



## 14 April 2020: An Open Letter to CAMRA Members from Lawson Mountstevens, Managing Director

Following a number of emails we have received from CAMRA members, I wanted to take this opportunity to outline our position on rent to those many pubgoers.

Firstly, we are acutely aware of the significant impact the Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdown measures have had on the entire pub economy. It is important that all of us who work across the pub industry and those who enjoy pubs come together to protect the future of the Great British Pub in these simply unprecedented times.

It goes without saying that we are doing – and will continue to do – as much as we can to help our pubs. In addition to all the Government's support and grants to help cover rent, salaries and other fixed costs, **Star Pubs & Bars is providing rent relief to all our leased and tenanted pubs on an individual basis.** We are also suspending the collection of reduced rent until at least June (or when pubs reopen) and will be flexible on repayment plans to support pubs with their cash flow. In addition, we will be ensuring there is a solution in place for out of date beer kegs and casks when pubs reopen – ensuring that licensees are not out of pocket for beer that is not saleable. Over the coming weeks we will be providing further practical support on a pub by pub basis.

From the outset, and together with a range of industry bodies (including UK Hospitality, the British Beer and Pub Association, and the CAMRA National Team), we have been lobbying the Government for support packages to keep pubs going to ensure they are able to generate an income during these challenging times. That support package, which is unprecedented in its own right, is welcome – and our Business Development Managers (BDMs) are doing all that they can to support our pubs access that help.

The Government has been clear that those support grants and loans have been put in place to allow companies to continue paying rent to keep the wheels of the economy turning. Together with the Government's wider support (including the cancellation of business rates, the creation of the Job Retention Scheme and support for the self-employed) – each pub across the UK has been affected very differently by the Government's support package. As we have a very large and varied estate of 2,500 pubs, **our approach to supporting our pubs with their rent has therefore been conducted on an individual basis in a fair and equitable way.**

Once restrictions are lifted, we want to see all of our pubs open, trading and operating as viable businesses as soon as possible. We know the rent relief we are providing on a pub by pub basis, which represents a significant investment on behalf of Star Pubs & Bars during challenging times for the whole industry, will have a significant bearing on the future sustainability of our licensees' businesses – and clearly we want to see our pubs thrive in the long-term.

Regards,

Lawson Mountstevens – Managing Director, Star Pubs & Bars

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