

Noise nuisance at The Blue Bell Public House, Llandovery

I have lived with my three boys in Llandovery for nine years. Although the house is on the main street it has never been a particularly noisy place. We are situated between two pubs, The Whitehall and The Blue Bell. Until two years ago the pubs have not been a nuisance at all with nothing to complain about. The previous licensee of The Blue Bell had live music occasionally and we would sometimes go along. It was inside the pub, usually acoustic and a nice evening out.

In October 2020 a new licensee took over The Blue Bell. It was repainted, serving food, had quiz nights and was showing the rugby which all looked promising and perfect for a local pub in it's location. The following Spring, April 2021 extensive work started in the beer garden with the construction of an outdoor stage. There was no consultation with neighbouring properties.

On Sunday 13 June which was a lovely sunny day, we were in our back garden at 1 o'clock when very loud music started coming from the Beer Garden of the Blue Bell. We couldn't believe how loud it was. The music went on all afternoon and into the evening. It was an open mic event so the music was not of a professional standard and some of it was really quite bad. It was too loud for us to stay outside in the garden and we had to go in and close the windows and back door even though it was warm.

That was the start of the noise nuisance from The Blue Bell. It has been upsetting for our family and has had a big effect on our lives. The loud music is a regular occurrence, often all weekend, Friday night to Sunday night and often on consecutive weekends. The frequency of events can be seen on the Facebook page of the pub. Some of these events have been advertised as 'Festivals' with a number of events on a single weekend. For example, Hallowe'en 2021 Friday night disco from 8.30; Saturday live band from 8.30pm and Sunday Karaoke and Open Mic from 2pm.

I sometimes work on a Sunday and I have had to sleep on the settee in the living room on a Saturday night because the noise in the street is so loud from people coming back and fore to the pub. The pub has a late license and loud, drunk people are often outside our house at 2 or 3 in the morning. I am a single mother living on my own with three children and I have found it intimidating and lost a lot of sleep.

The music is so loud that it can be heard in every room in the back portion of our house which includes the kitchen, bathroom and two of my sons' bedrooms. On the weekend the music often goes on after my children go to bed which means they have to have their windows closed and wear headphones to go to sleep.

There have been many occasions when we have had to leave our garden and go inside because the music was so loud. Visiting friends and family have been shocked when it starts up. It has got to the point where we go away when The Blue Bell is having a live event. The Sheep Festival is coming up this weekend in Llandovery and the Blue Bell have a weekend of live events. On Friday there is an evening of Stand Up comedy starting at 8pm and on Saturday the Black Sheep Music Festival will start at 2pm and go on until late. We will be able to hear every minute of all of this and so we are going to stay with friends for the weekend.

There is often bad language which we can hear in our house and garden e.g. a band playing on 16 November 2021 were advertised as 'DO NOT TURN UP IF YOU ARE LIKELY TO BE OFFENDED! BECAUSE YOU WILL!' (sic) unfortunately we do not have the option to not turn up because every offensive comment is broadcast into our home.

On 25 June the Blue Bell held an event to celebrate Pride month. A few days before we received a letter through the door advising us that there would be explicit language and sexual references on the outdoor stage of the Blue Bell between 8pm and 11pm and as our property is within earshot of the Blue Bell they wanted to warn us. That evening in my garden I heard the MC of the show shout 'Let's annoy the neighbours, if we don't get a complaint by the end of the night I haven't done my job. So make loads of noise' I found this remark to be deliberately antagonistic and upsetting. I also heard a lot of swearing, with the F and C words used liberally. My friend's 10 year old son was walking through our back garden from their car when a joke was made about anal incest in graphic detail. To avoid our children hearing that sort of material we had to stay inside the house for the rest of that evening with our friends with the doors and windows closed.

I feel that the license the Blue Bell currently holds is unsuitable for a public house in its location in a residential terrace in a small town. Besides this the licensee regularly opens the premises past the licensed hours and the music and nuisance from the people in the beer garden and the street goes on well past midnight most nights that the pub is open. As well as the noise nuisance itself it has been stressful making complaints and noise recordings in order to try and have an end to this situation.