Plans for new homes must include pubs

25/01/2025 by Timothy Hampson

Industry

A trade association has called for the government’s ambitious plans to build 1.5m houses in the next five years to include pubs. The British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) has partnered with think tank Create Streets to produce the Brewing Communities report which found new towns and major housing developments will only flourish if they have successful pubs as part of the community. Dubbing this approach as creating “pub hubs” the report emphasises the importance of creating great places and great locals to enhance communal life and reduce loneliness.  The report, which was launched in parliament, highlights the decline in the number of pubs and high-street retail vacancies in the UK, which has negatively impacted communal and neighbourly interactions. Hosted by Labour Growth Group chair Chris Curtis MP, the event saw parliamentarians and industry experts come together to discuss key policy recommendations for the government including business rates incentives, capital expensing and planning reforms.  Creative Streets founder Nicholas Boys-Smith said: “No place, person or institution echoes through British history as joyfully as the pub. From Chaucer’s pilgrims departing the Tabard, the Queen Vic in Eastenders, local boozers have always taken centre stage in British life. “If our streets were a home then our local pub would be its hearth, the place where we warm ourselves and where we meet and talk, relax and revive. But our pubs are troubled. Over a quarter have closed. This matters. If we desire neighbourhoods where we can come together then we should cherish our existing pubs, manage our streets and squares so that pubs can thrive and create new places which weave us together and don’t spin us apart. “The good news is that we know how. The evidence on where people like to be and why is ever clearer. Let’s lift the bar and create places in which pubs can thrive, and people can prosper. This report shows how.” BBPA CEO Emma McClarkin (pictured) said the report highlights how people, pubs and the communities they call home suffer when town planning is poorly thought out. She warned that planning must focus on the people who live there, rather than hitting targets and construction numbers. She said: “The social and economic benefits that pubs offer to the development of new towns and the expansion of existing ones are clear. Pubs are an essential part of the new government’s vision for 1.5m new homes – a focal point and key community asset that will help ensure the success of these new communities. “I hope this report serves as a call to action for policy makers, developers and communities alike to prioritise the creation of vibrant, connected spaces where people can come together, and feel they’re at home.”