



# Sign our letter to your MP

Dear.....MP

There has been a great deal of publicity and concern in recent months about the levels of alcohol abuse and drinking levels currently reported in the UK. As a member of the UK drinks industry I take our responsibility towards alcohol very seriously.

But in light of potential new legislation governing the sale and distribution of alcohol in the UK it is also important that you as a Member of Parliament understand the real facts about drinking levels in the UK.

I am writing to you as part of a nationwide initiative by business trade magazine, *Harpers Wine & Spirit* and the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, to make you aware of the most up to date government statistics about drinking levels and alcohol behaviour in the UK.

The alcohol facts you, your party leader and your constituents need to know are:

## 1 Average alcohol consumption in the UK is falling

- Per capita alcohol consumption has been falling since 2004
- The UK ranks 13th out of 27 in the EU league table of per capita alcohol consumption
- On average, Britons drink 17% less than the French, and 19% less than the Germans.

## 2 The majority of people drink responsibly

- The numbers drinking over the recommended weekly guidelines fell between 2000 and 2006
- Men – down from 29% to 23%
- Women – down from 17% to 12%
- In the UK 7% of the population drink 33% of the alcohol

## 3 Underage drinking is declining but those who drink consume more

- Underage drinking is down from 26% of 11-15 year olds in 2001 to 21% in 2006
- The numbers of 11-15 year olds who have never drunk alcohol are increasing:  
2000 – 40% 2006 – 46%
- Weekly alcohol consumption among those 11-15 year olds who drink is up from an average of 10 units in the last decade to 11.4 units in 2006

## 4 Binge drinking is in decline but is more common among 16-24 year olds

- Number of people reporting binge drinking (over eight units) on at least one day in previous week is down:
- Men – 2003/4 – 23% 2006 – 18%
- Women – 2003/4 – 9% 2006 – 8%
- Among 16-24 year-olds, 27% of men and 21% of women reported binge drinking in 2006, down from 36% and 26% in 2001

## 5 Laws to tackle alcohol misuse are not being enforced

- Just two people have been prosecuted and one found guilty of selling alcohol to a drunken person since the 2003 Licensing Act was introduced
- Only six people in England and Wales were found guilty of supplying alcohol to under-18s in 2006
- No-one since 2004 has been given the maximum fine for refusing to surrender alcohol in a public place or refusing a police officer's instruction to stop drinking

**Let's focus on the facts. It's time to tackle the cause of the problem not punish the majority who drink responsibly**

### ALCOHOL: KNOW YOUR FACTS

**As a member of the drinks industry I take my role in promoting responsible drinking very seriously.**

**But it is also important any debate on the impact of alcohol on the British society is carried out based on fact and accurate and reliable data.**

**As my Member of Parliament I ask you to take on board the real facts about the use of alcohol in the UK and ensure the truth about drinking levels and alcohol behaviour in this country are understood not only by yourself, but by your constituents and the leader of your party.**

**I urge you to represent the true picture of alcohol use in the UK in any debate on this issue with the Prime Minister on the floor of the House of Commons.**

**Any policy on alcohol must be based on fact not prejudice.**

Name: .....

Company name:.....

Address:.....

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Contact details:.....

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