

# easylicensing

## Licensing Consultants

Mr B. Nacum  
Licensing Manager  
Tewkesbury Borough Council  
Gloucester Road  
Tewkesbury  
GL20 5TT



7<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Dear Mr Nacum,

**Subject: Application regarding Witcombe Cider Festival.**

I enclose an application for a new licence for the Witcombe Cider Festival and feel it may be helpful if I provide additional information regarding the festival, the reason for this application, and detail regarding the additional measures that will be implemented.

The Witcombe Cider Festival has operated successfully over the August Bank Holiday weekend for the last 5 years (4 on this site). During that time, the festival has developed a reputation as being a safe and enjoyable environment for families as well as individuals, and there have been extremely low levels of drunkenness, crime and disorder associated with the event. Although there were initially some minor issues and corresponding adjustments to the licence, there have been no major incidents during its history. Last year, there were no reported incidents of crime or disorder at the event.

Although the Witcombe Cider Festival originally centred on the wide choice of ciders locally produced, its focus rapidly shifted so that it now focuses primarily on Live Music. It is renowned for featuring some eminent and popular artists, and these have become the main attraction. However, a wide selection of primarily local ciders are still on offer, and this feature provides a quirky distinctiveness to this festival and distinguishes it from other music festivals in the UK, particularly since traditional and naturally flavoured ciders tend to be more popular than beer, for example, with female festival goers. This festival is, of course, extremely small in comparison to other music festivals and, significantly, operates during *daytime hours*. Ticket prices are also considerably less than other festivals, allowing local people to enjoy a popular music festival at relatively low cost and without the environmental damage caused by unnecessary travel.

*Registered Office: The Firs, Hayden Lane, Staverton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 0SR*

Despite being an extremely small festival, it is well-managed and professionally operated. The Licence Holder, Mr Joseph Pointon, employs experienced specialists to assist him in managing the event (e.g. Health & Safety Specialist, Sound Engineers, Security advisers). Importantly, feedback from neighbours, attendees, and the statutory authorities is taken into consideration each year and refinements have been made year-on-year to ensure continuous improvement. This process will carry on, as Mr Pointon is keen to enhance the reputation of the festival and uphold his own reputation as a responsible licence holder.

This annual August Bank Holiday festival has proved to be so popular with the local community that it reached the permitted capacity on the licence last year. As a result, the organiser Mr Pointon is applying for a new licence that is substantially the same as the existing licence, but with the following changes:

1. Increase the *maximum* capacity so as to allow up to 3,000 patrons. (Precise numbers wishing to attend such outdoor events are, of course, unknown and actual numbers are very much dependent on the weather at the time. However, this will hopefully remove the necessity of people being refused entry to the event in the future.)
2. Extend the duration of the event to include Friday evening from 5pm – midnight, but with the maximum capacity remaining at 1,500 on Friday.
3. Include the option of adding the Bank Holiday Monday to the festival in the future; however it would not be implemented this year.
4. Include the option of allowing some festival attendees to camp on the higher field in the future. This facility would be particularly beneficial to those attending for the whole weekend, especially those who do not live locally. This would not be utilised in 2017.
5. Relinquish the off-sale authorisation that is on the current licence.

### **Additional Measures**

As you are aware, considerable resources have previously been invested in making sure that the festival's impact on neighbours is minimised and that their properties are protected. With that in mind, if this application is granted, the following *additional* measures will be implemented in order to add further improvements and protections.

1. The number of Registered Doorstaff/Security employed will be *increased* to correspond with the increase in capacity. A minimum ratio of 1 door supervisor per 75 patrons would remain in place at all times. This is a high ratio and follows best practice for festival events.
2. The heras fencing between the festival site and the neighbouring properties will be covered with fabric screening material, so as to provide a much higher degree of privacy for the neighbours and additional sound attenuation.

3. Transport arrangements will be substantially enhanced in the following manner:
  - a. Three double-decker buses and a single-decker will be available on site from 9pm to close on Saturday, Sunday and Monday evenings to provide dedicated transport for festival visitors. Two buses will operate from 9pm to close on Friday evening.
  - b. The bus fare will be *subsidised* to encourage use (£2 per person in 2017), and this will be payable by either a drinks token (pre-purchased) or cash. Children (under 18) will travel free.
  - c. Stewards will oversee the transport facilities. They will encourage customers heading towards the exit to make use of the buses.
  - d. Doorstaff will travel on the buses to maintain good order.
  - e. The buses will service two routes: *Route 1*. Brockworth, Hucclecote, to Gloucester City Centre Bus Station (to assist with ongoing transport connections as necessary). *Route 2*. Shurdington, Warden Hill, Tivoli, to Cheltenham Town Centre.
  - f. In addition, Stagecoach has agreed to monitor demand and provide additional buses at peak times on its number 61 service (which serves this route).
4. A CCTV camera will be installed at the entrance to the site in order to record visual images of all those attending the event and signs will be displayed to make attendees aware that CCTV is in operation. This will act as a further deterrent to antisocial behaviour. Recordings will be made available to the statutory authorities in the event of problems.
5. Temporary signs (notices of consideration) will be attached to the lamp-posts along Painswick Road asking patrons to be considerate to residents and keep noise levels low.
6. The overflow car-park will be utilised and extra stewards deployed to this area to ensure good traffic flow is maintained.

Furthermore, as a result of resident feedback from last year's event, the fairground arrangements will be modified to reduce extraneous noise. In particular, the provision of the noisy 'dodgem cars' will cease, and the fairground will remain closed on Friday evening.

It should be noted that there are no proposals to extend the festival's terminal hour. Outdoor music and entertainment will cease at 2300 hours each day, with the whole site being empty and closed down by midnight (as in previous years).

The implementation of the above substantial measures will tend to reduce any chance of crime, disorder and public nuisance occurring, whilst also increasing public safety. In particular, the improved transport arrangements will reduce the number of pedestrians walking home and thereby minimise contact between local residents and those attending the event. It will also ensure festival attendees arrive home promptly and safely and are not left on the streets at the end of the evening.

It is Mr Pointon's hope that the festival will come to be recognised as the perfect example of what can be achieved by a responsible licensee working in partnership with the responsible authorities.

In the event that this licence is granted with the suggested additional conditions, the existing licence will be surrendered.

I would be grateful if you would include this letter with the application so as to inform any interested parties.

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Cook**

Licensing Consultant

*andy@easylicensing.co.uk*

cc.

Gloucestershire Constabulary

Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service

Environmental Health department

Planning department

The Pollution Team

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board

Public Health department

Trading Standards