

Traditional approach scores at THE CABIN



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The Cabin, in the village of Sedgley near Dudley in the West Midlands, is what many would call a drinking man's pub, but licensee Peter Guise prefers to call it a traditional English pub, where the focus is on providing a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere for the whole family.

Formerly run by the Spirit Group, the managed house division of Punch Taverns plc, The Cabin was converted to leased premises status in November 2006. Peter had been managing The Cabin for four years at that time so it was a natural progression for him to take on the lease. He was confident that by continuing to position the pub as a focal point for local league sports teams and offering indoor activities such as darts and dominoes, he could further develop the business. What he was not confident about were the back office functions, such as payroll and processing VAT, which

had been taken care of by the pubco in the past.

Informed advice

As a result of a UK-wide partnership with Punch Taverns, Peter was able to access specialist accountancy and financial management support from Milestone. Since taking over the lease, he has been supported by Debbie Bullimore, Milestone's regional accounts manager for the West Midlands. Debbie has provided Peter with quality, informed advice based on her extensive personal experience of the licensed trade.

Peter commented: "Debbie's been fantastic and having a dedicated accountancy service to call on has taken a lot of pressure off me. The changeover from support provided by the Spirit umbrella to working with Milestone was seamless."

Punch Taverns' business relationship manager for the West Midlands is Sandy Tipton and she added: "We now have a large number of pubs supported by Milestone and in all cases the licensees receive good and timely financial management information. In many ways, Peter is an ideal lessee because he is highly experienced in the operational side of running a pub. However, making the transition from a corporately funded operation to a personally funded one can be difficult and it is a great credit to Milestone that the move has been a smooth and successful one."

Debbie has worked closely with Peter to identify areas where the business could be improved. Employee costs were highlighted as being on the high side and, with close monitoring and advice from Debbie, these have now started to come down. Peter is also now much more aware of the impact of costs on cash flow and profitability. In a move to increase margins, a price rise was considered and eventually introduced. Despite the increase, customers have remained loyal and this is testament to a business decision which was well thought out and well managed.

Peter is now so comfortable with the situation at The Cabin that he has taken on the lease of another pub and he is confident that Milestone will continue to meet all his requirements for financial management support.



Peter Guise and Milestone's Debbie Bullimore raise a glass to The Cabin's success.

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