

Licensing Act 2003

'NIGHTSAFE'

**Blackpool will be a Vibrant, Inclusive, Healthy,
Safe and Prosperous Town**



Applicants who are preparing an operating schedule will wish to ensure that their proposals contribute to the prevention of crime and disorder.

This leaflet details the schemes that operate in the town with the support of the Blackpool Partnership against Crime, the Town Centre Forum, the Licensees Forum and other agencies.

Inclusion of these initiatives in an operating plan indicates a positive approach by an applicant to supporting the town's efforts to prevent crime and disorder.

Risk assessments may show that some or all of these initiatives are not directed at the type of activity described in the operating schedule. Further advice can be obtained from the Licensing Service and the appropriate responsible authorities, in particular the Police.

The 'Nightsafe' Scheme

'Nightsafe' is the collective title for a strategy to reduce alcohol related crime and disorder, to link healthcare to drug and alcohol abuse to deliver harm reduction education and to reduce alcohol related anti-social behaviour within the resort. An overall commitment to support and participate represents a positive approach to addressing alcohol related problems.

The particular elements relating to crime and disorder are as follows:

A) Radiolink: Premises where alcohol is sold and / or entertainment is provided need to be able to communicate with other such premises in the town. Real-time communications give immediate information relating to disorder and individuals associated with disorder.

Radiolink is administered by the Town Centre Manager and is controlled from the Divisional Police HQ CCTV Room. Officers from the Police Licensing Unit and the Managers of the major door care contractors monitor the system and can respond to incidents when appropriate.

B) Doorcare: The government have now established the Security Industry Authority to register door staff.

Risk assessments should be used to determine the adequate number of accredited door staff to be provided at licensed premises. Venues are advised to employ contractors who are BSI approved. Adequacy is related to many factors including the number of entrances, exits, trading floors (or levels), the nature of the entertainment, the clientele, premise location and the counting systems adopted at the premise. The Police recommend a ratio between door staff and customers of 1:100.

The provision of an adequate number of registered door staff is essential to the safe operation of any entertainment venue where alcohol is available.

C) Closed Circuit Television: CCTV provides excellent evidence, which can be used to detect crime and criminality while enabling licensees to monitor behaviour in and around their premise and protect their reputation and licence.

Lancashire Police will provide expert advice in relation to the location of camera's, the type of camera and lighting equipment, which may be needed, and maintenance of the system.

The installation of a Police approved system including where appropriate cameras outside the premises is essential. A leaflet is available from the Divisional Police HQ relating to minimum standards for CCTV systems.

D) 'Safer Clubbing': Is described in a Home Office publication of the same name, which provides guidance for Licensing Authorities, Drug Action Teams, the Police, Club managers and promoters.

The guidance has been applied to places of public entertainment in Blackpool as conditions attached to the Public Entertainment licences. The conditions appear on the Licensing Service website under 'Safer Clubbing Code of Practice'.

The Drugs Action Team can assist in your risk assessment process by providing advice on the relevance of Safer Clubbing to premises. Such advice will have regard to the nature of the entertainment, clientele etc.

An undertaking to observe the appropriate identified 'Safer Clubbing' conditions will be regarded by the Licensing Authority as a positive approach to protecting public safety and reducing crime and disorder.

E) 'Cutting Edge': Is an initiative to reduce injuries sustained either from assaults with glasses and bottles or by standing upon broken glass. There are four elements to Cutting Edge namely the use of toughened glass drinking vessels, enhanced glass and bottle collection and floor clearing, sponsorship of a purpose made bottle bin outside the premises, prevention of access to bottles and glasses, the provision of secure bottle stores and enforcement of a 'no exit with a bottle' policy by door staff. It is anticipated that premises providing door staff will wish to include 'cutting edge' participation in their operating schedule.

The commitment to the use of plastic bottles will be regarded as a positive approach to relieving glass inflicted injuries.

F) Drinking in the Street Ban: The Council have introduced a street drinking order, which covers a considerable proportion of the resort.

Details of the area covered by the street drinking provisions can be obtained from the Legal & Democratic Services Division. Tel: 477432. In particular premise operators can contribute to the reduction of street drinking, by the use of public address reminders, by enforcing 'cutting edge' within their premises and by supporting the work of the Licensees Forum.

A commitment to participate in the promotion of the Street Drinking Ban would be regarded as an indication of commitment to reducing crime and disorder and protecting public safety,

G) The Licence Forum, Blackpool Town Centre Forum and the British Retail Crime Initiative: The Council, Police and other agencies are committed to support the work of the Licences Forum and believe that the Forum should be one of the trades' voices in devising and reviewing licensing policy. Premise operators are encouraged to join the Town Centre Forum, which manages and operates the British Retail Crime Initiative and Pub Watch Schemes in the resort.

H) 'Proof of Age': The Act creates a number of offences relating to age and seeks to protect children from crime, disorder and unsuitable influences. An essential part of any defence against proceedings for an age related offence would be to have established reasonable precautions to ascertain an individual's age. A variety of 'Proof of Age' schemes exist and the Councils Environmental Services Division operates a scheme involving local schools.

The Police will encourage the use of the 'Challenge 21' policy in relation to proof of age.

The operating schedule should identify the proof of age schemes and/or alternative photo identify methods, which will prevail at the premises. The use of a "No Proof—No Drink" policy is an

essential control on underage drinking. The only proof of age cards that should be accepted are the Environmental Services Division card, Driving Licence, passport or Portman Group pass card.

I) Drinks Promotions: A responsible drinks discounting protocol was agreed in July 2003 between the licensed trade and the responsible authorities. Full support of this initiative and an agreement to the protocol being incorporated: - premise licence conditions will be regarded as a clear intention to promote the licensing objectives.

J) Crime Prevention Publicity and Alcohol Awareness Education: The operating schedules should include a commitment to support the efforts of the responsible authorities in relation to crime prevention and alcohol awareness. Participation in Licensees Forum sponsored activity and commitment to Portman Group campaigns are obvious examples of good practice.

(k) Dispersal of Patrons: Considerable crime and disorder problems have been identified with the dispersal of patrons from both individual establishments and groups of premises in an area.

It is recognised that legally the role of door staff outside premises is no different to any other citizen but it is known that a uniformed, high visibility presence is a deterrent to crime and disorder.

The Licensing Authority is committed to reducing crime and disorder and believes that the support of the trade by making door staff available for a period after closing of their premises to maintain order in the vicinity of the licensed premises and at Taxi stands in the area would make a major contribution to public safety.

A commitment to an after closing hour pro-bono provision of door staff to Crime Reduction Partnership schemes would be appreciated and would provide a clear indication of intent by an applicant.

(l) Capacity Limits: Disorder and disturbance are often associated with congestion and overcrowding. Use of a 'comfort factor' when determining occupancy can serve to reduce 'friction'.

The Responsible Authorities and the public entertainment venues have agreed that a 10% reduction in maximum permitted occupancy represents a suitable comfort factor.

Applications for a premises licence or a variation should include the determined capacity and the comfort factor that has been applied.

This guidance is provided to assist applicants but does not provide an interpretation of the law as only the courts may do this.

For further information please contact the Principal Solicitor (Licensing).

Licensing Service, Blackpool Council, Municipal Buildings, PO Box 4, Blackpool, FY1 1NA

**Office Opening Times: Monday to Thursday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm
Fridays 9.00 am to 4.00 pm**

Phone: 01253 478343

Fax: 01253 478372

Email: licensing.la2003@blackpool.gov.uk