



ticketing mailbox <ticketing@culture.gov.uk>

Secondary Ticketing Consultation

1 message

20 November 2015 at 13:18

To: "ticketing@culture.gov.uk" <ticketing@culture.gov.uk>

Dear _____ and anyone else concerned in this consultation,

My name is _____ and I'm writing to you in regards to your consultation on the resale of music tickets. I do not work in the industry, but as a member of the public who has attended many gigs over the past few years I wanted to share my views.

I cannot remember the source off-hand, but a few months ago I recall reading an article on the BBC News website in which a Government spokesperson said that touts essentially provide a "public service" which allows fans who cannot get tickets elsewhere to attend gigs. I believe that nothing could be further from the truth. As is widely known, ticket touts intend fully to exploit fans rather than provide them with a service. Within minutes of popular shows going on sale, tickets regularly appear on "official" reselling websites such as Viagogo, Stubhub and Seatwave for several times their face value - often rocketing to prices which most members of the public simply cannot afford. For example, I bought three tickets to Kate Bush at Hammersmith Apollo for a total of £55 each from an official outlet when they went on sale. Within an hour the selfsame tickets were on resale sites for over £200 each. This is not a public service. This is causing a huge barrier to people attending and enjoying shows from artists they admire.

For me and many other people, £55 is not cheap. I've had to save a lot to purchase that ticket and simply would not be able to afford a £200 ticket to any show. Touts (using legal resale sites) constantly exploit the ability to resell and make a quick buck on shows which they know will be popular - causing a barrier to attendance from lower earning fans. Again, this is not a public service. It is particularly exacerbated by the fact that shows have become markedly more expensive over the past 5 years, exceeding normal inflation. As an example, a ticket to Blur in Hyde Park in 2010 cost me £50 including booking fee. Tickets to see them at the same venue this year cost a minimum of £77 including booking fee - with "Golden Circle" tickets costing over £100 each.

Worse still is the fact that ticket resale sites often list tickets which have yet to go on sale, for example tickets to Prince's recently announced Piano and a Microphone Tour were listed before the shows even went on sale at all. This led the artist to pull the tour, meaning fans missed out again.

I often hear the argument that Government has no right to intervene in the ticket resale market and that it would be impractical to do so. However, the ban on the resale of tickets to football matches above face value has proven that this can be achieved successfully. There is no reason a similar model cannot be used for music as is used in football.

I understand that fans must be able to shift tickets if they simply cannot attend a show, however there are always other options than reselling at artificially high prices. Most venues accept returns for sold out shows even on the night. There are smaller ethical resale sites which only resell tickets for face value plus booking fee. The Government do not have to allow ticket resale sites to continue without regulation so that real fans cannot attend concerts.

I would urge the Government to do everything possible to limit the resale of tickets for any value higher than the face value of the ticket plus the original booking fee. They should regulate resale sites so that they can only charge for this - potentially with a small admin fee no more than 10% of the ticket value on top of this. This would disincentivise the bulk purchase of tickets by touts and allow a higher proportion of fans to attend shows.

Please feel free to contact me for further discussion on this if you wish as I'm very keen to share my thoughts and help the Government bring an end to this exploitation.

Kind regards,

