

## Drunk and disorderly in York city to face behaviour course

The Alcohol Referral Project will be run for a trial period of 12 to 18 months



By [Anwen Baker](#), News Editor (2013/14)  
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Credit: Bayhaus

City of York Council, in consultation with the University of York, are implementing a new system of dealing with those arrested for being drunk and disorderly.

Instead of being charged, the offender will be able to attend a one day course, where they will be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and self-image. The Alcohol Referral Project, recommended by a report to City of York Council's Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee, will be run by the charity Lifeline for a pilot period of 12 to 18 months. The University is to provide evaluation on the project.

Under the program, those arrested will be bailed for 14 days and then given the option to attend the course. Anyone who is alcohol dependent, has mental health issues or is a prolific offender will be excluded.

The report states: "Previous studies have shown that the impact of the course on participants lasts for about a year but they will receive text message alerts (written by themselves on the course) after this time to keep up motivation."

However, some are sceptical of the scheme. A York student who has previously been charged for being drunk and disorderly in public told Nouse: "Everyone knows that it is a stupid idea. It's a drunken mistake, not something that you soberly want or would do. How can a course help, especially given the amount of stuff we do at school in PSHE."

According to North Yorkshire police, there were over 1,500 arrests for the charge of "being drunk and disorderly in a public place" in York city centre from 2006-2012.

The report also states that the University may look to hold alcohol awareness campaigns of their own amid concerns about the number of drunk freshers who attended York Hospital's A&E department this year.

This comes after the news that the number of off-licences in York is set to be reduced following efforts by Safer York Partnership to cut down "anti-social behaviour linked to alcohol".



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