

9 Wellington Street, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5AZ

Christine Allison, Licensing Manager
Huntingdon District Council
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon, Cambs. PE29 3PE

Dear Mrs Allison and team,

Date: 9th November 2014

Licensing Review, The Oliver Cromwell Public House, St Ives.

Following the public notices advertising the License Review for the Oliver Cromwell Public House, we wish to support 'the proposal' to change their closing time back to 23.00. We understand The Police Licensing Officer has brought this proposal after receiving many complaints of anti-social behaviour, both inside and outside the premises.

We'd like to make it perfectly clear that we have no issues The Oliver Cromwell Pubic House during normal hours; indeed the establishment is an asset both to the neighbourhood and to the town, and serves good food and drink. It has been pointed out that many town councillors are regulars! However we do have issues with The Landlord, Mr Schonfeldt, especially his poor management of late night customers. We have written to Mr Schonfeldt a number of times to ask for a meeting to discuss the situation, but letters have been ignored, and spontaneous chats aren't possible.

Since the Licensing hours were extended beyond midnight in 2003/4 there has been a constant pattern of anti-social behaviour, between Thursdays and Sundays, caused by the pub crawling groups who generally arrive at the pub after 23.30 and stay until the early hours. Almost all are under 25, and they are, generally, inebriated when they arrive. If the pub closed at 23.00 we are sure that the place would not be so attractive to this type of customer.

Because the smoking garden closes at 23.00 customers drift into the street to smoke, and congregate in groups outside - smokers and non-smokers - with their glasses. At best they just make an unreasonable noise, and in the summer months it is very uncomfortable having to sleep with all the windows shut. At worst comatose customers collapse in the street; occasionally ambulances are called. Vomiting, urinating against peoples' doors and brawling are commonplace, as are smashed glasses which the staff tend to ignore. In fact The Landlord and staff behave as if nothing outside the pub is their responsibility.

When these drunken customers finally go - after 01.00, or later - they're frequently shouting, and singing or swearing at the top of their voices, which all gets amplified by the buildings in this very narrow street. We have been woken up by these disturbances for years, and when you are woken from a deep sleep it is often difficult to get back to sleep. You lie awake for a long time in the early hours, and not unreasonably get angry. We all need sleep to do our jobs properly.

At Bank Holiday weekends the noise in the street (and anti-social behaviour) is far worse, yet the Landlord still does nothing to prevent it. So we leave town to escape it...but why should we? Unfortunately The Police are often unable to attend, as they're undermanned and have a wide responsibility looking after the St Ives night time economy, as it is.

When I moved into Wellington Street in 2002 the Oliver Cromwell was a quiet local pub, with a regular (older) clientele. It may not have survived, as it was. Mr Schonfeldt is a businessman, and he has developed the pub and increased the number of customers but without due consideration for the residential neighbourhood in which the pub still stands.

Mr Schonfeldt is a good host, but a poor manager. Recently he claimed to a Police Officer that he had no idea that drinking in the street was not permitted, yet a notice explaining the very same thing is pinned up inside the door of the pub.

When we have complained to the Landlord we have experienced not just verbal abuse but also deliberate damage to our property, to our considerable cost and discomfort; but of course nothing can be proved, so no action is ever taken. Not even any warning. Our complaints and representations are well documented in emails.

Our neighbours and friends to the pub, recently sold up and left the street because they could not deal with any more abuse. To have to leave the street is shocking in itself, but sadly their many complaints were ignored over the years (as there was no proof) and finally they gave up reporting anything to The Police. The details of their incidents are also well documented in e-mails.

Recently Mr Schonfeldt's son has taken over the management of the pub. Several neighbours, who have also been very disturbed by the drinking and anti-social behaviour in the street, will not be sending representations on this occasion because they feel that the situation may be changing 'under new management'.

Our view is that a number of our elderly neighbours are being careful; they do not wish to attract the reprisals that we have experienced. But until the Landlord's son is the registered Licensee and is fully responsible for the management of the premises, we cannot be sure that his occupancy is a strategy to try to avoid a change in the License.

We suggest that Mr J Schonfeldt has always chosen to ignore the poor behaviour of his customers in the street in case it deterred business. You'd think with the additional business would come an additional sense of responsibility and consideration for the neighbourhood - but just the opposite. He and his staff do not prevent people drinking outside, they do not discourage bad behaviour, nor do they bar drunk and rowdy customers from the pub. So why should the late customers be permitted to continue to mess up the street and disturb the very peace that we are entitled to in our homes? Please limit the night time closing to 23.00, at the very least for a trial period.

Thank you for considering our representation.

Yours sincerely,

Laurence & Caitriona Vulliamy

Mardon, Sarah (Licensing)

From:
Sent: 08 November 2014 15:20
To: Mardon, Sarah (Licensing)
Cc: Davies, John (Cllr)
Subject: Review of licensing hours: Oliver Cromwell Pub, Wellington St., St Ives,Cambs

Dear Ms Mardon,

We are emailing you in connection with the review of the licensing hours of the above premises. We wish to register out objection to the extended hours granted several years ago and request that closing time should revert to 11pm. The basis for our objection is on the grounds of public nuisance, which has been a significant issue in this street and along the Quay, since the extended hours were granted.

We have lived at No 8 the Quay since 1980 and seen a great many changes over the years to the so called night economy of St Ives. A common theme to these changes has been the extensions to normal licensing hours not only for the old established pubs but also for new ones, who, in their licensing applications, have sought longer and longer drinking hours. We await with increasing anxiety the Licensing Committees response to licensing issues to do the Robin Hood, Wetherspoons and the Otagon application. This has led to more noise, drunkenness and disorderly behaviour extending well past midnight and into the early hours, some of which affects us on the Quay.

We have raised objections in the past both formally and informally and it was because of the antisocial impact on residents of the Quay, Wellington St and Bull Lane, that we formed a neighbourhood watch group some years ago. Soon after it became a designated area. Admittedly, the situation with regard to crime and disorder related to drunkenness is not as bad as it was; we had our front windows smashed on two separate occasions. However, this should not lead to complacency as to standards of behaviour of people who have been drinking for many hours late at night and into the early hours. Where is a policeman when you need one?

We think it is also important to view the issue of extended hours for drinking in the wider context of the St Ives night economy. It is also plainly unhealthy not only for individuals but also the community at large for more and more drinking establishments to be operating well after the normal hours of everyday living.

We are concerned that the Licensing Committee should be seen to be promoting the health of the local community and we urge them to demonstrate their sense of responsibility for the good of our community.

Yours sincerely,

Dr George Smerdon
Mrs Diana Smerdon

