

Minimum price for alcohol likely to be 50p

- ✘ The preferred minimum price for alcohol will be 50p per unit, it was announced today by The Scottish Government.

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said that, at this level, the price was equivalent to the 45p per unit set in 2010 after taking account of inflation. She also said that setting the price at this level would have significant health and social benefits.

Ms Sturgeon made the announcement during a visit to a gastroenterology ward at Glasgow Royal Infirmary, where 80 per cent of patients are in hospital because of alcohol misuse. She met with Dr Ewan Forrest, a consultant gastroenterologist who specialises in treating alcoholic liver disease.

Ms Sturgeon said:-

“Cheap alcohol comes at a price and now is the time to tackle the toll that Scotland’s unhealthy relationship with alcohol is taking on our society. Too many Scots are drinking themselves to death. The problem affects people of all walks of life. It’s no coincidence that as affordability has increased, alcohol-related hospital admissions have quadrupled, and it is shocking that half of our prisoners now say they were drunk when they committed the offence. It’s time for this to stop. Introducing a minimum price per unit will enable us to tackle these problems, given the clear link between affordability and consumption.

“There is now a groundswell of support for the policy across the medical profession, police forces, alcohol charities and from significant parts of the drinks and licensed trade industry who recognise the benefits minimum pricing can bring – saving lives and reducing crime.

“Since 45p was first proposed as the minimum price 18 months ago, we have seen inflation of around five per cent. A minimum price of 50p takes this into account and will achieve a similar level of public health benefits to what 45p would have achieved in 2010.”

The Alcohol (Minimum Pricing) (Scotland) Bill is shortly to start the final stage of the parliamentary process.

The Bill looks to set a minimum price for a unit of alcohol as a condition of licence. It also sets the formula for calculating the minimum price (based on the strength of the alcohol, the volume of the alcohol and a price per unit of alcohol).

According to a minimum pricing modelling study carried out by the University of Sheffield, it is estimated by that in the first year, introducing a minimum price of 50p would see:

- 60 fewer deaths
- 1,600 fewer hospital admissions
- A total value of harm reduction of £64 million
- Around 3,500 fewer crimes per year

After 10 years, benefits would increase to:

- Over 300 fewer deaths annually
- 6,500 fewer hospital admissions
- A cumulative value of harm reduction of £942 million

Chief Medical Officer Sir Harry Burns said:

“For too long too many Scots have drunk too much and now it’s time for tough action to address this.

“I strongly support minimum pricing, as part of a wider framework of action, as the best chance we have of reducing Scotland’s harmful levels of alcohol consumption.

“Alcohol-related disease and violence are costing the NHS

millions of pounds every year and this cannot be allowed to continue.”

Support for minimum pricing has come from all quarters – the Welsh Government, Northern Ireland Executive, the majority of the health and sport committee, the Scottish Licensed Trade Association, all 17 of Scotland’s public health directors in NHS Scotland, the British Medical Association, the Royal Colleges, ACPOS, Scottish Licensed Trade Association, Church of Scotland, various children’s charities, Tennents and Greene King.

The Scottish Government have issued this table of the Impact of 50p on various alcoholic drinks:

Product	ABV	Units	Prices as at 2 March 2012	Price per unit of alcohol	Minimum price at 50p/unit	Increase
<i>Cider</i>						
Tesco Strong dry cider, 4x440ml	5.3	9.3	£1.80	20p	£4.67	£2.87
Tesco Value dry cider, 2 litres	4.2	8.4	£1.69	21p	£4.20	£2.51
Blackthorn dry cider, 12x440ml	5.5	29.0	£11.99	42p	£14.52	£2.53
Strongbow, 4x440ml	5.3	9.3	£3.99	43p	£4.67	£0.68
Gaymers Old English, 4x440ml	4.5	7.9	£3.89	50p	£3.96	£0.07

Bulmers, 6x568ml	4.5	15.3	£9.00	59p	£7.67	Not affected
Magners, 4x440ml	4.5	7.9	£4.79	61p	£3.96	Not affected
<i>Vodka and Gin</i>						
Tesco Value vodka, 70cl	37.5	26.2	£8.72	34p	£13.13	£4.41
Glen's vodka, 70cl	37.5	26.2	£11.29	44p	£13.13	£1.84
Vladivar Classic, 70cl	37.5	26.2	£13.29	51p	£13.13	Not affected
Gordon's gin, 70cl	37.5	26.2	£15.59	60p	£13.13	Not affected
Smirnoff Red Label, 70cl	37.5	26.2	£16.07	62p	£13.13	Not affected
<i>Whisky</i>						
Tesco Value, 70cl	40.0	28	£9.97	36p	£14.00	£4.03
Tesco Special Reserve, 70cl	40.0	28	£11.99	43p	£14.00	£2.01
Bell's, 70cl	40.0	28	£15.59	56p	£14.00	Not affected
Whyte and MacKay, 70cl	40.0	28	£15.79	57p	£14.00	Not affected
Grants, 70cl	40.0	28	£16.50	59p	£14.00	Not affected
Famous Grouse, 70cl	40.0	28	£17.00	61p	£14.00	Not affected

Johnnie Walker Red Label, 70cl	40.0	28	£17.99	65p	£14.00	Not affected
Chivas Regal 12 yr old, 70cl	40.0	28	£24.79	89p	£14.00	Not affected
Glenfiddich single malt 12 yrs, 70cl	40.0	28	£24.67	89p	£14.00	Not affected
Beer and lager						
Tesco Lager 4x500ml	4.0	8	£2.24	28p	£4.00	£1.76
Carlsberg Special Brew 4x440ml	9.0	15.8	£6.79	43p	£7.92	£1.13
Tennents Super Lager 4x440ml	9.0	15.8	£6.79	43p	£7.92	£1.13
Red Stripe 4x440ml	4.7	8.3	£4.48	55p	£4.14	Not affected
Stella Artois 4x440ml	4.0	7.0	£3.99	57p	£3.52	Not affected
Carling 4x440ml	4.1	7.2	£4.29	60p	£3.61	Not affected
Carlsberg 4x440ml	3.8	6.7	£4.29	65p	£3.35	Not affected
Wine						
Silver Rock Chardonnay 750ml	12.5	9.4	£3.19	35p	£4.69	£1.50

Tesco South African White 750ml	12	9	£3.37	38p	£4.50	£1.13
Tesco Simply Chenin Blanc 750ml	12.5	9.4	£3.49	38p	£4.69	£1.20
Blossom Hill Californian Red 750ml	12.5	9.4	£4.68	50p	£4.69	£0.01
Echo Falls Merlot, 750ml	13	9.8	£6.49	67p	£4.88	Not affected
Blossom Hill Chardonnay, 750ml	13	9.8	£6.69	69p	£4.88	Not affected
Black Tower Rivaner, 750ml	9.5	7.1	£4.99	71p	£3.57	Not affected
Hardy's Cabernet Merlot, 750ml	13.5	10.1	£10.99	£1.09	£5.07	Not affected