

**Press release: Swanswell**

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**Rugby, UK.**

## **Stay safe with Christmas drinking: top tips from Swanswell**

**With Christmas party season now upon us Swanswell, a leading provider of community based alcohol services across Coventry and Warwickshire, has the following tips to help make Christmas safer:**

- Eat before you go out – this will help you absorb the alcohol more slowly. Fast food at the end of the night will have no benefit.
- Plan your night out – where you're going and how you're going to get home.
- Don't peak too early – set yourself a limit and in order to stick to it pace yourself.
- Avoid buying in rounds – this makes it more difficult to keep an eye on how much you've had, as do larger measures and stronger drinks so know what you're drinking.
- Resist temptation - a kiss under the mistletoe can lead to other things. Don't be too drunk to say no, or too drunk to practice safe sex.
- Drinking and driving don't mix – treat yourself to a taxi home or identify a designated driver and support that person not to drink any alcohol. Some bars / restaurants offer free soft drinks to designated drivers.
- Recover - if you do have a big night out give yourself *at least* forty eight hours to recover before drinking again.

Jacob Shell, a Senior Team Manager for Swanswell said:

'Christmas is now in full flow and much of the celebrating goes hand-in-hand with drinking. Whilst we know that keeping to the recommended limits of no more than four units a day for men and no more than three a day for women can be difficult, if people limit the amount they drink they will find the festive season to be much more enjoyable, healthy and safe'. A regular pint of lager is about two units, a small glass of wine about one to one and a half units.

Swanswell advise that people should keep an eye on how much they are regularly drinking as well as just over the festive season. A number of new alcohol awareness groups are being piloted within the West Midlands to help people keep alcohol in its place. Project Leader Paul Hartley said:

“Alcohol is an increasing risk to personal health and community safety so we all need to be more aware of the risks and learn how to reduce these. With Christmas in full flow, the temptation to drink a lot increases, so the groups that we at Swanswell are piloting are a gift for attendees. They will have benefits long after Christmas is over.”

Designed for people who are concerned that they may be drinking at harmful levels, the groups encourage people to support one another in moving towards a healthier and happier lifestyle. A useful toolkit helps people to set alcohol limits, develop a plan and stick to it.

Email [alcoholawarenes@swanswell.org](mailto:alcoholawarenes@swanswell.org) to find out about local alcohol awareness groups  
The Swanswell website at [www.swanswell.org](http://www.swanswell.org) contains information about Swanswell's full range of support and advice for alcohol problems in Birmingham.

-ENDS-

Jacob Shell and Paul Hartley are available for further comment.

Please contact Jacob on 02476 226619

Please contact Paul on 0121 233 7400

Swanswell's alcohol awareness groups are run in Birmingham with the community-based Health Exchange, at the Soho Health Centre on Wednesday evening at 6.45pm to 8pm and at St Andrews Community Centre College Road, Handsworth Wood, on Sunday evenings at 5pm check this hasn't changed

Coventry Community Alcohol Service is open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Anyone concerned about their own or someone else's drinking can drop-in or phone without an appointment between 9-12pm, Monday to Friday and from 5pm to 6.30pm on a Monday.