

Alcohol roles

Young People's Advocate

You are the head of a local secondary school. You are concerned at the amount drunk by children in the school. You have a few pupils who are persistently late getting to school, tired and ill during school, and who are not completing homework because of drinking. Many more children are occasionally hung over. You have worked hard to improve exam results and the schools OFSTED rating. The effect of alcohol on school work and behaviour in school is now limiting further improvements. You want something done about this. Time within the school day is already difficult to find, to meet national curriculum requirements.

In the Tellus survey 6.9% of young people in Kingston Schools reported frequent misuse of drugs, volatile substance or alcohol or both; which is better than the England average of 9.8%. However, you are aware that participation in Tellus was low in local schools, and you are aware that the survey has now been stopped.

Nationally, the overall proportion of young people who do not drink is increasing. However among those who do drink, there seems to have been an increase in alcohol consumption. The rate of liver cirrhosis amongst young adults has increased in the last 10 years and this is likely to be associated with heavier drinking in the teenage years. Studies are indicating that heavy drinking in adolescence can have an impact on liver, bones and endocrine development as well as affecting brain development.

Shopkeeper

You are a small independent shopkeeper, and a member of the local Chamber of Commerce. Your profit margins are not high, and alcohol sales are important to you to keep your profits up. You are worried at the prospect of a minimum price for alcohol, as this will probably affect your sales.

You are also worried about sales to young people. Some of your customers are from local gangs, and you suspect that some of the IDs they use to buy alcohol may be false.

You are aware that in 2005, the Home Office led on an Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign and targeted test-purchasing across England and Wales. It found 29% of on-licensees, 21% of off-licensees and 18% of supermarkets were selling to under-18 year-olds. Evidence indicates that young people are sensitive to price increases and tend to buy cheaper alcohol.

Local councillor 1

You are an independent local councillor. You stood for the local council from a desire to improve services and lives for local people.

You are very concerned about improving life for those who are worst off and least able to help themselves. You want to see a minimum price for alcohol introduced, and you want the local authority to monitor alcohol sales to young people more effectively, with harsh penalties for anyone found to be selling alcohol to young people.

Alcohol responds to price increases like most consumer goods on the market; when other factors remain constant, an increase in the price of alcohol generally leads to a decrease in consumption and vice versa. Analysis of trends in alcohol price and consumption show that this has been the case in the UK – as alcohol has become more affordable, consumption has increased.

In most developed countries, including the UK, approximately 20% of drinkers consume approximately 80% of all alcohol sold.

Alcohol Concern recommends a minimum price for alcohol as the most effective and efficient lever to tackle irresponsible drinking, whilst not significantly affecting moderate, responsible drinkers. They recommend a minimum price of 50p per unit of alcohol.

Increasing the price of alcohol has been shown to reduce alcohol-related harm across all population groups, but some groups of drinkers experience a greater impact than others. Young drinkers, and frequent and heavier drinkers, tend to experience a more significant reduction in consumption levels than less frequent and lighter drinkers. This is because both young binge-drinkers and for problem drinkers tend to choose cheaper drinks.

Local councillor 2

You are an independent local councillor. You stood for the local council from a desire to improve services and lives for local people.

You are very concerned about improving profits for local businesses, which in turn will improve tax revenues and local amenities. You are also worried about the lack of responsibility taken by people for their own lives. You want to see more treatment services for alcoholics and stronger penalties for alcohol related crimes.

Alcohol affects more than people's health:

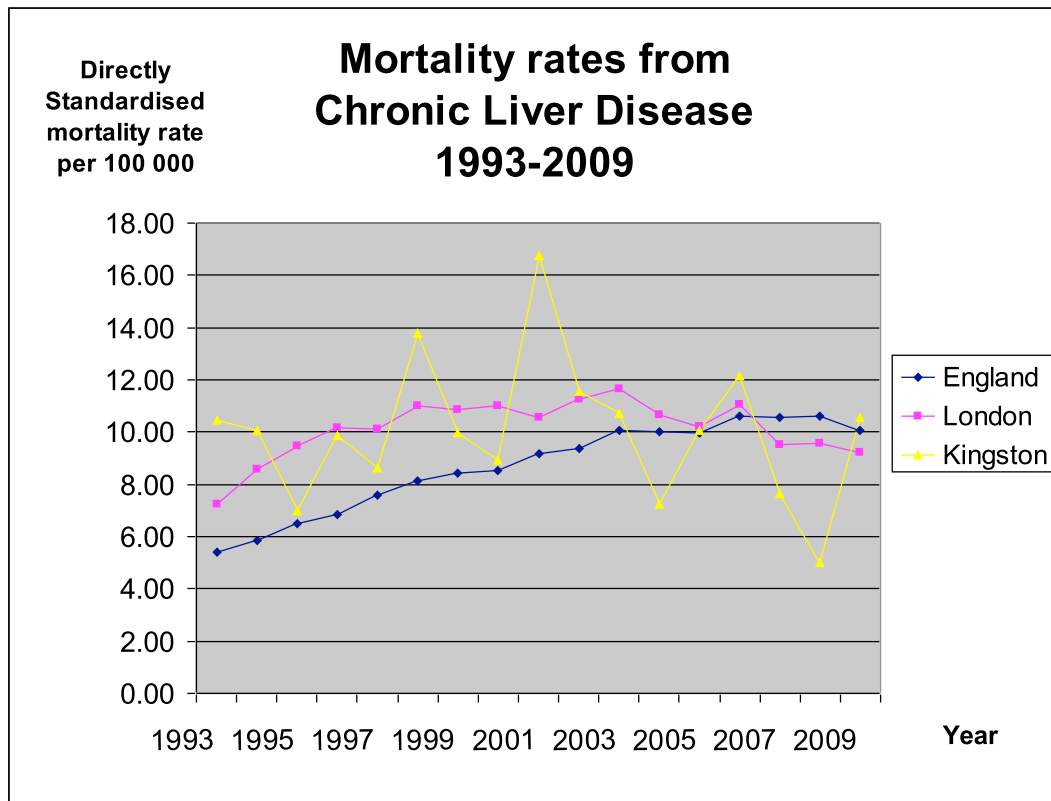
Offence Category	Total Offences in Kings to n April 2009 to March 2010	Alcohol Attributable Fractions	Calculated Alcohol Attributable Crimes in Kings to n April 2009 to March 2010
Violence against the Person	2,262	0.37	837
Sexual Offences	150	0.13	20
Robbery	265	0.12	32
Burglary	1,177	0.17	200
Theft & Handling	4,605	0.13	599
Fraud & Forgery	463	0.16	74
Criminal Damage	1,376	0.47	647
Drugs	555	0.19	105
Other	160	0.26	42
Total	11,013		2,555

[Metropolitan Police Website](#) and the [North West Public Health Observatory](#)

Public Health

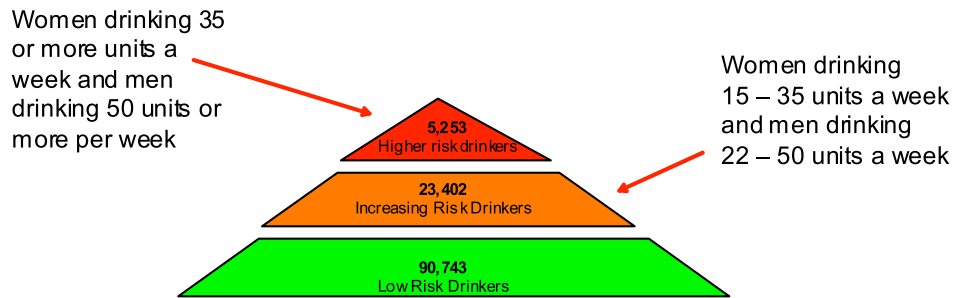
You work in the local public health department. You have been asked to develop an alcohol policy to improve health and reduce the harm due to alcohol locally.

In 2009 there were 5775 deaths from chronic liver disease in England, and 17 in Kingston.



There is no clear trend in deaths over time, and no indication of a reduction.

Alcohol



Synthetic estimates for low, increasing risk and harmful drinkers in Kingston (produced by the North West Public Health Observatory)

Binge drinking – 13,500 individuals in Kingston estimated to consume at least twice the daily recommended amount of alcohol in a single drinking session (6 or more units for females and 8 or more for men).

A recent pilot testing a screening tool for new patient registrations found that over one year 326 people were found to need a brief intervention in primary care, and 29 required more services.