



News Information

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Residents urged to drink responsibly as officers highlight dangers of binge-drinking and alcohol abuse

POLICE across Lancashire are highlighting the dangers of irresponsible drinking as part of a week of action calling for residents to drink sensibly and consider the impact of excessive drinking on police resources.

Drink related anti-social behaviour is the most common form that people experience and 72% of assaults requiring treatment are alcohol related.

Officers are particularly keen to engage with Lancashire's students, with thousands set to descend on the county over the next few weeks as universities gear up for their annual Freshers' celebrations.

Superintendent Samuel Mackenzie, Lancashire's Constabulary's strategic lead for alcohol, said: "The damage alcohol does to communities and the impact it has on police resources cannot be underestimated.

"Nearly half of all violent crime in the UK is alcohol related, every weekend the emergency services have resources diverted to our town centres dealing with people who have consumed alcohol in such a way as to cause themselves or others real harm.

"Drunkenness is a big problem and we all need to do more to address this issue, one thing that would really help is people taking responsibility for themselves on a night out.

"If you drink excessively, you are more likely to end up becoming involved in crime – either as a victim or as the offender. That's not a risk worth taking on a night out - it could have a lasting impact."

Alcohol costs services in Lancashire around £634m a year and accounts for 10 per cent of all crime, with people who have been drinking excessively more likely to become a victim of crime, be injured or be involved in violence.

Lancashire's week of action has been timed to coincide with ACPO's national campaign to highlight the realities of dealing with drunkenness and alcohol-related incidents and the impact on the police service.

In Lancashire it will see officers join forces with other agencies, including local councils Trading Standards and the health service, to carry out test purchasing operations, visit schools to give talks on the dangers associated with consuming alcohol and work with licensed premises across the county.

They will also be visiting universities to highlight the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption to students and will provide training to security and bar staff, in addition to their own front line officers.

People often 'pre-load' before going into town drinking making them 2.5 times more likely to be involved in violence as a victim or an offender.

This weekend officers will be out on the streets at violence 'hot spots', where they will tackle binge drinking by issuing warnings to those heavily under the influence of alcohol, with some being asked to leave the city or town centre.

Supt Mackenzie continued: "The Constabulary do all they can to make sure the county's towns and cities are safe places to be at night, but we really do need people to help by taking personal responsibility for their drinking.

"The level of social tolerance for excessive drinking is unhelpful and it is considered normal to be so drunk that people are not in control of themselves. This not only puts people at increased risk of harm but it puts an enormous burden on police and health services and affects the service we offer to all our communities."

You can follow the police activity by following @LancsPolice and #alcoholharm.

Supt Mackenzie will be hosting a Facebook chat on the Lancashire Constabulary Facebook page on Friday 19th September from 2pm until 3pm for people to ask any questions.

ENDS

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