

Make Your Voice Heard:

**Alcohol Advertising &
Promotion**

People in recovery are calling for action to address alcohol marketing

During the past year Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) has been speaking to the recovery community about alcohol marketing. Through a mix of focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys we have engaged with approximately 150 people. We have set out what they said in an [animation and an accompanying resource](#).

People with alcohol dependence experience disproportionate harm from alcohol and are more susceptible to its marketing. For those in recovery, alcohol marketing can be a trigger which threatens their recovery and can cause relapse.

An opportunity for change

The Scottish Government has launched a [public consultation](#) about alcohol marketing, and is considering placing restrictions on where, when, and how alcohol can be promoted. AFS is therefore keen to bring the voices of people in recovery more fully into this debate, to increase understanding of the human impact of alcohol marketing and ensure that people can participate in decisions about it that affect their lives.

Responses to the consultation will be used as part of the Scottish Government's decision-making process, along with a range of other available evidence; for example, the responses may be used to inform the development of new alcohol marketing restrictions or help decision makers choose between different options. As such, the consultation provides a key opportunity for people in recovery to make their voices heard and change the way that alcohol is promoted in Scotland.

How to input your views

The Scottish Government's consultation will be open until **9 March 2023** and people can choose to respond either as an individual or an organisation. However, if someone is engaged with an organisation that responds to the consultation, they can still submit their views separately as an individual. There are a number of ways to respond:

- **Online** using the using the Scottish Government's consultation hub at <https://consult.gov.scot/alcohol-policy/alcohol-advertising-and-promotion>. You can save and return to your response while the consultation is still open.
- **By email** by sending the respondent information form and consultation questionnaire to alcoholmarketing@gov.scot
- **By post** by sending the respondent information form and consultation questionnaire to:
Alcohol Advertising and Promotion Consultation
Alcohol Harm Prevention Team Scottish Government
3E, St Andrews House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

The consultation questionnaire asks for views on a range of potential alcohol marketing restrictions. People can choose to answer as many of the questions as they wish and can provide simple 'yes'/'no' responses or more detailed comments. The consultation questions are listed in a [template](#) on the AFS website that you can use to help you prepare and submit your response.

Anyone inputting to consultation also has to send a [respondent information form](#) with their response. It asks for basic contact details and whether or not the response can be published (people also have the option to remain anonymous even if they give permission for their response to be published).

A range of restrictions are being considered by the Scottish Government

The Scottish Government has set out various ways that alcohol marketing could be restricted:

Alcohol marketing restrictions
<p>Sport and events sponsorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban alcohol sports sponsorship e.g., brands on players kits, adverts in stadiums. • Ban alcohol events sponsorship e.g., Edinburgh Fringe Festival, music festivals.
<p>Outdoor and public spaces marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban alcohol marketing outdoors e.g., on billboards, on buses.
<p>In-store alcohol marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict the visibility of alcohol in shops e.g., window displays, aisle-end displays. • Separate alcohol from other products e.g., with barriers, closed display cases.
<p>Brand-sharing and merchandise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban alcohol-branded merchandise e.g., branded T-shirts, jackets, glasses. • Apply marketing restrictions to no- or low-alcohol drinks e.g., Heineken 0.0.
<p>Print advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban advertising of alcohol in newspapers and magazines (produced in Scotland).
<p>Online marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban alcohol advertising online e.g., websites, via pop ups, social media platforms.
<p>Television and Radio Advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban alcohol advertising on television and radio completely. • Introduce a watershed for alcohol advertising on TV and radio.
<p>Cinema Advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict alcohol advertising in cinemas.
<p>Restrictions on content of adverts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict alcohol marketing to factual elements e.g., product type, alcohol content etc.

In addition, the consultation also asks about how any future alcohol marketing restrictions should be monitored and enforced, and whether the alcohol industry should be required to provide information to the Scottish Government about marketing campaigns and alcohol sales.

Suggestions of what to contribute to the consultation

Any views shared in response to the consultation will help decision makers to understand the issues and make more informed choices about what action to take. However, people in recovery may be more vulnerable to alcohol marketing and have unique insights into its potential impacts. It may be helpful to consider the following points when responding to the consultation:

- How often and where do you see alcohol being promoted in your daily life?
- Do you feel that you are targeted by alcohol marketing? If so, how?
- How have different types of alcohol marketing impacted on you?
- How can alcohol marketing affect a person's recovery journey?
- Which marketing restrictions could make the biggest difference to people in recovery?
- Are there any marketing restrictions that you wouldn't support? If so, why?
- Is there anything not included in the consultation that you'd like to suggest?

AFS can support you to share your views and get involved

AFS is able to support individuals and organisations to input to the consultation, including by:

- Facilitating discussions and focus groups
- Providing information, research, and evidence
- Providing updates and flagging future opportunities to input
- Identifying opportunities for people to speak about marketing and its impacts
- Connecting people to decision makers
- Supporting and promoting campaigning activities

For further information about any of the above, or to discuss other ways to get involved, please contact:

Marc Buchanan (Involvement & Partnerships Coordinator)

marc.buchanan@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

Alcohol Focus Scotland, 166 Buchanan St, Glasgow G1 2LW

0141 572 6700

You can also find more information about the consultation and alcohol marketing on the AFS website:

<https://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/campaigns-policy/alcohol-marketing-campaign/alcohol-marketing-resources/>