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From:**Sent:** 11 June 2013 15:16**To:** Pubs Consultation Responses**Cc:****Subject:** pubco/leaseholder relationship

As an experienced licensee both pre code of conduct and post, there are a number of points I wish to raise regarding the intention to literally make pubcos property landlords.

1. Having worked in the industry before voluntary codes of practice were introduced, there was a feeling that you were working alone. No training, no help, no flexibility on rent payments, no Repair & Maintenance funds, cellar and cooling maintenance or heating and boiler repair schemes etc. You would literally pay your rent, buy your tied products and get on with it. Should you fail, tough.

2. Regional managers would call occasionally to ensure that you were only retailing goods bought from the relevant pubco, make sure the building was in a good state of repair, make sure you were paying your dues and leave.

On the positive side, in the past few years, pubcos have embraced the industry and are beginning to provide much needed support to struggling businesses and offer an insight into the trade by providing relevant and very useful training days prior to allowing a prospective lessee to blindly take on a public house (a career move not to be taken lightly).

Not only do these training days cover the basics of running a pub, but encompass the whole spectrum from simply wet sales through building a successful food business and utilising letting rooms effectively.

All aspects of the trade are covered including accountancy, judging profitability and working with margins.

Another area which has proved vital to us as a business, is the provision of various maintenance plans which enable us to budget effectively. Should a major appliance such as a boiler fail or the cellar cooler fail, this would prove extremely costly to repair and would need immediate attention. With the provision of various maintenance contracts provided by the pubcos however, this need not be a problem.

The introduction of Business Development Managers (formerly Area Managers) has given the lessee a portal through which to communicate with the hierarchy of the pubcos which previously never existed. Should a lessee require direction or assistance in promoting their business, help is at hand. If the pubco were to become property landlords, all this help would stop, rents would be payable with no leeway whatsoever and the industry would slip into a more rapid decline than we are currently experiencing.

In conclusion, the short term benefits may seem attractive with an increase in profits but consider the long term implications. Contacting independent suppliers and arranging pricing structures to suit your business.

Having no back up plan should expensive, essential pieces of equipment go wrong or you experience damage to the property. Arranging independent contractors to service and maintain your gas equipment, electricians for PAT testing, hardwired installations and annual safety tests, fire fighting equipment maintenance and testing..... The list is endless.

The biggest fear is that inexperienced operators will take on failing pub businesses and fail themselves, ultimately leading to fewer well run pubs, less employment within the industry and therefore less affordability of the products we sell as fewer people will be in work. The brewers will wholesale fewer barrels which in turn will force the price up!

Keep pubcos as they are, cut out the last paragraph of this article and we will all save a lot of time, effort and expense.

Enterprise Inns Lessee.

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