

Attn Licensee ONLY  
 Pheasant Public House  
 225 Southampton Street

licensing@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk



07 October 2020

Reading  
 RG1 2RB

Dear Licensee,

As you may be aware, on 09 September 2020 your premises was swabbed for traces of drugs.

I have listed the full set of results in the table below but, based on your highest result I can tell you that overall, in relation to drugs misuse, we consider your premises to currently be of **significant concern**.

Because of this, it is vital that you give the matter your urgent attention. Advice and guidance is available to assist you in addressing the issue (see below). It should be noted that if such advice is declined or ignored and the problem persists, then the police will seriously consider taking licensing enforcement action.

Location	Drug Type	Reading	Grading
Gents Toilets - Cubicle toilet seat	Cocaine	3.44	High
Gents Toilets - Cubicle window sill	Cocaine	4.92	High
Gents Toilets - Cubicle window sill	MDMA	2.23	Medium
Ladies Toilets - Cubicle 1 toilet seat	Cocaine	2.65	Medium
Ladies Toilets - General cubicle	Cocaine	4.64	High
Ladies Toilets - Window sill (3)	Cocaine	1.85	Low
Ladies Toilets - Window sill (2)	Cocaine	3.58	High
Ladies Toilets - Window sill (1)	Cocaine	1.19	Low
Gents Toilets - Window sill	Cocaine	1.61	Low
Gents Toilets - sink	No Drugs (clean)	0	Clean
Bar Area - Pool table	No Drugs (clean)	0	Clean
<b>Overall Grading:</b>		<b>HIGH</b>	

Overleaf you will find some basic information to explain how the swabbing process works and how we interpret the results, along with some advice on combatting the misuse of drugs on your premises. Should you wish to discuss the above results or seek further advice, then please feel free to make contact either with your local police licensing officer or a member of your local neighbourhood policing team.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Licensing Team  
Thames Valley Police

## About Drug Swabbing

Few licensees would condone, much less welcome, drugs on their premises. However, since it is rare for drug users to be open about it in public, the problem tends to be hidden and licensees can be forgiven for believe that - particularly in the absence of any other criminality - it doesn't exist.

Although drug swab results (positive and negative) can be used as part of formal proceedings such as licence reviews, Thames Valley Police's drug swabbing programme is primarily intended to inform the licensee of the extent of drug misuse on their premises so that they can do something about it.

Powdery materials - in this case illicit drugs - leave behind particulate contamination which is not visible to the naked eye and which is only removed after vigorous and/or repeated cleaning.

The swabbing process simply involves firmly wiping a swab across the relevant surfaces (we focus on smooth, level areas which are larger than the size of a credit card) before analysing it using a sophisticated drug testing device which gives us a reading that tells us

### **Reading is 0**

Zero readings are graded as CLEAN.

### **Reading is between 0.01 and 0.99**

These are graded as TRACE. The drug levels may be as a result of cross-contamination, rather than being in direct contact with the swabbed surface, or else it may be that it is several days since the drugs were there.

### **Reading is between 1 and 1.99**

These are graded as LOW. Although we would not normally be concerned about a low reading, it can depend upon the day and location that the swab was taken - it may be a few days since the drugs were there for example.

### **Reading is between 2 and 2.99**

These are graded as MEDIUM. This is the stage that we would start to be concerned about the readings, as we can be confident that they reflect a genuine and recent presence of drugs. There is one exception though - some cleaning products can leave traces that result in a false positive for opiates (i.e. heroin). so we treat any heroin result in this range as LOW.

### **Reading is 3 or higher**

These are graded as HIGH. Any high reading is of serious concern and in urgent need of attention.

## Combatting Drugs

A more comprehensive range of advice can be found in our document "Combatting Drugs: A Guide For Licensees" - if you don't already have a copy, please contact your local police licensing officer or check our website.

Generally, vigilance and proactivity are key, which you can achieve by doing (amongst other things) the following:

- frequent glass collection/table wiping to allow staff to monitor customers
- regular checks of all toilet, car park and garden areas
- train staff in unobtrusive monitoring techniques and what to look out for
- ensure staff inform you immediately, but discreetly, of any suspicious activity
- if you have a separate disabled toilet, keep it locked with the key behind the bar so patrons have to ask for it.

Another useful technique is to grease the flat surfaces in your toilet areas - drugs will stick to grease, which hinders the user in taking them. There are two vital points to remember though:

- DO NOT use WD40 or any other solvent-based products as you could be liable if someone snorts it and causes themselves harm. Cooking oil (vegetable oil, olive oil etc) is most commonly used.
- Check the toilets more frequently to check that no-one has tried to wipe the grease off, or indeed that there isn't any drug residue stuck to the grease that may be visible to other customers.

As an alternative to greasing, you can 'design out' drug use by ensuring there are no suitable surfaces available. This can be done by blocking in cisterns and toilet tissue dispensers, or by giving them sloping tops that are at an angle of at least 40 degrees, as well as removing toilet seats etc.