

AVAILABILITY: the local connection



Partnership working to tackle illegal drug activity

Report of
the Conference
September 2001

**LONDON
DRUG
POLICY
FORUM**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The London Drug Policy Forum would like to thank all the speakers who addressed the conference:

Rt Hon Paul Boateng MP; Derek Bradon; Robin Burgess; Michelle Collins; Martin Davis; Niamh Cullen; Andy Hayman; Judith Lempriere; Tiggey May; Paul Reid; Frank Sole; Mike Stewart and Kathy White.

The Forum would also like to thank Tim Rathbone MP and James Naughtie who chaired the day's proceedings.

The Forum would also like to acknowledge, with many thanks, all those who helped to organise the conference, notably David MacKintosh, Policy Adviser and Tiffany Peen, Assistant Adviser to the London Drug Policy Forum. We must also thank Golda Behr, City of London DAT Co-ordinator, Martin Fanner and Jim Brightwell from the Metropolitan Police and Peter Jackson of the City of London Police.

The views expressed by the speakers at this conference are not necessarily those of the London Drug Policy Forum or the Corporation of London.

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FOREWORD

This year was a landmark for the London Drug Policy Forum, Availability: The Local Connection being our 10th Annual Conference. The last decade has seen the LDPF establish a reputation for hosting and organising conferences whose themes have been at the leading edge of policy or, indeed, have helped set the agenda. LDPF conferences and related publications have helped inform policy development while also providing support to those working at the "coalface".

Availability: The Local Connection has continued that tradition, bridging the gap between the headlines in the press concerning multi-million pound seizures of drugs and the actions that can effectively be taken at a local level to restrict drug markets and stop the damage they do to the fabric of our communities.

Being an independent body the LDPF is able to bring together experts to critically assess the work of Government and its agencies across the drugs field, as well as senior Government figures and those responsible for enacting policy. This Conference highlighted much of the good work being carried out to reduce the damage drug dealing does to our citizens and our communities. I was particularly pleased to hear the Minister forcefully reiterate the Government's commitment to tackling this issue.

The Conference also revealed areas where more action needs to be taken and highlighted that our responses to this problem need to be rooted in sound research

and evidence. There were also examples of projects that had valuable lessons for others tackling this issue.

A key lesson of the day was that no one agency can, or should, be expected to tackle drug markets and their consequences. There was recognition of the broad range of factors that can impact on drug markets and an acknowledgement of the need to look beyond local boundaries.

Most importantly I think the conference helped to redress the sense that drug dealing and its associated problems are so vast that we are powerless to counter them.

The London Drug Policy Forum, its members and partners, will be working hard to show that we can and must reduce the damage the availability of drugs does to our communities.

I must record my thanks to all those who contributed to the conference and I trust you will find this report useful.



Peter P Rigby CBE JP

Chairman of the London Drug Policy Forum

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE

Councilman Rigby opened the conference by extending a warm welcome on behalf of both the London Drug Policy Forum and the Corporation of London. He introduced the theme of the conference: how agencies can work in partnership to control the availability of illegal drugs in the Capital. Mr Rigby invited Tim Rathbone, former Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Drugs Misuse Committee, to chair the morning's session.

Mr Rathbone announced that the conference would hear from a wide range of speakers reflecting many of those involved in stifling the availability of illegal drugs. The morning featured presentations from: Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, the police service at a national and metropolitan level, central government

and the research community. It included a key note address from Paul Boateng, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, with responsibility for HM Customs and Excise.

Mr Rathbone went on to outline the conference's proceedings. Following the morning speeches, the afternoon would feature presentations on a range of issues designed to aid delegates' work in partnership to tackle the availability of drugs in London. The presentations included practical examples of local initiatives and sources of information and support.

The conference concluded with an extended plenary session chaired by James Naughtie which highlighted the key issues of the day.



Drug trafficking in London and the UK

Derek Bradon, Head of drug investigation strategy for HM Customs and Excise, gave a presentation on the current trafficking situation. He presented the three strategic aims of the customs service's law enforcement response to drug trafficking:

Focus resources – an emphasis on Class A drugs

Increased effectiveness – aiming for more seizures

Disruption of trafficking, money and the organisations controlling the trafficking of drugs

Mr Bradon set out the main working principles of the Customs and Excise approach to drug trafficking:

- ◆ **Partnership approach – Customs works with the National Crime Squad, police services and any other relevant agencies**
- ◆ **End to end approach – tackling drug trafficking at every point from production to sale**
- ◆ **International approach – close co-operation with Customs and police across the globe**

IMPORTATION ROUTES

Mr Bradon went on to provide an overview of the main trafficking routes for the two principal Class A drugs that are targeted, heroin and cocaine.

The principal heroin trafficking routes start in Pakistan

or Afghanistan, where most of the heroin reaching the UK is produced. It is possible that the international response to the terrorist attacks on America on 11th September will have a significant impact on this production. From these countries, heroin is typically transported via Turkey then either through the Balkans or the central Asian republics into Europe. Up to this point, the heroin is transported in bulk. It is then broken down into smaller quantities before being smuggled into the UK.

The cocaine smuggled into the UK comes principally from Columbia with smaller amounts from Bolivia. Two main trafficking routes are used. The first involves cocaine being taken directly to Spain and then the Netherlands before being broken down into smaller quantities and being smuggled into the UK.

The second route involves the cocaine being transported on fast boats to the Caribbean from where it is often smuggled directly into the UK. Much of this importation is done by human 'mules' who smuggle cocaine by swallowing packages of the drug. This is a very dangerous method of smuggling. It is also very common and difficult to detect, owing to the large numbers of individuals now becoming involved. The economic situation in the Caribbean means that many people are being persuaded to smuggle cocaine in this way in return only for payment of their flight ticket. They hope to make a more prosperous life in the UK if they succeed in getting through customs.

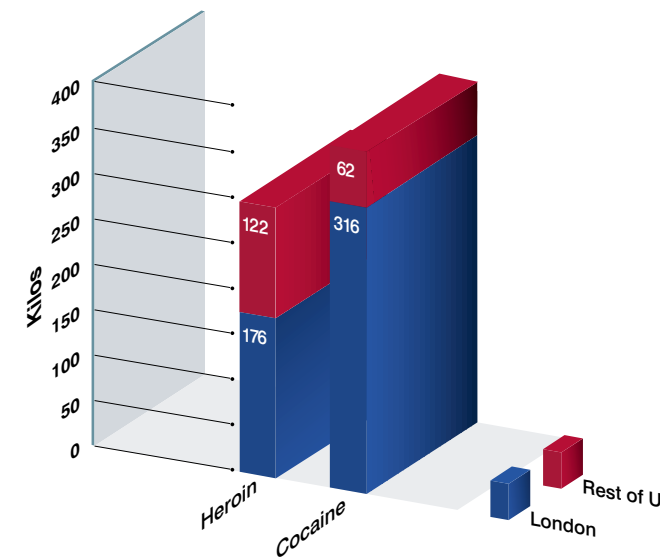
Other methods of smuggling drugs include concealing them in fruit such as avocados, car wheels and a variety of other places.

Crack is not directly imported into the UK, it is 'washed up' from cocaine powder after arrival.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LONDON IN DRUG TRAFFICKING

London is the focal point for distribution of drugs throughout the UK and Eire. Most Class A drugs come via the Capital although some drugs are imported directly into other cities, Manchester and Liverpool in particular. Recent seizures by HM Customs vividly demonstrate this point:

Mr Bradon expounded on why London was an attractive hub for those involved in drug trafficking:



HM Customs Drug seizures from investigations April – July 2001

◆ **Geography** – London has its own port and several airports, it is also close to the South Coast, giving a range of importation opportunities

◆ **Diversity** – the diversity of communities living in London means that there are potential contact points with a very large number of countries

◆ **Employment** – there are large numbers of people willing to take advantage of the opportunity to earn money from drug trafficking

◆ **Money** – there is a great deal of legitimate money which affords unscrupulous wealthy people in the capital to make illegitimate profits from trafficking

◆ **Transport** – London is the hub of an extensive rail and road network which facilitates distribution of drugs throughout the country

He concluded by highlighting one of the most pernicious consequences of London being the importation point for such large quantities of Class A drugs – the relationship between drugs and violent crime. Since 1997 there have been eleven murders of Turkish people in the Capital, most linked to drug dealing. In the year from July 2000 to June 2001, in the London borough of Lambeth alone, there were 408 firearm incidents, the majority again being related to drug dealing.

Heroin trafficking routes



Cocaine trafficking routes



Amphetamine routes



Drug distribution in the United Kingdom



The drugs business

Frank Sole, Acting Chief Detective Superintendent in the National Crime Squad, gave a presentation which examined drug trafficking as a national and international business.

Mr Sole started by setting out the 'business model' of drug dealing, showing why it was attractive to unscrupulous individuals. He identified six key factors:

- ◆ **Set up costs** – these are minimal
- ◆ **Employees** – almost all employees work on a casual basis and recruitment is usually straightforward
- ◆ **Business contacts** – these are essential and are, for some, the most difficult part of the process of setting up as a drug dealer
- ◆ **Profits** – these can be potentially huge with even a small time dealer making a 200% gain on crack cocaine
- ◆ **Tax liability** – profits are maximised through the fact that no taxes are paid
- ◆ **Risks** – risks of imprisonment and violence from other dealers can be very high, but the more successful dealers can delegate many of these risks

The fact that a small quantity of drugs is very valuable and can be very easily transported, also assists the dealers. A kilo of heroin costs £500 at source in Afghanistan and is sold for £15,000 wholesale in the UK. Once divided up, that kilo can be sold for between £60,000 – £85,000 on the streets.

Mr Sole indicated the scale of the international drug trafficking problem. He stated that globally more money is spent on illicit drugs than on food and that it is estimated that between \$3-5 trillion dollars of funds belonging to trans-national criminal organisations are hidden in off-shore banking havens.

Drug trafficking is the main business of the National Crime Squad representing 64% of all its operations. Mr Sole presented the main methods the NCS uses to tackle drug trafficking:

- ◆ **Targeting drug transit routes, pre-cursor chemicals, and money laundering**

- ◆ **Using hi-tech approaches**
- ◆ **Promoting better international co-operation, enforcement and use of banking regulations**
- ◆ **Working with the Government to support their attempts to establish crop-replacement programmes and give overseas aid, to reduce the amount of illegal drugs produced by poor countries.**

Focusing on money laundering is a particularly fruitful approach with 80% of investigations resulting from disclosures by financial institutions. A further weapon against drug trafficking will be available in 2002 when the national asset recovery agency (CARA) comes on line. The Director of CARA will be at the heart of promoting the use of financial investigation and asset recovery as basic tools both for crime reduction and increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system.

IN THE YEAR 2000/2001, THE NCS SUCCEEDED IN:

Dismantling or disrupting 206 drug organisations

Making 621 arrests for drug trafficking offences

Seizing £262 million worth of drugs

Tracing £25 million of criminal assets

Seizing 1390 kilos cocaine

Seizing 768 kilos heroin

Seizing one million ecstasy tablets

Mr Sole concluded by stating that it is in all our interests to keep the bad money generated by drug trafficking away from the legitimate wealth of the City of London.

Tackling availability – the London Perspective

Andy Hayman, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, from the Metropolitan Police Service's Drugs Directorate, gave a presentation on tackling the availability of illegal drugs in London.

A QUESTION OF RESOURCES

Mr Hayman started by stating that enforcement activities against drug trafficking and dealing are resource intensive. The Metropolitan Police has to distribute resources through a wide range of anti-drugs initiatives. It is important to balance the public reassurance which comes through high profile uniformed activities, with school-based education work, and partnership work on such initiatives as arrest referral schemes, as well as directing resources against drug dealing.

A RANGE OF INITIATIVES

Mr Hayman gave brief details of four initiatives that the Metropolitan Police had launched against drug dealing in recent years.

OPERATION WELWYN – this operation had been continuous in the Kings Cross area for the last five years, its objectives and methods had developed over that period to tackle changing needs. Operation Welwyn is led by the Drug Action Team and targets drug and sex markets in the local area.

OPERATION CRACKDOWN – this operation focuses on the supply of class A drugs, mainly heroin and cocaine, and is intelligence-led. Three or four waves of intensive enforcement activities, co-ordinated across London, take place every year. These surges of activity allow intervals for intelligence gathering. The last wave of operations in February-March 2001 resulted in 241 raids and 401 arrests and the recovery of drugs valued at £8.9 million.



RAT ON A RAT – this is an advertising campaign designed to support Operation Crackdown. It aims to encourage local communities to phone in information on local drug dealing. It is the most successful advertising campaign ever run by the Metropolitan Police Service. In the two month period January-February 2001, this campaign took 2425 calls which resulted in 679 raids, 1297 arrests and the recovery of £2.3 million worth of drugs.

OPERATION TRIDENT – this operation was launched in July 2000 and aims to reduce firearm violence within Black communities, a large proportion of which is drug-related. It has three elements:

- ◆ **Proactive intelligence-led operations**
- ◆ **Reactive investigations into firearm incidents**
- ◆ **Working with communities and partners to divert young people from this form of crime**

Although all these operations have been successful at disrupting drug dealing and arresting drug dealers, the experience of the Police Service and independent research is that drug dealing activities often resume very promptly.

THE FUTURE

The Deputy Assistant Commissioner concluded by looking towards the future. In his view, we are clearer on how to tackle international trafficking and low level dealing but have not yet developed effective ways of tackling middle markets. Mr Hayman saw this as the next big challenge for law enforcement and stated that we needed to understand better how middle markets operate. He ended by posing four key questions for discussion:

- Q **Is there a need for a London-wide drug squad?**
- Q **How can Drug Action Teams influence enforcement?**
- Q **How can Drug Action Teams and borough-based police divisions operate across boundaries?**
- Q **Do we have the research base to monitor progress?**

Making partnership a reality

Judith Lempriere, the head of the treatment, young people and local delivery unit of the Home Office's Drug Strategy Directorate, delivered a speech on making partnerships work at a local level.

Ms Lempriere started her address by acknowledging that there was a fear amongst many in the drugs field that the re-location of the Anti-Drugs Co-ordination Unit to the Home Office would mean that undue emphasis was placed on the criminal justice elements of the national strategy. She stated that the Directorate was keen that this would not be the case, and that they hoped to be better able to co-ordinate governmental action from their new location.

The Directorate was involved in three main areas of work currently in pursuing the national strategic aim of stifling the availability of illegal drugs.

First, the Directorate was reconsidering the targets it was setting Drug Action Teams and their member agencies in this area. There was an acknowledgment that if targets were slightly wrong, they could significantly disrupt and minimise the effectiveness of activities aimed at reducing drug supply.

Secondly, the Directorate had identified that there was a lack of substantive work being undertaken against middle markets, and had made the development of effective strategies in this area a priority.

Thirdly, it was keen to support the fledgling partnerships between DATs and Crime and Disorder partnerships which had been fostered by the launch of the Communities against drugs initiative.

It was on this area of the Directorate's work that Ms Lempriere focused her speech. The team were actively looking at the overlaps between different multi-agency partnerships – including DATs, Youth Offending Teams and, Crime and disorder reduction partnerships – in order to reduce any duplication of work and streamline the effectiveness of all such groups.

Ms Lempriere also acknowledged that there were a wide range of government bodies involved in directing the work of, and supporting different local partnerships. These bodies included the Drug Prevention and Advisory Service, Regional Crime Directors, the National Treatment Agency, the Youth Justice Board, and Government Offices in the Regions. The Directorate was leading work to develop

a government drug website to unify the central approach and provided helpful support to DATs and other partnerships.

Ms Lempriere highlighted four key issues which the Directorate regarded as the most important ones for ensuring effective partnerships:

ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms Lempriere stated that internal and external accountability were both important issues. Partnerships needed to be accountable internally to their member agencies, and externally to government and other funders because they were overseeing the spending of large amounts of public monies.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Directorate was actively engaged in finding new ways of supporting partnerships and getting them working effectively without overloading them. Government was looking to take on more of the duties of getting information where it is centrally available, to inform the work of Drug Action Teams. At present, DATs were often asked to get data which other government departments were already requesting from local agencies. In particular, the Directorate was reviewing the template process by which DATs reported on their work annually to make it more streamlined and user friendly.

MINIMISING BURDENS

Ms Lempriere was aware of the demands placed on Drug Action Teams and here again the Directorate was working hard to enable DATs to spend more time dedicated to local action.

CO-ORDINATION

She concluded by stating that she hoped that the Directorate's work aimed at improving co-ordination at a central level would be reflected in improved co-ordination between different partnership groups locally.



Keynote ministerial address

Paul Boateng, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, gave the keynote ministerial address. He started by stating that as a former minister for law and order policy, with responsibility for the police, and now as a finance minister, with responsibility for Customs in the UK, he was only too well aware of the threat that illegal drug abuse posed and the challenge that we faced in tackling it.

Mr Boateng affirmed the Government's commitment to the four pronged national anti-drug strategy.

He listed a number of Government initiatives addressing each area of the strategy before focusing on the Communities Against Drugs initiative launched by the Chancellor in the 2001 budget.

This initiative, which involves £220 million over the next three years, recognises that drug abuse often reflects and reinforces the other problems faced in deprived neighbourhoods – for instance:

- ◆ **High rates of truancy and few activities to keep young people occupied**
- ◆ **A culture of hostility towards the police in some areas and a perceived lack of police presence**
- ◆ **Poor physical design of housing estates and public areas, providing easy opportunity for crime and for drugs dealers to operate**
- ◆ **Highly mobile populations leading to high turn over of tenancies and no stable community support**

It is designed to complement a range of other initiatives including action on jobs, housing, education, crime and health, many of which also form a core part of the Government's neighbourhood renewal strategy plan 'A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal', published in January 2001.



Communities Against Drugs monies will, within the context of partnership working, be used to:

- ◆ **Disrupt drug markets – by, for instance, ensuring that police officers can maintain a visible presence in drugs hot spots, by installing more CCTV and better physical estate security**
- ◆ **Tackle drug-related crime – using mobile police stations to increase police accessibility; introducing neighbourhood wardens; and establishing 'youth inclusion' schemes to divert young people away from drugs and crime**
- ◆ **Strengthen communities' ability to deal with the drug abuse by, for instance, providing extra housing managers, and parents' and residents' support groups**

The minister stressed that the key point about this initiative is that the strategy for using the money will be agreed locally, between the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the local police commander and the local Drug Action Team. The local strategy will need to take account not only of the importance of

drugs in fueling crime, but also the effects that drugs have on communities themselves.

The funding provided in this way is intended, not only to provide ready access to the resources necessary to tackle these problems, but to strengthen the capacity for joint working between the agencies and partnerships involved. Therefore, subject to delivering the outcomes intended, the Government has made it clear that spending decisions will be left to local judgment about what will work best locally. The Government will provide 'best practice' support and guidance, but recognises that local communities, and the agencies working with them, are best placed to judge what is needed locally.

The minister concluded by stating that in his view, the different agencies represented at the conference, by effectively, even imaginatively, working together could achieve real improvement in the lives of all those afflicted by drugs and drug dealing. He hoped that 'Communities Against Drugs' would, alongside other initiatives, help deepen partnership working towards the Government's shared goal of freeing communities from the blight of drug abuse and its consequences.

Tackling drugs to build a better Britain

Young People – to help young people resist drug misuse in order to achieve their full potential in society

Communities – to protect our communities from drug-related anti-social and criminal behaviour

Treatment – to enable people with drug problems to overcome them and live healthy and crime-free lives

Availability – to stifle the availability of illegal drugs on our streets



Tackling drug markets – applying a partnership approach in practice

Robin Burgess, the policy lead on communities and availability from the Drugs Strategy Directorate in the Home Office, started his presentation by stating that a key element of the 4th aim of the Government's drug strategy is to disrupt the supply of drugs. The targets set in the strategy emphasise two key goals of reducing street level dealing and limiting the damage done to communities by drug dealing.

Mr Burgess outlined four key challenges:

- ◆ The need to understand and to develop responses to middle market suppliers (handling 1-5 kilos)
- ◆ The need to develop new definitions and measures of success
- ◆ The need to improve the engagement of the general public in helping tackle supply
- ◆ The need to develop partnership approaches to supply

He set out the new approach detailed in the Communities Against Drugs strategy, which is characterised by three key elements:

- ◆ Tackling drug availability through work which is owned locally and directed strategically, and which aims both to reduce demand and control supply
- ◆ Creating resilient communities that can resist drugs
- ◆ Working through community partnerships involving key local agencies

These key local agencies are crime and disorder reduction partnerships, the police, Drug Action Teams (DATs) and community groups. There is considerable funding available for initiatives to disrupt drug supply including £220 million over the next three years via crime and disorder reduction partnerships, plus £15 million over 3 years for DAT-led community work.

The Drug Strategy Directorate has set out four key principles to guide this work which should be:

- ◆ Planned and led by partnerships – tackling supply is not just a police matter
- ◆ Based on a thorough understanding of the local market

- ◆ Linked to broader social programmes to tackle deprivation

- ◆ Incorporating a range of approaches – both enforcement and demand reduction activities

The Directorate recommends that local areas first create a partnership management group, which:

- ◆ Organises action based on need
- ◆ Provides reports and oversees finances and planning
- ◆ Involves key stakeholders
- ◆ Knows the limits of intelligence sharing
- ◆ Engages the community and stimulates intelligence and confidence
- ◆ Maps the local market using composite data sources

The unit also recommends that a problem-solving approach is adopted which asks a series of key questions. Many of these are linked to understanding local drug markets, an issue that is explored further in the next presentation. The key questions are:

- Q What type of market is there?
- Q What sustains and supports the market? (e.g. sex market, the handling of stolen goods)
- Q What action can tackle these?
- Q What quality of intelligence is there?
- Q What resources and powers are available to take action?
- Q How can this action be followed up?

Mr Burgess set out the Directorate's work responding to the key challenge of developing new definitions and measures of success. Measuring progress involves applying the right indicators to the right action. Numbers of seizures and arrests are often not reliable indicators in themselves. A better set of indicators would include:

- ◆ Asking whether local people think drug supply has reduced
- ◆ Seeing whether related problems (sex markets, discarded needles etc.) have improved
- ◆ Asking local drug users about changes
- ◆ Monitoring changes in external perceptions (from local media etc.)

- ◆ Improvements in partnership working

- ◆ Indicators of disruption

Mr Burgess concluded by informing the conference that an experimental pilot project designed to tackle middle markets is currently under way in the West Midlands. Funded from the Confiscated Assets Fund, the project involves four police service areas and aims to develop models of good practice based on existing intelligence information.

Disrupting local drug markets

Tiggey May, research fellow at the Criminal Policy Research Unit at South Bank University, reported on a study that she had undertaken into a number of drug markets¹. Ms May stressed the importance of understanding local markets before undertaking action to disrupt them.

She described one of the drug markets studied which had been anonymised as 'Chede'. Chede was a short distance from the centre of a city characterised by being ethnically diverse and having high unemployment rates. The area had a wider reputation as a place where sex and drugs could be bought. Although the market had previously been 'open', it was now closed – only known drug users, or those vouched for by known users, were able to buy drugs there.

The drug market operated within a small, self-contained geographical area. The built environment lent itself to drug dealing, providing easy concealment. The drug market was described by users and dealers as stable. The users felt that the market was underpinned by the threat of violence, although actual incidents of violence were rare. The distribution system and processes involved a typical pyramid with a small number of dealers controlling a larger number of 'runners' or street level dealers. Most dealers sold both heroin and crack cocaine. Almost all transactions were arranged by mobile phone with collection of money and delivery of drugs taking place at a number of pre-arranged locations. Safe houses, often belonging to pensioners, were used to hide drugs within the local area. Competition between dealers was considered unacceptable and was usually resolved by violence.

Interviews with local dealers revealed that all had been selling drugs for at least seven years and none were

¹May, Edmunds & Hough Street Business: The links between sex and drug markets Police Research Series Paper 118 Home Office 2000



problematic drug users. They all owned at least one weapon and were earning an average of £7,000 per week.

The market suffered from a reactive style of policing, both resources and morale were low. Although the police did mount test purchase operations, none of those selling drugs were concerned about police activity. Police officers and dealers shared the view that enforcement against those operating above street level was ineffectual.

The level of activity at Chede drug market was exacerbated by the lack of local appropriate drug services. Only one agency operated and capacity was restricted through lack of space. Access to methadone prescriptions was limited and no specific services were offered to crack cocaine users.

The research study produced two sets of recommendations to tackle this drug market, one aimed at policing, the other at treatment provision.

POLICING RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Police managers need to 'keep in touch' with operational officers
- ◆ Drug enforcement activities should be intelligence-led
- ◆ It is effective to task informants to gain specific information
- ◆ Proactive drug units can be more effective
- ◆ Effective use can be made of community police officers

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ It is vital to provide properly resourced services that meet needs of local drug market
- ◆ Treatment should be responsive to individual needs
- ◆ The criminal justice system can serve as a bridge to treatment, and can also provide invaluable data on changing trends
- ◆ Referral schemes can work but they need to be monitored closely – it is important to give feedback to officers
- ◆ Drug Action Teams and police managers need to work together

Communities against drugs toolkit

Mike Stewart, Director of the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, gave a presentation on the 'Communities against drugs toolkit'², part of a series of Home Office Internet-based resources. The website went online in March 2001 and contains the following key components:

- ◆ Policy context
- ◆ Facts and figures
- ◆ Core information about drugs and crime
- ◆ Ideas for developing local solutions
- ◆ Evidence based actions
- ◆ Ideas for planning and tracking
- ◆ Where to look for further information and resources

Delegates were encouraged to log on to the website and send feedback. The website is intended to be a work in progress, and will be continuously up-dated to reflect new developments in policy and practice. The website links to other policy areas including the following:

- ◆ Employment – including progress2work (a new £40m programme)
- ◆ Regeneration – particularly the neighbourhood renewal programme
- ◆ Housing – allocation and management
- ◆ Health – Health Action Zones
- ◆ Education – Education Action Zones
- ◆ Employers – workplace drug policies

Links with other policy areas are aimed to promote the 'joined up thinking' approach, Mr Stewart concluded by saying that although policing was often perceived simply in terms of its control function it had a vital role to play as a key element of partnership approaches to regeneration and area management.



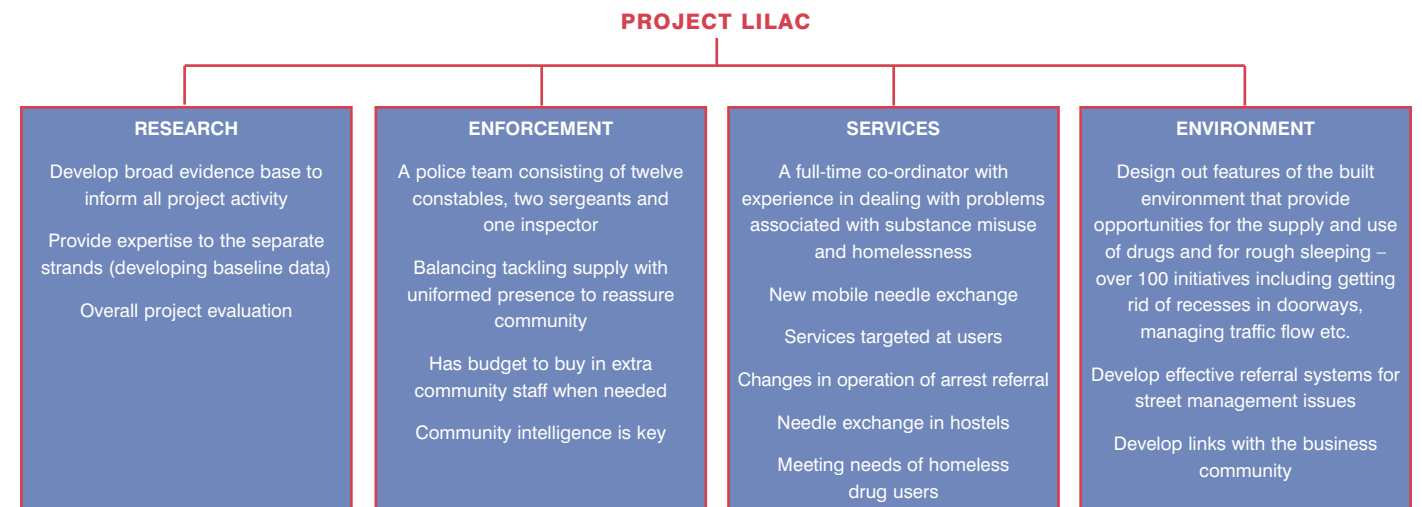
Project Lilac

Inspector Michelle Collins and Niamh Cullen gave a joint presentation on Project Lilac which was set up to develop a multi-agency approach to tackle the illicit drugs market centred around Centrepoint and the Charing Cross Road area of central London.

The project operates a four strand approach with enforcement, treatment services, research, and environment being regarded as equally important. The aims of the project were to:

- ◆ Increase information and understanding of drug market
- ◆ Reduce visible drug dealing
- ◆ Improve the health of drug users
- ◆ Address issues of rough sleeping
- ◆ Improve the environment
- ◆ Enhance cross-border partnership activity

The diagram below details the main initiatives undertaken under each strand:



The presenters identified the key challenges which this multi-agency project had had to tackle:

- ◆ Understanding of roles in other agencies
- ◆ Building trust
- ◆ Cross borough issues
- ◆ Local needs versus directions from the centre
- ◆ Organisational cultures
- ◆ Information exchange
- ◆ Liaison between criminal justice agencies – sentencing can conflict with enforcement

The project responded to these challenges by developing new ways of working together. The lessons learnt to date include the following:

To kickstart information sharing, it can be useful to start with depersonalised data so that confidentiality is not compromised. In this project, such data proved useful for planning and helped to identify poor prescribing practice.

The project worked hard at engaging with local communities and ensured that all agencies were involved in making community presentations. It was vital to develop a media strategy to make sure that misinformation in the press did not undermine community support.

The issue of engaging with courts to ensure that sentencing practice does not conflict with enforcement activity has been flagged as an area needing attention.

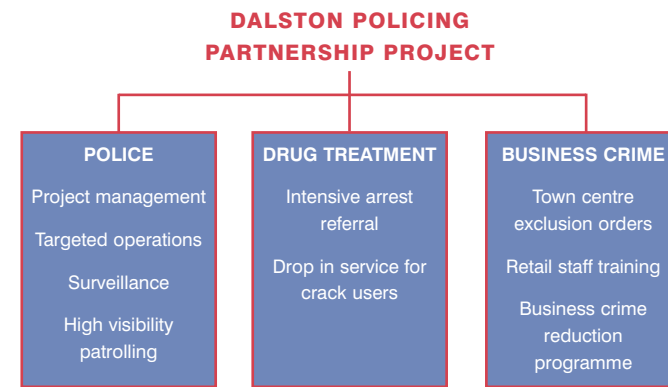
Multi-agency drugs reduction in Hackney

Martin Davis, acting Assistant Director in the London Borough of Hackney, presented a model of partnership work adopted in that borough to tackle drug dealing. The Hackney approach is based on including a very wide group of agencies and ensuring that strategic direction, management of projects and tactical approaches are all co-ordinated. The involvement of the voluntary and community sector was critical in addition to the Drug Action Team, local authority community safety unit and the police.

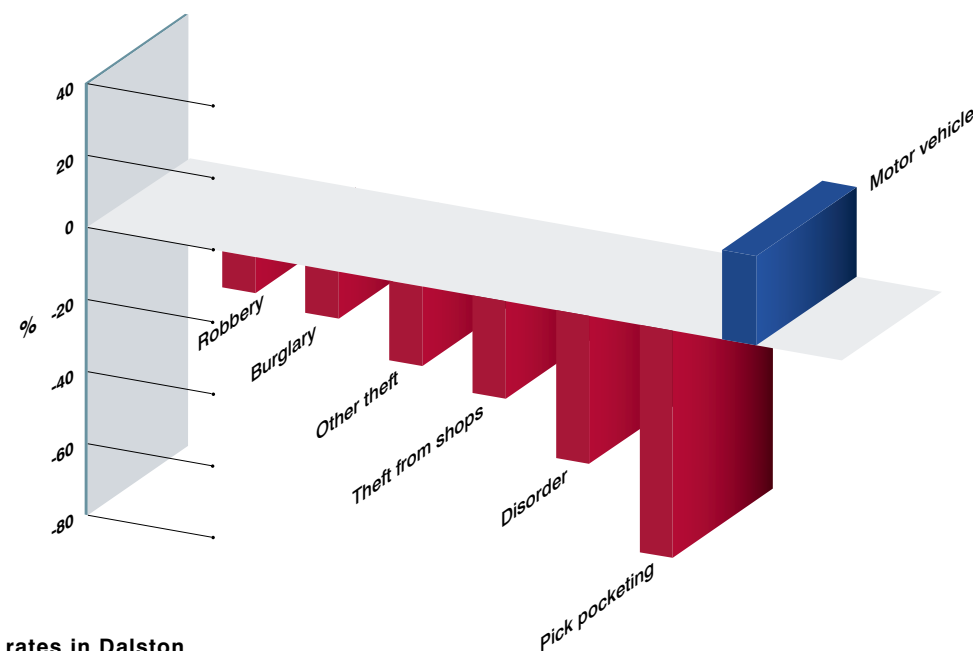
Mr Davis presented the work of the Dalston Policing Partnership Project (DP3) which was established in 1999 to:

- ◆ Reduce drugs and collateral crime in the Dalston 'hotspot'
- ◆ Develop a multi-agency project which enables targeted policing to be supported by the skills and resources of partner organisations
- ◆ Develop a system to deliver sustainable services
- ◆ Reduce disorder
- ◆ Reduce the fear of crime

He discussed the activities which had taken place in three main areas of operation:



The presentation concluded with the outcomes of this intervention measure to date. In addition to the fear of crime being reduced and the confidence of residents and shopkeepers increased, there was an overall reduction in recorded crime of 8%. Changes in the commission of different categories of offences are shown below:



Changes in recorded crime rates in Dalston

Community action in Brixton

Kathy White, Co-Chair of the Brixton Area Forum, and Paul Reid of Lambeth Council, gave a presentation on a campaign by local residents to challenge drug dealing within their local community.

The Brixton Area Forum is an unincorporated voluntary organisation comprised of local residents and stakeholders in local agencies. The forum has 1,200 members and is split into eleven groups divided by locality and theme. Local residents used the vehicle of the forum to channel their anger and concern at a drug-related shooting which took place at a local children's play area. They launched an anti-drugs campaign with the key message:

'No room for crack and smack in Brixton'

Residents and council officers in partnership with the Community Drug Project and London Print Work Trust developed a project team which set up an 08000 automated telephone hotline which routed callers to appropriate helping agencies. Callers were directed in three main directions:

- ◆ The local authority environment department for such issues as removing discarded needles and providing better streetlighting
- ◆ The Community Drug Project for drug users or their families in search of treatment or support
- ◆ Crime stoppers for those wishing to provide anonymous information about drug dealers

They also launched campaign material which advertised on buses, tube escalators, poster sites and the town hall amongst others.

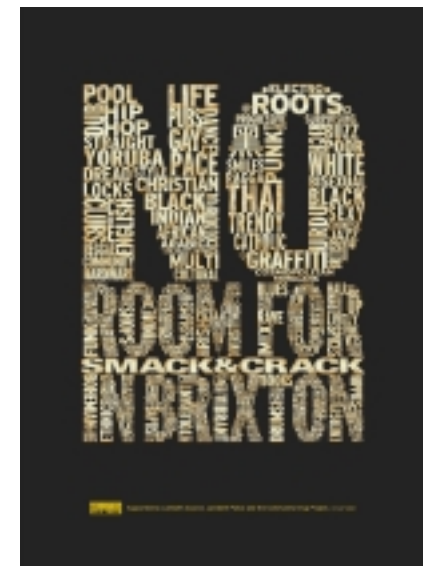
To date the campaign has been very successful at raising awareness of the issue and building the confidence of the community to respond to local drug agency. A number of concrete goals had been achieved, the Forum had:

- ◆ Mobilised community action
- ◆ Developed positive working relationships amongst partner agencies
- ◆ Succeeded in getting Lambeth police to identify drug issues as a local priority

The Forum has also learnt a number of valuable lessons which they felt able to pass on to other

groups wishing to mobilise community action. These included:

- ◆ Be aware of potential media interest and develop a media strategy which identifies the key messages you want to get across
 - ◆ Residents may feel vulnerable and at risk of reprisals from local drug dealers, support is very important
 - ◆ Raising awareness is a positive first step, but it is important to develop a programme of action to maintain momentum, Phase 2 of the work in Brixton will be a call to action
 - ◆ Action needs to be taken on a number of fronts and needs to be co-ordinated. Drug related concerns in Brixton include street crime, prostitution, deprivation and environmental quality
- In conclusion, the presenters felt that the primary success of their work had been to act on, and give voice to, the views of the 'silent majority'. The full involvement of local communities was vital to any sustained progress in reducing the availability of drugs in any local area.



The role of technology in tackling drug supply

Trevor Sleet of the Operational Technical Support Unit of the Metropolitan Police gave a presentation on the uses and limitations of technology in tackling drug supply. He gave a number of examples including how the overt use of CCTV systems could relocate drug dealing to areas where it could be observed and controlled by covert security systems. He made the point that all those who were preparing funding bids which included technological approaches such as CCTV, should ensure that maintenance, as well as capital, costs were included.

Mr Sleet concluded by stressing that expert advice on using technology was always available via local police services.

The main themes of the conference emerged from three plenary sessions which took place throughout the day. Delegates identified six main concerns in the battle to stifle the availability of illegal drugs:

THE NEED TO TACKLE MIDDLE MARKETS

There was a general consensus throughout the conference that nationally there was a need for greater understanding of how middle level dealers operate and that there is a need to develop a range of responses. It was hoped that the large scale pilot in the West Midlands would help inform future developments in this area.

MAKING PARTNERSHIPS WORK ON THE GROUND

There was concern that even as the quality of partnership work improves on an operational level, the proliferation of co-ordinating bodies could lead to duplication of efforts and a loss of impetus. There were particular London issues relating to work across DAT and borough boundaries. There is a need for a strategic direction in London and it is clear that the Drug Prevention Advisory Service, the London Drug Policy Forum and the Greater London Authority should work closely together to help tackle these problems.

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

The Brixton Area Forum presentation was enthusiastically received by those who had been working hard to engage with local communities. The lessons learnt by the Forum and by Project Lilac highlighted the importance of getting local communities involved at an early stage of any initiatives. The Government's Communities Against Drugs initiative was helpful in the way it pressed for community involvement in deciding which initiatives to fund. It was felt vital to be open and honest with community representatives as to how much input and control they could have on any given piece of work.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE MEDIA STRATEGY

If communities are to be engaged with successfully, an effective media strategy is vital. Participating agencies will need to develop a clear message which they present repeatedly and be ready to respond to negative publicity which may focus on such issues as the displacement of drug dealing to neighbouring areas. Direct communication with local communities will also be important.

SETTING HELPFUL TARGETS

There was a consensus amongst presenters and delegates that the current targets in the national strategy were not particularly helpful and could easily be distorted by one large operation. It was agreed that the current exercise to produce more meaningful targets was of considerable priority.

FLEXIBILITY IN RESPONDING TO CHANGING PROBLEMS

The conference heard repeatedly how successful enforcement action against drug supply inevitably displaces drug dealing, both geographically and in terms of methods used. Several delegates stressed the importance of a unified approach that adapts swiftly to changes in the drug market.

Looking ahead

The London Drug Policy Forum is committed to working with all those tackling drug related problems across London. The Forum will actively take the issues raised at this conference and ensure they are fully recognised by the Metropolitan Police, Drug Action Teams and other relevant bodies.

The London Drug Policy Forum believes that tackling drugs is integral to regeneration work and has significant impact across a wide social agenda. The Forum will be leading the way in ensuring that London tackles drugs in a holistic, integrated and effective fashion in the year ahead.

The Rt Hon Paul Boateng MP was appointed Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 11 June 2001. He was previously Minister of State for Home Affairs 1998-2001 and before that Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Health 1997-98. He joined Parliament as Member for Brent South in 1987. His career in Opposition included stints as spokesman for the Treasury and Economic Affairs 1989-92 and the Lord Chancellors Department 1992-97. He also served on the Select Committee for Environment 1987-89. He was educated at Achimota, Accra Academy, Apsley Grammar School, Bristol University and the College of Law. Paul Boateng was born in 1951. He is married and has two sons and three daughters.

Derek Bradon has worked in Customs and Excise for over 30 years, most of which has been spent tackling drugs smuggling. He has worked with the uniformed officers at ports and airports, especially Heathrow. However, the majority of his career has been with the Investigation Service in London where he has held both operational and intelligence commands. He currently is responsible for determining the operational response by Customs and Excise to the challenges presented by drugs traffickers in the 21st century.

Robin Burgess is the policy lead on supply and community issues for the anti-drugs directorate within the Home Office. Previously Robin was regional manager for DPAS in the East Midlands, working part time on policy development of these areas. He wrote a large part of the Crime Reduction web site on drug related crime. Previous work experience includes 15 years with voluntary sector drug services in the Midlands and South Wales. Robin worked in different community bodies and organisations in the drugs, housing and welfare rights fields prior to joining the civil service.

Michelle Collins has been a Police Officer for seven years, and has developed specialisms in diversity and partnership working, this has included 'hate crime' investigations in LB Hounslow, operational police work, Sector Sergeant in Notting Hill and race

relations/community development with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. She joined Project Lilac in August last year and played a key role in setting up the Project.

Niamh Cullen has worked in social work for 15 years, specialising in drugs for the last 10 years. She has worked in a variety of settings ranging from street work to Prison work for both statutory and voluntary sector agencies. During the last 10 years she has developed a particular interest in developing accessible services for rough sleeping drug users. Niamh joined Project Lilac on secondment from BKGW Mental Health Trust in November 2000.

Martin Davis is an acting Assistant Director in the London Borough of Hackney. He is responsible for the management of the Drugs Action Team services and a range of crime reduction and prevention teams – including Youth Offending, Community Safety, CCTV and Emergency Planning, Domestic Violence and Racial Harassment as well as teams delivering community development services. Martin is a community Safety Advisor to the Local Government Association and joint author of the LGA's policy paper on community safety partnerships and drugs action team co-ordination. He is also a technical advisor to Home Office and a member of the Home Office 'Communities Against Drugs' working group.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy Hayman was appointed as Head of the Metropolitan Police Drugs Directorate in November, 1998. He has lead responsibility for all drug policy and strategy for the Metropolitan Police, which includes the development of education, enforcement and prevention strategies. The main achievement of the Directorate during 1999 was the setting up of a drugs arrest referral scheme across London, where drug workers are employed in custody suites in every borough. During the summer of 1999 he led Operation Trident, an initiative to investigate drug-related murders in the capital. He is secretary to the Association of Chief Police Officers Drugs Sub-committee.

Judith Lempriere spent the first part of her career working in personnel/human resource management in local government and the university sector. This included a period working for the London Borough of Hackney and also Oxford University. Judith joined the Cabinet Office in 1990 and in September 2000 she became Deputy Director of UKADCU, taking particular responsibility for strategic planning, co-ordination, communications and local delivery. Following their move to the Home Office in June 2001 her role has changed slightly and she has taken on responsibility for the teams leading on Young People and Treatment, local delivery – including overall responsibility for DPAS, and communications.

Tiggey May is a Research Fellow at South Bank University in the Criminal Policy Research Unit. She has conducted several studies looking at different aspects of drug use. In particular her work has focused on the impact of low level enforcement on drug markets and dealers, sex workers and drug use, interventions in the criminal justice system for drug using offenders, the links between sex markets and drug markets, and the policing of pimps. Her current work is examining the policing of cannabis offences which has been funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

James Naughtie is one of the BBC's best known presenters. He was a political journalist for many years and still writes widely for newspapers and magazines. A former chief political correspondent of *The Guardian*, he has been Sony Radio Personality of the Year, the Laurence Stern Fellow on *The Washington Post* and has been the recipient of many broadcasting awards. He also presents classical music on BBC Radio and television and is host of Radio 4's monthly Bookclub.

Tim Rathbone was the Member of Parliament for Lewes from 1974-1997. He was Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for Health from 1979 -1982 and the Minister for Consumer Affairs from 1982-1983. He was a founder member and chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Drugs Misuse Committee from

1984-1997. He is a trustee of Phoenix House and the Mentor Foundation UK and a Governor of Bancrofts School.

Frank Sole joined the Metropolitan Police Service in 1975 and served on specialist units including a drug squad, fraud squad, 'crack-cocaine squad' and murder squads. In 1997 Frank joined the Regional Crime Squad, which became the National Crime Squad on 1st April 1998. In 2000 he became the Intelligence Support Superintendent and took on the specific responsibility to lead on all matters relating to heroin within the 'drugs portfolio'. Frank is currently the Acting Detective Chief Superintendent for the Eastern Operational Command Unit of the NCS.

Mike Stewart is a co-founder and director of the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI). CESI works with national and local partners to promote social justice and help deliver economic and social inclusion. Mike's particular interest is in helping to connect welfare to work and social policy. He is currently commissioned by the Employment Service to project manage the Progress initiative, testing ways of helping former drug misusers into work and has been helping with the design of the new progress2work programme. He has been a trustee of Cranstoun Drug Services – a national drug service agency for the last ten years.

Kathy White – became actively involved in her local community following the birth of her youngest daughter (who is just under 5 now) when she became aware of the lack of provision compared to when her older children (now young adults) had been born. Through her work with the Tenants Association she became involved in other local groups and initiatives becoming Co-Chair of the Brixton Area Forum (BAF). BAF is about people who come together to promote a positive difference. The 'No Room for Smack & Crack' campaign is one example of this. Kathy is a firm believer in the need to develop grass roots approaches and the benefits of raising community awareness.





The London Drug Policy Forum was established in 1991 to co-ordinate London local authority policy and practice and to encourage joint working. It is funded by the Corporation of London.

For further information please contact our Policy Advisers at: London Drug Policy Forum, Town Clerk's Office, PO Box 270, Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ
Telephone: 020 7332 3483/3084.
Email: david.mackintosh@corpoflondon.gov.uk
Website: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/our_services/social_services/ldpf/london_drug_policy_forum.htm



The Corporation of London is the local authority for the City of London. In addition to the usual services provided by a local authority, such as housing, social services, education and town planning, the Corporation is involved in a wide range of activities extending beyond the boundaries of the Square Mile for the benefit of the nation. The funding and support of the London Drug Policy Forum underlines the Corporation's commitment to the fight against illicit drug abuse in the capital.



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