

## **6. High streets and communities**

### **6.1 The role of hospitality and leisure businesses**

Hospitality and leisure businesses are central to creating safe, vibrant high streets and supporting community health and wellbeing. Licensed premises provide regulated spaces where people can socialise safely, reducing risks associated with unregulated environments. They also generate employment and offer inclusive spaces for communities to come together, strengthening social cohesion and contributing to mental and physical health.

While licensing applies only to licensable activities within licensed premises, many businesses voluntarily adopt measures that go beyond statutory requirements, demonstrating leadership in promoting safer streets and healthier communities. This should be recognised and commended.

### **6.2 Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour**

Licensed premises play a vital role in creating welcoming spaces for people to socialise. Good licensing authorities and operators are committed to tackling and crime and anti-social behaviour and recognise that these risks need to be managed in a way that is reasonably practicable to ensure venues remain safe, inclusive, and enjoyable for all. The police play an important role, with dedicated licensing officers supporting and advising compliant businesses as well as taking necessary and proportionate action against irresponsible businesses to keep the public safe. In particular, the government recognises the contribution made by policing to the licensing regime.

The government is committed to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, including halving incidents of violence against women and girls. The deployment of additional neighbourhood policing officers and staff will support these goals, alongside local partnership working.

Many operators already demonstrate strong leadership in this space, adopting a range of voluntary measures to promote safety and prevent harm. The government recognises and commends this good practice and encourages all operators to consider how they can contribute to safer environments. It is not the role of licensing officers to prescribe the adoption of voluntary schemes safety measures, unless there is clear evidence that such steps are necessary to promote the licensing objectives. However, authorities can encourage the uptake of good practice, particularly where it can help mitigate known or emerging risks.

Responsible operators should be supported to demonstrate how they are managing risks to the licensing objectives to a reasonably practicable level.

### 6.3 Community health and wellbeing

Hospitality and leisure businesses are more than places to eat and drink, they are hubs of social life that underpin community cohesion. By creating safe, inclusive environments and supporting wellbeing initiatives, they contribute significantly to safer streets, healthier lifestyles and stronger communities. This is not only good for communities, it is good for business, particularly given the increasing demand for low and no-alcohol drinks and for more food-led and experiential hospitality.

Responsible licensed premises therefore play a positive role in protecting public health and supporting healthy communities. By providing regulated environments, they help reduce excessive alcohol consumption and prevent injuries or risky behaviours caused by intoxication, providing welcoming spaces that help address isolation and loneliness.

There are lots of examples of voluntary good practice, including supporting people to drink within the [UK's Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines](#) of 14 units of alcohol per week spread over 3 or more days with several alcohol-free days each week, and promoting customer wellbeing, including:

- health-conscious offerings – expanding menus to include a range of low and no-alcohol beverages and healthy food options, providing customers with information to support informed decisions
- activity-led social experiences – hosting events such as live music, quiz nights, board games, and cultural evenings encourages social interaction that is not centred solely on alcohol consumption, helping to moderate drinking
- inclusive safe spaces for all – creating welcoming environments for families, non-drinking social groups, and individuals seeking alternative leisure options or just company
- partnerships with local organisations – collaborating with charities and health bodies to tackle loneliness and promote wellbeing – for example, coffee mornings for older residents or hosting community fitness classes. Additionally, engaging with local public health teams to understand local patterns of alcohol-related harm and explore joint intervention
- supporting government/sector-led/charity initiatives – many operators work closely with organisations such as Pub is the Hub, the Inn Crowd, and the Centre for Ageing Better, showing how the sector contributes to wider social goals, including tackling loneliness and isolation
- promoting low-risk drinking – to help create these inclusive environments, avoiding promotions that encourage excessive consumption, such as ‘all-you-can-drink’ offers and supporting campaigns such as THINK! “Drink a Little, Risk a Lot” to highlight the dangers of drink driving. Operators should protect children by preventing underage sales and good operators should monitor and recognise the signs of intoxication so that they can intervene early

In line with the principles of proportionate regulation, these should not be mandated through licensing conditions. However, where licensed premises do not comply with their legal obligations and licence conditions, the government fully expects licensing authorities to take the appropriate action.