

ANNEX 8: OVERPROVISION - LICENCEES SURVEY COMMENTS

1. *Supermarkets seem to be taking so much trade away from Pubs. In a pub, the barman can say when to stop for a customer, but in the supermarket or off license there is no one to keep an eye out for the customer and drinking can be carried to excess far too easily. If Tesco can provide alcohol cheaper than we can buy it it makes the pub a dying business.*
2. *We operate 7 days per week during the summer (beginning of April until the end of September) but operate a reduced service during the other months usually three days per week.*
3. *Our premises is very rural with the nearest off sales shop being more than 8 miles away and not open evenings. The next nearest hotel is 3 miles away. We know the majority for the young people well and underage drinking in hotels is not a problem. I do believe that cheap off sales drink is a problem as older children buy it for younger children.*
4. *There are two types of drinkers. The pub drinkers and the house drinkers. The public house cost basis means that fewer people than ever can afford to purchase alcohol this way on a regular basis and as such the majority now purchase from off sales for home consumption. The percentage divide is widening rapidly.*
5. *My local Coop, which by volume, will retail hundreds of times the amount of alcohol I sell pays NO BUSINESS RATES! (Small bis rates relief scheme). My rateable value is £16,000 and as such I pay £7000 approx. The intake of alcohol is controlled in licensed premises. Who has an optic in their house?*
6. *20 cans of lager for £11.00 Off Trade is equivalent to approx. £49.00 On Trade. Basically a no brainer.*
7. *Alcohol in supermarkets is being subsidised. If you wish proof of this then please contact me.*
8. *My brother owns a substantial sized brewery which supplies a global market. UK supermarkets are selling his products at less than cost price!*
9. *Around 1980 there were 47 licensed premises on Bute. Today I believe the figure is 17. The On Trade is being decimated. I reckon my pub will be a cafe/charity shop/bookies etc. in 5 years time.*

10. *Living in a rural community, I feel we have no problem with the availability of alcohol between both on and off sales.*
11. *In our small community we are aware there are people who have problems with alcohol, and occasional incidents of noise/nuisance but these are not in our opinion related simply to issues of provision.*
12. *The island is a seasonal economy so this hotel is closed through the winter when there is no demand and open from March to the end of October 7 days a week.*
13. *During the season there are 2 hotels, a licensed bar and a shop selling as an off-licence. There seems to be a balance of supply and demand.*
14. *Alcohol problems have nothing to do with availability of alcohol. The problem is with the consumption of alcohol. People have to make an informed personal choice in this matter. I believe education, not dictation, can help people make this choice.*
15. *With regard to children - the more difficult you make it to obtain alcohol then the harder they will try to obtain it. Again education should be the way to tackle problems. Other European countries have a much more lax attitude and you rarely see binge drinking on the streets.*
16. *I believe that low priced alcohol from supermarket promotions and deals are a factor in all of the above. Also the over provision of licensed premise in the Campbeltown area. The number of public houses were fine when it was a vibrant town but now there is not the custom to supply the number of bars. Prices are cheaper in Campbeltown bars as there is so much competition. I believe if any other bars were allowed to open/reopen then there would be price reductions to compete with them. This is not good for current businesses in Campbeltown.*
17. *Late licenses after 12.00 are to me a bit stupid as the customer has a set amount he/she can spend. Opening the bar for longer won't increase the customers spend but wages/lighting/heating etc. all go up. In Oban and surrounding areas there are about the right amount of pubs but there is not the business especially in the winter when you consider how many customers now smoke and drink at home. Much as I agree with the smoking ban in Pubs I think it has killed too many pubs.*

18. *I consider that the more rural areas of Argyll and Bute need to hold on to their pubs and diversify to remain vital hubs for local communities - in our area residents have to travel some distance for a night out. However like most of the country, local hotels and bars struggle to survive off season as they are less used by locals as supermarket alcohol is so cheap in comparison and public transport non-existent in evenings and weekends. Vigilance re underage/drunks by hotels/bars also makes home drinking attractive to those who are under age or those over indulging. The closure figures in Scotland bear this out. Our bar is over 500 years old but present legislation - reduced drink drive limit etc. is sorely affecting viability difficult.*
19. *There are areas where we are aware overprovision could be an issue, but Mull and Iona are not in our opinion subject to this.*
20. *There is a certain pub in Oban promoting cheap alcohol - this has to encourage binge drinking which can lead to health and anti-social behaviour. Such pricing should be discouraged by the licensing board.*
21. *We supply a wide range of outlets in Argyll, and obviously the area is very varied, but we haven't heard of any reports that would suggest that over provision is an issue. We would be wary that designating an area as over provided could prevent new licensees being able to open new businesses and so provides protection to existing licensees. This lack of competitive pressure in our view can cause a problem in the industry, leading to old fashioned offerings that aren't meeting the current needs of residents or visitors.*
22. *I don't believe we have a problem in most areas of Argyll*