



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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Keep Pubs Afloat Campaign – Campaign for Real Ale

Thank you for contacting me about CAMRA's campaign to keep pubs open.

Pubs play a crucial role in the social and economic life of our nation. The British Beer and Pub Association estimate that each pub contributes £80,000 each year to its local economy.

I am pleased to be able to say that the pub sector is being supported in a range of ways.

Through the Asset of Community Value scheme, communities can list facilities of local importance, such as pubs. This means that if a pub owner wishes to sell, the community has six months to come up with a plan and funding in order to try to save it. I am glad that there are now around 2,000 pubs across England listed as assets of community value.

Measures have been introduced to ensure that tied pub tenants are fairly and lawfully treated by pub companies. Tied pubs are covered by a statutory code with an independent adjudicator to resolve disputes. Many pubs have also benefited from the Government's package on business rates for small businesses. The Spring Budget provided a £1,000 discount on business rates bills in 2017 for 90 per cent of pubs.

Tax on beer will only increase by RPI inflation this year, in line with previous forecasts. This follows the removal of the beer duty escalator in 2013 and the unprecedented freeze in beer duty.

There is also greater flexibility on weights and measures, allowing beer and wine to be sold in different sizes. It is easier now for pubs to play live music and £350,000 has been provided for the Pub is The Hub initiative and the Plunkett Foundation to help landlords diversify and provide essential services such as village shops and post offices.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP