

VOICE OF THE

DAILY Mirror

Face up to paying tax

HERE is one story that nobody is going to like on Facebook.

The social media giant had UK revenues of £1.65 billion last year but paid just £28.5 million in tax. You do not need to be a maths expert to realise that Facebook is taking the British taxpayer for a massive ride.

The company uses clever accounting to lower its tax bill by shifting its profits overseas. It is technically legal but morally abhorrent.

Facebook employs staff who are educated at our schools and universities, cared for by our health service and protected by our police.

It benefits from our expertise and infrastructure but balks at making a fair contribution towards their cost. When firms such as this leech off the state it is the rest of us who pick up the bill through higher taxes.

We need new laws that force global giants to pay taxes in the countries where they sell and make products.

EU deal fragile

BORIS Johnson was forced to the negotiating table after Parliament rightly blocked his path to a no-deal Brexit.

Against the odds there is now a chance that an agreement with the EU can be reached.

There is still much to do in a short space of time to nail down a workable deal. This fragile compromise could collapse and there is no guarantee it will be passed by the Commons.

It is sensible for everyone to withhold judgement until the exact details are published.

Labour and the trade unions are not going to endorse a Brexit that tramples on our precious employment rights and opens the door of our NHS to US health giants.

Many will welcome a deal but not one that sells out workers and the health service.

Saddest cuddle

WATCHING young Gabriella Zaghari-Ratcliffe reunite with her father Richard was rather bittersweet.

The joy of seeing the child hug her dad was mixed with sadness that her mother Nazanin is still in an Iranian jail.

#WAGATHACHRISTIE

I would like to categorically deny that Russia had any involvement in hacking Rebekah Vardy's Instagram account...



SHOUTING LAGER, LAGER, LAGER...

by Will Hawkes

Food and drink writer

LAGER has taken a kicking in recent years. The king of the British bar-top has found itself under constant attack as craft beer advances on all fronts.

"Macroswill", "yellow fizz", "cooking lager": these are some of the nicer things the craft crowd have had to say about Britain's favourite pint. It seems the message is getting through.

Lager sales are falling through the floor as drinkers turn to low-ABV and craft options. Carlsberg is down 11%, Beck's 26% and Carling 3%. It looks like curtains - but I'm not sure it is. The battle may have been lost but lager is going to win the war. Why? Because it's delicious and, crucially, easy-drinking.

The diversity of craft beer is wonderful - I love Burning Sky and The Kernel as much as the next middle-aged, middle-class man - and I drink more than my fair share of great cask ales like Harvey's. But there is no beer in the world that goes down better than good lager, the perfect pub pint.

I'm not talking about Carling or Peroni (a triumph of marketing that often costs more than craft beers) but proper lager, the kind you find in its native lands, Bavaria and Bohemia.

Lager there is truly delicious and diverse: it can be golden, like our

lagers, amber or even black. It can be cloudy or clear as a bell. It can be fizzy or as softly textured as a cask ale.

It can taste rich, sweet, toasty, smoked or bitter and much more. It's served in large glasses or, even better, steinkrugs, stoneware mugs.

Let's be honest - our lagers, served in Nonic glasses with half a centimetre of apologetic foam, have never been that appealing. But now

they're starting to be. A new generation of brewers, inspired by craft beer but turned off by hop-heavy ales, are

brewing great lagers in the central European tradition. I'm talking about Lost & Grounded, whose Keller Pils is Bavaria in a Bristolian glass, or Donzoko, the Hartlepool outfit turning out delicious pale lager.

Then there's Braybrooke, whose superb amber Kellerbier is inspired by Franconia, Bavaria's northern third, or Thornbridge, a brewery famous for its delicious hoppy pale ales but whose best beer is Lukas - a Helles, the style beloved in Munich.

Even Carlsberg changed their recipe earlier this year to attract some of the craft custom. And one of the most popular "craft" beers, Camden Hells, is a lager. They've recently built a huge new brewery in Enfield, North London, to keep up with demand.

The message is clear: drinkers still want lager, they just want it tastier. Hopheads should enjoy it while they can. Lager is on the way back and it's better than ever.

MY TOP FIVE

- 1 Ayinger Altbairisch Dunkel
- 2 Braybrooke Keller
- 3 Lost & Grounded Keller Pils
- 4 Pilsner Urquell
- 5 Thornbridge Lukas



Lager rout...



Sales are flat as craft ales fizz...which drink's better?

BY STEVE MYALL

THE glass certainly looks half-empty for mass-produced lagers as sales plunge by up to 25%.

Drinkers are deserting the traditional tippie, often associated with rowdy footie fans, for craft beers that appeal to more affluent drinkers, hipsters and

women. But is there really a danger of time being called on lager? And is craft beer more than fad and hype?

Here, a devotee of each camp sets out their case.

And they also reveal there may be common ground by making an identical pick in their top fives...

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PUTTING IN THE HARD CRAFT...

by Richard Salthouse

Owner of Salthouse Bottles, Brockley, London

WE are careful using the term "craft beer" as there is no agreed definition and it carries no guarantees - anybody can stick the label on any beer.

Any definition is subjective but ours would be independently produced, flavour-focused, high-quality beer.

It can be new and innovative, traditional, or a mixture of both. But for me it must taste great and be made with integrity. So "craft beer" is also about making a quality-driven product with care and independence.

What craft beer is not is mass-produced and owned by large firms intent on driving up margins by using cheaper ingredients, disconnected from customers and communities, or disinterested in supporting the rest of the industry or its employees. Or bland.

On a local scale, craft beers are sold to customers through specialist independent shops and bars. At Salthouse Bottles, our best-selling brewery, Villages, is down the road in Deptford and, like us, founded in late 2016. We have grown together and these close relationships let customers build a closer connection to the beer.

Customers are being introduced to new beer styles and flavours. And word has spread - one-time small local

breweries like Camden Town (now owned by AB Inbev), Beavertown (now partially owned by Heineken), Magic Rock (now owned by Lion) and Northern Monk are established regional and national brands. As more people get into craft beer, so the supermarkets and pub groups have begun to satisfy the growing demand.

Much of the craft industry has close links with the creative quarters of our major cities. Collaborations between breweries and artists are

common. Craft beer bottles and cans have a different look - eye-catching, easily identified as something "other". In terms of an experience and a person's identity, this "other" is a world away from the humdrum of macro.

In the past, many of us would have defaulted to macro-brewed lager partly because that's what our friends and parents drank and partly as there was no real alternative on offer. Now, more people know more is out there. They have found, primarily, American-style pale ales and all of the flavour packed within. They expect more than macro lager is offering and to find craft beers in bars, pubs, shops and supermarkets.

Macro lagers simply aren't good enough - corners and costs are cut in large-scale production. Craft beer is in some way a reaction against this.

Customers now have a choice between unremarkable macro lagers and flavour-driven craft beers. I know which I prefer.

MY TOP FIVE

- 1 Affinity Breeze
- 2 The Marble Pint
- 3 Pressure Drop Pale Fire
- 4 Villages Rodeo
- 5 Lost & Grounded Keller Pils

