

Jollyboys BICESTER event (Thursday 19th January 2017)

Bicester, from its name, has obvious Roman origins, although there appears to be a difference of opinions amongst scholars of such thing as to the basis for the name – the most simple translation meaning “Two Forts” is good enough for us. It presumably grew up on the crossing of two strategic Roman Roads, one – Akeman Street - heading South to North from Dorchester to Towcester, and the other West to East from Cirencester to St Albans. In railway terms it is more well known for the MOD Ordnance Depot which is still in operation though significantly reduced in size, and for the Chiltern Railways development of a Marylebone to Oxford connection, tapping into, among other things, the seeming insatiable desire of tourists from the Far East to visit the shopping opportunity that is Bicester Village where they can buy, at inflated prices, goods made within a hundred miles of their own homes! (Those who bring shopping partners, beware - Andy, Ralph, Peter!)

Bicester has two stations – Bicester North and the controversially renamed Bicester Village. The choice is yours as the pubs listed lie between the two and the Wetherspoons’ rendezvous - the **Penny Black** - is almost equidistant (10 minute walk) between them. The way to the Town Centre is well signposted but you are headed for Sheep Street. (If you are fed up with ‘spoons breakfasts the **Saxon**, across the road, is also reputed to do good breakfasts, including Pancakes with Maple Syrup, but their Ale choice is severely limited.) We suggest that we should have our first drink here at the **Penny Black** and then plan to leave at 1130.

Turn right and along to the **Bell** (turn left as you enter to the main bar) – a no-nonsense, Aunt Sally league supporting, NO FOOD, pub with Hobgoblin plus two fairly local guest ales (Aylesbury Brewhouse - Convergence & Purity Brewing – Mad Goose when we visited). Run by AMY on 07-904-975839. Leave at 1215.

Turn Right and along to the **Angel** – a very recent refurbishment / new venture with, at the time of our visit, 4 ales including products from XT at Long Crendon but with the stated intent to double that and also to install a tiny brew-kit on the premises, which might even be producing in time for our invasion. Run by RYAN on 07-960-707834. NO FOOD. Leave at 1300.

Turn right and along to the **Plough** on the opposite side of the road. FOOD AVAILABLE. Leave when you please. Allow 10 minutes to stagger to Bicester Town or 20 minutes back the way we have come to Bicester Village stations. If you are heading in that direction and want a top-up (or drain-down!) you could call into the **Kings Arms** (Black Sheep or Greene King London Glory).

Trains

Marylebone to Bicester Village – 0900, 0923, 1006 – journey 50 odd minutes
Marylebone to Bicester North – 0940 (arr 1027) or stopper at 0944 (arr 1046)
Via Oxford – dep Oxford at 0936, 1010, 1041 – arr B/Village 20+ mins later
From the North via Banbury - dep there at 0930, 1004, 1045 – arr B/North +15 mins

Return to M'bone – B/North - xx01 and xx16, B/Village – xx26 and xx56.
To Oxford from B/Village at 1453, 1525, 1554.
Banbury & the North from B/North at 1445, 1527, 1543

To

BUT please check your own plans!