# Brighton council grants limited alcohol licence to Dracula’s House despite local objections



Brighton and Hove City Council has granted an alcohol licence to Dracula’s House, a Romanian convenience store located on London Road. This approval allows the store to sell alcohol exclusively from 8am to 9pm, Monday to Saturday, and from 9am to 6pm on Sundays. However, the licence comes with stipulations: it permits only Romanian alcoholic products, limited to 5 per cent of overall sales, and all items must be stored behind the counter.

During the council’s licensing panel hearing, the owners Ionut Cimpoesu and Ioana Cimpoesu emphasised their commitment to responsible operation. They accepted various conditions aimed at addressing concerns raised by local residents and community groups. Objections had surfaced from 13 residents, as well as from Green councillor Sue Shanks, due to fears of potential public nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Community objections highlighted the area’s saturation with licensed premises, a factor that generally leads council policy to deny new applications in similar contexts.

In a somewhat exceptional decision, the licensing panel—comprising councillors Julie Cattell, John Hewitt, and Kerry Pickett—recognised the unique nature of Dracula’s House as a specialist shop focusing on Romanian products. The panel noted the business had experience operating a similar establishment in Horsham, which aimed for a family-oriented, responsible sales environment. They expressed confidence that the proposed measures—particularly the staff supervision with alcohol being kept behind the counter—would mitigate risks such as shoplifting or attracting street drinkers.

The conditions imposed by the panel align with broader council efforts to maintain community standards in an area often described as “saturated” with licensed premises. Issues of public safety and community wellbeing are frequently at the forefront of council considerations. For context, recent cases in the area, including the revocation of a licence for Pascal's Bistro Bar due to severe breaches of conduct, underline the authority’s stringent approach to maintaining order in licensed venues.

The decision by the council also reflects a nuanced understanding of local economic dynamics. With Dracula’s House promoting a niche market by exclusively offering Romanian beverages, the hope is that this will attract a different clientele and reduce the likelihood of the establishment contributing to local drinking culture associated with public disorder. By confining alcohol sales as a minor aspect of their overall product offering, the owners are aligning their business model with community expectations, as evidenced by the assurances given during the council hearings regarding the nature of their operations.

In summary, while the granting of the alcohol licence to Dracula’s House faced initial opposition, the final judgement emphasised a commitment to balancing entrepreneurial spirit with community concerns. As Brighton continues to navigate its licensing landscape, the success or challenges faced by this small, specialised shop may provide useful insights for future applications in similarly contentious areas.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2025/05/02/councillors-to-decide-whether-spirits-will-be-allowed-in-draculas-house/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.moreradio.online/news-post/neighbours-object-to-specialist-romanian-off-licence-application)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/sussex-news/pascals-bistro-bar-hove-loses-5764712)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss), [[6]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/23097664.late-night-alcohol-licence-stanmer-house-stanmer-park/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.moreradio.online/news-post/neighbours-object-to-specialist-romanian-off-licence-application)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25202940.draculas-house-shop-brighton-can-now-sell-alcohol/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2025/05/02/councillors-to-decide-whether-spirits-will-be-allowed-in-draculas-house/> - Brighton and Hove City Council is set to decide on granting an alcohol licence to Dracula's House, a Romanian convenience store in London Road, Brighton. The application seeks permission to sell alcohol from 8am to 9pm Monday to Saturday and from 9am to 6pm on Sundays. The proposal has faced 13 objections from neighbours and one from Green councillor Sue Shanks, citing concerns over public nuisance and potential crime. The council's licensing panel is scheduled to review the application on 14 May. ([brightonandhovenews.org](https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2025/05/02/councillors-to-decide-whether-spirits-will-be-allowed-in-draculas-house/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.moreradio.online/news-post/neighbours-object-to-specialist-romanian-off-licence-application> - Neighbours have objected to Dracula's House, a Romanian convenience store in London Road, Brighton, applying for an alcohol licence. The store seeks permission to sell alcohol from 8am to 9pm Monday to Saturday and from 9am to 6pm on Sundays. Brighton and Hove City Council received 13 objections from residents and one from Green councillor Sue Shanks, citing concerns over public nuisance and potential crime. The application is due to be decided by a licensing panel on 14 May. ([moreradio.online](https://www.moreradio.online/news-post/neighbours-object-to-specialist-romanian-off-licence-application?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/business-and-trade/licensing-and-gambling/alcohol-and-entertainment-licensing> - Brighton and Hove City Council provides information on alcohol and entertainment licensing, including the Licensing Act 2003 Public Register. The register includes records of premises licences, club premises certificates, personal licences, temporary event notices, and various applications and notices related to licensing. The council's licensing team can be contacted for further information. ([brighton-hove.gov.uk](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/business-and-trade/licensing-and-gambling/alcohol-and-entertainment-licensing?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/sussex-news/pascals-bistro-bar-hove-loses-5764712> - Pascal's Bistro Bar in Hove has had its alcohol licence revoked following a review by a Brighton and Hove City Council licensing panel. The decision was based on evidence of violence, drug use, and persistent breaches of COVID regulations. The panel found overwhelming evidence of issues at the venue, including a violent incident in May, drug traces found in the toilets, and breaches of licensing rules. The owner has 21 days to appeal the decision. ([sussexlive.co.uk](https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/sussex-news/pascals-bistro-bar-hove-loses-5764712?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/23097664.late-night-alcohol-licence-stanmer-house-stanmer-park/> - Stanmer House in Stanmer Park, Brighton, has secured a late-night alcohol licence despite opposition from neighbours. The venue can now sell alcohol until 1am on Friday and Saturday nights, with an extra half-hour drinking-up time. The council's licensing panel approved the application, noting conditions to mitigate potential noise nuisance, including prohibiting live music in the garden after 11pm and requiring a contact number for residents to reach the duty manager. ([theargus.co.uk](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/23097664.late-night-alcohol-licence-stanmer-house-stanmer-park/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2016/seafront-restaurant-loses-alcohol-licence> - Azure, a seafront restaurant in Brighton, has lost its alcohol licence following a review by Brighton and Hove City Council's licensing team. The decision was based on persistent breaches of the licence, including offering alcohol without a full meal, repeated changes of management, and a series of warnings and interventions from the council and police. Councillor Jackie O’Quinn stated that the decision sends a clear message about the council's commitment to tackling noise nuisance and antisocial behaviour. ([brighton-hove.gov.uk](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2016/seafront-restaurant-loses-alcohol-licence?utm_source=openai))