair will make available the shortlisted pubs ranked in two lists:

1. Beer Quality score ranking from Whatpub and survey forms;
2. Overall score, which will include factors such as sympathy with CAMRA values, value for money, community involvement, atmosphere and décor, service and welcome.

The non-beer quality values should be debated and given substantial consideration.

EIGHT venues will be selected for inclusion in the GBG, together with **TWO** reserves.

The results are announced and the meeting closes. All present are requested to keep results confidential until the GBG is published in September.

FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF THE GBG SELECTION, A DISCUSSION AND VOTE WILL BE HELD TO SELECT THE BRANCH PUB AND CLUB OF THE YEAR FROM AMONGST THE EIGHT GBG ENTRIES.

Proof Reading / Final Amendments

All entries and reserves are submitted electronically by the Branch Chair to the Regional Director within 2 weeks of the meeting. Proof reading takes place in April/May. Up until early June it is normally possible to delete entries and promote reserves, but only with Committee and/or Branch approval.

Publishing

To mark publication of the GBG, the branch will hold a launch event in a GBG pub.

END