# Thousands attend unauthorised 420 cannabis event in Bristol’s Castle Park causing disruption



On Easter Sunday, Bristol’s Castle Park became the scene of a large, unauthorised cannabis event, drawing thousands of attendees and generating significant noise and disruption in the city centre. The event, part of the global 420 celebrations marking cannabis culture and opposing drug prohibition, saw competing sound systems creating a chaotic atmosphere that resonated throughout the day.

Residents living near Castle Park reported enduring over 12 hours of loud music, which transformed the public space into a bustling, unregulated gathering. One local described the experience to the Express as “very depressing,” adding that “the music was awful” and painted a picture of people “looking high, wandering about in a daze.” The festivities led to a considerable amount of litter being left in the park once the event concluded.

Despite the known significance of 420, Bristol City Council had refused a temporary licence for the use of sound systems back in February. Nonetheless, the event went ahead, attracting individuals from across the South West, some reportedly bringing sound rigs that had been confiscated elsewhere.

The Bristol Cannabis Club, a prominent local advocacy group, made clear its disapproval of the event’s recent developments. Alister Flowers, co-founder and manager of the club, expressed disappointment in comments given to Bristol Live. He said, “We are shocked how the 420 event has been taken over by free party sound system crews.” He criticised the atmosphere of the gathering, suggesting that “the majority [of people in attendance this weekend] were all on class A drugs and drinking heavily.”

Flowers criticised local authorities for their refusal to allow the event to be licensed or controlled, stating: “We strongly feel it’s gone this way as Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Police refuse to let us license, fence and control it.” According to him, the event no longer represents the cannabis community but has instead been “hijacked” by outsiders using it for their own benefit. The Bristol Cannabis Club and allied organisations have submitted licensing applications annually since 2017, but without success, leading to a loss of regulation and oversight.

Police confirmed their presence at the unauthorised gathering, acknowledging the challenges in managing such an event. A statement from Avon and Somerset Police explained: “Police attended an unlicensed gathering with multiple sound systems in Castle Park on Sunday. Thousands were there for the unofficial international '420 Day', a public rejection of laws restricting cannabis use.” The force received numerous complaints, primarily concerning the “impact of very loud music on the wider community.”

In the early hours before the event, police seized a sound system at 3am, but noted that their powers to regulate music volume during the day were limited. They ensured the sound was turned off by 11pm. The police and ambulance teams responded to various incidents throughout the day, including medical emergencies and violent outbreaks, resulting in several arrests.

The event highlighted ongoing tensions between celebration, community interests, law enforcement, and local governance regarding cannabis policy and public events. Castle Park, which has hosted thousands for annual 420 gatherings in past years, now faces questions around licensing, control, and the future direction of these public demonstrations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/police-powerless-shut-down-all-day-party-castle-park/> - Confirms the unauthorised 4/20 event in Castle Park with multiple sound systems, resident complaints about noise, police limitations in daytime regulation, and arrests.
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPe2zaJOTOU> - Mentions the 420 event in Castle Park and its association with global cannabis culture, aligning with the article's context about the event's purpose.
3. <https://www.magzter.com/de/stories/newspaper/Bristol-Post/A-RAVE-WITH-CANNABIS-RESIDENT-HITS-OUT-AT-420-EVENT-IN-PARK> - Details the annual 4/20 event's nature as a cannabis-focused gathering with resident complaints, corroborating noise and community impact claims.
4. <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/police-powerless-shut-down-all-day-party-castle-park/> - Reiterates the police statement about pre-emptive sound system seizure at 3 AM, limited daytime powers, and nighttime shutdown at 11 PM.
5. <https://www.magzter.com/de/stories/newspaper/Bristol-Post/A-RAVE-WITH-CANNABIS-RESIDENT-HITS-OUT-AT-420-EVENT-IN-PARK> - Supports the article’s claim about the event’s shift from cannabis advocacy to a less-regulated gathering, as noted by local stakeholders.
6. <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/police-powerless-shut-down-all-day-party-castle-park/> - Confirms the Bristol Cannabis Club’s licensing application struggles since 2017 and the council’s refusal to permit regulated events.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2045799/cannabis-rave-trashes-community-park-sparks-complaints-over-awful-music> - Please view link - unable to able to access data