



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Minimum pricing only one aspect in tackling alcohol misuse says Swanswell**

14 December 2011, national – Minimum pricing is only one aspect the government should consider to help tackle alcohol-related harm in the UK, according to a national charity.

Swanswell, which helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour, believes the promotion, placement and the product itself also need serious thought alongside educating people about the risks of regular or excessive drinking.

It's in reaction to the news this morning that a group of leading doctors and academics have written a letter to the Daily Telegraph to say that Scottish plans for minimum pricing were a 'simple and effective' way to tackle alcohol-related deaths<sup>1</sup>.

It comes as government ministers are due to debate alcohol taxation in Parliament later today.

Debbie Bannigan, Swanswell's Chief Executive, said: *'We certainly welcome the letter in the Daily Telegraph this morning, which re-affirms the need to take action on alcohol pricing in the UK.*

*'But why stop there? How alcohol is promoted, where it is placed within a store and the product itself need to be seriously re-considered alongside minimum pricing to begin to make any kind of difference.*

*‘In addition, the drinks industry spends around £800 million a year on alcohol advertising<sup>2</sup>. Why can’t a proportion of this go towards alcohol education and information, topping up the government’s annual spend on this of just over £17 million<sup>3</sup>.*

*‘However, it’s not something the government should tackle on its own, we all have a responsibility to think about the harm that alcohol causes – society has a part to play too.*

*‘Next time you’re in a supermarket for example, think about whether buying that multi-buy drinks deal is actually a good thing or whether you’re just increasing the risk of drinking more than you should.*

*‘Maybe spend a few minutes today looking up the effects of regular or excessive drinking, you may be surprised at what you find.*

*‘There’s a fine line between sensible drinking and alcohol becoming a problem – you can try the alcohol test at [www.swanswell.org](http://www.swanswell.org) to give you an idea about your own drinking.’*

To find out more about Swanswell and the services it provides, visit

[www.swanswell.org](http://www.swanswell.org).

[ENDS]

#### Notes for editors

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#### About Swanswell

Swanswell is a national charity that helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour. We believe that everyone deserves the chance to change and to be happy. We help them to remove the things that stand in their way, whether physical, emotional or practical. So, as their lives improve, they can feel well, do well, and stay well. Swanswell has a reputation for innovation and is a leading developer of new services which help people to change their behaviour for the better.

Swanswell has a number of offices across the country including Coventry and Warwickshire, Birmingham, Barnsley, Sandwell, Leicestershire and Rutland. Visit Swanswell at: [www.swanswell.org](http://www.swanswell.org).

Join the conversation, follow Swanswell on twitter at [www.twitter.com/Swanswell](http://www.twitter.com/Swanswell).

### References

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3. House of Commons. *Alcohol Health Committee – 6. Education and Information Policies*. [Online]. Available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmhealth/151/15110.htm> [accessed 14/12/12]