

Given that our whisky industry is a key national and export industry, we remain committed to a Treasury review of alcohol taxation to better reflect alcohol content, while securing health benefits through minimum pricing.

We are also taking forward the introduction of Scotland's new rural development programme, which will provide crucial support for Scottish farming, food production, rural communities and the environment. The new scheme is worth £1.3 billion over the next six years. We will continue to press for speedy European sign-off of Scotland's rural development programme and, in the meantime, will continue to take action here in Scotland to minimise any delay or disruption to payments.

SNP MPs will urge the UK government to work with the European Commission to deliver a simplified CAP, in particular with a review of direct payments and Greening, in line with proposals in the Brian Pack report to reduce red tape. We will also continue to press the Agriculture Commissioner to ensure Scottish farmers get clarity and certainty over the implementation arrangements for the new CAP.

Fishing is a very important industry for Scotland's economy, with fishing, aquaculture and processing generating £690m and employing around 14,300 people. The SNP is working hard to increase revenues and profitability for the industry, with the deal secured at last December's fisheries council adding around £10 million to the value of Scotland's whitefish and prawn stocks.

We are engaging with the industry on our review of fish quota management. We want to ensure quotas are managed in the common interest, so that active

fishermen have access to the quota that they need, rather than seeing them concentrated in the hands of those with the deepest pockets. **We want to sustain jobs and find ways to support the entry of the next generation of skippers.**

We will continue to work to ensure the discard ban is implemented in a way that does not damage the viability of the fleet and is workable for our fishermen. Sensible implementation will deliver benefits for the fleet and consumers as we end the practice of dumping perfectly good fish back into the sea.

Our aim is to grow and strengthen local economies, both urban and rural. By increasing the minimum wage and supporting a fair wage economy we can increase the disposable income of low and middle-income households, which will provide a direct boost to local businesses, enabling them to grow. We are keen to see spending increase, and profits remain, within local communities so that more money is being circulated locally, generating jobs and opportunities for the benefit of all. That is why we remain fully committed to the Small Business Bonus and why we are expanding the Social Entrepreneurs Fund, to encourage and support community social enterprises.

We also recognise the importance of improving access to the internet, especially for some of our more remote or disadvantaged communities. In government we are working to maximise the availability of high-speed broadband across Scotland and are also providing funding of £1.5 million to **increase free provision of Wi-Fi** in public buildings.

Our aim is to deliver a future-proofed infrastructure that will establish world-class digital connectivity across