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## Police Drug Diversion Evaluation (EAF)

# The Thames Valley Police Drug Diversion Scheme

# TVP: Descriptive Manual

March 2023









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# CONTACT DETAILS


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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AUDIT | Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test |
| PDD | Police-led drug diversion |
| TIDieR+ | **T**emplate for **I**ntervention **D**escription and **R**eplication + (Economic Costs) |
| NVQ | National Vocation Qualification |
| OOCD | Out of Court Disposal |
| OIC | Officer in charge |
| CJSM | Criminal Justice Secure Mail |

# INTRODUCTION

**What is the Police led Drug Diversion (PDD) scheme?**

The College of Police and the University of Kent are leading an evaluation of police-led drug diversion schemes that are already operating in three areas: Durham, **Thames Valley** and West Midlands. People on the schemes are assessed, then referred to education, treatment, or support (as needed) with an 'out of court disposal,' like a warning, which does not create a criminal record.

PDD project partners include universities, police forces, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and the lived experience charity, User Voice.

The PDD project started in mid-2022 and will finish in March 2025. It is funded by the Cabinet Office's Evaluation Accelerator Fund. Findings will be published in a range of reports, practical guidance documents and academic articles.

**PDD Scheme name:** Thames Valley Police (TVP) Drug Diversion Scheme

**Delivery dates:** This manual describes the Thames Valley PDD scheme from 01/10/2021 – to date (March 2023).

**Why:** To evaluate of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of police-led diversion schemes for drug-involved suspects. This national evaluation will inform policymakers, police forces,

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and their partners of how to maximise the benefits and reduce the costs of policing low-level drug-related offenders.

**Manual: Method of production**

This manual has been produced in collaboration with Thames Valley Police, the Druglink team, local authority stakeholders, User Voice and academic partners following the TVP PDD regional workshop. The aim of the collaboration process was to create a detailed description of the TVP scheme to enable evaluation, to produce an operational manual, to enable replication of police drug diversion schemes in other areas and to produce a TIDieR framework to judge the fidelity of implementation (1).

## TVP: CONTEXT

The Thames Valley area covers eight local authorities and is situated in the southeast of England. Thames Valley police cover the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. TVP is the largest non-metropolitan police force in England and Wales and covers 2,218 square miles and a population of 2.42 million people (2).

The TVP drug diversion scheme is voluntary diversion for people found in possession of small amounts of illegal drugs or where their offence is linked to substance misuse or addiction. It is a '**diversion with incentivised referral to services scheme'** for people coming into contact with the criminal justice system, that requires an interview using the officer's body worn video on the street. For successful participation, the summons will be deferred resulting in a positive outcome and no criminal conviction.

The TVP scheme aims to help break the cycle of drugs and offending and to help people change their lives and behaviour. The scheme is an early intervention and is based on the current evidence base that recognises that formal processing in the CJS leads can lead to an increase in offending (3).

Delivery providers are the TVP Violence Reduction Unit, commissioned service, **Druglink**. Diversion Scheme — Druglink. They provide services for adults and young people facing difficulties with alcohol and other drugs, through education, training, treatment services and housing solutions (3.4). Supporting people predominantly across Hertfordshire, but also people outside of the county.

## THE TARGETED PARTICIPANTS

Police officers initially decide if the offence is suitable for either a community resolution or a conditional caution. For Out of Court Disposals, officers follow a disposal decision model. Officers will make sure the offence meets the criteria evidentially and that the offence is in

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the public interest, before agreeing with the suspect that an Out of Court Disposal diversion is suitable and achievable. This is then referred to the admin team who will make the referral to Druglink.

For a community resolution, the individual will be offered the e-Learning course, for a conditional caution, the individual would be requested to attend a virtual or face to face facilitated diversion course.

**Eligibility Criteria:** for referral onto the scheme?

- The offender must be over 18 years old.
- All classes of drugs are eligible.
- The drug offence is suitable for an adult **community resolution (CR)** or **conditional caution (CC).**
- Offender must agree to engage with the intervention.
- **Additionally**: Druglink deliver interventions national, therefore if someone is referred by TVP but lives outside of the area, Druglink can still work with them in-person and remotely.

**Responsibility:** Alongside the eligibility criteria, the offender must also agree that they are responsible for the drug offence.

**Absolute Exclusion Criteria**:

- Possession with intent to supply.
- Discretion of the police

**Unsuitability Criteria:** Decided at the discretion of the police.

## REFERRAL PATHWAYS

The investigating officer identifies and deals with the offence. The suspect will be interviewed by the officer using a body worn video on the street. The crime is recorded on the police management system, Niche.

The police offer decides on the disposal pathway, either a CR or CC. A CR can be given on the street with a compliance date. For simple possession, the referral goes straight to the case disposals team, after the officer's sergeant has reviewed in the NICHE log. The case disposals team then conduct a triage process, to ensure all contact details and relevant information is gathered in order for a successful referral to Druglink. Referrals are then sent

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to Druglink to action the chosen diversion option. The compliance date can sometimes be extended with police authorisation for an extension.

If the pathway referral is a CC, it requires a review from the officer in charge to determine eligibility and appropriateness. Officer discretion is central to the referral process based on their knowledge of the local population. The Case Disposals team assesses the CC and refers to Druglink.

Before the community resolution pathway is issued, the NICHE occurrence/offence is filed, the CR is then issued. It can be recorded as an **Outcome 8** by the Assistant Crime Registrar before the terms of the CR are met. Compliance of the diversion (CR) clears the offence.

## COMPONENTS OF THE PDD SCHEME

**Process:** Once the disposal (CC or CR) has been decided, Druglink contact the individual to inform them they have been registered on one of the courses. The first point of contact is by letter or email, SMS text messages are sent on scheduled days (twice a week) if no contact/payment has been made. The communications invite individuals to contact Druglink to arrange payment for e-Learning/course booking. SMS messages are also sent to remind them to attend the course. In cases where individuals do not comply this is referred to the police for them to decide next steps.

**There are two options for drug diversion, a general drug diversion option or a cannabis only diversion course, both offer face to face and virtual group sessions.**

**Modes of delivery:** Face to face or virtual group sessions (CC) and e-Learning session (CR) (i.e., that they can go in person or do it online).

**Duration of session/dose:** Dependent on disposal: to be completed withing the 16-week contract agreement.

- One 3-hour Face to face and virtual group sessions (CC), Face to face max 20 attendees per session and Virtual 15 max attendees per session.
- One 1-hour (approx.) e-Learning session - individual learning (CR).

**Location:** Druglink deliver in several different venues and locations. Face to face sessions are delivered across England in community spaces, fire stations and community centres. They do not facilitate sessions in police facilities. All venues are risk assessed prior to use.

Virtual group sessions are provided online.

Group sessions are delivered during the day and evenings, both face to face and virtual.

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**e-Learning session**: Online, independent self-learning at a time to suit the individual. Pass mark is 88%. Diversion eLearning — Druglink

**Who delivers?**

- **e-Learning course:** 4 FTE salaried staff, educated to GCSE A-C or equivalent qualification/ experience are responsible for enrolling divertees and overseeing completion of the course.

- **Face to face/virtual facilitated group session:** 8 self employed trainers with experience of working within the alcohol and drug sector or lived experience, deliver approximately 30 x 3-hour group sessions per month, with a mixture of virtual and face to face sessions.

**Voluntary/unpaid staff:** The TVP drug diversion scheme has no voluntary or unpaid staff delivery for any element of the scheme.

**Partners:** During sessions individuals are made aware of the aftercare service, information, and additional support available form agencies within the local area. Druglink also provide, addiction and detox treatment, reintegration, supported housing and community counselling which can be accessed by clients in the Hertfordshire area.

**Other referrals:** Druglink deliver drug diversion to TVP and other police forces *(table 1)*. Referrals from other police forces include Conditional Caution referrals (facilitated course, either face to face or virtual) and Community Resolution referrals (e-Learning course).

*Table1. Druglink Drug diversion by police force.*

| Police Force | Conditional Cautions | Community Resolutions |
|---|---|---|
| Avon & Somerset | ✓ | ✓ |
| British Transport Police | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cheshire | ✓ | ✓ |
| Devon & Cornwall | ✓ | ✓ |
| Dorset | ✓ | ✓ |
| Hampshire (Conditional Caution Substance Missue Intervention) | ✓ | ✗ |
| Hertfordshire | ✓ | ✓ |
| Met (2 boroughs –Southward and Lambeth) | ✓ | ✗ |
| Merseyside | ✓ | ✓ |
| Norfolk | ✓ | ✓ |
| Northamptonshire | ✓ | ✓ |
| Staffordshire | ✓ | ✓ |
| Surrey | ✓ | ✓ |
| Suffolk | ✓ | ✓ |
| Sussex | ✓ | ✓ |

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# CONTENT OF THE PDD SCHEME

**Aims and Objectives:** The TVP drug diversion scheme aims to break the cycle of drugs and offending and to help people change their lives and behaviour**.** Druglink objectives are to drive education to prevent reoffending.

**Content:** At the end of the course (face to face or virtual or e-Learning) divertees will,

- Understand more about drugs/ alcohol and the effects of usage.
- Know the physical and psychological harms.
- Be aware of the stages of addiction.
- Understand the link between alcohol/ drugs and violence.
- Be aware of the laws and implications of a criminal record.
- Understand the costs/ impact of substance misuse to society.

**Drug diversion face to face session:** Facilitated face to face session with group work, individual and group activities, and discussions. Focus is drug education and behaviour change.

- Discuss all categories of drugs and the effects these have on an individual, including prescription drugs and New Psychoactive Substances i.e., Nitrous Oxide & Spice)
- Wider impacts of drug use.
- Connections with County Lines.
- Advice on how to reduce use.
- Risk reduction and how to stay safe if using illicit substances.

**Drug diversion virtual group session:** Online session (zoom) Facilitated session with group work, individual and group activities and discussions. Focus is drug education and behaviour change. **Content as face-to-face session above.**

**Cannabis diversion face to face session:** Facilitated face to face session with group work, individual and group activities and discussions. Focus is drug education and behaviour change.

- Looks specifically at cannabis and how it can affect people physically and mentally.
- Risks of mixing drugs (poly use).
- Small section on spice and the effects on an individual.
- Wider impacts of drug use.
- Connections cannabis has with County Lines.
- Advice on how to reduce use.
- Risk reduction and how to stay safe if using illicit substances.

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**Cannabis diversion virtual group session:** Online session (zoom) Facilitated session with group work, individual and group activities and discussions. Focus is drug education and behaviour change. **Content as virtual session above.**

**e-Learning course (1 hour session):** Online self-learning, learning can be accessed at any location, any time of any day. **Focus is drug education.**

- Introduction to the topic - Alcohol, Drugs, Cannabis. Delivered in three separate courses and all cover poly-substance use.
- Information, advice and guidance on future use.
- Interactive approach

**Druglink materials**:

**Face to face (3-hour course):** individuals are asked to complete a registration form and a Drug Screening Questionnaire (soon to be replaced with the drugs metre app) *(appendix 1).* This is referred to throughout the course.

At the end of the session individuals are asked to complete a feedback form via an online link *(appendix 2).*

Business cards with relevant aftercare service details are provided and drug and alcohol information leaflets are available.

**Virtual group course (3-hour session):** Druglink trainers register individuals and complete the screening questionnaire, feedback is provided via email.

Details of the aftercare service are visible on the screen and are kept on at the end of the session for clients if required. Weblink (password required) gives details of all the local support services in that area.

**e-Learning**: no additional materials outside the online session.

**Modifications:** Under the previous TVP Project: 1st Nov 2021 to 1st April 2022 divertees received a telephone triage assessment: Next steps were discussed. Outcomes included, additional support, attendance on face to face or virtual course- no payment was required during this time. Under Druglink: April 2022- present. Online: Group sessions face to face and group session. Payment now required.

During the Covid pandemic the face-to-face courses were updated and redesigned to be delivered virtually. Virtual group sessions have remained an option for those who have accessibility or travel difficulties, in person face to face courses have since been reinstated. **Update:** Druglink will be updating their courses in April 2023.

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If someone does not have the appropriate technology to complete the e-Learning session, trainers will explore every option to support access, i.e. Library computer, friends and family etc. If no viable option is found, Druglink will offer the face-to-face session (with police approval) as an alternative option.

Virtual face to face is an option for those who commit a drug offence (and are eligible) in the TVP area but live elsewhere (dependent on where they live in the country).

## COMPLIANCE

**What counts as compliance?** The offender has to agree to engage with the TVP drug diversion scheme by signing a legally binding 16-week contract, agreeing to complete the requirements for drug diversion within 16 weeks of offence/start date. All Out of Court Disposals are given a default of 16 weeks unless otherwise specified, it may be shorter or longer as determined by the OOCD team.

**What happens for non-compliance?** To encourage engagement with the diversion, police will make contact either by phone or face to face, to discus engaging with Druglink, make payment or attend the diversion they have been referred to. A maximum of three attempts are made based on individual circumstances. If the offender **does not comply** the case is referred back to the case referrals team leader and OIC for a decision on outcome.

**What happens for repeat offenders?** If the offender has previously complied with the TVP drug diversion scheme under a **conditional caution** outcome, and meets the eligibility criteria, they can be offered the diversion again (at police discretion).

If they have previously received and complied with a **community resolution** outcome, and meets the eligibility criteria, they may be given another/multiple CR's or escalated to the conditional caution pathway and be offered diversion (at police discretion).

## PAYMENT

The person who is diverted incurs a cost for the diversion, both the community resolution and conditional caution. This has ben in place since April 2022, below are the costs as of March 2023.

- **Community Caution:** £75 for face to face/virtual group session (plus additional £10 administration fee).
- **Community Resolution:** £25 e-learning (no admin fee).
- **Payment Plan:** Option to pay in two £35 instalments (based on individual circumstances). Community resolution only. **No payment plan for the E-Learning option (CR).**
- Hardship fund is available.

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## MONITORING

The offence is recorded on the police crime recording system, NICHE. Once the drug involved suspect is referred to the TVP diversion scheme, they are monitored via the Case Disposals team, via NICHE and Outlook (tasking) to record all Out of Court Disposals.

Druglink send a weekly attendance report to the team leader at the case disposals team and liaise with the Case Deposal team regularly. Druglink inform police of all individuals who have completed their interventions via Criminal Justice Secure Mail (CJSM).

## INTENDED BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING POLICE FORCES

It is intended that the benefits from the TVP diversion scheme affect different stakeholders and include:

**Police:** Reduced reoffending, reduced cost, improved community relations.

**Treatment Practitioners:** Early identification of people who may need drug treatment, or who may be at risk of developing problems with drugs.

**People who use drugs:** Increasing their access to useful educative and treatment services, reducing the harms done to them by unnecessary criminalisation, and so improving their health and wellbeing and reducing their offending.

**Families of people who use drugs and local communities:** Reducing the burden of poor health and offending.

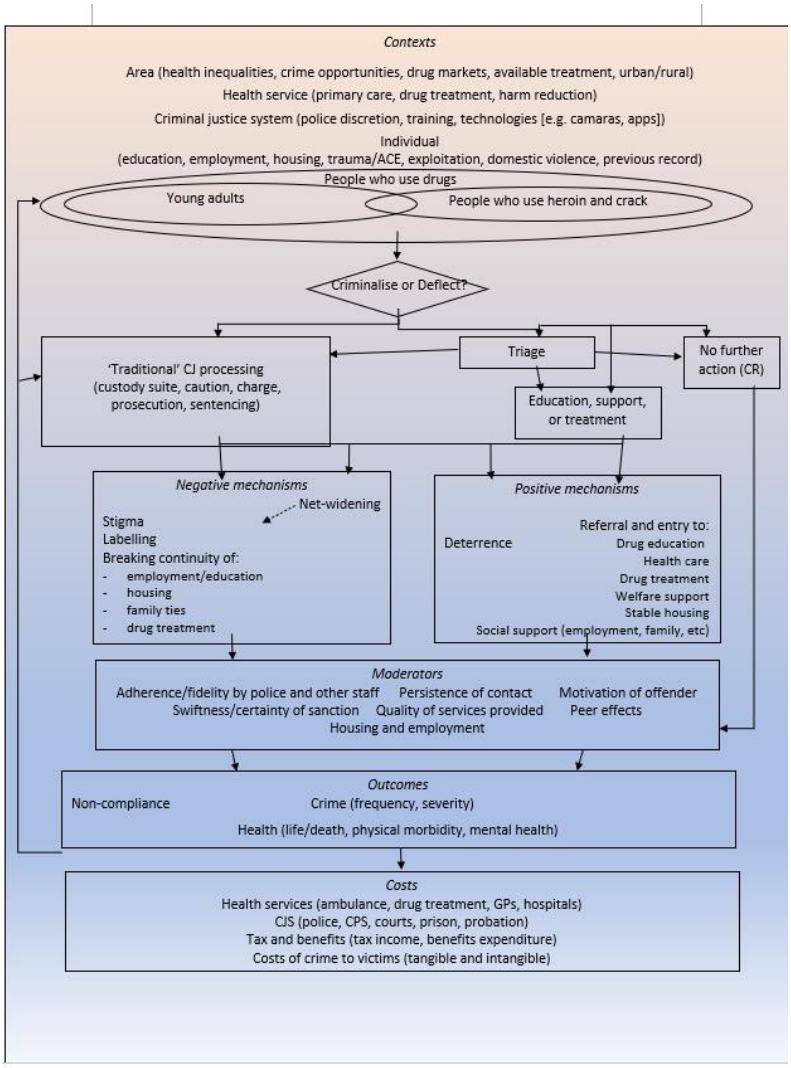
## THEORY OF CHANGE

The TVP drug diversion scheme aims to educate and support individuals to make informed choices about drug use and is an early intervention for those at risk of drug related harm. It is based on the current evidence base that recognises that formal processing in the CJS leads can lead to an increase in offending.

*Theory of Change, March 2023 (appendix 3)*

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# OTHER DIVERSION PATHWAYS: ALTERNATIVES TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ROUTE

This section provides an overview of two other relevant drug diversion pathways that are offered by the police in the TVP area.

**1. Diversion name:** Alcohol Diversion Scheme

**Diversion Provider:** Druglink

**Eligibility Criteria:**

- Individuals who have committed an offence whilst under the influence of alcohol.
- Local management systems checked to verify eligibility.

Similar approach to TVP drug diversion scheme, face to face or virtual facilitated group sessions. **Aim:** Alcohol education and behaviour change.

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**Pathway:** Conditional Caution (outcome determined by Assistant Crime Registrar for CR/OOCD).

**Contact details:** **diversion@druglink.ltd.uk**

**2. Diversion name:** Alcohol eLearning

**Diversion Provider:** Druglink

**Eligibility criteria:**

- Individuals who have committed an offence whilst under the influence of alcohol.
- Local management systems checked to verify eligibility (1st offence only).

Similar approach to TVP drug diversion scheme, e-Learning course. **Aim:** Alcohol education (pass mark is 88%).

**Pathway:** Community Resolution (outcome determined by Assistant Crime Registrar for CR/OOCD).

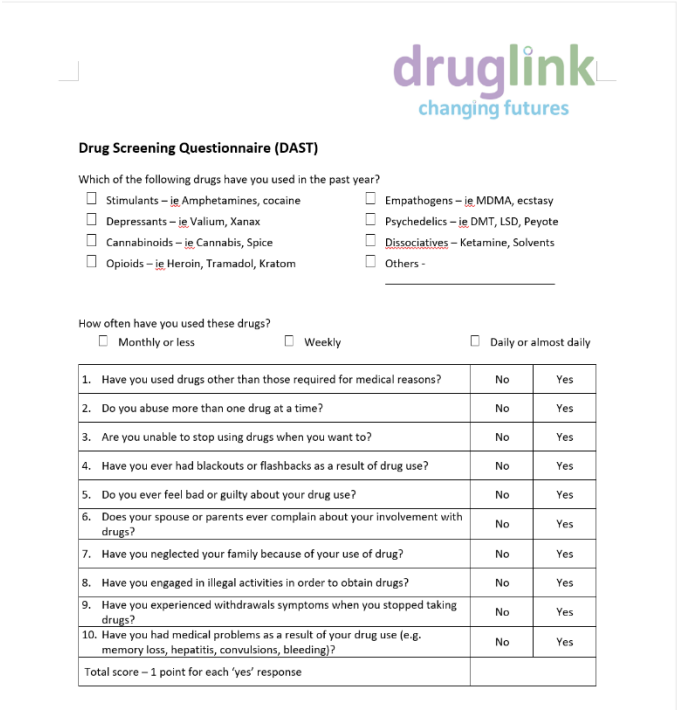
**Contact details:** **diversion@druglink.ltd.uk**

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# APPENDIX: PDD DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1.



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**Drug Screening Questionnaire (DAST)**

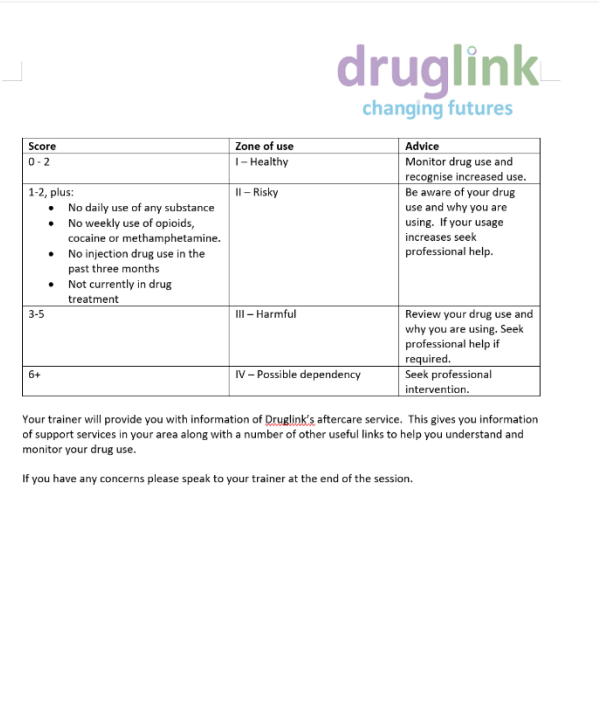
Which of the following drugs have you used in the past year?

- ☐ Stimulants – ie Amphetamines, cocaine
- ☐ Depressants – ie Valium, Xanax
- ☐ Cannabinoids – ie Cannabis, Spice
- ☐ Opioids – ie Heroin, Tramadol, Kratom
- ☐ Empathogens – ie MDMA, ecstasy
- ☐ Psychedelics – ie DMT, LSD, Peyote
- ☐ Dissociatives – Ketamine, Solvents
- ☐ Others - _____

How often have you used these drugs?

☐ Monthly or less ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily or almost daily

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Have you used drugs other than those required for medical reasons? | No | Yes |
| 2. Do you abuse more than one drug at a time? | No | Yes |
| 3. Are you unable to stop using drugs when you want to? | No | Yes |
| 4. Have you ever had blackouts or flashbacks as a result of drug use? | No | Yes |
| 5. Do you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use? | No | Yes |
| 6. Does your spouse or parents ever complain about your involvement with drugs? | No | Yes |
| 7. Have you neglected your family because of your use of drug? | No | Yes |
| 8. Have you engaged in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs? | No | Yes |
| 9. Have you experienced withdrawals symptoms when you stopped taking drugs? | No | Yes |
| 10. Have you had medical problems as a result of your drug use (e.g. memory loss, hepatitis, convulsions, bleeding)? | No | Yes |
| Total score – 1 point for each 'yes' response | | |



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| Score | Zone of use | Advice |
|---|---|---|
| 0 - 2 | I – Healthy | Monitor drug use and recognise increased use. |
| 1-2, plus:<br>• No daily use of any substance<br>• No weekly use of opioids, cocaine or methamphetamine.<br>• No injection drug use in the past three months<br>• Not currently in drug treatment | II – Risky | Be aware of your drug use and why you are using. If your usage increases seek professional help. |
| 3-5 | III – Harmful | Review your drug use and why you are using. Seek professional help if required. |
| 6+ | IV – Possible dependency | Seek professional intervention. |

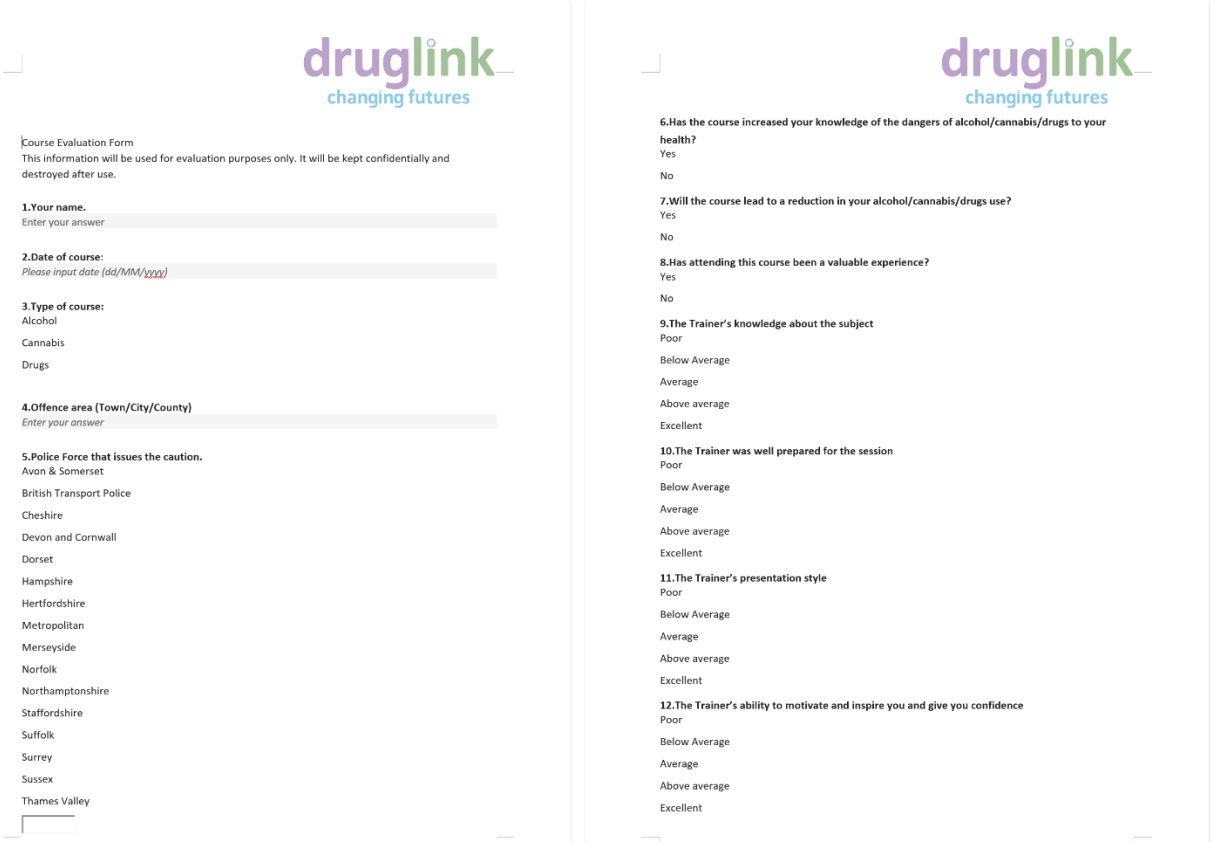
Your trainer will provide you with information of Druglink's aftercare service. This gives you information of support services in your area along with a number of other useful links to help you understand and monitor your drug use.

If you have any concerns please speak to your trainer at the end of the session.

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Appendix 2.



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Course Evaluation Form
This information will be used for evaluation purposes only. It will be kept confidentially and destroyed after use.

**1.Your name.**
Enter your answer

**2.Date of course:**
*Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)*

**3.Type of course:**
Alcohol
Cannabis
Drugs

**4.Offence area (Town/City/County)**
*Enter your answer*

**5.Police Force that issues the caution.**
Avon & Somerset
British Transport Police
Cheshire
Devon and Cornwall
Dorset
Hampshire
Hertfordshire
Metropolitan
Merseyside
Norfolk
Northamptonshire
Staffordshire
Suffolk
Surrey
Sussex
Thames Valley

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**6.Has the course increased your knowledge of the dangers of alcohol/cannabis/drugs to your health?**
Yes
No

**7.Will the course lead to a reduction in your alcohol/cannabis/drugs use?**
Yes
No

**8.Has attending this course been a valuable experience?**
Yes
No

**9.The Trainer's knowledge about the subject**
Poor
Below Average
Average
Above average
Excellent

**10.The Trainer was well prepared for the session**
Poor
Below Average
Average
Above average
Excellent

**11.The Trainer's presentation style**
Poor
Below Average
Average
Above average
Excellent

**12.The Trainer's ability to motivate and inspire you and give you confidence**
Poor
Below Average
Average
Above average
Excellent

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**13.The Trainer's ability to pass on knowledge to you**
Poor

Below Average

Average

Above average

Excellent

**14.The Trainer's overall effectiveness:**
Poor

Below Average

Average

Above average

Excellent

**15.Would you recommend this trainer?**
Yes

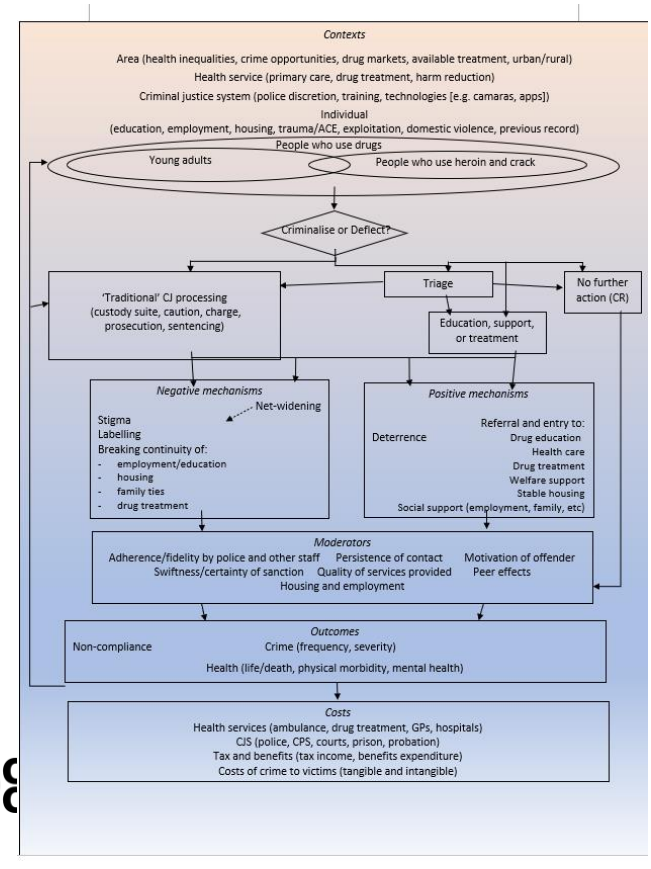
No

**16.Would you like Druglink to contact you to discuss any further support you may require?**
Yes

No

**17.Do you have any other comments?**
*Enter your answer*

Appendix 3.



# REFERENCES


1. Template for Intervention Description and Replication (TIDieR) | Cochrane Training
2. Thames Valley Police - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Home | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Home (justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)
3. New drug diversion programme in place across Thames Valley to help break the cycle of substance misuse and crime - Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (tvvru.co.uk)
4. Diversion eLearning — Druglink.
5. Diversion eLearning — Druglink



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