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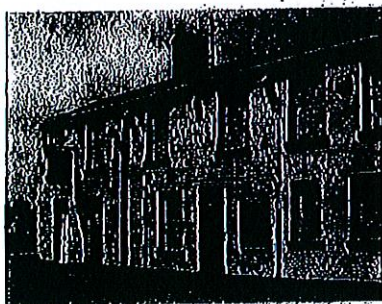
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## Pub closure rate slows to 29 a week

- By John Harrington
- 24/11/2010 13:14

The pub closure rate has slowed to 29 per week for the first six months of 2010, according to CGA.



Pub closures: still high

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Meanwhile, one in 10 nightclubs have also shut in the past 12 months, according to CGA chief executive Jon Collins.

"Our data says that about 10% of nightclubs have closed in the last 12 months," he said.

"You'll know that the pub closure rate that hit a historic high of 52 pubs per week net closure, well that's gone back down now to 29 pubs closing in the first half of 2010.

"That's still 50 closures, offset by 21 openings.

"That's still incredibly high compared to years gone by, so at this time when the market is contracting and consumers are coming out less, the idea that [Government] policy needs to be aimed at town centres being out of control and more sanctions being needed just doesn't ring true."

He was speaking at the launch of a report into student drinking habits and social norms, put together by AB InBev, Noctis and the National Union of Students.

#### NUS project

At the launch, Noctis executive director Paul Smith revealed plans for a project with NUS aimed at using social norms theory to encourage sensible drinking behaviour among students in "early 2011".

The plan is to use the internet and posters to get across the idea that sensible drinking behaviour is normal.

"In the next few weeks I'll be having a conversation with individual unis, now the report is out, about which messages, which effective behaviours, they want to focus on."

Ben Whittaker of NUS said he wanted to "unpack" the drinking culture of some students to discover why they drink heavily.

He stressed that NUS doesn't endorse activities such as bar crawls and games like pub golf.

"I think there's a piece of work [to be done] around redefining what's a good night."

"It's as if there's this perception that you need to drink 12 cans of Stella, get a pizza, be sick on the way home and can't remember anything from the night before...that is hailed as a good night."

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## News

**Pub closures running at 25 per week – new national and regional survey**  
16.03.2011

- Urgent case for a freeze in Beer Tax in next week's Budget, says BBPA
- 13,000 jobs lost in 2010, and more at stake
- Closures worst in London and North West, but all regions hit

Pubs are closing at the rate of 25 per week, as the trade continues to face tough conditions in all parts of Britain, according to new figures released today. The British Beer & Pub Association, which commissioned the new survey, says that the Government should now abandon plans for a huge seven per cent increase in Beer Tax in the Budget next week. The BBPA says that with the right policies, the beer and pub sector, which employs almost 1 million people, could play a leading role in bringing the economy out of recession.

While the closure rate has slowed from the previous year's 40 per week, there were almost 1,300 fewer pubs in Britain by the end of 2010. With a typical pub employing around ten people, this represents a net loss of jobs of around 13,000 across the country. Pubs are closing in every part of England, as well as in Scotland and Wales. The rate of losses is highest in London and the North West, though all regions are suffering a decline (see table).

With beer still the key seller for pubs, huge rises in Beer Tax, which has gone up by 26 per cent since March 2008, are a huge drag on the sector, says the BBPA. To add to the problem, the Government plans a further, swinging seven per cent rise in duty in the Budget, through the controversial policy of the beer duty escalator. This is set to add two per cent above inflation to the existing duty burden, which would add 3.5 pence in Beer Tax on a typical pint, with bar prices set to rise by up to ten pence a pint. Taken with the VAT increase in January, the Government is heading for the biggest ever tax hike on beer in a single year.



## Pub closure rate slows, but beer tax hike imminent

By Becky Paskin, 15-Mar-2011

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**The rate of pub closures has slowed to 25 per week, although government plans for a 7 per cent rise in beer tax in next week's budget could prolong damage to the sector.**

Although the closure rate slowed from last year's 40 per week, the number of pubs in Britain dropped by 1,300 over the course of 2010 – a net loss of around 13,000 pub jobs.

According to new research from the British Beer and Pub Association, the rate of loss was highest in London and the North West, although all regions across the UK are suffering.

Brigid Simmonds, chief executive of the BBPA, said that as the sector plays such a vital role in the economy, the closure rate is "bad news".

"With the right policies, this vital part of our tourism and hospitality sector could be creating new jobs, and helping to bring Britain out of recession," she said. "If we really do have a pub-friendly government as the Prime Minister says, the time to act is now – with a freeze in beer duty in the Budget."

The BBPA is once again calling for a halt to the 2 per cent above inflation beer tax escalator, which is expected to add a further 10 pence on a pub-bought pint in next week's budget.

The body claims that, along with the VAT increase in January, the pub industry is looking at the single biggest tax increase on beer in a single year.

Scrapping the measure could save over 10,000 jobs in 2011/12.

### Pub jobs

A further report conducted by Oxford Economics shows that the industry provides brewing and pub jobs to just under 1 million people, with 11,000 situated in London – the worst hit city for pub closures in the country.

The sector contributes over £21bn to the UK economy each year, and is responsible for £13.4bn of wages.

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