

Merseyside DIP Clients: A comparison of client characteristics for under and over 25 year olds

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1.0 Executive Summary

The aim of this report was to examine the characteristics of clients assessed by the Merseyside DIP teams in 2006/07, focussing on their age. The data gathered were specifically broken down into two groups, those under the age of 25 and those that were 25 and older. Data regarding gender, offending behaviour, drug use, injecting and sharing patterns, levels of alcohol use and accommodation status were examined for both age categories and the main findings were as follows:

- Under 25 year olds made up a sizeable proportion of clients assessed in all areas with the exception of St Helens.
- The introduction of Test on Arrest has seen a sizeable increase in the proportion of young males entering the DIP process.
- The offending behaviour of clients varied depending on age. Those aged 25 and older were far more likely to be arrested for shoplifting, whereas burglary, car theft and Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) offences were more common among under 25 year olds.
- Cocaine was the main drug used by those under 25 years old, with a large proportion reporting its use across all areas. Levels of cannabis use were also high among this age group. For those aged 25 and older, levels of crack and heroin use were much higher than among their younger counterparts.
- Levels of weekly spending were lower among under 25 year olds compared to their older counterparts.
- A far lower proportion of under 25 year olds reported having injected in their lifetime compared to those aged 25 and older in all areas except St Helens.

- With the exception of St Helens, under 25 year olds who have been in treatment in the past two years were more likely to have dropped out than those aged 25 and older, and therefore were not currently in treatment at the time of assessment.
- A far greater proportion of those aged 25 and older reported consuming alcohol on a daily basis than those aged under 25, who reported higher levels of weekly use. When viewed in terms of the safe recommended weekly limit for adults, levels of consumption were high in general for both groups.
- Rented accommodation was the most common accommodation type in both groups for all areas, with the exception of Wirral, where a greater proportion of under 25 year olds reported living in temporary accommodation.

It is hoped that DIP teams will note these findings and tailor their range of services accordingly. There are considerable differences in the types of clients entering the DIP system and it is crucial that this is recognised so as to provide the best form of treatment for each individual client.

2.0 Introduction

The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) is a Home Office initiative intended to reduce the impact of drug-related crime on the community. By directing drug-misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment, it aims to break the cycle of drug use and re-offending. DIP forms a critical part of the Government's 2002 Updated Drug Strategy, in which plans were laid out for the programme under its previous title, the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP) (Home Office, 2002). CJIP was designed to ensure continuity of care between custody and the community by linking prison, treatment and aftercare services. Its case management approach was intended to ensure seamless, tailored support and treatment for drug-misusing offenders from the point of arrest through sentencing, to prison release and beyond. Initially launched in April 2003 as a three-year initiative in areas of high acquisitive crime (intensive areas), the programme was implemented in all remaining Drug (and Alcohol) Action Team (D(A)AT) areas in May 2005 (non-intensives) (Home Office, 2005; 2007b). Home Office statistics suggest that DIP is proving successful in reducing levels of crime and increasing the numbers of drug-related offenders in drug treatment. After the introduction of DIP in 2002/03, acquisitive crime fell by 20%. Approximately 3000 drug-misusing offenders enter treatment through DIP every month, which is on track for attaining the Government target of engaging 1000 drug misusing offenders into treatment every week by 2008 (Home Office, 2007a).

Every client entering DIP for the first time or re-entering the programme after a period of absence is assessed and a record of this assessment is taken on a Drug Interventions Record (DIR). This report aims to examine the data collected from the Merseyside D(A)AT areas to highlight emerging trends in client characteristics and specifically focus on the age of clients, those who were under the age of 25 at their time of assessment and those who were 25 and older. This is of critical importance as clients under the age of 25 were one of the key focus groups in the original Models of Care document and retain particular emphasis in the 2006 updated version of the guidance (NTA, 2006). In addition, one of the key drug strategy targets that has formed a Public Service Agreement is to 'Reduce use of Class A drugs and the frequent use of any illicit drug amongst all young people under 25, especially the most vulnerable young people'. Examination of the characteristics of younger drug users in comparison to their older counterparts can provide key indications for planning service delivery as client requirements may be very different. It can also indicate emerging trends in drug use or early warning regarding potential public health issues. This report, then, aims to

provide analysis to inform effective service delivery with clients under 25 years old and for those over the age of 25 as two distinct and separate groups.

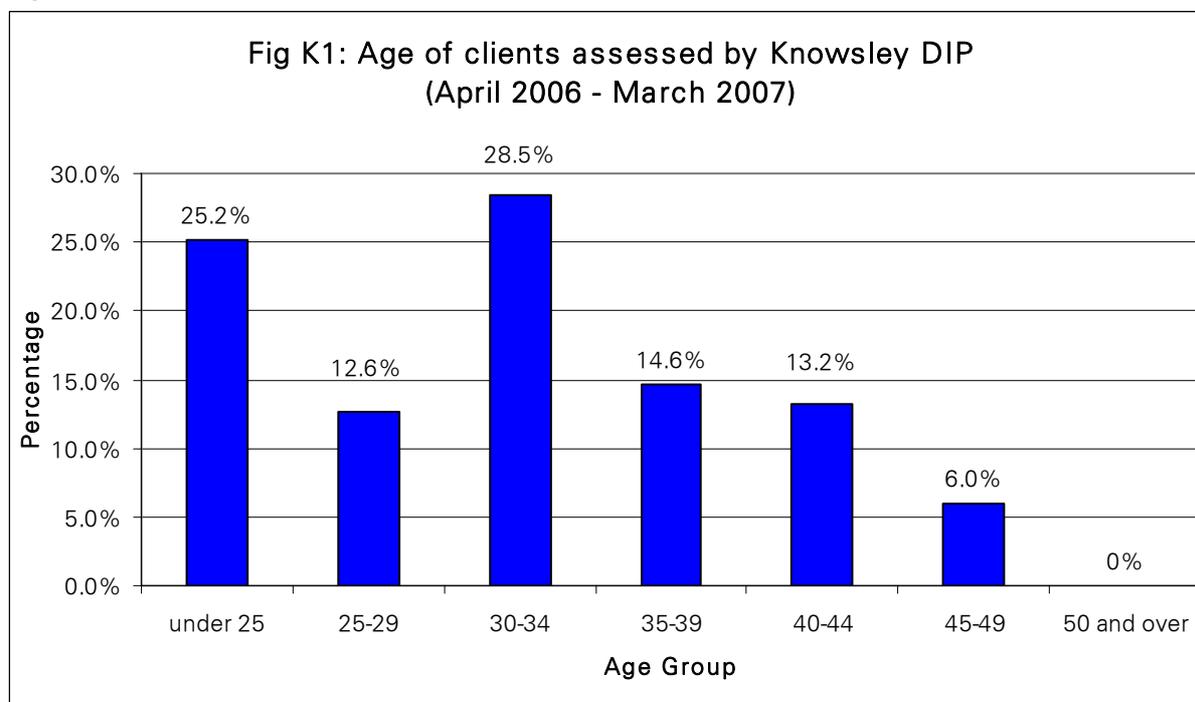
3.0 Methodology

Data for full DIP assessments taken from DIR's completed by Merseyside DIP teams between April 06 and March 07 were used for all analysis. Client's demographic information, the offence for which they had been arrested, details of drug use, weekly spend on drugs, injecting and sharing habits and details of treatment were recorded. These records were split into two age categories (under 25 and 25 and older at time of assessment). Data provided on drug use, weekly spend, injecting and sharing was controlled to those who had used drugs in the last month. Clients could list more than one drug of use and offence so numbers will be in excess of 100% in both the drug use and offence tables. Offences have been collapsed into more robust categories for analysis purposes. It should be noted that for reporting purposes, recalls to prison and self referrals are included as offences in the "Other" category. It should also be noted that questions regarding sharing equipment on the DIR pertained to all methods of sharing and not just in relation to injecting paraphernalia. For all figures, percentages have been rounded to one decimal place and therefore occasionally figures will add up to more than 100%.

4.0 Knowsley DAAT

There were 151 clients assessed by Knowsley DIP over the 12 month period.

Age



A quarter (25.2%) of all clients assessed in the 12 month period were under the age of 25.

Gender

Table K1: Gender by Age category

Gender	Under 25 (n=38)	25 and older (n=113)
Female	2 (5.3%)	16 (14.2%)
Male	36 (94.7%)	97 (85.8%)

Although numbers are small, it can be seen that there was a large difference in the gender split among under 25 year olds when compared to their older counterparts. For those clients under 25 years of age, 94.7% were male, compared to only 85.8% of those 25 and older.

Offending

Table K2: Offences by Age category

Offence	Under 25 (n=34*†)	25 and older (n=100*†)
Affray	1 (2.9%)	2 (2.0%)
Assault	6 (17.6%)	8 (8.0%)
Breach	6 (17.6%)	10 (10.0%)
Burglary	5 (14.7%)	8 (8.0%)
Car Theft	1 (2.9%)	
Criminal Damage	3 (7.9%)	1 (1.0%)
Deception		2 (2.0%)
Handling	1 (2.9%)	2 (2.0%)
MDA	7 (20.6%)	14 (14.0%)
Motoring Offences		5 (5.0%)
Possession of offensive weapon	1 (2.9%)	2 (2.0%)
Public Order		9 (9.0%)
Robbery		3 (3.0%)
Shoplifting	6 (17.6%)	45 (45.0%)
Theft	1 (2.9%)	1 (1.0%)
Warrant	1 (2.9%)	4 (4.0%)
Other	1 (2.9%)	1 (1.0%)

* As clients can report being arrested for more than one offence, figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Offences not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 13 of those aged 25 and older.

The lists of offences for each group were similar in nature; however there were noticeable differences in the distribution of offences between the age groups. There were larger proportions of assault, breaches, burglaries, criminal damage and Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) offences among the under 25 year olds. In contrast, clients in the 25 and older category were far more likely to be arrested for shoplifting than their younger counterparts. Numbers are small however, so these results should be treated with caution.

Drug Use

Table K3: Drug use by Age category

Drug	Under 25 (n=34*†)	25 and older (n=102*†)
Amphetamines		3 (2.9%)
Benzodiazepines		10 (9.8%)
Cannabis	20 (58.8%)	12 (11.8%)
Cocaine	18 (52.9%)	28 (27.4%)
Crack	4 (11.8%)	60 (58.8%)
Ecstasy	4 (11.8%)	2 (2.0%)
Heroin	4 (11.8%)	74 (72.5%)
Methadone	1 (2.9%)	13 (12.7%)
Other		3 (2.9%)

* As clients can report the use of more than one drug figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Drug use not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 11 of those aged 25 and older.

The drugs used across both groups show great variance. While heroin (72.5%) and crack (58.8%) were the drugs most commonly used by those in the 25 and older category, cannabis (58.8%) and cocaine (52.9%) were the drugs most used by those under 25 years of age. In addition, rates of use of illicit methadone and benzodiazepines were substantially higher amongst those aged 25 and older, whilst clients under 25 years of age were more likely to use ecstasy than their older counterparts. It should be noted that the sample size here is small so results should be treated with caution.

Weekly Spend on Drugs

Table K4: Weekly spend on drugs by Age category

Weekly Spend	Under 25 (n=34*)	25 and older (n=95*)
£0-£50	9 (26.5%)	12 (12.6%)
£51-£100	9 (26.5%)	16 (16.8%)
£101-£250	8 (23.5%)	19 (20.0%)
£251-£500	4 (11.8%)	27 (28.4%)
£501-£1000	4 (11.8%)	19 (20.0%)
Over £1000		2 (2.1%)

* Estimate of weekly spend not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 18 of those aged 25 and older.

Those under 25 years of age spent less as a group than their older counterparts. Over half (53.0%) of those assessed who fell into the younger category reported spending £100 or less during a week on illicit drugs compared to 30% of those in the 25 and older category. In contrast, half (50.5%) of those aged 25 and older reported spending in excess of £250 per week in comparison to just 23.6% of the younger age group.

Injecting & Sharing

Table K5: Levels of injecting and sharing by Age category

	Under 25 (n=34*)	25 and older (n=100*)
Ever injected	1 (2.9%)	55 (55.0%)
Injected in past month	1 (2.9%) (100% of those ever injected)	22 (22.0%) (40% of those ever injected)
Ever shared	3 (8.8%)	22 (22.0%)
Shared in last month	3 (8.8%) (100% of those ever shared)	5 (5.0%) (22.7% of those ever shared)

* Information regarding injecting and sharing not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 13 of those aged 25 and older.

There was a substantial difference in the injecting behaviour between the groups. Over half (55.0%) of those in the 25 and older category reported having injected in their lifetime, compared to only 2.9% of those under 25 years of age. This difference in behaviour was also evident among clients who had injected in the past month, with 22.0% of those aged 25 and

older having injected in that time period compared to just 2.9 of those who were under 25. The same pattern emerged with lifetime sharing behaviour (22.0% of those aged 25 and older had shared equipment compared to 8.8% of those under 25) but varied when sharing in the last month was examined (8.8% of those under 25 had shared compared to 5.0% of those aged 25 and older).

Treatment

Table K6: Episodes of treatment by Age category

	Under 25 (n=34*)	25 and older (n=100*)
Received treatment in past 2 years	3 (8.8%)	50 (50.0%)
Currently in treatment	1 (2.9%) (33.3% of those ever in treatment)	23 (23.0%) (46.0% of those ever in treatment)

* Information regarding episodes of treatment not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 13 of those aged 25 and older.

There was also a notable difference in the two age groups when episodes of treatment were looked at, with 50.0% of those in the 25 and older category having previously been in treatment compared to just 8.8% of those under 25 years of age. This difference was also evident when proportions of clients who were currently in treatment were examined (23.0% of those aged 25 and older were in treatment compared to just 2.9% of those under 25 years of age). A lower proportion of under 25 year olds (33.3%) who had ever been in treatment were still in treatment compared to those in the 25 and older category (46.0%).

Alcohol

Table K7: Frequency of Alcohol use by Age category

Frequency of use	Under 25 (n=26*)	25 and older (n=66*)
Daily	8 (30.8%)	28 (42.4%)
Weekly	14 (53.8%)	25 (37.9%)
Monthly	4 (15.4%)	13 (19.7%)

* Information regarding frequency of alcohol use not provided for 12 under 25 year olds and 47 of those aged 25 and older.

Those in the 25 and older category reported higher proportions of daily alcohol use (42%) than those under 25 years of age (31%), but this trend was reversed when looking at those who drank on a weekly basis, with 54% of those under 25 years of age reporting weekly alcohol use compared to just 38% of those in the 25 and older category.

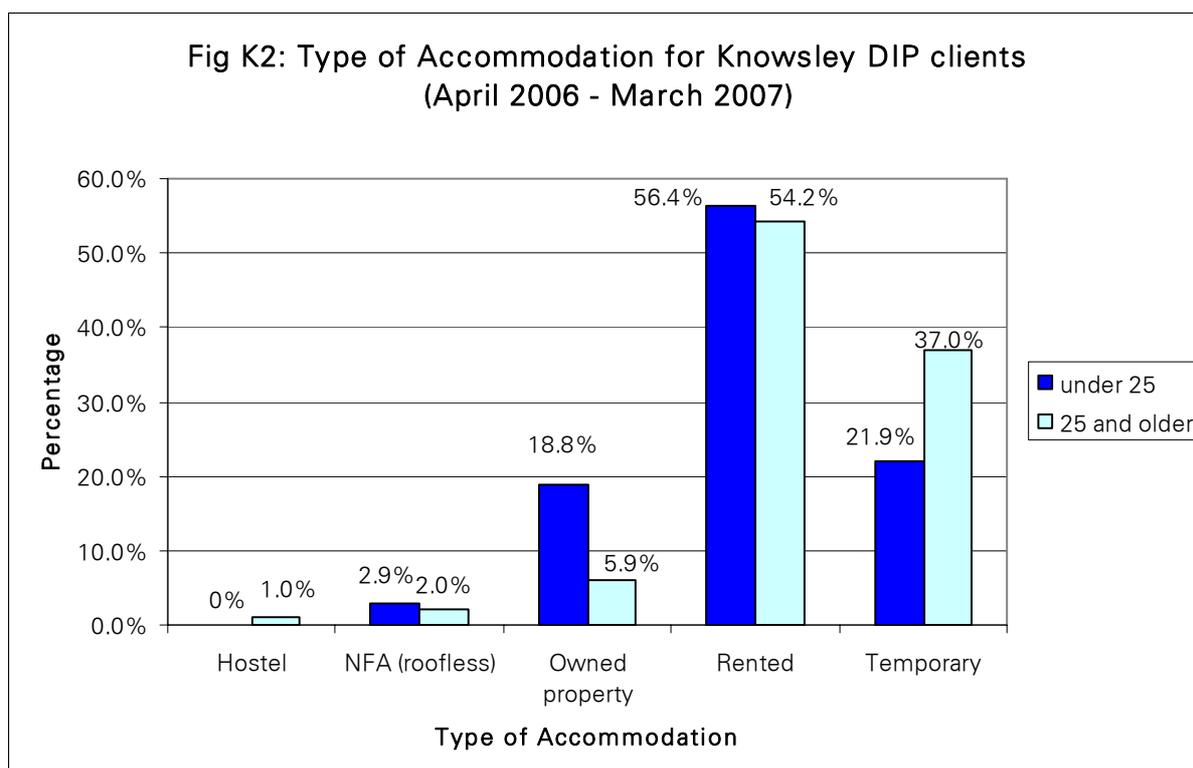
Table K8: Weekly Alcohol Consumption by Age category

Weekly Alcohol Consumption	Under 25 (n=26*)	25 and older (n=65*)
0-25 units	9 (34.6%)	25 (38.5%)
26-50 units	7 (26.9%)	17 (26.2%)
Over 50 units	10 (38.5%)	23 (35.4%)

* Information regarding levels of alcohol consumption not provided for 12 under 25 year olds and 48 of those aged 25 and older

Levels of alcohol consumption were quite similar across the two age groups, with a large proportion of those assessed in both instances reporting high weekly alcohol intake. When this is viewed in relation to the recommended weekly unit intake (male = 21 units, female = 14 units), it is clear that the majority in both age categories are consuming in excess of the recommended limits.

Accommodation

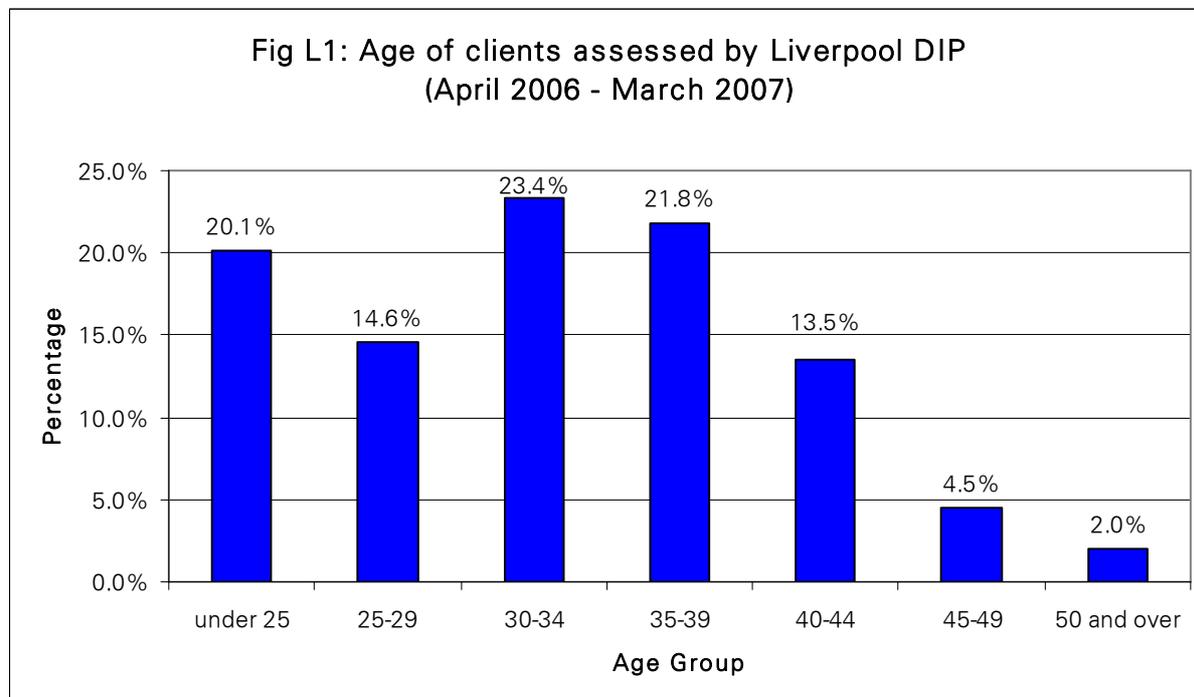


There was little difference between the two groups in terms of accommodation, with the majority of each group reporting living in rented accommodation. A larger proportion (37.0%) of those in the 25 and older category reported being in temporary accommodation compared to 21.9% of their younger counterparts. In contrast, 18.8% of those under 25 reported living in owned property compared to just 5.9% of those who were 25 and older.

5.0 Liverpool DAAT

There were 2,458 clients assessed by Liverpool DIP over the 12 month period.

Age



Clients who were under 25 made up a fifth of all clients assessed in the 12 month period (20.1%).

Gender

Table L2: Gender by Age category

Gender	Under 25 (n=494)	25 and older (n=1964)
Female	73 (14.8%)	496 (25.3%)
Male	421 (85.2%)	1468 (74.7%)

There was a noticeable difference in the gender split when comparing those assessed who were under 25 years of age to those who were 25 and older at the time of assessment. Although one in four clients (25.3%) assessed over the age of 25 were female, this proportion was substantially lower among the under 25 year olds (14.8%).

Offending

Table L2: Offences by Age category

Offence	Under 25 (n=492*†)	25 and older (n=1942*†)
Affray	2 (0.4%)	2 (0.1%)
Assault	12 (2.4%)	37 (1.9%)
Begging	4 (0.8%)	111 (5.7%)
Breach	4 (0.8%)	86 (4.4%)
Burglary	78 (15.9%)	191 (9.8%)
Car Theft	86 (17.5%)	140 (7.2%)
Criminal Damage	4 (0.8%)	14 (0.7%)
Deception	9 (1.8%)	24 (1.2%)
Going equipped	5 (1.0%)	27 (1.4%)
Handling	6 (1.2%)	44 (2.3%)
MDA	159 (32.3%)	273 (14.1%)
Motoring Offences	11 (2.2%)	20 (1.0%)
Possession of offensive weapon	6 (1.2%)	6 (0.3%)
Prostitution	1 (0.2%)	15 (0.8%)
Public Order	9 (1.8%)	42 (2.2%)
Recall	1 (0.2%)	13 (0.7%)
Robbery	32 (6.5%)	86 (4.4%)
Shoplifting	52 (10.6%)	622 (32.0%)
Theft	35 (7.1%)	152 (7.8%)
Warrant	13 (2.6%)	130 (6.7%)
Other	6 (1.2%)	37 (1.9%)

* As clients can report being arrested for more than one offence, figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Offences not provided for 2 under 25 year olds and 22 of those aged 25 and older.

The lists of offences for each group were similar; however there were differences in the distribution across the age groups. There were larger proportions of burglaries, car theft and MDA offences among the under 25 year olds. In contrast, shoplifting made up almost a third (32.0%) of all offences amongst those in the 25 and older category and clients in this age group were far more likely to be arrested for this offence than their younger counterparts (10.6%).

Drug Use

Table L3: Drug use by Age category

Drug	Under 25 (n=460*†)	25 and older (n=1848*†)
Amphetamines	2 (0.4%)	11 (0.6%)
Benzodiazepines	5 (1.1%)	65 (3.5%)
Cannabis	143 (31.1%)	128 (6.9%)
Cocaine	376 (81.7%)	360 (19.5%)
Crack	40 (8.7%)	1216 (65.8%)
Ecstasy	17 (3.7%)	6 (0.3%)
Heroin	44 (9.6%)	1403 (75.9%)
Methadone	7 (1.5%)	187 (10.1%)
Other	3 (0.7%)	15 (0.8%)

* As clients can report the use of more than one drug figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Drug use not provided for 34 under 25 year olds and 116 of those aged 25 and older.

There was great variation in the drugs most commonly used by those under 25 years of age when compared to those in the 25 and older category. Heroin (75.9%) and crack (65.8%) were the drugs most commonly used by those aged 25 and older. The proportions of those under 25 who were assessed that reported use of cocaine were extremely high. Just over eight in ten clients (81.7%) under 25 years of age reported use of cocaine compared to 19.5% of those who were 25 and older and under 25 years old clients were more likely to report the use of cannabis (31.1%) than their older counterparts (6.9%). Conversely, rates of use of illicit methadone were higher amongst those aged 25 and older (10.1%) than in the under 25 year old category (1.5%).

Weekly Spend on Drugs

Table L4: Weekly spend on drugs by Age category

Weekly Spend	Under 25 (n=445*)	25 and older (n=1755*)
£0-£50	243 (54.6%)	384 (21.9%)
£51-£100	80 (18.0%)	266 (15.2%)
£101-£250	51 (11.5%)	396 (22.6%)
£251-£500	36 (8.1%)	455 (25.9%)
£501-£1000	27 (6.1%)	219 (12.5%)
Over £1000	8 (1.8%)	35 (2.0%)

* Estimate of weekly spend not provided for 49 under 25 year olds and 187 of those aged 25 and older

Clients under 25 years of age spent less on drugs per week as a group than their older counterparts. Almost three-quarters (72.6%) of those assessed who were under 25 years old reported spending £100 or less per week on illicit drugs, compared to just 37.1% of those in the 25 or older category. In contrast, four in ten (40.4%) of those aged 25 and older reported spending in excess of £250 per week in comparison to just 16.0% of the younger age group.

Injecting & Sharing

Table L5: Levels of injecting and sharing by Age category

	Under 25 (n=460*)	25 and older (n=1848*)
Ever injected	27 (5.9%)	953 (51.6%)
Injected in past month	16 (3.5%) (59% of those ever injected)	502 (27.2%) (53% of those ever injected)
Ever shared	36 (7.8%)	290 (15.7%)
Shared in last month	31 (6.7%) (86.1% of those ever shared)	154 (8.3%) (53.1% of those ever shared)

* Information regarding injecting and sharing not provided for 34 under 25 year olds and 94 of those aged 25 and older.

There was a substantial difference in injecting behaviour between the groups. While just over half (51.6%) of those in the 25 and older category reported having injected in their lifetime, only 5.9% of those under 25 reported having ever injected. The same pattern emerged when current injecting was examined, with 27.2% of those aged 25 and older reporting that they had injected in the past month compared to just 3.5% of those under 25. A higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported ever sharing (15.7%) compared to their younger counterparts (7.8%). It should also be noted that there is an extremely high proportion of people under 25 who are continuing to share equipment, with 86.1% of those who have ever shared reporting that they had done so in the past month.

Treatment

Table L6: Episodes of treatment by Age category

	Under 25 (n=460*)	25 and older (n=1848*)
Received treatment in past 2 years	41 (8.9%)	1011 (54.7%)
Currently in treatment	16 (3.5%) (39.0% of those ever in treatment)	551 (29.8%) (54.5% of those ever in treatment)

* Information regarding episodes of treatment not provided for 34 under 25 year olds and 94 of those aged 25 and older.

Just over half (54.7%) of those in the 25 and older category had been in treatment over the last two years compared to just 8.9% of those under 25 years of age. Similarly, a far higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported as currently in treatment (29.8%) than their younger counterparts (3.5%). A lower proportion of under 25 year olds (39.0%) who had ever been in treatment were still in treatment compared to those in the 25 and older category (54.5%).

Alcohol

Table L7: Frequency of Alcohol use by Age category

Frequency of use	Under 25 (n=339*)	25 and older (n=725*)
Daily	57 (16.8%)	332 (45.8%)
Weekly	239 (70.5%)	286 (39.4%)
Monthly	43 (12.7%)	107 (14.8%)

* Information regarding frequency of alcohol use not provided for 155 under 25 year olds and 1,217 of those aged 25 and older.

Those in the 25 and older category reported far higher proportions of daily alcohol use (45.8%) than those under 25 (16.8%). This trend was reversed when looking at those who drank on a weekly basis, with 70.5% of those under 25 reporting weekly alcohol use compared to just 39.4% of their older counterparts.

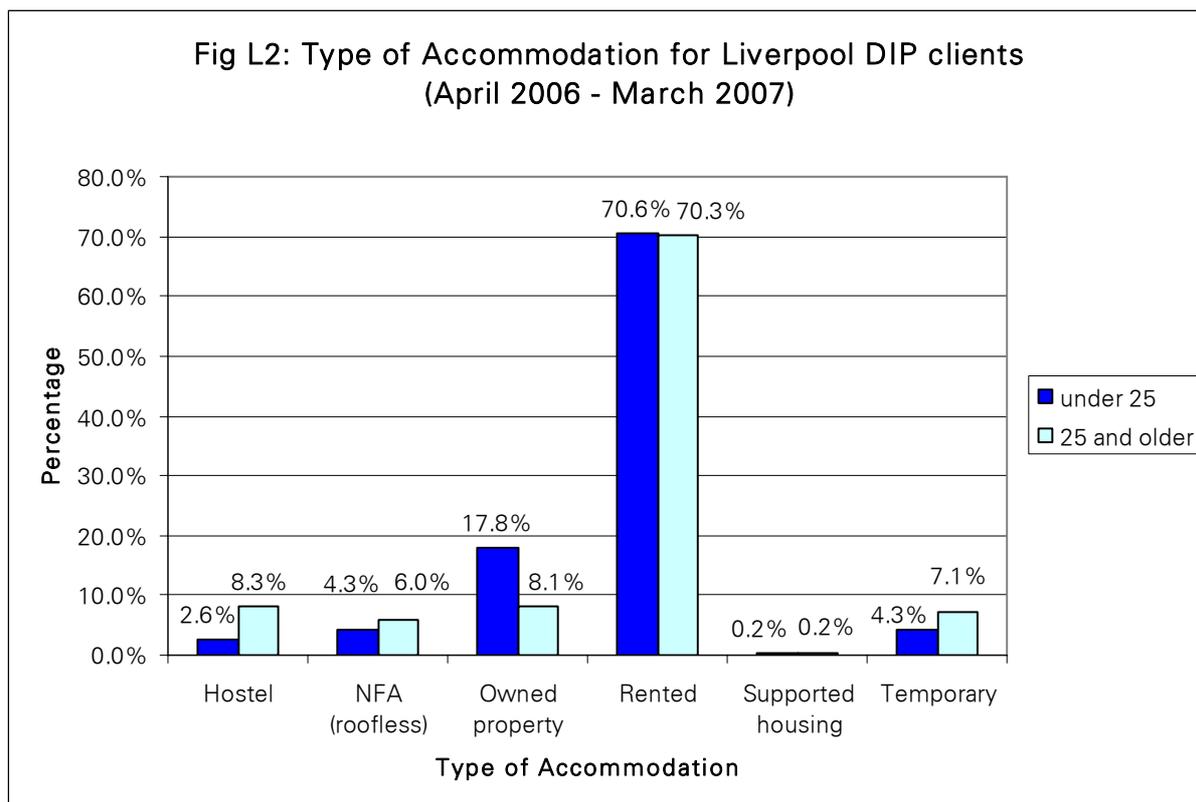
Table L8: Weekly Alcohol consumption by Age category

Weekly Alcohol Consumption	Under 25 (n=310*)	25 and older (n=681*)
0-25 units	182 (58.7%)	314 (46.1%)
26-50 units	79 (25.5%)	157 (23.1%)
Over 50 units	49 (15.8%)	210 (30.8%)

* Information regarding levels of alcohol consumption not provided for 184 under 25 year olds and 1,261 of those aged 25 and older

Just under six in ten (58.7%) of those under 25 drank between 0 and 25 units per week. Almost half of those who were in the 25 and older category at the time of their assessment (46.1%) fell into this category. It should be noted that just over three in ten (30.8%) of those aged 25 and older reported consuming in excess of 50 units per week, well in excess of the recommended weekly limit for both males and females.

Accommodation

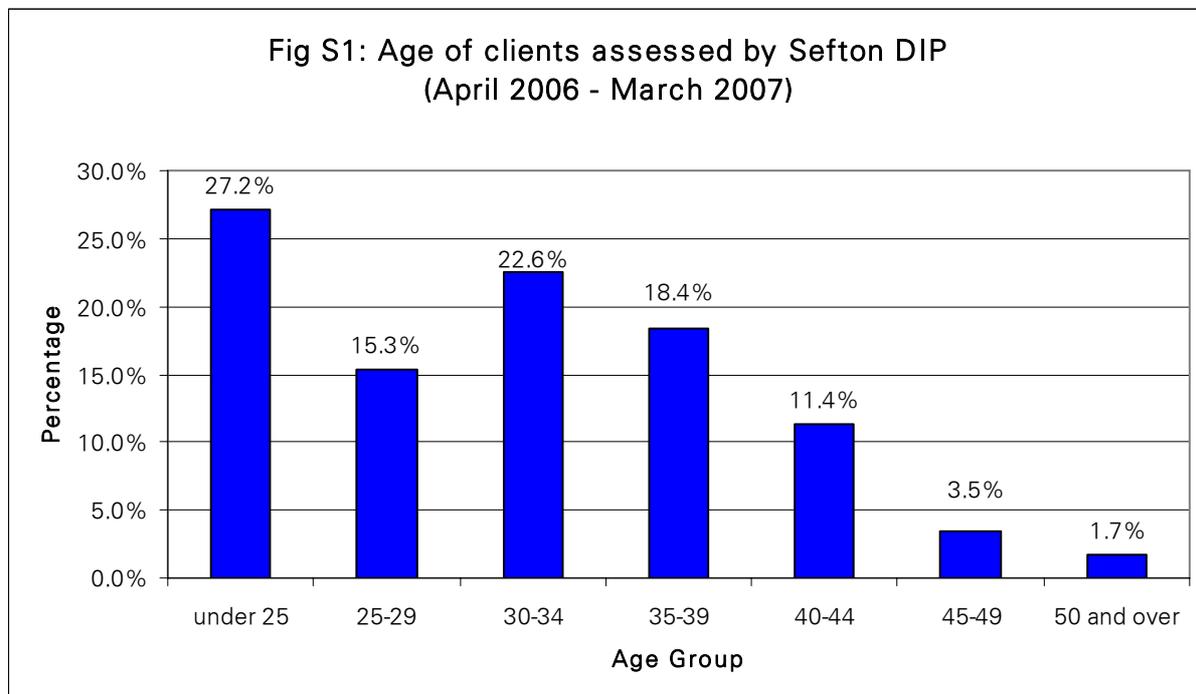


There was little difference between the two groups in terms of accommodation, with the majority of each age group reporting living in rented accommodation. A larger proportion of those under 25 reported living in owned property (17.8%) compared to just 8.1% of those who were in the 25 and older category.

6.0 Sefton DAAT

There were 713 clients assessed by Sefton DIP over the 12 month period.

Age



Just over a quarter (27.2%) of individuals assessed by Sefton DIP in 06/07 were under the age of 25.

Gender

Table S1: Gender by Age category

Gender	Under 25 (n=194)	25 and older (n=519)
Female	20 (10.3%)	134 (25.8%)
Male	174 (89.7%)	385 (74.2%)

Under 25 year olds assessed were more likely to be male than their older counterparts (89.7% compared to 74.2%).

Offending

Table S2: Offences by Age category

Offence	Under 25 (n=191*†)	25 and older (n=477*†)
Assault	14 (7.3%)	27 (5.7%)
Begging		1 (0.2%)
Breach	4 (2.1%)	11 (2.3%)
Burglary	34 (17.8%)	54 (11.3%)
Car Theft	28 (14.7%)	25 (5.2%)
Criminal Damage	2 (1.0%)	3 (0.6%)
Deception	2 (1.0%)	8 (1.7%)
Going equipped	2 (1.0%)	1 (0.2%)
Handling	3 (1.6%)	10 (2.1%)
MDA	53 (27.8%)	75 (15.7%)
Motoring Offences	3 (1.6%)	5 (1.0%)
Possession of offensive weapon	2 (1.0%)	5 (1.0%)
Prostitution		3 (0.6%)
Public Order	5 (2.6%)	3 (0.6%)
Recall		1 (0.2%)
Robbery	7 (3.7%)	16 (3.4%)
Shoplifting	31 (16.2%)	200 (41.9%)
Theft	11 (5.8%)	34 (7.1%)
Warrant	1 (0.5%)	6 (1.3%)
Other	5 (2.6%)	17 (3.6%)

* As clients can report being arrested for more than one offence, figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Offences not provided for 3 under 25 year olds and 42 of those aged 25 and older.

The lists of offences for each age group were similar in nature; however there were considerable differences in the distribution of these offences across the age groups. There were notably larger proportions of burglaries, car theft and MDA offences among the under 25 year olds, showing that this age group were more likely to have committed these types of offences than their older counterparts. In contrast, clients who were in the 25 and older category were far more likely to be arrested for shoplifting than those under 25 years of age.

Drug Use

Table S3: Drug use by Age category

Drug	Under 25 (n=179*†)	25 and older (n=480*†)
Amphetamines		1 (0.2%)
Benzodiazepines	1 (0.6%)	11 (2.3%)
Cannabis	73 (40.8%)	57 (11.9%)
Cocaine	138 (77.1%)	138 (28.8%)
Crack	27 (15.1%)	257 (53.5%)
Ecstasy	3 (1.7%)	4 (0.8%)
Heroin	28 (15.6%)	233 (48.5%)
Methadone		47 (9.9%)
Other		1 (0.2%)

* As clients can report the use of more than one drug figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Drug use not provided for 15 under 25 year olds and 39 of those aged 25 and older.

The drug use profile of clients across the two age groups varied greatly. While heroin (48.5%) and crack (53.5%) were the drugs most commonly used by those in the 25 and older category, cocaine (77.1%) and cannabis (40.8%) were the drugs most commonly used by those under 25. In addition to this, the use of illicit methadone was more common among those aged 25 and older with no clients under 25 reporting use of the drug.

Weekly Spend on Drugs

Table S4: Weekly spend on drugs by Age category

Weekly Spend	Under 25 (n=176*)	25 and older (n=474*)
£0-£50	110 (62.5%)	171 (36.1%)
£51-£100	23 (13.1%)	87 (18.4%)
£101-£250	23 (13.1%)	108 (22.8%)
£251-£500	13 (7.4%)	66 (13.9%)
£501-£1000	6 (3.4%)	37 (7.8%)
Over £1000	1 (0.6%)	5 (1.1%)

* Estimate of weekly spend not provided for 18 under 25 year olds and 45 of those aged 25 and older

Clients assessed who were under 25 generally spent less per week on drugs than their older counterparts. Over three-quarters (75.6%) of those assessed who fell into the younger category reported spending £100 or less during a week on illicit drugs, compared to 54.5% of those in the 25 and older category. Conversely, 22.8% of those aged 25 and older reported spending in excess of £250 per week over the same time period compared to just 11.4% of the younger age group.

Injecting & Sharing

Table S5: Levels of injecting and sharing by Age category

	Under 25 (n=179*)	25 and older (n=478*)
Ever injected	13 (7.3%)	245 (51.3%)
Injected in past month	6 (3.4%) (46.2% of those ever injected)	80 (16.7%) (32.7% of those ever injected)
Ever shared	21 (11.7%)	82 (17.2%)
Shared in last month	14 (7.8%) (66.7% of those ever shared)	20 (4.2%) (24.4% of those ever shared)

* Information regarding injecting and sharing not provided for 15 under 25 year olds and 41 of those aged 25 and older.

There was a substantial difference in injecting behaviour between the groups. Over half (51.3%) of those in the 25 and older category reported injecting in their lifetime, compared to only 7.3% of those under 25. The same pattern emerged when current injecting was examined, with 16.7% of those aged 25 and older reporting that they had injected in the past month compared to just 3.4% of those under 25. Patterns of lifetime sharing were similar for both groups (17.2% of all clients aged 25 and older had shared in their lifetime compared to 11.7% of those under 25). Analysis also revealed that a large proportion (66.7%) of under 25's who have ever shared equipment shared in the last month.

Treatment

Table S6: Episodes of treatment by Age category

	Under 25 (n=179*)	25 and older (n=478*)
Received treatment in past 2 years	23 (12.8%)	260 (54.4%)
Currently in treatment	11 (6.1%) (47.8% of those ever in treatment)	154 (32.2%) (59.2% of those ever in treatment)

* Information regarding treatment not provided for 15 under 25 year olds and 41 of those aged 25 and older.

Around half (54.4%) of individuals in the 25 and older category had been in treatment over the past two years compared to just 12.8% of those under 25 years of age. Similarly, a far higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported as currently in treatment (32.2%) than their younger counterparts (6.1%). A lower proportion of under 25 year olds (47.8%) who had ever been in treatment were still in treatment compared to those in the 25 and older category (59.2%).

Alcohol

Table S7: Frequency of Alcohol use by Age category

Frequency of use	Under 25 (n=143*)	25 and older (n=263*)
Daily	23 (16.1%)	108 (41.1%)
Weekly	97 (67.8%)	112 (42.6%)
Monthly	23 (16.1%)	43 (16.3%)

* Information regarding frequency of alcohol use not provided for 51 under 25 year olds and 256 of those aged 25 and older.

Those in the 25 and older category reported far higher proportions of daily alcohol use (41.1%) than those under 25 (16.1%), but this trend was reversed when looking at those who drank on a weekly basis, with 67.8% of those under 25 reporting weekly alcohol use compared to 42.6% of those in the 25 and older category.

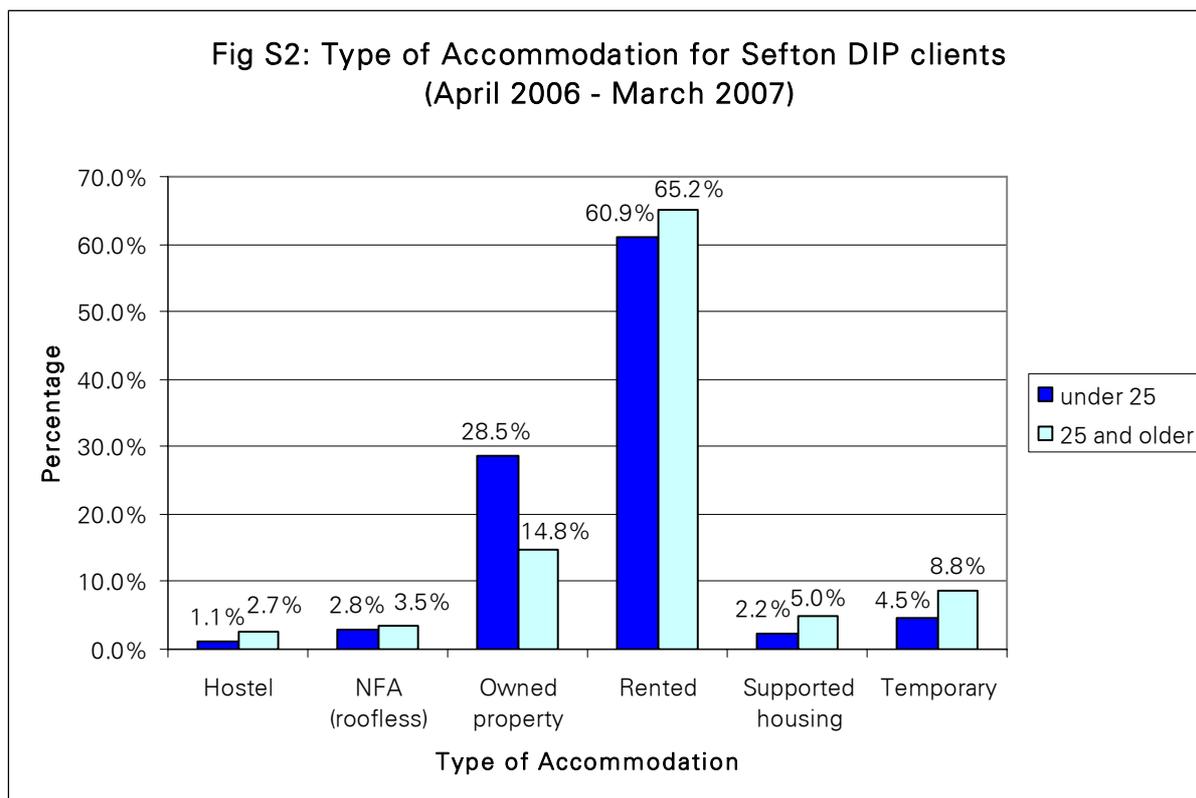
Table S8: Weekly Alcohol consumption by Age category

Weekly Alcohol Consumption	Under 25 (n=135*)	25 and older (n=251*)
0-25 units	78 (57.8%)	144 (57.4%)
26-50 units	37 (27.4%)	44 (17.5%)
Over 50 units	20 (14.8%)	63 (25.1%)

* Information regarding levels of alcohol consumption not provided for 59 under 25 year olds and 268 of those aged 25 and older

Levels of alcohol consumption were quite similar in the two age groups, with almost half of both groups consuming in excess of 25 units per week, which is well over the recommended weekly intake for both males and females. A quarter (25.1%) of those in the 25 and older category reported consuming in excess of 50 units per week, compared to 14.8% of those under 25.

Accommodation

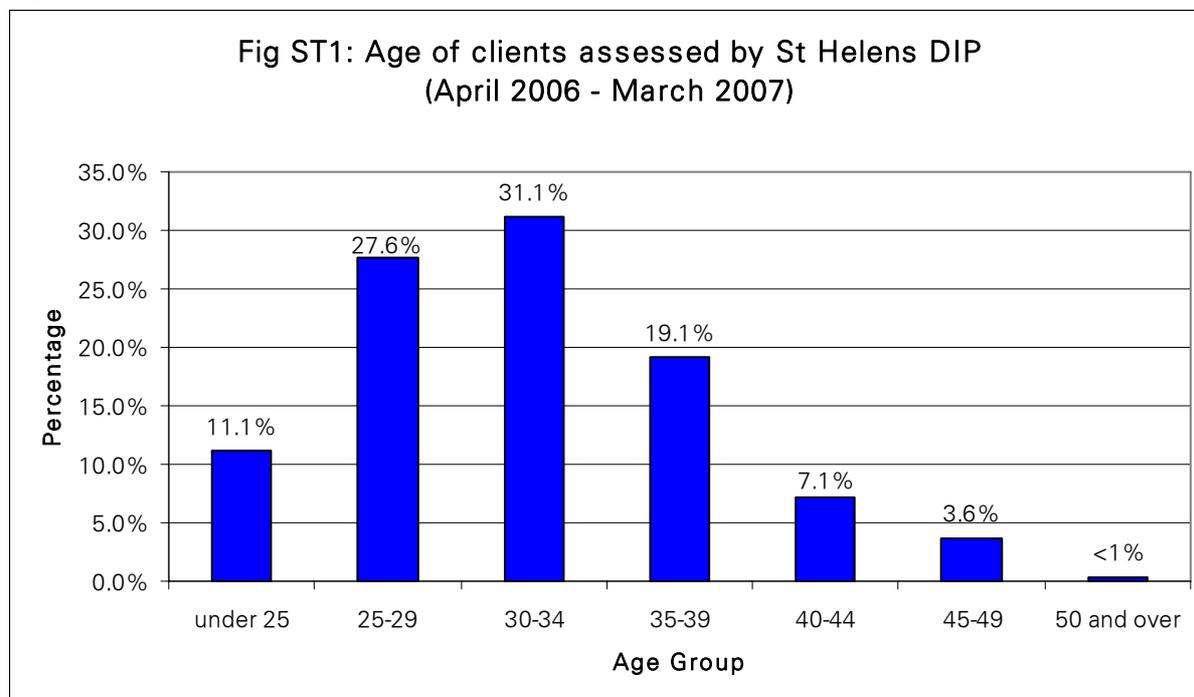


The majority of clients in each age group assessed in Sefton reported living in rented accommodation. A larger proportion (28.5%) of those under 25 reported living in owned property compared to just 14.8% of those in the 25 and older category.

7.0 St Helens DAT

There were 225 clients assessed by St Helens DIP over the 12 month period.

Age



Just over one in ten clients (11.1%) assessed by St Helens DIP in 06/07 were under the age of 25. This only represents 25 clients however, therefore future analysis in this section on clients under the age of 25 should be treated with caution as numbers being analysed are low.

Gender

Table ST1: Gender by Age category

Gender	Under 25 (n=25)	25 and older (n=200)
Female	2 (8.0%)	37 (18.5%)
Male	23 (92.0%)	163 (81.5%)

Although numbers are small, it can be seen that there was a substantial difference in the gender split between under 25 year olds when compared to their older counterparts. Of those under 25 years of age, 92.0% of those assessed were male, compared to only 81.5% of those in the 25 and older category.

Offending

Table ST2: Offences by Age Category

Offence	Under 25 (n=25* †)	25 and older (n=193* †)
Affray	1 (4.0%)	
Assault	4 (16.0%)	8 (4.1%)
Breach	2 (8.0%)	14 (7.3%)
Burglary	3 (12.0%)	25 (13.0%)
Car Theft		5 (2.6%)
Criminal Damage		1 (0.5%)
Deception		1 (0.5%)
Handling		1 (0.5%)
MDA	1 (4.0%)	19 (9.8%)
Motoring Offences		2 (1.0%)
Possession of offensive weapon	1 (4.0%)	3 (1.6%)
Public Order		7 (3.6%)
Recall		2 (1.0%)
Robbery		8 (4.1%)
Shoplifting	11 (44.0%)	80 (41.5%)
Theft	3 (12.0%)	12 (6.2%)
Warrant	2 (8.0%)	31 (16.1%)
Other		7 (3.6%)

* As clients can report being arrested for more than one offence, figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Offences not provided for 7 clients aged 25 and older.

The type of offence for each age group varied greatly in St Helens over the 12 month period with under 25 year olds coming into contact with the criminal justice system only through a small number of offences. Among under 25 year olds, shoplifting made up the greatest proportion of offences, with 44.0% of clients being arrested as a result of this offence. This was in line with those in the 25 and older category, where shoplifting was also the offence committed by the highest proportion of individuals assessed (41.5%). There were significantly larger proportions of MDA offences and arrests due to warrants among clients aged 25 and older. In contrast, clients under the age of 25 were more likely to be arrested for assault or theft than their older counterparts. Figures should be treated with caution however, as there were a low number of under 25 years olds included in the analysis.

Drug Use

Table ST3: Drug use by Age category

Drug	Under 25 (n=24*†)	25 and older (n=188*†)
Amphetamines		12 (6.4%)
Benzodiazepines	2 (8.3%)	22 (11.7%)
Cannabis	5 (20.8%)	10 (5.3%)
Cocaine	12 (50.0%)	28 (14.9%)
Crack	11 (45.8%)	74 (39.4%)
Ecstasy	1 (4.2%)	1 (0.5%)
Heroin	16 (66.7%)	170 (90.4%)
Methadone	5 (20.8%)	30 (16.0%)
Other	1 (4.1%)	4 (2.1%)

* As clients can report the use of more than one drug figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Drug use not provided for 1 under 25 year old and 12 of those aged 25 and older.

Levels of heroin use were high in both age groups although there was a far greater proportion of heroin users in the 25 and older category (90.4%) compared to those under 25 years of age (66.7%). Levels of crack use were also high in both age groups with proportions being more similar than for heroin. The main contrast revolves around the use of cocaine, with half (50.0%) of those under 25 reporting its use compared to just 14.9% of those aged 25 and older.

Weekly Spend on Drugs

Table ST4: Weekly spend on drugs by Age category

Amount Spent each week	Under 25 (n=24*)	25 and older (n=185*)
£0-£50	4 (16.7%)	23 (12.4%)
£51-£100	5 (20.8%)	25 (13.5%)
£101-£250	6 (25.0%)	60 (32.4%)
£251-£500	8 (33.3%)	58 (31.4%)
£501-£1000	1 (4.1%)	18 (9.7%)
Over £1000		1 (0.5%)

* Estimate of weekly spend not provided for 1 under 25 year old and 15 of those aged 25 and older

Clients under 25 years of age spent less as a group than their older counterparts, with almost four in ten (37.5%) spending under £100 per week on drugs, compared to a quarter (25.9%) of those over the age of 25. Levels of high spending were similar however, with 37% of those under 25 spending in excess of £250 per week compared with 42% of those in the 25 and older category.

Injecting & Sharing

Table ST5: Levels of injecting and sharing by Age category

	Under 25 (n=24*)	25 and older (n=183*)
Ever injected	13 (54.2%)	101 (55.2%)
Injected in past month	13 (54.2%) (100% of those ever injected)	80 (43.7%) (79.2% of those ever injected)
Ever shared	3 (12.5%)	19 (10.4%)
Shared in last month	2 (8.3%) (66.7% of those ever shared)	8 (4.4%) (42.1% of those ever shared)

* Information regarding injecting and sharing not provided for 1 under 25 year old and 17 of those aged 25 and older.

Levels of lifetime injecting were almost identical across the groups, with just over half of those assessed in both age groups reporting having injected in their lifetime. A higher proportion of those under 25 reported as having injected in the past month (54.2%) compared to their older counterparts (43.7%). All of those who were under 25 were still injecting, compared to 79.2% of those aged 25 and older. Levels of lifetime sharing were also similar, with 12.5% of those under 25 having shared equipment compared to 10.4% of those aged 25 and older. Proportions of those who have shared equipment in their lifetime were low, with 12.5% of those under 25 and 10.4% of those aged 25 and older reporting sharing.

Treatment

Table ST6: Episodes of treatment by Age category

	Under 25 (n=24)	25 and older (n=183*)
Received treatment in past 2 years	12 (50.0%)	150 (82.0%)
Currently in treatment	6 (25.0%) (50.0% of those ever in treatment)	73 (39.9%) (48.7% of those ever in treatment)

* Information regarding episodes of treatment not provided for 5 clients aged 25 and older.

It should also be noted that 82.0% of those in the 25 and older category reported as having received treatment in the past two years compared to only 50.0% of those under 25. A higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported as currently being in treatment (39.9%) than their younger counterparts (25.0%). Similar proportions of both those under 25 year olds (50.0%) and those in the 25 and older category (48.7%) who had ever been in treatment were still in treatment.

Alcohol

Table ST7: Frequency of alcohol use by Age category

Frequency of use	Under 25 (n=9)	25 and older (n=78)
Daily	3 (33.3%)	34 (43.6%)
Weekly	3 (33.3%)	31 (39.7%)
Monthly	3 (33.3%)	13 (16.7%)

* Information regarding frequency of alcohol use not provided for 16 under 25 year olds and 122 of those aged 25 and older.

Those in the 25 and older category reported higher proportions of both daily and weekly alcohol use, while those under 25 years of age reported higher monthly usage.

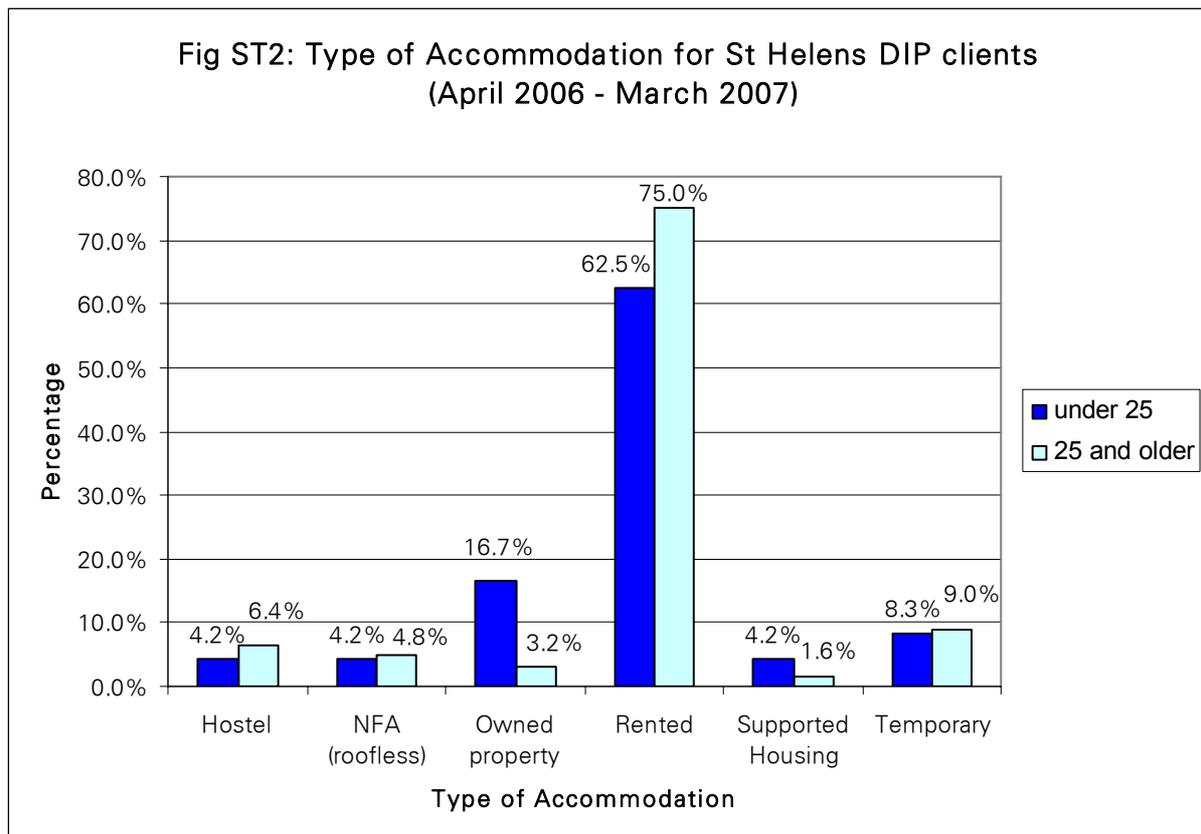
Table ST8: Weekly Alcohol consumption by Age category

Weekly Alcohol Consumption	Under 25 (n=9)	25 and older (n=86)
0-25 units	4 (44.4%)	52 (60.5%)
26-50 units	5 (55.6%)	23 (26.7%)
Over 50 units		11 (12.8%)

* Information regarding levels of alcohol consumption not provided for 16 under 25 year olds and 114 of those aged 25 and older

Over half (60.5%) of those in the 25 and older category reported consuming 25 units or less in a week compared to just under half (44.4%) of their younger counterparts.

Accommodation

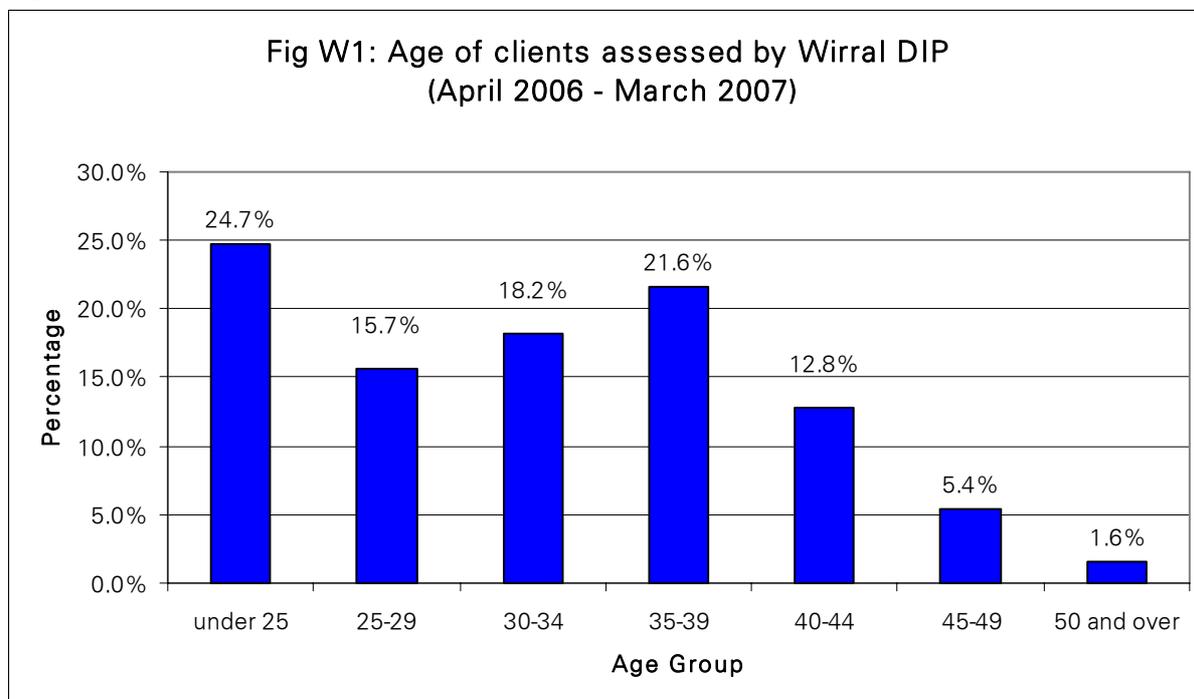


The majority of each age group reported living in rented accommodation at the time of their assessment. The main contrast between the two age groups centred around those living in owned property, with 16.7% of those under the age of 25 living in this type of accommodation compared to just 3.2% of those in the 25 and older category.

8.0 Wirral DAAT

There were 616 clients assessed by Wirral DIP over the 12 month period.

Age



Under 25 year olds made up the second largest proportion of clients assessed by Wirral DIP in 2006/07 (24.7%).

Gender

Table W1: Gender by Age category

Gender	Under 25 (n=152)	25 and older (n=464)
Female	11 (7.2%)	90 (19.4%)
Male	141 (92.8%)	374 (80.6%)

There was a sizeable difference in the gender split between under 25 year olds and their older counterparts. Analysis showed that 92.8% of under 25 years olds assessed were male, compared to only 80.6% of those in the 25 and older category.

Offending

Table W2: Offences by Age category

Offence	Under 25 (n=152*)	25 and older (n=464*)
Affray		1 (0.2%)
Assault	4 (2.6%)	7 (1.5%)
Begging		1 (0.2%)
Breach	2 (1.3%)	10 (2.2%)
Burglary	26 (17.1%)	71 (15.3%)
Car Theft	36 (23.7%)	35 (7.5%)
Criminal Damage	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.2%)
Deception	2 (1.3%)	8 (1.7%)
Going equipped	3 (2.0%)	3 (0.6%)
Handling	1 (1.3%)	6 (1.3%)
MDA	44 (28.9%)	111 (23.9%)
Motoring Offences	1 (0.7%)	4 (0.9%)
Possession of offensive weapon		1 (0.2%)
Public Order		1 (0.2%)
Robbery	6 (3.9%)	16 (3.4%)
Shoplifting	15 (9.9%)	149 (32.1%)
Theft	16 (10.5%)	60 (12.9%)
Warrant	2 (1.3%)	3 (0.6%)
Other	3 (2.0%)	1 (0.2%)

* As clients can report being arrested for more than one offence, figures will add up to more than 100%

The offences committed by both age groups that lead to their contact with DIP were similar for the most part. However, a larger proportion of under 25 year olds had been arrested for car theft than their older counterparts. In contrast, clients in the 25 and older category were far more likely to be arrested for shoplifting than their younger counterparts. The proportion of MDA offences was high in both age groups (28.9% for under 25 year olds and 23.9% for those aged 25 and older).

Drug Use

Table W3: Drug use by Age category

Drug	Under 25 (n=148*†)	25 and older (n=446*†)
Amphetamines	5 (3.4%)	13 (2.9%)
Benzodiazepines	1 (0.7%)	28 (6.3%)
Cannabis	67 (45.3%)	131 (29.4%)
Cocaine	118 (79.7%)	152 (34.1%)
Crack	12 (8.1%)	219 (49.1%)
Ecstasy	12 (8.1%)	18 (4.0%)
Heroin	15 (10.1%)	294 (65.9%)
Methadone	3 (2.0%)	101 (22.6%)
Other	2 (1.4%)	6 (1.3%)

* As clients can report the use of more than one drug figures will add up to more than 100%.

† Drug use not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 18 of those aged 25 and older.

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The drugs profiles of the two age groups showed great variance. While heroin (65.9%) and crack (49.1%) were the drugs most commonly used by those in the 25 and older category, cocaine in particular (79.7%) and cannabis (45.3%) were the drugs most commonly used by those under 25. In addition, rates of use of illicit methadone were notably higher amongst those aged 25 and older.

Weekly Spend

Table W4: Weekly spend by Age category

Amount Spent each week	Under 25 (n=147*)	25 and older (n=440*)
£0-£50	89 (60.5%)	196 (44.5%)
£51-£100	25 (17.0%)	69 (15.7%)
£101-£250	25 (17.0%)	85 (19.3%)
£251-£500	4 (2.7%)	48 (10.9%)
£501-£1000	3 (2.0%)	30 (6.8%)
Over £1000	1 (0.7%)	12 (2.7%)

* Estimate of weekly spend not provided for 5 under 25 year olds and 24 of those aged 25 and older

Analysis revealed that those under 25 years of age generally spent less on drugs in a week than their older counterparts. Over three-quarters (77.5%) of those assessed who fell into the younger age category reported spending £100 or less during a week on illicit drugs compared to 60.2% of those in the 25 and older category. In contrast, almost a quarter (20.4%) of those aged 25 and older reported spending in excess of £250 per week compared to just 5.4% of the younger age group.

Injecting & Sharing

Table W5: Levels of injecting and sharing by Age category

	Under 25 (n=148*)	25 and older (n=446*)
Ever injected	8 (5.4%)	214 (48.0%)
Injected in past month	3 (2.0%) (37.5% of those ever injected)	71 (15.9%) (33.2% of those ever injected)
Ever shared	1 (0.7%)	61 (13.7%)
Shared in last month	1 (0.7%) (100% of those ever shared)	9 (2.0%) (14.8% of those ever shared)

* Information regarding injecting and sharing not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 18 of those aged 25 and older.

Almost half (48.0%) of those clients assessed who were 25 and older reported having injected during their lifetime compared to just 5.4% of those under 25 years of age. A higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported injecting in the last month (15.9%) compared to those under 25 years of age (2.0%). A higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported ever sharing (13.7%) compared to their younger counterparts (0.7%).

Treatment

Table W6: Episodes of treatment by Age category

	Under 25 (n=148*)	25 and older (n=446*)
Received treatment in past 2 years	20 (13.5%)	259 (58.1%)
Currently in treatment	10 (6.8%) (50.0% of those ever in treatment)	179 (40.1%) (69.1% of those ever in treatment)

* Information regarding treatment not provided for 4 under 25 year olds and 18 of those aged 25 and older.

Over half (58.1%) of those in the 25 and older category reported having been in treatment in the past two years compared to just 13.5% of those under 25 years of age. Similarly, a far higher proportion of those aged 25 and older reported as currently in treatment (40.1%) than their younger counterparts (6.8%). A lower proportion of under 25 year olds (50.0%) who had ever been in treatment were still in compared to those in the 25 and older category (69.1%).

Alcohol

Table W7: Frequency of Alcohol use by Age category

Frequency of use	Under 25 (n=125*)	25 and older (n=254*)
Daily	22 (17.6%)	95 (37.4%)
Weekly	86 (68.8%)	116 (45.7%)
Monthly	17 (13.6%)	43 (16.9%)

* Information regarding frequency of alcohol use not provided for 27 under 25 year olds and 210 of those aged 25 and older.

Those in the 25 and older category were more likely to report daily alcohol use (37.4%) than those under 25 (17.6%). However, this trend was reversed when looking at those who drank on a weekly basis, with 68.8% of those under 25 reporting weekly alcohol use compared to 45.7% of those in the 25 and older category.

Table W8: Weekly Alcohol consumption by Age category

Weekly Alcohol Consumption	Under 25 (n=124*)	25 and older (n=253*)
0-25 units	69 (55.6%)	134 (53.0%)
26-50 units	33 (26.6%)	55 (21.7%)
Over 50 units	22 (17.7%)	64 (25.3%)

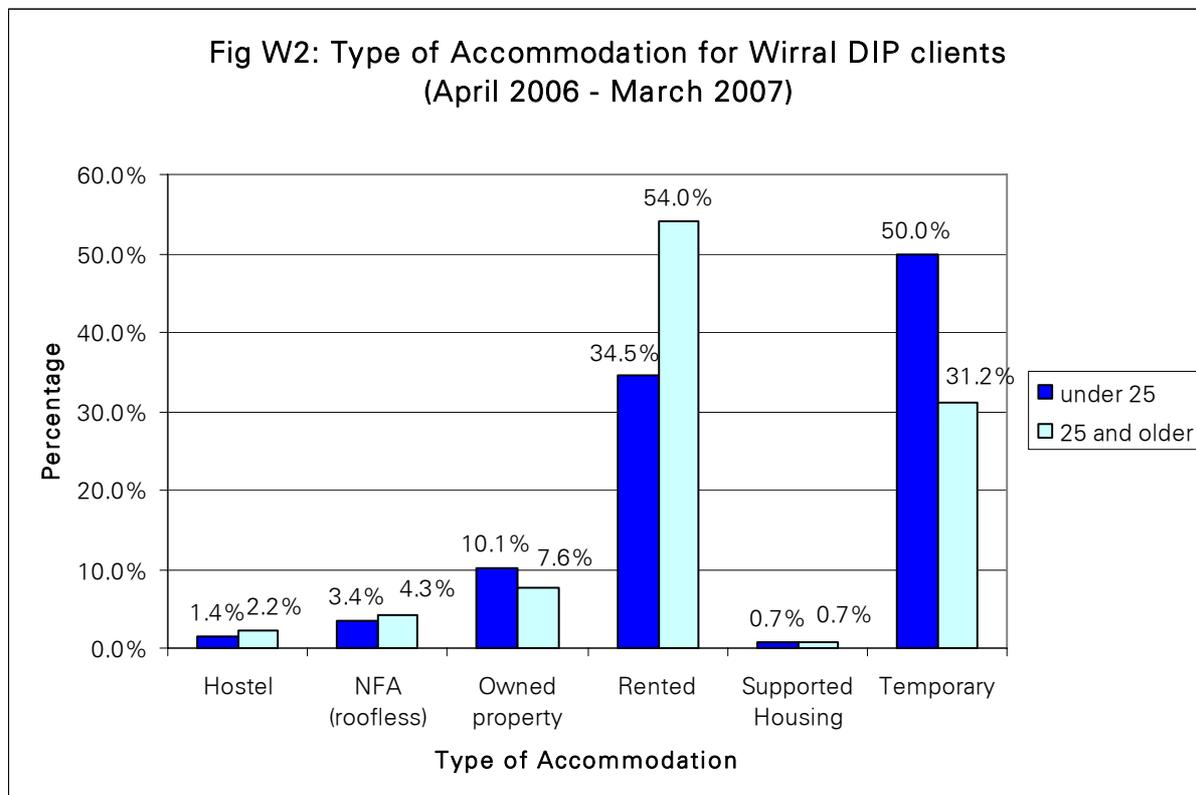
* Information regarding levels of alcohol consumption not provided for 28 under 25 year olds and 211 of those aged 25 and older

Levels of alcohol consumption were quite similar across the two age groups, with a large proportion of those assessed in both categories reporting high weekly alcohol intake. Almost

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half of the clients in both age groups reported consuming in excess of 25 units per week (44.3% of under 25 year olds, 47.0% in the 25 and older category).

Accommodation



There was a substantial difference in the accommodation profile of the two age groups. Just over half (54.0%) of the 25 and older group reported being in rented accommodation compared to a third (34.5%) of those under the age of 25. In contrast, half (50.0%) of those who were under 25 reported being in temporary accommodation, compared to just under a third (31.2%) of those aged 25 and older.

9.0 Summary & Recommendations

Age

Under 25 year olds made up a substantial proportion of the assessments in most D(A)AT areas in 2006/07 (between 20% and 27%). St Helens was the exception to this with under 25 year olds making up only 11% of all those assessed.

Recommendation: For all areas, including St Helens despite their small proportion, this demonstrates the importance of understanding the profile of this group as they represent a substantial proportion of DIP clients.

Gender

In all areas across Merseyside, the main point that emerged over the 12 month period was the proportion of young males coming into contact with DIP. Under 25 year olds assessed were more likely to be male than those in the 25 and older category.

Recommendation: DIP teams need to consider the special requirements that younger males might have when entering the programme. This may include channelling them into education, which they may have left relatively recently, or into training. Unfortunately information was not available on the old monitoring forms regarding employment status as this may have provided a guide to one area that the DIP teams could provide assistance with. Further investigation may also be needed into the reasons why there are such a low proportion of females coming through the DIP system.

Offending

There were differences in the offending patterns of the two age groups in all of the areas. Generally, those in the 25 and older category were more likely to have been arrested for shoplifting, while for most areas, under 25 year olds were more likely to have been arrested for burglary and MDA offences. The exceptions to this trend were St Helens and Wirral. Under 25 year olds were also more likely to have committed car theft in Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral than the other areas.

Recommendation: Different offending profiles may point to different motivation for offending, thus teams need to consider this when deciding whether to put individuals forward for DIP case management and how to fulfil their needs. Findings don't suggest that younger clients are less serious offenders, in fact the opposite appears to be true. Therefore, action must be taken with those individuals to minimise their impact on the community.

Drug Use

The most evident finding from the data on drug use across the five areas was the prevalence of cocaine amongst the under 25 year olds. This was particularly noticeable when studying the proportion who reported use of the drug in Liverpool (81.7%), Sefton (77.1%) and Wirral (79.7%). While the proportions were not as high in Knowsley (52.9%) and St Helens (50.0%), it is clear that cocaine is the main drug of choice amongst young offenders contacted by DIP in Merseyside. Levels of cannabis use were also high, again potentially indicating the recreational nature of drug use among this group. It should also be noted here that levels of both cocaine and cannabis use were much higher among the under 25 years old than those in the 25 and older category. Levels of crack and heroin use were generally much lower among under 25 year olds. In St Helens, despite rates of heroin use among under 25 year olds being slightly lower than those in the 25 and older group, they were much higher than in any of the other areas. This may to some degree be influenced by the large numbers of cocaine using offenders being drawn in by Test on Arrest in Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral, which means that the proportions of heroin and crack users appears lower.

Recommendation: Teams need to consider whether they have the services, links and interventions in place to attract and deal with young cocaine and cannabis users. They also need to consider whether they want to channel these users into DIP given their profile, or to just concentrate on their core group of “problematic” users.

For those aged 25 and older, the pattern was similar across the five Merseyside areas, with heroin and crack the main drugs of choice for this group, potentially indicating a more chaotic lifestyle. Nine in ten (90.4%) of those in the 25 and older category in St Helens reported using heroin, a far higher proportion than in any other area, but rates of crack use were much lower here than in all other areas. In all areas, apart from St Helens, rates of illicit methadone use were higher among clients in the 25 and older category.

Recommendation: All areas need to examine this, in particular Wirral, where rates of illicit methadone use among those in this category were far higher than in any other area.

Weekly Spend

Under 25 year olds generally reported spending less per week on drugs than their older counterparts in all areas across Merseyside. High level spending was particularly prevalent amongst those aged 25 and older in Knowsley, Liverpool and St Helens, with 40% or more in these areas reporting spending in excess of £250 per week on illicit drugs. Lower levels of expenditure among under 25 year olds again points to this group being less problematic than

their older counterparts. It is unclear whether, with these low levels of expenditure, these clients are offending to fund their drug use or whether it is one of a range of risk behaviours.

Recommendation: Teams need to consider the implications of taking these younger clients on to the DIP caseload to be able to effectively tackle the motivations for this range of risk behaviours.

[Injecting & Sharing](#)

There was a substantial difference in injecting behaviour between the age groups for all areas on Merseyside with the exception of St Helens. The other four areas displayed the same trend, that being that an extremely low proportion of under 25 year olds who had injected during their lifetime compared to their older counterparts. In St Helens however over half of all under 25s assessed (54.2%) had injected in their lifetime, almost matching the proportion for the 25 and older category (55.2%).

Recommendation: For St Helens this issue may require further investigation, as given the rate of heroin use amongst these under 25 years old and their high expenditure compared to under 25 year olds in the other areas, they may already be an extremely chaotic group despite their relatively young age.

In addition, a far greater proportion of under 25 year olds who have shared in their lifetime were currently sharing when compared to their older counterparts in all five areas. This may indicate that the harm reduction message may not be getting through effectively to the younger population, or has not yet had an impact.

Recommendation: There is a clear need for DIP teams to investigate new avenues to impart this information and to make sure it is relevant for these younger clients.

[Treatment](#)

For all areas apart from St Helens, under 25 year olds appear to be less “gripped” in treatment than those in the 25 and older category. We can see this from the lower proportions of clients who had been in treatment in the previous two years who were still engaged.

Recommendation: Teams need to ensure that services are appropriate to try to grip these younger people and address their needs. It is interesting to note that St Helens’ group of under 25 year olds appear to be gripped better and their profile is far more similar to those in the 25 and older clients in this area than in any other area.

Alcohol

There were higher proportions of daily alcohol users among those in the 25 and older category than among their younger counterparts in all of the Merseyside areas. Weekly alcohol users were more common in the younger age group in all areas, possibly indicative of the typical drinking culture that exists amongst young people. Large proportions of those assessed in both age groups were consuming relatively high levels of alcohol along with the intake of a variety of drugs. For those using opiates and drinking in particular, the risks of overdose are substantial. This is aside from the health risks that alcohol alone holds.

Recommendation: DIP teams should ensure that information regarding the dangers of combined use of alcohol and other drugs is readily available for clients, and that pathways for referral to alcohol specific treatment services are also available.

Accommodation

Rented accommodation was the most common form of accommodation across all areas for both age groups. The exception to this is Wirral, where half of the under 25 years old reported living in temporary accommodation, this needs to be investigated further by the DIP team.

Recommendation: Wirral should investigate whether this high proportion of clients in temporary accommodation has been evidenced due to recording practice or whether there is an ongoing issue with the stability of accommodation among under 25 year olds.

Overall

In the five D(A)AT's examined, with the exception of St Helens, we have seen that the profiles of those who are under 25 years old and are coming into contact with DIP services are similar. They are more likely to be male and predominantly cocaine users. It would appear that they are committing more serious crimes on the whole than their older counterparts. They are also spending less overall on drugs, display lower levels of injecting and sharing, are less likely to be in structured treatment and more likely to be in stable accommodation as a group than their older counterparts. St Helens profile is considerably different in that both age categories display similarities in all themes analysed. DIP teams should take account of these findings when deciding on the best way to offer the service to individuals, with the clear message being that there is considerable variation in the types of clients coming into contact with the criminal justice system. It is imperative that this is taken

into account to ensure that clients get the best possible advice and treatment for their particular needs.

10.0 References

Home Office (2002) *The substance misuse treatment needs of minority prisoner groups: women, young offenders and ethnic minorities*. Home Office Development and Practice Report 8. Home Office, London.

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