**MP Letter template**

I am writing to you as one of your constituents who operates a pub locally, to ask for your commitment to back a reduction to the unfair tax burden pubs like ours face with a reduction in VAT. This investment will allow us to weather the storm of escalating costs, invest in our teams and diverse businesses and continue to be at the heart of our communities.

Pubs have continued to face the most extreme trading conditions that they have ever seen. Food and drink costs having risen by 40% over the last 24 months, energy costs for many are 2 to 3 times higher than pre-pandemic levels and wage costs have risen significantly to attract and retain staff. The National Living Wage (NLW) will have been increased 40% from 2020 when the newly announced levels come into force in April 2024.

The recognition by Government of the value of pubs at the heart of communities and high streets through the extension in Business Rates Relief for a further year in 2024/25 was greatly welcomed. This will not add additional costs to businesses like ours but many of us that are still paying covid debts, tackling escalating costs whilst maintaining an affordable experience for our customers. These pressures cannot simply be passed through to customers as this will devastate levels of trade and drive further inflation.

Whilst sales for many are positive, this does not convert to profit and ultimately sustainable businesses. Recent data from a British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) member survey highlighted that whilst 3 out of 4 pubs have not generated a profit in 2023. Pubs continue to provide strong levels of taxation to the Treasury, but this is simply not sustainable without investment in pub businesses like ours.

At the full budget early in 2024 the Chancellor has an opportunity to provide the investment in pubs that will power growth in the economy through a reduction in tax via VAT. This will prevent unnecessary business failure, unlock investment in pub teams & businesses and enable the growth potential in every community.

I am asking you to raise this request, with your backing, directly with the Chancellor ahead of the full budget early in 2024 to secure this vital support that we and many other pubs need.

Thank you in advance for your support and if you have the time to visit and discuss this with us we would greatly appreciate a visit to one of your local pubs.