

Management and staff from Russell Cellar's, Winemark and Russell's Shop-4-You Off Licence Premises located in the Castlereagh Borough have signed up to an Off Licence voluntary code of practice and in doing so have agreed to not selling alcohol to anyone under the age of 18 or to those perceived to be buying for persons under 18.

Although it is legal to sell alcohol to anyone over 18, staff will ask for identification from anyone not known to be over 18 and who looks to be /appears to be under 21. Staff will question, and if appropriate, refuse anyone who is buying large quantities of alcohol or those who have bought alcohol on more than one occasion on one day. Staff will liaise and co-operate with local police and council officers.

A training programme for off licence staff highlighting the principles of the scheme along with the distribution of promotional material was funded by Castlereagh Community Safety Partnership whose Manager Stephen Addley stated , " Underage drinking and alcohol misuse is always of concern within the council area. There is also a strong correlation between alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour. To help reduce the problem of underage and binge drinking in Castlereagh we are pleased that the above mentioned off- licences throughout the Castlereagh Borough Council area have signed up and intend to implement our code of practice which gives guidance on the responsible sale of alcohol."

The Code of Practice is also supported by Castlereagh Borough Council, Castlereagh District Policing Partnership and Castlereagh Police Service Northern Ireland.