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From: [redacted]
Sent: 14 June 2013 19:19
To: Pubs Consultation Responses
Subject: BISC Submission

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to tell you about my experience of being an Enterprise Inns Tenant. I was the manager of the [redacted] for 10 years. I then took on the lease after the small Pub Company I worked for ceased trading due to ill health. This was in [redacted]. It was a 5 year lease and I paid £30k ingoings, which included 2 months rent up front and fixtures and fittings. There was no dilapidations report made. I did request this numerous times as there were lots of problems that had been ongoing with the previous Company I worked for. I was always fobbed off about any repairs and being told they were my responsibility. My partner did most of the work that needed doing. Then the no smoking ban came in and hit us hard. But we tried to organise various events to get people back in the pub and we had a purpose built smoking shelter built in the rear car park. We asked ETI if they would contribute, their reply was, yes but it will cost at least £20k! There was no way we could afford that. We had so many friends in the pub they rallied round and the smoking shelter was fabulous! Wrought iron. It was the size of a Portacabin. It had double glazed windows donated by a customer. It had a TV and speakers linked to the juke box, electrical work was done by friends too. It had 10 beautiful hanging baskets and solar fairy lights, it was a thing of beauty. So that led to nearly weekly barbeques which boosted takings. We held a lot of charity events. All this was good for the pub. We had fun. We held weddings, christening and funerals. Any excuse we had a party.

Our rent was [redacted] a month. The business rates were [redacted] a month. The gas was £400 a month and the electricity was £500 a month. VAT to be paid. Plus staff wages. All this on top of the weekly beer order. We were in difficulty. This was in 20 [redacted]. I contacted ETI and told them we were having difficulty. They put me on cash with order. Basically if I couldn't pay for my weekly order before it was delivered, I wouldn't get it. If I could only afford to pay for part of the order, that meant the rest would have to be put on an emergency order and would be charged extra for delivery of £50 plus VAT. I asked for a week's rolling credit, meaning the last week's order would be paid for before I put my new order in. Apparently my BDM had been moved to another area, I hadn't been informed of this, so the new BDM made an appointment to visit. We had to go through all the same history but he finally said he would approve the credit. This was December 20 [redacted] so Christmas was nearly upon us and I was really worried I wouldn't get through the Christmas and New Year period. As last a reprieve. He agreed the credit agreement would run for 6 weeks then be reviewed.

Paperwork was signed by both parties. I put in an order, and with Christmas nearly here, we had to place another order the same week. Business was doing well on the run up so I paid for the first order. The next order arrived and all was well. Then New Year came and ETI rang for my order I was told I couldn't have it unless it was paid for. In other words the credit had been taken away without been given notice. No one apparently knew why. I couldn't reach my BDM he was off work with stress! He didn't know the meaning of the word! We ended up borrowing money from family to get an order from ETI to get us over New Year. All this was happening and we were getting fortnightly visits from Brulines too. It became apparent that as we were struggling and ETI knew this, they wanted us out. Then I joined a group and found I wasn't alone in my struggles which led to me joining the GMB. Then things did get worse. Obviously ETI knew about this and were more or less ganging up on licencees. The group I joined eventually petered out but that left licencees on their own with no direction and with no help. So a friend and myself created

[redacted]. The group was intended to offer help and advice and support to others going through the same with their Pubco's. During that time, ETI went to court and we were given notice to leave our pub in 2012. We did this with a heavy heart, but all of our friends and customers knew we had put up a valiant struggle along the way and fully supported us. The pub was closed for 6 months. ETI gave it a full refurb, they made it a Beacon Project. Then had a local girl in on a trial

run to see if she could make it work. She couldn't. After 3 weeks she gave the keys back. ETI then had a management company in. There was 3 couples in. Then a couple took it on in February 2013 and they [redacted] the lease as there is so much more repairing needs to be done. They are paying [redacted] a month rent. Cheap draught beer and lager. My point is why couldn't they do that for us? We had lost our home and our jobs. My [redacted] grew up there. I was heartbroken. Still am.

The trauma the Pubco's cause is absolutely horrific. Luckily I have a partner who loves me and was prepared to put up with the worry and stress I carried on a daily basis. It truly was an uphill battle every single day. We now both have jobs. We earn minimum wage. I'm [redacted] and my partner is [redacted].

We have no money put aside for old age. We didn't take a wage for the last 18months at the pub. I get to cook, which has always been a hobby of mine, but we get to eat together now. Go out together. We have a social life. We're still together. Please please put an end to this :Pubco abuse for Licenceess. They are crippling our Great British Pub. A pub is for socialising, meeting friends, just being there. We had elderly people coming into the pub for company. They could have gone days without speaking to anyone else if not. Pubs raise thousands for charity. It's the hub of the community. Please don't let the Pubco's keep treating us like we're animals. There has been committees looking into this abuse for years, it has to stop.

Thank you for reading my story. I do hope together we can put an end to this abuse.

Yours faithfully

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