



HOME OFFICE

Alcohol and Crime: Taking Stock

Ann Dehan

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The Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (PRCU) is based in the Research, Development and Statistics (RDS) Directorate of the Home Office. The Unit carries out and commissions social and management science research on policing and crime reduction, to support Home Office aims and develop evidence-based policy and practice.

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Foreword

The need for effective action against alcohol-related crime was highlighted at the Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) liquor licensing conference in November 1998. Some areas have already begun to identify the need for a local alcohol strategy.

This review draws on information from the academic, health and policing fields to explore the links between alcohol and crime, and to suggest methods which might reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder. No one single measure is likely to be enough but the potential value of local partnerships in any strategy is underlined. This report will provide an evidence base that should aid the development of such local policies and strategies.

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Executive Summary

This review gathers together information from the academic, health and policing fields to explore the links between alcohol and crime. It identifies recommendations to reduce alcohol-related crime, and consequently, suggests methods which could reduce the level of policing and other resources needed to deal with these offences.

Alcohol and crime

Alcohol-related crime includes not only offences that are alcohol-specific such as drunk and disorderly or offences against the licensing laws but covers a continuum of offences which involve alcohol to a greater or lesser degree. Alcohol can be a disinhibitor, can be used as an excuse, or can result in crime because the individual has a drinking problem. Although alcohol can cause crime, usually it is no more than associated with offending.

Drunkenness as a crime appears to cross all age boundaries but is associated mainly with the young, particularly young males where the offence involves aggression. The link between alcohol and aggression is not a simple one. Situational factors appear to play a strong role in alcohol-related aggressive acts which are in turn often influenced by the protagonist's expectations of the outcome of a situation.

Alcohol-related aggression often results in facial injury, with beer glasses used as weapons. Men, particularly young men, are the most likely victims. However, there is also a strong link between domestic violence where women are the victims, and alcohol. Men who drink heavily are more likely to physically abuse their partners. Consequently, women are more likely than men to be injured in the home, while men are more likely to sustain injury near licensed premises.

Alcohol and aggression on licensed premises

Evidence suggests that controlling elements of the physical and social drinking environment can reduce the potential for alcohol-related violence. For example, attractive and well-maintained licensed premises have fewer violent incidents. Discounted alcoholic drink promotions and 'happy hours' should be avoided. Serving food tends to be associated with fewer incidents of aggression. Staggered closing times can reduce the numbers of people on the streets at the same time looking for transport and food. The social environment can be influenced by expecting drinkers to behave in a socially acceptable way, by staff actively discouraging any anti-social behaviour. Emphasis should be placed on the intoxication level of patrons and avoiding selling alcohol to already intoxicated drinkers. Experienced door staff can often recognise potentially aggressive individuals or groups and pre-empt incidents as a result.

The role of the criminal justice system and the licensed industry

The police, courts, probation service and the licensed industry all have a role in reducing alcohol-related crime. The police obviously enforce legislation but also have an educational role. The custody suite is recognised increasingly for its appropriateness as a setting to divert addicted offenders into treatment and as such has potential as a setting to deliver harm minimisation messages to drunken detainees. The courts and probation service also serve as points of diversion into treatment and education. Magistrates can apply conditions to licensed premises licences. Probation officers help to support and enforce treatment which is a condition of sentence. The licensee also has an obligation to ensure legal requirements are met on their premises. The solution to tackling alcohol-related crime may not lie in the individual roles of these agencies but through a partnership approach.

What makes a successful alcohol-related crime reduction initiative

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Alcohol is the most widely used drug in most countries in the world and has been described as 'Our Favourite Drug' (RCP, 1986). Most people consume alcohol socially and moderately. However, some people drink heavily with adverse physical and psychological consequences (Marshall and Alam, 1997). Alcohol has also been linked to crime, accidents and other social problems. It has been estimated that alcohol misuse contributes to 40% of violent crime (Robertson, 1990), 78% of assaults, and 88% of criminal damage cases (Alcohol Concern, 1991). One in six cases presenting to the emergency services are thought to be alcohol-related (Backhouse, 1986). Alcohol is also a contributory factor in many divorces, child abuse cases and has been linked to domestic violence (Alcohol Concern, 1997). The economic costs of alcohol to society in a single year are potentially enormous. Godfrey (1996) calculated that alcohol misuse involved costs of £2.7 billion in 1992, approximately 0.5% of Gross National Product. Evidence from abroad indicates that the costs of alcohol misuse are between two percent and five percent of GNP (Alcohol Concern, 1999).

The fact that alcohol is so widely used makes its control a very public and political debate. The issue was brought to the forefront in November 1998 by the Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) liquor licensing conference, marking the first time that senior officers had debated the issues nationally. The conference pointed to previous police concentration on drug issues leading to the exclusion of alcohol. This review aims to gather together information from the academic, health and policing fields to explore the links between alcohol and crime; to identify recommendations to reduce alcohol-related crime; and consequently, to suggest methods which reduce the level of policing and other resources needed to deal with these offences.

Defining alcohol misuse

It is not always easy to define when excessive alcohol consumption becomes problematic for the individual. Alcohol can be, and is used, moderately by the vast majority of people without adverse side effects and in a socially acceptable way. The problems experienced as a result of alcohol consumption can be mild, moderate or severe (Institute of Medicine, 1990) and the manifestations of these problems can

...sometimes be primarily physical, sometimes social, sometimes psychological; most often will be variable combinations of all of these. (Institute of Medicine, 1990)

The drinking population can be represented by a continuum ranging from those who drink alcohol without problems, through those who drink with problems at a level which allows them to function relatively normally, through to those who are dependent drinkers suffering withdrawal symptoms. In between there are many shades of grey. While, without doubt, crime

can be associated with dependent problematic use of alcohol, many of the problems the police deal with are not a result of dependent drinkers but are ordinary drinkers who have 'binged' and cannot control their behaviour.

The importance of the alcohol consumption of young people

An understanding of the alcohol consumption of young people is vital to the alcohol and crime debate. Alcohol is often the first psycho-active drug used by young people in the UK and can be consumed legally from the age of five (Parker et al., 1998). The proportion of 11 to 15 year olds that do not drink alcohol has remained constant at around 40% in recent years (Balding, 1997). However, those who drink are drinking larger amounts and more frequently. This is accompanied by increased intoxication and binge drinking (Wright, 1999). A longitudinal study of 14 to 16 year olds in the North West of England (Newcombe, Measham and Parker, 1995) suggests that the choice of alcoholic beverage by young people is susceptible to fashion, attracting them to the designer alcoholic drinks which have recently become a part of the market. While alcopops and other designer drinks have become established as part of young people's drinking culture, these drinks do not appear to have replaced the traditional drinks - most still prefer cider or cheap lagers, presumably because of cost factors (Wright, 1999). However, recent research from the Health Education Authority (1999) may point to this trend changing. The study found that among children aged 11 to 16 alcopops had been established as the most popular alcoholic drink. Drunkenness is not uncommon among young people, with one study in Scotland reporting that half of the children interviewed reported at least one episode of being drunk (McKegney, 1996). The peak age for being arrested for drunkenness is 18.

The use of alcohol by young people is also important because early use can be predictive of deviant behaviour (Newcombe et al., 1995). Recreational drug use is becoming normalised within youth culture (Parker et al., 1998) and as a result young drinkers are more likely to be in situations where drugs are offered for sale (Measham et al., 1994). Studies have highlighted the use of alcohol by young offenders. A Manchester study, for example, found that regular young drinkers were much more likely (25%) to have a criminal record than those who did not drink or only drank occasionally (6 to 7%) (Newcombe et al., 1995). Heather (1981) found that 63% of Scottish young offenders in one institution were intoxicated at the time of their offence, as were 80% of offenders found guilty of breaches of the peace and 88% guilty of causing criminal damage. The Audit Commission (1996) has expressed concerns that children not in school are more likely to consume alcohol than those in school and estimates that 65% of school age offenders are excluded from school. However, often young people's drinking is highlighted not by criminal activity but by the fact that they drink in public places, unsupervised, and as a result cause a public nuisance.

The importance of the social nature of alcohol

Alcohol use is inextricably intertwined with modern social living and is a visible part of everyday life. Most young people have seen adult drinkers before they reach their teens

(Wright, 1999) and often can distinguish alcoholic drinks by appearance and smell and accurately describe the effects of drinking by the age of ten (Fossey, 1992). As a result, many young people begin to drink as part of the normal socialisation process (Wright, 1999). One ethnographic study (Gofton, 1990) described the changing nature of drinking cultures. The research identifies a move away from the high consumption, male-dominated working-class culture to a binge-drinking culture, frequented by both males and females who drink mainly at weekends and in groups. Consequently, as alcohol is so much a part of how society uses its leisure time, any potential strategy to minimise its harms must do so by educating the public that alcohol is not bad per se, but that it can have negative consequences when misused.

Scope of the review

While this review will discuss the relationship between alcohol dependency and crime, it will also focus on the moderate but 'binge' drinkers who are most likely to come into contact with the police for minor offences. There is a substantial literature about alcohol and crime, from both the criminological and addiction fields. The scope of the review could not possibly give an exhaustive account of all of the literature. Instead, it focuses on four key areas:

- exploring the association between alcohol and crime;
- alcohol-related aggression on licensed premises;
- the role of the criminal justice system and the licensed industry; and,
- potential methods of intervention.

Structure of the report

The next section presents an overview of the association between alcohol and crime. The third section focuses more specifically on the problems of policing licensed premises and adjacent areas, and is followed by a discussion of the role of the police, Forensic Medical Examiners, the courts, the licensee and the probation service in dealing with alcohol misusing offenders. The report then explores the potential avenues to filter dependent alcohol misusers into treatment and to provide public health messages, particularly to binge drinkers, and to police licensed entertainment venues, which together could successfully reduce alcohol-related crime and its associated costs.

2.

Alcohol and crime

The link between alcohol and crime has been explored extensively. Research suggests alcohol is often consumed by offenders and victims prior to offences being committed, but there is little evidence of its precise role (Shepherd, 1994). There is, however, much evidence of an association between the use of alcohol and offending behaviour. For example, screening of assault patients in accident and emergency departments has shown that between 65% and 80% were intoxicated at the time of the injury (Yates et al., 1987). Murders committed by relatives and friends are particularly likely to be linked to the consumption of alcohol (Room, 1983). This section explores the types of crime associated with alcohol consumption, examines the crime of drunkenness particularly, and explores the links between alcohol and aggression.

Types of crime

Alcohol can be associated with a wide variety of crimes ranging from minor public order offences which are anti-social by nature, through traffic offences, minor assaults through to

Table 1: *A functional model explaining the alcohol crime relationship (Purser, 1995)*

CATEGORY	EXAMPLE
Offences which specifically mention alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Drinking and driving● Being incapable or disorderly in a public place having consumed alcohol● Being in contravention of occupational regulatory law e.g. railway staff
Offences against the Licensing Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Serving under-age drinkers● Selling alcohol to under-age drinkers● Serving people who are already intoxicated
Offences committed while under the disinhibiting effects of alcohol where alcohol has affected the person's self-control or judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Where alcohol is used for 'dutch courage' e.g. a burglary
Offences resulting from an alcohol problem where alcohol need not have been consumed immediately prior to the offence being committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To obtain money or goods where income has been spent on alcohol● Stealing alcohol to consume● Stealing goods to sell to buy alcohol
Offences where alcohol is used as an excuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● An account given in court to explain away criminal behaviour

serious assaults and murder. The relationship is not simple. Purser (1995), in a paper presented to the All Party Group on Alcohol Misuse, uses a functional model to describe patterns of drinking and their association with different sorts of criminal activity (table 1).

This model states that while alcohol is not always a causal factor in crime, it can both contribute to and be associated with crime. Offences are distinguished by the role alcohol plays in the offence. Alcohol can cause the crime to be committed (drink-driving or drunk and disorderly offences), can be a disinhibitor, can result in a pharmacological effect which alters the individual behaviour, can be used as an excuse for crime or can result in crime because the person is a dependent drinker. In addition there are offences which can be committed as a result of who licensees sell alcohol to, for example if the drinker is underage or already intoxicated.

The relationship between alcohol and crime is simplified by Hayes (1993) who divides alcohol-related crime into three broad areas:

- causal relationships;
- contributory relationships; and
- co-existence.

Causal relationships include alcohol-defined offences (offences which were defined in law by virtue of the use of alcohol alongside a behaviour which would otherwise be lawful, e.g. drunk-in-charge of a child, drunk in a public place), alcohol-induced offences (offences which occur because the offender has drunk alcohol, typically public disturbances and domestic violence) and alcohol-inspired offences (offences committed to obtain alcohol, typically shoplifting to obtain drink or goods to sell in exchange for drink).

Contributory relationships include drinking for 'dutch courage' to facilitate an offence which requires an element of courage, alcohol acting as a trigger, or used as an excuse for offending behaviour.

Co-existence where offenders engage in two separate activities which have no relationship with each other. For example, an offender may drink heavily in their private life but this may have nothing to do with their criminal activity.

What is clear from the literature is that any link between alcohol and crime is multi-faceted. Some studies have claimed a direct central nervous system/biochemical impact (Berry and Brain, 1986), a disinhibition effect (Room and Collins, 1983), or the impact of situational factors such as the drinking environment (Roman, 1981). Other studies have compared different alcohol dose levels and associated higher dose levels positively with aggressive behaviour (Kelly et al. 1988). There is also evidence that the likelihood of aggressive behaviour increases as blood alcohol level decreases (Giancola and Zeichner, 1995) and following the consumption of spirits rather than beers (Murdoch and Phil, 1988).

Drunkenness as a crime

Aspects of Crime and Drunkenness 1995 (Home Office, 1997) gives an indication of the numbers of intoxicated people found guilty or cautioned for drunkenness. The report provides a count of those cautioned or found guilty of offences of simple drunkenness¹ or aggravated drunkenness². In 1995, 42,600 people were found guilty of, or cautioned for, offences of drunkenness. This is a continuing decrease from the peak of 93,000 in 1981. While these figures do give a picture of drunkenness offending, they do not present the true extent of drunkenness. The main reduction occurred in the Metropolitan Police area which had introduced a system of formal warnings in 1995, issuing 7,100 in that year which would not be included in the 42,600. The report itself states that changes in the rates of offending are likely to reflect changes or variations in police practice. Table 2 shows the numbers of people found guilty or cautioned for drunkenness offences between 1985 and 1995.

On the face of it, there would appear to be a massive drop in offences - a difference of 32,726 offences (43%). However, the difference lies mainly in the reduction of the number of offenders found guilty of drunkenness between 1985 and 1995 (a decrease of 29,387, 90% of the total drop in offences) not in the numbers being cautioned for the offence. The drunkenness offence data also supports findings from other studies that point towards this primarily being a 'young' problem, particularly it would seem for aggravated drunkenness.

Figure 1 presents the number of warnings issued by the Metropolitan Police by age of offender in 1995 both for simple and aggravated drunkenness.

The numbers of drunkenness warnings issued rises rapidly from the under 18 age group to the 21 to 29 age group. Both simple and aggravated drunkenness peaks at the 30 to 59 year age group and falls in the 60 plus group. The 30 to 59 age group is much larger than the other age groups, so cannot be compared with them. However, it is worth noting that aggravated drunkenness is as big a problem in the 21 to 29 age group as the 30 to 59 group but simple drunkenness is proportionally more of a problem in the older group.

Defining the link and the absence of official annual statistics

There is much anecdotal evidence of the link between alcohol and certain types of crimes. However, there is no way of determining if various types of crime are actually alcohol-related as data are not collected systematically nationally. The collection of such data is made more difficult because of the range of criminal offences involved (Purser, 1995). In addition, drunken offences are not currently notifiable to the Home Office. Consequently, it is very difficult to describe accurately the scale of the problem nationally. However, a recent Home Office study (Bennett, 1998) has provided useful information about arrestees in police custody. The study found that 25% tested positive for alcohol and that those arrested for alcohol/drug offences

or for disorder offences were more likely to test positive for alcohol than those arrested for other offences. In addition, 16% claimed to be dependent on alcohol at the time of the interview. Hospital data, particularly, accident and emergency department data may also provide more information about alcohol-related violence, and in particular, incidents which are not reported to the police (Shepherd, 1990).

The link between alcohol and aggression

The early experimental research on the relationship between alcohol and aggression had conflicting results, with one study suggesting a causal role for alcohol in aggression (Shuntich and Taylor, 1972), while the other found no relationship (Bennett, Buss and Carpenter, 1969). This led to research into other factors which might have an effect on the relationship between alcohol and aggressive behaviour such as dose level, beverage type, alcohol expectancies, threat and third-party intervention (Graham et al., 1998). The overall conclusions from this research were that:

- there is no simple relationship between alcohol and aggression;
- situational factors play a significant role; and,
- there is a complex role between expectations and aggressive acts.

A considerable body of research has addressed the issue of alcohol and violent crime and has consistently shown that a high proportion of violent crime (50 to 80%), including assault, rape and homicide, is committed by an intoxicated person (Taylor and Leonard, 1983). Studies of violent offenders have found them much more likely to be heavy drinkers than demographically matched samples of the general population (Welte and Miller, 1987). Research in two English southern towns indicates that in 67% of cases where an arrestee had consumed alcohol, the arrest was for violent or public order offences (Saunders, 1998). While the precise role of alcohol has yet to be fully understood, what is clear is that aggressive behaviour is influenced by a complex mix of social, personal and situational factors (Turning Point, 1998). These include the amount of alcohol consumed, the predilection towards aggressive behaviour, expectancies regarding the effects of alcohol and the social context of drinking.

In the case of homicide it has frequently been found that the perpetrator and victim have been drinking (Welte and Miller, 1989). Studies have found that expectations of alcohol-related aggressive behaviour are higher among males (Brown et al., 1980), heavy or dependent drinkers (Fishbein et al., 1993) and more aggressive individuals generally (Leonard and Blane, 1988). Alcohol consumption by young men has been shown to increase the likelihood that the behaviour of others will be perceived as insulting or challenging (Pihl, 1983). It also increases the tendency of male drinkers to project aggression onto others, and to respond to imagined hostile behaviour more aggressively as a result (Gibbs, 1986).

The fact that situational and cultural variables can affect the relationship between alcohol and aggression suggests that there is not a direct pharmacological link between alcohol and violent behaviour. Instead, it is more likely that alcohol increases aggression by influencing the social and cognitive processes (Bushman, 1997) thereby escalating events.

The consequences of alcohol-related violence

A recent survey estimates that half a million people in Britain suffer facial injuries every year, 125,000 of them in violent circumstances. A significant proportion of these assaults involved young people and in the majority of cases (61%) either the victim or the assailant had been drinking alcohol (Magennis et al., 1998). Half of the facial injuries sustained by persons between 15 and 25 years of age were the result of assaults, nearly half were in or near bars and 40% were severe enough to necessitate specialist surgery. This study pointed out that while four times as many men as women sustained facial injury in assaults, in domestic situations the reverse is true. Half of all facial injuries sustained by women occurred in the home and almost half of these assaults were associated with either the victim or assailant having consumed alcohol. Alcohol Concern report that women who drink heavily are more likely to be assaulted, but, most domestic abuse is directed at women who do not have alcohol problems. However, abused women often develop alcohol problems as a consequence of the abuse (Jacobs, 1998).

Magennis et al. (1998) conclude that the consumption of alcohol is linked to assault, but, underline that the importance of the effect of alcohol may lie in increasing vulnerability as much as in its effect on aggression. Furthermore, injury research has shown that beer glasses are the most frequently used sharp weapons in assaults and are an important cause of permanent disfigurement (Shepherd et al. 1990). The mandatory use of toughened glass³ on licensed premises would seem to be an obvious first step in lessening the likelihood of severe facial injuries.

3. Alcohol and aggression on licensed premises

Many studies have shown that drinking in bars is associated with greater violent or aggressive behaviour than in other drinking settings (Homel et al., 1991), and there is evidence that much police work is focused on licensed establishments at weekends (Ramsay, 1982). The importance of the environment in channelling behaviour has long been recognised (Stokols, 1992) and the role of situational factors in aggressive behaviours has been increasingly studied by researchers (Goldstein, 1994).

Australian research has found that 60% of alcohol-related street offences (assault, offensive behaviour/language, criminal damage, domestic violence, noise complaints and drink-driving) occurred on or in the vicinity of licensed premises (Ireland and Thommery, 1994). Evidence suggests that a range of situational and environmental factors impact on the level of alcohol-related violence around licensed premises. A situational analysis of incidents of violence in 23 licensed premises in Sydney found that a combination of factors led up to the incident with no single factor being enough in itself to spark the violence (Homel and Clarke, 1994).

British studies have also identified key issues. The most recent relevant work stems from the British Crime Survey - the national household survey of people's experiences of crime - which indicates that 1.6% of all violent incidents took place in and around pubs and clubs (Mayhew et al., 1993). This equates with Brown and Ellis' work (1994) which found that 15% of offences most commonly occurring in the street, were linked to licensed premises, either occurring on those premises or originating inside and spilling out onto the street. A study in Southampton, examining both direct/immediate and indirect/less immediate links between licensed premises and offences of violence and disorder, has shown that 21% of all relevant recorded offences were associated with specific pubs and clubs. When offences were explicitly violent, the proportion rose to one in three (Ramsay, 1982).

Not all pubs and clubs are equally associated with violence and disorder. In central Southampton, a mere half-dozen out of literally scores of licensed establishments were directly or indirectly linked with half of all the violence and disorder attributable to this kind of location (Ramsay 1982).

The common pattern emerging from these studies is one of incidents that tend to be a combination of criminal damage offences, drunk and disorderly offences and other public order offences. Young males between the ages of 18 and 30 years tend to be the main protagonists. Activity tends to occur on or very near licensed premises, to cover a very small, distinct entertainment area of a city or town centre, and involve travel from the out-skirts of the town (Ramsay, 1982; Purser, 1995).

All of these issues have ramifications for how we manage alcohol-related crime in or near licensed premises. In deciding what strategies to put in place, we need to consider both the physical environment of licensed premises and to remember that such venues are inherently social establishments.

The physical environment

Aggression has been found to be more likely in some types of establishments than others. Studies of public drinking have found that certain types of bars often establish a reputation for aggression (Homel and Clarke, 1994). The physical layout of the premises has been found to affect whether violent events occur - inadequate seating and inconvenient bar access affect movement in the bar and can lead to aggressive behaviour where people cannot sit or get served quickly enough (Peranen, 1991). Graham et al., (1980) found that aggression was significantly correlated with poorly maintained, unclean, unattractive establishments, and Graham and Homel (1997) suggest that it is reasonable to hypothesise that the first clue the drinker has as to what will be acceptable behaviour in a venue is its physical appearance. The Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association (BLRA, 1997) have suggested simple measures to consider when designing a bar area such as raising the bar area to maximise staff visibility and control.

MCM Research (1993) in a British study concluded that aggression was more likely in 'moderately uncomfortable' rather than 'uncomfortable' bars. The physical attributes that appear to increase the likelihood of aggression or violence include smoky atmospheres, poor access to the bar, inadequate seating and crowding. This can result in frustration which may contribute to aggression, rather than directly provoking aggression (Graham and Homel, 1997).

Promotions run by licensed premises that discounted drinks were found to lead to more alcohol consumption and as a result more aggression (Homel and Clarke, 1994). The availability of food has been associated with a reduced risk of aggression (Graham et al., 1980), possibly because these bars tend to attract less aggressive individuals anyway, but also because food slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body (Wedel et al., 1991).

The closing time of licensed premises has also been considered as a factor in reducing alcohol-related problematic behaviour. Marsh and Kibby (1992) suggest that many problems can be caused by the sudden increase in density of young people emptying from licensed premises at the same time. The study reports that 47% of the incidents of violence and disorder in public houses occur between 11 pm and midnight on Friday and Saturday nights. Over 50% of arrests for alcohol-related crime occur at these times. Marsh and Kibby (1992) state that there are lessons to be learned from the continental approach where licensing hours are generally less restricted. This, they report, leads to a steady decline in the rate of drinking and patrons leaving in small groups through the evening causing fewer problems as a result.

The social environment

One of the strongest predictors of aggression found in licensed premises were social environment variables (Graham et al., 1996). Permissive environments where drug use, swearing or sexual activity, were allowed were found to be highly associated with frequency and severity of aggressive incidents, as were large crowds and high volume noise levels (Hemel and Clarke, 1994). Aggression has also been associated with bars where bar staff have little or no control, where they did not engage in responsible serving practices, where the ratio of staff to patrons was low and where 'bouncing' practices did not keep aggressive patrons out (Graham et al., 1996). Both Rydon (1994) and Craze (1994) point to breaches in the licensing laws and lack of enforcement as causing many of the alcohol-related offences. Research that has specifically focused on violence in public bars, found that such behaviour can be related to the behaviour of bar staff. Formal training of bar staff, to avoid serving intoxicated customers and to promote responsible drinking, has been found to reduce blood alcohol levels substantially in bar customers (Russ and Geller, 1987).

Previous research has highlighted the particular role played by door/security staff. Hemel et al. (1994) describe incidents of aggression initiated by door staff and other incidents where door staff have increased the potential for harm by their inadequate response to a situation. In a study of public order problems and alcohol, Marsh and Kirby (1992) found that 10% of injuries, in one city centre, had been inflicted by door staff. However, in another town, door staff were actually instrumental in reducing violence. This is consistent with findings in a recent study by Wells et al. (1998), which categorised the reactions of door staff as either 'good', 'bad' or 'ugly'. 'Good' responses prevented and minimised the impact of aggressive behaviour by identifying people with the potential to cause a problem and dealing with them quickly to lessen the likelihood of aggressive responses from other drinkers. 'Bad' responses increased the likelihood of violence by being unfair or inconsistent in their handling of the situation, by not intervening quickly enough or by generally showing poor judgement in their assessment of incidents. 'Ugly' responses were responses where the door staff were aggressive, hostile or provocative when faced with potentially violent incidents. The study concluded that door staff play a crucial role in aggressive incidents in bars. In an effort to avoid the problems door staff registration schemes have been introduced by many local authorities. These schemes which require a potential member of a door team to register with the local authority, involve a check of the applicants previous criminal convictions and undertake training are becoming more and more popular around the UK (Portman Group,

Controlling the environment

Marsh and Kibby (1992) suggest that aggression can be fostered by

...encouraging young men to drink large volumes of beer or other alcohol in a very short period and in a traditional macho style where such patterns of consumption and

manliness are reinforced by the marketing and advertising of the product. At a fixed time, well before most of the participants are motivated to return home, we would close the places that sell drink. Before doing so, however, we would encourage a peak of consumption resulting in a peak of intoxication just prior to leaving. At closing time, we would roughly expel the drinkers on to the street, suddenly increasing the density of people and maximising the potential for conflict. We would ensure that there was very little in the way of transportation so that people would have to queue for the few buses and taxis and remain in the town centres even longer. Food facilities, if available at all, would be of poor quality and, again, people would have to stand in line even to obtain a hamburger.

Lessening public order problems on licensed premises would appear to be more likely if attention is paid to the controllable aspects of the physical and social environment of the venue and surrounds. Maintaining premises, training staff to deal with intoxicated customers, promoting alcohol in a sensible manner, filtering patrons from licensed premises by using staggered closing times can all be elements of an overall strategy. Box 2 lists some of the issues raised by the research reviewed for this report. Many of these have been included in the interventions and models of good practice explored in the final section, where their merits and demerits will be discussed in detail.

Box 2: Potential elements of good practice on licensed premises

ENVIRONMENT CAN BE CONTROLLED BY:

- Attractive, well-maintained premises
- Design of venue: raised bar area, adequate seating etc.
- Ensuring the premises are well-ventilated and numbers are controlled to reduce frustration for patrons
- Ensuring the premises are staffed by trained servers and door staff
- Ensuring safe glassware is used
- Avoiding discounted alcoholic drink promotions and 'happy hours'
- Serving food
- Staggering closing times
- Expecting drinkers to behave in a socially acceptable way (i.e. not condoning swearing, the sale of drugs, sexual activity etc.)
- Not selling alcohol to already intoxicated drinkers
- Employing bar and door staff who discourage anti-social behaviour
- Employing experienced door staff who can recognise potentially aggressive individuals or groups and who do not admit them to the premises

4. The role of the criminal justice system and the licensed industry

This section documents and explores the roles and responsibilities of the police, the Forensic Medical Examiner (FME), the courts, the probation service and the licensee. All have different parts to play in managing the problem of alcohol-related crime, but like most issues currently facing the criminal justice system, the solution may lie not in their individual roles, but in maximising their potential through a partnership approach. To begin, the current legislation is examined.

licensing laws and other legislation

There is much legislation aimed at preventing or reducing the problems associated with alcohol intoxication. A list of legislation and the conditions applied is presented in the Annex. The legislation covers the responsibilities of the licensee, the behaviour of the drinker and the powers of the police to deal with both. There are specific offences which are alcohol-related, the most basic of which are that of being drunk in a public place or being drunk and disorderly. In addition, the police have various powers of arrest under the public order legislation, which are often used to control situations where alcohol is involved.

The responsibilities of the licensee are clearly indicated in current legislation. The sale of alcohol cannot be undertaken without a Justices' Licence (The National Licensees' Certificate Awarding Body, 1994). There are two types of Justices' Licence - On-Licence which authorises the holder to sell alcohol for consumption either on or off the premises of a named public house, and Off-Licence which authorises the holder to sell alcohol from named premises, but only for consumption away from those premises. On-Licences are only granted to persons who are considered 'fit and proper' and for premises that are structurally adapted for the purpose.

Licensing laws lay down permitted hours within which alcohol may be sold with 20 minutes 'drinking-up time' at the end to allow customers to consume alcohol already purchased. Young people between 14 and 18 years are allowed in a bar during opening hours. However, it is an offence to sell alcohol to any person under 18, for a person under 18 to attempt to buy or consume alcohol in the bar, or for any other person to purchase alcohol for them. The licensee has discretion over who is allowed to enter the public house, who is served and who is allowed to remain on the premises. However, the licensee also has a responsibility to refuse service to anyone who appears intoxicated or to anyone purchasing on behalf of a drunken person. A Public Entertainment Licence, issued by the local authority, is required if there is live music by more than one performer at the venue, dancing, karaoke or other forms of entertainment.

Problems with current licensing legislation

Licensing legislation is an important plank in any strategy to minimise the harm caused by alcohol. However, any case for changes in the law will always be problematic because of the difficulty of enforcement, and the co-operation required from a wide range of agencies

including the drinks industry, magistrates, police and local authorities. The previous section has discussed at length the problems caused by fixed closing times, particularly in city or town centres where several licensed venues empty at the same time. Marsh and Kibby (1992) report that much of the alcohol-related disorder experienced in many town centres could be avoided by less restricted closing times for licensed premises. Under-aged drinking has been of particular concern to the Magistrates' Association and the Justices' Clerks Society who have called for heavier penalties for selling alcohol to under-age drinkers (Alcohol Alert, 1998). There is concern that the current maximum penalty for offences involving breach of licensing laws is inadequate, resulting in the law being deliberately broken because sanctions are minimal. The Magistrates' Association and the Justices' Clerks Society recommended that all courts make arrangements to ensure that convictions of licensees are brought to the attention of the licensing committee. This enables the committee to examine the circumstances of the offence and decide whether it is serious enough to warrant revocation of the licence.

A number of loopholes exist in the present legislation that could be addressed. For example, in the case of a 14 year old boy killed while running across a main road while under the influence of alcohol, prosecution could not go ahead against two employees of a national off-licence chain because of precedents set by appeal in 1997 (Russell versus the Director of Public Prosecutions). *Russell v. DPP* confirmed that people selling alcohol to persons under 18 can be found guilty if they are the licensee or the directly employed servant of the licensee. However, in *Russell v. DPP*, it was stated that "a trainee branch manager employed by a limited company was not a 'servant' of the licensee...but a 'servant' of the employing company". In this case, the alcohol was sold by employees of a national off-licence chain and not by the licensee whose name appeared above the door of the licensed premises. This technically served as immunity from prosecution⁴.

The role of the police

The police service has the potential to play a key role in both preventing and responding to alcohol-related crime. Pivotal to any role the police can have in this area is the support of the local community, because alcohol plays a central part in the social life of any town or city. Manning (1996) reports that this group of offenders are often arrested because they are a danger to themselves or the general public, and claims that these offenders are rarely prosecuted. The responsibility on police officers is great. Once detained, drunken offenders are vulnerable and drunkenness is a common feature in many deaths in police custody.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour as a result of drunkenness is perhaps one of the greatest burdens on police resources. Urinating in the street, throwing missiles, minor public disorder conduct and minor criminal damage may seem insignificant, but, if left unchecked, can lead to fear of crime in the local community and a gradual acceleration of public disorder in an area. Manning (1996) states that a highly visible police presence is required to deter such behaviour. This is resource intensive. In addition, when arresting such offenders, police officers may face personal risk both from the offender and anyone in the vicinity. Such arrests are often

viewed as unnecessarily heavy handed in an environment where inhibitions are low and perceptions of aggression high. This can result in further aggression and violence that can continue into the custody suite.

A recent publication by West Yorkshire Police in conjunction with the Portman Group (1998) details some of the strategies and initiatives currently being used in England and Wales to tackle the problem of alcohol-related crime. The report shows a progressive attitude to dealing with this problem - focusing not only on enforcing the legislation but also on education and the larger social environment. In terms of enforcement, there are already various initiatives in place around England and Wales. These include:

- using under-18s to test purchase alcohol from off-license premises to prevent the supply of alcohol to young people;
- using local by-laws to prevent drinking in public places;
- backing local proof of age identity card schemes;
- using the Inebriates Act, 1898, to prevent individuals who are consistently problematic because of being intoxicated from purchasing alcohol;
- setting up intelligence gathering systems and licensing units;
- introducing Pub-watch schemes to improve communication with local licensees; and,
- enforcing drink-driving legislation.

Forces have also become involved in educational initiatives designed to inform the community about the dangers involved with inappropriate use of alcohol. Many schemes focus on children and are run in schools as part of a multi-agency approach to the issue. However, the police have also been involved in schemes which are run outside of school hours and are designed to demonstrate the lack of necessity for young people to drink alcohol to have a good time. Two outreach workers, for example, patrol with South Yorkshire officers on the beat with the aim of identifying groups of young people on the streets at risk from substance misuse and offering advice and educational literature (West Yorkshire Police, 1998).

Social problems as a result of alcohol-related crimes are also tackled by many forces. Community safety teams are one of the methods of dealing with, and attempting to prevent, many of the problems associated with alcohol misuse in towns and city centres. Police forces are becoming increasingly involved in helping to run door supervision schemes with local authorities, and Pub-watch schemes with local licensees and other agencies.

Of particular interest is one of the first alcohol strategies to be developed by a police force. North Yorkshire Police alcohol strategy was launched in November 1998 with a view to developing consistency in decision-making and standards around alcohol and licensing. The strategy is divided into four sections and sets out clear objectives and performance indicators under each with the aim of:

- reducing alcohol related offences;
- establishing minimum standards of training;
- creating safe drinking venues; and,
- incorporating alcohol/licensing strategy within local community safety partnership development.

Care in custody and the pivotal roles of Forensic Medical Examiners and police custody staff

There is evidence to suggest that many detainees have consumed alcohol prior to arrest. Bennett (1998) found that 25% of arrestees in police custody tested positive for alcohol. The care of drunken detainees must address issues of fitness to be detained/interviewed, alcohol withdrawal, general well being and safety. How important these issues are in individual cases will depend on how much the detainee has drunk and if they are dependent on alcohol. Drunken detainees are a major problem for the police and are one of the main groups to die in custody. Recent research (Leigh et al., 1998) reports that 25% of all deaths in police custody were a result of the arrestees' use of drugs or alcohol. Aside from the obvious problems of managing a drunken person while they detoxify, there are issues of the cost of this care. Research most certainly points towards the care of drunken detainees being a significant proportion of the Forensic Medical Examiner's (FME) workload. Hunt (1996) estimated that 80% of a FME's work is connected to alcohol misuse. A more recent study of the work of the FME in the Metropolitan Police found that almost 40% of their calls in an average 24 hours on call were to drunken detainees. The majority of these were to ascertain whether they were fit to be detained or fit to be interviewed (Deehan et al., 1998). Each visit by an FME costs in the region of £70.

The discretion of the custody sergeant in deciding if, and when, a detainee needs medical attention is also pivotal, as is the arresting officers' understanding of the effects of alcohol use and withdrawal symptoms. A recent survey carried out by the Metropolitan Police Federation found that the vast majority of custody sergeants had not received training in the role (Jenkins, 1998). Yet, major responsibility is placed on sergeants for the care of prisoners in custody- this issue is even more vital when the detainee is intoxicated. Drunken detainees under PACE guidelines must be checked regularly and roused by custody staff if unresponsive. This is a huge responsibility to place on non-medically trained police officers and has implications for the use of police resources. The existence and impact of basic substance misuse training on how to manage and care for users is a central issue.

The police custody suite is also an ideal setting from which to filter problem drinkers into treatment or to provide basic health education. Hough (1996) describes this setting as useful because the detainee is at a vulnerable point and this may provide an instance where the individual might want treatment. Arrest referral schemes currently focus primarily (or only) on drug users. The main focus of an alcohol arrest referral scheme might well be younger 'binge' drinkers, rather than filtering dependent drinkers into treatment. Like the drug schemes, such an

initiative could have a harm reduction approach, warning drinkers about the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption and, in particular, of 'binge' drinking. Studies of brief interventions with drinkers in primary care suggest that this is potentially a very effective and cost-effective method of health promotion and disease prevention with a direct cost of as little as £20 per intervention (Effective Health Care Bulletin, 1993).

The role of the courts

Magistrates are frequently presented with criminal behaviour in which alcohol use and misuse has played a significant part (Norton, 1998). The responsibility of the magistrate is to impose a sentence matched to the seriousness of the crime. However, any sentence must also take into account the rehabilitation of the offender. Thus, the magistrate can act as a point of diversion into treatment or educational schemes for various levels of alcohol problems. The magistrate will not always be dealing with a dependent drinker but with an individual who is in the early stages of a problem or who may never develop an alcohol problem. As such, every case will be different.

Magistrates, when deciding on alternatives to custodial sentences, rely on the availability of local service schemes and in practice, are dependent on the probation service to identify the role of alcohol in offending, advise on what, if any, treatment/education is available and to supervise the offender. In turn, the probation service is often reliant on the existence of local voluntary and statutory sector agencies to act as partners to provide an adequate service. Schemes aimed at drunk drivers have offered reductions in driving bans for those disqualified for one year or more if they attended and successfully completed a course which covered alcohol education, drinking behaviour, attitudes and drinking practice (Norton, 1998). The Drink-Drive Rehabilitation Experiment has been running since 1993 and is currently being evaluated by the Transport Research Laboratory. No evaluation results are available yet but the scheme has run 1,086 courses involving 10,690 offenders.

However, the view that alcohol education schemes are the answer is not universally held. Hayes (1993) points out that there are two main reasons why alcohol education programmes are an insufficient response to alcohol-related offending. First, few programmes recognise that for many offenders alcohol is not the only substance being misused. Secondly, one cannot assume that if an individual offender learns to control their drinking that offending behaviour will cease. Room and Collins (1993) point out that the link between alcohol and crime is often complex and rarely responds to only one type of initiative.

Other schemes have offered intensive group work in sessions over a period of weeks or months. Hough (1996) writes that these schemes imply a certain level of coercion which can prove to be problematic as many drug workers in the UK work from the premise that for treatment to work it must begin from a willingness by the offender to take part. However, research evidence from the United States and Europe points to coerced treatment patients fairing no worse than voluntary patients. Ward and Allwine (1979) compared drink-driving

offenders who had been coerced into treatment with drink-driving offenders who were attending treatment voluntarily. The rates for re-conviction were significantly less in the coerced group compared with the voluntary group. A Swedish study (Sallmen et al., 1996) found that a successful treatment outcome was predicted by the level of social support the patient had, but not by whether the treatment was entered into under coercion or voluntarily. Chick (1998) warns that while on the face of it coercion may not appear to affect treatment outcome, the patient should have at least something to lose by not complying, and the treatment offered should be tailored to maximise the benefit to the individual.

Magistrates also have a role to play in the conditions attached to a licence. For example, there are around 5,000 injuries each year as a result of glass being used as a weapon. Magistrates can make it a condition of a licence to use toughened glass on the premises. There has been considerable concern from many groups including the Magistrates' Association and the Justices' Clerks' Society that the legislation surrounding licensing issues is not being used effectively (Alcohol Alert, 1998). They have recommended that use should be made of the section of the Licensing Act 1964 which allows a bench to order the forfeiture of a Justices' Licence if the licensee has been convicted for the second time for an offence involving the sale of intoxicating liquor to, or for consumption by, a person under 18.

The role of the probation service

The probation service is the only criminal justice agency to work with offenders at every point in the legal process: on bail, under supervision in the community, in prison and after release (Webster and Chappell, 1995). Thus the nature of the probation officers' work puts them in an ideal position to detect problematic alcohol use and to filter such offenders into appropriate services. In addition, probation officers clearly have access to a population that could benefit from intervention. One survey of probation officers found that nearly 30% of their clients and 58% of remand and sentenced prisoners were problematic drinkers (National Association of Probation Officers, 1994). The main function prior to trial or sentencing performed by probation officers is the preparation of pre-sentence reports (PSRs). PSRs provide the court with information about the offender prior to sentencing and set out proposals for community penalties if appropriate. These reports can also provide an opportunity for sentencers to encourage offenders to examine the causes of their criminal behaviour.

As well as delivering education and 'treatment' for alcohol problems in both one-to-one supervision and in group work programmes designed to address more serious drug/alcohol/substance related offending, the probation service often works in partnership with other statutory and voluntary sector agencies in developing the best community initiative for a particular offender. One such multi-agency approach to substance misusers was the Drug and Alcohol Related Offenders Project (DAROP) undertaken in West Glamorgan (Raynor and Honess, 1998), which proved successful in raising awareness of substance misuse and in providing appropriate proposals for those offenders. However, although some probation partnership funding is used for the direct purchasing of treatment places for offenders, it is not a core function of the probation service to provide drug and alcohol treatment. In practice,

availability of and swift access to treatment places is the primary issue and the role of the probation service is simply to identify and refer offenders for treatment.

The role of the licensee

The control of licensed premises by a well-trained licensee can go a long way to preventing alcohol-related public order offences. Norton (1998) writes that the Magistrates' Association is keen to see a national mandatory standard of training of licensees which educates them about their responsibilities in selling alcohol, as well as their legal obligations. Moves have been made towards such training by the British Institute of Innkeeping in the creation of a National Licensee Certificate. The certificate covers both the legal and social responsibilities of the licensee. It also includes basic information about the effect of alcohol on the individual. However, this training while encouraged by the drinks industry is not mandatory.

Legally the licensees' responsibilities are laid down in the Licensing Act of 1964. This outlines permitted opening hours, the serving of alcohol to young people, rights of entry to licensed premises, rights of the landlord to refuse entry or to eject a patron as well as other issues around service and entertainment. The issues relevant to the control of the physical and social environment of licensed premises are discussed in detail earlier in the previous section. However, what is clear is that the licensee has a responsibility to make the drinking environment as safe as possible for all drinkers. The use of trained staff, well-maintained premises and the encouragement of minimum standards of behaviour by customers contribute to the lessening of aggression and other alcohol-related problems within the drinking environment.

Summary

The issues discussed in this section are summarised in Box 3.

Box 3: The role of the criminal justice system and the licensed industry

POLICE

- enforcement of legislation
- educational role
- diversion into treatment
- harm minimisation while drunken detainee in custody

COURTS

- point of diversion into treatment and education
- can apply conditions to license

PROBATION SERVICE

- point of diversion into treatment and education
- also have an educational role in one-to-one supervision of offenders
- support and enforcement of treatment as a condition of sentence

LICENSED INDUSTRY

- need for recognition not only of legal obligations but also of social responsibilities
- establishment of licensee training

Initiatives to tackle alcohol-related crime

This section describes some of the initiatives, both in this country and abroad, which tackle the consequences of alcohol-related crime. Bars have been the focus of many successful preventive initiatives. Much of this work has been carried out in Australia, but important initiatives have also been undertaken in the UK. Initiatives have included addressing transportation issues, the location of fast food outlets, encouraging licensee codes of practice, training and registration of door staff (Purser, 1997), training of bar staff, Pub-watch and Pub-ban schemes (MCM Research, 1993), as well as intelligence gathering strategies. The projects and strategies discussed here incorporate many of the issues already raised in this report and offer an opportunity to see their practical application. Many of the schemes that appear to have worked best have employed a multi-agency approach. This section could not possibly cover every existing alcohol-related initiative, but does give an overview of many of the problems and benefits of such schemes.

- *The Coventry Experiment:* This project began with a survey of crime in the Coventry city-centre area (Purser, 1997). It found that 70% of assaults, 35% of criminal damage, 26% of theft from motor vehicles, 24% of burglaries and 9% of thefts were related to the consumption of alcohol. Most of those who were prosecuted for crime in the city-centre lived in estates in the suburbs and travelled in to attend entertainment venues. Crime was restricted to a small geographical area of nightclubs and fast food outlets and tended to happen at entertainment venue closing times. This crime was associated with young employed males. An action plan was developed to address the problem. The first part of the plan was to enforce licensing laws locally. The police met all licensees and visited individual premises to check licenses. Any establishment which was in breach of the law by serving under-age drinkers, allowing violent drunkenness or serving an intoxicated person, appeared before the magistrates for removal of their licenses. In addition, magistrates increased the frequency of both announced and unannounced visits. Mandatory training for licensees and door staff was introduced. Practical issues were also addressed. A single taxi rank had existed where up to 200 people would queue for transport. This was one of the flash points for disturbances. Clubs were encouraged to allow taxis to collect customers directly at the door to minimise queues, and a late night bus service was provided to the suburbs. The evaluation of this project was hampered by the lack of an on-going data collection system. However, indications are that alcohol-related crime and fear of crime have been significantly reduced.
- *The Torbay Enforcement Study:* Torbay is a seaside town with a large influx of visitors during the holiday season. It has a higher ratio of licensed premises per resident than the national average. The local police initiated a high profile licensing initiative, which

included visits to local pubs/clubs, both announced and unannounced, to check for violations of the licensing laws (Jeff and Saunders, 1983). Alongside this, they ran an arrest project not unlike the Last Drink Project described below. Arrestees were asked where they had been drinking prior to arrest. The research team noted significant reductions in crime with a reduction in recorded crime of 15.7% with alcohol-related crime reducing to a significantly greater degree than non alcohol-related crime.

The use of the Inebriates Act 1898: Northumbria Police have warned 300 shops in South Tyneside that they risk losing their drinks license if they are caught selling alcohol to a named 'violent drunkard' (West Yorkshire Police, 1998). The police have issued posters telling them they could be fined £500 if they allow the named man to purchase alcohol. The ban, issued under the 1898 Inebriates Act, prevents the individual from buying alcohol in Tyne and Wear. The man was convicted of drunken behaviour four times in a year and had been arrested 208 times in the previous three years for drunkenness, violence and theft. The 100 year old law was also used successfully by police to clear 20 street drinkers from the city centre.

Pub-watch: Pub-watch schemes are set up with the aim of improving communication between the police and licensees to facilitate a reduction in crime on or near licensed premises (Nowill and Lavin, 1988). Within the Sheffield policing area there are a total of 865 on-licensed premises, of which almost 520 are members of the Pub-watch scheme (personal communication, Sheffield Police). This scheme involves a number of initiatives. Bar and door staff use pagers to provide an early warning system of instances of disorder. Pictures of individuals excluded from local licensed premises are published in a quarterly newsletter 'Last Orders'. It is hoped that the newly introduced local council-run door registration scheme will become an integral part of all licensed premises subject to extended hours. The police conduct supervisory visits to premises giving cause for concern, resulting in two licensees reported for supplying intoxicants after hours, and a further two cautioned for operating without a current licence. The scheme has seen alcohol-related crime fall throughout its first year: drunkenness - 398 proceedings compared with 425 for the previous year (-6%); drink driving - 265 proceedings compared with 297 (-11%) and a fall of 18% for assaults. The figures for 1998 show a continued downward trend.

Drug and Alcohol Related Offenders Project (DAROP): This project undertaken in West Glamorgan (Raynor and Honess, 1998) devised a new system of organising services for people who came to the attention of the Probation Service with substance misuse problems. The project devised a new screening procedure which required probation officers to complete routinely, a standardised form concerning drug and alcohol problems. Whenever they prepared a pre-sentence report they routinely referred all who had substance misuse problems for an assessment interview by a specialist project worker; and developed, where appropriate, a plan for treatment or assistance which could be drawn to the attention of the sentencing court. This plan was implemented if a probation order was made (or perhaps voluntarily if the offender remained at liberty on some other basis).

Evaluation of the scheme's early impact revealed positive results. DAROP raised awareness of substance misuse issues within the local probation service. More significantly, the introduction of DAROP appears to have roughly doubled the proportion of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) in which substance misuse issues were addressed. PSRs produced as part of the project also became clearer in terms of the proposals for dealing with the substance misuser, and there were indications of more use by the courts of substance misuse related disposals. DAROP led to more access to assessment services for offenders under supervision by the probation service at the PSR stage, and to more access to assessment services for offenders about whom a PSR was being written. About half of the assessments picked up offenders who were new to the substance misuse agencies, although they had been in trouble in the past for offending related to substance abuse. Thus, the scheme acts as an outreach service making contact with offenders whose needs would probably not otherwise have been addressed. Both probation officers and sentencers welcomed this positive approach to substance misuse problems.

The West End Forum Project: This is an Australian project which was set up to make the main entertainment area of Melbourne safer by reducing or eliminating violence (Lang and Rumbold, 1997). Safety audits were used to identify services and amenities which required involvement. At the same time, the perception of an increased likelihood of being arrested was gained by increasing police presence. Wilson (1996) referred to this method as 'opportunity reduction'. A voluntary code of practice was introduced for licensees that aimed to reduce consumption and to train bar staff. During the early months of the project, crime did drop significantly; however, this would appear to be part of a trend that had begun prior to the start of the project. Despite a reduction in crime, local media continued to focus on the violent incidents that still occurred. The police reacted with a tougher strategy to beat the problem but at the same time alienated licensees. The code of practice that was finally agreed with licensees contained no specific strategies to deal with alcohol-related problems. The project did contribute to the decrease in violence but it is difficult to say how much as it failed to evaluate its work fully. It did not document its aims and outcomes, set up appropriate performance indicators or adopt a suitable evaluation methodology.

The Geelong Local Industry Accord: Again this is an Australian initiative, but a much more successful one than the West End Project. Geelong is the second largest populated centre in the state of Victoria. Its problems with alcohol-related violence began in the mid 1980s reaching a peak in the early 1990s. Like the West End Project, the local media regularly reported alcohol-related violence and problems associated with under-age drinking. Police agreed a verbal Code of Conduct with local licensees to tackle the problem through self-regulation, but this had little impact. Success was eventually achieved by the replacement of the Code of Conduct with a written Geelong Local Industry Accord (Turning Point, 1998). The main objective was to decrease the incidence of violence by adopting simple strategies to reduce the movement of patrons between venues. The Accord introduced an entry charge to venues after 11 pm, not allowing people to re-enter a venue without paying

again, and ceased the practice of 'happy hours' where cheap drink is sold early in the evening. The implementation of the Accord was followed by a marked decrease in violent behaviour. This reduction was sustained up until the end of a two year evaluation project. The evaluation points out that the reduction in violent crime cannot be attributed only to the Accord and that external factors played their part in the success of the project.

- *The Last Drink Project*: This is a joint initiative by the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario and Peel Regional Police (Kinross, 1997). The aim of the project is to reduce the number of drunk drivers by reducing 'over-service' of alcohol. As part of the initiative, every individual arrested for drink-driving in the area is asked where they had their last alcoholic drink. Twenty six per cent named a bar or other licensed establishment. The names of these establishments are then forwarded to the Liquor Licence Board. In the first year of the project, 142 licensed premises were named by 264 individuals. Some bars were much more likely than others to be named, with three bars accounting for 56 individual reports. A system of written warnings and investigations with licence suspensions, and orders for training of bar staff, are in place as deterrents. Early evaluation of the project indicates reductions in arrests near named bars in the following year.

What makes a successful alcohol-related crime reduction initiative

Obtaining the licensees' co-operation

The co-operation of all licensees in such projects is essential. Projects which have confined the initiative to a small number or cluster of licensed venues, while allowing adjacent premises to continue trading as before, have reduced the motivation of those involved to be co-operative. Furthermore, a displacement effect has occurred where troublemakers could continue as before by simply moving to another nearby bar (Hemel et al., 1997).

Long-term licensees tend to be easier to motivate into joint action, to obtain agreement from, and to sustain that agreement over time, because of common interest in the entertainment area. Lang and Rumbold (1997) found that a key factor in the success of any initiative is the ability to 'sell' it to licensees as a good business idea that will not reduce profits. Again the issue of ownership is critical, and that can only be achieved by working together on the aims of the project.

Sustainability

The issue of sustainability is perhaps the most important factor with regard to alcohol-related crime reduction projects. The projects reviewed show that it is possible to set-up and manage successful community initiatives to alleviate the problem of alcohol-related crime. Success would appear, from the lessons to be learned from previous work, to depend on effective partnerships with a project worker with strong leadership skills, and the involvement of local police in an enforcement and support role. In addition, success requires every agency to have a stake-hold in its accomplishments to promote willingness to self-regulate. Implicit in the success of these models is the belief that alcohol-related violence cannot be solved by simple enforcement and opportunity-reduction strategies (Lang and Rumbold, 1997). Data collection systems that evaluate and monitor a project's aims often provide hard proof of the benefits of taking part in, and continuing with, such initiatives.

Attention must also be given to social attitudes towards alcohol and violence. The local community should have an input into projects. Lang and Rumbold (1997), in a review of successful Australian initiatives, found several factors which were key to the promotion and sustainment of any successful project. The project must be relatively isolated from external factors and ideally should evolve from, and be resourced and managed within the community. There must be close co-operation between licensees and police and any agreement must be seen to make 'good business sense' to the licensees. The value of these issues are evident in the initiatives discussed earlier in this section.

BOX 4: Key elements of successful alcohol-related crime-reduction initiatives

1. GETTING A PROJECT UP AND RUNNING

- Written agreement
- All agencies have sense of 'ownership'
- Adequate project funding
- Employment of project officer
- Consistent police enforcement
- Evidence that profitability will be maintained
- Appointment of a project manager

2. PRACTICAL ELEMENTS

- Self-regulation
- Training of participants
- Retention of licensed venues in project
- Retention of profitability

3. SUSTAINING SUCCESS

- Maintenance of partnership through regular contact
- Good working relationship with the police (Support and Enforcement)
- On-going monitoring and evaluation
- Local community involvement
- Retention of profitability
- Strong leadership

While it is clear that alcohol is a factor in a proportion of criminal activity, the extent to which alcohol actually causes crime is unclear. With the exception of when drunkenness itself is the offence or an indispensable ingredient of the offence, most offences are caused by a variety of factors. However, there are certain types of crime in which alcohol is so strongly implicated that it is reasonable to assume that effective measures to reduce alcohol abuse would reduce their occurrence, particularly offences of violence and disorder around licensed premises (Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention, 1987).

The way forward

evaluated. Health education that focuses attention on guidelines for binge drinking, particularly among young men, could go some way to help to reduce alcohol-related instances of anti-social behaviour.

- *Reducing the availability of alcohol to young people*

The law is very clear on the availability of alcohol to young people. However, young people do obtain alcohol from pubs, clubs, off-licences and supermarkets. About 10% of 12 to 13 year olds, 16% of 13 to 14 year olds and 25% of 14 to 15 year olds claim to have bought alcohol recently, with off-licences being the most widely used outlet (Balding, 1997). Over half of 14 to 16 year olds in a London study reported buying an alcoholic drink at some time, and a quarter had done so in the 90 days before the interview (Stillwell et al., 1998). The most common place for purchasing alcohol was off-licences and small stores with a substantial proportion also purchasing alcohol in public houses and nightclubs. Over half of the respondents who had bought alcohol themselves, reported that they had never been asked for ID to prove their age. Most had no difficulty in persuading a stranger, older brother or sister to purchase alcohol for them. Many police forces are already enforcing current legislation by undertaking test purchases of alcohol by under 18 year olds to deter licensees from selling alcohol to young people and encouraging the use of ID. In the US it is an offence for adults to buy alcohol for supply to children, and it can attract a fine of \$500. Consideration should also be given to the minimum age for the purchase and consumption of alcohol. There are examples of the effect of the enforcement of minimum legal drinking age laws internationally. In America and Canada, road traffic accidents involving drivers under the age of 21 increased after the minimum age for purchasing alcohol was reduced during 1970 to 1975 (Dumochel et al., 1989). American studies have estimated that substantial reductions in night time road accidents occurred as a result of the re-introduction of the minimum alcohol purchasing age to 21 (Womble, 1988). A Ministerial Group has been proactive in encouraging both the drinks industry and the criminal justice system to tackle the problem of underage drinking, including, the marketing of drinks to children (Home Office, 1997). It should be remembered that the way many young people view alcohol is shaped by society and in particular by parents. Most young people have seen adult drinkers in the home before they reach their teens. As a result, many young people begin to drink as part of the normal socialisation process (Wright, 1999). Consequently, any public education should by default filter down to children through their parents.

- *Controlling the licensed environment*

The enforcement of the licensing laws is a key issue in reducing alcohol-related problems around licensed premises. This report points to key situational factors that can reduce the likelihood of problematic behaviour, such as the use of toughened glassware, the availability of fast food and transportation. The use of registered doormen schemes has been viewed positively by the police and local authorities as a means of strengthening control of licensed venues. Training bar staff to deal with intoxicated customers and to manage the licensed environment better has had positive results. In addition, the question of more flexible hours has

been raised as an issue for consideration, particularly in the light of the benefits many continental countries appear to experience (Marsh et al., 1992). The Scottish experience of more liberal drinking hours appears to have worked well, changing the masculine binge drinking culture to a slower drinking, female-friendly environment. The key players are the magistrates who hold the power to apply conditions on a license or to remove that license. As such, the magistrates have great leverage, which can ensure that the licensees do all that is possible to reduce problematic behaviour around their venue. This power is only of any real use if used consistently. The Home Office is currently undertaking a review of the licensing laws.

- *Training*

There is evidence to suggest that a significant proportion of detainees in police custody have consumed alcohol (Bennett, 1998). Recent research (Leigh et al., 1998) points towards 25% of all detainees who die in police custody having consumed alcohol or drugs. The discretion of the custody sergeant in deciding if and when a detainee needs medical attention, and the understanding arresting officers have of the effects of alcohol use and withdrawal symptoms are paramount in the care of these individuals. As such, the existence and impact of basic substance misuse training on how to manage and care for users is a central issue. Equally, probation officers and other criminal justice workers would benefit from such training.

- *Diversion of problem drinkers into treatment*

Many offenders who pass through custody, the courts and the probation service may be problem drinkers either because they have a dependency problem or because they 'binge' drink. Accident and emergency departments have been identified as sources of unreported violence data and also as possible points of intervention with alcohol misusers (Shepherd, 1998). Consequently, there is huge potential not only to divert offenders into treatment but also to deliver a public health message about the dangers of the inappropriate use of alcohol. Thus, there are two preventive issues to be considered; the referral of dependent alcohol misusers to appropriate treatment, and the delivery of 'sensible' drinking messages to other problematic or potentially problematic drinkers. Any initiative to divert offenders into treatment will obviously need to consider the impact on the alcohol services.

- *The lack of official statistics*

The main obstacle faced by policy and decision makers about the role of alcohol in crime is the lack of official statistics. Drunken offences are not currently notifiable to the Home Office. Consideration needs to be given to the feasibility of collecting official statistics routinely at a national level which will provide a true picture of the impact of alcohol on crime. However, the new Crime and Disorder partnership audits gather information from a variety of sources (e.g. accident and emergency units) and should identify the extent and nature of the problem enabling the development of effective local strategies.

The need for a co-ordinated approach

Alcohol Concern have recently published their proposals for an alcohol strategy for England (1999) which underlines the need to tackle alcohol-related problems focusing not only on the individual but on society as a whole. What is clear after examining many successful and innovative initiatives both in the UK and from abroad, is that there is no single solution to the problem. However, what appears to work best is a multi-agency approach which brings together all interested parties. The Department of Health's recent white paper *Saving Lives Our Healthier Nation* (1999) endorses this view underlining the need for cooperation from health and social services, schools, the alcohol industry, law enforcement agencies, government and the general public.

The drug field has already produced a national strategy. Alcohol misuse must also be tackled from the point of view of prevention, diversion into treatment and enforcement at a national level, and needs a clear and comprehensive national strategy to do so. Local Crime and Disorder partnerships may well already provide an infrastructure suitable for tackling alcohol-related problems.

LEGISLATION	CONDITIONS
Inebriates Act 1898	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prevention of the sale of alcohol to habitual drunkards
Licensing Act 1872	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple drunkenness ● Drunk in a public place ● Drunk in any highway or other public place ● Drunk in charge of a carriage, cattle or steam engine ● Drunk in possession of a loaded firearm
Licensing Act 1902	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drunk in charge of a child
Licensing Act 1964	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Justices' licences ● Permitted hours and extensions ● Sale to persons under 18 ● Sale of intoxicating liquor to a drunken person
Criminal Justice Act 1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drunk and disorderly
Alcoholic Liquor Duties Act 1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Duties payable on alcohol
Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Occasional licenses to sell alcohol not for the purpose of private gain
Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Powers of arrest to prevent person injuring themselves or a member of the general public. This does not specifically refer to drunkenness; however, it is commonly used by the police to protect drunk individuals
Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) 1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Causing or permitting the carriage of alcohol on a specified vehicle on route to or from football matches ● Being in possession of alcohol on such a vehicle on route to or from football matches ● Being drunk on a specified vehicle ● Possession of intoxicating liquor at any time during the period of a designated sporting event when in any area of a designated sporting ground from which the event may be directly viewed ● Possession of intoxicating liquor while entering or trying to enter a designated sporting ground ● Being drunk at a designated sporting ground at any time during the period of a designated sporting event ● Permitted licensing hours during designated sporting events does not include any part of the period at a designated sporting event or the off-supply of alcohol ● Entering or trying to enter such a ground during the period of a designated sporting event

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