

## **ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN**

SUMMARY OF EMERGING EVIDENCE FROM THE UK

## Summary

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK went into lockdown on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.

There have been reports of increased supermarket spending on alcohol, but it is not yet known how overall alcohol sales have changed throughout this period.

In addition to ongoing research with data collection, a number of surveys have been set up specifically on the issue of drinking during the pandemic. This briefing summarises the emerging evidence base on changes in UK alcohol consumption during the lockdown, by bringing together findings from different sources.

The findings of the surveys so far represent a mixed picture. One study found that 25% of adults were risky drinkers between Apr 2019 – Feb 2020 compared with 38% during lockdown in April 2020. Several other surveys have reported that between a fifth and a third of people are drinking more during lockdown. Where the proportion of people drinking less during lockdown has been reported, this is often similar to or exceeding the proportion drinking more during lockdown.

It is challenging to compare across surveys because of different designs and measures of alcohol consumption, and it is possible some groups are under-represented. In particular, not enough is known about how the COVID-19 lockdown has affected harmful and dependent drinkers, and research conducted with those in alcohol treatment could help to address this.

More research is needed to understand the socio-demographics of changes in alcohol consumption (eg could COVID-19 exacerbate existing inequalities in alcohol-related harm?), how changes to alcohol consumption vary according to individuals' pre-lockdown consumption (eg are baseline heavy drinkers especially likely to increase their consumption?), and how COVID-19-related impacts (such as furlough, redundancy, unemployment, bereavement, mental health) are associated with changes in alcohol consumption.

In the short-term, there are things survey researchers can do to monitor and investigate changes in alcohol consumption during this period. In the medium term, analysis of alcohol sales data and research with harmful and dependent drinkers and people in recovery can add to the picture from surveys, as well as an understanding of how any changes in alcohol consumption occur alongside changes in other health behaviours. Further ahead, tackling alcohol harms must be an essential part of the UK's COVID-19 recovery plan.

## Background

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the UK went into lockdown, with only essential and work-related journeys permitted in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Under *The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020* (1) (and similar legislation in Wales (2), Scotland (3) and Northern Ireland (4)), no person was permitted to leave their home ‘without reasonable excuse’, such as shopping for groceries.

Off-licences were designated essential businesses by the UK Government (5) and had permission to remain open throughout. While some professionals questioned whether off-licences really were ‘essential’ (6), there was a wider recognition that continued access to alcohol is critical for dependent drinkers, who may otherwise face an increased risk of withdrawal and the associated complications at a time when health services could be less able to respond to these needs (7).

An extra £160m was spent on alcohol in supermarkets in the three weeks to lockdown, compared with the same period last year (8). This reflected a broader picture of increased supermarket spending during the crisis, represented in the press and on social media through photos and videos of panic buying and stockpiling. Stories soon emerged describing empty alcohol aisles in supermarkets (9), wine tasting sessions moving online (10), starter kits to brew your own beer selling out (11), and the phenomenon of ‘the virtual pub’ (12), where Brits could engage in a social form of home drinking with friends and family via video chat, thanks to the rapid take-up of conference-calling software such as Zoom.

Increases in supermarket alcohol sales could indicate increased alcohol consumption, but tell only a partial picture. Typically, approximately 65-70% of alcohol sales are in the off-trade (supermarkets, off-licences etc), with the remaining third of alcohol sales in the on-trade (pubs, restaurants etc) ((13), Tables B9 and B10). With on-trade venues closed completely – although some are selling drinks in sealed containers for consumption off-premise – drawing conclusions based on supermarket alcohol sales without seeing how this balances against on-trade closures (as well as possible stockpiling) is premature.

Surveys also revealed a consumer sensitivity to alcohol producers’ responses to the pandemic: YouGov found that in the early weeks of lockdown (14), a brand’s reputation appeared to depend upon how their contingency plans were received, although this may prove to be temporary in the long run. BrewDog saw their Buzz Score rise 3.5 points on news of the civic-minded gestures of the company’s founders to forgo their salaries and to do their bit in fighting coronavirus by producing hand-sanitiser. JD Wetherspoon’s score, on the other hand, dropped 13.9 points following owner Tim Martin’s suggestion that pubs should be allowed to remain open during the lockdown, and his announcement that staff would not be paid until the government stepped in to pay them on furlough.

In time, sales data from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will show if there have been changes in overall alcohol sales on average per adult (although trade associations have called for an excise duty holiday during the pandemic (15), which would affect the usefulness of these data). The HMRC data for April 2020 suggests lower alcohol receipts compared with the preceding two years overall. There was a 5% decrease in spirits duty receipts, a 19% decrease in wine receipts, and much larger decreases in the receipts for beer and cider (69% decrease and 47% decrease respectively) (16). However HMRC notes it is too early to draw conclusions based on these findings, as these changes are

‘due to a combination of changes to payment timing, responses to COVID-19 policies and emerging pandemic related economic impacts’ (16). The sales data also do not provide information on individuals’ alcohol purchasing, so surveys measuring self-reported alcohol consumption are also valuable.

Anecdotal evidence on the demand alcohol places on public services may provide an indication of how consumption has changed, particularly as restrictions are eased. In Australia’s Northern Territory, a ‘rise in admissions to Royal Darwin Hospital coincided with the full reopening of pubs and bars’ (17). According to one hospital in north west England, the pandemic did not stop a spike in emergency admissions over a May Bank Holiday weekend (18), akin to ‘pre-lockdown days’.

This briefing summarises the emerging evidence on changes in UK alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic, by bringing together findings from different surveys that have been published so far.

## What we know so far

In addition to ongoing data collection (eg the Alcohol Toolkit Study), a number of surveys have been set up specifically on the issue of drinking during the pandemic. These are summarised in Table 1, and selected press coverage is available in the Appendix.

At the time of writing, there are at least eight surveys with results published which have asked participants about alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown. Most of these have been conducted by market research companies using online polling over a short period of time and ask about alcohol consumption before lockdown retrospectively. Some surveys have been conducted at multiple time points, but overall the majority of the evidence so far relates to the month of April.

**Several surveys have found between a fifth and a third of people reported drinking more during lockdown.** Where the proportion of people drinking less during lockdown has been reported, this is often similar to or exceeding the proportion drinking more during lockdown. However, 'drinking more' is not well-defined, and could constitute any combination of increases in frequency of consumption, increases in quantity per occasion, and/or increases in heavy episodic drinking. The data tables from the Imperial Global C19 survey conducted by YouGov indicate little change in quantity of alcohol drunk per occasion, but increases in the proportion of people drinking 5+ days a week. This was seen especially among those in their 30s and 40s, those in ABC1 social grade, and those in employment, but the (freely-available) data require further analysis to investigate this (19).

There is a small amount of evidence that the most frequent drinkers have increased their consumption the most (20) and that there is an increase in the prevalence of risky drinking (21). For example, the Alcohol Toolkit Study found **25% of adults were risky drinkers between Apr 2019 – Feb 2020 compared with 38% in April 2020** (21). Due to methodological differences, it is difficult to compare these findings with the other data sources. With the exception of one poll (size unknown) conducted by YouGov for Action on Addiction (22), there is very limited evidence describing the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on harmful and dependent drinkers and people in recovery.

In the Imperial Global C19 survey conducted by YouGov, drinking 5+ days a week increased during lockdown more among parents of children under 18 years of age compared with adults without children (19). This is worthy of investigation: it could be explained by age or cohort effects, but it may potentially be of concern if alcohol is being used as a coping strategy among parents dealing with stress or anxiety related to lockdown and school closures. This is one example of the importance of investigating changes in alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown by socio-economic, demographic and household characteristics.

One survey – the Global Drug Survey – found the time of day people have started drinking has moved earlier (23). The relationship between this and any other changes in alcohol consumption patterns, including volume and frequency of drinking, is not yet known. The Global Drug Survey has a large sample size globally, but importantly it is a non-probability sample, meaning it is not designed to be nationally representative (for example young adults and people who use other substances are over-represented in this survey).

Table 1: Summary of reports of alcohol consumption during COVID-19 lockdown in the UK (presented chronologically)

Survey name	Conducted by	Timeline	Design	Size and coverage	Alcohol data collected	What else is collected?	Key findings
YouGov daily question (24,25)	YouGov	Two days:  24th March 2020 and 10th June 2020	Polling	N=2,639 in March and 4,449 in June  Adults 18+ in Great Britain	'Are you drinking more or less alcohol than you normally would?'	Socio-demographics, political affiliation	24th March: <b>95% drinkers – 17% are drinking a bit/much more than normal, 57% are drinking the same as normal, and 24% are drinking a bit/much less than normal.</b> Changes were most apparent among 18-24-year-olds, with this age group the most likely to be both drinking more (25%), and drinking less (28%) when compared to the other age groups.  10th June: <b>Three-quarters (75%) drinkers – 22% are drinking a bit/much more than normal, 36% are drinking the same as normal, and 17% are drinking a bit/much less than normal.</b> 18-24-year-olds were around twice as likely to drink 'much 'less' than the overall average.
Life under lockdown / Getting used to life under lockdown (26,27)	King's College London Policy Institute and Ipsos MORI	Two waves:  1-3rd April and 20-22nd May 2020	Online survey	N=2,250 in April and 2,254 in May  UK adults aged 18-85 in April and 16-75 in May	'Since the Prime Minister announced the measures on 23 March, have you personally done or experienced any of the following? - Drank more alcohol than you normally would' (part of a list of other health and social behaviours)	Perceptions and misperceptions about COVID-19, plus expectations, behaviours and attitudes related to COVID-19	April 2020: <b>19% had drunk more alcohol than they normally would</b> , 80% had not.  May 2020: <b>29% had drunk more alcohol than they normally would</b> , 69% had not.

Alcohol Change UK polling (20)	Opinium	7-9th April 2020	Polling, weighted to be nationally representative	N=2,010  Adults 18+ UK-wide	Frequency and typical quantity, retrospectively before lockdown. Whether changes in frequency and typical quantity since lockdown	Socio-demographics, region, effects of any changes in alcohol use (eg on health, sleep quality etc), household size and number of children	<p><b>One in three drinking less often than usual, but one in five drinking more often.</b></p> <p><b>Regarding typical quantity, 42% reported they drank less than usual, compared with 13% who reported they drank more than usual.</b></p> <p>Those drinking the least often before lockdown reduced frequency the most. Nearly half (47%) of people who drank once a week or less have cut down or stopped drinking, compared to just over a quarter (27%) of people who drank two to six times a week, and just one in five (17%) daily drinkers. <b>Nearly one in five (18%) daily drinkers reported they had further increased the amount they drink since lockdown.</b></p> <p>Data tables freely available.</p>
Direct Line Insurance (28)	Opinium	21-23rd April	Polling, weighted to be nationally representative	Approx. 2,000  Adults UK-wide	Not clear	Unhealthy food, exercise	<p><b>Since lockdown 27% of adults reported drinking more alcohol.</b></p> <p>On average, drinkers have increased their alcohol consumption by 12.6 units per week in the daytime and a further 14.6 units in the evenings. Extrapolated up to the population, more than 250,000 people in the UK were said to be drinking in the morning (not contrasted with before lockdown).</p>
Alcohol Toolkit Study (21)	Ipsos MORI for UCL Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group	April 2019-Feb 2020, and Apr 2020	Monthly representative survey, ongoing since 2014	N=18,884 before lockdown and 1,674 during lockdown  Adults 16+ in England	High risk drinking (AUDIT-C), alcohol reduction attempts, use of evidence-based support, use of remote support	Socio-demographics, smoking and quitting behaviour	<p><b>Greater prevalence of high-risk drinking after lockdown compared with before (38% compared with 25%, OR 1.85).</b></p> <p>Among high-risk drinkers, <b>odds of making a serious attempt to reduce drinking were 2.16 times higher</b> after lockdown compared with before. Among high risk drinkers who made an attempt to cut down, use of evidence-based support was 0.23 times lower after lockdown, but odds of using remote support did not vary significantly.</p> <p>Notes: Preprint under peer review at the time of writing. Until February methodology was face-to-face adults 16+. March 2020 data not collected. Change in methodology in April – telephone surveys of adults 18+</p>

Global C19 Study (19)	YouGov and Imperial College London	Alcohol measured since w/c 4th May 2020	Weekly cross-sectional survey, weighted to be nationally representative	Approx. 1,000 weekly  Adults 16+ UK-wide	Frequency and typical quantity, during lockdown, and (retrospectively) before lockdown	Socio-demographics, COVID-19 symptoms or health behaviours, smoking and quit attempts, gambling, mental health, region, household size and number of children	<p><b>Small increase in frequency</b> (measured by proportion drinking on 5+ days a week). Among men, 19% drank on 5+ days before lockdown and 22% during lockdown. Among women, 12% drank on 5+ days before lockdown and 16% during lockdown. This proportion increased most among those in their 30s and 40s, those in ABC1 social grade and those in employment.</p> <p><b>Larger increases in frequent drinking among those who have children under 18 in the home compared with those who do not.</b> Among men with children, 13% drank on 5+ days before lockdown compared with 18% during lockdown (28% relative increase, compared to 13% among those without children). Among women with children, 9% drank on 5+ days before lockdown compared with 15% during lockdown (40% relative increase, compared to 24% among those without children).</p> <p><b>Little overall change in quantity of alcohol consumption on typical occasion</b>, but there was a 20% point drop in proportion of FT students drinking 5+ units on a typical occasion. Increase in C2DE women drinking 5+ units on typical occasion: 22% of before lockdown, compared with 28% after lockdown.</p> <p>Data tables and datasets freely available.<sup>1</sup></p>
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Global Drug Survey Special Edition on COVID-19 (23)	Global Drug Survey	May 2020 (interim report)  <b>Full report is due July 2020</b>	Online survey, non-probability sample (ie not designed to be representative)	Approx. 1,300  Adults 16+ median age 29 years, UK-wide  Part of a global survey with over 40,000 participants included in interim report	Past 12m drinking. Among past 12m drinkers, desire to drink less, frequency of past month drinking.  Comparing with Feb (ie before lockdown retrospectively measured), change in drinking days a month, number of days drinking 5+ drinks, drinking earlier in the day. Those who reported drinking more or less were asked how they explained the increase, and whether they experienced an impact on them eg health/relationships	Demographics, other substance use	<p><b>Fifty-six percent of participants increased their number of drinking days a little/a lot since lockdown, compared with 28% whose number of drinking days decreased a little/a lot.</b></p> <p><b>One third (33%) of participants increased their frequency of heavy episodic drinking, compared with 36% who decreased their frequency of binge drinking.</b></p> <p>The top two reasons for drinking more related to boredom and having more free time. Consequences of drinking more included worse physical health (cited among 44% of those reporting increased drinking), and worse mental health, poorer work/study performance, and decreased pleasure/enjoyment related to drinking (all around 25% of people who drank more).</p> <p>Among people who drank less, the most popular reasons were not having access drinking venues and having less contact with people you usually drink with.</p> <p><b>47% reported drinking earlier in the day since lockdown.</b></p> <p>Figures above not included in GDS interim report were obtained through personal communication.</p>
YouGov / Portman Group survey on alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown (29)	YouGov for Portman Group	22-26th May	Polling, weighted to be nationally representative	N=2,070  Adults 18+ in Great Britain	'The only study to review weekly unit intake prior to and since COVID-19'	Breakdowns by age, sex, unit guideline threshold. Also question on 'moderating strategies'	<p>5% of drinkers report that they've stopped drinking during lockdown 22% report drinking less 38% report no change 35% of drinkers say they are drinking more than pre-lockdown</p> <p><b>Heavier drinkers much more likely to report drinking more during lockdown compared to previously</b></p> <p><b>The majority of drinkers at all levels who were exceeding the UK guidelines regularly before the pandemic have increased their drinking during lockdown.</b></p>

YouGov National Poll on Addiction Behaviours in Lockdown (22)	YouGov for Action on Addiction	Not stated	Polling, weighted to be nationally representative	Sample size not stated  Adults 18+, UK-wide	Impact of lockdown on addiction behaviour in UK adults not in recovery, impact of lockdown on recovery, addictive behaviour after lockdown, access to treatment	Not stated  Note: addictive behaviour is not limited to alcohol dependence (includes other substances, behavioural addictions)	<p><b>A quarter of adults (not in recovery from an addiction prior to lockdown) have increased their alcohol consumption since lockdown.</b></p> <p><b>Of those who have increased their drinking, 15% experienced related problems</b> (such as relationship difficulties, managing work, sleeping problems, physical symptoms of withdrawal, debt etc). Almost a quarter of those reporting problems said that they would need help to resolve them.</p> <p><b>39% of people surveyed who were in recovery from an addiction prior to lockdown have experienced a relapse or a re-occurrence of their addictive behaviour.</b></p>
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<sup>1</sup> From IAS analysis of four weeks of alcohol data tables (from w/c 4th May) accessed via crunch.io platform (between 4-9 June 2020). Anonymised respondent level data have been made freely available to all public health and academic institutions globally to aid in the fight against COVID-19, available from: <https://github.com/YouGov-Data/covid-19-tracker>

## Limitations of the data and gaps in knowledge

Overall it is difficult to compare across these data sources, because the designs of the surveys and the questions asked about alcohol consumption are rarely comparable. Most surveys have asked about alcohol consumption before lockdown retrospectively, which is a less reliable indicator than actual consumption before lockdown (as measured, for example, in the Alcohol Toolkit Study). Changes in alcohol consumption that are reported may also be for reasons other than the lockdown.

While the majority of the surveys so far have been weighted to represent the demographics of the whole UK population, we should remain cautious drawing conclusions regarding the representativeness of the results. The majority of surveys have been conducted online, and sampling frame issues and non-response bias could mean that some groups – particularly heavier drinkers, whose drinking may well have changed the most – are under-represented (30). Few surveys used reliable measures of higher risk drinking, and there is little research so far about the impact of the lockdown on alcohol consumption among harmful and dependent drinkers and people in recovery. This is important in light of a BMJ editorial published in May 2020, which stated that two groups need particular attention: 1) those already struggling with alcohol dependence and 2) those on the brink of dependence during lockdown and beyond (31).

Related to this, there is an absence of evidence on how the lockdown is affecting uptake of and referrals for alcohol treatment. There have been reports of substantial reductions in referrals to third sector providers in Wales (32) and residential rehabilitation centres (33), but the national picture is not yet known. There have also been reports of COVID-19 triggering relapses among people in recovery (34). Both Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems and the Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England released guidance for commissioners and providers of services for people who use drugs or alcohol (35,36), which stated services should remain open but adapt to minimise face-to-face contact. Changes in referrals for and uptake of alcohol treatment are concerning but are typical of a wider pattern of this across healthcare (37). For alcohol, this is important to consider in the context of future demand in an already stretched system (38), particularly given that one study found high risk drinkers were over twice as likely to make a serious attempt to reduce drinking during lockdown compared with before (21).

With many of the surveys finding some people are drinking more during lockdown alongside others drinking less, it is unclear whether to expect an overall change in the average alcohol sales per head of the population throughout the COVID-19 lockdown. **An absence of (or minimal) population level changes could risk obscuring significant changes among particular groups and individuals.** So far there is limited evidence describing the socio-demographics of changes in alcohol consumption (eg could COVID-19 exacerbate existing inequalities in alcohol-related harm?), how changes to alcohol consumption vary according to individuals' pre-lockdown consumption (eg are baseline heavy drinkers especially likely to increase their consumption?), and how COVID-19-related impacts (such as furlough, redundancy, unemployment, bereavement, mental health) are associated with those changes. There may also be particular issues in relation to disclosing drinking in lockdown concerning child protection and domestic violence; these remain unexplored.

## How do we fill the gaps in knowledge?

Alcohol consumption is not at the centre of the public health crisis that COVID-19 presents, however the potential effect on alcohol consumption and harm of the unprecedented changes on day-to-day life we have experienced should be monitored. As with the overall impact of the pandemic which is affecting different parts of society in vastly different ways (39,40), it is likely that changes in drinking could have similarly unequal effects.

In the immediate/short term: **routinely-collected data and surveys should continue to be monitored; surveys should use validated tools to measure risky drinking** (such as the 3-item AUDIT-C (41)) where possible; and **datasets should be made freely available**, for researchers to analyse associations with (for example) socio-demographics, pre-COVID alcohol use, and COVID-19 related experiences and impacts.

In the medium term: **alcohol sales data from HMRC should be used to determine whether there has been a change in overall alcohol sales**, both before and after on-trade sales are due to recommence in July 2020; **research with harmful and dependent drinkers, as well as people in recovery, is needed** to understand how these groups are impacted and how health services should respond; and **studies of how changes in alcohol consumption overlaps with other health behaviours in response to COVID-19 will help to understand the health impacts in context**. Two examples of this are: 1) the HEBECO Study (led by UCL's Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group and Behavioural Science and Health) (42), which has a longitudinal design, and 2) the COVID Symptom Study app – which has over three million users – which has recently begun to collect information on diet and lifestyle, including alcohol consumption (43).

In the longer term, beyond acute effects of lockdown on people's drinking, opportunities may arise for policies to reduce harm from alcohol. Professor Sir Ian Gilmore, chair of Alcohol Health Alliance UK, wrote in the British Medical Journal of the need to position **tackling alcohol harms** as integral to the UK's COVID-19 recovery plan (31). This can be achieved through relatively **low cost policies such as minimum unit pricing and marketing restrictions**, alongside **investment in alcohol treatment** which presents savings in the long-run (44), plus those that can generate revenue, such as **duty reform** (45).

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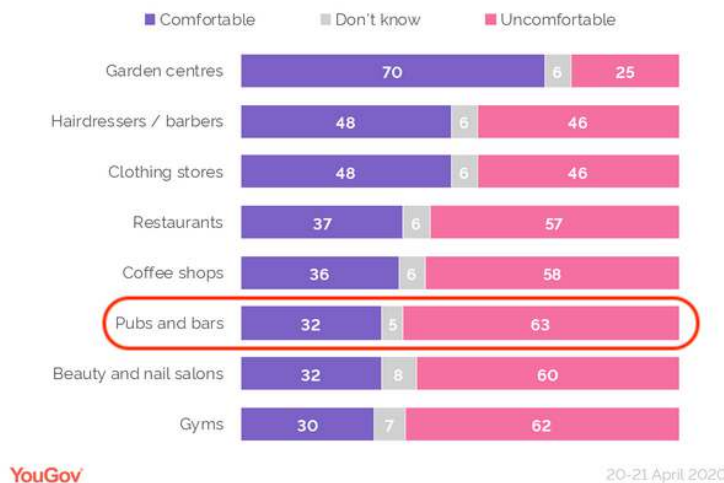
## Appendix: Selected alcohol-related COVID-19 press coverage

16<sup>th</sup> April  
[The Guardian](#) – One in three drinking less in lockdown, UK survey finds



### Even when restaurants, pubs and gyms reopen, most will still feel uncomfortable about visiting

How comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel visiting each of the following places once the government loosens the current lockdown restrictions and they reopen?  
 % of those who say they ever visit these places



23<sup>rd</sup> April  
[YouGov](#) – Don't count on customers returning once COVID-19 lockdown eases  
 32% of public would feel comfortable going back to pubs and bars



3<sup>rd</sup> May

### [The Observer](#) – Problem drinking soars under UK lockdown, say addiction experts

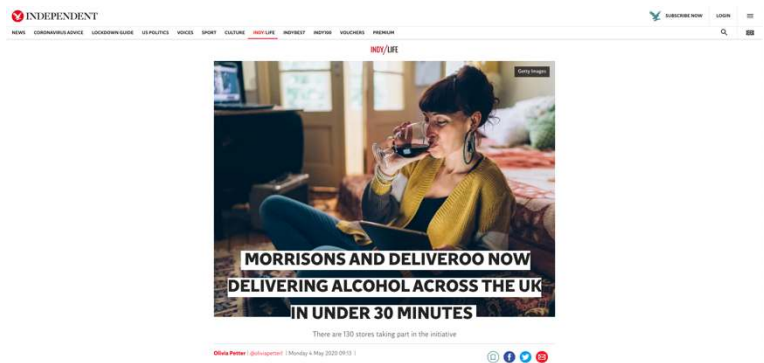
*Alcohol sales in Britain were 30% higher than usual in March, as people prepared for, and became used to, living under the lockdown, which began on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month... One in five of Britons who drink – about 8.6 million people – have begun drinking more often since then, [according to recent research](#) by the charity Alcohol*

*Change UK... [their] survey of more than 2,000 people also found that 35% of those who usually consume alcohol have cut down and 6% have given up: this comprises about 1.4 million people... While 4,089 sought advice from the 'get help now' section of its website between 23 March and 30 April last year, it had 20,067 visits in the same period this year.*

4<sup>th</sup> May

### [The Independent](#) – Morrisons and Deliveroo now delivering alcohol across the UK in under 30 minutes

*Since the lockdown was imposed, Wineapp's daily sales have surged by 1,600 per cent and the company is approaching a seven-figure revenue as a result of its success... Last month, [Alcohol Change UK] [figures revealed](#) that one in five people were drinking more than usual in lockdown.*



### Booze bonanza for shops masks beer and spirits downturn

Philip Binkins

6 MIN READ

BRUSSELS (Reuters) – When Lionel Platteau started planning how he would cope under Belgium's coronavirus lockdown, there was one item he wanted to make sure he had enough of – alcohol.



7<sup>th</sup> May

### [Reuters](#) – Booze bonanza for shops masks beer and spirits downturn

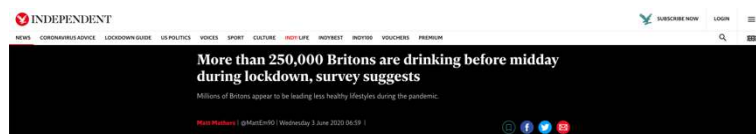
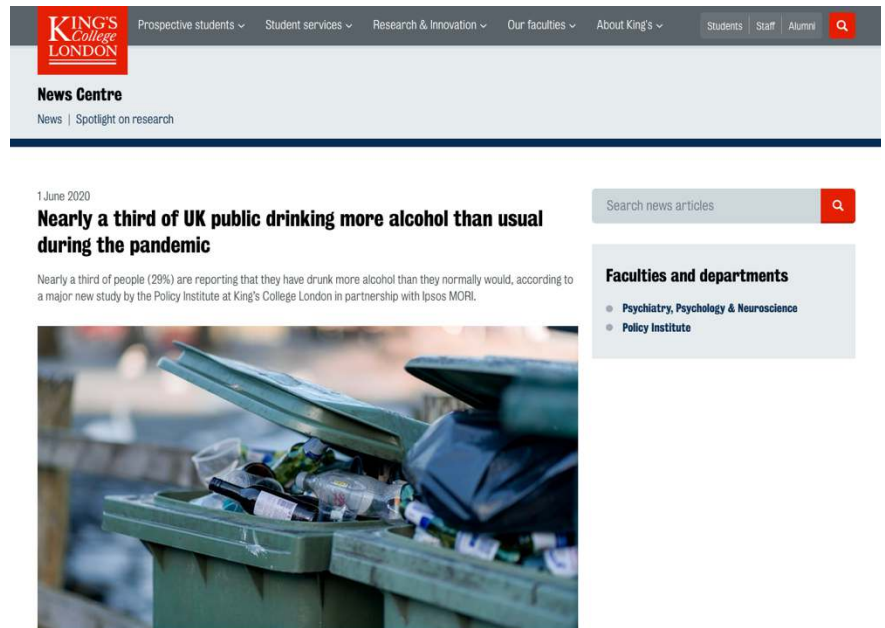
*Sales at British liquor stores leapt a third in March, while those for alcohol at U.S. retailers shot up more than 50% in the week after the country entered a state of national emergency.*

1<sup>st</sup> June

[King's College London](#) –

**Nearly a third of UK public drinking more alcohol than usual during the pandemic**

*The second King's College London survey that has been run across the UK since the pandemic began finds that 29% of people have reported drinking more alcohol than they would normally, up from 19% in early April*



3<sup>rd</sup> June

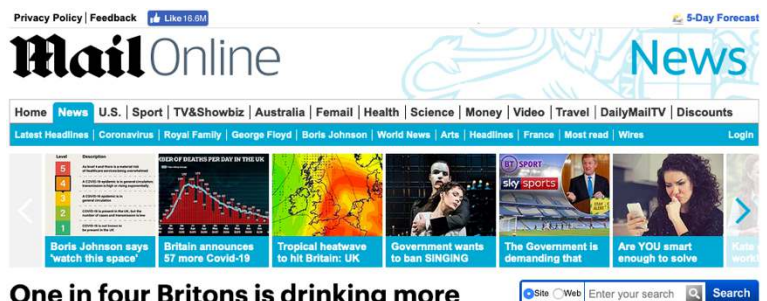
[The Independent](#) – **More than 250,000 Britons are drinking before midday during lockdown**

*Most Britons are drinking more during the coronavirus lockdown, with an estimated 250,000 having their first tipples before midday, according to two studies into rising alcohol consumption since the restrictions began... an interim report for the [Global Drug Survey](#) found more than 50% of British drinkers reported an increase in the number of days consuming alcohol each week during the Covid-19 crisis, with a third reporting an increase in binge drinking.*

3<sup>rd</sup> June

[Mail Online](#) – **One in four Britons is drinking more alcohol during the coronavirus lockdown... with a quarter of a million downing booze before MIDDAY**

Twenty-seven per cent of adults have been downing more [alcohol](#) since March 23 – totalling more than 14million people... The survey [for Direct Line Life Insurance, carried out by Opinium] said the increase in alcohol consumption works out at 12.6 units a week during the daytime for an average person – plus another 14.6 units in the evening.





**An Institute of Alcohol Studies publication**

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