



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Bill: Digital Engagement

Summary of Online Forum Submissions to support the Criminal Justice
Committee's scrutiny of the Bill.

Participation and Communities Team

March 2022



Fireworks in Scotland: Digital Engagement

The Committee agreed at its meeting on 9th February 2022 to launch an online platform to gather the views and experiences of the public in relation to the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Bill.

The online platform was open for submissions from 14th February-11th March 2022.

The platform enabled participants to rate proposals up or down using rating buttons (👍 or 👎) and comment on eight proposals set out in the Bill by putting forward a point for or against each proposal.

There were also discussions on whether the proposed laws should go further; or if the proposals go too far.

Who took part?

Over **1,400 people** took part in the online discussion providing **over 1,600 comments** on provisions in the Bill and **nearly 11,000 ratings**.

To counter potential digital exclusion, and to support diversity and equal access, the Participation and Communities Team (PACT) provided support and resources to partners in communities to gather a range of views. As a result, we received additional contributions from war veterans via Erskine, people with visual impairment in collaboration with RNIB, and the views of neuro-atypical people from the South Lanarkshire Autism Resource Centre, amongst others. The views gathered in this manner was incorporated on to the site and is part of the summary of the key themes is available below.

To lower barriers to participation, users could choose to register to participate in several ways:

1. By registering an account on the platform with their email address, with the choice to provide additional demographic information
2. By linking their Facebook account
3. Clicking the “Participate Anonymously” which created an anonymous account for participants to use without providing any additional information

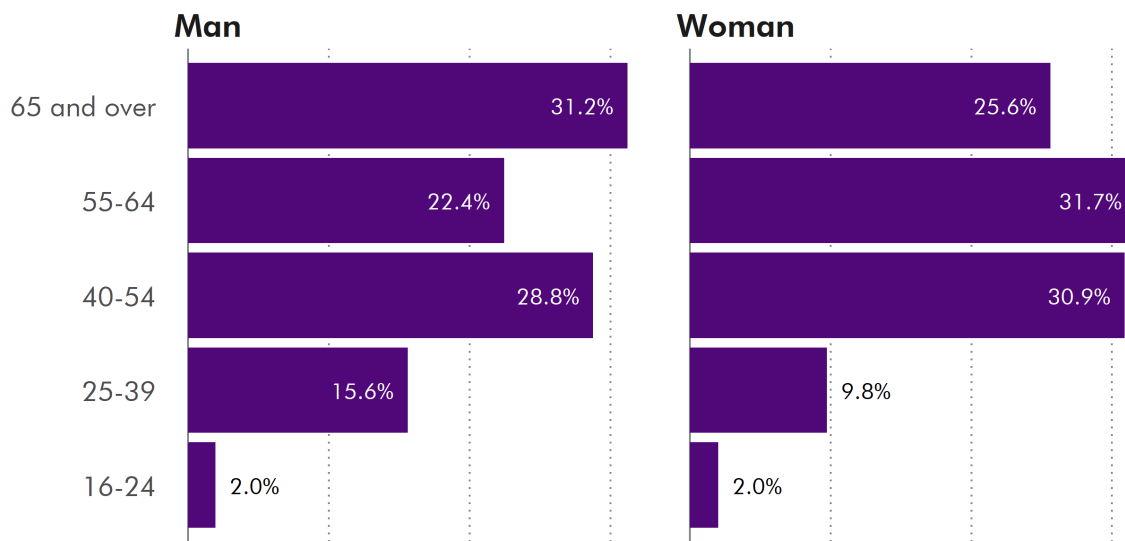
467 users provided some demographic information, which is illustrated below to provide a snapshot of participation levels.

Gender

Around 55% of those who provided information on gender indicated they were a woman; and 45% were men. Three users indicated that they described their gender “in another way.”

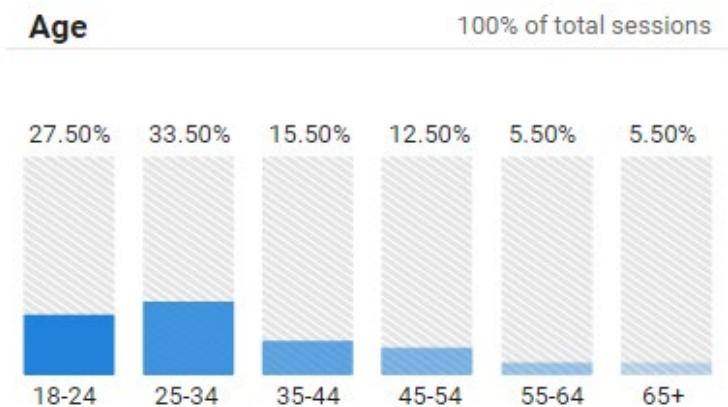
Age

The data from the 457 people who provided details about their age is outlined below:



One user indicated that they were “under 16.”

While this data suggests that we achieved more engagement from older demographics, other data available to us relating to the 12,000 visitors to the site estimated that 61% of users were under 35:

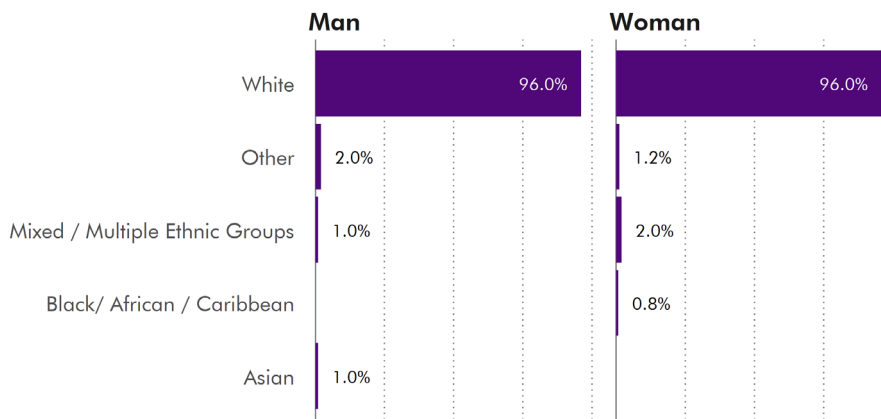


This potentially suggests that we did reach a younger audience, however those aged under 35 are more likely to choose to participate in digital engagement activities anonymously.

Ethnicity

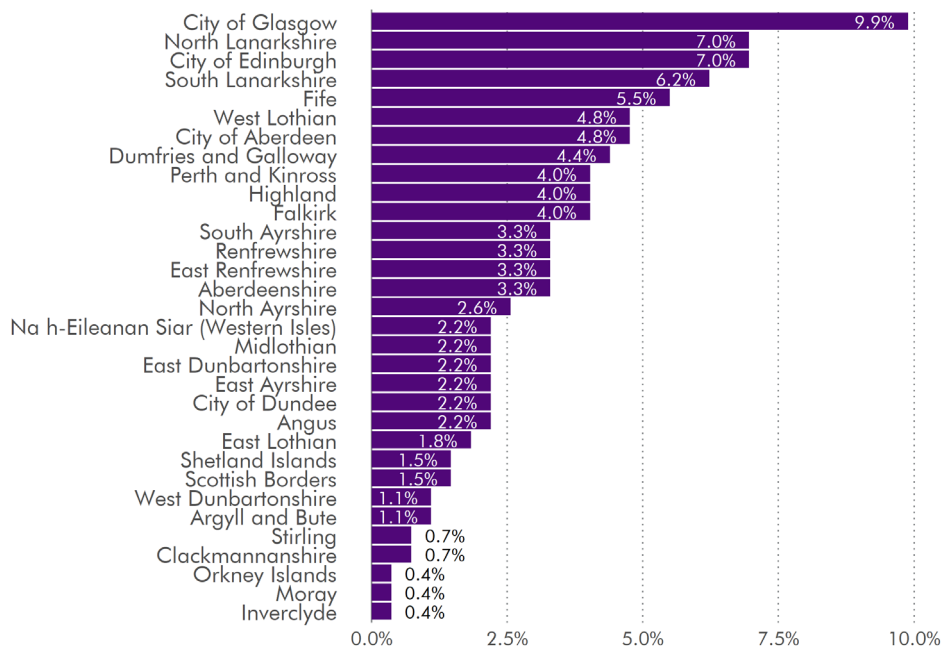
The data from the 457 people who provided details about their ethnicity is outlined below:

The data gathered from this exercise is not intended to be a representative of sample of the population, but rather give a snapshot of some of the experiences, questions and concerns the public have about the Bill.



Location

While the data is not intended to be representative, the engagement activity achieved strong levels of participation with users from every Scottish Local Authority area taking part. Details of participation based on the 261 users who provided details of their location is outlined below:



Website data also suggested that there was interest in the site from around the world with a particular interest from users in the rest of the United Kingdom.

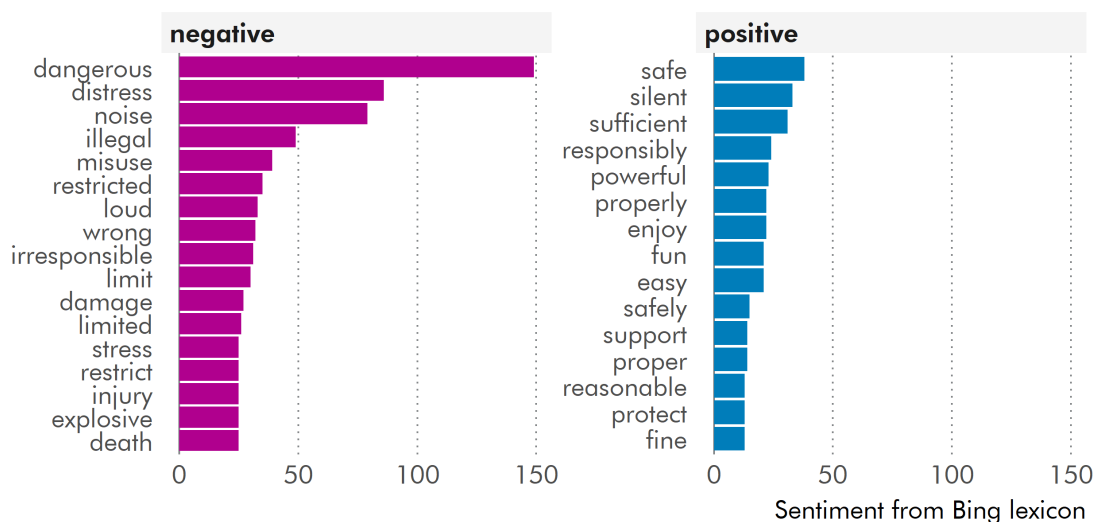
We estimate that around a third of registered users came from outside of Scotland, this could be due to UK based campaigns on both sides on the debate characterising the Bill as a potential prerequisite to a similar Bill being laid at the UK Parliament in the future.

The contested nature of the debate on the licensing of fireworks meant that there was a possibility for dishonest users to amplify their views by attempting to cast multiple votes. The platform was checked regularly to ensure fairness. The small minority of users who created multiple accounts to cast votes for the same item multiple times had duplicate ratings removed.

We are pleased at the level of participation and are satisfied that the process was a fair and transparent.

Summary of Key Themes

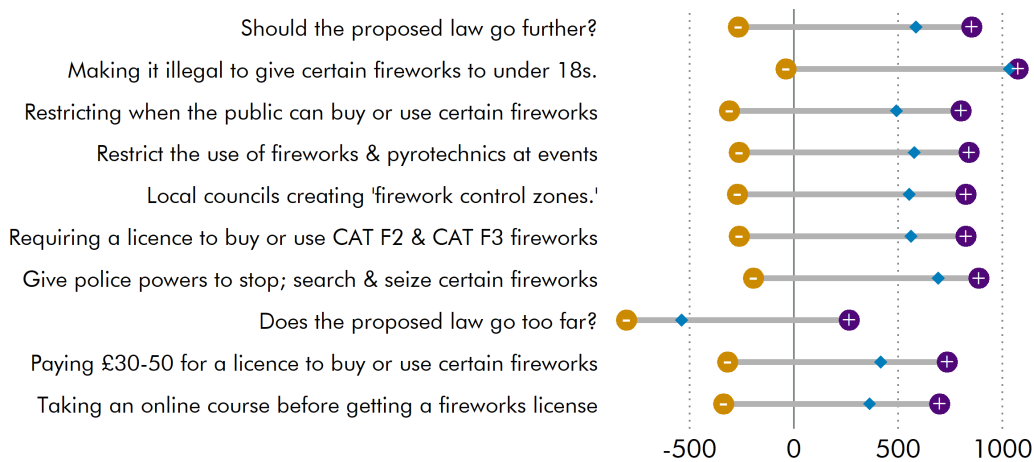
SPICe carried out automated textual analysis of all 1,600 comments to identify the positive and negative words used in the discussion about the Bill:



This analysis illustrates that most negative words were in relation to harm caused by fireworks or in relation to “restrictions” that would be imposed by the Bill. The most frequent positive words in the discussion related to the “safety” provided by the provisions but also the “fun” and enjoyment that can be sought in the use of fireworks. Finally, words like “sufficient” and “reasonable” were positive words used by some to describe the bill, especially in the context of the provisions being part of a compromise.

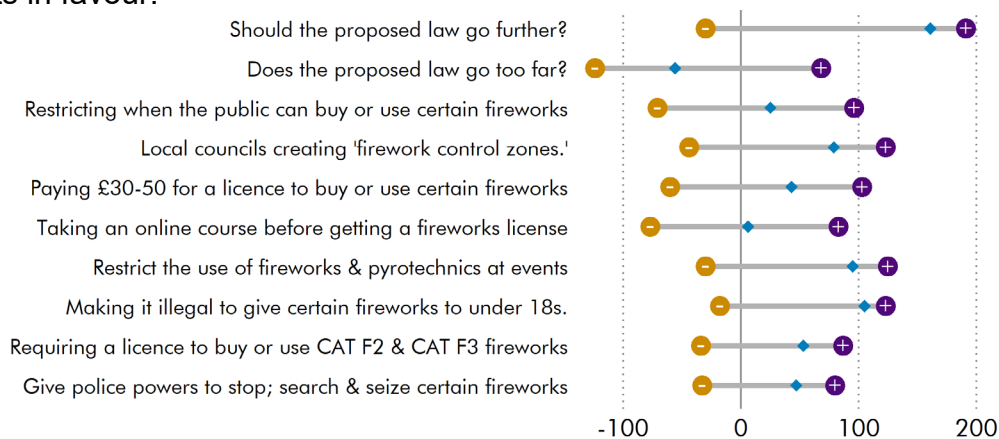
Summary of Ratings and Comments

Each section on the engagement website enabled participants to rate proposals up or down using rating buttons (👍 or 👎). Below is an illustration of the overall ratings, in order of levels of interaction:



The chart above shows the number of supporting and opposing votes for each provision. For example, the issue attracting the most overall votes (for and against combined) was the discussion around the proposed law going further. The blue diamond in the graphic above represents the net rating.

The chart below shows the spread of comments for and against each proposal. The blue diamond illustrates the net score in relation to positive comments vs negative comments. For example, the discussion on whether the law should go further elicited the most comments in favour.



The remainder of this paper summarises the discussions outlined above and highlights comments in favour and against the Bill, and suggestions for to improve the provisions.

Restricting when people can buy or use certain fireworks

800 users were in favour of this proposal providing 96 comments in support. 309 users were against the proposal providing 71 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Proposal helps minimise the opportunities for fireworks to cause harm

The proposal minimises the dates when fireworks can cause “distress” to “vulnerable people and children” especially those impacted by “dementia, mental health issues, anxiety and post-traumatic stress and autistic conditions”

The proposal minimises the dates when fireworks can “cause disturbance” and “distress” to animals and “reduce the environmental impact” and “noise pollution” of firework use.

The proposal would minimise the opportunities for anti-social behaviour via “indiscriminate” “unexpected random use” that would lead to fireworks not being used “safely or properly”

Allows impacted people to plan ahead

The proposal gives people impacted by fireworks “warning” to help them plan ahead to mitigate disruption by having “a better idea of which dates to expect firework use.”

Mandate to enforce rules

Provides a mandate for local authorities and police to “clamp down on usage outside of” stipulated dates and times

Compromise

Some noted that Bill made “progress” and was a “reasonable compromise.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Stockpiling

Some participants felt this proposal may be ineffectual as it “does not stop people stockpiling fireworks to use when they want.”

An all year-round retailer noted that they “see just how many out of season customers there really are. There really are literally a hand full of customers that buy fireworks out of season. And those sales are mostly to commemorate a lost one. Or to celebrate a special occasion. MOST of the fireworks you hear out of season are those that have been kept or are left over from the previous year or bonfire”.

Overreach and freedom

Others noted strong opposition to the proposals noting that “fireworks are enjoyed by millions every year. The most spectacular form of entertainment for weddings and parties, raise millions for small charities. The annual back garden bonfire night brings families together.”

Some participants expressed the proposals were an “unnecessary restriction on freedoms” and that the government should “stop dictating what normal, sensible, responsible people can and can’t do, regarding personal choice and enjoyment.”

Current law is sufficient

Some felt that “current laws are sufficient” and that they “just need enforcement.”

Focus on production of silent fireworks instead

Others suggested that the focus should be “on reducing the noise (fireworks) make rather than when they are available” to purchase and use.

Impact of fireworks less than impact of dogs

Some users noted that anti-social behaviour and injuries related to fireworks were less than issues such as “dog fouling” and “injuries inflicted by dogs.”

Economic impact on business

Professional retailers of fireworks feared that they “will not be able to sustain a viable business if selling days are restricted.”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

The range of permitted dates is too broad

The proposal is a “step in the right direction” but some declared that there were “too many dates” available to purchase and use fireworks “and this will allow fireworks to be let off on too many days around the actual event”. Some agreed with the use of fireworks for certain celebrations such as Bonfire night, Chinese New Year and Diwali but were concerned with use on other stipulated dates in April and the “wide range” of permitted dates around bonfire night (27th Oct-10th November).

Outright ban preferred by some

Some noted that they would “prefer an outright ban” to the public “except for organised displays” or “only for commercial use” and used by “qualified (individuals) working for a professional company in the creation of an organised and controlled display”.

More clarity on range of dates

Some commented that the proposed “dates need to be very precise... (as) the proposed dates seem to be a little too generous, but it is an important step in the right direction.”

Stockpiling solution

One participant suggested that stockpiling could be avoided if it was easier for people “to return (unused fireworks) to the shop where they bought them from” if they were unable to be used during the stipulated times.

Strict Enforcement

The need for “strict enforcement” was raised and some users felt the restrictions were “open to abuse”.

Requiring a licence to buy or use CAT F2 & CAT F3 fireworks

824 users were in favour of this proposal providing 87 comments in support. 262 users were against the proposal providing 34 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Danger inherent to fireworks usage

A commonly cited reason in favour of this restriction is the danger involved: “Fireworks are explosives and are dangerous. Many users have little regard for the distances required for safe use, and particularly the impact it could have on others.”

Restricting anti-social use and reduce “nuisance”

Many users also felt that the introduction of licensing “would help provide an essential framework, necessary to allow enforcement of a training requirement and... would also be encouragement for many towards more thoughtful considered usage” and “increase the responsible use of fireworks.”

Good to monitor usage

Another point put forward in favour was that “if the public are to be allowed to buy fireworks, they should be closely monitored and controlled and the location and time for this anti-social and harmful activity should be severely restricted.”

Ability to suspend or withdraw a license

“It's the same as licencing any dangerous activity. It means people can have their licence withdrawn if they break the rules.”

Deterrent to those using fireworks on a whim

It is also pointed out that this deters spur of the moment decisions to use fireworks, “Those who are buying fireworks for a particular occasion/special occasion will be the ones who will want to take the time and energy to follow the procedures.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Easy to get around this restriction

A common thread is the idea that this will be very easy to circumvent, firstly by crossing into England: “They wouldn’t have to prove anything, they would just drive into England to buy them”, and secondly by having someone who is licensed purchase fireworks and resell them/give them to others: “This is open to people fraudulently purchasing fireworks for other people” and “encourage illegal... and black market sales.”

Targeting people with convictions

One user takes issue with the idea that past convictions should prevent the purchase of fireworks, asking, “What has a person’s criminal conviction, if any, got to do with buying fireworks?”

Economic impact

Another is concerned about the economic impact of increased regulation, stating that it is unnecessary: “Such a move would destroy the fireworks industry. The retailers and wholesale businesses are very responsible and provide the correct advice.”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Identity verification

The most common question asked by those who don’t necessarily oppose a measure along these lines was, “How can you guarantee the person sitting a test and the one buying the fireworks are the same?”

Raising age limit to purchase Fireworks

One user stated that an alternative to the bureaucracy of introducing a licensing system would be to “raise the age to 21 as most 18-year olds are not as mature as they were 25 years ago.”

Further steps in the process required

One commenter stated that more steps were required once a license has been obtained: “They should also have to seek permission for their planned use of fireworks for a specific public event, at specific times, and local residents should be informed in advance.”

Paying £30-50 for a licence to buy or use certain fireworks

735 users were in favour of this proposal providing 103 comments in support. 319 users were against the proposal providing 60 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

A strong deterrent

The first and foremost reasoning behind supporting this measure was: “It would put a lot of people off if the price was high” and “anything which reduces irresponsible behaviour regarding fireworks can only be a good thing.”

Reasonable price

Another commenter focused on the price in question: “£50 is about right as it is not a significant amount to a serious and responsible individual putting on a display, but will discourage spur of the moment random purchase for petty or malevolent use.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Non-deterrent

One person disagreed with the deterrent being effective: “Licensing will not deter those who ignore normal behaviour and will still get access to banned products.”

Unfair pricing

The first criticism is that the pricing is not fair, or disproportionate. A commenter took issue with the price relative to the price of fireworks: “Nonsense. You can buy a safe, legal, tested firework for less than £6. Why do you need a licence costing £60 to set it off safely in your own garden?”

Other commenters disagreed with charging at all, one stating that, “It just becomes a money game, cutting out the poorer demographic as they can’t afford it, borderline discriminatory” and “Charging a licence fee will only hurt legitimate users. The few irresponsible users will ignore this licence requirement just as they ignore existing controls.” One final commenter simply said, “There should be no cost.”

Money-making scheme

One person saw this as a way for the government to profit: “It will only make more money for the government, not lessen the use of fireworks”

Danger of pooling resources

And another commenter saw this as easy to circumvent if people pool their resources: “A bunch of lads get together, £10 each is nothing, and suddenly they have access to all the powerful fireworks!”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Too cheap to be a deterrent

A common theme in those seeking to improve this part of the bill was that the price needed to be increased: “The charges need to be higher, to act as a deterrent to buy”, and “at least £100” or even as high as “£500 may be more of a deterrent.” Others felt that a price such as £50 would not be workable to “cover all the administration costs” and place “excessive time” on “over stretched councils and police excessive time. Probably £200 - £300 is a more conservative costing.”

More payments required to minimise fireworks use

Another repeated point was that there should be more payments made in order to bring the number of events down: “you should be made to pay for a display”

Taking an online course before getting a fireworks license

699 users were in favour of this proposal providing 83 comments in support. 337 users were against the proposal providing 77 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Training is an overall good thing

Among those showing support, there was widespread approval of any training provided for the public: “people/groups should have proper training when handling fireworks”

Training could help people be aware of the impact

Some felt that many people using fireworks antisocially aren't aware that they're doing so, stating: “This would help increase awareness of the harm they cause and deter casual use of powerful fireworks” and “People are generally unaware of dangers and antisocial nature of fireworks.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Easy to get around

Some commenters stated that this will not stop people from evading the rules, as: “The people who use fireworks anti-socially won't take any notice of this, they will just buy them over the border, or worse mail order from Eastern Europe as happens today.”

Possible complete fraudulently

Other participants pointed out that online testing isn't verifiable as to the identity of the person completing the test: “Online training doesn't confirm who is actually taking the training or inputting answers” and this means the process is “impractical” and unenforceable.”

Too easy, forgettable

Others had problems with what they saw as inherent issues with short online tests: “Forget the online courses because they are far too easy to pass” and “This is hardly specialist training and a waste of time and money; will you remember what a 10min course said 5 years ago?”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Depends on the difficulty of the course

This issue of the difficulty of the course was often brought up by those who supported the idea but were unsure about it in practice: It would help but it depends on how hard the course is. I think it would still be too easy to get your hands on them.”

Teaching should be in person

Another commenter stated that an online course was not enough to instil proper safety in those sitting the test, “Any handler should be properly trained under professional in person guidance using actual pyrotechnics. This is not a cooking class; these are dangerous explosives.” Other concerns raised around the online only format of the course was the impact of “digital exclusion” limiting training to those who had means, skills and access to the internet.

Test should only be for certain, more powerful fireworks

One person believes that this testing should only be applied to the more powerful CAT F3: “Only for CAT F3, not CAT F2.”

Introduce teaching at schools

Finally, a commenter argued in favour of introducing this teaching at school: “It might be helpful to add something to schools to show to kids annually around Bonfire Night, so they grow up with a repetitive message around safety when using fireworks.”

Local councils creating 'firework control zones.'

824 users were in favour of this proposal providing 123 comments in support. 272 users were against the proposal providing 44 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Good to have areas where there is no worry about fireworks

A common idea is that it would be reassuring for people to not have to worry every year about whether they'll be triggered by fireworks: “Having safe places, where there's no fireworks would be amazing. Not everyone likes them, humans as well as animals. Why should people/animals, who (fear) them have to suffer?”

Good for areas with sensitive populations

Another often repeated point in favour is that this will protect vulnerable people and animals if applied correctly: “In areas where care homes (particularly supporting those with dementia, PTSD, learning disabilities) livestock, kennels, catteries, stables and vet clinics are then this is totally appropriate and necessary.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Unnecessary legislation

A commenter took issue with introducing more legislation than they feel necessary: “Protection of animals is already given by the Animal Welfare Act. Enforce that before bringing in more burdensome regulation”

Resource allocation issues

Questions were raised regarding how this would be controlled, and by whom: “Who would police this? Councils are cutting back on everything, I don’t think they would have the resources for that.”

Pressure on police

Some worried about how this would impact police: “Policing zones creates another unnecessary load for the police.”

Difficult to enforce

Others worried this would be ignored or difficult to enforce: “No one pays attention to where fireworks should be let off. Kids set them off at all times of the night. I don’t think they’ll change their behaviour because they’re not supposed to.”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Difficulty in choosing the area

Commenters were unsure about how this would be applied, and what would decide that: “What right do you have to prohibit one area and not another?”

They also worried about the lack of uniformity between councils affecting the issue, saying, “[This is] likely to lead to patchy, post-code lottery through variable local council attitudes and interpretation.”

More restrictions needed within these zones

One person called into question whether more aspects of fireworks usage needed to be restricted within the non-control zones: “I think it needs to do more, like restrict time or how often too”

Giving police powers to stop, search & seize certain fireworks: feedback from the public

887 users were in favour of this proposal providing 80 comments in support. 195 users were against the proposal providing 33 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Police need powers to enforce the proposed new restrictions

Those in support of the proposal felt that “it seems entirely sensible and reasonable; if you have a law, it has to be enforced” and “if there is legislation there must be a serious intent for reasonable and appropriate steps for enforcement.”

New police powers will reduce dangerous and anti-social use of fireworks

People in favour of this provision believed it “will allow police to react where fireworks are being used dangerously” and it “would give the police more opportunity to keep society safe”, stop fireworks being used “as weapons” or with “malignant intent” and reduce “anti-social behaviour” and “noise”.

Stop and search powers could act as a deterrent

Some hoped the proposal would help “deter anti-social use” of fireworks.

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Police already have sufficient powers, existing laws need to be enforced

Those against the proposals felt “the police already have great power” and “all the powers needed to stop such anti-social use”. “They just need to enforce (the existing laws) and not stop the majority of law-abiding people enjoying and buying fireworks.”

Police are already overstretched and require more resource

People against the proposal thought that “the police have enough, more important, things to do” as the “the police don't have time” and “too much to do already” and the new stop and search powers would be a “waste of resources”.

There were calls for the police to “be better funded so that they have the resources to enforce existing laws better, because people are breaking current firework laws all the time and the police are seemingly doing nothing about it. More powers won't change this” issue.

Police overreach and abuse of power

Some participants felt strongly that the “police should never have unwarranted stop and search powers” and were concerned that the proposed powers seemed to “give police powers to stop and search almost everyone...” Another respondent noted: “Stop and search is always a controversial power. I am not sure it is relevant to fireworks.” Others noted that these powers offered “more scope for discrimination” and “abuse of power”.

Feedback from veterans at Erskine indicated that “Stop and search was not supported... but there was agreement that the police should be able to confiscate fireworks if any concerns have been raised.”

Cross-border implications

Some felt that the stop and search powers could cause issues at the border between Scotland and England, one participant stated: “Is the plan to have police at the border with England randomly stopping cars?” Another participant asked: “will members of the public crossing the border into Scotland be subject to random spot checks to ensure they are not carrying fireworks?”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Concerns about police resource to enforce

Some participants felt the proposals were a “great idea” but there were concerns that police do not have “the time and manpower to enforce the regulations.” One participant stated: “I do not believe the police force should be even more stretched than it is, (but) there has to be some control. Does Scotland have sufficient police numbers to be effective in this regard?” There were concerns that “police have insufficient capacity to undertake such searches.”

More detail about how police can enforce all provisions in the Bill

Some respondents felt that the police powers should go further. For example, one person stated:

“I think it has to go beyond basic stop and search and there needs to be a clearer idea of exactly what other powers, including stop and search, the police are going to be given” to tackle anti-social use of fireworks. “For example, if... the police find an unlicensed display taking place using black market fireworks are they going to shut it down. How will they do that? Who will be held responsible? The proposals “need a lot more detail of all the powers (the police) need.”

Concerns about unfair implementation

Others were supportive of the proposals but “only if it is not abused and used as an excuse to stop and interfere with folk going about their own business”; and “As long as there is sufficient reason to suspect that fireworks are being carried illegally, indiscriminate stop and search is not ok”.

Some users expressed that they were “not a fan of stop and search as it can be bias against certain groups” “both intentionally & unconsciously by those with irrational bias against certain subgroups of the population.”

Some participants indicated that they would be “reluctantly in favour” and “potentially” support the proposal, “but only if great care is taken in how you define ‘reasonable grounds’ and questions were raised about “how you train... the police force” to carry out “appropriate and fair use of stop and search for fireworks.”

Concerns about police safety

Some participants agreed with the proposal but felt “the police are an easy target and could get fireworks thrown at them” carrying out their duties to implement the new regulations.

Making it illegal to give certain fireworks to under 18s.

1075 users were in favour of this leaving 123 comments in support. 39 users were against the proposal providing 18 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Closing a loophole

Some participants noted the similarity to the laws around alcohol, stating that “adults can’t buy booze for kids so why ok for explosives?”

Immaturity/Lack of responsibility

Others compared the situation to that with firearms, saying “at no point should anyone give any child an explosive device. You’d not give them a gun so why allow kids to run about with fireworks that can do as much harm and cause death through deliberate or incompetent misuse.”

Another raised a similar point: “Under 18’s are not consistently responsible.”

Many more in favour of this restriction followed this theme: “Younger people don’t always understand the impact fireworks have on animals (agricultural, wildlife and domestic) and it is the younger age bracket that are most likely to use fireworks antisocially.”

“Youths are more likely to use fireworks irresponsibly without care for the detrimental effects of them”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Contradictory laws

One commenter stated that there was a contradiction, “You can join the army at 16 and be taught to fire a gun. But the safe use of fireworks by minors would be against the law.”

Letting the actions of a minority affect the majority

Another user stated that this was punishing people who had not done anything wrong: “It will deprive many younger people who just wish to have a good bit of... innocent fun. Do not let the minority ruin something for the majority, you get some bad seeds everywhere.”

Family activity

Some commenters view children learning to use fireworks under supervision as a family event: “Maybe prevent giving them for use without adult supervision but they should be allowed to be given to under 18s when used with supervision by under 18s, for some families it’s almost a rite of passage to be the next to light the fireworks”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Any use by under 18s should be illegal

A common point was that it should be illegal for the under 18s to use the fireworks at all: “All fireworks should be unavailable to under 18s at all times”, “no-one under 18 should be in the possession of fireworks”

Manner of enforcement

Another user calls into doubt the sometimes ineffective prohibition of alcohol to under 18s, stating “I agree with this part, but my concern is over how it would be enforced. What evidence is there that the restriction on under-age drinking is effective?”

Restrict the use of fireworks & pyrotechnics at events

839 users were in favour of this proposal providing 125 comments in support. 263 users were against the proposal providing 30 comments in opposition.

Comments in support of this part of the Bill

Dangerous behaviour

The most prominent point was on the level of danger present: “Many in society seem to resort to the use of fireworks in very unsuitable locations/events. These powers are essential for controlling such inappropriate/dangerous use”, with one user pointing out that, “Irresponsible use of fireworks is particularly dangerous at mass events”

Unnecessary risk

The other major theme was that the presence of fireworks or pyrotechnics causes an increased and unnecessary risk: “No one should be taking an explosive out on the street or to an event.” Another commenter asked, “Why do you need fireworks at sports events or music events? You’re there to enjoy the entertainment, nothing else”

Unpredictability

The third major point in favour of more restrictions was the unpredictability of setting off pyrotechnics in crowded areas: “Fireworks are unpredictable and have no place at events where crowds are not strictly controlled. Besides the obvious safety concerns there is no control over where the empty casings land.”

Comments in opposition to this part of the Bill

Enforcement, not more rules

A major criticism, however, was that this is an issue of enforcement rather than more rules: “Sports grounds and other private premises already have this power. And it is already illegal to use fireworks dangerously or to set them off in a public place.”

Government overreach

There was also the claim that this simply wasn’t warranted, as the public should be able to make their own decisions about this: “People have a right to decide for themselves, we are not children and should not be treated like such.”

Comments to improve this part of the Bill

Unclear objective

One user took issue with the phrasing of this part of the bill, “Agree, but it’s poorly worded. If an event is official and fireworks handled by professionals, then that’s fine.”

Not specific enough regulations

Whereas others thought that this section wasn’t detailed enough, saying, “Not only should the personal use of fireworks be banned but organised events must be more regulated: restricted for 30 mins during sociably acceptable hours, well-advertised, ideally subject to public consultation, venues limited to how many firework events allowed per year.” And another user stated, “all fireworks and pyrotechnics should be limited to professional displays only.”

Does the new law go too far?

There was also a discussion around whether the proposed law goes too far. 803 users indicated that they thought the proposed law did *not* go too far; and 265 users thought the proposals *did* go too far.

Reasons given for why some felt the proposed legislation went too far included:

- The risk that the legislation would “make it complicated for sensible use” of fireworks by the majority
- Existing laws are enough, such as laws relating to animal welfare and anti-social behaviour and “just require enforcement”
- The proposals “kill off” the pyrotechnics industry “both retail and professional display” sectors.
- The restrictions on use will “create a black market that will lead to unregulated goods appearing” in circulation from other countries.

- The new laws would be too difficult to “police”

However, most of the comments in this discussion were similar to the points outlined below on why the law “does not go far enough.”

Should the new law go further?

852 users indicated that they thought the proposed law should go further; and 267 users thought the proposals should not go further.

Examples of how the law could go further were:

- Banning ALL sales to private individuals, maintaining organised displays at events
- Only allowing professional fireworks organisations/companies to be licensed to purchase fireworks
- Having fireworks allowed zones rather than fireworks control zones
- Ban noisemaking fireworks, so only silent fireworks can be used
- Banning fireworks as a whole



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