

Motion to Wigan CAMRA AGM

To: Wigan CAMRA Branch Members
From: Wigan CAMRA Annual Awards Subcommittee
CC: RD Greater Manchester; RD West Pennines; RD Merseyside & Cheshire
Subject: Branch Annual Awards Processes – Proposed Changes
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1. Synopsis

Following our June 2021 branch meeting, members were invited to form a subcommittee to explore ways to improve the branch annual awards process.

A subcommittee was formed of members that expressed an interest in helping to shape such improvements. Representatives of recent winners of the Branch Pub of the Year award were also invited to join the group to provide valuable insights into how pub licensees might respond to such changes, rather than exclusively focusing on the suggestions of CAMRA members who may or may not have ever been involved with the running of a pub.

The group met three times, in August, September and October 2021, to discuss the current processes and explore suggestions to improve them.

The purpose of this memo is to seek feedback on the proposed changes to the way that the Wigan CAMRA Branch nominates and votes for its annual awards.

2. Overview

This page gives a high-level overview of the proposed changes in sections [8](#) and [9](#).

2.1. Pub of the Year (POTY)

2.1.1. [Round one](#) – members vote online from list of all real ale/cider/perry pubs

A list of all pubs marked in WhatPub as serving real ale, cider or perry will be reduced to a 'long list' of up to 50, with some automatic entries (see [point 8.4.1](#))

2.1.2. [Round two](#) – members vote online to form short-list of up to 10 pubs

Members will be asked to vote online to reduce the long list to just 10 pubs.

Automatic entry for last year's POTY providing it receives at least one vote.

2.1.3. [Judging](#)

Branch members will judge the shortlisted pubs using the same guidelines and score cards as those used during the regional round of the national competition.

2.2. Cider Pub of the Year (CPOTY)

2.2.1. [To be renamed 'Cider & Perry Pub of the Year'](#)

2.2.2. [Round one](#) – members vote online from list of all real cider/perry pubs

A list of all pubs marked in WhatPub as serving real cider or perry will be reduced to a shortlist of up to 5, with automatic entry for last year's CPOTY providing it receives at least one vote.

2.2.3. [Judging](#)

Branch members will judge the shortlisted pubs using the same guidelines and score cards as those used during the regional round of the national competition.

2.3. Club of the Year (COTY)

2.3.1. [Round one](#) – members vote online from list of all real ale/cider/perry clubs

A list of all clubs marked in WhatPub as serving real ale, cider or perry will be reduced to a shortlist of up to 5, with automatic entry for last year's COTY providing it receives at least one vote.

2.3.2. [Judging](#)

Branch members will judge the shortlisted pubs using the same guidelines and score cards as those used during the regional round of the national competition.

2.4. Community Pub of the Year (ComPOTY)

2.4.1. [Round one](#) – members nominate pubs online

Branch members will be asked to complete an online form, asking for nominations and reasons why a pub should win Community Pub of the Year.

2.4.2. [Voting](#)

Voting takes place exclusively in-person at the Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM).

2.5. Best New Cask Outlet (BNCO)

2.5.1. [Round one](#) – members nominate pubs online

Branch members will be asked to complete an online form, asking for nominations and dates of when a pub first opened/converted to serving cask-conditioned ale.

2.5.2. [Voting](#)

Voting takes place exclusively in-person at the Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM).

3. Implementation Timeline

If a motion to the branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2022 is passed by members, the new processes would be implemented for our annual awards at the 2023 AGM.

Our 2022 awards would be conducted as per the Branch Constitution, or de facto processes.

4. Subcommittee members

The Wigan CAMRA Annual Awards Subcommittee was formed of the following individuals: -

Name	Role(s)
Dorothy Abbott	Wigan Branch Member
Stuart Hurst	Social Officer; Licensee at Twisted Vine Ale House
Karen Mears	Membership Secretary; Admin Officer
Stephen Mears	Branch Vice Chair; Pubs & Clubs Officer; GBG Co-ordinator; BLO
Mark Moorcroft	Non-CAMRA member; Manager at Sherrington's
Sandy Motteram	Branch Chair; Joint Festival Organiser; GBG Co-ordinator
Zoe Pearson	Central Manchester member; Assistant Manager at Sherrington's
George Valentine	Health & Safety Officer
Joanna Whalley*	Central Manchester member; Licensee at Wigan Central
Dave Whittle	Training Co-ordinator; Owner of Real Crafty
Lisa Whittle	Admin Officer; Owner of Real Crafty
Shelley Wright	Branch Magazine Editor; Licensee at Swan & Railway

*Joanna stepped down from the subcommittee after feeding in to the first meeting.

5. List of annual awards and subsequent competition rounds

Wigan CAMRA nominates and awards five separate awards at its AGM, usually held in January.

Three of the award winners advance to regional rounds of national competitions.

The five annual award categories are: -

5.1. Pub of the Year (POTY)

Winner advances to regional round of National POTY competition

5.2. Club of the Year (COTY)

Winner advances to regional round of National COTY competition

5.3. Cider Pub of the Year (CPOTY)

Winner advances to regional round of National CPOTY competition

5.4. Community Pub of the Year (ComPOTY)

No regional/national competition rounds

5.5. Best New Cask Outlet (BNCO)

No regional/national competition rounds

6. Reasons to review

6.1. Make the awards processes transparent, accountable and fair

Making the process for each award public creates transparency and engenders trust in our organisation, as opposed to appearing to be a 'closed shop'.

Formalising the processes for annual awards will enable the branch to answer the question "Why did that pub/club win the award?"

Creating quantifiable scores by judging a shortlist of pubs should make the process fairer and less susceptible to vote rigging by 'stacking the deck' at an AGM.

6.2. Make the awards processes as inclusive as possible

The vast majority of our branch members are not 'active' within the branch and do not attend branch meetings or events.

Wigan CAMRA is currently comprised of over 750 members, yet the average attendance at the AGM since 2017 is just 40, while regular meetings (excluding online) average just 23.

There may be a wealth of reasons why members either are unable to or choose not to attend meetings in person but to expand this process to allow all members to take part in at least some parts of the awards process could help us to engage with those members that currently do not exercise their right to a voice within our branch.

The subcommittee issued a poll to members asking for votes for their favourite local brewery and received 64 responses in just over a week, without any campaigning or incentives at all. Of the 64, only one membership number was entered incorrectly (one digit out) so we received 60% more votes from members than we would receive at an average AGM. If the Branch, along with pubs and clubs, actively campaigns for votes, we predict we could double, if not triple our normal level of member engagement.

6.3. Improve our branch pubs and clubs' chances during regional rounds

Implementing a judging phase at a branch level should serve to encourage the licensees of shortlisted venues to adhere to CAMRA's national guidance. The pubs and clubs that score highest in the judging phase at a branch level should therefore theoretically have the best chance of scoring highly when being judged at the regional level, and will have had a head-start in preparing for the next rounds of the competition.

6.4. Annual awards should reflect and reward the best pubs and clubs

POTY, CPOTY and COTY awards should be awarded to the pubs and clubs that quantifiably score the highest number of points when judged against CAMRA's national guidance.

In February 2016, the nomination process for Wigan CAMRA's Pub of the Season (POTS) process was amended during its branch meeting. The new eligibility criteria was/is:

If a pub is selected as a Pub of the Season, that pub will become ineligible for nomination for the following three Pub of the Season awards.

E.g. if a pub is awarded Pub of the Season for Spring 2016, it will become ineligible for nomination for Pub of the Season Summer 2016, Autumn 2016 and Winter 2016. The next opportunity to nominate that pub for the Pub of the Season award will be Spring 2017.

The purpose of that amendment was primarily to prevent the same pub or pubs winning the award in consecutive, or near-consecutive seasons. As a result, the award would be distributed more widely around the pubs within the branch – perceivably creating a subjective award to boost the profile of a wider range of pubs.

If the branch is saying that the POTS award should be shared around, rather than reflect the best pub as per a set of quantitative measures, then it should also be true that the awards for POTY, CPOTY and COTY should be awarded to the pubs or clubs that score the highest when measured against one another.

7. Current processes

7.1. Current POTY process

A motion was passed at the 2019 branch AGM that formalised the POTY process:

Eligibility for nomination

All of the pubs that are in the current published version of the Good Beer Guide are automatically nominated for Branch POTY, providing that at the point of voting for the award, the pub is still eligible to be in the GBG as per the branch regulations.

In addition, the previous four winners of branch Pub of the Season will also be automatically nominated, again providing that the pub is eligible to be in the GBG at the point in time of voting.

Under exceptional circumstances, additional nominations may be taken from the floor during the AGM and, if seconded, the pub will be added to the list of nominees at the discretion of the Branch Chair (or Acting Chair, should the Branch Chair not be chairing the AGM).

Voting - phase one

Once the list of nominees is complete, a ballot by show of hands (regardless of meeting location) will be taken. The ballot will entitle each branch member at the AGM to a single vote for a pub during this phase. The four pubs with the greatest number of votes will form a shortlist for phase two of voting. In the case of a tied number of votes during phase one, the Branch Chair (or Acting Chair) will determine the most appropriate way to form the shortlist.

Voting - phase two

Each attending branch member will have the option to take part in a secret ballot (regardless of meeting location). Members may vote for a single pub from the shortlist during this phase. The votes will be collected and counted and the pub with the greatest number of votes shall win Branch POTY. In the case of a tie, the Branch Chair (or Acting Chair) will break the deadlock with a casting vote.

7.2. Current COTY Process

No process for Branch COTY exists within the branch constitution.

The de facto process is to nominate from the AGM floor and vote in the room.

7.3. Current CPOTY Process

No process for Branch CPOTY exists within the branch constitution.

The de facto process is to nominate pubs that serve real cider/perry as per CAMRA's current definition from the AGM floor and vote in the room.

7.4. Current ComPOTY Process

No process for Branch ComPOTY exists within the branch constitution.

The de facto process is to nominate pubs that serve their communities well from the AGM floor and vote in the room.

7.5. Current BNCO Process

A motion was passed at the 2018 branch AGM to formalise eligibility for the Branch BNCO award. Future changes to that criteria will supersede the definition below: -

The award should go to a venue which has demonstrated its credentials over a period of between four and sixteen calendar months from its opening or conversion to a cask outlet

The de facto process is to nominate pubs that meet the eligibility criteria above from the AGM floor and vote in the room.

8. Proposal Timeline

8.1. March – Encourage members to opt-in to emails at Wigan Beer Festival

During the Wigan Beer Festival, branch members will be encouraged on entry to opt-in to receive branch communications by email so that they can take part in our annual awards process. This can be performed in a non-time-consuming way either with flyers or posters in the hall with website addresses and/or QR codes with direct links to the CAMRA website where members can update their details and amend their communication preferences.

8.2. April – Email members, asking for feedback from the festival

Send out branch communications via CAMRA's comm's tool, asking members for feedback from the Beer Festival. A feedback form will be designed and shared using an online form. This will begin to engage members and get them used to responding to our requests.

8.3. June – Rules for awards

Send out branch communications via CAMRA's comm's tool, outlining the rules and process for our annual awards.

8.4. August – POTY Round 1

Send out branch communications via CAMRA's comm's tool with a link to a web form. The form will have a drop-down list of all pubs in our branch area that are marked as providing real ale. There will also be an option for 'other', enabling a member to nominate a pub that we might not currently know serves real ale. The branch can then investigate and update its records accordingly, improving the quality of information we hold.

There are approximately 130 pubs in WhatPub that are marked as 'Real Ale outlets' or 'Real Cider outlets'. That list of ~130 will be reduced to a 'long list' of up to 50 pubs.

8.4.1. Automatic entry into Long List

The 'long list' will contain some automatic nominations, providing those pubs are currently eligible for entry into the GBG as per the branch processes at the time.

For clarity, current branch criteria for eligibility for entry into the GBG are: -

- The pub must have continuously served real ale and/or real cider and/or real perry for a period of at least four months to a consistently good standard.
- The pub must not have had a change of licensee within the previous four months, except under exceptional circumstances wherein the new licensee has a recent proven track record locally.

Any changes to branch processes for GBG eligibility will supersede the above criteria.

The automatic entries into the list of 50 will be: -

- Pubs in the current published edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide (GBG)
 - Usually 20 pubs across Greater Manchester and Lancashire
- Pubs that won one of the four annual awards at the last AGM
 - The COTY award is not applicable to this step
 - These 4 pubs are usually included in the 20 GBG pubs above
- Pubs that won POTS within the last 12 months
 - Usually 4, unless an award is shared or not run
 - These 4 pubs are typically included within the 20 GBG pubs above

Under normal circumstances, between 20 and 29 pubs will therefore automatically enter the long list. The remaining spaces will be taken by those pubs that receive the greatest number of votes.

Pubs receiving zero votes will not be added to the long list, automatically or otherwise.

In the event of a tie, scores from NBSS will be used to break the deadlock. If there is still a tie, the length of the long list will be reduced, removing the lowest-scoring pubs.

8.5. September –CPTY Round 1 and shortlist

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool with a link to a web form. The form will have a drop-down list of all pubs in our branch area that are marked as providing real cider and/or real perry. There will also be an option for ‘other’, enabling a member to nominate a pub that we might not currently know serves real cider or real perry. The branch can then investigate and update its records accordingly, improving the quality of information we hold.

There are currently 24 pubs in WhatPub/Pubzilla that are marked as ‘Real Cider outlets’ although that list likely needs to be reviewed in light of the recently amended [definitions of Real Cider and Perry](#) from CAMRA (as updated May 2021).

A shortlist of up to five pubs will be formed from the pubs with the greatest number of votes on the web form. The pub that was awarded CPTY at the most recent branch AGM will automatically enter the shortlist alongside up to four other pubs, providing that it meets the GBG criteria as described in [point 8.4.1](#).

Pubs receiving zero votes will not be added to the shortlist, automatically or otherwise.

In the event of a tie, scores from NBSS will be used to break the deadlock. If there is still a tie, the length of the shortlist will be reduced, removing the lowest-scoring pubs.

8.6. September – COTY Round 1 and shortlist

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool with a link to a web form. The form will have a drop-down list of all clubs that are marked as providing real ale, real cider or real perry. There will also be options for ‘other’, enabling a member to nominate a club that serves real ale, real cider or real perry. The branch can then investigate and update its records accordingly, improving the quality of information we hold.

There are currently eight clubs in WhatPub/Pubzilla that are marked as ‘Real Ale outlets’. There are zero clubs that are marked as real cider outlets.

A shortlist of up to five clubs will be formed from the clubs with the greatest number of votes on the web form. The club that was awarded COTY at the most recent branch AGM will automatically enter the shortlist alongside up to four other clubs, providing that it meets the GBG criteria as described in [point 8.4.1](#).

Clubs receiving zero votes will not be added to the shortlist, automatically or otherwise.

In the event of a tie, scores from NBSS will be used to break the deadlock. If there is still a tie, the length of the shortlist will be reduced, removing the lowest-scoring clubs.

8.7. October – POTY Round 2 – long list to shortlist

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool with a link to a web form. The form will have a drop-down list of the long list of up to 50 pubs (see [point 8.4](#)).

Members will be asked to vote for the best pub from the long list in order to form a shortlist of up to ten pubs.

The pub that was awarded POTY at the most recent branch AGM will automatically enter the shortlist alongside up to nine other pubs, providing that it meets the GBG criteria as described in [point 8.4.1](#).

Pubs receiving zero votes will not be added to the shortlist, automatically or otherwise.

In the event of a tie, scores from NBSS will be used to break the deadlock. If there is still a tie, the length of the long list will be reduced, removing the lowest-scoring pubs.

8.8. November – Judging

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool announcing the shortlists for POTY, CPOTY and COTY.

Judges will be appointed by the branch from the branch membership. There will be no limit to the number of judges. Judges may judge one, two or all three award categories.

Judges must judge and record a complete set of scores for each of the venues on the shortlist for the category or categories they are judging, or the scores will not count.

Judging will be conducted as per the current CAMRA guidelines and scoring sheets as per the regional round of the respective competition.

Scores must be recorded by the end of December in order to be counted.

The Annual Awards Subcommittee (if still formed) or Branch Committee (if the Subcommittee has since been disbanded) reserve the right to challenge what is perceived to be abnormal scoring during the judging process. If the relevant committee is not satisfied following a challenge, sets of abnormal scores may be rejected.

The winners of POTY, CPOTY and COTY will be the pub/club with the highest average score following the judging process. In the event of a tie, scores from NBSS will be used to break the deadlock. If there is still a tie, the winner will be chosen by the result of a secret ballot of members attending the AGM. If there continues to be a tie, the Branch Chair (or Acting Chair, should the Branch Chair not be chairing the AGM) must break the deadlock with a casting vote. The POTY, CPOTY and COTY awards must not be shared, in order that a pub/club may progress to the regional round of the respective national competition.

8.9. November – BNCO suggestions

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool asking our members to nominate pubs for the BNCO award, including as much information as possible to help determine eligibility (see [point 7.5](#)).

A list of pubs will be formed from the nominations that meet the eligibility criteria.

8.10. December – Nominations for ComPOTY

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool asking our members to nominate pubs for the ComPOTY award, including descriptive reasons why the pub is an asset to the community and therefore deserving of the award.

A list of pubs will be formed from the nominations.

8.11. January – Encourage members to attend the AGM for BNCO & ComPOTY

Send out branch communications via CAMRA’s comm’s tool encouraging members to attend the AGM to vote for BNCO and ComPOTY awards.

Voting for those two awards will take place exclusively in-person at the Branch AGM. No online or proxy votes may be cast.

The winner of the two awards will be the pub or club with the highest number of votes.

In the event of a tie, the award will be shared between the tied pubs/clubs.

9. Additional information

9.1. Online nominations/voting

Each of the web forms will ask members for their names and membership numbers. That is to enable the branch to verify that the member has a current membership within the Wigan branch and that each member can only vote once at each stage.

Members without access to email or the internet will be able to cast their votes by using someone else's device, as long as they provide their own name and membership number.

Any occurrences of a member voting more than once at each stage will cause that member's votes to be rejected, regardless of whether the votes were for the same or different pubs or clubs.

If a membership number is entered incorrectly and cannot be verified against the membership database, that vote will not be counted.

9.2. Requests for members to receive branch communications

Each web form will contain a link with instructions on how to opt-in to branch communications to avoid missing the chance to vote in subsequent rounds. We expect that pubs will campaign for votes and may encourage drinkers in the pub to vote. Some of those drinkers might not be opted-in to branch comm's so this could increase our digital reach.

9.3. Timeline variation

The timelines set out in [section 8](#) are subject to change for any reason deemed appropriate by the Annual Awards Subcommittee or Branch Committee.

9.4. Future changes to POTS process

Any changes to the branch processes for POTS will not automatically affect the annual awards processes, regardless of [point 6.4](#).

9.5. Name change for CPOTY

Following the adoption of the motion, the name of the Branch Cider Pub of the Year award should be renamed to Branch Cider & Perry Pub of the Year award (still abbreviated to CPOTY).

9.6. Physical prizes

Currently the winner of POTY is presented with a framed certificate and shield, the Alan Ball Award. This motion proposes that all five annual award winners are presented with some form of physical trophy, to be decided upon following the adoption of this motion.

10. Options for change

This motion provides two options and recommends that the branch adopts option [10.1](#).

10.1. Adopt the proposals above (recommended option)

The Annual Awards Subcommittee recommends that the branch adopts the proposals as laid out in [section 8](#) and [section 9](#) for all of the reasons listed in [section 6](#).

10.2. Make no changes and retain the current processes (not recommended)

The branch will continue to conduct its annual awards processes as described in [section 7](#). A representative or representatives of the membership who vote against adopting the changes should be tasked with writing formal process documentation for each award that will be added to the Branch Constitution, replacing the de facto processes.

11. Revision History

- 0.1 07/11/2021 Initial draft;
- 0.2 08/11/2021 Added Overview ([section 2](#)); corrected 2022 AGM date;
- 0.3 01/12/2021 Edited [subsection 8.7](#) clarifying automatic entry for previous year's POTY; Appended winning mechanisms to [subsection 8.8](#) and [subsection 8.11](#);
- 1.0 13/12/2021 Removed Sections 11 & 12 "Action Requested" & "Contact" as unnecessary; Moved 'Revision History' to [section 11](#) (previously on front page)

12. Glossary

AGM	Annual General Meeting
BIS	Brewery Information System
BLC	Brewery Liaison Coordinator
BLO	Brewery Liaison Officer
BNCO	Best New Cask Outlet
CAMRA	The Campaign for Real Ale
CBoB	Champion Beer of Britain
Comm's Tool	CAMRA's communications tool , for sending emails to branch members
ComPOTY	Community Pub of the Year
COTY	Club of the Year
CPOTY	Cider Pub of the Year / Cider & Perry Pub of the Year
EGM	Extraordinary General Meeting
GBG	Good Beer Guide
NBSS	National Beer Scoring System, scores recorded by members in WhatPub
NE	National Executive , CAMRA's elected board of directors
POTS	Pub of the Season
POTY	Pub of the Year
Pubzilla	The database that holds the pub/club information displayed in WhatPub
RD	Regional Director
WBF	Wigan Beer Festival
WBW	Wigan Beer Week
WhatPub	CAMRA's online directory of the nation's pubs and clubs