



Professor Alan Bairner's Guide to Pubs in Loughborough



Loughborough doesn't have many cultural highlights, but it does have some good pubs. We asked Professor Alan Bairner, the world's leading authority on the sociology of sport, and Loughborough's leading drinker, to give his views on the places to go.

White Hart (Church Gate, LE11 1UD)

Alan's view: "Probably the Loughborough pub which appeals most to young academics, has a great garden but the music gets too loud indoors. The inside of the pub gets very dark and is lit by candles: drinking here is a fire hazard. Good selection of lagers, real ales, craft beer and gin. Try the real ale offering from Shiny Brewery. Does food some evenings."

Three Nuns (Church Gate, LE11 1UD)

Alan's view: "A pub for locals. Could be slightly intimidating for people from outside the East Midlands. Everards beers (not the best). Cheaper than the White Hart."

Jam Garden (Bedford Square, LE11 2TP)

Alan's view: "Young clientele (more for undergraduates than postgraduates). Typically you'll find young men and women who look like they work in estate agents here. Very expensive. Food available, including nachos. Okay for lagers and the like, but don't bother with the real ale."

Moon and Bell (Wetherspoons) (Ward's End, LE11 3HA)

Alan's view: "Soon to be closed. Wetherspoons is a national chain of pubs owned by Tim Martin, a Brexiteer until he realised that most of his bar staff had left the country. Like Rishi Sunak, he's now trying to negotiate a new deal. Clientele are elderly during the day, but young at night. Very cheap beer and a good range. Cheap food."

Amber Rooms (Wetherspoons) (The Rushes, LE11 5BE)

Alan's view: "The other branch of Wetherspoons in town: the more 'up market' version. Loudish music, pub quizzes, but like all Wetherspoons pubs the service is good and the drink is cheap. Not unpleasant."

The Swan in the Rushes (The Rushes, LE11 5BE)

Alan's view: "Opposite the Amber Rooms. Loughborough's original real ale pub, frequented more by students than in the past, but they usually go to the mysterious upstairs rooms. There are two downstairs rooms. To left as you enter from the street has older customers, some of them from the University, some playing bridge, and many bemoaning the fact that Jeremy Corbyn is no longer leader of the Labour Party. To the right side, equally old clientele, consisting of people who don't know who Jeremy Corbyn is, nor what time of day it is. A great jukebox, and all-in-all a great range of beers and particularly cider."

Needle and Pin (The Rushes, LE11 5BG)

Alan's view: "Micropub. Concentrates on real ales and craft beers. Small, unlike many of the customers that congregate around the bar who make it slightly difficult to get served. Once served, go upstairs where there is a nice room with a record player and numerous vinyl albums that can be played to your heart's content."

The Griffin (Ashby Square, LE11 5AA)

Alan's view: "Student pub: screens and tunes. Not for the drinking connoisseur, but lively and good fun for people who like that sort of thing. Has an outdoor drinking area."

The Phantom (Leicester Road, LE11 2AG)

Alan's view: "See The Griffin."

The Generous Briton (Ashby Road, LE11 3AB)

Alan's view: "Strange name for visitors from the European Union. Once a failing pub with relatively few customers, renovated to appeal to the students. Two rooms and a pleasant outside drinking area. The beer is not of a quality that it once was, but gin aplenty, and various lagers are available. Five screens in the room on the left, and three on the right, show sport. The Twenty 20 cricket will be on during the conference."

The Paget Arms (Oxford Street, LE11 5DP)

Alan's view: "Hidden away in a back street in the middle of a student housing area. Pleasant pub, but on the last visit there were more dogs than customers. The beer is not the finest, but there's plenty of other things to drink and to eat. The proprietors are friendly, and there is a garden. Has idiosyncratic opening hours."

The Wheeltapper (Woodgate, LE11 2TZ)

Alan's view: "Outstanding for real ale and craft beers. A smaller selection of other drinks. Traditional East Midlands fare: Scotch eggs, sausage rolls, and the Melton Mowbray pork pie. (If you like this, do go and visit Melton Mowbray, the famous pie town, before you leave. Take a pie and some Stilton cheese home with you.) There's a garden to the rear and friendly bar staff. I'm to be found there at least three times a week, do say hello and ask me about the sociology of sport."

Organ Grinder (Woodgate, LE11 2TY)

Alan's view: "A Blue Monkey brewery pub with a selection of Blue Monkey beers which vary in terms of alcohol content rather than taste. Frequented by the University's English Department, so suitable for erudite conversation with the University's luvvies, check it out."

Moonface (Moira Street, LE11 1AU)

Alan's view: "Small micropub which, as that description suggests, has not a lot of room to move around in. Has well-kept beers, pork pies and filled rolls. Definitely worth a visit for something slightly unusual. Closes early."

The Cask Bah (Market Street, LE11 3ER)

Alan's view: "Loughborough's music micropub. Located in the town centre. I believe it's due to close down soon. Small, loud, and radical. Not for the faint-hearted but good times to be had."