

# Kent Police In Medway

Licensing Report 2009 -  
2010



'Promoting Safer Socialising'



**Kent  
Police**

2010

## **Licensing Report to Licensing and Safety Committee** **For Year 2009 – 2010**

Police licensing is based within the Community Safety Unit at Medway Police Station. Licensing staff members are structured as follows Chief Inspector Mark Arnold is the head of department, Inspector Robert Dell line manages the licensing team and Sergeant Mark Carron who actively takes part in all aspects of licensing and supervises the licensing team. DC Mark Horner is the police-licensing officer and he has administration support from police support employee Joe Duggan.

### **Licensed Premises**

There are currently 800 licensed premises and 1600 personal licence holders within Medway.

### **Overview**

During 2010 the general conduct of licensed premises in Medway has been good. This is due to a significant improvement with the relationship with licensees, tenants and holding companies. The turnover of tenants continues to cause concern due to the lack of continuity of designated Premises Supervisors and staff that are necessary to build relationships to ensure good working practices are maintained. Those premises that come to police notice for not promoting the licensing objectives are dealt with robustly.

Kent Police in Medway can say that in the rolling year to September 2010:

- Criminal Damage has fallen by 13.3% (583 less crimes)
- Violent Crime has fallen by 9.3% (400 less crimes)
- Serious Violent Crime has fallen by 25.1% (43 less crimes)
- Assaults less serious has fallen by 7% (128 less crimes)
- Anti Social Behaviour incidents has increased by 0.8% since April 2010 (30 more incidents)

Data source from Kent Police Business Information Unit

## **Administration of Licensed Premises**

Medway has a large volume of licensed premises; only a small proportion comes to police notice. Such premises when identified will receive intervention from either the ward Neighbourhood Police Officer, Tactical Team or Police Licensing team. During the year a small number of premises have required some form of intervention. This intervention has ranged from informal warnings through to review.

Through an administration process we have identified premises licenses where some of the conditions are no longer required or need amending. On a daily basis the police licensing officer reviews the systems that record incidents where police are called, reported crime and arrested persons. This facilitates early intervention with the premises and can identify risks to partner agencies i.e. noise.

Applications and variations received by the licensing officer are dealt with through effective engagement with the applicant that ensures that any conditions are proportionate and necessary to the needs of the premises and the responsible authority.

Sergeant Carron attends the Medway Alcohol Partnership meeting, which sits within the Medway Council Public Health team. The aim of this meeting is to look at opportunities for alcohol harm reduction through a partnership approach.

## **Anti Social Behaviour**

A high percentage of calls to Police in respect of Anti Social Behaviour relate to behaviour are aggravated by alcohol. This is more prevalent during the hours of the Night Time Economy and can be attributed to the areas of the Medway Towns where there are a high concentration of licensed premises.

Kent Police in Medway continue to deploy resources into the key town centres during key dates in the calendar year such as the summer period, Halloween/Bonfire night and the festive periods. These officers will conduct high visibility foot patrolling of the High Street areas on Friday and Saturday nights during which they engage with door supervisors, the SOS bus, Medway Street Pastors and patrons of the night time economy.

The perception of drunk/rowdy behaviour in Medway by residents, i.e. residents who consider drunk/rowdy behaviour to be a very big problem in the area has increased by 1.4% from 16.1% to 17.5% between September 2009 and September 2010.

Data source from Kent Police Business Information Unit

### **Test Purchasing Operations**

Kent Police in Medway assist Medway Council Trading Standards team with test purchasing operations, this demonstrates excellent partnership working and vital evidence gathering for all. Police can issue fixed penalty notices when offences have been detected and this can be used in any review proceedings instigated.

### **Safer Medway Partnership**

The Safer Medway Partnership, which is a business partnership, plays a key part within the daytime and nighttime economy. Sergeant Carron sits on the board as an advisory member to give advice and supply information. This partnership is key to tackling violent crime and anti-social behaviour within licensed premises and Rochester High Street.

### **Police Operations**

#### **Operation Albatross**

The operation has two main aims the first being to disrupt the supply and use of illegal drugs within licensed premises and the second is to ensure that designated premises supervisors and staff are promoting the licensing objectives. This is achieved by deploying uniformed and non-uniformed police officers into licensed premises to secure best evidence and gain intelligence. The operation is supported by the use of 2 passive drugs dogs.

From September 2009 until October 2010 there have been eleven operations run and the results are as follows:

- 108 licensed premises visited
- 44 persons arrested
- 61 drug seizures
- 224 persons searched under the misuse of drugs act
- 5 section 27 (direction to leave the area) issued
- 15 persons received Cannabis street cautions

- 3 drug intervention support program (DISP) referrals made
- 1 section 19 closure implemented
- 4 penalty notices for disorder issued
- 3 warnings given to licensed premises for breach of licensing conditions
- 708 persons tested on the ION track machine.
- 118 intelligence reports submitted

### **Operation Maximise**

This is a briefing co-ordinated by police licensing and the tactical team for door supervisors of licensed premises, the Medway Street Pastors, The SOS Bus, and Medway Council CCTV. The briefing takes place every Friday in the George Vaults, Rochester High Street. The aim is to share intelligence, build partnership relations and give updates on arrests, bail conditions and persons of note to ensure a holistic approach to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour is achieved.

### **Operation Farmer**

This is a Police led multi agency operation that seeks to identify and deal with licensed premises who are selling fraudulent or duty-evaded alcohol/tobacco.

During this operation 1145 litres of alcohol were seized that accounted for in excess of £4,600 of evaded duty.

Kent Police in Medway also support partner agencies such as Operation Night Owl and Operation Unite, which are proactive licensing visits and enforcement.

### **The SOS Bus**

The SOS Bus It is a converted single decked bus and is funded by a number of partner agencies, and statutory organisations. It has the latest medical, counselling, chill out/waiting area, customer service and other community facilities on board including TV's. The SOS Bus started work on Friday 29th May 2009 at 9.00pm.

Kent Police in Medway work closely with the bus to ensure that it is prevalent within the nighttime economy at key times within Rochester High Street.

The SOS Bus delivers a daytime service engaging with communities throughout Medway delivering a wide variety of information such as;

- Crime Reduction
- Community Safety
- Youth engagement
- Domestic Violence
- Volunteer recruitment
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Anti-social behaviour
- Community Days of Action
- PACT Panels (Partners and Communities Together)
- Fire and safety
- Alcohol misuse
- Drug misuse
- Homelessness
- Housing
- Benefits advice
- Road Safety
- Sexual health awareness
- Teenage pregnancy
- Smoking reduction

By Night The SOS Bus has a primary role to provide a safe haven for any vulnerable person, irrespective of their age, race, sexual orientation or religion between 9.00pm and 3am on a Friday or Saturday night in the Medway Towns. It is the first point of contact for any person who is at risk due to:

- Inability to get home safely on their own
- Illness/incapacity
- Injury
- Emotional or psychological distress
- Mental distress
- Alcohol misuse
- Drug or solvent misuse
- Lost or homeless
- Victim of theft
- Victim of harassment and or intimidation
- Any form of violence

## **Medway Street Pastors**

Kent Police in Medway work with and support the Medway Street Pastors who are based at the Vines Church, Rochester who engage with the community to offer support and help where required.

A Street Pastor is defined as a Church leader/minister or member with a concern for society - in particular young people who feel themselves to be excluded and marginalised - and who is willing to engage people where they are, in terms of their thinking (i.e. their perspective of life) and location (i.e. where they hang out - be it on the streets, in the pubs and clubs or at parties etc).

## **TENS (Temporary Event Notices)**

From April 2009 until March 2010 police as a responsible authority received 372 Temporary Event Notices.

## **Impact of Longer Licensing Hours**

Kent Police in Medway has seen an impact on policing since the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003 in relation to opening hours and the sale of alcohol due to having to respond to incidents at licensed premises later into the night.

## **Smoking Laws**

Since the legislation in regards to the smoking ban introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007. There has been a rise in calls relating to noise and antisocial behaviour due to customers congregating in outside areas and at the front of licensed premises. Licensed premises have tried to address this problem through a variation however many cannot explore this due to planning constraints.

## **Gambling Act**

Kent Police in Medway have worked in conjunction with the Gambling Commission, partner agencies and betting shops within Medway to utilise the act accordingly to ensure that premises are target hardened to ensure that opportunities for crime are reduced.

We are currently in liaison with the Gambling Commission to look at opportunities to implement The Safebet Alliance, which is a robbery security code for bookmakers after recent high profile robberies within Medway.

## **Threats**

The current recession continues to impact on the night time economy as well as licensed premises in general. These pressures coupled with fixed overheads from Breweries and Property owners may lead to short cuts to maximise profit at the expense of safety for example a reduction in SIA door staff could be considered.

A threat to licensing from a policing perspective is anti-social behaviour and violence where alcohol is an aggravating factor. The driver for this problem is not solely the premise but the individual's propensity to "Pre load" on alcohol bought cheaply at supermarkets.

Drinks promotions are still a part of the legislation that requires clarification from the Home Office when balancing for example a nightclub against a supermarket. The prices being charged for alcohol play a major part in pre loading which in turn causes responsible retailers a problem in dealing with drunken people within their premises and then the fall out from the behaviour and perception attributed to this premise.

The comprehensive spending review is likely to see a reduction in partnership funding this may impact on how we inspect and enforce licensing legislation.

## **Conclusion**

Effective partnership working remains pivotal in achieving good management of those businesses and individuals who operate within the Licensing Act 2003.

Engagement with the licensing trade and the community is a key element of proactive and focused activity to ensure that Medway remains a safe place to live and socialise.

Kent Police in Medway will continue to work towards a reduction in crime and anti social behaviour, this will include tackling anti social behaviour within wards the town centres with dedicated policing teams for Gillingham and Chatham High Streets.