

Reading Festival 2017



licence capacity – 94,999



The Councils role

- Issue of the Licence and conditions.
- Liaising with partners.
- Assessing and supporting new approaches to public safety and protection.
- Managing the public highways to ensure safe use and maintaining optimal traffic flows.
- Ensuring the safety of on site private water supplies.
- Monitoring and working with Festival Republic to improve air quality
- Working with Festival Republic to manage noise outbreak from the site and minimise the impact on residents.

- Ensuring food safety on site by inspecting all traders and caterers and delivering an award scheme to encourage higher standards.
- Monitoring health and safety of activities on site during the build and staging of the festival.
- Tackling illicit trading such as underage alcohol sales, touting and fake merchandise.
- Monitoring off site activities linked to the festival which have an impact on public safety or service.
- As a landowner, managing sites used by the festival and ensuring that they are returned to their pre-festival condition.

- Providing contract services such as waste management.
- Providing an Emergency Planning presence to assist in the management of any major issues such as flooding.
- Managing post festival debriefs and collating learning points and issues to address for the next festival.
- Manage a hotline for residents to call during the event which enables officers to investigate concerns and action them as appropriate.

Complaints

- 55 complaints received, this is a small increase from 2016.
- 23 related to noise.
- 4 complaints were received about Air Quality concerns.
- A variety of other complaints were made, which included illegal mooring on Thameside Promenade, noise from an advertising plane, litter, parking, tickets, pricing and drugs.



Noise related complaints – mostly received on Friday and related to heavy bass associated with the headliner. Caversham and Tilehurst were most affected. Officers are sent out to the areas from which complaints are received and communicate with the onsite team to make adjustments to frequencies and the volume on particular stages.

Additional complaints came from the onsite bars and traders who independently played music after the main acts had finished. This issue has been addressed at the debrief and stricter controls will be put in place to manage this sort of noise.

The Air Quality matters relate to onsite campsite fires. These are permitted and seasoned wood is available for festival goers to buy. The onsite and offsite monitoring demonstrates a peak in poorer air quality during the festival. As part of the debrief process the issue of campsite fires has been raised and Festival Republic have undertaken to investigate alternative smokeless fuels.

Other issues – where possible, issues were dealt with during the festival. Illegal mooring, 11 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued over the course of the weekend. Unfortunately, the issue of FPNs does not force the boat owner to move on.

Drugs and safeguarding. Partners reviewed these issues as part of the debrief and agreed more could be done. Festival Republic undertook to draft a new Safeguarding document which is currently being reviewed. Improvements suggested include:

- A new Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- Working with local young people, the University and reviewing new research
- Implementing 'Safe Tents' which will be staffed by drugs and mental health workers
- Promoting safe messaging, signposting to on site support, improved messaging pre-festival, working with partners to tie in messaging campaigns across the customer journey.
- Potential back of house drugs testing to provide alerts
- Strengthening gate policies, including eviction options
- Improve ID checking

General

- Test purchasing was carried out on all onsite bars and 12 offsite traders. All passed.
- A multi agency team (including Licensing, Trading Standards and the Police) carry out proactive and reactive monitoring around the festival site. 12 warnings were issued to touts, 4 Fixed Penalty Notices, 8 illegal street traders received warnings .
- The increased threats around large public gatherings were assessed and mitigations were put in place. These will be assessed with partners annually.



Multi agency team – Where warnings were given to illegal street traders, they moved on and the team did not have to deal with them again. The team proved successful in disrupting touting activity.

Conclusion

- Learning points from each year are captured and actioned.
- Residents concerns are reviewed and direct action is either taken during the festival or reviewed as part of the debrief process.
- Festival Republic have taken the option to increase the licence capacity, so for 2018, the licence capacity will be 99,999.