

## **Appendix G- Landed Festival Response**

I write in response to your complaint to the Council received following the Landed event on Easter Sunday in Whatman Park, Maidstone. This has been treated as a Stage 1 complaint in accordance with the Council's policy regarding such matters, and I am replying to your concerns as the officer responsible for Parks and Leisure Services.

Firstly, on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) I would like to apologise for the inconvenience caused by the Landed Festival. We have had a high volume of complaints and, although we did put noise restrictions in place, we realise that the levels and the times were inappropriate for Easter Sunday.

We aim to hold a variety of events in our parks and public spaces to appeal to all tastes, and unfortunately, although the festival ran very smoothly, the impact on residents on this occasion was unacceptable. Lessons will be learnt from this experience so that we can make sure we strike a good balance between providing entertainment for a wide range of interests and people, and minimising the impact on residents.

Prior to being issued a licence this event was reviewed by the Maidstone Safety Advisory Group which comprises not only of the Maidstone Borough Council Environmental Enforcement and Health and Safety teams but also includes all the emergency services.

The licencing process involves notices being put up in the park for 28 days and an advertisement being placed in the local press, both of these were done by the event organiser. Copies of the application would also go to the Police, Social Services, Environmental Health, Planning Enforcement and Trading Standards. If no responses are received then the licence would be granted, as in this case, or if comments are received then it would go to Licencing Committee for a final decision.

The licence details showing when the event can take place and which sets noise limits in accordance with national guidance from the Health and Safety Executive can be found here (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg195.pdf>) and The Noise Council information can found here([http://www.cieh.org/policy/noise\\_council\\_environmental\\_noise.html](http://www.cieh.org/policy/noise_council_environmental_noise.html))

MBC's Environmental Enforcement officers can be contacted via the Medway Contact Centre who manages MBC's Out of Hours service. When telephoning MBC, callers are invited to redirect their call to this service. MBC Environmental Enforcement officers were present throughout the event, checking noise levels at several locations to ensure that these did not exceed the approved licence conditions. Our team on site received three complaints during the day and visited each address to check noise levels and the event organisers turned down the music when requested.

The impact on wildlife is considered in the planning stages of any event. MBC parks staff were on site to ensure compliance at this event and did not note any animals in distress.

The event was arranged for Easter Sunday to take advantage of the long weekend. However, in hindsight this was not appropriate and we will consider

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carefully in the future staging events on religious holidays, as well as other lessons before any similar event is planned.

This event was a trial for Whatman Park and the event organiser at no time exceeded the terms of his licence. I know that it is no consolation to those who were disturbed but this event was very much enjoyed by the nearly 1,500 people that attended the event.