

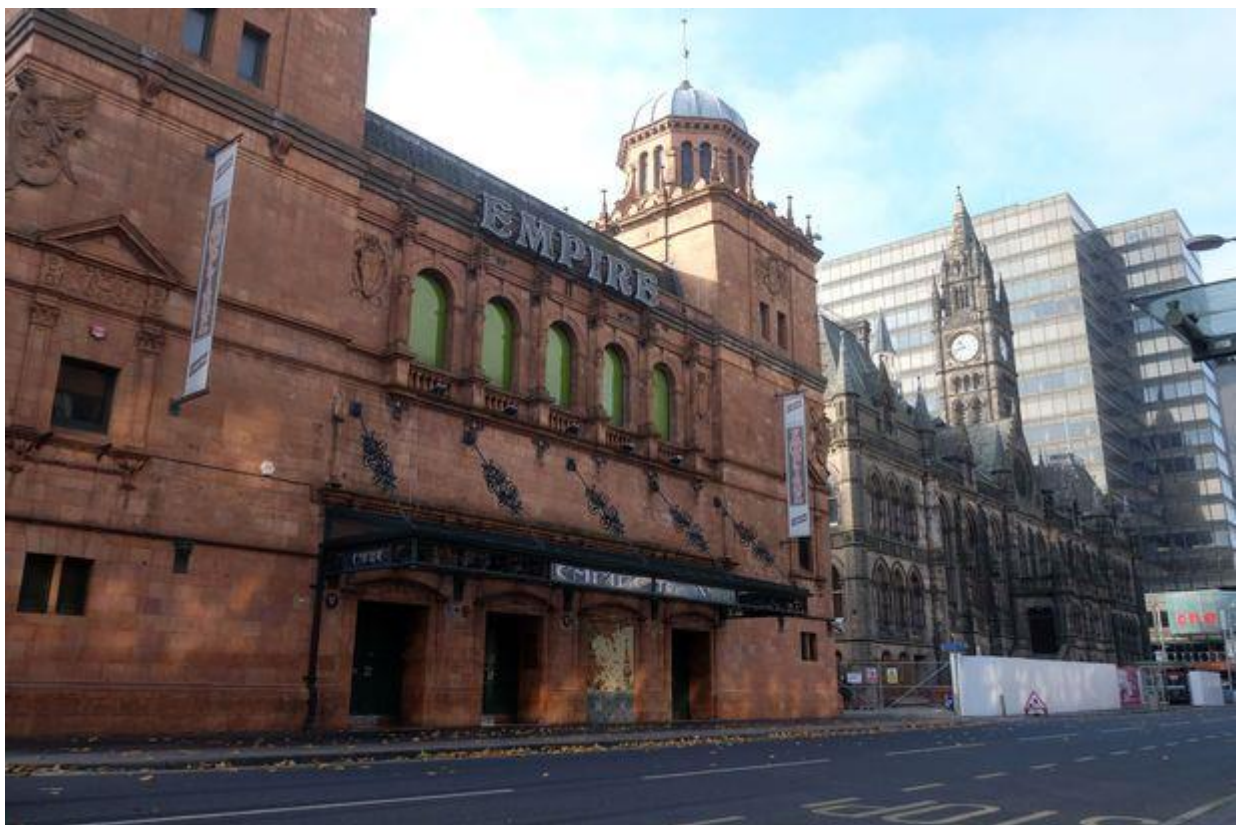
AT/7

1. [Home](#)
2. [News](#)
3. [Teesside News](#)
4. [Middlesbrough Empire](#)

# Empire nightclub could lose booze licence after underage drinkers arrested over stabbing

The renowned late-night venue is facing a review after police raised concerns over disorder

[gazettelive](#)



**The Empire** (Image: Evening Gazette)

A popular Middlesbrough nightclub could have its alcohol licence revoked after underage drinkers were arrested following a suspected stabbing.

[Cleveland Police](#) has submitted an application to the council to review [The Empire's](#) premises licence after two violent incidents were linked to under 18s. In the early hours of Sunday, May 1, [a 19-year-old clubber was stabbed in the back](#). He was taken to [James Cook University Hospital](#) where his condition was described as stable but still poorly. Last week, it was reported that three juvenile men

# AT/7

had been released under investigation by Cleveland Police after they were arrested following the assault.

**Read more: [Eerie glimpse inside derelict Middlesbrough nightclub SLAM where time has stood still](#)**

A month earlier, on April 4 an underage drinker got into a fight with another man and was hit in the face, causing an injury. The day before, a concerned mother reported that two underage children had entered the venue and were drinking. The force said that it would provide further evidence in due course.

The Empire is one of the North-east's best known nightclubs. The historic venue, which dates back to 1897, has played host to major names including James Arthur, Arctic Monkeys and Kasabian as well as being a legendary dance music venue.

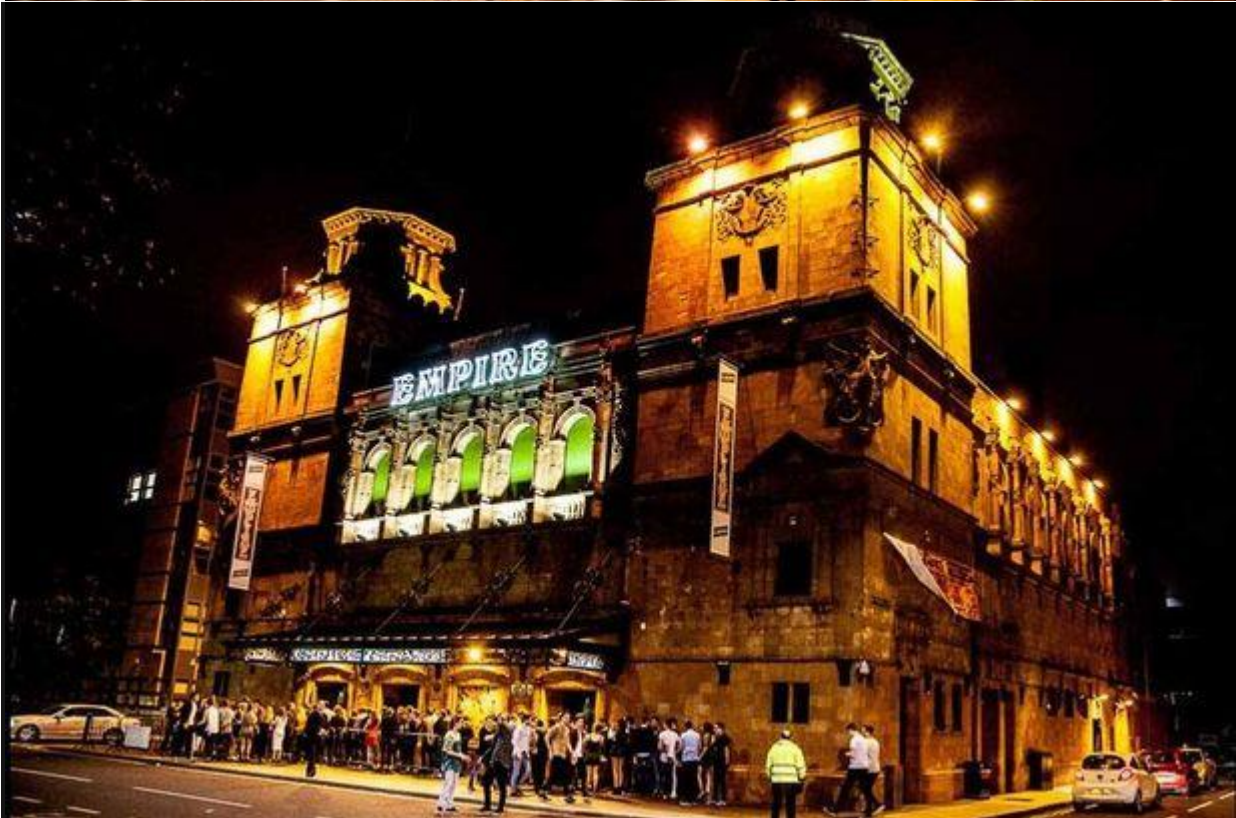
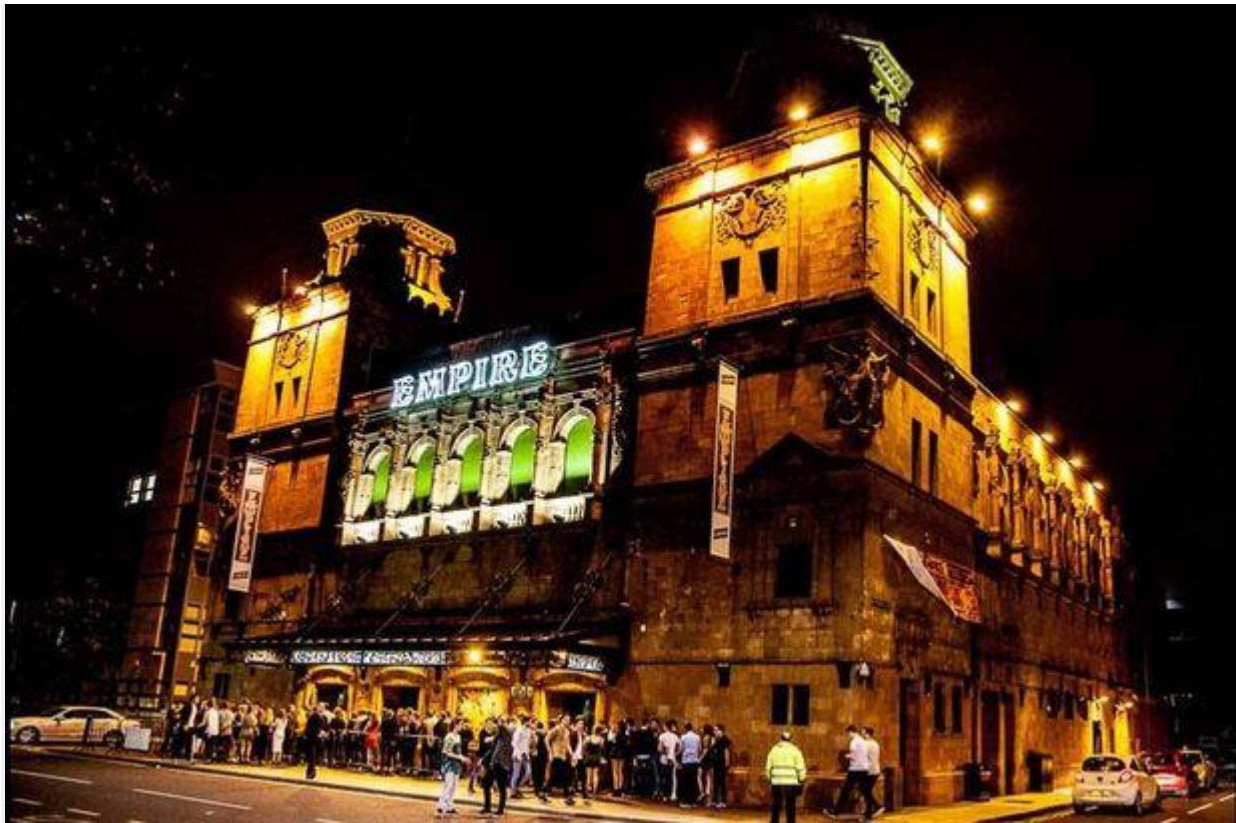
A statement in the licence review application for the town centre venue read: "Recently there has been intelligence suggesting that, since re-opening after the relaxing of restrictions due to the [covid pandemic](#), there has been a steady increase in underage drinkers in the venue. The venue has been spoken to on a number of occasions by both police licensing and council representatives regarding the issue, with the promise on each occasion that the matters would be addressed." It went on to add: "The venue has been spoken to about the allegations of underage drinkers getting in to the venue and the door staff not examining ID thoroughly, but from this latest incident it does not appear that the lessons have been learned and that the issue has now escalated to a very serious level."

[Middlesbrough Council's](#) licensing policy lists a number of steps that the local authority could take. It might decide that no action is necessary, modify or add conditions to the licence, exclude a licensable activity from the licence, remove the designated premises supervisor, suspend the licence (for up to three months) or even revoke it altogether.

To decide on a course of action, the local authority will hold a hearing where the different parties involved will be invited to speak.

**Inside the Middlesbrough Empire in lockdown**

AT/7



VIEW GALLERY

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On Friday, the club, based on Corporation Road, released a statement on [Facebook](#) stating that it would be cracking down on fake IDs. The post read: "Over recent weeks we have become increasingly aware of individuals attempting to use forged identification or identification that does not belong to them to obtain entry to the venue - this has left us no choice but to increase the rigidity of our ID checks prior to entry.

"While we do understand that many of you carry a passport that contains an old picture of your younger self, you will still be refused entry if a member of our security team does not believe that you bear enough of a resemblance to the photograph on your identification. If you're concerned that this may affect you, then help us out by carrying a form of identification with an up-to-date photograph."

If anyone wants to make representations regarding the review of the licence they need to write to the Middlesbrough Council licensing office or email [licensing@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@middlesbrough.gov.uk) by June 2.

## Conversation

FOLLOW THIS CONVERSATION TO BE NOTIFIED WHEN NEW COMMENTS ARE POSTED FOLLOW

## All Comments

1. TH  
26 DAYS AGO

tbh, fake id's are becoming more and more convincing, BUT there are still ways of catching them out (the cheapest and easiest way is to carry a small UV torch like the one i got on amazon for as little as £7) Fake ID's will not fluoresce under ultra violet light like a real ID would. maybe venues such as empire should invest in this method. it would make detection of fake ID's easier

2. HO  
MAY 9, 2022

Nothing new, underage people have been getting in there for years, as well as the other night clubs in Teesside, might make the bouncers actually do their jobs properly if the police or council sent in undercover officers in these places then started asking for ID themselves whilst they are in there, you know, do the job the bouncers are supposed to be doing and don't, as far as the bouncers are concerned, if it has breasts and a short skirt, they are in, anything for them to oggle over. EDITED  
REPLY<sub>3</sub> REPLIES 3

0. JA  
MAY 9, 2022

3. LI  
MAY 9, 2022

Bouncers have been the problem at Empire for a long time absolute 📢 ends

4. SA  
MAY 9, 2022

# AT/7

Make entry 21 and over. Stop the chavs getting in under age

- TH  
MAY 9, 2022

That's not the issue. It's that the door staff/bouncers don't care. From this to sl\*\*\*-shaming women who report they've been groped up their clothing

- CH  
MAY 9, 2022

You get chavs over 21 as well, in fact most of Middlesbrough are chavs no matter the age.

- MR  
29 DAYS AGO

I don't think stopping respectable 20yo's in is part of the solution.