

# New law on underage drinking introduced today

A new law which makes it an offence for someone to make alcohol available to a child or young person to drink in public comes into effect today.

This is part of an overarching piece of legislation the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2015 and the aim is to ensure that police have powers to tackle outdoor drinking dens.

The other parts of the legislation relate to a new test on alcohol licensing to establish that a licensee is a fit and proper person, and also licensing boards have to become more transparent by publishing their financial reports.



Justice  
Secretary  
Michael  
Matheson MSP

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said: “While many young people will not undertake underage drinking, we know that groups of young people drinking outside can be an intimidating sight to members of the public and are often linked with a number of public order offences.

“Furthermore, underage drinking can cause short and long term harm to health, as well as put young people in dangerous situations when drunk. So it is entirely correct that Police Scotland are able to deal effectively with those who supply alcohol to children and young people.

“I am very pleased that these key measures from the 2015 Act are coming into force today, alongside additional checks in

the licensing process and ensuring greater accountability within the responsible licensing boards.

“The Scottish Government has already put a number of measures in place designed to reduce alcohol-related harm, including lowering the drink drive limit and legislating to end multi-buy discounts and the irresponsible promotion of alcohol products.

“Today’s measures will strengthen the range of interventions available to further reduce the harm caused by alcohol and help the police to take action against those who distribute it irresponsibly.”