

Apology to Edingale

I just wanted to make contact with the village of Edingale to apologise for the shocking traffic conditions on Thursday that were a direct result of the Bearded Theory Festival.

If there had been some horrible crash or other external reasons that made the traffic worse, that would have been one thing however there was not and it was purely down to poor organisation.

We are always very strict with event organisers about their traffic management and the need to get vehicles off the road as quickly as possible. Whilst Catton needs the events to keep us running, we are very conscious of the impact on local residents and do our absolute best to pass this on to the event's organisers so they can do everything possible to minimise this.

Due to the large amount of Campervans and caravans, Bearded Theory has always struggled to come up with a solution for getting traffic off the road quickly and efficiently.

I had a long meeting with them after last year's event and they were told in no uncertain terms to make sure that they did a much better job with their traffic management.

You can imagine my frustration when it became painfully clear very early on Thursday that there had been no improvements and things were in fact much worse.

Like a lot of you, I was stuck in the tail backs for over 2 hours, there is absolutely no excuse for it and you all have every right to feel very aggrieved. I also attended the entrance where the problems stemmed, tearing my hair out at the painfully slow and inefficient process they were using and could, unfortunately do little to improve things at that stage.

Whilst Catton does not organise these events, the blame unfortunately but quite rightly, rests on my shoulders and all I can do is apologise whole heartedly and promise that I will do everything possible to make sure that does not happen again.

Although the event in itself is a lovely one, I am not sure at this point what the future holds for the Bearded Theory Festival but if it is to come back next year, there will have to be some wholesale changes and I also believe they too owe Edingale village a huge apology.

As for the future of Catton events, we will continue to have them here as they are necessary for our survival and, whilst they might change from year to year, I have no plans to have any more.

The 3 main festivals that we have are (possibly) Bearded Theory in May, Sausage and Cider in July and Bloodstock in August. Also the firework festival in September, although this is a little smaller.

The other problem I'm sure some of you will have had over the years is the noise. Whilst this is very dependent on wind direction, there are very strict council limitations that the organisers must adhere to and they are constantly out in the villages monitoring the noise. They all have a noise complaints hotline (on their website but if not, we will have it) that anyone can call if the noise gets too much.

I promise to keep working on improving these each year and to never have the same terrible tail backs we had this last bank holiday.

If anyone ever has any issues, or just wants to have a rant, please email the office on estateoffice@catton-hall.com and we can try to do something about it.

Once again, my sincerest apologies for any of you affected by the traffic from the festival at the weekend.

Thanks

Oliver Neilson