

Glasgow Licensing Report 2024-2025



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe

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Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to provide the Annual Licensing Report for 2024/25, in accordance with Section 12(A) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

Throughout the last year I have been committed to improving confidence amongst our communities by working in partnership with a focus on prevention, early intervention and proactivity. This supports our broader 2030 vision of safer communities, less crime, supported victims and a thriving work force.

In respect of Licensing, I recognise that success can only be achieved in collaboration with the 32 local authorities across Scotland. Along with contribution from many other associated national and local partners, this collaborative working ensures support for the licensed trade while also preventing alcohol fuelled violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Our joint campaigns which aim to protect children and young persons from harm will continue.

In the year ahead, our approach will remain focused on prevention and collaboration to ensure high standards of service delivery. I will continue to encourage officers and staff to engage with licensed premises and take relevant and proportionate action where appropriate to ensure licensing standards are maintained in the interest of the safety of the people of Scotland.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank our local partnerships for their contribution to maintaining high standards and driving improvement where necessary within the Licensed Trade for the benefit of the communities we all serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Farrell'.

Chief Constable Jo Farrell

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Police Scotland Licensing Overview –

The Violence Prevention and Licensing Co-ordination Unit (VPLCU) sits within the National Policing Together Division and have staff based across the force. The department has overall responsibility for determining and delivering national licensing strategy and policy, providing advice, guidance and support to divisional licensing teams and undertaking other specialist functions.

The VPLCU is a specialist department which consists of a small team of officers. The officers within the unit work with divisional licensing teams and partner agencies to help shape policy and strategy around the police licensing function. They provide advice to police licensing practitioners, operational officers, supervisors, and policing commanders.

The VPLCU seek to ensure that legislation governing the sale and supply of alcohol is applied consistently across the country and all opportunities are taken to stop the illegal or irresponsible sale, supply, or consumption of alcohol with the intention of preventing and reducing crime and disorder.

During 2024/2025, from a licensing perspective, our particular focus was on the following.

- Scrutiny of the serious incidents of violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour linked to licensed premises.
- Delivering and promoting campaigns which seek to address issues arising from the consumption of alcohol, particularly in relation to young persons and in the context of the night-time economy.
- Governance and ongoing development of the National ICT Licensing System, known as “Inn Keeper,” to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of liquor and civic licensing administration and management. Police Scotland continue to upgrade the National ICT system to ensure compliance with GDPR legislation.

Each of the 13 Local Policing Divisions have a licensing team responsible for the day-to-day management of licensing administration, complying with statutory requirements as well as addressing any issues that may arise within licensed premises in their local area.

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LICENSING BOARD AREA

Greater Glasgow Division polices the Licensing Board area.

Chief Superintendent Emma Croft is the Local Police Commander who has the responsibility for all day-to-day policing functions.

Approximately 626,000 people reside within the council area making it the most populous city in Scotland and the fourth most populous city in the United Kingdom.

The Glasgow board area has 1906 Licensed Premises which play a significant role in the city, local communities, and tourism.

Glasgow has in recent years developed a flourishing reputation for hosting international events along with iconic concerts and sport. Greater Glasgow is home to a number of Football Stadiums and other iconic venues, including the National Football Stadium at Hampden, Celtic Park, home of Celtic Football Club, Ibrox, home of Rangers Football Club, The Emirates arena and The SECC Hydro.

The area also encompasses several parks including Glasgow Green, Bellahouston Park and Kelvingrove Park.

The city also enjoys thriving daytime and night-time economies attracting businesses and visitors from around the world.

Local Policing Priorities

Following our public consultation process, the policing priorities for Greater Glasgow Division, as set out in our Local Policing Plan are as follows.

- **Crime** – reducing the crimes of greatest concern and detecting offenders.
- **Community Wellbeing** – collaborating with partners and the most vulnerable to reduce risk.
- **Events and Operations** – ensuring the safety of participants and being responsive to community concerns.
- **Serious Organised Crime** – divert, deter, detect, and disrupt organised criminality in our communities.

OPERATION OF THE LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005

Greater Glasgow Licensing Department continues to operate from London Road Police Station in the east end of Glasgow. The department is led by Inspector Alan Ferris, and is supported by two Sergeants, six Constables and nine members of police staff.

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On a day-to-day basis, officers within the department continue to review all incidents that have occurred either within or in the vicinity of licensed premises throughout the board area. These incidents are then acted upon depending on the nature and if any issues are found. Officers from the department will conduct further enquiry with the attending officers, the premises licence holder, the designated premises manager, and any staff involved in the incident.

From this it allows a broad picture of what has occurred and allows officers to formulate an approach on how to solve the matter. There are a range of measures that can be taken. In some cases, no further action is taken if we are satisfied that from a licensing perspective there are no failings or issues identified.

If this is not appropriate, then other options are taken by officers within the department. The first being an '**Interaction**.' This takes place when minor incidents have occurred that do not constitute a breach of the licensing conditions. Officers will communicate or hold a meeting with the premises licence holder and the designated premises manager to discuss the incident and how it can be resolved. This is recorded on the Innkeeper database and no further action is then required.

If a more serious incident occurs, then officers will conduct an '**Intervention**.' This is a more formal approach. A meeting will occur with the premises licence holder, the designated premises manager and potentially staff members involved in the incident. This usually takes place at a police station or the premises itself. This quite often involves a Licensing Standard Officer also being in attendance. A formal document known as a 'Licensed Premises Incident / Intervention Control Form' is prepared by licensing officers outlining the incident. A list of crime prevention / risk reduction recommendations is made to avoid a repeat of any further incidents or how to better manage a particular incident if it does occur. A specific timescale for the implementation will be agreed with the responsible person. This will be signed by all parties. Once the timescale is up and licensing officer have conducted a review update then the Intervention is filed, and no further action is required.

If a serious incident occurs or evidence exists of a premises operating in a manner inconsistent with the licensing objectives or out with the conditions of their licence, then licensing officers will apply for a '**Review**' of the premises licence and or a personal licence of any person involved. With early indication or identification of any issues or trends with a premises or licence holder, licensing officers can take early effective measures and steps through interventions and interactions. This generally results in issues being resolved and rectified without the need for a review.

All actions and decisions taken by licensing officers including inspections and incidents involving licensed premises are stored on the 'Innkeeper' database. Applications received are also logged on this system. It is the core function of the department and continues to allow trend patterns to be identified with any premises. This also allows the department to focus and monitor any areas of concern.

From April 2024, the following measures have been taken by Greater Glasgow Licensing Department within the board area.

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- *Interactions – 43*
- *Interventions – 3*
- *Review (Premises) - 1*
- *Review (Personal) – 2*

Over the same period for the Glasgow board area, Police Scotland have recorded the following common licensing offences under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. These statistics have been collated from the Police Scotland Crime Management system and refer to crimes where the offender has been detected.

- *Section 1 – Unlicensed sale or supply of alcohol*
 - *1 person has been charged.*
- *Section 52 – Failure to display summary of licence or certified copy.*
 - *2 persons have been charged.*
- *Section 104 – Supply of alcohol to a child or young person*
 - *4 persons have been charged.*
- *Section 111 – Drunk persons entering or in premises on which alcohol is sold.*
 - *6 persons have been charged.*
- *Section 115 – Disorderly conduct*
 - *20 persons have been charged.*
- *Section 116 – Refusal of leave premises*
 - *79 persons have been charged.*

On a day-to-day basis officer's from across Police Scotland continually conducted inspections to off and on sales premises in the board area. These totalled 3973.

Incidents responded to by Police officers within licensed premises within the board area totalled 1460.

Officers within the department continue to collaborate closely with partner agencies, in particular Glasgow Licensing Standards Officers and the Security Industry Authority (SIA). Officers routinely attend premises with partner agencies, where joint visits and action plans are undertaken, and advice is given.

On a day-to-day basis licensing officers continually provide advice and assistance to Local Policing Teams and Local Problem-Solving Teams who are based within the board area, to give these officers more confidence when it comes to visits and inspections to licensed premises. This includes participating in action plans and local initiatives.

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Training to local officers across the board area was also delivered, introducing Licensing Champions, increasing awareness and knowledge surrounding licensing legislation.

Due to a rise in the number of reports of alleged spiking within the board area, Police Scotland made all attempts to support the core licensing objectives by increasing awareness of spiking to the public and licensing trade. Licensing officers conducted bystander training to the trade to prevent crime and disorder, securing public safety and protecting and improving public health.

2024-2025 saw an increase in the number of large-scale events in the area. The licensing department supported such events in both preparatory and advisory roles. A close relationship was developed between the event organisers and Police licensing ensuring the safety of the public.

The department receives a number of applications from Glasgow City Council. These are processed in a timeous manner with various background checks being conducted to ensure public safety and the licensing objectives are met.

In the period of this report the department has processed 3398 licensing enquires for the Glasgow Board area. They are broken down below.

- *56 Premises applications*
- *58 Major Variations*
- *726 Minor Variations*
- *155 Transfers*
- *37 Personal Licence Renewals*
- *852 New Personal Licence*
- *262 Extended hours*
- *1252 Occasional Licenses*

PREVENTING THE SALE OR SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL TO CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

Police Scotland continually strives to maintain one of the core licensing objectives of protecting children and young persons from harm. Underage alcohol sales can lead to serious health risks in children, criminality, and anti-social behaviour. It can further leave children vulnerable and susceptible to harm. Therefore, it is imperative that any premises found to be engaging in underage sales, whether purposefully or not, are dealt with robustly and promptly. Along with this the trend of proxy purchases of alcohol by adults on behalf of children was emerging.

Asking an adult to buy alcohol for them is one of the most common tactics used by under eighteens.

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To deal with this, officers operated a campaign known as ***“It’ll Cost You”*** in partnership with the Scottish Alcohol Industry Partnership and the Community Alcohol Partnerships. The aim of the campaign was to raise the awareness that proxy purchase is a criminal offence which carries a fine of up to £5000 or up to 3 months imprisonment, or both.

By raising awareness of the consequences of proxy purchase, we hope to reduce the number of attempted purchases of alcohol for under eighteens, reduce crime in the area and reduce anti-social behaviour and noise in the area.

Large volumes of leaflets, information packs and posters were distributed throughout the board area to off-sales along with advice provided by licensing and local officers.

Licensing officers also collaborated closely with the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers where they attended chain supermarkets and engaged with the local community, providing education surrounding the issues and dangers of proxy purchase.

From April 2024, Police Scotland have also recorded on the Crime Management System the following offences relating to sale and supply of alcohol to children or young persons.

- *Section 104 – Supply of alcohol to a child or young person*
 - *4 persons have been charged.*

TACKLING SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime remains one of the local priorities for Greater Glasgow as outlined in our Local Policing Plan 2023-2026. As per previous reports to the board we recognise that most licensed premises operate in a completely legitimate manner and undertake the sale and supply of alcohol in a safe and regulated environment. However, several Serious and Organised Crime Groups (SOCGs) often make attempts to become involved in the running or ownership of legitimate business or by seeking to intimidate or influence legitimate operators. Police Scotland data shows that around 70% of SOCGs are operating in the west of Scotland and around 65% participate in the use of seemingly legitimate businesses. Some of the most common business types are licensed premises and stewarding companies.

As a result, all licensing applications received to the department are subject to extensive background and intelligence checks on any individuals or companies named. On a regular basis, officers from the department may interview applicants along with conducting visits to the premises.

During this period officers from the licensing department have attended alongside colleagues from the Serious and Organised Crime Disruptions and Interventions Unit to a small number of licensed premises to conduct joint visits and searches.

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These premises will be monitored by the licensing department with increased visits and inspections being conducted to build up an intelligence picture and deter the potential for any organised crime from occurring. The use of monitoring premises has been in use for several years by the department. These are any premises that the area commander, in consultation with the licensing department, considers requiring additional support or supervision. One example of what might be categorised as a monitored premises would be where links to serious and organised crime have been identified.

Over the last year, the licensing department continues to collaborate closely with its partner agency SIA in relation to stewarding agencies and companies being involved in organised crime at licensed premises. In 2024 a joint visit to premises employing stewards through companies and agencies was conducted to ensure all door stewards are SIA licensed and are performing the duties for which they are trained. Present during this operation was the SIA Chief Executive Officer.

We continue to focus on the four objectives of divert, deter, detect, and disrupt.

PROPOSED ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Looking ahead into 2025/2026 the licensing department will continue to assist with large scale events.

The previous campaign *"It'll Cost You"* will run into next year focusing on underage drinking by targeting the adults making proxy purchases. Last year's campaign was a success whereby anti-social behaviour and public nuisance was reduced, resulting in less harm to children.

Licensing officers will continue to deliver the 'Bystander' input to members of the licensing trade when required, providing awareness of vulnerable people and the benefits of early intervention.

Officers from the licensing department will liaise and provide inputs to Local Policing Teams and Local Problem-Solving Teams to improve licensing awareness. We will work closely with "Licensing Champions" building relationships and knowledge.

The department will continue to collaborate closely with its partner agencies to meet its objectives and deliver on the national and local priorities.

To conclude we would like to thank you for your continued support during what has been a challenging year for all. We have all had to adapt to a new way of working and ever-changing circumstances which has been embraced by all.

We look forward to a safe and healthy 2025/2026.