

CONNECT M3	
This Legend Lives Among Us	

TB-5486F

There's a reality check coming. It's set to trigger a completely new system!

- 1 Chancellor Rachel Reeves delivered a beast of a budget this last week. No one was expecting good news – since governments almost never deliver on that – as she'd given us all plenty of advance warning to sweat the *BIG* stuff.

The truth is – the measures she laid out were the exact opposite of what her boss told us all – a year ago – was going to happen. Growth-Growth-Growth he said, not understanding it seems how that's created – at least for the ordinary guy just hanging on – while mega corporations scoop off the cream. For the smaller businesses – like Luke's – this budget was next to crushing.



- 2 **In the personal words of a small business owner in his own community**
This is the face of a tired, and absolutely bloody skint, pub landlord who has just had a chance to start reading through today's Budget announcements. I pulled my pants down ready for it – but clearly forgot the lube.
- 3 **Minimum wage increase**
We all heard in advance that this was happening, and unfortunately, it's not even a double-edged sword. The minimum wage will increase, but tax thresholds remain the same, forcing more of your wage into the taxable bracket. This isn't a pay increase – it's a tax increase! The few extra quid the average worker will end up with in their pocket after tax will be spent 10-fold by the cost increases, we're all about to see, everywhere we spend our money, as a result.

Meanwhile, small business owners, who already literally don't have a spare penny, will just cut staff hours, stop hiring, fire existing staff, or shut up shop altogether.

4 **Alcohol duty going up**

Rising with inflation, alcohol duty will increase across the board, including draught products. We're about to see a **3.66%** increase just on the duty itself - and don't forget all the other increases the breweries themselves will also be facing from this budget. Plus, you can bet they'll be adding them straight onto our beer invoices.

5 **Business Rates utter bullsh*t**

Headline nonsense of a reduction in the multiplier used for hospitality businesses is quickly overshadowed by the fact they've snuck in HUGE increases to everyone's actual rateable value!

At present, our RV is **£12,500** and we theoretically pay **49.9p/£** of that annually - but we also get small business relief, making our bill approx **£100** per month.

Our new RV is apparently going to be **£25,500** - even with the new multiplier of **38.2p/£** that equates to **£812** per month - and there's now no small business rate relief on that!

That's a whopping **£712** MORE per month, despite a fancy headline stating business rates are dropping!

6 I manage to pay myself, on average, the princely sum of **£6ph** for the hours I work - and that's not including time spent on midnight Facebook rants, late night emergencies and perpetually ignoring my kids and partner whilst answering phone calls and emails from sales reps, energy suppliers and people who can't remember if they left their bank card at the pub 6mths ago.

This month I was only able to pay myself half my normal ~~pittance~~ wage, to make sure the all-powerful VAT man could have his well-funded Christmas party, whilst also ensuring all my suppliers and staff were fully paid up, as they of course very much deserve to be.

7 The past year has been, without a doubt, my toughest one since taking over the pub - and yes, it seriously is a LOT harder than the "Covid Years"!

 Every single possible bill has gone up, some by as much as **50%** without warning, and yet we've held firm on our pricing because who the hell wants to pay more than 6 quid for a pint. I know I don't!

8 But the reality is - this: sh*t is really *bleeping* tough right now, and without small incremental price rises there will be no pubs any more. Not just ours - because every Freehold pub across the country is currently fairly well on the verge of collapse. No one wants to say it out loud, because to admit it is almost tempting fate, but we're really all living on the edge these days -

week-to-week, hand-to-mouth, and searching for a god we didn't previously believe in - to start praying to!

- 9 And what does the future look like without "The Great British Pub"?!

It's certainly not one I want to envisage! Pubs are a British institution - a place to relax, make new friends, meet old friends, listen to live music, discover amazing new beers, make business deals, celebrate happy occasions, commiserate and mourn less than happy occasions, learn a new sport, meet your future wife, discover how bloody awful pickled eggs are! Not forgetting opportunities to fundraise for your latest charity, partake in a quiz or bingo night or (God forbid) karaoke night...

Pubs are a part of British life and I know - for absolute certain - things will be even shittier when they're all gone and turned into housing!

- 10 We haven't had a price increase at **The Hog since July 2024**. Yes, I did write that date correctly - **2024**. That's 16 months of us holding our prices, despite minimum wage, national insurance, electric, gas, beer, co2 and literally everything else you can think of increasing in price on an almost-monthly basis! (I know, we're absolute bloody legends, you're welcome! 🙌🙌)

- 11 Seriously though, if you want to still have a pub a year from now in **Horsley** -, or anywhere else for that matter - then I'm sorry to say you just have to accept the inevitable, because I can't keep feeding my kids on less than **£6ph**, and today's budget has really hammered home the fact we should have been nudging our prices up a LOT more frequently than every 16 months!

If you come into The Hog next week and find everything is 20 or 30p more a pint, then I hope this post helps to explain why. It's not "greedy pubs" making loads of money from you, it's this b*stard government forcing us to do whatever we have to, just to survive. But please know, were I a better businessman, and if I cared less about all you bloody legends who support us every single day, then it would be significantly more than just 20p going on a pint, so I promise we are still trying our damndest to look after you all!

- 12 The fire is warm, the beer is cold, the conversation is (sometimes) good, and I promise we don't plan on going anywhere any time soon. But when you're already paying **100%** more for a tub of Lurpack from Morrisons, please try your best to remember not to moan at us too loudly about a 4 or **5%** increase on a pint, that is making sure the doors will stay open for hopefully many more years to come!

- 13 We bloody love you all! ❤️ But this government can *bleep* the *bleep* right off! (Sorry mum for all the swears 😊),

From us all here at The Hog in Horsley

Luke, Kelly, Cristian, and the rest of the legendary Team Hog! x 🐶❤️

PS1 **Editor's comment**

The route to growth – as most economists will tell us – is to lower taxes and create a business environment which oozes confidence – if not an environment setting course to ooze confidence some time soon. This current government is now accused of doing everything to crush any confidence which might have existed just 7days ago – thus giving the average businessman – and certainly the heroes of every smaller business serving us in the community – one more challenging headache to suffer.

If you fancy a dive into the beautiful Cotswolds to find a great village pub – nestled on the outskirts of **Nailsworth** – an interesting and friendly town, full of independent shops and galleries – then **The Hog** might be the place to head for. If you're like Luke – stay clear of the pickled eggs – and instead go for a warm fireside chat with a legend of these parts. He would love to see you and chew the cud over one of his speciality beers. Located **GL6 oPR**

By: Contact CONNECT: [HERE](#)

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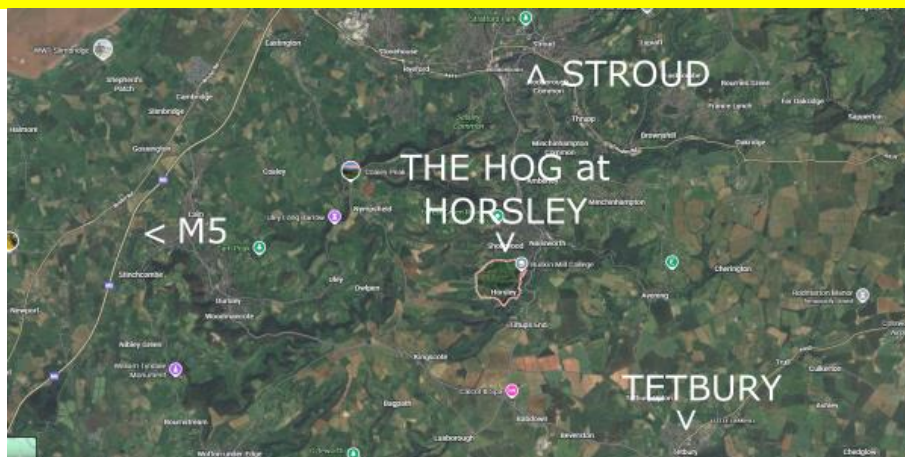
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