



## Get Home Safe

The Get Home Safe partnership was set up in 2002 to encourage people to get home safely after a night out in Belfast.

The group is led by Belfast City Council and a range of partner agencies including the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Department of Justice, local universities, the Public Health Agency, NI Ambulance Service, NI Housing Executive, Pubs of Ulster and local vintners.

### Get Home Safe Marketing Campaign: Stay together, stay safe

Belfast City Council has developed a new campaign, "**Stay together, stay safe**", which we hope will make young people more aware of how their behaviour affects their safety. The marketing campaign urges party-goers to stay safe when enjoying a night out. It shows how good and bad a night out can be, how drinking too much can affect your ability to get home safe and it encourages everyone socialising in Belfast to look after their friends.

The campaign explores the following themes:

#### **Pre-loaded**

- The campaign advises that security staff may not let people who have already drunk a lot of alcohol into bars and clubs, leaving them isolated on the street.

#### **Over-loaded and alone**

- Taxis may not want to take people home, leaving them stranded on their night out.
- Some people may not be able to use their judgment getting home.

#### **Stay together, stay safe**

- Everyone can have a good night by sticking together and getting home safe.

#### **Our tips for staying together and staying safe**

Our key message is to stay together and stay safe. So when heading out, follow these tips:

- plan your journey home in advance by booking a taxi or arranging for someone to collect you
- drink responsibly and know your limits when it comes to alcohol



- don't get separated from your friends and don't let them wander off on their own, especially if they have had too much to drink
- never leave your drink unattended and never accept a drink from someone you don't know
- save the phone numbers of reliable taxi companies into your mobile or carry some spare change in case you need to use a payphone
- stay calm and walk away if someone provokes you
- always carry enough money to get home.

The Get Home Safe partnership also carries out the following activities to help make Belfast a safer place to socialise:

### **Joint Enforcement work**

This project aims to reduce underage and on-street drinking and related antisocial behaviour in local communities.

We work closely with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to organise high-visibility enforcement operations on a weekly basis.

Our staff and police officers patrol known underage drinking hotspots, confiscating alcohol and reporting offenders, through the appropriate channels such as the PSNI's Youth Diversion Officer.

The aims of joint enforcement work are to:

- reduce underage drinking and related antisocial behaviour
- enforce alcohol bye-laws
- respond to complaints from the public in relation to known drinking hotspots
- support off-licences in tackling underage drinking.

We also target one-off events (as appropriate) to curb underage and on-street drinking, for example, underage discos, parades, sporting and other outdoor events.

### **Partners**

We're working with the following agencies on this project:

- Belfast Community Safety Partnership
- Police Service of Northern Ireland

- local voluntary and community sector groups.

## **Off-licence Code of Practice**

Belfast City Council, together with the Belfast District Policing Partnership, produced a voluntary code of practice for off-licences.

Although Belfast City Council aren't permitted to carry out test purchasing or prosecutions (this is the responsibility of the Police Service of Northern Ireland) we engage with off-licences across Belfast to raise awareness of the dangers of selling alcohol to underage customers.

We've produced an information brochure, *'The Retailer's Guide to the Off-Licence Code of Practice'*, which explains the code of practice and gives advice for off-licence staff when implementing it.

But it's not only off-licences which have a responsibility to uphold the code of practice. There are steps we can all take to reduce antisocial behaviour caused by alcohol. These are outlined in our *'Customers' Guide to the Off-Licence Code of Practice'* information pack.

### **Aims of the project**

The project reinforces the message that it is illegal to sell alcohol to under 18s.

We're also working to encourage off-licence staff to question customers who they feel are buying unusually large amounts of drink, or who may be buying alcohol for their younger friends.

The project will help to reduce the amount of alcohol being supplied to underage drinkers and cut down on antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled violent crime.

### **What does the project involve?**

Since the launch of the code, council officers have been visiting off-licences throughout Belfast to encourage them to sign up, to provide more information on the project and to train staff.

Off-licences have supported the campaign to clamp down on young people drinking alcohol illegally - around 80 per cent of off-licences in Belfast have already signed up to the code.

The project is further strengthened by the PSNI's test purchasing of alcohol scheme

### **Partners**



We're working with the following agencies to deliver this project:

- Belfast Community Safety Partnership
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Pubs of Ulster

### **Off Licence and Bar Staff Training**

Our Get Home Safe team has teamed up with SORT Training and Bar Czar Ltd in association with Pubs of Ulster to deliver training programmes for off-licence and bar staff.

The programmes raise awareness of a wide range of alcohol-related issues as well as giving staff the chance to share their experiences and problems.

#### **Off Limits course for off-licences**

One of the main aims of this programme is to reduce under-age drinking by avoiding selling alcohol to under 18s and those buying on behalf of young people.

It covers the theory and practice of responsible retailing, as well as awareness and how to deal with the aggressive customers. The course supports the governments's Challenge 21 scheme which encourages retailers to ask for proof of age from their customer and to exercise their legal right to refuse all potentially illegal purchases.

The theory of responsible retailing has been developed especially for the Off Limits programme and is based on four key operational principles that should be adopted in the workplace. These are Be Alert, Be Firm, Be Legal and Be Careful. They are referred to throughout the training.

Participants have the opportunity to gain a certificate by sitting a short multiple choice question paper at the end of each course. This course is free of charge for participants.

#### **Off Limits course outline**

##### **Unit 1 - Introduction to the Off Licence Code of Practice**

##### **Unit 2 - Legal responsibilities**

- 2.1 - Licensing laws in Northern Ireland (current and pending)
- 2.2 - Sale of alcohol - controls, offences and penalties
- 2.3 - Confiscation of alcohol from young persons

- 2.4 - Criminal Justice Order (NI) 2008 and test purchasing
- 2.5 - Local bye-laws and on-street drinking
- 2.6 - Health and safety in off-licences

### **Unit 3 - Alcohol awareness**

- 3.1 - Alcohol consumption - positive and negative outcomes
- 3.2 - Young people and alcohol
- 3.3 - Units of alcohol

### **Unit 4 - Responsible retailing - the four key rules**

- 4.1 - Be alert - monitoring the work environment and customers' behaviour
- 4.2 - Be firm - the do's and don'ts
- 4.3 - Be legal - checking ID and refusing service
- 4.4 - Be careful - avoiding conflict

### **Unit 5 - Dealing with aggressive customers**

- 5.1 - Responding professionally and assertively to anger and conflict
- 5.2 - Using verbal and non-verbal communication effectively
- 5.3 - Managing customer behaviour

### **Counter Measures course for pubs, clubs and hotel bars staff**

One of the main aims of this programme is to reduce excess and underage drinking in licensed premises.

Bar staff can be faced with challenging customer behaviour due to the drinking trends of today. Responsible retailing can mean refusing service.

The Counter Measure course guides participants in how to do this legally and safely by following the four key rules of responsible retailing: be alert, be firm, be legal and be careful.

Participants have the opportunity to gain a certificate by sitting an assessment at the end of the course. They will also receive a handbook. This course is also free of charge for participants.

### **Counter Measures course outline**

### **Unit 1 - Legal responsibilities**

- 1.1 - Licensing law and the legal duties and rights of bar staff
- 1.2 - The 'Permitted and Additional Hours' for the sale of alcohol
- 1.3 - Restrictions in relation to young people ('proof of age' and Challenge 21)
- 1.4 - Proxy purchasing
- 1.5 - Test purchasing
- 1.6 - Other relevant legal controls and regulations
- 1.7 - Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978
- 1.8 - Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill 2010 update

### **Unit 2 - Alcohol awareness**

- 2.1 - Alcohol consumption - positive and negative outcomes
- 2.2 - Young people and alcohol
- 2.3 - Units of alcohol

### **Unit 3 - Responsible bar service - the four key rules**

- 3.1 - Be Alert - monitoring work environment and customers' behaviour
- 3.2 - Be Firm - the do's and don'ts
- 3.3 - Be Legal - checking ID and refusing service
- 3.4 - Be Careful - avoiding conflict

### **Unit 4 - Dealing with aggressive customers**

- 4.1 - Responding professionally and assertively to anger and conflict
- 4.2 - Using verbal and non-verbal communication effectively
- 4.3 - Managing customer behaviour

## **Licensed Premises Group**

This group is made up of Belfast City Council staff from various departments (Legal Services, Building Control, Health and Safety, Environmental Protection and Community Safety) as well as PSNI officers, including liquor licensing officers and members of the local Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The group meets monthly to discuss licensed premises that are breaching the terms of their liquor and entertainment license as well as review applications which have been made for liquor and entertainment applications. As a group, coordinated action is taken to deal with the breaches and in some cases meet with the licensee to develop an action plan for their premise. In the case where a premise is continually breaching the conditions of their



entertainment license, advice is given to Belfast City Council's Licensing Committee who may remove the premises entertainment license.

### **Information Sharing Protocol**

Funded through the Get Home Safe Partnership, Belfast City Centre Management have recruited licensed premises to sign up to an Information Sharing Protocol where they will formally share information on individuals who have been convicted by PSNI of night time disorder offences in and around their licensed premises. This allows licensed premises to make an informed decision whether or not they permit entry of a known offender into their premises. PSNI compile information and images of offenders, these are circulated to licensed premises which are signed up to the scheme.

### **Belfast Nite Zones**

Belfast City Council works with PSNI, the Street Pastors, and Belfast City Centre Management to provide a safer environment for night time revellers wanting to go home.

We have Nite Zones in the following four top socialising areas in Belfast:

- Odyssey
- Cathedral Quarter
- Belfast City Hall
- Malone Road

Here you will find:

- An emergency contact point. You should use this if you need urgent assistance. All calls will be directed to the PSNI.
- A taxi rank.
- A taxi marshal with a radio who will be able to assist you (subject to availability).
- CCTV linked to the PSNI
- Recognisable signage to indicate that they are in a Nite Zone area.
- Safety lighting.
- Litter bins.