

Mrs Anne Main MP
St Albans



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

21 November 2018

Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer,

I am writing to you in relation to the business rates applied to pubs across the country, and especially to the many pubs in my constituency of St Albans.

I wanted to contact you after meeting with local publicans and visiting several of the pubs that are being heavily impacted by business rates in St Albans. I have also been contacted by hundreds of local people who share the severe concerns many in the pub industry have about the impact of business rates on their pubs.

Pubs in St Albans have made it absolutely clear to me that the measures that have been introduced by the government will see pubs close, jobs lost and will have a detrimental impact on our high streets and on the lives of so many people who enjoying going to their local pub. So far, 10% of pubs in St Albans have closed due to cost pressures since the business rate reform and this will, sadly, continue.

The majority of pubs in St Albans have seen an average of a 56% increase in rateable value since business rate reform. This is an average of £19,000 per pub. One of the pubs I recently visited said they would need to sell an additional 22,000 pints to cover the additional £51,000 in business rates they will have to pay. This is simply unsustainable.

The recently announced budget rate relief, which is a welcomed step across the country, did almost nothing for the majority of pubs in St Albans. This was mainly due to the high value of property in

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the area and the flawed Fair Maintenance Trade formula. I accept this will help in many areas across the country, but for high value areas like St Albans, that is not the case.

We should be doing everything we can to support small business owners, sadly the business rate policy is doing nothing to support pubs and their owners in St Albans.

Local pubs are calling for the budget business rate relief cut to apply to all pubs for the first £51,000 in rateable values. They also wish to see an urgent review that will look into the fairness and benefit of future business rate reform.

These requests seem completely reasonable and I strongly believe the government should adopt these measures in order to provide vital support for this industry.

I would like you to take some time to meet with publicans from my constituency to discuss these pressing issues for their businesses.

Considering the groundswell of opinion on this issue locally, I sincerely hope you, or a member of your ministerial team, will be able to meet with me and local pub owners at your earliest convenience. I would be grateful if your office could liaise with mine to arrange this at MAINA@PARLIAMENT.UK

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne Main".

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