



“THAT FRIDAY FEELING”



Questionnaires Findings

December 2004

AACS
62 Dee Street
Aberdeen
AB11 6DS
Tel: 01224 573887
Email: info@aacsc.co.uk

Contents

Background Information	3	
Introduction	3	
The Questionnaire	3	
Profile	4	
Drinking Pattern	5 – 6	
Alcohol Awareness	7 – 8	
Outcomes	9	
Conclusion	9	
Conclusion	9	
Appendix (i):	Questionnaire	10 - 11
Appendix (ii):	Information Card	12
Appendix (iii):	Letter to Pubs	13

Background Information

AACS is a voluntary organisation specialising in supporting people with an alcohol problem and those affected by someone else's problem, with over 30 years of experience in providing 'counselling' and community based support services for the residents of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

AACS promotes responsible drinking and within that context continues to strive to provide individual support for people with different needs and different drinking patterns and habits. There is a level of acceptance within the North East of Scotland that drinking and heavy drinking is 'the norm' and the Scottish culture of 'getting drunk' is embedded in this. However, for many people this Scottish culture reflects a very different picture and can create problems for individuals, families and communities. The effects of binge drinking is particularly high on the Scottish Executive agenda as a recognised 'problematic' way of drinking which does not only affected young people.

Introduction

In discussion with members of the JADAT sub groups, it was generally agreed that we all held information regarding alcohol consumption the trends and patterns, but this was mostly anecdotal. It therefore seemed appropriate to try and update this information with more factual data, and the idea of interviewing people in the pubs/clubs was suggested. The outline proposal and subsequent funding was provided by the JADAT and the preliminary work began in September.

Fiona Angus
Manager

Rae and I recently carried out interviews in numerous Aberdeen pubs in an attempt to ascertain the drinking culture and habits of local people. We also aimed to raise the awareness of alcohol and its effects by distributing an information card after each interview. In order to make this possible, a questionnaire (appendix A) and information card (appendix B) were devised then sent out to licensed traders in the local area asking for permission to interview their customers (appendix C).

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 14 questions which were under 3 main headings:

- 1) profile (ie.gender, employment status)
- 2) drinking pattern (frequency and cost)
- 3) alcohol awareness.

The information card was created using information that was already available within AACS. It promotes sensible drinking and gives information about alcohol and its effects so as to increase alcohol awareness in the area. To make it possible for the project to go ahead, permission had to be gained from licensed trades.

A list of all the licensed premises in Aberdeen was collated. A letter from AACS was sent out detailing our intentions along with a copy of the questionnaire and information card to various pubs. A range of pubs was chosen, some in the city centre and others from the surrounding areas of Aberdeen. This was done in order to incorporate a wide range of people, different age groups and people from all walks of life. In total 75 letters were sent out, with the fact in mind that these all contained a sensible drinking information card this was a very time consuming part of the project, therefore when we only received 11 responses - 5 of which were negative - it was very disheartening. However using established links with some licensees, 4 more pubs allowed us to carry out interviews.

During our time spent interviewing people wide ranges of responses were given, the majority of which was positive. Total completed questionnaires totalled at 167 and the total people asked were 174, this encouraged my colleague and I.

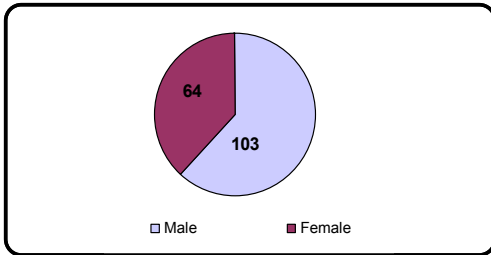
Rebecca Masson
Development Worker

Profile

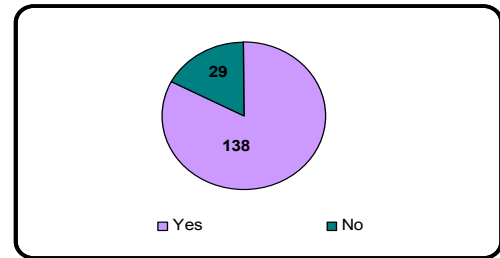
When interviewing we tried to keep a balance between male and female interviewees. The final figure reflects that there were more men than women in the pubs we were in. We found that more men were inclined to sit in a pub on their own whereas most of the women were in groups.

Although we intended to find out the drinking habits and culture in Aberdeen city there was quite a high proportion of people from Aberdeenshire and other areas as far a field as Shetland. This may or may not have affected our findings, however the majority of people did come from Aberdeen city.

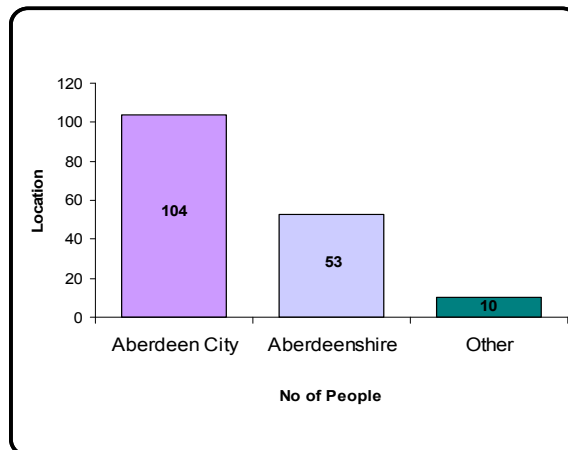
Gender



Employed



Home Location

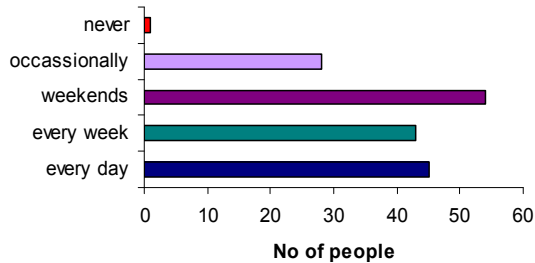


A high percentage of people interviewed were employed and on their lunch break. In response to the question "occupation" some people were returning to work having consumed alcohol and would be operating machinery later in the day.

Drinking Pattern

Considering the aim of this project was to look at the drinking culture in Aberdeen, this section played an important part in our findings.

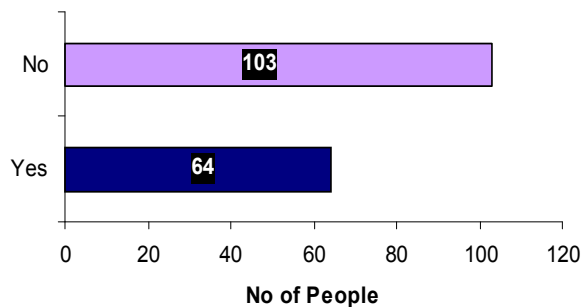
How Often Do You Drink?



Current media would lead us, understandably, to believe we are a nation of binge drinkers. That is drinking over the government recommended safe daily allowance for units of alcohol tend to be a weekend trend. Some of those who work all week think that a weekend is for having a 'blow out' because they have earned it. Is this just an excuse to drink themselves into oblivion? Our findings show that most people do only drink at weekends and surprisingly only 2 people we interviewed did not consume alcohol at all.

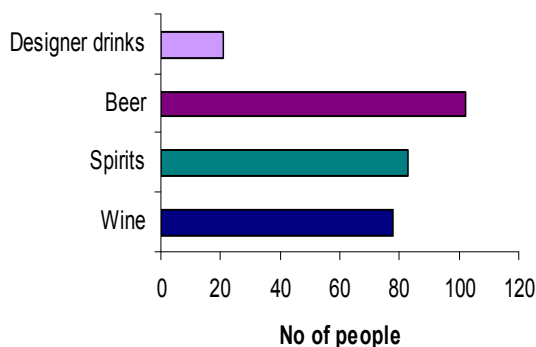
Many people drink everyday with no alcohol free days in a week. Would they still do this if information were readily available about how alcohol affects the body? Some people interviewed thought that because they may only have a couple of pints a day (4 units), that they were drinking safely. This may be true in the sense that they still know what they are doing, but because they are drinking everyday the liver has no time to recover and is placed under unnecessary strain, this in the long term may cause damage.

Do you ever mix your drinks with the free intention of getting drunk?



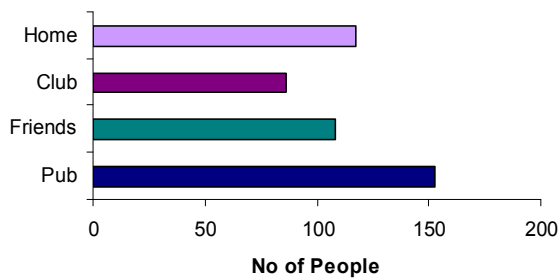
Do people know about the dangers of alcohol? In my opinion not enough people do. This is reflected in the number of people that do actually go out with the intention of getting drunk.

Choice of Drink?

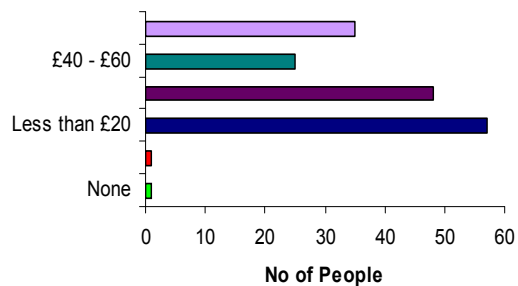


It is surprising considering the hype that surrounds so called 'designer drinks' just how few people preferred them to the old favourites such as beer. We found that bars often had certain promotions on different types of drinks some of which were 'designer drinks' others on cocktails and even some on champagne. Promotions and such offers mean that depending on where people drink they could spend less than £20 a week on alcohol and still be 'binge drinkers'. So it is hardly surprising the amount of people that spend under £20 a week on alcohol was high. These type of promotions are not limited to pubs, supermarkets now can offer alcohol at extremely low prices, in turn allowing people to stay at home and drink at a cheap rate also. Therefore the amount spent on alcohol per week wouldn't necessarily reflect the amount of alcohol consumed.

Where Do you Drink?



How Much Do You Spend Per Week?



“

I found it a very interesting experience and was bemused by some of the comments eg. are you do-gooders? Are you preachers from the A.A.?

”

I feel the way we approached the licencees and customers effects the positive response we got.

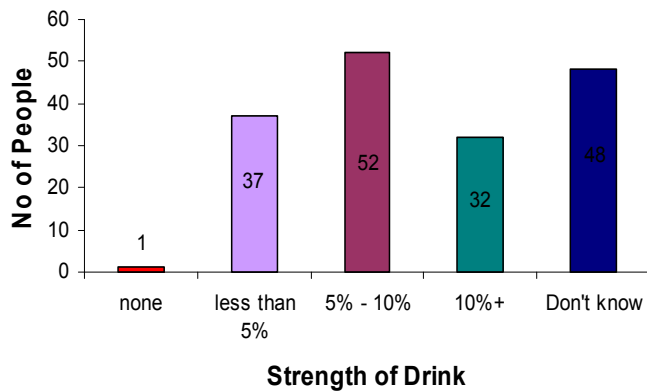
Rae Ingham
Interviewer

Alcohol Awareness

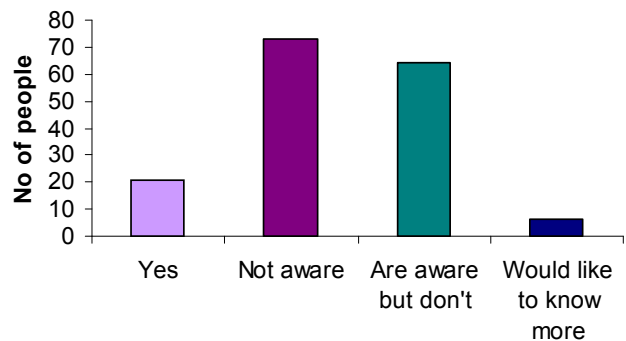
In this section we attempted to find out the amount of knowledge people have about alcohol and its effects.

The results from the first question show that although a most people prefer in between 5% and 10%, a quite high proportion of people do not actually know what strength of drink they prefer. Does this mean people don't actually know what strength of drink they are drinking or does it mean they just don't know what they prefer? I posed this question to some of those who answered they didn't know, most of the answers I received were that people didn't actually know what strength of drink they did drink. This directly reflects the lack of knowledge within the general population about units of alcohol and how unaware some are of the amount they are actually consuming.

What Strength of Drink Do You Prefer?

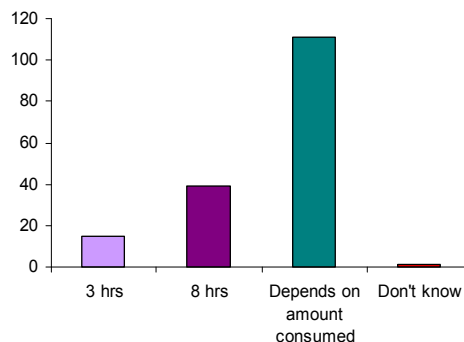


Do you Ever Count Your Units of Alcohol?



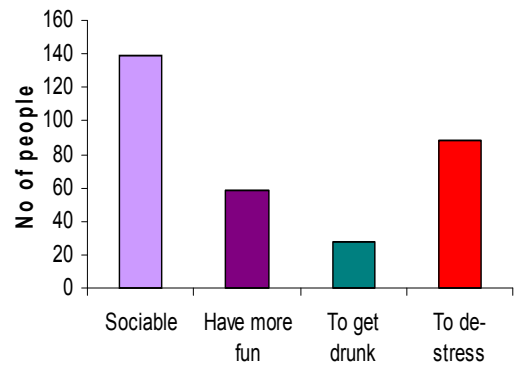
Do You Know How Long Your Body Takes To "Burn off" Units of Alcohol?

It was surprising the amount of people who actually answered yes to counting their units of alcohol when in fact these same people had no idea how long it takes your body to burn off units of alcohol.

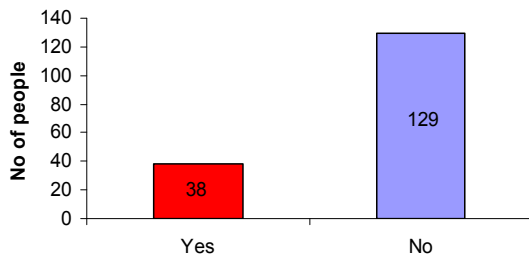


What, if any, do you think are the benefits of drinking?

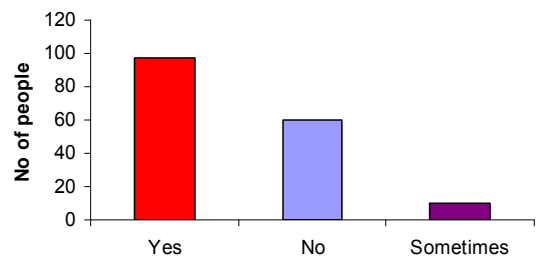
The figures we found were that most people drink alcohol for sociable reasons, however it is again shown that there are people who drink just to get drunk. This shows that the awareness of alcohol and its effects may not be to a standard that it should be for 'safe' drinking, especially when we look at exactly how many people plan how they will get home after a night out. Do people know the dangers of walking home alone or even standing in a taxi rank alone? Someone who is intoxicated and alone is a much easier target for opportunist criminals.



Do you think you have ever had your drink spiked?



Do you ever plan how you will get home?



Outcomes

- 174 completed interviews
- 103 male 64 female
- 138 in employment
- Interviewees included individuals from outwith Aberdeen City residences.
- Every day drinking featured in many people's lives.
- Weekend drinking was regarded as the most common drinking pattern.
- Beer most common choice of drink.
- Considerable expenditure of £20 plus was spent each week on alcohol.
- Overall very limited knowledge of alcohol strengths and units.

Conclusion

The aim of this pilot was to find the drinking patterns and awareness of alcohol in Aberdeen City. It can be concluded that Aberdeen may have a reputation for binge drinking, but the actual results we found showed that it is not only binge drinking that is causing a problem.

The amount of daily drinking is a cause for concern not only in terms of actual consumption, but the potential after effects and cost in monetary terms.

It could be concluded that many people are aware of their alcohol intake, but do not consider this to be problematic for them or others around them.

The amount spent on alcohol is difficult to conclude because of "offers" and "discounts" in relation to actual quantity being bought and consumed.

The promotion of responsible drinking may still be the most appropriate method of informing and educating people about alcohol and its effects.

'That Friday Feeling' Questionnaire**Profile**Gender: Male Female Employed: Yes No

Occupation: _____

Home Location:

Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire

Other (please specify) _____

Drinking Pattern

How often do you drink?

Every day Every week Weekends Occasionally

Choice of drink?

Wine Beer Spirits Designer drinks

Do you ever mix your drinks with the intention of getting drunk?

Yes No

Where do you drink?

Pub Club Friends Home

How much do you spend per week?

Less than £20 £20-£40 £40-£60 £60+

Alcohol Awareness

What strength of drink do you prefer?

Less than 5%

5% - 10%

10%+

Don't know

Do you ever count your units of alcohol?

Yes

Not aware

Are aware but don't

Would like to know more

Do you know how long your body takes to 'burn off' one unit of alcohol?

3hrs

8hrs

around 1 hr

don't know

What, if any, do you think are the benefits of drinking?

Sociable

Have more fun

To get drunk

To de-stress

Do you think you have ever had your drink spiked?

Yes

No

What, if any, were the consequences? _____






Do you ever plan how you will get home?

Yes

No

If so can you give details: _____

THIS MATERIAL IS THE PROPERTY OF AACCS, 62 DEE STREET, ABERDEEN. IT MAY NOT BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED.
FAPUBRM13/09/04

<p>1 =  =  =  1½ =  2 = </p> <p>UNIT HALF PT (Beer/Lager 3.5% ABV) WINE (125ml, 8% ABV) SPIRITS (25ml, 37.5% ABV) UNITS SPIRITS (85ml, 37.5% ABV) UNITS WINE (175ml, 12% ABV)</p>	<p>Alcohol And You. It is believed that there are no significant harmful effects to your health if alcohol is consumed in moderation. It is recommended that men should not exceed 3-4 units per day with at least 1 alcohol free day and women should not exceed 2-3 units per day with at least one alcohol free day.</p>	<p><u>SENSIBLE DRINKING</u></p> <p>Have something to eat before you start drinking. Stay in control. Avoid drinking to get drunk. Space alcoholic drinks out with soft drinks. Avoid drinking competitions. Alcohol only blots out problems it doesn't solve them. Try talking them over with friends or seek advice or help. If you have a hangover, allow your body to rest, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and stay off alcohol for 48hrs.</p>
<p>TEST YOUR MATHS! Would you like to know exactly how many units you are drinking? Follow this formula to calculate your alcohol intake</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VOLUME x % ABV</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1000</p> <p>e.g. A 175ml glass of 13 % ABV = $\frac{175 \times 13}{1000} = 2.3$ units</p>	<p>Contact: Alcohol Advisory and Counselling Service 62 Dee Street Tel.no. 01224 573887</p>	

16th September 2004

Ref No: Pubfriday/RM/fa

Dear

Re: Customer Questionnaires.

AACS, in conjunction with the Joint Alcohol and Drug Action Team in Aberdeen City, have agreed to interview members of the public about their drinking patterns and preferences.

In order to complete this work, two members of staff from AACS would like to interview customers on your premises during Friday lunch times and late afternoons.

The questionnaires are completely anonymous and will be collated into an evaluation paper for the JADAT.

The interviews will last approximately five minutes. AACS promotes sensible and responsible drinking and we would like to hand out credit card size information cards regarding strength of drink and units.

I have enclosed a sample of the questionnaire and information card for your approval. Could you please complete the enclosed slip and return to our office in Dee Street. If you have any queries please call me on 01224 573887 or email fiona.angus@aacs.co.uk.

Thank you for your assistance.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Name: Fiona Angus.

Position: Manager.