



Entertainment Licensing
Leeds City Council
Civic Hall
Leeds
LS1 1UR

Elections and Regulatory Services

Civic Hall
Leeds LS1 1UR

Our Ref: A80/CB/LIC/PREM/03987/006

Your Ref:

Contact: Carmel Brennand



Date: 21 December 2023

Dear Sirs/Madam,

REVIEW APPLICATION UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003 PREMISES: KRAKUS, 54 HAREHILLS ROAD, LS8 5LE

Please accept this formal representation by an officer on behalf of the Licensing Authority. I am employed as a Senior Liaison & Enforcement Officer within Leeds City Council's Entertainment Licensing Section.

My duties include investigating complaints for licensed/unlicensed premises contrary to the Licensing Act 2003 as well as visiting licensed premises with other agencies to ensure compliance under the Licensing Act 2003, in promoting the four licensing objectives; the prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm. I have delegated authority under the said Act.

The shop at this address has been licensed to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises since 25th May 2017. The Premises Licence permits the retail sale of alcohol from 07:00 to 23:00 every day with the opening and closing times being the same. The Premises Licence Holder (PLH) and Designated Premises Supervisor specified at Anna Strychaz.

On the 9th May 2023 Entertainment Licensing Section received the following complaint from a local resident :-

'I am e mailing you because I would like to report a breach and I would like to contact you because I have noticed for several weeks now the two off license shops BABA JAGA and KRAKUS on Harehills Road are opening around 06.00 am in the morning and closing at around 12.30 after midnight and I am aware that is not right and not legal.

I see people buying things early morning when these two shops should not be open and against their council permission times are opening and selling alcohol and many items late in the night way after 11.30pm and that should not be allowed either.



It has come to my attention and the attention of all my neighbours about these opening times of the above two shops and it has caused a lot of problems because of alcohol especially at night times.

I am reporting this matter to you to investigate and take action against these two shops and I hope this will be done as soon as possible.

KRAKUS Off License shop, 54 Harehills Road, Leeds LS8 5HS BABA JAGA shop , 107 Harehills Road, Leeds LS8 5HS

I am aware the above two off license shops should follow the permitted times to open and close the shop but every morning and every night they breach those permitted times'.

A similarly worded complaint was received the same day from a separate resident and complaint GE/003969 was generated in respect of Baba Jaga and GE/003970 in respect of Krakus. Both were allocated to me to investigate.

On the 12th May 2023 I was working in company with PC Clifford.

At 11:10 am we attended at Krakus, 54 Harehills Road. The PLH and DPS Anna Strychaz was not there but Mr Muzafar Piroti was. He stated he was going through the process of buying the business from Ms Strychaz although he had been working at the shop for the past 3 weeks, which tied in with the complaint. I recognised his name as being the new operator of Baba Jaga which is directly across the road. I explained the complaints I had received about both shops. Mr Piroti stated that the shops were not open to the public but staff were on site at 6 am for bread, milk, pastries deliveries. He said people do come in but when they are refused alcohol, they have been carrying on. He also stated that after hours staff are cleaning. I reminded him of hours on both Licences for alcohol as well as the opening and closing times as well as a specific condition 'The premises licence holder/designated premises supervisor will ensure deliveries are made between 07:00 and 19:00'.

I noted that the time and date on the cctv monitor was incorrect. When I asked Mr Piroti if he could show me footage from 31 days ago he stated he could not operate the cctv. I advised him that the system needed to be at the correct time and date and that someone on site should be able to operate it in accordance with the conditions on the Premises Licence.

When there is a breach of conditions, any licensable activities such as the sale of alcohol are unauthorised and therefore an offence under Section 136 of the Licensing Act 2003, namely:-

- 1) A person commits an offence if -
 - (a) he carries on or attempts to carry on a licensable activity on or from any premises otherwise than under and in accordance with an authorisation, or
 - (b) he knowingly allows a licensable activity to be so carried on.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a unlimited fine, or to both.
- (5) In this Part "authorisation" means -
 - (a) a premises licence,
 - (b) a club premises certificate, or
 - (c) a temporary event notice in respect of which the conditions of section 98(2) to (4) are satisfied.

Mr Piroti said that he was having an operation and would be away so I told him that staff need to ring me when it is 31 days so that I can come back out and re check or they can send me a screen shot. Mr Piroti signed the inspection sheet and I gave him a copy of it.

I produce a copy of the inspection sheet dated 12th May 2023 as my exhibit CB 1.

On the 15th May I received a phone call from [REDACTED], obo Mr Piroti wanting clarification on what I needed. I explained that I needed screen shots of the cctv from both premises showing footage from 31 days prior. I reminded her of the operating hours for both shops.

On the 16th May 2023 I emailed both complainants with the results of our visits and that the operator was fully aware of the opening/closing times and the permitted hours for alcohol sales. I asked the complainants to let me know if they witnessed any sales out of permitted hours.

On the same day, applications were received to transfer the PLH to Krakus Leeds Limited and vary the DPS to Muzafar Piroti. A check on Companies House for 14796117 shows the sole Director and Person with Significant Control as Mr Muzafar Piroti.

Later that day I received an email from Mr Piroti with a screenshot of cctv footage from the 12th April 2023 so 30 days recording.

At 14:00 on the 18th May I had a telephone conversation with [REDACTED]. When I asked which premises the screenshot of the cctv was from? She said Krakus.

PREM/03987/005 with Krakus Leeds Limited named as the PLH and Mr Muzafar Piroti specified as the DPS with effect from the 31st May 2023 was posted out on the 7th June.

On the 19th July I was in company with PC Haywood visiting premises in the Harehills area. At 09:40 we attended at Krakus. Mr [REDACTED], a friend of the PLH was working on site. The Parts A & B of the Premises Licence were in order. I noted that the date and time on the cctv monitor were correct. A new hard drive had been fitted cctv so it only went back to 24th June which was 25 days. I explained that the condition said 31 days and gave him my business card so he can email screenshot of cctv. When PC Haywood asked about the 3 males drinking outside the shop, Mr [REDACTED] said he did not serve them. I referred to the Licence and advised him to buy a Page a Day Diary to record all refusals and any incidents. I also advised that the Licence specified that staff should be asking for ID from any person appearing under the age of 25 when buying alcohol and there should be posters informing customers of this. When I asked about deliveries, he said they were all after 7 am now.

From here PC Haywood and I went across the road to Baba Jaga at 107 Harehills Road (which is owned by the same operator) to reinspect under the Licensing Act.

Whilst we were in Baba Jaga a female customer came in and picked up some bread and other bits and when she came to the till and was speaking to [REDACTED] (shop assistant) in a foreign language, possibly Iranian; I'm not sure. The female asked for Malborough and [REDACTED] said no. We left and crossed over the road as my car was parked outside Krakus.

The female then came over and went into Krakus and came out with a couple of cans in her hand and then turned around and went back into Krakus and stood talking to the male shop assistant. They appeared to be waiting until we drove away. The whole situation seemed odd.

On the 15th August PC Haywood and I were again conducting revisits to premises in Harehills. At 12:15 we attended at Krakus. Mr [REDACTED] and Mr Musafa Piroti were on site. There were now 2 cctv monitors and Mr [REDACTED] explained that there were 2 systems with their own hard drive. Mr [REDACTED] showed us footage going back 29 days on the 1st system. He could not show us any footage on the 2nd system as he could not remember the PIN. Also, the mouse for one of the systems was in the roof void so Mr [REDACTED] had to stand on a stool to operate it which

we advised was not ideal. I asked to look at the Refusals/Incident Register which was a looseleaf writing pad with dates on each page. I looked at 2 days previous and written was the time and 'energy drink'. I advised that should be writing more details. i.e. Young male asking for energy drink but no ID so refused. I explained more details shows due diligence; that they're doing their job properly and that a Page a Day Diary would be much better as bound and by being dated, the pages are chronologically numbered. You can't tear a page out without noticing. Although there were 'NO ID – NO SALE' posters, I explained their shop policy stated 25 years so they should advise customers of this so I wrote out some wording for Challenge 25. Before we left PC Haywood reminded them that need for compliance or the Licence could be in jeopardy.

On the 17th August I received an email from Mr Piroti with a screenshot of the cctv calendar showing recording from the 17th July and proof of age posters displayed in the shop. I emailed Mr Piroti back that there were 2 systems but staff could only access 1 system. I also reminded him of the Incident/Refusals Register and that when conditions were not being met, offences under Section 136 are being committed.

On the 30th August 2023 I took part in a multi-agency operation visiting shops in the Harehills area. At 10:15 am I attended at Krakus with PS Chris Secker and Ms Nicola Raper, Section Head of Entertainment Licensing. Officers from His Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and Trading Standards were already on site.

An officer from Trading Standards seized illicit cigarettes and illegal vapes whilst HMRC were seizing a large quantity of non-duty paid alcohol. The HMRC officer was speaking to ██████████ in his role as manager of both Krakus and Baba Jaga, querying the exchange of goods between the 2 shops without the necessary paperwork.

The other member of staff Musafa Piroti was being interviewed by Home Office Immigration officers about his right to work so no inspection was made under the Licensing Act.

On the 11th October 2023 PC Haywood and I were revisiting premises in the Harehills area. At 12:16 we attended at subject premises. Mr ██████████ and Mr Musafa Piroti were both working. The Part B was displayed. I asked to have a look at the Refusals/Incident Book. It was the same large looseleaf notebook. Mr ██████████ stated that no-one comes in and tries to buy something they shouldn't. He went on to say that even when the police came in with kids, they were refused. I repeated what I had said the last time; that as much detail as possible, it shows due diligence and I gave them an example. Mr ██████████ kept repeating that no one comes in as they know they will be refused. PC Haywood reiterated that a Page A Day Diary would be ideal. Mr Piroti seemed to grasp what we wanted when I said, Okay you might not serve to them but if you have people outside drinking and you go out and ask them to move away – record it. When Mr ██████████ showed us the cctv systems, 1 was recording from the 19th August and the other from the 11th August, so finally compliant. As we were leaving PC Haywood asked, 'What are you going to go and buy?' Mr Piroti shook his head, then remembered and said 'Diary from the pound shop'.

It has taken over 5 months, 4 visits to the premises with repeated advice in person, on the phone and via emails to finally get compliance of the Licensing Act 2003.

It is clear from the serious and continuous breaches of the Licensing Act 2003, the seizures of illicit alcohol and tobacco as well as illegal vapes that Mr Muzafar Piroti does not take his responsibilities seriously. He has failed to comply with a variety of legislation and is unconcerned about the impact his business has on the immediate community. It is clear that he has failed to operate responsibly in upholding the objectives; namely the prevention of crime and disorder and I therefore support the review being brought by West Yorkshire Police.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Carmel Brennand
Senior Liaison & Enforcement Officer
Entertainment Licensing

£180 ANNUAL FEE DUE 25.5.23



Leeds CITY COUNCIL

Licensing Act 2003

Record of Inspection

WENF/03185

Premises Details Licence Number: Prem/03187/008 Name: KRAKUS Address: 54 HAREHILLS ROAD LS8 5LE	Inspection Details Date: 12.5.23 Time In: 1110 Time Out: Authorised Officer: CB Other officers: In company with WYP/BTP/TS Other Agency:
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Premises Licence Holder/DPS: ANNA STRYCHAR Present? Yes No

	X	Matters arising (Advice given marked with "X" in left-hand column)	Timescale
	X	CCTV NOT CORRECT TIME + DATE	
	X	UNABLE TO OPERATE TO SHOW 31 DAYS FOOTAGE.	

No action required Action required; contravention(s)/breach of condition(s) as above

Signatures
 Authorised Officer's signature: [Redacted] Date: 12.5.23
 Time: 1120

Appropriate person at premises
 I certify that the issue(s) identified have been brought to my attention and I undertake to rectify any breaches by the agreed timescale(s) set out above. I have been advised that a revisit will be made to ensure that the breaches have been rectified. I will ensure that the Premises Licence Holder and Designated Premises Supervisor is informed of this inspection and the findings at the earliest opportunity.

Print Name: [Redacted] Date:
 Signed: [Redacted] Time:
 Position: [Redacted]

CARMEN [Redacted] premises

Enforcement Powers and Offences - Licensing Act 2003

Section 136 – Unauthorised licensable activities

- (1) A person commits an offence if –
 - (a) he carries on or attempts to carry on a licensable activity on or from any premises otherwise than under and in accordance with an authorisation, or
 - (b) he knowingly allows a licensable activity to be so carried on.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to an unlimited fine, or to both.
- (5) ...“authorisation” means –
 - (a) a premises licence,
 - (b) a club premises certificate, or
 - (c) a temporary event notice in respect of which the conditions of section 92(2) to (4) are satisfied.

Summary of other offences (Licensing Act 2003) (not exhaustive):

Unauthorised licensable activities

- section 137 Exposing alcohol for unauthorised sale
- section 138 Keeping alcohol on premises for unauthorised sale etc.

Drunkenness and disorderly conduct

- section 140 Allowing disorderly conduct on licensed premises etc.
- section 141 Sale of alcohol to a person who is drunk
- section 142 Obtaining alcohol for a person who is drunk
- section 143 Failure to leave licensed premises etc.

Smuggled goods

- section 144 Keeping of smuggled goods

Children and alcohol

- section 145 Unaccompanied children prohibited from certain premises
- section 146 Sale of alcohol to children
- section 147 Allowing the sale of alcohol to children
- section 147A Persistently selling alcohol to children
- section 147B Order suspending a licence in respect of offence under section 147A
- section 149 Purchase of alcohol by or on behalf of children
- section 150 Consumption of alcohol by children
- section 151 Delivering alcohol to children
- section 152 Sending a child to obtain alcohol
- section 153 Prohibition of unsupervised sales by children
- section 154 Enforcement role for weights and measures authorities

Confiscation of alcohol

- section 155 Confiscation of sealed containers of alcohol

False statements relating to licensing etc

- section 158 False statements made for the purposes of this Act

Powers of Entry

- section 179 Rights of entry to investigate licensable activities (available to a constable or authorised person).

WITNESS STATEMENT

**Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2
Criminal Justice Act 1967, S. 9
Magistrates Courts Act 1980, 5B**

Statement of: Noreen AKHTAR

Age of witness: (if over 18 enter 'over 18')

Over 18

Occupation:

Regulatory Compliance Officer

This statement (consisting of 2 pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Dated:

29th November 2023

Signature:

I am a Regulatory Compliance Officer employed by West Yorkshire Trading Standards Service (WYTSS). I am an authorised officer for the purposes of the Trade Marks Act 1994, the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016, the Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Regulations 2015 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

On 29th August 2023 I was in plain clothes when I entered the premises of Krakus, 54 Harehills Road, Leeds, LS8 5LE. I approached the counter and asked the male behind it for "20 Richmond". He then picked up a walkie talkie that was on the counter and asked for the cigarettes. I handed him £10.00 and was given £6.00 change. Another male in the shop also asked for some cigarettes, the male behind the counter ordered them via the walkie talkie again and we were both asked to wait.

NOTE : *If statements are typed double spacing should be used.
One side only of this paper should be used.*

(Signed)

Dated: 29th November 2023

Page: 1 of 2

To be completed if applicable:being unable to read the above statement I,of....., read it to him/her before he/she signed it. **Signed** **Dated**.....

WITNESS STATEMENT

**Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2
Criminal Justice Act 1967, S. 9
Magistrates Courts Act 1980, 5B**

Continuation Statement of: Noreen AKHTAR

Approximately 1.5 minutes later a male wearing a hoody entered the shop. He placed 3 packs of 20 cigarettes on the counter and left. I was handed 1 x 20 Richmond and I left the shop.

As I was leaving the shop I saw the male who had delivered the cigarettes to the shop crossing the road towards another shop, Baba Jaga on the opposite side of the road. He stood on Conway Place, at the side of Baba Jaga where he was approached by a woman that had come out of Baba Jaga. He then went to the boot of a grey Skoda, VRM [REDACTED] parked on Conway Place and appeared to remove something. He then walked back across Harehills Road and returned approximately 1 minute later.

The packet of cigarettes purchased did not conform with the Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Regulations 2015 in that the packaging was not in the specified colour. The cigarettes were presented in a blue packaging. The retail price for these cigarettes is over £12.00, over £7.00 of that representing the excise duty payable. The packet of cigarettes was sent to its trade mark holder who has confirmed them to be counterfeit.

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One side only of this paper should be used.*

(Signed)

[REDACTED]

Dated: 29th November 2023

Page: 2 of 2

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WITNESS STATEMENT

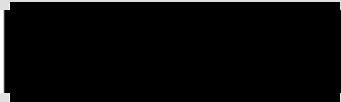
**Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2
Criminal Justice Act 1967, S. 9
Magistrates Courts Act 1980, 5B**

Statement of:

Age of witness: *(if over 18 enter 'over 18')*


Occupation:

This statement (consisting of 3 pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Dated: **Signature:** 

I am the Lead Cheap and Illicit Tobacco Officer employed by West Yorkshire Trading Standards Service (WYTSS). I am an authorised officer for the purposes of the Trade Marks Act 1994, the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016, the Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Regulations 2015 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

On 30/08/2023 I was in company with HMRC and Police officers when I conducted an inspection visit at Krakus, 54 Harehills Road, Harehills, Leeds, LS8 5LE. The male working behind the counter in the store gave an address in Newcastle and checks showed he had no right to work in the UK. This matter was referred to immigration control. Illegal counterfeit/illicit cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco were recovered from behind the counter. The total amount was 131 x 20 packets of counterfeit/illicit cigarettes and 3 x 50g pouches of hand rolling tobacco. Also seized

NOTE : *If statements are typed double spacing should be used.
One side only of this paper should be used.* **(Signed)** 
Dated.....29/11/2023.....

To be completed if applicable:being unable to read the above statement I,of....., read it to him/her before he/she signed it. **Signed** **Dated**.....

WITNESS STATEMENT

**Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2
Criminal Justice Act 1967, S. 9
Magistrates Courts Act 1980, 5B**

Continuation Statement of: Babul Hussain

from behind the sales counter was 49 disposable electronic cigarettes with a tank capacity of greater than 2ml, making them non compliant with Regulation 36 of the Tobacco and Related Product Regulations 2016. The HMRC officers present also seized quantities of non duty paid alcohol.

The grey Skoda vehicle, registration [REDACTED], from which the cigarettes were obtained for the test purchase at the store on 29/08/2023 was still parked opposite the store on Conway Place. Access to this was gained and illegal tobacco items seized from inside. The total amount was 554 x 20 packets of cigarettes and 11 x 50g pouches of hand rolling tobacco.

I visually examined the tobacco products that were seized from the store and vehicle. I could see they were not in the standardised format as required by The Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Products Regulations 2015 and were in violation of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 as the prescribed health warnings were not present in English. From discrepancies in the packaging on some cigarettes and from the foreign excise stamps present on others it was clear to me, the cigarettes were a mix of counterfeit and smuggled items

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One side only of this paper should be used.*

(Signed) [REDACTED]

Dated.....29/11/2023.....

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WITNESS STATEMENT

**Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27.2
Criminal Justice Act 1967, S. 9
Magistrates Courts Act 1980, 5B**

Continuation Statement of: Babul Hussain

The sale of Counterfeit/Illicit Tobacco products is not a minor breach of regulations but is in fact serious organised criminality. These items which cannot be legally sold in the UK are smuggled into the country on a vast scale. The profits of this illegal trade going to criminals while the treasury is deprived of the Tax/Excise. The current yearly loss in revenue is in excess of £2.5 billion which in turn deprives public services of funding.

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable diseases in the UK and over half of long term smokers will die prematurely from smoking related diseases. Tobacco taxes are a proven strategy to reduce smoking and extend lives. The illegal, cheap sale of this product removes this incentive of helping people to quit and also makes cigarettes more affordable to children, making it more likely they will start.

The supply of illegal tobacco not only causes harm to people but also causes genuine businesses to lose income and potentially close. This damages local communities with reduced employment and the loss of essential services. By selling counterfeit and illicit cigarettes this business is clearly in breach of the licensing objectives to prevent crime and disorder and promote public safety. West Yorkshire Trading Standards therefore fully supports a review of its alcohol licence.

NOTE : *If statements are typed double spacing should be used.
One side only of this paper should be used.*

(Signed) 

Dated.....29/11/2023.....

To be completed if applicable:being unable to read the
above statement I,of.....,
read it to him/her before he/she signed it. **Signed** **Dated**.....



Gipton & Harehills Ward
Labour Councillors
Councillor Arif Hussain
Councillor Salma Arif
Councillor Ashgar Ali
Civic Hall
Leeds, LS1 1UR

FAO: Leeds City Council's
Entertainment Licensing Team



11.12.23

Dear To Whom It May Concern

Subject: Licence Review, Krakus, 54 Harehills Road, PREM/03987/006.

As ward Councillors we are writing to **support** the licence review of Krakus on Harehills Road.

Harehills Road is one of the main arteries of Harehills which, along with neighbouring Harehills Lane, is already saturated with retail outlets legally selling alcohol.

To put this into context, along Harehills Lane and Harehills Road, approximately 70% of shops are selling alcohol. These alcohol outlets sit – quite literally – adjacent to people's homes, children's schools as well as places of worship. Harehills is a densely populated neighborhood; a place where what happens on the street has a huge impact on the local community.

According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, Gipton & Harehills Ward has 17 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country. That is more than any other Ward in Leeds. Coupled with this cumulative deprivation is the fact that Gipton & Harehills Ward is:

- Gipton and Harehills is second most populated Ward in Leeds with 33,645 residents living in 12,400 properties; nearly 10% of homes are classed as overcrowded.
- The Ward is both young and dynamic; 29.5% of residents are children and young people aged 14 or under. 53% of the population is aged 29 or under.
- 4,303 children and young people aged 0-15 in Gipton & Harehills live in the most income deprived households in England.
- Whilst 62.4% of the population is economically active; long term unemployment is double the Leeds average and those that have never worked is at 15.2%, which is nearly four times the Leeds average. Women from the Ward active in the job market is also notably lower than the Leeds average.

- 33.3% of working age people are receiving universal credit.
- Gipton and Harehills Ward is very diverse, with 63% of the population identifying as being from an ethnic minority; 72% of households reported that English was a first language.
- As a migration hub, the Ward has hundreds of languages spoken and numerous faiths live in close proximity (75% of households identify as being religious against a Leeds average of 65%).
- Nearly 56% of households don't have access to a car or van.
- Fuel poverty for the Ward stands at 29.9%, 8.4% of households don't have central heating.
- Crime is higher than the Leeds average with violence and sexual assault, public order, ASB and criminal damage presenting as the main issues

Source: <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/deprivation>

Numerous residents, both young and old and of all faiths and backgrounds, have talked to all three of us about their experiences of drink related abuse and violence on their doorstep. This behaviour as led to damage to property, broken glass, urine and worse left on the pavements outside of people's homes.

Against this backdrop, the idea that a business in the heart of Harehills could be not only operating illegally but compounding these issues by selling illegal alcohol is simply staggering.

Such is the scale of alcohol related issues in Harehills, a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) was introduced by the council in early 2019 and has been re-drafted and enlarged in November 2022; this enlarged area now includes the site of Krakus: <https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/g11973/Public%20reports%20pack%2029th-Nov-2022%2010.00%20Licensing%20Committee.pdf?T=10> The response from Harehills residents to the CIA consultation was both compelling and shocking, but sadly not surprising.

Indeed, we feel passionately that this licence should be reviewed in light of the compelling evidence presented by the Police, as letting this business trade illegally would be seriously damaging to the health of the people of Harehills; from local residents, parents and children who have to witness anti-social behaviour on their doorstep as the result of alcohol abuse to the vulnerable residents who may be exposed to alcohol that they otherwise wouldn't have access to.

For over three years, a dedicated partnership made up of local Cllrs, council officers, the Police and representatives from the community and voluntary sector have sought to address the issue of problem drinking in Harehills. Problem street drinking is a tragic but inevitable bi-product of the availability of cheap alcohol, sold from numerous outlets, at all hours.

This latest development around the sale of illegal alcohol is a major concern. The following paragraphs outline the arduous journey that has been undertaken to help tackle problem drinking in adults in Harehills. To think that potentially another generation of our children could be embarking on this path because of access to illegal alcohol is frankly terrifying and cannot be allowed to happen.

To expand, the multi-agency partnership is taking-up this complex challenge is on several fronts. Focus is being given to disruption, which includes enforcing the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/antisocial-behaviour-and-crime/public-spaces-protection-orders/harehills-pspo>) and serving injunctions on the more troublesome street drinkers.

In tandem to this approach, there is also a concerted effort to engage with this cohort of drinkers to address their needs around addiction. This work has proven challenging for the partnership given the obvious tension between balancing the imperative to support individuals who are addicted to alcohol and the concerns of the wider community who are suffering because of their actions. A constant pressure for the partnership is allowing the space and time for the outreach work to pay dividends whilst demonstrating to residents that this issue is being taken seriously via enforcement activity that reduces unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour.

Genuine relationships are being forged under difficult circumstances by Touchstone's dedicated outreach worker who has conducted numerous visits to the Harehills area to date. Allied to this, alcohol supply has sought to have been addressed through the continued defence of the council's Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) and the opposition of any new off licenses; four applications have been declined in recent times, but tens of off-licences remain in a less than two-mile square radius. A prominent derelict site on Compton Road has also been target hardened following work by Cleaner Neighbourhoods Team colleagues, as it was a magnet for street drinkers.

Ward Members from both Gipton and Harehills and Burmantofts and Richmond Hill have committed funding for the Touchstone outreach worker, with group sessions for this cohort taking place at a local café on Harehills Lane. Encouragingly, around 12-15 people now regularly attend and engage with support services at these sessions, with over 129 individuals with alcohol dependency issues attending since October 2021.

Incremental progress is being made with two attendees in rehab; one individual is not attending due to "now working" and some of those who attended on a regular basis are now staying at home, in a relationship or visiting family i.e. positive lifestyle changes. Most refrain from drinking to attend the session then go home afterwards. Furthermore, some clients changed their drinking behaviour and reported increased confidence and self-worth. In addition, there was a take up of new registrations with Forward Leeds, who supported the drop in sessions.

Allied to this, colleagues in Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team, along with the Police and the Safer, Stronger Communities Team are constantly working in partnership using all the available legislation including the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 to address the issue of problem street drinking and associated community concerns.

The innovative use of 'Closure Orders', granted under anti-social behaviour legislation further bolstered the existing PSPO in the area for a time. The Closure Order, which denied access to a specific area if people are in possession of an open container of alcohol, also gave officers additional powers to ensure there was the necessary balanced approach that allowed officers to support the needs of the community as well as the needs of a group of individuals with very serious challenges around addiction.

East Leeds Neighbourhood Policing Team undertook the following action in relation to the Closure Order, which ran from December 2021 until June 2022:

- 92 x individuals issued with warnings
- 36 x individuals reported for summons to court, for breaching the order and previous warnings issued
- 7 x individuals arrested for offences including breach of the closure order, breach of bail and drunk and disorderly.
- 3 x individuals prosecuted and fined in court, for breaching the partial closure order

Closure Order: <https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/news-appeals/new-powers-tackle-street-drinking-harehills-leeds>

As a community, along with the council, statutory services and local community and voluntary sector groups we are exhaustively trying to redress the current imbalance in an area where alcohol misuse is having a detrimental effect on the lives of residents.

Ignoring the very real and serious concerns raised by the Police in this licence review, will be slap on the faces of everyone who has campaigned for the CIA, the PSPO, the closure order as well as those working hard to support people with alcohol addiction and those wanting a safer future for themselves and their children.

As Ward Councillors, we hope you will consider the concerns raised above and come to the decision that Harehills does not need, want or deserve an off license selling illegal alcohol.

We say with a united voice, please consider the impact on our children, they deserve so much better than this.

