

## APPENDIX S

### Response to Representations and the objection to the premises license.

Firstly, I'd like to say that I'm truly sorry that anyone in the Parish is upset at all about the small events we create. We have a huge number of locals from Horseheath and it's surrounding parishes attending, they love and support what we do and to learn of any locals, however few, are upset about something is of course something we want to mitigate and deal with.

In the first instance we can easily diffuse much of this anger and worry which we read in your representations by ensuring you all understand the truth. Most of your representations are driven by fear of expansion, the "3, 3 day events of up to 10,000 people" –whether your concern is the woodland environment, traffic issues, the village being inundated with visitors or crime and disorder, these are mostly around these supposed large events. John Howard and I had several positive long phone calls and e-mails in August and September, if only he had fact checked with me before this scaremongering it would have saved parishioners and myself a great deal of stress and not wasted council time.

### The truth around the main concern of the representations

We have no plans to run 3, 3 day festivals for up to 10,000 people. This has never been a plan. These are not the kind of events my small company wants to run, we are running 2 small public events each year. This fear of expansion to these large events seems to be the driver (understandably so) of the complaints. Not only do we NOT want to do this, we know the limits of the area, the roads etc. It is important everyone understands how closely we work with the council to make sure our events (mainly our largest one) run smoothly. We have Safety Advisory Group meetings with, health and safety, the police, the traffic police, and the fire department

Planned events- Due to the pandemic we rolled over our 2020 events to 2021, namely The Wild Wood Rumpus – our family day and The Wild Wood Disco. We also rolled over two private events, a wedding and a corporate team building day. These events were all that was planned for 2020 and are currently still all that is planned for next year, although as we all know the pandemic may mean some of these events simply cannot take place.

The Wild Wood Disco is our largest event, which we can have 2,500 customers on site. As well as being the largest event we also understand that this is the one with loudest music, therefore this is the event that we need to monitor closely and the event we spend months planning to ensure it's safe. We ran this event in 2019 with 2,400 people (close to full capacity). We have to work closely with the council well in advance of this event, and send in our traffic management plans, event plans, health and safety plans, security plans etc. Last year we put in a large amount of infrastructure, including fencing and security with dogs patrolling the perimeter of the woods to keep it safe, therefore no one is "wandering everywhere", they are very much kept in a small area on the estate. In 2018 and 2019 we gave out a phone number to the parish council for noise complaints. For the 2019 event we had no security issues or trouble, no need for our medical team to act on anything or use the ambulance on site, no traffic issues and no noise complaints. The biggest portion of ticket buyers are 35-55, we have a very warm, respectful, older crowd in the most part and have never had any trouble or medical issues since we first ran the event in 2017.

### Environmental Damage

We are a tiny company with a big conscience and always put our environmental beliefs before profit, whether that is ensuring we don't use single use plastic on site, or carbon off setting car and plane journeys from our artists. We invested a lot building our stages with an eco-builder who uses sourced materials from the ground to create natural stages that fit with the surrounding, he is the head of Greenpeace build at Glastonbury and will only work ethically. No trees have ever been felled for the purpose of our events in Crofts Wood. We work with the woodland trust at our family event, The Wild Wood rumpus, through them and The Fairyland Trust and our bush craft expert from Audley End, children are taught about the trees and the environment and learn a lot through the woodland paths. The estate earning money through the hire of the site to me enables money to go into keeping the land, managing the woodland and keeping local people employed.

We have consultations with the woodland trust arranged about mitigating any disruption to wildlife in the woodland. The woodland is managed by Thurlow Estate using all best practice laid out by government law. Crofts wood represents less than 1% of the woodland that Thurlow Estate manage and is neither SSSI or semi-ancient woodland. They own 1,470 acres of woodland - of

which 590 acres have during the Vestey family's stewardship been designated SSSI's. Some of our money from this years event was planned to go into re-planting schemes and the protection of the ancient woodlands on the site.

By phone call and e-mail I spoke with John Howard about trying to direct some profit to the Millennial Wood next year so the parish could benefit if our small events could run.

### Impact on the villages

With our 2019 event being close to capacity and no negative effects on the surrounding villages being noted we feel the local area can mostly benefit from our events. All hotels and pubs in the surrounding areas are full for the weekends of our events, we know this as we have had to search for rooms for people. They also benefit for Sunday lunch trade the following day. We employ local crew, local food traders, and use local suppliers of sound equipment alcohol and toilets. We do understand some noise may be heard on the day of the wild wood disco; we speak to lots of locals who have offered us their contact details in villages to learn of their experience as well as checking by car in the villages themselves. This year our sound systems were turned off sharply at 11pm so any noise heard outside of that would have come from a private residence, that is also the case for the noise heard at 4am back in 2018 ( we do remember this complaint as when we have them they are taken very seriously). Also, regarding comments around burglary etc. this is a tiny event with a wonderful audience who are well contained with security measures in place laid out by the council which are sufficient for a much larger event and very costly to us. We do not feel this statement to be fair or correct and as mentioned we were 100 below full capacity last year and no negative instances took place. This is not going to be another Secret Garden Party, which was for 35,000, ran for 4 days and had some 24 hour sound systems, there is no risk of that with us running events there.

Regarding the illegal rave rumour. This was something I heard and took incredibly seriously, there has been a huge increase in illegal raves around the country during covid, the unlicensed events, with no medical, no security, no litter picking and no regard for their surroundings are very dangerous for those people that attend such events. The rumour I had heard was concerning woods in the Linton area. I reported this to the officer that is involved in our Wild Wood Disco safety advisory meetings who explored the local area looking for signs of anything happening. I visited the site myself during the day and the

previous evening looking for any signs I could report to the police. I also looked in all the other wooded areas on the Horseheath racecourse site. The rise of illegal raves is directly related to Covid and young people having nothing to do and are run by gangs for profit with no regard for safety. Our activity in the woodland in the summer may well have helped ensure nothing did happen there. This is a time to be very vigilant of these things and hopefully when Covid has gone the spectre of these events will diminish. Thurlow estate has, like any UK landowner, historically suffered from unwanted activity on the land such as hare coursing and theft and this is notably reduced when we are regularly on site. We all need to be alert and looking out for such problems rather than blaming each other.

2020 was going to be the first year we had the capability to give very cheap tickets to villagers which is what we are frequently contacted about from Horseheath, Bartow and Linton, we hope we can start this up in 2021. We have many local people come that are incredibly grateful to have these events on the doorstep and have come from the start, they really love these events and have a sense of ownership of them as their local events and we know any of them very well now. We also hope the cheaper tickets will open up the possibility for more locals to come and experience what we are doing, whether families or those that want to come to our woodland party.

### Breaking our Licensing Conditions

There were 3 days of licensable activity on the site this year as per our premises license. If we had wanted to run another day of licensable activity with the events being for under 499 people, we would have applied for a temporary event notice or TENS to do so.

I forgot and profusely apologised to e-mail Horseheath Parish council before the August event. John Howard and I went over this, I was working very hard putting an event on at such short notice and was hugely focused on the Covid regulations, he did accept my apology and I have assured him that this will never happen again. This was a mistake which I am very sorry about. We have notified the parish council about everything else.

We had all the relevant paperwork on site as we had been asked to hold it there rather than send to the police or the council, we could have made this available to the parish council if they had asked and this is being shared with you now. Are events are planned meticulously.

## Covid regulations

On a personal note I am someone who has received a transplant, had half a lung removed and no spleen, I shielded for over 3 months earlier this year and am extremely high risk. We went above and beyond what would be expected to create a safe and risk free environment at our event this year in line with all the relevant government guidelines at the time. Our crowd were very respectful and just happy to be out somewhere they love in the open air. We created an environment far safer than a supermarket, beach, café, pub. We used ticket sellers ticket agents to track and trace and our crowd were told not to go into the villages/ local shops.

People had to book in a group to sit on a table of up to 6 people. Each table had a sprayed white line around where people could get up and dance but must stay within the lines. We had a one way system routed through the woods. We had large number of toilets for the numbers which were cleaned hourly. We had hand washing and hand sanitising points all through the wood. We had to use disposable cups but made sure these were bio-degradable. We had security working through the night to ensure social distancing, safety and for the very few that were camping (not more than 20) to ensure they stayed within their tents at night.

The events we ran could still be run now under government covid regulations. We would not choose to do so as I am constantly checking figures and the R number in our area. On the 12<sup>th</sup> September the R rate in the area was 0.7. To compare the event to cancelled events at Duxford and football matches without bookable seated areas, huge amounts of space to socially distance and the difficulty of toilets, squeeze points et is not a useful comparism. We held a safe event. All of our Covid Documents are to be forwarded by the council for you to read in detail if you wish.

The route into the farm we used on 1 night of the 21<sup>st</sup> September was used by 24 cars (parked at the event) and 9 taxis for an evening which had just 90 people on site so we need to keep into perspective the size and effect of these events. We understand through the chair of the parish council the long standing bad feeling surrounding this route and bridge with the parish (if he speaks for everyone) and the landowners and we were unaware of this. Please don't pass this bad feeling onto us. This was used 1 time only.

## Actions of the Chair of the Parish Council

We note the trespassing onto private property, the libel and slander published by poster, e-mail, local magazine against Wild Wood Events. We have sought legal consultation on the latter, but our aim is to build a strong relationship with the villagers as I felt I was doing with John by phone and e-mail – we do not wish to inflame the situation he has created. Therefore, at this time decide to take no further action against him. We hope that there is an understanding that inflammatory lies spread to the villagers will damage this tiny business and is not acting as a parish councillor should act. As a representative of the parish the truth should have sought before any materials were published. We also ask why there is still and has never been an agenda published for the 14<sup>th</sup> September meeting on the website and on the village noticeboard (it has been opened to include the poster “Wildlife or Disco”). There are still no minutes included. How can people air their comments regarding an issue without an agenda being known?

From 2018 we have contacted Horseheath Parish Council at this address [horseheathpc@gmail.com](mailto:horseheathpc@gmail.com)

This e-mail from the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018

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I am the organiser of The Wild Wood Rumpus and The Wild Wood Disco that take place in the woodland on Horseheath Racecourse on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> June. I ran 1 of these events last year and we received no complaints from Horseheath, but we just wanted to inform everyone in the parish it was running again and give you my contact details if you have any concerns. The first event has an end time of 9.30pm and the second event has an end time of 2am we will of course be complying with noise regulations. We expect a maximum of 1,800 including staff at the events.

Please do contact me if you have any concerns,

All the best,

Vicky Fenton  
07545629579

## A little bit more about our company ethos

We are a tiny company, running events at Thurlowe Estate, at The Cambridge Union and private events mostly at people's houses.

We have core principles that guide us in everything we do.

1. **Quality.** To create events which bring extraordinary experiences and lifelong memories. We want our audience to experience something that surprises whether that be an art installation at The Wild Wood Disco, a debate that enlightens at The Sunday Papers Live, or education through fun at The Wild Wood Rumpus. We want to offer entertainment, culture and education.
2. **Care.** We care about every detail at our events and pour a lot of love and time into them. We also care about our staff and ensure we are inclusive in our employment. We try and employ as local as possible (all of our staff come from within a 25 mile radius, our suppliers (mostly) within a 30 mile radius). We want to open job opportunities to young people and have worked with Anglia Ruskin to enable artists, photographers and journalists to have a chance to gain experience on site and have their work shown or published.
3. **Sustainability.** The environment matters to us a lot. We put sustainability before profit and ensure we don't use single use plastic, we offset carbon footprints, we recycle, we encourage respect and understanding of the environment at our events and encourage attendees to leave no trace. We hope to start a tree planting scheme as part of 2021 if events can go ahead as we had planned if our big event could have gone ahead this year.
4. **Honesty and Integrity.** We are transparent with our customers in every way and have built a loyal following based on trust. When working as a team we consider ourselves a family with open communication. The way we communicate with our customers and the events we produce mean we have 1,000 people holding onto their ticket for 2020 for 2021 for The Wild Wood Disco as they wanted to help our business to carry on through the pandemic.

This year we applied for an arts council application for The Wild Wood Rumpus. At the beginning of the pandemic we were told we had a strong

application being considered but that for 2020 all grants were now, not to go ahead. Our aim here was to open up the site for 1 or 2 days ahead of the event day (not licensable activity) to local school children, particularly children from low socio-economic backgrounds. These are children that wouldn't benefit from being taken to an event like this, to learn about woodlands, the environment and play outside. We very much hope this is something we can do in the future.