



Alcohol Licensing Research Findings Strengthening the community's role in licensing

Iconic's innovative research on how to strengthen the community's input into the alcohol licensing process was published last week by Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH). The research - commissioned by GCPH and Alcohol Focus Scotland - outlines how the community's input can be inhibited by awareness of alcohol issues and the licensing process, knowledge and understanding of the decision making process, and the skills and resources to engage in the process.

The research was based on experiences in Glasgow gathered from a wide range of participants including community groups and Community Councils, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Glasgow City Council licensing staff and elected members, and Police Scotland. Views and experiences outwith Glasgow were also gathered via consultation with Licensing Standards Officers across Scotland. **The findings are relevant to anyone with an interest in alcohol licensing in Scotland.**

The report and a user-friendly summary leaflet 'Re-imagining the system' are available by visiting GCPH's website (www.gcph.co.uk) or by clicking [here](#).

A number of steps are outlined on how communities can have a greater say on the availability of alcohol in their area. The ideas focus on developing a community facing licensing process, and supporting communities to assist their engagement in the process.

Re-imagining the system: how communities can have a greater say on the availability of alcohol in their local area

Through conversations with community groups and other related organisations – such as the NHS, police, community planning, elected members, licensing clerks – we explored what needs to happen for communities to have a greater influence on the availability of alcohol in their neighbourhood. We also looked at examples where communities have tried to influence alcohol availability in their local community. Finally, we conducted a 'shared solutions' workshop which explored the suggestions that were put forward. The aim of this work is to stimulate debate and action that will lead to greater community input into local decisions.

The work was based in Glasgow but is relevant to communities across Scotland. This is a summary of the learning, a copy of the full report can be found on the GCPH website: www.gcph.co.uk

**In Scotland
today you can exceed
men's maximum weekly
recommended alcohol
intake (21 units)
for £4.**

Should communities be able to change the availability of alcohol in their neighbourhood?

Since the 1980s alcoholic drinks have become cheaper and more easily available – we can buy alcohol in more and more places. This has led to a huge rise in both the amount of alcohol drunk by people in Scotland and the amount of alcohol harm seen in Scotland.

Reducing alcohol availability is one of the most effective ways to reduce the amount that people drink and the harm caused to individuals and communities by alcohol.

The alcohol licensing system does have ways for communities to influence the amount of alcohol available in their area (see Box 1 below). However, in practice, it is often difficult to do this. As a result, communities are not as involved as they could be if the processes were simpler.



If you are interested in knowing more about **Iconic's** research and findings, or if there's any way we can help you to progress this issue in Aberdeenshire, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Contact **Ian Clark** on 0131 627 0070 or ian@iconic-consulting.co.uk

This is the latest in a number of alcohol and drug related studies undertaken by **Iconic**. For more details please visit our website <http://www.iconic-consulting.co.uk/>

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