



**PlanetLove Personal Safety and Crime Prevention
in accordance with PSNI guidelines.**

Personal Safety and Crime Prevention

We hope that everyone has a safe time at Planetlove WKD. By taking some practical precautions and thinking safety, your experience at Planetlove should be a happy one.

More comprehensive Personal Safety and Crime Prevention advice can be found at <http://www.psni.police.uk/index/crime-prevention/personal.htm>

Attacks

Some of us fear being attacked so it is worth considering what you might do if it did happen. If someone threatens you, shout for help and set off your personal attack alarm – if you have one. This might be enough to frighten the attacker off.

However, you can use self-defence if you feel it is necessary.

Each situation is different and you will have to make that choice yourself. You should take the time to think about what you would do. Remember, you can defend yourself but it is illegal to carry an offensive weapon.

General Advice

You can do many things to increase your safety when you are out.

- Stay in busy, well-lit areas
- Travel in a group, if possible
- Respect other people's personal space
- Walk away from confrontational situations as soon as possible
- Go to the police or a doctor if you have been attacked

Self-Defence

If you do decide to defend yourself, be aware that your attacker may be stronger than you. It is often better to shout and run away. Call the police immediately on 999 if you feel you are in any danger - we are here to help.

- You can use reasonable force in self-defence
- You are allowed to protect yourself with any object you are carrying, as long as it is not an offensive weapon, such as a knife.
- Self-defence classes may help you feel more secure

Outdoors

If you are on your own there are some simple things you can do to make sure you stay safe. For example:

- Stay in bright, well-lit and busy areas.
- Look and act confident.
- Get a personal attack alarm. They are available from DIY stores or ask your local Crime Prevention Officer.

Bag Safety and Valuables

We all care about our personal property but, remember, your personal safety is always more important. If you feel in danger, then let your valuables go.

- Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards.
- If possible carry your things in a small bag across your body, under your outer coat.
- Spread your valuables around. For example, carry your house keys in your pocket, your phone in your bag and your money in your jacket.
- Try not to advertise your valuables, mobile phone, laptop, MP3 player, jewellery, watches

Rape and Sexual Assault

Rape and sexual assault are devastating experiences for any person. If this happens to you it is important to remember that it is not your fault.

Rape and sexual assault can happen whether you are a man or a woman and we have specific officers who are there to help and support you. There are also voluntary agencies that are not linked to us, but that offer further support and advice.

It is wise, however, to take precautions when you are out. Research shows that being drunk can make you more vulnerable to sexual assault. Alcohol affects your actions and you can be taken advantage of if you are drunk.

Drugs can also be used to make people easier to attack. They can be slipped into your drink without you noticing and you need to take care when you are out.

- Always keep your drink with you.
- Drink out of a bottle.
- Make sure that you take your drink straight from the bar staff.

Help Us to Help You

- Take the name or address of any witness.
- Try to remember what the attacker looked like.
- Note the make, colour, model and registration number of any car involved.

Even though your immediate reaction will be to wash, try not to do this if you can possibly help it. Cleaning destroys vital medical and forensic evidence.

If your case does come to court don't worry because the law will protect your identity. Newspapers cannot publish anything that might identify you.

In an emergency always dial 999. If you have other enquiries or want to talk to an experienced officer, dial 0845 600 8000.

The PSNI's [Be SMART](http://www.psni.police.uk/index/updates/updates_campaigns/updates_be_smart.htm) campaign gives more information about how to stay safe when you are out and about.

http://www.psni.police.uk/index/updates/updates_campaigns/updates_be_smart.htm

Health Effects of Alcohol

The immune system

Regular heavy alcohol consumption depresses the immune system, leading to a higher risk of infectious diseases, including respiratory infections, pneumonia, tuberculosis and some forms of cancer.¹

Reproduction

Studies have found adverse effects of alcohol on the endocrine system and reproductive function. In men, alcohol can suppress testosterone levels. Chronic alcohol use in women of child-bearing age is associated with menstrual cycle disturbances. Both acute and chronic alcohol use can have disruptive effects on cognitive and motor-functioning, and the nervous system.¹

Alcohol and pregnancy

Alcohol consumption during pregnancy can result in birth defects in the developing embryo or foetus.

Osteoporosis

Long-term alcohol consumption can interfere with bone growth and replacement of bone tissue, resulting in decreased bone density and increased risk of fracture. Some evidence suggests that moderate drinking may decrease the risk of fracture in postmenopausal women.²

Trauma

Alcohol plays a significant role in trauma, such as road traffic accidents, and other accidents, such as fires and falls. It is also linked to suicides, fights and murders.

It is difficult to obtain precise estimates of alcohol's role in traumatic events because of definitional and methodological differences across alcohol and trauma studies.

The urinary tract and sleep problems

It is not uncommon for drinkers to suffer from a weakened bladder/lack of bladder control.

Alcohol is a diuretic as it causes the kidneys to produce more urine. It is best not to take a diuretic at bedtime, because you will need to pass urine in the night and, if your bladder control is poor, this could cause bed-wetting.

Drinking alcohol can dull the nerves in the bladder and keep them from signalling the brain when the bladder is full. Without this message, the bladder overflows. Alcohol can sometimes cause the bladder to become too active. This is called 'urge incontinence'. Go to www.niddk.nih.gov for more information on this from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

Some people drink alcohol as a nightcap to help them sleep, but it can have the opposite effect, as alcohol interferes with sleep patterns.

Poor quality of sleep can affect a person throughout the day. Alcohol is the biggest culprit in adults where there is no other physiological problem. It badly affects the normal sleep pattern, particularly rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, during which most dreaming takes place. Your sleep is closer to unconsciousness than true sleep, so there is less control over body functions. It doesn't take very much to upset this rhythm and if you take alcohol late at night on a regular basis, bed wetting can occur.

Depression and anxiety

Alcohol is a depressant – it depresses the central nervous system. One of the effects of drinking alcohol is that depending on the social setting and the mood of the individual, the person can feel more depressed from drinking.

Alcohol can be a problem for many people with depression, often without them realising it. This is for several reasons:

- depression can lead to people drinking more alcohol, in an attempt to improve mood;
- alcohol may induce depression;
- alcohol can interfere with the action of antidepressants, and increase their side-effects;

- suicidal acts such as overdoses are often related to drinking alcohol.

Research from Australia into the link between alcohol and depression showed that in the male sample, both non-drinkers and occasional drinkers, and those using alcohol at a hazardous or harmful level, had significantly higher ratings for depression and anxiety than the light drinkers. Conversely, they showed significantly lower levels of 'positive effect'. Among the female sample, only hazardous and harmful consumption were associated with higher ratings for depression and lower levels of positive effect.

Drug-related harm

Individual harm

Harm to the individual can take the form of ill health, social, personal or legal harm.

Ill health

Besides the actual nature and type of drug, the harm or risk to health can depend on:

- exactly how much is taken;
- the strength of the dose;
- how often it is taken;
- possible impurities in the drugs;
- possible mixing of drugs together;
- the person taking the drug.

Each individual will be affected in different ways by the same drug and the same amount of the drug. This is due to a number of factors, including:

- make-up of individual (eg physiology; personality traits; physical and psychological health problems; weight; tolerance to drug; gender; family history; novice or regular user; method of use);
- method of taking the drug (eg injecting; smoking; eating; sniffing; swallowing);
- where the drug is taken (eg alone; at a party; at a club; outdoors; in the company of others).

The risks associated with individual drugs are detailed In Information on drugs. The types of health-related harm that can be attributed to drug use include:

- accidental overdosing - physical harm or death;
- long-term excessive use - physical and psychological harm;
- idiosyncratic reaction - physical and psychological harm;
- novice use - physical and psychological harm.

The nature of the physical harm can range from increased blood pressure to collapse or death. Psychological harm can also range from feelings of anxiety through to acute psychotic behaviour and long-term mental illness.

Although a high proportion of those who take drugs do not come to any great harm, there is no guarantee. All drugs carry the risk of dependence.

Social and personal harm

Drug users can be viewed negatively and generally stigmatised by society. This in turn can lead to feelings of low self-esteem and difficulties with various relationships. For example:

- relationships with friends, family and employers may be harmed;

- employment prospects can be damaged by having a criminal record or by poor or non-attendance at work or training scheme;
- academic achievement and educational prospects may be harmed through poor performance or by poor or non-attendance;
- exclusion from school or college could affect educational prospects;
- reputation may be hard to live down, leading to a person having to move.

Legal harm

The laws relating to illegal drug use are dealt with below. Engaging in an illegal activity such as possessing or dealing in controlled drugs, can leave a person with a criminal record, imprisonment or fines and may cause difficulty in obtaining work, visas or a passport.

Summary of drug-related offences

	Supplying	Buying or possessing	Being intoxicated	Those who are responsible for premises who know but take no action to prevent		Knowing a person is in possession or dealing and not telling*
				Use	Supply	
Solvents	Illegal if suspected to be sniffed by person under 18.	No offence	No offence although sniffing in a public place is likely to be considered a breach of the peace. Illegal to drive while unfit to do so due to drugs.	No offence	No offence	No offence
Benzodiazepines, Tranquillisers	Illegal	No offence	No offence. Illegal to drive while unfit to do so due to drugs.	No offence	Illegal	No offence if in possession. Illegal if person is dealing
Magic mushrooms	No offence unless prepared (eg cooked).	No offence unless prepared.	No offence. Illegal to drive while unfit to do so due to drugs.	No offence	No offence unless prepared.	No offence unless prepared.
Heroin, cocaine, crack, LSD, amphetamines, Ecstasy	Illegal	Illegal	No offence. Illegal to drive while unfit to do so due to drugs.	No offence	Illegal	Illegal
Cannabis	Illegal	Illegal	No offence. Illegal to drive while unfit to do so due to drugs.	Illegal	Illegal	Illegal

Maximum penalties

The 1971 Act (amended through the Criminal Justice 2003 Act, which came into effect in 2004) divides drugs into three classes depending on the degree of harm deemed attributable to each drug. In turn the maximum penalties for being convicted of an offence under the Act are fixed according to the class of drug.

The drugs that are deemed most harmful are in class A and those deemed least harmful are in class C. Within each class, penalties are highest for trafficking offences and lower for possession.

Maximum penalties

Offence	Type of trial	Class of Drugs		
		A	B ⁱ	C
Possession	Summary ⁱⁱ	6 months and/or up to £5,000 fine	3 months and/or up to £500 fine	3 months and/or up to £200 fine
Possession	Indictmentⁱⁱⁱ	7 years and/or unlimited fine	5 years and/or unlimited fine	2 years and/or unlimited fine
Trafficking ^{iv}	Summary ⁱⁱ	6 months and/or up to £5,000 fine	6 months and/or up to £5,000 fine	3 months and/or up to £500 fine
Trafficking	Indictmentⁱⁱⁱ	Life and/or unlimited fine	14 years and/or unlimited fine	14 years and/or unlimited fine

- i Any class B drug in injectable form is treated as a class A drug.
- ii Tried before a Magistrates' court.
- iii Tried before a Crown court.
- iv Includes supply, offer to supply, production, import and export. The same penalties apply to allowing premises to be used for supply. Unauthorised import or export is prohibited by the Misuse of Drugs Act but is an offence under the Customs and Excise Management Act, so fines on summary conviction can reach three times the value of the goods seized.

DRINK SPIKING THE COWARDS WAY

**Drink Spiking is cowardly and wrecks lives!
It can cause serious illness and even death.**

STAY SAFE, WATCH YOUR DRINK!

