

Hammersmith & Fulham Council
Licensing Team
Hammersmith Town Hall
London, W6 9JU
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14 August 2025

When telephoning
please ask for the
Licensing Section.

E-mail:
licensing@lbhf.gov.uk

Mr Tara Ram Singh
Best Quality Food and Wine
333 - 335 Lillie Road
London
SW6 7NR

Dear Mr Singh

Licensing Act 2003- Premises Licence Review: 2025/01278/LAPRR

Premises name: - Best quality Food and Wine - 333 - 335 Lillie Road London SW6 7NR

We are in receipt of the attached application for the review of your premises licence made by our Trading Standards Team under Section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003 (the Act). This application will be subject to a 28 day public consultation ending on 10 September 2025.

If you have any comments in relation to this application, please send this in writing to us at the above address or by email to licensing@lbhf.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Matt Tucker
Interim Licensing Policy and Administration Team Leader

Application for the review of a premises licence or club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Before completing this form please read the guidance notes at the end of the form. If you are completing this form by hand please write legibly in block capitals. In all cases ensure that your answers are inside the boxes and written in black ink. Use additional sheets if necessary.

You may wish to keep a copy of the completed form for your records.

I Doug Love, Lead Pratitioner, Trading Standards
(Insert name of applicant)

apply for the review of a premises licence under section 51 of the Licensing Act 2003, for the premises described in Part 1, below.

Part 1 – Premises or club premises details

Postal address of premises or, if none, ordnance survey map reference or description: Best Quality Food & Wine 333 Lillie Road	
Post town: London	Post code: SW6 7NR

Name of premises licence holder or club holding club premises certificate: Tara Ram Singh

Number of premises licence or club premises certificate: 2023/01187/LAPR
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Part 2 - Applicant details

I am

Please tick ✓yes

- 1) an interested party (please complete (A) or (B) below)
- a) a person living in the vicinity of the premises ☐
- b) a body representing persons living in the vicinity of the premises ☐
- c) a person involved in business in the vicinity of the premises ☐
- d) a body representing persons involved in business in the vicinity of the premises ☐
- 2) a responsible authority (please complete (C) below) ☒
- 3) a member of the club to which this application relates (please complete (A) below) ☐

(C) DETAILS OF RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY APPLICANT

Name and address	
Doug Love Lead Practitioner, Trading Standards Hammersmith Town Hall King Street London W6 9JU	
Telephone number:	07771 806 923
E-mail:	doug.love@lbhf.gov.uk

This application to review relates to the following licensing objective(s)

Please tick one or more boxes

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| the prevention of crime and disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| public safety | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| the prevention of public nuisance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| the protection of children from harm | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Please state the ground(s) for review (please read guidance note 1)

This review relates to the alleged failure of the premise licensee to promote the licensing objective relating to the protection of children from harm. Full details of the facts and allegations against the business follows. One recent complaint cannot be conclusively proven, or disproven, due to a crucial failure to comply with licence conditions relating to the CCTV system in use.

The business

Best Quality Food & Wine is a small off-licence / convenience store, which is operated by Sweet Food & Wine Ltd., a company of which premises licence holder, Tara Ram Singh, is the sole director. The business has operated for over 10 years. Tara Ram Singh's son, Satnam Singh, is the main employee in the shop. Manpreet Singh, who I believe to be a nephew of Tara Ram Singh, has also worked in the business and was previously the sole director of the company. I have not seen anyone else working at the shop.

History of the business, in respect of age-restricted sales

August 2018: A 'Challenge 25' test purchase was made at the business. Satnam Singh sold alcohol to a 19-year-old volunteer, without challenging them for proof of age. He said, after the sale, that he believed the volunteer to be 19. The sale is not an offence, per se, although it is a requirement of the premises licence to operate an age verification policy. 'Challenge 25' is standard 'good-practice' for retailers in an urban area with a mixed demographic and many non-regular customers. When used, the seller requires anyone buying age-restricted goods, who the seller believes to be under 25, to provide proof of age before any sale. The proprietor was alerted to and encouraged to attend training for age-restricted goods retailers offered by LBHF Trading Standards after the test purchase, but no booking was received.

A follow-up underage test purchase in **Nov 2018** resulted in no sale being made.

March 2023: Two complaints were received about underage sales at Best Quality F&W.

One, from a member of the public was recorded by a colleague:

"Local person said he was in the shop and three school girls in uniform were sold vapes. Seller didn't ask for ID. Complainant said he has witnessed this at least 3 times",

The other, from Head of Year 9 at a local school, read:

"Just wanted to drop a line to let you know that a parent has informed me that a newsagents at 333 Lillie Road is selling underage girls vapes and alcohol and that parent has seen pupils walking out of the store with these items (in casual clothes)".

29/03/23: I visited Best Quality F&W, with two underage volunteers, not known in the shop, who I asked to make separate test purchases. The first volunteer (female, 17y), in plain clothes, was refused. The second (a male volunteer, 16y & 2m), dressed clearly in a (non-local) school uniform was sold a vape by Tara Ram Singh.

When I returned to the shop, minutes after, Mr Singh claimed not to have noticed the school blazer and thought the buyer "18-19", which indicates - at best - that he was not using Challenge 25, or an acceptable age-verification policy, as required by the licence.

I believe that if he looked at the volunteer, to assess his age, it is unlikely that he would not have seen the school uniform and, maybe, chose to sell as he felt 'safe' that it was not a test purchaser, even though the volunteer was not known in the shop.

I strongly suggested that the person responsible for staff training should attend our training courses. No booking was made.

12/07/23: A third complaint, via the schools' police, was received. The officer wrote:

"Just wanted to make you aware of a store on Lillie Road SW6 (Best quality food and wine) who have allegedly sold 4 x 200ml bottles of vodka to 4 female students aged 14-15 years old on Friday 7th July. The students were not in uniform. They have then attended school very drunk and 2 of them were admitted to hospital after being sick with concerns for their welfare.

"I was informed by the school's designated safeguarding lead, that after she spoke to one of the girls she mentioned to her they got the alcohol from a store located on Lillie/Munster Road. I have spoken to one of the girls and when I showed a picture of the store, she confirmed that this was where the alcohol was brought. She also stated ID was not asked for nor their age challenged for buying alcohol."

Mid-to-late July 23: A check of licensing conditions by an officer of the LBHF Licensing Team, made between the receipt of the complaint and the test purchase at the end of July, revealed that the CCTV system was not working. The premises licence holder was required to take corrective action.

28/07/23: During a further test purchase, Tara Ram Singh sold alcohol to 16y & 6m female volunteer. A few minutes after the sale, he stated that he believed the volunteer (who was not present) to be "over 25".

A record of refusals that was in use showed 62 refusals had, apparently, been made in 46 days.

23/08/23: At a PACE interview, Tara Ram Singh revised this opinion when shown a photograph of the volunteer as she looked at the time of the purchase stating the girl looked "20". He stated he had not realised that the CCTV system was not working.

Outcome: In retrospect, it seems clear that a review application should have been made at this time and we are sorry that Trading Standards did not submit one, as the subsequent events may have been averted if we had.

However, they were given the benefit of the doubt after Tara Ram Singh and the company agreed to accept cautions, which were administered after

- Tara Ram Singh and Manpreet Singh (then sole director of Sweet Food & Wine Ltd) both attended the Trading Standards training;
- further underage test purchases were made on **03/08/23**, **07/01/24** & **27/02/24** and had resulted in no further sales; &
- a further visit by Licensing revealed good compliance with the licence conditions.

05/07/24: Another underage test purchase resulted in no sale.

Events prompting this application

10/04/24: A complaint was referred to LBHF Trading Standards by the Citizens' Advice Consumer Helpline. The complainant, a member of the public, was recorded as saying that

- her 17-year-old son had purchased a vape from Best Quality F&W;
- she knew the business to have sold to 16-year-olds, also; and
- that the business was known as the place to go for underage children to buy vapes.

When questioned by an officer, she stated that she believed her son (or his then 16-y-o girlfriend) had purchased vapes from the shop on several occasions; that no ID checks were made; that "all three" staff (believed to be a reference to Tara Ram, Satnam and Manpreet) sold.

30/05/25: An underage test purchase was carried out by a 17-year-old male volunteer. No sale resulted.

17/07/25: A complaint was received, by e-mail, from a member of the public. She stated:

"I wish to report the selling of alcohol and vapes on multiple occasions over the last few months to a 15-year-old girl, my daughter and her friend over the last few months. No ID is requested. On the 12th July, 2025. My daughter aged 15, and her friend aged 15 together with a third girl visiting from Scotland who only just turned 16, went in around 8.20 pm. The 15-year-old bought a vape. The 16-year-old then asked for a bottle of Smirnoff vodka, for which she paid 20 pounds in cash. My daughter tried to get her not to buy this, as an adult in the queue look concerned. Yet the shop salesperson sold this without requesting any id.

"The girl then went home to Edinburgh, and unknown to either myself or her mother took the bottle of vodka with her. Her mother found her unconscious on Monday night, and she spent two days in the hospital, including in intensive care. As her parents did not know what had happened, the doctor had to treat her for multiple possible causes, and she was heavily sedated and intubated. Please note this shop has been reported - please realise this is not just a case of girls trying vapes or having a drink to party, but in this case a girl with poor mental health being able to buy vodka to drink alone and nearly dying."

The complainant later identified two other dates – 30th June 2025 and 5th July 2025 - when the two 15-year-olds were alleged to have bought age-restricted goods.

I have subsequently been provided with letters from the doctors treating the hospitalised girl, but as, I understand, that this girls' parents intend to make a representation in support of this review, I will leave them the discretion to produce these. Suffice to say, it appears that the girl was severely affected by consuming the alcohol.

23/07/25: Licensing Officer, Bill Masini, and myself conducted a visit to Best Quality F&W. No mention was made of the recent complaints, but routine checks were made. From a Licensing perspective, Mr Masini noted that

- the CCTV coverage was incomplete, with no coverage of the counter area, so that no transactions were shown, and it could not be proven whether or not ID was required and checked. This is, I believe, a breach of licence condition 17, which requires the system should be "...installed and maintained to Police recommendations..."
- that alcoholic drinks were not clearly labelled or marked with the name of the premises, contrary to licence condition 25; and
- that refusals records indicated that just five refusals made on three days had been noted since 27th March 2025 – nearly four months earlier – and none since 11th April.

No illicit goods were found.

27/07/25: A test purchase was attempted by three female volunteers. I have seen and photographed each girl's passport and can confirm that they are aged between 16 years and 16 years and four months. None of the volunteers were local and none had previously been in the shop.

Given the nature of the complaints, I asked them to deviate slightly from how we would normally ask our volunteers to undertake a test purchase, specifically to be challenging if they were refused, by showing that they were aware of other sales to young people.

Satnam Singh sold the girls two lost Mary nicotine vapes and a 35cl bottle of Smirnoff vodka (a 'half-bottle'). The volunteers reported the events as follows:

- *Two vapes were requested first.*
- *The seller, who was on the phone, took the two vapes from behind him and then asked "How old are you?"*
- *Volunteers responded "18" (I had asked them to do this with a grin – as if it were the expected response, rather than necessarily a true one)*
- *The seller asked "Do you have ID? I can't sell unless you have".*
- *Volunteers responded along the lines "The older man always sells".*
- *The vapes were then supplied.*

- *The volunteers asked for some Smirnoff*
- *The seller asked “Big or small bottle?”*
- *They responded small and the seller completed the sale, giving them a bag and saying “Make sure you keep it in the bag”.*

I went into the shop, very briefly, after the sale to ensure I saw who was working there and identified Satnam. He was the only person working in the shop at the time. When I asked why he had sold the items to the girls, he responded that he’d known them from previous occasions.

I have attached photographs of the underage volunteers who were able to purchase age-restricted goods in March and July 2023, and in the recent incident as Appendix 1. ***These photographs should not appear in the publicly accessible papers, or be shown at the hearing.***

31/07/25: CCTV footage was provided by the business, as requested, for the test purchase and the three recent occasions where they were alleged to have sold.

- On footage from 12/07/25, the three girls appear at the time indicated by the complainant. As there is no footage from cameras covering the counter, it cannot be seen what was purchased or whether ID was produced.
- On footage from 05/07/25, the two girls appear at the time indicated by the complainant. As there is no footage from cameras covering the counter, it cannot be seen what was purchased or whether ID was produced.
- On 30/06/25, no specific time was indicated by the complaint – merely that the girls went to the shop ‘after school’. I have looked at footage from between 1530 and 1730 and was unable to identify the girls in that time.

11/08/25: Both Tara Ram Singh and Satnam Singh attended interviews under caution. Both produced prepared statements, which I have added as Appendices 2 & 3, respectively, and then chose to offer ‘no comment’ to all subsequent questions.

Tara Ram’s statement denies culpability for the offences and he concludes by saying that he is “...happy to work with the Council and consider implementing any measure that the council feel is necessary”. I do not find this reassuring, given the clear evidence that he is breaching his licence conditions, and his choice to offer no comment to questions intended to give a full picture of the events.

Satnam’s statement is, I believe, dishonest. He states that he did not challenge the ‘customers in question’, by whom he clearly means the volunteers, even though he refused to confirm this when shown their pictures later in the interview, because he believed that they looked over 25 and that they did not say they were 18.

The reasons I believe this to be false are:

- I do not believe that any reasonable person would truly believe the three girls were (all) over 25;
- the volunteers reported that they did say they were 18 and that they were challenged for ID; &
- when I went into the shop after the sale, I asked Satnam why he had sold and he did not mention their appearance, or believed age: he told me that they had been in the shop before.

Recommendations

I believe that it is appropriate and necessary to revoke the premises licence.

The complaints – five, from different sources, in little over two years - about the business and the failed test purchases paint a picture of a business which is willing to sell age-restricted items to persons that must be known, or strongly suspected, to be underage. This is done, it should be assumed, for financial reasons, with the potentially tragic consequences to young customers’ health either considered and ignored, or disregarded entirely.

The failure to comply with licence conditions may be co-incidental. However, one may legitimately wonder whether the failures are designed to obscure the truth. The absence of CCTV coverage at the counter

denies the opportunity to verify what was purchased by customers, or whether ID was examined; and ignoring the condition to label all alcoholic drinks with the name of the shop, denies the opportunity to link the purchased alcohol to the shop.

Lastly, I have no faith in the current PLH to improve. He has already had the opportunity to do this, and, despite signing cautions to admit underage sales, and attending the trading standards training, and having the knowledge that further transgressions were most likely to lead to a licence review and a prosecution, he is still not following best practice advice.

I invite the Licensing Sub-Committee to agree with these recommendations and to revoke this licence.

Have you made an application for review relating to this premises before No

If yes please state the date of that application

Day Month Year

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If you have made representations before relating to this premises please state what they were and when you made them

N/A

Please tick ✓ yes

I have sent copies of this form and enclosures to the responsible authorities and the premises licence holder or club holding the club premises certificate, as appropriate

☒

I understand that if I do not comply with the above requirements my application will be rejected

☒

IT IS AN OFFENCE, LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO A FINE UP TO LEVEL 5 ON THE STANDARD SCALE, UNDER SECTION 158 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 TO MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT IN OR IN CONNECTION WITH THIS APPLICATION

Part 3 – Signatures (please read guidance note 3)

Signature of applicant or applicant's solicitor or other duly authorised agent (See guidance note 4). If signing on behalf of the applicant, please state in what capacity

Signature:



Date: 14th August 2024

Capacity: Lead Practitioner, Trading Standards

Contact name (where not previously given) and postal address for correspondence associated with this application (please read guidance note 5)

Post town

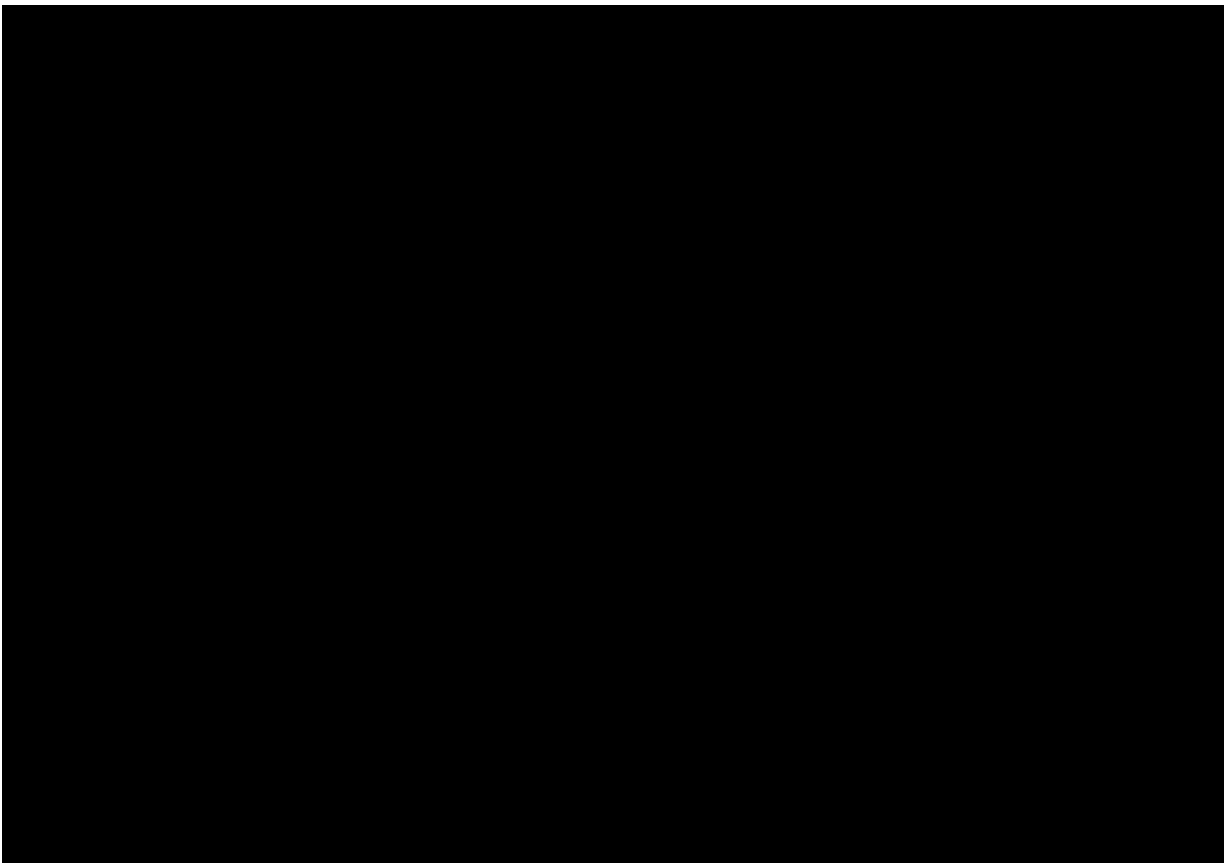
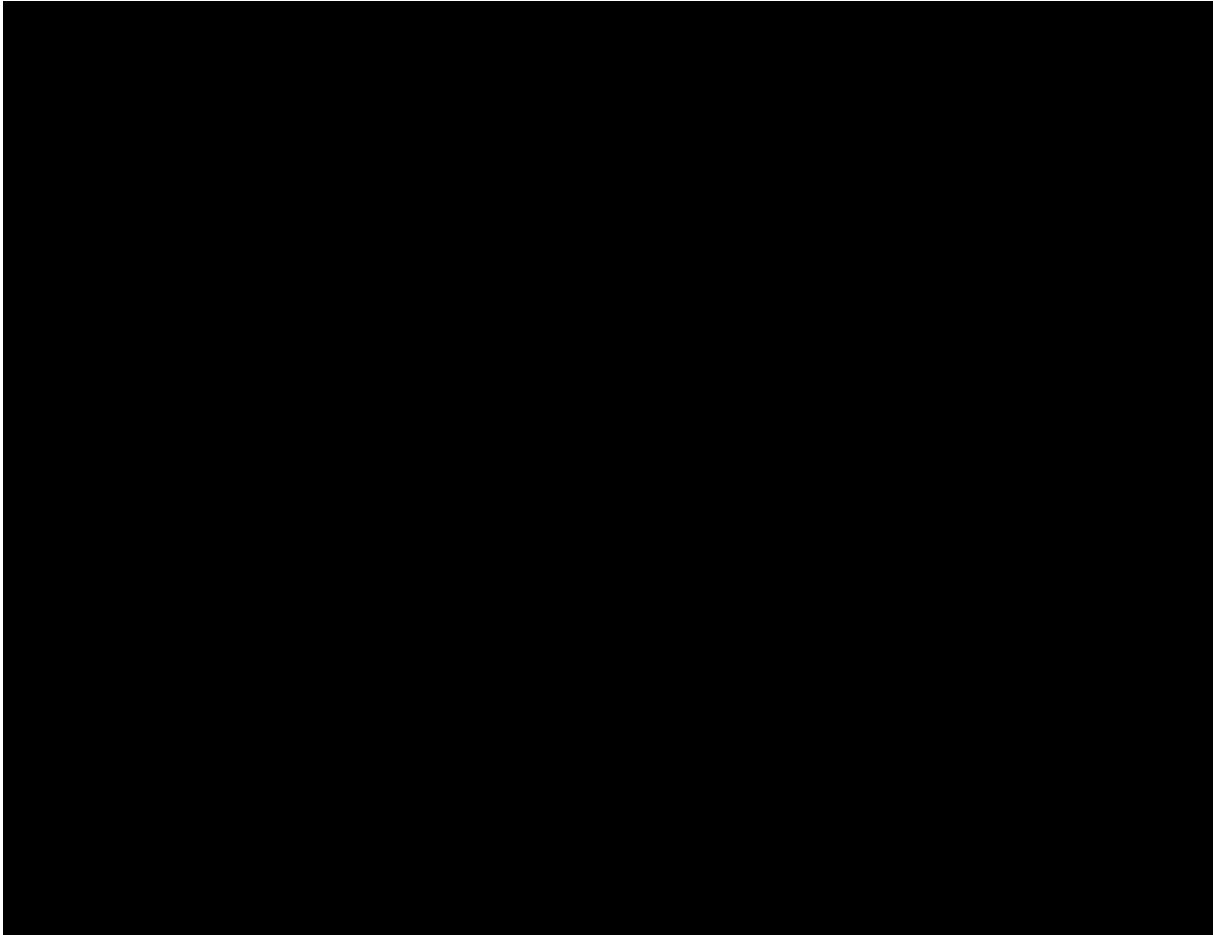
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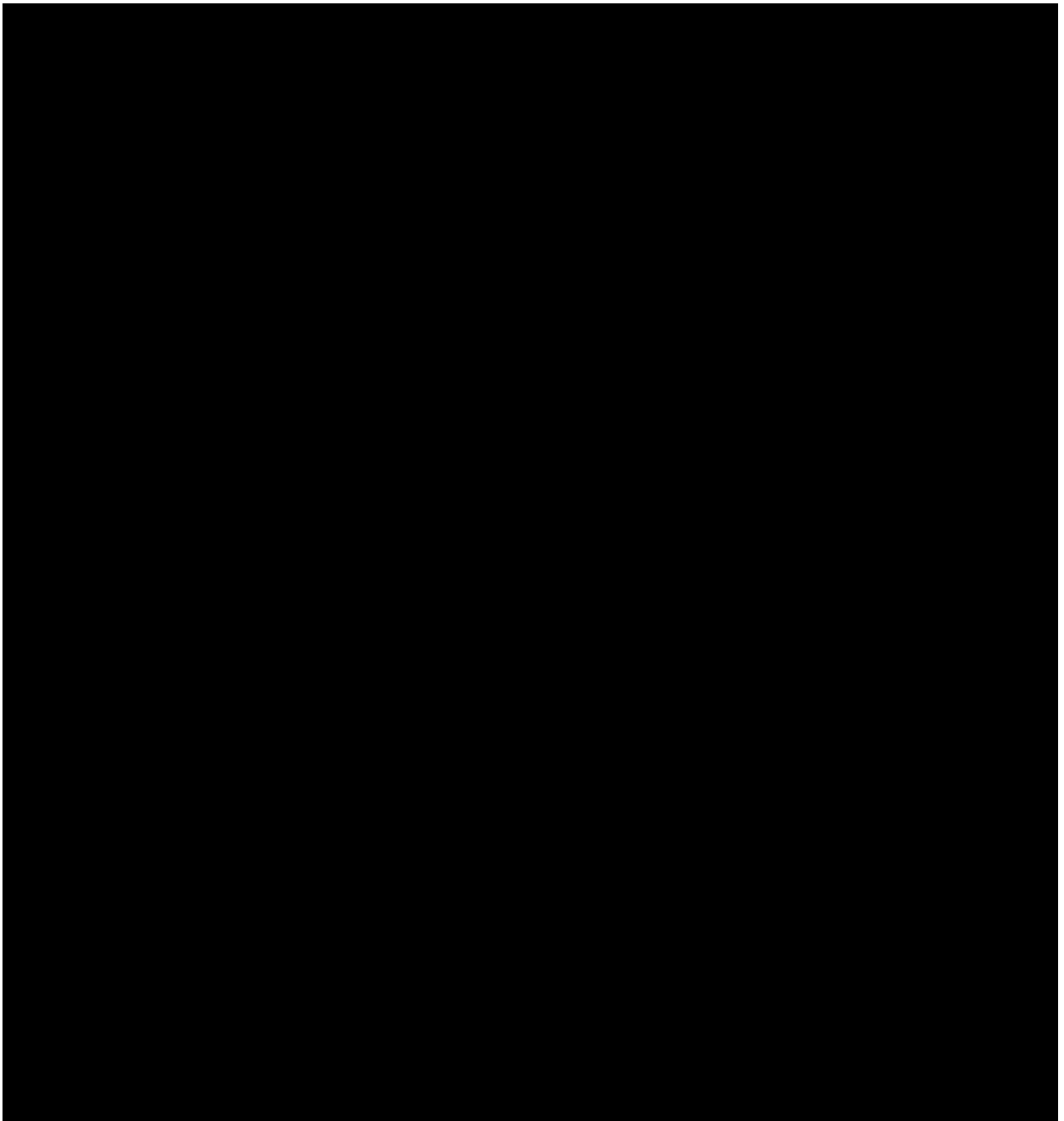
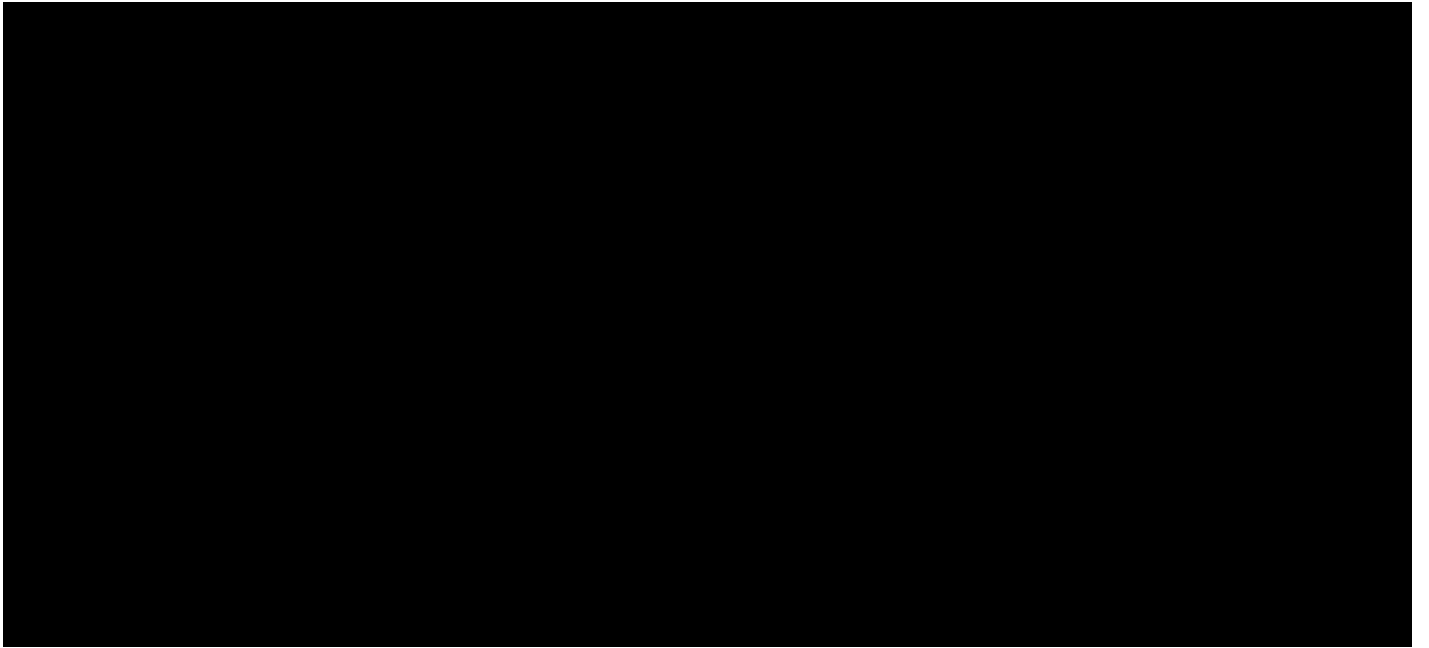
Telephone number (if any)

If you would prefer us to correspond with you using an e-mail address your e-mail address (optional)

Appendix 1 - Underage volunteers sold age-restricted good at Best Quality Food and Wine

Nb – not to be included in the public papers





Prepared Statement

I Tara Singh, date of birth [REDACTED], will state as follows: -

1. I can confirm that I am the director of Sweet Foods and Wines Limited, trading as Best Quality Food and Wine (address: 333-335 Lillie Road, Hammersmith and Fulham, SW6 7NR).
2. I am unaware of anyone working for me selling tabaco products or alcohol products to anyone under eighteen years of age. I was not present when these items are sold.
3. My staff know that they are prohibited from selling tabaco products and alcohol to anyone under eighteen years of age.
4. They are properly trained. They are trained to follow the 'Challenge 25' procedure.
5. I took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid my company committing an offence.
6. With relation to the allegation that my company has committed offences under the Licencing Act 2003, I can confirm the following: -
 - i. That I took corrective action quickly on each occasion the CCTV was not working, using due diligence and taking all reasonable steps to avoid an offence being committed under the Licencing Act.
 - ii. That there was CCTV covering the counter but rodents (mice) had destroyed the cables by chewing the cables. The CCTV covering the counter now works. Again, I used all due diligence and took all reasonable steps to avoid an offence being committed under the Licencing Act.
7. I am happy to work with the council and consider implementing any measures the council feel is necessary. However, I trust that it is clear that I have not committed an offence.

Signed:



Dated: 11th August 2025

Appendix 3 – prepared statement of Satnam Singh, produced at interview

Prepared Statement

I Satnam Singh, date of birth [REDACTED] will state as follows: -

1. I can confirm that I am cashier at Best Quality Food and Wine.
2. I serve thousands of people a week as part of my role.
3. I challenge anyone that I believe to be under twenty-five years of age, who wants to purchase alcohol or Tabacco. I challenge hundreds of people who look under twenty-five years of age every week. I take 'Challenge 25' very seriously, and I am aware of what is required of me, as a cashier in a newsagent.
4. On 27th July 2025, I chose not to 'Challenge 25' the customers in question, as they looked over twenty-five years of age. They did not tell me that they were eighteen years of age. If they had told me this, then I would have asked them to prove that they were over eighteen years of age, by providing identification.
5. I was telling them to secure the vodka in the bag, so that it did not drop on the floor and smash. It was an innocent comment.

Signed:.....

Satnam Singh

Dated: 11th August 2025