

Hull Close  
London SE16 6BY

5 June 2009

Southwark Council  
Licensing Unit,  
Chaplin Centre,  
Thurlow Street,  
London SE17 2DG

Dear Sir

**Review of Premises Licence for Bacons College, Timber Pond Road, SE16 on June 29, 2009 -  
Licence Number: 829714**

As an interested party living in the vicinity of Bacons College, I would like to provide additional information to be considered by the Licensing Committee in the review of License number 829714.

In summary, I propose that:

- **The Bacons College building is not of suitable soundproof construction to enable the College to meet the condition of having "no music played in the licensed premises is audible at or within the site boundary"**. Despite efforts to resolve this detailed below and in attached documentation, amplified music and amplified speaking is still audible way beyond the site boundary into Hull Close and Keel Close, and I have heard sound from the College over in Gunwhale Close near to Surrey Water in the last few weeks.
- **The calibre of the management staff, procedures and proactive preparation for events at Bacons College are not sufficiently robust to ensure that the conditions of the license are adhered to.** Despite efforts to resolve this detailed below and in attached documentation, issues with parking, public disturbance, public safety and general control of the activities have not significantly improved, and the lives of residents in the vicinity continue to be severely impacted.

I have lived at 9 Hull Close since November 1997 and the environmental impact of events being run at Bacons College has been present over all those years. There were many occasions in previous years when I rang Southwark Council Noise Team who attended the premises, asked the event organizers to contain the noise, and close the windows to prevent it travelling. I know that I am not the only resident who has taken these actions, both recently and over the years. I am delighted to support the formal review request from my neighbour, Mr. Tumkan, and I will be present at the hearing to provide further details in person.

As residents, we have tried to work with the College to resolve these issues. For example, after a particularly noisy and disturbing Easter weekend in April, many complaints were made to the College and my neighbour from 14 Timber Pond Road managed to talk on the phone to David Cooke, Operations Manager at the College, who invited her and other interested parties in for a face to face meeting to discuss the issues. Since it was short notice, I was the only other person available to attend. After the meeting, we typed out comprehensive notes as an accurate factual record of what was discussed, a copy of which is enclosed. These notes were emailed to Mr. Cooke afterwards so that he had an opportunity to correct any misrepresentation, which he did not.

Since there had been many other complaints in the past, and similar meetings with other residents in the area, Mr. Cooke did not seem particularly surprised by the issues we were raising and acknowledged that he already knew of these problems. He has also continually assured us that, if there are any problems, we are welcome to ring the College. This strategy has not proved effective in curtailing the problems in the past and it is one which, in my opinion, indicates that the College management style is that of waiting for a problem to impact the residents and for them to complain about it, rather than pro-actively managing the activities within the terms of the license in the first place.

Following that meeting, I have been corresponding with Mr. Cooke by email (a copy of the emails between us is also enclosed) and had another discussion with him by phone, trying to resolve one of the issues in particular: that of disturbance from amplified sounds from religious groups using the college on a Sunday.

After many weeks and discussions, the issue is still not resolved, even though Mr. Cooke assured me on the phone that he had moved the groups into different parts of the college building where the sound would not leak beyond their boundaries.

The issue of noise on Sundays from religious groups is just one of many – and one would have assumed was a simpler one to resolve given that these are simply worship gatherings and not full-blown entertainment events with alcohol being sold. Those events are another subject altogether, with noise and disturbance continuing well beyond the license limit of 1.30am (which Mr. Cooke told us in the meeting was 1am with everyone away from the premises by 1.15am)

The notes of the meeting are self-explanatory and detail much more about the continual and continuing noise, parking and behavioral issues associated with the activities at the College. These constitute a serious public safety and public nuisance issue in what is otherwise a very peaceful and tranquil residential area.

I implore the Licensing Committee to consider the impacts of the current Bacons College license very seriously and to restrict the terms accordingly to avoid future public safety and public disturbance issues.

Yours faithfully,



Rhian Pamphilon (Mrs).



**Notes from a meeting on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2009 between:**

- **David Cooke, Operations Manager, Bacons College**
- **Rhian Pamphilon (Resident, 9 Hull Close)**
- **Delia (Resident, 14 Timber Pond Road)**

**Purpose of the meeting**

Over a period of time, there has been increasing activity during evenings and weekends at Bacons College. Following a number of complaints over the Easter period, an invitation from Bacons College had been extended to local residents to meet at short notice to discuss the issues.

These notes serve to outline the facts of the discussion at the meeting and the main actions agreed.

**1. David Cooke's responsibilities at Bacons College**

- Sports Centre
- Bar
- Function facilities

(e.g he is not responsible for any academic operations or running of the school / college).

**2. Objectives of Bacons College**

As well as running an academic institution, Bacons College also aim to make their facilities available for the benefit of the community and have set up limited companies and registered charity status to do this and to make the facilities profitable for future investment and the benefit of the community.

**3. Impact of community activities in the area and resident communications**

David Cooke was already aware that there were environmental issues with the college activities and outlined his perception of the main ones as:

- Noise
- Parking

He advised that he had already had a meeting with two other local residents to discuss these. He did not specify when that discussion took place. Rhian and Delia agreed that noise and parking were the main areas of concern for discussion at this meeting.

Rhian and Delia then queried why, despite being aware of the environmental impacts of their activities, the College had not consulted or involved the community more widely regarding plans and actions to resolve these issues.

David Cooke agreed that Bacons College had not communicated enough with local residents and that he would consider this for the future. He suggested that the residents could form a committee with himself as a member. Rhian and Delia did not dismiss this but suggested that the majority of the issues had been raised repeatedly over many years and could be addressed simply by Bacons College paying attention to the stipulations of their licenses, rather than place additional burden on local residents to monitor their activities.

However, Rhian and Delia suggested that Bacons College could publish a regular newsletter to local residents and that the College could organise a community meeting in the next few months in order to diffuse current frustration with the environmental impact of the current and perceived future activities at the College.

David Cooke stated that the College does not market its facilities and that business comes via word of mouth.

#### 4. Bacons College licences

- **Entertainment licence** – enables Bacons College to hold events with up to 300 invited guests. David Cooke stated that the entertainments licence stipulates that any noise from any event should not extend beyond the boundary of Bacons College premises and that, if local residents do hear it, then the music / volume needs to be turned down. However, there is no agreed procedure stipulated and published for notifying the College that the noise from events has exceeded their boundaries. Rhian and Delia commented that, in their experience, even if Bacons College staff on site are notified directly by phone or in person that there is a problem, action is not necessarily taken to resolve the issue.
- **Bar licence** – there is a bar facility within the building and the bar licence allows Bacons College to contract to keep the bar open up until 1am for functions (though many functions have bars which finish earlier). This is not a special licence application. Rhian and Delia commented that they had heard that the College was applying for a 2am bar license. David Cooke denied that this was the case.

#### 5. Parking Issues

David agreed that parking issues had been bad recently but this had been caused largely by the building works for Mellish Fields, which had taken up space at the side of the Bacons College site which would normally have been available for parking on site. The site has just been cleared and made available for parking again, and lighting for that area reinstated.



Points noted regarding parking:

- Parking on site for events should now be sufficient for parking cars up to the entertainment licence stipulation of 300 invited guests for the main hall. David Cooke did not stipulate that the car parking would be sufficient if additional events and sporting activities were taking place simultaneously.
- With the opening of new sports facilities at Mellish Fields, David Cooke advised that the impact of the additional associated parking for people using those sports facilities on the overall situation is yet to be experienced and monitored by Bacons College.
- Regarding events, the person contracting with the college for the use of the facilities at any time of the day, is expected to inform their invited guests that parking is on site and not on the road (or pavement). The contracted person is also expected to take action on any contravention by their guests of their contractual obligations.
- David Cooke stated that it is the responsibility of the person contracting for the use of the facilities to monitor their guests parking and to make them aware of the need to park on site. Bacons College staff could raise these issues with the person contracted, but did not have jurisdiction over parking on the roads surrounding the College, which was an issue for Southwark Council / Metropolitan Police.

Rhian and Delia stated that:

- Parking has indeed been a problem in the roads surrounding Bacons College during their contracted events, to the extent that it is a health and safety issue for car drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, with cars parked right up to and around junctions and long stretches of pavement parking.
- A number of minor car accidents have been observed due to reduced visibility created by undisciplined parking in the roads surrounding Bacons College during their contracted events, particularly at the junction of Hull Close and Timber Pond Road. Frequently during these contracted events, pedestrians have to manoeuvre around cars parked on the pavement.

London Marathon parking in the Bacons College playground:

This has been offered as a service to local residents who may need to park their cars in a place where they can get the cars out.

This is a one-off annual activity, but should be managed carefully by Bacons College to avoid impact on nearby residents. In particular, Delia stated that overnight security personnel were in 2008 parked in vans with diesel engines running all night, and were clearly not being monitored by Bacons College staff in terms of their noise impact on people living nearby.

## 6. Noise issues

Rhian and Delia stated that, having both lived in the area for many years and, having spoken with a number of residents within the area, issues with activities at Bacons College include:

- Loud amplified music which can be heard way beyond Bacons College boundaries, even into nearby residents' living rooms and bedrooms with windows closed.
- Car horns being sounded in the street, both from taxi firms picking people up from events and event attendees themselves leaving in their cars and attracting the attention of their friends with the car horn. Loud car stereos.
- People shouting, singing, arguing, speaking loudly on their mobile phone in the road while leaving the premises.
- Fireworks being let off in the road and in the park / woodlands behind.
- Unsupervised children from events (daytime and evening) wandering in the road and making noise (also a safety issue but for themselves rather than residents).

Noise issues around various types of activities were discussed and fell into the following categories:

- a) **Functions without a bar licence which take place under the terms of the entertainments license.**
- b) **Daytime functions, particularly on Sundays.**
- c) **Functions which involve the bar license.**
- d) **Sports facilities including new Mellish Fields Sports Facility.**

The specific issues discussed regarding these different types of events follow. David Cooke stated that:

### a) Functions without a bar licence which take place under the terms of the entertainments license.

#### Evening events

- A contract is drawn up with the "owner" of the event who has to put up a damages deposit in case of problems during the event. The "owner" is expected to control their guests in terms of noise and behaviour.
- Bacons College will communicate with the "owner" of the event on a number of occasions before the event to make sure that plans and logistics are in order and that they understand their obligation to take responsibility for their guests adhering to the terms of the Bacons College licence.



- Under the terms of the entertainments licence, music must be turned off at 10.30pm (recently reduced from 11pm). Attendees must then leave the premises by midnight.
- At these events, Bacons College have up to 4 members of staff present and 1 security guard (employed by an external contracted company).
- Signs are put up within the Bacons College premises to remind attendees to leave the site quietly.
- The entertainments licence stipulates that, if you can hear music at the Bacons College boundary, then the music is too loud and needs to be turned down.
- The music at the boundary and asking for it to be turned down should be policed and addressed by the staff at Bacons College. David Cooke stated that the staff undertakes regular patrols to check this.
- Even for events where a Bacons College bar license is not required, people contracting to have an event there can bring in their own alcohol.
- Bacons College does not contract for 18<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties – in fact they refuse milestone birthday celebrations below the age of 25.
- Bacons College staff (up to 4 for functions plus a contracted security guard) control and patrol the area and should ensure that contract owners are meeting their obligations regarding noise, behaviour, parking etc.

#### **b) Daytime functions, particularly on Sundays**

The daytime events which were discussed mainly involved meetings regularly taking place on Sundays. However, the discussions also apply to any type of event taking place in the daytime, either at weekends or in school holidays.

David Cooke stated that:

- “Several” churches have currently drawn up agreements to meet within the Bacons College premises during the day on Sundays. This has been happening for the last 18 months – 2 years period.
- Meetings also take place throughout the week.
- The college site is open for setup at 8am on Sundays and the services / meetings start at 9am. Groups then come and go throughout the day (i.e. this is a number of groups at different times, not one group with different meeting times).
- On Sundays, Rhian and Delia stated that there is noise throughout the day from 8am and sometimes before, from amplified music within the college premises which can be heard beyond the boundaries. There is also noise in the surrounding streets throughout the day with attendees coming and going from events.
- Rhian and Delia stated that there is also noise from 8am and earlier on Sundays from unsupervised children both at the front of the college premises and in Timber Pond Road. David Cooke mentioned partnerships with junior football clubs for the Mellish Fields site and the possibility of organising activity groups for the children of parents attending religious groups, perhaps inter-related with the junior football clubs. Delia suggested a “Sunday School” group for children

whose parents are attending an event at the College. David Cooke confirmed that options are being considered for entertaining children at these events, which may be a joint effort between the college and the group concerned.

- On Sundays, Rhian and Delia stated that there have been issues with the noise of gates opening and closing. This is an issue at the Mellish Fields end of the site and also for residents near to the Bacons College playground gates (opposite the rear of 9 Hull Close) which are used for access for delivery vehicles and parking.
- Concern was expressed by Rhian and Delia that more and more church groups will come to Bacons College. David Cooke stated that no more church groups are being considered for meetings at Bacons College at the moment until the effect of the opening of the Mellish Fields Sports facilities is known (see following section on Sports facilities including new Mellish Fields Sports Facility).

#### **c) Functions which involve the bar licence.**

For these events, comments under section a) apply. In addition David Cooke stated:

- An existing bar licence at Bacons College allows the bar to be open until 1am. Many events do not contract to use the licence until 1am, instead finishing at 12 midnight or 11am. "Last orders" are called half an hour before the bar closes.
- As an example of the latest possible environmental impact, if the event has a bar licence until 1am, then "last orders" are called at 12.30. The bar will then serve until 1am. The music finishes when the bar finishes (i.e. 1am). The aim of Bacons College is then to have attendees off the premises by 1.15am and the site closed up.  
Rhian and Delia stated that this is rarely the case because the worst offending events cause considerable environmental impact via noise from the site and on the streets until 2am and beyond with cars leaving, hooting, and people in the streets shouting and behaving badly, creating impact on the local environment.
- David Cooke stated that there are around 12 events per year which utilise the bar licence and, of these, only 4 or 5 events use the 1am licence. Others finish earlier.

#### **d) Sports facilities including new Mellish Fields Sports Facility**

David Cooke stated that this is a joint project between Bacons College and Southwark Council.

There are currently partnerships for the use of this site with 2 junior football clubs:

- Docklands Junior Football Club
- Griffin Junior Football Club

The parking needs caused by the opening of this new facility are being monitored and, at the moment, no more church group meetings are being accepted for Sunday bookings until the impacts of Mellish Fields are known. Floodlights on the pitches are on a timer system and turn off automatically at 10pm.



Sports facilities at the Dockhill Avenue end of the site also stop operating at 10pm, though mostly the latest bookings are 8-9pm. Lights should not be left on after the pitch is being used. Bacons College are looking into timers for these lights as they are about to be changed anyway to a more eco-friendly solution.

### 7. Agreed actions from meeting

David Cooke stated that he would address the immediate issues of:

- Noise
- Parking

Rhian and Delia agreed but were also concerned by the additional issue of the bar license until 1am and the managers of events being allowed to bring their own alcohol into the premises for functions even if the bar license is not utilised. However, addressing noise and parking issues should identify whether Bacons College needs to take further action on the subject of the bar licence and alcohol rules.

David Cooke, Rhian and Delia agreed to keep communicating and see how these actions progressed.

- END -

Rhian

-----Original Message-----

From: Dave Cooke [mailto:cooke@baconsctc.co.uk]  
Sent: 12 May 2009 13:37  
To: Rhian Pamphilon  
Cc: Mathew Earp  
Subject: RE: Bacons College meeting / activity over weekend

Hi Rhian,

Thank you for your time today regarding the issues you have raised. I have taken the time to walk the College and consult with colleagues who work of a weekend managing the church groups. I have visited the roadside your house overlooks to establish where noise could travel from to cause such disturbance to you and can only assume the this could only become from one section of the College. I have asked my on site Sunday supervisor to meet with the group using the area and move them to the back of the College. It appears this is the last church group at the front of the building that could generate the noise you speak of. Secondly just so you are aware we have taken the following steps to help control the issues you have reported to us.

- 1) All users have been contacted in writing and their full cooperation has been requested.
- 2) I will be putting in place a number of checklist designed to monitor and control noise and capacity.
- 3) As we spoke at our last meeting the fire door leading out of the dining room have now been put onto fire alarm control which will prevent the door from opening unless in an emergency.
- 4) As of this Sunday all church users will have been/be moved into the centre of the College. The windows and entrance doors will be closed to help contain potential noise.
- 5) All users have been instructed to keep noise to a minimum.
- 6) I am currently looking into manning our main car park to direct cars into parking bays in order to maximise space and to reduce any overspill on immediate roads that we have no control over.
- 7) I will be reviewing with one of my managers the booking which is due to take place on 30th/31st May 09.

For your information my on site Sunday supervisor is a lady call Margaret. Should you find the need to speak to Margaret on the day of an event then please do not hesitate to contact her directly on the main College number 020 7237 1928. Press opt 0 for the operator.

I am interested to see where progress has been made since we last spoke and would like to report back to the College on where we are. Please could you take some time to offer some feedback on progress made to date? As I explained today, I and the College do take your comments seriously and will work relentlessly to resolve the issues you have raised. I would also like to thank you for your time and apologise for any disturbance you have encountered.

Kind regards

Dave Cooke  
Operations Manager

-----Original Message-----

From: Rhian Pamphilon [mailto:rhian.pamphilon@baconsctc.co.uk]  
Sent: 11 May 2009 08:21  
To: Dave Cooke  
Cc: Mathew Earp  
Subject: RE: Bacons College meeting / activity over weekend

Hi Dave

I haven't heard any more from you since this email so trust that you managed to resolve your PC issues, opened the minutes of the meeting and have no further additions to the



items which Delia and I discussed with you at you at our meeting on 16th April.

I am disappointed to report that the issues with the Sunday church groups' impact on the community continue unresolved, with amplified music and speaking clearly audible beyond your boundaries yesterday from 09.30 in the morning onwards. As I left my house at 11.00, I also noticed that the college car park was fairly full and that there were many cars parked along Timber Pond Road that would not normally have been there at the weekend, including cars parked around your gate area. I don't know how many people were present in your building at that time but the assertion that there is enough car parking on site to accommodate 300 people attending would appear not to be true.

I was especially disappointed on Sunday in the light of having received an A4 leaflet through my door on Saturday, advertising the visit of one "Melvin Banks" under the sponsorship of the "Charismatic Renewal Ministries" in the Dining Room at Bacons College on Saturday 30th May and Sunday 31st May. The promoters are stating that "due to great demand to see him everywhere, it would be advisable to reserve free seats".

In the light of the continued impact on the community from the regular group activities on a Sunday, can you please advise me how widely this event is being publicised, how many people are expected and contracted for with the College, and what processes and management actions you have in place to ensure that these events do not impact on the community?

Thank you in advance for your reply.

Rhian

-----Original Message-----

From: Dave Cooke [mailto:cooke@baconsctc.co.uk]  
Sent: 01 May 2009 17:26  
To: Rhian Pamphilon  
Cc: Mathew Earp  
Subject: Re: Bacons College meeting / activity over weekend

Hi Rhian,

I trust you are well?

Thank you for coming back to me with the minutes of our last meeting. I am sorry but I am having some PC issues and cant open these at present, however ill get our IT boys to look into this on Tuesday.

With regards to our license I will be looking into this and reviewing how we operate our services in accordance to this. I will come back to you shortly with how I feel our event will be managed affectively in the future as discussed.

I am pleased the parking situation has improved and appreciate your positive feed back, I hope to continue to with this and maintain the management of our parking facilities.

Your comments on Sunday Church users will also be appreciated. We have done a lot of work in this area. Mathew Earp has meet with all church groups to explain the issues with noise and parking and we have had a very positive response from them. All groups are now aware of their impact on our community and wish to operate so not to cause disturbance. Mathew has also made several changes to facilities which have been booked which we hope will continue to reduce noise.

I have started to set up a feedback method for everyone who wish to comment on our service, in fact it will be more then that but a policy and commitment from the College that we have clear procedures, guidelines and communication links for everyone to access. I am calling this our community. This will include sending out information to residents, a path for feedback to be communicated and a general method of building links with you our community.

Please continue to remain in contact with me. I will continue to work on the areas of

concern and keep you updated on progress.

Have a great weekend.

Regards

Dave

On 01/05/09 16:46 , "Rhian Pamphilon" <rhian@baconsctc.co.uk> wrote:

David - sorry for the delay in replying to you and sending the notes from our meeting as I had promised.

I have now attached them after verification and amendment by Delia.

In the meantime, I found licensing details for the college on the Internet, which seems to indicate that the license can run to 01.30 for many activities on a Friday and Saturday.

Am I looking at the latest licensing details? I found them here:

<http://licensing.southwarksites.com/licpremisesgranteddetails.asp?systemkey=9831>

The parking situation does indeed seem to have improved since the building works were cleared on your site. I am around all weekend so I will see how the church activities are progressing on Sunday.

Thanks,

Rhian Pamphilon

-----Original Message-----

From: Dave Cooke [mailto:cooke@baconsctc.co.uk]  
Sent: 22 April 2009 22:27  
To: Rhian Pamphilon  
Cc: Mathew Earp  
Subject: Re: Bacons College meeting / activity over weekend

Hi Rhian,

Sorry for the delay in responding to you, however my move to new Mellish Fields offices hasn't gone as planned, however I am now in operation.

Anyway, thank you for attending the meeting. I feel it was positive and we got many points covered. Following on from the meeting and the two areas I have said I will be looking into I have despite being officeless made progression and some changes. You will be pleased to note I visited site on both Saturday and Sunday of last week to inspect that things were as I had instructed.

1. I noted that music from the dining room was a little loud to my liking, despite this not being heard at the boundary of the college. I have provided further training to my staff and security on this matter and spoke directly to the Pastor of the church groups who have been most helpful and made several changes to their set up and music times to help be more community aware.
2. I have spoken to my colleague Mathew Earp who looks after the function and church use of the College for me and we have agreed to move some groups into the centre of the building which should help reduce travelling noise.
3. Mathew is currently away on annual leave but upon his return will be reviewing contract agreements for both church groups and normal wedding type events. Mathew will



make stronger points on noise control. He will also write to all Church Pastors advising them of the impact of their services on the local community, this to include music, speaking, entering and vacating the College.

4. I have organised with Mathew Earp, my manager who oversees functions, bar and church use for regular spot checks during large functions and Sunday church use.

Thank you for your points in your email. I will look into how these can be put in place and will look to improve signage around the site to aid users getting into the College without causing excessive noise.

I am sorry but I haven't had much chance to look at the parking issues you have raised, but will do so at my earliest convenience. I will be planning regular site visits to ensure my team are doing their jobs, and ensuring our clients abide by contract agreement in place.

Please lets keep this line of communication open. I am looking to see how I can communicate to the local residents on a more global basis but hope that with my comments in the meeting and my actions to date shows that I am trying to manage our service in a way that it causes minimum impact on the community and that I do take you views and comments seriously.

Kind regards

Dave Cooke  
Operations Manager

On 20/04/09 09:14 , "Rhian Pamphilon" <rhian.pamphilon@baconscollege.com> wrote:

Hi David

A quick note to say thanks for meeting with Delia and me on Thursday to discuss the environmental impact of Bacons College activities. I have typed up my notes from the meeting and will check with her that I didn't miss anything before sending you a copy.

A short report on activities over the weekend - I was away from Friday evening until Saturday evening around 9pm, and on my return there seemed to be no external disturbance from the theatre group meeting you had advised was taking place.

On Sunday at 8am and before, there was no amplified music noise, so presumably the first group meeting had taken action to control the volume. However, there was a blast of amplified music noise between 10 and 10.30am, and then again between 11 and 11.30am. I didn't notice any further noise until 1.15pm - when there was a group of young boys (probably early teens) making a lot of vocal noise (arguing maybe?) outside the college and sitting on the railings for about 20 minutes. There was also a lot of car hooting at the same time, and a driving school car pulled up next to these youths (presumably to pick up someone for a driving lesson) as did another saloon car that was hooting. I took a couple of photos from my back garden of these activities. All seemed quiet for the rest of the day.

These previous comments were made in the context of hearing / seeing things from my house (9 Hull Close, back garden facing your playground gate).

I also took a walk along the road on Sunday to see the parking arrangements for myself and noticed that cars for the meetings at the college don't always spot the college gate and drive on, then turning round either in Hull Close or further along. One suggestion I could make to try and streamline visitors into the college parking is to insist that the groups meeting there have a large temporary sign on the gate (similar to the one I have seen before for Stagecoach meetings) so that they know they have reached the right place - and park there.

Keep us posted on any developments from your end. Do you have anything specific planned for next weekend?