

Consultation Questions  
Consultation on Alcohol Misuse

Age Concern Scotland believes that this approach to reducing alcohol sales is unfair on older people with fixed incomes. As inflation is driving up the costs of food, fuel and other consumer items older people should not be prevented from benefiting from deals that will

<p><b><i>Question 1: We invite views on our proposals to make regulations, under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005</i></b></p>	<p>help them reduce their weekly shopping. Binge drinking in Scottish society is a cultural problem, not a free-market one and will not be solved by increasing the cost of alcohol. Creating a market place with clear differentials in price will result in increased cross-border traffic akin to day-trips taken to the continent to purchase cheaper alcohol.</p>
<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>Again, Age Concern Scotland believes that older people should not be penalised for being on a low fixed income which is what these proposals would do. Many older people drink appropriately yet these proposals will seek to punish them for the excesses of younger people. Furthermore, these proposals would again result in increased cross-border traffic as opposed to reduced levels of drinking.</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>Age Concern Scotland does not have a position on this question.</p>
<p><b><i>Question 4: Do you think that the minimum age for off-sales purchases should be raised to 21 in Scotland?</i></b></p>	<p>Age Concern Scotland does not have a position on this question.</p>
<p><b><i>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)?</i></b></p>	<p>5. Age Concern Scotland believes that the cost of a social responsibility fee would be passed on to customers, including older people, which would result in increased costs to those low fixed incomes. This again penalises older people for the excesses for others. A fairer system may be to create a ‘social penalty’ to clubs and other premises from which trouble makers gain access to alcohol. Police and local authorities could use local intelligence to set the level of this penalty at an appropriate level. This would allow trouble free premises to continue to trade and not be punished for the actions of a minority.</p>
<p><b><i>Question 6: Should a fee be applied to Occasional Licences as well as Premises Licences?</i></b></p>	<p>no</p>
<p><b><i>Question 7: Should a similar fee be applied to other premises licensed under separate legislation?</i></b></p>	<p>no,</p>
	<p>no, Many older people with mobility issues would find it difficult to compare prices between</p>

<p><b>Question 8: Do you agree that regulations should be made, under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, to extend the existing regulations to:</b></p>	<p>different retailers if they were unable to view displays from accessible areas such outside shops. The WHO Report in 2003 Alcohol-No ordinary Commodity showed that Promotion controls had little effect on alcohol sales.</p>
<p><b>Question 9: Do you think that there should be separate checkouts for alcohol sales?</b></p>	<p>no, Older people with mobility issues find it hard enough to conduct their shopping and carry their bags through one checkout. A second checkout would make it difficult - should older people shop for their alcohol first and carry their products around whilst they shop for other items or vice versa? Would retail outlets allow many people carrying full shopping bags around their store again?</p>
<p><b>Question 10: Should there should be a requirement for alcohol checkout staff to be at least 18 years old?</b></p>	<p>no, The current approach where the staff member has to gain permission from a staff member aged over 18 is sufficient.</p>
<p><b>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?</b></p>	<p>Age Concern Scotland is disappointed that the consultation document concentrates almost exclusively on younger people. This is despite evidence from ISD Scotland (SMR01) showing that Alcohol Harm admissions for the over 65s is second to that of the 45-64 age group and above the 16-24 &amp; 25-44 age groups. A lot more work needs to be done to address the problems that drinking in later life can cause. This is especially the case for issues such as Liver Cirrhosis for which Scotland had the highest and fastest growing rate in Europe (Lancet 2006;367:52-56). As Scotland's population continues to get older more and more people who have been drinking responsibly for many years may fail to understand the changes that their bodies are going through as they deteriorate due to getting older. This means that more people will suffer from alcohol harm and the Scottish Government should be acting to address this now.</p>

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