# Four million Brits admit to stealing pub glasses as summer bank holidays approach



As the summer months roll in and with multiple bank holidays on the horizon, the UK’s beloved pubs, clubs, and bars face increasing challenges related to alcohol-related incidents. According to insights shared by the small business comparison site Bionic, establishments should brace themselves for heightened rowdy behaviour and more alarmingly, a spike in petty thefts, particularly involving glassware.

Recent statistics reveal that a staggering four million Brits confess to stealing tableware from hospitality venues weekly. This issue contributes to an estimated annual total of 2.1 million alcohol-related thefts across the country, with drinking glasses being the most coveted item. As many as 36% of individuals in a recent survey admitted to pilfering at least one glass, underscoring a persistent problem that has not gone unnoticed by the industry.

Interestingly, a 2023 survey conducted by Nisbets sheds further light on this troubling trend. It indicated that 27% of British adults, equivalent to approximately 17 million people, have stolen tableware from such venues, with the highest incidence found among younger adults aged 18 to 24, of whom 34% confessed to theft. Cardiff emerged as a hotspot, reporting that 36% of its residents have engaged in this behaviour. The financial implications for affected establishments can be significant, as they not only lose valuable assets but also face increased costs to replenish their supplies.

This problem is not unique to the UK. In Belgium, for instance, a popular bar known as the Beer Wall has resorted to installing alarm sensors on its beer glasses, to combat theft. Reports indicate that tourists, particularly from the UK, have been identified as frequent offenders, resulting in the venue losing approximately 4,000 glasses each year. Such measures reflect an understanding of the broader, unsettling reality facing the hospitality industry globally.

High-profile establishments are also grappling with the issue. Jeremy Clarkson’s pub, The Farmer’s Dog in Burford, Oxfordshire, recently experienced a significant loss of 104 branded pint glasses in just a single day. Clarkson expressed his frustration over the financial fallout from such thefts, emphasising the impact on profitability that establishments face when patrons take souvenirs from their visits.

The trend of middle-class shoplifting, which includes thefts of tableware, has been noted as an increasing concern for the hospitality sector. An opinion piece highlighted the heavy toll that glassware theft takes on establishments, calling for a cultural shift where patrons think twice before tucking a glass under their arm as they leave.

In light of these alarming statistics and incidents, many pubs have turned to humour in their messaging. Some establishments have taken to social media, creating lighthearted videos to encourage patrons to return stolen items. For instance, the Marquis Arms in Swansea cleverly asked in a viral TikTok video, “You wouldn’t steal our chairs,” prompting viewers to reconsider their actions.

As the bank holiday season approaches, it is imperative for both patrons and pub owners alike to confront this issue. By fostering a culture of respect and responsibility, the hospitality industry can hopefully reduce the incidence of glassware theft and enhance the enjoyment of communal spaces that are cherished by many.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2059727/4-million-brits-admit-committing), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/beer-glasses-alarms-attached-bar-wall-belgium-bruges-stolen-tourists-a8257721.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2059727/4-million-brits-admit-committing), [[2]](https://www.nisbets.co.uk/tableware-affair), [[5]](https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/middle-class-shoplifting-stealing-supermarkets-b2691270.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/01/jeremy-clarkson-pub-rocked-by-pint-glass-theft/), [[6]](https://www.lynnnews.co.uk/news/let-s-stop-stealing-glasses-from-pubs-times-are-hard-enou-9405168/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/beer-glasses-alarms-attached-bar-wall-belgium-bruges-stolen-tourists-a8257721.html), [[7]](https://www.myjoyonline.com/bar-forced-to-install-alarm-on-beer-glasses-because-people-keep-stealing-them/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2059727/4-million-brits-admit-committing), [[3]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/01/jeremy-clarkson-pub-rocked-by-pint-glass-theft/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2059727/4-million-brits-admit-committing> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.nisbets.co.uk/tableware-affair> - A 2023 survey by Nisbets revealed that 17 million British adults (27%) have stolen tableware from pubs, bars, or restaurants. The highest incidence was among 18-24-year-olds, with 34% admitting to such thefts. Cardiff emerged as the city with the highest rate of stolen tableware, with 36% of residents admitting to the act. The survey also highlighted that over 4 million Brits steal tableware more than once a week, leading to significant financial losses for the hospitality industry.
3. <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/01/jeremy-clarkson-pub-rocked-by-pint-glass-theft/> - Jeremy Clarkson's pub, The Farmer’s Dog in Burford, Oxfordshire, experienced a significant loss of 104 pint glasses in a single day. Clarkson expressed frustration over patrons taking branded glasses as souvenirs, emphasizing the impact on the pub's profitability. The incident underscores the broader issue of glassware theft in the hospitality industry, prompting establishments to implement measures to deter such behavior.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/beer-glasses-alarms-attached-bar-wall-belgium-bruges-stolen-tourists-a8257721.html> - The Beer Wall, a popular bar in Bruges, Belgium, installed alarm sensors on its beer glasses to combat theft. Tourists, particularly from the UK, were identified as frequent culprits, with the bar losing at least 4,000 glasses annually. The installation of the alarm system aimed to deter patrons from taking glasses as souvenirs, highlighting the challenges faced by hospitality venues due to such thefts.
5. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/middle-class-shoplifting-stealing-supermarkets-b2691270.html> - A 2023 survey by Nisbets found that 37 million Brits have stolen glasses from pubs and restaurants, and 17 million have stolen tableware. The survey also revealed that 4 million Brits steal from boozers or eateries on a weekly basis. The rise of middle-class shoplifting, including the theft of items like glasses and cutlery, has been highlighted as a growing concern for the hospitality industry.
6. <https://www.lynnnews.co.uk/news/let-s-stop-stealing-glasses-from-pubs-times-are-hard-enou-9405168/> - An opinion piece in the Lynn News emphasizes the impact of glassware theft on pubs, referencing the significant losses experienced by establishments like Jeremy Clarkson's pub. The article calls for patrons to refrain from taking glasses as souvenirs, highlighting the financial strain such thefts place on the hospitality industry.
7. <https://www.myjoyonline.com/bar-forced-to-install-alarm-on-beer-glasses-because-people-keep-stealing-them/> - The Beer Wall in Bruges, Belgium, installed alarm sensors on its beer glasses to deter theft. Tourists, particularly from the UK, were identified as frequent culprits, with the bar losing at least 4,000 glasses annually. The installation of the alarm system aimed to prevent patrons from taking glasses as souvenirs, addressing the broader issue of glassware theft in the hospitality industry.