



The Licensing Technical Support Officers
Regulatory Services, Brighton & Hove City Council
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13/10/2026

Police Station
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Dear Emily Fountain,

RE: APPLICATION FOR THE REVIEW OF THE PREMISES LICENCE FOR KINGS ARMS, 56 GEORGE STREET, BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX, BN2 1RJ UNDER SECTION 53A OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003.

With reference to the Expedited Review application dated 28th September 2026 made by Superintendent James Collen on behalf of the Chief Officer of Police for Sussex, I write to make further submissions to request the revocation of the Premises Licence for the Kings Arms, 56 George Street. This is on the grounds of undermining the licensing objectives of the prevention of crime and disorder and public safety.

Further investigation following the incident of serious disorder at the premises on 25th September 2026 has revealed serious failings by the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) and management at the Kings Arms. Police contend there has been a severe undermining of the licensing objectives which has ultimately led to serious crime and disorder directly associated with the premises.

Below are additional details evidencing the systemic issues at the premises, further to the Section 53a previously submitted:

A. Friday 25th September 2026 – Incident of Violent Disorder

Please refer to the Certificate and Summary Licence Review in the Licensing Panel papers, for previous submissions in relation to this incident that resulted in the initial Section 53A review.

The investigation remains ongoing with multiple suspects and arrests having been made on the night and subsequently. [REDACTED]

Police Licensing believe that the lack of control in management of this premises and customers led to an outbreak of large disorder [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

B. Saturday 26th September 2026 at 11:00

Police Licensing Officers PC Bernascone CB328 and PC Wade EA128 attended the King's Arms to carry out drug swabbing following the incident the previous night. They were met by the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS), Gary Wilson who facilitated access to the premises. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Swabs were taken throughout and the results were as follows:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[illegible]

The results are explained as follows:

Readings of between 1 and 2 times the alarm threshold can be classed as a “low” response. It could be attributed to cross contamination of the surface tested, background contamination, or greatly degraded historic contamination. It is not indicative of recent direct contact.

Readings of between 2 and 3 times the alarm threshold can be classed as a “medium” response. It could be attributed to cross contamination of the surface tested or recent historic contamination that may have been left a number of days prior to the sample being taken.

Readings of between 3 and 4 times the alarm threshold can be classed as a “high” response. This level of response would not be attributed to cross contamination and is indicative of recent and direct contact with measurable quantities of the narcotic identified by the machine.

Readings of 4.00 and above are estimated to relate to microgram amounts of contamination being transferred to the sample media. This level of contamination is not generally experienced in any other environment than somewhere that has been in direct contact with a bulk amount of the source narcotic, i.e. this level is not generally experienced as background contamination or through incidental cross contamination by being in close contact with other contaminated areas or persons.

Whilst carrying out drugs swabbing at the premises the officers located a number of used deal baggies with trace amounts of white powder. They also located a personal use amount of what was believed to be cannabis stashed on top of the urinal cisterns in the male toilets.

A shopping list was also located on the back of a [REDACTED] slip which included the items 'Coke – 4 grams' and 'or an 8 ball' – both believed to be drug references.

Paragraph 11.27 of the Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003 (September 2026) provides:

11.27 *There is certain criminal activity that may arise in connection with licensed premises which should be treated particularly seriously. These are the use of the licensed premises:*

- for the sale and distribution of drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the laundering of the proceeds of drugs crime;



With the drugs readings, evidence of drug taking/stashing within the premises as well as a 'shopping list' featuring drugs, it is highly likely that drugs are being sold, distributed and consumed within the King's Arms. The Section 182 Guidance notes that criminal activity of this nature should be **'treated particularly seriously'** and that is why Sussex Police have called a summary review of the premises licence and are asking for revocation in this instance.

Appendix A: CCTV footage of locating of baggies and stashed drugs

Appendix B: Shopping list

Appendix C: Technology Statement for Ion Track Machine.

C. Monday 28th September 2026 at 10:00.

Police Licensing Officers attended to carry out a full licensing check at the King's Arms following the incident on Friday 25th September 2026. It is noted that the premises was reopened for business at this time (10:00am) and had around 6 customers inside drinking. The DPS, Gary Wilson, was present and went through the premises licence with the officers.

They observed the following inconsistencies and breaches of the premises licence:

Part B was not fully on display in a prominent place – only Page 2 of 3 was showing.

Part A showed an incorrect current home address for the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS).

Under Annex 3:

1. Digital CCTV and appropriate recording equipment to be installed, operated and maintained throughout the premises internally to cover all public areas and the rear smoking yard, with sufficient numbers of cameras as agreed with Sussex Police. CCTV footage will be stored for a minimum of 28 days, and the management will give full and immediate cooperation and technical assistance to the Police in the event that CCTV footage is requested for the prevention and detection of suspected or alleged crime. The CCTV images will record and display dates and times, and these times will be checked regularly to ensure their accuracy and will be changed when British Summer Time starts and ends.

The cameras were noted to be recording in all the required areas and were of good quality. Footage provided as part of the investigation has also confirmed this. However, the system was running 7 minutes and 40 seconds fast which was something that had been identified to the premises previously during a visit on 14th May 2025. Therefore, would have been expected to be rectified over 16 months later.

2. The premises will employ a mobile support unit to cover times where SIA registered door supervisors are not on duty. All personnel carrying out security will be licensed by the Security Industry Authority. All security personnel carrying out these duties will sign in and out of the venue on each occasion when called to the venue. This will be incorporated into the incident log.

There was no Mobile Support Unit (MSU) contract in place at the premises and so no provision for when SIA registered doorstaff were not on duty. While the Kings Arms did possess a Brighton Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) radio and used this to call for assistance during the incident on 25th September 2026, they did not have the correct back up of an MSU in place.



There was no incident log available at the time of PS Hancox and PC Wade's check so this could not be checked to view any incidents recorded in it.

3. SIA licensed door supervisors shall be employed on occasions when a requirement is identified by the licence holder's written risk assessment or requested by Sussex Police in writing at least 7 days in advance. Further, as part of this written risk assessment the premises licence holder will consult with Sussex Police and take into consideration their advice regarding the following: public holidays, when seasonal variations are taking place and other city wide events e.g. Pride, Kemp Town Carnival etc. This written risk assessment will be reviewed every 12 months or sooner should the need arise and a copy shall be retained at the premises.

PS Hancox and PC Wade were not presented with or shown any form of Risk Assessment document relating to SIA security during the inspection and it was not believed that one existed. The only document remotely related was a generic Stonegate Door Staff Policy (Appendix D).

It was noted that the premises had employed SIA security during Brighton Pride as there was a completed sign on/off duty sheet for that.

4. The premises will become a member of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) whilst this scheme is in existence or other similar body approved by the Licensing Authority.

The premises are members of the BCRP and have a BCRP issued radio that was utilised on the night of 25th September 2026. However, during this visit there was no power to the base station and the radio was out of battery and therefore not operating. As the premises was open for licensable activity during this check, the expectation would be that the radio was powered up and switched on. Intelligence is shared via the radio network during the day also which is of particular importance given the Kings Arms location off St James's Street and the earlier time it opens to serve alcohol.

5. No glasses to be permitted outside the premises and the number of patrons allowed in the designated smoking area to be limited to 8 at any time, and 4 after 23:00 every day. This should be overseen by:

- *a manager on: Sunday – Thursday from 21:00 until close*
- *a manager or SIA registered door staff member (if working) on: Friday and Saturday 21:00 until close*

The DPS Gary Wilson stated that he found it very difficult, especially when busy, to control the numbers outside and keep them down to 8 persons. The informal smoking area is known to be outside the front of the pub on the pavement and so customers gravitate there. Officers reminded him that after 23:00 this should be limited to only 4 persons.

6. A noise limiter device will be fitted to manage recorded music and this will be set to a level agreed by the Licensing Authority.

Gary Wilson (DPS) had no knowledge of a limiter at the premises.

7. The premises will adopt a 'Challenge 25' policy whereby any person attempting to buy alcohol who appears to be under 25 will be asked for photographic ID as proof of their age. The only ID that will be accepted are passports and UK driving licences with a photograph or Portman group proof of age cards bearing the 'PASS' mark hologram. This list of approved ID may be amended or revised with the prior written agreement of Sussex Police and the Licensing Authority without the need to amend the actual licence.



There was Challenge 25 signage in the entrance hall and a poster to the right-hand side of the bar.

8. The premises will maintain a refusals book to record all incidences of age related products being refused and refusals to persons who are drunk. This book will be readily available for inspection by Council or Police upon request.

There was no refusals book on the premises and Officers were informed that while there was a 'challenge' button on the till, it was unknown if a report could be generated from this to show how many, if any, refusals had been made and for what reason. Therefore, an inspection could not be made.

Appendix E: Breach letter to DPS issued via email. Copies sent to Area Manager and representative for the Premises Licence Holder (PLH).

Appendix F: Response from PLH with offered conditions.

Below is a further account of Sussex Police's additional interactions with the premises beginning in May 2025:

1. Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 12:45 – Licensing Visit – Pre Pride

Police Licensing Officers attended the premises alongside Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) Licensing & Environmental Protection Officers for their yearly Pre Pride visit.

Yearly pre-Pride visits also give management opportunities to discuss any current issues – nothing was raised at the time of this visit.

2. Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 17:30 – Police Visit – CCTV request

Police Officers attended for a matter relating to an incident nearby to ask for CCTV. The manager was noted as being very patient and allowed officers to view the footage that was required. They knew how to operate the system without issue and advised that the company had approved a new camera to be installed outside the premises which will offer a greater view of the area than the current one.

It was noted that the CCTV time was **7 minutes fast**.

This was still the case during the full licensing inspection carried out by PS Hancox and PC Wade on 28th September 2026, over 16 months later.

3. Friday 16th May 2025 at 23:10 – Allegation of a fight

A call was received by Police at 23:10 reporting there were 5-6 people pushing each other outside the venue and concerns over a fight.

Outcome: Police attended at 23:15 and noted that all had calmed down. The officer spoke to people in the pub who stated it was not a fight but a lawful ejection.

4. Wednesday 21st May 2025 at 23:32 – Report from DPS

██████████ (the DPS at the time) called police to report that a regular had come out of the toilets with a white substance on his nose. Staff asked him to do a drugs wipe, which he did, and it



turned blue immediately indicating drugs were present. The male was asked to leave which he refused to do but then security asked him to leave and he did so without further trouble. [REDACTED] banned the male going forward and wanted to log this with police.

5. Friday 4th July 2025 at 16:52 – Harassment of DPS

A report was received by Police that the male banned by [REDACTED] on 21st May 2025 had continued to contact both [REDACTED] and other members of staff of the Kings Arms with increasingly violent threats.

This was recorded as harassment and investigated as such.

Outcome: The harassment was ultimately filed on 31st August 2025 as the victim could no longer be contacted. It is believed this may have been due to [REDACTED] leaving [REDACTED] position as DPS on 11th September 2025 and no longer living at or managing the premises.

6. Friday 1st August 2025 at 19:35 – Report of suspected drink driver

Phone call to Police from doorstaff at the premises. Doorstaff stated they had tried to stop a male they believed was intoxicated from driving away in his car. Unfortunately, they had been unable to stop them and wanted to provide a description of the car and the VRM to Police.

7. Sunday 7th December 2025 at 20:07 and 20:53 – Problem person outside the venue

Informant called Police to report that a female had entered the pub shouting and swearing about a lost item but then left. They advised that they would call back if she returned and there were any further issues.

A second call came in to report the female had returned and was screaming and shouting and smashing on the windows. She was then throwing chicken at the premises. Police attended at 21:00 and spoke to staff at the pub who confirmed the person had been throwing chicken at the windows but had now moved on.

Outcome: Police searched the area but could not locate the female so the CAD was closed.

8. Sunday 29th March 2026 at 23:43 – Customer report of common assault – High intox

Initial call received by Police at 23:43 from an individual who the call taker noted sounded 'very drunk'. The caller stated he had attended the Kings Arms on George Street, Brighton for a pint, let his dog off the lead and was then told he was too drunk and had to leave. It was at this point he was ejected. The caller stated that a male who he believed was [REDACTED] had thrown him out of the pub by his neck.

The caller made further calls to Police via 999 on 30/03/2026 at 00:16, 01:00, 01:12, 01:45 (transferred to 101), 01:48 (via 101), 01:53 (via 999) and again via 101 at 18:30. He made further allegations about being assaulted, someone stealing his dog and about drug dealing within the pub. He was noted as 'sounding drunk' by several different call takers who interacted with him.

Ambulance called for Police attendance at 02:08 as they had received a call regarding the same male being assaulted by a female who had hit him over the head with crutches. Police were with ambulance and the male at 02:16. They noted he had no injuries and they located his dog. Officers also stated that the male was unable to talk to Police due to his level of intoxication.



Calls were also received by police from other persons about the disturbance.

Outcome: Police attended and located the caller who was noted as drunk. He was removed from the Kings Arms (by his own admission) due to being drunk. He then remained in the vicinity causing further issues and taking up Police time.

The matter was recorded as a common assault but reclassified to non-fatal strangulation as per recording guidelines. Unfortunately, CCTV was unable to be provided by the venue despite being requested and was ultimately filed due to lack of evidence.

9. Monday 30th March 2026 – Intelligence received

Sussex Police received information that drug dealing was taking place outside the Kings Arms, 56 George Street, Brighton. The intelligence stated that a drug deal was seen to take place between two persons where white powder was exchanged for money.

10. Tuesday 14th April 2026 at 17:37 – Voicemail from DPS Gary Wilson

Police Licensing Officer M Thorogood received a voicemail from the DPS Gary Wilson advising that the premises was having CCTV issues. Mr Wilson stated it should all be fixed tomorrow.

It is believed these issues were identified due to the premises being unable to provide CCTV for the incident on 29/03/2026.

11. Thursday 23rd April 2026 – Licensing Visit – Pre Pride

Police Licensing Officers attended the premises alongside Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) Licensing & Environmental Protection Officers for their yearly Pre Pride visit. They met with the DPS, Gary Wilson, to talk through the premises plans for Pride 2026. Mr Wilson was noted as very engaging and was advised around the expectations for Pride in his location. Any potential Temporary Event Notice application was discussed, and it was agreed they would apply on the same terms as last year.

The new Area Manager was also meant to meet Police and BHCC officers at the premises but did not attend.

12. Friday 8th May 2026 at 13:15 – Hate Crime

Sussex Police received a report from the online reporting service advising that the informant works nearby and regularly has to walk past the King's Arms pub. Clientele of the premises had made racially motivated comments towards the informant on at least two occasions over the last 3 months. The first time in March, the informant had gone inside to advise staff behind the bar what had happened, but no action was taken and the informant was left to feel uncomfortable and unsafe. They therefore left the premises. On this occasion (May 2026) the informant was walking to get some lunch and had forgotten to cross the road to avoid the pub and the patrons outside. They again heard customers make discriminatory remarks based on their appearance. They wanted to report as felt the premises should be doing more to stop their customers being abusive in the street.

Outcome: This was filed as no suspects could be identified.

13. 16th May 2026 at 19:50 – High levels of intoxication



Sussex Police received a 999 call from a male reporting he had been accused of being paedophile. He stated that he had been asked to leave and wanted Police to come down to deal with the situation. The call taker noted that the male sounded intoxicated and that they could barely understand him. The male became increasingly aggressive on the phone, swearing at the call taker and demanding 'you get down here or I'll kick off'. The call taker ended up having to terminate the call as the male's behaviour escalated to the point of being abusive and he was refusing advice to leave the premises and go elsewhere.

The male called Police on 999 five times over the next 5 hours and was noted as intoxicated by each call taker. During his calls at 00:44 and 00:45 he stated he was suicidal and was going to set himself on fire.

Outcome: Police and Ambulance were tasked to attend at 00:56 and attempted to locate the male in central Brighton with no success. Ambulance was stood down and Police went to the male's home address at 02:38 where they located him. Attending Officers noted that he was 'very intox'. They ensured his safety and then stood down.

14. 3rd July 2026 – Email from DPS

DPS emailed Police Licensing to advise that they were not going to apply for a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) for Pride this year. They stated they felt their permitted hours were enough.

15. 17th July 2026 at 22:53 – Hate Crime and Common Assault

Informant called Police to report he had been assaulted at the premises when attending the premises for a karaoke night with work colleagues.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Police carried out initial enquiries but struggled to get CCTV from the King's Arms. On 22nd July 2026, the OIC (Officer in Charge) contacted Police Licensing to ask for assistance in getting CCTV as they had been unsuccessful so far. PC Bernascone made contact with the DPS, Gary Wilson, via email on 24th July 2026 (Appendix G) asking for CCTV to be made available.

During the investigation it was found that CCTV from the premises couldn't be uploaded via email link and could only be provided on a USB stick. The OIC reported on 10/08/2026 that CCTV had been obtained by Police Licensing and uploaded to Police systems for viewing. [REDACTED]

Outcome: CCTV and statements from the victim and witnesses have been provided. A named suspect has been identified and has been booked for a voluntary attendance interview. The case is ongoing.



It can be seen from the seriousness of the incident on 25th September 2026 and the subsequent investigation that there are significant concerns over drug use, drug stashing, potential drug dealing and intoxication levels at the premises. Poor management of problem customers at the earliest stage means that persons under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs have been permitted to remain on the premises, even after verbal altercations have taken place. This has culminated in the serious disorder and evidence of serious crime which led to the police taking the unusual step of submitting a summary review application.

While previous DPS's have been proactive in preventing drug use and banning persons known to take drugs within the premises, it would appear this has not been the case with subsequent DPS. Additionally, premises staff (who should be trained and overseen by the DPS) have not consistently recognised and managed intoxication levels or customer behaviour inside the premises, leading to ongoing issues even when ejections have been made.

It is worth noting that the premises has had 4 different DPS in the 17 months of interactions referred to within this letter. These are as follows:

	05/06/2023 – 11/09/2025
	11/09/2025 – 26/01/2026
	26/01/2026 – 23/02/2026
	23/02/2026 – 02/10/2026 (Removed by PLH following receipt of the Section 53a Review)

Without strong and consistent management, it appears that customers have been able to deal and take drugs within the premises. There is also evidence on two occasions in the last six months where customers who have been removed from the premises due to intoxication have continued to cause issues for Police and Ambulance services hours after they have attended the Kings Arms. This use of valuable resources could have been prevented if interventions had been made at an earlier point within the premises e.g. not allowing these customers to become intoxicated.

The nature of the current clientele means that the drug issues, high intoxication and related disorder are highly likely to continue unless there is a real break with what has been seen before. While conditions can go some way to mitigating the risk of crime and disorder inside a venue, they need to be in conjunction with strong and consistent management as well as SIA security to manage and remove problem customers. At present, Police Licensing have lost confidence in the Premises Licence Holder as an operator due to the consistent failings we have seen over the last 17 months. This situation has culminated in a case of serious crime and disorder where the submission of a Section 53a Review has been seen as the only Police course of action.

Sussex Police acknowledge that the Premises Licence Holder has taken a number of steps following the serious incident on 25th September 2026 including:

- Voluntarily closing the premises for 26th and 27th September 2026.
- Agreeing to voluntarily close until the full review has been heard once receiving the Section 53a Review.
- Removing the DPS, Gary Wilson, following receipt of the Section 53a review and the results of the interim steps hearing.
- Providing some initial proposed new premises licence conditions (Appendix F)
- Arranged a meeting with Sussex Police Licensing – booked for 14th October 2026.

However, the seriousness of this incident, combined with the nature of the current clientele, the history of the premises and expectations of the customers as well as no consistent strong management mean that without significant changes, Sussex Police cannot see how the current



premises licence can remain without a real risk to the licensing objectives continuing to be undermined.

Therefore, at this time Sussex Police are requesting that the Licensing Panel give real consideration to revocation of the premises licence of the Kings Arms, 56 George Street.

Additional evidence to support the incidents and interactions detailed in this letter, including the appendixes referenced, will be supplied in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Sgt Mark Redbourn o.b.o. Insp Ben Morrison
Operations, Planning & Events (inc. Licensing) Inspector
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Sussex Police

Please address all future correspondence to Brighton & Hove Licensing Unit, Police Station, John Street, Brighton, BN2 0LA.

