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**From:** Gordon Haycock [gordon.haycock@haycockandjay.co.uk]

**Sent:** 29 May 2013 21:00

**To:** Pubs Consultation Responses

**Subject:** Pub Consultation

Dear Sir / Madam

I am Director of a small company based in Otley which currently employs 9 people; we are members of the Otley Chamber of Commerce and endeavor to support our business community aiming to maintain Otley as a thriving market town. Of increasing concern over the last ten years has been the loss of public houses from the town, with a number standing empty at present. Whilst independent free houses and those owned by local breweries (eg Wharfebank Brewery, Town and Country Taverns) appear to thrive, it is noticeable that where the licensee is in a tied arrangement, then they have struggled to make a living and it is these which are closing down. The impact on the character of the town evident and the loss of community meeting places and socializing venues is bad news both for residents and visitors.

Consequently it is with some interest that I read about the proposed reforms. It is understood that the proposed reforms will ensure that the system will work fairly, and I believe that as 'Pubcos' have had almost 10 years to get their house in order and self regulation has failed, it's time for a statutory (legally binding) Code of Practice for pubcos.

clear that large pub companies take more than is fair or sustainable from pub profits so licensees are struggling to make a fair living. To stop the large pubcos charging excessive rents and high beer prices, all pubcos should be offered a choice between a tied option and a Market Rent Only option. For those who choose to remain tied, a Guest Beer Option should be offered. It is understood that a fair deal will result in the average pub being £4000 better off annually.

It is vital that there's a system in place to ensure pubcos stick to these new rules – so the Code should be underpinned with a powerful new independent adjudicator that should have the power to arbitrate disputes, investigate breaches and impose financial penalties on pubcos that break the rules. The Code should not apply to main's family brewers who operate a different model of the tie – so companies with under 500 pubs should be exempt but must abide by a separate voluntary code.

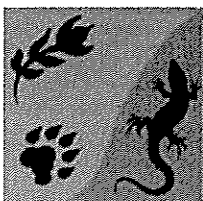
Business and ensuring tied licensees are no worse off than free of tie licensees should be at the heart of the Code.

I look forward to hearing about the outcome of this consultation.

Yours

Gordon Haycock CEnv MCIEEM  
Principal Ecologist / Director

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