

Jonathan Gornall

thebmj

Under the influence

How the alcohol industry
sabotaged minimum unit
pricing

March 2012



The Government's Alcohol Strategy

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2012

Cm 8336

£8.75

March 2012

Being in government isn't always about doing the popular thing. It's about doing the right thing+

British Prime Minister David Cameron



The Government's Alcohol Strategy

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2012

Cm 8336

£8.75

March 2012

It's just too easy for people to get drunk so we are going to introduce a new minimum unit price+

. *British Prime Minister David Cameron*



The Government's Alcohol Strategy

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2012

Cm 8336

£8.75

November 2010

It is time to stop telling people to make healthy choices. Rather than nannying people, we will nudge them by working with industry+

*. Andrew Lansley,
Secretary of State for Health*



November 2010

%d felt I was being used by a
Secretary of State-in-waiting who,
apparently, was not concerned
about the science, only about
public relations+

. *Professor Simon Capewell,
head of clinical epidemiology,
University of Liverpool*

March 2011

This is the worst possible deal
for everyone who wants to see
alcohol harm reduced – it's all
carrot and no stick for the drinks
industry and supermarkets+

. *Alcohol Concern*

March 2011

"This government has clearly shown that, when it comes to public health, its first priority is to side with big business and protect private profit+

. *Alcohol Concern, British Association for the Study of the Liver, British Liver Trust, British Medical Association, Institute of Alcohol Studies and the Royal College of Physicians*

October 2011

Partnership with commercial organisations has a place in health improvement. However, those with a financial interest must not be allowed to set the agenda for health improvement+

. *House of Commons Health Committee*

January 2010

A rise in the price of alcohol [is] the most effective way of reducing consumption. We recommend that the Government introduce minimum pricing. +



House of Commons
Health Committee

Alcohol

First Report of Session 2009–10

Volume I

Report, together with formal minutes

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 10 December 2009*

May 2010

Making alcohol less affordable is the most effective way of reducing the harm it causes
There is extensive evidence to justify the introduction of a minimum price per unit+

NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Alcohol-use disorders: preventing harmful drinking

Issued: June 2010

NICE public health guidance 24
guidance.nice.org.uk/ph24

Predicted effects of a minimum price of 40p

In year one:

- “ 6,309 fewer hospital admissions
- “ 157 prevented deaths
- “ NHS saving of £24.6 million

In year ten:

- “ 40,846 fewer hospital admissions
- “ 1,381 fewer deaths
- “ NHS saving of £115.9 million

Source: HM Government Alcohol Strategy, 2012



%d know the government indicated that it was just a price base question, but a lot of the people we spoke to, inside and outside parliament, were actually [still] debating the principle+

. *Nigel Fairbrass, head of global communications, SAB Miller*







Independent, non-partisan ò working
to promote libertarian and free-market
ideas+

November 2012

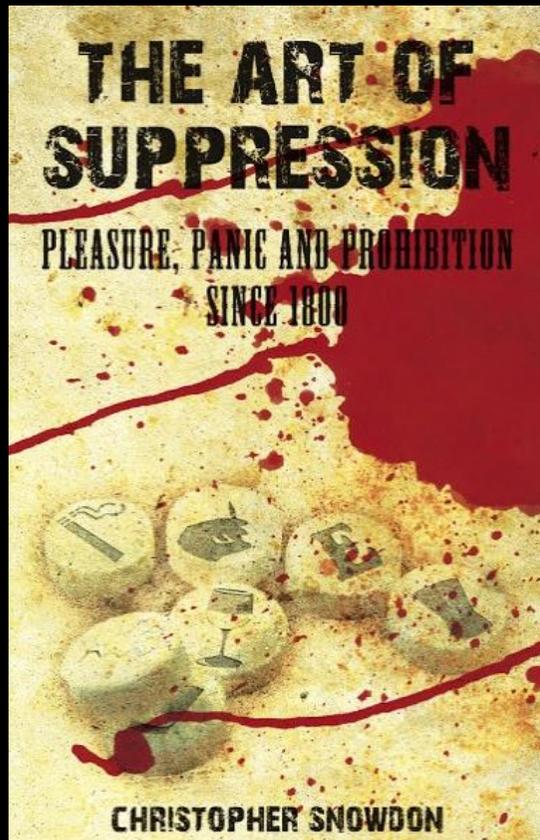


• Predictions based on the Sheffield Alcohol Policy Model are entirely speculative and do not deserve the exalted status they have been afforded in the policy debate+

The Minimal Evidence for Minimum Pricing

The fatal flaws in the Sheffield
Alcohol Policy Model

John C. Duffy and
Christopher Snowdon



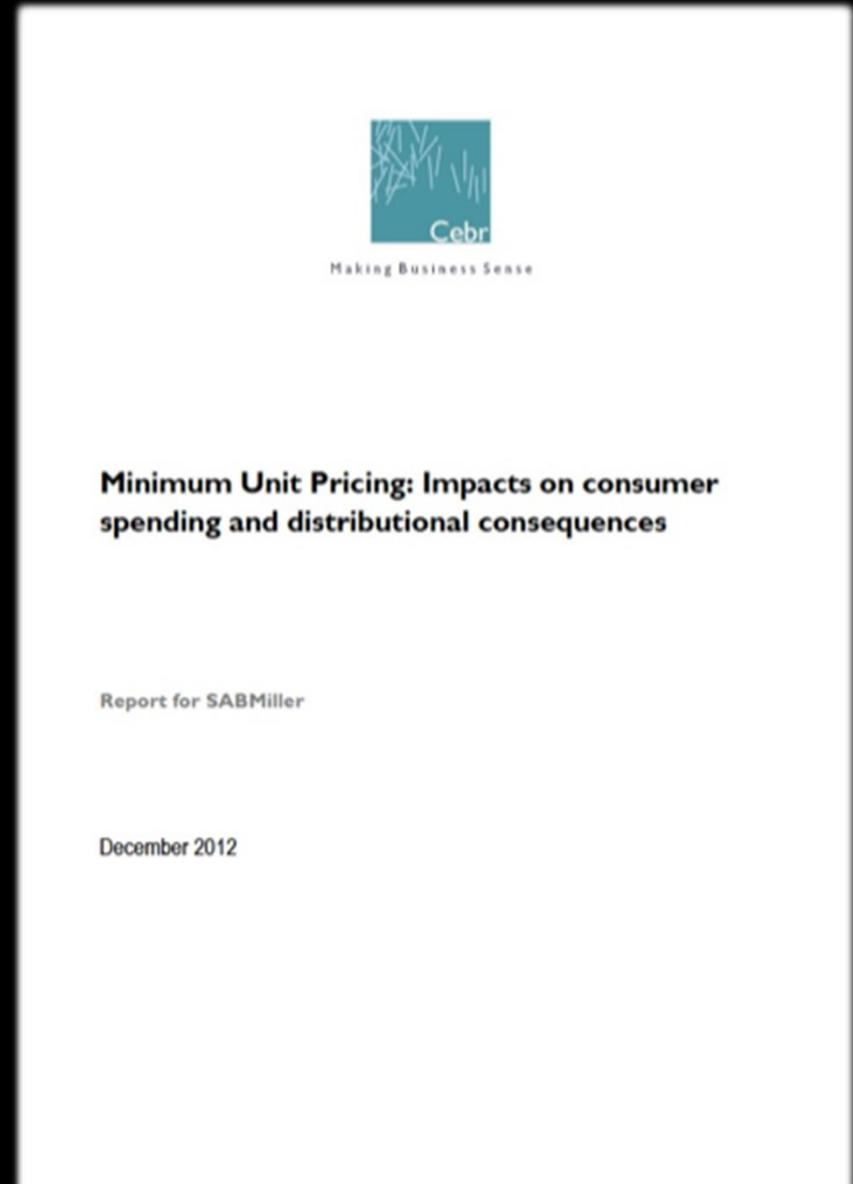
• The rise in obesity has been primarily caused by a decline in physical activity, not an increase in sugar, fat or calorie consumption+

. *The Fat Lie, August 2014*

November 2012



Minimum unit pricing is a regressive measure, disproportionately borne by the poorest – a price of 45 pence has a negligible impact on hazardous and harmful drinking levels+

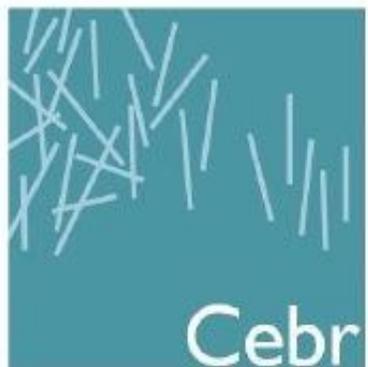


August 2013



A minimum price for alcohol is likely to increase the amount of brewing, fermenting and distilling done at home+





Making Business Sense



ADAM SMITH
INSTITUTE

DEMOS

iea

Institute of
Economic Affairs

December 2012



Tough love parenting .
a parenting style that
combines warmth with
consistent discipline . is
the best protection
against young people
drinking hazardously+

“Effective parenting is
the best way to call
time on Britain’s
binge drinking ...”

FEELING THE EFFECTS

Jonathan Birdwell
Emma Vandore
Bryanna Hahn

April 2011



There may be other side-effects of minimum pricing, such as people shifting to stronger, cheaper alternatives, such as drugs"

“Binge-drinking behind the headlines...”

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

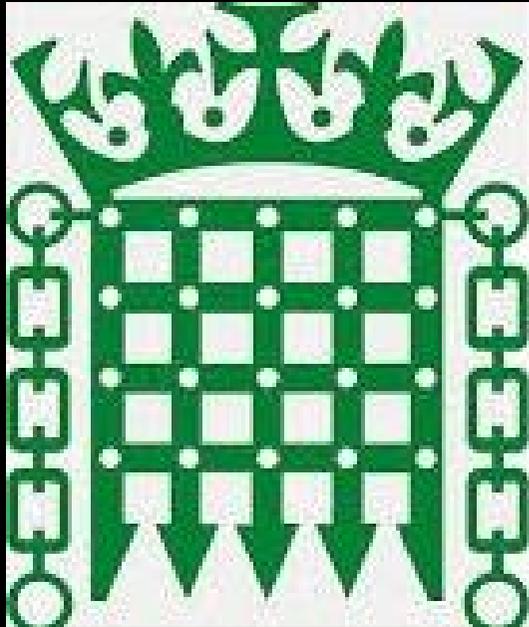
Jamie Bartlett
Matt Grist
Bryanna Hahn

Signs of the times



UK Parliament logo

Signs of the times



UK Parliament logo



Parliamentary
beer group logo

Friends in high places ã

“ All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group

AIM: %To support the UK's brewing industry worldwide and to promote a positive future for beer and the pub+

Friends in high places ã

“ Cider Group

AIM: To promote the cause of cider as a drink, to raise its profile and to inform and educate people about its role+

Friends in high places ã

“ Wine & Spirit Group

AIM: To promote the economic benefits of the trade and to introduce parliamentarians to members of the trade+

Friends in high places ã

“ Scotch Whisky Group

AIM: To promote and facilitate communication and understanding between the spirits industry and MPs+

All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group



To promote the wholesomeness and enjoyment of beer and understanding of the social responsibility exercised by the brewing and pub industries+

July 2013

Toasts of the industry



Andrew Griffiths, MP, Chancellor George Osborne
and former Chancellor Kenneth Clarke

























wsta

THE WINE AND SPIRIT TRADE ASSOCIATION



wsta

THE WINE AND SPIRIT TRADE ASSOCIATION



BRITISH
BEER & PUB
ASSOCIATION









Memo to government

Minimum pricing has no place in policy options for the UK government – continue vigorously to promote a self-regulatory approach and extol the benefits of innovative solutions, such as the Responsibility Deal, in tackling alcohol-related harm+

. Gavin Hewitt, Scotch Whisky Association

January 2014

We consider however that Ministers need to be able to discuss policy matters freely and frankly with stakeholders as part of an iterative policy development process. We consider that the disclosure of the views expressed in these discussions would be likely to inhibit future policy formulation and development as stakeholders would be less candid in expressing their views. Furthermore information discussed in previous stakeholder meetings informs future policy considerations. Accordingly, we consider that disclosure would compromise the 'safe space' that is required for policy formulation and development and we are withholding this information at this time.

. Freedom of Information response from HM Treasury

June 2013

ℳ Bennies from 11+

ℳ This special tippie was created to thank George for removing the Beer Duty escalator, a damaging policy implemented by the previous Government to raise beer duty+



June 2013

Sajid Choice+

Bromsgrove brewery has thanked town MP Sajid Javid for his part in abolishing the controversial beer duty ÷ by naming an ale after him+



February 2013

Health minister Anna Soubry meets with industry to discuss opposition to minimum pricing *after policy has supposedly been agreed*

Hello [REDACTED]

Thank you for the briefing pack and for supporting PS(PH) at the meeting. Here is a summary of the points made at the meeting.

Attendees
Alcohol Industry - [REDACTED] (Heineken), [REDACTED] (WSTA), [REDACTED] (ACS), [REDACTED] (SWA), [REDACTED] (Cider Makers Assoc), [REDACTED] (BBPA) and [REDACTED] (Portman Group)

DH - Liz Woodeson, [REDACTED]

Minimum Unit Price
On MUP, PS(PH) said she had been convinced by the arguments put forward by a group of liver doctors she had met with. However, she acknowledged that the primary responsibility for reducing consumption lay with the individual.

Alcohol industry representatives expressed deep concern about MUP and made the following points:

May 2013

Health secretary Jeremy Hunt meets with ASDA to discuss alternatives to minimum pricing *after policy has supposedly been agreed*

SofS

From: [REDACTED]
Cleared: Liz Woodeson
Date: 10 May 2013

BRIEFING FOR MEETING WITH ASDA

Purpose

1. You are meeting Andy Clarke (CE) and Paul Kelly (Head of Corporate Affairs) at their request to discuss the progress Asda has made to date on the Responsibility Deal (RD) and their future engagement.

Alcohol Strategy and Minimum Unit Price

- Thank Asda for strong support on alcohol – they have given real leadership. Have signed all RD alcohol pledges. Have also introduced individual pledges – no alcohol in store foyers, and £1m support for Addaction.
- Asda are opposed to MUP. Government still considering the issue. Could be open to alternative proposals from industry. Welcome Asda's views on this.



May 2013



% Get the barnacles off the boat+

March 2012

It's about doing
the right thing+

July 2013

Cameron does
the wrong thing





The Government's Alcohol Strategy

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty

March 2012



- “ Under the influence:
 - . in Scotland
 - . in Europe
 - . in England
- “ Alcohol charities % influenced by industry funding+
- “ World Cup 2014: festival of football or alcohol?
- “ Is the billion unit pledge just window dressing?
- “ New way to call time on cheap high-strength alcohol
- “ Budget cuts to alcohol prices will fail patients

The ban on below cost selling, implemented in the England in May 2014, is estimated to have small effects on consumption and health harm. The previously announced policy of a minimum unit price, if set at expected levels between 40p and 50p per unit, is estimated to have an approximately 40-50 times greater effect+

- . Brennan A et al. *Potential benefits of minimum unit pricing for alcohol versus a ban on below cost selling in England 2014: modelling study. BMJ, September 30, 2014.*

How to contact me:

www.jonathangornall.com

jgornall@mac.com

the**bmj**