

I have previously studied business at University and worked in the hospitality industry for 20 years at a managerial level and as a business owner. For 10 years I owned a busy city centre pub in Herefordshire, and built it from a 'pub' to a successful pub and restaurant business before selling it on.

I worked closely with licensing and the police service and proactively operated the banned from one banned from all principle, and had a reputation amongst young people as a 'no nonsense' licensee who strictly applied rules and tolerance levels.

I have worked in weddings and events for the past 7 years and am a personal licence holder who is acutely aware of the 4 licensing objectives which we adhere to at any wedding or event.

Our aim at House Meadow is to hold, small, intimate family weddings in a controlled environment.

I operate a challenge 25 policy.

I hold my environmental health certificate and first aid certificate.

We have systems & procedures in place, namely the following

- First Aiders/Accident Log Book
- Risk Assessments that are carried out on every event
- Training Manuals for Staff/Fully Trained Staff
- Log Book for Challenge 25

We have appropriate trade waste measures in place

To give you an idea of an Example Wedding

- 1500-1600 Welcome Drinks & Canapes on the grounds
- 1800 Wedding breakfast which can constitute a 3 course meal, sharing platter, buffet for example
- It is usual to suggest half a bottle of wine per person during the course of the wedding breakfast
- 1900 Bar opens

We only sell single measures and do not encourage inappropriate drinking

Midnight is the cut off and we allow 30 minutes for guests to vacate the premises. At this point we have marshalls waiting for taxis for guests and operate a 'Shush' policy whereby staff wander around asking the guests to keep quiet and respect neighbours. The area is fully lit.

With reference to drugs, in the 20 years that I have worked in the industry in Hereford, I have never encountered a hypodermic needle. I would be wholly shocked should I find such an item at a small, family, intimate wedding. If I should encounter any form of drugs whilst running an event, the police would be called and I would shut the event down.

I feel these objections from local residents are largely due to misinformation and overactive imaginations whereby, residents believe we will be operating large scale, uncontrolled events for 365 days of the year for 16 hours of each day.

We would regularly monitor noise levels and have a preferred selection of entertainments who are sympathetic to our noise levels.

Any outside suppliers that we use are recommended by ourselves, for example, caterers, and we ask for evidence of their public liability insurances and hold these on record.

We held an event on 4th August and prior to this, discussed with certain residents their worries of noise levels. I was more than happy to pass on my number to them so should their worries become reality, they could call me and I would deal with this imminently. That said, on the day in question, I had staff monitor the noise levels from the far side of the field (which is 8 acres) whereby, you could hear the music slightly but it was inoffensive. I also went into Whitehall Farmhouse and checked the noise levels myself and could not hear anything. The first I had heard of any problem was from a letter alleging noise pollution from the environmental health but with no evidence. Had I been notified on the day in question (outside of already monitoring the noise and believing it to be of an appropriate level), I would have acted accordingly.

Martha Summerfield.