
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...A BDM



by a PCA writer

The Pubs Code Adjudicator team continues to undertake visits to pubs around the country, to accompany pub company representatives in their roles. As Head of Regulatory Delivery at the PCA it was my turn to experience a day in the life of...a Greene King Business Development Manager (BDM)

It was a sunny Wednesday when I ventured out to meet Sarah, a BDM for Greene King, for the start of an insightful day meeting tied tenants in the Nottingham area.

Starting off we arrived at The Manor, this is a traditional style community pub and restaurant with an extensive menu. Here, we met Manisha where I was able to see first-hand the value of the business development manager relationship.

Satisfaction with the business development manager relationship was generally high in our latest tenant survey and this was reflected across all pub companies. Greene King did well here with 88% reporting their BDM was fair in discussions, an 11% increase on last year.

The BDM relationship is clearly one of trust, and I can see how the tenant and BDM couldn't work effectively without that.

What struck me was the data that was available to Sarah and the tenants to facilitate their discussions, such as changes they could make to pricing and drinks offerings to maximise their trade.

The BDM relationship isn't just about going over the figures - although that's important - Sarah provided support, encouragement, and reassurance.

The tenant had previously been assigned the lease but was now looking to move on from the business. The Pubs Code ensures proposed assignees receive important information about the implications of the assignment and nature of the agreement before taking it on. This should also mean no surprises at the end. I can see how Sarah's support at this time was invaluable to the tenants in understanding what they needed to do.

After a short drive across Nottingham, we arrived at our next stop, The Gate Inn. Here we met Rachel and Lauren, a mother and daughter team, who on our approach were outside cleaning their newly renovated outdoor seating area. I later discovered this was made possible with investment from Greene King. It looked amazing, so much so I had to take a photo!

It was great to hear the positive impact the new outdoor area was having on sales. It had clearly come at the right time when we were enjoying some uncharacteristically sunny weather!

Rachel and Lauren's enthusiasm and desire to innovate was impressive. This was their first time running a pub, and I can see how Sarah's advice and support was invaluable, be that talking through marketing ideas, ways to expand on the service offering, or looking at trend data and local comparators to better understand their customer base.

Both Rachel and Lauren knew about the Code, which was great to hear, and I could see how it underpinned their BDM discussions. It's important to say that tenants might not know all the ways in which the Code is helping them because it will be embedded throughout the pub company's business practices.



The newly renovated outdoor area at The Gate Inn.

We chatted about their experience with Greene King before taking on the pub. They told me how much they valued being able to talk through the new tenant information with the BDM who helped to break it down across several meetings. The Code requires the pub company to send a lot of important information to the tenant at the start, so it's reassuring to hear how they are supported with this.



Rachel and Lauren with their BDM Sarah behind the bar at The Gate Inn.

My final stop was to meet Ian, the landlord of The White Hart (as well as another pub close by). The White Hart is a great pub attracting students from the local university and with sport on TV screens at every turn, it's easy to see why.

Once again, I was impressed by the relationship Sarah had built. Ian knew about the Code and was keen to talk about it. We chatted about the requirements for tenants when they take on new agreements (or renew agreements not protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act 1964), such as preparing a sustainable business plan. The pub company must also advise the tenant to take professional advice before doing so.

We also spoke about repairs; the handling of repairs and dilapidations has been a pain point for tenants in our last two annual surveys across all the regulated pub companies. It wasn't a surprise to learn that getting repairs done as soon as possible is important for tenants. Improving satisfaction around the handling of repairs and dilapidations is an area of focus for the PCA and in turn, the pub companies.

Everyone I met had a different background and I was fascinated by their journeys into the tied tenant world.

I would like to thank Greene King's code compliance officer, Julie Jolly, for arranging my BDM day and thanks to Sarah for introducing me to a cross section of tenants and pubs. What they all shared is a desire and commitment to run successful businesses and serve their community. It was great to see Sarah supporting them along the way and I'm grateful to all those I met for allowing me to join their meetings and for their warm welcome at every stop - pub tenants doing what they do best!

To find out more about the Pubs Code go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/pubs-code-adjudicator>