

Lord Currie & Ms Andrea Coscelli
Competition & Markets Authority
Victoria House
37 Southampton Row
London
WC1B 4AD

23rd November 2017

Dear Lord Currie & Ms Coscelli

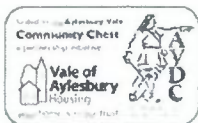
I write to express my horror, as Chairman of the Award-winning Community Shop detailed above, on hearing that Tesco plc has virtually been allowed to purchase Bookers. I think Tesco plc is buying Booker as a way of getting control of the opposition, because Bookers recently purchased Budgen and Londis.

Bookers is the number 1 supplier for thousands of small independent shops, including ours, enabling us to be independent of, and to a certain extent in competition with Tesco One Stop Shops. To allow Tesco plc to purchase Booker is giving a blank cheque to enable Tesco plc:

- to hold the reins of thousands of small independent shops.
- to dictate what products, and when, and at what price, small shops can purchase.
- to have complete control of businesses they do not own.
- to put prices up for the small suppliers so that they, Tesco plc, can then afford to put their prices down and gain an extra advantage in the market.
- to withhold products temporarily while they put theirs forward and take away the market from the small suppliers, leaving them either without certain products (Easter eggs, for instance) or delivering them late when the market for these products has gone because Tesco plc has sold all of its stock and now controls the market.
- To run a process of establishing which small suppliers are losing trade and then walking in to take them over. This is quite possible through looking at purchasing patterns.

Small shops are already at a disadvantage in comparison with Tesco plc who often pay no business rates at all. This is history due to every town at one time being willing to waive business rates for the plc in order to encourage them into their towns. This huge business is thus able to gobble up smaller businesses who pay business rates. This cannot be 'Fair Trading'.

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



I am totally in despair over what is happening with Bookers. I and thousands of other small businesses need your expert help to enable us to survive without dependency on a super-large Tesco as our grocery merchant. We need to be independent and running our own businesses and to have choice in which suppliers we use. There are few alternatives to Bookers.

I am also asking you to support all of us small businesses (who are trying by fair means to deliver a good service to our customers), to encourage Competition and Markets Authority to think independently about what they wish our country to be like and then to overturn the purchase of Bookers by Tesco plc thus preventing many, many independent retailers from becoming victims of this oppressive giant.

I ask you, thereafter to target Government to look into and overturn the 'no business rates' policy that Big Businesses like Tesco plc once had, and probably still enjoy. Let's have a level playing field for big and small businesses. Alternatively why not break up these huge businesses that monopolise the food markets, and waste so much food and farming resources, with their aggressive and punishing marketing methods?

Yours sincerely,

Alison H. Finnemore

Chairman – The North Marston Community Shop Association Ltd.