

Moors Valley Country Park & Forest premises licence application statement

The key purpose for our Moors Valley Country Park & Forest premises licence application is to host an exciting and family focussed seasonal illuminated light trail event in 2024 around Halloween.

This Halloween light trail is the only event planned for 2024 under this premises licence and is purposely a family friendly event that showcases Moors Valley Country Park & Forest. The illuminated light trail will run for a limited 10 consecutive day run around Halloween and will operate from 4pm, with last entry at 9pm. The trail is a 1-mile walking experience on existing forest walking trails with lighting and audio effects including incidental background music (there are no live musical elements) including some actors / costumed interactive elements.

The whole event is programmed and designed to be family friendly entertainment and similar to other seasonal illumination events already held in Dorset including Christmas at Kingston Lacy. We feel this event will be a great asset to showcase Moors Valley Country Park and Forest and will bring in new and existing audiences to our visitor attraction.

The event is a tightly capacity controlled ticketed event, segmented into 15-minute arrival slots. This staggered approach is to ensure the event has a steady and manageable flow of vehicles and attendees. We are not anticipating there being any more than around 2,000 attendees on-site at any one point, which is lower than what the site can experience on a normal busy summer day. All cars will be easily accommodated within our on-site car park, and due to steady arrival/departure, we are not expecting any issues onto the neighbouring road network.

There will be hot and cold refreshments available, including mulled wine and beer. The audience profile that attends these events are low risk, including a low consumption of alcohol, due to it being a family friendly entertainment. Data from previous similar events held at Blenheim Palace confirms that only 1 in 5 people who attend this type of event purchased an alcoholic drink. The most popular beverage sold at this family event is hot chocolate.

We will be working with RG Live, part of the Sony Group, who are the UK's leading provider of illuminated light trails who have successfully brought these family light trail experiences to several other notable UK visitor attractions including other Forestry England sites, National Trust properties (including Kingston Lacy in Dorset), Kew Gardens and Blenheim Palace.

A full comprehensive suite of event documentation, including all relevant health and safety documentation, will be provided as per our proposed licence conditions.

We have sent to the Dorset Council Safety Advisory Group (SAG) a full suite of event documentation from our event partner who executed a similar illuminated light trail event hosted at a Forestry England site in 2023. This event documentation was sent to demonstrate we are partnering up with reputable, experienced event professionals who have a proven track record of planning and delivery this type of illuminated light trail event experiences in ecologically sensitive venues.

Documentation submitted to the SAG includes:

- Event Management Plan
- Construction Phase Plan
- Onsite Health & Safety Policy
- Site Operations General Risk Assessment

- Method Statement
- Extreme Weather Plan
- Fire Incident Flow Chart
- Medical Incident Flow Chart
- Comms Plan

In summary, to confirm we are not planning on doing any event activity with live music / concert elements, hence why this regulated entertainment is not included within the premises licence application. On advice of Dorset Council, we will now also be removing the regulated entertainment of recorded music. The background music played during our illuminated light trail events is incidental only to complement the lighting of the trees and installations.

While we have hosted outdoor cinema at other Forestry England sites elsewhere in the country, there are no current plans to do this at Moors Valley Country Park & Forest.

We are confident the illuminated light trail we are proposing around Halloween will be a low risk, family friendly enjoyable event with minimal impact that will meet all four of the licencing objectives.