



Christopher Humphrey (SE 20.17)

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Time called on publican tax fraudster

A former West Sussex publican who lied about his sales to evade £85,000 in VAT and Corporation Tax has been jailed for 18 months after an investigation by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Christopher Humphrey, 53, manipulated till records so lower daily takings were recorded, and provided inaccurate information to his accountants. He also lied about the amount of stock purchased when he was landlord of The Tudor Tavern public house in East Preston - to try and hide the amount he was actually selling.

Chris Gill, Assistant Director, Fraud Investigation Service, HMRC, said:

“Christopher Humphrey lied about his true takings to pay less tax, which gave him an unfair advantage over business competitors. Our message is clear - it is simply not acceptable to steal from the tax system and honest UK taxpayers.

“HMRC will continue to pursue those criminals who attack the tax system and we ask anyone with information about suspected tax fraud to contact our Fraud Hotline on 0800 788 887.”

The fraud, which took place between August 2011 and June 2015, was uncovered by HMRC’s Cash Taskforce and referred for criminal investigation. Enquiries revealed Humphrey had evaded £53,464 in VAT and £31,128 of Corporation Tax.

Christopher Humphrey pleaded guilty on 28 November 2017 at Wood Green Crown Court. He was jailed for 18 months at the same court on 14 December 2017.

Upon sentencing Humphrey, His Honour Judge Lucas QC, said:

“You ran a public house in a manner I can only describe as wholly fraudulent. It is clear that not only were you cheating the public revenue but also deceiving your employers by purchasing stock elsewhere.”

Notes for Editors

1. Christopher HUMPHREY (DOB 13/11/64) a former publican, now of George V Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex. At the time of his arrest he was sole director of The Tudor Tavern EP Limited, of Sea Road, East Preston, West Sussex.

2. Christopher Humphrey was arrested by HMRC investigators in August 2015. On 28 November 2017 he pleaded guilty to:

- Cheating the public revenue of VAT between August 2011 and June 2015, contrary to Common Law by:

- Omitting to declare output tax for genuine sales
 - Submitting false VAT returns for the business
 - Failing to pay the full VAT due
- Cheating the public revenue of Corporation Tax between August 2011 and November 2014, contrary to Common Law by:
 - Submitting false Corporation Tax returns for the business
 - Failing to pay the full Corporation Tax due

3. He was jailed for 18 months and disqualified from holding any company directorships for three years.

4. Taskforces bring together various HMRC compliance and enforcement teams for intensive bursts of activity targeted at specific sectors and locations where there is evidence of high risk of tax evasion and fraud. The teams visit traders to examine their records and carry out other investigations.

5. Anyone with information about suspected tax evasion can contact us on 0800 788 887 or online at <https://www.gov.uk/topic/dealing-with-hmrc/tax-compliance>

6. A photograph is available from HMRC's Flickr site www.flickr.com/hmrcgovuk

7. Follow HMRC's Press Office on Twitter @HMRCpressoffice.

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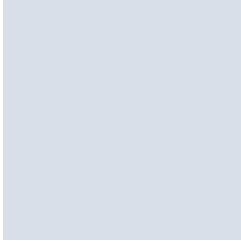
HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax authority.

HMRC is responsible for making sure that the money is available to fund the UK's public services and for helping families and individuals with targeted financial support.

Contacts



HM Revenue
& Customs



HMRC Press Office

Press Contact

news.desk@hmrc.gov.uk

03000 585018

HMRC Press Office Out Of Hours Contact

Press Contact

07860 359544

HMRC Regional Press Officer - London

Regional Press Officer

London

03000 529 729

07979 245 517