

Mary Ellmers
Head of Training & Development

Rethinking Alcohol Licensing



Expert Group on Public Health and Licensing

Convened by AFS and SHAAP June 2011

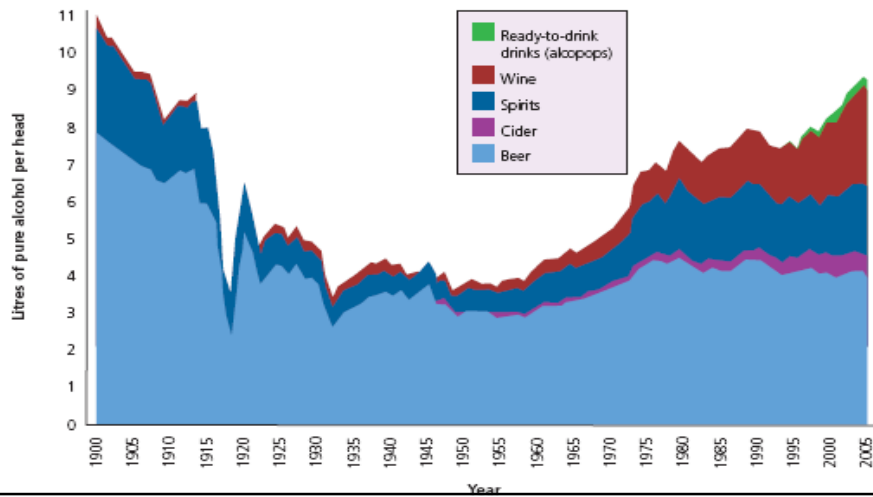
- 1) How could Scotland's licensing system more effectively regulate the availability of alcohol to alcohol-related harm?
 - 2) How can licensing policy and practice give more meaningful effect to the public health objective?
- Papers on history of public health & licensing, and international evidence on licensing & alcohol harm
 - Legal Opinion commissioned from Sir Crispin Agnew QC



UK Alcohol Consumption

Litres of pure alcohol consumption per capita in the UK

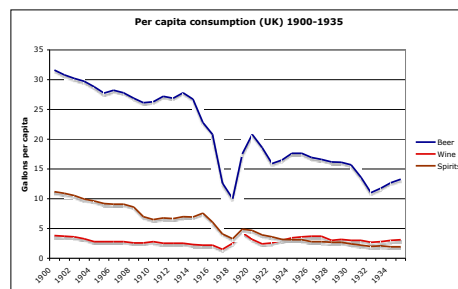
1900-2006 [Tighe Brewer's Statistical Handbook 2007]



Decline in consumption post-1916

“a younger generation is growing up to which, as a whole, any resort to alcoholic excess as a necessary or usual practice is almost totally unknown”

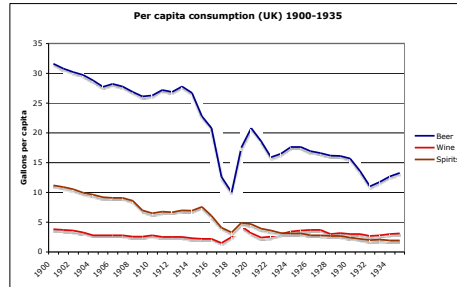
Royal Commission on Licensing (Scotland) 1931



Why the decline?

Decline in consumption due to:

- Better health awareness
- Alternative leisure pursuits
- Improved education
- Better licensing law
- Improved housing
- Increased taxation
- 'Drunkness has gone out of fashion'

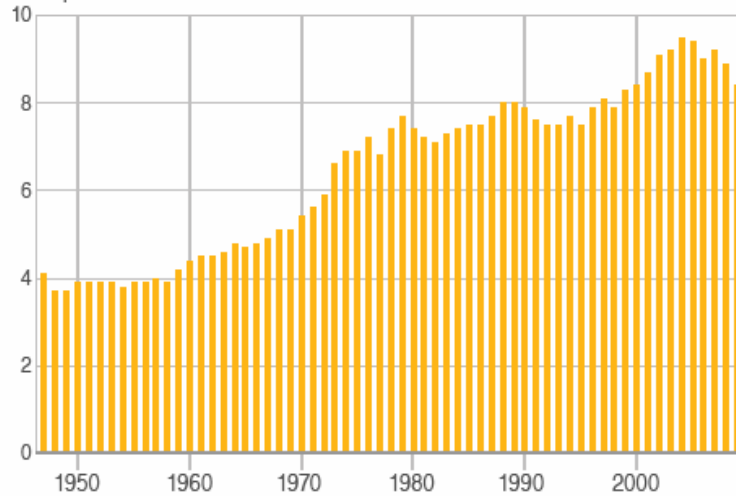


(Royal Commissions on Licensing (England and Scotland), 1931)



Alcohol consumption in the UK - 1947-2009

Litres per head - 100% alcohol



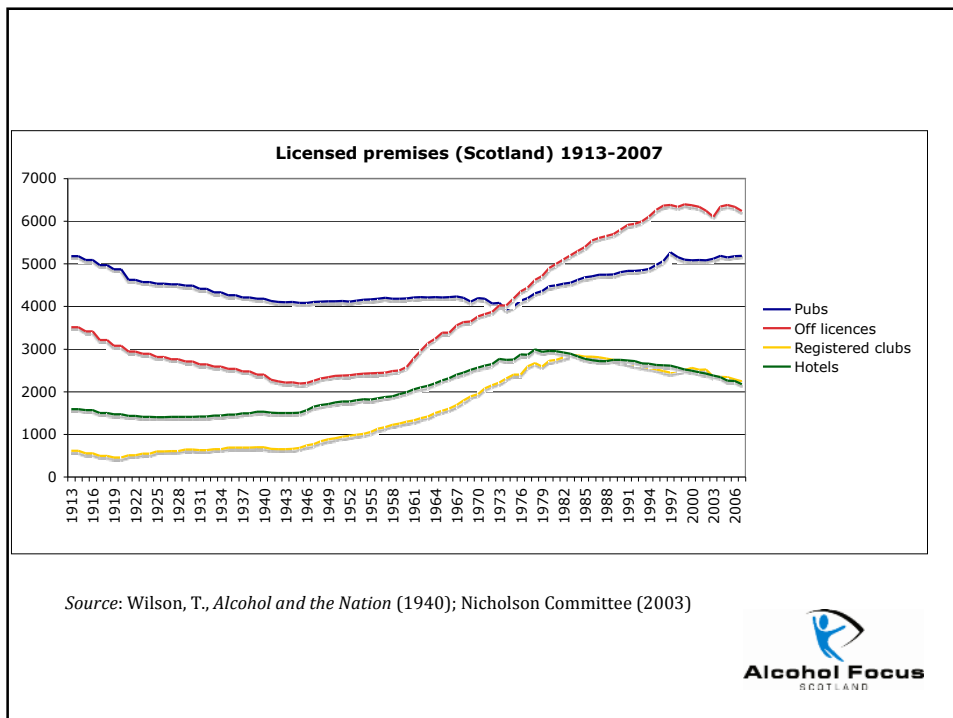
Source: British Beer and Pub Association Statistical Handbook 2010

Increased consumption after 1960

- Increased disposable incomes
- New youth cultures
- Greater gender equality
- The globalisation of the wine trade
- More effective retail and marketing strategies
- Closing of 'afternoon gap' for off-licences (1962)
- Abandonment of Resale Price Maintenance (1964)



We must 'get the beer-drinking habit instilled into thousands, almost millions, of young men who do not at present know the taste of beer.' Edgar Sanders (1933)



Scottish Government Alcohol Policy

2005

“There are four key issues that underline the approach the Executive has taken in proposing the new licensing system for Scotland. They are:

- reducing underage drinking
- reducing binge drinking
- providing a voice for communities
- and modernisation.”

Policy Memorandum for the Licensing (Scotland) Bill



Scottish Government Alcohol Policy

2009



“Alcohol misuse is no longer a marginal problem with up to 50% of men and up to 30% of women across Scotland exceeding recommended weekly guidelines. **That’s why we are aiming, consciously, to adopt a total population approach.**”

“**Our approach is targeted at everyone including ‘ordinary people’** who may never get drunk but are nevertheless harming themselves by regularly drinking more than the recommended guidelines.

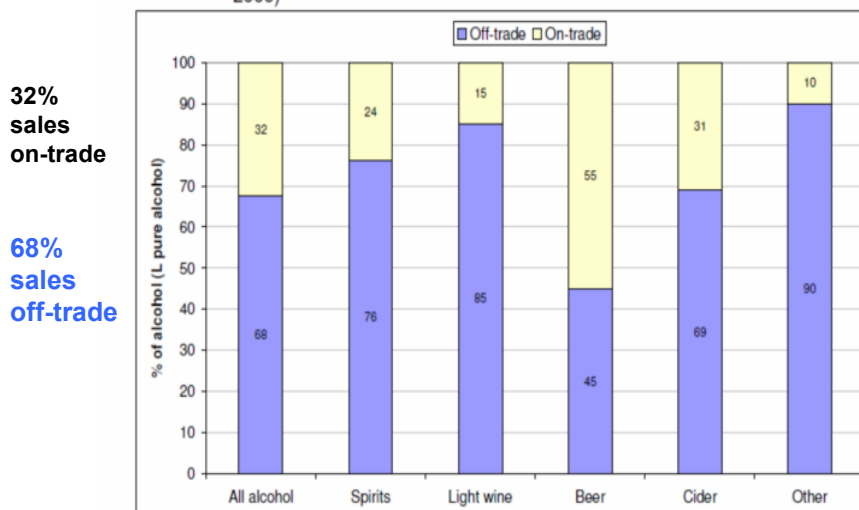
If we can reduce the overall amount that we drink in Scotland...then we will all reap the benefits.”

Changing Scotland’s Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action



Alcohol Sales in Scotland

Figure 1: Percentage of alcohol sold, by market sector within drinks category (Scotland, 2009)



Alcohol Sales in Scotland

A report on alcohol sales 2005-09 shows

- 1) Adults in Scotland buy on average **24% more alcohol** than the rest of Britain
- 2) The average price of alcohol is
 - **£1.31 per unit in bars, pubs, clubs, restaurants and hotels**
 - **only 43p per unit in the off-trade**

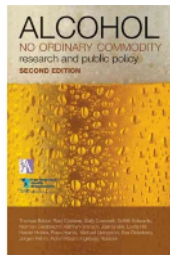
Analysis of alcohol sales data 2005-2009, July 2010, Health Scotland

International Evidence

World Health Organisation identifies two key components of a successful alcohol strategy as:

Price - taxation / minimum pricing but also price promotions

Availability - includes licensed hours, number of premises and also the size of premises / display area



Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity 2nd edition 2010



Strategy	Measure	Effect
Price Controls	Taxation graduated by strength	High
	Controlling cheapest price	High
Treatment	Brief Interventions	High
	Intensive treatment for dependence	High/Mid
Availability	Enforced age limits	High
	Restricted hours	Mid
	Retail monopolies	Mid
	Outlet Density	Mid
Safer Environment	Enforcement of licensing codes	Mid
	Server Training	Mid
Marketing	Limiting exposure to advertising	Low
Education and Information	Integrated campaigns	Low
	Classroom Education Only	Nil
	Public Campaigns / Warning Labels	Nil



Limitations of Current Practice Licensing Policy Statement

- There has been little promotion of the public health objective in the licensing policy statement or overprovision assessment so far.
- Few Licensing Boards address the overall supply of alcohol as a factor in risky drinking practices and problems.
- Evidence sources are not routinely cited, nor is there always a clear line of reasoning from the evidence to the policy position adopted.



Recommendations for Licensing Boards and Local Authorities

- 1) Licensing boards should prioritise formulating a comprehensive **evidence-based policy statement**.
- 2) Licensing policy to account of the **aggregate effect of licensed premises** on drinking behaviour & harm.
- 3) Licensing Boards should determine the **locality for an assessment of overprovision** that is appropriate to the licensing objectives
- 4) Local Authorities should ensure mechanisms are in place to check **consistency and complementarity of different policies** and ensure licensing policy is considered in eg planning
- 5) Licensing Boards should **publish detailed information** about licensing in their area



Recommendations for Public Bodies

- Public bodies responsible for the collation of statistics relating to the five objectives should ensure that local data are available to boards.



Recommendations for the Scottish Government

1. A **national policy statement** is formulated that local licensing boards need to consider when drawing up their own policies
2. A statutory obligation is placed on each licensing boards to **report annually** on how it has fulfilled its duty for each of the licensing objectives
3. Licensing premises should be required by law to provide annual information on the **volume of alcohol sold**
4. **Guidance** to the Licensing Act should be **updated**



AFS Licensing Activity

- Briefing to DsPH about new statutory status.
- Dissemination 'Re-thinking Alcohol Licensing Report'
- Data collection template (joint initiative with West Lothian Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco Partnership).
- Regional meetings across Scotland to discuss recommendations.
- Toolkit to be produced and made available to licensing boards, ADPs, DPHs, forums.
- Training for licensing board members and others.



For more information

Mary Ellmers 0141 572 6594

mary.ellmers@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

Linda Bowie 0141 572 6593

linda.bowie@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

