

Response to CAMRA members

14<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear CAMRA members

We understand your concerns regarding your local pubs and the unfortunate situation we all find ourselves in with the Government instruction to close pubs, stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. These are unprecedented times, and as somebody that started their career working behind a bar, nothing distresses me more than to see our thousands of community pubs and bars closed.

My company, Stonegate, recently expanded from a purely managed pub company to one that now encompasses many leased and tenanted publican partners. Our employees and publican partners are the lifeblood of our organisation, and every decision we make, from furloughing our managed division and office teams, to lobbying for or providing support and assistance, is designed to keep our pubs trading to protect the future of these businesses and the many jobs and careers they provide.

Government has been supportive to many of the businesses within our sector and we are starting to see the grants of £10,000 and £25,000 being paid to publicans to assist them with their fixed business and rental costs whilst their pubs remain closed. We have worked with our trade associations from the outset and continue to work with them, talking to Government, to ensure payments are made speedily and for the grants to be made available to all pubs, regardless of rateable value, as a small number fall outside of this current level of assistance.

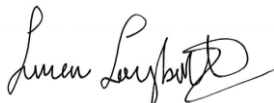
This financial support, along with business rates cancelled for 12 months, self-employed Income Support, the deferment of VAT and income tax payments, furloughed staff payments, refunded Statutory Sick Pay and potential to access Business Interruption loans, is intended to relieve current financial pressures from businesses. To ensure our publicans are fully aware of the range of support available we are regularly communicating with them and assisting them where help is required.

In addition to this we have deferred the collection of all rent and charges until further notice and will be working directly with our publicans to fairly assess individual cases where further assistance is needed as we understand this is a worrying time for all.

It is vital to us that our pubs not only survive these extraordinary times but also have the support to re-establish their business when trading resumes. We are planning support in this area which we will share directly with our publicans as we finalise our plans.

We ask that you too continue to support your local pub as we wait to hear the announcement that pubs can reopen and serve their local communities and loyal customers.

Yours sincerely



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CEO

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