

Drinks ban to be imposed at village games

A summer fête which has taken place for more than 100 years has been hit with a late drinks ban after a mistake on the licence application.

Dirleton Fete and Games traditionally sees people wander the Village Green with glasses of Pimms, prosecco and beer, sold from a gazebo on the day.

However concerns were raised when the application for this year's event outlined a drinks tent with no mention of visitors being allowed to take their purchases out into the open.

A meeting of East Lothian Licensing Board was told the licence application was the same as in previous years and the reference to a 'tent' was simply the way organisers referred to the gazebo.

But the board's licensing standards officer pointed out that it bore no resemblance to what was being described as happening on the day and, in fact, suggested licensing rules had been broken in previous years.

She told a meeting of the board: "The application is solely for a drinks tent and on-sales to be consumed within the tent and a designated area. It does not cover the village green and would not allow people to drink outside the tent."

Miranda Moyes, from the event, said it would be a 'big change' for people to be required to drink in a tent adding it was the

way organisers referred to the gazebo.

She told the board: "This is not the sort of event people come to to drink, it is the sort of event where people come, buy a drink and wander around."

Ms Moyes asked the board to consider granting the licence for a drinks tent so the organisers could try and arrange to have one which matched the restrictions in place in time for the games, which take place on June 22.

Board members were advised there would not be time for a corrected application to be submitted and approved ahead of the event, with the next board meeting scheduled for the week after the games.

After a short recess to discuss the case, board convenor Councillor John McMillan said that the tradition of people attending the games and drinking on the Village Green meant the board could not approve the current application.

Cllr McMillan said: "I hope in the next year organisers will be able to look again at this and work with us to put in a new application."

Ms Moyes said: "It is disappointing for our event but I do understand. Hopefully we can get to grips with what is needed for next year."

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter.

