CLACKMANNANSHIRE LICENSING REPORT 2025-2026



THIS PAPER RELATES TO ITEM 5

ON THE AGENDA

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

Foreword

I am pleased to present the Annual Licensing Report for the 2025/26 period, prepared in line with Section 12(A) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

Over the last twelve months, our core focus has been on strengthening public trust and safety across Scotland's communities. By prioritising preventative action and early intervention, we continue to make meaningful progress toward our 2030 vision of safer communities, less crime, supported victims, and a thriving workforce.

Effective licensing regulation is built on collaboration. Our close working relationships with Scotland's 32 local authorities, Licensing Boards, the licensed trade and a wide range of stakeholders remain fundamental to our success. Together we have balanced the needs within the licensing sector with our shared responsibility to address alcohol related harm, tackle disorder and anti-social behaviour. As well as safeguarding children and young people.

A significant focus during the year was our preparation for and delivery throughout the Fifa World Cup 2026. Extended licensing hours and increased demand across the hospitality sector required careful planning, strong partnership working and a co-ordinated policing response. Thanks to the professionalism of our officers, staff and partners, these challenges were met successfully while maintaining public safety and supporting communities across Scotland.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to delivering a fair, consistent and effective licensing service. By continuing to work closely with our partners and engaging positively with the licensed trade we will ensure our approach remains balanced, proportionate and responsive to emerging trends.

I would like to thank our partners for their continued commitment, professionalism and support throughout the year. The achievements highlighted in this report are testament to our collaborative efforts and shared ambition to make Scotland's communities safer places to live, work and visit.



Chief Constable Jo Farrell KPM

Police Scotland Licensing Overview –

The Violence Prevention and Licensing Co-ordination Unit (VPLCU) sits within the National Policing Together Division, with personnel located throughout the organisation. The Department leads the development and implementation of national licensing strategy and policy, providing direction, advice and support to divisional licensing departments, while delivering specialist functions as a national level.

The VPLCU is a dedicated team of specialist officers who work closely with divisional licensing colleagues and partner organisations to inform and influence policing policy and strategy in relation to licensing. The unit provides professional guidance to licensing practitioners, frontline officers, supervisory staff and senior policing leaders.

The VPLCU promotes consistent application of legislation governing the sale and supply of alcohol across Scotland. It seeks to ensure all available measures are utilised to prevent unlawful or irresponsible sale, supply or consumption of alcohol, with the overarching objective of reducing crime, disorder and associated harm.

During 2025/2026, from a licensing perspective, our particular focus was on the following.

- Reviewing serious incidents of violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour associated with licensed premises.
- Delivering and supporting initiatives designed to tackle issues linked to alcohol consumption, particularly where this impacts young people and the night-time economy.
- Overseeing the governance and continued enhancement of the national ICT licensing system, known as Innkeeper, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of liquor and civic licensing processes. Police Scotland has continued work to upgrade the system to ensure ongoing compliance with GDPR requirements.

Each of the 13 Local Policing Divisions has a dedicated licensing team responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administration of licensing matters. These teams ensure compliance with statutory obligations and respond to any issues arising within licensed premises in their respective local areas.

Licensing Board Area

The Clackmannanshire local authority area is policed by Forth Valley Division.

Chief Superintendent Roddy Irvine is the Police Divisional Commander who has overall responsibility for all day-to-day policing functions.

The officers who have responsibility for licensing within the area of Clackmannanshire are as follows:

Local Area Commander; Chief Inspector Garry Smith

Superintendent (Partnerships); Superintendent Aidan Higgins

Inspector, Preventions and Interventions; Inspector David Ryan

Licensing Sergeant; Sergeant Sharlene Meldrum

The Clackmannanshire Area Command serves over 51,000 residents over an area covering over 61 square miles incorporating both urban and village communities. The sub-divisional headquarters are based in the council headquarters at Kilncraigs in Alloa.

There is a total of 130 licensed premises located throughout the Clackmannanshire Area Command. The highest concentration of premises is within Alloa town centre which has one nightclub and numerous bars.

Local Policing Priorities

Following our public consultation process, the policing priorities for Forth Valley Division, as set out in our Local Policing Plan are as follows:

- Protecting people most at risk of harm.
- Responsive to the concerns of the communities.
- Road safety and road crime.
- Enhancing our collective resilience to emerging threats; and
- Promoting confidence through our actions.

Police Officers who work locally within Clackmannanshire Area Command and officers from the Police Licensing Department always have these priorities in mind during engagement with licensed premises staff and members of the community who are potentially affected by the operation of licensed premises within their community.

In addition to the above priorities the Licensing Objectives, as set out in the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, are key to the activities carried out by officers in relation to alcohol. The 5 objectives are:

- Preventing Crime and Disorder
- Securing Public Safety
- Preventing Public Nuisance
- Protecting and Improving Public Health
- Protecting Children and Young Persons from Harm

Operation of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005

Police, Licensing Standards Officers, and Environmental Health Officers work closely together to provide advice and guidance to the licensed trade through engagement and pro-active visits with the aim of upholding the licensing objectives as laid out in the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

It is recognised the misuse of alcohol can be harmful and damaging to our communities and alcohol is very often a contributory factor in the incidents police attend. These incidents range from low level anti-social behaviour to domestic abuse and incidents of serious violence and injury.

When considering these incidents, it is important to bear in mind in many cases offenders are not traced at the material time so the influence of alcohol cannot be fully assessed in offending behaviours. The experience of officers is the percentages of offenders drunk/having consumed alcohol when committing crimes/offences is likely to be a contributory factor to the offending.

Police Scotland does not hold data linking offending and perpetrators who were drunk or under the influence of alcohol at the time of committing an offence.

It is the responsibility of Police Scotland to ensure staff in licensed premises are complying with the licensing objectives as detailed in the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and to take the necessary action where and when required. Police are responsible for ensuring those conducting themselves improperly in licensed premises are dealt with in accordance with the legislation.

In Clackmannanshire Area Command this is achieved by a variety of prevention and intervention work, which involves the deployment of police resources as single agency and jointly with partners.

The policing of licensed premises in Clackmannanshire is managed by a combination of scheduled and impromptu visits complimented by a Weekend Policing Plan which is adapted weekly to consider intelligence and recent incidents within licensed premises. This plan involves local officers being deployed to carry out high visibility inspections to licensed premises at peak times when demand for policing increases.

The visits are intended to identify any concerns with regards to the management of licensed premises and ensure adherence to the licensing objectives. They also provide support to staff working within reassuring them and providing them with the confidence that local officers are deployed with the key aim of prevention and early intervention. It is hoped visits help to modify the behaviour of the few people who choose to act irresponsibly whilst in licensed premises and under the influence of alcohol.

In addition to this work is carried out to tackle public space concerns and issues such as disorder associated with alcohol. Generally, this type of demand is associated with young people sourcing alcohol and consuming it in public spaces. Hotspots are

identified based on local intelligence and reporting of incidents to police which focuses where local resources are deployed.

Whilst a key element is to tackle associated disorder and crime which may be reported, prevention is an essential element, through engaging with young people to ensure they understand the health concerns and related dangers of alcohol consumption. Our School Based Officers are based in secondary schools across Clackmannanshire and undertake a range of prevention work in this regard.

Forth Valley Licensing Department reviews data from police systems daily and prepares a weekly report detailing all incidents within or connected to licensed premises throughout Clackmannanshire Area Command. This includes police reports, reported incidents in relation to licensed premises and any intelligence which is received. The report also includes any significant events which are taking place, details of occasional licences and extended hours granted to licensed premises. This information is shared and discussed at a weekly meeting between the Licensing Department and the Local Area Commander, ensuring any concerns or risks are identified early and resources are deployed accordingly.

During the period under report there were 976 documented proactive inspections of licensed premises throughout Clackmannanshire Area Command to both on and off-sales premises. The visits conducted by officers shows our commitment to ensuring the licensing standards are upheld and provides support to the licensed trade.

Monitoring / Interventions

Generally, if an incident occurs at licensed premises, contact is made with those in a position of responsibility, the incident discussed, and any necessary action taken. In many cases this prevents the repeat of any like incident. As mentioned in the previous section, if a premises gives cause for concern, then it becomes a monitored premises. This involves local officers and officers from the licensing department engaging with staff to identify why there may have been repeated incidents occurring on the premises and offering the necessary advice and support.

If there is no improvement, then officers from the licensing department meet with the Designated Premises Manager and in some cases the Premises Licence Holder and prepare an intervention plan which the police and the DPM/Licence holder sign. This involves agreed measures which will be taken to improve the operation of the premises; better staff training, a change in the hours stewards is employed, ensuring peak periods are covered, or more frequent toilet checks. The plans that are put in place are dependent on the problems being encountered.

Should the staff on the premises prove uncooperative and the problems continue then consideration would be given to applying for review of the premises licence under Section 36 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, or a review of the personal licence of staff involved under Section 84A of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

During the period under report there was no requirement to class any premises in Clackmannanshire as monitored premises and no premises were subject to an intervention agreement.

Partnership Working

It is widely recognised that partnership working is key to the successful management of all activities relating to alcohol. The Police Service of Scotland work closely with Clackmannanshire Council in respect of licensing matters. This partnership is strong and includes the Licensing Team at Clackmannanshire Council, Licensing Standards Officer, Legal and Democratic Services and Environmental Health. The Police Service of Scotland are a statutory consultee in applications relating to alcohol received by the Local Authority. All applications received by Police Service of Scotland undergo the same level of scrutiny to ensure that the Licensing Objectives are maintained. Between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, the following alcohol related applications were received by the Police Service of Scotland.

- 178 Occasional Licence
- 41 Personal Licence
- 4 Premises Licence
- 21 Variations

All these applications have been processed by the Clackmannanshire Council Licensing Team prior to onward transmission to the Forth Valley Policing Division Licensing Department for consultation. All applications are processed and scrutinised by the Forth Valley Policing Division Licensing and uploaded onto the National Innkeeper System. A reply is thereafter sent to the Local Authority for every application. Most applications are returned with no adverse comments, however on occasion a letter of objection or representation is submitted.
It is important to recognise that the partnership working, particularly with the Licensing Standards Officer focuses on support, advice and guidance. The priority is to identify any issues or concerns at an early stage in order that early and effective action can be taken. As a result of this partnership working licensing issues are addressed with no need to escalate to the Licensing Board. Numerous joint visits have been carried out by Police and Licensing Standards Officer during the reporting period.

During 2025/2026 there were a range of initiatives between police and partner organisations directed at ensuring public safety in and around licensed premises. Throughout the year officers carried out joint visits to on sales premises with partners.

The licensing department monitor the conduct of door stewards with a collaborative approach with SIA Officers in response to any improper conduct by licensed stewards.

In the period running up to Christmas 2025, a dedicated team of local officers, supported by national specialist officers, participated in an initiative under the banner of “Operation Christmas.”

The daytime element of this campaign focussed on the retail sector, however, in the evenings officers concentrated on the night-time economy, proactively visiting licensed premises, and delivering personal safety messages designed at keeping

those enjoying Christmas parties and other celebrations safe. This included raising awareness of drink spiking, getting home safely, and encouraged responsible drinking.

This tied in with the Festive Drink Drive campaign to deter people from driving when under the influence of alcohol and detecting those who continued to do so.
In 2025/2026, the campaign also focussed on driving the morning after a person had been drinking.

There is good compliance with the legislation across licensed premises in Clackmannanshire, checks with partner agencies continue and regular contact between police and partner agencies assists with the flow of information ensuring any emerging issues are identified and addressed timeously.

Licensing Policy Statement

Having been involved in 2018 in the development of the Clackmannanshire Licensing Board Statement of Licensing Policy 2018 – 2023, Police Scotland continued to take the Board's policy statement into account when assessing applications for licences and during discussions within the Licensing Forum. The Statement of Policy assists officers in understanding the expectations of the Board and ensuring that their actions are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Board. The policy is currently being reviewed, and Police Scotland have contributed, and this includes statistical data for the question of overprovision. Whilst realising that the overprovision requirement is a complex and lengthy process, we will ensure Police Scotland are an effective consultee.

Exclusion Orders / Closure Orders

Where a person is being reported to the Procurator Fiscal for an offence involving violence on licensed premises, the police can request that consideration is given to imposing an exclusion order if a person is convicted. Section 94 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 gives the Court the power to impose an exclusion order preventing the convicted person from entering certain licensed premises for a specified period. Police Scotland do not hold information as to how many of these requests are issued to accused persons convicted by the courts.

Under section 97 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act, police can apply to the Licensing Board for a closure order in relation to any premises because of a risk of disorder and risk to public safety. Provision also exists for an officer of or above the rank of Inspector to make an emergency closure order in certain circumstances. During 2025/2026 there has been no necessity to apply for a closure order or implement an emergency closure order in the Clackmannanshire area.

Licensing Forum

A representative from the Police Licensing Department ordinarily attends the local licensing forum to hear from licence holders and members of the public and address any concerns they may have. This also contributes to an effective working relationship with licensed premises staff and ultimately a safer environment for the people of

Clackmannanshire. This has yet to be re-established in the Clackmannanshire area, since lockdown when the Coronavirus restrictions were imposed.

Applications For Licences

Section 22 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 covers applications for a premises licence. All applications for premises licences are considered by police. This is achieved by scrutinising police databases to ensure that the granting of a licence will not present issues for the community. Police officers from the Licensing Department will also contact local police officers to ascertain if they predict any problems with the granting of the licence and on most occasions will contact the prospective licence holder also. There have been no objections to premises licence applications during 2024/2025.

Section 72 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 covers applications for a personal licence. All applications for personal licences are considered by police by carrying out checks on police databases. In the year 2024/2025 there was no objections to the grant of a personal licence.

Preventing the sale or supply of alcohol to children or young persons

It is recognised that alcohol misuse among children and young persons can be extremely damaging and may result in antisocial behaviour and have a negative impact on the community, as well as the children involved. As can be seen from the attached statistics there is one charge relating to buying or attempting to buy alcohol for a child.

Community Police Officers in Clackmannanshire engage directly with children, educating them as to the potential dangers involved in consuming alcohol. They have the trust of children and young persons in the local community and can gather intelligence in relation to their alcohol consumption and take any appropriate action. The police Preventions and Interventions Department covering Forth Valley also engage with young people throughout the community and deliver presentations that raise awareness of potential risks.

Police officers on day-to-day duties who come across children and young people under the influence of alcohol, share this information with partner organisations such as health, social work and education, so steps can be taken to establish the root cause for these behaviours rather than criminalising these children. As can be seen from the attached statistics, the percentage of criminal activity in and around licensed premises involving children is negligible.

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

Licensed premises are one type of business known to be used by Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) groups for the purposes of laundering money and the commission of drugs offences. Clackmannanshire Area Command fully engages with Scotland's SOC Strategy, aiming to Divert, Deter, Detect and Disrupt SOC and the

harm it causes. This is not just about drugs, but is also linked to Human Trafficking, Cyber Crime and Sexual Exploitation.

Locally, the Community Policing Teams and Licensing Department regularly engage with the local community and staff within licensed premises ensuring that there is a comprehensive intelligence picture in relation to potential SOC activity within licensed premises in the area. The Licensing Department share information with the Force Disruptions Unit, working to deny persons involved in this type of activity access to licensed premises.

In 2025 Police Scotland created the **Retail Crime Taskforce.** This is a National Unit dedicated to tackling retail crime. It is recognised that those people involved in Serious and Organised Crime target licensed premises in the theft of alcohol. This dedicated unit operate throughout Scotland to tackle this problem. Since the creation of the unit they have operated within the Clackmannanshire area on numerous occasions.

Proposed activity for the year ahead

Police will continue to work alongside partners locally including the Licensing Standards Officer, Environmental Health Officers, HMRC and Trading Standards to ensure that on-sales and off-sales premises are safe places to frequent and socialise in. In so doing it is recognised that those in the licensed trade are valuable partners in working towards these objectives and we will work with them wherever possible.

As new challenges are presented, Police Scotland will seek to adapt and respond in a reasonable and proportionate manner to ensure that the licensing objectives and public safety are at the heart of our joint efforts in relation to licensed premises. Intelligence led policing of licensed premises will continue, responding to the concerns of our communities and taking enforcement action when necessary.

The Licensing Dept within Forth Valley plays a vital role in the administration and policing of licensing matters; however it is acknowledged that the officers deployed operationally have a significant role to play. The Licensing Dept is currently producing products and aide memoirs to assist officers.

To conclude, we would like to thank you for your continued support during what has been another challenging year for all. We look forward to a safe and healthy 2026/2027.

Clackmannanshire Area Command
Alcohol related crimes and offences 2025/26

Crime Type	Offence Description	Total Offences
Licensing Offences	A Person Behaves In A Disorderly Manner And Refuses/Fails To Leave Premises On Being Asked	4
	Attempt To Enter Relevant Premises While Drunk.	0
	Sell alcohol from a vehicle without being authorised to do so	0
	Consume Alcohol In A Designated Public Place - Local Order	5
	Sale of alcohol without a premises or occasional licence	1
	Person Buys Or Attempts To Buy Alcohol For A Child	0
	Refuse To Leave After End Of Licensed Hours When Asked To Do So	0
	Responsible Person Drunk Whilst On Relevant Premises	0
Licensing Offences Total		**10**