

Report to the Regulatory Committee at Halton Borough Council

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Report of, Philip S Ramsden. Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner  
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Subject : Creamfields 2009.

The annual Creamfields concert took place over the August Bank Holiday Weekend in August 2009. The event ran from mid afternoon on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August, finishing mid day on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009. The event passed without any major incidents with regard to the noise levels at nearby residential properties. The Licence conditions, on the licence issued by Halton BC, were not breached.

### **Warrington Residents Reaction.**

Fifty eight households contacted Warrington Borough Council, either directly, or via the Creamfields Hotline, Halton Direct or Cheshire Police. This is a larger number than in previous years but the contact details were published more widely and earlier than in other years.

The weather over the weekend was dry with winds of variable speed and direction; Saturday was more blustery which caused problems with using the sound level meters off site. Officers were available from 10.00am on Saturday until 04.00 on Sunday with an on site presence, measuring noise levels from the main stage and tented arenas, from 2.00pm until 01.30 on Sunday morning. On Sunday, officers were available on and off site from 12.30 pm to 12.00am on Monday.

On site monitoring is to establish if the licensing conditions, imposed by Halton Borough Council, are being met and this is carried out using a 15 minute monitoring period at a set distance from the stage or the dance floor. During the 15 minute period noise levels will fluctuate and the measurement period derives an equivalent value which is "A " weighted to mimic the way the human ear responds to noise. Using an "A" weighting ensures that the low frequency elements of the noise is represented in measurement.

Off site measurement is carried out under the same parameters of a 15 minute period using "A" weighting and is carried out near to any noise sensitive properties. Both of these measurements are in accordance with the Code of Practice on Environmental Noise at Pop Concerts, issued by the Noise Council.

The bass beat of the music was audible as far away from the site as three miles and we had reports from the areas of Latchford, Stockton Heath, Higher and Lower Walton, Appleton and in particular the areas close to the site on Chester Road and Park Lane.

Creamfields consultants, Vanguardia, had a consultant out for the majority of time when the festival was generating music and we have shared our results with the consultants and vice versa. Some of the measurements were taken at the same time as the consultants and showed comparable results.

During Saturday afternoon and evening measurements taken at Park lane and Chester Road were in the range of 53.4dB<sub>L<sub>Aeq</sub></sub> to 58.0dB<sub>L<sub>Aeq</sub></sub> the limit in the Code of Practice is 65dB<sub>L<sub>Aeq</sub></sub>. [An increase on measured levels from 50dBA to 60 dBA is perceived as a doubling of the loudness] Road Traffic noise contributed to the measurement, but I am satisfied that it was the music from Creamfields which dominated the measured noise. No noise measurements by Warrington Officers, Halton Officers or Vanguardia exceeded the limits in the Code of Practice.

Subjective assessments, by WBC Officers were made in many areas of Stockton Heath, Walton and other areas surrounding the site. In Firs Lane and High Warren Close the noise of the wind in the trees was the dominant noise although Creamfields noise was clearly audible. On London Road Appleton, Stockton Heath Village, Lower Walton and Pewterspear the noise was audible, in particular the bass beat. In Latchford on Knutsford Road the noise was barely audible.

Most residents who we spoke to over the weekend were not happy about being affected by the noise from Creamfields and would have preferred it to be located elsewhere. Generally they accepted that Creamfields were operating within the Code of Practice.

The main stage finished on both nights at 11.00pm. On Saturday night the tented arenas continued until 04.00. We did receive two complaints after 11.00pm [none had been received in previous years] measurement was made at Firs lane at 43dB<sub>L<sub>Aeq</sub></sub>, the bass beat was barely audible; and at Chester Road the music noise was not measurable above the road traffic noise and was described as barely audible.

Measurement taken both on site and off site did not indicate that any of the licence conditions were breached. Subjective assessment off site indicates that the noise levels were comparable with previous years in the outlying areas.