

October 2018

Dear Constituent

Thank you for contacting me about support for pubs.

I understand your concern regarding the future of alcohol duty and I look forward to hearing more about this at the forthcoming Autumn Budget. Furthermore, I recognise the crucial role that pubs play in the social and economic life of our nation, as well as in helping to promote responsible drinking, which is why I am encouraged by the support which the Government has made available to pubs.

Through the Asset of Community Value scheme, communities can list facilities of local importance, including 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 £3.6 million 'More than a Pub: The Community Business Support Programme', launched in March 2016, is helping to support communities across England to own their local pub. On top of this, the Government continues to support the work of the Pub is The Hub initiative to help landlords diversify and provide essential services, such as village shops and post offices, in order to improve the sustainability of their pub.

To support pubs further, the Chancellor's announced in the Autumn Budget 2017 a freeze on all alcohol duties for 2018, a decision which I welcomed. 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 pleased to see this extended in the Autumn Budget for a further year, through to March 2019.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.
Yours sincerely



Richard Benyon