

PRESS RELEASE

Lancashire triumphs in Responsible Drinks Retailing Awards



(l-r): Rosie Davenport, editor, Off Licence News; Mark Baird of sponsors Diageo; Gerry Smallshaw and Samantha Beetham of Lancashire County Council Trading Standards; Paul Charity, editor, Morning Advertiser

Lancashire County Council has taken the top title in the national Responsible Drinks Retailing Awards 2009.

An Alliance between the Council's Trading Standards team and the Young Persons Alcohol Project collected the Best Initiative Award from the organisers, leading drinks industry magazines *Morning Advertiser* and *Off Licence News*, at a presentation in London on the 12 November. Judges praised the Trading Standards team, commenting, "This is a model of how local authorities can help to 'call time' on irresponsible drinks retailing. There's no doubt that the sterling work done by Lancashire County Council's Trading Standards is helping to protect local people from the worst effects of alcohol misuse and creating a safer environment for everyone. They thoroughly deserve to win this national title."

The initiative is based on tackling drink related problems through a number of strands. Judges were particularly impressed with how the authority consulted with local businesses from businesses to understand their issues, and has focused on working with, not against them. For example, businesses that fail test purchase operations are offered training rather than being prosecuted immediately.

Of particular merit in Lancashire's winning Award entry was their 'Agecheck' interactive DVD, distributed to 10,000 businesses in Lancashire. This is now recognised as best practice and copies have been sold to 150 other authorities and to three retail chains.

The Responsible Drinking Awards are now in their sixth year. They recognise those businesses and organisations that don't simply operate within the letter of the law, but go out of their way to make sure alcohol is sold in a responsible way – and so reduce the antisocial impact on communities.

The Best Initiative category is sponsored by drinks company Diageo. The Awards are a strong 'fit' for the company's approach to promoting responsible drinking, which is about working in partnership to seek innovative solutions to alcohol harm.

Responsible Drinks Retailing Awards 2009: winners

Local Authority of the Year	Derby Community Safety Partnership
Police Champions of the Year	Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Best Initiative	Lancashire County Council Trading Standards
Managed Pub Company of the Year	J D Wetherspoon
Tenanted/Leased Pub of the Year	The Globe Inn, Chichester
Pubwatch of the Year	Rhyl Rules Pubwatch
Chain Retailer of the Year	Asda
Independent Retailer of the Year	TheDrinkShop.com, Ramsgate