

Patrick and Jean Bradshaw

17 Guinness Close, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1QG

Strictly Private and Confidential

12th August 1998

Mr Mark Moody-Stuart
Shell
Shell Centre
London SE1 7NA

Dear Mr Moody-Stuart

Shell, Syon Hill and Shell, Roehampton

The reason for writing to you direct is to request your intervention in the above matter.

A summary of the circumstances is as follows:

Having successfully operated the site at Syon Hill for some years, I was telephoned by Mike Garrett (the area manager for City) late on a Friday afternoon in January 1995 and asked if I would take over the operation at Roehampton Lane for a short period until a replacement operator could be found. I was assured that this would be a temporary position. I asked for the weekend to think about this proposition and to discuss this with my wife but was told that an answer was necessary within two hours. Dealing with such a large company such as Shell, it did not cross my mind that anything could possibly be dishonest about their predicament.

I was advised on many occasions that the previous operator had not legally banked the takings, but had taken the money from the safe and disappeared. This account of actions was also related to several members of the staff who were employed at Roehampton at that time and to my wife. Having a great deal of regard for Shell, we decided that we had done the right thing in assisting.

Since I was having to travel daily between Syon Hill and Roehampton Lane to operate two large and busy sites I took on extra staff at both sites to help. Mrs Susan Osborne worked at Roehampton Lane as an assistant to me in the office. She did the daily banking and reconciliation and generally kept the office ticking over in my absence.

After a short period of time, I realised that no matter how many staff were employed at Roehampton at any one time, the amount of shoplifting that took place at this site was far out-weighing any return to the site.

I approached Mike Garret and requested that they find an alternative operator as soon as possible. This request was put forward to Mike many, many times and I was always assured that they were looking for a suitable replacement. On one occasion Nick Adams (Regional manager) and Mike Garrett asked me if I would keep Roehampton and surrender Syon Hill. My exact response was "Roehampton was not a viable proposition" and I suggested they find somebody else for Roehampton as soon as possible.

Eventually but nevertheless, after ten very long months, I was able to relinquish the millstone around my neck and return my attention 100% to Syon Hill.

Having directed the accountants - E.K. Williams to draw up final accounts for Roehampton, the final blow struck when we were advised of a £20,000 loss. We know for certain that shop-lifting was the cause of the loss because of the meticulous and fool-proof method that Shell insist on for the banking exercise.

We subsequently discovered that apart from the dishonest method which was used to obtain my agreement to the taking on of Roehampton, this particular site had a long history of failures by a succession of operators. The previous operator had not dishonestly handled the money, but had simply gone bust.

I asked for Shell's help with the loss on several occasions but was offered a small amount to pay the wage bill that I had incurred by having to employ extra staff. Apart from this, I was on my own and up to my neck. So much so that I suffered a slight heart attack four weeks later.

Naturally, we wanted all this unpleasantness behind us. We took out a bank loan to cover the loss and continued putting all our efforts into Syon Hill.

Syon Hill was "a very good, tidy, and clean site". Many customers commented on this and even went as far as to say that they would always "come back because of the friendly atmosphere that greeted them". Numerous members of the senior Shell management, and not only from the UK, "popped in for a chat" on many occasions and not once did any of them enter without complimenting on the how good the place looked!

I took on the added responsibility of training new managers - preparing at least 22 new operators - many of whom are still managers/franchisees and one of whom happened to be Andrew Smith the Finance Director for Shell UK Retail.

Some months ago, determined to try to recoup my losses, I requested a meeting with Richard Emery. I said "that I wanted some compensation from Shell" I hasten to add that this was not the first time I had asked, but the first time that I was determined to try to get a satisfactory response. I made it quite clear that I was going to attempt to get some support in order to settle the still outstanding bank loan.

Many operators within Shell confirmed my feelings that I would probably receive some sort of "bully boy tactics" from Shell management because I was beginning to dig my heels in. They are my famous last words! On 29th May 1998, Richard Emery and Charles Fox arrived at my site to tell me that my contract was being terminated because my site was not up to standard! This was, I believe, Harley Barnard's impression. After 6 years of successful operating I find this totally unreasonable. I was presented with a letter (copy enclosed) advising me to vacate the premises.

To coin the phrase "kick you when you're down", when I approached the Government DHSS to apply for job seekers allowance, I was advised that I was not entitled to this benefit because Shell had consequently advised the DHSS that I had left "of my own accord". I showed the Gov't. office the original Shell letter, to which they were seriously agitated.

I enclose copies of letters that my solicitor has sent to Shell UK, together with Shell's reply. Attached to one of those letters is a typed statement from Mike Garrett to which I am totally opposed to - this description of events is utterly fabricated and I hold written statements from various members of staff to back up my statement and to which I am about to present to my solicitor.

I am in regular contact with many of the other Shell operators, They are advising me that representatives of Shell have repeatedly told them that I left the company because, due to ill health, I felt that I could not run the site any longer. This came as a complete surprise to me.

I believe that I have been treated very shabbily by Shell. In return for hard work and commitment to Shell over many years, I have been robbed of my livelihood and have suffered serious financial loss, all of which I believe is directly attributable to the actions of Shell management. I believe that I am entitled to be compensated.

I held the name of Shell in very high regard and I should be grateful if you would look into these matters on our behalf because someone, somewhere is not being totally honest and I am suffering the consequences.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Bradshaw

P.S:

I was discharged from hospital this weekend, as a result of the tactics used by Shell, hence the delay in sending the letter. Today (Monday) I have been served with my first writ issued by the High Court of Justice because of non-payment to one of the suppliers to Syon Hill. This will be one of many because I just do not have the funds to settle. Having spent the majority of my career in the police force, I have never been on the receiving end of a writ.

My exact words a short while ago were "I wish I had never come into contact with Shell" and because of the underhanded manner and deceit of some of your management I am forced into a situation that I would never have even dreamt possible.