CONSETT MAGAZINE

FREE

ISSUE 01/ AUGUST 2012



THE MICROBREWERY REVOLUTION
The master brewers of Consett showcase their famous ales

CONSETT ACADEMY
Campus confusion and transportation turmoil

CONSETT EATS UP DATA
Local Wi-Fi usage goes through the roof!

TERRIS NOVALIS
The history behind one of Consett's most famous landmarks

LEARN AND EARN
The way of the apprentice

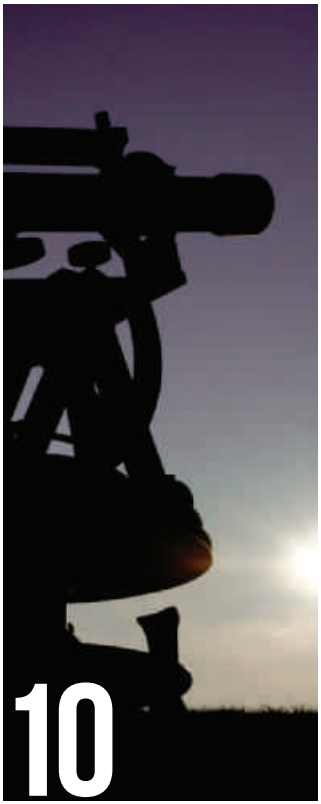
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Welcome...

...to the first issue of the FREE Consett Magazine!

For the past six months we have been asking the people of Consett what they would like to see in a local magazine. You may have completed a survey which was conducted in Middle Street, Consett or on the web via Facebook and Twitter. We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey as the results were very interesting indeed. We found what people were interested in reading about, what they did'nt like about other publications, and how to strike a good balance of local business advertising and quality content.

Consett Magazine will focus on arts, culture, entertainment, employment, history, events, news, and all matters of local interest.

In the future, we plan to expand the number of pages to provide you with even more thought provoking articles and interesting reads.

We invite everyone to contribute to the magazine with their own events, stories, photographs, or anything else which could make for a good read. You can do that by dropping us an email, visiting our website, or by posting a letter. Contact details can be found below.

Consett Magazine also available online. Together with this full colour magazine, our online portal is designed to be a great place to discuss and comment on local interest stories.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the first issue of Consett Magazine as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Don't forget to visit consettmagazine.com to get involved in discussions and leave a comment.

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Consett Fast Food Eats Up Data

written by Chris Brown

The McDonalds restaurant in Consett was recently in the mainstream news for being ranked third in the UK for Wi-Fi download usage out of all the McDonalds restaurants in the UK. Interestingly, the restaurant was the runner up to two major McDonald's restaurants in highly populated areas of London on Holloway Road and the Dartford Priory Shopping Centre. The town of Consett only has roughly 20,000 homes, but ranked above the Wi-Fi usage from restaurants in very high populated areas of London and Wigan.

It was noted in the recent news story that the high Wi-Fi usage for the Consett restaurant could have been due to the restaurant being close to the local college as well as the slower broadband speeds in many homes in the nearby area. The Wi-Fi usage in the McDonalds restaurant could be from the teenagers in the area using their mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads, android smart phones, tablet computers, and other internet devices.

One cold night in December, I went to McDonalds to find the restaurant full of young people congregating into small groups. It was at this moment I realised almost every person in the restaurant was holding a mobile phone, while only a few people in the restaurant had a coke or a burger. Perhaps these young people frequent the restaurant on a daily basis, and so the Wi-Fi usage in the Consett McDonald's is being accessed at an increasingly rapid rate.

McDonald's restaurants throughout the UK introduced free Wi-Fi to their customers and it seems if these young people are coming to use the Wi-Fi then perhaps it is a sign of times to come; will Wi-Fi be available just to keep customers coming back to restaurants? The youth of Consett realise how fast and easily accessible free Wi-Fi can be, and so they take full advantage of the free internet connection.

Fast internet speeds are few and far between in the small suburbs around Consett. Parts of Medomsley have only a half Meg connection whereas the centre of Consett has a 20 Meg connection. Even though Medomsley is only 2.8 miles away from Consett town centre, the internet connection speed is around 40 times slower.

As the internet in Consett is quite slow; it comes as no surprise that the data hungry youth choose to go to McDonalds for their daily Facebook fix. As smart phones begin to eat more and more data, the need for Wi-Fi will increase as can be seen in this small town fast food joint in the hills of Co. Durham.



Learn and Earn : The Way Of The Apprentice

written by Chris Brown

In today's economic climate, getting a job can be especially hard. Finding a job is a real concern for young people in the Consett area and indeed throughout the UK. With employment opportunities dwindling, young people are faced with a dilemma of what to do when leaving school or when they find themselves out of employment.

Becoming an apprentice is a great way in to learn valuable practical skills. Apprenticeships are considered to be the perfect stepping stone to a successful career.

Learning a trade is a sure fire way to gaining valuable experience in almost any profession. Skills in demand such as engineering can be gained by doing an apprenticeship. Apprenticeships are a mix of work experience and learning, many people who are on an apprenticeship attend college while also learning on the job.

With a wide variety of professions available, there are apprenticeship opportunities to suit almost everyone. Mechanics, joiners, plumbers and electricians are some of the most common apprenticeships. There are apprenticeships available for skill and job training which wouldn't normally fall under the perceived banner of apprenticeships. With programs now available for dental nursing, heath care, and even nuclear engineering, the possibility to learn new job relevant skills has never been easier.



Becoming an apprentice can help a young person to secure employment opportunities which could lead to something much greater in the future, a career! If you are looking at becoming an apprentice or you are an employer interested in the benefits of taking on apprentices visit: http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/.


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The Microbrewery Revolution

written by I. Laidler

In recent times, the microbrewery has become a national phenomenon with an increasing number of people choosing to buy and drink high quality local ales instead of the mass market beers and ales which have saturated the market. This new trend for craft ales brewed locally to a high standard has given us a greater choice in what to drink when we go to the local pub for a relaxing pint. Even though this is a relatively new trend, The Grey Horse in Consett has been brewing their high quality ale from as far back as 1998.

The name "The Consett Ale Works" harks back to a time when Consett was the industrial heart of the North East, producing steel for a number of noteworthy projects around the UK and their real ales are no different. The names of most of their ales are related to processes which were involved in the manufacturing process of steel. With names such as 'Molten Ale', 'Red Dust' and 'Blast Bitter' it's easy to see that this microbrewery is proud of its local heritage.

These speciality brews all have their own character with 3 regular ales which are regularly found on tap and a number of seasonal and speciality ales which often make an appearance at different times throughout the year. The three regular ales which can be found on tap in the Grey Horse are three award winning beverages which over the years have impressed judges at various ale festivals are 'White Hot', 'Red Dust' and 'Steel Town Ale'.

Each of these ales has its own distinctive character which can be easily picked up on when you take a sip. White Hot is a light, refreshing ale which is easy to drink and popular amongst a variety of beer drinkers. Steel Town Ale could be considered the 'all around' ale of the Grey Horse's regular line up, consisting of a well rounded flavour and an amazing colour. Red Dust is a dark ruby coloured bitter with a rich taste that may not be to everyone's liking but no doubt a great drink that more seasoned veterans of the real ale world will love.

Microbreweries across the UK strive to break free from the chains of the mass market beers and ales which are frequently found in most pubs. Consett Ale Works does just that, it has great drinks and it makes it even more special knowing that the beer you are drinking in the Grey Horse was made on site.

I decided to visit The Grey Horse to soak up the atmosphere and try some of the craft ales. With a very cosy atmosphere on a rainy Friday afternoon, I felt right at home with a pint of the Red Dust. Red Dust had a rich taste which I thoroughly enjoyed. The deep colour harked back to a time when Consett's local pubs were bustling with activity after clocking off time at the steel works.

If you are looking to do something new to experience locally, I highly recommend popping down the Grey Horse for a quality pint of their fine, home brewed ales.



Parents Protest Academy Plans

written by Peter Wood

Parents of Consett Academy students have expressed anger over the Academy's decision to transfer students between its north and south campus sites.

At a meeting organised by parents, held on the 18th July, shortly before the Academy closed for the summer, parents were invited to hear the latest developments in the ongoing dispute and also share their own concerns. Around 70 people attended the meeting, most of whom spoke about their concern over transport arrangements for their children to attend – what was until recently – a different school.

Organised and chaired by Julie Ross of Delves Lane, whose daughter would be affected by the move, the meeting covered several key areas of concern, including transport, the effect that the relocation of students at a critical time in their studies would have, children's safety if they are forced to walk to school, and also parents' choice – which Mrs Ross stated "has been taken away from all of us." The two sites, made up of the former Consett Community Sports College and Moorside Community Technical College, merged earlier this year to form the Academy.

The meeting was also attended by Councillor Claire Vasey, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services at Durham County Council, who was able to immediately address some parents' concerns over transport. In a statement which Cllr. Vasey read out on behalf of herself and Cllr. Bob Young, she said "We are pleased to announce that free transport can continue to be provided to all students at the academy who are currently receiving it." She added "We recognise that [students attending a different campus] would have an impact on families who would no longer have qualified for free transport and, in view of the fact that this is an unusual situation, we have sought a solution which will address this."

The announcement was welcomed by parents for whom the relocation of their child might have meant that they would no longer qualify for free travel due to their address falling within the 3 mile boundary.

However, children starting in year 7 this September will still have to meet all of the criteria set out by the Durham County Council's new transport policies in order to receive free travel. Otherwise, parents will have to pay a £95 per term concessionary charge in order for their children to travel to school by bus.

The principal of the Academy, Mr Kevin Reynolds, did not respond to invites to the meeting and no representative of the Academy attended.

Consett Academy had been planning for an entirely new campus to be built on the Belle Vue site in the town, however, delays caused by objections and a judicial review mean that it will not be ready until 2014 or possibly even later, much to the frustration of parents.

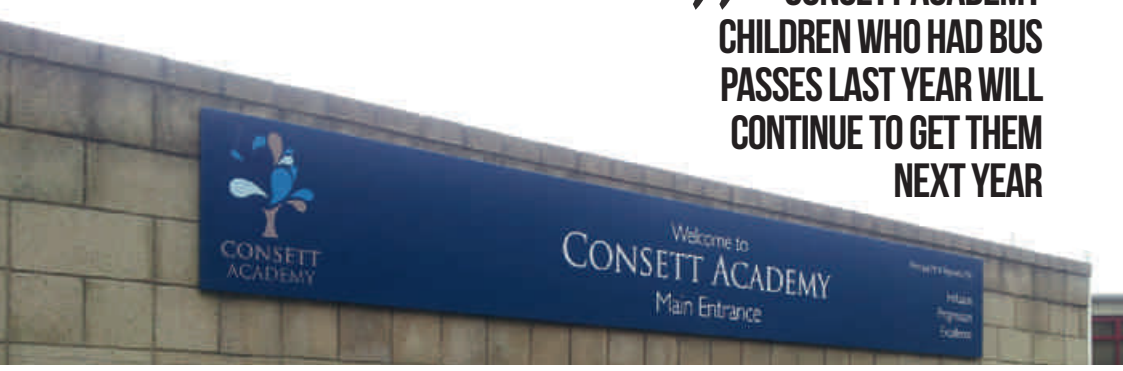
Many wish the new campus to be completed as soon as possible, and are supportive of the Academy in achieving this goal; however, most of the parents who attended last month's meeting were resolute in their opposition to the Academy's interim solution of transferring different year groups between campuses, regardless of where they lived. Mrs Ross, who has been spearheading the campaign, also said on the evening the she "firmly believes that the majority of the transport concerns would not be an issue", if the children were left in their respective schools until the new Academy is built. Some parents say that they will either be left out of pocket or unable to afford the travel costs associated with sending their children to a different site. While Durham County Council has provided walking routes to some parents that their children should take to get to and from school; routes which parents claim are unsafe due to crossing busy by-passes, unlit areas and neighbouring building sites.

Cllr. Vasey said that she would feedback all of the concerns and complaints that parents had raised at the meeting, however, many are doubtful that their voices will be heard, as they believe that the Academy is being run more like a business and they are not consulted over key decisions.

This dispute follows on from another controversial decision by the Academy, when it became the first in the region to impose a blanket ban on students bringing mobile phones to school, however, following similar protest from parents' groups, the Academy backed down on the rule and allowed students to carry mobile phones to and from school.

Many parents have contacted MP for North West Durham, Pat Glass - who also sits on the House of Commons Education Select Committee - regarding the issues surrounding the Academy and she has been working with the Academy and the Council to try and address some of their concerns. Speaking on the move to allow children who already receive free travel to retain it, she stated "The decision reached means that Consett Academy children who had bus passes last year will continue to get them next year." She also spoke of the Academy's decision to pay half of the costs for those who will not get free travel, adding "The decision of the Principal of the Academy to step in and pay half of the cost for children who won't get free bus passes and to underwrite the cost of direct buses means that the children who attend Consett Academy have a much better deal than children attending schools elsewhere in the County. I am delighted that I have been able to work with Mr Reynolds and the County to facilitate this."

> **"CONSETT ACADEMY CHILDREN WHO HAD BUS PASSES LAST YEAR WILL CONTINUE TO GET THEM NEXT YEAR**



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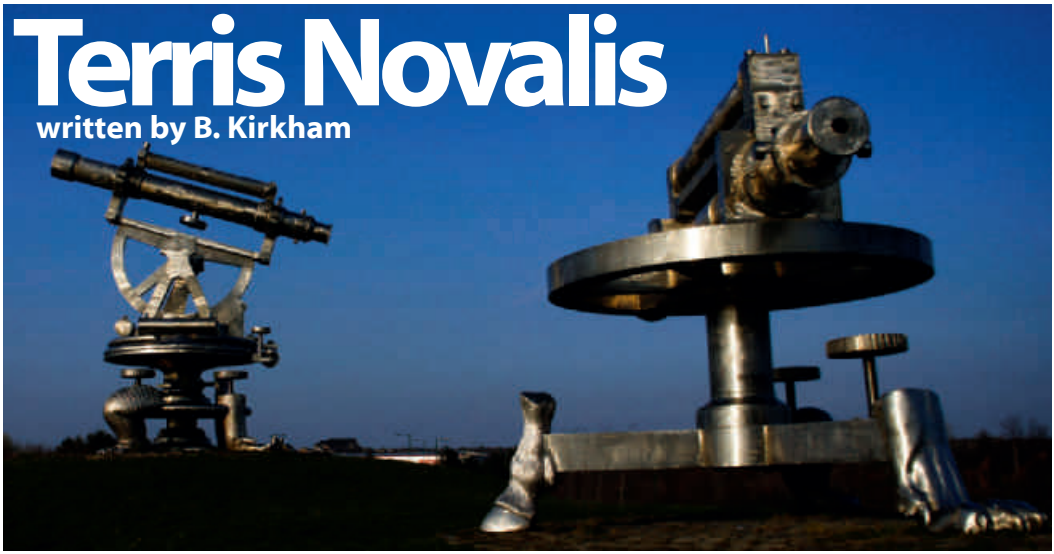
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Terris Novalis

written by B. Kirkham



On the former Consett steelworks site beside the C2C cycle path stands two huge sculptures based on nineteenth century surveyors instruments, a theodolite (used to measure horizontal angles) and a level (used to establish the bond between a surface to the horizontal.)

The theodolite stands on; a human hand, a horse hoof, and the foot of a lizard type creature. The animal feet that hold these instruments upright are said to be inspired by symbolic heraldry found on shields, coats of arms, plaques and items associated with land and ownership.

The sculpture was commissioned by Sustrans and paid for with money from the National Lottery, Northern Arts, Derwentside Council, the Henry Moore Foundation, Consett's Genesis Project and industrial sponsors.

Terris Novalis is the work of Turner Prize winning artist Tony Cragg. This is the only large-scale permanent public artwork in the UK by Cragg.

Component parts for Terris Novalis were cast in Sheffield and Germany and kept in storage briefly at Beamish Museum before being transported to Consett to be assembled on site. The piece was eventually unveiled, after a gestation period of four years, by the local M.P. Hilary Armstrong, on 22nd September 1997.

The sculpures in Consett mark the watershed between the moorland landscape and the extremes of the Industrial Age. Built on the Stanhope and Tyne Railway Line - the earliest commercial railway in Britain - Terris Novalis marks what was once Europe's largest steel works here in Consett. It could be said that this landmark is a monument to the scale of local industry. If you are in the area, make sure you visit Terris Novalis and check out Tony Cragg's tribute to the history of the local steelworks.

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Consett On Two Wheels

written by Chris Brown

Consett is a great place to be if you want to get out and see the countryside.

With a great selection of walking and cycling routes around the area you could easily spend a day visiting the beautiful countryside which surrounds us. By far the best way to see the countryside surrounding Consett is by bicycle. Not only is cycling is a great form of exercise, can also be a great way to cruise through some of our most beautiful landscapes.

A good route for cycling in Consett is to head past the Terra Novalis statues and head along the Waskerley Way. This route can be considered a gentle route which has some great sights to see along the way. The Houndsgill viaduct is a place to get a view of the valley, you can really appreciate the natural beauty which the North East has to offer from this vantage point.

Exercise is increasingly important in the modern world as people are becoming less active. Getting out and exercising can have a positive impact on your health. Cycling is a fantastic way in which to lose a few pounds while getting yourself out in the countryside.

Consett is situated in an area of great natural beauty with a number of different cycle routes which both showcase the area in its best light. The Derwent walk is also a good walking or cycling route which takes you northwards along the Red Kite Trail where some of these rare birds of prey have been breeding for a number of years. Getting out on your bike is not only a great way to stay fit but a fantastic opportunity to see the beauty of the area surrounding Consett.

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Consett: A Potted History of an Industrial Town History

written by Brian Harrison

Consett, the town we know today, has only been in existence since the early 1840s and the foundation's of the Consett Iron Company.

Men came from all areas to join in this new found wealth and industrial boom, shortly followed by their families. These early years were a turbulent time of unrest especially between the English and Irish faction's, religion playing no small part. There were many running battles throughout the years, some very famous like the Battle of the Blue Heaps, some not so. The town was often condemned in the press as a place of lawlessness and at times even compared to the American Wild West, something which stuck. These underlying problems of religious bigotry persisted in Consett, as in a lot of areas, right into the mid 1900s, although nowhere near the extent of those early years. I am sure those of the older generation will clearly remember the tensions between the Catholic and Protestant schools, most of it was pure talk but there were those occasional scuffles. However, out of those turbulent beginnings grew a town rich in culture and its own heritage which the hard working people of this area could be truly proud of.

Unfortunately the industry in our area began to dwindle. It started first with the pits, which had been part of our area's backbone, and by the 1970's there were none left and the visual landscape of our area began to change. Then, after industrialisation, parts of the Works began to close as well, such as the Rolling Mills, and our town began to hold its breath. Whispers began about closure, slowly at first, but then began to be openly talked about. By the end of 1978 the people of our area began to fight back. We marched, we leafleted and protested sometimes at the tops of our voices, but the cogs had already started turning. In 1980 the heart of our industrial town stopped beating with the closure of the Works and the loss of over 3700 jobs and silence fell across the town.

The Skyline of Consett was now forever changed and its people now had to change with it. It is to the credit and shear determination of the people of this town that we not only got ourselves up after such a massive blow, but we came out it stronger then ever. The sense of pride and belonging this town has given its people is truly awe inspiring and can be seen and heard when ever you talk to someone of this area. This is our town.

> THE TOWN WAS OFTEN CONDEMNED IN THE PRESS AS A PLACE OF LAWLESSNESS

The Future of British Blues?

written by Chris Brown



In recent years the British blues scene has seen rise to some great young artists all with immense skills and talent but one who seems to have risen above the pile is Consett's own Mitch Laddie. At only 21 years of age, Mitch has made serious waves in the UK and across the world with his latest album, Burning Bridges, being widely accepted as one of the best blues albums from a young artist in recent years.

Mitch joined us here at Consett Magazine for a chat about what is going on in the world of the young virtuoso and being nominated for the young blues musician of the year award for the second year running. Mitch explained, "There is some tough competition out there, I was up for it last year and I didn't get it, so we'll see how it goes. " On a more positive note he continued," It's nice to be noticed and know that people appreciate what we're doing. So yeah, it's great." It's easy to see how this positive attitude has helped him progress to where he is today.

His inventive tracks like the 9 minute epic "Mr Johnson Revisited" have captured the imagination of blues fans around the world whilst showcasing Mitch and the band's great skill and maturity. The talented youngster has recently been on the road around the UK and Europe to showcase his fantastic music to as wide an audience as possible but he always makes time to come back home to Consett and play some small gigs for the local fans. He said, "...the gigs we've done back at home recently in the last year have been really fun and the crowds have been really responsive and we've had a great time." It's fantastic to see someone from Consett who has been far and wide with his music still come back home to give a little back to the local fans which kick started his musical journey.

Mitch and the guys will be bringing their unique blues rock feel to The Black Horse on the 30th of November, so make sure you get this date written in your diary for a night of great music. We here at Consett Magazine wish him all the best with his upcoming events and the future of the Mitch Laddie Band.

If you'd like to see the full interview between ourselves and Mitch head over to http://www.consettmagazine.com for more web exclusive content brought to you by Consett Magazine.

Consett Music Events

Three Colors Red
4th Aug @ The Demi

The Gatecrashers
10th Aug @ The Black Horse

The Ballbreakers
17th Aug @ The Black Horse

Seige UK
24th Aug @ The Black Horse

Tillyfest
24th - 26th Aug @ Tow Law Town Football Club

Three days of great music, great beer and family fun for all to enjoy. 45 bands confirmed - put it in your diary now!

This is a charity event for Tilley Lockey who lost her hand at a young age to meningococcal septicaemia.

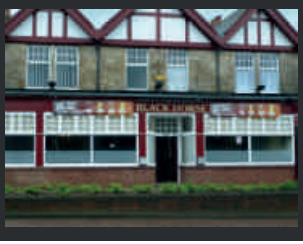
The Ballbreakers
25th Aug @ The Demi

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Andrew Sinclair bears the Olympic torch as it passes through Castleside

Consett's Olympic Hopes

written by I. Laidler

Did you know that an athlete from Consett will be representing the hallowed Team GB at this year's Olympic Games? Chantelle Handy, aged 25, is one of twelve women who will be representing Great Britain in the female basketball team in London this August. This is going to be the first time Team GB will have entered this specific event in the Olympics and after an impressive qualifying campaign hopes are high for the girls after beating Argentina, Canada and South Korea who were all higher ranked.

At aged 18, Chantelle went to the USA on a sports scholarship to play basketball whilst studying at University. This was a great spring board for her sporting career as she then progressed to playing club basketball for Athinaikos in Greece. Along with her club career, she has represented her country for more than 5 years now and cannot wait for the challenge of representing Team GB at the Olympics.

Chantelle and the rest of Team GB must be excited and raring to go with the Olympics finally getting underway. Let's hope the team's hard work pays off in London and these amazing girls can bring home the gold.

Did You Know?

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Olympic Facts

1. The last gold medals made from pure gold were issued in the year 1912.
2. There are 32 Olympic sports venues in London, with a combined capacity of 700,000.
3. Greece won the most medals as a host country during the first modern Olympics in 1896.
4. This year marks the third time the UK has hosted the Olympics. Previous years were 1908 and 1948.
5. The early Olympic games were celebrated as a religious festival.
6. Both gold and silver Olympic medals must be made with 92.5% pure silver. The gold medals must be covered with 6g of gold.

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PITCHER



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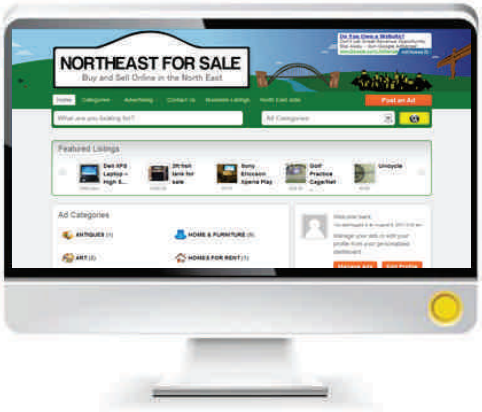
3 FOR £5

Each person gets 1x25ml Jägermeister and ½ can Monster Energy.

Subject to local licensing restrictions and availability at participating free houses.
*Cocktail pitchers contain 4x single measure. Excludes energy drinks. (See drinks menu for details).

drinkaware.co.uk Lloyds No.1 Bar wetherspoon

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