

ALCOHOL EXCLUSION ZONE APPLICATION WATH TOWN CENTRE MAY 2006.

Introduction.

Alcohol exclusion zones have proved successful in areas of York and Coventry as part of a 'tool kit' available to the police and crime and disorder partnerships in tackling alcohol fuelled crime and disorder issues and nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

They should be seen as preventative measures as opposed to prohibitive. They empower the police and communities to respond to crime and disorder or nuisance in a proportionate and considered way which forms part of a partnership response.

Sections 12-16 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 6 2001 allow the police to apply to a Local Authority to designate a place, (or Places), within its area as alcohol exclusion zones. A local authority may for the purpose of subsection 910 by order identify any public place in their area if they are satisfied that;-

- (a) Nuisance or annoyance is caused to members of the public or a section of the public, Or;-
- (b) Disorder has taken place and:-

Has been associated with the consumption of intoxicating liquor in that place.

The Governments position;

Rights and responsibilities are at the heart of the Governments approach to alcohol. Most people drink responsibly but there is general agreement that the scale of alcohol fuelled disorder is much too high. In 2002/2003 1.2 million violent crimes were alcohol related and 44% of all violent crimes were alcohol related. 35% of all attendance at hospital accident and emergency departments are related to alcohol. One in five violent incidents take place around pubs and clubs. All of this carries with it a high bill, with crime and disorder costs alone estimated to amount to £7.3 billion a year. (Source- Hazel Blears, MP Minister of state Consultation Document 21st January 2005).

Purpose of the Act/Order.

At present the police have no power to seize any alcohol or containers from a person over the age of 18 years of age.

In fact even though there is legislation to confiscate alcohol from persons under the age of 18 years, under the children and young persons act 1997, It is specified that the persons should be in a relevant place and that nuisance and annoyance is being caused. Therefore a person under the age of 18 years can legally drink alcohol in public if they are NOT causing a nuisance or annoyance to the public.

There are clear incidents of alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder along with anti-social behaviour, which takes place within Wath town centre and the immediate surrounding roads and public areas.

A recent incident where a male was attacked and hospitalised occurred when the offenders used beer bottles to assault the male and cause serious wound above his eye.

Other various incidents have occurred recently along with the library and other establishments and members of the public have reported incidence of nuisance and drunkenness during the daytime. Again recently 2 males were arrested for being drunk and disorderly at 2.30pm and during which a male was assaulted by use of a beer bottle. This problem can be encountered into the evening to late night. The police CCTV has captured a compilation of incidents. (*See attached video exhibit CP1*).

The 2001 Act does not ban the consumption of alcohol in the exclusion zone. It permits the Police, (and Police Community Support Officers under the direction of the Police), to target problematic alcohol associated crime and disorder and/or anti-social behaviour within the exclusion zone.

Consultation Process.

The consultation process will be in two stages;

1. Police and Partnerships,

The Command team at Rotherham agrees the need for an alcohol exclusion zone for Wath Town Centre and supports the application. The application should then be put before the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) and agreed. Such support is essential and integral to a successful application. Local Councillors and Member of Parliament John Healey have also supported the application.

Once the application has been agreed and supported by the command team and the SRP it is then sent to the local authority.

2. Local authority consultation.

This part of the process is fixed by the regulations set out in the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

The regulations provide a simple procedure for the making of an order, (this supersedes the procedure for the designation of public places by the local authority by-law), as follows;-

- i) Before making an order, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council must consult with the police, any parish or community council, in whose area the public place is situated. The licensees of any licensed premises in the public place or outside the public places if it is considered that they will be affected by the order.
- ii) Before making the order RMBC must advertise, in a local newspaper, the proposal to make an order and must wait at least 28 days, in order to receive and consider any representations by members of the public or businesses as to the result of the advertisement, before making the order (there is no requirement to consult with the public).

- iii) After making the order the RMBC must advertise the fact that of the order in a local newspaper, erect signs in the public place to draw public to the attention to the effect of the order and notify the Secretary of State of the fact of the order.

PROPOSED AREA TO BE COVERED BY THE ORDER AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.

The proposed area is designated by an attached map, which is highlighted. The streets affected by the exclusion zone are set out below. This also incorporates the public car parking areas, and Strathmore Park.

Montgomery Square,

Montgomery Road,

High Street,

Sandygate, (*from Montgomery Sq. to the junction of Dearne Way.*)

New Road,

Church Street, (*to it's Junction with West Street*),

Moor Road, (*Town centre side of Biscay Way*).

The area is not too large in that this would be difficult to police, however large enough to have a greater impact on quality of life issues and a reassurance to members of public travelling through the town centre area.

Statistics show that reports in Wath Town Centre have more alcohol related crimes and incidents than any other areas in Wentworth North.

(See below reports over the past 12 months.)

Police officers and Neighbourhood Wardens attached to the Wentworth North Safer Neighbourhood Team have conducted numerous high visibility patrols and plain clothes operations recently in the town and have witnessed a high volume of youths, even during cold and inclement weather, in the town centre. There

has been a vast amount of alcohol confiscated from the youths and a number of prosecutions against persons aged over 18 supplying alcohol to the under aged.

Incidents of alcohol related crime and disorder occasionally occur during the daytime where groups of adult males congregate close to the library.

However it is apparent, even with a significant level of police presence, that the drinking of the alcohol continues in the town to the annoyance of residents and members of the public visiting the area.

**STATISTICS RELATING TO ALCOHOL IN WATH,
MONTGOMERY SQUARE FROM APRIL 2005- MARCH 2006.**

69 REPORTS OF YOUTH NUISANCE AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.

26 REPORTS RESULTING IN CRIMINAL DAMAGE.

9 REPORTS RESULTING IN PUBLIC DISORDER.

11 REPORTS RESULTING IN WOUNDINGS AND ASSAULTS.

Updated Information:- (21-10-06).

From March 2006 –October 2006 there have been a further 46 reports in Montgomery Square only, which are drink related.

34 reports of youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

1 report of criminal damage.

4 reports of public order-

(significantly one incident on the 1st of July resulted in around 20 people fighting including some females where glasses and bottles were thrown- resulting in 12 arrests. Another incident involves youths throwing bottles and glasses.)

7 reports of violence.

(none of which are included in the public order offences highlighted.)

In this regard evidence is still prevalent that alcohol being used and drunk in Wath Town is proving to be a contributing factor to crime and disorder.

BILL BELL

POLICE SERGEANT 714

WENTWORTH NORTH SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM.

01709 832485

