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Plympton Pub told its rent will DOUBLE if it tries to buy cheaper beer

The tenants of The Post Office Inn have been told they will be penalised for laws designed to protect them



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By [Max Channon](#) Live Blog Editor

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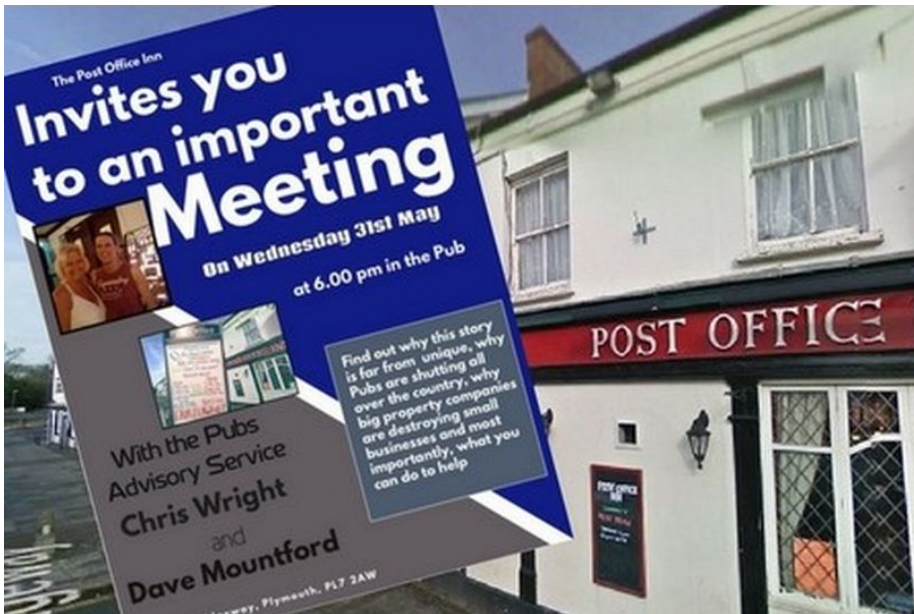
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A Plympton pub has been told its rent will double if it attempts to buy cheaper beer and offer customers a better deal.

The Post Office Inn's current tenancy agreement with EI Publican Partnerships - the firm which owns the pub - forces it to buy beer at prices up to double the market rate.

Under Government legislation the Post Office Inn could apply to break that agreement with EI and buy beer from a different company, while still paying rent to the pub giant.

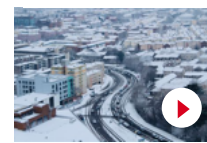
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However the tenants have been told that their rent would double if they used those laws, which are actually designed to protect pubs in such situations.

Earlier this month The Herald reported that the Post Office Inn in Plympton launched a stinging attack on the firm it rents its premises and buys its beer from - after discovering a neighbouring inn has secured a half-price deal with the same firm.

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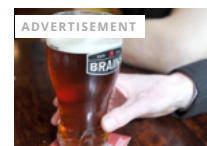
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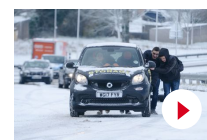
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Speaking to The Herald, a spokesperson for Post Office Inn stressed the attack was not directed at the Sir Joshua Reynolds Pub, or its management, but were solely a criticism of EI Publican Partnerships.

In response, 'pub co' giant EI, formerly known as Enterprise Inns, said it offered "a wide range of different business models across our pub estate."

Now it has emerged EI has said it will hike the Post Office Inn's annual rent from £26,000 to £50,000, if its tenants use Government legislation which aims to ensure pub companies act in a fair and lawful way in their dealings with their tied tenants, and that tied tenants are no worse off than if they were free of tie and able source their stock from wherever they choose.

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The Pubs Code allows tied tenants, who must purchase their beer from firms like EI at often the double the price it is sold elsewhere, to go free-of-tie by applying for a 'Market Rent Only' (MRO) lease.

In layman's terms, this should means the tenant pays the going market rate for their lease.

However, the tie-free MRO assessment given to the Post Office Inn almost doubles their rent - and is FOUR times that paid by the neighbouring Sir Joshua Reynolds, a similar sized pub just a few doors away, in its tied tenant lease with the same firm, EI.

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The Herald has contacted EI for a comment.

The offer has been described as "laughable" by the Pubs Advisory Service, a group which provides information and help to tied pub tenants.

PAS has now arranged a public meeting, to be held at the Post Office, and are inviting "anyone who wants to understand why pubs are shutting in Plymouth and around the country", to attend.

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They meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 31, 2017 at 6pm, and will take place at The Post office Pub, 39 The Ridgeway, Plymouth.

The Pubs Advisory Service has been involved in the changes made by Government in an attempt to reform the way the Pub industry treats its tenants and disposes of its Pubs.

They say that while The Post Office's case is far from unique, it demonstrates how the Governments legislation is failing pubs and communities up and down the country - and hope that the meeting will give them an opportunity to explain how property companies are destroying the great British boozier.

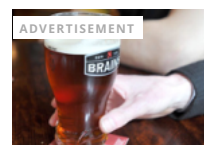
Chris Wright from the PAS told The Herald: "The legislation has simply failed as the pub companies are simply doubling the tied rent figure and putting every barrier in the way of decent honest publicans who are trying to make a living.

"This is clear from the laughable offers from EI to the Post Office, whereby the proposed rent will go from £26,000 to £50,000 per year - and new hugely onerous terms have been placed in front of them - to simply deter them from taking this route."

Dave Mountford from PAS added: "The MRO option, if applied correctly will release the huge profit that the pub company makes from the beer tie and therefore its not a great surprise that they are fighting so hard to avoid it.

"Whats incredibly frustrating is that we now have a law and an adjudicator who is supposed to apply the law and as demonstrated by EI, but it's being ignored with complete impunity.

"I hope that as many people attend the meeting as possible so we can explain how this situation has occurred and what can be done to support Nic and Debs at the Postie in their battle with a big corporate business"

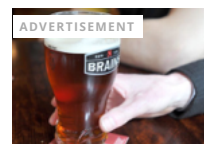


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"The meeting will hopefully be attended by the local Labour councillor Phillipa Davey who has expressed support for the pub."

A spokesperson for the Post Office Inn said: "We know of many others local licensees who have lost everything at the hands of EI and other like minded pub companies and brewers, and we hope that they can attend the meeting to get advice from the PAS and offer their support."

"It's obvious that this battle will never be won until the general Public understand that most tied pubs are owned by property companies who view their pubs as assets to be stripped and sold at their convenience."

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