



Wirral Council

Public Health, Environmental Health &  
Trading Standards.

# What is Reducing the Strength?

A voluntary agreement by alcohol retailers to stop selling cheap yet potent 'super strength' beer, lager and ciders:

- with an ABV of 6.5% or above
- specifically in plastic bottle or tin cans
- sold cheaply

# 82 Sign Up's & 49 Affiliates

## What the businesses have said:

- A&S - it's a nicer atmosphere, different customers coming in. It's made such a difference to the area.
- MS – There was a dip in profits but this levelled out
- MC - there's less theft and abuse, different people are coming
- CS – the difference it's made, he would never go back to selling it (SS)



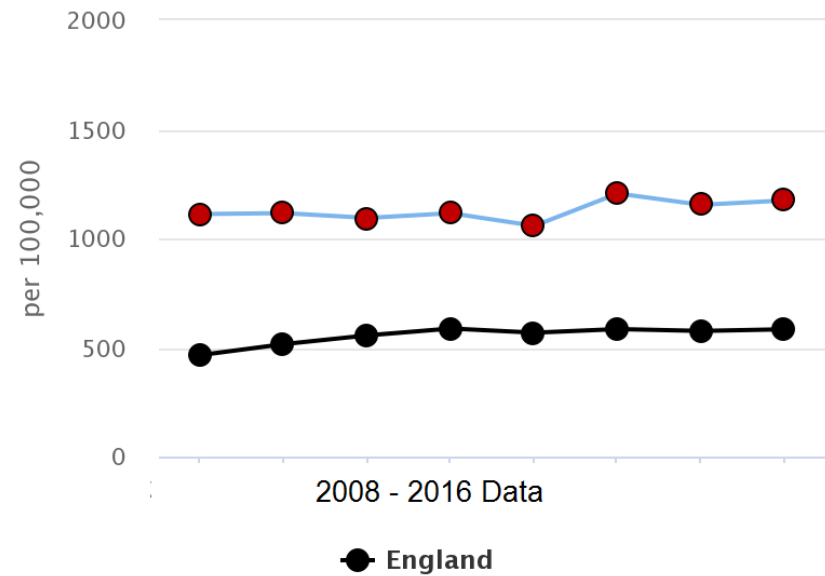
# Wirral's Story



# Wirral's Stories

- First Impressions
- Grandad
- 7am
- Birkenhead Magistrates court
- Woman & Child
- Verbal/Racial abuse
- Reduced price for the alcoholics

Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions (Persons) – Wirral



<http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/liver-disease>

# Where do you start?

- Governance
  - Steering group identifying and engaging partner agencies
    - Public Health
    - EH & TS
    - Licensing
    - Police
    - Community Safety
    - CCG and local hospitals
    - Alcohol support groups – WWTR & local Controlled Drinking Environments
- Legal advice was sought
- Identify the area of greatest detriment through crime/ASB stats/ alcohol support groups
  - Identify key premises – usually around the ASB hot spots
  - Introduction letter and you 'script'
  - Additional guidance was added (60second CMA)

# Realisations & Challenges

Plan of Action



Hook for the Business

Implementation



Complaints



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## 60-second summary

### High-strength alcohol schemes: competition law issues for retailers



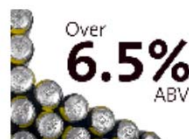
If you are approached by a local council about joining a scheme to limit the supply of high-strength alcohol in your local area, you should take care to avoid the risk of breaking competition law.

- Some local authorities are implementing schemes to tackle problems associated with street drinking by encouraging retailers to withdraw high-strength alcohol from sale.
- But you may risk being fined if you either agree with other retailers, or share with them your plans, to stop selling high-strength alcohol.

#### Some dos and don'ts to avoid breaking competition law

- Do speak with council officials about your plans on an individual basis. Don't let them tell you about what other retailers may be doing and, if they try, tell them that you're not interested and you're not willing to discuss it.
- Don't share information with competitors about whether you plan to stock high-strength alcohol or let your competitors share their plans regarding high-strength alcohol with you.
- Don't make a commitment to sign up to a scheme in a meeting where other retailers are present.
- Don't collaborate with other retailers to agree to withdraw high-strength alcohol.
- Only go public about your participation in a scheme once it has been launched.

You can make an independent decision to join a scheme and stop selling high-strength alcohol – but don't discuss this or agree to this in co-operation with other retailers



#### What's competition law and how does it affect you?

Competition law applies to firms – including retailers – engaged in commercial activity.

Penalties for breaking the law include significant fines of up to 10% of your annual turnover.

The CMA has engaged with local councils to help them make sure they do not ask businesses to break the law or risk putting them in a position where they may do so.

#### For more information

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/competition-and-consumer-law-compliance-guidance-for-businesses](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/competition-and-consumer-law-compliance-guidance-for-businesses)

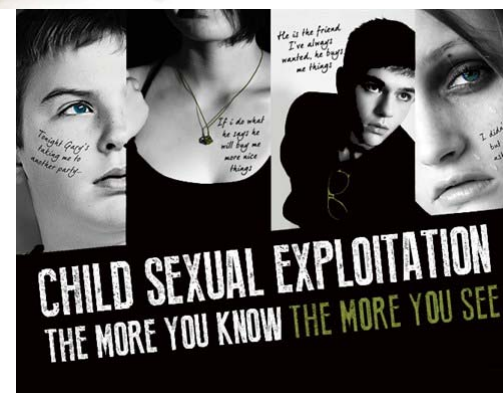
These materials do not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as such.

# Competition Law





# Off Shoots



# Custodians



Shop  
keeper  
knows  
everyone

Training shop staff  
to provide a brief  
intervention and  
sign post a  
customer to  
Alcohol Support  
Services

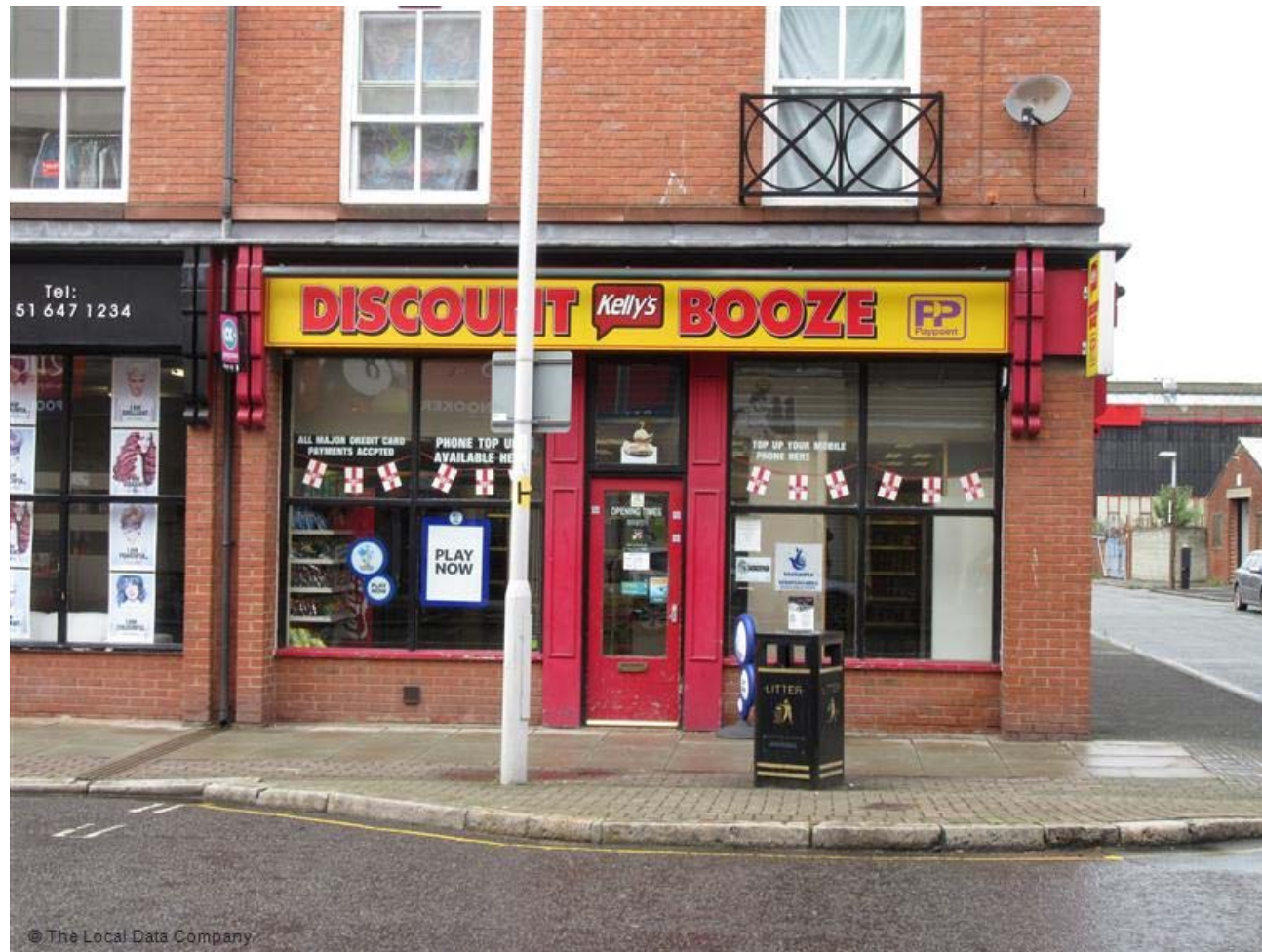


Shop keeper is the  
only person  
someone on a  
binge may speak  
to for days on end

# Questions for Your Area?

- Is there a super –strength related problem in your area?  
CDEs, hostels, police (PCSOs), Community Safety, CCG, hospital(s), retailers (TS/EH)  
TIIG, JSNA
- How will you take an evidenced based approach to tackling this?  
Ipswich model/case study, LGA guidance, Wirral
- Who will your key partners be?  
***Will be different (more involved/less involved) in each area*** – retailers, Public Health, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, police (PCSOs), Licencing team, Community Safety, CCG, hospital(s), local voluntary organisations
- Funding  
Can be low cost using existing resources e.g. PCSOs, licencing officers, EH/TS or one frontline team e.g. Trading Standards may be funded specifically to do this.
- Goals  
Can tackle hotspots and problem areas; can take a whole area approach. Can focus on small retailers OR also include large corporate retailers
- Challenges  
Drinks industry, competition law, corporate policies (big retailers), small margins and competition (smaller retailers).....

# Kelly's





# CIEH Excellence Award 2017 Winners



# But the Biggest Winner...



**2015**

Alcohol Related Admissions  
to Arrows Park Hospital  
Down 24%.

ASB down 6% (14%-8%) in  
target area.

Physical Assaults 628 (2014)  
2015/16/17 not above 320.

**2017**