



**"Our standards are a reflection
of the views and expectations
of UK audiences"**

4-5

The British Board of Film Classification's 2024 Guidelines Review

By Edward Lamberti, Policy Manager, BBFC



6-10

Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training and Assessment

By Mike Smith, Senior Specialist for Licensing and Community Safety at Guildford Borough Council

14-15

Events - What's On / Online?

By IoL

16-19

UK's leading licensing law firm celebrates 30 years at the top

By Poppleston Allen

20-23

UK licensing officers gain insight to how the gaming industry is stepping up its commitment to advancing SR, customer care and compliance innovations

By Charlotte Meller and Ken Scott

24-25

Jeremy Allen Award

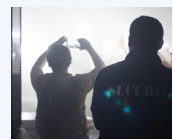
By IoL



26-27

Grown up licensing

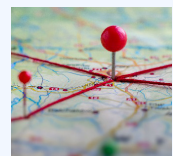
By Philip Kolvin



28-29

A national private hire system?

By James Button



This magazine is written, designed and produced by the Institute of Licensing (IoL). © Institute of Licensing (IoL).

IoL can accept no responsibility for the veracity of the claims made by the advertisers.

The views expressed by article authors are those of the author and not necessarily the views of the IoL.

Foreword

By Kate Nicholls OBE, National Chair

It gives me enormous pleasure to write the foreword for this LINK magazine having taken up the position of National Chair for the Institute of Licensing in April.

I am delighted to chair the IoL. It is an organisation that I have worked alongside for many years. I appreciate and applaud its aims, and its overall goal to increase professionalism within licensing and promote excellence in all areas, including but certainly not exclusively in relation to the hospitality and leisure sectors, and our town and city spaces overall.

The IoL is a body which has achieved a huge amount since its inception in 1996 (known then as the Local Government Licensing Forum or LGLF). I aim to bring a strategic and steady hand to the organisation, helping to progress the findings of a recent growth review which support reviewing and strengthening the governance structure, identifying and prioritising goals, and empowering the fantastic team at the IoL to ensure sufficient resources, and support in their work.

We are incredibly fortunate in the resources within the IoL - mainly the people involved. The team, the Board, Regional Committee members, our speakers, trainers, authors, sponsors and most importantly our members.

We are rightly proud of the IoL ethos, it is a welcoming, inclusive organisation with aspirations to grow but also to protect and preserve the things that make it special; our regional network, stakeholder engagement, training and qualification provision to name just a few.

The LINK magazine and the Journal of Licensing are recognised as key member benefits and it is a pleasure to introduce this edition of the LINK which features some fantastic articles including a look at the recent review of film classifications by the BBFC, alongside Philip Kolvin KC's article setting out his thoughts on the Protect Duty and, a fascinating look at licensing over the years and potential future developments from Poppleston Allen who are celebrating their 30th anniversary. Mike Smith explores best practice in driver training and assessments, while Charlotte Mellor and Ken Scott share some thoughts on the discussions at the recent ICE conference, and James Button expands on his thoughts about a potential national private hire licensing model.

The LINK magazine allows us to highlight the upcoming National Licensing Week (10th – 14th June), the Jeremy Allen Award (nominations open in June) and the work of the Local Alcohol Partnerships Group which brings together best practice schemes which operate in towns and cities across the country. This is an example of the stakeholder groups which the IoL is privileged to contribute to and support.

We are indebted to our contributing authors, and advertisers – thank you to you all. Anyone who is interested in providing an article for future publication, or simply suggesting topics should contact the team via email to link@instituteoflicensing.org.



The British Board of Film Classification's 2024 Guidelines Review



by Edward Lamberti, Policy Manager, BBFC

Our core mission at the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) is to help audiences choose what's right for them. We primarily do this by providing age ratings to films, series, and other content released in cinemas, on physical media (DVD/Blu-ray), and online. We also create content advice for every film and series we view, including a detailed breakdown of the issues they contain, which is available on our website and app. Together, these resources empower people to make informed viewing decisions and help protect vulnerable audiences from potentially harmful content.

For our age ratings to be useful they must accurately reflect society's evolving attitudes. Every four to five years, therefore, we reach out to over 10,000 people across the UK to ascertain what audiences want and expect at each of our age rating categories. We will then amend our standards accordingly, to ensure we best reflect the views of people in the UK.

Our Classification Guidelines, available on our website, are the foundation of all our age rating decisions. They are built on these widespread public consultations, as well as expert advice and the BBFC's many years of content classification experience.

Recognition And Trust

In March, we published the results of our latest,

and biggest, guidelines review to date. Through our research partner, We are Family, we spoke to 12,000 people from across the UK through a range of innovative methodologies.

The findings showed that BBFC age ratings remain valued and trusted by UK audiences. 97% of respondents see value in content being age rated, with 99% recognising at least one of our age rating symbols and 78% recognising them all. With this recognition also comes trust: 85% of respondents said they trust BBFC age ratings when making viewing decisions all or most of the time. Among parents, this reaches 90% - a 7% increase from our 2019 guidelines consultation. Similarly, 83% of people surveyed said they agreed with BBFC ratings all or most of the time, with those numbers even higher among older teens (85%), parents (87%) and teachers (87%).

The Media Landscape

Maintaining and even increasing these high levels of trust and agreement has been a key achievement for us over a turbulent few years for the entertainment industry. The global pandemic resulted in the temporary closure of many cinemas as well as the suspension of numerous film and television productions. There has also been a continued shift towards audiences viewing content online. While the cinema-going experience is the primary source by which people recognise BBFC ratings and content

advice (e.g. 'strong violence, sex'), the research results showed us that more people in the UK watch films via streaming services than at the cinema or on physical media.

Within the online space, the BBFC is making successful inroads working with major streaming services. We currently work with over thirty online services using BBFC age ratings. Netflix's UK site has total coverage of its content using our age ratings, and is the third biggest source of recognition among audiences for our symbols and the second biggest for our content advice. 81% of people surveyed think it would be better to have a consistent age rating system across cinema, physical media and on streaming services. We are proud that audiences appreciate the value of our ratings across these sites.

Changes To Content Classification In Our New Guidelines

Through focus groups, cinema screenings, an online community, teen film-viewing parties and an extensive online survey we tested 33 feature films, 31 trailers, 152 clips and a television episode, depicting a range of classification issues across the age rating categories. We were particularly interested in cases in which content was on the borderline between two categories - such as 15 and 18 - and whether people would give it the higher or lower rating and why.

Our research provides insight into which subject areas are of most concern to audiences, and in 2024 sexual violence remains at the top of the list. Suicide and self-harm, however, has risen from the 2019 results to become the second biggest area of concern, although there is widespread support for how the BBFC is classifying content with these challenging subjects.

Violence and sex were also ranked highly in the list, which corroborates the responses to the stimulus material used. Participants regularly erred on the side of caution for borderline scenes of violence, preferring a higher rating for content they deemed intense, impactful, tonally dark or notably bloody, sadistic or distressing. We are therefore adopting a slightly more restrictive position on borderline scenes of violence when these factors are present.

Similarly, on the 12A and 15 borderline people were concerned by scenes of sex. Our guidelines have been updated to reflect a slightly more cautious approach to classifying sex scenes if they are of longer duration, they contain sexual detail or nudity, or the sex appears rough or aggressive.

At PG, language was also felt to be an issue. The concern among participants, especially parents, was that certain terms could be normalised among children who may then repeat them and cause offence. We are therefore adopting a stricter position on language, with certain words previously passed at PG now requiring a 12A.

There was relaxation in other areas. People were less concerned by certain depictions of cannabis misuse at 12A, such as incidental depictions, but those which contain instructional detail or appear to promote cannabis misuse, or content featuring frequent scenes of cannabis misuse, are still likely to result in a 15.

People were also more nuanced in their response to material featuring solvent misuse. Our current policy is notably restrictive, but following these findings we sought expert advice and received support for a careful relaxation of this policy, in line with our approach to classifying drugs.

While these changes are relatively minimal, they represent the subtle shifts in societal attitudes and will ensure that our classification decisions continue to reflect the expectations of UK audiences.

Looking Ahead

These new standards came into effect from 1 May 2024. The full research report and Classification Guidelines documents are available on our website, along with an array of short Guides on specific classification subjects, such as Violence, Sex and Drugs, which include case studies on content that feature that issue prominently.

We are proud of the trust people have in our work and are extremely grateful to everyone who took part in this research. Our standards are a reflection of the views and expectations of UK audiences, and consultations such as this ensures that our age ratings continue to be shaped by you.

Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training and Assessment



By Mike Smith, Senior Specialist for Licensing and Community Safety at Guildford Borough Council

The updated Best Practice Guidance has brought about a shift in the Department for Transport's (DfT) recommendations in respect of driver training, in particular the requirement to complete a recognised vocational qualification which will likely leave many Licensing Authorities, including my own which requires such a vocational qualification, wondering what to do.

In addition, technological changes of a perhaps unrecognisable proportion between versions of the Best Practice Guidance have resulted in a change in position on Private Hire Driver knowledge assessment.

However, whilst there appears to be a move away from requiring vocational level training and knowledge testing of private hire drivers, recent additional disability legislation and statutory guidance appears to highlight very much the importance of training in respect of drivers being able to carry out their role effectively and to the highest of standards.

Surely, it cannot also be right that such an important role as being a licensed driver, where the driver is completely entrusted with the transportation of a person, including the young, elderly and vulnerable, where the role is highly regulated through the licensing regime, does not require any formal training?

As such, I wanted to explore the position in the new Best Practice Guidance and associated legislation about driver training and set out what Local Authorities should be expecting drivers to complete.

Firstly, you may well be thinking about the very sensible question of 'why don't all Local Licensing Authorities do the same thing?'

The intention of every set of Government Guidance has always been to try and set out a consistent position of what Local Authorities should be doing. However Guidance is just that – it is there to guide the Authority but ultimately only legislation can dictate how something should be done.

This was very much the intention of National Minimum Standards, which the Government committed to legislating for following the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group way back in 2018.

What happened to National Standards?

Simply put, the Government says it remains committed to the idea of National Standards, but with an election required soon they have run out of time to legislate for National Standards in Parliament before an election.

A Parliamentary debate in late January confirmed the position that whilst the Government remained 'committed' to National Minimum Standards, they had run out of time before the election but wanted to bring these in 'in due course', See: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-01-16/9922/>

Yet again, it remains unfortunately clear that Local Authority Licensing and the Taxi and Private Hire trade



remains very much a low priority for the Government when it comes to updating extremely out of date legislation, leaving both authorities and trade in an incredibly difficult position when it comes to regulation and consistency of standards, and waiting for when 'in due course' appears on our calendars.

What Training and Assessment do Taxi and Private Hire Drivers Need to Do?

Before I look at this question, I wanted to summarise the position up until 2020 which is set out in the previous version of the DfT Best Practice Guidance published in 2010.

The Previous (2010) Best Practice Guidance

Looking at training in the previous version of the guidance, the word 'training' appeared 17 times.

The main section on training set out that whilst the DfT had no plans to make training courses or qualifications mandatory, there may have been advantage in encouraging drivers to obtain one of the nationally-recognised vocational qualifications relevant to the licensed trade.

It also explained that some Local Authorities had established their own schemes covering: customer care, including meeting the needs of people with disabilities, relevant legislation, road safety, the use of maps and GPS, the handling of emergencies, conflict management and where required, literacy and numeracy. It also set

out the importance of training in context of the 2012 Olympics which intended to leave a legacy of more accessible transport.

The Guidance also summarised that: 'Authorities may wish to note that nationally recognised qualifications and training programmes sometimes have advantages over purely local arrangements (for example, in that the qualification will be more widely recognised)' and made a number of references to this section when discussing training requirements, indicating perhaps a position of recommending the use of a vocational scheme of training for licensed drivers.

However, whilst there was some discussion in the previous Guidance about training, and a suggestion to consider a recognised vocational course; aside from encouraging (not requiring) drivers to complete disability awareness training, there was no definitive list of what the Authority should require.

Examining knowledge assessment, the previous Guidance suggests that hackney carriage drivers be required to complete a topographical assessment of the local area relevant to how easy or difficult the area is to navigate, although whilst ensuring that such a test is not an undue barrier to entering the trade.

Regarding Private Hire driver knowledge, the previous guidance indicated that as Private Hire drivers were not available for immediate hire they would have the opportunity to plan a route prior to a journey and suggested drivers could be assessed on their ability to

read a map and knowledge of key places such as main roads and railway stations.

As far as language assessment, the guidance only indicated that Authorities may wish to consider whether a driver would have any problems in communicating because of language difficulties and was not particularly helpful in providing a definitive standard for proficiency.

The Statutory Taxi and PHV Standards July 2020

Moving forward to the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards published in 2020; this was published in response to terrible safeguarding failures in some areas and unsurprisingly set out a definitive position that all Licensing Authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake safeguarding training.

Clearly much had changed in the period between these standards and the publication of the previous Best Practice Guidance, which much being made of the communication abilities of drivers. Therefore, the Standards also recommend a conclusive position in respect of language proficiency in that a licensing authority should test both oral and written English language skills. Written proficiency because this could affect a driver's ability to understand written documents, such as policies and guidance relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Oral proficiency will be relevant in identifying potential exploitation through communicating with passengers and their interaction with others.

Elsewhere, this guidance then focussed on the importance of training of decision makers and potentially imposing further training on drivers who had not met the required standards, which is an interesting position in that there needed to be some failure by the driver in order for them to be required to complete training, whereas the rest of the Guidance focusses on preventative measures to ensure past failings are not repeated. Surely comprehensive training before a licence were granted would have been a much better pre-emptive approach?

It is important to remember that this Guidance has statutory status for Local Authorities and despite the new Best Practice Guidance still remains in effect.

The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022

This Act is designed to ensure that all disabled people can access transport services, free from the fear of discriminatory treatment or being faced with additional charges. It provides specific rights and protections for 13.7 million disabled people across the country so that they can travel with the confidence that they will receive the assistance they require when accessing taxi and private hire vehicle services.

The Act conveys several key actions which Licensing Authorities themselves will need to take; as well as placing requirements upon drivers, who are required to:

- Accept the carriage of any disabled person, provide them with reasonable mobility assistance, and carry their mobility aids, all without charging any more than they would for a non-disabled passenger.
- Provide any disabled passenger who requests it with assistance to identify the vehicle, at no extra charge.

When considering these duties and any training programmes aimed at raising awareness of these duties, it is important to remember that not all disabilities are visible. Many disabled passengers show no outward sign of their condition, so drivers will need to know how to speak to the passenger about their condition and ascertain their specific needs, without causing offence. Whereas when this Act came in the Best Practice Guidance in place at the time encouraged drivers to complete disability awareness training, this Act means that drivers will also know how to respond to these needs, which are likely to be more complex than historical awareness training which likely just covered wheelchair and assistance dog users.

The Updated Best Practice Guidance (2023)

Finally, progressing to the new Best Practice Guidance, by way of comparison, the word training features nearly twice as many times compared to the previous version, up from 17 to 33 mentions.

The first mention of training reiterates the position of the 2020 Statutory Standards of requiring safeguarding training, albeit that this is provided in a manner which avoids unnecessary delays to gaining a licence.

In respect of Disability awareness training, the Guidance builds on the position in the 2022 Disabled Persons Act and sets out that:

'Drivers should be trained in disability awareness and/or have their knowledge and skills assessed. Drivers should also be encouraged, through targeted and general communications, to uphold the highest standards of customer service. The training or assessment should include but not be limited to:

- the features of an inclusive, high quality service
- appropriate attitudes, behaviours and skills
- assistance that can be provided to all passengers
- the protected characteristics, and related Equality Act 2010 duties
- understanding the different barriers that disabled people face when using taxis and private hire vehicles, and how they might be identified
- the role of taxis and private hire vehicles in enabling disabled people to be independent and the role of drivers and operators in facilitating this
- how to communicate with people with different communication needs
- how to assist people with a range of visible and less visible impairments
- supporting wheelchair users to board, alight and travel in safety and comfort whilst seated in their wheelchair
- the identification and role of assistance dogs
- legal obligations towards disabled passengers and the consequences of not complying with them
- an assessment of the trainee's knowledge and skills'

Clearly the above comprehensive position and list of what training should be provided is much welcomed. Helpfully, the Guidance also signposts to existing materials, the REAL disability equality training programme, produced on behalf of the DfT relevant to the licensed trade.

So, we have a very clear position in the updated Guidance that drivers are required to complete safeguarding and wide-ranging disability awareness training. The guidance recognises that this could be delivered by way of vocational training however it

does not have to be delivered through this route. It continues that any requirement imposed needs to be proportionate and leads us to the position that:

'Vocational qualifications provide a

'snapshot' of learning as they are awarded based on the curriculum of the course at the time it is taken. The training required of drivers will naturally evolve over time and so a vocational qualification may need to be supplemented with further training and assessment. An example of this is the inclusion of 'county lines' awareness as part of safeguarding training.

Given the need for driver knowledge and awareness to evolve and the potential need for periodic assessment, licensing authorities should not require applicants for a licence to have obtained a vocational qualification. If drivers and private hire vehicle operators wish to go beyond what is required to obtain a licence as part of their development or business model they can obviously do so, but it should not be a licensing requirement.'

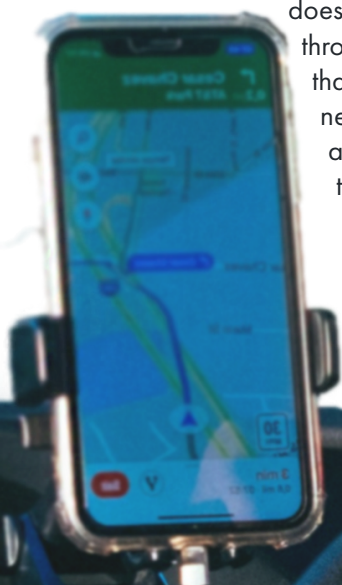
The above position, whilst moving away from the position of indicating that vocational training for driver was a good idea, appears to indicate that driver training should occur more often than at the time of first application. Looking deeper, the DfT appear to be setting out that whilst vocational training clearly delivers a set standard of training at a point in time, there is going to be a need for drivers to receive updated training periodically during their careers.

Whilst Continuous

Professional Development in any professional role is to be welcomed, unfortunately any further content or interval for such assessment has not been set out, it is likely to relate to emerging issues or be as a result of an enforcement issue where a particular deficiency has been identified, again perhaps undermining the intended preventative nature of the Licensing regime.

In addition to safeguarding and disability awareness, the updated Guidance also considers training for driver proficiency specifically. Whereas the previous version of the Guidance noted that Driving Proficiency Assessments existed, it set out that the need for such assessment needed to weigh up the cost/benefit of such testing.

However, the updated Guidance says that: Licensing



authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake training and/or assessment on driving proficiency, focussed on attitudes and behaviours at both first application and renewal. The rationale for this is set out that as professional drivers the licensed trade should display a higher degree of driving aptitude and diligence than a private motorist, and that this is considered appropriate and proportionate and is consistent with other elements of taxi and private hire vehicle driver licensing.

Elsewhere in the Guidance, there is some suggestion about what other training could be included such as training around health and safety responsibility, personal safety/security and training on emergency equipment where it is required.

The updated Guidance also reinforces the position of the Statutory Standards in respect of language proficiency, and concludes that good communications skills will bring wider passenger benefits in terms of the driver's ability to demonstrate an understanding of the desired destination, an estimation of the time taken to get there and other common passenger requests and for the driver to provide a legibly written receipt upon request.

As far as knowledge testing is concerned, for hackney carriage drivers the position of the previous Best Practice Guidance is maintained, in that taxi drivers should undertake a topographical assessment based upon the local area.

However, for Private Hire drivers, clearly advances in technology and App based services have led to a position in the updated Guidance that operators should gather sufficient information from the passenger to identify the collection and drop-off points, which in turn will enable the driver to check the details of a route before starting a journey and plan or enter it in a navigation system. In addition, given the availability, reliability and ease of use of sat nav systems, licensing authorities should not require any topographical knowledge or navigational tests for private hire vehicle drivers, which is a movement from the position in the previous guidance which indicated private hire drivers should have a knowledge of major roads and destinations.

To Conclude

It is clear that the most recent Best Practice Guidance, when read in conjunction with the Statutory Standards and the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 require driver training in respect of

wider disability awareness, safeguarding and driver proficiency.

In addition it is perhaps unthinkable for any other regulated profession such as a teacher, doctor, lawyer etc. to be able to embark upon their chosen profession without some form of vocational and competency based assessment, the Guidance only appears to initially require proportionate topographical knowledge for Hackney Carriage Drivers. However, whilst the Guidance has moved away from formal vocational training, it does set a higher standard for those mandatory subjects above and does indicate a need for drivers to receive updated training periodically during their careers. As I said previously, whilst CPD in any professional role is to be welcomed, unfortunately any further content or interval for such assessment will likely to relate to emerging issues and need to be set out in further Guidance to ensure consistency between Authorities. Otherwise, further training will likely be as a result of an enforcement issue where a particular deficiency has been identified, again perhaps undermining the intended preventative nature of the Licensing regime.

In respect of Private Hire Drivers, clearly advances in technology have led to a reduction in assessment although there remains obviously some debate about how much time a private hire driver operating on an on demand platform has to plan their route and the benefits of local knowledge in the event of a road closure or navigation failure, however this is the position intended to be Best Practice.

However, despite any recommended position in the Guidance, we are still left with the position where there is likely to be considerable variation in training requirements based upon local needs and decision making, and without a defined national standard there is also a risk of the race to the bottom as authorities being nervous about setting high standards for the fear of licence shopping.

So, as we continue to examine the updated Best Practice Guidance, there is no more important time to be 'in the know' about licensing issues affecting the trade and I would again encourage members of the trade to join the Institute of Licensing where the guidance is likely to be subject of many events and publications this year.

Full details are available at:
www.instituteoflicensing.org



Prices set
at 2023
levels.

VERSANTTM by Pearson

VersantTM English Language Testing

Remote testing with security you can trust.

The ability to communicate clearly with emergency services, vulnerable passengers and report safeguarding issues is an essential skill for today's drivers.

VersantTM English Language Test can become an integral part of the driver application process. It is quick and effective, reliable and non bias. Providing evidence of a drivers level of English comprehension.

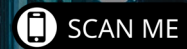
With the availability of **remote monitoring**, drivers can log in from home to a securely managed, recorded and monitored platform to take their Versant English test. After the test you will receive:

- the drivers score report
- plus, a remote monitoring report.

Giving you the **flexibility, insight and security** you need.

For more information contact Helen Kelly at 07392 282 844
helen.kelly@pearson.com

www.TalentLens.com



Local Alcohol Partnerships Group

The Local Alcohol Partnerships Group (LAPG) was established in 2012, and brings together representatives from local partnership schemes which seek to minimise alcohol harm and promote conditions for the safe and responsible sale and consumption of alcohol in town and city centres and local communities.

LAPG membership is open to local partnership schemes, industry partners and representatives of other interested parties including regulators, government departments and alcohol advisory/concern groups.

The objectives of LAPG are to:

- provide the basis for closer collaboration between the industry local partnership schemes, trade bodies and other stakeholders
- provide a source of practical and operational expertise in licensed economy issues for operators and regulators
- implement and support schemes as appropriate
- facilitate the sharing of good practice through attendance at events, meetings and roundtable discussions as appropriate.
- share good practice on evaluation and gather data that demonstrates the benefit of the schemes at local level.

Partnerships



Best Bar None

Best Bar None is an accreditation scheme supported by the Home Office and drinks industry that aims to improve standards in the evening and night time economy. Through a combination of responsible management and operation of licensed premises, ongoing improvements, and social responsibility, Best Bar None's goal is to help provide a safer night out to all.



ATCM Purple Flag

Vibrant, night-time economies do not happen by accident. Innovation, curation, planning and partnership are all key elements to creating a destination that can delight users after dark. Purple Flag is an international accreditation programme that aims to reward those who achieve this in their destinations after dark. Purple Flag strives to help create safe and thriving locations at night for all users.



Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP)

Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) is a Community Interest Company (CIC) which brings together and supports local partnerships of councils, police, retailers, schools, health providers and community groups to reduce alcohol harm among young people, improve their health and wellbeing and enhance their communities.



Street Pastors

Street Pastors was pioneered in London in 2003 by Les Isaac, starting with 18 volunteers taking the streets of Brixton – 15 women and 3 men. Since then, over 12,000 street and prayer pastors, have played an active part in strengthening community life and working for safer streets. Currently, more than 240 towns and cities around the UK have a Street Pastors team with over 20,000 volunteers in total associated with the Street Pastors network.



Drinkaware

Drinkaware is an independent charity which aims to reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking by providing impartial, evidence-based information, advice and practical resources; raising awareness of alcohol and its harms and working collaboratively with partners.



PASS Card

The UK's national proof of age accreditation scheme, endorsed by the Home Office, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the Security Industry Authority (SIA).



Retail of Alcohol Standards Group

The Retail of Alcohol Standards Group was established in 2005 by national retailers in an effort to eradicate underage alcohol sales. Its work today continues to focus on driving down underage alcohol sales, primarily through the Challenge 25 Scheme, addressing underage drinking through Community Alcohol Partnerships and promoting high standards among alcohol retailers through its Guidance for the Responsible Retailing of Alcohol.



National Pubwatch

National Pubwatch is a voluntary organisation set up to promote best practice through supporting the work of local Pubwatch Schemes. Its aim is to achieve a safer drinking environment in all licensed premises throughout the UK.



Safer Business Network

Safer Business Network is a Community Interest Company, which coordinates and administers several award winning business crime reduction partnerships (BCRPs) across some of London most challenging and diverse boroughs. Our BCRPs are private membership schemes which bring businesses together, with the police, council and other interested stakeholders to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour that have negative impacts on profitability of businesses and the 'look and feel' of town centre environments.

Events - What's On / Online?

We are delighted to offer the following training courses which can be booked online or via email to events@instituteoflicensing.org
<https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/events>



Introduction to Criminal Investigations Four Half Days (09:30 - 12:45)

25th, 27th June, 2nd, 4th July 2024

Online via Zoom

These sessions aim to provide new investigators with the skills required to conduct criminal investigations. These sessions are also suitable for investigators with some experience who wish to recap their skills before attending more advanced courses.



Scrap Metal

9th July 2024

City of London Corporation, Walbrook Wharf, 78-83 Upper Thames Street, London EC4R 3TD

The course will explain the workings of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, how it works and how the renewal process is applied. It will also look at the workings of the Act and secondary legislation, together with the Guidance and puts it all in a practical context.



Professional Licensing Practitioners Qualification

Four Day Online Course

9th Sept, 10th Sept, 17th Sept and 19th Sept 2024

Online via Zoom

Book your place online or email your booking requirements to events@instituteoflicensing.org FEES: Use the fees calculator on the event online to see the costs for one or more days. A discount is applied when booking all four days at the same time.



Animal Enforcement Training

12th September 2024

Burnley Town Hall, Manchester Road, Burnley BB11 9SA

The one day course will build confidence and knowledge to any delegate who deals with animal enforcement.

Contact the IoL team

Email: events@instituteoflicensing.org
or telephone us on 01749 987 333



Gambling Conference

16th July 2024

**The Hippodrome Casino,
Cranbourn Street, London**

We are delighted to visit The Hippodrome Casino, Leicester Square for our Gambling Conference on 16th July 2024.

Our Practical Gambling Conference will bring you an excellent line-up of expert speakers talking about practical elements of the gambling licensing regime.

Places are limited so don't miss out - join us for a fantastic programme with expert speakers including:

Confirmed Speakers:

- Sarah Fox, DCMS
- Gerald Gouriet KC, Francis Taylor Buildings
- Phil Bates, Southampton City Council
- Amanda Kiernan, Merkur Casino
- Charlotte Meller, Gambling Business Group
- Clark Dunstan, William Hill
- Nick Arron, Poppleston Allen
- Elizabeth Speed, Novamatic
- Ian Graham, NPCC
- Rob Burkitt, Gambling Commission
- Daliah Barrett - London Borough of Haringey

BOOK ONLINE

VIA OUR WEBSITE

instituteoflicensing.org/events

UK's leading licensing law firm celebrates 30 years at the top



Poppleston Allen reflects on the major changes to the industry over the past 30 years



In May 1994, Jeremy Allen and Susanna Poppleston launched Poppleston Allen: a specialist licensing firm for the hospitality sector. At the time, the general feeling from many outsiders about the new venture was that it would not last.

From humble beginnings, Poppleston Allen is now celebrating its 30th year as the largest and most respected licensing law firm in the UK, with offices in Nottingham's Lace Market and Kings Cross, London. From having just a handful of clients, the firm now gives specialist licensing, gambling and regulatory advice to 100s of businesses covering every sector imaginable, from outdoor festivals and pop-ups through to pubs, bars, restaurants, hotels, leisure complexes, arcades, betting and bingo premises, gaming software developers and machine manufacturers. Major pub co

clients include Mitchells & Butlers, Fullers, Youngs, Wells & Co, Stonegate Pub Company, St Austell Brewery and Amber Taverns.

Though Jeremy died in 2011 and Susanna retired a few years later, the firm has enjoyed 20+ years' service from many of its staff, including founding member and current Managing Partner, Lisa Sharkey.

Commenting, firm Managing Partner Lisa Sharkey says, "It's been an incredible journey and one which I have been lucky enough to have been on since day one. It might sound clichéd, but without the commitment of our bright and enthusiastic team and our many incredible clients - both present and past - we simply would not be the force we are today. I am beyond grateful to our clients for entrusting us with their business and letting us share their journey.

Sharkey continues, "One of my fondest memories was winning The Lawyer's 'Law Firm of the Year' Award and

sharing that stage with Jeremy and Susanna celebrating their foresight and bravery in going it alone and setting up Poppleston Allen. Next year I will be standing down as Managing Partner and Graeme Cushion will be taking up the helm. I am excited to see what the future holds under Graeme's leadership."

A trip down memory lane

The past 30 years have seen a massive change in licensing which reflects the changes in social and economic conditions. Remember that in 1994 the internet was in its infancy, considerable upper body strength was needed to use a 'mobile' phone, things were delivered either by a milkman or a midwife and a pint of beer cost £1.56*.

Changes had already started in 1989 with the Beer Orders which removed the monopoly of the combined big brewers and retailers and led to the rise of the non-brewing pub companies which have dominated the tied sector since then.

In England and Wales licensing was controlled by the old Licensing Act 1964 and that meant regular visits to Magistrates' Courts where licensing transfer sessions were held. Incredibly every application, no matter how experienced the proposed licensee, had to be granted by a bench of Magistrates. The process was apolitical, residents were not involved, despite inevitably being affected; disputed applications including hearings over multiple days were held when trade rivals could oppose each other on the basis of the concept of lack of 'need' for a new premises.

But the high street was a different matter. Doormen were unregulated, CCTV rare, under 18s could usually easily obtain a drink and incredibly, everyone closed at the same time and had the same licence.

So for the many of us who were out enjoying the weekend, from 22:30 to 23:30 we left with no choice but to stand (usually in the rain) with hundreds of other revellers in every town and city to join a very long queue to enter a nightclub. And not only did you have to have cash for your entrance fee, people were often refused entry, not because they looked under 18 (Challenge 25 was decades away), or if they'd had too much to drink but simply because you chose to wear trainers. And until the ban in July 2007, your clothes and hair would often smell very strongly of cigarette smoke the next morning too.

A lot of the old 'wet led' pubs and nightclubs were hit by the smoking ban where a change in drinking and social habits and a lack of food led to closure and rather depressingly many became supermarkets or flats. Typically, a village which in 1994 had five pubs probably now has just two.

Government shake up

The change in government in 1997 led to a policy to transfer control of licensing in England and Wales to Local Authorities, which culminated in the Licence Act 2003. The removal of the central control of permitted hours was controversial with The Daily Mail coining the expression "24 hour licensing". It was the biggest shake up in over 100 years, ending the role of Magistrates, combining everything into one licence and making the process more streamlined and cheaper. It also introduced greater opportunities for local residents to challenge applications.

This was significant for Poppleston Allen and the company became involved in the conversion of thousands of old style licences into Premises Licences. The change was a generally a success for the hospitality industry and also changed the way in which solicitors operated from the traditional early morning court appearances and advocacy to a quicker and more presentational approach.

Post Licensing Act 2003

Since 2005, when the Licensing Act 2003 came into effect, there has been much legislative change to the Act. It was meant to be a liberalising piece of legislation generally, creating a café culture with flexibility to avoid the pressure point where all premises' patrons would leave at the same time with the "cumulative" impact this had on town centres, fast food outlets and taxis.

Further liberalisation include the Live Music Act 2012, introduced to encourage more live music. However, following a period of concern about crime and disorder relating to excess alcohol consumption, we saw the introduction of greater enforcement through summary reviews and making licensing officers a responsible authority. In addition there are now also extra mandatory conditions to avoid irresponsible promotions – who remembers Gazza in the dentist's chair? Plus late night levies were introduced to make operators pay more for policing. There has been a reduction in the number of licensed premises and there are undoubtedly less pubs. However, there are more restaurants, hotels and other different types of licensed premises now, in particular in the experiential / competitive socialising.

What are the Gen Zers up to?

Post pandemic, we've seen a trend for younger people to drink less than their 90s and noughties counterparts. They often stay in and opt for cheaper drinks from the supermarket shelves with numbers of non-drinkers higher than ever before with a study showing 43%

of 18-25 year olds do not drink alcohol at all. Pubs have responded and are beginning to fall into two very separate categories. The premium end, particularly in smarter suburbs, historic towns and London offering better food, coffee and more expensive and exotic drinks. And the value based venues whose operators deliver cheaper drinks, standard pub food and appeal to students and those looking to save money.

We have also seen a massive change in brewing with breweries now either massive nationals or independent micro-breweries with those in the middle, including many famous family names, selling the brewery and concentrating on pub retailing.

And now we've got a complete change in the pub experience too. In 1994, you could pop to any good pub and enjoy a quick game of darts. Now this is increasingly becoming a fancy night out costing significantly more but offering customers more games such as golf, cricket or even axe throwing, yes really – and we can licence that too!

However, the pandemic showed how much the public missed traditional pubs and clubs with huge numbers venturing out to support their locals when restrictions began to be lifted. And the hard working and adaptive industry continued to prove itself to be extremely resilient in that challenging time with many venues, particularly pubs, at their very best dealing with adversity, changing their business models to focus on food and drink deliveries and takeaways to offset losses and help their communities.

And what does the future hold

Pubs are part of our heritage and culture and are unique to this country. They will continue to thrive and many, particularly at the premium end of the market, are doing extremely well despite recent economic challenges.

The sector will need to continue to focus on innovation and must attract younger people who are not drinking as much into premises. Experiential will be key and venues will need to seek out different styles of food, entertainment, different types of service and technology. We are seeing strong growth where operators are offering entertainment such as darts, golf, cricket and shuffleboard. And the split between premium and value offerings will continue.

Poppleston Allen is very proud to support such a unique and iconic industry and look forward to doing so for the next 30 years and beyond.

*Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/czms/mm23>

Legislative licensing timeline over the last 30 years:

- **1994: Jeremy Allen and Susanna Poppleston co-founded Poppleston Allen Licensing Solicitors.**
- **1995: Pubs allowed to open all day on Sundays:** It was a generation when dads took their sons to the pub for a "swift half" before returning home for Sunday Lunch. Now no last orders at 2pm!
- **2003: Many of the provisions of the 1989 Beer orders were removed.** These had successfully broken the large Brewer / Retailer monopoly.
- **2005: The Licensing Act 2003 came into effect.** A massive change. Many worried that whilst the intention of the new Act was to help bring a 'café culture' to the UK, that this would actually be the start of 24 hour drinking.

The Act contained 4 licensing objectives

- The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

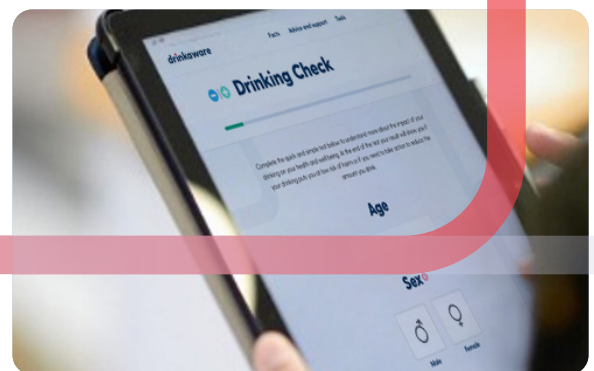
The Act 2003 fundamentally changed the legal regime governing the sale of alcohol, replacing licensing provisions across 10 different statutes and unifying them in one piece of legislation.

- **2006: Violent Crime Reduction Act.** Drink banning orders and alcohol disorder zones were introduced; the right for the police to issue a Summary Review was introduced, which could result in the closure of licensed premises following a hearing to which the licensee was not even invited; and the offence of 'three strikes and you're out' persistently selling alcohol to children (since reduced to two strikes). Part of the 'tightening up' was due to perceptions that the new relaxed regime was causing problems in towns and cities.
- **2009: The Minor variation procedure was introduced.** allowing licensees the option to make small amendments to their licence, for example minor changes to the layout or to add a non-contentious licensable activity using a simplified and cheaper procedure. Extending alcohol hours is excluded from this procedure.

- **2010: Home Office takes over licensing.** In 2004 alcohol licensing had been transferred to DCMS in a move seen to reflect a more relaxed approach to alcohol sales. Now, in a hardening of government policy responsibility for alcohol licensing was transferred back to the Home Office.
- **2011: Police Reform and Social responsibility Act.** Licensing authorities and public health bodies were added as consultees to licence applications, a removal of the 'vicinity test' allowing anyone anywhere to make representations; a change in language from 'necessary' to 'appropriate' in an attempt to make it easier for authorities to impose restrictions on licences; the right for Licensing Authorities to suspend a licence upon failure to pay the annual fee; and introducing the Late Night Levy to allow local authorities to charge licensed venues for the cost of additional enforcement required to manage the night-time economy, and Early Morning Restriction Orders, to allow local authorities the right to ban the sale of alcohol between the hours of midnight and 6am (not a single local authority has taken up this option). Even more tightening up.
- **2012 - Live Music Act:** Deregulated live amplified music for audiences up to 500 between 8am and 11pm.
- **2014-2015 – Some welcome deregulation for the trade.** Further deregulation of entertainment, a number of legislative changes saw relaxation for most forms of entertainment for audiences up to 500 between 8am and 11pm. The showing of films, and boxing and wrestling entertainments remain licensable.
- **2016 – Immigration Act:** Licence holders without a right to work in the UK see their personal or premises licences lapse automatically.
- **2020: Covid 19: Reasons to be locked down 1, 2, 3?** A series of Acts and statutory instruments were issued by the government in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, often at breakneck speed, which impacted the hospitality sector perhaps more than any other in its history. Over the next two years we experienced national lockdown, restrictions on gatherings, the Rule of Six, Support Bubbles, relaxations on outside trading and off-sales, local restrictions, Test and Trace, curfew, a requirement to stop 'singing on the premises by customers in groups of more than six', the Three-Tier System, debates on what constituted a 'substantial meal', with sausage rolls, pork pies and ploughman's lunches all being the subject of intense discussion on radio phone-ins, Christmas confusion and a Roadmap out of Lockdown, to name but a few.

- **2020 Business and Planning Act.** Relaxed pavement licences and , deregulated off sales
- **July 2023 – Revised Late Night Levy.** To include takeaways
- **March 2024:** Initially introduced during the COVID 19 pandemic, in 2022, the Fast Track Pavement Licenses became a permanent fixture, allowing operators much greater freedom to use outside space.

PopplestonAllen



Drinkaware's Drinking Check

The Drinking Check is an alcohol self-assessment that can help you identify whether the amount you drink could be putting your health at serious risk.

By encouraging widespread completion of the Drinking Check, Drinkaware aims to foster more open discussions about drinking and normalise conversations around alcohol.

In 2023, Drinkaware had over 550,000 completions of the Drinking Check. Which is an increase from 250,000 in 2021. By the end of 2025 we want to achieve two million completions a year.

Find out more visit drinkaware.co.uk.

drinkaware

UK licensing officers gain insight to how the gaming industry is stepping up its commitment to advancing SR, customer care and compliance innovations



By Charlotte Meller and Ken Scott, The Gambling Business Group

The Gambling Business Group (GBG) hosted the first ever assembly of local authority licensing officials at a gaming exhibition when 20 officers from councils across the south and south east visited its High Street Hub at the world's largest industry exhibition in London in February. They participated in one-to-one sessions with GBG specialists, Q&As and a tour of stands at the ICE London expo. Described by IOL Vice Chair David Lucas as "an excellent opportunity for practical engagement between the two bodies", the assembly offered the officials a chance to see new customer care protections and to discuss directly issues they face in the licensing process.

This year's ICE London exhibition was the largest gaming and gambling expo the world has ever seen. Almost 50,000 visitors from 168 countries, including 14,000 gambling operators from every jurisdiction in the world, occupied the ExCeL Centre for three days of trading, seminars, conferences and an estimated 1 million meetings.

In the centre of the 20 packed halls was the Gambling Business Group's High Street Hub which provided a forum for UK businesses to seek guidance and advice on licensing, operational and compliance issues in relation to land based gambling premises.

Special guests this year were 20 local authority officials from councils around the south of England - who had all taken up the GBG/IOLs invite to see how the industry is

driving innovation with social responsibility at the heart of that development.

And they were in esteemed company at the expo. Andrew Rhodes, chief executive of the Gambling Commission, was at ICE delivering the keynote speech on regulation at the Consumer Protection Zone; 200+ regulators from around the world attended ICE for the World Regulatory Briefing ranging from North America's Tribal Gaming regulators to those in Ukraine. It was a show not just about business, but also about the industry's social responsibility programmes which featured prominently across the three days, from the conference stage to the exhibition showfloor with new innovations covering age verification software and player protection systems to staff safety measures all on display.

Gambling Business Group chief executive Peter Hannibal described this year's High Street Hub as a resounding success and a "show that expanded the horizons."

One of those horizons was the partnership event with the IOL and the attendance of the local authority licensing officers

So, how did the trade body assess their reaction? Charlotte Meller, general manager at GBG, was enthused: "The size and scope of ICE can be a bit overwhelming - so we warned them about how busy it would be - even on the Thursday when they were



attending. But it was still a shock! We were able to provide them with sessions with our GBG experts and a tour, and then many of them spent time looking around the rest of the exhibition taking in the innovations."

For some time, the GBG and IOL has been focused on adding to the learning curve of both local officials and gambling businesses, and the assembly at ICE was designed to do just that. And it seemed to work well.

Meller again: "We wanted to give the officers an opportunity to raise questions so we established small groups giving them the best opportunity to speak to our experts about. We aimed for a wide ranging set of subjects, covering compliance using SmartHub (Boomerang Digital); security using StaffGuard (Link Integrated); age verification (Age Check Certification Scheme); machines (RBW Systems) and licensing matters (IOL/GBG). The officers were able to rotate between the experts every 20 minutes. It was a kind of gambling speed dating."

And with significant benefits; the licensing officials were given an insight to many of the industry's new innovations and how important they were to SR and compliance.

Meller explained: "All of them were really engaged and asking plenty of questions. For example, some of them had seen the StaffGuard box in premises but didn't know how it operated."

One of the experts on hand at the High Street Hub was Craig Murray, Director of Gaming & High Street

National Accounts at Link Integrated Security Solutions, the company behind StaffGuard.

A GBG member, Murray was delighted to take the licensing officers on a journey around the safety protection measures. Fielding questions from the delegates, he was reassuring: "The system, supported by a fully accredited conflict management centre and SIA licensed team, offers 24/7 support to quickly de-escalate conflict situations and threats through real-time high-definition video and crystal-clear audio links.

The solution also works in conjunction with a premises own CCTV and Security Solutions to provide a fully integrated solution that can provide real time evidence and information to the Emergency Services. It is also working in conjunction with other High Street initiatives to provide further support to staff and general public." And it's certainly having an impact as Murray explained: "This technological solution has contributed to a decrease in violent incidents and has been embraced by many high street organisations as a part of their security and safety strategies."

The buzz on the show floor was very much focused on the age verification systems which are becoming more advanced as technology develops. The latest AV currently rolling out in high street AGCs, pubs and bingo clubs is achieving significant accuracy success as evidenced on the GBG Hub which had two machines available to test the system, which a number of officers were able to experience.



Tony Allen, Chief Executive of Age Check Certification Scheme (ACCS) and Co Chair of Government's Expert Panel on Age Restrictions, was on hand to explain how the ACCS plays a pivotal role in aiding land-based gambling operators to adhere to stringent age verification requirements.

"With a focus on responsible gambling, the Scheme provides operators with a confidence that age verification and age estimation solutions actually work and meet international standards," he explained during the show. "The comprehensive framework ensures strict age restrictions are maintained, safeguarding minors from engaging in gambling activities. By implementing this certification, operators gain access to reliable age verification technologies and methodologies, bolstering their ability to accurately confirm the age of patrons."

This process includes robust ID checks, biometric verification, and advanced age estimation techniques, a point Allen was quick to reinforce. "The scheme acts as a proactive measure, assisting operators in preventing underage individuals from accessing gambling establishments or participating in related activities. It mitigates the risk of legal repercussions, financial penalties, and reputational damage associated with non-compliance, reinforcing the industry's commitment to promoting a safe and enjoyable gambling experience for adults while protecting vulnerable populations from the potential harms of gambling."

Rob Wheeler, whose RBW Systems business is expanding rapidly, met with the officers to discuss the way IT is transforming the industry's social responsibility activities. During his Q&A session with the licensing officers, he explained how the introduction of PC based

digital machines has opened opportunities to transform the gaming floor.

"The availability of IT infrastructures that have been used in other commercial environments, allows for the introduction of multiple system related functions that are supplied by different suppliers," he advised the council delegates. "The creation and adoption by all primary games and system suppliers of standard web based protocols has allowed for cost effective delivery of new functions such as ticket and payment card based cashless funds on and off the machines, promotional ticketing, Machine Data Capture including sessional play."

And it's this data that is enabling businesses and the Gambling Commission to work on advancing measures to protect players.

Howard Gant, Managing Director Compliance Operations at Boomerang, spent time explaining the features of SmartHub – a suite of products that both helps operators comply with operator licence conditions whilst at the same time demonstrating their operational commitment to the provision of safer gambling. And there are now over 2,000 land-based UK venues using SmartHub self-exclusion solution including casinos, AGCs, bingo and MSAs.

Gant explained the function: "SmartHUB provides staff with a user friendly and highly intuitive front end tablet, which they use to record a whole raft of information including - customer interactions, self exclusions, age verification checks, complaints as well as to log any in-premises incidence of fraud such as the use of fake notes."

The dialogue at the ICE show was also a two-way street; both the Gambling Business Group and the attending officers from the Institute of Licensing were keen to understand how local authorities were preparing for the land based changes in the White Paper and the review of their local gambling policy statements, as well as areas where they would like more training and awareness raising.

After spending time with the experts, it was on to the showfloor, and a tour of key manufacturers - including global giant Light & Wonder and the pioneering UK tech company making significant progress in the age verification market, Innovative Technology - conducted by the GBG. "We took them on a tour around some of GBG members' stands to see demonstrations of product developments and evolution. They were interested in the accuracy and efficacy of facial recognition for age estimation on gaming machines and wanted to understand how cashless systems would operate." Charlotte Meller said the event gave them a real insight

to what really happens within a land based premises in relation to Age Estimation and Verification, Staff and Customer Safety which they would not typically ask about when undertaking premises inspection.

“For most the technology and compliance recording systems were completely new to them - they were unaware how vital the compliance data available on SmartHub is and they were keen to learn what it all meant. And all our experts kindly shared their contact details with the licensing officers in case they had questions after the show, or wanted to visit a premises to see some of the technology and equipment in operation in situ.”

So, what next in the advancement plan for the relationship between the industry and licencing authorities?

“Well, we have a partnership with the Institute of Licensing with the regular articles in the IOL publications and speak at IOL events.

“However, the ICE expo session has highlighted that all licensing officers would benefit from the topic specific discussions held at ICE and so we are in discussion with the IOL about how best to disseminate information and build up licensing officers knowledge bank of the various aspects of land based gambling. There was certainly appetite from those officers present for more engagement of this kind



And David Lucas, IOL vice chair, agreed. “The Institute of Licensing is pleased to be working with the Gambling Business Group to enhance awareness and develop the relationship between operators of gambling premises and licensing authorities. It is beneficial to the members of both organisations for them to understand the different issues that they each face and how they can work together effectively.

“The event at ICE earlier this year provided an excellent opportunity for practical engagement between the two bodies and other stakeholders. Further opportunities for communication exist through regular articles in the Institute’s publications and attendance at Conferences and other meetings.

“At a time when resources are limited for all concerned, the partnership between the IoL and the GBG is a positive and effective benefit to their members.”





The Jeremy Allen Award 2024

Celebrating our previous JAA winners



2023
John Miley

"I am honoured and humbled to receive the Jeremy Allen Award. There were many worthy nominees and I was delighted to win. I would like to thank all of those who supported my nomination and I would like to dedicate the award to all of those that I have worked with within the licensing industry over the years."



2022
Yvonne Lewis

"I am truly humbled and honoured to win the Jeremy Allen Award. To be nominated by so many friends and colleagues is so heart warming and I am bursting with pride that I am part of such an amazing inspirational organisation which I truly love."



2021
Andy Parsons

"A career highlight for me was the two phases of the local alcohol action areas program in which I helped to support many local areas across England and Wales in tackling alcohol harms. I see this award as recognition of the work I did with people at the sharp end and would like to thank everyone who wrote very kind words in support of my nomination"



2016
Bob Bennett

"I really was both surprised and humbled to be nominated for this special award. I would like to thank everybody that supported my nomination but also for their willingness to work within the various areas of licensing to provide together the best and safest services and licensing environment we jointly can."



2015
Jane Blade

"The creation of the Jeremy Allen Award was a testament to Jeremy and his values. For this reason, to win this award - particularly against such outstanding other candidates - is an honour beyond compare."



2014
Alan Tolley

"It is a real honour for me to be chosen as the winner of this year's Jeremy Allen Award and it makes me particularly proud to know my nomination came from my own colleagues within the West Midlands Region. "

Nominations for the 2024 Jeremy Allen Award are open from 10th June 2024 with the deadline for nominations closing on 6th September 2024.

This award is open to anyone working in licensing and related fields and seeks to recognise and award exceptional practitioners.

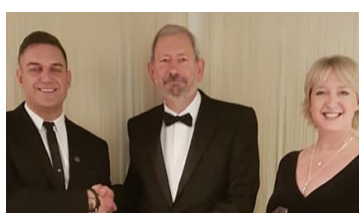
Please email nominations to info@instituteoflicensing.org and confirm that the nominee is aware and happy to be put forward.

For full details including the nomination criteria, please [click here](#). We look forward to receiving your nominations.



2019
David Lucas

"I am extremely honoured to receive the Award. Throughout my career I have not sought public acknowledgement or recognition in respect of any of the activities mentioned in the nomination. I have been extremely fortunate to be involved in an area of law that I enjoy immensely, and which has provided me with enormous satisfaction."



2018
Stephen Baker

"Jeremy Allen was a strong supporter of National Pubwatch and I am honoured to receive this award in his name. It means a great deal to me to have the work of National Pubwatch recognised by such a prestigious organisation as the Institute of Licensing"



2017
Claire Perry

Claire was described as 'an inspirational colleague', a 'driving force for the South East Region', a 'voice of hope' and a 'great forger of partnership working'.



2013
David Etheridge

Speaking about the award, Graeme reminded everyone that the award is intended to recognise excellence in licensing. He paid tribute to all those nominated, pointing out that nomination alone is a tribute to the individuals, illustrating the regard in which they are held by their peers.



2012
Jon Shipp

Jon was instrumental and the driving force behind the introduction of Town Watch for the town centre and a further two pub watch groups, which now cover the entire town.



2011
Alan Lynagh

The award, announced by Jonathan Smith, Managing Partner at Popplston Allen, was presented to Alan Lynagh in recognition of his consistency in going 'the extra mile' working with applicants to assist in application processes, planning of applications and dealing with issues to resolve problems.

*No Award in 2020 due to Covid-19

NLW National Licensing Week

10th–14th June 2024

NLW celebrates the role and importance of licensing in the UK to keep people safe when enjoying a variety of hospitality and pleasure activities.



Licensing is

Day 1 – Positive partnerships

Positive partnership has become the cornerstone of licensing regulation and engagement – it cuts across almost every aspect of licensing and has transformed the relationship between licensing regulators and businesses generally.

Day 2 – Tourism and leisure

Tourism and leisure is hugely important to the UK providing 1.6 million jobs across the country, and contributing £22.1 billion to the country's economy. Licensing plays a significant role in the tourism and leisure industry across the UK – small village fetes, caravan sites, riding stables, large music venues, outdoor festivals and sporting events.

Day 3 – Home and family

Almost every activity in the leisure sector – and most of those that supports the sector – requires a licence or some other licensing authorisation.

Most people will not think twice about their contact with licensing regulation every day of their lives, but it plays a vital role to protect people and animals – which is something most people do not recognise until things go wrong.

#NLW2024 @licensingweek

How will you promote licensing where you are?

NLW represents an opportunity for everyone involved in licensing to promote awareness of their business, their role and the link to licensing. It is a chance to raise public awareness across the country.

More and more businesses and organisations are using National Licensing Week to showcase what they do and

using the opportunity to celebrate the diversity of licensing and all the participants.

The underlying message of the initiative is that “licensing is everywhere” with daily themes to demonstrate how licensing effects our daily lives.



Everywhere

Day 4 – Night time

The UK's nighttime economy has played an important role in the cultural life of most people in the UK and continues to do so both in local communities and on the national stage. Almost every aspect of the UK's nighttime economy touches on licensing to some degree, whether it be alcohol, entertainment, levies, EMROs, regulating the distribution of promotional material, closure powers or sexual entertainment.

Day 5 – Business and licensing

Licensing essentially exists to regulate business activity in order to protect people. From small independent businesses such as taxi drivers and home boarding establishments to large multinational businesses such as those affected by primary authority partnerships, there is a golden thread of licensing regulation intertwined in all of it. In fact, there are very few business sectors where licensing regulation is not a relevant factor.

What are you doing for #NLW2024?

How will you promote licensing where you are?

#getinvolved

licensingweek.org

Grown up licensing



By Philip Kolvin KC, 11 KBW

Here's a multiple choice question. Are licensing authorities competent to keep people safe?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure
- D. Don't care

I pose this question at a critical juncture for licensing and, in my view, for its professional body, the Institute.

If your answer is D, please resign your membership immediately. If your answer is A, and especially if it is B or C, this article is for you, so please read on. The atrocity at the Manchester Arena, 7 years ago this month, prompted a public inquiry in which the nation's preparedness for terrorist attacks was placed under the microscope. The report by John Saunders, former Judge and licensing barrister, presented a penetrating critique and a key suggestion – a Protect Duty - placing larger venues under an obligation to try to prevent an attack, and requiring most venues to make appropriate preparations in the event of attack. His recommendation was salutary: I have not heard a word uttered against it.

The question is who should enforce this duty? Sir John did not have much doubt – it could be

enforced through existing systems such as planning, building regulations and licensing. It is not difficult to see why he said this. After all, larger venues and events already have terrorism protection plans, and they are even catered for in some licensing policies, e.g. Westminster's.

More broadly, the very purpose of the Licensing Act was to bring together regulation of premises under one legislative scheme, so as to avoid duplication of regulation, with a long list of responsible authorities able to make representations on applications as well as applying to review premises which are non-compliant or failing to meet the public interest objectives of the legislation.

The Protect Duty engages all four licensing objectives, and therefore it is natural that the oversight of protection should lie with the licensing authority, acting on the expert advice of the responsible authorities, including the Police.

That, however, does not represent departmental thinking, at least not yet. Instead, a national regulator has been suggested, but not identified a year after the draft Bill saw light of day, at a cost of billions of pounds to the private sector and public purse, yet still able to inspect only 5% of premises a year. The word "licensing" barely figures in the draft Bill. When asked why not, officials tend to



fidget a little uncomfortably. One reason they give is that Ministers want a one size fits all Bill, for licensed and unlicensed premises, and also for the devolved administrations. The rather simple answer to that is that expediency should not be sacrificed to headlines, and that a centrally published Protect Code can be enforced through different regimes such as health and safety, planning and licensing.

A less palatable explanation I have heard is that local authorities don't have the expertise to handle the Protect Duty. That smarts. Local authority officers are as capable of education and professional development as the rest of society, and have banded together in an admirable charitable organisation called the Institute of Licensing specifically for that purpose. Why it is thought that small pubs have the expertise to implement the Protect Duty but experienced licensing officers don't have the expertise to oversee them is beyond me. If our public protection officials lack basic skills then, Houston, we have a problem. Luckily, it is one we can fix, with a will.

The likeliest explanation, however, is the one not given. Why repurpose an old system when you can have a new system? Hence, the draft Bill barely mentions the word licensing, and officials are at a loss to explain how the two systems are expected to work together. I declare an interest here: I have

advised major operators and a trade association on the draft Bill. But, on a personal level, I find it baffling.

This is a road well-travelled. In recent years, the Sports Grounds Safety Authority re-examined its own DNA. It had previously concerned itself principally with regulating the rules against standing in top tier grounds. But once it had taken advice as to the meaning of safety, it emerged from its pupa state to hold itself responsible for all aspects of stadium safety including protection from disorder and terrorism. Its transition was evolutionary, seamless and, frankly, a no-brainer.

Now, licensing is at a fork in the road, as is its professional body. No-one thinks that as a nation we should sit back and let terrorists do their worst. No-one argues that the licensing objectives implicitly exclude protection from terrorism. Rather, we have to ask ourselves whether licensing is up to the job.

My answer is simple. Of course it is, provided we resource it properly, and educate the regulators. Fortunately, we have an oven-ready solution, an Institute whose charitable purposes include the advancement of professional skill and technical competency in the field of licensing, and the enforcement of the law in relation to the licensing objectives.

Well then. Will the Institute continue its 25 year mission to move licensing away from its "Cinderella status" of yesteryear, to take hold of the responsibility with both hands? Or is it better to wring its hands, and put the task of public protection into the "too difficult box"?

Now, is your answer A, B or C?

Oh, and by the way - if you care about this topic I'll be writing about it at greater length in the next Journal of Licensing, if its admirable editor Mr Charalambides permits.

Philip Kolvin has provided this article in his personal capacity and not in his capacity as Patron of the IoL.

A national private hire system?



By James Button, James Button & Co

At the Institute of Licensing Taxi Conference in Leicester in March, I proposed a solution to the longstanding problem of the lack of consistent standards for private hire licensing across England and Wales. This is explained in an article in the March 2024 Journal of Licensing "National conditions for private hire licences" (2024 28 JoL p28 available at <https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/resources/journal-of-licensing/>).

At the Conference, the suggestion was well received, particularly by the trade.

It is a big idea, and needs some time to assimilate, but it has the potential to work.

In simple terms, one local authority would issue all private hire licences – operator, vehicle and driver. That would be the Principal Authority. All other local

authorities would cease to issue private hire licences and would act for that principal authority by placing their private hire staff at the disposal of the Principal Authority. They would be authorised officers of the principal authority, enabling them to take action against licences.

In addition, local authorities would be where applicants could obtain information, provide documentation, and would also be the key point for driver checking and vehicle testing.

This would provide a national set of standards for private hire because all licenses would be issued by the Principal Authority. One policy leading to one set of conditions. A common approach to drivers, vehicles and operators.

This would obviously need local authorities to accept



some compromises. The Principal Authority may not have the highest overall standards and requirements, but no local authority would agree to work with a principal authority that had the lowest standards. Accordingly the standard should be way above the minimum and must be acceptable to all authorities. As mentioned above, this will require some compromises but those will be worthwhile to achieve not only a national standard but complete cross-border enforceability.

The benefits to the Principal Authority are: significant increase in employment at no cost to their local taxpayers; full cooperation from other local authorities. The benefits to the other local authorities are: removal of challenges to private hire decisions; freeing up councillor time.

The benefits to all local authorities and all citizens: improved public safety. The situation where a person is refused or has their private hire drivers licence revoked by one authority but then are allowed to retain it or have a new one granted by another authority would disappear. It does not make any

sense for somebody to be considered fit and proper in District A on the south coast, having been refused a licence in Districts B and C in Wales and the north of England.

Local authorities would still deal with Hackney carriage licensing, as Hackney carriages must be locally licensed to stand or ply for hire (there is of course remote use for pre-hackneys which would continue).

It remains to be seen whether this suggestion will find widespread acceptance but I would suggest that it certainly merits proper consideration and evaluation, and enables local government to address a problem where central government is reluctant to take action.

James Button has provided this article in his personal capacity and not in his capacity as President of the IoL.

The ride for Lucy,
Aldrick, Dan, Will, Oli,
Gigi, Anthony, Ceili,
Ben, Mike, Talveer,
Meg and Jamal will
depart in 5 minutes
from Platform 7

Trains — now on Uber

National Training Conference



13th, 14th, 15th November 2024

Bridgefoot, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6YR

We are delighted to be holding our signature three-day National Training Conference for 2024 to be held in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Residential bookings sold out last year so book early to avoid disappointment. Please book online or email events@instituteoflicensing.org to submit your booking request.

Once full we will add residential booking requests to the waiting list. We will then process requests for bookings in date order.

The programme will include the range of topic areas our regular delegates have come to expect, with well over 50 sessions across the three days delivered by expert speakers and panellists.

We look forward to welcoming new and seasoned delegates to the NTC along with our expert speakers and our event sponsors.

Early booking is always advised, and bookings will be confirmed on a first come first served basis.

The Gala Dinner (Thursday evening) is a black tie event, and this year will have an optional 'red, white & blue' theme. Wear something red, white & blue and join in the fun, coloured tie / scarf or an accessory.

The Institute of Licensing accredits this event as 12 hours CPD. 5 hours on Wednesday and Thursday and 3 hours on Friday. (Course Ref: ATC174677)

With thanks to all our event sponsors!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK ONLINE, CLICK HERE

instituteoflicensing.org/events

Advertise with Us



Reach over 51,000 users with your product or service!

We offer a limited number of advertising opportunities to showcase your licensing products and/or services.

Website advertising

Our website is the largest licensing website of its kind in the UK, visited by over 51,000* users annually with well over 250,000* page views.

*Based on 2023 Google Analytics data

Publications

We publish and distribute publications to over 4,500 people in the licensing sector, starting with an initial distribution of 1,800.

Licensing Flashes

Our regular e-Newsletters (Licensing Flashes) bring the latest news, jobs, and information to over 4,000 subscribers across the UK.



For rates and further information, please contact:

Caroline Day +44 845 287 1347
marketing@instituteoflicensing.org

Idox Cloud

Designed around the way you work

Case management software for Licensing that simplifies, streamlines and supports your processes, so you can focus on what really matters.

Visit idoxgroup.com.



Contact Us



General Enquiries

01749 987333
info@instituteoflicensing.org

Team Contact details

Sponsorship enquiries
sponsorship@instituteoflicensing.org

Training and event enquiries
events@instituteoflicensing.org

Membership enquiries
membership@instituteoflicensing.org

To advertise job vacancies
jobs@instituteoflicensing.org

News articles
news@instituteoflicensing.org

Financial queries
accounts@instituteoflicensing.org

 Institute of Licensing

www.instituteoflicensing.org
© 2024 Institute of Licensing

Thank you to all our contributing authors and advertisers.

The IoL is grateful for all contributions or suggestions for future edition content which should be submitted via email to link@instituteoflicensing.org

Link



www.instituteoflicensing.org

Find us on



Promoting Excellence in Licensing

Important information about your membership renewal

We are in the process of changing over to a new IT system for membership and events and hope that the new system will be much more user friendly for our members.

In the meantime, the online renewal facility is disabled. IoL members should already have received communications from membership@instituteoflicensing.org regarding renewing memberships. If you have not heard from us or require any help, please get in touch either via email (membership@instituteoflicensing.org) or by calling us on 01749 987333.

Not a member?

Make IoL your professional body:

- Network with industry, regulatory, and legal professionals
- Share information, views and promote mutual understanding and professional
- Respect
- 12 Regions covering the whole of the UK
- Bespoke Training
- Receive regular eNews updates and publications including the **Journal of Licensing** and **LINK Magazine**

If you have any questions please email membership@instituteoflicensing.org and one of the team will be happy to assist.