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**From:**  
**Sent:** 12 June 2013 12:14  
**To:** Enquivr Enquivr (Other Government Departments)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Punch Taverns complaint ref:

To All concerned,

Please find attached (in no relevant order) a complaint against Punch Taverns in their handling of us and The since

There will be more to follow once I am able to retrieve all emails sent and received between myself and Punch Taverns.

Many Thanks

Licensee of The

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- I took over The [redacted] under a short term lease at this time we provided a copy of our survey to our then BRM [redacted] to highlight the issues with the pub. [redacted] advised us that [redacted] would have the issues looked into before we signed the long term agreement. Subsequently nothing had been done about it.
- We signed the lease agreement partially due Punch showing us brulines data which showed the pub selling around [redacted] brewers barrels per annum ( [redacted] Gallon barrels). However when we took over, it had come to light that this was not the case and in fact the figures shown were [redacted] brulines data.
- Our solicitors bought to light that there was an eviction order going through for the previous tenants and this was hidden from us by punch. Again showing that they were just looking for people to take over a pub at whatever they deemed the right price.
- We spent in excess of £26,000 on deposit, rent, stock order and the internal refurbishment of the pub with no help what so ever from the brewery.
- We signed a 15 year lease agreement dating [redacted] and we were not provided any other options for different agreements.
- In the first few months of having the pub we found it extremely difficult to pay for the rent and the stock as an unforeseen recession had hit the country and were forced to use our personal credit cards to pay for rent and beer whilst we built the trade up. At this time we had asked our BRM [redacted] for help but were refused it.
- During our first winter into the pub approx. [redacted], the boiler in manager accommodation had been condemned and sealed off. We were given no option to have this waived and was forcefully sealed off being told we would have to take this up with Punch. This was then taken to Punch Taverns and they said that we had signed an all repairing and maintainable lease and therefore I would have to replace the boiler myself, which cost me approx. £800.
- They maintained that it was all our responsibilities. They said that our surveyors should have done a better survey when we found damp coming through the walls of the Pub both upstairs and downstairs and nothing had been done about it. Considering at this time I had a [redacted] yr old child and a [redacted] old baby.
- Within 6 months of taking over the business the condensing unit for the beer cellar had broken down and again punch maintained the lease agreement and I had to pay for a new condenser which cost in excess of £5500.
- We spoke to our BDM about the 2010 World Cup and that we wanted to build an outside bar for it. However were concerned about the licensing implications of doing so. [redacted] told us that the garden was a licensed area and we would be fine to do so and if we made a success of it that [redacted] would help us to cover the costs. So we ploughed ahead with the plans only to be told by [redacted] Licensing and Planning team that the garden was NOT a licensed area and that we would have to pay £21 for each Temporary Events Notice to have the outside bar open. There were also no benches for customers to be seated and I spent £750 on buying my own benches. When we contacted [redacted] about the help [redacted] said [redacted] would provide us he denied ever agreeing to it. And instead accused us (using Brulines Data) of buying in 78 brewers barrels of beer from a foreign source. This was absolutely absurd as if I did I would not have placed an order for at least 2 weeks as I would have been over stocked.

- After the above disagreement arranged a meeting between us, self and regional manager During our discussions of our future plans for the business agreed to give us double discounts on our barrels for the foreseeable future and promised to look into the repair works to the building.
- After the success of the 2010 World Cup Punch came to us with another pub (The [A]) that wasn't doing so well and the verbal agreement was that if we took that pub on they would re-render The [B] for us which would considerably reduce the amount of damp coming into the building. However upon taking on The [A] pub which was slowly starting to pick up trade they put the pub on the market and denied all knowledge of agreeing to re-render The [B]. This also left us with approx £15,000 of debt which then had to nurture via the [B] thus placing more pressure on us and our family.
- In summer of 2 we found that we had a leaking roof in the pool room and gents toilets and also the windows in the pub and in the private accommodation. This was brought to Punches attention but again no help was provided.
- The damp in the managers' accommodation has gradually been getting worse and has been affecting my families' health. have developed Eczema and has also developed vitaligo and was verbally told that it could be the environment that that could have possibly triggered it off. I have been suffering depression, anxiety attacks and numerous viruses and have been consistently put under pressure by the brewery's inability to help. This has also contributed to my and I having numerous arguments and a breakdown in my marriage.
- We had an independent rent review by a recognised independent chartered surveyor in 2 which subsequently said that we were paying too much rent. A copy of this was sent to Punch and was ignored.
- We expressed to punch about bringing our rent review forward on several occasions however that was refused as well
- We have spent approx. £60,000 in total in the last 5 years on doing The building up however with the recession taking place, there was not enough trade in the village and therefore had to spend on personal credit cards and borrowed money off family and friends to survive. And punch have not acknowledged this fact and maintain that my and I are not good operators (making the statement its "your Fault") the pub is doing worse now than before.
- Punch has also charged us with numerous allegations of buying in stock from a foreign outlet. Majority of which was not true but we were made to pay it so to keep the peace.
- The survey conducted by us clearly shows an issue of rising damp which had been ignored by Punch.
- There was no gas and electrical safety checks completed prior to our taking over the business. Had this been completed then I would not have had to spend the amount of monies I did and could have been put to better use, however, this was completed 4years later in 2 Punch had put the safety of myself and that of my family at risk of injury should anything have happened.
- In the following meetings with e has made several statements that have been degrading and downright disrespectful. The asked why we wanted to stay in the pub business? Why we came into the business without finances to back us up? And also forced a

meeting with (an insolvency Company) to try and force us to claim for bankruptcy, when infact all we wanted to help from him for the long run. My and I have always maintained that we are looking to stay in this pub for a very long time and hope to retire in it. However said that it would be better we claim bankruptcy and "call it quits". I stated that this would leave us in a much worse off state than we are in now. I have children to bring up and it would mean that I would have to lose everything, therefore, making us homeless. At this said that we would be even!

- It seems that Punch and certainly is only interested in the short term gain and does not think about the long term profit. They call us partners however the partnership is very one sided. I feel that all they are interested in is to take the money from me in any way possible and are getting me to refurbish the pub with very limited funds and build up trade and not considering the fact that The is in a village where there are pubs including Thr and trade has become slow not only for us but the rest of the businsses in the village.

- these complaints were taken directly to our BRM/BDM at the time were changed three time from and and back to

All of which ignored and overlooked our concerns.

- has not been forth coming with regards to the business. He built our hopes up by sending an interior design team to re-design the building for completing potential works to The . However when it came to having a meeting with and Boss they clearly stated that they would not be doing any works to the building at all and never will. They were quite rude in the way they conducted themselves and had upset me to the point I had to ask them to leave.

- In the latest of events wants to put in place a High Court Injunction to make us comply with the terms of our agreement which we are bound by, by signing the lease and also pay £ in damages and £ 000 in court fees/costs. They sent round

( territory dispense manager) to check the Brulines flow monitoring equipment.

also took photos of x2 Barrels and a Budweiser bottle case which classed as "foreign stock". We explained to that another of the local pubs had ran out and wanted to borrow the stock from us and they would replace them the very next day. This was still not accepted as a valid argument by ' and took it upon self to tell

, whom now want to take legal proceedings against us. Upon receiving the evidence from Punch's solicitors we found the photos of the barrels and the bottle of Budweiser. And a report to say that my was reluctant to let

into the cellar. was infact running the pub on own that morning and there were customers in the pub. I have a very strict policy on leaving the bar unattended due to previous incidences. However upon my arrival had allowed access to the Cellar to conduct duty. Again ng documents.

- We sent a Request that we speak over the telephone to deal with this matter however they are adamant that they are going to force through a High Court Injunction and that Punch taverns will not accept any other proposals unless it involves an injunction. I protested that I will agree to an undertaking to the court to say that I will stick to my agreement like I have done for the last 5 years however this was not good enough. And now cost have increased.

- [redacted] then came on another occasion and accused us of tampering with the Bruline flow monitoring equipment. Again this was incorrect as my [redacted] and myself do not play with equipment we have no knowledge of. [redacted] then accused us again of tampering with the monitoring equipment saying that when they took one away that "a screw was in a little too tight." To this our response was that it's your technicians that come in and do the calibrations and therefore we have nothing to do with it.
- We have found [redacted] a very hard BDM/BRM to work with. [redacted] took away the extra discounts that were put in place to help us through a relatively difficult trading period and we are still feeling the after effects of this till this day.
- I have been highly stressed by [redacted] and Punchs' conduct and behaviour and feel like I have been harassed and bullied for a very long 5yrs. We are honest people and will conduct our business within our boundaries. I have [redacted] children to provide for and will never put their future at risk by conducting myself and my business in a disrespectful manner
- Due to the minimal help that I have been receiving from punch I have now had to place my house on the market to pay off the built up debts. This will now leave my children without the security they need for their future.
- In 2 [redacted] we were in the process of buying the pub off Punch and were given a guide price of £ [redacted],000 + VAT. We were two weeks to signing and Punch decided that they wanted £100,000 more + VAT. This was not possible as we only managed to raise the original amount.
- On trying to buy the building again we found the Punch has separated their estate into core and non-core estates and the [redacted] was in the core estate and not for sale. This would have been at a time when the pub was doing fairly well.
- During the beer festival of [redacted] refused to arrange credit for buying the beers for the festival and said we would have to order it cash on delivery. As a result we made a loss as we could only order a limited amount of stock. The customers did not like what we had ordered and therefore had to throw away most of the beer.
- When we had [redacted] came to have a chat with us and during this time when we started showing [redacted] the building [redacted] aggressively pulled my [redacted] off the front door step and asked "why is everywhere else more busier than The [redacted]?" to this we replied that the rent is too high and that we needed more help in getting the building looking right from the outside and also the discounts are very minimal. We made a complaint to [redacted] (the then Area manager) and [redacted] apologised on the BRMs behalf and assured it will not happen again.
- On a particular meeting with [redacted] we were giving him our accounts so that [redacted] could help us. When it came to giving [redacted] the Wage/Labour costs [redacted] said that it was "too high and should be less than 10% of your weekly takings." We replied that it was between 13%-16% of our weekly takings and that was correct as we came from a resource and planning background with the [redacted]. We said that along with running the bar and kitchen we also have to make time for stock runs, admin, general maintenance and advertising the business. If we did 100% of the hours in the pub then we would not have time to do the rest to ensure the successful running of the business. [redacted] also ridiculed us further by stating "your Sky Entertainment bill is too much and that we should get an illegal Foreign Satellite System as it is far cheaper." We then asked [redacted] if he ever read the

newspapers, the morning advertiser or even watched the news? As there was a High Court case currently in session regarding the Foreign systems being deemed illegal and that only Sky held the rights to all the matches that held the premiership logo. If the outcome was that in favour of Sky then we would be fined thousands of pounds for having the foreign system. To this [redacted] said "I don't read the papers and don't have time to watch the news and don't care what's happening in the industry. Its none of my business and really don't care." We asked how can [redacted] working in the hospitality industry not know what is going on? and all [redacted] said was "I don't know and don't care. There are directors above me that deal with things like that, and are none of my concern." We then asked how [redacted] could advise one of his licensees to take on what was deemed as an illegal system and commit a crime? [redacted] just said "I don't care!"

- We came to some information that some of the fruit flavoured bottled ciders eg Rekorderlig and Kopparberg were actually charged wine duty and not cider duty as they were made from pears and not apples. We brought this up with [redacted] and asked if this was true? To this [redacted] said that [redacted] did not know and was again none of [redacted] concern. The directors decide what gets charged and that [redacted] was only doing [redacted] job. When asked if would look into this [redacted] said a firm "No"
- A bruline technician was sent out again on [redacted] 2013 as their equipment was not working. The technician found water in the monitoring box which was affixiated on the wall. We told the technician that there as a leak just above the box due to heavy rain fall and we thought that as it box was tamper proof that it would be ok. The technician said that there was no sign of physical pampering and changed the equipment. However, I am now concerned that Punch will say we have tampered with it and created more problems for us.