Town centre alcohol bans come into force

A BOCZE ban in Lampeter and Cardiganshire town centres has been described as a great step forward by town officials.

The alcohol exclusion zones were up and running in Lampeter and Cardigan as from Friday.

Although the order does not make it illegal to drink in the affected areas, it gives police more powers to confiscate alcohol and control drunken troublemakers drinking in the towns.

In Lampeter, a joint application for an alcohol exclusion zone was made by the town council and Dyfed Powys Police last summer and it is now up and running. The zone includes the town's problem area, including Bridge Street, College Street, Harlech Square, High Street, Market Street and North Road as well as St Peter's Church and the town's Catholic Church.

Delighted that the order is up and running after so many years of campaigning, mayor, Rob Phillips, has thanked everyone for helping make it happen.

"To see it finally operational is a great news," he said. "We have been fighting for it for a long time and it is in place in time for the summer."

This is a very positive development and a testament to everyone who pushed for it.

Cllr. Huw, deputy mayor, said the towns had "got there in the end".

"There is a hope this order will be effective and it shouldn't be seen as praetorian against any individuals," he said.

"Over the first weekend I understand police have spoken to a couple of people about drinking in the area,"

But he said it was inevitable people will find other places to drink, which would be monitored with police on hand.

He said: "If people want a drink in the town centre obviously there will find somewhere it is the same as any law, people will always break them, but we must do all we can to stamp down on this.

"Whether we like it or not, people will still be in the town with a car, but we are confident the scheme will work well in addressing the worst of the problems."

Speaking at the order earlier this year, district police commander, Simon Powell, said he was "very pleased" with getting them up and running to give police "more teeth" in tackling anti-social behaviour.

Inspector Paul Bonning said three confiscations have been made in Lampeter over the weekend but that with the town carnival "some discretion" was necessary.

No confiscations have yet been made in Cardigan.

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Pictured at the alcohol exclusion zone launch in Lampeter are, from left: Bethan Jones, Chamber of Trade; Chris Walker, Spar store manager; Mayor Rob Phillips; Carol Davies, secretary, Chamber of Trade; Rob Jones, local businessman and PCSO Ryan Jones.