

RENEWAL OF SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE LICENCE

WIGGLE 159 OLD CHRISTCHURCH ROAD BOURNEMOUTH

OBJECTIONS

OBJECTION #1

I am writing to formally object to the proposed licensing of Wiggle a sex entertainment venue in Bournemouth town centre.

I work in Old Christchurch Rd and believe the councils decision to licence sex Entertainment Venues puts them in breach of their Public sector Equality Duty. The presence of this club makes me feel unsafe. Old Christchurch Rd is increasingly hostile to women even in the day time, licensing SEV's reinforces the idea that women are for sale.

Objectification of Women:

Sex entertainment venues, by their very nature, objectify women, reducing them to mere objects for the sexual gratification of male patrons. The renewal of this license will perpetuate harmful stereotypes and reinforce demeaning views of women, contributing to a culture of misogyny and disrespect. The centre of Bournemouth becomes increasingly centred around the objectification of women as weekend evenings progress with most venues open after 4am being based on an economy of selling sex (Always males paying for access to women's bodies) (1) The governments Tackling Violence against Women and Girls report states: Effective prevention also involves our public spaces being designed in a way which helps ensure women and girls are and feel safe and deters offending. (2) I believe that the sale of sex entertainment creates a hostile environment in a town centre which should be welcoming to all.

Rise in Sex Attacks in Immediate Vicinity:

There has been a concerning documented increase in sexual assaults in the immediate vicinity of this establishment. The proximity of this venue to residential areas, educational institutions, and public spaces raises valid concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the community, especially women.

The Performance Analysis Department for Dorset Police have provided the following information.

Searches were completed on Niche for all sexual offences that have occurrence addresses within the 'Bournemouth Central' section.

Offence group	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Other Serious Sexual	0	3	3	4	5
Other Sexual Offence	44	32	47	43	44

Rape Female	114	81	144	144	154
Rape Male	10	10	14	7	16
Sexual Activity Child Under 13	3	6	3	6	3
Sexual Assault Female	104	113	122	167	163
Sexual Assault Male	18	16	15	13	22
Total	293	261	348	384	407

In addition, there have been several very serious sex attacks and rapes in immediate proximity to this venue and at times very relevant to the operating times of SEV's in this part of Bournemouth town centre.:

In October 2022, a woman was raped after four men approached her in Wooton Gardens (Behind Old Christchurch Rd) at 3am (3)

On June 25, 2022, Two women were reportedly sexually assaulted by a man as they walked through Horseshoe Common in [Bournemouth](#). The 18-year-old women were walking through Horseshoe Common when they were approached by an unknown man at around 3.30am. (4)

On Sunday 26 February 2023 a woman – was walking in the area of Lansdowne Road, between the flyover above the A338 and Beechey Road, between around 1.30am and 1.45am when she was sexually assaulted by a man. (5)

On Friday, August 11 2023, At 4.04am, Dorset Police received a report that a woman had been raped by a man in Horseshoe Common. (6)

On July 7 2023 woman had spent two hours trying to rebuff Ahmed Almryam's advances in a bar before he followed her when she left, it is alleged. (7)

On Tuesday, February 18 2024 A 26-year-old man from Bournemouth was arrested on suspicion of [sexual assault](#) and stalking (8)

I note that in the dancers rules there are very strict rules. These rules recognise that customers will be sexually charged and that the dancers may be subject to sexual attack or harassment. If the committee is able to recognise this danger to the dancers they must be able to also recognise that other women in the vicinity of the club or in other late night venues are also at risk from these customers and further more may be more vulnerable as they may be drunk and not aware of the risk of the customers or the nature of the activities they have been partaking in.

The Licensing Committee's Duty Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The PSED requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimization.
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

The licensing of a venue that explicitly profits from the sexual objectification of women directly contradicts these obligations. Furthermore, the venue's rules for dancers acknowledge the risks of sexual harassment or assault inside the club. If the committee recognizes the necessity of stringent protections for women working within the SEV, it must also recognize the risks posed to other women in the surrounding area, many of whom may be more vulnerable due to alcohol consumption and lack of awareness of the venue's clientele.

Impact on Women's Freedom to Use Public Space

No individual should feel they need to avoid an area of their own town due to its unsafe or hostile environment. By permitting SEVs to operate in the heart of Bournemouth's nightlife, the council is indirectly creating a space that many women feel compelled to avoid for their own safety. This is a clear violation of the principle that all public spaces should be accessible and inclusive.

(1) Clubs with late licenses in central Bournemouth

Club Name	Closing Time	Status
HALO	N/A	Permanently closed as of March 2024
B AT ONE	3:00 AM	Active
VODKAREV	3:00 AM	Active
CAMEO	4:00 AM	Active
DNA	4:00 AM	Active
ANVIL	5:00 AM	Active
ZEPHYR	5:00 AM	Active
CAMEL	6:00 AM	Active
WIGGLE (SEV)	5:00 AM	Active
FYEO (SEV)	6:00 AM	Active
TEMPTATION (SEV)	6:00 AM	Active
BAR REPUBLIC	6:00 AM	Active

(2)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033934/Tackling_Violence_Against_Women_and_Girls_Strategy_-_July_2021.pdf

- (3) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-63453715>
- (4) <https://www.dorset.live/news/dorset-news/women-sexually-assaulted-man-walking-7261272>
- (5) <https://news.dorset.police.uk/news-article/84d3eaad-1cc8-ed11-9d54-6045bdd24049>
- (6) <https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/23720094.man-arrested-part-bournemouth-rape-investigation/>
- (7) <https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk/news/23908483.man-stands-trial-accused-bournemouth-rape/>
- (8) <https://news.dorset.police.uk/news-article/120b1e9b-f0f5-ef11-9d75-6045bdd24049>

OBJECTION #2

Susan Stockwell – Consent given to disclose name and email address to applicant enable communication.

25.03.25 @ 15:30

This is my objection to the application by Well Hot Ltd for a Sexual Entertainment Venue license for Wiggle strip club at 159 Old Christchurch Road.

I repeat all the points made in my previous objections to licensing this premises in this way and respectfully remind the committee that under case law, Sheptonhurst, they are entitled to make a different decision on licensing even if the circumstances are identical to those in previous year(s). This is an administrative decision and the decisions of previous committees either recently or over the years are not binding on you. You are also perfectly entitled to consider hearsay evidence, ie what is repeated by another person, though it is up to you as to how much weight you give it.

I would like to draw your attention to successful objections to strip club licensing made by ward councillors in other parts of the country, and shown as appendices towards the end of this objection. At Appendix 1 a green ward councillor in Sheffield makes points regarding the last licensed strip club in that town, pointing out very similar circumstances to Bournemouth, with Knowledge Gateway reflecting our own three Universities, numerous language schools and ambitions to attract investment to fill empty buildings with student accommodation. I would echo the request in this objection in Sheffield to ask for a condition that everyone working in the establishment, including security staff, performers and all others has employment contracts, which at the moment Companies House records suggest that they do not. This also places the duty on the employer to check right to work in this country. I have no evidence that anyone in Wiggle does not have a right to work, but would point out that anyone that slips through the net, which I accept the applicant has in place having previously represented this at another hearing, then they could be vulnerable to exploitation by third parties not associated in any way with the applicants. I have visited Sheffield for a night out not so long ago, and found it to be lively, happy relaxed and boisterous, very like the pictures run by local press here of people enjoying the night time economy before strip clubs came to dominate the centre of Bournemouth. It was very much in stark contrast to the state of central Bournemouth which is absolutely saturated with police and council resources to try and bring order to the chaos caused by sex tourists marauding about through the night. I remind the committee of a different Bournemouth strip club which even warns its dancers in writing not to go to local bars after their shift because they won't be safe.

At Appendix 2 A Labour ward councillor objects to a strip club licensing on the basis of heritage, being close to the grave of Richard III, whose remains were moved to the cathedral in recent years. I point out the parallel to our St Peter's Church, whose churchyard has graves next to each other of Mary Wollstonecraft, founder of modern feminism and author of "A Vindication of the Rights of Women", her daughter Mary Shelley and her son in law. The councillor mentions nurseries in the area and I draw a parallel to having witnessed tiny children from the new academy built at Stafford and Madeira Road, out for a walk and either from reception or possibly a nursery at the school being walked past Wiggle with staff. Old Christchurch Road conservation area houses all three licensed strip clubs in Bournemouth, and consists of the roads built when the Victorians developed the town as a seaside resort

dedicated to health for those escaping London. It includes the former Town Hall as well as many buildings built subsequently in the Art Deco period which I was shown on a walking tour last summer run by an academic expert in this field to see if such tours would be appealing to attract tourists. If we want to swap sex tourism for respect for Bournemouth's heritage and stunning architecture then licenses for sexual entertainment need to be refused.

Next I would like to draw attention to objections from property owners and businesses to strip club licensing. In Westminster City Council area a hearing was held on 25th August 2022 for a strip club license application. At Appendix 3 are shown various objections by property owners to that application, including the use of legal representation. I have written to BCP's own estates department who hold the Freehold of the mainly residential Citrus Building next door to Wiggle on behalf of the public as it is owned by BCP. At time of writing this I don't know whether they will use the opportunity to object to this application with a view to protecting the public interest in this property or their own residential and commercial tenants. I also draw your attention to the successful objection to licensing a strip club near the world famous department store Selfridges. In addition the developers of a regeneration project near an established strip club in Maidenhead objected to its relicensing. Ironically, it may well have been aided by the Judicial Review into BCP's sex establishment licensing policy in making that objection. It is disappointing that the owners of the various buildings awaiting investment in Old Christchurch Road have tolerated the licensing of strip clubs nearby. I draw your attention to the two retail arcades in the area Richmond Gardens and St Peter's Quarter which according to press reports have changed hands recently and are offered for sale respectively.

At Appendix 4 are examples of council departments elsewhere objecting to strip club licensing, namely Environmental Health and Licensing. These are shown as attachments to this email in pdf form. Unfortunately my efforts to engage our environmental health department here in BCP in assessing suitability of the three strip clubs licensed in Bournemouth based on the buildings has not been productive at date of writing this. Because Wiggle has no effective means of ventilation visible to a lay observer, ie me, from the outside, the windows having to remain closed as a condition of licensing, I have approached our environmental health department over this point. Whilst the health and safety legislation which insists on this being provided is still on the statute book made by Parliament a previous government told local authorities not to enforce it. However, I am not relying on the health and safety legislation which BCP is forbidden from enforcing but on the licensing regime for sex establishments, which does still allow you to refuse a license on the basis of unsuitability of the premises. There is no requirement of which I am aware that requires the licensing plan to include ventilation, and the only official source I can find is the business rates records, which sometimes show some forms of ventilation. I would ask you to consider whether there is adequate ventilation to prevent heat related injuries of patrons or staff in a hot summer given the black on the windows which will attract heat, the lack of a lift and the possibility of air borne infection travelling in such an unhealthy environment. I reiterate that I am not asking you to enforce the excellent health and safety legislation obliging workplaces to guard against this with ventilation, as already mentioned this can't be done at the moment, but to look at whether this is a suitable building for this activity. I have in the recent past approached a BCP council officer with responsibility for licensing asking for

an objection to be lodged, but unlike Westminster Council there was a feeling that the council's role was to remain neutral.

It is forbidden under the Local Government Act 1972 for the council's executive, ie the councillors charged with overseeing the council's function to improperly influence the decision making process of the regulatory committees, including Licensing. However, I would suggest that this doesn't prevent departments whose functions would be impacted by a licensing decision making objections to licensing applications. As long as they are properly carrying out functions such as community safety, environmental health, public health, estate management, licensing itself or any other function and not making the objection spuriously in an attempt to improperly influence the committee's decision, that is not only proper, but arguably part of their duty.

Appendix 5 shows the Metropolitan Police making an objection to a strip club license on the basis of inadequate provision to prevent crime and disorder. It is disappointing that despite the substantial crime and disorder and huge amount of police and council time and resources dedicated to trying to keep a lid on crime and disorder in Central Bournemouth, this approach is not being taken by Dorset police to strip club licensing. Very straightforward conditions such as a ratio of security staff to customers, toilet attendants, ensuring both the staff entrance and customer entrance are provided with security guards, maximum number of people in the building, a one meter gap between customer and dancer in private dances or ideally abolish the private dances have potential to dramatically improve staff and public safety. In addition this appendix shows text of before and after articles on strip club licensing in Newquay, where the police objected to licensing despite not having direct evidence of the presence of the strip clubs contributing to the sexual assaults in the area. By contrast our crime including sexual violence remains much higher in Central Bournemouth than the rest of BCP area. I should also point out than in contrast to our PCC Police and Crime Commissioner in Dorset, the PCC covering Bristol was reported in 2022 as calling for strip club licensing to be removed from council control and for there to be a nationwide ban. I mention this as it is important to understand that Dorset police's previous unwillingness to object to strip club licenses in Bournemouth does not prevent you from refusing a license, given that other police and at least one PCC has spoken out against licensing.

At Appendix 6 is BCP's previous cabinet member for tourism objecting to strip club licensing as part of her function. At time of writing I have written to our current member asking him to consider lodging an objection.

At Appendix 7 is an example of a BID Business Improvement District objecting to strip club licensing. On the application to Westminster Council heard 25th August 2022 the local BID objected,

At appendix 8 is White Ribbon's correspondence with me regarding accreditation and nil Cap sex establishment licensing policy

I am now setting out the points on which I am objecting specifically to this application and on which it can be refused.

Applicant. The applicant is still unsuitable for being given a license on the basis of various points where a cavalier disregard for regulations imposed by local authorities has been shown

2013 Bournemouth licensing committee was obliged to impose mystery shopper conditions following allegations of various breaches of conditions at Wiggle. At a subsequent hearing it was found that this wasn't being adhered to.

2020 Portsmouth the applicant's director and his agent were fined for not having an HMO license at Cabman's Rest and both appealed, with the applicant's director subsequently withdrawing that appeal. However, the adjudicator who decided on the remaining appeal stated that the property was dangerous because of lack of fire extinguishers, a point denied by the applicant's legal representative ie that the premises were dangerous, in the online presence of the applicant at a subsequent BCP licensing hearing. The applicant did not correct his representative leaving the impression that the building was not dangerous.

2021 Southampton City the applicant has another company licensed for strip clubs trading as Wiggle where the premises has been expanded. However the records for building control show that work on a party wall has been recorded as started but not completed, despite the premises being reopened to the public. It is possible that the records are out of date and that everything is in order, so the applicant should be given an opportunity to explain the situation in Southampton.

The applicant is also unsuitable because they advertise their premises using a dancer wearing a costume parodying school uniform as it is in a tartan material.

In addition to the above I have photographed a pile of Nitrous Oxide cylinders called Fastgas in the grounds of Wiggle during the pandemic in a break when the clubs could open. Since they were cleared I am delighted to say I have seen no reappearance of this type of canister. I drew the pictures to the attention of the national press who swiftly launched a successful campaign to make it easier for police to enforce on possession of this product. However, even before this, when I took the pictures, if it could be shown that it was being used as a recreational drug it was illegal. Here balloon debris was also present. I should say a much bigger pile of cannisters was on the opposite corner of the road just inside the wall for Trinity House, where there is a rehab facility. The pile should have been in the eyeline of door staff. In addition I visited late morning or early afternoon and the club had closed at about 5am, which didn't really leave time for someone to build up a pile that large.

The premises are unsuitable for use as a strip club for the reasons given above of no adequate ventilation being apparent (although I may be wrong and there may be ventilation which I can't see in place) and no lift being apparent on the plans which I have seen. In addition a smoking shelter is provided which goes against your statutory public health duty by encouraging smoking through making it more comfortable for patrons. The roof was looking a bit the worse for wear on the shelter and the cracking in the building was still apparent last time I checked. However, I intend checking again soon as there has previously

been a flurry of patching up and litter picking before licensing hearings in the past so I will be happy to withdraw or modify this section in the event of change between now and a hearing.

The location is unsuitable for reasons of the character of the neighbourhood and use to which nearby premises are put for reasons, some of which are given above.

In particular it is near open space, ie Horseshoe Common which may attract prostitution by persons unconnected with the applicant. I respectfully remind the committee that there is no requirement to prove harm in a licensing refusal, so you are perfectly entitled to make reasonable assumptions and to act proactively. In other licensing policies which I have seen in appears to be common practice not to license near open spaces such as parks.

You also don't need a policy to be in place, which I say the old Bournemouth policy is in place and your officers have told me is not, to refuse on the grounds of location, only to refuse on the basis of a policy placing a cap on the number of licenses.

As previously stated, it is next to a rehab facility in Trinity House, and it is reasonable to refuse to license near vulnerable people, ie their clients.

It is near the new school, and it is reasonable to refuse on this basis. As stated in judge's remarks in ex parte Christian Institute where the local authority was Newcastle on Tyne, placing a sex establishment in a neighbourhood will attract people that shouldn't be mixing with children. There is no suggestion the applicant breaches license conditions by allowing children, ie anyone under 18 onto the premises when the club is operating, but nevertheless, for youngsters to be walking to and from school past a strip club is not appropriate. Likewise the fact that so many young students away from home and sometimes from their own country are in the area again makes it entirely inappropriate to license a strip club there. The plans to fill empty buildings with student accommodation can't come to fruition if parents balk at funding their children living in such a neighbourhood. I have heard from one language school owner that parents do not like their children to be so near strip clubs.

It is near various restaurants etc which have children's menus and to clubs and bars whose advertising makes it clear that they are aimed at young people so that again strip club licensing is not appropriate. Families eating out late on a warm summer's evening sitting outside and students away from home as well as youngsters from Bournemouth and surrounding areas are not a good mix with sex tourists attracted into the area and marketed to large groups. I don't know how successful the marketing to large groups is but Wiggle's website advertises package deals for groups of up to 30 people. Packages which sell alcohol in advance to anyone including parties before they arrive at the premises strikes me as highly irresponsible, as it may not be possible to honour that if a customer is already intoxicated, or becomes too intoxicated to consume everything bought. I feel that if this is done that it should be clear that non alcoholic drink will be substituted if any member of the party becomes too intoxicated to be served with more alcohol whilst on the premises on the pre appointed date. In addition the package advertised doesn't state the size of bottles offered nor strength of the alcohol, which is important information so breaches the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations. These points are also relevant to unsuitability of the applicant.

It is near religious premises as mentioned at St Peter's Church and also at the nearby synagogue. The town centre Mosque is a little further away but it is still reasonable to assume people will walk to get to it from beyond Wiggle.

The location's neighbourhood has recently been granted some sort of planning permission according to press reports for premises in Glen Fern Road called Boho Grand to include residential and commercial use. As previously mentioned with Citrus building next door and a move to encouraging people to live in town centres, strip club licensing is definitely not appropriate at 159 Old Christchurch Road. In the past planning permission was refused for the upstairs area of this building to be converted to residential flats, but given the improvements in the bus facilities and alternatives to private motor car planned for that road, and the planning move to encouraging car "light" living with minimal commuting the applicant, who owns the building outright through another company if my information is up to date, might be well advised to pursue this course of action for the building. All three strip clubs have had constant advertising tabs for recruitment for dancers since I have been lodging objections and one of the other clubs in Bournemouth was until recently advertising a gallery showing a large number of dancers advertised as performing in Bournemouth but from Watford, where there is a sister club. If you have any concerns that there is an oversupply of dancers available in Bournemouth, which would result in unemployment if a club stops offering sexual entertainment these two facts would seem to contradict this. In addition, I should point out that I have noticed from googling that several night clubs have actually opened up in Sheffield since the last strip club was converted to a regular bar. It is perfectly possible that dancing which doesn't require a sexual entertainment license will replace the existing clubs. I also understand that both pole dancing and aerialist work is excellent exercise so that this may open up employment opportunities as alternatives to sexual entertainment, eg through running exercise classes.

As in previous objections I ask the committee to be mindful of their Public Sector Equality Duty including duty to promote good relations between the sexes and to eliminate harassment, particularly in the light of feedback by women to a public consultation on BCP's sex establishment licensing policy alleging harassment by strip club customers.

I have also been sent images of tokens and a flyer which a third party has told me are being used by Wiggle, which I understand would be a breach of their license conditions. However, I believe the third party may have submitted their own objection.

This is the end of my objection and various appendices follow.

Kind regards

Susan Stockwell

Appendix 1

Green Councillor objects to strip club licence renewal.

12th April 2017



Dear Sir /

Madam,

I am writing as a ward councillor to lodge an objection to the renewal of the Spearmint Rhino licence.

In doing so, I wish to support residents and other businesses in City Ward who are adversely affected by this lap-dancing club.

Whilst Spearmint Rhino has been trading for a number of years, its location is becoming increasingly unsuitable for a lap-dancing club. The growing development of the Cultural Industries Quarter and the expansion of student accommodation and teaching locally are highly relevant to the appropriateness of the location. The premises are located on what is to be known as the Knowledge Gateway, recognising the enhancement of the area as a place of creative knowledge and progressive development.

A lap-dancing club is increasingly at odds with this vision. I am therefore disappointed that the application form submitted does not attempt to address any of the licensing objectives except by stating it is a renewal application.

The nature of a lap-dancing club means there is significant difference in the treatment of the sexes. In particular, I understand the establishment treats the regular staff (mostly if not all, men) as employees but requires the dancers (i.e. women) to be self-employed, with correspondingly lower degrees of employment protection. This is not a matter of choice on the part of the dancers. The local authority must demonstrate it has due regard to the various principles in the public sector equality duty when considering the application, so as to comply with its own legal obligations.

If the authority is minded to grant the licence, I would support a condition requiring all workers, including dancers, to be engaged directly only under the terms of a written contract of employment.

I trust the Committee will take these views into account.

Appendix 2

Plans to open a new strip club in Leicester have been opposed by some because the proposed site would be too close to King Richard III's tomb.

A planning application has been sent to the city council to open the venue, despite claims it would be a "particularly unsuitable location".

If approved, the sexual entertainment venue in Millstone Lane, would only be a few hundred metres from the final resting place of the former King.

King Richard III's remains were reburied inside Leicester Cathedral in 2015, after being dug up from a council car park a stone's throw away.



The proposed venue in Millstone Lane, would only be a few hundred metres from Leicester Cathedral.

Credit: ITV News Central

Labour Councillor Patrick Kitterick, representing the Castle ward, has lodged objections to the application after complaints from residents.

He said: "There are an increasing number of residents in the area, it's not a deserted area of town any more and there are a number of nurseries in the area.

"You are only a few hundred metres from the resting place of a former King of England.

"A number of residents in the area have contacted me to make the objection, it just shouldn't be in an area of family nurseries."

The matter was due to be considered again by the licensing committee on 19 December 2017 but the meeting has been postponed.

Appendix 3 pp approx 325 page count 25th August 2022 Westminster

Appendix 4 objection by licensing department and environmental health pp 295+Westminster 25th Aug 2022

Appendix 5 Objection by police p295 approx and Newquay x2 articles. Lap dancing 'contributes to sex crimes' police claim

BBC 2012

Lap dancing clubs may have contributed to sex crimes in a Cornish town, according to a senior police officer.

Insp Ian Drummond-Smith, from Devon and Cornwall Police, made his claims in a letter objecting to an application to open a new club in Newquay.

He said he was not linking the 14 rapes and 30 sexual assaults directly to the clubs, but their presence "could have been a contributing factor".

The new licence applicant declined to comment ahead of the licence hearing.

The sex crimes referred to by Insp Drummond-Smith took place in the town over a two-year period.

During that time, there were two lap dancing clubs in Newquay, although one was forced to close last year for breaching its licensing conditions.

'Low-level harassment'

Cornwall Council's licensing committee will consider an application for a new lap dancing establishment on Friday.

But the application has been opposed by police and local residents.

Insp Drummond-Smith told BBC News the presence of lap dancing clubs in an area where there were young people and a heavy use of alcohol could be a contributing factor to the sexual offences.

Tracy Earnshaw, who represents a Newquay residents' group, said local people do not want another sex club in the town.

"We have seen an increase in low-level sexual harassment and offensive comments and that's not just at night after nine o'clock, 10 or 11 - this is during the day," she told BBC News.

Last October Ms Earnshaw said previous clubs had their licences removed by Cornwall Council because of "serious, repeated and blatant" breaches.

BBC 2019

Newquay reinvented: 'You stopped finding knickers in your garden'

- Published

6 December 2019

Share



Image source, Mel Bonfield

Image caption,

Newquay remains a popular destination in the summer months and is also a focus of New Year's Eve celebrations

By Johanna Carr

BBC News

In the summer of 2009 Newquay's image was in tatters. The town was known as a hardcore party resort where anything went. Thousands of teenagers made post-exam pilgrimages to the Cornish coast to drink until they passed out, while gangs of stags and hens marauded through the streets, making the town a no-go area after dark for families and couples.

Then two teenagers died falling from cliffs, while a third was seriously injured - all in the space of a few days. Suddenly time was up on Newquay's days of dangerous debauchery.

"I can't describe what it was like when the under-18s were coming," says Tracy Earnshaw, who was involved in campaigning to change the culture of the resort.

"Indecent exposure was the norm. You used to ring Newquay police and not get much response."



Image source, Getty Images

Image caption,

While Newquay's nightlife caused concern, the towns beaches have always been attractive to visitors

In 2009, Tracy lived with her young family in Newquay town centre. Life was pretty tough - they struggled to sleep at night due to the noise, were only able to drive "bangers" because of the number of times wing mirrors and wipers were snapped off, and were trying desperately to sell up and move away.

Her campaigning took up a lot of time.

"My focus was mostly the underage drinking and lap-dancing clubs which contributed to the antisocial behaviour," she says. "They were just all feeding on one another and people were not being held accountable. There was a lot of vested interests and a lot of turning a blind eye."



Image caption,

Tracy Earnshaw says she "very rarely" sees stag dos in Newquay now and the "underage kids have stopped coming"

Now she is pleased nobody wanted to buy her home and is glad she still lives in the town. She becomes emotional talking about how things have changed.

"It has been quite a phenomenal change, actually," she says.

"The less stag groups that came, the less anti-social behaviour there was. You stopped finding knickers in your front garden."

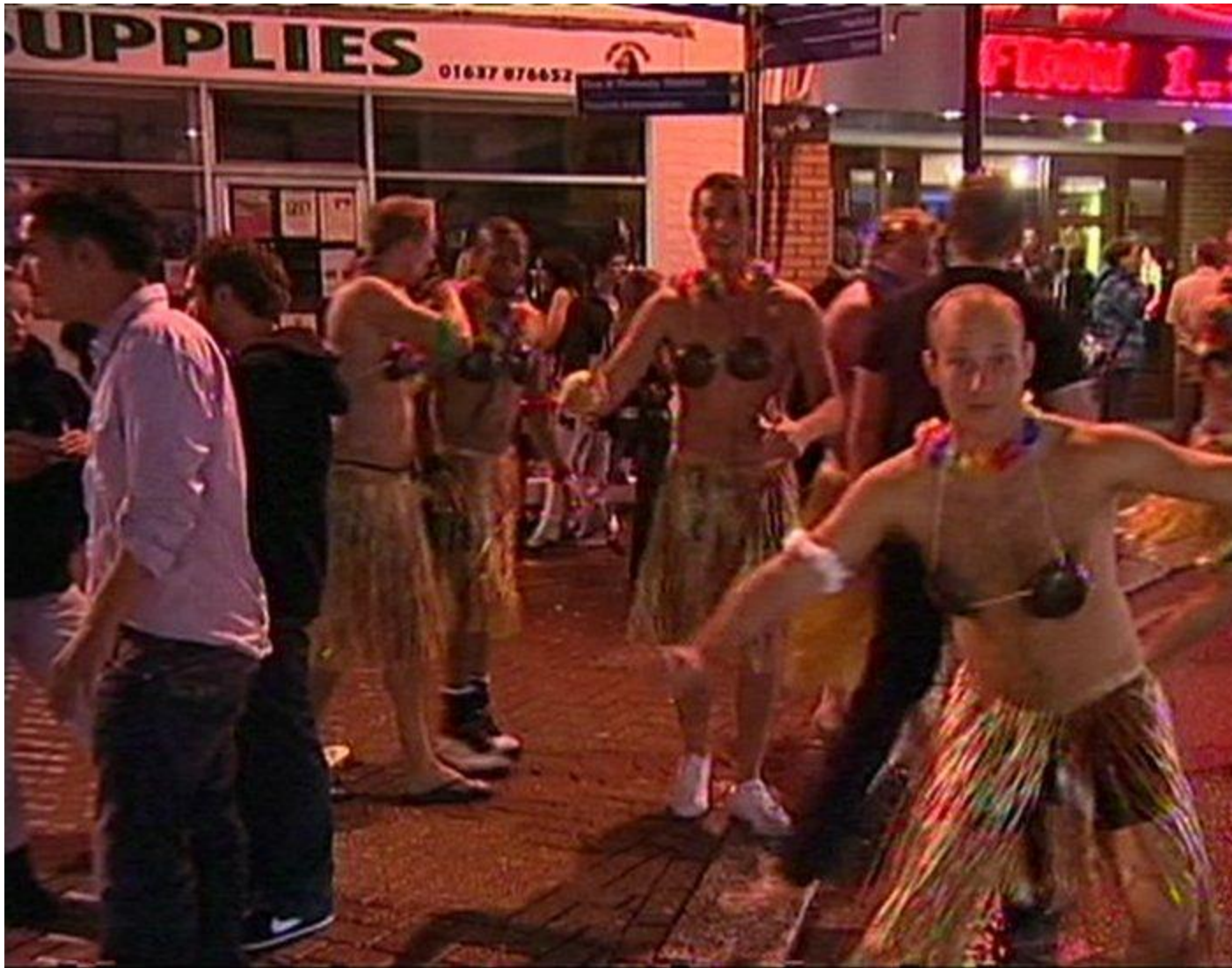


Image caption,

Newquay used to be a mecca for rowdy stag and hen groups

In the immediate aftermath of the deaths in July 2009, residents like Tracy rose up and marched on Newquay Town and Cornwall councils, demanding an end to the permissive culture in the town.

Soon measures were brought in to try to ensure young people's safety. Newquay Safe - an award-winning partnership between the council, police and about 20 other agencies - was set up and schemes like a bar crawl code of conduct, Challenge 25 and alcohol-free under-18s club nights all aimed to tackle the resort's problems.

At the time, Insp Dave Meredith was relatively new to the top policing job in Newquay. Tracy says Insp Meredith, who is retiring at the end of the month, was "instrumental" in changing the culture of the town.



Image caption,

Insp Dave Meredith: "I have always been open and honest about my tough stance"

"He didn't really care who he upset by simply doing his job," she says.

"I would say he was the first person who actually looked at the problem and decided something should happen. He wasn't shy about going into licensed premises and saying 'what is going on here?'"

Insp Meredith says Newquay is "absolutely a different place" today.

[Skip X post by Insp Dave Meredith](#)

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End of X post by Insp Dave Meredith

"It was sort of a Wild West town back then," he says.

"It was just power drinking and fighting and all that... I knew it was going to be a really challenging job. It is great that we have moved forward in 10 years from something that was causing concern to a lot of people. It was 10 years or so of hard work."



Image source, Getty Images

Image caption,

Police started meeting teenagers as they arrived in town to check their bags for alcohol and offer advice

He describes himself as "very forthright" and says he was an advocate of "robust" action.

He says one thing he looked at was the town's lap-dancing clubs. He found there was "compelling evidence showing issues with them".

"That is why we decided to take them to licensing review," he says. "I think Newquay is a far safer place with the closure of these lap-dancing clubs."



Image caption,

This alleyway used to be home to a sex shop but now hosts a health food store

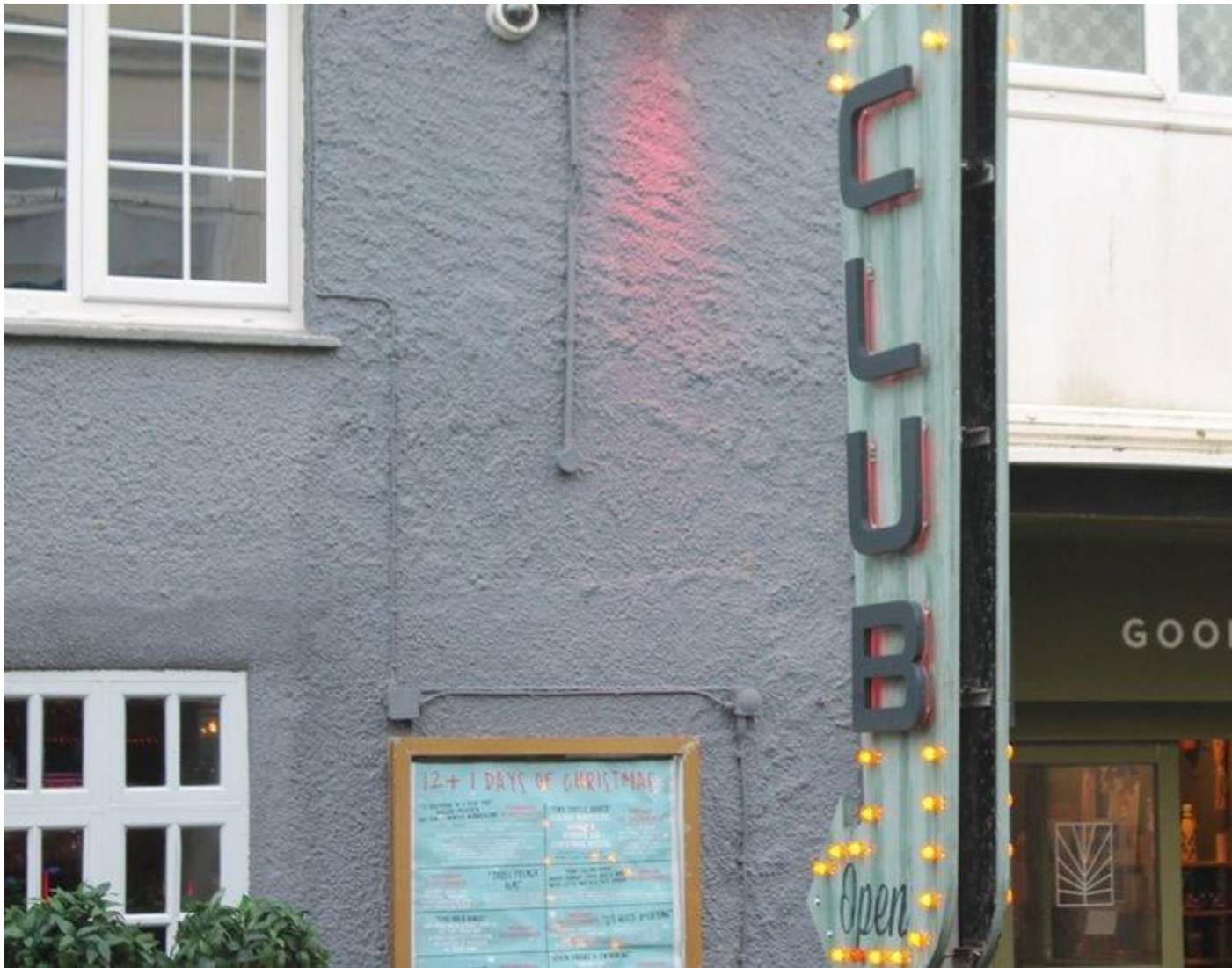


Image caption,

Newquay's pubs and clubs exist alongside ethical food shops, yoga studios and wine bars

This summer for the first time in many years Newquay's nightclubs and campsites did not run any dry nights for under-18s because there were no longer enough coming to make it worthwhile.

Insp Meredith says there is now a "very robust policy making sure that under-18s don't go into pubs and clubs". He says they work very closely with the licensees.

"They realise it is not worth risking their business by letting these people in," he says. "These days we don't have a real problem with underage drinking."



Image caption,

Newquay still has a busy nightlife but many venues close earlier and do not allow people in offensive dress through the doors

Another change has been what is acceptable for people to wear while out drinking in Newquay.

A [mankini ban](#) has been credited with helping to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. Insp Meredith says this was never a police initiative but rather the venues banding together and deciding they no longer wanted customers dressed in that way.

Inflatable genitalia and T-shirts bearing offensive slogans were also prohibited in a code of conduct for the Newquay Pubwatch scheme, meaning people wearing or carrying such items would not get into venues signed up to it.

Robin Jones is one of the faces of the new Newquay - a town of upmarket cafes, wine bars and yoga studios. He owns a wine and tapas bar and says life and holidays here have become more family-orientated.



Image caption,

Robin Jones says he feels sorry for stag groups who come to Newquay not realising how much things have changed

Robin says he would not have wanted to live in Newquay in 2009 but moved to the town seven years ago and loves it.

"It is such a beautiful place around the beaches and the coastline," he says. "I think it was massively let down by the town identity and the culture that went with it. House prices have risen dramatically and I think that is attracting a different sort of person to the town. There happened to be three wine bars all started up about the same time three years ago."

He says he thinks their success is down to Newquay's new clientele wanting somewhere a bit more upmarket.



Image caption,

The evolution of the town has included the development of high-end apartment blocks

The entrepreneur says there are fewer stag and hen dos now and those that do come and dress up tend to get turned away. "A lot of the businesses won't let them in any more," he says. "I feel a bit sorry for them because they are walking around with nowhere to go to.

"All the people that come in the bar say what a different town it is and how much nicer and calmer it is."

[Tourism data from Visit Britain, external](#) shows Newquay does not appear to have suffered a big drop in visitor numbers since the changes. The tourism survey indicates there were 526,000 visits to the town in 2009 and 441,000 in 2010. Between 2016 and 2018 there was an average of 487,000 visits each year.



Image caption,

Debbie Anderson-Jones says the town is far less busy at night these days

You may also be interested in:

- [Spitfire pilots return after round-the-world trip](#)
- ['Only complete' Roman egg found during dig](#)
- [Trafalgar Square Christmas tree branded a turkey](#)

Debbie Anderson-Jones has also noticed how much calmer Newquay is. She started volunteering as a street pastor a decade ago and has seen the worst the nightlife had to offer.

The street pastor scheme has now ended and these days she runs Pirans Angels, which offers a similar service on a reduced number of nights.

Of the drinking culture, she says: "It started on a Saturday afternoon and [you used to think] if we are going to town we have got to get in and out before they start... by 10pm people were like 'you need to get off the streets because all hell will break loose'."



Image caption,

Debbie says scenes like this one are a rarity these days

She says they are now seeing far fewer people on the streets who have made themselves vulnerable through drink, and anyone who causes trouble is effectively instantly banned from all the other venues.

"If someone is difficult in one club, door staff and the cameras work together to identify that person and that group and relay that message to every pub and restaurant," she says. "If you are kicked out of one place you are not getting in anywhere. We will say to them 'I just heard what you did, you are all on CCTV, you might as well go home now'."

Debbie says the stag groups that still come are different from their predecessors and seem to want to do other activities as well as drinking.



Image caption,

Tracy Earnshaw, pictured in 2012, no longer spends "far too much time" writing letters calling for change in Newquay

As for Tracy, she says her life has completely changed.

Recounting incidents of being flashed at and meeting a 15-year-old girl wandering the streets after being raped, she says she can't quite believe how much is different, and credits the change to the right people being in the right places at the right time.

"I think a lot of people will forever be grateful to Dave Meredith because he made a difference," she says. "These kids who were 15 and 16 were here to get hammered without any accountability... it was grim and we were made to feel guilty if you had a problem with it.

"You had to be really resilient. We always knew we were right and what was happening was wrong. It was unacceptable and actually it was against the law."

- Pu

Appendix 6 Lesley Dunlop tourism

Wiggle's licence in Bournemouth renewed despite councillors' concerns

- Published

8 June 2022

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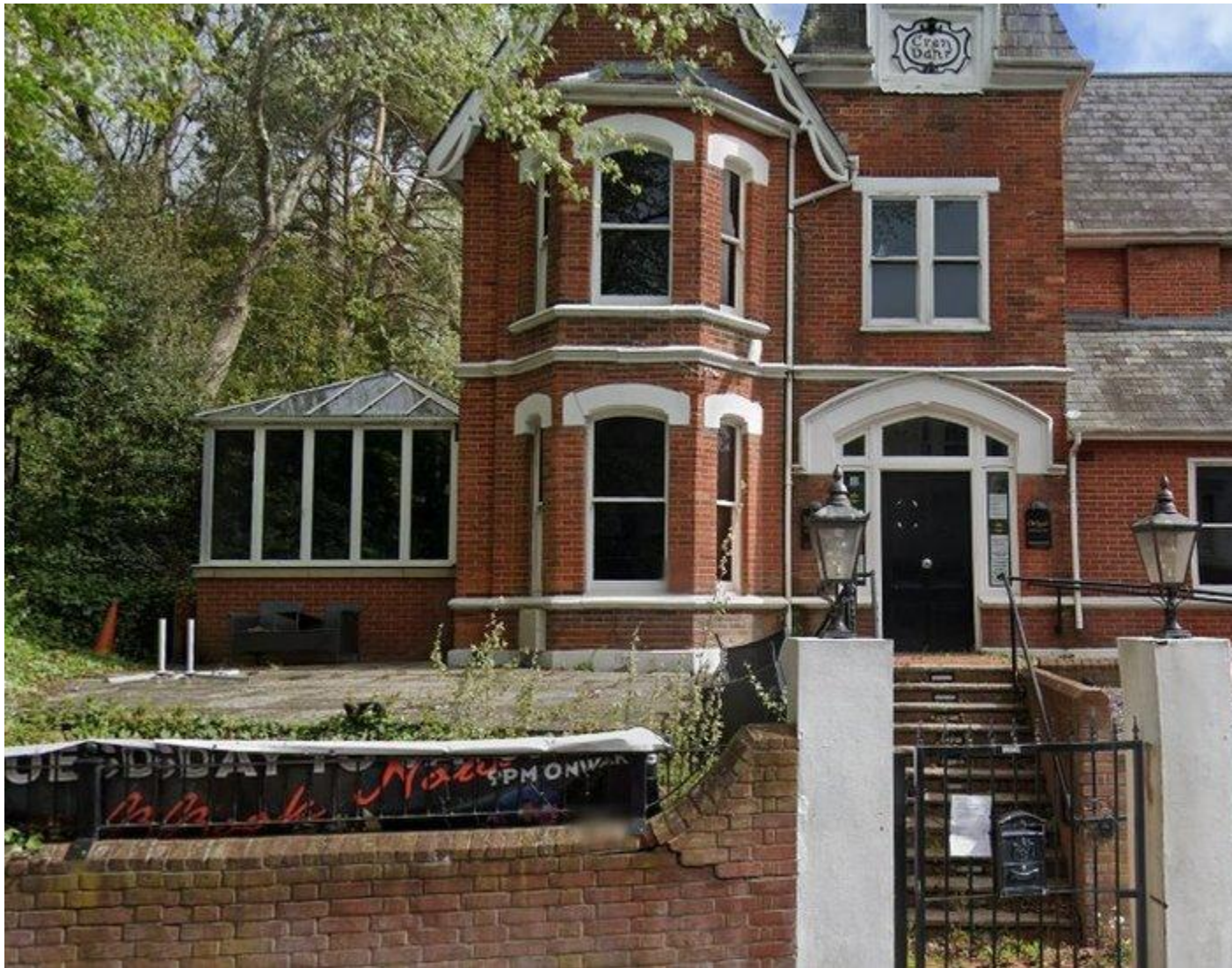


Image source, Google

Image caption,

Wiggle's licence has been extended for another year by BCP Council

A strip club's licence has been renewed for another year despite a councillor complaining she had been harassed by punters as she walked past.

Police and the local council had no objection to Wiggle, which has been operating in Bournemouth since 2006, staying open.

But two councillors objected and said they felt there was "no place" in the area for "sex establishments".

BCP Council's licensing sub-committee approved the renewal on Tuesday.

'Harmful sexist culture'

Independent councillor Lisa Northover said she had been harassed by men who had been to the venue.

"I've had this happen to me so I know it happens. It's not a moral objection," she added.

"I don't want to be spoken to like that by people who have just spent a couple of hundred pounds in Wiggle getting het up."

Councillor Beverley Dunlop, a Conservative, said she objected to the renewal of Wiggle's licence "in the strongest terms".

In written comments to the sub-committee for a meeting on 26 May, she said venues "which profit from sexual exploitation and promote a harmful sexist culture are not compatible with being a world-class destination".

- [Cent](#)

Appendix 7 BID objection-available on request

Appendix 8 correspondence with White Ribbon available on request.

This concludes my objection.

I consent to my email address being disclosed to the applicant purely for the purposes of any correspondence they may wish to enter into regarding this objection only.

Kind regards

Susan Stockwell

25.03.25 @ 22:25

Hi

Could the attached pdf of upcoming events advertised at Wiggle Bournemouth please be added to my objection to SEV licensing this year. They add to the unsuitability of the

applicant seen in the context of the Equality Act. The Public Sector Equality Duty obliges BCP council to eliminate harassment, so that licensing an applicant running promotions sexualising the uniform of female health workers and police officers will undermine this. Another promotion sexualising children with a "school girl theme" speaks for itself. The "funk me" promotion implies that the no touching rule can be broken as the word funk can be easily confused with a similar swear word meaning sexual intercourse. The MILF promotion still seems to be offered in Bournemouth, despite being withdrawn in Southampton's Wiggle.

Kind regards

Susan Stockwell