

A PLAN OF SUBSTANCE

**West Lothian's Multi-agency Strategy to
Tackle Substance Misuse
2005 > 2008**

West Lothian Drug Action Team

Press Release

West Lothian Drug Action Team Launch 3-year Strategy 'A Plan of Substance'

Following confirmation of funding arrangements, West Lothian Drug Action Team (DAT) have recently launched their 3-year strategy - "A Plan of Substance". The strategy outlines key achievements since the last strategy, along with the work that the team plan to do over the next 3 years to address drinking, drug use and smoking in West Lothian.

Cllr. David McGrouther, Chair of West Lothian Drug Action Team, commented: "People affected by substance misuse problems continue to be a high priority in West Lothian. We know that substance misuse can have a detrimental effect on individuals, families and communities. Our vision for West Lothian is to reduce tobacco, alcohol and drug use, to help individuals in families and communities live healthy lives, free from substance misuse."

The launch was hosted by Club Earth in Livingston, who are supportive of the West Lothian DAT vision to reduce smoking, drug use and excessive drinking. Commenting on the launch event, Joni McArthur, DAT Development Officer, said: "We wanted the event to be encouraging and challenging for practitioners and service planners. We produced a short film '*Partnership in Action*' showcasing some of the highlights of the work that has been done since the last strategy. We also outlined some of the key issues that currently face us in West Lothian and how we plan to deal with them over the next three years."

Mary Mulligan MSP for Linlithgow, officially launched the DAT strategy. Mary Mulligan gave an overview of the key achievements and challenges that face West Lothian in continuing to tackle excessive drinking, smoking and drug use.

West Lothian DAT's key achievements that feature in the strategy include:

- the development of an award-winning substance misuse cinema campaign
- the introduction of locality drug clinics to help reduce waiting times for treatment
- the allocation of additional funding to encourage more people to give up smoking
- specialist community support for people with alcohol problems

The Drug Action Team is committed to lowering the prevalence of tobacco, drug, alcohol and solvent use across local communities throughout West Lothian. West Lothian DAT will be involved in several initiatives including supporting the national ban on smoking in public places which, when implemented, will reduce the risks associated with passive smoking.

Some of the other initiatives that the DAT will take forward over the next three years include:

- Identifying the needs of ethnic minority and equality groups in developing substance misuse awareness campaigns and treatment services
- Meeting the needs of young carers
- Involving drug, alcohol and tobacco users in service planning and delivery
- Identifying and meeting the needs of persistent problem drinkers
- Investigating drug and alcohol related deaths to inform best practice
- Integrating drug, alcohol and smoking cessation services
- Providing effective smoking cessation support for low-income groups, young people and pregnant women
- Introducing integrity testing of retailers for tobacco and alcohol sales
- Strengthening joint working arrangements between neighbourhood response teams and treatment and support services

Cllr. McGrouther added: "To achieve our vision we will work together to plan and deliver services efficiently and effectively, so that people affected by substance misuse can get the help they need, when they need it."

If you would like a copy of the West Lothian Drug Action Team strategy, please contact WLDAT directly on 01506 774082 or email dat.admin@westlothian.gov.uk