

DRUG & ALCOHOL FINDINGS Abstract

This entry is for a document added to the Effectiveness Bank but not (or not yet) fully analysed. Usually the entry consists only of the reference and if available the original abstract with no comments or material changes. The original document was not published by Findings; click [Title](#) to order acopy. [Links](#) to other documents. [Hover over](#) for notes. [Click to](#) highlight passage referred to. Unfold extra text

Send email for updates

[SEND](#) [About updates](#)

▶ [Title and link for copying](#) ▶ [Comment/query to editor](#) ▶ [Tweet](#)

▶ [Modern Crime Prevention Strategy.](#)

[UK] Home Office
[UK] Home Office, 2016.



This new strategy presents a vision for crime prevention in 2016, which includes greater partnership-working between government, the police, business and industry to prevent and tackle drug and alcohol-related crime and disorder, and greater personal responsibility for substance use and recovery.

SUMMARY Crime has fallen rapidly over the last 20 years, but at the same time the picture of crime has changed. While high-volume crimes like burglary and street violence have more than halved, there has been increased reporting and visibility of child sexual abuse, rape and domestic violence, and more evidence obtained about the scale of online fraud and cyber-crime.

The reduction in crime can be attributed in large part to better preventative action to stop crimes from happening in the first place. The expansion of drug treatment, for example, has helped reduce the numbers of heroin and crack cocaine users, who commit over 40% of acquisitive crimes.

The *Modern Crime Prevention Strategy* sets out what crime prevention means in 2016, applying lessons from past successes, along with the latest research into modern challenges. The strategy outlines evidence for tackling six key drivers of crime: opportunity; character; effectiveness of the criminal justice system; profit; drugs; and alcohol.

The following entry summarises the Home Office approach to drugs and alcohol, providing links where useful to related Effectiveness Bank content, which may not be cited in the original report.

Drugs as a driver of crime

Further reducing the number of heroin and crack cocaine users is likely to have the biggest impact on the volume of crime. The expectation of Government, outlined in the 2010 Home Office [Drug Strategy](#), is that "full recovery [from drugs and alcohol] is possible and desirable". A new strategy will be published in 2016, building on the current approach to reduce demand, restrict supply, build recovery, and tackle drugs as a key driver of crime.

The *Modern Crime Prevention Strategy* describes (in brief) how the impact of drugs on crime and disorder can be mitigated through: (1) treatment; (2) prevention; and (3) enforcement.

Treatment

The criminal justice system can offer a number of routes into treatment, which is a key way of [reducing levels of offending](#). "Full recovery" from dependence should be the aim of treatment, which evidence suggests is more likely to be achieved and sustained if users are given support to improve their 'recovery capital', particularly around housing and meaningful employment.

For a small cohort of entrenched, long-term opiate users who have not achieved recovery through optimised oral substitution treatment, there is evidence that heroin-assisted treatment (supervised injectable heroin) [reduces crime](#).

Prevention

There is little evidence that [drug education](#) focused on information or media campaigns alone can change behaviour. This approach should only be used as part of a wider strategy. However, there is growing evidence that good quality Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and school-based interventions (building confidence, resilience and effective decision-making skills) can have a preventative impact on drug use. For those in the early stages of drug use, brief interventions (including motivational interviewing techniques) at early contact points with health, criminal justice and social care services can help prevent escalation.

Enforcement

There is some evidence that drug law enforcement can have an impact at a local level. However, benefits can be short-lived and disappear once an intervention ceases. Policing interventions aimed at drug hotspots, implemented in partnership with community groups, are likely to be more effective than conventional law enforcement-only approaches at reducing drug-related problems such as street-level dealing, crime and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

Alcohol as a driver of crime

The sale of alcohol contributes to the UK's economy, and pubs are a significant part of community life for many people. However, alcohol-related crime costs the UK an estimated £11 billion; alcohol misuse places a strain on emergency services, and has a negative impact on communities, with 18% of adults perceiving people being drunk or rowdy as a very or fairly big problem in their local area.

Key points
From summary and commentary

Alcohol and drugs are identified as two key drivers of crime and disorder in the 2016 Home Office *Modern Crime Prevention Strategy*.

The impact of drugs can be mitigated through treatment, prevention, and enforcement – something which is expected to be further elaborated on in the forthcoming 2016 Drug Strategy.

Capacity to curb the impact of drinking on crime and disorder can be increased via information-sharing, establishing effective local partnerships, and equipping the police and local authorities with the right powers.

Full recovery from dependence should be the aim of treatment

very or fairly big problem in their local area.

The trends in alcohol-related crime and disorder have been moving in the right direction consistently over the past decade. Nonetheless, harms associated with alcohol remain too high, and the Government is clear that "people should be able to go into the evening and night time economy to socialise, eat or enjoy the entertainment their town centre has to offer without the fear of becoming a victim of crime", and that "the lives of the majority of residents of town centres, suburbs and estates should not be affected by the drunk and rowdy behaviour of a minority".

Given the association between alcohol use and violence, reducing consumption is likely to be beneficial in crime prevention. Evidence shows that reducing the availability of alcohol, providing targeted treatment and brief advice, and prevention approaches that build life skills and resilience can be effective in reducing alcohol-related harm. Good partnership working and data-sharing, which underpin the successful implementation of interventions, can also support crime prevention activity.

Preventing alcohol-related crime and disorder requires action by *all with a stake* in the successful operation of the evening and night-time economy including businesses, local authorities, the police, and health services. For businesses, it is important that they consider the societal impacts of selling alcohol to those who have drunk too much, including the potential risk of crime and disorder. Personal responsibility is also important – "individuals must shoulder their share of responsibility when it comes to decisions they take about drinking to excess, committing acts of violence or disorder, and not challenging the unacceptable behaviour of others".

Preventing alcohol-related crime and disorder requires a three-pronged approach: (1) improving local intelligence; (2) establishing effective local partnerships; and (3) equipping the police and local authorities with the right powers.

Individuals must shoulder their share of responsibility when it comes to decisions they take about drinking to excess

Improving local intelligence

Decisions about individual licensing applications, enforcement activity and the use of resources to police the night-time economy hinge on the strength of the evidence that is available. To improve the amount and quality of local intelligence the Government will:

- Publish information about the number and location of incidents of alcohol-related crime and disorder on police.uk.
- Encourage the police to make the best use of data and to share information with local authorities and businesses where appropriate.
- Expect more local NHS trusts to share information about alcohol-related violence to support licensing decisions taken by local authorities and the police (as demonstrated in the [Cardiff Model](#)).
- Encourage licensing authorities to share information with each other about individuals and premises that have had their licences revoked.
- Work with partner organisations including the Local Government Association and Public Health England to ensure that local authorities have the right analytical tools and capability to make effective use of the information made available to them.

Effective local partnerships

Strong, sustained, and effective partnership working is at the heart of successful management of the evening and night-time economy. The police, local authority, and health services must work alongside local businesses to devise local solutions and strategies for preventing alcohol-related crime and disorder. The Government has a role in facilitating partnership-working, but the day-to-day management of the evening and night-time economy should be done locally. To develop effective partnership working locally the Government will:

- Launch a new round of [Local Alcohol Action Areas](#). The new programme will strengthen the capacity and capability of local areas to build effective partnerships, address alcohol-related harms by focusing on a number of core challenges, and provide access to experts and advice. Areas will be able to bid for inclusion in the programme, which will launch in autumn 2016.
- Work with industry partners to support businesses locally to continue to take action to prevent crime, for example by continuing to support partnership-based initiatives such as Pubwatch, Best Bar None, Community Alcohol Partnerships and Purple Flag, as well as the Proof of Age Standards Scheme and Drinkaware.
- Influence positive behaviour change among individual consumers, for example through the provision of [brief interventions](#) outside a traditional health-care setting for both offenders and victims.
- Pursue a life-course approach to preventing the onset of alcohol misuse, and its escalation, through supporting a universal approach combined with more targeted action for the most vulnerable. This includes placing a greater emphasis on building resilience and confidence among young people to make informed and positive choices for their health and wellbeing.

A need for industry partners to support local businesses to prevent crime

Equipping local authorities and the police with the right powers

The Government will ensure that local authorities and the police have the right powers, and that the licensing framework within which the police and local authorities operate supports them in taking the right action. "Action should be proportionate, but offenders, be they individuals or licensees, should be left in no doubt of the need to change their behaviour." To achieve this the Government will:

- Improve the [late night levy](#) by making it more flexible for local areas, fairer to businesses, and more transparent. At the same time, create a greater role for Police and Crime Commissioners by giving them a right to request that local authorities consult on introducing a levy to contribute towards the cost of policing the evening and night-time economy.
- Put [cumulative impact policies](#) on a statutory footing to strengthen the ability of authorities to control the availability of alcohol and reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder, as well as providing industry with greater clarity about how the powers can be used.
- Where partnership working has broken down and problems are concentrated in a particular geographical area, consult on the most appropriate powers for local authorities and the police to deal with problems effectively. To achieve this, the Government will consult on a group review intervention power to enable licensing authorities to consider the licensing conditions of a group of premises to address problems in a specific location. Where there are serious concerns about individual premises, the licensing authority will continue to use the existing review process.
- Future-proof changes to the police workforce by safeguarding civilian staff powers to enter premises to inspect whether activity is taking place in accordance with licence conditions, as described under the Policing and Crime Bill.
- Introduce sobriety as a court-imposed community order to reduce alcohol-related reoffending. The Ministry of Justice

will use the available evidence to establish the best model for achieving this, including the evaluation of the [London](#)

will use the available evidence to establish the best model for achieving this, including the evaluation of the [London-based pilot](#), led by the Mayor of London Office for Policing and Crime. The outcomes from pilot activity will feed into a broader Electronic Monitoring Strategy which will support the rollout of GPS technology across the country before the end of the Parliament.

FINDINGS COMMENTARY The Home Office *Modern Crime Prevention Strategy* reflects alcohol and drugs policy before it, influenced by prevailing beliefs about [personal responsibility](#) for substance use and 'full recovery' – concepts unpicked in these two Effectiveness Bank hot topics ([1,2](#)).

The featured strategy shows no signs of reigniting the [minimum pricing](#) policy for alcohol, outlined in the 2012 [UK alcohol strategy](#) (and dropped in 2013). The approach to tackling drug-based crime and disorder relies on treatment, prevention and enforcement, while for alcohol, it is primarily about partnership-working to mitigate the harms from 'anti-social' drinking. This includes continued work between communities and alcohol industry partners through initiatives such as Pubwatch and Drinkaware. A 2015 [review](#) of alcohol policy found that industry involvement in policy design and implementation has been exceeding their (evidence-based) recommended roles as producers and distributors of alcohol, something which is likely to undermine public health.

Last revised 23 September 2016. First uploaded 05 September 2016

- ▶ [Comment/query to editor](#)
- ▶ [Give us your feedback on the site \(two-minute survey\)](#)
- ▶ [Open Effectiveness Bank home page](#)
- ▶ Add your name to the [mailing list](#) to be alerted to new studies and other site updates

Top 10 most closely related documents on this site. For more try a [subject or free text search](#)

STUDY 2014 [Drugs: international comparators](#)

DOCUMENT 2012 [The government's alcohol strategy](#)

REVIEW 2009 [Refocusing drug-related law enforcement to address harms](#)

DOCUMENT 2010 [Drug Strategy 2010. Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery: Supporting People to Live a Drug Free Life](#)

REVIEW 2010 [Drugs, crime and public health: the political economy of drug policy](#)

STUDY 2013 [Criminal justice responses to drug related crime in Scotland](#)

STUDY 2011 [Achieving positive change in the drinking culture of Wales](#)

REVIEW 2012 [Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: a meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts](#)

REVIEW 2006 [Motivational arm twisting: contradiction in terms?](#)

STUDY 2011 [Scoping study of interventions for offenders with alcohol problems in community justice settings](#)