

**A consultation on fees under the Licensing Act 2003**

**Response from Arts Council England**

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

From March 2012 to April 2015 we will invest £1.4 billion of public money from government, and an estimated £1 billion from the National Lottery in arts and culture to help create experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

We support the Government’s continued efforts to reduce the burdens on businesses and not-for-profit groups affected by the 2003 Licensing Act, including proposals to remove many activities from the scope of licensing entirely. Consequently, we agree with the principles set out in this consultation, and welcome an approach to locally-set fees which aligns with existing proposals.

In particular, we support the rationale of the ‘combined class’ as set out in 6.18 of your consultation document and agree that theatres, art galleries, arts centres, community premises and other arts and culture venues which are not primarily used for drinking, and rarely open after midnight should be excluded from any higher fee amount given that evidence shows they are not associated with higher average costs.

We will continue to take an interest in developments and monitor further proposals on ‘additional fees’ for large events, and other matters which may have an impact on arts and culture organisations.