Alcohol’s Impact on Policing

Chief Constable Jon Stoddart
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In 2010 alcohol was 44% more affordable than it was in 1980
The alcohol industry spends £800 million a year on marketing – which leads young people to start drinking earlier and to consume more
As of 2009/10 there were more than 5,800 licensed premises in the North East.
There are 169 licensed premises in the North East able to sell alcohol 24 hours a day.
In the North East, 48% of men and 29% of women report drinking above the daily recommended limits.
A woman can drink at her daily limit (2-3 units) for just 36p or weekly limit for £1.68
A man can drink at his recommended daily limit (3-4 units) for just 48p and weekly limit for just £2.52.
Just under a fifth of North East drinkers binge drink on a regular basis
Alcohol related crime costs the economy in Northumbria force area over £151 million per year… Cleveland Force area over £78 million per year… and Durham Force area over £71 million per year. Overall, alcohol related crime and disorder costs individuals, police and the criminal justice system in the North East at least £310 million a year.
More than seven in ten North Easterners think that people being drunk and rowdy in public is a ‘fairly big’ or ‘big’ problem.
More than nine in ten North Easterners associate alcohol consumption with anti-social behaviour, crime and violence.
More than eight in ten North Easterners associate alcohol consumption with being a victim of crime.
More than nine in ten North Easterners associate alcohol consumption with domestic abuse.
In 2010/11 there were 20,632 alcohol related crimes sentenced in the North East—this was 12.7% of all crimes. However, many low-level crimes go unreported and estimates using academic studies suggest this figure should be more like 214,000 alcohol related crimes.
50% of violent crime is alcohol related.
50% of domestic abuse is alcohol related
During 2010/11 police in the North East were called to 4,800 street drinking incidents.
On average in Durham Force area around 35\% of all arrests are alcohol related, on weekend evenings this increases to over 80\%
In 2010 Police forces across the country breathalysed nearly 200,000 people following motoring collisions - 7% of drivers were over the legal limit.
In 2009 there were a total of 560 casualties as a result of drink driving in the North East, 90 of which resulted in death or serious injury.
More than a third of offenders being supervised by the National Offender Management Service in the North East are believed to be alcohol dependent.
“Alcohol is a persistent problem that impacts on all disciplines throughout forces”
Policing an often chaotic night time economy means that resources have to be taken from elsewhere within the community, is this fair?
“Alcohol related crime and disorder is seen as a constant part of the job.”
Police perception is that 70-90% of their time on weekends is spent dealing with alcohol related incidents.

“Policing has had to change because of the availability of alcohol”
“Frontline officers are frequently subject to verbal, physical...”
“... and sometimes sexual abuse from drunk members of the public.”
“Often there will be groups of up to 30 or 40 kids of which some are over 18 who will buy alcohol for the whole group, this leads to a multitude of problems...”
What Durham Constabulary is doing to tackle the problem of alcohol...
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