



# Inequalities in victimisation:

alcohol, violence, and anti-social behaviour

An Institute of Alcohol Studies report

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# Contents

Executive summary	4
Introduction	5
Method	11
Results	18
Discussion	38
Conclusion	41



# Inequalities in victimisation: alcohol, violence, and anti-social behaviour

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# Executive summary

## Introduction

- The links between alcohol and violence, as well as alcohol and anti-social behaviour (ASB), are widely recognised.
- Less is understood about how experiences of alcohol-related violence and alcohol-related ASB are distributed across different socioeconomic groups.

## Methods

- This study used data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales from 2013/14-2017/18 to analyse this distribution.
- Socioeconomic group specific incidence and prevalence rates for alcohol-related violence (including domestic, stranger, and acquaintance violence) and alcohol-related ASB were created. Housing tenure, occupation, and household income were used as indicators of socioeconomic status (SES).

## Results

- Alcohol-related violence victimisation is disproportionately clustered in the lowest socioeconomic groups. Higher rates of alcohol-related domestic and acquaintance violence for lower socioeconomic groups are behind this pattern, with the most disadvantaged groups experiencing prevalence rates up to five times as high as the most advantaged group, and incidence rates as much as 14 times as high.<sup>1</sup>
- Lower socioeconomic groups are more likely to experience high frequency alcohol-related ASB; around half of those from the lowest socioeconomic groups who ever experienced this in the last year, experienced it every week or more often.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusions and recommendations

- Barriers to lower socioeconomic groups accessing support services must be removed; crucially, provision of publicly-funded domestic violence services must be improved.
- Causes of violence are complex, with no one resolution. However, population level action on alcohol price and availability has already been demonstrated to reduce violence levels. This must be coupled with a substantial increase in the availability across the population of alcohol treatment services, and increased access to alcohol interventions in primary care and emergency services settings. These measures together might disproportionately benefit those from economically disadvantaged groups.

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<sup>1</sup> For domestic violence, when measuring SES through housing tenure.

<sup>2</sup> Social renters (50.4%), those in households earning £19,999 and under (46%), and those unemployed (55.1%).



# Introduction

*'Inequalities are a matter of life and death, of health and sickness,  
of well-being and misery'  
– The Marmot Review<sup>3</sup>*

Whether it be health, social, or familial harms – the burden of alcohol harm is not felt evenly by all. Rates of alcohol-related deaths are highest in England's most deprived areas; for example, among men in 2017, there were 30.1 deaths per 100,000 males in the most deprived regions compared with 7.0 deaths per 100,000 males in the least deprived regions.<sup>4</sup> In London, 44% of all homeless people have alcohol support needs,<sup>5</sup> much higher than estimates of little over 1% in England's general adult population.<sup>6</sup>

These findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between alcohol use and harm; harms experienced are not influenced solely by how much alcohol a person uses. Consider a person's SES; despite drinking less on average than their more advantaged counterparts, people belonging to more disadvantaged socioeconomic groups experience higher levels of alcohol-related mortality and ill-health.<sup>7</sup> This health inequality – known as the alcohol harm paradox – has been well examined,<sup>8</sup> and many explanations for its existence have been put forward, including the idea that people drinking 'at extreme levels' might be concentrated in lower SES groups.<sup>9</sup>

The distribution across socioeconomic groups of other alcohol harms are less well examined; particularly alcohol-related violence and alcohol-related ASB. The links between alcohol and violence, and alcohol and ASB, are well-established, but it is not understood whether there are socioeconomic inequalities in who experiences these. This work will investigate this.

## Alcohol and violence

Alcohol features in violence in diverse ways. For example, violent acts – such as robbery – might be means to raise funds to buy alcohol.<sup>10</sup> Victims of violence have been shown to use alcohol to cope with their experiences.<sup>11</sup> While it is important to consider all the ways alcohol might be involved in violence, perhaps the most frequently discussed is violence perpetrated under the influence<sup>12</sup> – this is the definition of alcohol-related violence adopted in official statistics for England and Wales.<sup>13</sup>

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3 Marmot, M. and Bell, R. (2012) Fair society, healthy lives, Public health 126, p. 3.

4 Office for National Statistics (2018) Table 2: Alcohol-specific age-standardised rates of death per 100,000 population by deprivation quintile, deaths registered in England, 2011 to 2017 in Alcohol-specific deaths in the UK: liver diseases and the impact of deprivation in Alcohol-specific deaths in the UK: registered in 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/causesofdeath/bulletins/alcoholrelateddeathsintheunitedkingdom/registeredin2017>.

5 House of Commons Library (2018) Rough sleepers: access to services and support (England). Briefing Paper, Number 07698, 9 March 2018. p. 7.

6 Pryce, R., Buykx, P., Gray, L., Stone, T., Drummond, C. and Brennan, A. (2017) Estimates of alcohol dependence in England based on APMS 2014, including estimates of children living in a household with an adult with alcohol dependence. Prevalence, trends and amenability to treatment. London: Public Health England. p. vi.

7 Institute of Alcohol Studies (2014) Alcohol, Health inequalities and the harm paradox: why some groups face greater problems despite consuming less alcohol. London: Institute of Alcohol Studies.

8 Beard, E., Brown, J., West, R., Kaner, E., Meier, P., Boniface, S. and Michie, S. (2019) Associations between socio-economic factors and alcohol consumption: A population survey of adults in England, PLoS One 14:2, p.e0209442.; Katikireddi, S.V., Whitley, E., Lewsey, J., Gray, L. and Leyland, A.H. (2017) Socioeconomic status as an effect modifier of alcohol consumption and harm: analysis of linked cohort data, The Lancet Public Health 2:6, pp.e267-e276.; Beard, E., Brown, J., West, R., Angus, C., Brennan, A., Holmes, J., Kaner, E., Meier, P. and Michie, S. (2016) Deconstructing the alcohol harm paradox: a population based survey of adults in England, PLoS one, 11:9, p.e0160666.

9 Lewer, D., Meier, P., Beard, E., Boniface, S. and Kaner, E. (2016) Unravelling the alcohol harm paradox: a population-based study of social gradients across very heavy drinking thresholds, BMC public health 16:1, p. 599.

10 Boles, S.M. and Miotto, K. (2003) Substance abuse and violence: A review of the literature, Aggression and violent behavior 8:2, pp. 159-160.

11 Miller, B.A., Wilsnack, S.C. and Cunradi, C.B. (2000) Family violence and victimization: treatment issues for women with alcohol problems, Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research 24:8, pp.1287-1297.

12 Boles, S.M. and Miotto, K. (2003) Substance abuse and violence: A review of the literature, Aggression and violent behavior 8:2, pp. 159-160.

13 Office for National Statistics (2019) The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Retrieved: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/thenatureofviolentcrimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>.

Repeated studies across a variety of settings have identified a link between alcohol consumption and perpetrating violence. Reviewing literature concerning violence and substance use, Boles and Miotto find alcohol to be 'the substance most frequently cited as being related to aggressive and violent behavior', noting repeated findings of 'alcohol use by the perpetrator or victim immediately [preceding] many violent events'.<sup>14</sup> Table 1 summarises this body of research.

*Table 1: Summary of research examining alcohol and violence*

RESEARCH DESIGN	EXAMPLE
RESEARCH SUGGESTING ASSOCIATION	
National surveys	In England and Wales in 2017/18, in almost 2 of every 5 (39%) violent crimes reported to the Crime Survey for England and Wales, the victim believed the perpetrator to be under the influence of alcohol. <sup>15</sup>
Criminal justice system data	Interviews with young men held in the Scottish prison system found many reported 'that alcohol intoxication escalated violent incidents as much as being the cause of them'. <sup>16</sup>
Health service data	Link between assault injury presentation at emergency departments and victims' level of intoxication found; suggested to 'arise because aggression and loss of judgment induced by alcohol in the victims prolongs violence...' <sup>17</sup>
Studies in the night-time environment	Interviews with young men who have taken part in bar violence have shown they considered alcohol to contribute to their violence, by making them '...less aware of risks, more willing to take risks, more stimulated, more emotional and more aggressive'. <sup>18</sup>
RESEARCH SUGGESTING CAUSATION	
Meta-analyses	<p>Meta-analysis studies over the last 30 years have repeatedly demonstrated a causal relationship between alcohol consumption and violence, eg a meta-analysis of '30 experimental studies...[indicates] that alcohol does indeed cause aggression'.<sup>19</sup></p> <p>Recently, a meta-meta-analysis combined many of these meta-analyses to confirm that alcohol consumption had a 'medium-size' effect on violence perpetration.<sup>20</sup></p>
Longitudinal studies	Research tracking participants' symptoms of alcohol dependence and violent offending between ages 17 and 30 found 'a causal association between alcohol misuse and violent offending/ victimization and [intimate partner violence] perpetration, with estimates suggesting that alcohol use disorder accounted for approximately 4.6–9.3%' of this violence. <sup>21</sup>

14 Boles, S.M. and Miotto, K. (2003) Substance abuse and violence: A review of the literature. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 8:2, pp. 161, 160.

15 Office for National Statistics (2019) The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Retrieved: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/thenatureofviolentcrimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>.

16 McKinlay, W., Forsyth, A.J. and Khan, F. (2009) *Alcohol and Violence Among Young Male Offenders in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Prison Service, 5. p. v.

17 Shepherd J. (1998) Emergency room research on links between alcohol and violent injury. *Addiction*. 93: 1299.

18 Graham, K. and Wells, S. (2003) 'Somebody's gonna get their head kicked in tonight!' Aggression among young males in bars—a question of values?, *British Journal of Criminology* 43:3, pp.546.

19 Bushman, B.J. and Cooper, H.M. (1990) Effects of alcohol on human aggression: An integrative research review. *Psychological bulletin*, 107(3), p.341.

20 Duke, A.A., Smith, K.M., Oberleitner, L., Westphal, A. and McKee, S.A. (2018) Alcohol, drugs, and violence: A meta-meta-analysis. *Psychology of violence*, 8(2), p.241.

21 Boden, J.M., Fergusson, D.M. and Horwood, L.J. (2012) Alcohol misuse and violent behavior: Findings from a 30-year longitudinal study. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 122(1-2), p.135.

Alcohol has been linked not just to the broader category of violence, but to different types of violent acts, as well as to ASB. Population level studies have repeatedly linked alcohol consumption levels to the rates of many types of violence, including homicide, sexual assault,<sup>22</sup> and domestic violence.<sup>23</sup> Strong associations have also been identified between alcohol consumption by perpetrators and specific types of violence, and ASB, detailed in Table 2.

*Table 2: Alcohol consumption and violence/disorder types*

VIOLENCE TYPE	ASSOCIATION IDENTIFIED
Domestic	<p>An evidence summary of case-control and meta-analysis studies of alcohol use and domestic violence concluded: 'we have reached the point where we should conclude that heavy drinking is a contributing cause of violence...This assertion does not mean that the presence of alcohol is the only or even the primary determinant of whether violence will occur... it is clear that alcohol contributes to violence in some people under some circumstances.'<sup>24</sup></p> <p>Similarly, a summary of evidence on causes of intimate partner violence defined alcohol as an influencing factor on intimate partner violence, noting 'Heavy alcohol consumption by men (and often women) is associated with intimate partner violence if not consistently.'<sup>25</sup></p> <p>Estimates of proportions of perpetrators drinking at the time of these assaults ranging from 25% to 73% have been presented.<sup>26</sup></p>
Stranger	<p>More than a third of all alcohol-related violent incidents reported to the 2000 British Crime Survey occurred between strangers.<sup>27</sup></p> <p>Analysis of US national crime survey data showed that an average 31% of stranger violence incidents were alcohol-related.<sup>28</sup> Further, analysing alcohol problems and participation in stranger or partner violence amongst college students, Cogan and Ballinger found 'Men with alcohol problems were more likely than other men to commit violence toward strangers...'<sup>29</sup></p> <p>In a similar vein, many have identified associations between on-trade alcohol availability and violence. Analysis of alcohol outlet density in Scotland in 2018 found rates of violence 'were consistently and significantly higher in areas with more alcohol outlets. This relationship was found for total outlets, on-sales outlets and off-sales outlets.'<sup>30</sup> The total capacity of alcohol outlets in Cardiff's entertainment district was found to be directly proportional to the number of serious violence incidents in this setting.<sup>31</sup></p>

22 Graham, K. and Livingston, M. (2011) The relationship between alcohol and violence—population, contextual and individual research approaches, *Drug and Alcohol review* 30:5, p.454.

23 Leonard, K.E. (2005) Alcohol and intimate partner violence: when can we say that heavy drinking is a contributing cause of violence?, *Addiction* 100:4, pp.423-424.

24 Leonard, K.E. (2005) Alcohol and intimate partner violence: when can we say that heavy drinking is a contributing cause of violence?, *Addiction* 100:4, pp.423-424.

25 Jewkes, R. (2002) Intimate partner violence: causes and prevention, *The Lancet* 359:9315, p. 1425.

26 Gilchrist E., Johnson R., Talriti R., Weston S., Beech A., and Kebbell M. (2003) Domestic Violence offenders: characteristics and offending related needs, Findings, 217. London: Home Office.

27 Budd, T., Tedstone, C. and Curry, D. (2003) Alcohol-related assault: findings from the British Crime Survey. London: Home Office. p. iv.

28 Greenfeld, L.A. (1998) Alcohol and crime. An Analysis of National Data on the Prevalence of Alcohol Involvement in Crime. Washington DC.

29 Cogan, R. and Ballinger III, B.C. (2006) Alcohol problems and the differentiation of partner, stranger, and general violence, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 21:7, p. 924.

30 Alcohol Focus Scotland and CRESH (2018) Alcohol Outlet Availability and Harm in Scotland. Glasgow: Alcohol Focus Scotland. p. 8.

31 Warburton, A. L., and Shepherd, J.P. (2004) An evaluation of the effectiveness of new policies designed to prevent and manage violence through an interagency approach. Welsh Assembly Government, Wales Office of Research and Development.



ASB	<p>Survey work has confirmed it is common for people to be impacted by disorder caused by others' drinking; almost half (49%) of respondents to a survey taken in North West England had been kept awake by drunken noise, while 43% had been annoyed by drinkers vomiting or urinating in the street.<sup>32</sup></p> <p>In the year ending September 2017, the majority of the 13,000 Penalty Notices for Disorder issued in England and Wales for non-notifiable offences related to drunk and disorderly behaviour.<sup>33</sup></p>
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However, what is also clear is that the relationships between alcohol and violence are not straightforward but mediated by surroundings and society.<sup>34, 35</sup> Is it possible this includes the influence of socioeconomic factors?

## Is SES a risk factor for alcohol-related violence?

There are three reasons we might suspect alcohol-related violence to be unevenly distributed between different socioeconomic groups:

### 1. The link between alcohol consumption and violence is impacted by social surroundings

Firstly, whilst alcohol's various cognitive effects may make violence more likely,<sup>36</sup> sociological research has repeatedly shown that individual's responses to intoxicants can be affected by their surroundings and society more broadly.<sup>37</sup> For example, interviews with men who took part in violence in bars revealed that while they felt alcohol contributed to their violence – making them more aggressive, more likely to take risks – they also suggested they were influenced by a 'positive endorsement of aggression in bars'.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Graham et al present a schema for alcohol-related violence, highlighting the influence of drinking contexts (eg on trade vs off trade) and the 'societal/cultural framing of intoxication and aggression'.<sup>39</sup> As settings for drinking occasions will likely differ between socioeconomic groups (for example, it has been shown that off-licensed premises are more densely clustered in more deprived areas<sup>40</sup>), it is possible we will see differences in violence levels between socioeconomic groups generated from this.

### 2. Violence is unevenly distributed in the population

Criminologists recognise that the risk of violence differs across society. Men are more likely to experience this than women (although the reverse is true for domestic violence). Young people are (in general) more at risk than the old.<sup>41</sup> And most relevant here, risk of violent victimisation is not uniform across socioeconomic groups.<sup>42</sup> This was shown, perhaps most famously, in the now renowned Islington Crime Survey of 1986. This work showed the very different realities of crime victimisation between socioeconomic groups within one London borough.<sup>43</sup> These findings have been echoed more recently, in analysis of data from the British Crime Survey between 2002/03 and

32 Institute of Alcohol Studies (2015) Alcohol's harm to others. London: Institute of Alcohol Studies.

33 Office for National Statistics (2018) Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2017. London: Office for National Statistics. p. 58.

34 Brown, W. and Leonard, K.E. (2017) Does Alcohol Cause Violence and Aggression?. The Wiley Handbook of Violence and Aggression, pp.1-13.

35 Boles, S.M. and Miotto, K. (2003) Substance abuse and violence: A review of the literature, Aggression and violent behavior 8:2, pp. 155-174.

36 Boles, S.M. and Miotto, K. (2003) Substance abuse and violence: A review of the literature, Aggression and violent behavior 8:2, pp. 159-160.

37 Zinberg, N.E. (1984) Drug, set, and setting: The basis for controlled intoxicant use. New Haven: Yale University Press.

38 Graham, K. and Wells, S. (2003) 'Somebody's gonna get their head kicked in tonight!' Aggression among young males in bars—a question of values?, British Journal of Criminology 43:3, pp.546.

39 Graham, K., Leonard, K.E., Room, R., Wild, T.C., Pihl, R.O., Bois, C. and Single, E. (1998) Current directions in research on understanding and preventing intoxicated aggression, Addiction 93:5, p. 659.

40 Shortt, N.K., Tisch, C., Pearce, J., Mitchell, R., Richardson, E.A., Hill, S. and Collin, J. (2015) A cross-sectional analysis of the relationship between tobacco and alcohol outlet density and neighbourhood deprivation, BMC public health 15:1, p.1014.

41 Green, S. (2012) Crime, victimisation and vulnerability. In Handbook of victims and victimology, ed S Walklate. Cullompton: Willan. pp. 97, 95.

42 Green, S. (2012) Crime, victimisation and vulnerability. In Handbook of victims and victimology, ed S Walklate. Cullompton: Willan. p. 102.; Dignan, J. (2004) Understanding victims and restorative justice. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press. p. 19.

43 Jones, T., MacLean, B. and Young, J. (1986) The Islington crime survey: crime, victimization and policing in inner-city London. Aldershot: Gower.

2007/08 showing lower household income to increase a person's risk of violent victimisation.<sup>44</sup> These uneven distributions of violence suggest we might see similar inequalities in alcohol-related violence victimisation.

### **3. Research has identified examples of socioeconomic inequalities in alcohol-related violence and ASB**

There is an emerging body of evidence that indicates a relationship between SES and alcohol-related violence, though there is disagreement on whether advantaged or disadvantaged people are at greater risk. Home Office research using the nationally-representative Crime Survey for England and Wales examined incidents of alcohol-related assaults in the years 1996, 1998 and 2000 and found that 'adults who were classified as unemployed had far higher rates of alcohol-related assault than those who were in employment/self-employed or economically inactive...'<sup>45</sup> Similarly, research analysing Scottish hospital data for patients from 2001 to 2006 found alcohol-related facial injuries to 'disproportionately [affect] young men from socioeconomically deprived areas.'<sup>46</sup> Further, in an analysis of alcohol's harms to others in Wales, a significant association between deprivation and experience of violent harm as a result of another's drinking was identified – as was disrupted sleep due to another's drinking – overall concluding that such harms to others 'place a large, although unequal burden on adults in Wales.'<sup>47</sup>

However, analysis of Australian police data found the reverse, that higher SES neighbourhoods were 'associated with greater alcohol-related crime at the community level' (including violence, sexual assault, criminal damage, and ASB).<sup>48</sup> The Australian study faced limitations as it used police-recorded crime statistics (which the criminology literature regards as weaker than survey and hospital admissions data)<sup>49</sup> and its sub-national sample of only rural communities may not be generalisable. Yet that does not mean that we can confidently conclude that socioeconomic disadvantage is a risk factor for alcohol-related violence. The other studies have limitations of their own. Perhaps most importantly, none of them disaggregate domestic, stranger, and other violence types. This is a substantial limitation; considering the importance of the 'societal/cultural framing of intoxication and aggression'<sup>50</sup> already outlined, it is quite possible these distinct violence types have differences in victim profiles. While some international work has attempted to understand how alcohol-related ASB is experienced by different SES groups, findings are mixed<sup>51</sup> and this is yet to be examined in England and Wales. It is clear further investigation is needed.

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44 Brennan, I.R., Moore, S.C. and Shepherd, J.P. (2010) Risk factors for violent victimisation and injury from six years of the British Crime Survey, *International Review of Victimology* 17:2, pp.209-229.

45 Budd, T., Tedstone, C. and Curry, D. (2003) *Alcohol-related assault: findings from the British Crime Survey*. London: Home Office. p. 9.

46 Conway, D.I., McMahon, A.D., Graham, L., Snedker, S., McCluskey, K., Devlin, M. and Goodall, C. (2010) The scar on the face of Scotland: deprivation and alcohol-related facial injuries in Scotland, *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* 68:3, p.644.

47 Quigg, Z., Bellis, M.A., Grey, H., Webster, J. and Hughes, K. (2019) Alcohol's harms to others in Wales, United Kingdom: nature, magnitude and associations with mental well-being, *Addictive behaviors reports* 9, p.100162.

48 Breen, C., Shakeshaft, A., Slade, T., Love, S., D'este, C. and Mattick, R.P. (2011) Do community characteristics predict alcohol-related crime?, *Alcohol and Alcoholism* 46:4, p. 464.

49 Reiner, R. (2007) *Law and order: an honest citizen's guide to crime and control*. Cambridge: Polity.

50 Graham, K., Leonard, K.E., Room, R., Wild, T.C., Pihl, R.O., Bois, C. and Single, E. (1998) Current directions in research on understanding and preventing intoxicated aggression, *Addiction* 93:5, p. 659.

51 As outlined in Karriker-Jaffe, K.J. and Greenfield, T.K. (2014) Gender differences in associations of neighbourhood disadvantage with alcohol's harms to others: A cross-sectional study from the USA. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 33(3), pp.296-303.

## What is left to know?

The studies presented suggest an association between lower SES and higher rates of alcohol-related violence victimisation, but their results are mixed and there is limited recent evidence from the UK. Research is needed that disaggregates different types of violence and ASB and uses a nationally-representative source of data to address the limitations of previous studies to corroborate any association. It is necessary to understand whether any association holds for different types of alcohol-related violence, such as domestic or stranger violence – this is knowledge that will be essential in redressing any inequalities identified.



# Method

## Research design

This research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. **How is alcohol-related violence (and subtypes of domestic, stranger and acquaintance violence) distributed across socioeconomic groups in England and Wales?**
2. **How is alcohol-related ASB distributed across socioeconomic groups in England and Wales?**

To answer these questions, data were drawn from a five-year period to create rates that tell us how many a) victims and b) incidents of this violence and ASB there were in different socioeconomic groups.

## Data

To achieve this, a sample representative of the population, along with data on their victimisation and SES, was needed. All of this is provided by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).<sup>52</sup> This is a face-to-face survey presented every year to more than 35,000 adults.<sup>53</sup> Respondents are asked about their experiences of crime and ASB in the last year, as well as about their employment, income and housing.<sup>54</sup>

There are many strengths to the data gathered from this survey:

- **Surveys are generally a stronger measure of crime than other sources like police data:** Quite apart from philosophical discussions about what crime *is*,<sup>55</sup> crime is hard to measure. Take police-recorded crime statistics for example – crimes recorded here must be detected by police or reported to them, as well as recorded by police. Police detection depends in part on resources – differences in the volume of crimes detected between forces could easily be due to differences in how they allocate their resources, rather than different ‘true’ crime rates. Similarly, reporting by the public is influenced by a range of external factors; eg high-profile cases or public information campaigns might lead to a spike in reports of a given crime type.<sup>56</sup> Finally, police recording practices can vary between forces and over time – indeed, reporting from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services has recently revealed that only three of all forces audited had ‘accurately recorded complaints of rape’ between 2016 and 2019.<sup>57</sup> Surveys improve on the limitations of police-recorded crime data, as these remove many of the barriers to reporting and recording discussed – for example, concerns a person may have that an incident is too trivial to report to the police.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, for these reasons, police-recorded crime statistics are now no longer considered National Statistics in the UK, and instead the CSEW is used.<sup>59</sup>

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52 This work was produced using statistical data from ONS. The use of the ONS statistical data in this work does not imply the endorsement of the ONS in relation to the interpretation or analysis of the statistical data. This work uses research datasets which may not exactly reproduce National Statistics aggregates.

53 Office for National Statistics (2018) User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales. London: Office for National Statistics. p.3.

54 Office for National Statistics (2018) User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales. London: Office for National Statistics. p.3.

55 Reiner, R. (2007) Law and order: an honest citizen’s guide to crime and control. Cambridge: Polity.

56 Reiner, R. (2007) Law and order: an honest citizen’s guide to crime and control. Cambridge: Polity.

57 Barr, C. (2019) Thousands of rape reports inaccurately recorded by police. Retrieved: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/sep/19/thousands-of-reports-inaccurately-recorded-by-police>.

58 Reiner, R. (2007) Law and order: an honest citizen’s guide to crime and control. Cambridge: Polity. p. 41.

59 UK Statistics Authority (2014) Assessment of compliance with the code of practice for official statistics: statistics on crime in England and Wales. Assessment Report, 268.

- **It contains data on multiple offence categories:** Hospital data have been used in other research as a measure of violence levels.<sup>60</sup> This measure, like surveys, addresses many of the limitations of police-recorded data (for example, presentations at hospitals are unlikely to be influenced by public information campaigns or news reports in the way that reports to police might be). However, hospital records do not include information about perpetrators that the CSEW does; the survey records whether violent incidents experienced are domestic, stranger or acquaintance violence. Hospital data also offer no insight into alcohol-related ASB.
- **The CSEW is nationally representative:** The large sample size and survey weighting mean that CSEW data are nationally representative of England and Wales' adult population. This means findings can be generalized to the general population.
- **Data from the CSEW is used in official government statistics, as well as by the wider research community:** Data drawn from the CSEW form official national crime statistics;<sup>61</sup> work based on this same data will be in a comparable form and able to inform policy. Similarly, these data are regularly used by the wider criminology and social policy research community;<sup>62</sup> working with these data ensures this research can contribute to a growing body of literature on this subject.

## Procedure

Data from adult respondents to the CSEW are held across two datasets: the Victim Form dataset and the Non-Victim Form dataset. The Victim Form dataset contains data on instances of crime including if an incident was violence, what type of violence it was – domestic, stranger, or acquaintance – and if it was alcohol-related. The Non-Victim Form dataset contains data about the people surveyed, with each row relating to a respondent; it includes information on their SES and their experiences of alcohol-related violence ASB. Each row of Table 3 shows which variables relating to this work are contained in each dataset.

*Table 3: Measures used in each CSEW dataset*

	NON-VICTIM FORM DATASET	VICTIM FORM DATASET
SES	Housing tenure, total household income, and occupation of respondent	None
Alcohol-related violence and sub-types (eg domestic)	None	Measure indicating what type of violence an incident was (domestic, stranger, or acquaintance) and another showing whether the offender was under influence of alcohol
Alcohol-related ASB	Measures of whether and how often respondent experienced alcohol-related ASB last year.	None

60 Sivarajasingam, V., Wells, J.P., Moore, S., Page, N., Morgan, P., Matthews, K. and Shepherd, J.P. (2010) Violence in England and Wales in 2010: An accident and emergency perspective. Violence and Society Research Group: Cardiff.

61 UK Statistics Authority (2014) Assessment of compliance with the code of practice for official statistics: statistics on crime in England and Wales. Assessment Report, 268.

62 Walby, S. and Towers, J. (2018) Untangling the concept of coercive control: Theorizing domestic violent crime, Criminology & Criminal Justice 18:1, pp.7-28.

The two datasets needed to be merged to answer our research questions. Each row of the Victim Form dataset – an incident or crime series – contains a 'Case identifier' number, which can be matched to a single respondent in the Non-Victim Form dataset. This made it possible to merge the files to attach information on each respondent – like measures of their SES – to each incident reported in the Victim Form dataset.

While alcohol-related violence makes up a significant proportion of all violent incidents reported every year in England and Wales,<sup>63</sup> when we zoom in and disaggregate incidents of this violence by type (domestic, stranger, or acquaintance) and by socioeconomic group of the victim, we start working with smaller totals. So, to improve the reliability this work, we combined the data from five years of the survey – 2013/2014 to 2017/2018.<sup>64</sup> The final sample totalled 174,178.

Weighting variables were used 'to adjust for possible non-response bias to ensure the sample reflects the profile of the general population' meaning the data and statistics presented below are nationally representative.<sup>65</sup>

## Measures

SES: three variables – total household income; housing tenure; and occupation of respondent – were used. The analysis was repeated for each of these SES measures. These were chosen as past research has shown that individual and household measures are needed to assess how victimisation and SES interact<sup>66</sup>. These different indicators of SES used together go some way to balance any limitation of one measure used alone.

**Table 4: Total household income**

	PERCENT
£19,999 and under	33.8
£20,000 to £39,999	30.8
£40,000 and up	35.4
Total	100.0

Base = whole sample, excluding uncategorisable responses marked as missing (n=174178-22616, unweighted). Response categories condensed from 7 categories (Under £10,000, £10,000-£14,999, £15,000-£19,999, £20,000-£29,999, £30,000-£39,999, £40,000 to £49,999 and £50,000 or more) to improve statistical power

63 Office for National Statistics (2019) The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. Retrieved: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/thenatureofviolentcrimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>. Accessed 23 September 2019.

64 Office for National Statistics (2015) Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2013-2014. [data collection]. 2nd Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 7619, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-7619-2>; Office for National Statistics (2016) Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2014-2015. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 7889, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-7889-1>; Office for National Statistics (2017) Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2015-2016. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8140, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8140-1>; Office for National Statistics (2018) Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2016-2017. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8321, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8321-1>; Office for National Statistics (2019) Crime Survey for England and Wales 2017-2018. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8464, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8464-1>

65 Office for National Statistics (2018) User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales. London: Office for National Statistics. p.5.

66 Towers, J. (2013) Economic Inequality and Intimate Partner Violence Against Women: An Analysis of the British Crime Survey 2008/09. Lancaster University (United Kingdom).



**Table 5: Housing tenure of respondents**

	PERCENT
Social	15.0
Private	22.1
Owners	62.9
Total	100.0

Base = whole sample, excluding uncategorisable responses marked as missing (n=174178-929, unweighted).

**Table 6: Occupation of respondents**

	PERCENT
Never worked or long term unemployed	4.1
Routine and manual	35.6
Intermediate	24.0
Managerial and professional	36.3
Total	100.0

Base = whole sample, excluding those marked missing (n=174178-6744, unweighted). Never worked or long term unemployed is described as 'unemployed' throughout this work. Details of the occupations included in these categories can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatisticssocioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010>

Violence: In the CSEW, incidents of violence are described to interviewers, and respondents are asked whether:

*As far as you know, at the time it happened was the person/were ANY of the people who did it under the influence of drink?<sup>67</sup>*

Reports are then coded by trained crime survey coders as domestic violence (wounding and assaults that involve partners, ex-partners, other relatives or household members), stranger violence (wounding and assaults in which the victim did not have any information about the offender(s), or did not know and had never seen the offender(s) before), or acquaintance violence (wounding and assaults in which the victim knew one or more of the offenders, at least by sight; it does not include domestic violence). The variable 'Whether offender was under the influence of drink' indicates if incidents were alcohol-related (Table 7), and 'CSEW Type of violence' indicates whether incidents were classed as domestic, stranger or acquaintance violence (Table 8).

**Table 7: Whether offender was under the influence of drink**

	PERCENT
Yes	30.3
No	49.0
Don't know	20.7
Total	100.0

Base = sub-sample of victim form sample (item presented to participants for the first three incidents or series of incidents they describe only), excluding incidents where the victim was unable to comment on the perpetrator, or the perpetrator was 10 years of age or younger (n=51037-35722, unweighted). In analysis those responding 'Don't know' were also marked as missing.

<sup>67</sup> Presented here as one item, but in the survey, respondents would have been asked whether the person or persons were under the influence, dependent on their responses to previous items.

**Table 8: CSEW Type of violence**

	PERCENT
Domestic	20.7
Stranger	35.1
Acquaintance	44.2
Total	100.0

Base = whole victim form sample, excluding those marked missing (non-violent incidents, and incidents not defined as domestic, stranger, or acquaintance violence) (n=51037-47641, unweighted)

ASB: Respondents described incidents of ASB they experienced or witnessed in the last year to interviewers, in response to the item 'What sorts of ASB have you personally experienced or witnessed in your local area in the last 12 months?'<sup>68</sup>. From these unprompted responses, interviewers coded what types of ASB the respondent experienced, if any. Interviewers then asked how frequently they experienced this type of ASB.<sup>69</sup>

**Table 9: Alcohol-related ASB experienced in last 12 months, among those who experienced ASB**

	PERCENT
Not experienced	69.6
Experienced	30.4
Total	100.0

Base: non-victim form dataset, sub-sample who indicated experiencing any ASB in last 12 months, with some responses to this question in the years 2013/14 to 2016/17 removed from the data due to a quality issue identified by ONS (unweighted n=48673).

**Table 10: Frequency of experiencing or witnessing alcohol-related ASB in last 12 months, among those who experienced alcohol-related ASB**

	PERCENT
Weekly or more	35.2
Less than weekly	64.8
Total	100.0

Base: non-victim form dataset, sub-sample of respondents, all of whom reported experiencing or witnessing alcohol-related ASB in the last 12 months, with some responses to this question in the years 2013/14 to 2016/17 removed from the data due to a quality issue identified by ONS (unweighted n=11386). Converted to a binary variable for this analysis.

## Analysis

Prevalence rates and incidence rates are often used to assess levels of crime and ASB. An incidence rate refers to the number of incidents experienced in the last year per 1,000 people. A prevalence rate refers to the percentage of a population that experienced at least one incident in the last year. In this study, we combined five years' worth of data to improve the reliability of our findings; in each wave of this data, respondents were asked about their experiences in the last year only (see Figure 1). Data were analysed using SPSS v24.

68 Office for National Statistics (2016) 2016-17 Crime Survey for England and Wales Questionnaire (from April 2016). London: Office for National Statistics. p. 186.

69 Respondents were asked details, including this frequency item, regarding up to two of the types of ASB they reported in the survey, and if they reported more than two types, the two they were asked about were selected at random.

Figure 1: Waves of data in study



### *How is alcohol-related violence distributed across socioeconomic groups in England and Wales?*

Prevalence and incidence rates for alcohol-related violence – including for subtypes domestic, stranger, and acquaintance – were created for each socioeconomic group in every socioeconomic measure used. These measures are useful to view together as one victim may experience more than one incident. The estimated populations of different socioeconomic groups in Tables 4, 5 and 6 were used to create these. Alongside this, chi-squared tests were performed between SES and ever experiencing alcohol-related violence in the past year.

### *How is alcohol-related ASB distributed across socioeconomic groups in England and Wales?*

Prevalence rates for alcohol-related ASB were created for each socioeconomic group in every socioeconomic measure used. The estimated populations of different socioeconomic groups in Tables 4, 5 and 6 were used to create these. Following this, the percentage of victims of alcohol-related ASB within each socioeconomic group who experienced this weekly or more often was calculated. This created something similar to an incidence rate, as it gives us an indication of where repeat victims are concentrated. Alongside this, chi-squared tests were performed between SES and experiencing high frequency alcohol-related ASB, amongst victims of alcohol-related ASB.

## Limitations

Survey methods do greatly improve on data sources like police data as discussed, but their limitations should be considered when interpreting results. As the CSEW is a household survey, there are certain populations who will not be included – such as people who are homeless and people who are in prison<sup>70</sup>. The figures for alcohol-related violence reported to the CSEW are also likely to be an underestimate. Respondents describe up to six incidents (or series of incidents) of crime to interviewers, and while previous capping that caused substantial under-counting of repeat victimisation has now been removed,<sup>71, 72</sup> respondents are only asked whether they believe their assailant was under the influence of alcohol for the first three incidents or series of incidents they report. As a victimisation survey, categorising which incidents are alcohol-related is based on the victim's report, rather than any clinical measure such as BAC. Further, while three measures for SES are used here, to go some way to reduce limitations of any one measure, there remain some considerations. A person's housing tenure, income, or occupation only show so much about someone's resources and environment – as has been demonstrated in work combining measures to understand a person's profile more fully.<sup>73</sup>

70 Office for National Statistics (2018) User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales. London: Office for National Statistics.

71 Walby, S., Towers, J. and Francis, B. (2015) Is violent crime increasing or decreasing? A new methodology to measure repeat attacks making visible the significance of gender and domestic relations, *British Journal of Criminology* 56:6.

72 ONS. 2019. Improving victimisation estimates derived from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

73 Boniface, S., Lewer, D., Hatch, S.L. and Goodwin, L. 2020. Associations between interrelated dimensions of socio-economic status, higher risk drinking and mental health in South East London: A cross-sectional study. *PloS one*, 15(2), p.e0229093.



The measures used here are an entry point to understand the spread of this violence and ASB, but certainly future research will need to delve further into the shape of any patterns found.

# Results

## Alcohol-related violence

### 1. Across the whole sample, experiences of alcohol-related violence were uncommon.

Less than one in a hundred (0.87%) people experienced this in the last year, and there were 19.1 incidents per 1000 of the population.

### 2. People from the lowest socioeconomic groups are the most likely to have experienced alcohol-related violence in the last year

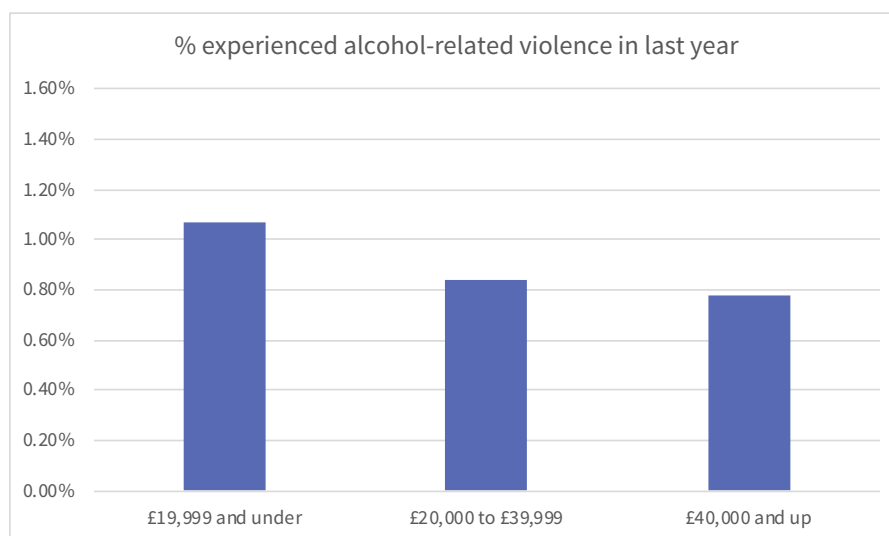
Overall in the general population alcohol-related violence was uncommon, but there were patterns across SES groups. Measuring SES by a household's income or a person's occupation, we found that a greater proportion of individuals from the lowest socioeconomic groups experienced alcohol-related violence in the last year compared with any more advantaged group. More than 1 in 100 (1.07%) of those living in households earning £19,999 and under were victims of alcohol-related violence in the last year, compared to only 0.78% of those earning £40,000 and above (see Table 11, Figure 2). Of those who are unemployed, 1.01% experienced this violence in the last year, while 0.64% of those in managerial or professional occupations did (see Table 11, Figure 3). Using a person's housing to assess their SES, we found that those in the most advantaged group – people who own their home – experienced a markedly lower prevalence of this violence than those in lower socioeconomic groups. 1.53% of private renters and 1.28% of social renters were victims of alcohol-related violence in the last year; a prevalence rate almost three times, and twice as high as owners (0.52%), respectively (see Table 11, Figure 4). These associations between SES and the prevalence of alcohol-related violence victimisation were statistically significant.

**Table 11: Prevalence of alcohol-related violence by SES**

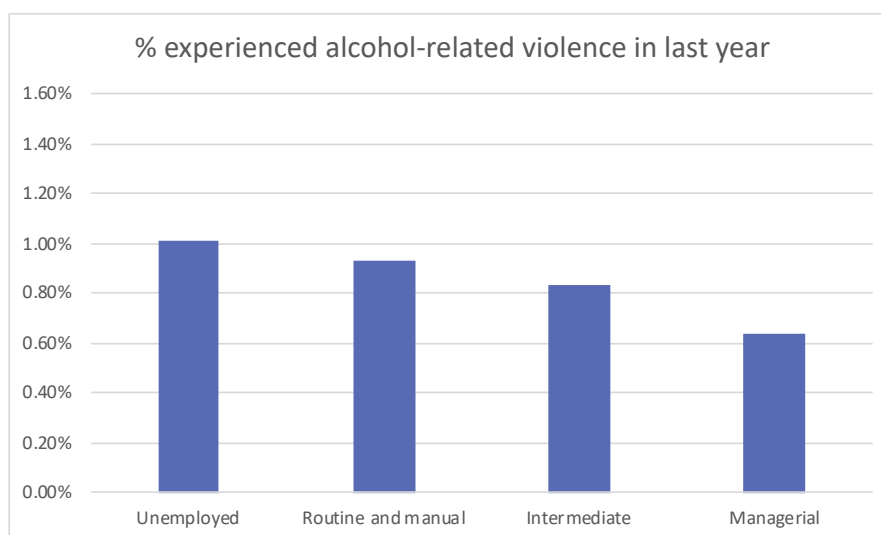
% EXPERIENCED ALCOHOL-RELATED VIOLENCE IN LAST YEAR	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	1.07%
£20,000 to £39,999	0.84%
£40,000 and up	0.78%
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	1.01%
Routine and manual	0.93%
Intermediate	0.83%
Managerial	0.64%
HOUSING	
Social renters	1.28%
Private renters	1.53%
Owners	0.52%

Total household income: Pearson Chi-Square=35922.964, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.013; housing tenure: Pearson Chi-Square=523448.757, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.048; occupation: Pearson Chi-Square=47003.532, df=3, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.015. Confidence intervals for all violence prevalence rates presented are <0.02 percentage points in range, and have been presented in the appendix.

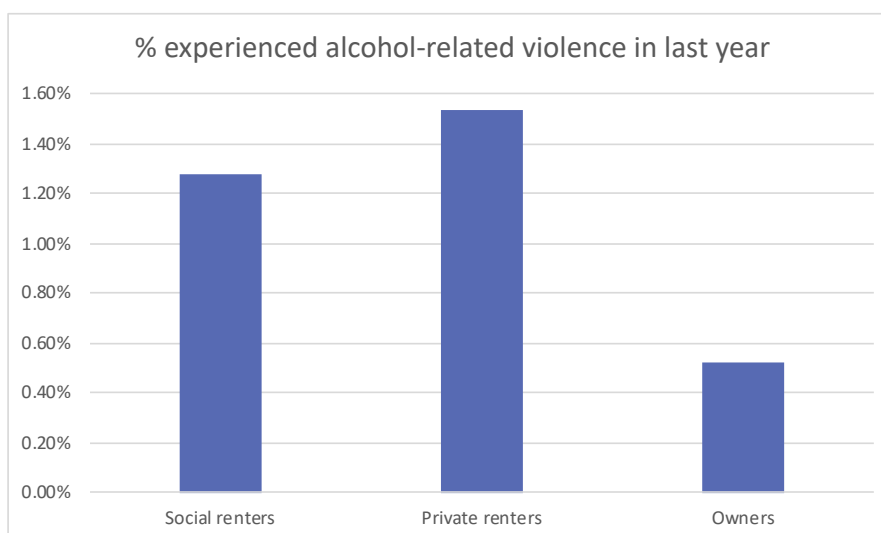
**Figure 2: Alcohol-related violence prevalence rate by total household income**



**Figure 3: Alcohol-related violence prevalence rate by occupation**



**Figure 4: Alcohol-related violence prevalence rate by housing tenure**



### 3. Lower socioeconomic groups generally experience a higher rate of alcohol-related violence incidents than the most advantaged groups

When measuring SES by housing or occupation, incidents of alcohol-related violence per 1,000 people were greater for the lowest socioeconomic group than for the highest. Social renters experienced almost three times as many incidents per 1,000 people as owners (29.60 incidents per 1,000 compared to 11.47), while the unemployed experienced almost twice as many as those in managerial occupations (23.87 incidents per 1,000 compared to 12.73).

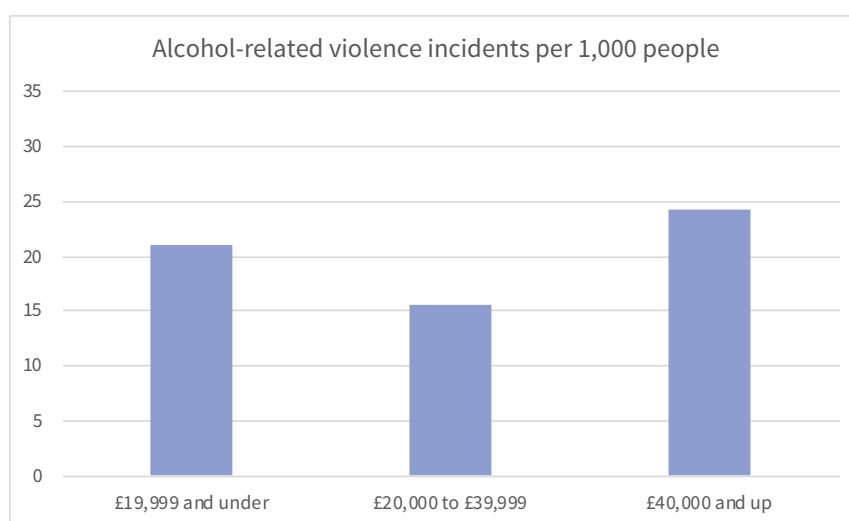
For every SES measure, one group experienced more incidents per 1,000 people than the least advantaged group. For housing and occupation, this was a central group (private renters and those in intermediate occupations), and for income this was the highest group (those in households earning over £40,000).

*Table 12: Incidence of alcohol-related violence by SES*

ALCOHOL-RELATED VIOLENCE INCIDENTS PER 1,000	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	20.98
£20,000 to £39,999	15.49
£40,000 and up	24.27
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	23.87
Routine and manual	19.47
Intermediate	26.91
Managerial	12.73
HOUSING	
Social renters	29.60
Private renters	33.73
Owners	11.47

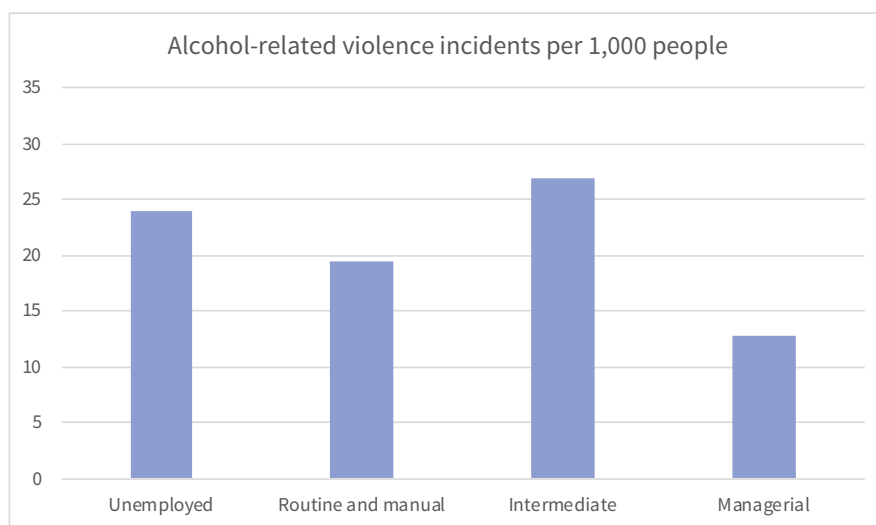
Confidence intervals for all violence incidence rates presented are <0.3 in range, and have been presented in the appendix.

*Figure 5: Alcohol-related violence incidence rate by total household income*

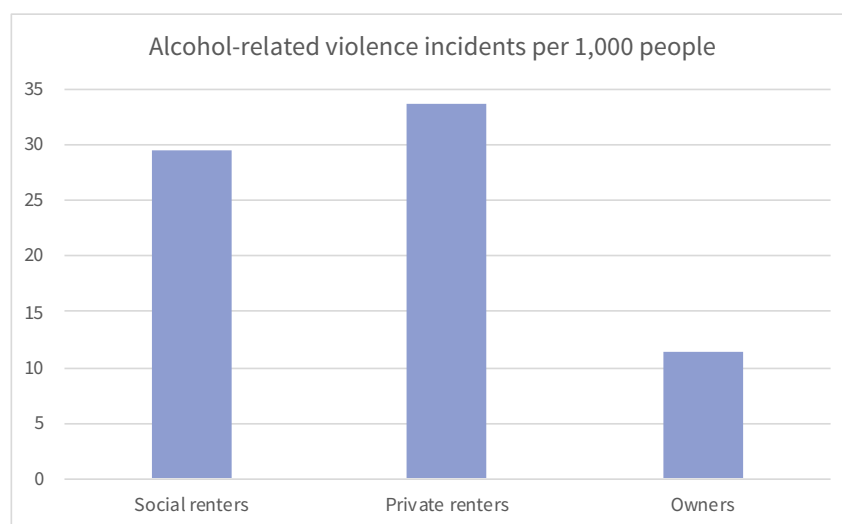




*Figure 6: Alcohol-related violence incidence rate by occupation*



*Figure 7: Alcohol-related violence incidence rate by housing tenure*



**4. People from lower socioeconomic groups are most likely to have experienced, and experience more, alcohol-related domestic and acquaintance violence in the last year**

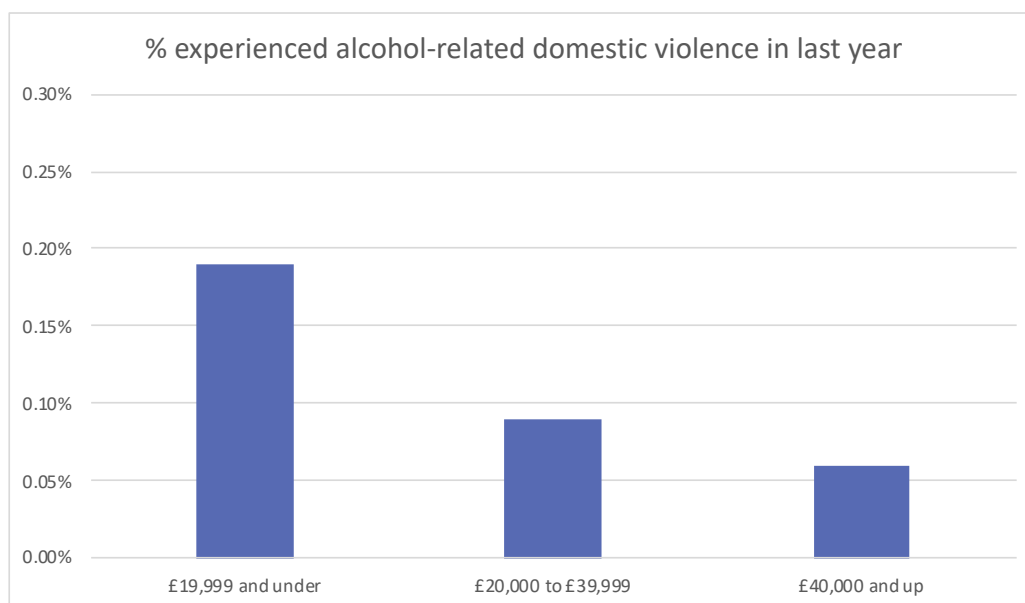
Alcohol-related violence overall was uncommon in the general population (see 1.), therefore the breakdown into subgroups yields small annual prevalence rates. However, SES patterns were still seen: for all measures of SES, we found that a greater proportion of individuals from the lowest socioeconomic groups experienced alcohol-related domestic violence in the last year compared with more advantaged groups (see Table 13). The gap in the prevalence rates between a measure's lowest and highest socioeconomic group was as much as five times (0.26% for social renters vs 0.05% for owners). These associations between SES and the prevalence of alcohol-related domestic violence victimisation were found to be statistically significant.

**Table 13: Prevalence of alcohol-related domestic violence by SES**

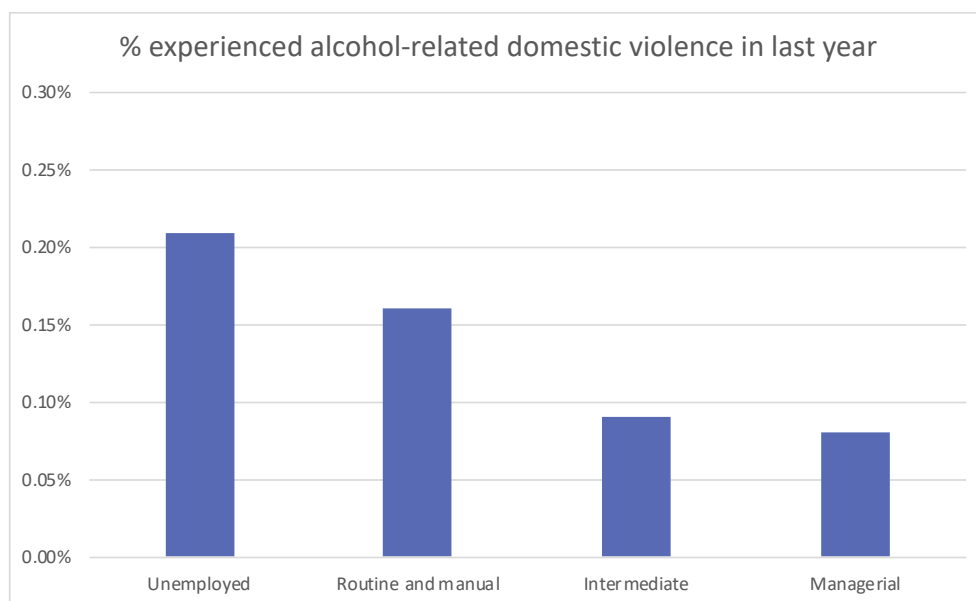
% EXPERIENCED ALCOHOL-RELATED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN LAST YEAR	
<b>INCOME</b>	
£19,999 and under	0.19%
£20,000 to £39,999	0.09%
£40,000 and up	0.06%
<b>OCCUPATION</b>	
Unemployed	0.21%
Routine and manual	0.16%
Intermediate	0.09%
Managerial	0.08%
<b>HOUSING</b>	
Social renters	0.26%
Private renters	0.17%
Owners	0.05%

Total household income: Pearson Chi-Square=56130.257, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.017; housing tenure: Pearson Chi Square=131153.693, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.024; occupation: Pearson Chi-Square=30698.374, df=3, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.012.

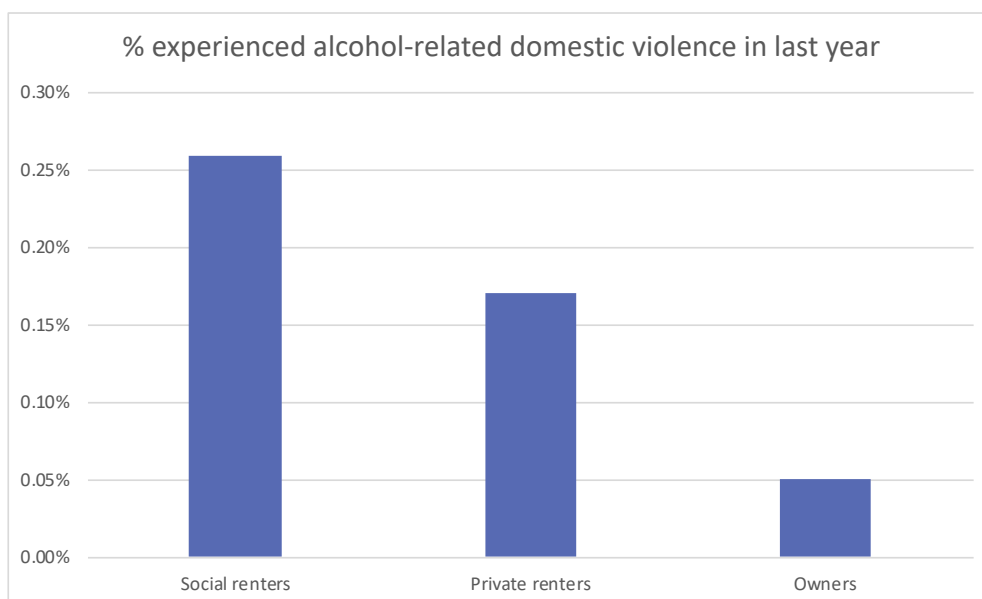
**Figure 8: Alcohol-related domestic violence prevalence rate by total household income**



*Figure 9: Alcohol-related domestic violence prevalence rate by occupation*



*Figure 10: Alcohol-related domestic violence prevalence rate by housing tenure*

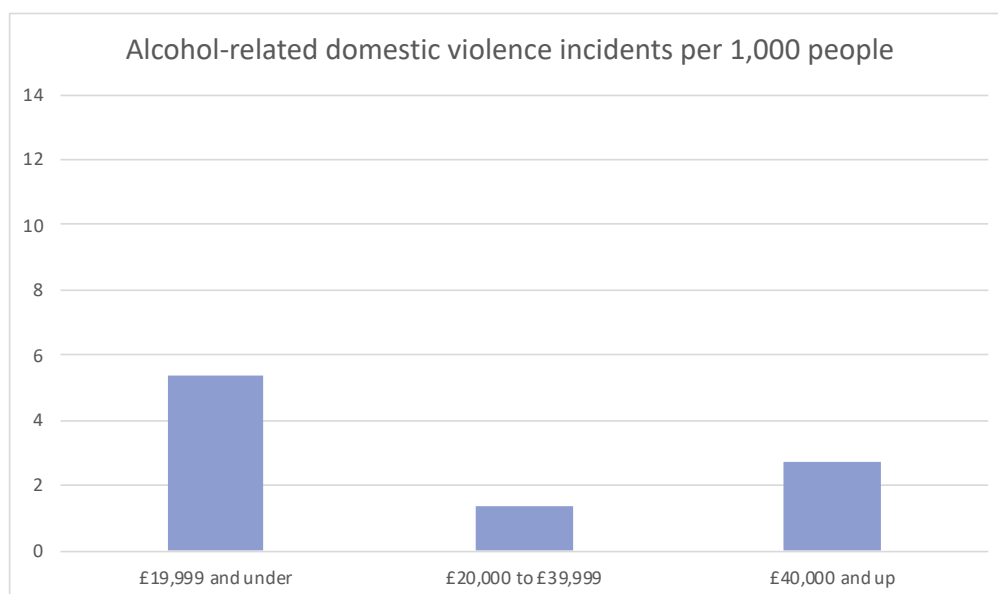


The same pattern was generally observed when we look at the number of incidents experienced per 1,000 people. Social renters and those living in households earning £19,999 and under experienced the greatest number of incidents of alcohol-related domestic violence per 1,000. Indeed, as a group, social renters experienced more than 14 times as many as owners (12.13 incidents per 1,000 and 0.85 incidents per 1,000 respectively).

**Table 14: Incidence of alcohol-related domestic violence by SES**

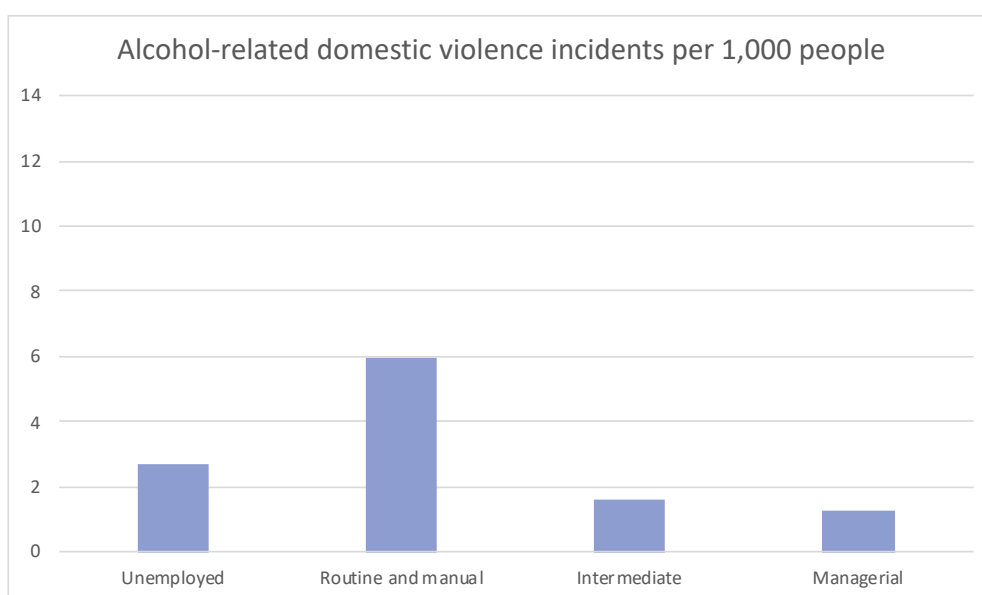
ALCOHOL-RELATED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENTS PER 1,000	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	5.36
£20,000 to £39,999	1.40
£40,000 and up	2.72
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	2.69
Routine and manual	5.93
Intermediate	1.63
Managerial	1.24
HOUSING	
Social renters	12.13
Private renters	2.57
Owners	0.85

**Figure 11: Alcohol-related domestic violence incidence rate by total household income**

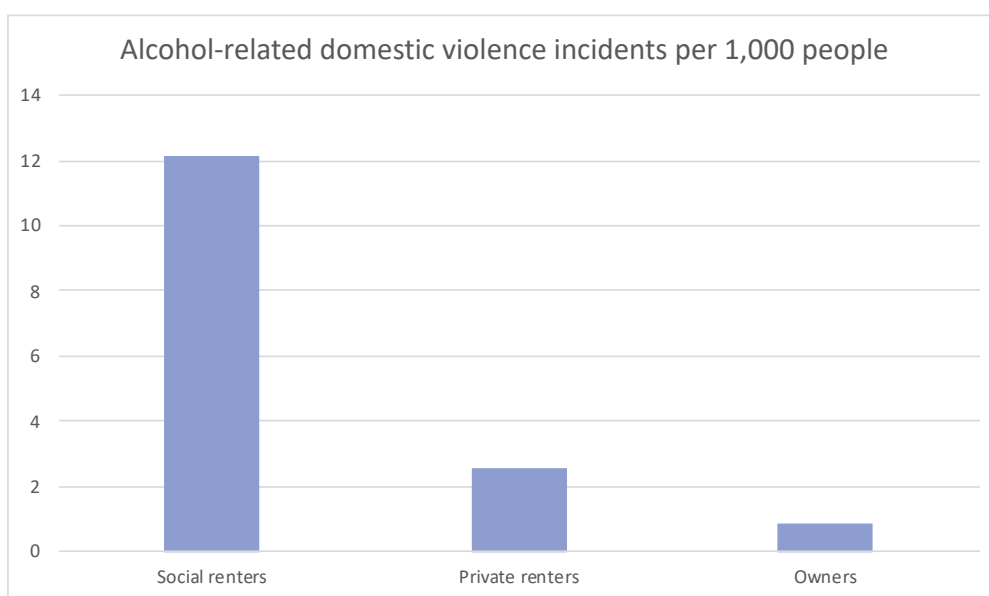




*Figure 12: Alcohol-related domestic violence incidence rate by occupation*



*Figure 13: Alcohol-related domestic violence incidence rate by housing tenure*



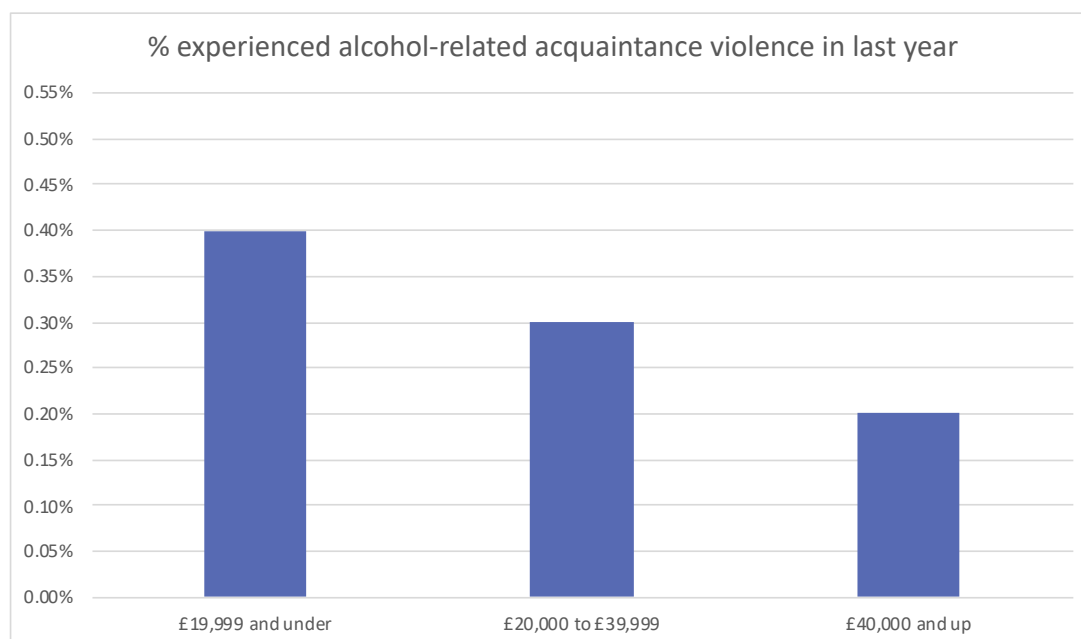
Similarly, a greater proportion of individuals from the lowest socioeconomic groups experienced alcohol-related acquaintance violence in the last year compared with more advantaged groups (see Table 15). Across all the measures of SES used, the prevalence rate for the lowest socioeconomic group was twice or more that of the most advantaged group – and sometimes more than three times as high (0.52% for social renters compared to 0.15% for owners). These associations between SES and the prevalence of alcohol-related acquaintance violence victimisation were found to be statistically significant.

**Table 15: Prevalence of alcohol-related acquaintance violence by SES**

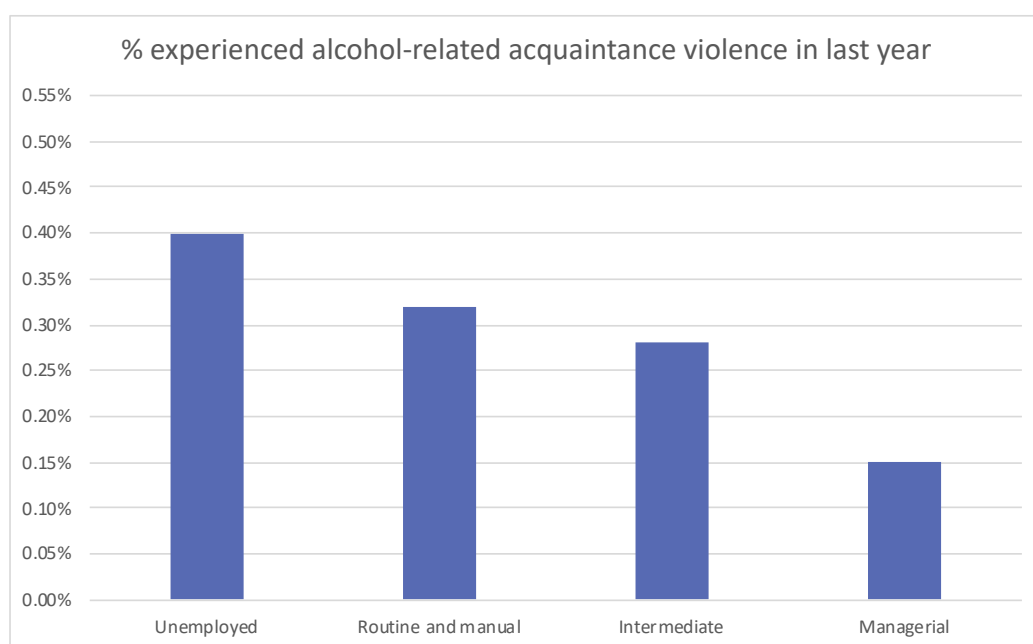
% EXPERIENCED ALCOHOL-RELATED ACQUAINTANCE VIOLENCE IN LAST YEAR	
<b>INCOME</b>	
£19,999 and under	0.40%
£20,000 to £39,999	0.30%
£40,000 and up	0.20%
<b>OCCUPATION</b>	
Unemployed	0.40%
Routine and manual	0.32%
Intermediate	0.28%
Managerial	0.15%
<b>HOUSING</b>	
Social renters	0.52%
Private renters	0.48%
Owners	0.15%

Total household income: Pearson Chi-Square=48341.688, df=2,  $p<0.001$ , Cramer's V=0.016; housing tenure: Pearson Chi-Square=227680.950, df=2,  $p<0.001$ , Cramer's V=0.032; occupation: Pearson Chi-Square=55329.039, df=3,  $p<0.001$ , Cramer's V=0.016.

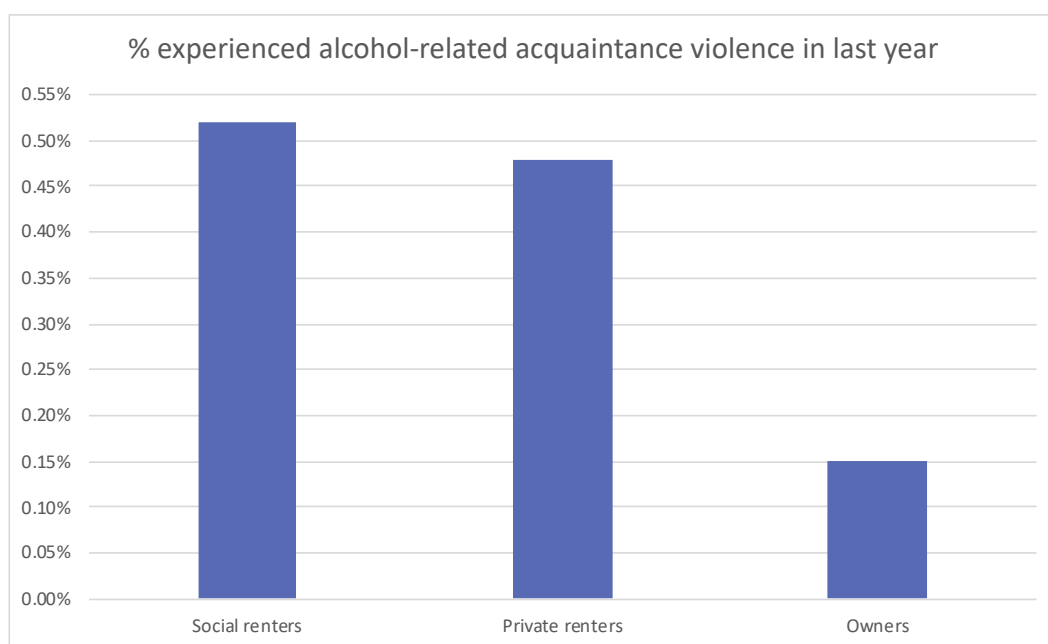
**Figure 14: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence prevalence rate by total household income**



**Figure 15: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence prevalence rate by occupation**



**Figure 16: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence prevalence rate by housing tenure**

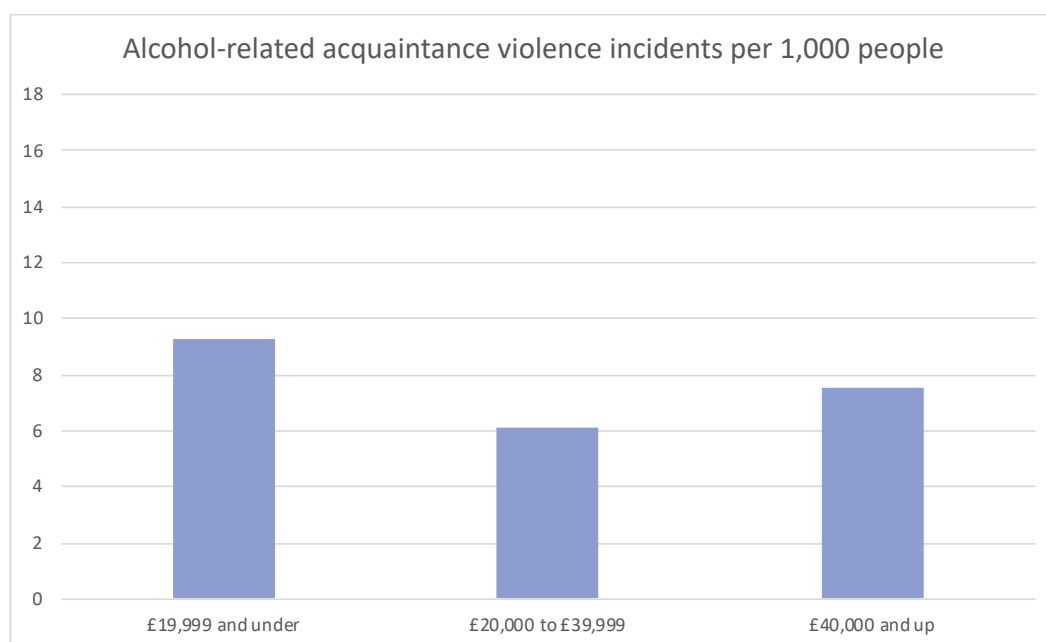


The lowest socioeconomic groups also generally experienced more incidents of alcohol-related acquaintance violence per 1,000 people than others (see Table 16). Those in households earning £19,999 and under experienced 9.31 incidents of alcohol-related acquaintance violence per 1,000 people, compared to 7.55 incidents for those earning £40,000 and up. The same figures for those who are unemployed and those in managerial occupations are 16.02 per 1,000 and 2.16 per 1,000 respectively. When measuring SES by housing tenure, the rate for social renters was more than three times higher than that for owners (10.72 per 1,000 and 3.09 per 1,000 respectively).

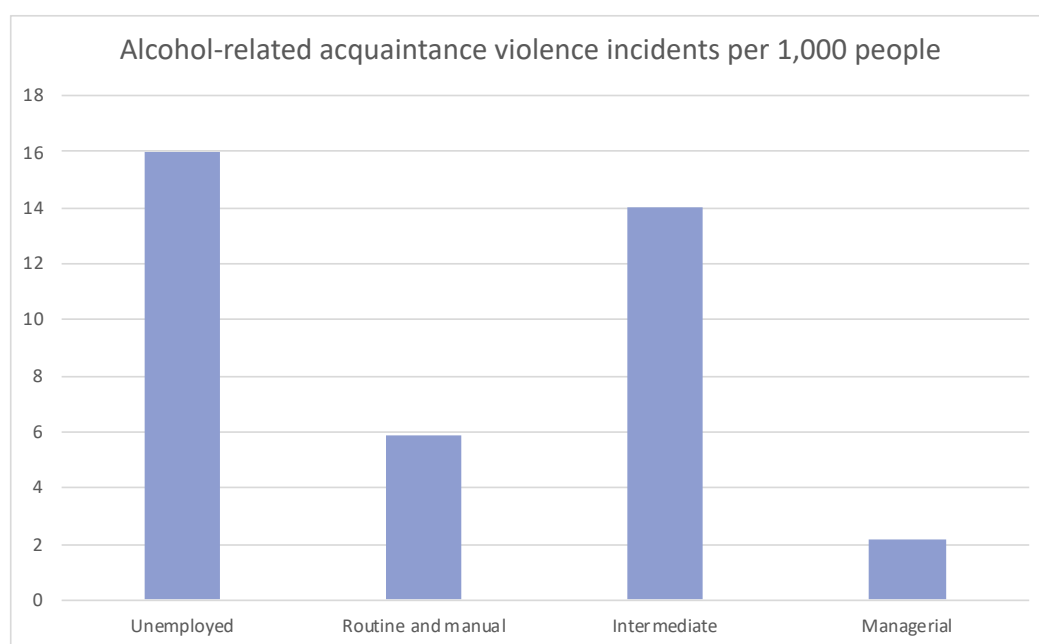
**Table 16: Incidence of alcohol-related acquaintance violence by SES**

ALCOHOL-RELATED ACQUAINTANCE VIOLENCE INCIDENTS PER 1,000	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	9.31
£20,000 to £39,999	6.08
£40,000 and up	7.55
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	16.02
Routine and manual	5.87
Intermediate	14.00
Managerial	2.16
HOUSING	
Social renters	10.72
Private renters	15.75
Owners	3.09

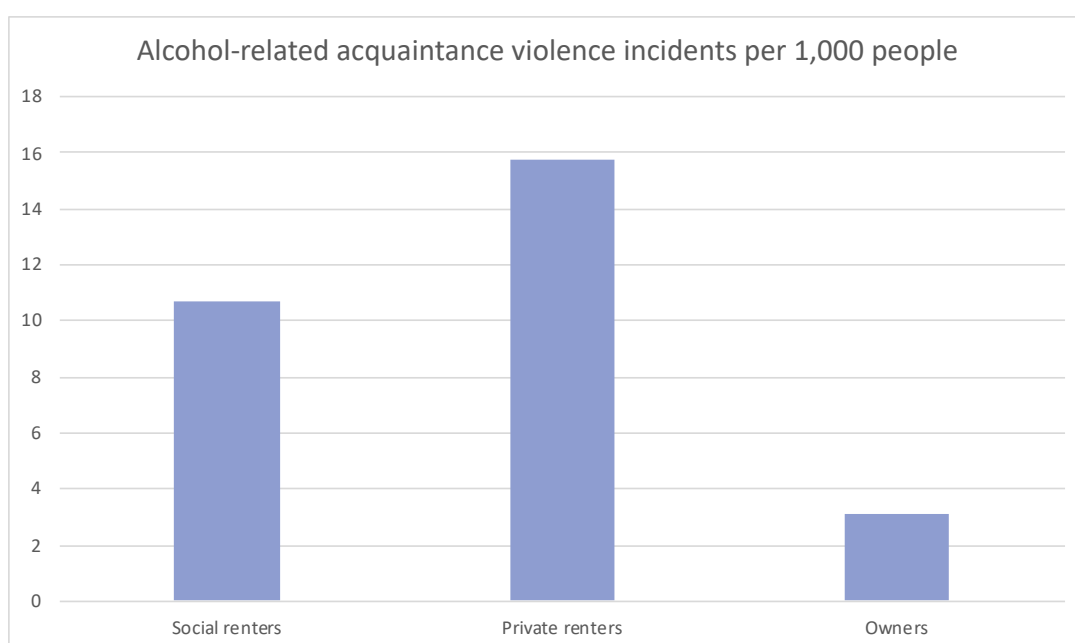
**Figure 17: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence incidence rate by total household income**



*Figure 18: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence incidence rate by occupation*



*Figure 19: Alcohol-related acquaintance violence incidence rate by housing tenure*



## 5. There are no clear trends in alcohol-related stranger violence across socioeconomic groups

Measuring SES by income, occupation, and housing produced different patterns in the prevalence of alcohol-related stranger violence, although it was generally higher socioeconomic groups that have the highest prevalence (those earning £40,000 and above at 0.53%, private renters at 0.92%, and those with occupations classed as intermediate or routine and manual both at 0.48%). These associations between SES and the prevalence of alcohol-related stranger violence victimisation were statistically significant.

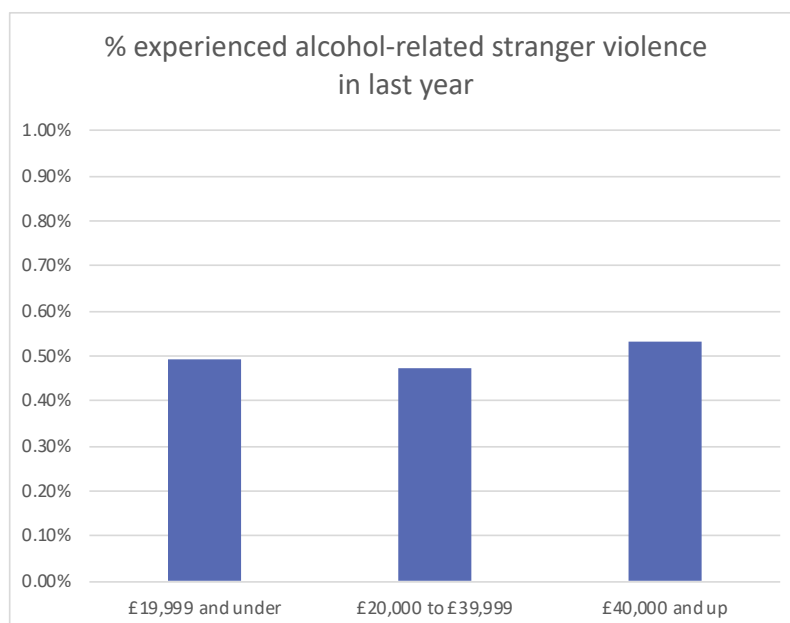


**Table 17: Prevalence of alcohol-related stranger violence by SES**

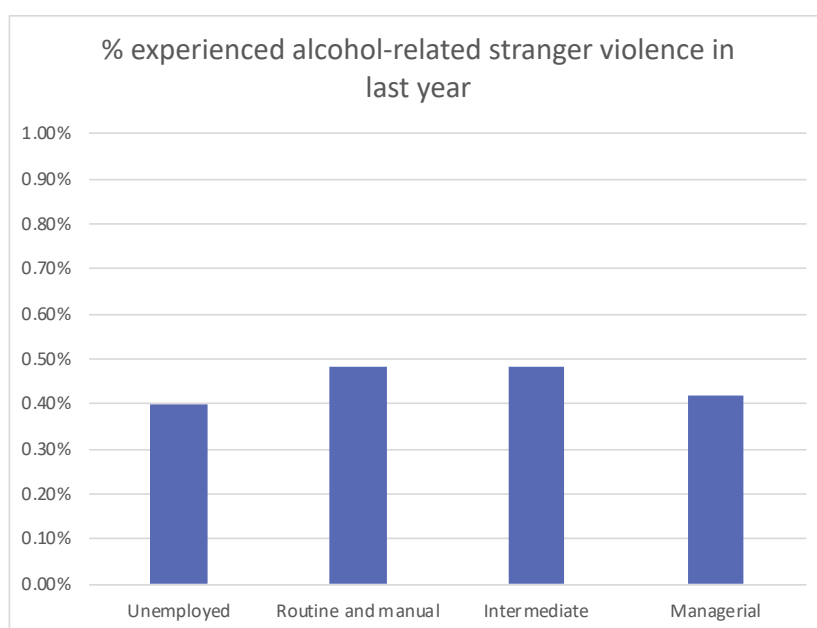
% EXPERIENCED ALCOHOL-RELATED STRANGER VIOLENCE IN LAST YEAR	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	0.49%
£20,000 to £39,999	0.47%
£40,000 and up	0.53%
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	0.40%
Routine and manual	0.48%
Intermediate	0.48%
Managerial	0.42%
HOUSING	
Social renters	0.52%
Private renters	0.92%
Owners	0.33%

Total household income: Pearson Chi-Square=2838.773, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.004; housing tenure: Pearson Chi-Square=262084.899, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.034; occupation: Pearson Chi-Square=4026.121, df=3, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.004.

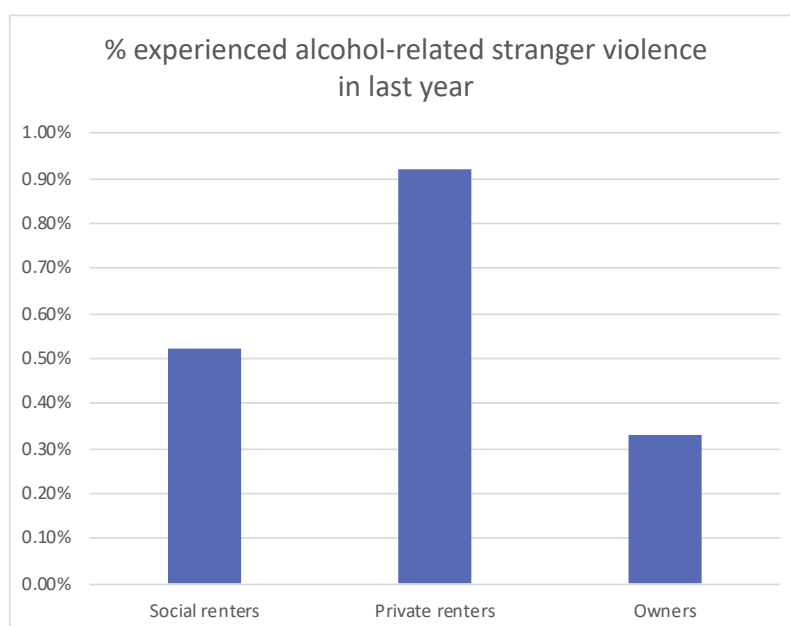
**Figure 20: Alcohol-related stranger violence prevalence rate by total household income**



*Figure 21: Alcohol-related stranger violence prevalence rate by occupation*



*Figure 22: Alcohol-related stranger violence prevalence rate by housing tenure*

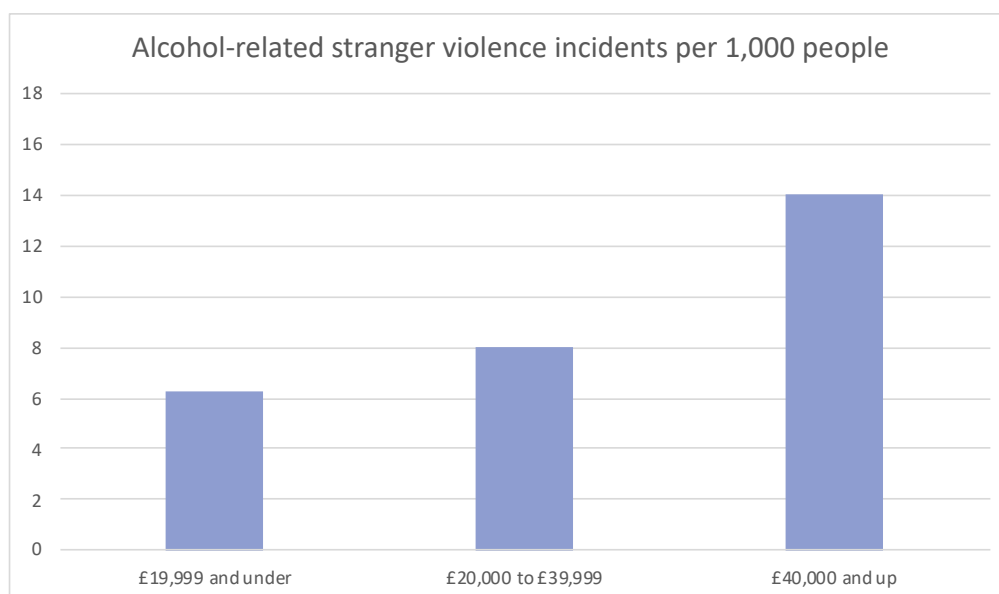


Again, there was no clear pattern in which socioeconomic group experienced greater numbers of incidents of alcohol-related stranger violence, but for all socioeconomic measures used, the lowest socioeconomic groups had the lowest incidence rates; social renters (6.75 incidents per 1,000 people), those in households earning £19,999 and under (6.31 incidents per 1,000 people), and those in the group who were unemployed (5.17 incidents per 1,000 people).

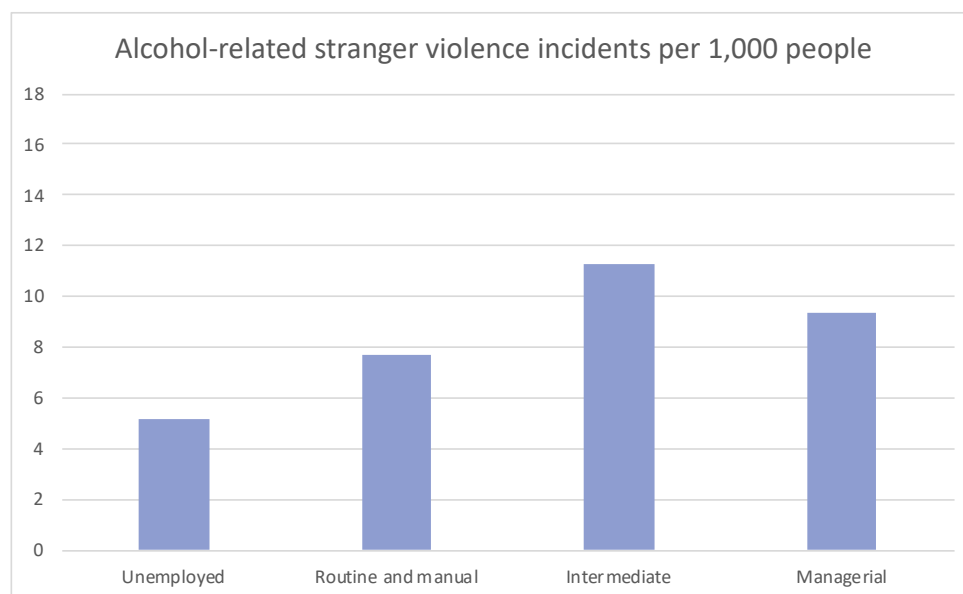
**Table 18: Incidence of alcohol-related stranger violence by SES**

ALCOHOL-RELATED STRANGER VIOLENCE INCIDENTS PER 1,000	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	6.31
£20,000 to £39,999	8.01
£40,000 and up	14.00
OCCUPATION	
Unemployed	5.17
Routine and manual	7.67
Intermediate	11.29
Managerial	9.33
HOUSING	
Social renters	6.75
Private renters	15.41
Owners	7.53

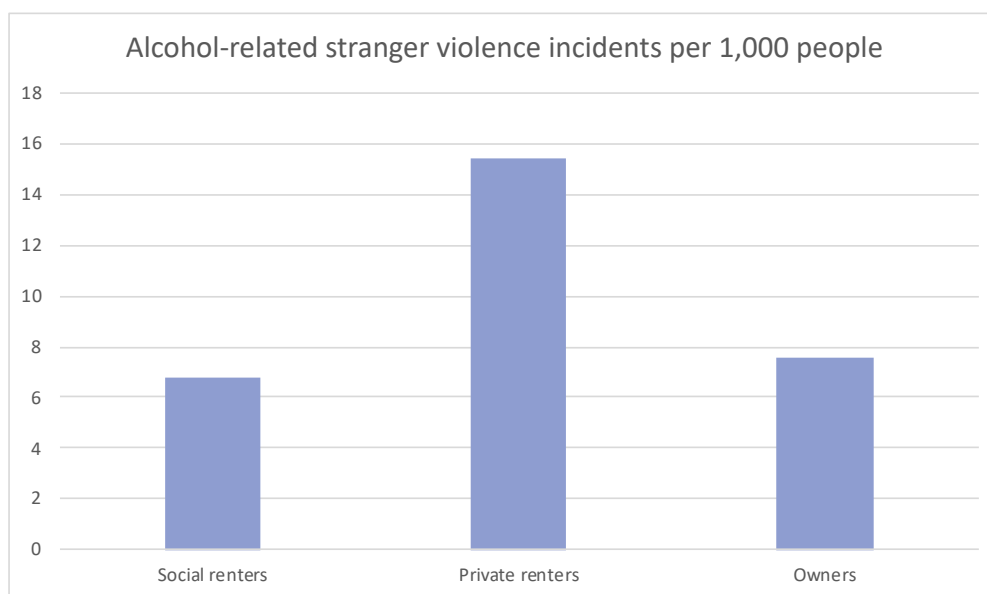
**Figure 23: Alcohol-related stranger violence incidence rate by total household income**



*Figure 24: Alcohol-related stranger violence incidence rate by occupation*



*Figure 25: Alcohol-related stranger violence incidence rate by housing tenure*



## Alcohol-related ASB

### 1. Alcohol-related antisocial behaviour is common

Almost one in ten (8.79%) people questioned in the CSEW experienced alcohol-related ASB in the last year.

### 2. Experiencing this once in the last year was common in every SES group

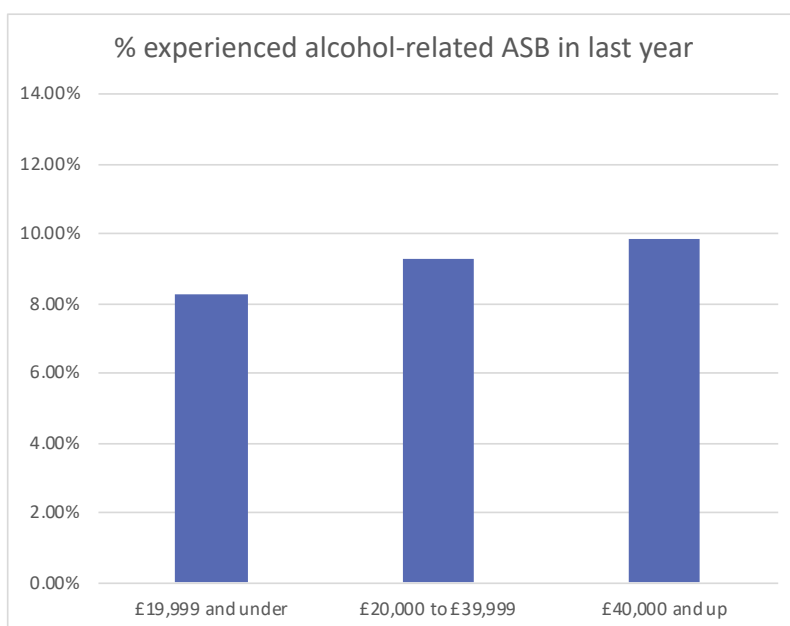
There was no SES pattern in experiences of alcohol-related ASB across different groups; with less than two percentage points between the most and least advantaged groups in any SES measure.

**Table 19: Prevalence of alcohol-related ASB by SES**

% EXPERIENCED ALCOHOL-RELATED ASB IN LAST YEAR	
INCOME	
£19,999 and under	8.24%
£20,000 to £39,999	9.30%
£40,000 and up	9.84%
HOUSING	
Social renters	9.52%
Private renters	11.75%
Owners	7.61%
OCCUPATION	
Never working and long-term unemployed	7.84%
Routine and manual	7.98%
Intermediate	7.80%
Managerial	9.76%

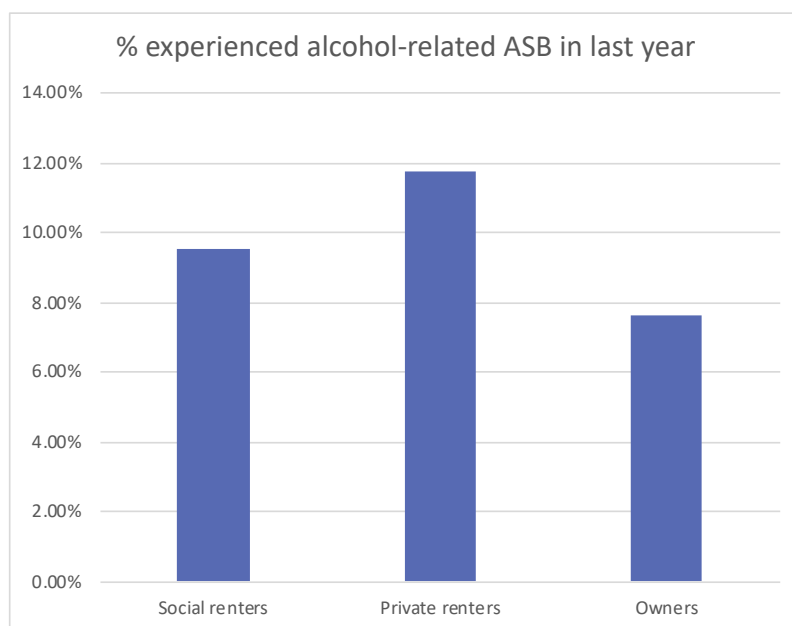
Confidence intervals for rates presented in Table 19 are all <0.05 percentage points in range, and have been presented in the appendix.

**Figure 26: Alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by household income**

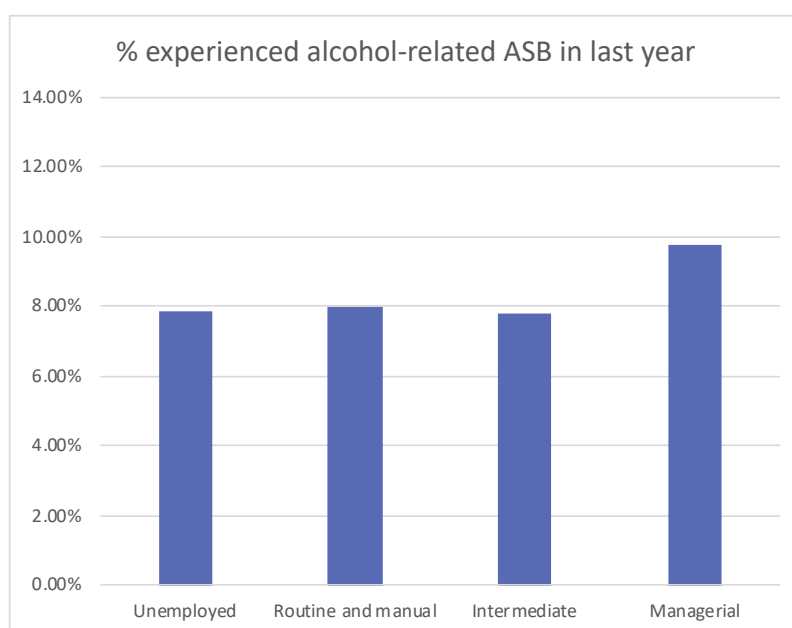




*Figure 27: Alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by occupation*



*Figure 28: Alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by housing tenure*



### **3. People from the lowest SES groups were more likely to experience this frequently**

High frequency experiences of alcohol-related ASB victimisation were most common for those in the lowest socioeconomic groups. Across all socioeconomic measures used, a greater proportion of victims of alcohol-related ASB from the lowest socioeconomic groups experienced this weekly or more; social renters (50.4%), those in households earning £19,999 and under (46%), and those unemployed (55.1%), compared to homeowners (28.4%), those earning £40,000 and more (24.7%), and those in managerial occupations (27.9%) respectively. Amongst victims of alcohol-related ASB, there was a significant association between SES and the prevalence of high frequency alcohol-related ASB victimisation.

**Table 20: Prevalence of high frequency alcohol-related ASB by SES**

	% OF ALCOHOL-RELATED ASB VICTIMS*	% OF WHOLE GROUP
<b>INCOME</b>		
£19,999 and under	46.0%	3.01%
£20,000 to £39,999	36.0%	2.67%
£40,000 and up	24.7%	2.00%
<b>HOUSING</b>		
Social renters	50.4%	3.60%
Private renters	40.2%	3.78%
Owners	28.4%	1.76%
<b>OCCUPATION</b>		
Never working and long-term unemployed	55.1%	3.22%
Routine and manual	43.1%	2.75%
Intermediate	32.7%	2.02%
Managerial	27.9%	2.19%

\*Total household income: Pearson Chi-Square=504309.169, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.185; housing tenure: Pearson Chi-Square=476992.163, df=2, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.172; occupation: Pearson Chi-Square=374937.315, df=3, p<0.001, Cramer's V=0.160. Confidence intervals for ' % of alcohol-related ASB victims ' are all <0.4 percentage points in range, and for ' % of whole group ' are all <0.03 percentage points in range, and these have been presented in the appendix.

**Figure 29: High frequency alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by household income**



Figure 30: High frequency alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by occupation

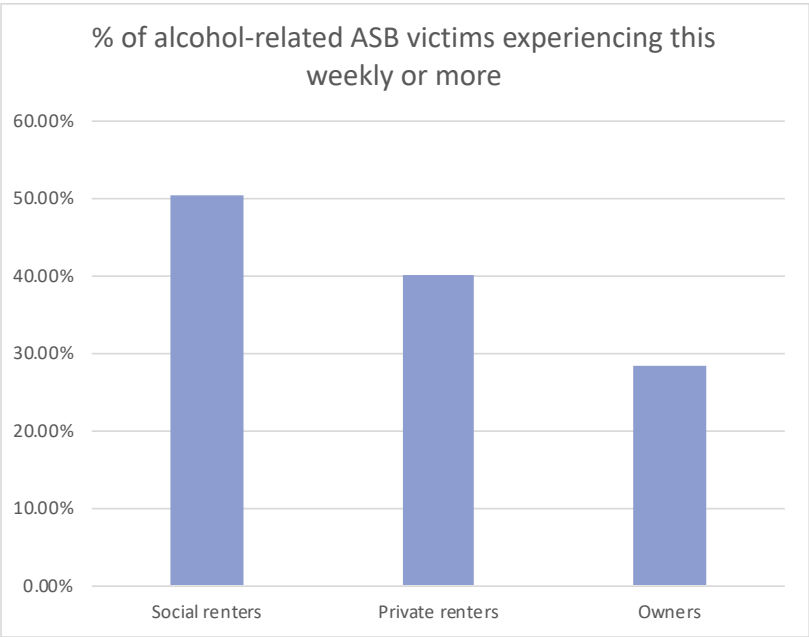
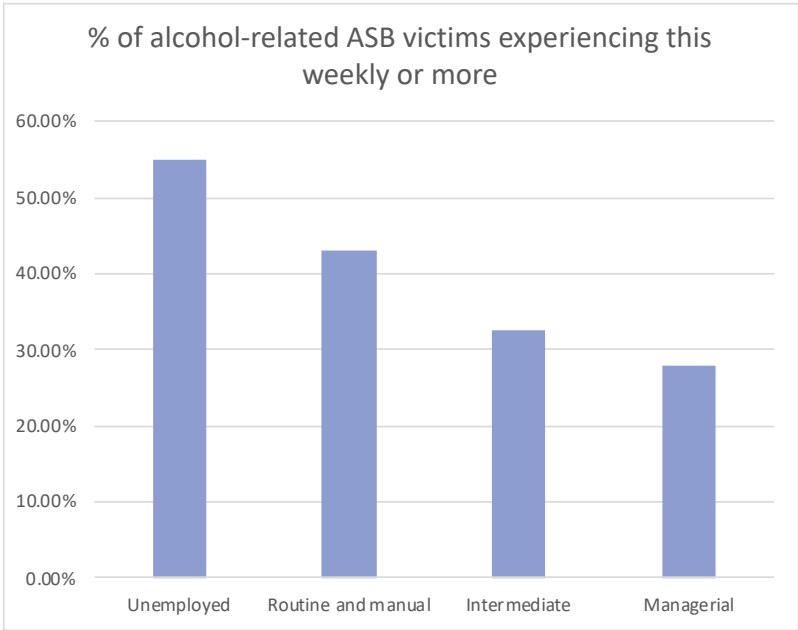


Figure 31: High frequency alcohol-related ASB prevalence rate by housing tenure



## Discussion

These results show that in England and Wales people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are at greater risk of alcohol-related violence, particularly alcohol-related domestic and acquaintance violence. Further, these results also show lower socioeconomic groups are more likely to experience regular alcohol-related ASB.

### **Alcohol-related violence falls disproportionately on the lowest socioeconomic groups**

Generally, those from lower SES groups experienced higher prevalence rates of alcohol-related violence than any other group, albeit from a low prevalence overall. For two of the three measures of SES used in this work – a person's occupation and their household income – the lowest SES group examined experienced the highest prevalence rates for alcohol-related violence. The prevalence rate for those with household incomes £19,999 and under was 1.07% compared to 0.78% for those in households earning £40,000 and above. For those in managerial roles, the prevalence rate was 0.64%, compared to 1.01% for people who are unemployed.

The pattern did not hold when using housing tenure as a measure of someone's SES – here, while the lowest socioeconomic group had a higher rate than the most advantaged group (social renters, 1.28% and owners, 0.52%), the middle group – private renters – had the highest rate at 1.53%.

Similarly, while lower SES groups generally experienced higher incidence rates of alcohol-related violence than the most advantaged group (those with household incomes £19,999 and under at 20.98 incidents per 1,000, social renters at 29.60 incidents per 1,000, and those in the group unemployed at 23.87), it was other groups (those in households earning £40,000 and above, those in intermediate occupations, and private renters) that had the highest incidence rates of this. Considering this against the prevalence rate findings, it seems the incidents of alcohol-related violence for these groups are concentrated in a smaller number of individuals. We can develop our understanding of these patterns by looking at the results on alcohol-related violence subtypes.

### **Higher rates of alcohol-related domestic and acquaintance violence for lower socioeconomic groups are behind this pattern**

To begin to understand the disparities presented in rates of alcohol-related violence between socioeconomic groups, we must disaggregate the category 'alcohol-related violence'. Alcohol-related violence covers a diverse range of incidents – from late night violence between intoxicated individuals in licensed premises, to incidents of violence towards family members and partners in the home.

For every measure of SES used, the lowest socioeconomic group experienced the highest prevalence rates for alcohol-related domestic and alcohol-related acquaintance violence. Similarly, the lowest socioeconomic groups generally experienced the highest incidence rates for alcohol-related domestic and alcohol-related acquaintance violence (except those who are unemployed whose incidence rate of alcohol-related domestic violence was not as high as those in routine or manual occupations, and social renters whose incidence rate of alcohol-related acquaintance violence was not as high as that of private renters). The most dramatic disparities were seen between the incidence rates of alcohol-related domestic violence. When measuring SES through housing tenure, the lowest group (social renters) had an incidence rate more than 14 times as high as the highest group (owners). These findings should be considered in light of reports that domestic violence is highly under-reported. Comparing reports of domestic violence in the in-person interviews of the

CSEW in 2016/17 to answers to similar items in a self-completion module, it has been shown that only 14% of those reporting such an incident in the self-completion section also shared this with their interviewer.<sup>74</sup> While the distributions presented may be accurate, the true rate at which lower SES groups might experience this violence might be considerably higher than reported.

The patterns for alcohol-related stranger violence were very different. Prevalence and incidence rates were highest for middle and upper socioeconomic groups – for private renters, those earning £40,000 and above, and those in intermediate occupations.<sup>75</sup> It appears that the general trend in alcohol-related violence overall – that this disproportionately falls on the lowest socioeconomic groups – is underwritten by highly disproportionate rates in alcohol-related domestic and alcohol-related acquaintance violence.

## Lowest socioeconomic groups are most likely to experience high frequency alcohol-related ASB

The results presented suggest alcohol-related ASB is common; almost one in ten people were found to have experienced this at least once in the last year. While initial experiences of alcohol-related ASB were fairly evenly spread, amongst those who had experienced alcohol-related ASB in the last year, being a high frequency victim was most common for those in the lowest socioeconomic groups. Almost twice as big a proportion of victims of ASB amongst social renters (50.4%), those in households earning £19,999 and under (46%), and those unemployed (55.1%) experienced this once a week or more compared to homeowners (28.4%), those earning £40,000 and more (24.7%), and those in managerial occupations (27.9%) respectively. While incidents of alcohol-related violence no doubt require action from policymakers, it would be wrong to assume that alcohol-related ASB incidents are harmless, particularly for groups experiencing these in such sustained ways.

## Explaining these disparities

The relationship between violent victimisation and SES is well established,<sup>76</sup> and it is likely that trends presented here share some drivers behind this overall violence and SES relationship. However, there are some drivers that might apply only to alcohol-related violence and ASB.

Alcohol-related domestic violence appeared to drive the SES patterns in overall alcohol-related violence. Previous research examined the effects of the financial crash on domestic violence. Walby et al. recently analysed violent crime trends using CSEW data between 1994 and 2014; they found that violent crime has risen since 2009, and that this trend was driven by a rise in domestic violence. Walby et al. suggest that the crash damaged publicly available services accessed more often by lower SES groups – including domestic violence services – and disproportionately harmed the financial status of women, seeing these women unable to remove themselves from situations they needed to. They suggest the financial crisis:

*...reduced income levels and increased inequalities and thereby reduced the propensity of victims to escape violence, including exiting violent relationships or enabling conflicted households to split up. The financial, economic and ensuing fiscal crisis has been gendered in that the reductions in the resources have disproportionately affected women.<sup>77</sup>*

74 Office for National Statistics (2018) The nature of violent crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. Retrieved: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/thenatureofviolentcrimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017>.

75 Prevalence rate of 0.48% joint with those in routine of manual occupations.

76 Eg. Green, S. (2012) Crime, victimisation and vulnerability. In Handbook of victims and victimology, ed S Walklate. Cullompton: Willan. p. 102.; Dignan, J. (2004) Understanding victims and restorative justice. Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press. p. 19.

77 Walby, S., Towers, J. and Francis, B. (2015) Is violent crime increasing or decreasing? A new methodology to measure repeat attacks making visible the significance of gender and domestic relations, British Journal of Criminology 56:6, p. 1228.

Further research should investigate this in relation to our findings – including how gender interacts with these socioeconomic disparities. Not only this, but similar – as similar severe cuts to publicly-funded alcohol-related services have been sustained in recent years.<sup>78</sup> Under-provision of publicly-funded alcohol treatment services, as well as limited access to alcohol interventions in primary care and emergency services settings will have effects on population-wide alcohol consumption, some of which contributes to this violence. It may also be worth considering here that this lack of accessible alcohol-treatment services may inhibit some women's access to the limited domestic violence services still available – a study of domestic violence refuges in London found that in 61% of boroughs, women who use alcohol or drugs are only sometimes accepted into refuges, while two boroughs actively exclude these women.<sup>79</sup>

Alcohol-related stranger violence did not follow the patterns of other violence types – it is possible this is due to time spent in the night-time economy. Alcohol-related stranger violence rates were highest for private renters, those earning £40,000 and above, and those in intermediate occupations – middle and upper socioeconomic groups. Previous analysis of British Crime Survey data (the precursor to the CSEW) has shown a larger proportion of stranger violence takes place in and around licensed premises than does violence overall.<sup>80</sup> We might expect private renters, those earning £40,000 and above, and those in intermediate occupations to have two things in common; some disposable income, and generally younger than homeowners and managers. It follows they may be more likely to spend time in night-time economy spaces.

For example, work from the Greater London Authority looking at London's night-time economy found those groups most likely to use this included 'people in the ABC1 social grade, aged under 50'.<sup>81</sup> An increased attendance in such night-time spaces might raise their risk of such alcohol-related stranger violence. Further, the finding that around half the victims of alcohol-related ASB in the lowest socioeconomic groups experienced this at least every week suggests there might be a structural explanation for their experiences. It might be due to the nature and location of their housing. As gentrification has seen inner city neighbourhoods, and their nightlife, transform to cater to 'the young professional labour force of post-industrial sectors', it may be social renters that find themselves living adjacent to night-time economy spaces – putting residents at risk of repeated incidents.<sup>82</sup> To confirm this, further research is needed that statistically controls for characteristics like age, and spending time in pubs and clubs.

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78 Alcohol Concern / Alcohol Research UK (2018) The hardest hit: Addressing the crisis in alcohol treatment services. London: Alcohol Concern / Alcohol Research UK.

79 Against Violence and Abuse and Solace Women's Aid (2014) Case by Case: Refuge provision in London for survivors of domestic violence who use alcohol and other drugs or have mental health problems. London: Against Violence and Abuse and Solace Women's Aid.

80 Allen, J., Nicholas, S., Salisbury, H. and Wood, M. (2003) Nature of burglary, vehicle and violent crime in C. Flood-Page and J. Taylor (eds). Crime in England and Wales 2001/2002: Supplementary Volume. London: Home Office.

81 Greater London Authority (2018) London at night: an evidence base for a 24-hour city. London: Greater London Authority. p. 15.

82 Hae, L. (2011) Dilemmas of the nightlife fix: Post-industrialisation and the gentrification of nightlife in New York City. Urban Studies 48:6, p. 3449.



# Conclusion

This analysis suggests that, as has been confirmed regarding alcohol health harms, alcohol-related violence – and alcohol-related domestic and acquaintance violence in particular – and high frequency alcohol-related ASB, are experienced to a greater degree by lower SES groups. This is of concern in and of itself, but we should also consider that individuals from these socioeconomic groups might experience violence differently – and that these experiences might widen the harm disparity further. A single incident of alcohol-related violence experienced by a member of a more disadvantaged group may be felt more acutely. Research analysing British Crime Survey data from 2002/03 found that:

*'...those living in the poorest households were nearly three times as likely to report a range of emotional effects following victimisation, including depression, anxiety, panic and difficulty sleeping. They were also more likely to move home and to change their behaviour by avoiding certain places. For those in employment, people with lower incomes were more likely to lose earnings, possibly because they were more likely to be paid by the hour.'*<sup>83</sup>

Further, some of the harms that ASB can generate might emerge only after repeated experiences (eg impacts to mental health after repeated sleep disturbance or incidents of intimidation<sup>84</sup>), and as we have seen, it is the lowest socioeconomic groups most likely to be subject to such repeat exposure. We must consider these details if we hope to create an accurate picture of the harm experienced by different SES groups.

Following these findings, we present a series of recommendations for policymakers. Violence is a complex phenomenon, and no-one would argue that acting only on the 'alcohol' side of alcohol-related violence will fix the disparities presented here. As such, some policies proposed aim to tackle some suggested economic and structural drivers of this victimisation disparity, while others aim to tackle alcohol-related violence nationwide, in a way that might disproportionately benefit the lowest SES groups. These strategies should be implemented in tandem.

## **1. Population level action on alcohol harm might disproportionately benefit the lowest SES groups**

If alcohol harms are unevenly distributed, then it stands to reason that the benefits of policies to reduce such harm could be unevenly beneficial to some also. Indeed, this has already been demonstrated in the modelling for minimum unit pricing<sup>85</sup> for alcohol, which is projected to improve health outcomes for the lowest SES groups to the greatest degree.<sup>86</sup> Population level action on the price and availability of alcohol, as well as substantially improving the availability of alcohol treatment services, should be investigated in a similar way for their potential to benefit disadvantaged groups.

83 Institute of Public Policy Research (2006) CrimeShare: The unequal impact of crime. London: Institute of Public Policy Research. p. 28.

84 Quigg, Z., Bellis, M.A., Grey, H., Webster, J. and Hughes, K. (2019) Alcohol's harms to others in Wales, United Kingdom: Nature, magnitude and associations with mental well-being, Addictive Behaviors Reports, p. 3.

85 Minimum Unit Pricing 'creates a uniform price per unit of alcohol. The minimum price for particular products is then set according to the MUP, strength and volume of alcohol using the formula  $MUP \times S \times V \times 100$ , where MUP is the minimum unit price, S is alcoholic strength, and V is the beverage volume in litres. The definition of a unit of alcohol varies in different countries and in the UK is equal to 10ml or 8g of pure alcohol.' Burton, R., Henn, C., Lavoie, D., O'Connor, R., Perkins, C., Sweeney, K., Greaves, F., Ferguson, B., Beynon, C., Belloni, A. and Musto, V. (2016) The public health burden of alcohol and the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of alcohol control policies: an evidence review. The public health burden of alcohol and the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of alcohol control policies: an evidence review. P. 88. .

86 Angus, C., Holmes, J., Pryce, R., Meier, P. & Brennan, A. (2016) Alcohol and cancer trends: Intervention Studies. University of Sheffield and Cancer Research UK.

### **a) Price**

Alcohol's price and levels of violence have been repeatedly linked.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, a Home Office literature review assessing the effects of alcohol price increases on society, published ahead of their 2012 Alcohol Strategy, notes: 'The balance of this evidence tends to support an association between increasing alcohol price and decreasing levels of violence.'<sup>88</sup> The price of alcohol has also been specifically linked to domestic violence;<sup>89</sup> the World Health Organization advocate for the regulation of alcohol prices as 'effective in preventing intimate partner violence.'<sup>90</sup>

### **b) Availability**

The physical and temporal availability of alcohol has been linked to levels of violence. Scottish research found rates of violence to be 'consistently and significantly higher in areas with more alcohol outlets. This relationship was found for total outlets, on-sales outlets and off-sales outlets'<sup>91</sup> while the introduction of restrictions on temporal availability improved violence rates in New South Wales, where restrictions on hours of sale in 2014 reduced assault rates within two years.<sup>92</sup>

### **c) Treatment**

Alcohol treatment services have been described as facing a 'crisis' of provision.<sup>93</sup> Correcting this and improving access to such services is not only humane but might reduce the incidence of alcohol-related violence and ASB. This must be coupled with a substantial increase in access to alcohol interventions in primary care and emergency services settings. Resources such as these will also be key supports for some victims of alcohol-related domestic violence, as it has been shown that victims of domestic violence may use alcohol to cope with their experiences.<sup>94</sup>

## **2. The provision of domestic violence services must be improved**

The lack of adequate domestic violence services in the UK has been well-chronicled.<sup>95</sup> As well as increased provision of these services, it is essential that these services can accommodate those facing both domestic violence and problematic alcohol use – this is not currently the case. Research examining domestic violence refuges in London found that refuges in less than two-thirds (61%) of boroughs only 'sometimes accept' those who use alcohol or drugs, while two exclude them entirely.<sup>96</sup> This must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

## **3. Further research into the causes of these disparities is required**

Further investigation into the causes of these inequalities is essential. Future research should explore recent changes in rates of alcohol-related violence nationally. While some have attempted

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87 Booth A., Meier, P., Shapland, J., Wong, R. & Paisley, S. (2010) Alcohol pricing and criminal harm: a rapid evidence assessment of the published research literature. SCHARR, University of Sheffield. p. 14.

88 Secretary of State for the Home Department (2011) The likely impacts of increasing alcohol price: a summary review of the evidence base. HM Government. p. 4.

89 Markowitz, S. (2000) The Price of Alcohol, Wife Abuse, and Husband Abuse. Southern Economic Journal, Volume 67, Issue 2, accessed from the National Bureau of Economic Research. p. 20.

90 World Health Organization (2010) Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: Taking action and generating evidence. p. 51.

91 Alcohol Focus Scotland and CRESH (2018) Alcohol Outlet Availability and Harm in Scotland. Glasgow: Alcohol Focus Scotland. p. 8.

92 Foster, J., Harrison, A., Brown, K., Manton, E., Wilkinson, C. & Ferguson, A. (2017) Anytime, anyplace, anywhere? Addressing physical availability of alcohol in Australia and the UK. London and Canberra: Institute of Alcohol Studies and the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education. p. 16

93 Alcohol Concern / Alcohol Research UK (2018) The Hardest Hit: Addressing the crisis in alcohol treatment services. London: Alcohol Concern / Alcohol Research UK. p. 2.

94 University of Bedfordshire & Alcohol Concern (2010) Grasping the Nettle: alcohol and domestic violence. p. 2

95 Walby, S., Towers, J. and Francis, B. (2015) Is violent crime increasing or decreasing? A new methodology to measure repeat attacks making visible the significance of gender and domestic relations, British Journal of Criminology 56:6.; Holly, J. (2017) Mapping the Maze: Services for women experiencing multiple disadvantage in England and Wales. London: Agenda & AVA.

96 Against Violence and Abuse and Solace Women's Aid (2014) Case by Case: Refuge provision in London for survivors of domestic violence who use alcohol and other drugs or have mental health problems. London: Against Violence and Abuse and Solace Women's Aid.

to theorise as to why there has been a decrease in the number of alcohol-related violent incidents since 2013/14,<sup>97</sup> without findings on how these trends are mapped by demographic features such as SES, this movement cannot be sufficiently understood - as has been demonstrated by gendered analysis of violent crime trends.<sup>98</sup> Other non-SES influences on alcohol-related violence and ASB - such as housing placement or night-time economy attendance - may be driving the patterns seen in this work and could be investigated in future research that statistically controls for characteristics like age, urban or rural living, and spending time in pubs and clubs. Understanding the profile of those experiencing this violence within each SES group – including their other sociodemographic characteristics or vulnerabilities such as those people with a disability for example – may also identify additional targets for social policy or public health interventions.

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97 Alcohol Policy UK (2018) Declining alcohol-related violence - an effect of consumption falls? Crime Survey 2017. Retrieved: <https://www.alcoholpolicy.net/2018/02/is-alcohol-related-violence-falling-crime-survey-2017.html>.

98 Walby, S., Towers, J. and Francis, B. (2015) Is violent crime increasing or decreasing? A new methodology to measure repeat attacks making visible the significance of gender and domestic relations, *British Journal of Criminology* 56:6.





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