

Consultation Questions

Consultation on Alcohol Misuse

*Question 1: We invite views on our proposals to make regulations, under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005*

I do not agree with any of the above proposals. I do not see that any of the above proposals will lead to the desired change in behaviour that is being sought. You need to change thoughts, for without that you will not change action. There are many legal protections in place already, but they are ignored, violated, and not enforced. Laws can be, and are, broken.

If the laws apply equally to all premises is this

<p><b><i>Question 2: We invite views on whether a minimum pricing scheme should be based on the following principles</i></b></p>	<p>not a form of price fixing? A cartel? I like gin, which is strong, but I drink it sensibly and responsible in moderation, so why should I be penalised for the actions of others? Also, what about consideration being given to pricing by volume? One cider may be stronger than another. So if cider A is stronger than cider B, but if cider B is cheaper and sold in a larger bottle and is cheaper by the volume, then the point is missed. Kids will not worry about the money. They will pool together their money and get bevvied up together. Their concern is to get drunk, not to save their money and invest it in stocks and shares. You cannot price away the desire for teenagers to use alcohol. Kids have a lot of money these days.</p>
<p><b><i>Question 3: What particular information do you think parents and carers would find helpful to enable them to support their children to make positive choices about alcohol?</i></b></p>	<p>This is where the real change will occur. I think real emphasis needs to be given to looking into the reasons why people want to drink. Teenage drinking is such a part of our culture that it is seen as normal. It is normal for our culture, but it is not right. I think that teenagers need to be advised that they and they alone need to be responsible for what they do to their bodies. Only they can lift the glass and drink. It is not about rebelling against people. It is about harming yourself. I think that there is no "positive choice about alcohol" unless you give examples of what the other choices are. Teenagers need to shown that there are alternative ways to bond and have fun - athletics clubs, volunteering, hobbies. Sadly most of the kids involved in drinking to excess have a huge void in their lives, and their parents will NOT support them to make positive choices. This is why I think it is important to show children and teenagers that they need to be strong enough to take responsibility for their own well being. Information should be given on the effects of alcohol on physical and mental well being. Alcohol is a poison, so very many people do not realise this. It is used as a drug as a way to medicate away a lot of issues. Children and teenagers need to be provided with alternative coping strategies. Information on self esteem, self respect and positive alternatives need to be given. Take the focus AWAY from alcohol. The more you focus on alcohol, the more it becomes normal. It is almost like you are creating an expectation on the minds of the teenager. It's like you are saying "This is how teenagers in Scotland behave". They need to</p>

	hear positive alternative messages. Don't create the expectation, don't create a self fulfilling prophecy. For example the BBC news tonight showed police footage of teenagers drinking and fighting. This leads to labelling. Teenagers get their views of themselves from others, so what is this kind of thing saying to them?
<b>Question 4: Do you think that the minimum age for off-sales purchases should be raised to 21 in Scotland?</b>	no, No. It is already illegal for anyone under 18 to buy alcohol. The law is broken regularly. You are just making a bigger challenge. It is a badge of honour to get one over on authority. Take away that challenge and I think you will see an improvement. Many many many sensible people over 18 and under 21 will be penalised. Teenagers will always find away around it, so I think raising the age limit will have little effect. What about those people who are over 21 but look younger who do not have a drivers license, a passport or a student card? I think teenagers need to experience living as a reponsible adult. I think those between the ages of 18-21 need to learn to drink sensibly, and by shutting them out of off licenses you will drive the drinking underground. They will miss out on going into an off license and seeing how adults handle purchasing alcohol in moderation.
<b>Question 5: What criteria should be used to determine the types of premises (or specific premises) that should be subject to a 'social responsibility fee'? (e.g. late opening premises, or premises in a particular area)?</b>	I think that the fee should be tied to how many times the police/ambulance staff are called to the premises, and how often the police visit the premisises based on intelligence about under age drinkers. Fees should be determined based on irresponsible promos aimed at binge drinking ( a pound a drink promos for example). Fees should be reduced for premises whose staff undergo training on how to promote safe drinking, how to tell for example when people are too drunk to be served. All pubs should have a social responsibilty fee, I think this is an excellent policy proposal.
<b>Question 6: Should a fee be applied to Occasional Licences as well as Premises Licences?</b>	no
<b>Question 7: Should a similar fee be applied to other premises licensed under separate legislation?</b>	yes, Yes. Rugby, tennis clubs for example.
<b>Question 8: Do you agree that regulations should be made, under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, to extend the existing regulations to:</b>	no, The first idea - no I disagree. This is far too much state interference. Second point - yes I agree. Third point - yes I agree.

<p><b><i>Question 9: Do you think that there should be separate checkouts for alcohol sales?</i></b></p>	<p>no, I really don't understand this proposal. I think alcohol should be allowed to be sold with the rest of a person's shopping. I buy a bottle of wine in the supermarket very very infrequently and always to use in a recipe, or with a meal. This is not irresponsible, so why should I be penalised, inconvenienced and stigmatised? Moderate sensible alcohol consumption is ok in my opinion. It should be normalised, not made to be a huge issue. The huge issue is with binge drinking in pubs and in parks, and private house. How will a separate checkout stop this?</p>
<p><b><i>Question 10: Should there should be a requirement for alcohol checkout staff to be at least 18 years old?</i></b></p>	<p>yes, Yes, in fact they should be at least 21. I think that below this age many teenagers would not have the self confidence and authority to challenge their peers. I think the older the checkout operator is the better placed they are to appreciate the effects and consequences of selling alcohol to under agers.</p>
<p><b><i>Question 11: Do you have any other comments or suggestions to make on, or any addition to, the proposals set out in this consultation paper?</i></b></p>	<p>Yes, those teenagers that abuse alcohol regularly do so as a past time, a recreation and as a way of life. It is a habit. It is used to bring happy feelings and a self of well being These two things are craved by everyone, that is why it is such a popular drug. If you don't provide people with an alternative you are never going to win the battle. Excessive drinking is such a part of our way of life here that it is rarely seen as a problem. It is normal, but it shouldn't be. Kids who drink to excess regularly must feel lonely, isolated and unsupported, and if they don't initially then their behaviour is bound to lead to this long term as their problem prevents them from undertaking a productive, involved, meaningful life. Alcohol misuse is an easy short term fix, which leads to long term social problems. You need to address the social problems first and foremost that lead to teenagers choosing to abuse themselves in this way, otherwise all the legislation is simply sticking your finger in the dam to hold the flood back. I suggest a far less heavy handed approach. You cannot legislate people into not wanting to get blind drink. You need to win hearts and minds. The point being missed in all of this is that many many people over 21 get drunk and fight each other. Age has nothing to do with it. Many teenagers I know are teetotal, and proud of it. Why are they being demonised and labelled? It is not an age issue in the main. It is a mentality issue.</p>