

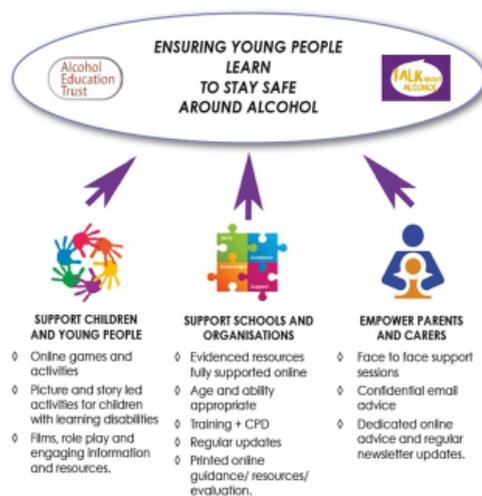
Written evidence submitted by the Alcohol Education Trust (SPI0019)

1. The Alcohol Education Trust is a small focused charity which works to keep young people safe around alcohol. We are a leading early intervention charity, which since 2011, has supported young people age 11- 25 in making more informed life choices through the schools and youth organisations we support free of charge with our award-winning resources and training. Young people in 1219 settings such as schools, children's homes, PRU's, 6th form Colleges, Universities, youth and sports clubs were supported in 2020/21 both virtually and face to face.
2. We provide specialist training and support, working with young people, parents, carers, professionals, partners and the wider community, with the aim of reducing alcohol and drug related harms, risk taking behaviours and anti-social behaviour. Our mission is to raise the age of onset of drinking, which is currently just age 13 and for young people to enter adulthood with a responsible understanding of alcohol. Our objective is to improve young people's self-esteem, confidence, resilience and life skills, enabling them to make positive and safer choices for their future health and mental well-being.

Our goals are to:

- *Raise the age of onset of drinking whole drinks from the current age of 13*
- *Reduce the prevalence and social acceptability of binge drinking and drunkenness*
- *Ensure the life chances of young people most vulnerable to alcohol harm and abuse are improved*
- *Reduce the accidents, violence, assault and harm caused by excess alcohol to young people and the community*
- *Encourage diversionary activities for young people that reduce anti-social behaviour crime and onset of drinking*

A joined up approach to reduce alcohol related harm



IMPROVE LEARNING AND LIFE CHANCES

3. Our interactive activity-based and award-winning Talk About Alcohol programme is evidenced to improve knowledge and delay the age that teenagers choose to drink whole drinks. We focus on regions where alcohol harms are highest and have bespoke approaches for those most vulnerable to alcohol, such as looked-after children. *Talk about alcohol* is selected by The Early Intervention Foundation as one of the 70 best early intervention programmes internationally. Expert external bodies and associations carry out academic evaluation of our programme periodically. Extensive published valuations include by The National Foundation for Education Research and by University College
4. **The AET Talk About Alcohol programme is selected as best practice by:**

- i. European Platform for Investment in Children
- ii. Centre for Analysis for Youth Transitions
- iii. Early Intervention Foundation

SUSTAINABLE, AFFORDABLE LEGACY

5. The professionals that we train become our ambassadors and cascade their learning to others, meaning Talk About Alcohol costs just 50p per child. We continue to update resources, provide professional development and phone/email support ongoing.

STRENGTHEN ROLE MODELS AND BOUNDARY SETTING

6. As parents and carers are the prime suppliers of alcohol to children, we build parental confidence, knowledge and skills around alcohol. We encourage parents to monitor their children and to understand the risks associated with underage drinking, in both supervised and unsupervised settings.

A FOCUS ON SPECIAL NEEDS AND THE MOST VULNERABLE

7. Young people with learning difficulties are at significantly higher risk of vulnerability to drugs and alcohol (grooming, county lines and assault as well as alcohol dependency), hence in 2021 we supported 433 new schools and providers with our resources that use colours, stories and emojis as well as distancing techniques especially designed for young people with SEN.
8. To learn more visit www.alcoholeducationtrust.org and www.talkaboutalcohol.com

Response to Drink Spiking inquiry questions namely:

The Committee invites evidence on the following points:

- The prevalence of spiking
 - How common is spiking?
 - Where and when does it happen?
 - Who is vulnerable to spiking?
 - Who commits spiking offences and why do they do it?

Estimated prevalence of drink spiking across England and Scotland

9. In the 12 years that the AET have worked day to day with young people across England and Scotland, drink spiking has always been a widespread and terrifying occurrence that is rarely reported by young adults, and when it has been has often been dismissed, evidence not gathered and perpetrators very rarely brought to book. Some of the key barriers have been the low level of reporting, the problem with getting evidence and difficulty in persuading police/medics by victims to take timely blood or urine samples.
10. In response to the media attention to the new phenomenon of injecting and the raised public awareness of drink spiking and the lack of data, The AET conducted a snap poll through the young adults aged 16 – 25 it supports throughout England and Scotland to try and provide more evidence as to the levels of drink spiking, where it is taking place and how often it is being reported.

11. The poll was open for a week from the 12th October with 747 responses, of these 461 were female, 252 were male and 34 identified as non binary.
12. It should be noted that the geographical representation of young adults was broad but respondents were self selecting, responding to a call for more information, therefore it may have been more likely for those who had experienced spiking to respond. However, the 12% experience of being spiked level is similar to rates found in the Instagram survey carried out by The Tab of 23,000 students (11%) in 18 Universities across England and Scotland (Oct 21) and a YouGov poll for The Independent (one in nine women). We therefore estimate that an average of one in 10 young adults have experienced drink spiking.
13. **Key findings from the AET survey:**
 - Overall, 12% of respondents (94 people) had had their drink spiked, (15% of females, 7% of males and 17% of those identifying as other). A further 5% thought their drink may have been spiked. Among young people who reported having had a drink spiked, in 77% of cases their drink had contained alcohol. For 23% the drink had been alcohol-free, confirmation that any drink can be spiked, alcoholic or not.
 - Public perception is that drink spiking occurs mainly in pubs and clubs, by strangers, but the survey found that among those who had experienced a drink being spiked, the most common location of spiking was at a private party (35%) followed by at a night club (28%). 13% was in a bar/pub, 7% at a festival and 17% in another location.
 - Shockingly, 92% of participants who had been a victim of drink spiking didn't report it. A variety of reasons were given including thinking they wouldn't be taken seriously (14%) and thinking there wouldn't be enough proof (8%) or they didn't realise what had happened to them until too late (11%).
 - Of the small number who did report that their drink had been spiked, 25% told the police, 26% a medic and 25% a bouncer/venue staff. 8% told a party host, 8% told a friend and 8% told a parent. Worryingly, 50% of those who reported spiking said nothing happened as a result, but for 9% it was investigated, 8% received help from their parents, 8% said that security was added to the venue as a result. Unfortunately, 8% were not believed. Of those who didn't report the drink spiking, 22% said that they wished they had.
 - When asked what they would find helpful to prevent/deal with drink spiking, the top answers were: Advice re what to do if a drink is spiked (33%); campaigns/ ads/ raising awareness (15%); education at school/college/uni (12%); advice re how to know if a drink has been spiked (11%); and target the perpetrators (2%).
 - Only 36% of survey respondents said that they felt confident knowing what to do if a friend's drink had been spiked. 60% said they didn't know where to go for help and support around drink spiking,

Full survey findings

14. In answer to the question 'Do you think you have ever had one of your drinks spiked?' 94 replied yes and a further 26 'maybe'. This equates to 15% of females having their drinks spiked, 7% of males and 17% of those identifying as other.
 - 81% of females said no
 - 4% of females said maybe
 - 7% of males said yes
 - 89% of males said no

- 4% of males said maybe
- 17% of others said yes
- 75% of others said no
- 8% of others said maybe
- Of the 94 young people who had had a drink spiked, 77% had an alcoholic drink spiked and 23% a non-alcoholic one, raising the importance of realising that any drink can be spiked, alcoholic or not.
- Public perception is that drink spiking occurs mainly in pubs and clubs, but the survey found that among those who had had a drink spiked, the most common location of spiking was at a private party (35%) followed by at a night club (28%).
 - 13% was in a bar/pub
 - 7% was at a festival
 - 28% was in a nightclub
 - 17% was in another location
 - 35% was at a private party
- Perhaps the most shocking statistic of all from the survey was that 92% of those who had their drink spiked didn't report it. A variety of reasons were given including 14% thinking they wouldn't be taken seriously and 8% thinking there wouldn't be enough proof or they didn't realise until too late (11%) what had happened to them.

All answers:

- They didn't know who to report it to 4%
 - It didn't occur to them that they should report it 4%
 - They didn't think they would be taken seriously 14%
 - They felt embarrassed 3%
 - They thought there would be no proof 8%
 - They were not 100% sure that their drink had been spiked 20%
 - They didn't feel concerned enough 15%
 - Other 13%
 - They realised later 11%
 - They felt scared 4%
 - They were friends 2%
 - They were too drunk to report 1%
 - They were drinking underage 1%
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- Of the small number who did report that their drink has been spiked, 25% told the police, 26% a Medic and 25% a bouncer/venue staff.
 - Parents 8%
 - Police 25%
 - Medics 26%
 - Bouncer 25%
 - Friend 8%
 - Party host 8%

Equally astonishing is that 50% of those who reported spiking said nothing happened as a result.

It was investigated 9%

- Received help from parents 8%
- More security was added to the venue 8%

- Friends came to collect 9%
- They were not believed 8%
- They just left the party 8%
- Nothing 50%
- If they didn't report the drink spiking, 34% didn't wish they had, 22% wished they had and 44% answered maybe.
- When asked if they know where to go for help and support around drink spiking 60% said they didn't, so the AET is now putting together a campaign both highlighting the issues, the importance of reporting cases as soon as possible and top tips to prevent drink spiking from happening.
 - 24% said yes
 - 60% said no
 - 16% said maybe
- When asked if people felt confident knowing what to do if friend's drinks had been spiked:
 - 36% said yes
 - 38% said no
 - 26% said maybe
- When asked what they would find helpful to prevent/deal with drink spiking, people said:
 - Campaigns/ads/raising awareness 15%
 - Education at school/college/uni 12%
 - Advice re how to know if a drink has been spiked 11%
 - Nothing 1%
 - Having a cover for drinks 3%
 - Other 16%
 - Target the perpetrators 2%
 - Unsure 7%
 - Advice re what to do if a drink is spiked 33%

15. An additional Instagram survey by The Tab - a site covering youth and student culture, taken by over 23,000 students at 19 different Universities, asked: 'Since the start of this University year, do you believe you have been spiked?' Overall 11% of participants thought that their drink had been spiked, although in individual Universities the percentages varied widely from as high as 18.9% (Leeds, Brookes and Bournemouth) and as low as 8% (Oxford, London and Lancaster).

	Have you been spiked			%
	Yes	No	Total	
<i>Oxford</i>	14	193	207	6.763285024
<i>London</i>	54	606	660	8.181818182
<i>Lancaster</i>	121	1274	1395	8.673835125
<i>Nottingham</i>	154	1548	1702	9.048178613
<i>Birmingham</i>	65	635	700	9.285714286
<i>Bristol</i>	135	1315	1450	9.310344828
<i>Edinburgh</i>	162	1575	1737	9.32642487
<i>Exeter</i>	265	2540	2805	9.44741533
<i>Southampton</i>	172	1381	1553	11.07533806
<i>Durham</i>	52	408	460	11.30434783
<i>Newcastle</i>	374	2872	3246	11.52187307
<i>Manchester</i>	178	1352	1530	11.63398693
<i>York</i>	84	616	700	12
<i>Sheffield</i>	45	317	362	12.43093923
<i>Liverpool</i>	136	938	1074	12.66294227
<i>Lincoln</i>	24	155	179	13.40782123
<i>Sussex</i>	139	885	1024	13.57421875
<i>UK</i>	132	831	963	13.70716511
<i>Leeds</i>	91	468	559	16.27906977
<i>Brookes</i>	187	828	1015	18.42364532
<i>Bournemouth</i>	41	175	216	18.98148148
Total		2625	23537	
%		11.15265327		

Statistics kindly supplied by The TAB

16. In November 2021, **students organising for sustainability (SOS)** on our request included questions on prevalence of drink spiking in their annual drink and drug survey. The survey was distributed through the National Union of Students to the database of TOTUM cardholders. Among 2,700 respondents they found a prevalence rate of 14% have been or think they have been victims of drink spiking with drugs (7% certain). 55% of students participating in the survey were women, 40% were men and 2% were non-binary. 29% experienced spiking at a House party, 39% at a club, 33% at a bar. 70% did not report the incident to anyone. The report measures spiking with more alcohol as well as with drugs.
17. The report can be accessed here: <https://www.sos-uk.org/post/student-opinion-on-drink-and-drug-spiking>

You Gov poll commissioned by The Independent

18. In addition, a Nationally representative YOUGov poll of 2,000 people commissioned for the Independent found that a similar level of one in nine women (11%) say they

have been a victim of drink spiking. Another 8% say a family member has been spiked, while a further 12% have friends who have had drinks spiked in the past. In total, a third of women have either been spiked themselves or know someone who has.

19. Among men, 6% say they have been spiked, while 4% say members of their family have been spiked, and 8% say a friend has. One in five men overall say they know someone who has been spiked or have been themselves.
20. Some two in five (40%) of those aged between 18 and 24 know someone who has been spiked, including themselves, the highest of any age group. Only 14% of people aged 65 and over say the same. However, it is those aged between 24 and 49 who are the most likely to say they personally have been spiked (14%).

Do people think they would be taken seriously if they were spiked?

21. 42% women think the police would take them seriously if they reported being spiked – but this only includes 8% who are “very” confident they would be taken seriously. On the other hand, 41% do not think the police would take them seriously in such an incident, including 13% who are “not confident at all” they would be taken seriously.
22. Men feel broadly the same: 43% are confident they would be taken seriously by police, while 38% are not.
23. Approaching half of both women (49%) and men (46%) are not very/not at all confident a venue would take them seriously should they complain about being spiked there. Only 27% of women and 30% of men think a venue would take them seriously if there were spiked.
24. Britons of both genders are, however, confident that family and friends would take them seriously. However, while a majority of women are “very confident” their friends (56%) and family (57%) would take them seriously if they were spiked, only 37% of men are “very confident” their friends would take them seriously, while 47% say the same of their family.
25. Full findings can be viewed here: [Copy of Internal Spiking 211029.xls \(yougov.com\)](#)

Student attitudes and fears

26. The work app developer Stint questioned 1,000 students across the country. Female students were more likely to say they were concerned or know someone who is concerned about spiking, with 88% saying they were concerned about spiking or knew someone who was, compared with 69% of male students. Overall, 80% of students said they were worried about spiking, or knew someone who was.
27. 27% of students intend to avoid clubbing due to concerns about drink spiking.
 - Are the police doing enough to identify perpetrators and bring them to justice?

Reporting of cases to the police and the number of prosecutions.

Totals

Year	Reported spiking offences	Charges	Related sexual offences*
2018	751	13	183
2019	915	9	161
2020	722	8	123
2021	1466	1	237

*stats for 24/28 forces accurate as 10th January 2022

28. Data disclosed to and compiled by Elena Salvoni, investigative journalist with Ferrari Press Agency, via the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The data was either retrieved via Home Office Codes or keyword search in the MO, depending on different police forces' internal systems and the method which they said returned the most accurate data. Four of the twenty eight forces said they were unable to return data on sexual offences linked to the spiking acts.
29. Some forces have attached disclaimers to their datasets which state that the data should not be used in comparison with other forces', as the means of retrieving the data often differs between different systems (there is no one "generic system" for recording offences or retrieving information about them across the 43 police forces of England and Wales). While most forces' FOI teams endeavoured to return the most accurate information in accordance with the FOI requests, there may be discrepancies in the data as it is extracted from live systems and therefore may be subject to change or amendment since they were recorded. Some offences may also have been missed in searches and not included in the data depending on the way they were recorded and the method of data extraction used by each force. Full data available by email.

Scotland

30. In the first 10 months of 2021, police investigated 152 cases of drugs being added to drinks or injections with syringes. This compares 30 in 2020, 43 in 2019 and just 16 in 2015.
31. 69 people reported they'd had their drink spiked, with 51 people being injected. Of the remaining 32 cases [police](#) were unable to establish how they had been drugged.
32. Of the victims, 128 were women and 22 men were targeted - gender wasn't specified by two people. 15 out of the 152 cases had a sexual motive. Spiking can also be used to assault or rob someone or as a prank.
33. Since 2015 there have been a total of 328 spiking cases across Scotland, with 70 arrests or detections.

34. In an FOI to Police Scotland, they revealed that spiking incidents are differentiated into two categories: 'Drugging', and 'Administering a substance for sexual purposes'. Over the last six years, those numbers have been: 22, 38, 35, 43 and 37. In seven months from April 2021 to October 2021, that number rose to 142.

35. **AET comment on police reporting**

These increases in figures are shocking and yes it likely to only be the tip of the iceberg as our poll of 750 young people (to age 25) October 2021 found that just 8% reported being spiked to the police, due to a mixture of embarrassment, feeling there wasn't enough evidence, that it was too late or they wouldn't be believed.

36. Looking at AET stats as well as those from The TAB (of 23,000 students) and a YOUgov poll for the independent, that approximately 1 in 10, or 10% of those surveyed have experienced being spiked – then very few victims are reporting spiking to the authorities. It is an epidemic and must be addressed, we are pleased there appears to be an increase in reporting but shocked at the apparent decrease in charges from already shocking low figures.

- How spiking should be prevented and addressed
 - How effective is partnership working between the police and others (such as local authorities, the health service, night-time industries, universities and third sector organisations) in safeguarding potential and actual victims of spiking?
 - How effective are the measures used to prevent spiking, including the advice and guidance that is used to train, educate and support those involved in handling this type of crime (such as police officers, nightclub security staff and A&E staff)?
 - What barriers do victims face in reporting spiking incidents and obtaining treatment and support?

37. Up until 2021, efforts to address drink spiking had been sporadic and uncoordinated. Personal testimonies from the many victims who report their cases to us over the years illustrate a pattern reflected in the lack of police prosecutions or of perpetrators being charged. Namely:

- Police refusing to carry out blood/urine tests or not having the necessary materials and so sending victims to A and E
- A and E refusing to carry out tests and suggesting victims go to the police. In many cases as victims show the same signs as extreme intoxication they are offered no help or support at all.
- Premises and nightlife security staff accusing victims of being drunk and disorderly rather than supporting them as victims of spiking.

38. The combination of the above have made most victims NOT report spiking cases to the police, together with the additional factors of:

- By the time they realise their drink has been spiked they feel there won't be enough evidence to prove it.
- Often due to black out and memory loss victims cannot remember clearly what happened in detail
- Social embarrassment (especially for young males) is a barrier to reporting the crime
- Where spiking occurs at house parties, victims worry about getting the hosts or their friendship groups into trouble if they report spiking.
- In most cases there is no additional crime such as sexual assault or robbery so victims do not believe that they will be taken seriously or believed.

39. **However, we must now recognise some of the excellent initiatives that are being or have been put in place to address drink spiking. It is too early to measure their success as yet.**

40. **Please Note:**

- None of these campaigns address the important issue that many cases of drink spiking are taking place at private parties/House parties and not just in the night time economy.
- It is also likely that spiking will move even more to more unregulated spaces as vigilance and measures increase in bars and clubs. At locations such as House parties and festivals, perpetrators are less likely to be caught on CCTV or drinks to be tested for evidence.
- None of the campaigns are addressing the crucial need to ensure that drink spikers are reported and called out or that spiking is a serious criminal offence that can cause life changing consequences for the victims.

However the initiatives should help ensure that better evidence is collected through CCTV and drink spiking testing kits in the on trade, A and E and police stations for example.

Voluntary group programmes

41. **Safe Space** schemes run by St John Ambulance in Leeds, Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester, Norwich and Nottingham are among the 40 locations planned by the charity to provide a neutral haven for anyone needing support while out with staff trained to spot victims of drink spiking this joins the excellent work being conducted by **Street Pastors** and **Street Angels** in ensuring people get home safely, are not vulnerable or are taken to a place of safety.

Universities

42. Many Students' Unions have also signed up to the SU/SOS **Good Night Out** scheme. SUs including Edinburgh, Leeds, Queen Mary, UEA, and Warwick have received training or become accredited members of the campaign. This involves training staff on sexual, racial and LGBTQ+ harassment, consent, and other topic areas to keep people safe.

43. **Newcastle** University and NUSU worked in partnership with Northumbria University and Students' Union, Northumbria Police, Public Health and the local authority to make the city safer and in the reporting and ongoing support provided for those affected. This includes offering anti spiking resources such as spikeys, drink testing kits and cup covers, encouraging the reporting of incidents using the University or

Students' Union Report and Support form and offering ongoing support to all students who may need it, providing a safe taxi scheme and supporting the Big Night In campaign. The work continues with a policy and protocol focus within the Night-time Economy in our city.

44. **Liverpool John Moores** SU has met with groups including the uni, city council and police to increase support for students. It is looking into supporting self-defence classes for students, and offering drop-in sessions with the on-campus police officer so students can raise any issues.
45. **St Andrews** Students can request test strips for drinks and urine if they believe they've been spiked. The Customer Safety Team have received further training on spiking and regularly walk around venues looking for signs of spiking, as well as doing random bag searches on entry; and the SU is redeveloping its alcohol safety training for student societies.
46. At **Lincoln** SU, **students can take** a rapid drug test at the Wellbeing Centre if they believe they have been spiked the night before. The SU's on-campus night time venue offers drink covers, tops and drink testing kits. Other measures include drug detection dogs, as well as physical searches.
47. **Edinburgh Students' Association** has CCTV throughout, staff monitoring of spaces to identify students who may need support, on-duty first aiders and a dedicated welfare area where attendees are offered safe transport home, if needed.
48. **Liverpool Guild has created a** "spiking information hub" which includes information on the symptoms of spiking and ways to feel safer on nights out. At all its bars, anti-spiking devices are now available for free, as well as information about spiking and further support. Bar staff receive training and there will be increased trained medics and first aid responders on site for large events and gigs.
49. **Southampton** SU has a student safety charter which will be in place across its venues. This includes providing a "welfare space" with trained staff, making "every reasonable attempt to ensure students do not travel home alone", and providing a means of testing drinks if spiking is suspected. It is also encouraging other local businesses and venues to sign this charter and agree to the measures it puts in place.
50. **Northumbria**, union bar gives out free anti-spiking bottle toppers and drinks covers, as well as offering panic alarms for students. The team has met with police, local authorities and unis to further understand how they can combat the issue and support students.
51. **Lancaster** SU owns and runs The Sugarhouse, its own nightclub off-campus. A spokesperson for the SU told The Tab it has policies including a dedicated and fully-stocked welfare room; a dedicated SIA licensed FGH Welfare Supervisor, who is fully

first aid trained, working every night to offer support; and free drink testing kits. It will soon also have drink covers.

52. **Leeds** SU has added more frequent “staff walk arounds” in venues, trained staff and invested in drink protection bottle stoppers. It also runs a safe taxi scheme.
53. Within its own premises, **Aberdeen** SU is training staff and considering additional safety measures. It said it is also communicating with local nightclubs.
54. **Oxford** SU VP for Women has ordered drinks covers and facilitated bystander intervention training, as well as speaking to local clubs about safeguarding policies.
55. **Oxford Brookes** Union has launched a campaign to ensure the culture at Brookes is safe for everyone, and it is already working on a number of initiatives as part of these including education about sexual consent. It works with groups such as the police, uni and NHS, which it says includes action on drink spiking and wider issues of student safety.
56. **UEA** SU is taking a number of steps including increased searches and bag checks, anti-spiking devices at the bar, training for staff and an “alcohol impact crew” at all nights and St Johns first aiders at their busiest and biggest club nights. It is also looking into new methods such as testing strips.
57. **Warwick** SU has implemented additional measures including increased door staff who have been specifically briefed about spiking and sexual misconduct, messages to club and society social secs, and relaxed its “no drinks” policy in the smoking area. Going forward it’s looking into a number of policies including introducing anti-spiking devices, and reviewing whether current staff training is sufficient.
58. **UCL** SU is giving additional training to staff and increasing the number on security staff and supervisors on busy nights. It will join the Good Night Out accreditation scheme, and will be providing free drink lids, bottle stoppers and spiking testing kits. It already has a number of measures in place including bag searches and asking for student ID.
59. **Birmingham** Guild, has introduced increased bag searches, increased personal searches on entry to venues (including with metal detector wands), and a trial of passive drug detection dogs. It also held an open meeting for students to voice concerns around safety and to highlight any additional measures they would like.
60. **Examples of police initiatives**
61. **Bristol** Drink spiking test kits are set to be rolled out across police stations and dozens of night-time venues in Bristol as part of a trial funded by The Home Office The Safety of Women at Night Fund and joining Bristol Nights, a campaign with Avon

- and Somerset Police, Bristol City Council and Bristol City Centre BID, to help tackle drink spiking in Bristol's nightclubs.
62. Their campaign states, 'Our objective is to educate Bristol on the procedure of reporting and collecting evidence of drink spiking, to increase the prosecution rates of the people who carry out these crimes'.
63. This links in with the savenightlife programme for venues [DSPG FINAL \(savenightlife.com\)](#)
64. **Nottingham** Police Operation Windblown Gold group is coordinating a multi-agency response to the reports of spikings, and is working with venues to provide anti-spiking devices and free drink-testing kits.
65. **West Yorkshire** Police advice to licensees on drink spiking and injection incidents is contained in **the Licensing Security & Vulnerability Initiative (Licensing SAVI)**, which venues are being encouraged to use to improve their safety and security for the benefit of staff and customers. The initiative started its national roll out on the 15 October to 300 venues in West Yorkshire where it is being funded by the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit and delivered with support from West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership.
<https://licensingsavi.com>
<https://www.policecpi.com>
66. **Gloucestershire Constabulary** has become the first police force to introduce the use of drugs testing machines as part of Operation Nightingale.
67. The campaign has a focus on offenders and work with licensed premises will see the use of drug screening tools to ensure anyone entering is not in possession of something which could harm others. This includes enhanced searches of club goers upon entry to establishment with metal scanning machines and drugs screenings which pick up readings of class A, B and C drugs after hand swabs are taken.
68. There is a dedicated investigation team which assesses each reported incident of spiking and looking and working very closely with establishments to share guidance around the preventative measures they can consider such as increased door searches prior to entry and the use of drink spiking kits for evidential capture. Work is also ongoing with partner agencies such as Cheltenham Guardians and the Street Pastors. There is also the Flare reporting app for reporting incidences.
- WILTSHIRE POLICE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY TRAINING FOR 1000 POLICE OFFICERS**
69. Wiltshire Police has funded Night Time Economy Training for 1000 officers (PCSO's, Police Officers, Sergeants and Inspectors) on their protected learning days to ensure they are equipped and confident to protect against drink spiking and other relevant issues.
70. **Examples of night time economy initiatives**

[Drink spiking FAQs guidance FINAL \(ii\).pdf \(bii.org\)](#)

These include **Ask for Angela** – where anyone requiring assistance can use this code to ask staff for help

Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement training · WAVE Training aims to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of those working in licensed premises focusing on identifying vulnerability and making appropriate interventions.

CPL Learning · are providing free access to their online drink spiking awareness course for staff

Drinkaware Nightlife Crew

Save Night Life guidance [DSPG FINAL \(savenightlife.com\)](#)

National Pubwatch guidance · A range of policy documents developed in conjunction with Best Bar None · E-learning module on vulnerability awareness in the night time economy ·

Women's Night Safety Charter The Mayor of London has developed a Women's Night Safety Charter for businesses in the night time economy.

- What role should Government play in tackling this crime?

71. The Home Office and National Police Chiefs' Council online tool Street Safe which allows the public to pinpoint areas on a map where they feel unsafe and say why is a useful step, if the information is used by police forces to better work with communities to improve local safety in particular. However, this app will not help people get home safely or prevent spiking from occurring.
72. The Government funding of a National Police Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls, DCC Maggie Blyth including coordinating police action across England and Wales is also an excellent step.
73. The Safety of Women at Night Fund which is providing £5 million to 22 organisations focused on improving the safety of women and girls at night is excellent progress.
74. We believe this fund should be extended to cover the safety of all at night including the LGBTQ community in addition to the 8% of young men who are victims of drink spiking.

Call for Action

75. Awareness of drink spiking is now much higher and we hope this awareness will lead to more reporting by victims - and we know that authorities and licenced premises are now taking reports of drink spiking much more seriously. It is only through the combination of more reporting, collecting evidence (through CCTV and drink spike testing kits) and hospitals, police and GP's carrying out tests on victims that we can ensure that the awful people committing the crime of spiking can be brought to book.

76. However, it is very important to realise that spiking also happens at house parties and in unsupervised places. This means the perpetrators are within victims' wider friendship groups.
77. We therefore need work with young adults to call drink spikers out, to make clear it's no joke and is a serious criminal offence subject to up to 10 years in jail, We must ensure there is more reporting of spiking to authorities and to increase confidence in the reports being followed up by the police – only then will the spikers see that they are more likely to be caught and charged.
78. **The AET believe that the epidemic of drink spiking will not be reduced unless there is a four pronged approach of:**
- i. **Supportive proactive awareness campaigns enabling all to be equipped to protect themselves and others against drink spiking as far as possible in 6th forms, FE Colleges and Universities as well as in venues.**
 - ii. **Medical services including A and E, NHS walk in centres and GP's taking reports of drink spiking seriously and being able to gather evidence for prosecution.**
 - iii. **Police ensuring more evidence is collated and more prosecutions take place and victims are taken seriously. We need to ensure that the current improved focus is maintained long term.**

We also need to ensure that spiking itself stands alone as serious criminal offence and a category such as 'malicious drugging' is used instead of 'drink spiking'

- iv. **Night time economy venues ensuring every measure is in place to ensure customers are kept safe including CCTV, staff training, ensuring customers showing symptoms are not presumed drunk and are kept safe, drink testing kits are kept behind bars, vigilant security staff are employed and trained in larger premises.**
79. **Only this combination will ensure more reporting by victims and an understanding by perpetrators that they will be convicted and caught, which is not the case at present.**

80. **We need:**

- i. **More data on the true prevalence of drink spiking, where it is occurring, to whom as well as the motivations of the spikers themselves. This should include a way for victims to register the offence against them and receive support and investigation in a timely and sensitive manner as an alternative to reporting to the police.**
- ii. **A general awareness campaign of how to keep safe and look out for each other via 6th forms and FE Colleges – preparing young people for transition to legal drinking age, leaving home, student life, the night time economy and**

empowering them to make safer choices. This can then be complemented by work at Universities and other suitable settings.

- **This should include a strand aimed at potential spikers as their motivations are unclear, including zero tolerance and the need to call spikers out and the importance of reporting every incidence to the police or authorities**
- **It should also highlight that any drink can be spiked, the wide variety of settings where spiking takes place and that it can happen to anyone**
- **Advice on preventing spiking, how to recognise the signs, where to go for help and support and how to report incidences.**

The AET would like to work in partnership to pilot and build this campaign

- iii. **A targeted campaign raising awareness in the LGBTQ community where prevalence is as high as amongst women**
- iv. **A programme for A and E staff that includes drug testing kits for all A and E units that will ensure that evidence is gathered in time.**
- v. **There also needs to be a change in mindset (education/awareness) at A and E departments (quite understandable considering the number of drunk and drug related incidences that staff have to deal with, particularly at night) towards taking claims of spiking seriously and as genuine, which is not the case at present**

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