RASG

A new way of tackling public under age drinking

A Retail of Alcohol Standards Group (RASG)

Presentation

Establishing RASG

- Serious failings in under age sales in 2005
- RASG was launched with aim to *'Seek to eliminate underage sales by the end of 2006'*
- Supported by the UK Government
- Virtual network of most retailers across UK working together for first time

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The story so far…

- “Challenge 21” rapidly rolled out across UK
- Research commissioned into why check out staff make under age sales
- Radical new training programmes introduced
- Achieving significant and ongoing reduction in test purchase failures

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Challenge 21

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TUSAC Campaign Results

	Off licences	On licences	All premises
Test purchase operations	7,408	1,558	8,966
Sales	1,025 (14%)	287 (18%)	1,312 (15%)
PNDs issued	752	250	1,002
Premises targeted	2,199	484	2,683
At least 1 sale	833 (38%)	231 (48%)	1,064 (40%)
At least 2 sales	174 (8%)	50 (10%)	224 (8%)
At least 3 sales	17 (1%)	6 (1%)	23 (1%)

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Community Alcohol Partnership

- RASG continually looking at what could be done next to tackle the demand side
- Only way to create solutions was to ‘push every button’
- Working with Cambridgeshire Trading Standards in a specific area:
  - *The St Neot’s Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP)*

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CAP - benchmarking

- Measurement / benchmarking vital
- Trading Standards surveyed police, local residents, young people to get ‘before’ and ‘after’ viewpoints
- Police tracked incidents of anti-social behaviour involving under-18s and alcohol
- Litter ‘counts’ in areas where young people were known to congregate

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CAP – Trading Standards & Police

- Joint Trading Standards and Police operations
- Increased focus on underage purchasers
- Increased focus on proxy purchasers
- Alcohol confiscation from under-18s

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CAP – Retailers

- Local retailers sharing intelligence quickly with Trading Standards and Police
- Sharing information on broader local problems
- Dedicated ’phone numbers
- Operations planned in “hot spot” areas and stores informed in advance
- Better relationships not solely based on test purchase activity

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Communicating the Message

- Retailers and Police jointly communicate key messages
- Handouts developed for school and in store use
- Local schools and sixth form college visits
- Letter home to parents of young offenders

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Ensuring local buy-in

- In addition to trading standards, police, schools and retailers:
- Councillors and School Governors
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- Local Member of Parliament
- Media Partner

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CAP – local coverage

The Hunts Post

ST NEOTS and CAMBOURNE

Wednesday, September 12, 2007 www.huntspost.co.uk Price 75p where sold (£3

Blitz on young drinkers

A CAMPAIGN is launched today (Wednesday) calling time on underage drinkers in St Neots.

Community Alcohol Partnership

Town at forefront of campaign

AGE-RESTRICTED SALES

The view from over the counter

Richard Matthews recalls some valuable lessons from two days' 'work experience' in a Spar shop

'While I still do not believe cashiers can use the fact they have been pressurised by underage customers as an excuse for selling to them, I do have more empathy for staff working in shops after doing this'

www.huntspost.co.uk Newsdesk: 01480 411481

Post/news

Trailing the underage boozers

Gangs of youths, some as young as 13, hang around in the shadows, swigging alcohol from cans and bottles, hiding away from the road. At a skate park, a group of 40 youngsters congregates to drink the night away, leaving a trail of mess and destruction behind them. Just a fairly typical Friday night in St Neots, reporter ANDREW McGILL discovered, but work is in hand to tackle the problem.

ABOUT one in five children aged 11 to 15 will admit to drinking alcohol in the past seven days, according to NHS figures.

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Learnings

- **42 per cent decrease** in anti-social behaviour incidents from August 2007 (pre-project) to February 2008 (post-project)
- **94 per cent decrease** in under-age people found in possession of alcohol
- **92 per cent decrease** in alcohol-related litter at key hotspot areas
- No displacement to new areas
- Changed enforcement activity was **cost-neutral**
- Better relationship between retailers and enforcers
- Public perception that public spaces were more pleasant than previously – cleaner and fewer incidents of group drinking
- Winner of Better Regulation Award

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New CAPs in Cambridgeshire

- New CAP launched in the City of Cambridge
- Further roll outs planned for the rest of the county

"This is the new way of doing business, it's the way forward and it's not going to change. ***This is about the long term health of our children."***

Mark Hopkins ACC Cambridgeshire Constabulary

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Launch of Cambridge City CAP

L-R

Alastair Roberts, Head of Safer Communities Section, Cambridge City Council,
Nick Grant, Chair of RASG,
Leon Livermore, Head of Trading Standards, Cambridgeshire CC,
Inspector Jonathan Hutchinson, Neighbourhood Policing, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

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Beyond Cambridgeshire

- RASG has launched a toolkit endorsed by the Home Office for roll out to other areas
- Youth Alcohol Action Plan commits Home Office to encouraging wider take up
- First county wide CAP launched in Kent
- Further CAPs planned in IoW and Reading

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The future

- This is a problem for all of us
- RASG will use CAP and other good local practice to formulate holistic responses to local problems relating to underage drinking
- Ensure that retailers continue to take the lead in combating underage sales

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The Vision

"Shop staff have acted as our colleagues on the frontline and helped us to really bring home the impact of under-age drinking to the youngsters. We are never going to be able to cure under-age drinking completely but ***we believe with this scheme we can make a real difference. We hope that our work in St Neots will act as a blueprint for launching CAPs across Cambridgeshire and beyond.****"*

Leon Livermore

Head of Cambridgeshire Trading Standards

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Further Information

RASG is supported by the Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA)

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