

STOP PRESS

Application for a Premises Licence in respect of Foots Cray Meadows REFUSED

The North Cray Residents Association is delighted to confirm that at the Public Hearing held on Wednesday 26 October 2011 the Licensing Sub-Committee 'refused' Bexley's Parks & Open Spaces Department's Application for a Premises Licence to hold Regulated Entertainment on Foots Cray Meadows.

The Association's arguments against the Licence in its present terms (which would have permitted events attended by up to 3,000 people) were ably and effectively presented by Councillor Don Massey, supported by our chairman, David Cook, with further strong representations being made by the dozen or so other local residents who attended the meeting to voice their concerns. Our chairman took care to point out that our Association did not oppose the granting of a licence in principle as it did not want to jeopardise small pastoral events such as those arranged by the Friends of Foots Cray Meadows. However, the Application, in the form submitted, would allow a series of major commercial events and the Association made its views clear that it strongly opposed the granting of a licence that would allow high impact events that could cause damage to, or change the nature of, the Meadows and its wildlife or would create significant inconvenience and distress to local residents – especially as Bexley already had at least two other venues more suited to holding such events.

The Licensing Sub-Committee heard objections stemming from concerns regarding traffic levels, parking, noise pollution, crime and the impact on the environment and wildlife. Moreover, documentation showed that it had received over 30 letters of objection from local residents and interested bodies and associations. The Committee shared those concerns.

The two key factors in its decision to refuse the Application were:

1. The Committee did not consider that the applicant had fully considered the impact of the proposals on the licensing objectives, and
2. The Committee was not satisfied that the applicant had clarified its arrangements for the parking of up to 750 vehicles at Cleeve Park School or the availability of access to the Meadows from the School. In fact, it was evident that Parks & Open Spaces had no proper agreement with Cleeve Park School.

The applicant (Parks & Open Spaces) has a right to appeal against this decision but it is hoped that the strength of local residents' opinions on this issue will be respected.

Jean Gammons
Hon. Secretary
28 October 2011