

About Substance Use: Substance use, which includes alcohol and other drugs, has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals. Alcohol is the most widely used drug in the UK. When faced with difficult times, people can turn to heavy use of drinking and drugs as a coping mechanism for anxiety and stress. Initially, substances may make a person feel more relaxed and sociable, but they have a broad and occasionally profound impact on the individual and community. They impact all areas and segments of the community, including families, schools, children, parents, neighbours, carers, businesses, employers, etc.

In Richmond and Wandsworth, the number of dependent drinkers is increasing every year and around 2/3 of these individuals are not connected to treatment services. Drug related deaths are also rising. The boroughs are experiencing greater numbers of deaths due to physical co-morbidities and end-of-life scenarios in ageing opiates and alcohol cohorts.