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## SGF CALL FOR ACTION TO TACKLE SPIKE IN RETAIL CRIME



Almost 8,000 cases of abuse and assault have been reported to Police Scotland in less than two years. Reports of a spike in shoplifting across the UK has led the Scottish Grocers' Federation to call for prosecution figures to be made public.

The Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland) Act 2021, which was delivered by Daniel Johnson MSP with the support of SGF, came into force in August 2021. The latest figures provided by Police Scotland show that the Act has been used 7,955 times to report retail specific cases of abuse or assault of staff and retailers.

SGF has contacted the Scottish Government, the Lord Advocate, the Courts and Tribunal Service and the

Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service calling for the figures on referrals and convictions relating to the Act to be made public. This is essential information to show the Act is a working deterrent.

SGF Chief Executive, Dr Pete Cheema OBE said: "Retail crime and shop theft is a very serious issue for convenience stores and our members. People should not have to come to work knowing they will likely have to put up with threats, abuse and potentially violence".

"It is not only staff wellbeing and businesses that are being impacted by these crimes, but families and the wider community as well.

"While we welcome the figures on the POW Act provided by Police Scotland,

we really need to know how many of those cases are being brought to justice. That would encourage more retailers to report the crimes happening in-store, daily, and could be an effective way of making potential perpetrators think twice."

SGF's Scottish Crime Report highlights that 100% of respondents experience shop theft at least once a day and all experience abuse, violence, or Hate Crime on a regular basis. In 2021, the total cost of crime to the participants in our survey was £2.3million.

In addition, SGF have approached the Scottish Government to refresh their joint Don't Put Up with It campaign, delivered in collaboration with Crime Stoppers.



# FREE SUPPORT AND FUNDING TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY BILLS

**BUSINESS  
ENERGY  
SCOTLAND**

Free support to help retailers cut energy bills is available from Business Energy Scotland. Funded by Scottish Government, the service is available to Scottish small and medium businesses and includes access to interest-free loans with attractive cashback grants of up to £30,000.

While retailers can take some simple actions to try to reduce energy bills, such as switching tariffs or changing behaviour, big savings are often enjoyed by retailers that take advantage of energy-efficient lighting and refrigeration. And who save on heating by upgrading insulation and switching to renewable technology, such as heat pumps.

Business Energy Scotland's advisors have already identified over £200 million worth of savings for Scottish businesses, with a massive 24% average energy saving per business. What's more 9

out of 10 businesses that have had support recommend it to others.

MC Stores based in Girvan was able to make several improvements to its store including LED lighting, refrigeration units and new ventilation system. It is now saving over £4,000 on energy each year. "Because of the interest-free loan and cashback we were able to invest more money back into the business to basically bring the store up to a 5-star standard" said Richard Cook, Operations Manager.

**Contact info:**

**To find out more visit:**

<https://businessenergyscotland.org>

**or call 0808 808 2268.**



**LAST FEW TICKETS REMAINING  
FOR THE SGF ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE 2023 - BOOK  
NOW!**

*What's Next for Retail?*

*Future-proofing the Industry*

**Thursday 12th & Friday 13th October  
Crowne Plaza, Glasgow**

*Innovation | Sustainability | Convenience | Health & Wellbeing*

**SGF**  
SCOTTISH GAS & ELECTRICITY FEDERATION



# INSPIRING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE THROUGH RECYCLING REWARDS



In a world where environmental awareness is steadily growing, many organisations are at the forefront of fostering positive change. Trovr Tech, established in 2021, is passionately committed to encouraging individuals to embrace recycling and cultivate a sustainable mindset through innovative software and hardware solutions, all while generously offering appealing incentives to consumers.

Since its establishment, they have spearheaded 20 “Recycle for Rewards” projects, resulting in the successful recycling of an impressive 240,000 single-use drink containers. Notable collaborations with reputable brands such as Co-op, Carrefour, Adidas, PepsiCo, L’Oreal, and Etihad Airways have brought recycling to the forefront of public consciousness.

Currently, they are working hard to be an inclusive contributor to Scottish recycling by looking to work with the retail community with a special focus on small independent retailers to ensure they are supported through DRS with the latest innovations.

Moreover, Trovr goes beyond just the consumer app as it integrates with Reverse Vending Machines and manual handling devices, ensuring that retailers can maximise the use of all available technologies. By seamlessly connecting with these machines, Trovr enhances recycling efforts and creates a more sustainable shopping experience for customers.

Trovr understands that motivation is key to driving widespread

environmental action. Through its user-friendly smartphone app, they have incentivised the recycling experience of single use drink containers. Users can easily track personal recycling efforts and unlock exciting rewards, turning sustainable living into a fulfilling and enjoyable journey.

Personal stories highlight Trovr’s impact. Customers are rewarded with unforgettable experiences and discounts, ranging from getaways to festival tickets and loyalty points. They have not only reaped the benefits of recycling but also contributed to Trovr’s tree planting campaigns, making a difference by planting over 2,000 trees to date.

Trovr Tech’s approach combines technology, rewards, and sustainability to inspire change. By fostering responsibility and environmental awareness, they reshape attitudes towards recycling.

Through unwavering dedication, they empower individuals, local communities and businesses to embrace the circular economy.



[www.trovrappp.com](http://www.trovrappp.com)



# 2023-2024 – PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT



The First Minister launched his Programme for Government on 5th September 2023 in the Scottish Parliament which set out the Scottish Government's priorities through to the end of the Parliamentary year. Within it contained important points for our retailers. They include:

- Take action to reduce vaping among non-smokers and young people and to tackle the environmental impact of single use vapes, including consulting on a proposal to ban their sale and other appropriate measures.

- Work with businesses to develop plans for the delivery of the Deposit Return Scheme from 2025.
- Deliver a fair and affordable Non-Domestic Rates package in the Budget.
- Establish a new Small Business Unit to ensure that the interests of small businesses are always considered.
- Take forward the implementation of the bail and release from Custody (Scotland) act 2023.
- Publish a Hate Crime Strategy Delivery Plan, setting out our immediate and longer-term activity in support of the Hate Crime Strategy, including implementation of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 in early 2024.

The full programme for government can be found here:

[www.gov.scot/publications/programme-government-2023-24/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/programme-government-2023-24/)

SGF will continue to monitor the situation as it progresses and engage with the Scottish Government on key issues for the sector.

## UPDATES TO FOOD ALLERGEN LABELLING

Food Standards Scotland have released a Consultation on food allergen labelling and information requirements.

Around 2 million people living in the UK have a food allergy, but this figure does not include those with food intolerances. In addition, it is estimated that 1 in 100 people have coeliac disease, an auto-immune condition which causes damage to the gut lining when gluten is present in food.

This consultation concerns updates to Food Standards Scotland's Technical Guidance on food allergen labelling and information requirements. The two key updates focus on standards for applying precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) and best practice guidance that No Gluten Containing Ingredients (NGCI) statements should not be used.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek the views of food businesses, enforcement authorities, consumers, and other stakeholders on the proposed updates to the technical guidance on food allergen labelling and information requirements.

SGF submitted a response to the consultation on 31st August in favour of the proposed updates to the Allergen Labelling



Technical Guidance relating to the use of Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) statements and in favour of the proposed updates to the Allergen Labelling Technical Guidance relating to the use of No Gluten Containing Ingredients (NGCI) statements.

However, SGF noted that it is essential that changes to the PAL guidance should be implemented in such a way to minimise any disruption to retailers and food business operators. Furthermore, we argued that

there should be a reasonable period of grace and flexibility within the guidance, allowing businesses to comply to the updated requirements without falling foul of the regulations.

The consultation is now closed. However, details of the potential changes can be found here: [https://consult.foodstandards.gov.scot/regulatory-policy/consultation-on-updates-to-the-food-standards-scot/consult\\_view/](https://consult.foodstandards.gov.scot/regulatory-policy/consultation-on-updates-to-the-food-standards-scot/consult_view/)

# Sustainability At the Core of Doing Business



Rich Products has been serving Scottish retailers for many years, but not everyone will know who we are. Rich's are the proud supplier of sweet bakery products, creams and pizza bases to customers up and down the UK. A lot of Scottish retailers will know Rich's for our F'real Milk Shake brand which has now enjoyed a very loyal following in Scotland for several years. Our revolutionary 'blend in cup' technology gives retailers and food service operators a solution to provide frozen shakes with no fuss, mess or waste. We continue to innovate and bring to market products that delight our customers and consumers, including products through our exclusive relationship with Nestle.

Although we serve the whole of UK, we are proud of the partnerships we have developed in Scotland across our product range, working with hundreds of retailers on F'real and ready to grow even more across all channels. Rich's in the UK is part of a US family run business founded back in 1945 by Robert E. Rich. The business was created on developing innovative food products, starting with whipping cream made from soya beans when dairy was scarce in the post war world. The business has expanded across diverse food categories, expanding globally to over 100 countries, still proudly family owned.

Our business is focused on great service, innovation, quality, and creating value. Our products are made in our world class bakery that was built in 2019 in Andover, Hampshire. It is up to all of us in the supply chain to do all we can to improve sustainability and reduce waste. We put sustainability and the environment at the core of our operation along with our technical and operational excellence. With

120 solar panels, grass roofing and rain water recirculation along with our zero to landfill policy and partnership with Fareshare we are passionately committed to matching our great products with our approach to sustainability. We have a clear approach to responsibly sourcing our ingredients and packaging and we have implemented a programme of plastic reductions across all our packaging materials and increased the recycled content of our plastic packaging to over 45%.

At Rich's we are here to support all of our retail, wholesale and foodservice partners in bringing great products to market and developing solutions to help make doing business easier.

**Dez Paterson**  
**Sales Director, Rich Products UK**  
**Mobile: 07780 875931**  
**dpaterson@rich.com**



# SGF HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAMME

The SGF Healthy Living Programme (HLP) have recorded another busy start to the financial year of 2023/2024.

In May, HLP partnered with Social Security Scotland (SSS) to raise awareness of the Best Start Food Card.

Best Start Foods, administered by SSS, helps pregnant women and eligible families with the cost of buying healthy food and milk for babies and children. The payment is delivered via a prepaid card and is topped up with up to £39.60 every four weeks.

The HLP Development Managers are training and encouraging staff in c-stores to get their customers used to paying with Best Start Foods cards. HLP have collaborated on POS with SSS which is now being implemented in all stores that are part of HLP.

The successful launch of the partnership took place at Keystore, Johnstone with the Social Security Scotland Chief Executive David Wallace in attendance.

In June 2023, HLP hosted 10 Welby

Breakfast events in two weeks before the start of the school holidays. The team spoke to a staggering 1,964 pupils, taking the total number of pupils that the HLP has spoken to since 2017 to 25,246.

The 25,000 mark is an outstanding achievement for the HLP team.

Events are now being booked for the next school term by the Development Managers and we were fortunate to have welcomed the Minister for Public Health & Women's Health, Jenni Minto on the 6th September to a Welby Breakfast in Edinburgh. We believe that it is crucial that Ministers get the opportunity to witness the events that HLP facilitate in person and have the chance to speak to retailers and members of the community that benefit from the work that HLP lead on.

This October HLP are launching a new campaign, called 'Family Favourites'. This fun initiative is following on from the 'Cooking at Home' campaign which encouraged families to produce simple, healthy recipes

from scratch with products easily found within their local convenience stores. Watch out for POS hitting the stores shortly and social media links available to any retailer wanting to promote healthier eating within their stores.



For more information or to get a Development Manager to come and speak to yourself please contact:

**healthylivingeast@sgfscot.co.uk** or Call **0131 343 7602**

Facebook **@healthylivingprogramme**

Twitter **@sgfhealthy**

LinkedIn **healthylivingprogramme**



# LET'S PRIORITISE COLLABORATION OVER MORE REGULATION ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



The Circular economy Bill requires Scottish Ministers to introduce measures to help develop a circular economy. This includes:

- Publishing a circular economy strategy
- Reducing waste
- Making sure individual householders and businesses get rid of waste in the right way.

The Scottish Grocers Federation has written to the Minister for the Circular Economy calling for a more collaborative approach, working alongside retail and small businesses, to deliver on Scotland's environmental targets. Noting that additional restrictions and regulations should be used as a last resort, only.

SGF Chief Executive, Dr Pete Cheema OBE said: "The convenience sector provides an essential lifeline service to many communities in Scotland, as well as being a vital economic multiplier and important source of local employment.

"However, as I have explained to the Minister before, the burden of further regulation from government, across a range of issues, is also impacting on business viability.

"The recently published Circular Economy Bill will give Ministers powers to increase that burden further."



## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

### KEEPING ON TOP OF THE ISSUES OF THE DAY

ONE thing about the convenience sector is that there's always something happening, there are always key issues that we need to address or comment on – and there's been plenty of that since I wrote my last President's notes.

The SGF has unveiled a new blueprint for vaping, calling for a more nuanced and mature debate about vaping in Scotland, following the announcement in First Minister Humza Yousaf's Programme for Government that restrictions will be considered.

We've also written to Lorna Slater, the Minister for the Circular Economy, highlighting that proposed measures set out in the Scottish Government's Circular Economy (Scotland) Bill could place even more pressure on our sector amid a trading environment that is already very challenging.

Legislation in Scotland is relentless and while some of it is necessary there needs to be a fine balance between what should be prioritised and what is just legislation for legislation's sake, adding more layers of complexity for hardworking retailers who are already pressed for time as they run their businesses and support their communities.

So, it was pleased that the SGF's Healthy Living team and local pupils hosted Public Health Minister Jenni Minto MSP at a recent big breakfast. And while we sometimes criticise the Scottish Government, I have nothing but praise



for their support of our Healthy Living Programme which goes from strength to strength. It is a classic example of successful partnership.

And while we've had mixed fortunes with the weather this summer and probably not enough sunshine as most of us would have wished for after a sunny May and June, what a welcome return the sun made in early September – I hope that good spell extended the BBQ season and encouraged increased sales for your businesses.

Meantime, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our forthcoming SGF annual conference in Glasgow in October, focusing on the key themes of Sustainability, Innovation, Technology, Health and Wellbeing, and Convenience.

And as our keynote speaker Steven Van Belleghem will tell us, our customers today expect more than just good service and to be able to find the products they need and want. A highly respected author and motivational speaker, Steven will make us think about the way we do business and challenge us to do things differently as technology opens new doors.

As always, don't hesitate to call or email me if you wish to talk to me – my door is always open.

*Craig*



# SGF UNVEILS VAPING BLUEPRINT FOR SCOTLAND

The Scottish Grocers' Federation (SGF) is calling for a more nuanced and mature debate about vaping in Scotland, following last month's announcement in the Programme for Government that restrictions will be considered.

The convenience store trade body has written to Scottish Government Public Health Minister Jenni Minto outlining a series of measures which it believes can help dramatically reduce vaping among children while also ensuring that adult smokers, who wish to quit smoking, can freely and easily access life-changing and life-saving alternatives to cigarettes.

They include:

- Supporting restrictions on the naming and packaging of vapes to make them less appealing to children
- But opposing restrictions on flavour, which is proven to be the key factor in switching from cigarettes to less harmful vapes
- Asking producers to encourage alternative vaping products over disposables
- But asking the Scottish Government to rule out an outright ban on disposable vapes so as not to fuel illicit trade
- Working with retailers to provide recycling options for disposable vapes.
- Ensuring that Challenge 25 checks are made to stop underage sales
- Calling on policymakers to ensure current legislation is fully enforced to publish retailers and wholesalers responsible for illegal sales of vapes

The actions being taken by SGF - and the steps it is urging politicians to take - are outlined in a new document that can be found on our website, Healthier Choices, Healthier Communities, which will in future be extended to similar work in the areas of harm reduction from alcohol, and high fat, sugar and salt foods.

It is being shared with all MSPs, highlighting the steps being taken to ensure responsible retailing balances with the need to support the use of vapes as an alternative to tobacco, helping to make Scotland smoke-free and reducing pressures on the NHS.

Through its Healthier Choices, Healthier Communities drive, SGF will raise awareness of vaping as the proven best-known smoking alternative, but one which should only be used by smokers, not by non-smokers.

SGF Chief Executive Dr Pete Cheema OBE said, "Scotland has been a trailblazer on smoking harm reduction. But to take the next step towards a smoke-free generation, we need a more nuanced debate about vaping.

"The Healthier Choices, Healthier Communities campaign is about balance. We want to help create public policy which simultaneously encourages vaping amongst adults who wish to quit smoking and discourages it amongst non-smokers, particularly given the evidence of young people vaping."

Our press release, which includes the Healthier Choices, Healthier Communities document can be found here: [www.sgfsco.co.uk/latest-news/sgf-unveils-vaping-blueprint-for-scotland](http://www.sgfsco.co.uk/latest-news/sgf-unveils-vaping-blueprint-for-scotland)

He lthier Choices  
He lthier Communities

**Reducing harm from smoking**

An MSP's guide to the first part of the Scottish Grocers' Federation's new campaign

