

29/5/2013

With reference to Government Consultation Pub Companies and Tenants April 2013

Dear Vince Cable

The [redacted] has been our first entry into the licenced trade and we have been here for 3 years through good times and now very lean times.

Our regulars are incredibly loyal to us but all of their expenses have gone up whereas their income like ours has not.

What has really hurt us has not been rent increases from Punch, our pub landlord but the costs of utilities, business rates, council tax and the massive increases year on year in beer duty.

Punch and especially our Regional Business manager, [redacted], have given us enormous support to buy beer when cash has been tight so that we can take advantage when the sun occasionally shines or we are running one of the many special nights that we organise.

It also does really help to have a very supportive and knowledgeable and widely experienced Business Manager who has tried his best to help us with ideas and initiatives. Punch are also going to help us set up a website that will allow to attract a wider market even though we are situated in the centre of a small urban village.

Although the thought of being in a "Freehouse" appeals, where we could buy our products from any source, the increase in fixed rent and the lack of any support is outweighed by the day to day communication and back up that we get from our landlords. If we had borrowed the money from a Bank to buy our pub we do not believe that we would still be here as the Banks would not be as helpful or supportive as Punch have been.

If you want a real focus then please explain to us in a small business, why our customers can purchase from supermarkets cheaper than we could buy from a warehouse or wholesaler?

Yours Sincerely