

# **A City for All Londoners – Consultation**

## **Response from the British Beer & Pub Association**



## **Response of the British Beer and Pub Association to the consultation on 'a city for all Londoners'**

The British Beer & Pub Association is the UK's leading organisation representing the brewing and pub sector. Its members account for 96 per cent of the beer brewed in the UK and own almost half of Britain's 50,000 pubs. The pub sector contributes over £18 billion to the economy and employs in the region of 600,000 people. Over 80% of pubs (i.e. nearly 40,000 outlets) are small businesses which are independently managed or run by self-employed licensees.

The BBPA welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation and believes that, given its substantial role in representing the brewing and pub sectors, it can provide useful input into the Mayor's vision for London on aspects of culture, economic development, and crime and public safety.

### **Culture**

First and foremost, pubs constitute an important part of any local economy and are quintessentially British institutions, enjoyed throughout the capital by both residents and tourists. It is important to recognise the cultural significance of pubs as well as the social benefits that accompany their use. Pubs are diverse and present a range of offers alongside the consumption of alcohol such as food, music, games and other forms of entertainment. They are synonymous with a British social culture that should be recognised and protected. Recent research has indicated that pubs play a vital role within community cohesion and have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of those who frequent them, including with the moderate consumption of alcohol<sup>1</sup>.

Pubs are not only of cultural significance to locals and nearby residents. Tourists view pubs as a uniquely British experience with 600 million day visits to a pub by tourists in 2015<sup>2</sup>. In fact, visiting a pub is the third most popular activity for someone visiting the UK on holiday. If business visits are included, it becomes the second most popular activity<sup>3</sup>. Undoubtedly then, pubs are considered to be culturally significant by tourists and this will further have a significant impact on economic development for the capital.

### **Economic Development**

The BBPA also recognises the economic value of licensed premises to the UK economy and considers them to be a major factor in London's economic development. In the UK, pubs alone contribute over £18 billion to the economy on an annual basis, and create around 600,000 jobs. The industry also employs around 44% of young people and provided £1.47 billion in investment last year. Yet pubs, often acting as small businesses, are faced with an increasing number of costs and regulatory burdens that hamper the ability of the sector to reach its full economic potential. The

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.camra.org.uk/documents/10180/36197/Friends+on+Tap/2c68585b-e47d-42ca-bda6-5d6b3e4c0110>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Office for National Statistics, Tourism Intelligence Unit

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.visitbritain.com/gb/en>

BBPA recognises that it is important to properly regulate licensed premises and has always supported the five principles of better regulation (proportionality, accountability, consistency, transparency and targeting). We have continually highlighted to Government that all regulation relating to the sector must be necessary, well-evidenced and proportionate. We are also supportive of the regulator's economic growth duty, whereby regulators must take account of the economic and employment benefits businesses bring to an area.

Pubs are highly regulated businesses, absorbing the cost and social impact of new legal provisions. The Association has been concerned about the increasing levels of legislation, regulation, red tape and gold plating that has impacted on the pub sector in recent years and the vast majority of pubs are small businesses. The Licensing Act 2003, which came into effect in July 2005, has undergone a number of changes. We calculate there have been at least 23 significant legislative changes to the licensing regime since 2005 via both primary and secondary legislation, which in our view has not helped the system 'bed in' and has led to a lack of clarity for both operators of licensed premises and enforcement agencies and added additional cost to business.

The 2003 Act was the result of a thorough examination of the previous licensing system and a need to modernise it. Measures introduced since then such as the Late Night Levy and Early Morning Restriction Orders, do not address problematic individuals and how they behave - which is the root cause of anti-social behaviour. Enforcement agencies have the powers to tackle such people and the licensed trade should not be penalised when the authorities choose not use their powers effectively.

Indeed, London's night time economy is particularly important to the UK economy. Yet here licensing is used as the primary regulatory tool and, rather than working proactively to expand a diverse and vibrant night-time offer, in some areas the value of the night time economy is not recognised.

In some areas policies can be negative - Cumulative Impact Policies and Late Night Levies for example - which leads to negative perceptions of the night time economy and it is seen as something to be restricted and minimised. Instead, licensing should recognise the value of the night time economy, in both economic and cultural terms.

In contrast to the night time economy, planning is the central tool in the day-time economy, working proactively to build a diverse offer and identifying leisure assets of value to the local community. There is no doubt that proportionate and evidence-based regulation is important, whether this is through licensing, policing or health and safety. It should not, however, result in unsustainable costs on businesses and should recognise good operators whilst assisting in bringing less successful operators up to scratch or sanctioning those that deliberately and consistently flout the law. In many areas, this requires a major step change in how the night time economy is viewed and managed, if the shared vision is of a safe and diverse night time economy that caters for every sector of the population and benefits the local area economically. It is important that all planning and regulatory authorities work together alongside businesses to achieve this.

## **Crime and Public Safety**

The BBPA understands that crime and public safety are both significant concerns for the City of London and welcome the Mayor's new vision which advocates for policing to be brought closer to local communities. Indeed local issues require local solutions. Licensed premises, and particularly pubs, are now engaged with assisting local authorities in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, as

well as increasing public safety and taking further responsibility for vulnerable people. Where local economies are successful in addressing these issues, partnership working is at the heart of the solution. The BBPA and its members support a range of effective local partnership schemes which see businesses engaging effectively with police, licensing authorities and other stakeholders to address some of the key concerns outlined in the Mayor's vision for London. This response gives further details below on the schemes that we support.

## **Partnership working**

The BBPA works alongside a number of partnership schemes including National Pubwatch, Best Bar None, Business Improvement Districts, Street Pastors, Local Alcohol Partnerships, and Purple Flag. All of these schemes have proven their worth in local economies throughout the UK and many work closely with police to ensure the safety of venues and public spaces, as well as taking steps to tackle alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour. Here are some further details of the schemes we work alongside:

### **National Pubwatch<sup>4</sup>**

There are over 650 local Pubwatch schemes throughout the United Kingdom working to achieve a safer drinking environment in all licensed premises throughout the UK. Local Pubwatch schemes bring together licensees and seek to establish good relationships with the police and reduce alcohol-related crime by working together to ban individuals who cause trouble. National Pubwatch works to support local schemes by sharing best practice, advice and information.

Durham Pubwatch has been established for a number of years. The Durham Pubwatch works successfully in close partnership with Durham City authorities, including initiatives to help train licensees, bar staff, and door staff on best practice, and clampdown on violent and disorderly incidents at licensed establishments. This has helped contribute towards a 15% drop in alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in the city over the past year. Durham Pubwatch is also active in the City Safety Group scheme to improve public safety around rivers, particularly for those under the influence of alcohol.

### **Best Bar None<sup>5</sup>**

Best Bar None exists to recognise and promote the best standards in safety, training and operations across the late night economy, and is a collaboration between police, local authorities, licensed venues and the alcohol industry. The Best Bar None awards scheme was first piloted in Manchester in 2003. It has since been taken up by more than 100 towns and cities across the UK. Best Bar None accreditation is awarded to venues with strong management, who take pride in their surroundings, operate responsibly and demonstrate a commitment to reducing alcohol related harm. The process of becoming accredited includes meeting minimum standards, and rewards the most responsible premises at an annual awards event.

The scheme was launched in Northamptonshire five years ago by Northampton Pubwatch with support from the Northamptonshire Police and Northampton Community Safety Partnership, to help

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nationalpubwatch.org.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bbnuuk.com/>

create a safer town and recognise the pubs, bars and clubs that are working hard to reduce alcohol related disorder and promote responsible drinking. The Northampton Scheme is now in its fifth year and support for the scheme has been growing each year.

## Business Improvement Districts<sup>6</sup>

Business Improvement Districts (BID) are business led partnerships where a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area. BIDs have been operating across the UK for over a decade and there are over 250 BIDs now established around the country, a testament to their success.

Within a BID, businesses become active stakeholders in creating a safe, diverse and vibrant night-time economy. It is key for local authorities to understand that local businesses are not the cause of local issues but instead are both willing and able to assist in addressing these issues. Central to this theme is partnership working between all stakeholders.

## Street Pastors

Street Pastors are volunteers from the local church community who give up their time to help people out in the NTE. They typically work from 10pm to 4am on Friday and Saturday nights and provide a range of assistance, for example, tending grazed knees where people have fallen over, finding taxis to get people home safely if they have lost their friends or become disorientated, and offering kindness and support.

Since 2003 over 12,000 street and prayer pastors have been trained and have played an active part in strengthening community life and working for safer streets. Currently, more than 300 towns and cities around the UK have a Street Pastors team<sup>7</sup>.

## Community Alcohol Partnership

The Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) scheme, supported by the Retail of Alcohol Standards Group (RASG), brings together local retailers and licensees, trading standards, police, health services, education providers and other local stakeholders to tackle the problem of underage drinking and associated anti-social behaviour. The CAP model is unique in that it recognises that retailers and licensees are part of the solution and has been shown to be more effective than traditional enforcement methods alone.

Kent County Council has worked to develop a county-wide scheme across Kent covering Canterbury City Centre, Westwood Cross, Thanet and Edenbridge. An independent evaluation<sup>8</sup> by Kent University showed significant reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour as a result of the CAP.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.britishbids.info/about-bids/what-is-a-bid/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.streetpastors.org/about-us-1/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.communityalcoholpartnerships.co.uk/images/stories/KCAP%20Evaluation.pdf>



## Purple Flag

Purple Flag is the accreditation programme that recognises excellence in the management of town and city centres in the early evening and night time economy. Purple Flag provides a comprehensive set of standards, management processes and good practice examples designed to help transform town and city centres at night with an extensive research, training and development programme, to help towns and cities improve their evening and NTE.

Purple Flag has contributed to improving town centres across the UK, including in Bath where there was a 30% reduction in violent crime for 2011-2012. Also, Kingston saw a 70% reduction in crime inside key venues and an 11% reduction in violent crime in the town centre (2012-2013).

## Conclusion

Overall, therefore, the BBPA believes that the sector we represent is able to provide a significant contribution to culture, economic development and protection against crime in the capital. We hope that this will be recognised and reflected in the Mayor's future vision for London and we look forward to the outcome of the consultation.