

# **SAFER SEX WORKS**

*DON'T DROP THE POP*



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# Summary

Safer Sex Works was conceived and developed to address substantive continuing issues arising from Street Prostitution in Preston.

'Operation Kerb', a multi agency P.O.P. initiative launched in January 2002, at its conclusion and assessment in December 2002 had achieved significant progress in addressing problem issues primarily through enforcement strategies.

Root causes and issues remained, however, funding opportunities had been exhausted and competing demands on policing services continued with the outcome that prostitution was no longer regarded as a priority. Indicators showed that if not specifically addressed street prostitution would inevitably return to previous levels or beyond perpetuating the cycle with all the associated problems and misery.

Recognising the clear threat, and without a policing mandate, a pre-emptive problem solving approach was vital to the further reduction and management of the problem issues. 'Safer Sex Works' was conceived and initiated to bring a mechanism and structure to a range of issues historically given a low priority by successive governments and the police service.

Following in-depth analysis and broad experiential consultation a range of innovative responses were developed and adopted in close co-operation with key partner agencies. These responses were no longer reliant on traditional enforcement but were aimed at introducing a structured tiered approach, prioritising problematic behaviour. A key objective of the project was to maximise outcomes using limited resources in order to deliver manageable and sustainable interventions.

Assessed in December 2004 'Safer Sex Works' achieved genuine, sustainable reductions in the problem of street prostitution in Preston. A genuine partnership delivered initiative; it reduced the scope and impact of street sex work on communities and individuals to such an extent that street prostitution ceased to be a significant problem. A reduced level of street sex work could now be safely tolerated with an emphasis on partnership working to deliver health care, harm reduction and exit strategies. Key performance indicators include: -

- Only 9 complaints of problematic 'Sex work' (2004).
- Eradication of Sex Work from residential areas and arterial routes.
- Only 1 complaint of 'Kerb Crawling' (2004)
- 76% reduction in known sex workers to 17 individuals (2004).
- Absence of young people engaged in sex work.
- Pimping and organised crime deterred and absent.

The project created a safer environment for the people of Preston, visitors and businesses and perhaps most importantly the sex workers themselves.

# **SCANNING**

## **The Problem**

Safer Sex Works was conceived, developed and implemented by Gareth Pearson and Steve Armes of the Lancashire Constabulary as a live project to tackle the substantive continuing issues arising from Street Prostitution in Preston. Of equal importance was to deliver a pre-emptive P.O.P. approach to address the recurring threat posed by these activities. The officers were instrumental in the Goldstein Finalist 'Operation Kerb', the Lancashire Constabulary's response to a public and media outcry over street prostitution issues, which demanded urgent action and results

The root causes and issues remained, however, funding opportunities had been exhausted and competing demands on policing services continued to increase with the outcome that prostitution was no longer a priority. All indicators showed that if not specifically addressed or treated as low priority, street prostitution would inevitably return to previous levels or beyond perpetuating the cycle with all the associated problems and misery.

The absence of a Policing or Political mandate together with the lack of funding and staffing resources actually presented the officers with a unique opportunity. As passionate believers in the P.O.P. philosophy the officers embarked on a project which would be reliant on a 'Pure P.O.P.' approach requiring the officers to trust in their detailed analysis and understanding of the issues to deliver a tiered range of responses tailored to maximise sustainable outcomes through innovation and partnership working. To succeed the project would need to be delivered without cost implications and rely wholly on the 'part time' efforts of the two officers in partnership with the voluntary organisations of 'Streetlink'.

Contemporary street prostitution in Preston can be traced back to 1997 with the emergence of a street sex scene in the Deepdale area of the city. Initially low-key arising from displacement brought about by successes in tackling retail crime these activities rapidly grew more widespread and problematic with women openly soliciting for the purposes of prostitution. The reasons why women may become involved in prostitution are many and varied from homelessness and debt through to coercion and abuse but the most obvious being the financing of an addiction to drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine. The Police have little influence on the causes of prostitution, however, the burden of dealing with the resultant problems repeatedly falls with the Police Service.

Key issues highlighted and the bedrock of the project include

- Public concern and complaint
- Fear of Crime
- Visibly active Street Sex Workers
- Kerb Crawlers
- Sexual Offences
- Geographic location
  - Residential
  - Main arterial routes into the city
- Problematic Behaviour
- Associated Crime
- Drugs paraphernalia & spent condoms found in sensitive areas
- Health and welfare issues
- Diminished quality of life
- Child prostitution
- Pimping and coercion

'Operation Kerb', a police led multi-agency problem solving initiative to tackle issues relating to street prostitution in Preston, Lancashire, was launched in 2002. Funded by 'Communities Against Drugs', at its conclusion and assessment in December 2002 the initiative was shown to have achieved significant progress in reducing certain problem issues primarily through enforcement strategies. Street prostitution, however, had not been eradicated and although perhaps only 20 prostitutes were active at any one time, 70 individuals were known to have been active during the year. Complaints were considerably reduced but still significant.

The world-over street prostitution brings with it significant problems, from crime and disorder to drugs and health issues, universal issues created by the illegal and problematic nature of the street sex trade.

Recognising the threat of *'the oldest industry'* some initiatives favour zero tolerance. Others have pioneered tolerance zones such as Utrecht in the Netherlands. Evidence would suggest that neither approach has produced effective long-term solutions. Issues such as crime, displacement and 'market segmentation' amongst the obvious failings.

Recognising the clear and present threat, and in the absence of a policing mandate, a pre-emptive problem solving approach was vital to the further reduction and management of the problem issues. **'Safer Sex Works'** was conceived and initiated to bring a mechanism and structure to a range of issues historically given a low priority by successive governments and the police service in England.

**'Safer Sex Works'** was initiated in January 2003 to effectively deal with live problematic issues and to act as a pre-emptive measure to the genuine recurring threat. Official confirmation of the initiative's relevance was highlighted in the Autumn of 2004 with the publication of two important documents, The Government consultation paper **'Paying the Price'** and **'A.C.P.O.'s Policy, Strategy and Operational Guidelines for dealing with exploitation and abuse through prostitution'** These papers articulate genuine concerns with Street Prostitution issues and emphasise the official opposition to 'Tolerance Zones', further reinforcing and justifying the pre-emptive relevance of 'Safer Sex Works'. **(Appendix H)**

Safer Sex Works would have to deliver achievable, manageable and sustainable reductions and improvement to street sex related issues in Preston whilst working within the framework of the existing law and in the absence of external funding and policing resources.

# **ANALYSIS**

## **Identification of The Problem**

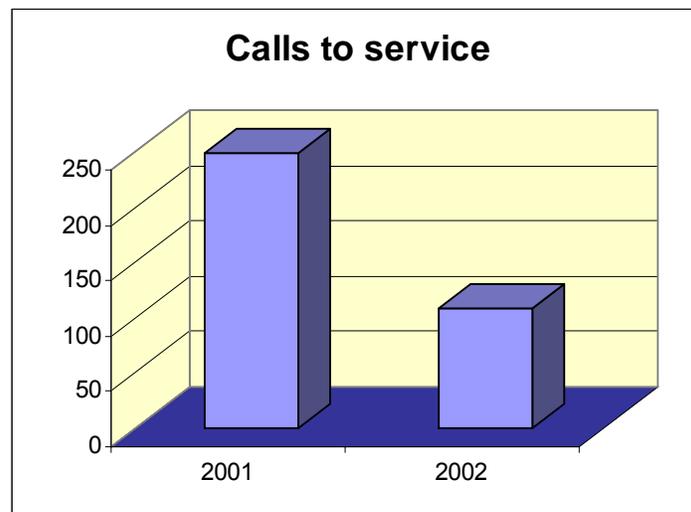
In 2002 an in-depth analysis was undertaken for a previous initiative, 'Operation Kerb', including:

- Police Data recording Systems (**Appendix A**)
  - CRS – Incident Recording
  - INTL – Intelligence Reports
  - INDE – Crime Recording
  - Custody Records
- Consultation with Communities
  - Those living and working in the affected area
- Partnerships
  - Preston City Council Community Safety Department
  - Streetlink – Multi-Agency group focused directly at individuals involved in 'Street Sex Work'
  - Media
- Internet Site 'Preston Punters' –dedicated to Kerb Crawling in Preston and the North West.
- Police Street Survey – direct approaches to street sex workers.

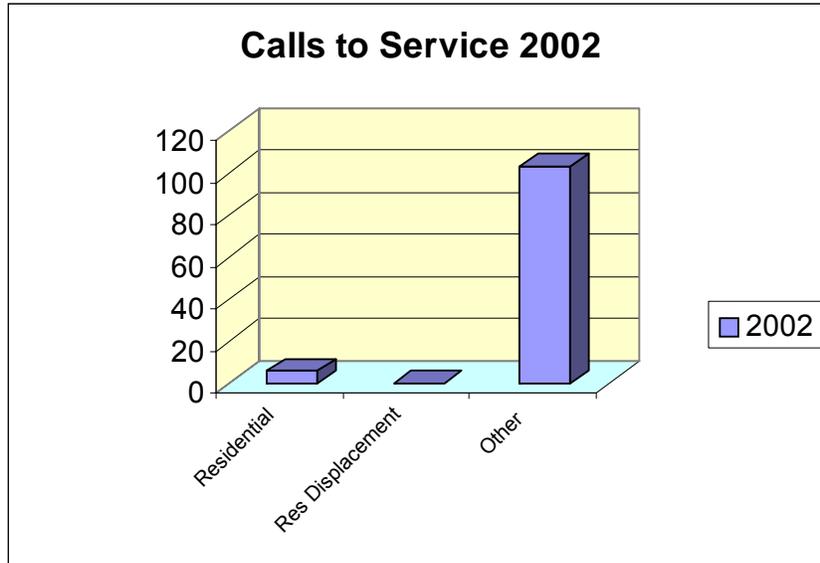
At the start of 'Safer Sex Works' it was vital to revisit analysis to ensure the understanding of the problem was accurate and further develop understanding of issues. There can be no shortcuts to a thorough and meaningful analysis and this project was no exception. However, for the purposes of this report we will focus on certain key features of the analysis, which were fundamental to this understanding.

### **Calls to Service (Incident Reporting)**

By the end of 2002 there had been a significant reduction in the calls to service to the police.



Prostitution had all but been eradicated from residential areas. There had been no displacement into neighbouring areas. However, there remained significant calls to service that required attention.

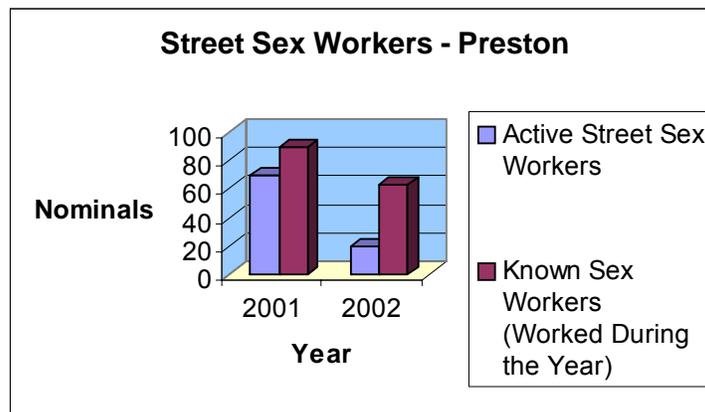


In-depth analysis of calls to service was undertaken providing specific information into the nature and extent of the problem, providing a greater understanding of the issues involved in prostitution.

- **Problematic Behaviour** - Street sex workers behaving in a manner that only served to raise intolerance.
- **Sightings/Perceptions** - Perceived sightings of street sex workers.
- **Offending Behaviour** - Criminal behaviour by sex workers such as theft and assaults.
- **Venue for Sex** - Specific geographic locations of sexual acts.
- **Repeat Complainants** - Complaints received from the same source, providing information and evidence of activity.

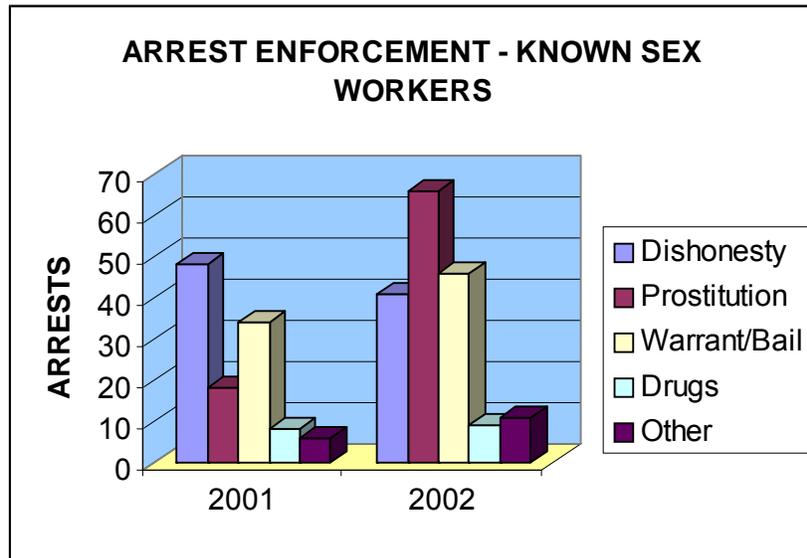
## Street Sex Workers

A cornerstone of this project was an absolute awareness and ongoing monitoring of all individuals known to be involved in street sex work in Preston. Accurate up to date information about offenders, activity and behaviour also allowed the opportunity to revisit historical offending behaviour.



Although significant reductions in the number of street sex workers (active at any one time) were achieved by the end of 2002, there remained a considerable number of women known to have been involved in street sex work throughout the year.

An examination of enforcement activity against known street sex workers was undertaken to illustrate the extent and scope of their offending, which gave an insight into their behaviour. This clearly indicated that individuals were not solely dependent on sex work for income and were also actively involved in acquisitive crime.



## **Problematic Behaviour**

Analysis revealed that behaviour deemed problematic was a trigger for complaints and calls to service. It was therefore necessary that a clear understanding of problematic behaviour would be required in order to tackle what had become a key element of the problem.

## **Internet Site**

The Internet web site 'Preston Punters' was continually monitored to gain un-corrupted information about users of sexual services. Forum members had become increasingly wary of the police activity in the area. Messages posted on the forum exhibited paranoia in relation to perceived police activity that simply was not taking place.

## **Streetlink**

As key stakeholder and partner, 'Streetlink' continued to be a vital source of information as they engaged in regular outreach with the street sex workers. Officers attended all meetings with this multi-agency partnership and established an information sharing protocol.

## **Street Surveys**

Periodic surveys of the women, helped to provide valuable information such as:

- New women working on the streets.
- Problematic and Offending behaviour
- Issues of concern to the sex workers
- Threats to both police and sex workers

## Experiential Analysis

By the end of 2002, a significant body of work had been undertaken tackling street prostitution in Preston. Responses had been adopted based predominantly on traditional enforcement strategies. Ongoing analysis proved vital in understanding the problem. The officers involved in the project found that their experiences in dealing with the women, men and those affected by the problem gave a unique insight and understanding of the underlying causes, fears and motivations together with the nature and extent of the problem.



## Street Sex Workers

- The Street sex workers prime motivation was to generate income, often to fund an addiction to drugs.
- Certain women would use the opportunity to commit acquisitive crime whilst engaged in sex work.
- Some women would commit acquisitive crime in addition to sex work.
- Street sex workers would often 'work' sufficiently long to procure funds for short-term drugs needs.
- Competition lead to risk taking, undercutting, violence and prolonged activity.
- Police enforcement and crime victimisation was often viewed as an occupational hazard as opposed to a deterrent to street sex work.

## Kerb Crawlers

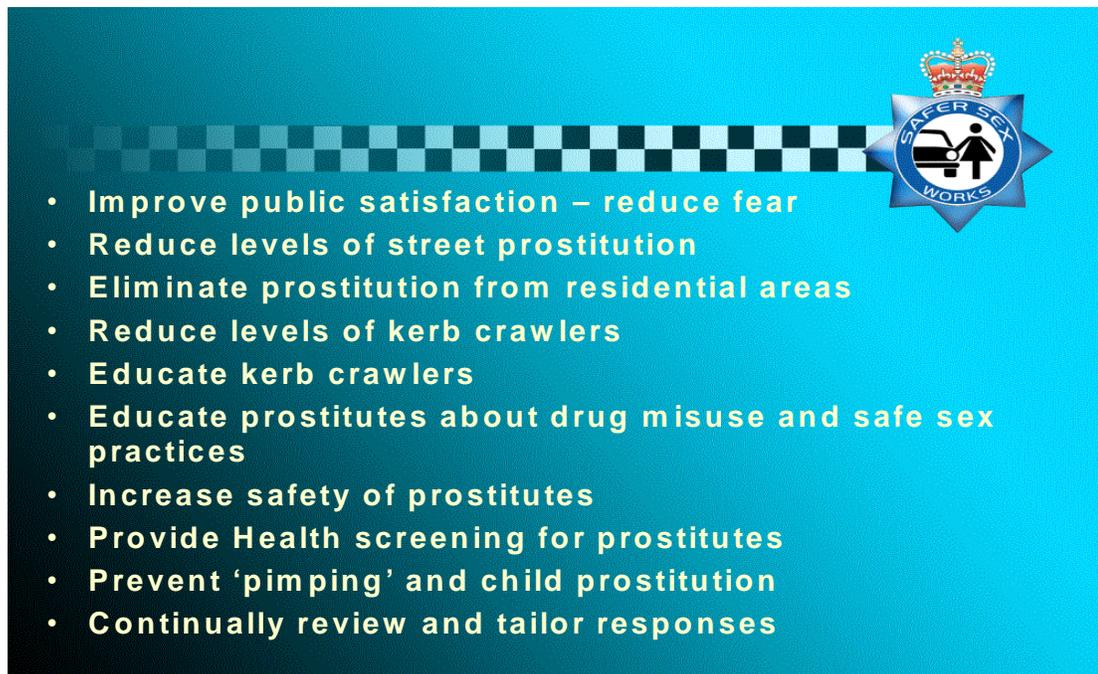
- The Kerb crawlers' prime motivation was the procurement of sexual services.
- A vast majority of kerb crawlers had no criminal background, were often in employment, relationships and were often married with children.
- Kerb crawlers believed using street sex workers was discreet and offered them anonymity.

## The Public

- Officers involved in the project revisited complainants and spoke to those affected by the problem. It became evident there was a certain amount of tolerance to the existence of non-problematic street sex work.
- Sex workers exhibiting behaviour deemed problematic, such as working in a residential area was considered unacceptable.
- Complaints were far more robust and numerous when behaviour deemed problematic was exhibited by street sex workers.

## Project Objectives

Certain fundamental project objectives aimed at reduction, prevention and education have remained constant throughout the project.



- **Improve public satisfaction – reduce fear**
- **Reduce levels of street prostitution**
- **Eliminate prostitution from residential areas**
- **Reduce levels of kerb crawlers**
- **Educate kerb crawlers**
- **Educate prostitutes about drug misuse and safe sex practices**
- **Increase safety of prostitutes**
- **Provide Health screening for prostitutes**
- **Prevent ‘pimping’ and child prostitution**
- **Continually review and tailor responses**

It was important to set operational objectives aimed at delivering manageable and sustainable interventions.



- **To implement a tiered approach**
- **To maximise outcomes**
- **Define & address problematic behaviour**
- **To provide quality safety and healthcare services whilst maintaining public reassurance and personal safety**

# **RESPONSE**

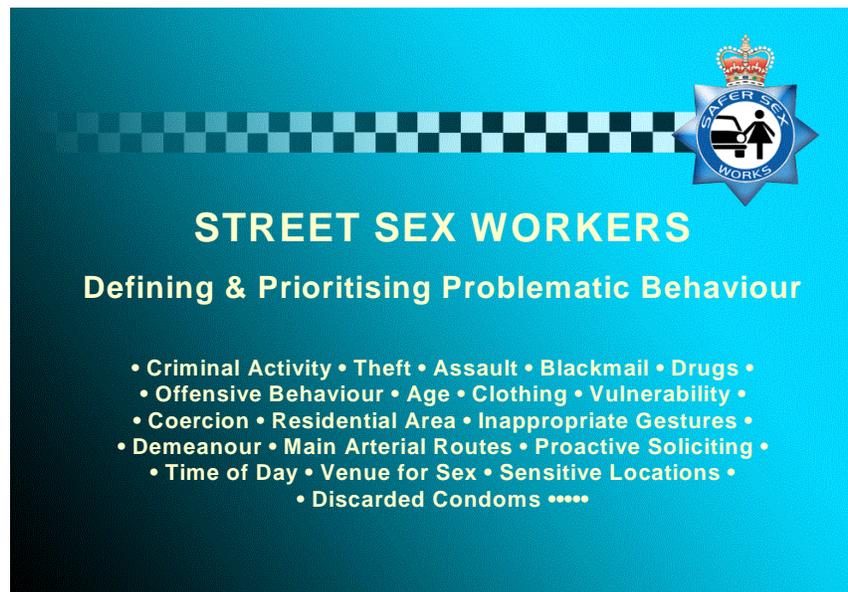
## **Dealing With The Problem**

All responses were developed and implemented in close partnership with Streetlink (**Appendix B**). Recognising shared areas of mutual concern and responsibility; key interventions were reliant on a consistent message being delivered by all partners. Responses highlighted are the more innovative interventions and whilst these were the main focus of the project, established working practices were maintained where appropriate.

## Defining & Prioritising Problematic Behaviour

Analysis established this was a key element of the problem and the predominant reason for generating complaints and calls to service.

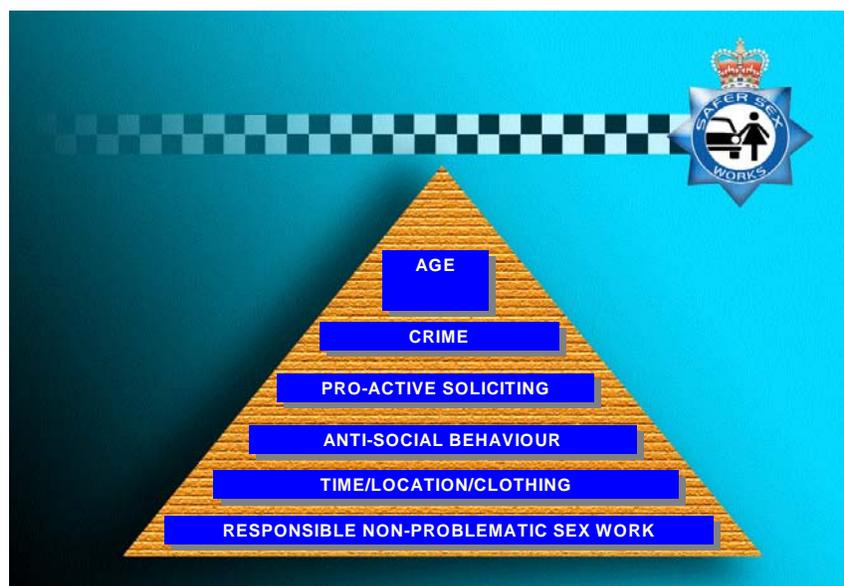
To tackle this issue it was vital to define 'problematic', revisiting previous complaints and calls to service and drawing from the officers' in-depth analysis. Considerable liaison with Streetlink identified problematic behaviour as a threat to health, welfare and personal safety.



**STREET SEX WORKERS**  
**Defining & Prioritising Problematic Behaviour**

- Criminal Activity • Theft • Assault • Blackmail • Drugs •
- Offensive Behaviour • Age • Clothing • Vulnerability •
- Coercion • Residential Area • Inappropriate Gestures •
- Demeanour • Main Arterial Routes • Proactive Soliciting •
- Time of Day • Venue for Sex • Sensitive Locations •
- Discarded Condoms ••••

Combinations of behaviour could be deemed problematic. By defining problematic behaviour the Police and Streetlink were able to focus their efforts through prioritisation.



Police interventions were geared towards educating the sex workers about problematic behaviour and the consequences of exhibiting this type of behaviour in terms of focused police enforcement.

The lead police initiative to combat problematic behaviour, the education of the women and the re-affirmation of the message that enforcement activity would be prioritised against individuals exhibiting problematic behaviour, created a framework for responsible non-problematic sex work. As a result of seeking to prioritise only problematic behaviour the Police were in effect more tolerant of low-key responsible behaviour in less sensitive areas.

Problematic behaviour would be prioritised and robust enforcement measures including A.S.B.O.'s considered (**Appendix C**).

Streetlink echoed this message during outreach and drop-in sessions.



## Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid

Analysis shows a kerb crawler's prime motivation is the procurement of sexual services. Often family men in employment they wanted anonymity. The officers identified levers that could be used as a deterrent and ultimately a way to exit men from kerb crawling.

Letters to registered keepers of vehicles frequenting the problem area was the first step in a tiered approach resulting in the development of the Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid.



Repeat sightings of vehicles were monitored and recorded, with the assistance of the volunteer Special Constabulary. Following evidence of repeat offending the next intervention was a verbal warning, a high visibility stop of the vehicle within the problem area and reinforcement of the educational message together with a final documented warning. Enforcement levels would increase in line with levels of offending behaviour. Implementation of the tiered approach was aimed at maximising the exit of offenders with a minimum of resources and effort. The entry point on the pyramid remains at the officers' discretion.

## **Community Engagement**

Officers involved in Safer Sex Works personally visited complainants to illicit as much information as possible in relation to the activities of sex workers and kerb crawlers. This provided the officers with the opportunity to raise awareness and educate complainants in relation to the issues involved in sex work and what was being done by the partnership to address them.

## **SARA..ARA..ARA..ARA..ARA**

Throughout the project it was vital to revisit analysis in order to assess the effectiveness of adopted responses and to develop new responses. At the end of 2003 all complaints and calls to service during the year were analysed resulting in the development of two new responses.

## **Control Groups**

Analysis showed two specific locations where numerous complaints were being generated from the same source. Sharing similar characteristics, the problems experienced were not especially problematic. The opportunity was taken to establish these locations as control groups to measure the effectiveness of the partnership interventions, introducing interventions into only one of the locations, whilst monitoring the other.

Analysis showed the milder summer months proved the busiest in terms of sex work activity. It was decided that between the months of April and September 2004 all planned police activity would cease other than periodic monitoring of the situation. Streetlink interventions continued unaware of this measure.

## **Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme**

Developed specifically to address concerns over discarded condoms funding of \$2500.00 was secured from Preston Community Safety Partnership. Provision of 6 litter bins and 50,000 disposable bags featuring the 'Keep Britain Tidy' logo enabled Streetlink to provide bags to sex workers together with free condoms as part of their education campaign (**Appendix D**).



## **Sex Work Tariff**

Streetlink identified an issue of concern in relation to prices that some of the women were charging for their services. Competition between the women led to:

- Undercutting of prices
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Longer periods on the street to generate income

Streetlink developed a response to this issue with the creation and implementation of a 'Sex Work Tariff'. Through consultation with the women prices for services were fixed and all the women agreed to charge the same. The tariff was then produced in a small credit-card form for the women to show to kerb crawlers upon being approached (**Appendix E**).

This intervention was aimed at preventing the women from entering into risk-taking behaviour and leading to less time spent on the street.

## **Media**

The local media were kept informed on the progress of the project and periodically accompanied officers out on patrol resulting in a number of newspaper articles. Sensationalised headlines became a thing of the past as their awareness of the issues and the partnership's work increased. The Lancashire Evening Post headline '**Vice Girls Clean Up Their Act**' (**Appendix F**) shows a considered appraisal of the facts and a recognition that the sex workers themselves had addressed their problematic behaviour as opposed to enforcement activity or Police crackdown.

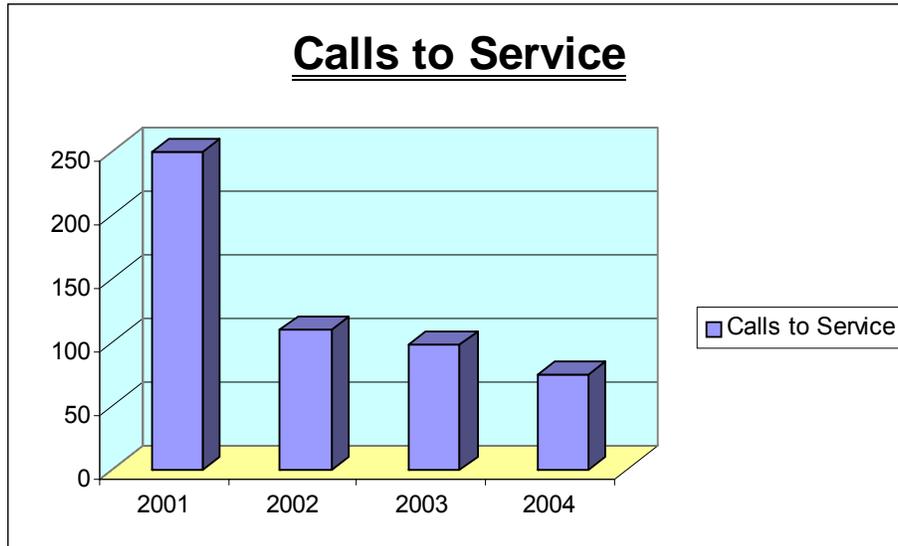
# **ASSESSMENT**

## **Assessing Our Approach**

Assessed at its conclusion in December 2004, the work, increasingly lead by 'Streetlink' continues.

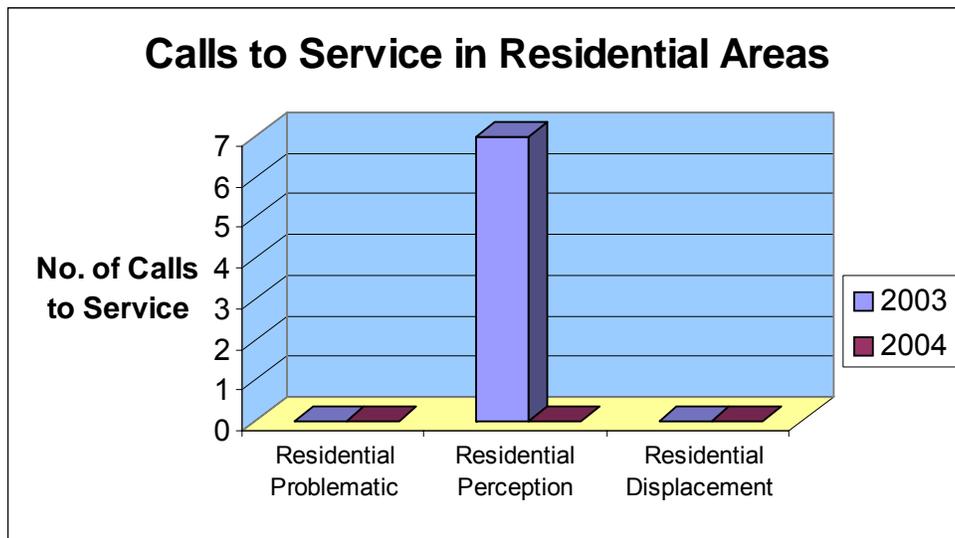
## Calls to Service

Headline figures for calls to service for prostitution issues were significantly reduced throughout 2003 and 2004.



Headline figures however do not give a clear indication of the true picture and we must look more closely at specific details.

## Residential

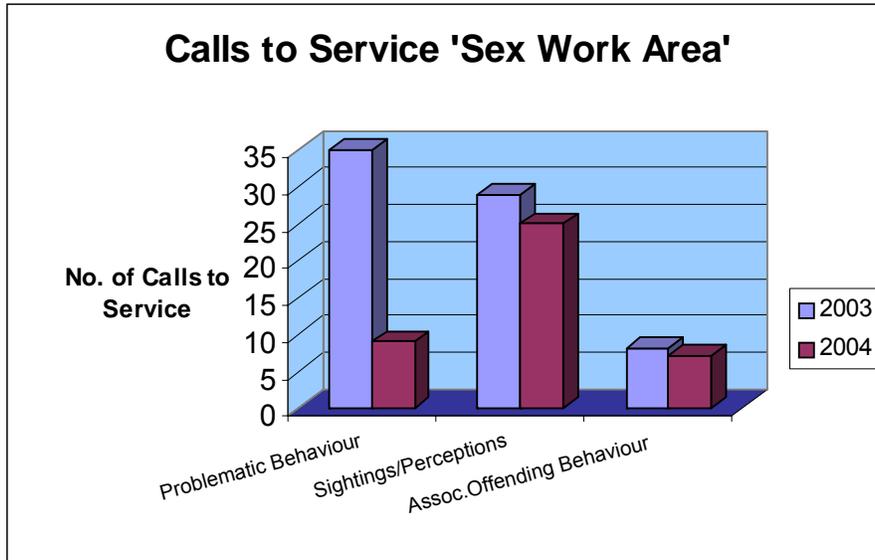


Clearly there has been complete success in eradicating problematic behaviour from residential areas and preventing residential displacement.

During 2003 there was some perception of continuing sex work in residential areas, this issue was successfully addressed throughout 2004.

### Sex Work Area

The area in which sex work occurs indicates 3 distinct types of calls to service. Reductions were achieved in all categories. Having identified and targeted the most problematic behaviour there has been a genuine and significant reduction in this type of complaint. During 2004 the key indicator, complaints of problematic behaviour associated with sex work shows a reduction to only 9 incidents in the City for the entire year.



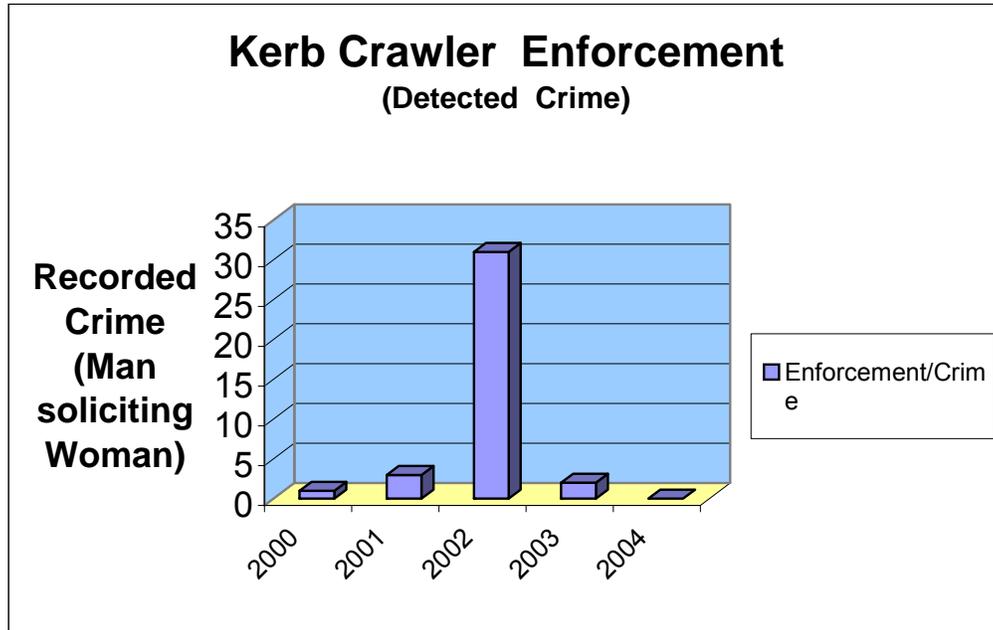
Further evaluation reveals interesting evidence in relation to the 'regular complainant' control group. Where the partnership interventions were delivered there was a reduction of problem issues of 57%. In the absence of interventions the complaints in the control group rose dramatically by 127%. The control group is significant. Calls to service from this single complainant accounted for approximately a third of total calls to service during 2004.



## Kerb Crawlers

When considering the results and impact of the interventions aimed at the activities of kerb crawlers it is important to note that interventions were not reliant on typical enforcement activity.

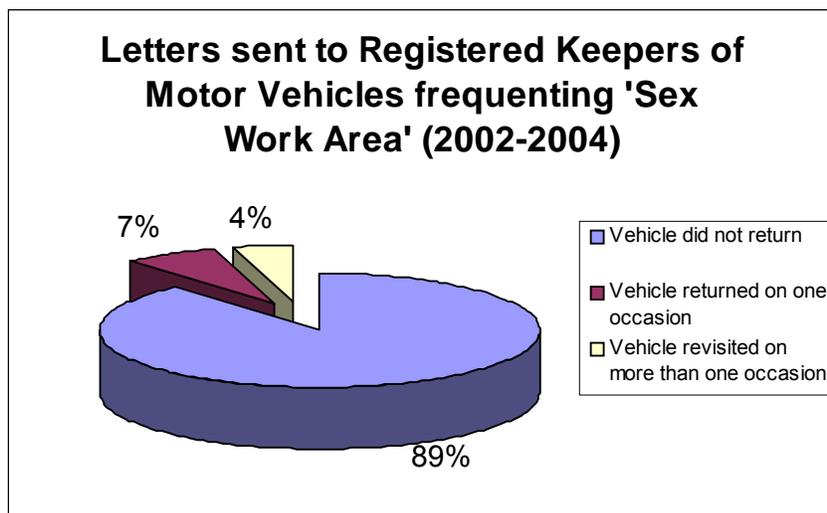
In 2003 there were only 2 arrests for kerb crawling and none in 2004.



## Letters to Registered Keepers of Vehicles

The 'Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid' sets out the tiered progression of interventions designed to address the issue of Kerb Crawling. Aimed at maximising outcomes, the scheme to send letters to the registered keepers was the entry point to the pyramid and was designed to exit the majority of non- problematic offenders from kerb crawling at the first opportunity.

Generated following sightings of vehicles in the 'problem area' the success of the intervention was monitored with assistance of officers from the volunteer Special Constabulary.

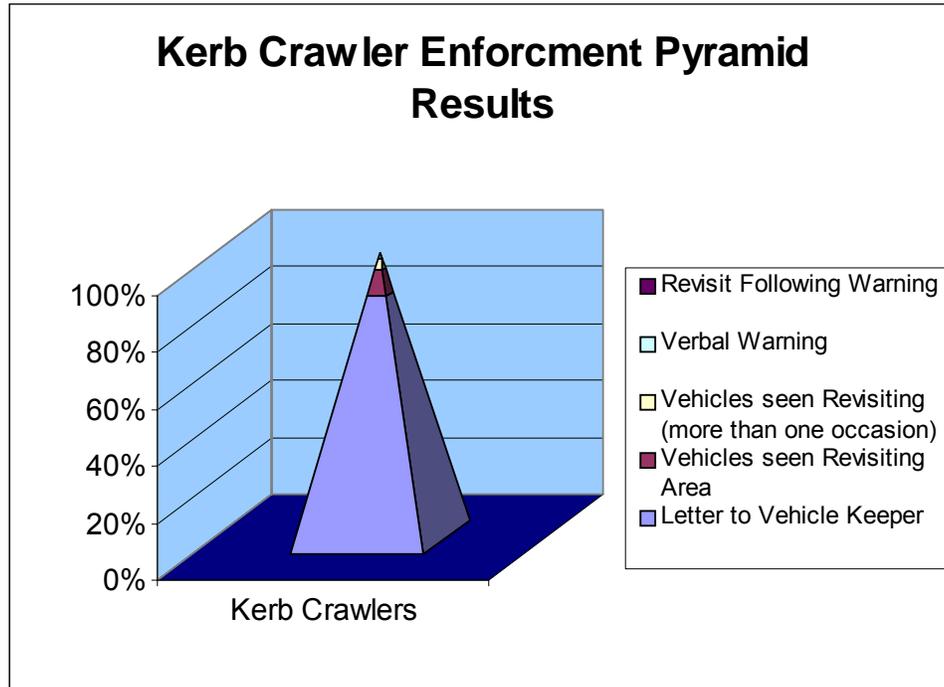


The assessment demonstrates this intervention was hugely effective with a success rate of 89%.

A further 7% were observed to revisit the area on only one occasion and again no further exit interventions were required with this group.

The combined 96% success rate of this tactic ensured that a much reduced and manageable number of offenders were then carried forward to the next level of intervention.

### **Kerb Crawler Enforcement Pyramid**



The next level of intervention on the pyramid was a high visibility stop by uniform officers in the problem area on those individuals who continued to frequent the area after the 'educational' letter had been sent.

In total only 36 individual vehicles were seen to revisit the area more than once.

Certain of these vehicles did not present an ongoing problem and did not return, requiring no further intervention.

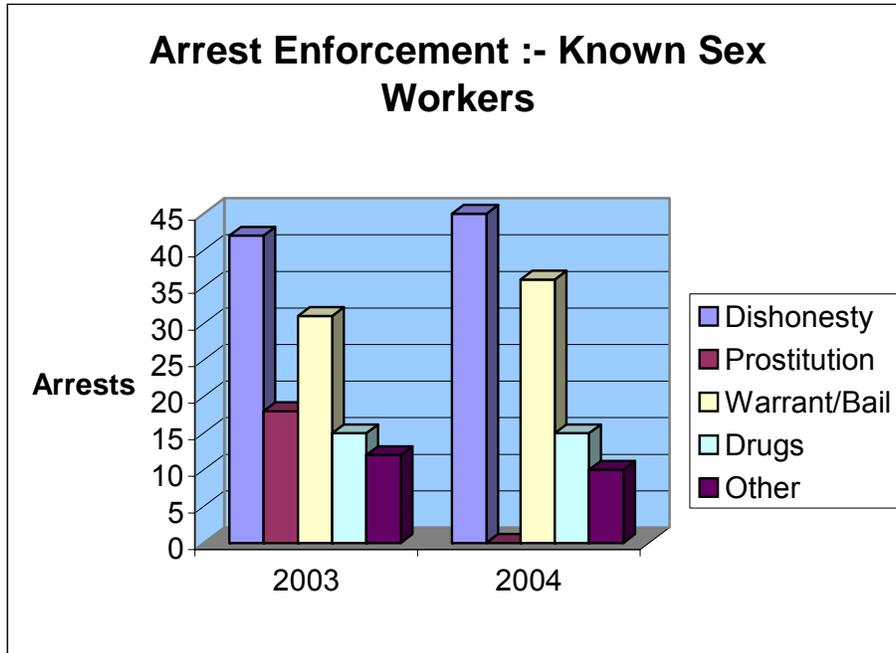
On street education and warning was delivered after 3 or more sightings on different dates. During 2003, 19 individuals were warned and a further 3 during 2004.

There were no recorded instances of kerb crawlers returning to the area after the high impact 'stop and warning' intervention and there was no need to progress further up the pyramid for those who had entered at the base level.

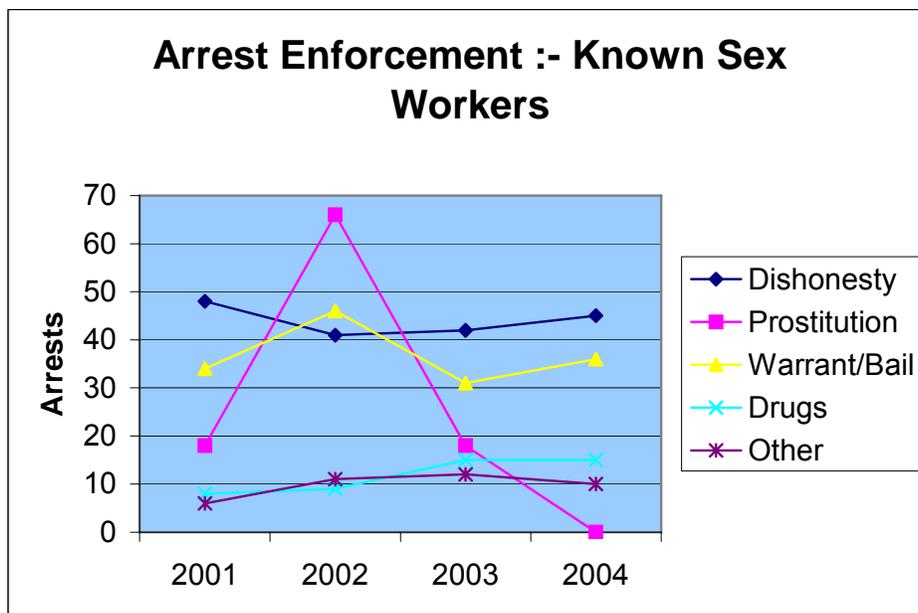
Certain investigations and prosecutions resulted from the offending behaviour of men towards sex workers where violence and sexual offences had occurred. In no instances were these individuals previously dealt with at any other point in the pyramid.

## Street Sex Workers

It is important to emphasise the results of this phase were not achieved through traditional enforcement activity. There were no arrests for street prostitution offences during 2004.



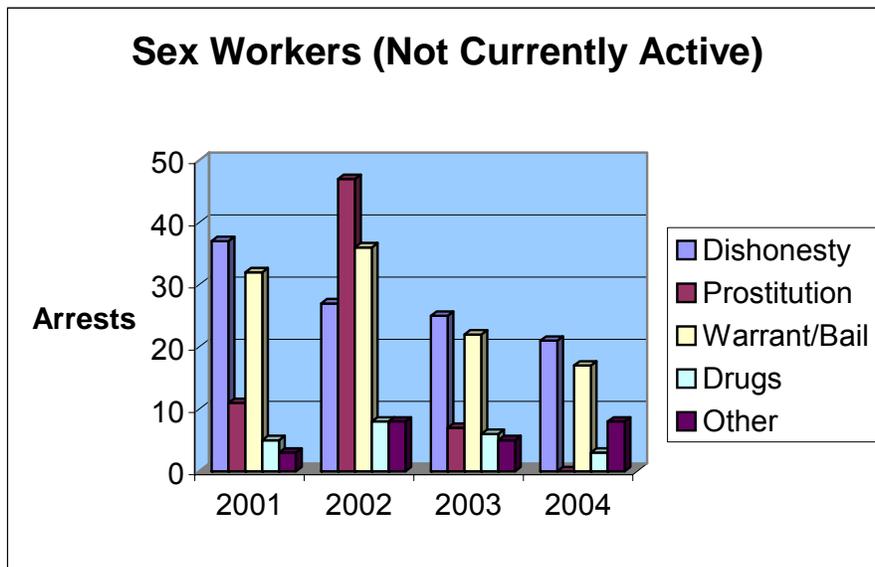
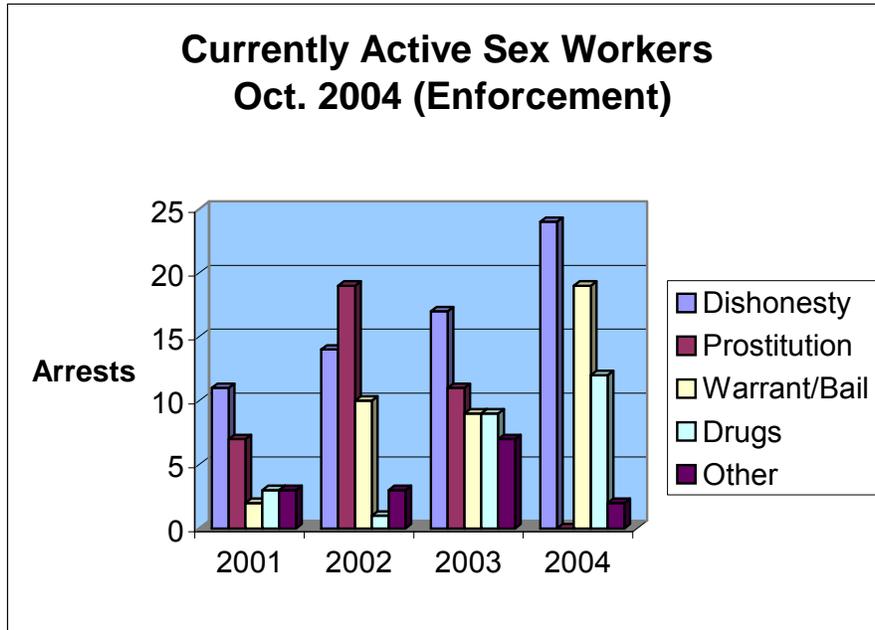
Enforcement based activities peaked during 2002. Since this time the project has been based on the principles of 'Safer Sex Work'



Assessment of enforcement activity also provides an interesting insight into the offending behaviour of the women.

Acquisitive crime amongst known workers has remained broadly constant despite the absence of enforcement of street offences. Offending is not a consequence of displaced offending behaviour.

The relationship to other offending can be further examined by comparison between individuals who are no longer active in street sex work.



Comparison of the two groups shows that women who have exited street sex work are not committing increased numbers of other offences. In fact offending has decreased.

The active group are also committing acquisitive crime in increased numbers together with their sex work, indicating evidence of chaotic drug dependant behaviour.

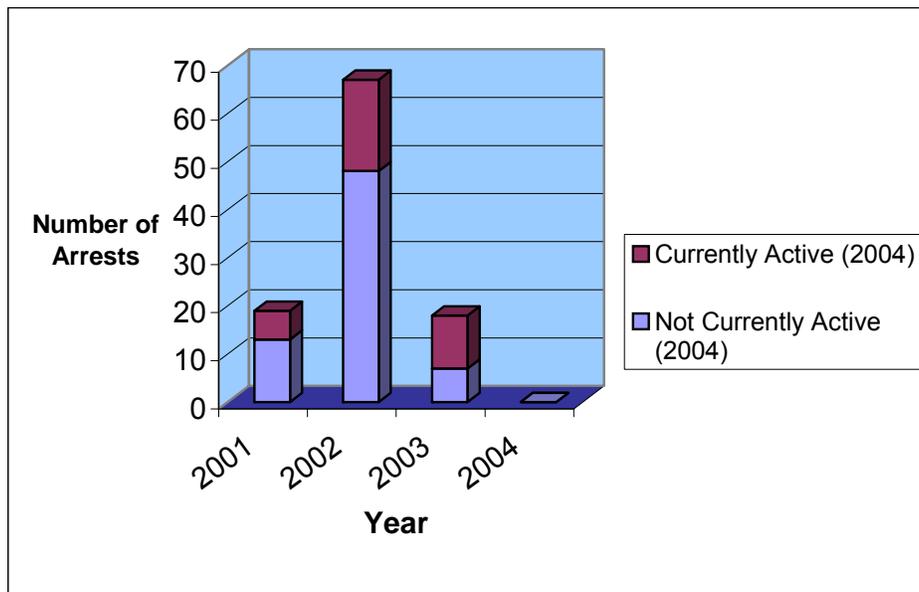
Successful exiting from sex work does not necessarily result in displacement of offending behaviour.

Street surveys revealed important and interesting information linked directly to some of the key objectives. The most recent survey was conducted in October 2004.

No young people below 20 years found working in the street sex trade.

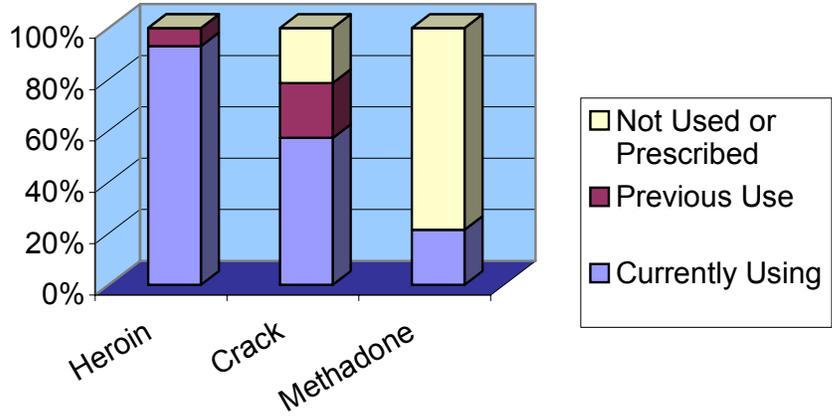


Many of the sex workers had been working in the area for several years.



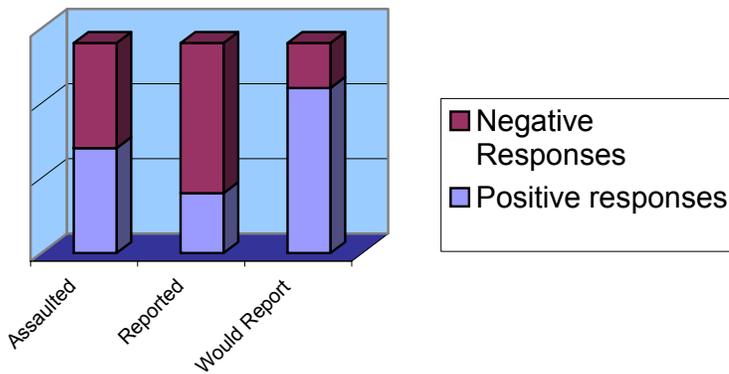
The majority of women indicated they were drug dependant. Heroin was the most widely used. There was little evidence of drug treatment prescriptions.

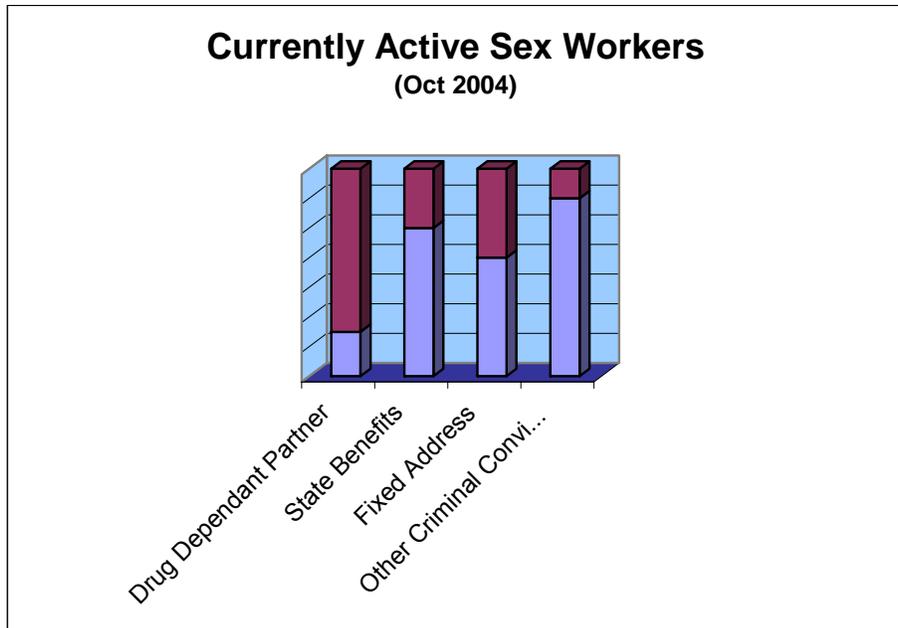
### Drug Use amongst Street Sex Workers (Oct 2004)



Respondents indicated they were now more likely to report assaults to the Police or 'Streetlink' and were increasingly empowered and organised in their daily lives.

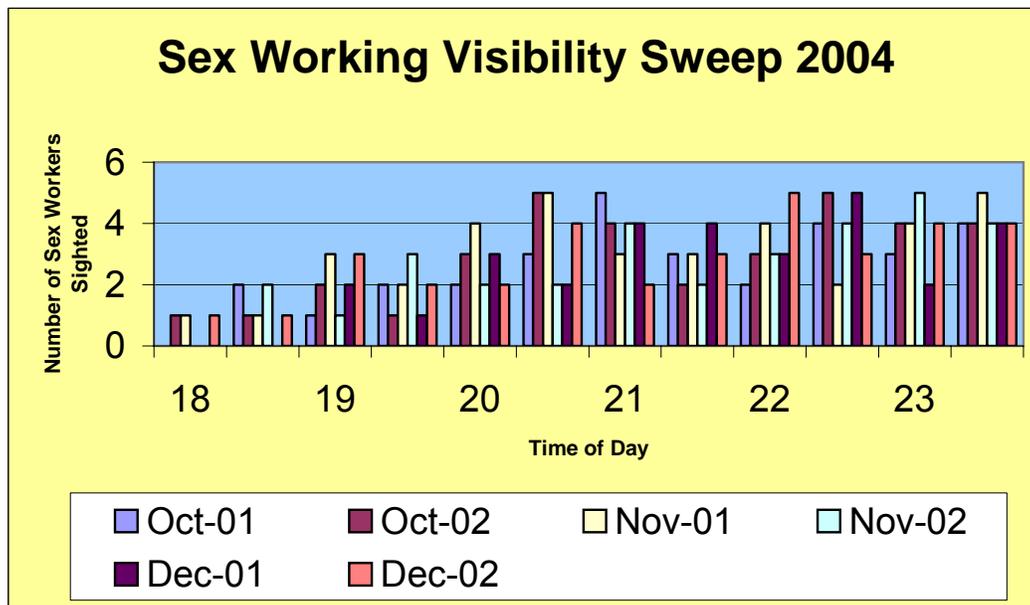
### Assaults and Reporting Survey Oct 2004 (whilst engaged in Street Sex Work)





### Sustainability

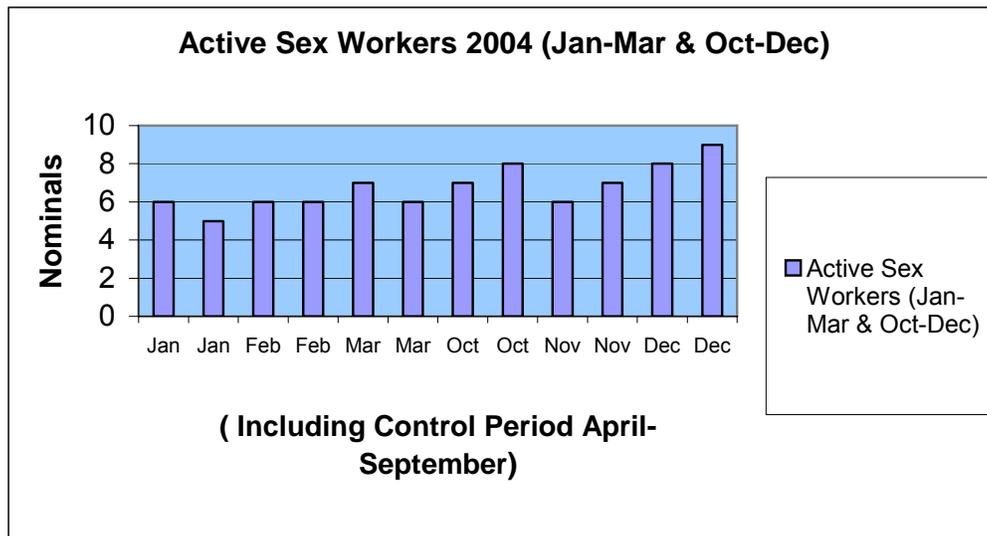
Surveys and sweeps were conducted in order to accurately establish the numbers of women actively involved in street sex work and the time of day at which they were working. This work was carried out after a six-month control period during which the Police had not been active in the sex work area.



During the last 3 months of 2004 no more than 5 individuals at any one time were sighted in the entire sex work area. There were occasions in the earlier evening when no women were active. Before 8pm there were no more than 3 individuals sighted.

It was important to accurately collate information on the identities and numbers of individuals who remained actively involved in street sex work during 2004. Information gathered prior to

and after the control period would also help establish if the absence of police activity was detrimental to the project.



Assessment of this information indicated that the project was sustainable with interventions solely by 'Streetlink'. No significant variations occurred following the period without Police intervention.

During any one month of 2004 there was never any more than 9 individuals actively involved in street sex work amongst a total of 17 individuals during the entire year.

### News

The project was featured on the national BBC 10 o'clock news in Autumn 2004 as an example of a 'best practice' project.

### Internet – 'Preston Punters'

Documenting the decline of Preston's 'street sex trade' through police intervention the site is now entirely focussed on 'off street' and parlour services (**Appendix G**).

### Conclusion

As a result of the POP Safer Sex Work, street based sex work is no longer a significant problem in Preston.

Amongst the key indicators of its success are

- Only 9 complaints of problematic 'Sex work' (2004).
- Eradication of Sex Work from residential areas.
- Absence of Sex Work on arterial routes.
- Only 1 complaint of 'Kerb Crawling' (2004).
- 76% Reduction in known sex workers to 17 individuals (2004).
- No more than 5 sex workers active at any one time.
- A continuing absence of young people engaged in sex work.
- Pimping and organised crime deterred and absent.

Overall the project was a genuine partnership delivered initiative which has delivered a sustainable reduction in problem issues and created a safer environment for the people of Preston, visitors and businesses and perhaps most importantly the sex workers themselves.

# APPENDICES



**APPENDIX B**

- **Streetlink**

**APPENDIX C**

- **A.S.B.O. Applications**

**APPENDIX D**

- **Ethical Condom Disposal**

**APPENDIX E**

- **Sex Work Tariff**

**APPENDIX F**

- **Newspaper Article**

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- **Internet Web Site**

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- **Government Papers**

## **APPENDIX B - Streetlink**

Streetlink are a multi-agency group made up from numerous voluntary sector agencies. Their aims and objectives are focused directly at help and guidance of individuals involved in 'street sex work'.

- Independent of the Police.
- Independently funded.
- Work specifically with street sex workers.
- Project jointly managed by three voluntary sector agencies:
  - The Foxtton 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.

### **Partnership Delivered Problem Management**

- Education of sex workers to understand issues of problematic behaviour
- Encourage empowerment and increasingly responsible behaviour
- Delivery of Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme
- Identification of 'risk' kerb crawlers
- Information sharing
- Exiting of street sex workers from prostitution

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.

# **Appendix C - ASBO Applications**

## **Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to tackle Street Prostitution in Preston**

During the early months of 2002 it was decided to seek Anti Social Behaviour Orders against a number of street prostitutes as a means of curbing their offending behaviour and hopefully encouraging the individuals to engage with support services to exit them from prostitution and drug misuse. The intention was always to use A.S.B.O.s as one option amongst a range of other tactics and approaches.

This briefing note aims to look at the application process of these particular applications and to highlight any successes or failings in the process and to give guidance to other practitioners looking to successfully obtain and use A.S.B.O.s in the field of street prostitution.

## **Selection of Suitable Candidates**

At the time there were up to 70 active street prostitutes in Preston many of whom were arrested on a regular basis during the initial enforcement phase of the Operation. Upon arrest individuals were offered the opportunity to enter into an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) with the Police. The contract sought to seek agreement from the offender to address their offending behaviour in the future, and provided a comprehensive list of guidelines.

The ABC also included the warning that the Police would consider applying for A.S.B.O.s in the event of a breach.

The ABCs are not designed to be a legally enforceable instrument in themselves but breaches or subsequent offending by those declining to enter into the contract was used as evidence to support the A.S.B.O. application process.

All the ABCs entered into by street prostitutes were quickly breached and the decision to pursue the Anti Social Behaviour Orders was taken in respect of the first seven persons to commit a breach.

Once the candidates had been selected simple evidence was collated of offending behaviour from the time they were arrested and entered into the ABC onwards. Evidence was recorded as MG 11 statements. No historical offences were used to support the applications, and it was decided that a small specimen number of offences and/or ABC breaches would be sufficient in each case.

## **Preparation of Application**

Evidence was to be presented by one nominated police officer. PC 1972 Pearson was selected to present all the evidence and a statement setting out in detail the history and problems associated with street prostitution in Preston was constructed. At the end of the statement appendices were attached included detailing a brief resume on each of the women together with the specific evidence against them.

Each application was also supported by a brief history of the women, their nominal details and their antecedent and criminal history.

## **Serving of Documents**

In brief the serving of the necessary documents, disclosure and summonses proved quite problematic. The women involved invariably did not have known fixed addresses and this inevitably lead to papers being served on the street and to their appointed legal representatives if they were known. Delays in the service of documents lead to delays and subsequent non-attendance at court delayed matters further requiring further summonses to be issued. Throughout this time the women became increasingly difficult to trace in a bid to delay and disrupt the process.

## **Ruling**

After all the evidence had been heard the District Judge adjourned the hearing for several weeks to consider his judgement as he stated matters merited careful consideration. When in due course the judgement was made the District Judge provided comprehensive written observations on his deliberations, but in short the application failed.

The key areas identified were: -

- The Judge felt that the application needed to be proved to the Criminal standard of 'beyond all reasonable doubt' as opposed to the accepted civil standard of 'balance of probabilities'.
- The Judge did not accept that it had been proved that Potters behaviour was likely to cause harassment alarm or distress.

### **Appeal**

Following the failure of the first application the others were held in abeyance pending appeal to the High Court against the ruling. Having heard the appeal, once again the judgement was delayed as the case was described as being of National Importance and merited careful consideration.

The judgement when it came was found in the favour of the Chief Constable with the District Judge being urged to 'look again' at the application. A clear indication that the original judgement should have favoured the Constabulary.

### **Summary of Initial Application**

It is still believed that the use of an Anti Social Behaviour Order can be a justifiable and successful measure to combat the problems and nuisance created by street prostitution. The more careful selection of targets is desirable and it is however probably best reserved for use against persistent offenders causing problems in residential areas and for whom other interventions have proved unsuccessful.

### **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. ABCs, Outreach interventions etc.
- Secure specific evidence of behaviour causing harassment alarm or distress by the subject.
- Secure community based witness to support evidence of anti social behaviour (harassment alarm or distress) Evidence can be general i.e. against prostitute's behaviour generally in the area but is preferable that it relates to the subject where possible.
- Identify the subject's address for the serving of documents and details of their representing solicitor at an early stage in the process.
- Consider the use of 'Conviction A.S.B.O.'

### **Withdrawal of ASBO Applications**

It was with a great deal of thought that Lancashire Constabulary considered the use of Anti Social Behaviour Orders to tackle Street Prostitution in Preston. Traditional enforcement strategies had proved to be of limited success and the problem seemed set to expand creating greater nuisance for the affected neighbourhoods. It is worthy of note that the impact of the procedures undertaken to gather evidence and serve papers on the nominated respondents in itself brought about a noticeable improvement in their offending behaviour. These women did not underestimate the consequences of the imposition of such an order.

Over a period of time the Police have successfully developed a Problem Orientated Policing approach using a range of tactics and partnership working to reduce the problems created by street prostitution and furthermore reduce the risks faced by those involved in the sex trade. Anti social behaviour orders are no longer deemed necessary or appropriate in the cases of the women initially identified for these orders. However, it is hoped that should an order be required by the Lancashire Constabulary to address persistent or problematic prostitution in residential or sensitive areas that the court will accept that there are genuine reasons for pursuing such an order and ask that the courts will look favourably upon such an application.

## **Appendix D – Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme**

Almost a mini P.O.P. in its own right, the Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme came into being as a result of evidence from a number of sources indicating that discarded spent condoms were creating issues of concern.

Discarded condoms found outdoors in public places are certainly evidence of sexual activity, however it seems that from complainants and community sources there is a public perception that discarded spent condoms are inextricably linked to the street sex trade.

A number of complaints were received that condoms were found close to sensitive areas such as places of worship, medical facilities and business premises. Although there was no supporting evidence, in every case the complainant made the link to prostitution. Research was undertaken to identify which women favoured these locations in a bid to educate them to the community concern and encourage responsible disposal. As a result of this research certain interesting facts were also uncovered.

- Locations were being used by persons not involved in prostitution.
- Prostitutes were concerned about public reaction or hostility to the presence of discarded condoms in sensitive locations.

Clearly an emotive topic but one which raises genuine health, welfare and reassurance issues the disposal of spent condoms needed to be addressed.

The scheme is simple but works in several ways.

- Street sex workers who are all supplied with free condoms by 'Streetlink' are also given equal numbers of disposable sanitary bags at the same time, to place the used condom in.
- Additional regular litter bins were provided and sited in the main sex work area.
- The City Council agreed to provide 'fast track' cleansing and removal of condoms from reported problem sites upon referral.
- The scheme uses the nationally recognised logo of The Keep Britain Tidy Campaign, together with the legend 'Please dispose of your waste responsibly'. This gives the scheme instant recognition and avoids close association with the Police.

A funding bid was submitted to The Preston Community Safety Partnership for \$2,500 to finance an initial 25,000 bags and 4 litter bins. The bid was successful and in addition, in the spirit of partnership the City Cleansing Dept agreed to provide 6 bins in total, however they also agreed to provide 3 of them free of charge, a saving which allowed the purchase of 50,000 disposal bags. The Keep Britain Tidy Campaign kindly agreed to the use of its 'Trademark' logo. It is hoped the scheme can be self-funding in the future with minimal contributions from the sex workers who are becoming increasingly responsible.

Key additional benefits of this very simple scheme are:

- Discarded 'Condom Disposal Scheme' bags not placed in the litter bins provided and discarded elsewhere are evidence of the locations where sex work is taking place. In the event that such locations are sensitive educational inputs through 'Streetlink' can highlight the concern to the workers raising it as an issue of 'problematic behaviour' and encouraging an ethical response.
- In the event of complaints from the public about discarded condoms, the 'Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme' can be highlighted as a planned and appropriate response to the problem, particularly addressing street sex work. In addition the absence of the disposal bags will raise doubts as to whether a particular problem is actually related to prostitution.



**Please dispose of  
your waste  
responsibly**

## Appendix E – Sex Work Tariff

A tariff developed by Streetlink in consultation with the street sex workers was printed as a wallet friendly credit card sized document. Detailing a list of sexual services the tariff set the cost of individual services and could be shown to ‘punters’. The initiative was conceived to:

- Introduce fair pricing for services
- Eliminate under-cutting and price negotiation
- Reduce risk-taking
- Reduce the time spent on the ‘street’



**STREETLINK**  
**SEX WORKER'S COALITION**  
**TARIFF**

**Time Limit: 20 Minutes Maximum**

Extra charge for distance  
£5 for every extra 10minutes added due to extra distance

<b>GROPE</b>	<b>£10</b>
<b>HAND JOB</b>	<b>£15</b>
<b>BLOW JOB</b>	<b>£20</b>
<b>LICK OUT</b>	<b>£25</b>
<b>FULL SEX</b>	<b>£30</b>
<b>ALL NIGHTER</b>	<b>£80</b>
<b>SEX AT A</b>	
<b>PUNTER'S HOME</b>	<b>£40</b>
<b>ANAL SEX</b>	<b>£40</b>

# VICE GIRLS CLEAN UP THEIR ACT



**OFF THE STREETS:** Prostitutes have heeded legal threats

## LEP-backed campaign prompts huge reduction in complaints

By Ann-Marie Houghton and Geraldine Baybutt

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



**WARNING:** Flashback to the Post last January when sex workers and kerb crawlers got a blunt message

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

● Turn to Page 2

## Appendix G – Internet Web Site

pp message board

[<< Previous Topic | Next Topic >>](#)

**Police report**  
November 29 2004 at 10:58 PM

Hi

Don't know if people have seen this before but it makes interesting reading. You will need acrobat reader to read it.

[http://www.popcenter.org/Library/Goldstein/2003/03-56%20\(F\).pdf](http://www.popcenter.org/Library/Goldstein/2003/03-56%20(F).pdf)

Findus

Users of the Internet forum 'Preston Punters' were obviously computer literate and well informed. A link to the Goldstein finalist 'Operation Kerb' appeared on the website!

pp message board

**Rupert** **Re: just to bump it to the top** December 31<sup>st</sup> 2004  
(Login [Rupertrise](#))

I repeat a report I have put on another thread.

'I would say overall that I agree with the local constabularies activities in 2004. They have clamped down heavily on street girls, but also left alone managed brothels to ply their trade without hinderance. Several parlours in Preston and Blackpool have now gone multi-girl without any intervention from Lancashire Constabulary. This has actually helped the police anti-street initiative as punters change from the street to parlours.

The girls on the street are in the main sufferers of an addiction and each punt is geared to obtaining as much money as possible from the encounter whether by fair means or foul.

Let the street girl be eradicated completely from the Preston Punter Forum in 2005.

Initially a public Internet forum for the users of predominantly street based sexual services in Preston and surrounding areas, the site allowed unregistered anonymous browsing. Following the discovery of the Goldstein site users realised that messages were being monitored by the Police. Since this time the forum has become less 'public' and users must register in order to browse the site.

The decline of Preston's reputation as a city with a vibrant street sex scene is well documented on 'Preston Punters' Internet site. As a consequence the site is no longer dedicated to street based sex work and the site is almost exclusively concerned with escort services and massage parlours.

## **Appendix H - Papers on Prostitution ‘Quotes’**

### **From Home Secretary David Blunkett (Paying the Price: a consultation paper on prostitution July 2004)**

Prostitution can have devastating consequences for the individuals involved and for the wider community. It involves the abuse of children and the serious exploitation of adults – many of whom are trafficked into and around the UK for this purpose. It has close links with problematic drug use and, increasingly, with transnational and organised crime.

Many of the laws relating to prostitution are outdated, confusing and ineffective.

### **Other quotes from ‘Paying the Price’**

Prostitution is not illegal. However, activities associated with it, including soliciting, advertising using cards in telephone boxes and kerb crawling, are criminal offences.

Approaches to prostitution have tended to focus on the activities of the prostitute rather than those of the user. While the existence of commercial sexual transactions is generally accepted and even tolerated in certain circumstances, the prostitute is a commonly pilloried figure. This is often based on a general assumption that those involved are in control of their situation. However, the evidence is clear that this can be far from true. High levels of childhood abuse, homelessness, problematic drug use and poverty experienced by those involved strongly suggest survival to be the overriding motivation.

### **ACPO’s Policy, Strategy and Operational Guidelines for dealing with exploitation and abuse through prostitution**

The policing of prostitution currently operates in a national policy vacuum.

Although sensitive to the arguments in favour of “zones of toleration”, ultimately this policy and strategy does not support their introduction. Clearly if there is a change in the law which permits their introduction, then as always the police service will enforce the legislation of the day. However, at this stage their introduction is not supported. The first reason is that a change in the law would be necessary for such zones to operate lawfully. Chief constables do not currently possess the discretion as a matter of policy to dispense with an act of Parliament. The second reason is that the evidence that such zones work successfully in other jurisdictions is equivocal. Not only do such zones permit the continued exploitation of people through prostitution, there is evidence that illegal prostitution has been encouraged alongside the managed examples

## **Agency and Officer Information**

- This problem solving initiative was initially developed and implemented by two Community Beat Managers in Preston. It was then adopted by the Police Division as the sole initiative to tackle street prostitution in the city of Preston, Central Division.
- The two Community Beat Managers responsible for the project have considerable problem oriented policing experience and have previously been Goldstein finalists. Lancashire Constabulary provides support and guidance in all problem-solving initiatives and is committed to Problem Oriented Policing.
- Officers are encouraged to undertake problem-solving initiatives to tackle medium to long-term problems. There are no additional incentives given to officers.
- A number of resources and guidelines were used during the management of this project including:
  - 'Operation Kerb' – 2002 Multi-agency POP project
  - Using Analysis for Problem-Solving – COPS Guide
  - Become a Problem-Solving Analyst – Ronald V Clarke & John Eck
  - [www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits)
  - [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org)
- No problems or issues were identified with the Problem-Solving model.
- The project was implemented and managed by two Community Beat Managers in partnership with Streetlink as part of their general duties. \$2500.00 was received from the Preston Community Safety Partnership to fund the Ethical Condom Disposal Scheme. There were no other financial resources incurred.
- Project Contact Person:

PC 1972 Gareth Pearson  
PC 1842 Steve Armes  
Lancashire Constabulary  
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