



BRITISH INSTITUTE OF INNKEEPING

Infor House
1 Lakeside Road
Farnborough
GU14 6XP

T 01276 684449
E membership@bii.org
W www.bii.org

Rt. Hon. Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

9th July 2020

Dear Chancellor,

Safeguarding the Future of Pubs - Priority Business Support

We are writing to you as the leading independent membership body for individuals working in the licensed trade, with the majority of our 8,500 members being licensees of pubs. As part of the Government Taskforce for reopening pubs and restaurants, we have provided information to the team in BEIS on the concerns of our members around safety of their teams and customers, the financial realities they are facing and the impact on profitability of physical distancing measures.

Over the course of the closure period for our pubs, you have recognised the unique position that they play in our communities and high streets and many of them have been able to access the package of financial measures that you have put in place. As our pubs start to reopen, they will be vital to our social fabric; to providing employment in all areas of the UK, from rural communities to town centres, and for delivering much needed revenue back into the Treasury.

The steps you took yesterday to encourage customers back into our pubs over the summer are welcomed and we know that our innovative, professional members will do all they can to ensure those customers have a safe and enjoyable experience. We also recognise the investment you are putting into the development of new jobs, particularly for young people and we believe our sector can be a huge part of delivering not just great jobs, but incredible careers for those that are the future of our industry as well as our country.

All of this however, is dependent on having sustainable pubs, serving those customers and nurturing and developing those employees. The incredibly high costs of reopening safely, restarting their supply chains, and the limited capacity within their venues due to distancing measures, means that even with high consumer confidence, the majority of our pubs will be loss making for many months to come. Also for many of our traditional pubs they will see less value from the measures that you have announced, as food only plays a small part in what they do.





BRITISH INSTITUTE OF INNKEEPING

Infor House
1 Lakeside Road
Farnborough
GU14 6XP

T 01276 684449
E membership@bii.org
W www.bii.org

A key area we have consistently asked for is further extension of grant support for all sizes of pubs, and we now feel that this is critical for their survival over the coming months. Only when our pubs are back on their feet again, can they begin to look to the future and play their significant part in rebuilding our economy. We understand the original investment in grant based support was not fully utilised and would propose you consider a specific restart grant for pubs of all sizes irrespective of rateable value. This would recognise their investment in time and money making their venues safe whilst trading at levels that will be loss making for many for some time.

The stark reality for our members is that they entered lockdown after a traditionally quiet time of year and now, with little or no cash reserves to see them through their initial loss making period and with mortgage, rent and utility arrears stacking up, many of their businesses will fail without further support.

Pubs are so much more than businesses however. For many of our members, they are family livelihoods and homes. They stand to lose everything. They are an essential part of the UK, delivering tangible social value in inclusively bringing people together; a vital link between the economy and the community spirit that has held our country together during this crisis. To lose them during those fragile first months of trading would be devastating to communities and the economy across the whole of the United Kingdom.

Throughout this pandemic we have been providing Government with insight from our members on their ability to access support, its impact and the financial realities of pubs. We will be conducting further research in the coming weeks and would be able to share the impact of your measures and further support on pub businesses to ensure that we safeguard their valuable futures.

We would welcome further discussion with you and your team on how we can make this happen.

Yours sincerely,

Steven Alton
Chief Executive,
British Institute of Innkeeping (BII)