

The Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Branch
Tourism Division
3rd Floor
2-4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1Y 5DH

22nd December 2004

Dear Sirs

Response to consultation on fee levels under the Licensing Act 2003

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on fee levels to be established under the Licensing Act 2003. CAMRA is a consumer group representing 75,000 beer drinkers and pub goers.

1.0 Cost of new licences and variations

- 1.1 The new fee levels will result in a large number of community public houses and clubs paying more than they currently do. The existing cost of a three-year public house On Licence or a variation is only £10. Under the new fee levels the minimum cost for a new licence or a variation will be a minimum of £80, plus an annual charge of at least £40 a year.
- 1.2 Those public houses that currently pay for a separate Public Entertainment Licence are likely to be significantly better off under the new fee levels. In many areas the current cost of a Public Entertainments Licence is unreasonably high and impacts on the viability of public houses and acts to deter public houses from providing entertainment.
- 1.3 We note that 98% of all new applications are currently successful and would hope this percentage would not worsen under the new Licensing system.

2.0 Fees for large temporary events

- 2.1 We express concern at the proposed fees for large temporary events, as they will threaten the future of many events, which are important to Britain's heritage and cultural life.
- 2.2 We call upon the Government only to levy an additional charge for temporary events with more than 9,999 persons attending at any one time.

- 2.3 The current proposals would adversely affect CAMRA's annual Peterborough beer festival, which currently has a maximum attendance at any one time of between 6,000 and 8,000 persons.
- 2.4 The current licensing costs for Peterborough beer festival are £315 for a Public Entertainment Licence and £10 for an Occasional Licence. An increase of these fees to £5,000 is a huge increase and would represent between 10% and 15% of the annual surplus made by the beer festival in previous years. The beer festival is run on a not for profit basis and any surplus is used for CAMRA's campaigning activities.
- 2.5 The likely impact of the current proposals is that the Peterborough beer festival would have to limit attendance to less than 6,000 persons at any time. This would result in no additional fee income for the local authority and would undermine the beer festival's viability; its service to the community and benefits to the local business community.
- 2.6 CAMRA's beer festivals are important in promoting the beers of local brewers; promoting local tourism and in promoting Britain's national drink of beer. They offer a unique opportunity for consumers to sample products, usually from small local producers, which are otherwise difficult to find in pubs. They also offer a unique showcase for the products of small brewers.

Please contact us if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Mail
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