

# York Alcohol Needs Assessment: Summary

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## **1. Key Facts**

This document summarises the key facts identified within the [York Alcohol Needs Assessment](#).

More detail about the content can be found by following the links provided or by reading the full needs assessment document which can be found here: <http://www.healthyork.org/lifestyles-in-york/alcohol.aspx>

## **2. Alcohol Profile**

- Worldwide, 3.3 million deaths each year result from harmful use of alcohol. This represents 5.9% of all deaths ([World Health Organisation](#)).
- Excess alcohol consumption causes death and disability relatively early in life. In the 20–39 year old age group, approximately 25% of the total deaths within this group are linked to alcohol ([World Health Organisation](#)).
- There is a causal relationship between harmful use of alcohol and a range of mental and behavioural disorders, conditions and injuries.
- Alcohol contributes to over 60 health conditions and is linked to crime and anti-social behaviour.

### **c. UK Alcohol Profile**

- The UK has one of the highest levels of drinking in the world, high levels of binge drinking and few people who not drink at all ([World Health Organisation](#)).
- Nationally reported drinking levels of school aged children are generally falling, the evidence shows that whilst fewer young people are using alcohol or drugs, those who do tend to use these substances more frequently and in greater quantities.

#### **d. Definition of drinking levels**

- Any level of drinking raises the risk of a range of illnesses that include cancers of the mouth, throat and breast ([Department of Health](#)).
- Men are now advised to drink no more than 14 units per week to keep their health risks at a low level. This is the same level advised for women ([Department of Health](#)).
- It is best to spread the amount of alcohol consumed over 3 days or more. Having one or two heavy drinking sessions increases the risks of death from long-term illnesses and accidents and injuries ([Department of Health](#)).
- A good way to reduce alcohol intake is to have several alcohol-free days a week ([Department of Health](#)).
- Short-term risks can be avoided by limiting the amount of alcohol consumed on any one occasion, drinking more slowly, and drinking with food and alternating with water ([Department of Health](#)).
- For pregnant women, or those planning a pregnancy, the guidelines say the safest approach is to drink no alcohol at all to keep risks to the fetus to a minimum ([Department of Health](#)).
- Drinking in pregnancy can lead to long-term harm to the baby, with the more you drink, the greater the risk ([Department of Health](#)).

### **3. Alcohol Availability**

- In York there are 799 premises licensed to sell or supply alcohol (as of March 2015). With an approximate population of 160,000 adults aged 18 or over, this equates to one venue which sells alcohol for every 200 adults (City of York Council, Licensing data unpublished).
- The price of alcohol is a big factor in how much alcohol is drunk ([Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems, 2007](#)).

#### **a. Cumulative Impact Zones (CIZ)**

- York is one of the few Local Authority areas to have a cumulative impact zone. Of the 349 local authority areas, 102 had at least 1 cumulative impact zone in their boundary as at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2014 ([Home Office, 2015](#))

**b. Alcohol Restriction Zones (ARZ)**

- York has an ARZ. This allows North Yorkshire Police to seize alcohol from those who are behaving anti-socially. It does not prevent social drinking outside bars or cafes or in public areas.

**c. Underage Sales**

- Much of the alcohol drunk by young people is either bought by an adult for them or is bought by young people in shops that are good at staying undetected in underage sales (City of York Council Trading Standards Department, unpublished).

**4. Alcohol Consumption**

- Much of the data on how much alcohol is consumed by people comes from self reported measures but people under report how much they drink by about 40% ([Alcohol Concern, 2009](#)).
- When considering the link between alcohol misuse and mental ill health, the identification of a common mental health disorder by a GP is important because there is an opportunity to look at what information and messages are being given to people with common mental health problems around alcohol.

**a) Drinking Levels in York**

- Levels of drinking in York are about the same as the average rates in England apart from for binge drinking where York has significantly higher numbers of people who binge drink.

**b) Where People Drink**

- Since 1992, the amount of alcohol that is drunk within the home has increased ([Health & Social Care Information Centre](#))
- Since 2001, the amount of alcohol that is drunk in pubs and bars has decreased ([Health & Social Care Information Centre](#))

**c) Pre-loading**

- Pre-loading means drinking at home before going out. This is often done to save money and is traditionally seen as more common in young people than older adults.
- 1 in 4 people who go out in York always pre-load, overall more than half are pre-loading at least sometimes. 78% of under 25 year olds reported pre-loading but it is not just the under 25's who pre-load, half of 35 – 54 year olds reported pre-loading (North Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner, 2014).
- 1 in 3 people who reported pre-loading stated this meant at least 5 drinks, men reported drinking slightly more than women and York residents are almost twice as likely as visitors to pre-load (North Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner, 2014).

**d) Older Adults**

- For older adults, the risks of alcohol related harm increase with age.

- As well as making some conditions harder to treat, alcohol can also mask some symptoms of illnesses or conditions and make it harder for things like heart disease or alzheimers to be diagnosed ([National Institute on Ageing, 2015](#)).
- The population in York who are more likely to drink every day are older more affluent people.
- Men and women aged over 45 are more likely to drink more frequently than younger people.

**e) Children & Young People**

- There are currently gaps in the quality of data available to indicate how many cases coming to the attention of children's social care services have alcohol identified as a contributing factor to social care services involvement.

**5. Alcohol Costs**

- Alcohol related harm in England is estimated to cost £21 Billion every year ([Public Health England, 2013](#))
- Alcohol costs in York alone are estimated to be £77.2 Million each year (Public Health England & Balance, unpublished data from 2011/2012).
- Understanding the socioeconomic patterns of harmful alcohol consumption is important for public health policy development. It should be considered when determining how alcohol related health promotion, harm prevention and interventions are targeted at a local level.

**a) Alcohol Harms**

- Recent research is making a stronger case against the health benefits of drinking alcohol even at very low levels of consumption – unless you are a woman aged over 65 and consuming very low levels of alcohol, there are no clear health benefits associated with drinking alcohol.

- When compared to national figures, York appears to be about average on many measures of alcohol related harm. However, when compared to areas with similar levels of deprivation, York performs worse across a range of measures related to alcohol harm.
- Social Norms Theory is important to consider when thinking about influencing a reduction in risky drinking levels within the York population. This is particularly relevant because of the high levels of binge drinking in York and the potential impact that this has on reducing life expectancy in those who binge drink.

**b) Parental Alcohol Misuse**

- Parental drinking habits are the largest indicator for risky drinking behaviour in young people.
- Nearly 1 in 3 (30%) of children live with at least one parent who is a binge drinker (between 3.3 - 3.5 million children) and around 1 in 5 (22%) live with a hazardous drinker (over 2.5 million children)
- Around 26,000 babies under 1 in England are living with a parent who would be classified as a 'dependent' drinker. This is equivalent to 31,000 across the UK.
- Almost twice the numbers of children were counselled by ChildLine about their parent's alcohol misuse than about drug misuse.
- 80% of adults think that parental drinking is a serious problem for children in the UK and 84% of adults agreed that parental drinking is as harmful to children as parental drug use.
- Parents often underestimate their influence as a role model around drinking behaviour. When considering that evidence identifies a range of alcohol related harms associated with drinking in childhood, it becomes more important to promote responsible drinking by parents.

**c) Family Focus**

- Where families are engaged in the nationally defined Family Focus programme, 20% of families with an adult with an alcohol misuse problem also had a child who was substance misusing compared to 13% of

families where there was no adult misusing alcohol ([Department for Communities & Local Government, 2014](#))

**d) Anti-social Behaviour**

- In a survey about what people saw as the most problematic reasons fro anti-social behaviour, general drunken behaviour was the highest reported problem in York (North Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner, 2015).

**e) Alcohol & River Safety**

- Alcohol can be confirmed as a contributing factor in about half of all river related deaths locally (North Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner, 2015)..

**f) Alcohol & Gambling**

- Individuals who frequently drink large amounts of alcohol are more likely to engage in problematic gambling ([Alcohol Concern, 2015](#)).

**g) Alcohol & Mental Wellbeing**

- People with a mental health condition are more likely to drink alcohol at risky levels than people who don't ([Department of Health, 2014](#)).

**h) Alcohol & Crime**

- About half of all violent crime is alcohol related ([Office for National Statistics, 2012](#)).

- York is generally perceived to be a safe city and local crime data supports this with low levels of crime reported across many areas (Safer York Partnership).
- York has lower rates of alcohol related crime and violent crime than England but slightly higher rates of alcohol related sexual crime than England (Safer York Partnership).
- During the period of 01/01/2012 – 22/02/2015 there were 520 drink driving arrests in York (North Yorkshire Police).

## **6. Alcohol & the Economy**

- National information on alcohol taxation revenue by sales shows that UK alcohol taxation revenue has increased since 2000-2001 and that in 2014-2015 for the first time, sales revenue from wine was greater than from beer ([HM Customs & Revenue](#)).
- York as a City has consistently been in the top 30 local authorities with the highest rates of employment within the areas of employment listed above since 2009 (Department of Trade & Industry).

## **7. Local Services**

- Specialist alcohol treatment services support a relatively low number of people but engage a slightly higher proportion of people with a drinking problem into treatment than average figures across the rest of the country.

### **a) Hospital Admissions**

- It is estimated that 1 in 10 people attending A&E in York do so because of an alcohol related injury.
- When compared to England rates, York looks to be about average for hospital related alcohol admissions. However, when compared to other areas that are more similar to York, this shows that there are higher

rates of alcohol related hospital activity in York and that these are higher still among people from the more deprived areas of York ([Public Health England](#)).

**b) Factors for Admissions**

- Those who are accessing specialist treatment are more likely to be from poorer areas.
- Those accessing hospital treatment for alcohol specific conditions are more likely to be from poorer backgrounds.
- The highest rates of hospital admission for alcohol specific conditions can be seen in males and in particular in males aged 45-64.
- The highest rates of hospital admission for alcohol specific conditions in women are for those aged 25–64.
- The highest rates of hospital admission for alcohol related conditions can be seen in females and in particular in females aged over 65 years old.
- The highest rates of hospital admission for alcohol related conditions in men are for those aged over 65 years old.

The full version of the York Alcohol Needs Assessment can be found here: <http://www.healthyork.org/lifestyles-in-york/alcohol.aspx>