

Grimsby Telegraph

Sobriety tag scheme to be rolled out across Humberside to combat alcohol related crime

Connor Lynch | 20 Jun 2018

The use of sobriety tags is to be rolled out in courts in Grimsby in a bid to reduce alcohol related crimes.

The Humberside, Lincolnshire & North Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation Company (HLNY CRC), are rolling out the scheme following successful pilot runs in Grimsby, York and East Lincolnshire, which were first launched in June 2017.

It is estimated that alcohol plays a part in 25 per cent of all offences reported to the police, along with 40 per cent of all domestic abuse offences in the Humberside force area.

HLNY CRC is responsible for supervising offenders under probation and ensuring they comply with orders of the court. CRC staff have been trained to fit and maintain the sobriety tags and to complete alcohol awareness work with offenders subject to the requirement.



A sobriety tag scheme is to be rolled out across Grimsby after successful pilot in the town

Becky Bailey, Project Manager for the HLNY AAMR Pilot, said: "There's a cohort of offenders who are more likely to commit crime when they are under the influence of alcohol, creating more victims and harm to individuals and themselves. In the pilot scheme 70 offenders have been sentenced to the Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement for a range of offences including theft, drink driving and violent offences.

"To date the compliance rate has been around 90 per cent and offenders who have completed the requirement say it has had a positive impact upon their lives and helped them to reduce their use of alcohol."

What does a sobriety tag do?

The sobriety tags monitor the consumption of alcohol and alert case managers if an offender has been drinking.

How does it work?

The technology, provided by SCRAM Systems, accurately detects the presence of alcohol in an offender's system by taking readings from the skin. If alcohol is detected, the offender can potentially be returned to court in breach of their sentence. Offenders are assessed for suitability before being tagged as the requirement cannot be used for people who are dependent on alcohol or those with certain medical conditions.

Who can give them out?

Magistrates and Crown Courts can impose an AAMR as part of a Community Sentence or Suspended Sentence Order provided there is evidence the offending was linked to use of alcohol.

How long must they worn for?

Offenders can be ordered to wear a 'sobriety tag' around their ankle for up to 120 days.

Martin Davies, chief executive of HLNy CRC said: "The sobriety tagging initiative is an innovative approach to tackling alcohol-related crime and an opportunity to make a big difference to communities across Humberside, Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire by reducing the risk of further alcohol related offences."

[Humberside Police](#) and Crime Commissioner Keith Hunter said: "The trial of sobriety tags in the Humberside Police area was carried out at Grimsby Court and has proved very successful. One offender was featured on the regional news speaking about how the tag had made him think about, and change his behaviour for the better.

"I am pleased to see the plans to roll out the scheme across all courts in our area and my office will monitor the results moving forward."

Amit Sethi, EU Head of Operations for SCRAM Systems, said: "Removing alcohol from the equation can make all the difference for both the offenders and the community at large. We look forward to continuing to support the Humberside, Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire CRC and its innovative approach to addressing alcohol-related offences."

As the AAMR is a Pilot scheme, a full evaluation has been commissioned from independent research organisation, the National Centre for Social Research. This will evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention to tackle alcohol related offending.