

REPORT TO: LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE 30 JUNE 2021

REPORT BY: LICENSING MANAGER

REPORT AUTHOR: NICKII HUMPHREYS

**Licensing Act 2003 – Section 20 - Mandatory Condition - Exhibition of Films
"Drop City" - Guildhall Square Film Screening**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is for the Committee to exercise its statutory powers as Licensing Authority to impose an age classification using the BBFC film classification categories in respect of a film exhibition to be shown on the Big Screen, Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth. The date for this exhibition is Sunday 4 July 2021.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Section 20 of the Licensing Act 2003 provides that where a premises licence or club premises certificate authorises the exhibition of a film, it must include a condition requiring the admission of children to films to be restricted in accordance with recommendations given either by a body designated under section 4 of the Video Recordings Act 1984 specified in the licence (currently only the British Board of Film Classification - "BBFC") or by the Licensing Authority itself.

A Temporary Event Notice has been given to the Licensing Authority for an exhibition of a film on Sunday 4 July 2021. The premises user is Erika Smith, Festival Director for Ports Fest acting on behalf of No 6 Cinema, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

The applicants wish to exhibit a feature film entitled "Drop City" and have advised that it has not been submitted to the BBFC for classification and therefore the Port Fest organisers and Boathouse No. 6 are seeking local authority clearance in order to exhibit this film, based upon the BBFC film classification groups.

Further information concerning the organisers has been provided below from their [web site](#):

"Ports Fest is an award winning festival that has been providing cultural experiences in the City of Portsmouth for over 20 years, engaging with multiple audiences in Portsmouth venues and surrounding areas.

Our ambitious multi-arts programme tries to respond to the city's identity as a commuter belt, sea city, and area of rich cultural history.

Ports Fest is ambitious about delivering work of the highest quality that illuminates the lives of people from all backgrounds. The growth of the festival since its inception in 1999 has been recognised as largely due to the active participation of its arts and cultural partners and the efforts of a core of dedicated individuals.

2021 will see some new changes, most noticeably a change to the number of days that the festival runs. The festival will now be referred to as Ports Fest rather than Portsmouth Festivities. With this name change comes new branding, reflecting the need for a strong and credible image that represents the direction in which the festival is moving".

3. SUMMARY OF FILM SYNOPSIS

Year: 2012

Genre: Documentary

Duration: 82 minutes

DROP CITY tells a story of whimsical innovation and the drive to create a new civilization on the scrapheap of a wasteful society.

Often cited as the first rural commune of the 1960s, Drop City was an experimental community on the plains of Southern Colorado that blended practices of art, architecture, and resourceful living in ways that came to define a global counterculture.

Visually arresting, idiosyncratic and utopian, Drop City's significance has deepened as a new generation embraces a do-it-yourself spirit for confronting an uncertain future.

BBFC CLASSIFICATION GUIDELINES

BBFC is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit, co-regulatory body. Its role is to classify:

- Films, trailers and advertisements on behalf of local authorities who licence cinemas;
- Video works under the Video Recordings Act 1984;
- Video works which are distributed over the internet under a voluntary, self-regulatory service;
- Commercial and internet content distributed via mobile networks under a voluntary, self-regulatory service.

The Classification Guidelines produced by the BBFC follow extensive public consultation, as well as other research, expert advice and its accumulated experience over many years. The Guidelines pay particular attention to changes in public taste, attitudes and concerns as well as changes in the law. They also take into account new evidence from research or expert sources. The guidelines are reviewed on a regular basis.

The guiding principles applied by the BBFC are:

- To protect children and vulnerable adults from potentially harmful or otherwise unsuitable media content;
- To empower consumers, particularly parents and those with responsibility for children, to make informed viewing decisions.

Attached as Appendix B is a copy of the most recent BBFC Guidelines but in summary the following general advice applies to the classification categories in terms of age restrictions:

U Universal - Suitable for all

A U film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over, although it is impossible to predict what might upset any particular child. U films should be set within a positive framework and should offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence, threat or horror.

See Page 18 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

PG Parental Guidance - General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children

A PG film should not unsettle a child aged around eight or older, Unaccompanied children of any age may watch, but parents are advised to consider whether the content may upset younger, or more sensitive, children.

See Page 20 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

12A/12 - Suitable for 12 years and over

Films classified 12A and video works classified 12 contain material that is not generally suitable for children aged under 12. No one younger than 12 may see a 12A film in a cinema unless accompanied by an adult. Adults planning to take a child under 12 to view a 12A film should consider whether the film is suitable for that child.

See Page 22 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

15 - Suitable only for 15 years and over

No one younger than 15 may see a 15 film in a cinema. No one younger than 15 may rent and or buy a 15 rated video work.

See Page 24 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

18 - Suitable only for adults

No one younger than 18 may see an 18 film in a cinema. No one younger than 18 may rent or buy an 18 rated video work.

See Page 26 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

R18 - To be shown only specially licensed cinemas, or supplied only in licensed sex shops and to adults only.

The R18 category is a special and legally-restricted classification primarily for explicit works of consenting sex or strong fetish material involving adults. Films may only be shown to adults in specially licensed cinemas, and video works may be supplied to adults only in licensed sex shops. R18 video works may not be supplied by mail order.

See Page 28 of the Guidelines for more comprehensive guidance.

4. APPEAL PROVISIONS

There are no appeal provisions in the Act in respect of any classification decision made by the Licensing Authority.

5. APPENDICES

A. BBFC Guidelines.

THE COMMITTEE IS REQUESTED TO DETERMINE THE MATTER

**Licensing Manager
For Head of Service**