

Leeds Music Festival

After some years at Temple Newsom , each time with considerable damage and nuisance to local residents , the decision was reached in early Summer 2003 that the festival should be transferred to Bramham Park . A combination of Lane Fox owners [who said they needed the money] , producers [who had a legal contract to continue in Leeds , and seemed happy to get away from the controversies caused by previous concerts at Temple Newsom] , and Leeds councillors [who wanted to avoid breaking contract , retain the concert for Leeds , and get into the good books of Labour voters nearer the town centre -- Wetherby area returns Conservatives !] ensured that Bramham would be the venue, lucky to be chosen for 2003 -- and for the future.

Read on ...

for Cr. Paul Topping to the Parish Council

clr *Machin*

Bramham Park Rave

Tues evening 18th Feb met Mrs Lane-Fox, Claudia Landmead (new resident agent) + Melvin Benn (Mean Fiddler Group- promoter of Leeds Festival previously held at Temple Newsam); -apologies from Nicholas L-F& JDE.

They have submitted an application to stage the festival at B'hm Pk, as an alternative to Temple Newsam, & called these meetings to inform B'hm & Thorner PCs before it became common knowledge.

I stressed that I could not speak for the PC, but after the fiasco of the Rave last year I had personal reservations, & would expect BPC & village to be extremely apprehensive.

Main points of their application:

- -3 day event, Fri-Sun, late August during School hols & away from all exam dates,
- -venue is south of the house, between gardens & pleasure grounds
- -satisfactory sound tests !?
- -all events finish before midnight each day,
- -access to site is from A64 via South Approach, but some coach movts thro Thorner,
- -they are happy that they can secure the site,
- -despite press reports last year, stats show no increase in crime at Temple Newsam,
- -non-flammable bogs to be installed this time,
- -B Park is convinced that they have learned from previous fiasco,
- -& M Benn has the experience of successfully running these events,

I said that the item would be discussed at BPC on 5th March:
-further meeting to discuss problems arising (provisionally 10th March).

Personal view:

I think the Park is still on a steep learning curve in running this type of event, & is over-optimistic in trying to secure the A64 & Mangrill Lane fringes, (will mean temp suspension of FP13, Biggin to Fox & Grapes) but, with proposed site position & access, I don't think we have much to worry about, the festival will not cause us too much trouble or intrusion.

PRT/ 19 Feb 03

PS att: B'hm Pk press release

PSS.-told Chris Bond, Yorks Post, that the village was naturally apprehensive, but BPC would canvas opinion & discuss the matter at its next meeting, and would probably have further discussions with Bhm.Pk. Unable to comment further at this stage.

*in the village!
Chapelton Council*

*Can I quote you
later?*

01937 842559

9 , Prospect Bank ,
Bramham ,
Wetherby ,
West Yorkshire.
LS 23 6 RS.
22 February 2003.

Mr. & Mrs. N. Lane Fox ,
Bramham Park.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Lane Fox ,

I write in the hope that this will be one of many letters you will receive during the coming weeks , hoping you will reconsider your welcoming of the Leeds Festival to this area. Needless to say , the good fortune you have in being lifetime tenants of a famous estate must bring with it many burdens , among them the need to raise sufficient money to maintain its facilities ; one can empathise with that . However , English landowners have always stressed their responsibilities beyond their own gates to the local communities and the people in them. I would ask you to consider the following in this respect.

Around the perimeter of The Park lie a number of parishes , which are all at risk of being adversely affected by the coming of an event of this nature. They include, near at hand , Aberford , Barwick , Thorner , Wothersome , Bardsey , Clifford and Bramham , not to mention the ones only slightly further away --- Boston Spa , Thorp Arch , Collingham and so on. In fact , though many people are currently commiserating with Bramham , it would appear that other villages may be more at risk.

And , as previous events of this kind have developed at Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam , ' risk 'is not too strong a word. The fact that there has emerged an imperative to move this event on speaks volumes. Whatever the organisers say [and they are bound to gloss over anything to their detriment] , these events have always included a sizeable proportion of ruffians who care nothing for their surroundings or the people who live there. The majority may mean well , when sober and not under the influence of ' rock' or hard rock , but can you really believe that , when the official bands sign off at midnight , things will go quietly to sleep ?

Thousands of young people , hyped up by hours of excitement and worse, retiring to their tents with mugs of cocoa ! Being realistic , the thought of what a crowd of St James ' Park proportions [the official entrants] , plus probably as many again ingenious and experienced enough to get in around the huge Park perimeter, will do after midnight on a balmy Summer 's night doesn 't bear thinking about. I shouldn 't want to be held responsible for every break - in , every act of robbery or violence , each illegal happening which occurs over three days , as a result of allowing this event. Unfortunately , we all being human, that is the line likely to be taken by huge numbers of local residents, just as all the householders around Temple Newsam blame Leeds Council for last year's fiasco. Short - term gain would hardly seem worth putting one 's good name at risk.

We can all sympathise with your natural desire to maximise your facilities to increase your wealth ; we all do that up to a point . However , that point should not include ensuring the name ' Bramham ' is associated with the appalling behaviour usually accompanying such an event . Those of us who have worked all our lives to build our homes from scratch would not want to see their worth , or our village and district , devalued because its name has become linked with this kind of concert. Frankly , if I lived elsewhere , but wanted to move to this area , I should certainly avoid Bramham if it was known as the home of a gigantic annual pop festival. This part of the country ' s reputation has grown in recent years as a delightful and prosperous place to live and work ; many of us want to retain that.

Incidentally , if you continue to welcome events of this nature , against all the advice you will doubtless receive from local people , one would hope you would consider sharing your profits with communities found to have been inconvenienced or damaged in any way by the events ' presence.

The mention of money , the need for which you have frankly given as the reason for your hosting this event , brings to mind the question of whether , without profit , at any other time , you would welcome the people who will descend on us . I suspect you would have the police around pretty smartly to show them off the premises. Which means , of course , that you would share our concerns and understand what many of us fear.

No doubt you will take the greatest care in protecting The Park property during the three days concerned . Presumably the rest of us can be assured that you will be in residence , not conveniently elsewhere , ready to help with any problems which arise from your imposition of your visitors on us , in respect of unlawful noise nuisance ; or infantile , aggressive or illegal behaviour around the villages. The rather feeble excuse that some care to use on these occasions , that the event is being run by an intermediary and therefore nothing to do with the estate owners , will simply not wash. It 's clearly your property and your choice to have the event here .

Unfortunately , your released statement that the police have prosecuted last year 's criminals has come at a bad time , just when they have been let off lightly because the worst perpetrators couldn 't be found [according to the police] ! Though you write in glowing terms about previous participants , the facts speak for themselves . Even a small minority , in a crowd so large , amounts to a great many people --- and the owners and neighbours of Temple Newsam don 't want them again.

It 's surprising that you do . However, like so many others of your neighbours in the area , I would hope that you can resolve your financial problems by developing the Park in many other ways , rather than this . We would all , I ' m sure , wish you great success and support in doing so.

Very best wishes ,



BRAMHAM

D Machin Esq
9 Prospect Bank
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LS23 6RS

Our Ref: CL/rsc

14 March 2003

Dear Mr Machin

Bramham Park
Leeds Festival - Mean Fiddler

Thank you for your letter of 22nd February regarding the possibility of holding the Leeds Festival at Bramham Park.

1. I note your comment that you feel the event would affect a number of the local Parishes.
2. I hope that, by having the event away from residential areas – unlike Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam where the populations are much closer – and by ensuring the site is fenced, disturbance will not be caused to the surrounding area.
3. We have been informed by the Police Authority that the incidence of reported crime did not increase in the area surrounding Temple Newsam during the event.
4. I note your comments on associating a concert such as this with Bramham.
5. Mean Fiddler have proposed giving a generous donation to the local community. This was discussed with Paul Topping when he came to Bramham.
6. I have publicly stated that the only reason I am holding the event is in order to obtain income from the event in order to put into the Estate and repair and maintain the features and structures of this unique 17th Century landscape.

7. I can confirm that I will be staying at Bramham and fully involved with the running of the event.

8. We are working very closely with the Police and, together, we are addressing their concerns. I will not proceed with the event without their full backing.

Yours sincerely

PP Claudia Longmead.

Nick Lane Fox



The Leeds Festival has the Opportunity of a New Home at Bramham Park, Leeds

The owners of Bramham Park, Leeds, announced today that, following negotiations with Mean Fiddler Music Group, they are pleased to be a potential home for the Leeds Festival.

MFMG are currently in the final year of a 5-year arrangement with Leeds City Council for the Festival to be staged on their land. However, significant objections from a group of residents, opposed to the usage of public space, in Leeds, has lead MFMG to secure an alternative site for this year's and future years' Festivals.

Nick Lane Fox, owner of Bramham Park said

"We are very pleased that future Leeds Festivals may take place here. We have looked into the problems, which the Festival has encountered in previous years and had our own people at Temple Newsam last year, to see for ourselves what it was like. Apart from the small amount of mindless violence at the end of the Festival, the crowd were very, very friendly and helpful. They only wanted to enjoy the music."

"The firm action taken by the Police in prosecuting the few perpetrators of last year's disorder and the plan to use new, purpose-built, non-flammable toilets, for the Leeds Festival, have given me great confidence that the event can take place here, without detriment to us or our neighbours. In fact, the positive reports of the nature of the majority of the Leeds Festival crowd, which I have had, make me very keen to welcome them here."

"In the past the Estate has relied on income from farming to maintain the gardens, parkland and buildings, but in the current farming depression that simply is not possible and we have had to look elsewhere."

"As our historic structures get older, they require ever more drastic restoration: one of the major ponds is leaking badly and needs urgent repairs. The Estate has yet to finalise terms with Mean Fiddler, but the payment involved will enable us to continue our restoration of this unique C18th landscape (listed Grade I by English Heritage). The change in our farming to accommodate the Leeds Festival will also return some 200 acres of parkland to its original state."

Negotiations for the Festival to take place at Bramham Park have been conducted by Johnnie Dickinson of Synario Events & Venues. Bramham Park also plays host to the Bramham International Horse Trials in June each year.

BRAMHAM PARK

Scale 1:5000

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