



## On tour!

In early May we took off on the first of a series of bus trips to visit the pubs supporting LocAle out in the country. We started south of York, visiting six pubs.



First up was the **Boot & Shoe at Barkston Ash**, where we were greeted with some very positive news from licensees Neil and Sue, who were in the process of buying the pub from Punch. Although we knew of some brewers buying parcels of pubs from the company, this is the first individual sale any of us have come across. The couple have some great ideas for the future: they plan to get rid of the pool table, improve the kitchen, add a new cellar, increase the number of cask ales, use more local brewers and make the handpumps more prominent on the bar. As it was they had three – **Black Sheep Golden Sheep**, **Tetley's Cask Bitter** and **Brown Cow Bitter**. This is a cosy little pub; the front bar, with its comfy padded seating has an open fire at both ends, but the lovely outside decked area is possibly more the thing at this time of the year. For several of our party this was a first visit, but some have been back since for the pub's beer festival in July. The pool table had gone by this time, replaced by some comfortable bench seating, a move supported by the majority of the customers. There were only nine beers at the festival; however all were from Yorkshire, seven were LocAles and five were new to most of us – not bad going!

Our next port of call was the **Black Bull at South Milford**, a permanent stockist at the time for **York Guzzler**. Its only competition was **John Smith's Cask** as one of the hand-pumps was out of order, a great shame because **Acorn Barnsley Bitter** was a regular here. We soon formed an orderly queue at the pump, with John pulling the pints while Alison handled the money. The pub has been opened out a lot, but still retains a separate room with a TV and a pool table to one side in an area decorated with lots of football memorabilia. We managed to cram a lot into our 45 minute stop, with chairman Matt reckoning he'd had a good night out – some beer, a game of pool, a check on the football and some music on the jukebox! Sadly, John and Alison have left since our visit, but the new licensee is doing his best to keep the LocAle on.



We moved on to a perennial favourite, the **George & Dragon at West Haddlesey**, where Shirley very thoughtfully made us some chips to go with the beer. I'd last been there a fortnight previously for the beer festival, which had been very successful; Paul is already planning for his next, a one day event in December. Recently they've put in a pool table and opened their new village shop – 70 people turned out for the opening ceremony and hopefully it will prove to be an asset to the village. There's a house beer here, **Brown Cow White Dragon**, but a lot of us diverted from the LocAle path to try some of the others, **Abbeydale L'Age d'Or** and **Atlas Cloutie Dumpling**, a surprisingly spicy beer, which would be at home in December's beer festival.

Another branch favourite, the **Wheatsheaf at Burn**, was next. This pub has been opened up over the years, but retains a very welcoming and homely feel. It has a lot of what one of the party described as 'good clutter', a collection that has built up over time, rather than being bought as a job lot, with something to catch the eye everywhere you look. And as ever there was a great range of beers: **Brown Cow Spring Rye**,

**Phoenix White Monk**, **Summer Wine Elbow Grease** and **Leeds Midnight Bell** to name but four. Watch out in the autumn for the Selby Beer Festival at the pub: keep your eye on [www.wheatsheafburn.co.uk](http://www.wheatsheafburn.co.uk) for the exact date.



The **Wadkin Arms at Osgodby** was pub number five. We'd last been there for the Winter Pub of the Season presentation, so it was nice to see it in daylight and confirm the positive impression it made that night. It's obviously a family-friendly and popular local, pleasantly busy in the late afternoon as the football results came through. A good range of beers too, including **Brown Cow White Dragon** and **Tetley's Dark Mild**.

Last, but not least, it was the turn of the **Greyhound in Riccall**. This is a striking white building with an old Cyclists' Touring Club symbol on the external wall, something of a rarity nowadays. Originally a two room pub, it has been expanded and opened out and now feels light and modern. Locals were very complimentary about licensees Stephen and Sue Bell, who are very keen on real ale, have gained Cask Marque accreditation and are planning a beer festival. The beer range included **Tetley's Cask Bitter**, **Black Sheep Best Bitter** and **Wells Bombardier**. And if you want to eat there, the local recommendation is the Greyhound Whale!

