

Press release: Former Bristol pub landlord disqualified

Owain Charles Evans George, the Director of OMI Partnership Limited trading as The Albion, a pub in Clifton near Bristol, has been disqualified for three and a half years for trading to the detriment of HM Revenue and Customs.

The disqualification, from 28 February 2017, prevents Mr George from directly or indirectly becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company until August 2020. It follows an investigation by the Insolvency Service which found he had unfairly discriminated against HMRC by choosing to pay other trade creditors in advance of the company's VAT owed to HMRC for a period between January 2014 and 13 February 2015.

OMI Partnership Limited was placed into Liquidation on 13 February 2015 with an estimated deficiency to creditors in excess of £627,825 and outstanding VAT bill totalling £180,567.

Mr George was a director from 9 November 2004 to liquidation.

Robert Clarke, Senior Investigator, said:

Company directors have a duty to ensure businesses meet their legal obligations, including paying taxes. Deliberate neglect of tax affairs is not a victimless action – it deprives public services of vital money and introduces unfair competition in the business market.

The Insolvency Service will investigate and take action against directors who do not comply with their obligations.

Mr George's date of birth is September 1969 and it is believed he is currently of no fixed abode.

OMI Partnership Limited (CR0 No. 05275045) was incorporated on 01 November 2004 and latterly traded as a public house from The Albion, Boyces Avenue, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 4AA.

The Company went into Creditors Voluntary Liquidation on 13 February 2015 with an estimated deficiency of £627,825. A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: Exporting British style: designers set for £15 million global sales boost

This hotly anticipated event could lead to £15 million in exports for British designers, the fashion industry is worth £28 billion to the UK economy.

The government is helping match UK fashion designers with international buyers to boost exports by up to £15 million, International Trade Minister, Mark Garnier said today, ahead of [London Fashion Week](#).

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is not only sponsoring this year's event, but also investing into the 'International Guest Programme', where up and coming British designers are connected to some of the world's most high profile and influential buyers from priority markets such as Australia, China and South Korea.

This trade-matching scheme is designed to raise awareness of UK brands to a global audience and enable designers to compete for sales to international markets and secure export wins.

International Trade Minister, Mark Garnier said:

From street style to haute couture, some of the most iconic brands and trendsetters in contemporary fashion hail from the UK – so it's no surprise there is high demand for British heritage and luxury fashion.

The UK sits at the centre of the world's fashion design talent and we are proud to be sponsoring such a prestigious event, showcasing the very best of British fashion designers.

Through this trade-matching programme we are giving UK designers a tailored fit with their counterparts abroad, with the scope to boost trade by millions of pounds.

Minister of State for Digital and Culture Matt Hancock said:

The UK's creative industries are a tour de force, contributing £87 billion a year to our economy. British designers are now represented on catwalks all around the world, and our industry's alumni reads like a roll call of the fashion world's most talented stars, including Alexander McQueen, Thomas Burberry and Alice Temperley.

London Fashion Week is a tremendous celebration of the best of British fashion, and a reminder of the incredible pool of talent that we are committed to nurturing and supporting.

The UK has a worldwide reputation for its fashion design, and London has long established itself as a forward-leaning fashion capital, attracting investment from across the world. From Burberry to Victoria Beckham, big British brands are in high demand on and off the catwalk, making the fashion industry one of the UK's biggest export successes.

In 2015, clothing exports alone racked up £6.1 billion – and if footwear and textiles were included, would reach almost £10 billion.

The fashion industry is worth £28 billion to the UK economy and the world renowned London Fashion Week brings a major boost to the sector, attracting an estimated £100 million worth of orders during each fashion week and offering the best in design talent from across the world.

The trends and innovations on the catwalk will cascade onto British and international high streets, creating a multi-billion pound industry and a further boost to UK fashion exports.

Notes to editors

- priority markets for the 'International Guest Programme' include: the USA, China, South Korea, Australia, India, Saudi Arabia, Italy and Germany
- 'International Guest Programme' involves targeting international buyers and understanding their budgets and styles and matching them with appropriate British designers

- now in its 65th year, [London Fashion Week](#) will open its doors to more than 5,000 well-heeled guests keen to get a preview of the latest catwalk collections and designs
- the UK sits at the centre of the world's fashion design talent with internationally-acclaimed designers and brands such as Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood, Paul Smith, Burberry and Victoria Beckham all hailing from the UK
- the UK is a leading centre for the manufacturing of clothing and high-quality fabrics. Over half the designers showing at London Fashion Week make some of their collections in the UK

Further information

[Press release: Kebab shop owner disqualified for employing illegal workers](#)

Amjid Ali Maqbool Hussain, the director of Madina Kebab House Limited in Peterborough, has been disqualified for six years for failing to comply with its statutory obligations under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act of 2006.

The disqualification, from 21 February 2017, prevents Mr Hussain from directly or indirectly becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company until February 2023.

Mr Hussain's disqualification follows an investigation by the Insolvency Service which found he had failed to ensure relevant immigration checks were completed and documents retained, resulting in the employment of four illegal workers and which resulted in a penalty notice of £60,000 being issued by the Home Office.

Madina Kebab House Limited was placed into Liquidation on 18 December 2015, with an estimated deficiency to creditors in excess of £66,000.

Robert Clarke, Senior Investigator, said:

The Insolvency Service rigorously pursues directors who fail to pay fines imposed by the government for breaking employment and

immigration laws. We have worked closely in this case with our colleagues at the Home Office to achieve this disqualification.

The director sought an unfair advantage over his competitors by employing individuals who did not have the right to work in the UK in breach of his duties as a director.

The public has a right to expect that those who break the law will face the consequences. Running a limited company, means you have statutory obligations as well as protections. If you fail to comply with your obligations then the Insolvency Service will investigate you.

A Home Office spokesperson said:

Illegal working is not victimless. It undercuts honest employers, cheats legitimate job seekers out of employment opportunities and defrauds the taxpayer.

Businesses should be aware that they have a duty to check that their staff have permission to work in the UK.

We are happy to work with employers who play by the rules but those who do not should know that they will not go under our radar.

Mr Hussain's date of birth is 13 June 1978 and he resides in Peterborough.

Madina Kebab House Limited (CRO No. 08110208) was incorporated on 19 June 2012 and latterly traded as a takeaway from 65 Galdstone Street, Peterborough, PE1 2BN.

Mr Hussain was a director from 19 June 2012 to Liquidation. The Company went into Creditors Voluntary Liquidation on 18 December 2015 with an estimated deficiency of £66,244.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

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You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: CMA secures better deal for cloud storage users](#)

The 3 companies are the latest cloud storage providers to improve their terms and conditions following the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) review of compliance with consumer law in the sector. Last year, the CMA secured separate commitments from [JustCloud, Livedrive and Dixons Carphone](#), and [BT, Dropbox, Google and Mozy](#) to make changes to their contract terms.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Acting Chief Executive, said:

People rely on cloud storage to keep things such as treasured family photos, music, films and important documents safe, so it is important that they are treated fairly and should not be hit by unexpected price rises or changes to storage levels.

We are pleased that Amazon, Apple and Microsoft have joined 7 previous companies in working with the CMA and agreeing commitments to improve their terms and conditions and, as a result, millions of cloud storage users will benefit from fairer terms which will help them make the right choices when using cloud storage services.

Amazon, Apple and Microsoft have separately agreed to make changes to their respective terms and conditions, including in some common areas relating to:

- adequate notice to customers before significant changes are made to the service
- cancellation rights and pro-rata refunds if customers don't want to accept significant changes
- adequate notice, where appropriate, before the service is suspended or cancelled

A summary of the separate changes agreed with each company can be found on the [case page](#).

Cloud storage is used by around 3 in 10 British adults in a personal capacity. In its initial review of the sector, the CMA found that the majority currently use free services that come with their devices and are generally satisfied with the service they receive. However, there were some terms and conditions which caused concern, for example, terms which gave companies the ability to change the service or terms of the contract or suspend or terminate the contract, for any reason and without notice.

The CMA has worked with the industry to improve compliance with consumer law. The latest agreed changes bring to an end the CMA's consumer law compliance

review into the cloud storage sector. The CMA remains interested in unfair terms and conditions, particularly in the digital economy. Companies in the cloud storage, and other technology-driven sectors, are urged to keep their terms and conditions under review and to continually improve the fairness and clarity of their consumer contract terms.

The CMA has published an [open letter](#) to businesses operating in the sector advising them of their obligations, and a [60-second summary](#) to help consumers choose the right service.

In October last year, the CMA launched a campaign consisting of simple [videos](#) and [guides](#) to help businesses understand how to avoid including unfair terms and conditions in their contracts.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
2. The CMA has not made a finding on whether cloud storage providers' terms and practices have breached consumer law. As part of the CMA's compliance review, all cloud storage providers co-operated and constructively engaged with the CMA and voluntarily made changes to their terms and conditions. Where there is evidence that terms and/or practices breach consumer law this could lead to enforcement action by the CMA or other enforcers. Only a court can decide whether a particular term or practice breaches the law.
3. A summary of the changes, respectively, to be made by Amazon Media EU S.a.r.l., Apple Distribution International, and Microsoft Corporation to each of their terms and conditions has been published on the [case page](#).
4. The pieces of consumer protection legislation relevant to this review and enforced by the CMA are: Part 2 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 relating to unfair terms (and for contracts entered into before 1 October 2015 the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999), and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
5. The CMA commissioned Ipsos MORI to carry out a consumer survey. This survey was carried out by Ipsos MORI between 7 and 29 January 2016 as part of its face-to-face omnibus survey, Capibus, which conducts interviews with 2,000 GB adults aged 15+ every week. It asked consumers who used cloud storage in a personal/private capacity a range of questions about their experience of cloud storage.
6. Individuals have rights under the Consumer Rights Act and can ask a court to consider whether a term is unfair and unenforceable. The [Citizens Advice consumer helpline](#) is a telephone, email and online service offering advice to consumers where they have a problem with goods and services in the UK. If you have a cross-border complaint, you can go to [www.econsumer.gov](#). The UK European Consumer Centre provides advice if you have a dispute with a trader in another EU country.
7. Media enquiries should be directed to Rebecca Cassar (rebecca.cassar@cma.gsi.gov.uk, 020 3738 6633).

[Press release: Strong performance by social housing sector – HCA publishes Global Accounts](#)

The 2016 Global Accounts of private registered providers, published today (17 February 2017) by the Homes and Communities Agency, shows that the social housing sector has had a solid year of investment underpinned by strong in-year financial performance.

The Global Accounts gives an annual overview of the financial status of the social housing sector and is based on analysis of the regulatory financial returns and statements that are submitted by private registered providers managing or owning 1,000 or more homes.

For the first time, we have set out group as well as entity level data providing a clearer view of activity, such as open market sales, which typically takes place in unregistered subsidiaries.

With this year's publication, we are also including an analysis of unit costs at group and entity level, which gives the headline costs per social housing unit, broken down into components, drawn directly from the Global Accounts. This is supported by contextual information such as supported housing, stock transfer age and regional wages, which can be contributory factors in driving cost differences. These are drawn mainly from other regulatory returns, including the Statistical Data Return.

Some of the main findings for 2016 are:

- over £7.5bn was invested in new and existing stock as the sector continued to leverage the surpluses generated on its trading activity
- the development of new properties for both shared ownership and outright sale increased markedly in 2016 – a 39% increase in total turnover from this activity on the previous year
- group turnover increased in the year by 8% – despite increases in sale and other non-social housing activity, three quarters of total turnover continues to come from social housing lettings
- debt increased by £2.2bn in the year to fund capital expenditure
- improved operating margins and stable costs of debt contributed to an

increase in interest cover – while increasing property values contributed to gearing remaining stable.

Fiona MacGregor, Director of Regulation said:

The 2016 Global Accounts shows a steady picture in the sector overall with substantial ongoing investment in new and existing properties. This is despite the increase in debt being lower than that reported in 2015. A marked increase in turnover from commercial activities is an indicator of how providers are maintaining development levels in a more uncertain operating environment. We will remain vigilant as providers continue to adapt, and expect their risk management and mitigation approaches to keep pace with their activities.

Following on from the unit cost analysis and data we shared in June 2016, we are committed to presenting the data on costs in a clear, comprehensive and comparable format for greater transparency. We recognise that no single cost metric can perfectly capture diversity in business models and reporting approaches, and that providers' costs can be driven by a range of factors. The information will help providers and boards to better understand their own costs and to robustly challenge themselves on their economy, efficiency and effectiveness of expenditure.

The [2016 Global Accounts and Unit Cost Data](#) are available on the HCA website.

The [annual Global Accounts from 2012 to 2015](#) are also available on the website.

The Homes and Communities Agency is the single, national housing and regeneration delivery agency for England, and is the regulator of social housing providers.

As regulator, its purpose is to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It will do this by undertaking robust economic regulation, as enshrined in legislation, focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer.

For more information visit the [HCA website](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

Our [media enquiries page](#) has contact details for journalists.

For general queries to the HCA, please email mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk or call 0300 1234 500.