Alcohol Concern
NEWS Release

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NORTH-EAST TOPS BINGE-DRINKING LEAGUE
Summit called to tackle region's battle with booze

The north-east has more binge drinkers that any other region of the country - with around 1 in 3 men (29%) and 1 in 6 women (17%) regularly downing double the alcohol units advised by medical experts (which are 4 units a day for men and 3 units a day for women).

That's almost double the proportion of binge drinkers recorded across the whole of England - about 1 in 5 men and 1 in 10 women.

The startling figures are to be discussed at a high-level crisis summit organised by Alcohol Concern in Durham on Friday June 11th (see note below).
The summit has been called to discuss ways of turning the Government's new National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy into local action.

Comparative figures for binge drinkers in other regions are:
South East - 17% men/8% women;
London - 19% men/8% women;
East of England -15% men/6% women;
West Midlands - 18% men/8% women;
North West - 24% men/11% women
Means of cutting the crime and disorder, social exclusion and ill health caused by alcohol misuse will be high on the agenda. Key players from the local police and alcohol field will come together at the seminar – to discuss strategic priorities for the region - together with local politicians.

Alcohol Concern Chief Executive Eric Appleby, who will be speaking at the seminar, says: "The publication of the National Alcohol Strategy was a clear call for action, but will only lead to change if it there is commitment to this at a local level.

"It is absolutely vital to forge effective partnerships between a range of local bodies - everyone from councils, health and education authorities to the drinks trade - if we are to get to grips with the region's significant drink problems.

"The seminar will highlight the good work taking place in the region and elsewhere - so that this best practice can be shared among everyone with an interest in tackling alcohol misuse."

Statistics also show that average weekly alcohol consumption in the north-east is higher than in any other English region - for both men and women.

Men drink an average 20.8 units a week and women 9.4 units - compared with London at the other end of the scale where men are averaging 14.4 units and women 5.5 units.
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Note: The Durham summit on June 11th (at the Marriott Royal County Hotel) is a closed session - but interviews can be arranged via the press contacts above.