

**Statement in support of licensing review for 57 Monkeys**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Statement: 6 June 2022

I have lived at the above address for approximately six years. The LoveToLove nightclub was operating there during the first couple of years of my living at the address. The nightclub was loud and the crowds attending the club were noisy and disordered.

During the early years, I recall ordering noise monitoring equipment from the Worcestershire Regulatory Services several times, remaining awake throughout various nights to keep recording the noise, and them eventually telling me that the bass was not audible enough, and crowd noise, however severe, was not their responsibility. The only solution I could see at the time, was to sleep wearing heavy duty gun range ear-defenders, which made for uncomfortable sleep.

Attempts to agree doors being closed and turning the bass down with the operator of the club at the time and when the nightclub got re-branded into 57 Monkeys resulted in their temporary cooperation, but very soon our pleas started to become disregarded yet again. They did not ever offer any form of crowd control or active disbursement post-closing.

My partner and I, both worked, and found Friday and Saturday nights of sleeplessness starting to affect our work and health. We therefore started to stay at Southcrest Hotel in Redditch every Friday night, and sometimes Saturday nights, just to get away from the constant noise and fighting, and to get some sleep on week-ends. Our bill over several years of staying at Southcrest up to the start of the pandemic was in the region of £5,000.

We would often return to find shop windows here and there smashed and vomit covering the pavement near our home. I regularly saw small businesses, particularly beauty outlets, clean up the urine and vomit left on their doorstep just before their customers arrived on Saturday morning.

I do not accept any sort of argument that "this is High Street, you choose to live here, live with the noise that it creates". Firstly, this part of the High Street has historically been mixed commercial and residential. That is simply the fact. Secondly, the nightclub used to be a church, and generated far less disruption to the residents of the High Street. Thirdly, and most importantly, the High Street of today is becoming more and more residential, be it in Bromsgrove or nationally. This is the general trend, which will continue.

Covid, despite of the tragedy of the pandemic, also had a silver lining for the residents of the one-way part of Worcester Road and beyond, in that the nightclub activity all but stopped. The residents started to sleep again and go about their daily lives without the constant disruption and fear of violence over their property or person. I enjoyed being at home and after all these years of disruption, being able to sleep at home on weekends.

Since the removal of the lockdown restrictions, our lives have become hell again, but now even more so.

57 Monkeys nightclub serves cheap drinks, attracts visitors from outer Birmingham and other parts of the West Midlands, who, given the behaviour I have observed from my window, come to our Worcester Road for a good fight. The clubs are now open on Thursday night as well as the usual Friday and Saturday nights. The doors are always wide open, bass is uncontrollable. Visitors to the

nightclubs regularly engage in fights, often very violent, and invariable come across as extremely drunk.

If we are sleeping at home, which is always reluctantly, we hear loud crowds, which turn violent from 2am. We often observe vicious fights just beneath our windows at the nightclub closing times from 3am onwards.

I have also seen people urinate into the doors of Emily Nails and JKH Podiatry. I have observed people being so drunk (or drugged) that they threw themselves against the walls and windows of shops along this part of Worcester Road, bouncing from one side of the street to the other, and attempting to lift the fixed in concrete litter bins in the street.

I have observed and heard extremely violent altercations, the use of bad and provocative language and gestures, and felt frightened for the people involved. My partner went out several times to establish some form of order, after having called the Police. He would usually be threatened and ordered to walk away, if he did not want to get hurt.

On returning home after staying away to get some sleep, in the mornings, I would find a small plastic bag on the pavement close to the nightclub and by home, with remnants of a white powder, on several occasions.

Shops in the one-way part of Worcester Road are used as urinals, and their windows are often smashed due to fights or simply drunk or drugged behaviours of the visitors to the nightclub.

It would be preposterous for anyone to claim that this has got nothing to do with the nightclub, who is not there to control the crowds outside of their premises. The club is destroying our health, as well as our surroundings.

The combined effect of the existing nightclub, with the long-running noise and violence problems, and now Venga means that the situation is getting even worse. However, I want to stress that we have had problems with 57 Monkeys and Love2Love from the word go, and Venga has simply increased the already intolerable situation.

Ideally, there should not be such hard-core night-clubs in a small market-town such as Bromsgrove, at all.

However, I want to be reasonable and suggest that, as a trial and interim measure, the opening hours are reduced for the club as a matter of urgency. This measure will improve our wellbeing, reduce the heavy burden on the Police, enhance the presentation of this part of Worcester Road and is the most balanced solution, in my opinion, having been on the receiving end of the disorderly behaviour and noise over the weekends for a good part of six years. Additionally, I understand the nightclub has a 7-day per week licence. I would ask that this is reviewed and reduced to Thursday, Friday and Saturday (and Sunday only when there is a Bank Holiday Monday) nights only, and until 1-1.30am on each of these open nights.

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 07 July 2022 16:19

**To:** WRS Enquiries <enquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk>

**Subject:** External Email : 22/02798/REVPL 57 Monkeys, 39 Worcester Road Bromsgrove B61 7DN

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to make a representation regarding the above licensing review.

I am a resident living at [REDACTED] I have attached a statement of facts which has been sent to the Police but I wished to ensure that you also had a copy for evidence.

My fiancée and I have complained over many years about the affect that the nightclub has had on our ability to sleep and the result of criminal damage to our properties over the years from those in attendance.

Overall the issues can be condensed into 3 main ones:

1. When they are open they leave the front doors open and the noise/base reverberates between the buildings causing disturbance all night to the residents. They do this to attract customers and use the excuse that it is due to fire regulations.
2. The opening hours until 4am mean that revellers from out of town head to this venue and there are continuous groups of people collecting around the outside with no transport to get them home causing various ASB.
3. The security staff do not take any responsibility for the groups in the street, either in dispersal or preventing fights or damage to neighbouring property.

This was evidenced only recently at 1.30am on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June when two youths took great enjoyment in kicking in the door to the rear of [REDACTED] Worcester Road in full view of the security. They did this, not to gain entry but to see how quickly they could do it. Once smashed open they can be seen on the video laughing, hugging and walking off.

I am quite happy to attend in person and put in my views as an affected resident.

Kind regards

**Statement of facts regarding 57 monkeys, 39 Worcester Road Bromsgrove B61**

05/05/22

I have owned and worked in the above property as a

At that time the nightclub was Love2love and whilst there was noise and disturbance at around 2am, when the club closed, this was only on Fridays and Saturdays and their clients seemed to dissipate quite quickly. Also, as they kept the double doors closed, there was little disturbance from the base reverberating between the frontages when they allowed people entry.

Things began to change quite quickly when the club re-opened as 57 Monkeys in late 2016. As there were regular PACT meetings, I joined other residents to voice our concerns to the Police, Councillors and often the nightclub owner. I personally found getting to sleep very difficult due to the doors to the club being kept open to attract customers. I often approached the club to ask them to keep the doors closed because of the effect of the base but was told that their fire regs meant that they had to stay open. They also began to open on Thursdays which meant 3 days of interrupted sleep each week.

WRS provided sound detection systems for our room but they concluded that the noise was down to anti-social behaviour and therefore not in their jurisdiction and we should report it to the Police. This I have done too many times to remember and absolutely nothing has resolved.

Historically, the constant drunken youths then would scream profanities at the Police as they drove by. When this was highlighted to officers, I was told that if they arrested every disrespectful youth, they would fill all the custody blocks in the area. I do believe this tolerance of disrespect has led to further ASB. The ASB was noise, especially women screaming, disturbances from fights, but only occasional broken windows, theft of shop decorations and vomit in the doorways. My fear was that this would escalate into our property, where the access is at the rear, and a CO2 fire extinguisher was located close by.

My fiancée was able to sleep wearing my shooting defenders, but I found this impossible, and so we had no choice but to stay in a local hotel on Friday evenings, every Friday evening, to get a break between sleepless nights. The cost to me was over £4,500 and I can get the actual figure from the hotel if necessary.

The introduction of COVID-19 restrictions was the "answer to a maiden's prayer," it was fantastic. We had our lives back and began to realise what 'normal' was.

Unfortunately, this was short lived and when the, now two, nightclubs re-opened, the ASB took on a new level. There was not only the noise from the nightclubs competing for customers, through the music from their open doors, but screaming and fighting constantly once they emptied out. However, these revellers are not drunk, they are cognisant, in groups, and often looking for a fight. One of my tenants vacated his business in Hanover Street and we can sleep there on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays to get away from the noise.

However, this is not always the case, as the groups disperse to the Waitrose access road or into Hanover Street itself : \_\_\_\_\_ I feel it is my duty to go outside when I hear fighting or screams. Therefore, I still have had cause to call the Police, or board up broken windows at 3, 4 and 5am in the mornings. The youths also seem heightened or severely agitated which may be due to drug use. I have seen youths walking along Hanover Street at 4am hitting bystanders in the side of the head for fun and walking away leaving them bleeding on the floor. No one is answering 999 as I am confronting them and they are laughing that they can hear it has not been answered. I know where the CCTV is positioned and I stand in the safest place so I can be recorded but they are equally ineffectual and so youths know they can get away with anything. It is extremely frightening being out at that time.

I often cycle early on a Sunday morning and the litter, discarded food and broken bottles make Worcester Road a disgrace. The Council workers do a fantastic job to clean everything up by the time I return, but they do not deal with the vomit and urine in the doorways to the various businesses along Worcester Road. Even at 6am in the morning I have seen a youth bent over in the middle of the road vomiting, whilst his friends are asking me for a lift to Redditch.

Many of the buildings along Worcester Road have been trying to implement the government initiatives on returning residential occupation back above the shops within towns, but having the nightclub settled within a historic residential area does not lead to good relations. The residents feel they are ignored, the management of the club do not care, and the Police are ineffectual.

I always believe in offering solutions. Primarily the clubs should not be there. A pub closing no later than 11pm is fine, and how it was, historically, when there were 42 public houses within a 1mile stretch. But in today's society we should be using today's technology as they do elsewhere in the World.

**All the clubs should take a swipe of the photo ID/driving licence of anyone wishing to enter their private premises. Their entry is on the condition that their identity is shared with Council and Police in the case of any criminal or antisocial behaviour, which includes disbursement from the area. Anyone subsequently fined by the Council or Police will be refused admission for 12 months. CCTV should be pro-actively monitored with enforcement staff giving out fines. Clubs should not be open later than 2am**

**Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be heard.**

**Kind regards**

---