

Cheltenham Borough Council,
GL50 9SA,

18th June 2025

Sirs,

Re Tan's Coffee Box (TCB), located in St. Luke's Church grounds ,GL53 7JJ

I understand that Tanya Baxter who has the above micro business is being pressurised by Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) to pay £5,000 approx for a Licence Consent Fee. Her micro-business is run at St. Luke's Church which is private land belonging to the Church of England . She is there at the invitation of the vicar Patrick Wheaton, having been through thorough in depth interviews by members of the PCC.

Prior to launching her TBC micro-business almost twelve months ago she checked with you, CBC, regarding any licencing fee and was told that no fee would be necessary and drew up her business plan accordingly. You are now reneging on this which is *dishonourable and despicable* in itself, all the more so because of the exorbitant and *ridiculous* sum of money you are demanding; it is out of proportion to any turnover such a small business could reasonably hope to have.


Tan at TCB gives an excellent service to the local residents and others, such as staff, patients and visitors at Cheltenham General Hospital, workmen in the area, visitors to the church attending mid-week services, weddings and funerals. The presence of TCB engenders a healthy sense of community and neighbourly support which can be lacking in many other areas of our town. Also the quality of her products is excellent and appreciated, as testified by all who patronise her very regularly.

CBC may be short of money but failing to support micro-businesses will not help the town thrive. Unreasonable greedy demands may well see many such businesses close down in which case CBC will receive nothing. Surely it is preferable to make a modest, reasonable request and allow businesses to flourish; happy people, happy town, thriving community.

My husband, who supports me with this letter, was a District Councillor in the east of the country, for 43 years. He and the Council were successful and repeatedly re-elected because they listened to the people and supported them.

Yours faithfully,

Meg Ranger (nee Lunt)



Fwd: Tan's Coffee Box - request for licensing arrangement to remain at the same fee

1 message

Tan's Coffee Box

Wed, Jun 18, 2025 at 9:27 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 17 June 2025 at 22:04:37 BST
To: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Tan's Coffee Box - request for licensing arrangement to remain at the same fee

Dear Licensing Officer & Appeals Committee,

Re: Tan's Coffee Box, St Luke's Church, Cheltenham

I was dismayed to discover that this absolute gem of a business was at risk of closure due to potentially being subject to much higher and onerous trading license fees. I sincerely hope that this can be reviewed in favour of remaining at the current rate, so that the business to continue to trade. I would like to raise several points to support this view:

Firstly, it is highly disadvantageous to Tanya to allow her to build up her business at her own cost and effort on the basis of an agreed licensing fee, and then to switch it to a higher tariff, despite the nature of the business not changing. She has made a significant core investment up front and in good faith. It is hard to understand how the proposed change in fees could be regarded as fair or reasonable.

Secondly, Tanya has established a business that provides far, far more to the St Luke's community and hospital communities than a typical coffee van or café. I am in deep awe of Tanya's ability to quietly build a sense of community, effortlessly drawing people together and providing an important space for a very wide range of local residents and visitors. If I could use my own experience by way of example: I have been coming to manage my elderly parents' rental property on St Luke's Road following their sudden and significant decline in health. Initially I knew no one in the area, and was somewhat overwhelmed by the task in hand. After no more than 3 or 4 visits, stopping off to buy a coffee each time, I now feel incredibly supported by the local community, and have made valuable links within the community, which has helped me immeasurably in the work I am doing there. I am now on friendly terms with many of the neighbours and local residents. This would not have been possible without Tanya's amazing ability to facilitate social exchange and connections. As I have continued to visit the van, I have seen a number of vulnerable residents come to the coffee van, and on each occasion be the beneficiary of considered and sensitive support, whether this be directly from Tanya, or from other customers. It is so heartwarming to bear witness to this, and I feel strongly that this kind of social cohesion is what makes communities special. It would be an enormous loss to the St Luke's communities to have this business fold. I have also seen hospital patients, carers and staff find sanctuary at the van. In one case, the patient needed to remain outside for health reasons, in other cases, staff taking breaks from stressful shifts in a peaceful outdoor space.

Email: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/>

From: Giles Wadsworth [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 June 2025 11:25
To: Licensing (CBC) <licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Subject: Tan's Coffee Box

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

F.A.O Jacob

Dear Sir

I am writing regarding Tan's Coffee Box. I understand that she is being charged a significant increase in her license fee for the next 12 months, which is threatening to make her business unviable. I'm writing to ask you to reconsider this please.

The arrival of Tan's Coffee Box at the St Luke's churchyard has helped the community flourish in a number of ways, not least providing a service to visitors to Cheltenham General Hospital opposite and to ambulance and paramedic crews who regularly stop by.

As a member of St Lukes and, until recently, the treasurer, I helped to facilitate Tanya's start up at the St Luke's Churchyard having had a previous coffee van business attempt to do the same but to fail.

In Tanya's case, her consistency, her good nature and her pragmatic approach have all helped her business to thrive and to provide a vital service for the local community. It would be a massive shame if she was to have to close down.

I do hope that you will reconsider this increase and revert to the previous rate.

Your sincerely

Giles Wadsworth

member of St Luke's Church

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Dear Mr Coleman

We are writing to express our support of Tans Coffee Box.

Tania has worked incredibly hard to offer the residents, community and hospital patients and NHS staff a place where they can gather for a decent coffee and chat. It is an important part of the St Lukes community and we would be extremely disappointed if Tania had to stop this amazing micro business due to council licensing charges.

Surely there can be some way of keeping this valuable local business alive.

Thank you

Kind regards

Jane and Campbell Macpherson

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Fwd: Tans Coffee Box St Luke's

1 message

Tan's Coffee Box

Wed, Jun 18, 2025 at 9:29 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Keely Surman [REDACTED]
Date: 9 June 2025 at 19:36:08 BST
To: tanscoffeebox@outlook.com
Subject: Fwd: Tans Coffee Box St Luke's

Hi Tan,

My email was a bit blunt but it all counts!

Fingers crossed you get enough support.

Keely X

Begin forwarded message:

From: Keely Surman [REDACTED]
Date: 6 June 2025 at 09:14:31 BST
To: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Subject: Tans Coffee Box St Luke's

FOA Jacob Doleman

Good morning,

On hearing through our St Luke's community that the council wish to impose a huge consent fee on Tans coffee box, I wish to support Tan & her business by objecting to this proposal.

Tans coffee box is the hub of our small community and for the council to impose this fee on her would be criminal.

Is this what the council wants? To eliminate all small community hubs by being so greedy?

Keely Surman
24 St Luke's Road.



Fwd: Tan's coffee box St Luke's

1 message

Tan's Coffee Box

Wed, Jun 18, 2025 at 9:31 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lace Carter
Date: 5 June 2025 at 17:22:40 BST
To: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Cc:
Subject: Tan's coffee box St Luke's

To Whom it may concern,

I am emailing in regard to the coffee shop 'Tan's coffee box' that is situated in the grounds of St Luke's church.

I would just like to bring to your attention how brilliant it has been having them there.

I have been undergoing gruelling cancer treatment at Cheltenham General Hospital for the past year and have had my fair share of hospital views- walls, ceiling tiles and hospital equipment! Going for a coffee within the hospital isn't very enjoyable as you feel there is no escape in between treatments when often you are in the hospital grounds for 8+ hours attending various appointments. Being able to walk across the road to Tan's coffee box has been an absolute godsend to myself and many others I have gotten to know in the oncology unit.

It has helped to boost morale thus improving my mental health significantly not only from the owner of the box herself who always offers a listening ear, support and encouragement along with a smile and an incredible cup of coffee! But also by allowing people like me who are immunocompromised to be able to be out in the fresh air to enjoy a hot drink and company without the concern of the risk of illnesses or infections being transmitted to us when our bodies are at their lowest. Being able to go there 3- 4 times a week has been such a support to me and many others. It has helped me to become part of that community, striking up a lovely relationship with the parish as well as Tanya herself which in turn has been a massive support me also.

I would also like to show my appreciation as not just a patient but an NHS employee. I work within Cheltenham General Hospital on a full contract and although I have been unable to work for a year, many of my friends and colleagues pop over to 'the box' during their lunch breaks for a well deserved break away from the hustle and bustle of their departments. They have also built up a lovely relationship with Tanya and enjoy going to see her as often as they can.

I really hope that this will be a permanent fixture as I know a lot of people benefit from it being there and I know a lot of people who would be in support of this.

Thank you for allowing such an unsung hero to run her business from there- long may it continue!

Kind Regards,
Lace Carter

From: Mia Griffin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 10 June 2025 08:16
To: Licensing (CBC) <licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Subject: Letter of Support for Tan's Coffee Box

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my full support for Tan's Coffee Box and to highlight the significant and positive impact it has made within our local community.

Tan's Coffee Box is far more than a coffee stop—it is a welcoming and inclusive space that brings people together, supports local well-being, and enhances the atmosphere around St Luke's Church and the nearby hospital. It serves as a social hub, offering a sense of connection for those who might otherwise feel isolated, including patients, hospital staff, churchgoers, and members of the wider community.

Tanya, who runs the coffee box, has always shown exceptional care and commitment to her work. The business has supported local events, collaborated with the church, and operated with transparency and goodwill from the very beginning.

It is deeply concerning to hear that a substantial licensing fee is now being imposed due to an error in communication by the council. I believe it would be unjust to penalise such a community-oriented, micro-business in this way, particularly when the initial advice did not make this financial obligation clear.

I kindly ask that Cheltenham Borough Council reconsider the application of the full licensing fee, and instead offer a fairer arrangement that reflects both the community benefit and the administrative oversight that has led to the current situation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards,

Mia Deacon

Regular Customer

Sent from Outlook for iOS

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Fwd: Tans Coffee Box Licence fees

1 message

Tan's Coffee Box

Wed, Jun 18, 2025 at 9:32 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 4 June 2025 at 18:03:52 BST
To: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Tans Coffee Box Licence fees

F.A.O Jacob

Dear Sir

I am writing as a concerned member of St Luke's church regarding Tan's Coffee Box. I understand that she is being charged a significant increase in her license fee for the next 12 months, which is threatening to make her business unviable. This would be a great shame as she has become such a valuable member of St Lukes community over the last 12 months. I set out below just a few ways in which she has contributed to the wider St Lukes community:

- Her open & caring nature has seen her become a friend to many and she has provided advice and support on a wide range of subjects.
- For many years St Luke's church has wanted to forge closer links and provide support to the hospital across the road. This is happening thanks to Tans Coffee box, hospital staff are now coming to the church grounds for coffee on a regular basis and we are also seeing relatives and patients taking advantage of the facility.
- Tans Coffee Box provides a safe space for members of the local community as well as visitors to the hospital to meet up to support each other
- Having the coffee box open Monday to Saturday has meant that people coming from a distance for events during the week at the church including both weddings & funerals have been able to get refreshments before & after the services. The church congregation is small and would not be able to provide this service without the help of Tans Coffee Box.
- Tany has also provided catering for church events.

For the above reasons it would be a great shame to see her go if, due to the increased level of charges raised by the council, this meant her business ceased to be viable. We would respectfully request that you reduce her charges to a level in line with those charged last year.

Your sincerely

External: 01242 264135

Email: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/>

From: Rachael Anderson [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 June 2025 15:45
To: Licensing (CBC) <licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Subject: Tans Coffee Box - St Lukes Cheltenham

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

I would like to provide a statement in support of Tans Coffee Box at St Luke's Church as I understand the business is experiencing some licensing issues.

Tans Coffee Box has been an absolute delight to the St Lukes community for almost a year now, for many reasons which I shall outline below. My family and I are regular customers and we really enjoy having this great business on our doorstep.

1. Tans Coffee Box serves as a communal hub — a welcoming space where neighbours, friends and church members meet and conversations thrive. It has become a landmark in our community where my family and I have made friends and had the opportunity to connect with our neighbours.
2. Tans Coffee Box is locally owned by someone who grew up in this area and knows it well. The 'Box' has become a point of pride. It represents local entrepreneurship and hard work.
3. Tans Coffee Box is incredibly inclusive — welcoming people from all walks of life regardless of background, identity, or beliefs. That kind of acceptance can be rare and should be cherished. From a personal point of view, my daughter has special needs and she is always welcome at Tans. Tanya makes the effort to make her (and me) feel very comfortable. My daughter is not always welcomed everywhere due to her needs. Tans Coffee Box truly makes her happy, she runs around, enjoys the food and drink and plays with other children. As a mother of someone with special needs, it is very difficult to explain how much this means to us and how important it is for us to be able to go somewhere and feel at ease. Cheltenham lacks this offering.
4. Finally, Tanya is the driving force behind Tans Coffee Box and is absolutely dedicated and passionate about what she does. She cares. Nothing is too much trouble and she makes everybody in our community feel great.

I want to support local businesses and Tans Coffee Box has a place in my heart and our community. Please can we do everything we can for this great coffee box to continue to be a part of St Luke's?

If you would like any more information, feel free to contact me.

Kind regards

Rachael Anderson
[REDACTED]



Fwd: Tans coffee box.

1 message

Tan's Coffee Box

Wed, Jun 18, 2025 at 9:30 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Richard Raymer [REDACTED]
Date: 5 June 2025 at 20:22:04 BST
To: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Tans coffee box.

Good evening.

I am writing to give some feedback regarding the charges that are being charged to this business.

Firstly Tanya and her business like the fire truck beforehand have really brought some great community spirit back to the area and has been so positive.

I'm really disappointed as a resident of almost 15 years that this may now be in doubt because of the obscene charges being pressured on a local small business on the area.

I really would ask you to reconsider this as I really do not think you realise how much this brings the community together. It has such a positive effect to us all as it gives us opportunity to communicate in a neighbourhood watch scenario and gives us all that peace of mind and look out for each other.

Tanya is a wonderful communicator and has helped massively towards promoting the church and surrounding area and other small businesses. Surely this is good old school ethics which we really need to embrace.

Please feel free to get back in touch should you wish to discuss further.

Yours faithfully

Richard Raymer

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anthea Gupta <[REDACTED]>
Date: 8 June 2025 at 17:40:01 BST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Tan's Coffee Box, St. Luke's Road, Cheltenham

-----Original Message-----

From: Anthea Gupta <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 05 June 2025 15:29
To: Licensing (CBC)<licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Subject: Tan's Coffee Box, St. Luke's Road, Cheltenham

[You don't often get email [REDACTED] Learn why this is important
at<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Mr. Doleman,

My husband and I are long-term residents of St. Luke's Road and we feel very fortunate indeed that Tan's Coffee Box is located in the grounds of St. Luke's Church.

Tanya is a very professional lady who is well organized and 'on the ball'. She sells an excellent range of hot and cold beverages, supports local bakeries to supply delicious cookies and cakes, makes her own specialities and is always full of ideas for new recipes. She also offers a good supply of special treats for our four-legged friends.

Since she arrived here in June 2024, Tanya has worked extremely hard to build up her small business and has been instrumental in bringing people together from a variety of locations - not just residents of St. Luke's Road. She has attracted a wide range of customers from various walks of life including staff and patients from Cheltenham General Hospital, local builders, window cleaners, workmen involved with roadworks, etc., and numerous dog-walkers.

One of the results of Tanya's presence here is that we get to meet and talk to people we wouldn't otherwise have met, some close by, others further afield.

We greatly appreciate the sense of community that Tanya has encouraged in St. Luke's since she arrived here last year - she has made many friends - long may it continue!

Yours sincerely,

Anthea and Bharat Gupta

NB:

Tanya did not turn up uninvited at St. Luke's to set up her business - she was interviewed with other applicants and was subsequently invited by the vicar to run Tan's Coffee Box in the grounds of St. Luke's Church.

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This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

Dear Cheltenham County Council,

I am writing on behalf of Tan's Coffee Box at St Luke's Church. Having spoken to the owner, Tan, it was very disappointing to hear about the proposed Council charge per year to run the business. Tan has expressed concern that if charged the fee, the business will be unsustainable and may have to close. It would be a devastating blow to St Luke's if this were the case and I would like to highlight a few reasons why the council should reconsider this fee.

Firstly, Tan's Coffee Box is located on St Luke's Church's private property and there is no public footfall unless to access the church or the Coffee Box. Tan has stated that it was the Church who invited her for an interview and that she has an agreement with them regarding setting up the Coffee Box on their grounds.

Secondly, Tan's business helps to instill a strong sense of community in and around St Luke's. My partner works from home and is able to see the Coffee Box from her desk - she often comments on how people gather there to have a drink and a chat and how everyone seems to get to know one another and become friendly.

As a member of staff at the hospital, it has been heartwarming to hear stories of patients and their loved ones enjoying time together at the Coffee Box. A few examples include someone celebrating finishing their chemotherapy treatment and another person being able to throw a birthday party close to the hospital whilst they were an inpatient. Tan also mentioned a family who feel that the Coffee Box is the only safe space for their non-verbal child to be themselves. It is crucial that people have a local place to unwind, relax and connect with their support system.

I have also seen how inclusive and diverse the Coffee Box community is, bringing together people from all walks of life and providing a much needed network for those whose disabilities and circumstances may limit social interaction.

Furthermore, I would like to highlight that Tan's Coffee Box is an independent micro-business and it is clear from Tan's passion about sense of community and her easy-going, friendly nature that this is more than a job. It is a shame to penalise those who are trying to connect others via a small business, especially when they are competing against the ever-increasing number of chains popping up on the high street.

Finally, it goes without saying that the coffee is excellent!

I do hope that you will take these points into consideration and I am very happy to be contacted if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Grace Robinson

St Luke's Church
St Luke's Road
Cheltenham

18th June 2025

RE: Tan's Van trading licence for St Luke's Church grounds

Dear Licencing Team

I am writing in regard to the matter above as the Vicar of St Luke's Church in Cheltenham. I write representing myself, but also as Chair of our Church Council (registered charity number 1184357), and the wider church community. In my office as Vicar of the parish of St Luke's, I hope my comments would also be seen as representative of the wider local community.

My purpose in writing is to petition for the trading licence for Tan's Van to be granted without any fee being charged. I make this petition on two principal grounds:

1. Tan's Van trades on ecclesiastical land, and whilst Cheltenham Council holds the right to determine where fees are charged, I am aware that many other local councils see church grounds as exceptions.
2. Tan's Van is in practice a partnership project with St Luke's Church for the benefit of the community.

I will write in respect of the second, as the case for the first seems self-evident.

There is valuable historical context for a coffee van trading on St Luke's grounds. In 2021 the church gave permission for FireTruck Espresso, the trading name of Beaumont & Taylor, to operate on our grounds. This was an entirely commercial venture and the business rightly paid a trading licence fee. As a church, we felt this was a good means to support an individual looking for a new line of work having lost their job during lockdown. Our observation was that it also provided a focal point for the community to gather, build relationships and support one another in a difficult season of life.

When the owner moved back to their previous line of employment, St Luke's Church took on the business. It operated as charitable trading subsidiary from our associated Church Hall charity. All profit were used for the charitable purposes of that charity. The project was part-funded through the Diocese of Gloucester. The aim was to provide a place of community where anybody could come and find welcome, conversation and support. The proximity of the hospital, local elderly care homes, and our knowledge of many local residents who live on their own meant there was an observable need. Church grounds and the church building provide a place of warmth and comfort that a normal commercial coffee shop does not. This project was too much for us to take on as a church, and it had to be ended.

At the same time as the project above came to an end, a local resident introduced myself and Tanya Baxter. Their purpose was to see the vision for a community centred coffee facility continue on the church grounds. From the outset, all conversations with Tanya have been on the premise of a community focused operation, albeit with the structure of a trading business. Working together, Tanya and St Luke's are establishing a setting whereby regulars or visitors can not only buy coffee and cake, but find conversation

and support as needed. I have listed some of the ways this functions below. Some are general and others specific.

- Building relationships and providing community for Abbeyfield Care Home and visitors.
- Providing a setting for hospital patients, visitors and staff with refreshments and also facilitating the church opening for spiritual comfort and peace.
- Providing a meeting point for those who are isolated and vulnerable. These come from both the church community and residential areas. There are vulnerable people on account of age, disability and mental health concerns who use Tan's Van because the church site gives a sense of safety and comfort, and they know Tanya will be present.
- Liaising with myself as Vicar over those who come to the church looking for particular support. Tanya wisely makes use of my number to let me know if somebody turns up who would value spiritual support.
- Giving welcome and direction to individuals with support needs. Churches always draw individuals with various social needs. Tanya has dealt with a number who she has been able to point and assist in finding the appropriate support.
- Catering for church community events. Recently, Tanya has been able to provide catering for lunches for some of our elderly church members meeting midweek. We have no such facility in the church, and this would not be possible without Tan's Van.
- Welcome and refreshments for guests arriving for weddings and funerals who have travelled. Many of these are often elderly or vulnerable and so arrive early.
- As a church we have been developing a plan for how our building and site can be a better community facility on account of Tan's presence. For example, discussions have been held about establishing regular opening hours for the building, with volunteer support on-site. This would be for the purpose of heritage visits, those seeking spiritual support, and also potentially a community warm space in the colder months.

I could offer further and more detailed examples if required.

Overall, Tan's Van functions as a partnership project with St Luke's Church, akin to the Charitable Trading Subsidiary model that we previously sought to operate. As such, I would petition that it receives the same licence fee exemption that was applied previously.

Yours sincerely,



Reverend Patrick Wheaton

(on behalf of St Luke's Church PCC and the church community)