



**Marie Rimmer CBE, MP**  
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### **Support for Pubs:**

I appreciate the concerns raised on this issue. Pubs are still recovering from the pandemic and are now being hit by the cost-of-living crisis, both through increased staff, energy and other costs and through consumers having less money to spend on going out. I am concerned that the Government has failed to protect businesses in the hospitality sector and allowed the running down of our high streets.

I note the specific things CAMRA is calling for ahead of the Budget on 6 March. On duty on draught beer and cider, the Government has said it is monitoring the impact of the relief alongside other changes to alcohol duty and that it will evaluate this impact three years after the changes took effect on 1 August 2023.

It has nevertheless said it keeps all taxes under review, as it has also said in response to calls to reduce VAT on hospitality businesses. On draught relief for takeaway beer and cider, meanwhile, it argues that it is right that drinks to be consumed off-site pay the full rate of duty. I can assure constituents that I will continue to monitor these issues and I hope the Government gives proper consideration to the concerns highlighted by some constituents.

More widely, I believe one way to help businesses such as pubs to thrive again would be reform of business rates. That is why I believe it is disappointing that the Government has failed to deliver on the fundamental review of the business rates system that it promised in 2019. I am committed to supporting plans to scrap the current system and replace it with one fit for the current economy.

This approach would shift the burden away from high street businesses such as those in the hospitality sector – which continue to shoulder an undue burden compared to online businesses – incentivise investment, promote entrepreneurship and reward businesses that move into empty premises.

I believe this new system would help the hospitality sector to thrive once again, alongside wider plans to revive local high streets.

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