

Annex 7: Overprovision – free text comments from public survey

1. Alcohol abuse is a problem across Scotland, but is particularly prevalent on the West coast. We need to tackle the problem head-on and invest more in education on alcohol awareness and on interventions to stall alcohol abuse
2. Alcohol availability is such that if you want some you can get it
3. Alcohol is a legal drug, and its use has health implications, good and bad. Other recreational drugs, with similar health implications, should be de-criminalised, licensing devised, and treated in a similar manner to alcohol.
4. Alcohol is available far too cheaply. It is an addictive drug and should be priced to discourage use
5. Alcohol is not a problem in our area. I think the biggest problem in our area seems to be recreational drugs and hopefully this will be acted on by the authorities
6. Alcohol is too cheap and too easy to access - when you add in Scottish drinking culture you get a dangerous and damaging mix. People are able to access drink at an earlier age, in greater quantities and on a regular basis. The rise in drinking at home, fuelled by cheap deals at the supermarket, means little or no regulation. At least in a pub the publican has a responsibility not to serve people that are too drunk

7. Alcohol will always be accessible from a variety of sources and if people want it they will find it, regardless of whether there are 100 outlets or 10. Until it is socially unacceptable for people to use alcohol as an excuse their bad/criminal/abusive behaviours, there will always be multiple consequences to deal with
8. Alcohol, in general and not specifically in this area, is priced too low, and is too readily available and socially accepted
9. All areas of Britain have alcohol related incidents related to crime, health, noise and disorder and this has been the case since alcohol was invented, so there is nothing new there. As an ex police constable things are much better than they were 30/40 years ago when it was common to see males staggering about drunk & incapable, so things have improved considerably. Young people, particularly from families with parents who suffer from alcohol related problems need support and protection. The problem is how do you protect the vulnerable without penalising the law abiding sensible majority - and therein lies the problem - and it always has. Stringent rules and regulation only shift the problem so I think in Argyll & Bute you have got the balance just about right where tourists and locals alike can enjoy a refreshment at reasonable times of the day and night.
10. Although it can present problems to youngsters, I feel if we were more 'relaxed' like the Europeans, then there would not be so many teenagers using it under age & there would be a different attitude towards!
11. As a former B&B owner, I felt that the cost of licencing was prohibitive. It would have been good to be able to offer guests a glass of wine on arrival. As an area reliant on tourism, high levels of service bring return customers - this service was something I could not offer. At the time I wondered if this was why restaurants in Lochgilphead were not licenced? (Taj Mahal, Coriander - including when it was Edo).

12. as an ex drinker/drug user, takin away the availability wont stop the drinker, u need more info out there in schools an other places about the dangers of drinking, alcohol is a drug, and no matter wot the media says, alcohol is the first step to harder drugs. Look at the mental health issues caused by alcohol, health issues, crime, the list could go on forever...teach people the honest facts about alcohol
13. At least 10 premise selling alcohol for a population of approx. 500 people
14. Availability of drugs is closely controlled, but this hasn't stopped widespread drug misuse. Control of availability, and pricing, have become the top political priority, but they will never be the silver bullet people believe them to be. Social attitudes and education is the key
15. Binge drinking in teenagers is worrying
16. Both shops near to me and most, if not all on the peninsula have a licence, including 2 in Garelochhead. I personally don't think it's the amount of shops that is the problem, it's the people who feel the need to drink it in public and be a nuisance to others. This isn't so much in my area but Rosneath does seem to have this problem. Capping the number of shops with a licence will just mean people will go elsewhere which will mean either drink driving or drinking in public on the way back
17. Cheap supermarket alcohol is killing communities and their pubs.

18. Children's mental health suffers due to domestic incidents involving alcohol. Also problems are occurring through alcohol/drug combinations. (Legal Highs)
19. closure of hotel and pub has resulted in the death of the community and more home drinking
20. Due to the rural location it is often easier for the underage not to be served but this can be got round by an older youth or resident buying for those underage
21. Far too much being displayed in supermarkets. Much less on display would, I am sure suffice!!
22. For such a small Island, there are a lot of public houses, hotels and off licences within a short radius of the town centre
23. for such a small town there are far too many alcohol outlets. I think the use of all council buildings should be alcohol free including school buildings where the premises are used for functions at weekends
24. Government policies on licensing regulations and driving limits is closing down rural pubs, driving people to drink cheap, supermarket alcohol in greater measures than they would in a pub. these policies should be reversed with special measures laid down to protect rural pubs and off licences
25. great concern over under-age drinking

26. I believe the majority of people in my locality are able to enjoy alcohol for celebrations and relaxation within reason and the number of places to support such activities seems right. However, one cannot rule out the availability of alcohol as an influence on the choices of younger people or those with issues of addiction. I do not think there is too much availability but there does undoubtedly need to be support for those who are vulnerable to abusing this availability
27. I do not agree with registered alcoholics getting more benefits, if this still happens. They should be given support to quit not money for alcohol
28. I feel it is not a good idea in Helensburgh, my nearest town for shopping to allow pubs, licensed cafes/restaurants etc to have tables and chairs out on the pavement outside their premises as it makes it difficult for pedestrians to pass by which is a hazard. Especially disabled people and people with prams/buggies etc. and young families. Not enough space before the busy roads too which is a danger! Also the noise disturbance and the threat of disorderly behaviour due to the alcohol consumption. The cigarette smoke is awful too, who wants passive smoking when visiting a seaside town! This is all a health hazard! Please rethink the licensing laws and keep all alcohol consumption to indoor premises. In fact I thought it was an offence already to drink alcohol outside in a public place!
29. I have not encountered any negative influence of the availability of alcohol in Argyll and Bute
30. I know a lot of youngsters (under age) get alcohol so am suspicious of where they get it. I think the smaller shops are not always as diligent as the supermarkets.
31. I know for a fact that some convenience stores in the Helensburgh area sell alcohol to underage children
32. I live on an island and although availability is limited here it causes horrendous damage to health, families and lives
33. I personally think that the worst thing that happened was all day and much longer licencing hours many years ago

34. I think availability is immaterial. If people want it they will get it. What is required is a more responsible attitude towards alcohol, taught first & foremost by parents, and also by the authorities
35. I think it is silly that I cannot purchase alcohol anywhere until after 10:00 . I am an adult , and can look after myself, without state supervision of this single aspect of my shopping
36. I think there is very little choice of off sales. The supermarkets are the only places, all other off sales in Oban have now closed down
37. I think we need to look at what makes young people particularly drink the sheer volume that they often do. Availability of alcohol plays a part but motivation (or indeed lack of general motivation) plays a huge role. Many young people use alcohol as temporary self-confidence and that's surely not going to work out well as a long term coping strategy? Definitely a much bigger picture than "are there too many places to buy alcohol?"
38. I think we over focus on young people's drinking, at the expense of addressing all ages and areas of society and overuse of alcohol. Often the local press sensationalise young people's issues in relation to alcohol and drug use which is unhelpful in keeping perspective and addressing the wider issues. Whilst it is my perception that alcohol increases criminal activity involving children in my area, I don't actually have any direct evidence for this opinion. Increase the price to assist with reducing alcohol use per capita per head across the population, to contribute to reducing costs to health and crime.
39. I'm particularly upset that the recent remodelling of our local supermarket increased the range of alcohol sold, and placed it immediately adjacent to the queue for checkouts (previously it had been in a dedicated aisle, and thus a little easier to bypass). I have expressed my concerns to the supermarket chain (Co-op).

40. If people are determined to drink, they will find the means and place to purchase alcohol. The vast majority of people are sensible, social drinkers, who shouldn't be penalised for the sake of the alcoholic-dependent or irresponsible others.
Under-aged drinking is a problem nationwide
41. If the council did away with some of these places and tried to get more up market shop keepers into the town this would help to make the town more attractive for people to come and visit the way that they used to do before the town became a ghost town and maybe bring it into the 21st century and try and bring jobs into the town for the young people who live in the area instead of them having to leave when it is time for them to leave school because there is no work to be found
42. If you try and hide alcohol you make it more attractive. Dependency unit visits should be available to 5th and 6 year pupils so that they can evidence the affects of alcohol abuse. School visits from reformed alcoholics as guest speakers
43. In addition to ease of availability, there is also the strong inherent culture whereby over indulging in alcohol consumption (e.g. going out to get a 'fill) is accepted as the norm and is the basis for a high level of social interaction.
44. In the immediate area Tighnabruaich and Kames, we have four hotels and two licenced grocers
45. Increasing emphasis on the significance of the role alcohol has on health / performance - particularly aiming that at young people
46. It doesn't matter how many licenses establishments - if people want to they will find it anywhere

47. It is good that we have a specialist wine shop in Helensburgh so that we do not have to rely on supermarkets. Whilst recognising the hazards of excessive alcohol consumption, we should also acknowledge that alcohol; has a positive role when consumed in responsible amounts in a social environment. Most of us manage our alcohol consumption sensibly - we do not all drink in order to get drunk. So I hope availability of alcohol in this area is not about to be reduced, thus penalising the responsible drinker.
48. It is no big deal. There is a much smaller problem than in the past
49. It would help if shops and supermarkets could not sell alcohol after, say 6pm. People who are clearly drunk should not be served alcohol in pubs or shops
50. It's all well and good blaming alcohol for local problems, but maybe if Argyll and Bute council were more proactive in providing activities for children and bored young adults to do they may 2t resort to drinking you can't just lay the blame at those that sell alcohol. Do something positive for the young people of Argyll or the population may continue to dwindle
51. It's not just a local issue, it is a national issue, I think alcohol is too readily available - locally there are various corner shops which sell drink as well as lots of pubs. I think if people are determined to get it, they will, and most people don't think it is a problem - it is in my opinion
52. It's not the availability of alcohol that is the issue. It's the lack of support for those who abuse it, along with drugs that you need to look at. In Campbeltown they won't even admit there is an issue, and those wanting assistance in this cannot get help from the gp, as they refuse to prescribe the correct medicines. It's pathetic in this day and age that those who are suffering from an illness mainly caused by some form of trauma cannot get help as they live in a rural area. Kintyre is the

worst for it. It's time something was done to assist those who suffer from alcoholism, and those who take illegal drugs. It's a real issue, and surveys like this don't do anything to help unless you take these comments on board and do something about it. From past experience though I am sure this will be ignored by a&b council, as admitting they have an issue would be bad publicity!

53. It's too cheap and too readily available underage persons can get it easily without being checked for id

54. Like most things alcohol is OK in moderation. Landlords / shopkeepers continue to sell vast amounts to alcoholics, some people can hold the evidence of the intake of alcohol and continue to purchase at least a bottle a day from the same store. I personally think this is out of order. Alcoholics will not admit their addiction and cannot be told however they should be refused the sale of continuous large amounts

55. No Licensed premises on the island means people drink at home and probably drink more as a consequence.

56. No wonder people drink, just no jobs in our island and we take in many people where alcohol has already been a problem. We have so many empty properties and landlords and council happy to fill them, so the alcohol will remain problem

57. Not enough people involved in the license trade in Campbeltown, specifically pubs, are abiding by the law. Drunk people are served alcohol, despite this being against the law. There are many people working in pubs who do not have the required personal licence, and therefore have no idea of the law regarding the sale of alcohol. The pub watch system is being abused by over zealous licensee, who will get people put on it for personal reasons, and at the same time, very troublesome people avoid being put on pub watch. It's shambolic.

58. Of course there is harm in the consumption of alcohol but only when consumed irresponsibly. Alcohol can be safe when consumed responsibly. Education is the answer not limiting availability. If someone wants to buy alcohol they will find a way. Remember prohibition did not work in the USA.
59. Older youths purchase alcohol in the local shop walk round the corner out of the camera lens and provide younger youths with alcohol
60. One issue that annoys me is that often I do my main shopping early mornings and as such If I would like to buy alcohol for consumption through the week I am unable to do so
61. Rothesay bowling club lets people into the club in a state of disorder and underagers too and does not refuse sevice to them
62. Should not be available in every shop and supermarket in area
63. Some people drink too much. Cutting the number of places alcohol is available will not stop this - they will just go to where they can get a drink. Bars should be cutting off their customers before they get to the point where they are causing trouble, and police should be monitoring areas where drunken kids congregate. I don't know what you can do about the idiot parents who allow/encourage their children to drink, other than educating said children from a young age on how it could impact on their life.
64. South of Dunoon, there is only one off licence, one pub and one licenced hotel. No over provision here

65. still hearing stories about people buying alcohol for young people. Would like advice to parents of teenagers (as I am) - some parents ban it, some hold parties and supply alcohol so they can monitor it, some try and set good example, some don't drink with teenagers - how do we know what is best?
66. Strange mixed messages about alcohol. Tourism puts an emphasis on whisky and there are lots of outlets but other alcohol seems demonised. Worried about the alternatives to alcohol sought by young children and would sometimes quite like a cup of coffee when I am at a bar a night, interspersed with my alcohol, but this does not seem possible
67. The fact that licensed premises continue to serve people drink that are clearly to the brim annoys me and then they are falling all over the road trying to get home. The local supermarkets are more vigilant when selling alcohol
68. The level of availability of alcohol in Garelochhead is just about right (1 pub, 1 club and 2 off-sales) although there appears to be too many on-sales in Helensburgh
69. The licensing hours in shops is ridiculous. Alcohol should be available any time a particular shop is open
70. The local hotel is at the heart of a small community like ours - from social events like music nights and Burns Nights to funeral gatherings. Alcohol has traditionally always been a part of these, and I see no reason why it should not continue to be so. In our small community we have just lived through 2 winters when our local hotel/pub was closed - we are very pleased that it has re-opened, but it now needs support. The demonizing of alcohol and raising of prices will only lead on the one hand to places like pubs being forced to close through lack of custom, and on the other hand will drive alcohol consumption 'underground'. I ticked the box for '3' because I believe it would be good to have more licensed restaurants in

the area, where locals and visitors alike could go for a meal and a glass of wine. This would not only please locals and benefit tourism but would give young people a healthy attitude towards alcohol consumption

71. The majority of people in the community use alcohol sensibly. The local hotel, the Galley of Lorne, is an asset as a meeting place for a significant section of the community. Regrettably there are the inevitable few who drink to excess thereby endangering their health. There is very little bad behaviour resulting from alcohol and when it does occur is often dealt with by the 'self policing' that small and close communities are so good at

72. The questions are biased right from the start: too many outlets suggested, not too few. The biggest problem now is home drinking and no socialisation of younger drinkers in controlled environments such as pubs, golf clubs, etc. The other major problem in rural Argyll (and Scotland) is the unjustified emphasis on criminalising anyone who drives with even a small amount of alcohol. This is unjustified statistically and is leading to closures of rural hotels, will make golf and other clubs unviable and will have consequent adverse effects on Scotland's tourism. How many rural licensed premises remain in the Sandbank/Kilmun/Ardentiny/ Loch Eck area for a start. There are consequences of introducing the recent licensing act and the drink drive legislation which were ignored in the consultation process. This consultation will also draw responses primarily from those opposed to alcohol and who see the harmful effects as paramount. And I would emphasise that I am not a heavy drinker and have never been stopped for drink driving or anything similar

73. The real issue here is the need to educate people on drinking responsibly, whilst control of where and when it is available is fine to a point, it does not tackle the underlying issue of the need for the individual to take responsibility for their health and behaviour

74. The restriction of purchase of alcohol before 10am is most inconvenient as I invariably complete my weekly shopping before this time and thus have to make a special trip to buy the occasional bottle of wine/beer. How this restriction works to prevent problem drinkers obtaining alcohol eludes me. Stop worrying about alcohol and instil some discipline into our young people then they will have some self discipline
75. The supply of alcohol will be decided on a commercial basis, if there is too much provision licencees will stop selling people with dependency will find alcohol even if you close all the suppliers. would the expense incurred in this survey not be better spent providing toilet facilities in the town rather than expanding the nanny state
76. There are far too many late licenses in Oban and occasional licenses are handed out like sweeties. How can it be socially responsible to grant 3am licenses for two weeks around Christmas - including Christmas Eve? Apart from the harm to those people drinking, the whole town is disturbed by noise. What does it say as about us a society with vomit on the street on Christmas morning - supporting families, I don't think so!! 3am opening for 3 days at St Patrick's day? Not even a Scottish occasion – it's just a ploy to get round the licensing laws and the public has no say, no data is available to monitor this. The Licensing Board needs to take a hard look at themselves - they are part of the problem and abdicate their responsibility.
77. There are now only 4 outlets apart from Licensed Premises in Rothesay although another will be opening soon. Part of the problem has been adults buying for under age young people so I think there have not been enough prosecutions for that
78. There is by far too many outlets for purchase of alcohol in this area. I personally have confronted several unscrupulous retailers within the area whom are blatantly selling alcohol to children. In my opinion any retailer involved in this practice should automatically have their licence revoked with immediate effect

79. There should be a comparison made with numbers of other locations selling alcohol and also with numbers of alcohol related crimes and illnesses before any new licences are granted. The applicant should be required to demonstrate that they have procedures in place to prevent sale of alcohol to minors and to people who clearly have already had too much to drink. Landlords of pubs etc should be proactive about taking keys off drivers
80. There should be more availability of late licenses so everyone doesn't descend on the one place
81. Too cheap in shops and too costly in pubs. Pubs provide a safe, sociable, supervised environment, much healthier than drinking alone in your house
82. Too cheap in supermarkets.
83. Too cheap, too easily available and superstores show no responsibility at all
84. We have the main supermarkets that sell alcohol along with corner stores. On top of this there are garages getting in on the act along with pubs on every corner and side street. Argyll & Bute need to look into providing better facilities for youngsters to find alternative ways to amuse themselves. i.e. sports centre, bowling alley. The kind of venues that kids and or families can attend! Take the focus away from alcohol!
85. We should be more like the continent and stop trying to hide everything. You should be able to buy alcohol if the shop is open no restricted times
86. Young people are able to access alcohol through adults purchasing it and i think this is a big problem.
87. Younger people, mainly teenagers or slightly older, still bulk buy at supermarkets, mostly Friday/Saturday

