

**Memorandum**

**From** Tom Veitch  
Regulatory Team leader

**To** Licensing Administration

**Date** 25 April 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Championing Best Practice – National Best Bar None National Awards 2018/19  
National Champion – The Black Rose Tavern, Edinburgh**

I'd like to make the Board aware that following on from the Edinburgh Best Bar None Awards held on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018, two of Edinburgh's Category award winning venues, the Black Rose Tavern and the Gorgie Suite at Heart of Midlothian Football Club, applied for the national Best Bar None Awards scheme. The National Best Bar None Awards scheme is only open to local category winning venues, and is a chance for local winners to compete against the best award winning venues across Scotland.

The National Best Bar None scheme supports venues delivery of safe and inclusive social spaces, whilst rewarding social responsibility and duty of care. Key Partners and trade from across Scotland celebrated the licenced trade's achievements at an awards evening on Thursday 28th March at the DoubleTree Dunblane Hydro Hotel in Dunblane. The venues have considered not only their commitment and diligence in relation to their licensing commitments as key drivers for their businesses, but more importantly their customers and staff. A group of finalists took part in the annual national awards across eleven award categories with venues represented from the length and breadth of Scotland. There are twelve categories within the award scheme: Pub, Independent Pub, Bar, Independent Bar, Hotel, Night Club, SEV, Heart of the Community, Newcomer, Innovation in Social Responsibility and National Champion.

The Licensing Standards Officers support the Best Bar None scheme as a platform which encourages and promotes best practice in participating venues. The Black Rose has been taking part in the Edinburgh Best Bar None scheme since 2015, and has won

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a Gold award every year from 2015 to 2018 inclusive, with its annual score increasing year on year. This has contributed to the Black Rose being nominated for a National Award in 2017/18, and winning the Overall Award in Edinburgh for both 2017 and 2018, with 2018 representing the highest Best Bar None score ever awarded in Edinburgh.

At the 2018/19 National Best Bar None Awards the Black Rose Tavern was awarded the top overall National Champion Award, and in addition also won the following categories;

- Best Independent Pub
- Innovation in Social Responsibility
- Platinum Award (for consistent commitment to best practice within the licensed trade)

Their continued success is driven by “the two Alison’s”, Alison Morrison and Alison Wilson, who are extremely pro-active supporters of the Best Bar None scheme and best practice. They have been directly involved with the introduction and support of a number of significant nationally recognised schemes, such as bringing the “Ask Angela” scheme to Scotland more than two years ago. They’ve recently introduced a scheme which prevents drinks spiking via modified beer mats, and were actively promoting it during the National Awards evening even after winning all of the above National Awards. They attribute their success to their continued commitment and investment in developing their own knowledge and experience, including their staff, via ongoing training and development and review of best practice. As a result the Black Rose Tavern is recognised as one of Edinburgh’s premier establishments, and has now been recognised nationally as the National Best Bar None Champion for 2018/19.