

Fireworks and pyrotechnics in the UK

UK Government Consultation

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts across the UK.

1. Executive Summary

The UK Government has launched a consultation seeking views on proposals to reform the regulation of fireworks and other pyrotechnic products across the UK. The consultation forms part of the 2024 Labour Government's wider [Safer Streets Mission](#) agenda and aims to reduce the harms associated with fireworks, particularly excessive noise, anti-social behaviour and the risks posed by certain pyrotechnic products, while continuing to allow their use for celebrations, religious festivals and cultural events.

The proposals include restricting the sale of the loudest fireworks to professional users, expanding the list of prohibited pyrotechnic products, and reviewing the regulatory framework for lower-risk pyrotechnics to ensure it better reflects the varying levels of risk they present.

The Government is seeking evidence from a broad range of stakeholders, including local authorities, Trading Standards services and other regulatory bodies with responsibilities for enforcing product safety legislation. APSE encourages member authorities to respond to the consultation to ensure that regulations are informed by councils' experiences of enforcement.

Responses are due by **Wednesday 7th October 2026**.

[Click here](#) for further information and to submit your response.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

2. Overview

Fireworks remain an important feature of many public celebrations, religious festivals and community events across the UK. However, concerns have grown in recent years regarding their misuse, the impact of noise on residents and animals, anti-social behaviour, and the safety risks associated with certain products. [According to the Government](#), increasing numbers of public complaints, parliamentary debates, petitions and stakeholder representations have demonstrated significant public interest in reviewing the existing regulatory framework.

The consultation therefore seeks evidence on whether current regulations continue to strike the right balance between enabling responsible enjoyment of fireworks while protecting people, animals, property and communities from harm. Responses will inform whether amendments should be made to the [Pyrotechnic Articles \(Safety\) Regulations 2015](#) and related legislation.

It should also be noted that this consultation was launched under the previous UK Government led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer as part of its Safer Streets Mission. Following the subsequent change of administration and appointment of Andy Burnham as Prime Minister, the consultation remains open at time of writing; however, the Government's response and any subsequent implementation timetable may be subject to review under the new administration.

Policy context and rationale

The current framework governing fireworks and pyrotechnics is primarily contained within the [Pyrotechnic Articles \(Safety\) Regulations 2015](#) and the [Fireworks Regulations 2004](#), which regulate the manufacturing, sale, storage and use of fireworks across the UK, alongside the [Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles \(Scotland\) Act 2022](#) and the [Explosives \(Fireworks\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 1999](#). These regulations establish safety requirements, restrictions on sales, and controls over the use of certain fireworks, alongside enforcement responsibilities shared between Trading Standards, local authorities and other regulatory agencies.

The Government argues that while existing regulations have improved product safety, concerns remain regarding the availability of particularly noisy fireworks, products considered to present unacceptable risks, and whether lower-risk pyrotechnic products (e.g. Christmas crackers) continue to be regulated proportionately. According to the [Office for Product Safety and Standards \(OPSS\) research](#) cited by the consultation, 91% of respondents supported regulatory change, 71% said fireworks disturb the peace and quiet of their communities, and more than half had witnessed fireworks being used illegally in public places or after 1AM. The Government states that these findings have informed its proposals to review the current regulatory framework.

The consultation therefore proposes three broad areas of reform:

- Reducing noise impacts, and restricting access to the loudest fireworks so that they are available only to professional users.
- Expanding the list of pyrotechnic products prohibited from sale to the general public.
- Reviewing the regulatory requirements for lower-risk fireworks and pyrotechnic products (e.g. Christmas crackers) to better align with the different levels of risk they pose.

The Government states that these proposals are intended to support its wider Safer Streets Mission by reducing anti-social behaviour and improving public safety while preserving the role that fireworks play in organised celebrations and cultural events.

Why local authorities should engage

The consultation specifically identifies local authorities, Trading Standards services and regional and national regulators with product safety enforcement responsibilities as key stakeholders whose views are sought.

Local authorities possess practical experience of how fireworks affect communities through a range of service areas, including Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Community Safety, Parks and Open Spaces, Waste, and Cleansing. Authorities may also hold valuable evidence relating to complaints, anti-social behaviour, enforcement challenges, partnership working with emergency services, and the resource implications associated with regulating fireworks.

Responses from councils can therefore help ensure that any future regulatory changes are informed by operational experience and are practical to implement. They also provide an opportunity to highlight any unintended consequences, resource pressures or enforcement considerations arising from the proposals, as well as identifying opportunities to improve compliance and consistency across local authorities.

3. Consultation Questions

The consultation questions are categorised as follows:

Topic	Questions
Updating the banned list and reviewing the regulation of F1 and P2 Products	5
Reducing noise impacts	3
Lead-in periods	2

The consultation questions are available in full below:

1. Are there any other particular F2 and F3 fireworks products that you think the general public should not be allowed to buy? Please state which products and give your reasons.
2. If more products are added to the regulation 33 banned list, what consequences might there be for consumers, industry, enforcement authorities, professional users, and others? Please give your reasons.
3. Do you agree that regulation 33(1)(g) should be amended to make explicit that a firework comprising more than one shot tube is banned from sale to the general public? Please give your reasons.

Agree; Neither agree or disagree; Disagree

4. Do you agree that the age limit for purchasing Christmas crackers should be removed?
Please give your reasons.
Agree; Neither agree or disagree; Disagree
5. Are there any other specific F1 and P1 pyrotechnics that should have their regulatory requirements increased or decreased? Please state which products, what regulatory requirements you think they should have and give your reasons.
6. Do you agree the decibel level of fireworks consumers use should be lowered? Choose one of the following options:
 - No, the maximum noise level for fireworks should remain at 120 dB (A.imp);
 - Yes, to 110 dB (A.imp) (reducing perceived loudness by approximately half);
 - Yes, to 100 dB (A.imp) (reducing perceived loudness by approximately three-quarters);
 - Yes, to 90 dB (A.imp) (reducing perceived loudness by approximately seven-eighths);
 - Don't know
7. What might be the positive impacts of reducing the maximum decibel level of fireworks available to the general public? Please explain your answer and provide evidence where possible.
8. What might be the negative impacts of reducing the maximum decibel level of fireworks available to the general public? Please explain your answer, providing evidence where possible.
9. How much lead in time would businesses need to prepare for the changes proposed in this consultation and why? Please state a lead in time in months or years, and explain your answer, providing evidence where possible.
10. What other things should we consider when setting a lead in time? You may wish to reference the impact on people who buy fireworks, enforcement bodies, police or the general public.

4. APSE Comment

The regulation of fireworks and pyrotechnics is an issue that intersects with a range of local authority responsibilities, including Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Community

Safety, Parks and Open Spaces, and Waste and Cleansing services. Any changes to the current regulatory framework may therefore have implications for council services, enforcement activity, partnership working and the management of community events.

The consultation provides an opportunity for local authorities to share their operational experience of existing regulatory arrangements, including challenges associated with enforcement, responding to complaints, addressing anti-social behaviour and working alongside emergency services and other partners to promote public safety.

APSE encourages member authorities to consider engaging with the consultation and providing evidence from their own local experiences. Contributions from councils will help ensure that any future changes are informed by the practical realities of implementation, including the resources, guidance and support required to deliver effective enforcement.

As the consultation considers potential changes to the balance between public enjoyment of fireworks and the need to protect communities from harm, local authority insight will be important in shaping a regulatory approach that is proportionate, workable and responsive to local circumstances.

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