



Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board's Annual Functions Report

Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, Section 9A

01/04/2025 – 31/03/2026



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1. Introduction – Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board

General

1.1 Dumfries and Galloway is a mainly rural area in South West Scotland. It covers approximately 2470 square miles with a population of around 145,500. The principal settlements are Dumfries (including Heathhall/Locharbriggs), Stranraer, Annan, Lockerbie, Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Newton Stewart. The region of Dumfries and Galloway is divided into four geographical areas (former District Council areas) as follows: Annandale and Eskdale, Nithsdale, Stewartry and Wigtownshire.

1.2 Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board was set up on 3 October 2024 when the previous four Divisional Licensing Boards (as below) in Dumfries and Galloway were dissolved:

- Annandale & Eskdale
- Nithsdale
- Stewartry
- Wigtown

1.3 While Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board is responsible for the licensing and regulation of alcohol throughout the region, the Licensing Policy Statement contains separate policies for each of the 4 geographical areas.

1.4 As at 31 March 2026, there were 581 (589 – 2024/25) licensed premises in Dumfries and Galloway. Within each geographical area, the breakdown is:

Board	2025/26	2024/25
Nithsdale	185	183
Wigtown	139	146
Annandale & Eskdale	152	155
Stewartry	105	105

Types of applications under the 2005 Act:

1.5 Under the 2005 Act, Licensing Boards are responsible for considering applications for:

- occasional licences
- provisional licences
- temporary licences
- personal licences
- transfer of premises licences
- variation of premises licences
- extension of licensing hours

2. The Licensing Objectives

2.1 The Act sets out the following five licensing objectives ("the licensing objectives"):

- (i) preventing crime and disorder
- (ii) securing public safety
- (iii) preventing public nuisance
- (iv) protecting and improving public health
- (v) protecting children and young persons from harm

2.2 The licensing objectives provide a basis for the administration of the licensing regime. They also provide potential reasons for refusal of an application, for the grant or variation of a premises licence or an occasional licence. Breach of the objectives may provide grounds for reviewing a premises licence. Conditions attached to a premises licence or an occasional licence may be based on any one or more of the licensing objectives.

2.3 In exercising its functions under the Act, the Board must have regard to the licensing objectives.

3. Annual Functions Report

3.1 Section 9A of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 requires Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board to publish an Annual Functions Report within 3 months of the end of the relevant financial year.

3.2 The Board must therefore prepare and publish an Annual Functions Report by 30 June 2026 for the financial year 2025-2026 (being 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026).

3.3 An Annual Functions Report must include the following:

- a statement explaining how the Board has had regard to the licensing objectives;
- a statement explaining how the Board has had regard to the Statement of Licensing Policy and any Supplementary Policy Statement (including the Board's statement with regard to its duty to assess overprovision);
- a summary of the decisions made by (or on behalf of) the Board during the financial year;
- information about the number of licences held under the 2005 Act in each Board's area (including the number of occasional licences issued in each year); and
- such other information about the exercise of each Board's functions as each Board considers appropriate.

3.4 In the year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the Licensing Board met as follows:

Board area	2025/26	2024/25
Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board	10 meetings	2 meetings
Nithsdale Divisional Licensing Board	No meetings *	5 meetings
Wigtown Divisional Licensing Board	No meetings *	3 meetings
Stewartry Divisional Licensing Board	No meetings *	2 meetings
Annandale & Eskdale Divisional Licensing Board	No meetings *	2 meetings
Conjoined meeting of all 4 Divisional Licensing Boards	No meetings *	1 meeting

*The Divisional Licensing Boards were dissolved on 3 October 2024 following the establishment of the Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board.

3.5 Applications were determined in an open and transparent manner in accordance with the licensing legislation and the Board's Licensing Policy Statement.

3.6 Information and guidance was made available to persons wishing to apply for a licence, make representations or lodge objections.

4. Summary of decisions made by the Board

4.1 Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board holds meetings to determine applications that cannot be dealt with via delegated powers (whereby a Licensing Board Hearing need not be held to determine an application and an authorised member of the licensing team may 'grant' certain applications).

4.2 The premises licences granted by the Board in 2025/26 are detailed within the **Appendix**.

4.3 During the course of the year, 2092 occasional licences and 92 extended hours applications were granted. For comparison purposes, during 2024/25, 1859 occasional licences and 72 extended hours were granted.

4.4 Any occasional licence and extended hours applications that attracted objections or representations or were outwith policy hours, were considered by the Convener of the Licensing Board in line with the Board's scheme of delegation, detailed within the Licensing Policy Statement.

4.5 In the course of the year, the Licensing Board granted 132 personal licences (2024/25 – 204). 100 were revoked (2024/25 – 225).

5. Reviews

Premises Licence Reviews

5.1 In the 2025/26 period, 3 applications for review of premises licences were considered by the relevant Licensing Board (2024/25 - 2). The decisions taken were 1) issue a written warning; 2) vary the licence; and 3) suspend the licence.

Personal Licence Reviews

5.2 In the 2025/26 period, 7 reviews of a Personal Licence took place (2024/25 - 4). In two reviews, the licences were endorsed, in one review the licence was suspended for six months and in the remaining four reviews, no further action was taken.

6. Licensing Policy Statement

The Board's reviewed Licensing Policy Statement came into effect on 4 November 2023 and will remain in force for a maximum period of 5 years. The Board may agree to prepare and publish Supplementary Statements within that period. The Policy Statement can be found at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15196/Dumfries-and-Galloway-Licensing-Board>

6.2 The next review of the Licensing Policy Statement will commence following the Local Government elections in May 2027.

6.3 The Board's Licensing Policy Statement includes an assessment of overprovision in accordance with section 7 of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. Following consideration of the available evidence, the Board previously determined that there are no localities within Dumfries and Galloway where there is overprovision of licensed premises. The Board continued to have regard to this assessment when determining applications.

7. Licensing Standards Officers

7.1 Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board has 3 (2.52 FTE) Licensing Standards Officers (LSOs):

- Julia Farroll, Council Offices, Sun Street, Stranraer
- Mary Irving, Council Offices, Sun Street, Stranraer
- Stuart Davidson, Kirkbank House, English Street, Dumfries

7.2 The LSOs' general roles are:

- Providing information and guidance concerning the operating of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
- Supervising the compliance by licence holders of the conditions of their licence and other requirements of the legislation
- Providing mediation services for the purposes of resolving or avoiding disputes or disagreements between licence holders and any other persons.

7.3 LSOs continue to carry out routine compliance check visits to licensed premises.

7.4 The LSOs continued to deal with enquiries and complaints throughout the

year with the majority being resolved without having to proceed formally to the Licensing Board. Issues which repeatedly arise are:

- Complaints of noise and anti-social behaviour at licensed premises
- Non-payment of annual fees
- Changes to layout plans without variation applications having been submitted

7.5 LSOs continue to work closely with Police Scotland and other partner agencies carrying out joint visits as and when necessary.

8. Statement on how the Board exercises its functions

8.1 The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 as amended (“the Act”) sets out regulations for the sale of alcohol and regulations for licensed premises and other premises on which alcohol is sold.

8.2 The Act is underpinned by five licensing objectives which the Board must have regard to when exercising its functions. These objectives are:

- a) Preventing crime and disorder
- b) Securing public safety
- c) Preventing public nuisance
- d) Protecting and improving public health
- e) Protecting children and young persons from harm

8.3 The Licensing Board is required by law to have a Licensing Policy Statement outlining how they will exercise their functions and duties under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (the 2005 Act) in order to promote each of the Licensing Objectives.

8.4 The current Policy Statement contains a range of issues pertaining to alcohol licensing and how the Board exercises its functions under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and can be found at <https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/business-licences-permits/licences-permits/dumfries-galloway-licensing-board>

8.5 The Board determines all applications in accordance with the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, the licensing objectives and its Statement of Licensing Policy.

8.6 In determining applications during the reporting period, the Board had regard to the licensing objectives by considering representations from Police Scotland, the Licensing Standards Officers and other statutory consultees. Where concerns were raised regarding public safety, crime and disorder, public nuisance or the protection of children and young persons from harm, these were taken into account when determining applications.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Dumfries and Galloway Licensing Board is pleased to report that licensed premises are continuing to generally be well run in their respective areas.

9.2 Overall, the Board is generally satisfied that the licensed trade is upholding and promoting the five licensing objectives which underpin the functioning of the whole licensing system.

9.3 The Board also recognises the efforts of the Licensing Service and external stakeholders (including Police Scotland) to ensure that licensed premises comply with the legislation and continue to uphold the licensing objectives.

9.4 Whilst the Board recognises generally the good practice and effort of licence holders to ensure that the licensing objectives are upheld and promoted, it fully expects licence holders to continue to promote and uphold the licensing objectives at all times.

Appendix

New Premises Licences granted during 2025-2026

Wigtown area

Lodge Unity 682 The Masonic Hall The Hollow Creetown DG8 7HZ	On sales
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Stewartry area

The Glenisle Inn Palnackie Castle Douglas DG7 1PG	On and Off sales
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Nithsdale area

Standard General Store Main Street Penpont Thornhill DG3 4BP	Provisional Off sales
Pan and Plate 17 Church Crescent Dumfries DG1 1DF	On and Off sales
55 Drumlanrig Street Thornhill DG3 5LY	Off sales
66 Glasgow Street Dumfries DG2 9AQ	Provisional Off sales
Whisky Globetrotters – Dispatch Room 43 Anwoth Avenue Dumfries DG2 9QJ	Off sales
Starsky's Convenience Store 5-7 Castle Street Dumfries DG1 1DJ	Off sales

Annandale & Eskdale area

7 – 13 High Street Lockerbie DG11 2JL	Provisional Off sales
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2024/25 for comparison	New Premises Licences granted
Wigtown	2 On sales 1 Provisional/Confirmation Off sales
Stewartry	1 On and Off sales 1 Confirmation Off sales
Nithsdale	1 On and Off sales 1 Confirmation Off sales 1 Off sales
Annandale & Eskdale	1 Confirmation Off sales 1 On and Off sales 2 Provisional/Confirmation Off sales 1 Off Sales 1 Provisional On and Off Sales