As a result of consultation with Preston businesses, a unique support package has been developed. The ‘Age Check’ resource is an interactive CD ROM which has been produced as a guide for retailers in handling age-restricted sales such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents, and fireworks. The resource has been funded through the Home Office Blueprint initiative’s Health Policy Component, which aims to reduce sales of age-restricted products to minors. The Alcohol Project, Trading Standards and Lancashire Constabulary have worked together with local retailers and young people to produce the resource. It is unique in the fact that it incorporates a facility enabling a choice of languages including English, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, and Hindi. It also includes a short film, an interactive quiz, sections on the law, and downloadable useful documents such as a refusals register.

The ‘Age Check’ resource is to be distributed free of charge to all retailers who sell age-restricted products in Lancashire. It was launched initially on 25th April 2005 at the Gujarat Centre where it was well received by the attendees who felt that it was a welcome and supportive resource. The training package was also launched in South Ribble on the 10th August 2005 at an event for local businesses. It is hoped that the resource will assist in tackling under-age sales problems across the county, particularly in relation to alcohol.

The ‘Age Check’ resource has recently been recognised by the Trading Standards Institute and is being promoted as an example of good practice throughout the country.
News in Brief
The Alcohol Project in partnership with Trading Standards has been successful in a bid for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. It is to work with One Voice Neighbourhood Management Partnership (contact Annette Stevens: 01772 903017) which covers the areas of Brookfield and Ribbleton. The project has received a grant in order to deliver education campaigns and enforcement activities in these areas. It will support local retailers by hosting a training event and distributing support packages. Young people will also receive information and awareness-raising material.

Schools Alcohol Research Study
Five local schools have volunteered to take part in a longitudinal study. Pupils from Years 7 and 9 have completed alcohol questionnaires. A report will be produced in order to compare differing behaviours and attitudes between the ages. This study will be repeated in two years time.

Project Reports
The Project Assistant has produced a piece of research ‘The role of parents in preventing and addressing underage drinking’ as part of a Masters Degree in Child Health and Social Care. Findings of this study will be used to shape future awareness raising strategies.

The project has also produced a Mapping Report outlining alcohol related service provision for young people. A report has also been produced that has analysed the gaps in service provision in regard to alcohol and young people including draft recommendations for service improvements.

CARRYING THE CAN RESOURCE
Carrying the Can is a multi-agency resource produced in partnership to address issues relating to young people and alcohol. This teaching package has been distributed to every secondary school in Lancashire free of charge in order to help address the problems associated with binge drinking amongst young people in our communities. Carrying the Can is a short educational film, which aims to encourage pupils to consider carefully their attitudes and approach to alcohol. The resource has been designed for use within the Citizenship and PSHE programme at Key Stage 4. Carrying the Can is an effective way to start students thinking about the personal and social implications of alcohol misuse. Most importantly, it reinforces their individual ability to make choices, the consequences of which may affect them and others in both the short and long term. It focuses on dealing with alcohol, anti-social behaviour and sexual health issues. The film outlines a series of different scenarios with accompanying lesson plans and activities. Carrying the Can takes a practical approach, showing what happens if reasonable limits are exceeded. The resource has been produced in close collaboration with the Schools Effectiveness Service and Lancashire Constabulary’s Nightsafe team. The resource was launched at the VUE Cinema, Walton-Le-Dale on 17th May 2005. Presentations were delivered by keynote speakers including Ruth Joyce representing the Home Office Blueprint initiative. The event, which proved to be extremely successful, was attended by over 100 delegates.

RESOURCE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS
The Alcohol Project has commissioned the production of a ‘lifestyle’ website aimed at children under the age of 10, before they formulate their ideas and attitudes to alcohol use. The resource is being produced in partnership with the School Effectiveness Service. The interactive site will include alcohol awareness messages, support materials, downloadable lesson plans for teachers and an information section for parents. The website is currently under development after consultation with Year 6 pupils from Lea Community Primary School. This resource is due to be promoted through primary schools across Lancashire. It is hoped that a consistent and co-ordinated approach to tackling issues of alcohol at Key Stages will have a positive effect upon the behaviour and attitudes of young people.

SUSTAINABILITY
The Alcohol Project is currently undergoing assessment by Lancashire Children’s Fund in order to secure possible future funding for 2006-08. The project is also looking for alternative sources of funding. If successful in obtaining additional funding, it is envisaged that the Alcohol Project will be the key driver for co-ordinating a countywide collaborative approach in regard to tackling young people’s drinking.