**CAMRA report to the Lords Select Committee on Rural Economy – Selected items – BJ**

2.2]The National Housing Federation in its Rural Life Monitor 2017 noted that pubs are one of the three key pillars of rural community life.

2.3]The National Housing Federation Rural Life Monitor found that rural pubs have been closing at a rate of seven per week.

2.4]The production of beer and cider are also large contributors to and essential factors within the rural economy providing employment opportunities both in production and in agricultural roles, producing the raw ingredients, and preserving traditional methods and ways of life.

3.1. Pubs play an essential role in the rural economy; contributing vital services, employment opportunities, demand for local produce, and a space to socialise thereby tackling social isolation.

3.2. The Institute for Public Policy Research found that pubs boost the income of surrounding businesses by around £80,000 a year but also generate up to £120,000 worth of ‘social benefit’ to rural areas.

5.2. Pub is the Hub support rural pubs in diversifying their services to become hubs for the local community and provides many examples. Eg: 5.2.2. The Oyster Inn in Butley, Suffolk had been a focal point for the community since 1617 until it closed in 2012. This left the village of Butley without a pub or a community meeting place – it already lacked a village shop. After five years of being shut, Judi and Andrew Newman stepped forward to reopen the 400 year old pub – they wished to convert the derelict barn to the rear of the pub to provide essential community facilities such as a shop, a community shop, a cinema/meeting room, and a microbrewery.

7.3. CAMRA holds that it is essential that current pub-specific business rate relief is both retained and extended to provide pubs with the relief that they require. This ought to be a £5,000 permanent business relief rate for pubs.

7.5. Under current EU rules, it is not possible to apply a differential rate of duty on draught beer, however this could be looked at when the UK leaves the European Union. A lower rate of duty on draught beer could benefit rural community pubs by enabling them to compete on a more level playing field with supermarkets.

8.1.2. Furthermore, community pubs provide 350,000 full- or part-time jobs – this is a huge boost to the rural economy where jobs can be hard to come by. The provision of jobs in pubs allows people to stay living in rural areas rather than having to move into urban areas to seek employment opportunities.

9.2.1. The personal and social wellbeing benefits of pub-going are backed up by academic research. The ‘Friends on Tap’ Report was commissioned by CAMRA from Oxford University. The report found that people who identify as having a ‘local’ pub have more close friends and feel more engaged with their local community. On average those who had a local pub had 7.2 close friends compared to 6.0 for those who did not have a local pub and didn’t regularly visit pubs.

9.2.2. Hosting events targeting isolation in pubs is likely to get a more diverse range of attendees than those hosted in village halls – the organisation Cotswold Friends found that moving their lunch clubs from village halls to pubs enabled their programme to rapidly expand to 11 clubs and saw attendance by men go from around 10% of all attendees to up to 37%.