

TO CARDIFF

watling hope**Wastewater Engineering**

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10th June 2013

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Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable
 Secretary of State for Business, Innovation & Skills,
 Department for Business, Innovation & Skills,
 1 Victoria Street,
 London SW1H 0ET



By e-mail to:

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 Central Drafting Unit

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Dear Dr Cable

Government Consultation: Pub Companies & Tenants

Watling Hope have been providing wastewater services to the leisure industry for some 20 years, covering the whole of the UK and working with the majority of the country's pub companies. We undertake capital projects to improve infrastructure such as on-site sewage treatment and long distance pumping, we provide and maintain grease management systems for kitchen waste, and make around 100 service calls per day to the various items of equipment which handle and treat the wastewater from commercial, and particularly food-led, premises.

We must, by the very nature of our business, be involved in the level and nature of the trade generated in a pub and its operating procedures. We do not however become involved in the business aspect or the relationship between the companies and their tenants, and are not therefore in a position to comment on that aspect.

What however we do see is an industry which is thriving, diverse, and investing heavily in the infrastructure of its estates. Whereas many smaller private operators are tempted to 'make do and mend' or take a more cavalier approach to rules and regulations, the 'pubcos' are investing to provide premises which are not only appealing but which meet the requirements of legislation, which are more economical to operate, and which are environmentally responsible. Indeed the relatively high profile of larger pub estates makes them the focus of the various agencies which enforce the regulations.

Sadly, it is true that many pubs are closing but this seems more to do with a historical excess of pubs, their location, changing public behaviour and the economic climate; successful pubs are

springing up and prospering, and the 'pubcos' are providing the scope for the entrepreneurial licensee to stand out in contrast with the brands of other companies' managed estates.

While we understand and appreciate the need for government control, we are apprehensive about any change. The 1989 'Beer Orders' had far-reaching and unforeseen consequences which we are still feeling today. We believe that the industry is adjusting itself without the need for any further government intervention, and any attempt to control the activities or growth of the 'pubcos' would be counterproductive. They would certainly have an adverse effect on our business.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Palin BSc(Eng) ACGI
Director