For those investigating the pubs and publicans of Buckinghamshire an array of information is available to draw on. There is a very good chance of finding out about the history of a pub, or at least about the successive licensees. The first structured attempts to control licensing were made in the 16th Century; the earliest list for Buckinghamshire held at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) is dated 1577. You may well find earlier mentions of pubs in deeds, manorial records or other sources. This guide will point you in the direction of the resources held at CBS to illuminate historians of Buckinghamshire pubs and their publicans.

Printed sources
Before starting work on a pub history, it is worth checking what work has already been undertaken on the building. Pubs are extremely visible and durable landmarks in a town or village, and are therefore frequently mentioned in general histories. For some parishes, lists of the public houses known to have existed at various times have been published and parish histories will quite often mention local inns.

Good examples are:
Elizabeth Knight's ‘Old Inns of Olney’ (Barracuda Books, 1981; in Archives search-room).
Robert Gibbs's ‘History of Aylesbury’ (privately printed, 1885; in Archives search-room and Local Studies Library) pp. 400 onwards gives descriptions of many of the ancient pubs in the town.
D.J. Elliott's Buckingham (Phillimore, 1975; in Local Studies Library) pp. 186-205.
Julian Hunt and David Thorpe’s ‘Beaconsfield A History’ (Phillimore, 2009; in Local Studies Library) includes several pages on the inns and innkeepers of the town pp. 55-68.

Another good source is Mike Brown's ‘ABC: A Brewers’ Compendium A Directory of Buckinghamshire Brewers’ (Brewery History Society, 2007; in Archives search-room and Local Studies Library). The book focuses more on brewing than beer retailing, but mentions of individual houses are frequent. Those pubs where brewing is known to have taken place on site (like the Wharf Inn, Stantonbury for instance) are mentioned more often. There is a useful glossary for those getting started in brewery history.
For the relatively recent past, back to the mid 19th century, trade directories like Pigot's or Kelly's provide useful pointers. The directories were published every few years and provide listings of the tradesmen in a town. Pubs are often included with the name of their licensee and the sign of the house. Smaller establishments where a full licence had not been granted might have a listing only for the licensee with the name of the house from which they sold their beer omitted.

Entry in a directory required the payment of a fee so the directories do not necessarily provide a comprehensive list. Local Studies holds directories for the county from 1792 up to the mid 20th Century. A smaller selection of directories is available in the Archives search-room too. Several thousand trade directory entries are available through a database on www.buckscc.gov.uk/archives, and whole directories are accessible through the CBS subscription to Ancestry.co.uk.

More modern references can be found in the files in the Local Studies Library. These contain a variety of pamphlets, articles and other material of local interest, a selection of which concern pubs and related subjects. They can include items on pub sign artists and newly established or wholly rebuilt public houses. The files generally date from the last 30 years but some earlier material is also included.

Transcribed records
A number of the records relating to Buckinghamshire held at CBS and elsewhere have been transcribed by organisations such as the Buckinghamshire Record Society. Transcriptions can be found in both the Archives search-room and the Local Studies Library. None deal specifically with pubs but you can often pick up casual references to pubs or landlords. Of particular interest are the published Bucks Sessions Records, covering 1678-1730. Some lists of licences are provided; for instance volume 8 includes licences granted for the hundreds of Ashendon, Aylesbury, Buckingham and Cottesloe in October 1730. Offences connected with "tipling", illicit games and keeping unlicensed alehouses were frequently tried at Quarter Sessions, but these are often difficult to trace in the original records. The index to the published versions provides more assistance. It is rare, however, for these entries to mention the name of the house.

Indexes to the records of the Sun and Phoenix Fire Insurance Companies for parts of the 18th Century are available in the Local Studies Library in bound and microfiche format. Take up of fire insurance in an age before a proper fire service was widespread, so the records of the companies offering the product are useful sources. Many innkeepers are among the company's clients. The originals are held in the Guildhall library, and full transcriptions for a few Buckinghamshire towns are available on the website of local historian Julian Hunt (http://www.julianhuntlocalhistory.co.uk/).
Archive sources
Most of the original records relating to licensing in Buckinghamshire are held in the Archive strong-rooms and get be consulted in the Archives search-room. Useful records can be found in several collections:

**Wulcko Collection**
The Wulcko papers contain much systematically collected information about licensed premises in this and neighbouring counties and can save researchers much time. In many cases, Mr Wulcko has used the sources listed below and it is therefore useful to go through his papers relatively early in the research to avoid unnecessary duplication. The list to his papers is in the search-room (ref: D119) and online via Access to Archives (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a).

**Quarter Sessions**
The Court of Quarter Sessions had a range of administrative responsibilities as well as judicial ones. Consequently, their records include a number of items of use to pub historians. The most consistent series are the registers of licensed victuallers, 1753-1828 (ref: Q/RLv). The registers give lists of ‘the several Innkeepers Alehousekeepers and Victuallers’ licenced by the Justices of the Peace at Quarter Sessions. The sign of the house is not always given before 1760. Sadly, the series ends with the passing of the Licensing Act in 1828, a piece of legislation that did not compel the Clerk of the Peace to retain records. The boroughs of Buckingham and High Wycombe, which had their own courts of Quarter Sessions are not included. A separate register for Buckingham, 1790-1828, is among the town's records (ref: B/Buc 5/5/1).

Level of detail provided by the first Register of Licensed Victuallers, Q/RPL 1 (above) and the last, Q/RPL 8 (below).
Return of public houses in Buckinghamshire, 1872 (ref: Q/AP/26/11) was a one off printed return of public houses, beerhouses and grocers with outdoor licences made in connection with the Licensing Act 1872. It gives names of licensees and owners (ownership details are not given in the victuallers register) and the date of first licensing. A set of photocopies is available in Box 24 in the Archives search-room and from staff in the Local Studies Library.

The minutes of the Buckinghamshire Licensing Committee, 1904-1951 (ref: Q/CM 4/1-4) record proceedings concerning the de-licensing of many public houses in the county and the awarding of compensation as well as the confirmation of new licences. They give many interesting details of trading statistics, etc.

Petty Sessions
The notion of "Brewster Sessions" developed from early in the 18th century into a specific Petty Sessions responsibility in the course of that century. It was at those sessions that initial applications for licensing were made. Few records survive for Buckinghamshire until another change in the law in 1872 (some papers from Aylesbury in the 1830s are the exception). New licensing divisions were created that corresponded with the Petty Sessions divisions. A number of registers of licensed premises will therefore be found among the records of the Petty Sessions from this date until the 1960s or 1970s. The sequence is incomplete for most divisions; the majority of the registers not deposited with CBS are assumed to be lost.

Photographs and post cards
The major collection of photographs from the County Library and County Museum (deposited in the Archives) are available at the on-line Buckinghamshire Photographs pages (http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/historicphotos). Another collection of photographs covering the Wycombe and South Bucks area is available through Sharing Wycombe’s Old Photographs (http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/swop).

Other, small collections of photographs are deposited here and are listed in our photographs catalogue. In general, however, photos are as likely to show the whole of the high street of a village as the individual public house, like this photo of the White Cross at Askett (ref: PHX/233/22).
Records of brewing companies
Several brewing companies have deposited records in the Archives. Among the companies represented are: Wheeler’s Wycombe Brewery (ref: D147); Weller’s of Amersham (ref: D222 and D/X1458), Meacher’s of Ivinghoe (ref: D123), Allied Breweries (ref: D254) and Wethereds of Marlow (ref: D177 and D253).

The contents of brewery archives vary significantly from company to company. Many brewery collections contain substantial quantities of deeds relating to the pubs and brewhouses owned by the brewers. These can be invaluable in establishing when houses passed from one brewery to the next, for descriptions of the property and sometimes in giving names of landlords or tenants. Elsewhere in the records you might also find financial and administrative records, details of beer production, memorabilia, promotional material and photographs, many of which could assist in tracing the history of a pub. Some of the more useful are discussed below.

Estate books:
The collections of Allied Breweries include estate books from Roberts and Wilson of Ivinghoe (1888-1907 and 1915-1927), Wellers of Amersham (1879-1929) and the Aylesbury Brewery Company (1890-1960). They contain a range of different information. Some are inventories of the fixtures and fittings in a house, others record changes in the people running a pub. They can contain personal information, so are subject to a guideline 100 year closure period.

In this example from the Weller Estate Book covering 1879-1899 John Finch has been evicted from the Bank of England pub on Dean Street in Marlow (since demolished and replaced by flats). Finch, and his six children, are being removed because of his conviction at Marlow Petty Sessions for opening the pub out of hours. References have been taken up for his replacement, Charles Grace. Grace’s record in the army and at a local brickmaker’s was enough to land him the position. A later entry records that Grace was himself only to last 4 years in the pub.
Title Deeds:
Title deeds, if they survive, can provide much information about both the building and the landlords. It is worth remembering that public houses were not necessarily always put to that use, and may have been private dwelling houses at some time in their existence. Title deeds relating to public houses can be found either as part of brewery company archives or deposited as part of a private or estate collection. Perhaps the most useful of these are the omnibus deeds found in some brewery collections. The Weller papers (ref: D254/2) include several where large portions of the family estates have been conveyed. A conveyance of 1909 records the sale of Weller houses in over one hundred towns and villages. Title deeds held in the Archives are mentioned in the topographical indexes, or, for items deposited between 1976 and 1995, in the index to the Annual Reports. It is worth searching the CBS catalogues available electronically via Access to Archives to look for matches.

Maps
It is useful to establish the physical presence of the building on maps: Ordnance Survey (OS) maps mark "P.H.s" clearly, sometimes with the pub sign. Earlier maps vary in their scope and coverage and are therefore less predictable. Some are maps of a particular land owner’s estate and may only show pubs if that person owned them. Others are more comprehensive and are more likely to include them. The best maps are generally the Tithe maps (dated c.1840) quite often include the sign of the house. The map catalogues in the Archive search-room give details and dates of all maps held, by parish. The Domesday valuation maps (right) of c.1910 are based on OS maps and are accompanied by valuation books giving owner and occupier information for the property assessed.

Aylesbury town centre is particularly well served with maps. Both Rutt’s Eye Draught of 1809 (copy available in Box 24 in the Archives search-room) and a 1951 planning map from the papers of the Chesham and Brackley Brewery (ref: D254/3, extract shown left) show the names and locations of the town’s pubs very clearly.
Sale catalogues
Publicity materials released by auctioneers and valuers in advance of a sale can include some tremendously valuable information. The sale particulars might include details of the number of rooms in the property, any outside buildings like malthouses or barns and possibly the name of the tenant.

Sale particulars were generally released when the land in question was large or valuable. Inns (licensed premises with accommodation) are more likely to appear than simple pubs, unless the pub also had associated land. You will often find them mentioned being sold as one part of larger landed estates, or possibly as part of the sale of an entire brewery. The 1875 sale catalogue for the Newport Pagnell Brewery lists 34 public houses for instance. (ref: D/GA/Sc/2/11). A small percentage of sale catalogues (like the one for Denham Court estate below) have surviving maps to accompany them as well.

Sale catalogue entry (above) and section from accompanying plan (right) for the Queen’s Head Inn, Denham (1857, ref: SC/130).

The map is very detailed, and predates the large scale OS map of the area by around 30 years.
Other avenues
Before the mid 19th century and the building of parish rooms, public houses were often used as meeting places. Thus minutes of vestry or of certain Friendly Society meetings will mention the name of the public house where the event took place.

It is difficult to trace architectural alterations and development from manuscript sources listed above. The fact that one may be able to show that there was a building on the same site for 300 years does not prove that it has always been the same building. If the building is listed, schedules of listed buildings can be seen in the Archives.

The diary of Sir Roger Hill, JP, lists people granted alehouse licences in Petty Sessions for Stoke Hundred, 1690-2, 1703-5, but does not give names of the houses (Ref: D/W 97/8). A photocopy is available in the Archives search-room Box 24.

The embryonic occupations index in the search room will give some names for occupations associated with various aspects of the trade. Names can also be checked in land tax assessments (Ref: Q/RPL) and electoral registers (Ref: R/E).

A public house brokers' register (A. Morley and Son, Maidenhead), covering the years 1900-c.1912, contains many references to Buckinghamshire public houses

Entry for the New Inn, Bletchley from the Morley and Son broker’s register, D/X 724 from November 1911.
Copies of original records held elsewhere

The Return of Vintners, etc., for Buckinghamshire, 1577 lists licensees by parish but does not give signs of houses. The Archives has a copy of the original which is in the National Archives at Kew (D/X 423).

Accounts of licensing commissioners, 1617-20. The records of this short-lived national scheme for licensing list some of the larger inns in each county. Licences granted by the commissioners were known as 'Mompesson Licences' after Sir Giles Mompesson, special commissioner heading the scheme. It was abandoned in 1621 with Mompesson’s imprisonment amid wide ranging charges of corruption. The Archives has a copy under reference D/X 648. The original is in the British Library.

Factors to bear in mind when doing pub history

Name changes – The names of some pubs are remarkably static; Aylesbury’s King’s Head has been known by that name since it was built in the mid 16th Century. However, others change their name fairly regularly and for inexplicable reasons. Other name changes are more easy to understand. For instance The King of Prussia in Farnham Royal became the Emperor of India during World War I for patriotic reasons. It is always worth attempting to confirm that a pub listed by a particular sign in one time period is the same as the one with that name in a different period.

Different levels of pubs – Today’s pubs have a fairly uniform range of products on sale. However, in the past, there varying grades of house. Larger buildings with accommodation were known as inns, public houses had licences to sell both beer and spirits, and beer houses were only able to sell beer. Publicans often had more than one occupation, so it is not uncommon to find people listed in directories as ‘Farmer and beerseller’.

Replicated pub signs – You may sometimes find that two different pubs in a town have the same sign. In Wycombe, licensed premises by the name of the White Horse existed in both Crendon Lane and on the Oxford Road. When records will frequently provide no better explanation of the location of a property than ‘the White

Other relevant organisations
Readers interested in this subject might want to consider contacting the Brewery History Society (http://www.breweryhistory.com/) or the Pub History Society (http://www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk/).