



HM Revenue
& Customs

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Dear Councillor Gilham

Thank you for your letter of 22 March 2016 to Jennie Granger. I have been asked to reply to you.

I welcome your support for the new Alcohol Wholesaler Registration Scheme (AWRS). Thank you for your suggestion to introduce a 'Responsible Retailer Scheme'; an idea we would like to consider further.

We recently published a new alcohol strategy, which sets out our ambition to modernise the alcohol taxes to tackle fraud and reduce burdens on alcohol businesses. Part of that strategy is about continuing to explore measures to reduce tax losses. However, we also have a role to play in supporting wider government objectives to reduce alcohol related harms, and promote legitimate business growth. You can find this online at: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510235/HMRC Alcohol Strategy.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510235/HMRC_Alcohol_Strategy.pdf).

To consider and understand the merits of your proposal, we would need to know more about the intended objectives of a 'Responsible Retailer Scheme', how you might see such a scheme operating, and the benefits it might deliver. More detail would also help us to understand where across Government the scheme should be implemented and led from, or if there is any scope for industry involvement or leadership of such a scheme.

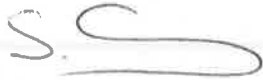
We already engage regularly with officials from Local Government Association, with Trading Standards / Licensing officers, and sectors involved in the supply and retail of alcohol

through our Joint Alcohol Anti-fraud Taskforce (JAAT), to consider what action we can take collaboratively to tackle illicit alcohol trading at retail level. This might prove a useful forum to test your ideas in due course.

When you are in a position to provide further information on your proposal, please contact our lead official for alcohol policy and strategy, Dr Peter Latham at Ralli Quays, 3 Stanley Street, Salford, Greater Manchester, M60 9LA.

I hope you find this reply helpful. If you need to contact us again, please quote the reference number at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Steve Groves