

Staffordshire brewery's ale is guest beer in Commons bar

# MPs get a taste for a pint or two of Top Totty

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RELAXING MPs now have more choice in a House of Commons bar – thanks to a family of Staffordshire brewers.

Alongside some of the more familiar brews, they can opt for a taste of Staffordshire in the form of Slaters' Top Totty.

The ale has been installed as a guest beer in the famous Strangers' Bar from this week.

Stafford MP David Kidney was at the launch with members of the Slater family, who travelled to Westminster to see their beer take pride of place.

Father and son Gerard and Andrew Slater have been operating Slaters' Brewery for 12 years. The company – which is owned by Gerard and has Andrew as managing director – began as a microbrewery in Eccleshall before moving to St Alban's Road, in Stafford. It can



now produce nearly 26,000 pints a week and supplies pubs across the country.

Andrew, aged 32, who has been involved in the brewery since leaving university, said: "It's a privilege to have our beer served in Parliament. I'm quite surprised."

The brewery produces six different brews, and has recently started selling bottled beers in off-licences.

Gerard said: "It's unbelievable to have the beer at the House of Commons. David Kidney came to look around the brewery and he offered to try to get it in the members' bar here. It's an honour."

Mr Kidney said: "It is my pleasure to support this enterprising family business, and it has been my pleasure to buy many members of the Slater family pints of their own beer in Strangers' Bar."

Potteries Pub Preservation Group member Mervyn Edwards said: "Top Totty is a good session drink because it's

not too strong, at 4.4 per cent."

The ale has been getting the thumbs up from MPs.

John Grogan, MP for Selby and chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Beer Group, said: "Top Totty has certainly been doing Staffordshire proud in Parliament this week."

"It has a distinctive, refreshing flavour, ideal for the British summer."

The beer was initially brewed as a summer ale, but became so popular it is now served all year round.

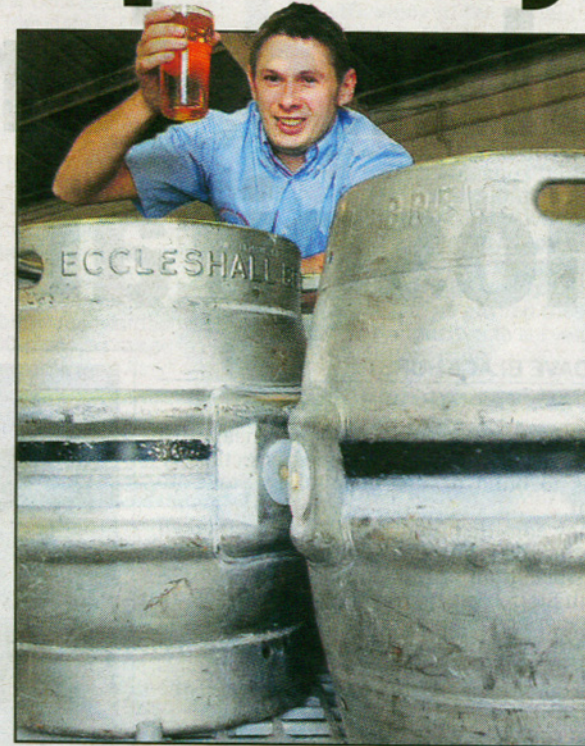
Mr Kidney said he had enjoyed the tittle.

"I thought it was good," he said. "It was quite light coloured which does make it especially suitable for the summer months."

Stoke South MP Rob Ffello said: "I will be sampling it. I've heard colleagues talking about it and I'm told it's an excellent tittle."

### Have you sampled Slaters' Top Totty? What's your verdict?

Write to The Editor, The Sentinel, Forge Lane, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5SS, or email us at letters@thesentinel.co.uk



**BOTTOMS UP:** Slaters' Brewery managing director Andrew Slater with a pint of Top Totty. Left, Andrew with MP David Kidney. Picture: Steve Bould (Ref: SB200607B-51)