

Boughton's

COFFEE HOUSE



Scoop Malone, the coffee trade's ace reporter, once again brings you the best read in the entire beverage trade...by miles!

February 2015

The first barista contest for tea

The first brewing contest to concentrate specifically on tea has been created by Kasim Ali, the tea room operator and tea wholesaler of Cardiff. It will run beside the SCAE's similar coffee-themed contest in March. Full story - page 15



Waitrose does an about-turn on free coffee - but has the damage already been done?

Waitrose has undertaken a partial about-turn on the free-coffee promotion which has brought it so much complaint from the independent catering trade. It is, however, far too early to know whether those high street cafes who lost business to the giant's free offer will be able to recover their business.

The giant supermarket had introduced an offer by which its loyalty card holders could claim a free drink in its instore cafes.

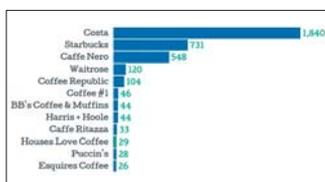
The result was that it moved swiftly to serving a million coffees a week, but that independent coffee shops all over the country complained that their trade was being unfairly taken away.

Some actually blamed the closure of their businesses on the big brand, saying that they saw their own customers spending time in Waitrose cafes, and members of parliament joined the complaints against the supermarket, which remarkably continued to deny that it was hurting other local businesses.

At one point, a Labour MP urged politicians of all parties to write to the managing director of Waitrose to tell "him that his company is acting in a way that will further destroy the British high street".

Waitrose replied that this was 'nonsense' and 'completely misguided', and remarkably, MPs of both sides supported Waitrose - even the Prime Minister, with quite astonishing short-sightedness, was reported to have enquired: 'what's wrong with a free coffee?'

Even Waitrose's own customers were up in arms - some complained that offering free coffee attracted 'the wrong sort of customer', who were



Mintel's graph showing Waitrose in fourth place among coffee-house operators.

cluttering up the supermarket's cafes and leaving no space for genuine customers.

One shopper famously wrote on her Facebook page: "please don't turn Waitrose into a soup kitchen - your usual clientele are hardly strapped for cash, are they?"

Having spent so much effort defending its position, Waitrose suddenly did an about-turn.

At the end of the first week of February, the terms of its offer were changed.

Instead of handing out free drinks to all card holders, it required those customers to make a purchase of some kind, such as a sandwich or cake, before they qualified for their free drink in an instore cafe.

They could, however, still have a free coffee for takeaway consumption.

The supermarket then repeated its habit of making bizarre statements on the matter.

Having already responded to complaints that it was taking away the trade of high street cafes with the odd claim that it was supporting local business, it now said that its about-turn was 'a matter of manners'.

A spokeswoman was quoted in several papers as saying: "most people who have their myWaitrose free drink in the cafe understand that they should buy something to have with their tea or coffee, and so we are simply confirming that."

Among all the press comment on the matter was the theory that the supermarket chain had been using its free coffee scheme as a way of raising attention from customers who would not normally have entered a supermarket café.

It was suggested that if Waitrose can now retain those customers who came for coffee and not for 'shopping', then its cafes would become the fourth biggest coffee-focussed chain in the UK... and the research house Mintel even created a graph showing this.

At the same time, Morrisons opened its 400th supermarket cafe, and claimed that it is now the UK's most successful supermarket cafe operator.

Asked about their ranking among coffee-selling foodservice operators, Morrisons told us that they consider themselves in seventh place.

INSIDE

WHAT DO CAFE OWNERS REALLY THINK?

- a big new survey aims to find out - Page 5



INTERNATIONAL STARS AT THE COFFEE MASTERS

- twenty baristas in for the £5,000 prize

- Page 9



THE TOURIST APPEAL OF COFFEE AND THE MAGNA CARTA

- a big new project in Lincoln

- Page 12



... and as always, more relevant and entertaining trade news than any coffee trade paper has ever attempted!

NELSON
Heavy-duty crockery, glass and dishwashing machines



0800 592833

A slightly mysterious project appears to be under way from 918 Coffee, in Dorset. The company has been granted the trade mark 'Coffee-Eco-System', which according to the application, involves the recycling of coffee grounds. The company has said that all its products and packing are recyclable, compostable or biodegradable, but has declined so far to tell us what the new project is, saying only that 'there is a lot more to this project than just a trademark'. However, we see that the company has advertised for a project manager to oversee a 'sustainable energy coffee roasting solution... to bring this theoretical idea through prototyping and on to commercialisation'. There is a further reference to working on 'the prototype of the new technology coffee roaster', which apparently should be ready during the course of this year.

Lavazza is working on limited-edition coffee ranges, and has launched two into Waitrose stores. One range is Lavazza Mono-origins, a single-origin range produced with all-arabica beans from Kenya, Peru and Papua New Guinea. The other is called the Italian Lifestyle range, and features three variants of different strengths. These launches follow the trial of Lavazza's first premium instant coffee, Prontissimo, in Waitrose and Sainsbury's stores, a trial which has been extended due to 'extremely positive uptake'.

A new cycle-themed coffee shop in Altrincham has opened after receiv-

ing the area's biggest loan from Start Up Now, the North West arm of the government's Start Up Loans programme. The new CycleManchester and Velo Espresso is a combination of an artisan coffee shop, a cycle boutique, and an e-commerce website selling cycle-related products. The owners have noted that there was an 88 per cent increase in the number of people commuting by bike from the Manchester suburbs last year, providing the target market for their business. The business plan for the venture was reportedly so impressive that Virgin considered it for a 'business plan of the year' competition.

An unwieldy but expensive and highly-inconvenient theft has been suffered by a Barrow coffee house – the Abbey Mill café near Furness Abbey lost two wooden exterior picnic tables. Not an easy theft...

Brad Jacobson and Nigel Lambe of the Small Batch Coffee Company in Brighton are to open a specialist craft beer and shellfish pub. Nigel Lambe is also behind the Velo Cafe, and is entrepreneur-in-residence at Brighton City College. His new Urchin pub will feature a craft beer menu of 100 varieties sourced locally and from around the world. One of the notable products he will stock is Brighton Gin – this is another company he is involved with. It comes from what is described as 'Brighton's only legal distillery', and has only recently completed its first production run of 400 bottles.

The tea market embraces the chance of Fifty Shades of Earl Grey

Twinings did a rapid about-turn on its proposed promotion to tie in with the Fifty Shades of Grey film, just a few days before the film's release in February.

The brand had previously said that it would be selling limited-edition tea boxes designed around the cover of the novel on which the film is based.

However, the film itself has provoked a large amount of upset, and several activist groups, such as the American National Centre on Sexual Exploitation, have claimed that the story glorifies sexual violence against women. In the face of such complaints, Twinings said it had not intended to cause any upset, and withdrew the promotion.

Elsewhere, many other companies are continuing to run promotions beside the film – we have seen variations on the theme of 'fifty shades of Earl Grey' ideas, including, even more curiously, one reported to come from Paul McCartney's 85-year-old step-mother.

Angie McCartney, who married the



Beatle's father in 1964, runs an online business, some of the proceeds from which go to cancer charities relating to Linda McCartney.

A Scottish brewer has launched a limited edition ale – the 50 Shades of Green is made of fifty different types of hops from across the world with natural ingredients chosen for their aphrodisiac properties.

It is £30 a bottle.

Starbucks – in the black after 17 years

Starbucks has announced a profit in the UK for the first time in 17 years. Despite its size and rapid growth here, the brand has always claimed to have made a loss, a situation generally put down to its internal accounting methods, which in turn brought the brand a vast amount of public criticism for its alleged avoidance of tax. In 2013 the brand agreed to pay several million in tax contributions.

However, Starbucks has now reported that it made a profit of £1.06 million in the year to September 2014, compared to the reported loss of £20.5 million the previous year. Turnover rose by 2.3 per cent, to £408 million.

The brand has said that this remarkable turnaround is down to 'improving our model, by rebalancing the store portfolio and carefully managing costs' – that is, closing stores with expensive rent, moving to cheaper locations, and expanding the number of franchises and licensed outlets.

Starbucks has closed 67 stores and opened 121 new stores in more profitable locations and formats in the past three years, taking its total to 791. The number of company-operated sites dropped by 43, but the opening of more licensed and franchised stores (now 157 and 80 respectively) has helped considerably in the lowering of the company's administration costs. It has also enthusiastically opened its drive-throughs, with 34 now open and plans for 200 over the next five years.

Its royalties and licence fees, which were a major topic of debate in the middle of the 'tax avoidance' scandal, were £26 million, compared to £25 million the year before. In its operating margin, Starbucks reports its most significant period of growth since 2010, and this time reported a credit balance – even if only 0.2 per cent.

In day-to-day terms, like-for-like

sales were up 5.9 per cent, and while company staffing is down a little, to 7,345, Starbucks reports that last year it offered 771 level-2 apprenticeships and 183 level-3 places, which almost met the aim of having a thousand in place by the end of last year. It intends to have 600 apprentices at any time.

Starbucks says it has now met its commitment to pay £20 million in tax, although it added the delightfully acid note: "despite a lack of taxable income!"

One of the many daily press reports on all this showed how little the coffee trade is understood by the business writers – one reported that a method that Starbucks had used to avoid British tax was that 'it brews its coffee in the Netherlands'. If this were so, it would, of course, have got cold before reaching Britain...



The interesting tag of 'biggest artisan coffee shop in the midlands' has been claimed by Devinder Dhallu of Six Eight, in respect of his newest site that will open at Millennium Point. It will have a hundred covers, and a counter which is forty feet long.

The Neapolitan culture of coffee - now available here in the UK!

- Espresso blends, ground, pods & capsules
- Espresso equipment - sale / free on loan
- Barista training
- Free coffee audits
- Free point of sale items
- Free crockery

KIMBO
ESPRESSO ITALIANO

www.kimbo.co.uk 020 8743 8959

Coffee chaff becomes domestic fire fuel

The Rounton roastery of Northallerton has created what it believes to be a unique service based on chaff, the by-product of roasting which is generally seen as a nuisance to coffee roasters. It has invested in equipment and research aimed at establishing how chaff can be turned into briquettes which can be used as fuel.

"What we are doing is unique," roaster David Beattie told us. "We have developed a waste method for our coffee chaff and we are now working with York University on looking at how we can potentially extract valuable oils from chaff and spent coffee grinds, and are also looking at the calorific values of chaff mixtures."

The theory is that chaff, the dried husk of a bean, which comes off during the roasting process, is always regarded as a nuisance by roasters who resent the time taken in cleaning it out of their systems.

It does have some uses, such as garden compost and mulch – adding a layer of chaff to the soil surface conserves moisture and improves the general health of the soil.

However, Rounton has been experimenting with a briquette-maker, which compresses material into 'logs' for burning. In their experiments, they created briquettes with various proportions of sawdust and chaff.

They confirmed that coffee chaff has a moisture content which is sufficiently low for a combustible fuel, and the chaff turns out to have several other advantages in making fuel bricks.

It gives fuel bricks a 'slick and glazed' look, which turns out to have a practical benefit – for some reason the addition of chaff prevents the dust normally produced in such items. It is

speculated that the oils in the chaff act as a bonding agent.

One additional feature, says Rounton, is that the briquettes do not simply burn very well, but they do so



David Beattie with his chaff bricks

with a distinct aroma of coffee.

"Could this be done on a bigger scale?" says David Beattie. "We believe it could, though the ratio of chaff to sawdust needs to be tested more.

"A 100 per cent coffee chaff briquette would be great, but we think at this stage that this may be a little too much. We need some more work on the answer to the proportions."

Coffee - the unknown sedative effects

Coffee contains a natural painkiller which has an effect similar to morphine, and longer-lasting, according to chemists at the University of Brasilia. The researchers there were working on combining coffee genes to improve quality, when they came across unexpected new substances in the product.

While analysing the coffee genome sequence and corresponding proteins, the researchers found some proteins similar to those typical for humans. On further work, they discovered previously-unknown fragments of protein called peptides in coffee which perform 'an analgesic and sedative activity'.

When used in experiments with laboratory mice, the peptides lasted for up to four hours and no side effects were recorded. The researchers have suggested that their discovery has many possible potential uses for use on both humans and animals.

Meanwhile, a couple in Vancouver have created the rather unexpected product of a coffee range which is intended to help consumers sleep.

The Counting Sheep brand is intended to be drunk as a nightcap, having been invented by the husband after his wife complained that she could not enjoy coffee after 3pm for fear of a sleepless night. After exper-

iments with various herbs and supplements, the answer turned out to be a blend of decaffeinated coffee with valerian, a plant which has been known as a mild sedative for centuries.

There are two blends, the Bedtime Blend and the rather stronger Lights Out!

The inventor notes that these are intended to be food products, not a drug to help with sleep... and having said that, advises that the coffee is not used in the morning.



The pop singer Ed Sheeran has donated to his local coffee house the gold disc marking a million sales of his album. The singer is a local customer of the Dancing Goat in Framlingham, Suffolk, and has already given the café a signed copy of an album cover for their wall - that has now been joined by the gold disc. It is also reported that he has a tattoo relating to the café!

Meanwhile, a former boy-band star has turned to the coffee trade – Mark Feehily, who had a string of hits with the band Westlife, has begun a mobile coffee shop in Ireland. Although the singer continues to perform as a solo artist, he refers to the coffee van as both a business and a hobby, and his appearance behind the counter at music festivals has apparently surprised a lot of his former fans. He told an Irish interviewer: "People have been flabbergasted to see me in the van making crepes - they said: 'oh, he was in Westlife a few years ago and now he's making tea'. But it's my business and I love it, and I love going to festivals - so why not take the van there?"

There have been protests from local traders to an application by the Coffee#1 chain to open in Southville, Bristol. More than 60 objections have been submitted to the planning application, which one complainant stated was "an unwelcome change of use as it adds to the increasingly unbalanced mix of businesses on North Street."

The jam maker Wilkin & Sons of Essex has continued to extend its café estate, by acquiring its seventh tea room. The new acquisition is Bosworth's, which operates in a listed building overlooking the village green of Finchingfield, which is near Braintree. Curiously, the manager of the new business will be the daughter of the previous owner.

Tregothnan, the only English tea plantation, has won a contract to supply a million tea bags for the onboard catering on First Great Western Trains. Jonathan Jones, director of the Tregothnan tea estate, has said that the business will allow his brand to take on new staff and develop more new products.

Quills Coffee of Liverpool has won £500 in a competition run by Baltic Creative, which runs a 'cluster' of workspaces in the city. Entrants had to convince a panel of local business experts that if they won the prize, they could use it to either fund a start-up venture or take an existing small business to the next level. Quills, which opened in October, impressed the judges with the breadth of activities in a coffee shop which was founded on the realisation of a need for a workspace where students and business people could work in relatively peaceful surroundings, yet with high quality food and drink. It now also hosts various events such as the Monthly Mashup, a meeting for would-be entrepreneurs, and Songwriting Sunday.

Coffee begins with 'see'.



Your trusted, global, green coffee merchants.

We only know two types of bean. The right beans, perfect for each of our customers' needs. And rejected beans. If our high standards aren't met – we leave those beans to others.

For more than 44 years, we've been trading, innovating and succeeding in the coffee industry, aspiring to be the global 'one-stop' Coffee Merchant. Critical to us is bringing grower and roaster together, with a special focus on provenance, traceability, standards and quality.

For more information, call us on +44 (0)20 7202 2620 or visit our website, www.drwakefield.com



DRWakefield

The Boston Tea Party chain has been named Best Café by the readers of Food magazine, which circulates in the south west. The award praised the range of brunch items on the menu, that the cafes make everything on site, and the focus on using ethically sourced and sustainable products. The chain has also been nominated for the Sustainable Restaurant awards, with one nomination referring to its recent project in which coffee grounds are used as fertiliser for mushrooms... which the café then serves on toast.

After raising £1,864,000 through its mini-bond on the crowd-funding platform Crowdcube, the Taylor Street Baristas chain is to use some of the money to expand its barista training programme, on the grounds that this 'is key to differentiating cafes from the scores of neighbouring competitors'. The co-founder of Crowdcube has pointed out that while crowd-funding was originally used for new product ideas, more established businesses have realised that 'retail bonds' offer an option for raising growth capital, and that enquiries are being received from all retail trade sectors.

The company which created the Harris & Hoole order 'app' has been given investment worth £6 million. The app is a payment platform that claims to multiply its clients' sales by six, and the investment came after the developer announced its deal with Harris & Hoole.

Red Espresso, the rooibos product distributed by Cream Supplies, is now available in Nespresso-compatible capsules. The product is a bush 'tea' that has been refined to a consistency that allows it to be used in a coffee maker; it was available loose or in pods, and now in capsules. Red Espresso is an antioxidant-rich coffee alternative that contains no caffeine, and is made entirely from wild grown and hand-harvested South African rooibos. It is dark red in colour and produces a notable coffee-like crema - it can be brewed for cappuccino or lattes.

Costa has opened in a former Harris & Hoole site - it has taken on the site in Crowborough, West Sussex, for which it had applied for planning permission before Harris & Hoole obtained it and later closed it.

Starbucks came up with a Valentine's Day promotion in partnership with Match, an online introduction organisation - Match said it

has three million members listing 'coffee and conversation' as one of their interests, so created the World's Largest Starbucks Date. Using their 'meet at Starbucks' feature, members could send an e-mail to someone they might like and could pick a convenient location for their Starbucks date. The boss of Match suggested that more first dates happen at Starbucks than anywhere else.

The Madhatters cafe of Kimberley, Nottingham, has closed on Main Street and re-opened in James Street, with double its existing space. Owner Nygel Stevenson said that he had been losing business by having to turn customers away on a Saturday because of lack of space. Madhatters recently won recognition from national childcare store Mamas and Papas, who called the cafe the best for family-friendly service.

A pub and micro-brewery in Chester has won two awards with a coffee-flavoured beer. The Pied Bull entered its Black Bull ale in the Manchester Beer and Cider Festival and won both 'best porter' and 'overall champion' prizes. Oddly, the beer does not actually contain coffee - the taste comes from an unusual combination of six malts and hops.

Rather curiously, considering its name, the Soho Coffee Company is opening its first site in London. It will work in partnership with WH Smith to open an outlet at Euston Station. Soho has built up a reputation for opening up speciality coffee businesses not just in travel situations, but in seeing several other opportunities - of its twenty or so sites, seven are in airports, but it has found a home in hospitals, 'designer outlets', holiday camps (four Butlins sites) and a couple of motorway service areas.

Costa Coffee has targetted two empty shops on the same street in Fakenham, Norfolk, as the likely location for a new branch - it has applied for change-of-use permission for a former video-rental shop and a former florists. Fakenham's mayor has said he had no objection to the arrival of a chain as it would bring two empty retail units back into use - but noted that he now has more than thirty cafes in a relatively small town. "I know some of the independent traders will not be happy with such a well-known brand in competition... but we shall have to see how it all works out."

Pay-per-visit cafes in every UK town?

The Ziferblat café concept has arrived in Manchester. This is the Russian coffee-house model which opened in London last year, and the project's British franchisee has now said that his intention is to have one in every British university town.

The concept of Ziferblat is that drinks, cakes and biscuits are free, as is wi-fi, and the customer simply pays for the time they use the facility. In Manchester, the rate is 5p per minute, measured by the vintage clocks handed to guests when they arrive.

The idea was created in Russia by an author, Ivan Meetin, as a social space for artists to meet and share ideas. The idea was of a 'shared sitting room', and the Manchester cafe is the latest of 14 that have opened across Europe. As well as the charge for time spent, Ziferblat in Europe has tended to have a donations box, and patrons have tended to pay far more than the flat rate.

The British franchisees now intend to open a string of new branches over the next five years, including two more in Manchester.



Meanwhile, in Minnesota, a coffee-shop owner has made a similarly revolutionary move by scrapping the tip jar, which is traditionally a major part of the American café scene, and which generally plays a significant part in staff earnings.

At Kopplin's Coffee in St. Paul, the owner decided that the tip system was unfair, and has decided to increase his starting-point minimum wage instead. Reliance on the tip jar, he has explained, was causing unnecessary stress to his team.

The staff weren't really disgruntled, he told his local press, but those who worked Monday mornings were virtually guaranteed to make more in tips than those working late on a Friday, when business was slower. This was unfair, because there is plenty of work to be done in a café in slack periods - cleaning and re-stocking have to be done, but are jobs which are not tipped for.

He opted to create a slightly higher wage, arguing that this would create more staff loyalty and staff retention.

It took six months' analysis to confirm that his company could afford to increase pay and that employees would be assured that they would still all make more under the new regime than from tips. He raised prices in general by 20 per cent, made an allowance for likely lost sales through higher prices, but also allowed for customers realising that they were not

actually parting with more money, because they were saving the amount they would have put in the tip jar.

Now, his minimum wage for new starts is \$12.50 (just over £8), but he reports that most of his team earn far more than that because they know that loyalty brings a review and wage increase every six months.

"Coffee shop employees are always worrying about scraping up enough money to get by," he said. "Now they don't worry about having to count tips."

Tipping is such an established part of the American catering trade that it is allowed for in employment law, requiring that even a small minimum wage must be paid to staff who can expect to receive a considerable income from tips, and that if their wages and tips do not equal the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour during any pay period, the employer is required to make up the difference. Some states require all staff to be paid the minimum wage, irrespective of tips.

How important is tipping in a British coffee house? We asked several cafe operators, most of whom agreed that it is a very minor consideration - one typical response was: "we have a tip jar but people rarely use it."

Private backing for case against review website

The subject of allegedly malicious content on online review sites has taken another curious turn, with the owners of a Scottish business now proposing to go to the Supreme Court in an attempt to have Trip Advisor forced to name its contributing reviewers, following which they propose to sue the reviewers for defamation. Their case is being paid for by an anonymous benefactor who believes in their argument.

So far, the Scottish courts have decided not to order the reviews website to identify its contributors; Trip Advisor itself, in an argument which echoes our recent report of the HSE's case against Elektra, has said that its headquarters are in Massachusetts and any legal issues must be raised there. (The Scottish caterers will argue that Trip Advisor has offices in the UK).

Although the caterer involved is not a coffee specialist, the case will resound among members of the coffee-house trade, several of whom have also recently complained about deliberately malicious content being posted about them.



Boughton's Coffee House

is published by Ian Boughton and Trudi Roark
The Old Farmyard, Mill Road, Dilham, North Walsham,
Norfolk, NR28 9PU

01692 535660 07702 348866

ianb@coffee-house.org.uk

MIX

Paper from responsible sources The news website is www.coffee-house.org.uk
The newsfeed is boughtonscoffeehouse.wordpress.com

FSC® C008152

Caffe Culture asks – what do cafe owners really think?

The organisers of the Caffe Culture trade show are running a survey which is intended to find out the state of mind of independent café owners who are working on today's high street.

The show organisers have suggested that their project will 'shed new light on life for owners of the UK's independent cafés and coffee shops', and also for suppliers to the trade.

Their logic is that trade surveys run by major research houses tend to concentrate on quantitative data, such as the number of coffee houses on the national high street, contain subjective comments and opinions on what will happen in the future, and that these surveys are only read in detail by those who pay for the full findings.

In this case, the organisers say, it is the independent café owners themselves who will deliver the opinions, and they will also have the benefit of reading the finished result.

"The point of this survey is that it will produce both opinions and facts for the benefit of people on the front line," the show organisers told us.

"There is an idea that many trade surveys do tend to concern themselves more with the performance of the chains... there are relatively few organisations with comprehensive databases of independent cafes, and a lot of independent cafes don't show up on any databases at all, so a number of surveys just don't factor in the experiences of these people at all.

"There is no comprehensive data on what café owners think - any opinion on what the average café owner thinks is finger-in-the-air stuff.

"And this is truly independent - it isn't sponsored by anyone."

What will be learned from the survey, and for whose benefit?

"It has two purposes," say the show organisers. "It gathers information about what independents think, which helps us as show organisers to put on the right kind of show. It tells us what is important to café owners, which is information which really should tell suppliers something. With the best will in the world, a supplier who is genuinely interested in his customers just can't get out in front of them all.

This will help independents assert their place in the view of suppliers - it will give them a voice."

Does it at all help with 'benchmarking', and tell one independent how they fare in their marketplace?

"We think it will - it will give an independent an idea of where they stand, and how they compare to others. We did a smaller version of this previously, and the feedback we got was that independent café owners tend to go into Starbucks and Costa and see what their prices are, but they don't have the time to go round their nearest two dozen independent cafes, the ones who are their real competitors, to see what the others are doing.

"From this, we intend to find out how independent café owners feel about being out there on the high street.

"We hear that independents do think they are wasting their time giving opinions to research which only benefits bigger businesses who pay for it... they themselves will get the benefit of this. The value of it is in helping the very people who fill in the survey."

Café owners can find the survey at www.caffeculture.com

Costa Coffee has been accused of avoiding the issue of a café in Liverpool which was temporarily closed due to concerns over hygiene.

Liverpool Council said that the café in Lord Street received a routine visit from environmental health officers, following which Costa agreed to close to address certain hygiene issues.

However, local media claim that when they spoke to staff, the café managers said that the store was being 'closed for refurbishment'.

A council spokesman said: "Costa Coffee have voluntarily agreed to the closure of their premises while issues relating to hygiene are addressed. We will continue to monitor the situation."

The cafe was permitted to open a few days later; Costa had offered discounts at other sites in the meantime.

Local roaster makes national TV

We have campaigned for years to have coffee regarded seriously by the TV chefs - and astonishingly, the James Martin Home Comforts show on BBC last month actually did feature a very brief segment with a coffee roaster. That roaster was James Guard of Coffee Circle in Manchester, who tells us that the TV people were keen to report on a one-man roastery being run from someone's garage... however, James now tells us, the whole thing was organised a year ago and was filmed last summer, since when he has managed to grow the business and leave his garage for more impressive premises! Before turning to roasting, James told us, he learned his barista skills working for an old-school French café manager with a strong line in discipline - any barista who used a spoon to help the foam out of the jug had his knuckles rapped!

MARIMBA
SINGLE ORIGIN

Real Hot Chocolate MELT

Serve award-winning, top quality hot chocolate. Each cup contains 40g of premium single-origin chocolate flakes

MADE WITH FLAKES
MILK, WHITE OR DARK VARIETIES
OF REAL CHOCOLATE

Try our range of flavour syrups, developed to perfectly complement hot chocolate

ALL NATURAL FLAVOURS

REQUEST A CATALOGUE

Call (01279) 714527 or 07943 873272
sales@marimbaworld.com www.marimbaworld.com



This is the coffee-top stencil from a café which is only recently opened to the public – it is the Jailhouse Café at HMP Guys Marsh, near Shaftesbury, run by a community interest company which aims to reduce re-offending by providing work and training for prisoners.

They have two Jailhouse cafes, the other at Portland on the Isle of Wight. Up to now, the Shaftesbury one has only been an internal catering operation, and actually had to apply for change-of-use consent before it could open to the public.

It is operated by prisoners under the guidance of a chef manager, and although the café is only open for a few hours each day, the intention is to provide external catering services.

Another prison-related coffee shop is the Square Edge, in Wells. It was bought as a home in 2011 and since developed – the building was once the eating hall for the prisoners in the town jail, and still has holes in the window sills where the bars were fitted.

Blended fruit and smoothies are bad for health, say tabloid scare stories

It has been a big time for the subject of healthy drinks in cafes, not least because of the re-appearance in the tabloid press of the regularly-reported idea that 'juiced' fruits, the concept so regularly used in the coffee house trade for both fruit drinks and smoothies, are bad for health.

The tabloid press has had a go at the concept, claiming that juiced fruit is to blame for weight gain, diabetes and dental problems, and is 'as bad as Coca-Cola'.

Their objections have been fuelled by the discovery that sales of blenders soared before Christmas, and by claims that blended juice and smoothies are an easy way of consuming huge amounts of micro-nutrients including vitamins, minerals and antioxidants into our bodies.

The anti-blending brigade claims that damage is done to the goodness in fruit when it is blended into a smoothie, and that a whole piece of fruit is better.

The argument is that blenders produce liquid, but ruin the fibre content, which is vital for the digestive system, and deliver too-high amounts of citric acid. A nutritionist has been widely quoted as saying that while a blender uses the entire fruit, the machine breaks down some of the fibre, meaning that the consumer does not get the same goodness as they would by eating the entire fruit in its original form.



With nutritionists apparently queuing up to be quoted in three tabloids, another says that blending adversely affects the antioxidants and other nutrients, which start to break down almost immediately once they are exposed to light and air.

Yet another reportedly says that blended fruits create increased sugar levels in the body, resulting in an 'insulin spike', required to burn off the sugar.

It is also alleged that a study four years ago questioned the cleanliness of blender blades in cafes.

One of the café owners who has argued against the new press reports is the Core café in Swindon, which told its local paper that daily press articles have been 'misleading, inaccurate, and scaremongering', and reported that 400 local people signed up for their New Year 'de-tox' programmes, which involves a programme of juice and smoothies for maybe three days.

The pioneer of such programmes, they point out, lived to the age of 99.

Yet again, the question has come up of whether Whitbread are preparing for the disposal of Costa. The speculation has been renewed in the financial press after Whitbread bought one of its own biggest British franchises – it bought the Life Coffee Cafes franchise for a reported £11 million.

That franchisee has sixteen Costa cafes in the south of England. The logic, finance writers have speculated, is that instead of settling for a 'modest' royalty from franchised stores, Whitbread thinks owning them will boost the value of Costa for an eventual sale. Whitbread said the deal had no such implications.

One of the many financial analysts quoted in the national press pointed out that Whitbread acquired Costa when it had 41 stores, and it now has 3,000 – the brand, he said, has over 9,000 'points of consumption' in the UK, which means there are now three times more Costa outlets per person in the UK than Starbucks has in the US.

The Minister for Life Sciences has been given a talk on the environmental problems caused by coffee capsules. The minister, George Freeman, was speaking at the Industrial Biotechnology Showcase and while visiting the trade stands, was shown a display by Biome Bioplastics, showing what they claim to be market's first biodegradable coffee pods.

Biome told him that 200 million capsules are now sent to UK landfill every year. Biome has been involved in research with the University of Warwick about extracting organic chemicals from lignin for the manufacture of bioplastics.

Lignin is the second most abundant organic polymer on earth, found naturally in organic materials like wood and produced industrially as a by-product of the pulp and paper industry. Biome Bioplastics' work with lignin is aimed at producing bioplastics that replace oil-based polymers.

A specialist in coffee capsules elsewhere remarked: "bioplastic still takes more than a year to degrade though, so although it's certainly a step in the right direction for the industry for sure, it's still not a patch on the one which dissolves to nothing in soil within 2-3 months, which is very close."



Teapigs has opened the UK's first dedicated matcha bar, although it was a temporary pop-up site in the heart of coffee territory, in Shoreditch.

The Boxpark site is an extremely novel retail idea, based on the use of dozens of shipping containers which host independent retail outlets. The concept is that the businesses are temporary by nature, and are thus more experimental than 'permanent' retail sites, with many focussed retail events being held.

Teapigs used the site for one week at the end of January, to highlight the range of items which can be made from matcha, the powder made of organic green tea leaves which is said to contain 15 times the health benefits of regular green tea, six times the antioxidants of goji berries, and 70 times the antioxidants of orange juice.

Teapigs has been championing the use of it on café menus for some time, and created the concept of the matcha latte as a drink which would be acceptable to the general public at a reasonably profitable selling price.

Last year, a thousand people took part in Teapigs' match challenge, which required them to drink it every day for two weeks and report how they felt afterwards.

The results said that 91 per cent felt more energised, 85 per cent reported a general improvement in health, and 65 per cent reported an improvement to hair and skin.

PADDY & SCOTT'S
slow roasted coffee

HANDPICK Your Coffee

We do!

The beans are at the heart of all good coffee. That's why ours are handpicked & always sourced for quality. Our range is Rainforest Alliance Certified and the beans are blended and slowly roasted; to ensure all the characteristics and complex flavours of each individual bean is captured.

By taking our time and not burning our beans our coffee stays smooth, without the bitter after-taste you get in some coffees.

www.paddyandscotts.co.uk



A maker of professional cleaning wipes has now given a UK launch to its cleaning towel specifically designed for the steam wands of espresso machines.

The Chicopee Coffee Towel is claimed to have heat resistant properties and 'superior cleaning capabilities', which allow baristas to clean machines thoroughly and without risk.

The cloth is said to be heat resistant up to 250C, thirty per cent more durable than other catering cleaning cloths, and able to absorb up to nine times its own weight.

It can be machine-washed multiple times without losing its cleaning properties. It is deliberately produced in a bright orange so as to be immediately identifiable as the steam-wand towel. The price is around £2.50.

We regret we haven't yet managed to get a sample cloth to test.

Nespresso ads – a judge allows the rival Clooney lookalike

A court in Tel Aviv has allowed an Israeli coffee company to continue running an advertising campaign which features a series of digs against Nespresso, using a lookalike stand-in for the big brand's representative George Clooney.

Nespresso sued for a restraining order against the commercials by Espresso Club, which makes its own coffee machines and capsules, asking for payment of civil damages for abusing its reputation in advertising which it called 'parasitic, of the worst kind'. However, the judge made two very interesting observations against the bigger brand - he said that Espresso Club is aiming at a different clientele, a market which is looking to save money and is not a direct competitor to the higher-priced Nespresso. He also remarked that Clooney's image is not protected by intellectual property law; if it did, his image would belong solely to the company and he would be unable to do any other work.

The judge awarded Espresso Club 58,500 shekels (around £10,000) against Nespresso.

Nespresso is back in court again over the old subject of patents on its capsules - the Swiss company Ethical Coffee says it is suing Nespresso for 150 million euros for violating its patents, by making changes in its machines that keep compatible cap-



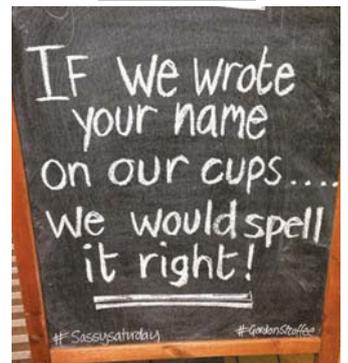
Two actors promote coffee - which one's the big star?

sules from working. Nestle is accused of modifying the Nespresso machines to keep competitors' capsules from all of them with a 'harpoon' device in the new Pixie range which prevents ECC's capsules from working properly in these machines, thus violating a European patent held by ECC, the company says. The claimant company says it has suffered losses of at least 150 million euros since 2010 because of this.

A new coffee shop in Birmingham is offering original artworks with coffee - Diplomats Baristas, at Snow Hill, is in a partnership with the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, through which it offers exhibition space for the society.



A Swedish inventor has come up with another version of the mobile coffee bike - this is the Wheelys 2, which is an electric cargo trike. The bike was created by the Nordic Society For Invention and Discovery, and its coffee aspect is provided by a siphon-style coffee brewer, with a butane-powered stove and a 10-litre coffee thermos. Power is provided by an onboard battery pack, and solar panels help keep the battery charged while the trike is parked.



We don't know who snapped this cafe house A-board, or where, but it is a wonderful dig at a certain big chain!

Star Quality

Between them, our UK customers have 30 Michelin Stars.

They trust our expert advice, so shouldn't you, too?

With over 70 years in tea blending, coffee roasting and equipment supply, you can rely on our experience.

Join the stars.



Established 1936

020 7740 1100
drurycoffee.com



Starbucks has decided to give a British trial to Powermat, which is the wireless charging pads that it has trialled in American stores.

The idea is not just that these pads replace the old idea of providing mains sockets into which customers can plug their mobile phone chargers, but that they are in themselves a product which can be sold over the counter.

The Powermat is a circular pad which sits on the table, and when users insert a 'dongle' into their phone and lay it on the mat, the charging begins. The dongles are available on loan over the counter at Starbucks, or can be bought. Starbucks says that the vast majority of smartphones should be compatible with the Powermat.

The matter of charging phones is something of a 'spirit of the age' phenomenon - the Duracell battery brand is involved in the development of Powermat, and says that 92 per cent of people in the UK have reported experiencing 'varying levels of stress' over worrying whether their smartphone battery might run out of power. Even that figure is apparently quite low compared to reports from San Francisco, where the entire populace seems to live in permanent fear of their mobile devices going down.



In North Wales, Starbucks has been hit with a second refusal over its plans for a 'super-logo' on the side of its coffee shop in Aberystwyth.

The company had wanted to erect a sign formed of a giant version of its mermaid logo, but councillors and residents said that it was far too large. So the company recently reapplied for permission, this time suggesting that the giant logo be painted on the outside wall of the coffee shop, as in the architect's drawing above.

The application was again refused on the grounds that 'the sign would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Aberystwyth conservation area'.

Drury to shift and enlarge its London roastery

Work is due to start this month on Drury's new roastery - the move will triple its coffee-roasting capacity and probably double its tea-blending and packing facility.

Drury, which has been roasting coffee since the 1930s and is notable for having roasted London's first espresso blend in the 1950s, has been at its site in Bermondsey and Southwark for around 16 years. It will move eastwards to the Royal Arsenal development in Woolwich.

The facilities there will include a new Brambati 300-kilo batch roaster, which will help the company move to a capacity of around 2,000 tonnes of coffee a year, up from its current 600 tonnes or so. There will also be three floors dedicated to the blending and packing of tea, with Drury now adding a second blending drum and a second Fuso packing facility, which produces the pyramid-style teabags. There will be a larger training centre and a dedicated barista-training facility, and a new espresso machine and grinder showroom.

The move will commence in mid-March and continue until early June, in a staggered move, with various departments moving at different times, and at one point with both sites operating, which should avoid any disruption of production.



Rick and Marco Olmi at the new site

"In terms of disruption to our customers... they shouldn't even notice," managing director Marco Olmi told us.

"We will be running both production facilities simultaneously, and have taken on extra staff both for the move and going forward to maintain our high service levels. The swan principle will work here - we may be running around like crazy, but customers will just see a serene transition.

"All in all, it's a bigger investment in one go than everything we've done, added together, in the previous 27 years of my career with Drury. "I'm glad we only move once a generation - pity it's my turn for the big one!"

Cuddles with the coffee at McVities

McVitie's could expand its rather curious Cuddle Café concept if the results of its first pop-up experiment are satisfactory.

The bakery brand hosted a two-day pop-up café in London, inspired by the work of a Dr Stuart Farrimond, who has researched the emotional and health benefits of hugging.

He has said, and we report this in all seriousness, that cuddling a soft toy triggers a similar emotional response and health benefit to hugging a person, and that same response is also triggered by the act of drinking a hot beverage.

Apparently 75 per cent of Britons would like more hugs in their life.

And so McVitie's created their test

pop-up café, in which passers-by were given free drinks and biscuits, in exchange for a hug with a giant 'interactive brand owl'; this in turn promoted a campaign in which customers can win cuddly toys.

However, according to one of the media writers invited along for the launch, McVitie's marketing people may not have used the most appropriate marketing cliché word when talking about the importance of cuddles.

"What it's about," she is reported to have said, "is working out what the most powerful touchpoints are, and tapping into them..."

Pavement usage causes more problems

A rather unusual variation on the usual complaints about street furniture has cropped up in Arnold, Nottingham, where the local council is to establish whether Cafe Zero is permitted to display cobs and teacakes for sale outside its shop.

Other traders have apparently complained that they have to undergo assessments before being allowed to use pavement areas, and there have been complaints that the displays attract a number of pigeons, feeding on the bread. Some neighbours have complained that the retail displays extend in front of their own windows.

Café Zero has reportedly replied with the interesting response that the area in front of its shop is actually its own property, as proven by reference to the land registry, and that it has a perfect right to trade on it. It has been argued that although the area is generally regarded as 'a highway', it is private property, and therefore displays on it cannot be a public obstruction.



The latest in the always-entertaining series of Drinking Thinking publications from Beyond the Bean is a calendar - but the dates are not the most important part of it.

This company, the pioneer of the Sweetbird flavours, has always been extremely keen on the creation of quick-to-make speciality signature drinks for coffee-houses, which is why it recently launched a series of 'all you need' selection boxes of ingredients for them. The calendar is the next step in that - it suggests a series of menu items to be programmed throughout the year.

A rather unexpected launch from Beyond the Bean is - a new range of cookies. It is surprising because this is the distributor which launched the Byron Bay Cookie in the UK, and in doing so probably created the entire boom in that new product sector for the coffee-house trade, with several copycat cookie brands following.

Byron Bay decided to take control of its own British distribution a few years ago, as a result of which the link with Beyond the Bean was severed... but now the British distributor has reappeared in the cookie market with the launch of Kent & Fraser gluten-free Cookies.

Kent & Fraser makes its products in a certified gluten-free bakery in small batches, and has said that its aim is to help a gluten-free diet become a more pleasurable experience. Beyond the Bean will be introducing four cookies - choc chip, spicy ginger, lemon butter shortbread and vanilla butter crunch.

"We think that avoiding gluten shouldn't mean avoiding great-tasting food," says Beyond the Bean. "We've had so many people asking after cookies, it made sense to find another range to offer. They're very good, they taste good, and we're happy to have them."

Beyond the Bean has also taken on the Rhinoware range of stainless steel and teflon milk pitchers. The stainless steel ones are available in various sizes, and are etched with a scale in both millimetres and ounces on the inside of the jug.

Beyond the Bean has also taken on the Thumpa knock-out tubes. They have two benefits for an espresso café, says the distributor - "they can be bashed around without coming apart, and are designed with a flared collar so that any excess splatters are caught - essential in any busy coffee shop!"

International barista champs to take part in London Masters event

There will be twenty international contestants for the Coffee Masters contest, which will be held at the London Coffee Festival at the end of April. There is a £5,000 prize.

This is, as the name would suggest, a contest which is aimed right at the 'star' level of baristas, and might reasonably be considered a world away from life in the average café, an impression which is reinforced by the news that one contender has spent the last two years eating flowers in order to understand the floral notes in coffee.

The event itself, which has been "designed and conceptualised" (their words!) by Allegra, the organisers of the London festival, might be considered rather more practical than the average barista contest.

Some parts of the contest are reminiscent of a contest held in America a few years ago, but the point is that baristas compete across several aspects of work - cupping, blending, brewing, latte art, signature drink, and real-life order situations.

The cupping session is similar to the 'cup tasting' element of the national championships in that entrants have to taste and memorise the characteristics of certain coffees, and identify them again. They are then required to create an espresso blend from these coffees.

The brewing section requires them to decide which grind and filter brew

will suit a coffee best, and the latte art contest is different from the conventional format, in that the competitors will not know beforehand what pattern they are required to replicate.

The signature drink section of the awards requires the entrants to reproduce the one which they offered in their application video (one involved free-range bacon!) and the section which has always been the favourite of this magazine is the 'real-life' order situation, in which the baristas have to deliver an order of ten espresso-based drinks, similar to those which might be expected to appear on a café menu, in nine minutes or less. They are judged on their technical ability, timing, and cleanliness of presentation.

The contenders include several champions - there is the UK Brewers Cup champion James Bailey, the Australian barista champion Craig Simon, and the world Coffee in Good Spirits champion Matt Perger. Virtually all the entrants can display a lengthy track record of either winning or being placed in various championships around the world.

Eight of the contestants are from the UK.

Peros creates a new 'boutique espresso' cafe-branding concept

The new catalogue from Peros, the biggest supplier of Fairtrade products to the catering trade, has now been published. As has been the case with its recent catalogues, this 64-page book is rather more than just a list of products.

It discusses subjects such as branding (including the new Boutique Espresso collection), a new collection of barista tools, and a new encouragement about seasonal recipes (not entirely surprising, as Peros stocks the Sweetbird flavours, a brand which is extremely keen on new ideas for 'specials').

There is the expected promotion of One Water, the product through which Peros has raised an astonishing amount for fresh water projects in Africa, and probably a wider selection of cold and fruit drinks than we have seen from Peros.

There is also the Jimmy's range of iced coffees. The One World range of single-packed snacks also appears to have been extended.

The Boutique Espresso 'café brand' is a particularly interesting project. It is a ready-to-use collection, which effectively means that a new start-up, or an independent café's second site, can go into business immediately with a 'corporate' look across its signage, cups, uniforms and coffee. That coffee



is actually Peros' existing brand, Eros.

Boutique Espresso is designed to give operators both the professionalism of a brand with the feel of the artisanal approach, suggests Peros, the independent outlook being suggested by the 'antique sepia' tones of the wall art boards, menu boards, and various other signage items.

Australia's largest coffee expo, the delightfully-named MICE, takes place in Melbourne next month - Friday 13-15th. The event attracted 9,600 last year, and rather notably, twenty producers from origin will be showing.

Essential water treatment systems for anyone serious about serving great coffee



PRIMA
for the perfect coffee

Our brand new range of PRIMA Calcium Treatment Units.

Specially formulated for use with espresso machines, coffee making equipment and vending machines.

Use PRIMA for the perfect coffee and delicious hot beverages.

European
WaterCare

Systems

iX
WATER

The iX Filter is the first truly eco-friendly ion exchange cartridge filter.

Offering Insert Refill Technology to provide a genuinely sustainable and cost effective alternative to mainstream cartridge filters already in the marketplace.

The iX range offers a comprehensive product in a cost effective, efficient, flexible and stylish package.



European WaterCare Ltd.

Regal House, South Road, Harlow, CM20 2BL

Tel: 01279 780250 | Fax: 01279 780268

email: info@watercare.co.uk

web: www.watercare.co.uk



MADE IN BRITAIN

Sacred Coffee, which has a claim to being one of the first of the Antipodean coffee shops to open in Soho at the beginning of the coffee boom, has marked its tenth year with a most unusual activity for a coffee house business.

It has extended its sponsorship of Porsche Carrera Cup racing – and, says the café's founder, his investment in sponsorship is now allowing him to take a café business into new areas.

This magazine has often got into trouble for questioning the value of sponsorships: we have always complained that sponsors of trade events pay thousands of pounds and at best only receive a token 'thank you'.

Not in this case, says Sacred.

"In the last year I've moved the Sacred business forward and have also activated a stronger marketing side using my other business, motorsport," explains Sacred founder Tubbs Wanigasekera. "I have been a sponsor of the Carrera Cup since 2009, and I have had my own team entered with my driver Kelvin Fletcher, who has a day job as an actor on Emmerdale.

"I used to compete in New Zealand in GT championships in an Alfa Romeo, Audi Quattro and Subaru Legacy before moving to the UK to become marketing manager for Honda in the British Touring Car Championships. I was later commercial director at Honda, and later at MG Sports & Racing, in charge of the British Touring Car Championship teams. So I do understand how brands should leverage their sponsor relationships."

(He has also managed one of the top superbike racers).

"When I set up Sacred I had a clear view of market positioning. The brand values of Sacred and Porsche fundamentally are very similar - 'quality vs cost', illustrated by the fact that it can take a little longer to get a coffee when the barista is taking time and care. (I see Starbucks as a Toyota, who I think make a car a minute!)

"So when I partnered with the Porsche Carrera Cup, I knew I would have my product in front of their 500 guests every race weekend, and that these guests are medium-to-high net worth individuals and families. The guests' perception of my Sacred coffee, in branded cups at the Porsche hospitality areas, helps me sell my brand to them in a soft manner.

"Sacred's growth into new markets has been assisted with partnerships like ours with Porsche."

In a second racing project this season, he also sponsors the driver Ben Barker, who becomes an 'ambassador' for Sacred.

The future direction for Sacred may be unexpected, but shows the logic of the path.

"Our new markets will include growing our business-to-business con-

A Soho coffee shop and its high-speed sponsorship



tacts. Meeting CEOs and other decision makers at the race events, and meeting other business people who have a passion for motorsport; this has helped me get corporate supply deals.

"Our future vision involves contract catering aspect and overseas catering projects that are currently in talks... again, due to meeting various influential people.

"The fundamental aspect of the Porsche sponsorship is making the best of this networking aspect. Each team and driver in the championship has high-end sponsors themselves, and our involvement helps me socialise and discuss ideas with interesting individuals.

"And at the end of the racing year, at the Porsche Awards gala dinner, I always give two bags of beans and ground coffee in the goodie-bag to the

invited guests. There's a cost involved, but it's this kind of straight-to-the-target aspect that I like."

This, he agrees, amounts to confirming the view that paying for sponsorship is not enough unless you think it through and work it through.

"Like any sponsorship, just having the brand on a sticker on a car or on a banner is not good enough unless the leverage is capitalised on in a honest and productive manner."

Sacred will also be involved in various events this year - there is an annual GQ magazine shopping event in Carnaby Street, a similar Grazia magazine event, and the annual The Sound of Porsche event.

The brand will also launch a second coffee blend next month, and there are further tea and coffee projects to come.

Lancashire tea - the wizard's favourite?

According to the makers of Lancashire Tea, who are in St Helens, their product is the favourite of the Harry Potter author, JK Rowling.

This came from a reference on the author's Twitter account, in which she responded to a fan's question with a reference to her liking for Lancashire Tea, and the note: "I'm drinking it right now." Living in Scotland, she later added: "They sell Yorkshire tea up here but never found Lancs. I have to smuggle it over the border."

According to the tea company, this endorsement was followed by a rise in orders, but perhaps rather oddly, the company went to tell its local paper that: "we blend the tea specially to infuse with the waters of Lancashire – so it tastes better here than anywhere else."

Perhaps Ms Rowling isn't getting the best of it after all.

Coffee trike appears on reality telly

A mobile coffee truck is to star in one of those never-ending 'reality' shows with which the TV channels are desperately filling their schedules.

In this case, the programme is Shipping Wars, a series which follows independent carriers who carry items that traditional carriers cannot cope with. In this case, the load was a tuk-tuk destined for Bojangles Coffee of Dunton Green, Sevenoaks, which was carried from Scotland on the back of a lorry.

It was when Bojangles' owner Jason Botting was researching quotes from carriers that the TV station got in touch and asked to film the tuk-tuk's journey. As it turned out, he says, the television people were lucky enough to film some drama – when the carrier arrived, in the dark, he found he had no ramps with which to unload the vehicle. They improvised with shelves from the cafe, and were helped by several men who had spent all evening in the nearby pub. The episode sounds worth watching!



One of the most amusing stories from the American trade has taken an unexpected turn.

The Keurig K-Cup is a big-selling capsule-based coffee system in America, and rather as happened to Nespresso in Europe, has found that it came under threat from a big business which sprung up in the supply of compatible capsules to fit its machines.

So it experimented with a code on its capsules, which could be read by the machines, which would identify acceptable capsules and brew them. This was immediately rendered void by the much-publicised solution of cutting a code from the top of a Keurig capsule and placing it on to any other capsule, thus fooling the machine.

A very well-known American family coffee company, Rogers, has now stepped into the fight and is widely promoting its free giveaway solution, the Freedom Clip.

This is a little gadget which fits into the Keurig machine, and effectively tells the machine that whatever capsule has been put into it is an acceptable one. Demand for the clips has been so high, Rogers has had to create a back-order waiting list.

Keurig's restrictions have become the subject of more than a dozen lawsuits in America, from customers who complain that the brand is unfairly forcing them to buy its coffee, at higher prices than other brands.

Dualit is the latest brand to say that its coffee and tea capsules are also compatible with domestic Nespresso machines. The brand says that its capsules have not required any design changes to resolve modifications made by Nespresso to its coffee machines, including those which are alleged to have been redesigned to prevent them working with compatible capsules.

The police and local press have praised a café manager who foiled a mugging attempt in Milton, near Cambridge – the manager of Postino Coffee in Milton Post Office noticed a slow-moving white Transit van with its passenger door open, saw the van pull up beside a woman, and a man attempt to grab the woman's bag. The café manager ran into the street and shouted at the robber, who abandoned the mugging and drove off.

Caffe Nero supported the first national Disabled Access Day, in January. The chain offered complimentary coffee vouchers to those who had volunteered support for the day. Over 200 companies and venues across the UK supported the new initiative, which aims to encourage disabled people, their friends and families to visit somewhere new together.

Britons fail to qualify for 'reality' coffee contest

The British coffee trade has failed to become involved in a slightly bizarre contest run by an Italian barista. The concept of the project is in itself quite imaginative and praiseworthy, but as is so often the case with Continental projects, the item was promoted in such over-the-top language that its true value was almost missed.

According to original announcements from the organisers of the Barista and Farmer project, ten baristas would be invited to take part in a Big Brother-style reality show, where they would go to work on coffee farms in Honduras, be 'covered 24 hours a day by video cameras', and one of them would end up being crowned with a kind of 'king of the jungle' title. The resulting film would be edited into a documentary.

When this magazine queried those aspects, pointing out that 24-hour filming would be quite unrealistically expensive and impractical, the organisers amended their initial statement, and said they would produce highlights of the activities, which would be shown on their own website.

The project is believed to be a follow-up to a similar one held a couple of years ago, in which the participants were all Italian; this time, according to the organisers, 200 applications were received from around the world, and the successful participants were chosen partly by online voting and partly by interview.

The participants were sent to origin in early February, with a planned schedule which saw them follow coffee through all its stages. They had to pick the cherries for themselves, and take part in all the various jobs of a coffee farm, working beside the field hands, before progressing to roasting, cupping and brewing stages.

They were also required to attend lectures on various subjects from farm management to crop care. From all these activities, points were awarded.

When all the hype is taken away, the basic idea itself is perfectly good, and it would not be surprising if a big brand with a budget copies it.



It is the selection of the participants which we have found odd – there was no announcement to the trade or the media, and the British applicants scored extremely low in the voting, as did most of the countries which are considered the big ones in the barista world.

"This year we received a great feedback from the international coffee community and this is demonstrated by the many applications that we received," claim the organisers. "It was also important for us to feature different countries and cultures, and votes were coming from each barista's followers as well as those of our show."

The successful applicants included three Italians, one each from Russia, Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, Thailand, France, and an Australian. The voting figures for the Italians were remarkably high, between 400 and 790 votes, whereas apart from the Australian, the world's famous barista-culture countries barely featured at all – of the three Americans, one achieved two votes, and the others no score at all.

The four British applicants amassed a total of four votes between them, three of which went to an applicant from Harris and Hoole.

The winner, we think, was the Russian.

Game-playing in Hartlepool

Following the creation of a London coffee-house dedicated entirely to boardgamers, a Hartlepool entrepreneur has now opened a new tearoom to cater for the same enthusiasts. Jeni Hart has opened Tea@Hart, which follows her own home-run business baking celebration cakes.

As well as being a tearoom, her business is also a games shop and stocks a range of games.

Among the café's policies are that wi-fi is free, as is the facility to use power sockets for computers or phone-charging - and the café will supply some phone chargers on loan as well.

Although there are dedicated gaming nights, the café invites customers to play at any time, saying "we offer games like some cafes offer newspapers". When selling games, the business claims to match Amazon on retail prices.

Boughton's Coffee House magazine, which will complete twelve years of news reporting next month, is the only serious news reporting medium for the cafe trade. Subscriptions are just £25 – email trudi@coffee-house.org.uk

All products in The London Tea Company range are Fairtrade certified!

THE
LONDON TEA[®]
COMPANY



LOOK FOR THIS MARK

Tea-rific
Starter Offer!



Each starter set contains:

A pack of 50 pyramid tea bags in each of the following blends: Fairtrade London Breakfast, Fairtrade Earl Grey, Fairtrade Green Tea Tropical, Fairtrade Moroccan Mint, Fairtrade Camomile, Fairtrade Rooibos, Fairtrade Raspberry Ginger & Vanilla and Fairtrade Lemongrass Ginger & Citrus Fruits; 8 display jars (with blend stickers), Bamboo tongs, Pack of 25 table talkers, Window sticker and posters.

~~RSP £134.09~~ - SAVE £35.09

offer price
£99.00*

For more information, to find your nearest distributor or to order please contact The London Tea Company on:

E: orders@londontea.co.uk

T: +44 (0)20 7802 3250

www.londontea.co.uk

*Terms and conditions apply. The London Tea Company reserve the right to alter, amend and discontinue this offer without prior written warning. This offer expires 31.03.2015.



One of the modern enthusiasms of the coffee trade, still probably too young to count as a 'trend', is the idea of coffee as the theme for a museum, visitor centre, or similar attraction. There are a few examples – notably, Atkinsons of Lancaster opened up a café beside the roaster, with a view to customers seeing what was going on. Java Republic did the same thing in Dublin some years previously.

More recently, we have reported on the discovery of the artefacts of the Bramah tea and coffee museum, La Cimbali has created an espresso in Italy, and Doctor Espresso of Putney is, we believe, soon to put his collection of vintage equipment on public display.

And in Lincoln, the long-established Stokes roastery is deep in negotiation with its local council over the acquisition of the Lawn, a very large and well-known local building, right next to the castle and the cathedral, which is intended for a combined roaster and coffee museum, one worthy of brown tourist signs.

The idea comes from Nick Peel, the managing director of Stokes and a descendant of the founding family, which won its first prize for coffee-roasting in 1904. He already has an interest in the joint concept of cafes and entertainment or education, and recently opened a coffee house in the basement area of a local museum and gallery.

The next project, it is envisaged, will be a big one. It is intended to open in, of all unlikely places, what was known a hundred years ago as a 'lunatic asylum', and indeed was still a psychiatric hospital until thirty years ago. The council decided to put the listed building up for sale last year, and recently decided to name Stokes as the preferred bidder, approving of Nick's plans for the Lawn as both a business site and an educational one which would attract visitors.

"At the Lawn, I want to create a place where people can see the process of coffee. I am now getting two or three calls a week to give coffee talks, and this has shown me how much interest there is... the request for talks started with WI groups, and now it consumes my life."

Public interest in coffee is clearly increasing, he says.

"We are now involved in barista courses, and the response to these is surprising - it is no longer just people in the industry who go on barista courses, but we now see a lot of individuals, maybe a lot of people who received espresso machines for Christmas, and a lot who buy the 'experience day' gift cards.

"Beside that, we see a lot of caterers who used to have an instant machine are now turning to traditional machines and to brew bars."

So there will be a great interest in the new venture.



A coffee-themed visitor site at the home of Magna Carta?

In Lincoln, one of the country's longest-established roasters and coffee-house operators is on the verge of creating a combined roastery, cafe, and museum



Nick Peel

"With the Lawn, we are still at 'preferred bidder' status, but the city has liked our ideas. They like the idea of a local business taking on a local site, and while it isn't a site which would get passing trade, it will certainly be a site with brown and white tourist signs pointing to it.

"One third of the site will be devoted to coffee, and the rest to a passion of mine, which is 'events' - cabarets, more than just music. The coffee museum will be based on a great deal of stuff that we've amassed over the years, and I want to tell the story of coffee and society. As a company with a history like ours, we have the opportunity to tell that story firsthand."

Lincoln, he points out, is already a tourist city, and that is going to get more attractive. Lincoln holds one of the only surviving copies of Magna Carta, and in this 800th anniversary year, the city is preparing tourist promotions centred on the document.

"The city is also spending £22 million on restoring the castle site, so we are going to get a lot more tourist traffic in this city, and our coffee project is going to be in exactly the right place. The city says it would like us there.

"Edinburgh has its whisky experience, Birmingham has its chocolate experience... we want the coffee experience! Yes, I want to create an artistic hub - a real arty-farty complex!"

The project will have a practical business side as well.

"We're now roasting a tonne a week, so we're going to need a large area for our production from now on. At the moment, we have only a 35-kilo Loring, and given the space, we could double our capacity.

"Historically, we always supplied a fifty-mile radius of Lincoln, but the businesses who have a base here have started ordering from their other sites, in Liverpool and Birmingham. We'll be doing shows to get interest from London - we're at Casual Dining, and we did pick up some customers from being at the London Coffee Festival."

Stokes' main site in Lincoln is the café which dates back to the 1500s, on what is thought to be the only British river bridge with shops on it. Many other hospitality venues in Lincoln display the Stokes logo, and curiously, many claim to have their own blend.

"They do," acknowledges Nick Peel. "We supply so many places close by

that we have to give them something bespoke... it may not be vastly different, but sufficiently so for them to say 'this is ours'."

Stokes has recently opened up another new venture, the Collection café in the archaeological museum and art gallery. Almost immediately, the café became popular with local musicians, is now a regular musical haunt, and Nick endorses the point that many coffee shop owners have made recently – that the evening can be a great trading period.

"When we took over at the Collection museum, it had a failed café with a terrible reputation," recalls Nick Peel. "It was open from ten to four, but we saw potential as more than a daytime café, as an entertainment venue for a certain age group.

"Being a university town, you can find a lot of bars here where your feet stick to the carpet, but nowhere for the over-30s. So we put on a swing band with 1930s music in here - and we got 120 people jitterbugging! A lot of jazz musicians began to show interest, so we opened it up for evenings and Sunday brunch music sessions.

"The evening can be a great trading period for a café if you do it well."

The café built its new reputation quickly by word of mouth, but also because of the coffee and food.

"If you offer the best and the freshest, you get a lot of cross-promotion by word of mouth. And nowhere else

continues....

in Lincoln offers crepes! In Paris, you can buy them on the street, but not in Lincoln.

"It's expensive to get the right hot-plate, and it takes a bit of experience and skill to get the right even-ness of mixture, but it does give you something unique. You can get a sandwich and a panini anywhere, so this is a USP, and they sell at £4.95-£6.95."

The next project will be the Stokes Society. This is not quite a coffee club – those who join, for free, will be invited to tastings of new coffees, be able to buy them before anyone else, and will get first crack at events tickets.

Typical of those new coffees may be the unusual Guadeloupien Bonifleur.

"This is the ancestor to Jamaica Blue Mountain. It's not as popular as JBM, but it's comparable in quality, and cheaper.

"I was in Jamaica and decided to check it out, and it took me five hours in a jeep to get to the plantation... that's one of the reasons Jamaican coffees are expensive!"

Will his customers be interested?

"Oh, the interest is there - we don't regularly source new coffees just for the sake of it, but last year we bought up a microlot which was a Nicaraguan farmer's entire crop, and we found it started a huge interest in direct trade. The public are now really interested in the story behind what we buy.

"Previously, they just wanted something that tasted like coffee..."



Swing chairs at Jamaica Blue and (below) the light fittings made out of coffee barrels! (Pictures by Claire Martinsen of Breckland Orchard soft drinks)

The second large international café chain to arrive in the UK in recent months has opened. Following the arrival of the Canadian chain Second Cup in Manchester before Christmas, the Australian franchise Jamaica Blue has now opened in Cambridge.

The chain has something over 130 stores internationally, and is owned by Foodco, which also runs the Muffin Break chain.

The name Jamaica Blue does of course refer to the famous coffee, and the chain sources this from the famous Wallendorf estate in Jamaica.

The expected single-origin coffee is served, but perhaps confusingly, there is also a house espresso blend called Jamaica Blue Signature Blend which features coffee from South America, Africa, India, the Pacific rim and



Central America. Both are also available for retail sale, with the Wallendorf estate priced at £15 for 100gm, and the espresso blend £6.50 for 250gm.

The brand was created in 1992, and has won a string of franchise awards in Australia.



Some puzzlement has been caused by the appearance of what appears to be a new coffee flavouring syrup produced by Starbucks – a cheese flavour. The product appeared online in a picture snapped by a customer in an Australian café, and sparked all kinds of speculation about cheddar lattes, but it later transpired that the syrup is linked with a 'strawberry cheesecake-inspired' frappuccino that the brand has sold in Australia.



Once a year, mice take over Jurby, in the Isle of Man – they are hand-knitted by a local lady, and each year hundreds of them suddenly pop up as an exhibition somewhere for charity. This year they turned up in the Ballacregg tearooms.



Melitta SystemService
www.melittasystems-service.co.uk

COFFEE
PERFECTION
IN EVERY
CUP



Melitta®
Cafina® XT 6

THE GRINDING DISKS

of the newly developed Melitta® grinder are made from durable tool steel. With a diameter of 75 millimeters, they ensure a consistent and even grind while protecting the bean's aroma.

THE INNOVATIVE MILK SYSTEM WITH COLD MILK FROTH

supplies various types of warm and cold milk froth – enabling an even greater variety of beverages.

THE PROFESSIONAL STAINLESS STEEL BREWING UNIT

is made from high-grade materials – mainly stainless steel – to ensure wear-free operation up to a maximum dosage of 20 grams.

THE CLEAN IN PLACE SYSTEM (CIP®)

guarantees maximum cleanliness with fully automatic cleaning of all milk supply tubes.

Text quiz games for the coffee house

A company new to the café trade is launching a mobile phone-based quiz intended to draw people into coffee-houses and give operators a certain amount of marketing data, at no cost.

The idea is that the café owner sets up regular one-question quizzes which can only be played by people who are actually on the premises, which is where they see the question. The customer enters by taking out their mobile phone, and texting their answer to a given number.

"You may be busy at lunch, but your quiet period may be in the mid-morning, or mid-afternoon or early evening. So, you set a game up which allows play within those times," says Bernie Hanning of Pinplay, who devised the idea.

"You put up a window display saying: 'win a free coffee between 9-11am with our new Pinplay quiz'. We earn our money from the number of entries, so we are interested in getting as many people into participating cafés as possible, and that is also the important thing for the café owners – the public have to be inside your premises to play the quiz."

The setting-up of the quizzes is done on a web page.

"We assign the café owner a web page, and they log in to set up the next quiz. You might prefer to set questions which are relevant to your area and attract local interest.

"The customer looks at your display, takes out their phone and texts the answer.

"There is an instant 'thanks for playing' response and at the end of the game period, the winner receives a message on their phone; this gives them a code which they show to the coffee house, who can match it to what we show on their web page, and give the prize.

"There is no charge to the café."

There are ways to profitably extend the idea, says Pinplay.

"For the café owner, the very big thing is that they now have every entrant's phone number. You can now text them to remind them of your further promotions.

"You also have the opportunity to make money from advertisers and quiz sponsors. There are various ways to make sure that a quiz covers its own costs."

At very high levels, where the proposed prize is perhaps a holiday instead of a free coffee, the coffee house owner, or a group together, or a chain, can work with Pinplay to decide the cost of the entry calls and locate a suitable sponsor to pay for the prize – where a very high entry rate is likely, the café may then also get a cut of the call fees.



The coffee house which claims to be the smallest one in the world has celebrated its fifth birthday with an imaginative offer - The Window, in Norwich, can just fit in six people if they are willing to get close, and is run by Hayley Gosling, top-scoring female in the barista championships a few years ago. Despite not being in the best of locations, there being few retail shops nearby, she has built up a regular clientele through being on a main walkway into the city centre. She says that customers are always asking for a go on her espresso machine... so she marked the birthday by inviting customers to write their details on her cup sleeves, and drew a winner who got some barista training. (The natty colours on the dog's coat are those of the local football club, Norwich City!)

South of London and east of Brighton, the market is still new for speciality coffee – that is the view of one of the newest roasters, Bean Smitten of Flimwell in East Sussex.

The Bean Smitten roaster has been started by Darren Tickner, a former accountant who gave up his job in the finance sector last year.

"The number of small-batch and artisan roasters is growing rapidly, and part of the reason must surely be that there is still such a long way to go in terms of getting your average consumer drinking better coffee.

"As far I can tell, south of London and east of Brighton, the speciality coffee sector is still in its infancy. Geographically, Bean Smitten is ideally placed to supply businesses in Kent and East Sussex, and the mission is to make premium speciality coffee more accessible to your average consumer."

Like most new roasters, Bean Smitten is selling online and is making progress with local delis.

One rather unusual coffee from this roaster is a Balinese one. Coffee from that part of the world is familiar enough, but not always that country.

"The story with Bali is that the coffee plantations in the Kintamani highlands had been mostly destroyed by the eruption of the Gunung Agung volcano in 1963. They have been going through a period of recovery ever since.

"The growing area in Bali is now estimated at 7,500 hectares. This particular coffee is an organic offering, it is very sweet (brown sugar) with notes of stewed fruit. It has big body, well-rounded acidity and a syrupy mouthfeel."

The Barista Brothers coffee chain of Plymouth has found itself in the middle of an alcohol licence application row, although the chain maintains that its plans will actually reduce alcohol sales in a student area, not increase them. The curious situation arises over a proposed 24-hour café, to be sited in premises which are at the moment a 24-hour off-licence. The owners of the café chain also own the off-licence.

Local residents have protested against the concept of a licensed coffee shop; the applicants say that by replacing an all-day off-licence with a café that can serve alcohol up to 2am, they are laying the way for 'a step away from the 24-hour alcohol lifestyle', by establishing instead a 'reputable community coffee shop'.

The premises are adjacent to sheltered housing - one side of the argument protests for peace for elderly residents, the other side claims that they will appreciate a community coffee shop. Barista Brothers say that the police and licensing departments have approved of their plans, and that a licensed coffee house is a more acceptable social business than an off-licence.

Barista Brothers is owned by Steven Bartlett, the man who led a shareholder's revolt at Coffee Republic. He has plans for opening more cafes under the brand in Plymouth - one of them, by delightful coincidence, in a former Coffee Republic site.

Village coffee shop beats off Aldi threat

A quite remarkable victory has been won by a relatively small coffee shop in Buckshaw, which is a 'new village' near Chorley in Lancashire. (It is one of the biggest development sites in the north, with much of it on land which was requisitioned to be a munitions factory during wartime).

A new retail development by Aldi, which would have included a Starbucks branded drive-through, had been proposed for the village - in a location right next to the Cowshed, a coffee house run by Alison Holme. The name comes from her mobile business, Coffee On Wheels.

Aware that such a development could destroy her business, she started a social media campaign which drew a vast amount of support from locals; she even offered a free drink to customers who attended a local council consultation event to object to the drive-through coffee shop.

Her own formal protest said: "I have no objection to Aldi or enhancing community facilities - I believe a bit of local competition is healthy and good for business, but only when it's on a fair playing field. It is the sheer size of the



potential global mega-brand that fills me with real dread, as my next-door neighbour."

Alison now tells us that not only did her campaign succeed, Aldi visited her in person to say so.

"The property director for Aldi UK visited the Cowshed to deliver the good news," she tells us. "He provided me with a copy of the revised plans which have now been submitted to the council planning department for approval.

"He confirmed the overwhelming public support displayed, and the attendance of residents at the public consultation meeting to object, were Aldi's sole reason for the Starbucks plan being dropped.

"The new plans have a completely new road infrastructure, ensuring no further threat from a drive-through.

"This story is testimony of what can be achieved by providing a consistently good product, excellent customer service and building a community around you."

Green tea sucks, doesn't it?

The creator of the new barista contest for tea-brewing, Kasim Ali of Waterloo Tea, recently addressed a top-thinkers conference on the challenge of changing views about tea

In an attempt to inspire interest in the cause of better brewing of tea in the hospitality sector, one of the UK's best-known tea-room operators, who doubles as a wholesaler of quality loose-leaf tea to the café sector, has created the trade's first tea equivalent of a barista contest. It has a first prize of £500.

The Tea Brewers Cup will be held in Cardiff at the end of March, and has been devised by Kasim Ali of Waterloo Teas, who will also present the SCAE's coffee-themed Brewers' Cup.

"I am a firm believer of competition being a driver for innovation," he has said. "Although I am a lover of tea, I am an admirer of the community that the coffee sector has. The tea contest was devised with a number of coffee people, most notably Jochem and Andrew from Taylor Street Baristas and Harris & Hoole. We ran a similar format as the in-house competition at Harris & Hoole last year, which worked well. Hosting the coffee contest was the final piece in the jigsaw."

The importance of the contest, says Kas Ali, is to reinforce the need for proper tea brewing in a catering world which has become accustomed to teabags dunked in hot water for a few seconds.

"We need to promote the movement towards 'slow' tea. Good tea has been left in the world of fancy tea rooms, while in hotels, the first cup may be OK, and the second cup will be over-brewed and bitter.

"It's obvious to us why this should happen, but we have had to get it



*"We have had to take people outside the world of a bag on a string."
- Kasim Ali at the Do Lectures*

across, and it has been a battle. The reason that more cafes are beginning to do it better, is because we have worked to get it across to them."

Contestants will be judged on their ability to brew three different teas within a given time limit. The contestants will not have seen the teas before the heats, but we understand that the teas will not be improbably unusual - no liquorice or chocolate teas. "The contrast between them will be on cultivar, terroir and processing style," says Kas Ali.

What the judges are looking for, he says, is creativity and imagination.

"In all honesty, and without wishing it to come across badly, this competition isn't aimed at the quaint tea rooms. It is about innovation, not about maintaining tradition.

"There will hopefully be ideas which can be reinforced and publicised, and we hope for novel techniques to be brought to the table."

The campaign to improve the brewing of tea in out-of-home situations is something that Kas Ali has spoken of in public, most recently at the Do Lectures, when he spoke on 'why great tea is as every bit as geeky as great coffee'.

These lectures, which are sponsored by the Welsh Government, are annual talks in which certain people who have achieved things in various fields are invited to, in the words of the organisers, "inspire the rest of us to go and do things too". In six years, the concept has grown from Wales to Australia and the USA.

When Kas Ali recently gave his Do Lecture last year, he spoke of how he came to move from the world of pharmacy to tea, and how he had quickly come to the belief that the long-established tea wholesalers were 'not fit for purpose'.

The wholesale selling of tea, he told the audience, was full of 'smoke and mirrors'. The unashamed hard-sell of

tea as a commodity, he remarked, was a radical change from his life in pharmacy, "where such salesmanship was not right - it would have been pretty unethical to have a customer walking out of a pharmacy with a bagful of drugs you'd succeeded in selling them!"

Kas Ali told the Do Lectures about the problems of changing consumers' ideas about tea, and the difference between commodity tea and the flavour of good tea.

"Trying to re-engineer people's ideas about tea is tricky. We had to turn round the idea of 'drink tea at home, coffee when you're out', and we had to change the concept of tea as a mug with a teabag in it... because people don't want to pay for that.

"When I saw a coffee shop menu which had two columns of coffee drinks and just one line at the bottom which said 'speciality tea', I decided that we had to flip that on its head.

"The big jobs have been to educate the catering trade about tea and to serve it well, and to interact with customers about it.

"It has been a long battle to convince consumers that great tea tastes good without milk and sugar - it's amazing that people have been drinking this all their lives and never knew what they were drinking!"

His progress with Waterloo Tea, he told the lecture audiences, involved easing off from his first ideals.

"Sometimes in business, you have to compromise.

"I had said I was only going to serve single-origin teas and green teas, I told a lot of people what we were going to do, and they replied: 'yes, but green tea sucks, doesn't it?!'

"That's because people were brewing it with boiling water - the reason that Japanese cups don't have handles is because they don't serve it with boiling water!"

"So I had to step back and look at the bigger picture, and saw that getting people started on their tea journey involved not taking them too far away from what they were used to... if we could get them started on, say, a mint green, then they would get used to it and graduate. That way, we would get to the great unadulterated teas we had always wanted to serve them."

It is a continuing battle, Kas told the lecture audiences.

"Now, the reason more venues are serving good tea is because we did get it across. We have taken them outside the world of a bag with a string."

The Grindsmiths coffee business in Manchester has suffered two break-ins in succession - having been forced to close over a weekend while damage from the first was repaired, the café was then attacked again within days. On the first occasion, the thief stole £200 from the till - on the second occasion, the owners had left the till drawer open to show that it was empty, but the criminals broke in anyway... and apparently used exactly the same means of entry, suggesting the same person might be responsible.

The Holden Wood Antiques tea room in Haslingden, Rossendale, has reported being surprised at the visit of one customer last month - it was the Prime Minister, who arrived at the counter and ordered a cup of lapsang souchong. The PM was in the region with the chancellor, talking about local economic recovery, and the tearooms were visited by security guards who simply told them to stand by for a VIP visit.

An award-winning tea room has been put up for sale at almost a million pounds. The café is at the Broadway House at Topsham in Devon, which is also a B&B, and which is on the market for the first time in 30 years. The tearoom has been featured on television several times, on programmes ranging from Michael Caines' Great British Menu to Escape to the Country. The owners bought the building when it was a collection of decrepit bedsits, and the tea room has now served two million customers.

Kaffeine, the London coffee house which has also been involved in bringing speciality coffee to Lord's cricket ground, has now taken on its second cafe site. The second shop is at Eastcastle Street, slightly north of Oxford Street in London. Owner Peter Dore Smith has referred to it as 'a cracker of a site, with a frontage on to wide pavements, in the middle of the media, fashion, advertising and design industries'. It will open on March 2nd.

The London coffee and wine shop Notes is to open three new sites this year, in St Pancras Square and at two sites in Canary Wharf.

The fourth franchised Heaven coffee shop site has opened, in Hull, in a former Orange mobile phone store. The chain has branches in Harrogate, Leeds and Ripon.

Whittard of Chelsea has opened a tea bar in Union Square, Aberdeen.

Shelton's Coffee, notable for its 'coffee cube' flavoured soluble product, has brought its manufacturing operation to Leicester from South America. Managing director Steven Shelton told us: "The roasting will be still kept in Colombia. The flavourings will be purchased locally in the UK."



Amazing how easily you can offend people, isn't it? Teapigs has long had a name for the off-the-wall humour to be found on its retail packs, and one of the ones which tickles us is the visual wordplay for its Chai Tea - the picture clearly shows someone doing Tai Chi! However, says the brand's Nick Kilby, what has offended someone is the throw-away tag line 'bolly good'. Someone actually complained that this is a racist comment.



Kaldi

In a possibly unique case, a west London café has been caught out over its use of counterfeit ketchup. The café, in Acton, has been caught refilling old Heinz sauce bottles with cheaper 'industrial standard' ketchup, by customers who apparently noticed that although there were Heinz bottles on the tables, their labels looked suspiciously old and dirty. A lorry driver, showing a quite remarkable knowl-

edge of marketing matters, was reported on a news website as saying: "Heinz has not used this label design for years - these bottles date back to around 2004. The ketchup within is a vivid red, it almost looks radioactive. I bet it comes from a catering supplies warehouse in Stoke, probably supplied in big plastic drums labelled '1 x Red Sauce HK454'." When confronted on the matter, the café owner reportedly replied: "I admit we can't afford Heinz sauce. It is a luxury condiment. But putting the catering ketchup in the old bottles at least allows our customers to dream of a better life... in some ways I am a purveyor of dreams, selling not only fried breakfasts but also the illusion of a high-end sauce lifestyle." Lest it be thought that these quotes sound a fraction unlikely, and the kind of thing that get made up by untalented tabloid journalists, we are greatly re-assured by the reported final comment of the lorry driver on the taste of the counterfeit ketchup: he reportedly said "I don't really give a ****, but it is misleading."



A very neat product making a local comment was recently created by Boston Common Coffee, a café in Massachusetts. To understand this, you have to be a fan of the subtleties of American football - but briefly, it concerns the local team New England Patriots, who have been accused of

cheating, by using under-inflated footballs. The theory behind this is that if the ball is under-inflated, then it makes control of the ball a lot easier, particularly in cold weather. If one team happens to know that the ball is under-inflated, then of course they can adapt their tactics accordingly... and the Patriots have been investigated by football authorities for tampering with the balls they have prepared for their home games, it having been alleged that 11 of the 12 balls used in recent games were under pressure by as much as fifteen per cent. The local coffee shop turned the situation to advantage, creating a football-shaped chocolate-topped flat traybake, which it sold as 'deflated cookies at a deflated price'.



This packaging (above) actually does appear on the shelves of certain American stores, and also in the listings of various online retailers... but that's what it is, 'packaging'. The device which allows you to make coffee in your shower; the Bathe & Brew Coffee Maker and Soap Dispenser is one of several items from Prank Pack, who specialise in a series of 'genuine fake gift boxes'. This 'product' even has its own promotional video, which suggests that users 'cut their morning routine in half' with the brewer that plugs in to the bathroom water supply. Retailers with a sense of humour can buy the 'gift boxes' at \$20 for three. Other supposed products include the Beer Beard, a ZZTop-style growth which conceals a can of beer and a straw for secret drinking. Not surprisingly, some American columnists have greeted the arrival of the Bathe & Brew with the comment: 'if only...!'



kent & fraser
LIVING GLUTEN FREE



INTRODUCING A NEW RANGE OF DELICIOUS GLUTEN FREE BISCUITS, COOKIES AND SHORTBREAD FROM KENT & FRASER.

Pioneers of gluten-free baking since 2009, Kent & Fraser is a dedicated artisan producer of gluten free and wheat free baked food. Launching with four best-sellers, these perfectly portioned packs are just the ticket for those living a busy gluten-free life.

Made with 100% natural ingredients, contain no additives or preservatives and are gluten free, wheat free and egg free.



- Vanilla Butter Crunch
- Choc Chip Cookies
- Spicy Ginger Cookies
- Lemon Butter Shortbread

Each case contains two display trays of 14 x 35g twin packs.

To get your hands on some of these delicious gluten-free treats, contact the team at Beyond the Bean.



t: 0117 953 3522
f: 0117 953 3422

@beyondthebean
info@beyondthebean.com

