

Vogue magazine issues 'cease and desist' warning to Cornish pub of the same name

One of the world's most famous fashion magazines has threatened to sue a pub in a tiny Cornish hamlet that shares its name, claiming it could confuse its readers.

Publicans of The Star Inn at Vogue – named after the hamlet its in – thought one of its regulars was playing a practical joke when they received a 'cease and desist' letter from Condé Nast, the owner of Vogue magazine, asking them to stop using the name 'Vogue' as it is their name – even though the pub is more than 200 years old and the village is older still, [Cornwall Live reports](#).

The letter, which has been seen by [CornwallLive](#), asked publicans Mark and Rachel Graham to stop using the name of the Cornish hamlet because it might confuse its readers.

Mark, the 60-year-old publican said: "When I opened the letter I thought some b*gger in the village was having me on.

"Surely these people can't be serious. In this modern day and age someone couldn't be bothered to go onto Google and see that Vogue is a Cornish hamlet that's been here for hundreds of years. It seems common sense has taken a backseat on this one."

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In her letter to Mark and Rachel, in which she expresses concern that confusion over Vogue the hamlet and Vogue could divert global trade from Milan, Paris, London and New York to Cornwall, Condé Nast's chief operating officer Sabine Vandenbroucke, wrote: "Our company is the proprietor of the Vogue mark, not only for its world-famous magazine first published in November 1916 but in respect of other goods and services offered to the public by our company.

"We are concerned that the name which you are using is going to cause problems because as far as the general public is concerned a connection between your business and ours is likely to be inferred."



Publican Mark Graham outside of his pub, The Star Inn at Vogue in the tiny hamlet of Vogue, St Day near Redruth in Cornwall with the letter he has received from Conde Nast, owners of the fashion magazine Vogue threatening him to stop using the name 'vogue' as it could confuse their readers

(Image: Olivier Vergnault/DCM)

The letter, dated March 1, 2022, asked Mark and Rachel to provide more information about what type of business the Star Inn Vogue pub is about and any imagery it uses to make sure it obviously can't be confused with the magazine.

At the end it adds: "Please reply within seven days or we will take remedial action."

Mark said he did reply with a selection of photos of the pub and street names found in the area, bearing the name Vogue.

He believes the confusion may have arisen when he and his wife decided to change their trading status from a partnership to a limited company and the name popped up on Companies House, alerting Condé Nast to the issue.

In his letter to the New York publisher's London offices, the publican said: "Whilst I found your letter interesting on the one hand, I also found it hilariously funny. I presume your magazine bases its name on the dictionary term for being in fashion which is uncapitalised as used in the Oxford English Dictionary.

"If a member of your staff had taken the time to investigate they would have discovered that our company, the Star Inn, is in the small village of Vogue, near St Day, [Cornwall](#). Yes, that's right, Vogue is the name of our village, which has been in existence for hundreds of years and in fact is a Cornish word, not English.

"I note in your letter that you have only been in existence since 1916 and I presume that at the time when you chose the name Vogue in the capitalised version you didn't seek permission from the villagers of the real Vogue. I also presume that Madonna did not seek your permission to use the word Vogue (again the capitalised version) for her 1990s song of the same name.

"You are both at liberty to use the uncapitalised version without our permission. As a side note she didn't seek our permission either."

Mark concluded saying: "In answer to your question whether we would change our name, it is a categorical NO."

Vogue has been approached by CornwallLive for comment.

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