Dear Christine Grahame MSP

Impact of Minimum Alcohol Pricing on Low Income Groups

During the oral evidence session which I attended on behalf of SHAAP, Committee members expressed some concern about the impact of minimum alcohol pricing on people on low incomes. I understand these concerns have also been raised with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing who has been invited to give further oral evidence to the health and Sport Committee on Wednesday 5 May. With this in mind, I enclose for the Committee’s attention a recent paper which has been written for SHAAP by Professor Anne Ludbrook of the Health Economics Research Unit, University of Aberdeen, which analyses household income and expenditure patterns in relation to alcohol purchasing.

You will see that the analysis indicates that although it has been suggested that people on low incomes will be the only ones particularly affected by minimum pricing, the evidence indicates that cheap alcohol is purchased by households in all income groups.

I hope this new evidence will be of interest to Committee members and will help to inform the Committee’s deliberations in the coming weeks.

If you require any further information please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Bruce Ritson
Chair of SHAAP