

**AREA**

For licensing purposes, the Soho boundary is understood as that outlined by Oxford and Regent Streets, Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road.

**OUR OBJECTIVES**

- To make Soho a better place for people to live, work and visit by preserving and enhancing the area's historic fabric, its existing character and its diversity of uses; and by improving its facilities, amenities and the sustainability of its environment.
- To protect the amenity and interests of local residents and the interests of smaller traders and workers, where necessary, giving priority to local community needs over those of the tourist industry.

**WE WORK TO ACHIEVE THIS BY:**

- Reviewing all licence applications for Soho, i.e. restaurants, fast-food premises, public houses and bars, off-sales of alcohol, theatres, cinemas, performance venues, music and dancing premises, hotels, betting shops, casinos, combined-use premises, sexual entertainment venues.
- Objecting to all applications which impact adversely on residential amenity.
- Hold regular monthly committee meetings to review licence applications and discuss licensing issues in Soho.
- If required, discuss license applications with applicants prior to submission.
- Liaising with the Planning Committee of the Soho Society.
- Supporting local residents with licensing issues.
- Liaising with relevant officers from Westminster Council (i.e. Licensing, Police, Environmental Health, etc.)
- Recording all representations and maintaining an accurate archive.

**POLICY CONTEXT**

This mandate is written within the context of the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and Westminster City Council's Licensing Policy 2011, and subsequent versions. Therefore all representations made on behalf of the Society in response to licensing applications aim to promote the licensing objectives of:

- Prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- Prevention of public nuisance
- Protection of children from harm

**STRESS AREA**

As part of the designated West End Stress Area, Soho has the highest number of licensed premises within Westminster. Stress Area policy includes core operating hours for licensed premises as follows:

- For premises for the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises:
  - Friday and Saturday: 10.00 to midnight
  - Sundays before Bank Holidays: Midday to midnight
  - Other Sundays: Midday to 22.30
  - Monday to Thursday: 10.00 to 23.30
- For premises for the supply of alcohol for consumption off the premises:
  - Monday to Saturday: 08.00 to 23.00
  - Sundays: 10.00 to 22.30
- For premises for the provision of other licensable activities:
  - Friday and Saturday: 09.00 to midnight
  - Sundays before Bank Holidays: 09.00 to midnight

- Other Sundays: 09.00 to 22.30
- Monday to Thursday: 09.00 to 23.30

**NB** Special policy on cumulative impact – Stress Areas – Policy STR1:

- It is the Licensing Authority's policy to refuse applications in the Stress Areas for: pubs and bars, fast food premises, and premises offering facilities for music and dancing; other than applications to vary hours within the Core Hours under Policy HRS1.
- Applications for other licensable activities in the Stress Areas will be subject to other policies, and must demonstrate that they will not add to cumulative impact in the Stress Areas.

**OUR DETAILED AIMS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

With consideration of cumulative impact and licensing objectives, we will object to:

- all applications that wish to trade beyond defined core hours
- all new applications for betting shops, bars, music, dance and nightclub premises
- sex shop licences
- We can also advise residents on reviews of licensed premises that are causing concern.

**RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

Authorised members of the Society engaging in licensing matters should always consider the following:

- **Protection of Residential Amenities** The Society will require particular protection of local residents in narrow streets where noise is more obtrusive and we will actively seek review of licences that are deemed to be causing a reduction of residential amenity
- **Schools and Nurseries** Special consideration will be paid to the interests of parents and children in the area of the school and/or nurseries and routes travelled by them as a matter of necessity
- **Proliferation issues** We will make objections on the ground of proliferation or concentration in any particular residential area, i.e. this reason alone may be regarded as grounds for objection
- **Hours of Opening and Conditions** We will not generally object to licence applications that conform with the relevant stipulations of the City of Westminster's Licensing Policy subject to objections for any other reason
- **Environmental Issues** Particular note will be paid to intrusive musical noise, closing times of premises, the switching off of mechanical equipment such as air conditioning, the disposal of rubbish and bottles, and the orderly and quiet leaving of premises by patrons and staff
- **Quality of the Licensee** We will make objections and representations in respect of licences where the operator has managed the premises in an unsuitable or inappropriate manner with regard to the aims of this mandate and the objects of the Society

**CONDUCT OF PERSONS SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY**

Any members of the Society who are authorised to engage in licensing-related activities must ensure that oral or written representations, opinions or comments made on the Society's behalf use reasoned and objective argument based on empirical research or direct experience on issues relating to the charity's objects. Members must remember at all times their responsibility as representatives of the Society and not conduct themselves in any way that may be likely to call into question its reputation.