

SAFER SEX

WORKS

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SAFER SEX WORKS – Summary

Street prostitution and kerb crawlers soliciting women from vehicles created a highly visible problem centred around the Deepdale area of Preston affecting the quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses. Problematic behaviour, chaotic drug use and sexual activity creates genuine health concerns for the whole community together with fear and vulnerability to crime.

Preston had developed a national reputation as a city with a thriving red light district. It was vital to fully assess the scope and nature of the problem utilising a number of measurable and qualitative indicators, to develop an ongoing range of responses, which would be effective in reducing/eliminating the problem.

The range of indicators used included incident logging, reported crime and consultation with the community and partners. Complaints and community contact expressed genuine concern and vulnerability amongst affected communities, concerns echoed by the local media. The prostitute register was updated and a street survey conducted to assess the number of women actively involved in street prostitution, areas frequented, drug habits and the numbers of visiting vehicles. An Internet site dedicated to kerb crawlers was also discovered, monitored and evaluated.

Problem analysis showed that no one response alone would be successful and that a combination of tactics regularly developed and evaluated would be required. In partnership with Preston City Council, Streetlink and others, numerous responses were developed including:

- Street design.
- Targeted enforcement.
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders for repeat offenders.
- 'Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid'
- Letter sent to registered keepers of vehicles.
- Internet Site interventions.
- Media campaign
- Development of a 'Sex Workers Database'
- Health care and screening
- Outreach and Drop-In
- Provision of condoms

Significant results against project objectives, including:

- Reports/complaints involving a prostitute down by 92% (20 complaints 2003)
- Number of prostitutes on the street down by 71% (only 20 active prostitutes)
- 86% of kerb crawlers who received letters did not return to the area.
- Geographic reduction of the problem area.
- Prevention of geographic displacement.
- Increasingly responsible behaviour by sex workers.

The project succeeded in reducing the scope and impact of street prostitution on communities and individuals to such an extent that a reduced level of street sex work can now be safely tolerated with an increased emphasis on partnership working to deliver health care, harm reduction and the implementation of exit strategies.

SCANNING

The Problem

Contemporary street prostitution in Preston can be traced back to 1997 with the emergence of a street sex scene centred around Deepdale Road. Initially going unnoticed these activities steadily grew more problematic with a number of women openly soliciting for the purposes of prostitution. It became clear that there were a number of reasons why women become involved in prostitution, the most obvious being the need to fund an addiction to drugs with heroin being the preferred drug of choice.

Street prostitution was a new phenomenon to this area of Preston and the Police had limited experience in these matters. The women quickly learnt that street prostitution was not as rigorously enforced as offences of dishonesty such as shoplifting and that penalties upon conviction were less severe with no risk of a custodial sentence.

The number of street prostitutes increased and combined with limited police enforcement and competition for 'clients', the geographic location in which the women operated spread from industrial areas into neighbouring residential areas and arterial routes into the city.

The increased presence of street prostitutes brought an increase in traffic caused by men kerb crawling in motor vehicles, looking to procure the services of the prostitutes. People living, working or visiting the area became affected by increasingly problematic behaviour, including acquisitive and violent crime, causing an increase in complaints to the police. Street sex workers are a vulnerable group and although much of the reported crime was property related, reports of serious violent and sexual crimes are not uncommon.

Street prostitution represents legitimate health and welfare concerns for the prostitutes themselves, their clients and the wider community through intravenous drug use and sexual activity. As a result of these issues 'Streetlink' was formed as a multi-agency response to the presence of 'sex workers' on the streets of Preston to provide outreach workers in the areas in which street-based sex workers operated. They also provide befriending, advice, information and harm reduction services, a weekly drop-in at a Women's Centre and referrals to, and advocacy with other services.

Women do not take the decision to enter the street sex trade lightly. Their addiction and chaotic pattern of drug use brings a high financial burden and increased vulnerability. Many street prostitutes have housing difficulties often having accrued large rent arrears and are unable to secure accommodation. They often end up in abusive relationships funding criminally active partners' habits as well as their own. In addition the growth in the use of Crack Cocaine serves only to exaggerate their problems and increase their financial burden.

'Operation Kerb', a police led multi-agency problem solving initiative to tackle issues relating to street prostitution, was launched in February 2002. Assisted by 'Communities Against Drugs' funding, at the point of initial assessment in December 2002 many of the projects objectives were met. Street prostitution, however, had not been eradicated and it was at this point a decision had to be made. Whether to be content with the achievements made leaving these issues to traditional enforcement strategies or continue the analysis and implementation of partnership responses to further reduce the problem and improve quality interventions without additional funding.

'Safer Sex Works' was launched aimed at achieving significant reductions in problematic sex trade associated issues with the Police exiting from enforcement led strategies towards problem management and safety issues relating to vulnerabilities. Streetlink, with an emphasis on harm reduction, safe working, health screening and exit interventions, would increasingly become the lead agency of the initiative.

ANALYSIS

Identification Of The Problem

A variety of criteria were used to understand the root causes, the underlying conditions and the nature and extent of the problem.

Complaints

Specific information was obtained in relation to:

- Geographic location
- Time of day
- Day of week
- Nature of complaint
- Extent of problem
- Fears/Concerns

Consultation with communities

- Concerns raised showed the problem, if anything, to be even more acute.
- Degree of apathy and belief that nothing could be done.
- Belief that Police were unlikely to take their concerns seriously.

Interrogation of Police Data Recording Systems

- CRS – Incident Logging
- Sleuth – Crime recording
- Custody Records
- INTL – Intelligence reports

Partnerships

Other organisations and agencies were identified to provide additional information and perhaps an overview of the issues from a different perspective.

- Preston City Council Community Safety Department – Information received on their understanding of the issues and any proposed solutions.
- Streetlink – Their aims and objectives are focused more directly at help and guidance of individuals involved in 'street sex work' and so provides an insight into the issues and problems facing the prostitutes themselves.
- Media – The initial sensational reporting of the problem brought it to the attention of a wider audience doing little to improve the situation, but leading to an increase in 'sights seers' and offenders frequenting the area from further a field.

Internet Web Site – Preston Punters

- An Internet site dedicated to Kerb Crawling in Preston and the North West showing how wide demand for 'sexual services' had become.
- Particular reference to street prostitutes.
- Forum in which users posted messages in relation to particular areas, prostitutes and risks including health concerns and police activity.
- Used to advertise services available.
- Provided reports and reviews by users of individual prostitutes.

Police Street Survey

- Direct approaches made to prostitutes.
- Monitoring of vehicles in the problem area.
- Identification of locations used to perform sexual acts.
- Information gathered on times of the day and night, throughout both weekdays and weekends, during which the prostitutes and kerb crawlers operated.
- Update of prostitute register.
- Update of kerb crawler register.
- Identification of the individuals involved in street prostitution and their dependency on drugs.

Figure 2.1 - Problem Analysis Triangle



Features of the Location

- Sectors B and D of Central Division.
- Sector B – Light industrial/Commercial with some residential properties.
- Sector B – Main arterial routes into the city within the problem area.
- Sector D – Primarily residential properties within 5 minutes walk into the city centre.
- Kerb crawlers driving a defined route around the problem area.
- Weekdays – Activity starting from 5pm continuing until the early hours with a peak period between 7pm-9pm.
- Weekends – Activity starting from 7pm continuing until the early hours with a peak period between 10pm-2am. Significant increase in males on foot looking to procure services of a prostitute.
- Increased volume of traffic during peak periods.
- Drugs paraphernalia and spent condoms commonly found in sensitive areas.
- Diminished quality of life.

Features of the Offender

- Approximately 90 known prostitutes of which as many as 70 were active.
- Not uncommon to see up to and in excess of 12 women on the street at any one time.
- All prostitutes working to fund a drug habit.
- Heroin predominantly the drug of choice with increased use of crack cocaine.
- Drug habits well in excess of £100 per day commonplace.

- Offenders exhibiting problematic behaviour such as jumping into stationary vehicles uninvited, blatant and proactive soliciting.
- 70% of prostitutes aged in their twenties. 44% aged between 20-25.
- Criminal associates of the prostitutes attracted to the area.
- Criminal activity targeting vulnerable individuals.
- Kerb crawlers – Little evidence of previous criminal history.
- Kerb crawlers – Often in relationships and employment.
- Kerb crawlers – Susceptible to low-level enforcement initiatives.

Features of the Victim

- 249 reported incidents for year 2001 specifically involving a prostitute.
- Lone females living and working in the area were particularly vulnerable
- Prostitutes and their 'clients' were vulnerable to crime.
- Members of the public passing through the area were vulnerable.
- Prostitutes subjected to physical and sexual assaults and robbery.
- Kerb crawlers subjected to blackmail and theft offences.
- Many incidents went unreported due to the kerb crawlers being unwilling to state circumstances leading to becoming a victim of crime and the prostitutes' mistrust of police.
- Criminal associates of the prostitutes attracted to the area to commit crime.

Pimping and Child Prostitution

- Pimping and child prostitution were identified as areas of concern.
- No evidence found that Preston suffered from either of these problems.

Root Cause – Dependence on Drugs

The majority of prostitutes are convicted criminals who historically favoured shoplifting as a means of funding their addiction. However, shoplifting is now carefully policed, involving store detectives, CCTV and security tagging, with repeat offenders receiving custodial sentences. Prostitution offers drug users an alternative means of funding their addiction that has often seen only sporadic enforcement by the police and little punishments by the courts.

Initial Project Objectives

Due to the multi-faceted nature of the problem the objectives were widespread:

- Address Public Reassurance/Satisfaction – Fear of crime and apathy towards police.
- Reduce crime.
- Reduce overall levels of Street prostitution and elimination from residential areas.
- Reduce overall levels of kerb crawling.
- Education of kerb crawlers.
- Address drug misuse through use of partnerships.
- Increase personal safety of prostitutes and promote safe sexual practices through use of partnerships.
- Health screening for prostitutes.
- Prevent any emergence of organised 'pimping' and child prostitution.
- Continually review and tailor approaches to any changing circumstances.

Revised Project Objectives

- Reduce scope and impact of street sex work on communities and individuals.
- Reduced level of street sex work which can be safely tolerated.
- Increased emphasis on partnership working to deliver health care, harm reduction and exit strategies.
- Address vulnerability of street sex workers – 'Sex Workers Database'
- Police exit strategy – Steer project towards a management function as opposed to enforcement led.

Success Criteria

- Comparison of figures for numbers of reports/complaints involving known prostitutes.
- Comparison of figures for numbers of prostitutes working on the street.
- Management of geographic location, particularly residential areas.
- Analysis and evaluation of kerb crawler letters database.
- Analysis and evaluation of all tactics and initiatives.

RESPONSE

Dealing With The Problem

POLICE RESPONSES

Best Practice

- Other police forces tackling similar problems contacted.
- Aimed at establishing a 'best practice' approach.

Prostitute Register

- Updated record of convicted prostitutes.
- Detailing current street cautions.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (A.B.C.'s)

- Voluntary agreement offered during enforcement campaign.
- Opportunity to address offending behaviour.
- Prostitutes and Kerb crawlers.
- Evidence for potential A.S.B.O. applications.

Anti-social Behaviour Orders (A.S.B.O.'s)

- Applications pursued against six prostitutes.
- Breach of A.B.C.'s. supports evidence

Kerb Crawler Letters

- Addressed to registered keeper of vehicle.
- Educational address explaining Police activity and the problems affecting the area whilst not making specific allegations.
- Duty log for collation of evidence.
- Criteria:
 - Lone male occupants
 - Vehicle seen on at least 3 occasions on target streets within a short period of time.
 - Vehicles observed slowing down on approaching women.
 - Drivers seen to look at and looking out for women.

Training Package

- Developed for police personnel involved in enforcement.
- High quality input to regulate police activity.
- Guidelines, procedures and documentation to assist in evidence gathering and best practice.

Initial Enforcement – 3 distinct phases

Phase 1

- Plain clothed officers targeting prostitutes and kerb crawlers.
- Arrests made once evidence was obtained of women getting into vehicle and moving off.
- Prostitutes and kerb crawlers offered A.B.C.
- Letters sent to kerb crawlers seen frequenting the problem area.

Phase 2

- Plain clothed officers targeting prostitutes for loitering and soliciting.
- Zero-tolerance approach to street prostitution.
- Duty log assisted with evidence gathering.
- Prostitutes arrested offered A.B.C. and given bail conditions not to enter the problem area and to adhere to a curfew.
- Letters sent to kerb crawlers seen frequenting the problem area.

Phase 3

- Enforcement targeted purely at residential areas and any new areas where activity was identified.
- Letters sent to vehicles seen frequenting the problem area.
- Database to identify repeat offenders.

Internet Site

- Monitored to provide information from actual 'service' users in relation to current trends i.e. times, locations, areas of interest and active individuals.
- Police anonymously posted topics or replies on the forum message board relating to experiences of the 'punter' in the Preston RLD to promote discussion on issues including police activity.

Figure 3.1 - Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid



- Maximum exit of offenders with a minimum of resources/effort.
- Level of enforcement increases with level of offending behaviour.

- Selection of point of entry into pyramid at officer's discretion.

Sex Workers Database

Street Sex Workers

- Currently being developed in recognition of, and to address vulnerability of street sex workers.
- Database will aid in the early warning and tracing of missing persons.
- Regulated recording of street cautions throughout Lancashire.
- Collation of intelligence regarding sex workers including:
 - Associates
 - Addresses
 - Appearance
 - Drug habits
- Signposting to partner agencies.
- Investigative tool.

Kerb crawlers

- Record details of known kerb crawlers and their vehicles.
- Record sightings throughout Lancashire to monitor offending behaviour.
- Facilitate more precise targeting.
- Assist in detection of crime.

PARTNER RESPONSES

Communities Against Drugs (C.A.D.)

- Funding secured by Preston City Council Community Safety Department.
- Total funding secured £44270.
- Funding to be allocated towards:
 - Police enforcement.
 - Drug referral services at point of arrest.
 - Legal fees for A.S.B.O. applications.

Drug and Alcohol Referral Services

- Drugs worker in the custody suite during times of targeted enforcement.
- Advice and support for any street sex worker arrested.

Preston City Council

- Liaison with Community Safety Department and Highways department.
- Traffic diversion scheme on two residential streets affected by the problem.
- Roads physically blocked with paving, kerbs and bollards.

Media

- Local and regional media briefed at commencement of initial enforcement.
- Ensured reporting was more balanced and accurate avoiding sensationalism and promoting public reassurance.
- Radio media campaign, based on the success achieved at Cleveland Police, commissioned by Blackburn Police, Countywide broadcast.

Streetlink

- Independent of the Police.
- Independently funded.
- Work specifically with street sex workers.
- Project jointly managed by three voluntary sector agencies:
 - The Foxtan Centre
 - Drugline Lancashire
 - Preston Women's Centre
- Regular meetings with other partners:
 - Talkwize
 - Barnardos Moving On
 - Preston Primary Care Trust
 - Social Services
 - Substance Misuse Service
 - Lancashire Constabulary
- Streetlink services:
 - Outreach work
 - Provision of condoms
 - Personal Safety Alarms
 - Needle Exchange
 - Information and advice on drug use, safer working and safer sex
 - Befriending, listening and general support
 - Referrals to housing agencies, GP's, Genito-Urinary Medicine (G.U.M.) and Community Drug Team (C.D.T.)
 - Drop-in at Preston Women's Centre located within the problem area.
 - G.U.M. drop-in clinic at the Women's Centre.
 - Advocacy Service
 - Training on safer sex, negotiation skills and personal safety
- At the outset of the police operation areas of concern and potential conflict were discussed and agreement on common ground was reached:
 - Condoms supplied to street sex workers were not to be used as evidence.
 - No street sex workers would be targeted or kept under observation in the immediate vicinity of the Women's Centre so as not to discourage attendance. It was, however, stressed that the premises should not be seen as a place of refuge for persons wanted in relation to other matters.
 - Co-operation was sought to encourage their contacts through outreach and the Women's Centre to educate the street sex workers not to operate in residential areas.

Magistrates Court

- Provision of a dedicated session at court on Friday afternoons.
- Aimed at improving potential for maximising reporting possibilities.

ASSESSMENT

Assessing Our Approach

Tactical Assessment – Police Responses

Response Assessment

- Policing responses, whilst intended to also promote safe working and reassurance, were primarily aimed at reducing the problem, most notably:
 - Restriction and reduction of the problem area
 - Reduction in the number of complaints
 - Reduction in the number of active sex workers
- An initial assessment at the end of 2002 showed significant achievements against the projects initial objectives. It was, however, evident at this point that:
 - Further key reductions were necessary.
 - No additional funding for Police enforcement was available.
 - The project needed to be both manageable and sustainable.

Enforcement

Phase 1

- Time consuming and labour intensive in terms of evidence gathering.
- Kerb crawlers arrested did not return.

Phase 2

- A prolonged period of little or no prostitutes on the street was achieved.
- Visiting kerb crawlers found a distinct lack of prostitutes.
- This enforcement could only be maintained for a relatively short period of time.
- Reduction in prostitute numbers, behaviour was less blatant and proactive.

Phase 3

- Zero tolerance in residential areas proved very successful.
- Almost total absence of prostitutes working in residential areas.

Letters

- Provided statistical information on visiting vehicles.
- To date 658 letters have been sent out of which there have been 92 repeat offenders. This represents a success rate of 86%.
- Maximum results with a minimum of resources and effort.

A.B.C.'s

- All kerb crawlers arrested signed up to an A.B.C. No recorded breaches.
- A significant number of prostitutes declined to enter into the contract and continued with their offending behaviour.
- Without exception, prostitutes breached contracts.
- Refusal to enter into contract and breach of contract provided evidence in A.S.B.O. application.

A.S.B.O.'s (Appendix B)

- First application dismissed by District Judge.
- Lancashire Constabulary then challenged his decision on points of law and appealed to the High Court.
- The subject of these applications became a topic of huge media interest due to the precedence that could be set.
- The High Court then agreed with Lancashire Constabulary saying that the case would have to be reheard.
- Due to the timescale that had elapsed, 18 months, Lancashire Constabulary took the decision to withdraw all applications as it was felt they were no longer appropriate against the original respondents. This decision was taken as the Police had continued with their problem-solving approach using other tactics and responses to deal with the issues.
- Out of the six initial applications only two of the prostitutes continue to work in the problem area and their behaviour is no longer problematic.
- It was evident that the threat of A.S.B.O.'s, combined with the procedures involved in evidence gathering and serving of papers, had a positive effect on curtailing the activities of the prostitutes.
- A recent A.S.B.O. has been successfully obtained against a prostitute in Blackburn. This success has been attributed to the work undertaken during this operation.

Internet Site

- Increased discussion and awareness of police activity was prevalent.
- An insight into the state of the Preston 'street scene' can be seen in a post entitled '**Preston RLD – Alas – has it gone forever**'.(Appendix C)

Tactical Assessment – Partner Responses

Drug and Alcohol Referral Services

- There was no take up of these services.
- The notion that all arrested persons coming into custody were given the opportunity to take advantage of these services seemed a common sense approach.
- This proved to be misguided due to the police custody environment. Street sex workers were mistrustful of police and therefore once arrested just wanted to get out of custody as soon as possible.
- This reinforced the feeling that the Streetlink partnership were best placed to deal with these issues.

Media

- Compared to the sensationalised reporting at the outset of the operation, where the problem was branded '**Streets of Shame**', the reporting is now far more balanced and informative.
- This is reflected in the two most recent articles entitled '**Kerb It!**' on 31st December 2002 (Appendix E) and '**Vice Girls Clean Up Their Act**' on 15th December 2003.(Appendix F)

Communities Against Drugs

- The funding secured at the outset of the operation was vital in providing the enforcement resources needed to obtain the initial impetus and covering legal fees required during the A.S.B.O. process.

Preston City Council

- The street design measures introduced had a positive effect on disrupting kerb crawler's movement around the problem area.
- These measures also had a positive effect on reducing the Impact of the problem in residential areas.

Streetlink

- The streetlink multi-agency approach continues to provide quality contact with the street sex workers through both their sessions at the Women's Centre and outreach work.
- Streetlink's own annual report gives a full insight into their work and achievements.
- The police now enjoy a very honest and constructive working relationship with Streetlink, which has also seen an open exchange of information in relation to safety issues and 'Dodgy Punters'. (*Appendix D*)
- Streetlink have been vital to the success of the project in terms of education of the street sex workers in relation to working in residential areas and problematic behaviour.
- Streetlink are ideally placed to continue this education process and signposting of street sex workers away from street prostitution enabling the police to exit from enforcement led policing and more towards a management function.

Results

Table 4.1 - Reports/Complaints

YEAR	No OF COMPLAINTS INVOLVING PROSTITUTES	% REDUCTION AGAINST YEAR 2001
2001	249	-
2002	133	46%
2003	20	92%

Street Survey

- At the outset of the operation there were approximately 70 prostitutes regularly active.
- Currently there are approximately 20 active prostitutes, a reduction of **71%**.
- At the outset of the operation on a weekday evening you would have seen 10 to 12 prostitutes on the street at any one time. Currently you will see 2 to 3 and it would not be unusual to pass through the area and not see any at all.

Geographic Location

- There have been 3 specific goals in relation to the geographic location in which street prostitution occurs:
 - Eradication of street prostitution from residential areas
 - Prevention of displacement to neighbouring residential areas

- Restriction and limitation of geographic area in which street prostitutes operate aimed at lessening the impact of the problem as a whole.
- All 3 goals have been successfully achieved.
- Currently the prostitutes operate in an area of increased tolerance exhibiting less problematic behaviour.

Pimping and Child Prostitution

- There remains no evidence or intelligence to suggest the emergence of the involvement of organised criminals in street prostitution, however, there are still women involved in street prostitution who support both their own and their partners drug habits.
- There remains no evidence or intelligence to suggest the presence of child prostitution on the streets of Preston.

Public Reassurance

- No specific test of public reassurance was devised at the outset of the project or indeed since.
- Several indicators can be viewed giving an insight into any perceived improvement which include:
 - Reported incidents
 - Letters of complaint
 - Community feedback
 - Local media coverage
- All indicators suggest there has been an improved level of public reassurance and a recognition that the negative impact of street prostitution has diminished.

Conclusion

- A decision was taken that if the responses could be shown to have delivered, against certain set criteria, overall reductions in the multi-faceted problems associated with street prostitution then the whole issue surrounding enforcement and further reductions would be radically reviewed.
- The project was set to be reviewed at the end of 2003, when it had become increasingly clear that the future lay in a change in emphasis away from simple problem reduction with a move towards a focus on safety and welfare issues aimed at ultimately exiting women from the street sex trade.
- In essence a well managed yet defined and restricted area of increased tolerance to non-problematic street sex work.

The impact of Safer Sex Works on the street sex trade in Preston has been significant. The huge reductions of problematic behaviour and reduction of the affected area has ensured that an enforcement lead approach is no longer necessary or desirable.

An opportunity has now been created for Preston to allow increased tolerance to non-problematic street sex work in a very limited geographic area. Monitored and managed by the Police this allows the women increased security and partner agencies the opportunity to make the necessary health and welfare interventions aimed at ultimately exiting the women from drug misuse and street sex work. **(Appendix A)**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Increased Tolerance & Officer Guidance

APPENDIX B – A.S.B.O. Process & Officer Guidance

APPENDIX C – Excerpts from Preston Punters Website

APPENDIX D – Minutes of Streetlink Meeting

APPENDIX E – ‘Kerb It’ Newspaper Article

APPENDIX F – ‘Vice Girls’ Newspaper Article

APPENDIX A – Increased Tolerance & Officer Guidance

MANAGEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Profile

Historical

- Street prostitution first re-appeared in Preston around 1997. The numbers of women engaged in street prostitution and the associated problems quickly escalated.
- Street prostitution had become the preferred way for women to fund drug addictions (Heroin & Crack Cocaine) having previously engaged primarily in shoplifting and fraud.
- Approximately 90 prostitutes of whom 70 were regularly active in the problem area.
- The number of complaints received specifically involving a prostitute:

1 st June 2000 to 31 st December 2001	-	391
1 st January 2002 to 31 st December 2002	-	133

This reduction can be solely attributed to the implementation of Operation Kerb.

- Many of the women were involved in 'risk taking' behaviour and were very blatant and proactive in their actions.
- The geographic location in which the women worked crossed between Sectors B & D of Central Division either side of Deepdale Road with the residential side of Sector D generating the majority of complaints.

Current: Jan 2004

- Approximately 20 active prostitutes working in the problem area.
- The number of complaints received specifically involving a prostitute:

1 st January 2003 to 1 st December 2003	-	20
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- The women are less blatant and proactive in their behaviour.
- Street prostitution has effectively been eliminated from all residential areas
- Area of increased tolerance to non-problematic sex work on Fletcher Road between the junctions of Ribbleton Street and Deepdale Mill Street, St Mary's Street and St Mary's Street North (away from the junctions of Ribbleton Lane and New Hall Lane).
- A zero-tolerance approach has been adopted on the main arterial routes into Preston, New Hall Lane, and Ribbleton Lane and also on Mercer Street, Adelaide Street and Primrose Hill, which have been identified as potential threats.
- A strong partnership has been established with the Outreach workers from Streetlink and the Well Women's Centre resulting in an increase in the sharing of information.

Proposed Roles & Responsibilities - PC 1842 Armes & PC 1972 Pearson

- Overall management of the problem e.g. complaints, strategies, partnerships, update of prostitute register.
- All enforcement issues relating to Sector D.
- All Kerb crawler enforcement issues and strategies.
- Delivery of education and briefing package to all Fulwood and Preston officers.
- Identification of potential threats and targeted patrol/tasking for officers via Chief Inspector Blackburn.

Fulwood Officers

- All prostitute enforcement issues on Sector B.
- Consistent approach in relation to area of increased tolerance.
- Feedback of data and information of any actions undertaken to PC's 1842 Armes & 1972 Pearson via E-mail.

- ***Original document includes detailed map of area of increased tolerance.***
- ***Original document includes details of active street sex workers.***
- ***Original document identifies three women exhibiting some form of problematic behaviour and includes targeting strategies for officers to address these issues.***

APPENDIX B – A.S.B.O. Process Officer Guidance

A.S.B.O. PROCESS OFFICER GUIDANCE

Selection of Suitable Candidates

- Decided at an early stage that there would be no specific selection process.
- Decision to pursue A.S.B.O.'s was taken in respect of the first seven persons to breach.
- Once breached, simple evidence was gathered and collated of offending behaviour from the time of arrest and offer of A.B.C. onwards.

Preparation of Application

- Evidence to be presented by one nominated police officer.
- Statement setting out in detail the history and problems associated with street prostitution in Preston to be constructed.
- Each application was supported by a brief history of the women, their nominal details and their antecedent and criminal history.
- Certain obligatory procedures were followed and documented including the Schedule 4 Form, Schedule 6 Form and the Certificate of Consultation.

Ruling

- After all the evidence had been heard the District Judge adjourned the hearing for several weeks to consider his judgement.
- The District Judge denied the application and gave comprehensive written observations on his deliberations. The key areas identified were:
 - The Judge felt the application needed to be proved to the criminal standard of 'beyond all reasonable doubt' as opposed to the civil standard of 'balance of probabilities'.
 - The Judge did not accept that it had been proved that the woman's behaviour was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

Appeal

- Following the failure of the first application, the others were all held in abeyance pending an appeal to the High Court against the ruling.
- Due to the case being described as being of 'National Importance' the judgement from the High Court hearing was delayed.
- The judgement, when it came, found in favour of the Police.

Summary of Initial Application

- It was clear that we would now be able to successfully obtain A.S.B.O.'s against street prostitutes.
- Initial applicant was at the time of the High Court Judgement serving a custodial sentence for supplying Class A Drugs so it was therefore deemed inappropriate to pursue.
- Of the other women several were serving custodial sentences for other offences and all but one were no longer actively involved in street prostitution.
- The remaining individual had significantly moderated her behaviour.

Matters for Consideration During Application

- Careful selection of appropriate nominal for the application.
- Ensure continued gathering and collation of evidence.
- Show evidence of other approaches to solve the problem e.g. A.B.C.'s, Outreach etc.
- Secure specific evidence of behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress by the subject.
- Secure a community based witness to support evidence of anti-social behaviour.
- Identify the subject's address and details of their representing solicitor at an early stage for serving of papers.
- Consider the use of 'Conviction A.S.B.O.'s'.
- Important to recognise that an A.S.B.O. is a very powerful tool and careful consideration needs to be given to its use to combat street prostitution.
- Street prostitution whilst causing misery to communities it affects is still a relatively minor offence, the root cause of which is the women's dependency on drugs, which cannot be effectively tackled by means of an A.S.B.O. or ignored.
- It is worthy of note that during the evidence gathering process it became increasingly difficult for the women to operate as street prostitutes. However, whilst certain individuals are no longer seen to be actively involved in street prostitution, others became involved in more serious criminal offences.

Withdrawal of A.S.B.O. Applications at Court

- A great deal of thought had been put into the use of A.S.B.O.'s.
- The impact of the evidence gathering and serving of papers brought about an improvement in behaviour, as the consequences of the imposition of such an order was not underestimated by the women.
- From the initial application until the result of the High Court appeal a period of 18 months had elapsed. In that time the Police had developed a successful Problem Oriented Policing approach using a wide range of tactics and partnership working. As a result of this approach A.S.B.O.'s were no longer deemed necessary or appropriate in the cases of the seven initial applications.
- Lancashire Constabulary reserves the right to pursue A.S.B.O.'s to address persistent or problematic prostitution problems in residential or sensitive areas.

APPENDIX C – Excerpts from Preston Punters Website

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Preston RLD Occasional Shagger
December 12 2002 at 7:39AM

Anyone post an update about RLD before I go out Saturday evening ??? Quality of females and police presence ????

[Respond to this message](#)

Author	Reply	
NBnixxx	Preston RLD – Alas – has it gone Forever?	December 16 2002, 12:56AM

I think that the Police must be very pleased with themselves??? They Have, surely, almost totally achieved their objective in Preston??? From my experience, over several years, the street scene around Fletcher Rd – St marys st – East View & New Hall Lane seemed to go into rapid, terminal decline after Fletcher Rd was cut in half. Over the Last year I have occasionally checked out the area & hardly ever seen more Than one girl, in total, around the entire area, at mid evening time where in Previous years there would be at least a dozen. Has the area moved? I Haven't got any clues of this site that it has? I have reluctantly given up on the Preston street scene (well done Mr Plod – I can only admire your persistence) & last week had my first ever "pre-booked" "incall" at 3 times the cost but a safer & more reliable arrangement I guess. I trust that this is not now going to get targeted!

[Respond to this message](#)

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The Red Light Guide to the UK Blackpool Lad
July 23 2003 at 11:43AM

Hello all, once again I have compiled a listing of recent RLD's. Some info may be slightly outta date cos I don't get cruising all the places all the time. However, I reckon 96% is probably accurate. To any newcomers to this board or the punting scene:-The additional information below is to hopefully help you have a 'safe first punt'. Take it easy all & feel free to post any updates.
Blacky

THE RED LIGHT GUIDE TO THE UK

THE NORTH WEST & LANCS :-

BLACKPOOL
Central drive,Dickson Rd/near old bus station, South shore Car Parks, Used to be WG's behind Pleasure Beach etc..but none for a long time. This info is still to be clarified/although I have seen 1 WG out the other night and I know some work the clubs.

PRESTON
New Hall Lane, Deepdale Rd, St Mary's St, Adelaide St & Skeffington St. Most girls are pretty awful but sometimes there's one that's OK. Speed cameras, heavy policing and the closing off of certain streets has put a strain on this scene. Best walking if you dare ! Reasonable/ but heavy policing over recent months.
High Risk
£10/20 average

APPENDIX D – Minutes of Streetlink Meeting

The Foxton Centre

Minutes of the Streetlink Forum - 20 January 2004

Present: Tim Keightley, Foxton Centre; Catherine Turner, Women's Centre, Angela Davies, Gill O'Connor, Foxton Centre; Trudy McMahon, Cath Smith, Drugline; Fiona Kendrick, Andrea Walker, Sian Davis, Foxton Centre; Maggie Morris, Director Public Health Preston PCT; PCs Steve Armes and Gareth Pearson, Lancashire Constabulary

Apologises: Kath Talboys

1. Outreach Team Report

- The team reported some busy evenings but mainly in the Fletcher Road, St Mary's area and away from residential areas. Outreach workers had carried out some later sessions but the numbers were similar.
- There was discussion with the Police about an individual currently on bail who has been charged with a serious sexual assault. The sex workers were reporting having seen this individual in the area, apparently now driving a white Fiesta or on a bike. He may have changed his appearance. Police requested as much detail as possible as subject is on a curfew and it should be possible to check whether these incidents are of the same person or another individual. If there is evidence that it is the same person then statements from sex workers may be needed in order to secure an arrest. Police confirmed that a breach of curfew should lead to re-arrest and a court appearance, though initially this may in turn lead to release for first breach.
- Police confirmed that this case will eventually go to Crown Court for trial.
- Outreach Team reported that sex workers have genuine fear for their safety while this person is free.
- Police confirmed that Outreach workers could accompany sex workers to the Station if they want to give a statement but it is unlikely they would be allowed to stay with the sex workers while they gave a statement.
- Police confirmed that witnesses would have to appear in court though if they are not willing to attend, their evidence can still be used for intelligence purposes.
- Police requested that Outreach Team or sex workers try to obtain the number of the white Fiesta.

GUM Sessions:

- There are two sessions left (last one 18 February) with current funding. There to be a good uptake of and a high interest in service. The sex workers are used to this being a part of Streetlink's services. GUM provokes a great deal of discussion about sexual health matters.
- Maggie Morris asked for clarification of funding and was informed that there was a need for permanent mainstream funding for GUM services as part of Streetlink and in Talkwise the young person's sexual health service.

Tim requested that a report highlighting nature and take up of GUM services is prepared. Angela to action.

- Maggie expressed support for Streetlink stating she wanted to know in what ways she could support the project in the future. Part of her brief on the local LIT group and Lancashire LIT is to provide for at risk/vulnerable groups. Discussion confirmed Streetlink's opinion that research shows that the more information given to sex workers the safer they work e.g. condom use, safer injection and other interventions leading to a (albeit slight) reduction in harm. The meeting confirmed to Maggie Streetlink's intention to continue to provide training in self-defence, negotiating and working to a Tariff system.

2. Police Report

The Police have formally withdrawn all ASBO applications. While they are glad to have won the legal right to use these orders they no longer feel they are an appropriate intervention. There may be times when they will bring ASBO's and have informed the courts that if they do the courts should view them as necessary because of an individual's repeat criminality. Other interventions will now occur. These could include ABC's, arrests and bail and education about which areas in which prostitution will not be tolerated. The Arrest Referral service had not proved useful to sex workers as it ran at times when sex workers not arrested.

3. Discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of Tolerance Zones

Maggie Morris briefly described what is a Tolerance Zone (TZ) based on her experience of a visit to see one in operation in Holland. She observed firstly that in Holland there appears to be a greater tolerance of prostitution and the wider sex industry in Holland than is the case currently in England. A discussion on the implications of the Dutch experience took place and the suitability of such an experiment in the UK.

4. Women's Centre Report

A nurse is offering a surgery on Wednesdays 1:30-3:00 pm.

Mark Nately from the Woman and Mental Health services steering group is to map services in order to identify gaps.

The outside lights are to be fixed. Streetlink to pay.

Volunteers need training: Angela to follow up.

6. Safelink

Still progressing with the group at YMCA.

Residential coming up with YIP.

Cardinal Newman College educational sessions have taken place. There was good feedback and the college has requested that Safelink return at some stage.

Will shortly review the impact of their presence in Talkwise.

Next Meeting - Tuesday 23 March 2004 at the Foxton Centre

APPENDIX E – ‘Kerb It’ Newspaper Article

KERB IT!

Vice clampdown sees 300 drivers on the shame list

Police clampdown sees fall in prostitution nuisance

A purge on kerb crawlers in Preston has been declared a massive success.

Operation Kerb was launched in February to calm resident's fears about the level of prostitution in areas near Fletcher Road, dubbed the "Deepdale Triangle."

The police-led initiative took advantage of new laws which allowed tougher sentences for kerb crawlers.

Persistent offenders were warned they face five years in prison as well as being named and shamed in the press.

And the message appears to have got through.

New figures handed to the Evening Post show incidents of prostitution and kerb crawling have decreased.

In the six-month period from February to July, 60 people were arrested for vice offences.

Twenty eight of these kerb crawlers and as result, one man was prosecuted and the rest signed "acceptable behaviour contracts", agreeing not to return to the

KERB crawlers are being swept from the streets of Preston in the biggest crackdown of its kind, it emerged today.

The drive to clean up the Deepdale Triangle has been hailed a huge success by police bosses in the city.

Dozens of men arrested for kerb crawling

area, and Bamber Bridge.

A further 32% were from across the county, and the final 16% were from across the UK.

As part of Operation Kerb, 318 cars seen driving around red light districts had their registration details noted.

Letters were then sent out warning these people to stay away from vice hotspots.

Over the same period, complaints from residents concerned at the levels of prostitution are down by 67%.

Preston Police are also awaiting the result of seven applications for anti-social behaviour orders against prostitutes who re-offend regularly.

Supt Irene Curtis, operations manager for Preston Police said: "We are very pleased with the results so far in relation to Operation Kerb, which seems to be working and having a positive impact on the community.

Targeting

"Operation Kerb is continuing and enforcement will be particularly increased

have signed agreements not to return, and complaints from residents in the area have plummeted.

Now more than 300 cars seen cruising the area for prostitutes have their details banked on a special police database.

And today Supt Irene Curtis warned: "Operation Kerb will continue."

● **Full story – Page 5**

against repeat offenders, both prostitutes and repeat offenders."

Supt Curtis said that new initiatives being introduced to Operation Kerb included officer training to deal with vice issues.

Another scheme is an education programme targeting kerb crawlers to teach them the issues surrounding prostitution.

St Matthew's Ward councillor, Veronica Afrin, welcomed the news.

She said: "A few months ago people complained regularly to all the ward's councillors.

"What I can say is there are fewer complaints now. I have driven about that area and overall there seems to be fewer prostitutes in places like East View, around Kwik Save, and Deepdale.

"We had a serious problem there but we changed the traffic flow to make it harder for kerb crawlers to stop."

But Coun Afrin warned the war to clean up the city was not yet won and had to be fought on many fronts.

Measures

She said: "Though I have no doubts there is still activity, there is a whole

range of measures backing up Operation Kerb.

"It isn't just a matter of arresting them; there is a whole lot of other services – including care workers on the streets – who try and help these girls get treatment to get their lives right.

"Many of them have pimps and boyfriends who push them out there to make money. Ninety-five per cent of them are on drugs.

"It's important to remember that these girls aren't earning good money and quite often they are abused by men.

"The girls on the street are at the bottom of this chain..

"Part of the problem that we need to address is lighting around dark alleys and corners although we have just got a scheme in to light the back of the shops at Plunginton."

**By
Steven
McDade**

e-mail: steven.mcdade@lep.co.uk

APPENDIX F – ‘Vice Girls’ Newspaper Article

VICE GIRLS CLEAN UP THEIR ACT

LEP-backed campaign prompts huge reduction in complaints

The number of complaints against prostitutes in Preston has been hugely reduced following a threat of a legal crackdown.

Police say they have had only 20 calls from residents this year – just two years ago they were handling more than 300 in a 12-month period.

Sex workers had been warned to clean up their acts and stay clear of residential areas or face being hauled before the courts for an Asbo (anti social behaviour order).

But now, as a direct result of the downturn in problems, police have opted to axe plans for the Asbos.

The success follows a series of articles in the Lancashire Evening Post highlighting residents' concerns about vice girls and kerb crawlers. Lancashire Constabulary was the first force in the country to try to use Asbos against vice girls who had been intimidating communities and leaving condoms and syringes littered on the streets.

Call girl Lisa Potter was one of seven cases due to be heard.

The matter was originally turned down by local magistrates but when the evidence against her was heard at the High Court the appeal judges sent the case back to be re-heard.

Potter, however, has since been imprisoned on a different matter and the remaining six girls have started behaving themselves.

Community Beat manager Gareth Pearson said: "We were struggling with a lot of anti-social behaviour problems with prostitution which brought about the decision to go for the Asbos and the women identified at that time were very problematic to us.

"We had to take the matter to the High Court and this was quite a long drawn out process.

"It would not have been right for us just to sit back and wait for the outcome of that so, basically, in the interim, we have further developed Operation Kerb

and working with partner agencies, such as Streetlink, we have had a massive success in reducing the problem without the imposition of the order at that time.

"There has been a range of strategies from sending letters to kerb-crawlers to zero tolerance approach to prostitution in residential areas and the main arterial roads into the city.

"It was interesting to note that because an Asbo case is a powerful piece of legislation it had an effect on some of the women we were seeking orders against.

"During the application process we were having to get evidence and serve papers on them and that did prove something of a deterrent."

PC Pearson said: "It was a matter of education, coupled with hard targeting.

"In terms of complaints, we have gone from 300 complaints in 2001 to 130 last year and this year we are running at only about 20 complaints about the prostitutes in Preston so we are absolutely thrilled with the results.

"In the first place we took the decision very seriously to apply for Asbos and we believe now we are acting equally responsibly by saying we have minimised the risk involved by other means. The women identified are no longer so problematic to us so it would not be right to pursue the orders against those individuals. However, if the need arises we still consider it a serious option to pursue."

Operation Kerb, which is policed by PC Pearson and his colleague PC Steve Armes, has been so successful that it recently reached the finals of an international competition for problem oriented policing in America.

Forces around the world are now considering taking on the approach pioneered here in Preston.

News of the drop in complaints has been welcomed by local

councillors and community representatives.

Coun Albert Richardson is chairman of Preston's police and community forum and represents St Matthew's ward. He said: "Prostitution has been a problem in the St Matthew's ward and there were a few prostitutes in the city giving problems.

"But I have noticed there are not as many prostitutes hanging around on Ribbleton Lane as there used to be.

"I know the police have been working very hard. They have put a lot of effort in but they have been putting a lot of effort in for years.

"They are saying their efforts are starting to work and I applaud that. But we mustn't take the brakes off."

Coun Harold Parker, who represents Fishwick ward, said: "The drop in complaints is certainly good news for the people of the area."

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