

March 2023

PSPO Evidence

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

Background

Robust evidence is essential when considering the implementation of a PSPO. The council need to be satisfied that the evidence demonstrates that the conditions for the application of a PSPO have been met.

Following the recent renewal of the current PSPO on the borough in the 5 wards of Cricket Green, Figges Marsh, Graveney, Lavender Fields and Ravensbury wards, it was requested at Cabinet that the Community Safety Partnership consider the evidence to see if a borough wide PSPO would help support the ambition to be a responsible drinking borough.

Quantitative Evidence

Available intelligence has been examined to see what the potential requirement for the borough will be going forward. The evidence is not comprehensive; however, the information below seeks to provide some context as to how big the **reported** problem of alcohol related ASB is in the borough. The time periods we will look at, where possible, is the period of the last PSPO November 2020 to October 2021 (Year 1) and November 2021 to October 2022 (Year 2).

Safer Merton Alcohol Related ASB Complaints

The Safer Merton ASB Team log all complaints that come into their service. They log the type of incident and the location. Looking at the data supplied by the team for the period identified, there were 57 cases that had an alcohol element in year 1. In comparison in year 2 there were 81 cases that had an alcohol element.

The top locations in year 1 were Graveney (25%) and Figges Marsh (23%). There was at least one complaint of alcohol related ASB in 15 of the borough's wards over the year.

In year 2, the top wards were Figges Marsh (18.5%), and Graveney and Longthornton each with 12%. There was at least 1 alcohol related complaint in 16 of the borough's wards.

It's important to flag the relatively small numbers, however as the Strategic Assessment points out, the proportion of cases where alcohol is a contributory factor are thought to be much higher than the figures indicate.

In addition, the team have received 14 direct complaints and MP enquiries with an alcohol element since July 2022.

FPN's issued for Street Drinking

In the financial year 2021-22 there were 6 FPN's issued by Council Officers for Street Drinking.

CCTV Alcohol Related Logs

The CCTV team log any alcohol related concerns on their system as well as a brief description of events and associated behaviours where applicable. The location, time and date of logs are also captured.

In year 1, there were 129 alcohol related logs, and the top locations were Mitcham (40.3%), Wimbledon (21.7%) and Morden (10.9%). In year 1 there were 12 different locations mentioned from across the borough, but these were based on where there is CCTV coverage.

In year 2 there were 150 alcohol related logs, and the top location was Mitcham (39.3%), Wimbledon (27.3%) and Morden (11.1%). In year 2 there were 13 different locations mentioned from across the borough however again these were based on where there is CCTV coverage.

	CCTV Year 1		CCTV Year 2	
	Fig	%	Fig	%
Mitcham	52	40.3	59	39.3
Wimbledon	28	21.7	41	27.3
Morden	14	10.9	17	11.3
Colliers Wood	9	7.0	7	4.7
Wimbledon Village	5	3.9	2	1.3
All Areas	2	1.6	0	0.0
Phipps Bridge	2	1.6	2	1.3
Raynes Park	1	0.8	3	2.0
St Helier	1	0.8	0	0.0
Pollards Hill	1	0.8	3	2.0
High Path	1	0.8	0	0.0
Weir Road	1	0.8	1	0.7
Missing Location	12	9.3	8	5.3
South Wimbledon	0	0.0	4	2.7
Civic Centre	0	0.0	1	0.7
Morden Park House	0	0.0	1	0.7
Sadlers Close	0	0.0	1	0.7
TOTAL	129		150	

Police calls related to street drinking

Due to the Police reporting system, data was only available for the 12-month period February 2022 to January 2023. In this period there were 43 complaints of ASB with an alcohol flag and 9 calls in relation to street drinking.

London Ambulance Callouts for Alcohol

As the Strategic Assessment identified through data supplied by SafeStats, the London Ambulance Service data is normally the most reliable dataset to use in relation to alcohol related issues on the borough

For the two years under review, there were at least 10 callouts per year in every ward (based on the old wards) of the borough. In year 1 there were 732 alcohol related callouts and the top wards were

Figges Marsh (13%), Abbey (10%) and Colliers Wood (8%). In year 2 there 648 alcohol related callouts (an 11.5% decrease from year 1) and the top wards were Colliers Wood (9%), Abbey (9% and Figges Marsh (9%).

Summary of figures

Data Source	Year 1	Year 2
ASB Complaints	57	81
CCTV Logs	129	150
Ambulance Callouts (Sep 17 – Aug 18 and Sep18 – Aug 19)	732	648

Summary

The current information available to us around street drinking and associated behaviour is not comprehensive. We have therefore gone on to look at perception based information and have sought statements from key partner organisations to let us know about their experience.

Survey Information

In addition to the quantitative data, we felt it was important to consider the views of the public we have therefore look at perception information from the surveys conducted recently on the borough.

London Borough of Merton Annual Residents Survey 2021

Adults Survey

The 2021 survey provides a representative sample of 1005 residents living in the borough of Merton. There has been an increase in those feeling that people being drunk or rowdy is a problem (13% in 2019 to 23% in 2021). East Merton and Mitcham cluster had the highest percentage of residents who saw being drunk or rowdy (42%) as a problem. This was followed North East Merton (27%).

Young People’s Survey

As part of the Annual Residents Survey, the council included young residents aged 11-17. The sample size was 110 young people. In the 2019 survey 13% of the young people surveyed stated that they were personally concerned about substance misuse. This was an increase on the 10% in the 2019 survey.

Young people were also asked to state the top ten things that they were locally concerned about in their local area. 16% of young people stated that Anti-Social Behaviour and bad behaviour in public was a concern.

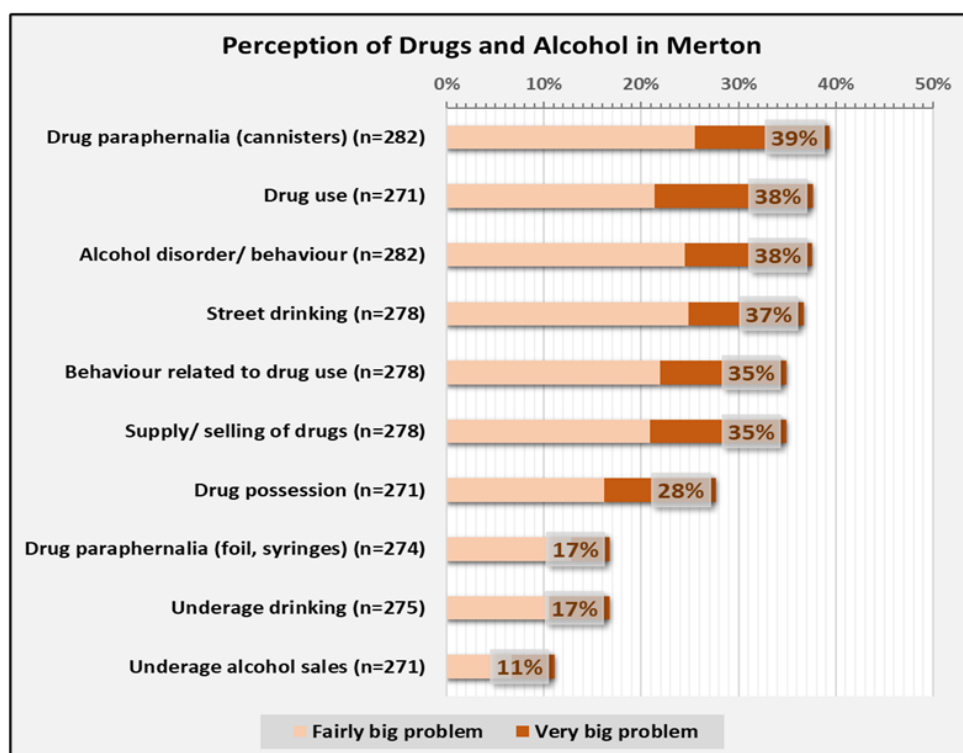
Safer Merton Survey

In 2021, a Community Safety Survey was undertaken. The survey opened in July and closed in mid-October. There were 328 responses. The survey aimed to ask residents about all aspects of community safety and as such there was a section around Anti-Social Behaviour and another around drugs and alcohol.

Whilst not the top concern, residents thought alcohol disorder and street drinking were a problem. 80% of people explained their score by saying they had experienced or seen it.

Residents were given the option to provide a qualitative response to specific ASB issues that they were concerned about. There were 169 free text responses provided. Of these, 5 contained the word “alcohol” and 9 specifically mentioned “drinking”. Most locations were open spaces such as parks.

Residents were then asked if there were any general comments they would like to feedback to the partnership. In total, there were 141 comments provided. Of these, 18 were specifically for “drinking” and 3 were for “alcohol”.



Stakeholders Survey (February 2022)

Safer Merton put together a short survey to assess perceptions of the PSPO amongst partners and the local Police Teams. In total we received 14 responses.

In general, the partners felt that the PSPO was a useful tool to have, particularly for those working the current PSPO area.

It was felt that fines for persistent drinkers may be an issue and it was felt that it would be good if there was an easier way to report breaches of the PSPO, for example through an app.

Generally, partners felt that the prohibition was the right one, however other geographical areas that were suggested for consideration were:

- Wimbledon Town Centre

- Colliers Wood
- Longthornton
- Pollards Hill
- Willow Lane Estate
- Merton Park and Morden Town Centre by Tube

Stakeholder Survey (November 2022)

Safer Merton put together a short survey to gather views of partners around the possible expansion of the PSPO to being borough wide. 8 responses were received. Locations identified were

- Town Centres
- Wimbledon Town Centre
- Colliers Wood - Wandle Park
- Lyvedon Road footbridge

There was a sense that engagement was important alongside enforcement. One respondent stating that enforcement alone will not solve the problem. Often those who are street drinking have complex, multiple issues.

The types of ASB that were identified was intimidating behaviour, littering, defecation, aggression, and escalation to other crimes.

Other points raised were the need to consider the perceptions if a boroughwide PSPO is implemented and are there other tools that could be used to address the problem.

Some of the benefits of having a PSPO included additional legislation, will make Merton safer, be a deterrent, allow issues to be dealt with quickly and help to tackle ASB.

Partner Statements of Support

As part of the consultation process in December 2022, we approached the wider partnership to gather views on the proposed boroughwide PSPO. In total we received 11 statements of support from organisations and teams. Partners raised the following points:

- A boroughwide PSPO will reduce the issue of displacement
- Consider impact of policing a boroughwide PSPO
- A boroughwide PSPO will provide more opportunity for engagement to support to those identified with alcohol problems.
- The powers will not affect those going about their activities but will help to prevent ASB.
- Surveys have shown that alcohol issues are a problem for residents.
- PSPO will support patrols in problem locations.
- Alcohol related harm can affect all areas of the borough.
- PSPO can promote reasonable drinking.
- Opportunity for education.

- Create a cohesive approach to promoting the responsible sale of alcohol and potentially minimising the effect on anti-social behaviour, crime and disorder associated with street drinking

(Note: Partner statements were received from The Police, London Fire Brigade, Merton Council Children's Services, Public Health, Merton Council Environment Enforcement, Merton Council Parks, Clarion Housing, Westminster Drugs Project, Merton Council Licensing, Safer Transport, Merton Council Homelessness Team).

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