



# How to improve the sales of low and no alcohol beer

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## Introduction

This research came about because we kept hearing about the many barriers to the sale of low and no alcohol beer – from brewers, venues, and consumers.

There are many breweries now brewing great beers, but there are also many pain points for venues and consumers in accessing them. We wanted to investigate what these pain points were and to look for solutions in order to find out how licensed venues can sell more low and no alcohol beer.

Finding solutions is important to us at Club Soda. Our goal is to create a world where nobody feels out of place if they're not drinking alcohol. We want everyone to have more choice in pubs, bars and restaurants. We are not here to take anything away, but to add in more choice for everyone.

How can we do that if there are still barriers that create an unlevel playing field for the new low and no alcohol entrants into the beer space? How can we educate the consumer and the retailer quicker, so that we can maintain momentum for this new low and no beer trend?

To summarise these issues, we set out to find answers to one question in particular:

**How can licensed venues sell more low and no alcohol beer?**



## The low and no alcohol beer market in 2019

The low and no alcohol beer market, and the new alcohol-free market in general, has shown significant growth over the past year. For example:

- Low alcohol beer made up 5.3% of the total production by The Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) members in 2018, up from 3.4% in 2017. In 2018, 22 UK breweries reported brewing low alcohol beers<sup>1</sup>
- Low and no-alcohol beer has seen a 381% increase in wholesale sales since 2017 at Eebria Trade. Almost 3% of beers bought so far in 2019 have been 2.8% ABV or below, and half of those have been 0 to 0.5% ABV<sup>2</sup>
- Approximately 8% of AB InBev's global beer sales volumes come from low and no alcohol beers<sup>3</sup>
- This trend is growing faster in other countries such as Spain where a third of people drink alcohol free beer, and Germany where a quarter of people do<sup>4</sup>

And this market shift seems different to discussions that have happened before:

<sup>1</sup> SIBA (2019) [‘The SIBA British Craft Beer Report 2019 - The UK’s Independent Craft Beer Sector In Focus’](#)

<sup>2</sup> Eebria (2019) [‘Eebria Trade Craft Beer Trends Part One - March 2019’](#)

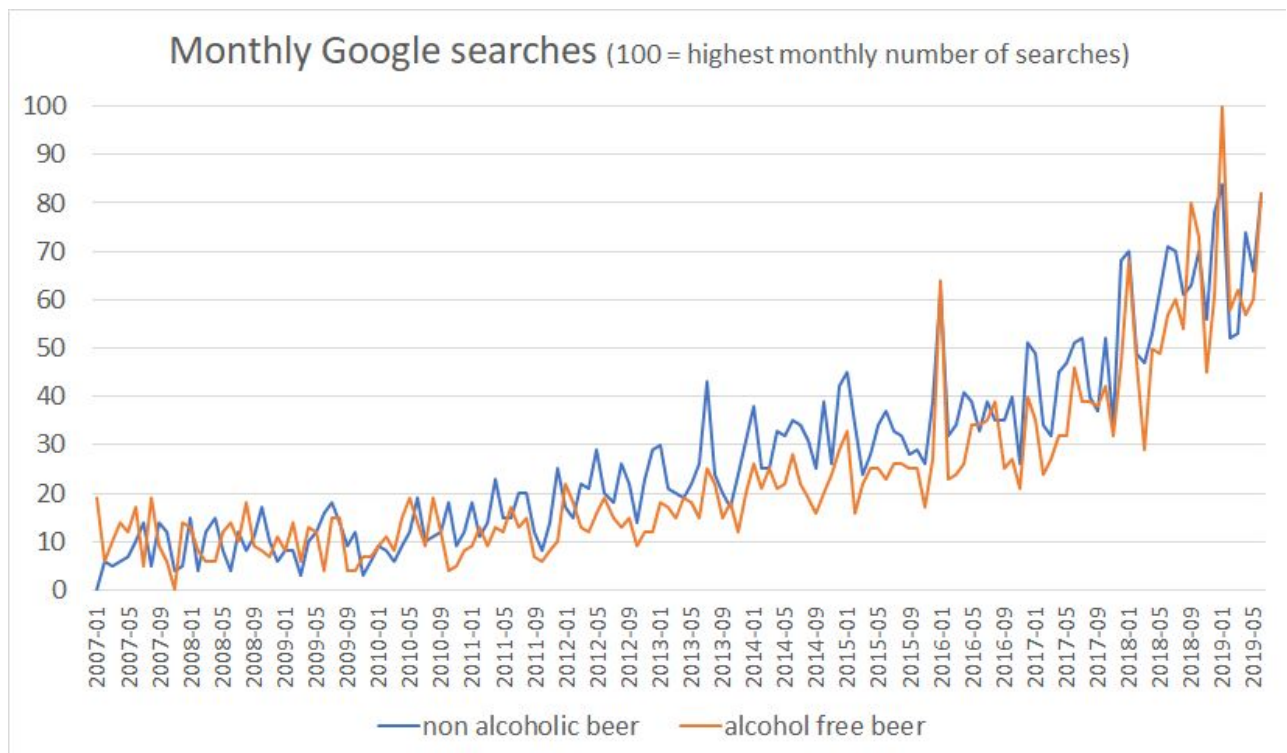
<sup>3</sup> AB InBev (2018) [‘AB InBev Annual Report 2018’](#)

<sup>4</sup> Eebria (2019) [‘Eebria Trade Craft Beer Trends Part One - March 2019’](#)



*“I'm old enough to remember several times when low non-alcohol beer was going to be the next big thing, and every single time it failed, mainly because the products were bloody horrible. And it's different this time. I saw a presentation last year from CGA Data, and in the last four years, low and non-alcohol as a sector has increased by 150%, which was never, ever done before in its history. This time, it really is here to stay.”* **Pete Brown, Beer Writer, Chair of the British Guild of Beer Writers**

This increase in sales is matched by an increase in public awareness around low and no alcohol beers, as evidenced by the trend in Google searches for “alcohol free beer” and “non alcoholic beer” over the past decade.<sup>5</sup>



From 2007 to 2011 there is not much change in the number of searches for the two terms. But from 2011 to 2016 there is a slow upwards trend (between 10 and 20 in January 2011), and from 2016 onwards the trend gets faster and faster (to the high of 80-100 in January 2019). It is also noticeable that many of the highest peaks in the graph take place in January, a popular month for people to make changes to their drinking habits as a result of the ‘Dry January’ movement.

<sup>5</sup> Google doesn’t release actual numbers of searches, but we can find out relative figures: searches in the highest month get a value of 100, and other months are in relation to that.



## A consumer-led movement

The growth in sales and interest in low alcohol and alcohol-free beer is led by a cross-generational, multi-motivated consumer base. Three key factors in this are:

1. Changes in drinking habits of the under 25 year-olds
2. Increase in health motivated moderate drinking
3. Alcohol-free lifestyles.

### Changes in drinking habits of the under 25s

The decline in alcohol consumption in Britain is being led by younger generations: over a quarter of 18 to 24-year-olds now say that they don't drink at all, and fewer are binge drinking (down from 27% in 2005 to 18% today).<sup>6</sup>

Millennial abstinence has been attributed to a greater importance placed on health and wellbeing (they are as likely to go to the gym as they are to the pub), social media platforms making 'in-person' gatherings optional, and a preference for 'Instagrammable experiences'.<sup>789</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Office for National Statistics (2017) 'Health state life expectancies, UK: 2015 to 2017'

<sup>7</sup> M. Fowlestone, Crocker P and King J (2017) ['The millennial hangover - Why Generation Y is not getting on with the on trade'](#) Multiply Agency

The importance placed on health and wellbeing shows that younger people are likely to be interested in low and no alcohol beer because of its health benefits (a number of low and no alcohol beers are isotonic) as well as looking for a wider range of drinks options to provide them with more interesting experiences.

## **Health motivated moderation on the increase**

More broadly across all age groups, people's increased focus on health is leading to a moderation of their drinking habits.

Overall, two in five (42%) adult drinkers say that at some point in their lives they have made efforts over a period of time to cut down their drinking. This is nearly 20 million people in the UK. Just under half (49%) of those who say they have attempted to cut down on their drinking say they have attempted this within the last year, with over a third (36%) saying they have attempted this within the last six months. On that basis we can confidently assume that this year, 8.6 million drinkers will be actively moderating their drinking.<sup>10,11</sup>

Individual attempts to change one's drinking often involves using a variety of moderation techniques, one of which can be consuming non-alcoholic substitutes of traditional drinks. 34% or 14.6m people have used lower strength drinks as a moderation tool. And 29% have drunk a non-alcoholic beer, wine or spirit substitute (12.5m).<sup>12</sup>

*"Four in five people are now really thinking about their alcohol habits and plan to moderate their drinking. (This presents) a significant consumer movement and opportunity for pubs"*

**David Scott, Director of Brands and Insight at Carlsberg UK<sup>13</sup>**

These broader changes show how there is an engaged segment of the population looking to drink less alcohol, so low and no alcohol beers offer a bridging opportunity for people making incremental changes.

## **Alcohol-free lifestyles**

Beyond those who are looking to moderate or cut down on their drinking, there is a significant proportion of the population who have stopped drinking altogether, or might have chosen never to drink alcohol.

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<sup>8</sup> E. Green (2018) '[Social media and "Instagrammable" food: Millennial influencers – a virtual reality?](#)' Food Ingredients First, accessed 10 June 2019

<sup>9</sup> DrinkUp.London '[London's Most Instagrammable Bars](#)', accessed 10 June 2019

<sup>10</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) '[Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults – Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018](#)' YouGov

<sup>11</sup> L. Giles and Robinson M (2017) '[Monitoring and Evaluating Scotland's Alcohol Strategy: Monitoring Report 2017](#)' NHS Health Scotland

<sup>12</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) '[Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults – Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018](#)' YouGov

<sup>13</sup> L. Ashworth (2016) '[Carlsberg UK Unveils 2015/16 Consumer Insights Report](#)' Cask Marque, accessed 9 June 2019

The Drinkaware Monitor 2018 found that 12% of adults don't drink, with 53% saying they used to drink alcohol but have given up, while 43% have never drunk alcohol.<sup>14</sup> This means that over 6.2 million people in the UK will not be having an alcoholic drink if they visit a licensed venue.<sup>15</sup>

Of the group who gave up, only 18% said they did so because they felt their drinking was problematic. Improving health, not liking the physical effects or alcohol not fitting into their lifestyle were bigger motivations for giving up.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) ['Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults - Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018'](#) YouGov

<sup>15</sup> Figure calculated using Nielsen population figures

<sup>16</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) ['Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults - Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018'](#) YouGov





## Why selling low and no alcohol beer matters

The need to support this new emerging drink category is not just important for those investing in and making low and no alcohol beers. Or just for the consumer who is looking for something more interesting on a night out. It is important to our pubs, restaurants and other venues too.

With 18 pubs a week closing down and a number of high profile restaurant chains leaving the high street, it is important that we find ways to tempt people out of their homes and into our social spaces.<sup>17</sup>

As a society, we have a bias that equates going to the pub with drinking alcohol. If you are not drinking on a particular evening, you are likely to say no to an invitation to the local bar. If you have never drunk alcohol, you may only rarely or even never go to the pub at all. This unwritten rule (pub=booze) stops people using our common social spaces as often as they could. We want this to change. From breakfast to dinner, there should always be a reason to say yes to going out.

We want our social spaces to have something for everyone, and make sure that all customers are served with the same care and attention, whatever the strength of their drink. This attitude creates more opportunities for people to spend money in their local, and helps keep cherished venues open.

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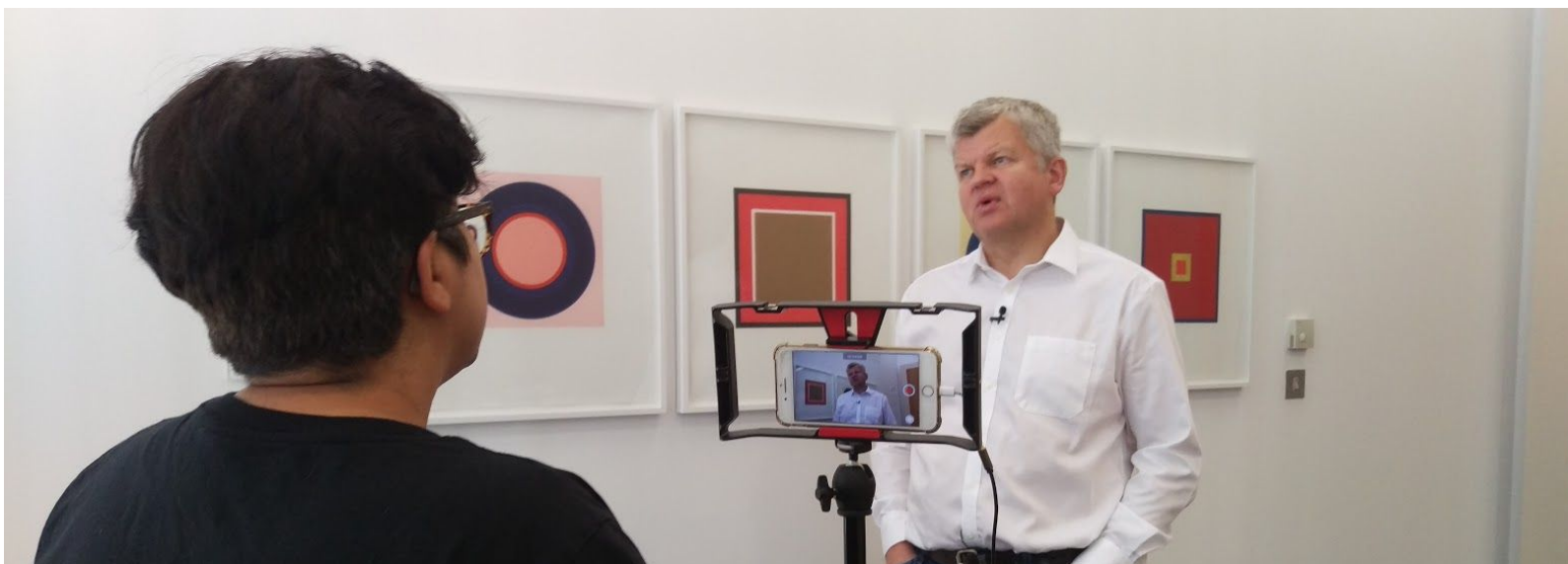
<sup>17</sup> BBC News (2018) [‘Pubs closing at rate of 18 a week as people stay at home’](#) accessed 9 August 2019

We believe that low and no alcohol beers, as the biggest innovators in the low and no alcohol space, could help the hospitality industry by boosting revenues, creating more welcoming social spaces, normalising low and no alcohol drinks, and helping venues appeal to a wider customer base.

These trends around consumer choices tell us:

- People are drinking less alcohol and this is a cross-generational trend that is likely to continue
- Interest in low and no alcohol beers has been increasing, as evidenced through sales and searches
- Fewer people are going to the pub than ever before

Taken together, this shows why licensed venues being able to sell more low and no alcohol beers will have a significant benefit to consumers, venues, and breweries. We know the market is there, and we want to help everyone make the most of it.



## Methodology and approach

### The Low and No Alcohol Beer Summit

In approaching our question as to how licensed venues could sell more low and no alcohol beer, we started by identifying what the pain points were for both venues and consumers. We did this through hosting a Beer Summit, where a range of industry leaders were invited to discuss the state of low and no alcohol beers. Attendees included alcoholic and non-alcoholic breweries, CAMRA, Ed Benninginton (Morning Advertiser), and Jane Peyton (Beer Sommelier). Attendees developed user personas and followed their journeys to identify issues around sales of low and no alcohol beers.

*“I just want to get alcohol-free and low alcohol beer into the mainstream. It seems barking mad to me that alcohol-free beer is not more widely available. I am sure there would be a demand for it. What seems to work with people is not saying ‘drink that instead of ordinary beer’ ... but see it as an alternative to water or sugary drinks or whatever else you could drink.”* **Adrian Chiles, launching the Low and No Alcohol Beer Summit in October 2018.**

The pain points we discovered were:

- Perceptions of quality
- Perceptions of cost
- Availability
- Visibility
- Confusion around labelling
- Talking about health

We then conducted a series of experiments and case studies for these pain points, looking at various domains (online sales, student unions, shops, rural pubs, restaurants) to discover possible solutions for both venues and consumers. This allowed us to develop recommendations for each of these problems, which will help licensed venues sell more low and no alcohol beers.





## Opportunity One: Improving Availability

What we hear from venues:

*"I can't get hold of any alcohol-free beers"*

What we hear from consumers:

*"Venues don't serve any alcohol-free beers"*

Venues have been slow to recognise the wide range of low and no alcohol beers now available from both mainstream and independent/craft brewers in a variety of styles. It is often common for a non-drinker in a social setting to only be offered sugary child-oriented soft drinks, such as colas or lemonades.

Part of the issue for venues is the lack of options offered by wholesalers, who can be very slow-moving, particularly in stocking drinks from smaller newer producers.

*"In my very naive way, I thought that I would go to wholesalers and say, 'I've made a great drink, surely then you'll buy it from me.' Whereas what they want is to know that they have a customer that will list it, but when you go and see the customer and say, 'Would you like to buy my drink?' They say yes, but you have to have it listed with these wholesalers. So, there's a constant circular feedback*



*loop of trying to get customers in order to get wholesalers, in order to get customers in order to get wholesalers.” Rob Fink, Founder, Big Drop Brewing Co.*

*“We know that the demand is there from the customers and has trickled through to the pubs. But it then takes a while for that to trickle through to the wholesalers.” Becky Kean, Co-founder, Nirvana Brewery*

This lack of supply choice makes product discovery hard for venues who will stay with safe, tried and tested drinks. It also means all new entrants into the market have to constantly juggle venues who want a product with their availability to get it. This slows down the progress of the market.

### **Case Study: London City Runners introducing alcohol-free beer**



London City Runners is the largest free running club in London, with a newly opened clubhouse in Bermondsey. Post run, members return to the club, but are reluctant to drink high-calorie beers or soft drinks so mainly drink free tap water, which the club makes no money on.

We suggested FitBeer as an appropriate alcohol-free beer for them to introduce to their clubhouse. FitBeer is made in the German tradition of low-calorie "bekoemmlich" (wholesome) beer, and its branding highlights the fact that it is isotonic, has only 66 calories per bottle, and is high in vitamins such as B9 and folic acid.

A promotional tasting event after a Tuesday evening run found the following results:

- 57% of the interviewed runners (50% male, 50% female) had never had an alcohol-free beer before, 36% had tried it, and 7% drink it often
- 42% of the respondents said that they only wanted water or a soft drink after a run, 36% an alcoholic drink and 21% were open to either
- After tasting FitBeer, 93% stated that it was better than their expectations
- 86% said that they were very likely to buy FitBeer again

- Offering an alcohol-free beer option was well received by an overwhelming majority of the customers
- Furthermore, apart from rehydrating, over a third of the runners stated that the main reason they bought a drink after a run was as to contribute financially to the club. The club selling an alcohol-free beer enabled them to do that, whilst having a healthy option.

The London City Runners experience was that their members were enthused by their inclusion of an alcohol-free beer at the clubhouse, as it allowed them to enjoy a healthy drink and contribute to the financial viability of the club. It also has allowed the club to make more money than when runners would choose tap water instead.

### **Case Study: Corporate Catering Event**

Traditionally at catering events, the selection of drinks options is very limited. There are a particular set of factors which means catering has been slow to embrace low and no alcohol beers:

- Caterers are attached to a building and are the sole providers of drinks for any events
- Caterers use a very traditional formula for their restricted drinks lists
- Healthy catering clauses only apply to solid foods but not liquids

*“Traditionally corporate hospitality has worked on a sale or return basis for beer and wine and a set number of units for soft drinks. This needs to change if we are going to be able to offer choice.” Ambra Cosentino, Nesta Events Manager<sup>18</sup>*

Club Soda were invited by an independent hospitality caterer to offer alcohol-free beers at an evening recruitment event for potential new staff by a major financial firm in the City of London.

Throughout the evening, approximately 300 people visited the refreshment area to network with existing staff of the firm. The drinks being served were a mainstream lager, white wine, red wine and two mainstream soft drink brands. Club Soda set up a separate table at this space with a selection of alcohol-free beers. We were asked to keep a “low profile” about the experiment so we collected feedback discretely from attendees.

Attendees said they picked alcohol-free drinks for religious or health reasons. Several also said that they didn’t feel like it was appropriate to be drinking alcohol at a recruitment event in case it made a bad impression on a potential employer.

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<sup>18</sup> Ambra Cosentino, Nesta Events Manager, speaking at The Food Service Show 2019.

We found that attendees of the event were dissatisfied with the traditional catering offer and had a number of reasons for not wanting to drink. However, because of the event format they were unlikely to mention this to the catering company. Many left with a negative impression of the hiring firm with regard to the drinks on offer.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

There can be a reluctance for wholesalers or venues to stock low and no alcohol beers which leads to a lack of availability of them. This lack of availability often means that it can be hard to perceive demand for the product and also suggests to a customer choosing not to drink that a venue does not care about their choices.

Our recommendations are for:

- Wholesalers to be more open to the category and be willing to pick up new low and no alcohol beers
- Venues to make an effort to find new and different low and no alcohol beers
- Caterers to review their long-held formula for menus at events and to work with clients to offer a range of options that makes everyone feel welcome.



## Opportunity Two: Challenging Perceptions of Cost

What we hear from venues:

*“The margins are not as good as coke on a hose”*

What we hear from consumers:

*“Alcohol-free beer should be cheaper than alcoholic because there is no alcohol duty”*

There is a perception among both venues and customers that alcohol-free products are not priced as advantageously as either traditional soft drinks or alcoholic beers. This is an issue we found in a previous piece of research, Nudging Pubs.

*“While some customers may be willing to pay extra for a nicer drink, the venues’ perception is that the cost is too high, and that customers expect soft drinks to be cheaper. There is an element of truth in this, but venues don’t always upsell the premium soft drinks they already offer. In our mystery shopping, staff nearly always started by offering the cheaper products (coke and lemonade) on the soda gun first, and often needed to be prompted about the more expensive soft drinks in the fridge.” Nudging Pubs<sup>19</sup>*

Other research has shown this is somewhat of a circular issue, as a survey of hospitality operators found that whilst half of managers expect their staff to upsell

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<sup>19</sup> L. Willoughby and Tolvi J (2015) [‘Nudging Pubs: Working with pubs and bars to improve their offer to customers who drink less or not at all’](#) Club Soda



or promote soft drinks, only a quarter of them actually provide the training to do so.<sup>20</sup>

This pain point also dovetails with issues around availability as venues often justify not stocking low and no alcohol beers on the basis that customers won't buy them, but don't find out if customers would buy them by never stocking them.

Not to mention the fact that the pricing of some venues' soft drinks means that they can be very cost prohibitive.

*"For some reason, pubs think that if I choose not to drink alcohol then I want something that's so sugary it makes my teeth feel furry. They also seem to think it's perfectly acceptable to rip me off – if you mix two drinks together, such as orange and bitter lemon, a pint can work out more expensive than a pint of beer. This may just be me, but something that has no other physical effect than giving me a sugar rush should be much cheaper than alcohol."* **Lisa Barber, Which? Car Editor**<sup>21</sup>

There is a lack of understanding around the associated costs with producing a low and no alcohol beer. People assume that because there is no alcohol duty the beer should be a lot cheaper but that's not necessarily the case.

*"Because we don't have alcohol, we have to be extra careful with bacteria and things like that, so part of that involves filtering, which can take away a lot of the flavour you get from hops, so you kind of have to balance out by adding more hops. So it is a lot more of a tricky process, it's actually more difficult making an alcohol-free beer than it is to make an alcoholic beer, and it can be more expensive as well."* **Becky Kean, Co-founder, Nirvana Brewery**

Furthermore, the idea that venues will make more money from products with possibly higher mark-ups is not always borne out.

*"You can sell more alcohol-free beers in one sitting than you can orange juice...you can actually get customers spending a lot more of their money on something. People are willing to spend four pounds on alcohol-free beer, but they wouldn't spend four pounds on an orange juice."* **Becky Kean, Co-founder, Nirvana Brewery**

## **Case Study: City Pub Group making the business case**

From June to December 2017, within the Pre-Packaged Lager (PPL) category, City Pub Group gave their venue managers a choice of ten alcohol-free beers, with no compulsion to order any of them.

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<sup>20</sup> E. Eversham (2015) '[73% of hospitality operators see soft drinks as growth area](#)' Big Hospitality, accessed 9 August 2019

<sup>21</sup> L. Barber (2012) '[Why aren't pubs offering decent non-alcoholic drinks?](#)' Which? Accessed 9 June 2019

They did this because, as Gemma Catlin, Head of People and Development at City Pub Group said: *“There are a growing number of people out there who want to be able to have a grown-up drink that isn’t Coke or orange juice, or even a soda and lime.”*

In this time period, they sold almost 6,000 bottles (around £20,000 of sales) making up 4% of their total PPL sales.

At this point, Gemma Catlin said: *“We realised we were onto something...There were people out there that wanted to drink proper grown-up low-ABV beers and enjoy them at the pub.”*

On the basis of this, they decided to expand their range even further and they now offer 20 alcohol-free beers as part of their PPL category, including Adnam’s Ghost Ship 0.5% on draught.

From June 2017 to December 2018, they sold 2,500 pints of Adnams Ghost Ship 0.5%, which equated to £8,500 worth of sales. Within the PPL category, they sold 14,300 bottles of alcohol-free beers accounting for almost £50,000 worth of sales. Sales of low ABV beers have become 6% of their total PPL sales.

*“I think it’s going to be a continuing market to grow, we are working really hard with producers to try and find additional markets, and I wouldn’t be surprised if this time next year, we have at least 30 beers on the list. What have we learned from this: low/no beers make business sense too – the demand is growing, and an offer tailored to your venue can be profitable.”* **Gemma Catlin, City Pub Group**

The City Pub Group experience was that diversifying their drink offer by including alcohol-free beers was met with demand and consequently generated them significant profits.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

As a case study, the City Pub Group experience demonstrates that offering a broad range of low and no alcohol beers can offer a new source of revenue for venues to profit from.

Our recommendations are for:

- Venues not to place too much importance on initial sales if they are introducing low or no alcohol beers into their venue for the first time – it might take a while for customers to adjust to them
- Venues to make a strong business case to their peers showing how low and no alcohol beers have generated profit for them – the more venues who adopt low and no alcohol beers, the more customers will become used to them, the more popular they will become

- Venues to equalise any special offers such as happy hours, loyalty schemes or drinks deals to include a low or no alcohol beer as well.



## Opportunity Three: Challenging Perceptions of Quality

**What we hear from venues:**

*“Alcohol-free beer tastes bad so no one will want to drink it”*

**What we hear from customers:**

*“Alcohol-free beer is of poor quality – why would I want one?”*

Alcohol-free beer has historically had a stigma of not being ‘real’ beer, of being a compromise, and of being a very poor substitute for alcoholic versions.

However, long gone are the days of poor-quality category-destroying beers that put a generation off the idea of alcohol-free beer as the drink of choice when an alcoholic beer wasn’t an option. New brewing techniques and technologies have led to a new generation of brewers creating beers that match the taste profiles of a variety of different styles of higher ABV beers.

In discussing alcohol-free beer, many people’s attitudes are tainted by their memory of drinks such as Kaliber and Barbican from the early 1980s. These beers



had their alcohol removed by crude processes involving essentially boiling the alcohol out of the beer, resulting in a very bitter and unrefreshing drink.<sup>22</sup>

*“One of the major factors in the enormous growth of non-alcoholic beer has been the vast improvements in the quality of these beers. No longer a dusty bottle on the shelf that people avoid like the plague. Brewers are now producing some wonderful beers that are a joy to drink.”* **Mike Wood, MP for Dudley South, Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group**<sup>23</sup>

And these traditional stigmas are fading as 70% of millennials say they enjoy the taste of alcohol-free beer and a quarter of them are likely to try one – the highest percentage of any age group.<sup>24</sup>

Breweries have come up with new and innovative ways to bring quality to the low and no alcohol category. In 2014 Adnams experimented with creating a beer with an ABV of 2.7%, motivated by beers below 2.8% ABV only attracting half the excise duty. Feedback for their Soul Star beer was positive and it sold well. Spurred on by BrewDog’s success with their 0.5% ABV Nanny State beer, Adnams reduced the ABV of Soul Star to 0.9% ABV, and its online sales doubled. Customers then started asking for lower alcohol versions of their favourite regular beers, and Ghost Ship Alcohol Free 0.5% was born.

Big Drop Brewing Co, founded at the end of 2016, keep their methods a closely guarded secret. Founder Rob Fink told us that *“My brewer says it’s a combination of voodoo and black magic...what we do is we just brew it to 0.5%. We don’t halter fermentation, we don’t heat it, and we don’t extract the alcohol. And it’s clever brewing, basically.”*

These improvements and changes in techniques are what has created a whole new world of low and no alcohol beers – but that is all academic until people try them.

## **Case Study: The Fountain and Ink placing Big Drop front and centre**

During January 2019, The Fountain and Ink pub in Southwark put Big Drop’s Pale Ale on draught, having already stocked it in bottles. They found that having an alcohol-free beer on draught allowed people to have their perceptions of low and no alcohol beer challenged.

*“We found a really good excuse to give people a taste and to convince people that the product was really good. And those people who tried it with us in Dry January have come back and have been asking for it in bottles afterwards, because there was no financial risk for them in trying it the first time”* **Ashley Naismith, General Manager, The Fountain and Ink**

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<sup>22</sup> C. Cozens (2001) [‘Kaliber beer’](#) The Guardian, accessed 9 June 2019

<sup>23</sup> Big Drop (2019) [‘Worldwide win for Big Drop’s Citra IPA’](#) accessed 10 June 2019

<sup>24</sup> Carlsberg UK (2018) [‘Drinkers seek more low and no alcohol choices in pubs’](#) accessed 13 May 2019

*“There is still an expectation that alcohol-free beer doesn't taste very good. And that's historic. And that's the biggest challenge that we have. There is no quick way to solving that problem. The only way that we solve that problem is we get people to try our beer.” Rob Fink, Founder, Big Drop Brewing Co*

The Fountain and Ink found that being able to offer people tasters allowed them to demonstrate the quality of an alcohol-free beer, which then encouraged them to start buying the beer regularly. As customers perceive the good quality of low and no alcohol beers, they will be more likely to buy them.

## Case Study: SOAS Student Union Bar



Club Soda ran a "Low and No Alcohol Beer Tasting Evening" at the Student Union bar on a regular quiz night at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. A wide range of beer styles were available to be sampled including lagers, pale ales, wheat beers, brown ales and stouts from both mainstream and craft breweries.

Each person who tried something filled out a Tasting Questionnaire. We found that:

- 68% of the respondents expressed a preference for beer as their chosen drink, and 50% stated that they drank at least 5 pints of beer a week
- 30% of the students who tried the alcohol-free beers said they would definitely drink more no and low alcohol beer in future, and 65% said they would maybe drink more.

Students were in general pleasantly surprised by the taste of alcohol-free beers in general, and on tasting the beers they immediately started thinking of situations when they would drink them.

The bar staff were also excited by the low and no alcohol beers and the manager, Peter Baran noted: *“They [the bar staff] like to have a drink sometimes when they're working, but they're not allowed to drink alcohol while they're working, so having a non-alcoholic beer at the same time makes them feel like they're part of the situation as well.”*

Again this case study shows how when people are given the opportunity to try low and no alcohol beers, their perception of its quality increases and it makes them more likely to buy more in the future.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

The best way for people to change their perception of low and no alcohol beer's quality is for them to have the opportunity to try it. When given a sample of a low or no alcohol beer, people's responses are broadly positive and this influences their future choices and behaviours. Customers want to know if they like something before they invest in it.

Our recommendations are for:

- Venues to offer samples to customers to encourage them to try new drinks
- Venues to train their staff and give them the opportunity to try any low and no alcohol beers they stock, so they can pass on their knowledge and recommendations to their customers.



## Opportunity Four: Improving Visibility

What we hear from venues:

*“No one ever asks us for alcohol-free beers”*

What we hear from customers:

*“I don’t want it to look like I’m not drinking”*

There is a double-pronged pain point around visibility for low and no alcohol beers.

Firstly, letting customers know that there are low and no alcohol beers available to them. In our Nudging Pubs research, we found that customers choosing not to drink often experience ‘bar panic’.

*“When the pubs are busy and the bar is packed with people waiting to order it’s very challenging to start asking what non-alcoholic drinks they have (it feels like ending up having a negotiation, waiters are not very willing to help, they feel anxiety, they feel like a burden) and so they opt for their default alcoholic choice.”*  
Online survey response<sup>25</sup>

Staff will often offer a traditional soft drink for someone not drinking, such as a lime and soda or a cola, rather than directing them to the more adult non-alcoholic drinks they have, such as low and no alcohol beers.

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<sup>25</sup> L. Willoughby and Tolvi J (2015) [‘Nudging Pubs: Working with pubs and bars to improve their offer to customers who drink less or not at all’](#) Club Soda



In Finland for example, Alko, the state alcohol monopoly identified a demand for non-alcoholic drinks. In response, Alko refreshed their shops' alcohol-free aisles in 2013 and 2014 with a new colour scheme to make them more visible and appealing. The result was 100% growth in sales for the category in the first year, with further rapid growth since then as well.<sup>26</sup>

The second pain point is customers not wanting it to be obvious that they are choosing not to drink alcohol. Currently, most venues that offer low and no alcohol beer will only do so in bottles or cans. Not many offer it on draught yet, which can make it more obvious that you're not drinking alcohol.

*"On draft, it feels more like a pint of beer. It presents as one. I think that image means a lot to a lot of people."* **Ashley Naismith, General Manager, The Fountain and Ink**

*"The more [low and no alcohol beer] on tap; the more people will drink it. And then, you know, I think you get better quality on tap, it tastes nicer, it feels like a proper beer."* **Becky Kean, Co-founder, Nirvana Brewery**

*"I think it's partly that ritual people like to have a pint poured, they like to go up and look like everyone else is looking"* **Fergus Fitzgerald, Head Brewer, Adnams Brewery**

Part of the reason low and no alcohol beers are rarely offered on draught is due to a misconception around the cellar life of them. Many believe that because these beers are missing alcohol, a preservative, they will not sell quick enough before they are 'off'. Kegs of beer from alcohol-free brewers like Nirvana Brewery and Big Drop Brewing Co have cellar lives of ten to twelve months, and will remain fresh for three weeks from being tapped. This is considerably more than a cask of alcoholic beer which should be consumed within three days.<sup>27</sup>

And producers of low and no alcohol beers are certainly not concerned about their beer hanging around on the bar.

*"Our first draught listing for Without has performed very well indeed and we've had to supply more already. The demand is definitely there, landlords just need to make the leap towards giving over same bar space to zero alcohol."* **John Hadingham, Managing Director, St Peter's Brewery**<sup>28</sup>

This worry about the reaction to being seen to be not drinking also crosses over into the naming of drinks.

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<sup>26</sup> Phone interview with Kasper Kukkonen, Category Manager, Brewery Products, Alko, 7 January 2019

<sup>27</sup> CAMRA (2018) '[CAMRA's Definition of Real Ale](#)' accessed 6 August 2019

<sup>28</sup> R. Mann (2018) '[The next step for zero-alcohol beer is selling on tap](#)' Morning Advertiser, accessed 12 March 2019

*“When Beck's released their alcohol-free beer....to start with, they called it Beck's Alcohol-Free. Sales were terrible. They changed it to Beck's Blue, the sales went through the roof, and they now have, by far, the biggest market share in the UK. And that, for me, is because you can go to a bar and you can ask for a drink without needing to ask for an alcohol-free drink. You can say, "Can I have a pint of Stella, a pint of Guinness and a bottle of Beck's Blue?"...Nobody needs to have alcohol-free in that communication...Right now, I think that you need to be able to go to a bar and have a conversation with a bar person about the beers that were available without necessarily needing to refer to them as alcohol-free [because of stigma].” Rob Fink, Founder, Big Drop Brewing Co*

The way drinks are presented and named has knock on effects on the visibility of low and no alcohol beers.

### **Case Study: Heineken Blade at Robinsons Brewery pubs**

Heineken have developed Blade, a draught system which can sit on a bar top and dispense beer without requiring any gas. As well as offering their alcoholic beers through this system, they have also started offering Heineken 0.0, their alcohol-free beer.

Robinsons is a brewery and owner of 260 pubs. Having introduced the Heineken Blade, Robinsons saw a 59% increase in sales of low and no alcohol beers and ciders in comparison with 2018.<sup>29</sup> As well as promoting a wide range of different low and no alcohol beers, the inclusion of draught has played a big part in this huge boost to their sales. Sales of low and no alcohol beers were up 209% on average across its managed pubs and 75% across tenanted ones.

*“We are finding that groups of core customers are...switching on certain occasions, particularly for draught” David Bremner, Marketing Director, Robinsons Brewery<sup>30</sup>*

We spoke to David Bremner to learn more about their experience with low and no alcohol beers. He said that although the profit margin on alcohol-free beer may not be better than on soft drinks or full strength beers, Robinsons felt that adding alcohol-free beers to their pubs was a good decision, and one they will maintain.

*“Getting the drinks range right is really important. And the Heineken Blade adds the theatre of the serve.” David Bremner, Marketing Director, Robinsons Brewery*

This shows how introducing low and no alcohol beers in more traditional forms such as on draught improves visibility for customers and therefore improves sales.

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<sup>29</sup> E. Hawkins (2019) '[Robinsons Brewery no and low-alcohol beer sales up 59%](#)' Morning Advertiser, accessed 6 August 2019

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

## Conclusions and recommendations

There are two key pain points around visibility, relating to the sales of low and no alcohol beers. The first is how customers are directed towards these drinks and the second is how they are perceived when they are drinking them.

Venues need to make sure their staff are aware of what their offer is and look at how they navigate customers around the adult non-alcoholic drinks available, rather than immediately offering someone who is choosing not to drink a more traditional option such as lime and soda.

Venues also need to investigate alternative ways of serving low and no alcohol drinks in order to help customers feel comfortable with choosing not to drink. Draught beer is a popular way of doing this, and can make people feel comfortable with having a low or no alcohol beer.

Our recommendations are for:

- Venues to train their staff around their adult alcohol-free drinks selection so they are equipped to help out a customer who is choosing not to drink
- Venues to try out low and no alcohol beers on draught
- Wholesalers to take on low and no alcohol beers in kegs
- Breweries to offer their low and no alcohol beers in keg
- Industry to continue to work to dispel misconceptions around kegged low and no alcohol beer
- Venues to make use of point of sale opportunities such as A-Boards and menus to advertise their low and no alcohol beers.



Photo: Jamie Smith

## Opportunity Five: Clarifying Labelling Regulations

**What we hear from venues:**

*“We don’t know what counts as alcohol-free”*

**What we hear from customers:**

*“0.5% means that it won’t be alcohol-free”*

Currently in the UK, if a beer contains 0.5% of alcohol it must be labelled as low-alcohol, and a product can only be labelled as alcohol-free if it is under 0.05%. However, this labelling advice does not apply to non-UK made drinks. Within the EU, beers containing 0.5% of alcohol can be described as alcohol-free, and can also use that descriptor in the UK. This has caused large amounts of confusion among both venues and consumers as to how to describe low and no alcohol beers.

*“When we are speaking to bar staff it is clear that they are confused, especially when they see something like an Erdinger (“Alkoholfrei” wheat beer) that is labelled as alcohol-free. It’s hard for them to know what they can and can’t say about our product.”* **Chris Hannaway, Founder, Infinite Session**<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> J. Beeson (2018) [‘Government legislation on low alcohol products is ‘functionally inappropriate.’](#), accessed 9 June 2019



The issue in this example is that the 0.5% German-brewed Erdinger can be described as alcohol-free whilst a 0.5% beer from UK-brewed Infinite Session must be described as low alcohol.

*“In Germany, everybody understands 0.5% is alcohol-free. And people are comfortable drinking it, they know – they've got confirmation from the regulations that this is deemed to be alcohol-free, and it's reassuring to know that that's what that's legally considered to be alcohol-free. Without having that legal reassurance, people aren't sure, they're a bit nervous, a bit scared. They think, "Oh, 0.5% is low alcohol so I can't have it." And it's just a bit of a mess, really.”* **Becky Kean, Co-Founder, Nirvana Brewery**

All of this creates confusion among the public around what is alcohol-free and what is not, and if it can be drunk when pregnant or driving. This confusion unnecessarily depresses the growth of the sector within the UK, and has the potential to slow progress in sales.

For example, 0.5% beer is safe for drivers to drink. The effects of alcohol can be felt by some people when their blood/alcohol content (BAC) reaches 0.04%.<sup>32</sup> In a 2012 study, 67 people drank 1.5 litres of alcohol-free beer in one hour. The maximum BAC they measured was 0.0056%.<sup>33</sup> This is one seventh the BAC when the effects of alcohol can be felt (and it is 14 times lower than the UK drink driving limit, and 9 times lower than the Scottish one).

Other countries have seen vast benefits from changing their guidance around alcohol labelling. In Denmark, the alcohol-free labelling limit was changed from 0.1% to 0.5% in 2014, and in the following three years saw a threefold increase in alcohol-free beer sales.<sup>34</sup>

### **Case Study: Club Soda members' perceptions of 0.5% labelling**

We surveyed 527 Club Soda members online and discovered a large amount of confusion around what 0.5% ABV labelling meant for their consumption of these products.

The survey began by asking what the members perceived as counting as 'alcohol-free' before providing them with some scientific information around what 0.5% ABV in drinks means, before asking them again what they perceived as counting as 'alcohol-free'.

Initially, almost half said that they would count 0.5% as 'alcohol-free'. And when presented with the facts around labelling, we saw the number of people saying they

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<sup>32</sup> Stanford Office of Alcohol Policy and Education (2019) [What Is BAC?](#) Accessed 2 June 2019

<sup>33</sup> A. Thierauf, Große Perdekamp M, and Auwärter V (2012) '[Maximale Blutalkoholkonzentration nach forciertem Konsum von alkoholfreiem Bier](#)'. Rechtsmedizin 22, 4: 244–247.

<sup>34</sup> CPH Post (2017) '[More Danes choosing alcohol free beer](#)' accessed 6 August 2019

would count 0.5% as ‘alcohol-free’ rising to 67%.<sup>35</sup> This survey showed how when presented with the appropriate information, people accept 0.5% as a reasonable ABV to be labelled as ‘alcohol-free’.

### **Case study: Spain as a leader in alcohol-free beer**

In Spain, alcohol-free beer accounts for around 18% of the overall beer market, as opposed to 5% globally. This market share is increasing, with surveys indicating drinkers are “somewhat” or “very” likely to drink a low or non-alcoholic beer in the next 12 months rising from 30% to 36% within the space of one year.<sup>36</sup>

Spain attributes much of this increase in popularity to improving the positioning of alcohol-free beer as a positive alternative to beer when driving, through a partnership with 18 top national associations and authorities on road safety, including Dirección General de Tráfico (General-Directorate for Traffic). In particular their five-year “En la Carretera, Cerveza Sin” (“On The Road, Non-Alcoholic Beer”) campaign, featuring a group of social media-savvy Harley Davidson-riding bikers travelling around Spain as ambassadors has been very successful at raising awareness of new drink driving limits, and distributing free samples of the alcohol-free beers now available at highway bars.

The result of the Spanish campaign was a 60% increase in drivers drinking alcohol-free beer, with 40% of them saying it was because they had to drive, and were influenced by the campaign.<sup>37</sup>

A campaign like this was possible because Spain accepted 0.5% ABV as an alcohol-free ABV, leaving them free to promote it as an acceptable drink to consume when driving. The confusion around labelling within the UK stops such campaigns being able to take place.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

Confusion around labelling means that neither consumers nor venues understand what counts as alcohol-free. When presented with the facts, the vast majority of people show a willingness to understand 0.5% as alcohol-free even though that is not what the government regulations currently allow.

Our recommendations are for:

- Industry to come together to lobby the government to allow 0.5% ABV drinks to be labelled as alcohol-free
- Industry to advocate for alcohol-free drinks to stand alone as a category separate from either soft drinks or alcoholic ones

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<sup>35</sup> Facts provided: that almost all drinks contain traces of (or up to) 0.5% of alcohol, that drinking 0.5% alcohol will leave you fine to drive, that 0.5% is safe for pregnant women to drink, that 0.5% is the most common global standard for ‘alcohol-free’ drinks.

<sup>36</sup> M McCormick (2019) ‘[Non-alcoholic beer a growing opportunity in stagnant market](#)’ Financial Times, accessed 10 June 2019

<sup>37</sup> J Marañón (2018) ‘Focus on responsibility campaigns and the use of non-alcoholic beer to tackle drink driving’

- Venues to explain to customers that 0.5% means alcohol-free
- All trusted sources (the government, retailers, drinks sector and special interest groups such as drivers and pregnancy groups) need to have a clear and consistent line on what alcohol-free is
- More research to be done on low ABV beers



## Opportunity Six: Discussing Health Benefits

What we hear from venues

*“I serve beer. Why do I need to know about calories?”*

What we hear from customers

*“I’m not going to be drinking for health reasons”*

Health is a primary motivation for individual decisions to moderate alcohol intake, but people moderating often choose to stay away from the pub, despite the fact that alcohol-free beer can have significant health benefits.

The most common reasons given for attempting to cut down drinking are to lead a healthier lifestyle or to cut down on calories/lose weight (both 55%).<sup>38</sup> A common moderation technique is choosing to take certain days in the week drink-free.<sup>39</sup> 72% of drinkers say that they are currently or have previously chosen certain drink-free days in the week.<sup>40</sup> That is potentially 31 million people in the UK not going out on a weeknight. The challenge the industry faces is in looking at how to

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<sup>38</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) [‘Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults - Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018’](#) YouGov

<sup>39</sup> DrinkAware (2019) [‘Drink Free Days’](#) accessed 9 August 2019

<sup>40</sup> B. Gunstone, Piggott L, Butler B, Appleton A and Larsen J (2018) [‘Drinking behaviour and moderation among UK adults - Findings from Drinkaware Monitor 2018’](#) YouGov



attract those people off their sofa by showing that pubs can be spaces where you choose not to drink.

In fact, drinking alcohol-free beer is likely to have more health benefits than not drinking anything at all. Studies have suggested that it can reduce the risk of heart disease, reduce the risk of respiratory tract illnesses such as the common cold, and will rehydrate you.<sup>41</sup>

It is also known that women drink less beer than men. Important factors for some women not drinking beer are male-oriented advertising, calories, and taste.<sup>42</sup> We haven't considered all of these aspects in our research, but clearly low and no alcohol beer has features which could make beer more attractive to women who don't currently drink it (lower calorie content being the most immediate factor).

Therefore, it is important to equip bar staff in venues with the information that will allow them to answer common questions about low and no alcohol beer, including around calories, sugar, and other ingredients, on top of ABV concerns.

### **Case study: Use of alcohol-free drinks as a tool for changing drinking habits**

Club Soda and Clever Together teamed up to research which tools and approaches employed by Club Soda best enabled our 35,000 members to change their drinking behaviours.<sup>43</sup>

280 Club Soda members participated in an anonymous online workshop sharing their stories by discussing their journey around changing their drinking, what worked for them and what didn't work for them.

We found that members liked the fact that Club Soda normalises low and no alcohol (16% of responses mentioned this). Participants saw this normalisation as creating a feeling that they were able to socialise without alcohol, encouraging increased availability of low and no alcohol drinks, and helping them to adopting a more mindful approach to drinking.

Some participants talked about initial concerns upon making a decision to change their alcohol consumption that they may struggle to explain their decision to friends, or feel uneasy at social events where they would usually have consumed alcohol, or that they may miss the taste or effect of alcohol.

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<sup>41</sup> T. Hallett (2019) '[The health benefits of alcohol-free beer](#)' Steady Drinker, accessed 9 August 2019

<sup>42</sup> Dea Latis (2019) '[The Beer Agender: A further study into female attitudes and behaviours towards beer 2019](#)' accessed 12 August 2019

<sup>43</sup> A. Redmond and Martin F (forthcoming) 'A draft report exploring the journey of Club Soda members on the path to changing their alcohol consumption: driving forces, goal setting, the tools and support mechanisms that work best and possible areas for improvement' Club Soda and Clever Together

The availability of low and no alcohol drinks appears to alleviate some of these concerns as it replicates the taste of alcohol, providing some of the positive associations, without requiring consumption. Some participants reported feeling more comfortable socialising where alcohol-free alternatives were available.

*“I lined up a good range of AF “adult drinks” to retrain my brain into not feeling deprived.”*

*“I've always drunk pints of real ale and have seen that as part of my identity, so that is something I need to address. I've found the availability of non-alcoholic beers a real help.”*

This research shows that people like using alcohol-free alternatives as a strategy to either moderate their drinking or go teetotal. This suggests that if venues can stock and then effectively advertise the availability of low and no alcohol beer, that sales will improve alongside the rise in moderation that is taking place socially.

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

Whilst there is an increasing trend towards moderation and people taking days off drinking, this does not have to spell the end for people visiting the pub. The health benefits of alcohol-free beer shows how visiting a pub with a good selection of low and no alcohol beers can dovetail with efforts at moderation for health reasons.

Our recommendations are for:

- Venues to educate their staff around the health benefits of alcohol-free beer
- Breweries to make it clear on their labelling and through conversations with venues that there are a number of health benefits



## **Summary: How can licensed venues sell more low and no alcohol beers?**

At the start of our research, we identified six different opportunities, based around existing pain points, for venues to sell more low and no alcohol beers.

These were:

1. Improving Availability
2. Challenging Perceptions of Price
3. Challenging Perceptions of Quality
4. Improving Visibility
5. Clarifying Labelling
6. Discussing Health Benefits

Our research into each of has allowed us to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for venues, customers, breweries, and the industry as a whole to implement, in order to continue to grow the low and no alcohol beer sector.

More broadly than the recommendations, we argue for an industry wide movement that embraces the potential for growth among low and no alcohol beers by making a strong, consistent business and social case for the category. This will involve working together to change the way the industry runs and is regulated. Instead of trying to fit low and no alcohol beer into existing formats aimed for alcoholic beer, we need to make it stand out and stand alone as it makes inroads into the sector.

### **The recommendations**

In order to improve availability, we recommend

- That **venues** stock a wide range of low and no alcohol beers, embracing stylistic multiplicity
- That **wholesalers** support new products in getting listings in venues
- That **caterers** revisit their traditional formula for event menus in line with the changing drinking trends among the population and embrace low and no alcohol beers

In order to challenge perceptions of price, we recommend

- That **venues** do not jump to conclusions about initial sales of any low or no alcohol beers they stock as customers will take time to get used to their changed offer
- That **venues** who do stock low and no alcohol beers act as advocates among their peers about the benefits of doing so
- That **venues** equalise any special offers such as happy hours, loyalty schemes or drinks deals to include a low or no alcohol beer

In order to challenge perceptions of quality, we recommend

- That **venues** offer samples of any low and no alcohol beers they have for customers to try
- That **venues** train their staff and encourage them to taste any low and no alcohol beers they stock in order for them to pass on their knowledge and recommendations to customers

In order to improve visibility, we recommend

- That **venues** encourage their staff to offer low and no alcohol beers to customers choosing not to drink as a first point of call
- That **venues** make use of point of sale opportunities such as A-Boards and menus to advertise their low and no alcohol beers
- That **venues** try out low and no alcohol beers on draught
- That **wholesalers** take on low and no alcohol beers in kegs
- That **breweries** keg the low and no alcohol beers they brew
- That **the industry** work to dispel misconceptions around the freshness of low and no alcohol beer

In order to clarify labelling, we recommend

- That **the industry** lobby the government to clarify the 0.5% ABV counts as alcohol-free
- That **the industry** encourage the government to think of alcohol-free drinks as a separate category to soft or alcoholic drinks
- That **venues** train their staff and inform their customers that 0.5% counts as alcohol-free
- All **trusted sources**, the government, retailers, drinks sector and special interest groups such as drivers and pregnancy groups need to have a clear and consistent line on what alcohol-free is
- That more **research** is carried out on the impact of low ABV beers

In order to embrace health interests, we recommend:



- That **breweries** make the health benefits clear on their labelling and in their conversations with venues
- That **venues** train their staff to be prepared to answer consumer questions around the health benefits of alcohol-free beer

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## Moving forward

Completing this research has allowed us to develop two specific resources which complement our recommendations and will encourage sales of low and no alcohol beers in licensed venues.

### Club Soda Guide

The Club Soda Guide has been redeveloped in conjunction with this beer research and we have used one to inform the other throughout the process.

The online [clubsodaguide.com](https://clubsodaguide.com) is the UK's first and only guide for mindful drinkers. It already lists over 2,500 venues across the UK, and over 850 low and no alcohol drinks aimed at adults, providing information about where to find them in venues, retail, and online shops.<sup>44</sup>

Venues can list the low and no alcohol drinks they serve and get a 'Club Soda Guide Score' which ranks how good they are for mindful drinkers. It is free for venues to sign up and we are working with a number of venue partners as well as getting the public to nominate their favourite venues.

The Guide has been built based on a number of pieces of research we have carried out over the past few years, drawing on the behaviour change techniques we

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<sup>44</sup> Data accurate as of August 1st 2019

pinpointed as part of the Nudging Pubs research, as well as trying to offer solutions to some of the pain points identified here.

Venues can use the Guide to boost their low and no alcohol beer sales by signing up and be discovered as being a 'Great Place for Mindful Drinkers'. They can also utilise it as a resource to find more low and no alcohol beers to stock – the Guide currently lists 68 beer brands with 142 low and no alcohol beers.

## Training materials

Based on what we have learned during this research, we have produced a series of industry focused training videos and other materials aimed at venue managers and staff. These will inform managers and staff about the importance of low and no alcohol beer and the best ways to sell it.

These will be made freely available on the [Club Soda Guide YouTube channel](#).

*“If we can have 10 or 20 bullet points of the key facts of a non-alcoholic or low-alcoholic beer, that can be helpful in our training, and again, it's something that can be useful throughout the year when people with certain needs will come to the bar.”* **Hanieh Bazargan, Student Union Bar Assistant Manager at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London**

## Beer Day Britain

Drawing on our findings and recommendations from this report, for this year's Beer Day Britain on June 15th, we hosted what we believe is the UK's first alcohol-free draught pub crawl.

We worked with three pubs in Hackney: The Cock Tavern, The Chesham Arms and The Old Ship, each of whom had an alcohol-free beer on draught especially for the day. This allowed people to come and try alcohol-free beer without looking like they were choosing not to drink, and gave us the opportunity to celebrate some of the incredible alcohol-free beers currently being made.

## All Party Parliamentary Group for Beer

Houses of Parliament, 26 June 2019



Drawing on our research we held a joint event with the APPG for Beer, featuring a range of low and no alcohol beers. It was addressed by the Chair Mike Wood MP and Victoria Atkins MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office. Co-Founder of Club Soda Laura Willoughby shared elements of this research and how low and no beers are key to drawing more people into our pubs.

Beers featured: Adnams, Bavaria, Big Drop Brewing, Birra Moretti, Brooklyn Brewery, Braxzz, Brewdog, Brutal Brewing Ship Full of IPA, Budweiser, Coast Beer, Cipher, Cobra, Drop Bear Beer, Erdinger, Heineken, Hook Norton Brewery, Ilkley Brewery, Lucky Saint, Nirvana, North Brewing Co, Old Speckled Hen, Palm, Peroni, San Miguel, St Peter's Brewery, Small Beer and Thornbridge Brewery.

## City BeerFest

This year, the City BeerFest, run by the Brewers' Company, invited Small Beer and Big Drop Brewing Co as the first low and no alcohol beers to appear at the event.

The Brewers' Company said: *"Each year the City Beerfest is proud to showcase top quality beers from the member breweries of the Worshipful Company of Brewers to an audience of thousands in the City of London's historic Guildhall Yard. This year we were delighted to welcome Big Drop and Small Beer, under the banner of Club Soda, who added a fresh and mindful element to complement the outstanding beers from other breweries. All the beers available on the day were very well received."*

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