



Alcohol Profile

August 2023

Report prepared by Susan Elliot and Rupali Sachar on behalf of the Local Licensing Forum

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 Key Data:	3
2 Introduction	5
3 Local Data	6
4. Number of Licensed Premises	7
3.1 Alcohol related health harm	9
3.1.1 Alcohol-related Hospital Stays – Scottish Borders	9
3.1.2 Alcohol related hospital admissions by Intermediate Zone	10
3.1.3 Alcohol related hospital admissions by Locality	11
3.1.4 Inequalities and alcohol-related hospital admissions	11
3.1.5 Potential for Improvement	12
3.1.6 Alcohol-specific deaths	13
3.1.7 Individuals exceeding weekly limits	13
4 Protecting Children and Young People From Harm	15
5 Community Alcohol Survey	16
6 Policy and Legislative Developments	18
6.1 Alcohol Framework	18
6.2 Minimum unit pricing	19
6.3 New Licensing Guidance	20
7 Post-Covid Recovery and the Current Context	21
Appendix 1 – Data Sources	24
Appendix Two: National Overview	25

1. Executive Summary

The aim of the Alcohol Profile (Profile) is to support the Scottish Borders Licensing Board (Licensing Board) by providing evidence to inform development of Licensing Policy Statement and support decision making.

Many different sources of evidence can be used to inform licensing policy and practice including experience and knowledge of Licensing Board members, views and experiences of people resident with the Board area as well as published alcohol data.

This report includes published alcohol data as well as views from the local community following the Community Insights Into Alcohol Impact and Licensing in Scottish Borders Survey: July 23 (Community Survey).

1.1 Key Data:

- 85% of alcohol sold in Scotland in 2021 was through the off-trade.
- The number of off-sales only licenses in Scottish Borders have increased 10% in previous five years.
- The number of occasional licensed in Scottish Borders has increased overtime and is at its highest level.
- 52% of alcohol related hospitalisations are in the most deprived areas of the Scottish Borders

The Community Survey highlighted areas for improvement in relation to:

- Increase training for staff who sell alcohol.
- Increased enforcement around licensed premises (selling to those drunk, selling to those underage).
- Request to reduce licensing hours in residential areas.
- Improve communication and education around alcohol use.
- Ensure licensed premises have information on support services.
- Stronger consideration of licensing family friendly events.
- Readdressing the balance between perceived excessive alcohol consumption and community celebration of summer festivals/rugby 7s.

The Licensing Forum's key recommendations on the Community Survey report are:

- Enhance policy around home deliveries/remote sales to minimise harm to children and young people.
- The views of the public and health professionals should strongly influence licensing decisions.
- Amend Policy to strengthen expectations around measures for underage drinking, drunkenness on premises, training and supervision for staff.
- Consider the total impact of multiple alcohol outlets (including occasional licenses) on a community.

2 Introduction

Each local licensing board in Scotland must develop a Statement of Licensing Policy. This policy sets out how the licensing board will carry out its work, including how it will promote the [five licensing objectives](#), how it will make decisions and also if the board thinks there are enough, or too many, licensed premises in an area.

The Alcohol Profile (Profile) is produced by the Alcohol & Drugs Partnership Support Team on behalf of the Local Licensing Forum and aims to collectively present the most up to date on alcohol and licensing available to support Licensing Board members in the following areas:

- Development of Statement of Licensing Policy 2023 - 2028
- Development of Statement of Overprovision
- Support decisions in upholding the five Licensing Objectives

This profile is separated into three areas:

- Local data including a summary of community views on the impact of alcohol and licensing.
- Impact of COVID-19 and the national context.

The previous [profile](#) included good practice recommendations from other Licensing Boards Policies noted within the Alcohol Focus Scotland Review of Statements of Licensing Policy 2018 – 2023.

Data sources are outlined in Appendix One.

Scottish Borders Alcohol Profile

ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND

May 2023

There are 456 places to buy alcohol in Scottish Borders:

343 on-sales premises (pubs and restaurants) 

113 off-sales premises (supermarkets and shops) 

Scottish Liquor Licensing Statistics 2021-22.

In Scottish Borders, 24% of people drink above the Chief Medical Officers' low-risk guidelines.

This includes **18% of women and 32% of men.** 

This compares to **24% of people in Scotland who drink above the guidelines.** Scottish Health Survey.

Parental drinking was a concern identified for 12% of children on the child protection register in Scottish Borders. 

Children's Social Work Statistics 2020-21.

53% of S2 and S4 students in Scottish Borders drink alcohol.

28% of S2 and S4 students in Scottish Borders drink alcohol at least once a month. 

Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021- 2022.

There were 405 alcohol-related hospital admissions in Scottish Borders in 2021-22. 


Alcohol related hospital statistics 2021-22.

The admission rate was lower than for Scotland as a whole. ScotPho Profiles.

Every year, alcohol costs Scottish Borders £30.50m or £270 per person.

This includes:

Health service	£4.31m
Social care	£5.27m
Crime	£10.62m
Productive capacity	£10.29m



The Societal Cost of Alcohol Misuse in Scotland for 2007.

In Scottish Borders, 21 people died because of alcohol in 2021, from conditions solely caused by alcohol. 

Alcohol-specific deaths 2021.

The death rate was lower than for Scotland as a whole. ScotPho Profiles.

The true number of alcohol deaths is over 3 times as high when including conditions such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases. NHS Health Scotland.

For full references and methods, visit www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/alcohol-information/local-alcohol-profiles

About Alcohol Focus Scotland
 Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) is the national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol harm.
 Alcohol Focus Scotland is a Registered Scottish Charity (SC009538) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (Scottish Company No. SC094096)

4. Number of Licensed Premises

In 2021/22 there were 456 licensed premises compared with 450 in the previous year¹.

Whilst on-sales have remained stable over the previous five years (352 in 2017/18 to 343 2021/22) the number of off-sales only licenses have increased by 10% over this time (102 in 2017/18 to 113 2021/22).

After an increasing trend of occasional licenses being granted between 2017 – 2020, the number reduced over 2020 – 22 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most recent local data provided shows the number of occasional licenses in 2022/23 has returned to an even higher level with an increase to 1455 (Aug 22 – Aug 23) (17% increase).

No license applications have been refused in the last 5 years.

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
On-Sales Licenses	352	351	341	342	343
Off-Sales only Licenses	102	106	107	108	113
On-Sales applications	5	3	3	12	4
Off-Sales applications	9	7	4	3	5
Occasional Licenses Granted	1243	1356	1416	77	652
License applications refused	0	0	0	0	0
Licensing statistics for Borders includes dual on/off sales licenses					

Data from Police Scotland Chief Constable Annual Licensing Report (2020-21)

The Police Scotland Chief Constable Annual Licensing Report (2020-21) provides information on incidents in licensed premises, licensing issues and interventions in the Scottish Borders.

Key information noted in the Report include:

- There are significant demands on police resources placed in the Scottish Borders area by the Common Ridings and Rugby 7's tournaments. There are currently 3 premises trading until 3am at the weekends with annual occasional extensions for some Common Riding Town Balls extending to 5am.
- There were 200 recorded incidents in licensed premises between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, this figure shows a decrease of 41% when compared with the previous year.

¹ [Scottish Liquor Licensing Statistics - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Scottish-Liquor-Licensing-Statistics)

There continues to be a notable trend in thefts of alcohol from ‘off sales’ premises over the reporting year, this may be due to the impact that Covid-19 has had on society.

- On Friday and Saturday evenings police officers are deployed on foot, where other incidents permit, to aid with dispersal of licensed premises and reduce antisocial behaviour and violence related incidents between the hours of 2200-0400.
- Violence recording indicates an “Alcohol” marker as a clearly defined aggravator to indicate where the presence of alcohol is deemed a factor in the act of violence.
 - Of the 979 recorded crimes of violence for 2020-21, 239 had the alcohol marker attached to the crime report. Of those, 134 were in residential locations and 105 in a public space.
 - Galashiels, Hawick, Kelso, Selkirk and Peebles are the area’s most frequently affected by public space violence where alcohol is a factor with most incidents taken place in the late evening/early morning across the weekend.
- The following offences relating to Children and Young People were reported during 2020-21

Number of offences reported – Scottish Borders	2019-20	2020-21
Section 102 (sale of alcohol to a child or young person)	0	0
Section 103 (allowing the sale of alcohol to a child or young person)	0	0
Section 104A (supply of alcohol to a child)	2	1
Section 104B (supply of alcohol to a young person)	5	5
Section 105 (purchase of alcohol by or for a child or young person)	2	0

The following licensing offences related to drunkenness and disorder have been reported to the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) during the reporting year.

Number of offences reported – Scottish Borders	2019-20	2020-21
Section 111 (drunk persons within licensed premises)	1	1
Section 112 (obtaining alcohol by or for a drunk person)	0	1
Section 113 (sale of alcohol to a drunk person)	0	1
Section 114 (DPM drunk whilst on duty)	2	0
Section 115 (disorderly conduct within licensed premises)	0	0
Section 116 (refusal to leave licensed premises)	8	3

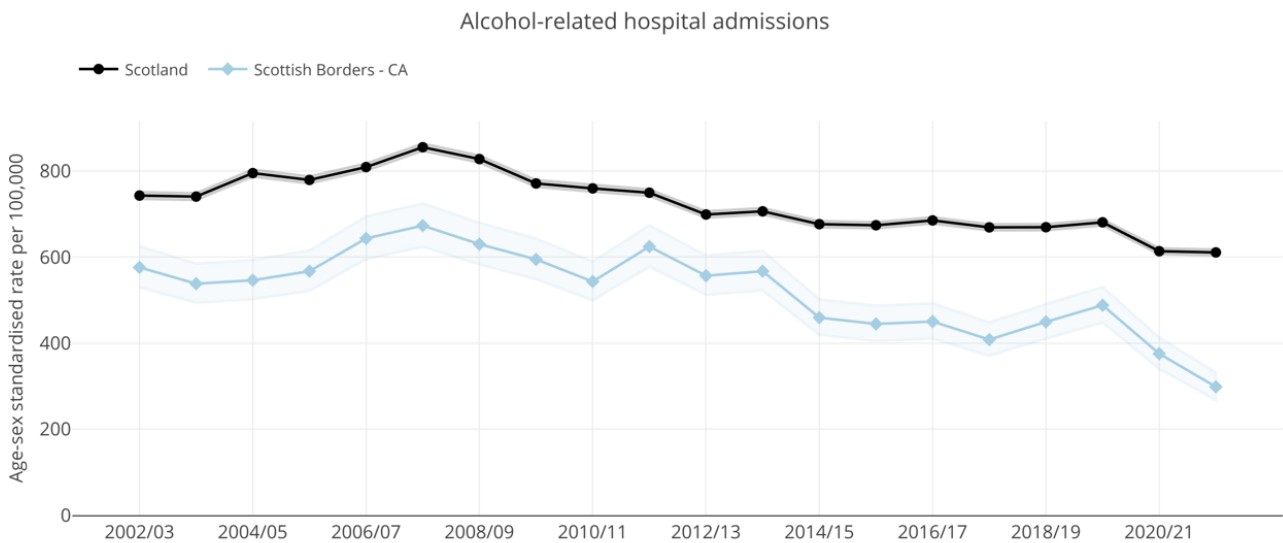
3.1 Alcohol related health harm

Excessive alcohol consumption causes harm to:



3.1.1 Alcohol-related Hospital Stays – Scottish Borders

The chart below shows the rate of alcohol related general acute hospital stays in Scottish Borders has reduced overtime to 298 per 100,000 population in 2021/22 compared with 375 in the previous year. Borders rate has consistently been better than the Scottish average.

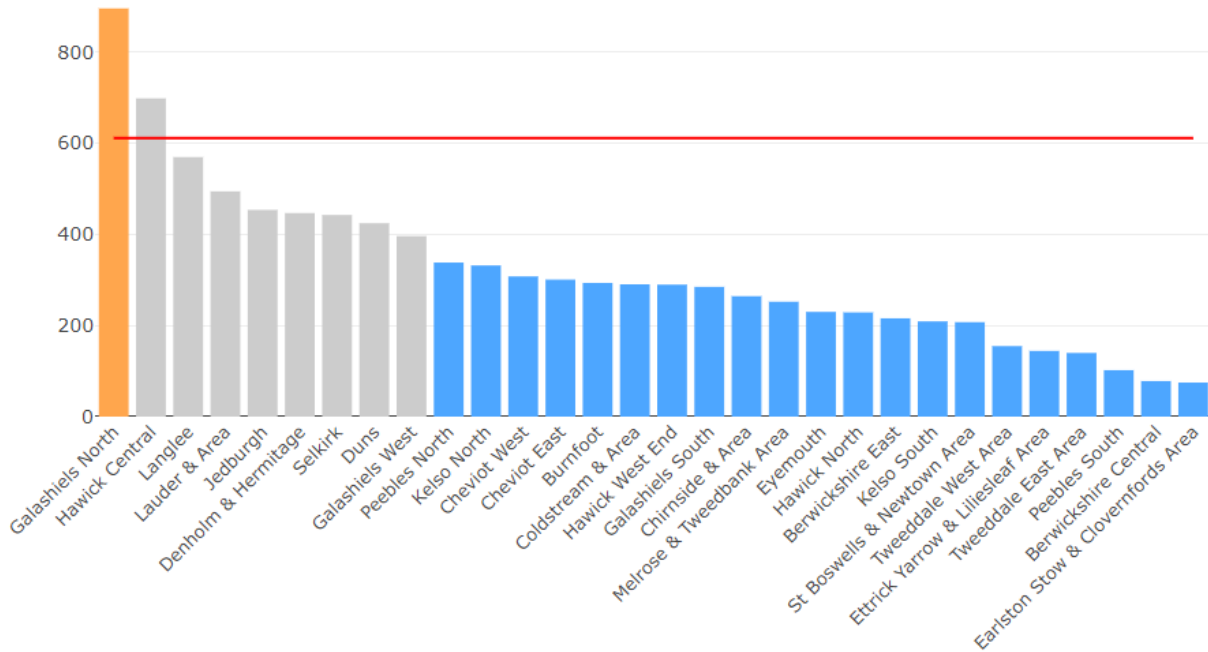


3.1.2 Alcohol related hospital admissions by Intermediate Zone

Galashiels North rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions was 895.32 in comparison to the Scottish average of 610.92.

Alcohol-related hospital admissions

Intermediate zones compared against Scotland - 2021/22



Legend

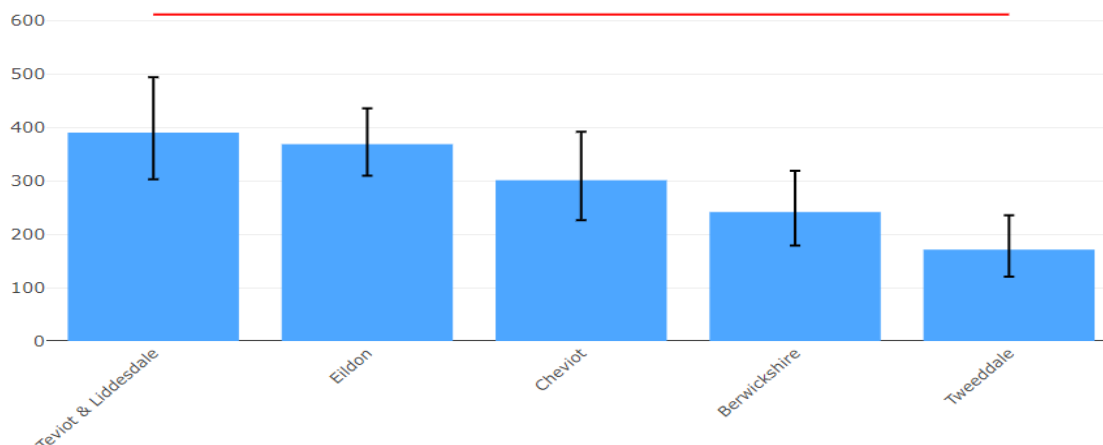
- Better than comparator
- Not different to comparator
- Worse than comparator
- No differences can be calculated

3.1.3 Alcohol related hospital admissions by Locality

Teviot and Liddesdale (389.9) and Eildon (368.3) have the highest rates of alcohol related hospital stays (admissions) by locality over the past 5 years.

Alcohol-related hospital admissions

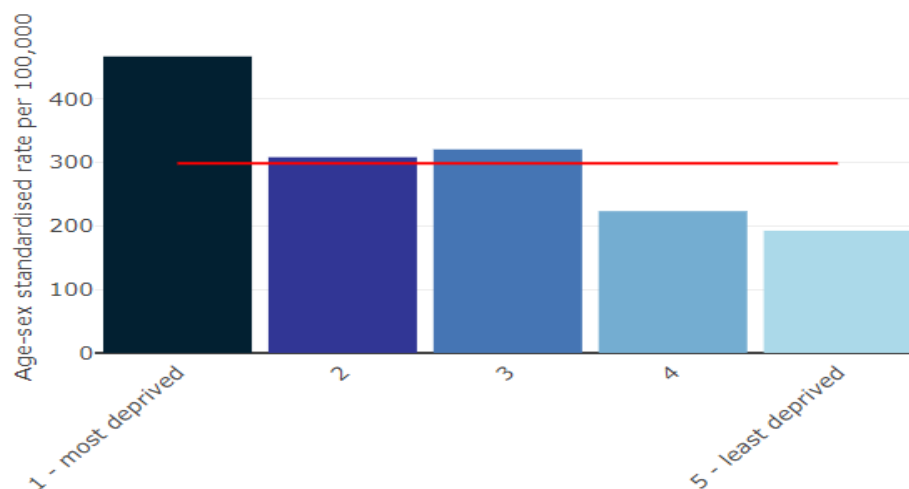
HSC localities compared against Scotland - 2021/22



3.1.4 Inequalities and alcohol-related hospital admissions

The most deprived areas have the highest hospital admissions. In Scottish Borders the most deprived areas have 52% more hospital admissions than the overall average.² The chart below shows the differences in alcohol-related hospital admissions between deprivation groups in Scottish Borders.

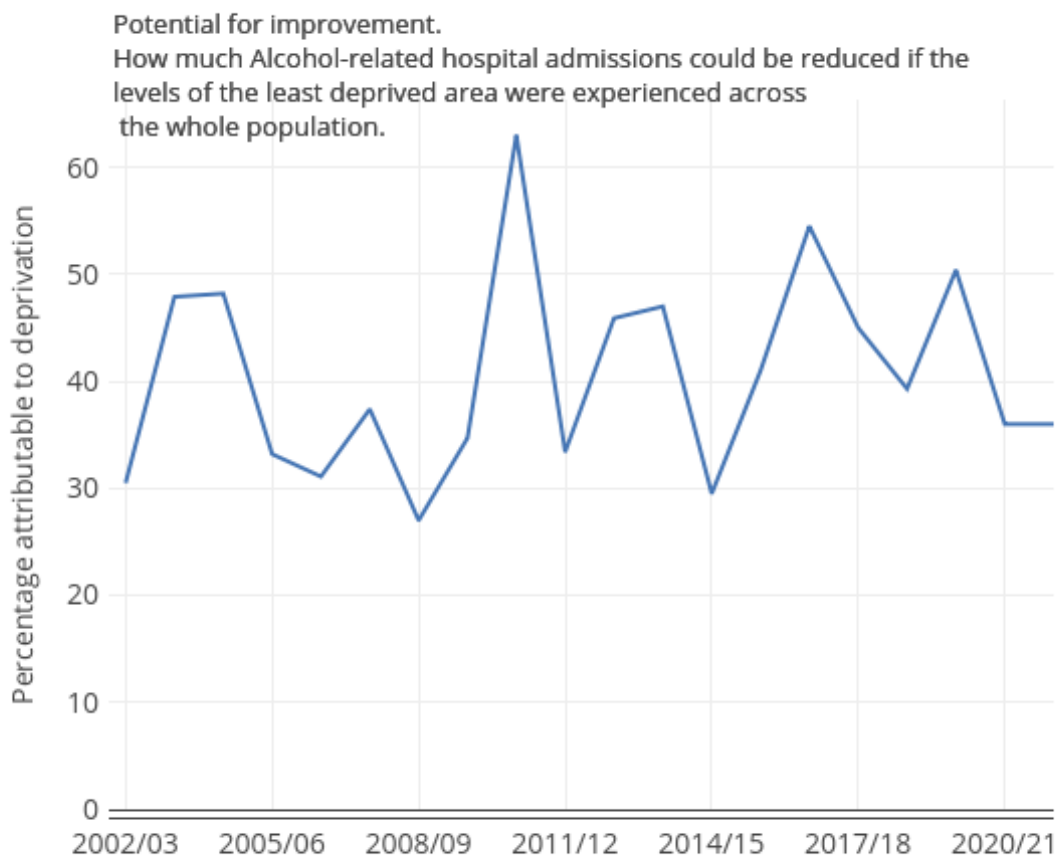
Differences in alcohol-related hospital admissions between deprivation groups for 2021/22



² [Public Health Scotland, Scotpho Alcohol Profile 21/22](#)

3.1.5 Potential for Improvement

The chart below demonstrates that alcohol related hospital admissions in Scottish Borders would be 36% lower if the levels of the least deprived area were experienced across the whole population.

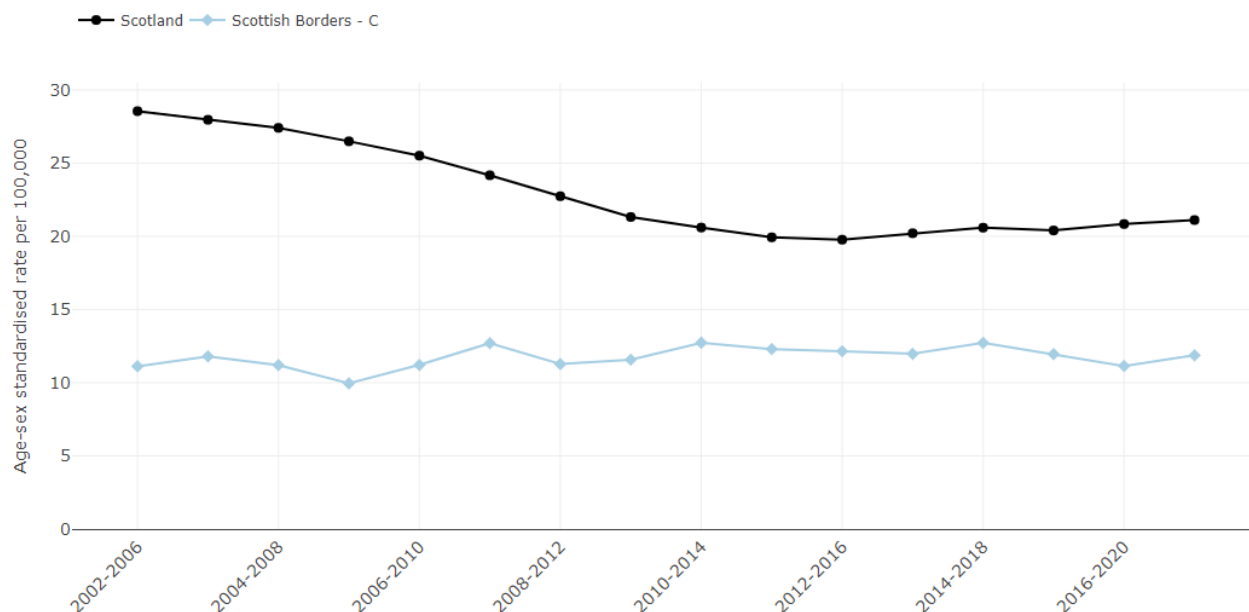


3.1.6 Alcohol-specific deaths

In 2022 there were 21 alcohol-specific deaths in Borders (same number in previous year). The rate of alcohol-specific deaths in Borders remains relatively stable since 2002/06. The latest 5-year average rate was 11.87 (2017-21) which is significantly better than Scottish average (21.1).

Alcohol-specific deaths

Age-sex standardised rate per 100,000

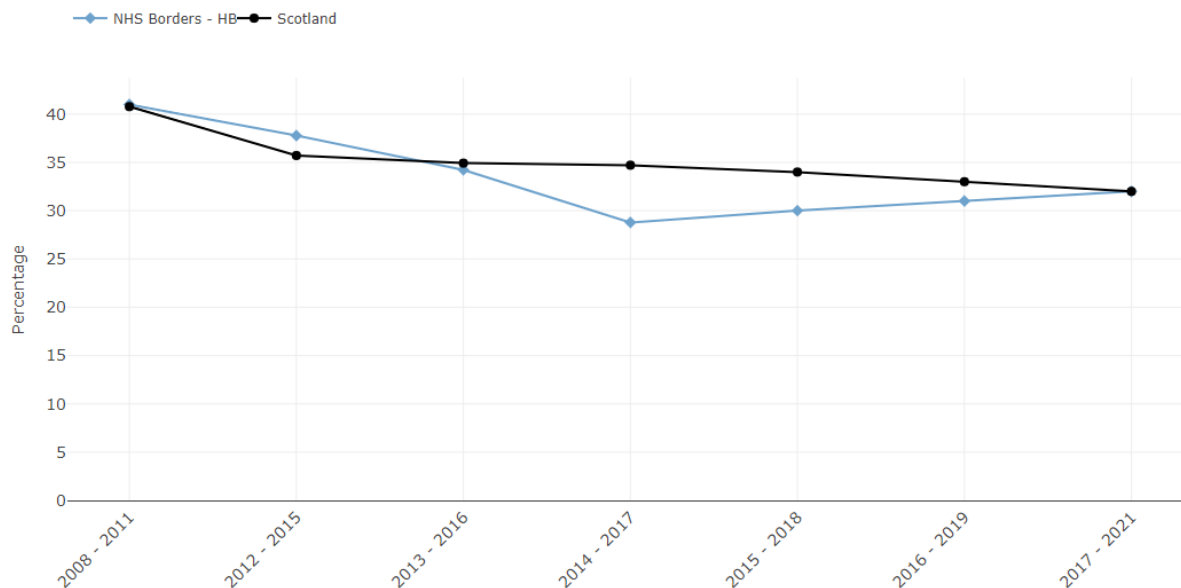


3.1.7 Individuals exceeding weekly limits

According to Scottish Health Survey (2017 - 2021 combined), 24% of all adults (aged 16 and over) in Borders are drinking above low risk guidelines (14 units per week) equal to the Scottish average. 32% of males are exceeding weekly limits in Borders equal to Scottish average and 18% of females compared with 16% Scottish average.

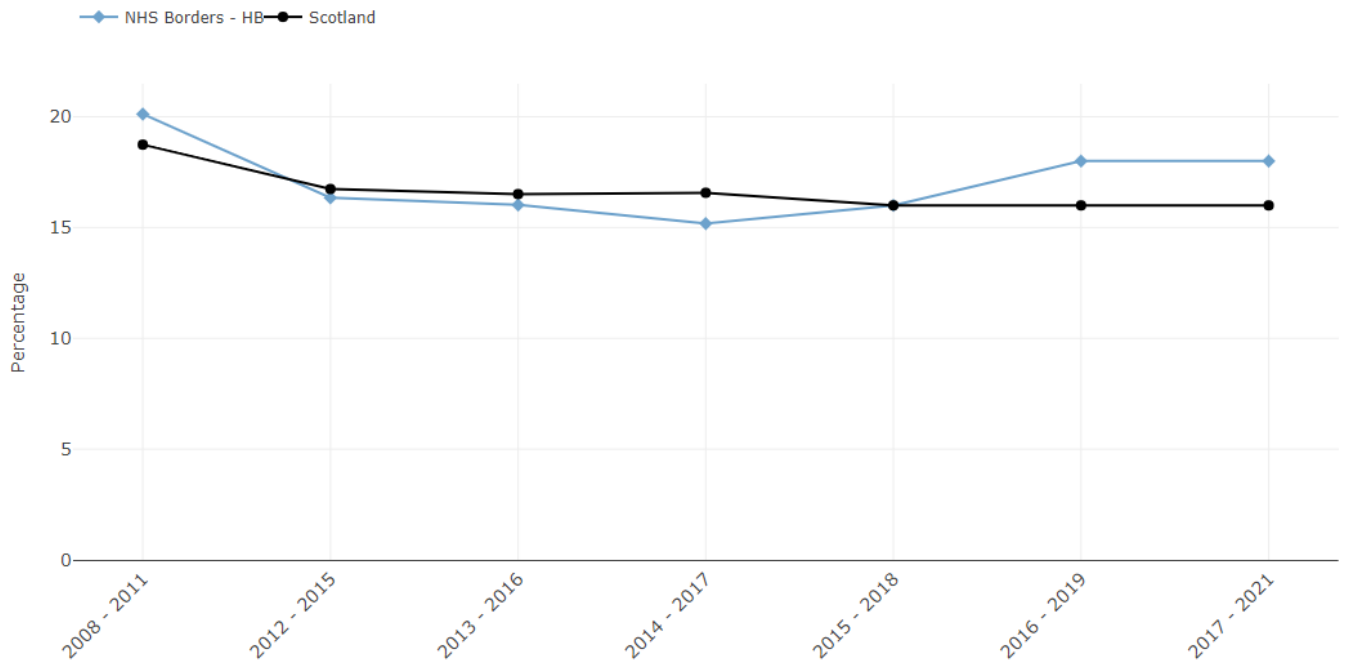
Alcohol consumption exceeding weekly limits, males

Percentage



Alcohol consumption exceeding weekly limits, females

Percentage



4 Protecting Children and Young People From Harm

The most recent scientific evidence states that an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest option. Exposure to alcohol and witnessing adult drinking can influence our children's future drinking habits. Young people's bodies are more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol because they are still growing and developing. Research also shows that the earlier a young person starts drinking, the more likely they are to drink in ways that can be harmful later in life. Our children and young people have the right to grow up in an environment where communities are safe, thriving and are able to grow up safe from alcohol-related harm³.

Comparison of findings from the Scottish Borders Health and Wellbeing Census: S4 Substance Use Questionnaire (2022) with the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) 2018.

- A reduction in the number of S4 pupils ever had an alcoholic drink (63% in 2022 in comparison to 75% in 2018)
- A reduction in the number of S4 pupils who report never being drunk (18% in 2022 in comparison to 27% in 2018)

The HWB Census for S4 pupils also shows:

- 15% of S4 pupils drink alcohol once a month or more
- 20% of S4 pupils report being drunk once a month or more
- 21% of S4 pupils source their alcohol from home.
- 53% of S4 pupils report being allowed to drink alcohol at home.
- 26% of S4 pupils report their parent or carer buying them alcohol.

Whilst education has a role in reducing underage drinking, the research tells us that it only works in combination with other measures, such as increasing the price of alcohol, reducing the availability, and [restricting the marketing of alcohol](#).

³ [Alcohol & Young People, Alcohol Focus Scotland \(2015\)](#)

5 Community Alcohol Survey

A survey seeking views of the community around alcohol and licensing was completed in July 2023. Below is a summary of the findings and recommendations.

There were 102 responses to the survey with 77% of respondents feeling that alcohol currently impacts our community.

Respondents were asked to identify what impact of alcohol they have personally experienced. The most prevalent response was antisocial behaviour (43%) which included vandalism, intimidating behaviour, community litter and noise.

Other responses included family breakdown/impacted by another family members alcohol use; physical and mental health; underage drinking; domestic abuse; negative impact at local summer festivals/rugby 7s and homelessness.

Respondents were asked to reflect on data provided around the number and type of licenses supplied in Scottish Borders over the previous 5 years and showed:

- Most respondents (68%) agreed that there should be better regulation around online purchases of alcohol and delivery of alcohol to minimise harm to children and young people.
- Most respondents (78%) agreed that the views of the public and health professionals should strongly influence licensing decisions.
- Just over half of respondents (52%) agreed that licenses should not be issued in communities suffering greatest harms from alcohol whereas 37% disagreed.
- Most respondents (75%) agreed that the Licensing Board should consider the total impact of multiple alcohol outlets (including occasional licenses) on a community.
- A majority of respondents (62%) agreed that there are enough off-sales licenses whereas 29% disagreed.
- There was no clear view in relation to the number of existing on-sales licenses.

The survey included data on alcohol related hospital admissions by intermediate zones and 54% of respondents believe the Licensing Board should significantly strengthen their next alcohol licensing policy to take this data into account whereas 26% wanted the policy to stay as is.

The survey provided an opportunity for suggestions to the licensing Board. It is important to note that not all of the interventions suggested are within the scope of local Licensing Board. Themes that were identified included:

- Increase training for staff who sell alcohol.

- Increased enforcement around licensed premises (selling to those drunk, selling to those underage).
- Request to reduce licensing hours in residential areas.
- Improve communication and education around alcohol use.
- Ensure licensed premises have information on support services.
- Stronger consideration of licensing family friendly events.
- Readdressing the balance between perceived excessive alcohol consumption and community celebration of summer festivals/rugby 7s.

The recommendations from the report are summarised as follows:

- Enhance policy around home deliveries/remote sales to minimise harm to children and young people.
- The views of the public and health professionals should strongly influence licensing decisions.
- Amend Policy to strengthen expectations around measures for underage drinking, drunkenness on premises, training and supervision for staff.
- Consider the total impact of multiple alcohol outlets (including occasional licenses) on a community.

6 Policy and Legislative Developments

International evidence shows that the most effective policies aimed at the whole population to reduce the harmful use of alcohol are:⁴

- Reduce affordability
- Reduce availability
- Reduce attractiveness

The interventions with the weakest evidence base for reducing alcohol harm include self-regulation of alcohol marketing, voluntary codes of retail practice, and information/education approaches.⁵

Alcohol Focus Scotland prepared a response for Licensing Boards Consultation on Statements⁶ which highlights the following:

6.1 Alcohol Framework

Scotland's current alcohol harm prevention framework was published in 2018 and takes a whole population approach to reducing alcohol harm. Whole population measures work to reduce and prevent alcohol harm across the entire population, reducing the likelihood of 'normal' drinkers becoming high risk. This is because targeting only harmful drinkers would not reach the majority of people who consume alcohol and who are therefore at risk of developing problems related to their alcohol consumption. Licensing is a whole population intervention. It works to safeguard individuals and communities from experiencing alcohol problems by controlling the overall availability of alcohol (through the number, type and opening hours of licensed premises), and by regulating the way individual on- and off-licences do business. The Framework therefore identifies the licensing system - alongside action on price and marketing – as being one of the key mechanisms through which the ambitions of the Alcohol Framework can be realised.

Alcohol sold in the UK in 2021 was 78% more affordable than it was in 1987. In recent years the general upward trend in the affordability of alcohol has been driven by increases in disposable income and a slight fall in the real price of alcohol in the UK. In 2021, the volume of pure alcohol sold per adult in Scotland was maintained at a similar level to 2020, whereas in 2020 Scotland was

⁴ World Health Organisation, Global status report on alcohol and health, (2018)

⁵ <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/media/86446/whole-population-approach-briefing.pdf>

⁶ Response to Consultation on Statement of Licensing Policy, Alcohol Focus Scotland May 2023

6% higher than in England & Wales, the smallest difference seen in the available time series.

Alcohol consumption at a population level in Scotland remained at its lowest level since 1994; on average, 21.7 units per adult per week were sold in 2021.⁷

6.2 Minimum unit pricing

As outlined earlier increasing the price of alcohol is one of the most effective ways to reduce how much people drink and prevent problems caused by alcohol.

Minimum unit pricing for alcohol (MUP) was implemented in May 2018 at a rate of 50p per unit. MUP targets the cheapest, strongest drinks like white cider and super-strength lager and had two aims:

- to reduce, in a targeted way, the consumption of alcohol by people whose consumption is hazardous or harmful, and
- to reduce the overall population level of consumption of alcohol.

The final [evaluation report](#) from Public Health Scotland was published in June 2023 and shows that MUP has had a positive impact on health outcomes, including addressing alcohol-related health inequalities. At a population level there is no clear evidence of substantial negative impacts on social harms such as alcohol-related crime or illicit drug use, and no clear evidence of negative impacts on the alcoholic drinks industry in Scotland. The policy is subject to a sunset clause, which means it will lapse unless renewed by the Scottish Parliament by end of April 2024.



⁷ PHS, Monitoring and Evaluating Scotland's Alcohol Strategy (MESAS) (2022) Monitoring and Evaluating Scotlands Alcohol Strategy (MESAS), 2022 (publichealthscotland.scot)

The evidence shows:

- It is estimated that MUP has saved 268 lives and averted 899 hospital admissions per year on average
- MUP has delivered on its intended aim of reducing overall population consumption in Scotland by 3%, driven by a 3.6% reduction in off-trade alcohol sales.
- MUP has reduced hazardous and harmful drinking by reducing the consumption of cheap, strong products, which were disproportionately consumed by hazardous and harmful drinkers.
- MUP has reduced inequalities in alcohol harm as the lives saved by MUP have been among the 40% of people living in the most deprived areas.
- There have been high levels of compliance by retailers and no significant negative impacts on alcohol producers or sellers.

MUP remains an essential component of Scotland's alcohol strategy to reduce the high levels of alcohol consumption and harm. However, the effect of 50p per unit has been significantly eroded by inflation since the legislation was passed in 2012.

Recommendations are being made by Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP), Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) and other key stakeholders to Scottish Government that the MUP is uprated to at least 65p per unit, and a mechanism is introduced to automatically uprate the price in the future, to ensure alcohol does not become more affordable. This will optimise the effectiveness of MUP in saving and improving lives.

6.3 New Licensing Guidance

The Licensing system is in place to control availability of alcohol and regulate the way individual premises and off-licences operate. In January 2023 [new guidance](#) was issued to Scottish licensing boards on carrying out their functions by Scottish ministers. The revised 'section 142' guidance replaces the original version which was first issued in 2009 and had become outdated due to subsequent changes. The purpose of the guidance is to assist boards in carrying out their functions under the 2005 Act, including the preparation of statements of licensing policy.

7 Post-Covid Recovery and the Current Context

While we do not yet know the full impact of the pandemic, [Alcohol Focus Scotland](#) has pulled together evidence of its effects in a number of areas:

- **Changing Drinking Patterns:** Public Health Scotland has published a [summary on the impact of COVID-19 on alcohol consumption and harm in Scotland and England](#). Overall, consumption decreased in both Scotland and England following the start of the pandemic. However, changes in drinking behaviour were polarised, with some increasing their alcohol consumption and others decreasing. This was associated with drinking behaviour before the pandemic: those who increased their alcohol consumption tended to drink more before the pandemic, and those who decreased consumption tended to drink less. Modelling studies for England predict that alcohol-related harm will continue to increase in the medium term, following pandemic-related changes in consumption. A similar study will be carried out for Scotland.
- **Home drinking:** Linked to the above, the pandemic has further shifted alcohol sales and drinking from the on-trade to the off-trade, exacerbating existing trends. In Scotland, 73% of alcohol was sold in off sales prior to the pandemic, with this proportion increasing to 90% in 2020 before decreasing slightly to 85% in 2021. The home is an unregulated environment and the continued shift to home drinking may lead to long-term public health consequences and an upwards trend in alcohol-related injuries and accidents occurring at home. In addition, while alcohol itself does not directly cause domestic violence, there are strong associations between alcohol use and domestic violence and abuse. Home drinking also poses potential risks for children and young people, such as neglect or modelling of parental drinking. As such, it will be vital that boards consider the factors that can impact on the licensing objectives outwith a licensed setting, and that local licensing policies take account of alcohol-related harms occurring in private spheres as well as public.
- **Use of outdoor areas:** A growing trend for outside seating areas had been identified in many areas prior to the pandemic, with a number of Licensing Boards setting out their expectations and requirements in this regard. However, COVID-19 related restrictions on sales of alcohol indoors led to an increase in applications from bars/pubs to serve alcohol in spaces outdoors e.g. pavements. If outdoor spaces are licensed on a permanent basis it could result in a significant increase in the overall capacity of venues and the visibility of alcohol, including to children and people in recovery who may be passing by. It is unclear how and whether Licensing Boards will now seek to reverse outdoor licences granted during the pandemic, or whether the trend for outdoor seating areas will continue to grow.

- **Online sales/deliveries:** The COVID-19 related restrictions increased the general trend to online shopping and led to an increase in premises offering home deliveries of alcohol. The types of businesses that sell alcohol online now range from small independent traders, specialist drinks retailers/clubs, local convenience stores, and supermarkets through to multinational e-commerce companies (e.g. Amazon). There is also a growing variety of app-based retailers who have arrangements with restaurants, takeaways and off-licences to deliver alcohol directly to people's homes. Despite the reopening of physical stores, it is predicted that online sales will remain high as people have become more accustomed to online shopping. It is unclear how age verification and other requirements can be effectively implemented when alcohol is being purchased on-line or delivered to people's homes. The majority of boards have responded to this issue at a local level by setting out their approach to alcohol deliveries within their policies, for example by making clear that delivery staff must be trained to the same level as those on licensed premises, that challenge 25 checks must be conducted, and that licensees using courier services must ensure that they are compliant with the Board's requirements.
- **The hospitality sector:** Although the licensing regime does not have responsibility for promoting business growth, a recurrent theme within existing licensing policies is the need for Licensing Boards to strike an appropriate balance between supporting the local licensed economy, while also upholding the five licensing objectives. During the pandemic, the hospitality sector across Scotland was severely affected, with sales of alcohol in bars and restaurants plummeting by 49% overall from 2019 to 2021, while off premises sales, such as e-commerce and supermarkets, grew significantly (by 11% between 2019 and 2021). In 2020, the Scottish Government issued guidance to advise that it "considers flexibility and pragmatism in decision-making and sensitivity to the wider economic situation should be at the forefront of how a board decides to operate". Licensing Boards will likely be very reluctant to be seen to hurt already suffering hospitality sectors but will also want to ensure that the licensing objectives continue to be promoted. As such, decision makers, advocates, and local stakeholders alike will need to identify policies that can do both. It has been suggested that policies which may protect on-trade businesses, while reshaping the night-time economy away from alcohol-related harms, could offer a 'win-win' for policymakers and health advocates. However, this raises questions regarding how boards should seek to manage competing priorities within their policies and decision-making.

In considering the economic impact of refusing a new premises licence, it is important to test any assumptions about the economic value of an expansion in the licensed trade. It is often not a simple equation between a new premises licence and more local jobs, and nor

is there evidence that a vibrant tourism industry depends on an ever-expanding alcohol supply.⁸

The financial costs to a local economy from rates of alcohol-related harm can be considerable and should not be overlooked. It is estimated that alcohol-related problems cost Scotland £3.6 billion each year, including direct costs for dealing with alcohol-related crime and health damage as well as indirect costs such as employee absenteeism and reduced productivity. These are largely costs to the public purse, whereas profit from the sale of alcohol is received by private companies.⁹ Estimated costs of alcohol related harm for Scottish Borders is £30.30m or £270 per person.

⁸ Alcohol Focus Scotland, Licensing Resource Pack <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/resources/> (2017)

⁹ Alcohol Focus Scotland, Licensing Resource Pack <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/resources/> (2017)

Appendix 1 – Data Sources

Various sources have been used to compile this Profile including Alcohol Focus Scotland, National Records of Scotland, NHS Borders, NHS Health Scotland, Police Scotland, Public Health Scotland, Scottish Borders Council, Scottish Government, World Health Organisation.

Appendix Two: National Overview

- 6% more alcohol sold in Scotland than in England & Wales in 2021.¹⁰
- 85% of alcohol sold in Scotland in 2021 was through the off-trade (supermarkets and other off-licences): while this was lower than in 2020 (90%) it remains higher than prior to the pandemic (72% in 2019)¹¹
- In 2021, alcohol sold in the UK was 78% more affordable than it was in 1987¹²

Preventing Crime & Disorder/Preventing Public Nuisance

- Alcohol is implicated in 46% of homicide accusations in 2021-22.¹³
- Offenders were believed to be under the influence of alcohol in 43% of violent incidents where victims were able to say something about the offender in 2020-21.¹⁴
- 50% of young offenders reported being under the influence of alcohol at the time of their offence in 2020.¹⁵

Securing Public Safety

- Alcohol or drugs use was suspected to have been a contributory factor in 16% of accidental dwelling fires in 2019-20.¹⁶

Protecting & Improving Public Health

- 1276 alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland in 2022, increase of 2% (31 deaths) on previous year and highest number registered in a year since 2008.¹⁷
- The rate of mortality from alcohol specific causes was 22.9 deaths per 100,000.
- In Scotland, 23% drink at harmful or hazardous level in 2021.¹⁸

¹⁰ [National Records of Scotland \(2021\) Alcohol-specific deaths, 2021, Report \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

¹¹ [MESAS monitoring report 2022 - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

¹² As per 11

¹³ [Scottish Government, Homicide in Scotland 2020/21](#)

¹⁴ [Scottish Government, Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2020/21,](#)

¹⁵ [Vision for YP Publication Final7394_3530.pdf](#)

¹⁶ [Scottish Fire & Rescue Service 2019/20](#)

¹⁷ As per 10

¹⁸ [The Scottish Health Survey 2021 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

- Two thirds of alcohol specific deaths were males. The increase in deaths in 2022 was driven by an increase of 31 female deaths. The number of male deaths is unchanged in 2021.¹⁹
- Average age tends to be slightly younger for females than males in 2022.²⁰
- Alcohol-specific deaths were 4.3 times as likely in the most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the least deprived areas.²¹
- Across Scotland, alcohol-related hospital stays and deaths as well as crime rates are higher in areas with higher alcohol outlet availability. Scottish neighborhoods with the most alcohol outlets, compared to those with the fewest outlets have:
 - double the alcohol-related death rate.
 - almost double alcohol-related hospitalization.
 - four times higher crime rates²².

Protecting children and young people from harm

- Up to 51,000 children are estimated to live with a problematic drinker.²³
- Between 2015 and 2018:
 - there has been an increase in the proportion of boys who had drunk in the last week from 4% to 7% among 13 year olds and from 16% to 20% among 15 year olds.
 - an increase among 13 year old girls, from 4% in 2015 to 6% in 2018.
 - Overall, in 2018, 52% of 13 year olds and 57% of 15 year olds who had a drink in the last week, had been drunk in the same time period.²⁴

¹⁹ As per 18

²⁰ As per 10

²¹ As per 10

²² CRESH, Alcohol Outlet Availability and Harm in Scotland, (2018), <https://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/media/310762/alcohol-outlet-availability-and-harm-in-scotland.pdf>

²³ Scottish Government, Final Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment for Minimum Price Per Unit of Alcohol (2012), <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Alcohol/minimum-pricing/Impact-Assessment>

²⁴ Scottish Government, SALSUS 2018, (2019), <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-schools-adolescent-lifestyle-substance-use-survey-salsus-alcohol-report-2018/>