

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL



EIGHT PAGES OF CLASS PICTURES – INSIDE

BREWERIES: USE THEM OR LOSE THEM



Beer campaign group Camra today warned that local breweries could be lost unless they are backed by pubs and drinkers alike.

The real ale lobby group has backed the Express & Star's rallying call for people to support local breweries in the wake of the decision by Carlsberg to end large-scale production in the city by closing Banks's Brewery.

The E&S has launched a campaign to highlight the many smaller breweries across the Black Country and Staffordshire that give our region character and employ hundreds of workers.

The Campaign for Real Ale today

MARK ANDREWS

mark.andrews@mnamedia.co.uk

warned that smaller producers of beer face a fight to get their products into pubs, which are dominated by larger international brands.

Shelly Bentley, West Midland regional director for Camra, warned other local breweries would go the same way as Banks's if people did not support them.

She said: "We are going to lose them if people do not buy the beer, they are going to close. They can't continue if people don't buy their beer."

"And that will mean there will be less choice for the consumer."

"One of the things that people like about real ale is the choice you

get. But all these different beers are going to disappear if people don't buy them, and all they will have then is the choice of a small number of beers from the big breweries."

Around 100 jobs are at risk from the closure of the Banks's plant at Chapel Ash, as part of a move by Carlsberg to shift production to Burton upon Trent.

West Midlands Mayor Richard Parker has asked for a meeting with Carlsberg Marston's executives, asking them to reconsider their plans.

The 149-year-old brewery, which is described by Mr Parker as a "cultural cornerstone of the Black Country" is set to close next year, vacating the city centre site.

● **Jobs – Page 2**



Michelin-starred restaurant Purnell's has closed after 17 years. Owner Glynn Purnell today spoke of his deep sadness. The chef says he has suffered tough trading conditions. Full story – Page 3

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