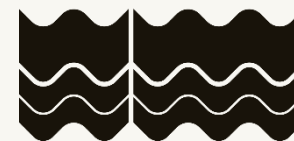


A conversation about drugs and alcohol



We asked the public, partners and stakeholders for their views to ensure that future projects address local needs. There were 222 responses to an online survey and 40 people using these services attended a focus group in Feb/March 2020.

Issues people wanted addressed

- A change in stigma around needing help is necessary
- When people ask for help they want to understand what will happen and to know they are going to be understood
- People are concerned about the impact on dependents and family and friends if they access support
- People need support to address their mental and physical health needs and to prevent relapse
- Services need to be consistently delivered and accessible to all
- Service users should be involved when developing services
- Peer support should be offered

Groups needing extra support

- The Armed Forces Community
- The street community
- Those caring for others
- Those needing gender-specific services
- People with mental and physical health needs

All kinds of substance abuse carry a very negative stigma and are popularly believed to be simply lifestyle choices made by sufferers. Very few people truly understand their nature.

What we are doing in response

- 1. We are working with those substance misuse support services shown to have lower awareness to promote their services.**
- 2. We are involving those with lived experience of drug and alcohol disorders in the evaluation process.**
- 3. We are working to reduce the harm associated with excessive drinking through the development of the Alcohol Harm Strategy.**
- 4. We have developed a separate fund to support members of the street community.**
- 5. We are ensuring the issues identified form the basis of all projects we commission.**