

What's the Government doing about drugs?

The Government invests millions of pounds to try to combat drug problems.

The focus has been in four main areas:

- Prevention and education programmes, particularly focused on young people through schools and media campaigns.
- Treatment, counselling, support and rehabilitation for people who experience drug problems.
- Using the law in an attempt to deter drug use including policing and penalties ranging from cautions and small fines through to long prison sentences.
- Attempting to stifle the production, supply and importation of drugs through the work of the police, customs and intelligence services.

Overall responsibility

Overall responsibility for the delivery of the strategy lies with Home Secretary supported by the Drug Strategy Directorate within the Home Office www.drugs.gov.uk

Delivery

Delivery of the treatment target is overseen by the National Treatment Agency (NTA) for substance misuse, a special health authority established by the Secretary of State for Health in 2001 www.nta.nhs.uk.

Local delivery of the drug strategy is co-ordinated by Drugs Action Teams (DATs). These are Chief Officer-level local co-ordinating and planning bodies supported by the NTA and Drug Teams based in the Government Offices for the Regions.

In 1998 the Government launched [Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain](#), their 10 year strategy to combat drug misuse.

The overall aim is to create *a healthy and confident society, increasingly free from the harm caused by the misuse of drugs*.

In December 2002 the Government launched the Updated [Drug Strategy 2002](#). This built upon, and adapted the 1998 strategy.

Aiming to reduce the harm that drugs cause to society - communities, individuals and their families - the Drug Strategy has four main elements:

- Young people - preventing today's young people from becoming tomorrow's problematic drug users;
- Reducing supply - reducing the supply of illegal drugs.
- Communities - reducing drug-related crime and its impact on communities;
- Treatment and harm minimisation - reducing drug use and drug-related offending through treatment and support.
Reducing drug-related death through harm minimisation.

New drug strategy for 2008



The current 10 year drug strategy ends in March 2008.

In developing the new strategy the Home Office, in partnership with other Government departments, will try to address the changes that have taken place in patterns of drug use and the profile of drug users since 1998, critically review the approaches, and reflect on the many developments that have taken place in related policy areas.

The new strategy, which will be launched at the end of this year (2007), will re-focus on the strategies and interventions that

have had the greatest positive impact, while building on opportunities to develop and deliver the strategy as part of the wider policy framework.

All the latest facts and figures about the new Drug Strategy can be found [here](#)

Updated June 2007

©2008 DrugScope
Built on [OneStopCMS](#)