



**Craig Whittaker MP**

**CALDER VALLEY**

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**Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA)**

Thank you for contacting me about the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

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 glad 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.

I am pleased that the Autumn Budget announced that duties on beer, cider, wine and spirits will be frozen in 2018.

Many pubs have also benefited from the Government's package on business rates for small businesses. The Spring Budget 2017 also provided a £1,000 discount on business rates bills in 2017 for pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000 – 90 per cent of pubs in England – and I was encouraged to see this extended in the Autumn Budget for one more year to March 2019.

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 £320,000 has been provided for the Pub is The Hub initiative 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