



The Axe the Beer Tax Campaign has welcomed the launch of a campaign to save the pub by the Conservative party.

The Tories launched their campaign on Friday — the aims of which mirror those set out in our manifest.

A new petition on the party's website calls for:

- Cutting taxes on lower-alcohol drinks such as beer and raising taxes on “problem drinks like high-strength ciders and alcopops”. The aim is to “use the tax system to target binge drinking, whilst ensuring that responsible drinkers and the traditional British pub are not unfairly penalised”.
- Enforcing existing laws to deal firmly with irresponsible drinkers and premises
- Trusting adults to make informed choices, not punish them for the actions of an irresponsible minority.
- Supporting the British pub as a vital part of local communities.

Rob Hayward, Chief Executive of the British Beer and Pub Association welcomed the move:

"We warmly welcome the support given today by the Conservative Party to save the British pub and, in particular, to axe plans to impose further increases in beer tax.

"Tens of thousands of people across the country concerned about the decline of local pubs have joined our campaign since the end of last year and more than 120 MPs, including 59 Labour MPs, have given their support too.

"The Axe the Beer Tax - Save the Pub campaign has the backing of the whole beer and pub industry, the Campaign for Real Ale, the Liberal Democrats and Britain's largest trade union, Unite, as well many other local and national organisations.

"Beer tax was increased by 18% in 2008 alone and with nearly six pubs closing every day the British beer and pub industry cannot take another hammer blow in next month's budget. We are not looking for tax breaks or special favours, just fair treatment.

"We hope the Government now recognises that plans announced twelve months ago to raise beer tax over and above inflation for the next four years are both unfair and unsustainable in today's economic climate. As John Maynard Keynes said: 'When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do, sir?'"

For more information about the campaign visit our website on www.axethebeertax.com or call Mark Hastings on 0788 418 1794