

Fencing to be set up at this year's Westfest

BIG SUNDAY:
Measure must be taken for event licence to be granted

ALAN WILSON

People heading to Dundee's biggest open-air free gala day, Westfest's Big Sunday, will this year be faced with two-metre-high fencing.

Revellers will also be prevented from bringing their own alcohol into the event, due to be held on June 4 at Magdalen Green, after a clampdown by police and council officials on the unlawful consumption of drink, which has grown in recent years.

As part of the licensing conditions to allow the festival to go ahead in 2017, organisers will now have to provide Herring Fencing to surround the event and extra stewards will be on duty to man the entrances and prevent people bringing in their own alcohol.

Stewards will also be patrolling inside the arena and will take action against anyone found with their own alcohol.

This year, extra bars will be provided inside the arena to allow visitors to the festival the chance to enjoy the stalls, attractions and the live music provided, while still enjoying a few drinks.

Westfest has grown in size from a few hundred people in 2010 to more than 10,000 over the past few years, but has become a victim of its own success, organisers say.

That success has seen an increase in the number of people consuming alcohol illegally, resulting in objections



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from Dundee City Council and Police Scotland.

While acknowledging there have been no real problems caused by revelers at Westfest, Police Scotland said they were unable to ignore thousands of people breaching the local bylaw.

The city law bans the consumption of alcohol in open air unless a licence has been granted, usually for beer gardens and pavements outside of licensed premises.

The council was therefore unwilling to grant a licence for the festival under the previous arrangements.

The volunteer committee of Westfest admitted it understood and shared some of the concerns expressed and agreement has now been reached for the entire event to be fenced off, allowing for the purchase and consumption of alcohol inside the fence as part of the licence.

Westfest chairman Ged Gourlay said: "It's been a long slog to get to this compromise and it's put the committee under a lot of pressure to achieve this year's event due to the short timescale now left.

"While we did not want to go down the route of fencing off the event, as we feared it would change the dynamic and the community-friendly aspect of Westfest, the committee voted overwhelmingly to continue with this year's event, even though it will result in some considerable costs to us."

Mr Gourlay added that Dundee City Council has offered to help out with a financial contribution towards the fence.

West End councillor Fraser Macpherson added that, though he believed erecting fencing was not "ideal", it was a "relief" that the festival could still go ahead.

20th century artificial substitutes have been manufactured and advertised as just as good.

"I will use science to open

year's women in science Festival, the world's only festival dedicated to celebrating women in science, technology, engineering & mathematics.

AWARDS

Top business women honoured



The winners show off their awards.

Businesses women from across Dundee and Angus were honoured at an awards ceremony at the Apex Hotel on Saturday night.

Hosted by social enterprise, Women Ahead, which supports the development of women in sport and business, the event saw 250 guests pile in for the annual prize-giving.

The Women Ahead Dundee & Angus Business Awards 2017 winners were:

Blackadders Most Enterprising Business of the Year Award: Elizabeth Jackson of Fairways Recruitment (Scotland) Ltd.

MMG Archbold Chartered Accountants Community Woman of the Year Award: Caroline McKenna of Dundee Int'l Women's Centre.

Fairways Recruitment (Scotland) Ltd Independent Woman of the Year Award: Dr Lorraine Arnot of Montrose Dental Care.

The Malting House Graphic Design Studio Young Woman of the Year Award: Bethany Bowles of Gather.

Journeycall - part of ESP Group Outstanding Contribution to a Business Award: Alison Smith of Angus Council.

Most Promising Business of the Year Award: Paula Fox of Nixvis Ltd.

Special Recommendation for Journeycall - part of ESP Group Outstanding Contribution to a Business Award: Marie McIntosh Ramming of Dream Hair Salon.