

Dear Licensing Officer,

I write to ask you to deny a licence as applied for by "Visit Lewes" for the proposed annual event "Gin and Fizz" to use the public space of the Grange Gardens in Lewes.

I write in a 'what's best for all' mode and not in a combatative one.

The Bye-laws, which would have to be temporarily jettisoned to allow it, are posted there in the Grange Gardens, and actually deny in general the purposes for which the application asks – namely –

The sale or consumption of alcohol,

The use of live "music" amplified or otherwise,

The audible use of radios or similar devices playing recorded music,

The carrying-on of a private business for private gain.

The gardens are a haven of wildlife and offer a rare excellently-kept beautiful and tranquil place where all, but especially parents and young children and babies, can relaxedly enjoy a shared safe place free from potential health risks of dogs, irresponsible threatening noisy dangerous behaviour by hooligans, delinquents, and drunks.

To grant such a license would -

-Create traumas to the wildlife there –especially the squirrels and birds which are a great attraction for visitors and locals alike, and provide an opportunity for very young innocent children to safely engage in closer connections with, and to learn to respect, the animals and nature of our planet.

-Deny the residents living nearby and the Garden users their right to their quiet enjoyment of their homes, private gardens, or the Grange Gardens.

-The loud amplified music becomes forced on people whether or not they want it, whether or not it is even to their taste. And no particular music will be music to everyone's ears and taste. For some it will simply be noise pollution, and from 10am to 10pm, not even just an hour or two. And the sound carries far depending on the prevailing wind –I have experienced that amplified music on the school's playing fields could be heard at the Station St / Southover Rd corner.

- Set an unwelcome precedent for the future that will potentially be used to claim further sites or further similar uses of the same site.

- Set an unwelcome example before children from noon to 10pm that could seduce them to think it ok also to consume alcohol or drugs, since the behaviour of adults models the behaviour of children around them.

-For mere commercial reasons encourage the consumption of alcohol by anyone, but especially by the vulnerable and those whose health and faith in society is at a low ebb in these difficult times.

Alcohol, like tobacco, compromises the immune system and gives only a few short hours of forgetting one's problems –those not addicted to either should be discouraged from damaging their health with them rather than being enticed to unnecessarily buy them and later on perhaps become a burden to themselves and the over-stretched healthcare system. There are already many pubs and drink venues in Lewes for those who wish to drink.

-Deny a large part of the public space to any member of the public without a ticket to enter the fenced –off event area.

-Set an unwelcome side-effect that the children think it ok to “do what I want behaviourwise and noisewise, without respect and regard for anyone else”. There is already an intermittent tendency for school youths to hang around the western benches of the gardens in the hours after school and before closing -some groups obviously harmless, but some that seem on the edge.

So –

I can imagine that in these times especially, raising money for the Council is a major issue and a balancing act. My suggestion is that a licence only be granted, not as applied for, but in a hired indoor space –the Town Hall or some other approved indoor venue which excludes access by underage minors, does not harm neighbours, animals or nature.

I have no wish to deny people their choice of any entertainment or pastime – provided it causes no harm and, as the police say, people do their duty to “keep the peace” and do not disturb the peace.

I wish all well, health and happiness.

Yours sincerely,

F. Everett

Lewes resident