

Bristol & District Branch Good Beer Guide Selection Process

The annual process of deciding the branch entries for the Good Beer Guide follows this timetable:

May: Survey/Explorer trips start

November: Long list of GBG contenders finalised

December – January: Survey forms are distributed to branch volunteer surveyors.

February: Survey trips end. Survey forms are returned by the February Branch meeting.

March: Selection meeting takes place to decide the entries and the results are submitted.

April – May: Proof reading phase

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

September: Publication

Survey/Explorer trips

From May to February the branch runs survey trips (approximately fortnightly) to try to cover the branch area. Pubs visited include current GBG entries, new nominations, those that narrowly missed out and any former entries not visited recently. Current entries and reserves are "Survey visits" and others are "Explorer" visits. Time and geographical constraints mean that most trips are a mix of the two types. A Survey visit may also be used to gather data to help with the filling in of a Survey Form.

The "Long List"

Members can nominate a pub, club or bar at any time to the branch GBG coordinator 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. This allows time to include them on survey trips and/or seek feedback from the branch. The contact details of the branch GBG coordinator and invitation to suggest additions / deletions appears in every Pints West and on our website.

Anyone can suggest deleting pubs, via the same means, at any time up to and including the selection meeting. The only normal reasons that pubs will be deleted are poor beer quality, persistent short measures, pub closure or the change of licensee late in the process. There is no National or Branch rule on change of landlord or cellar staff, so this needs to be debated for each individual case. Occasionally there may be an overriding reason agreed by Committee or branch e.g. non-payment of debts to CAMRA.

At the November branch the long list is finalised and made available upon request to any branch member. This document is highly sensitive and cannot be published anywhere that could be easily accessed by others. Members must respect its confidentiality. The Long List will include every pub deemed to stand a reasonable chance of entry into the next GBG. It is important to remember that volunteers will be expected to use valuable time and money surveying the pubs so the list has to be kept to a manageable length. If anyone feels strongly that any pub is wrongly included or excluded they can say so and if there are conflicting views then the branch will decide at a branch meeting. Deletions from the long list are possible at any time but additions will only be made after November in exceptional circumstances agreed by Branch. The remaining list of pubs that are voted on at the selection meeting are sometimes referred to as the "short" list.

Currently the annual branch mail out includes a list of the existing branch GBG entries and asking for feedback on any pubs that people think should be added or remove. These comments do NOT count as actual votes at the selection meeting (described below) but help to steer the Long List and survey visits.

Survey Forms

A Survey Form is the official national CAMRA document which is used to write a GBG entry. The Survey forms are normally made available by national CAMRA in December and are distributed to the branch up to and including the January branch meeting. It can be difficult to get sufficient people to act as Surveyors, so forms are normally given to the first volunteer. Forms need to be returned to the branch GBG coordinator asap and no later than the February branch meeting. If a surveyor decides that a pub should not be considered for the GBG then he should not complete the form but contact the branch GBG coordinator, who will either delete the pub or seek a second surveyor. All deletions are reported to branch meetings. Pubs not deleted will remain on the long list and will be voted on at the selection meeting.

Selection Meeting

The all important selection meeting takes place around late February / early March and the date and venue are published in Pints West, What's Brewing and on our website. Those genuinely not able to attend can email the branch GBG coordinator and ask for a voting form, which is the same form issued at the meeting. They can vote for and against any pubs that they have visited in the last 12 months but not any others. All "No" votes must state the reason why to eliminate votes cast for inappropriate reasons. Membership numbers must be supplied and all votes sent to the branch GBG coordinator no later than 2 days prior to the meeting. People can also supply votes in writing rather than email.

All postal and email votes are added up prior to the meeting. A full list of pubs to be voted on is supplied at the meeting allowing all to "keep score". The WSM sub branch hold a separate meeting a few days earlier and all votes cast are added in with postal votes. Several WSM branch members attend the main meeting to explain votes and comments made at their meeting but do NOT vote again.

The branch is currently allocated 63 GBG slots – 39 must be in Gloucestershire and Bristol and 24 in Somerset. The meeting is therefore divided into 2 sections to match that. At the start of the meeting the branch GBG coordinator announces any late suggested deletions with reasons and seeks agreement from the meeting. Licensees or anyone with a vested interest in any pub must leave the room whilst that pub is debated and voted on. If the surveyor is present then they are invited to speak first on each pub followed by a short debate. Any advance votes are announced followed by a show of hands for and against. Anyone who cannot produce a current CAMRA membership card may be excluded from voting.

A "formula" is then applied which results in a final score for each pub (the formula is at the end of this document). This formula was devised within the branch and is intended to create a fair chance for those pubs receiving a low total number of votes but mostly or all Yes votes. Country and suburban pubs are the most likely beneficiaries of this as central pubs naturally get more visits from members and thus more votes. Without this formula the branch GBG would consist almost exclusively of central pubs. The formula makes no distinction between "Town and Country" pubs. Rather it promotes pubs that receive a smaller number of total votes that are mostly "Yes" with few "No" votes.

A single no vote is disregarded to eliminate "maverick votes" possibly cast for inappropriate reasons. All other No votes are doubled and subtracted from yes votes to produce the score. Thus a 12-3 vote would score 8 and lose to a 9-0 vote. In the event of a tie the pub with the least no votes wins. Any pub with a final score of plus 1 or more can be considered for GBG, any with 0 or a minus score cannot.

For Gloucestershire and Bristol the top 37 scores are taken as GBG entries, and the top 22 in Somerset also. The pubs finishing 38-41 in Gloucestershire and 23-26 in Somerset enter the "play offs". Those present are invited to speak for and against each of these followed and a vote is taken. The whole meeting is invited to vote for 2 pubs in each county and the top two become entries. Those coming 3rd and 4th become first and second reserves.

The results are announced and the meeting closes. All present are sworn to keep results confidential until the book is published in September. The decisions taken at the Selection Meeting are subject to the approval of the Branch Committee. (This is in order to cover attempts at vote rigging etc.)

Proof Reading / Final Amendments

All entries and reserves are submitted electronically by the branch GBG coordinator 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

The GBG is normally published in September and the branch hold a launch event in a GBG pub.

AMENDMENTS TO THIS PROCEDURE/DOCUMENT

All requests to change the above procedure should be submitted in writing/email to the GBG Coordinator and Branch Chairman. The branch committee will discuss the request and add it to the next branch meeting agenda for discussion or action. If the Branch agree to the change, then the above document will be amended, and made available to Branch members.

This version updated 05/01/2011

GBG Pub Voting Score Reckoner (NO votes = -2) (First NO excluded)

Total No.of Voters	No. of YES votes																										Weighting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
1	1																										1.00
2	0	2																									1.00
3		0	3																								1.00
4		0	6	8																							2.00
5			2	6	8																						1.60
6				3	8	9																					1.50
7				0	4	8	9																				1.30
8					1	5	9	10																			1.25
9						3	6	10	11																		1.25
10						0	4	7	11	12																	1.20
11							1	4	8	11	12																1.11
12								2	6	9	12	13															1.11
13								0	3	6	9	12	13														1.00
14									1	4	7	10	13	14													1.00
15										2	5	8	11	14	15												1.00
16										0	3	6	9	12	15	16											1.00
17											1	4	7	10	13	16	17										1.00
18												2	5	8	11	14	17	18									1.00
19												0	3	6	9	12	15	18	19								1.00
20													1	4	7	10	13	16	19	20							1.00
21														2	5	8	11	14	17	20	21						1.00
22														0	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	22					1.00
23															1	4	7	10	13	16	19	22	23				1.00
24																2	5	8	11	14	17	20	23	24			1.00
25																0	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	25		1.00
26																	1	4	7	10	13	16	19	22	25	26	1.00

Scoring Assumes YES= +1 and NO= -2 (First NO vote excluded)

Weighting applied to Pubs with 4 to 12 voters.

Pubs receiving a total score less than zero are excluded from Guide.

Voting Eligibility: 1. Valid CAMRA Membership. 2. Visited Pub twice in last 6 months & tried range of Ales.