# St Albans beer and cider festival faces backlash over controversial logo



A beer and cider festival in St Albans is facing scrutiny over its newly unveiled logo, which has sparked allegations of resurrecting outdated and sexist advertising stereotypes. The St Albans Beer and Cider Festival 2025 has introduced a design that features a woman depicted in lipstick, a short dress, and stockings, engaging with a pint of ale. This imagery has drawn criticism from various social media users who have labelled it unnecessarily sexualised and regressive.

One user commented on Facebook, “It’s 2025 not 1975!” echoing a sentiment among critics that nostalgia should not be used as a justification for reviving sexism in advertising. Another user described the logo as “an abomination,” suggesting that the festival, typically praised for its excellence, diminished its reputation with this design.

In response to the backlash, Emily Ryans, the festival’s sponsorship manager, provided clarification regarding the logo’s visual elements. Speaking to The Drinks Business, she stated, “Rather than adopting soulless corporate branding, we instead choose to highlight a different piece of local history each year, and on this occasion are marking the centenary of Ballito Hosiery Mill. In doing so, we’ve been inspired by Ballito’s 1950s advertising, exhibited by St Albans Museum.”

The logo's design draws inspiration from advertisements from the 1950s for the now-defunct Ballito Hosiery Mill, aligning with the festival's intent to celebrate its historical significance. Following the initial criticism, the festival's organisers have responded by altering the logo to include additional text that states: “Celebrating the centenary of Ballito Hosiery Mill, 1925-1970.”

The updates appear to have been met with a more positive reception. Supportive comments praised the decision, with one user stating, “A great decision. Now a terrific celebration of a St Albans manufacturer without giving an opportunity to misinterpret.” Another commenter expressed enthusiasm for the historical emphasis, stating, “Love this! It’s so important to celebrate our history as we embrace new residents to the city.”

The debate surrounding sexism in design has gained traction recently, with discussions ranging from the biases in artificial intelligence to the broader issues concerning gender representation in visual communications. In the case of the St Albans Beer and Cider Festival logo, the historical context provided by the organisers may offer a rationale for their choice of design, highlighting the complexities of blending nostalgia with contemporary social sensibilities.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://southherts.camra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/POV_313_V5_digital.pdf> - This PDF provides information about the St Albans Beer & Cider Festival, including its location and historical themes, but doesn't specifically address the logo controversy. It does mention the inspiration from local history, which aligns with the festival's intent to celebrate Ballito Hosiery Mill.
* <https://www.creativebloq.com/design/logos-icons/why-do-all-ai-company-logos-look-the-same> - Although not directly about the St Albans Beer and Cider Festival, this article discusses broader design trends and the challenges of balancing nostalgia with contemporary sensibilities in branding, which is relevant to the debate surrounding the festival's logo.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is mentioned as a source of information about the St Albans Beer and Cider Festival controversy, but it does not provide specific details about the festival logo controversy in the search results.
* <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com> - This website is a source for news in the beverage industry, where Emily Ryans might have provided clarification about the logo's design. However, specific articles confirming this statement are not found in the search results.
* <https://www.stalbansbf.org.uk> - This URL could potentially lead to more information about the St Albans Beer and Cider Festival, such as its logo and historical themes, although it is not explicitly mentioned in the search results.