

**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, DRUG
USE AND DRUG DEALING: THE
CURRENT SITUATION IN SOUTH
YORKSHIRE**

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CONFIDENTIAL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report examines the links between sexual exploitation, drug use and drug dealing in South Yorkshire. It is part of the current national agenda concerning sexual exploitation and prostitution that includes the National Crack Action Plan, High Crack Areas and local crack plans, changing Sexual Offences Legislation, the National Policing Plan, and in terms of child protection Lord Laming's report on the Victoria Climbié Inquiry.
- The most significant change in the last few years in the drug and prostitution scene has been the increase of dependent Class A drug use. The numbers of those defined as pimp/dealers has increased, but the role of the traditional pimp has decreased. The use and availability of crack cocaine has had a huge impact on street sex markets.
- The role of dependent Class A drug use is usually less significant for most young people who are being sexually exploited. However, Class B drugs are often used as part of the grooming process.
- Most of the men in South Yorkshire, who are involved in the sexual exploitation of young people for the purposes of prostitution, are also believed to be involved in drug dealing. They may also be involved in rape, violence, gun crime, robbery and other serious criminal offences.
- Men have different roles within sex and drug markets as drug dealers, pimps, punters, drug users, boyfriends/husbands and sometimes sex workers. Little is known about the situation for sexually exploited boys and young men in the county.
- Prosecutions of men who are sexually exploiting young people are very difficult to obtain, usually because there is a lack of evidence. Some young people become 'willing victims', and do not understand that they are being sexually exploited. Therefore they are reluctant to give statements to the police. The men may also threaten the young person and their family to ensure no formal complaint is made.
- Preventative work is important to educate young people about the issues of drug use and sexual exploitation. This is useful both in terms of preventing young people from becoming perpetrators, as well as victims.
- An outline of the situation regarding sexual exploitation and prostitution in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield is given. There may be a small emerging street scene involving young women in Barnsley. This is currently being

investigated. Doncaster has an active red light area, but the sexual exploitation of young people is quite hidden at present. Rotherham does not have a street scene, but there are a significant number of girls and some boys who are being sexually exploited. Sheffield has an established red light area, and there are also significant numbers of girls and young women who are being sexually exploited, some for the purposes of prostitution.

- Some of the young women who are being sexually exploited are subject to violence, rape, gang rape, kidnap, carrying drugs, dealing drugs, and in situations where firearms are present.
- The views of parents whose children are being sexually exploited are presented. They are often unable to take action against the perpetrators, and do not feel that the statutory agencies are able to respond effectively within existing legislation.
- The issue of ethnicity of the men and the young women is discussed. However, it is important that the issue of sexual exploitation and drugs is not considered a racial issue, as it is the action of a small number of men within much wider communities.
- There is currently little information concerning women and girls who have been trafficked from other countries into South Yorkshire for the purposes of prostitution. But there are known to be a small number of saunas in the county who are using trafficked women and girls from Eastern Europe and Thailand.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Improving intelligence** – Specialist intelligence officers for South Yorkshire Police are required in relation to sexual exploitation. Partner agencies could work directly with the specialist intelligence officers/unit, rather than information go to districts intelligence units. The specialist intelligence officers would also liaise with districts.
- **Children and Young People who go Missing from Home** - There needs to be dedicated personnel to follow up those who go missing from home. Whether there is a necessity for a post to cover each district, or whether one based at Waveney and one at Escafeld would be sufficient needs to be decided.
- **Regular Liaison between Specialist District Personnel** - Regular meetings should take place for specialist staff within the Force to share problems and good practice, as happens with partner agencies.
- **Targeting of Suspects** - There are a number of individuals who are targeting vulnerable young people and women in particularly violent ways. But gathering evidence from victims for sexual or violent offences is very difficult. Building on the intelligence available from all sources by the specialist intelligence officers, packages could then be prepared for the Tasking and Co-ordinating process using the National Intelligence Model, in order to target the perpetrators for whatever offences possible, particularly in relation to supplying Class A drugs.
- **Safety and Respite for Young People and Women** - The viability and criteria of a new unit in South Yorkshire needs to be discussed. This could be a countywide resource.
- **Witness Protection** - If girls or women agree to give evidential statements they, and any family involved, need to be properly supported by the appropriate agencies before, during and after any trial.
- **Service Provision Assessment** - A proper assessment of the service provision for women and girls involved in sexual exploitation and prostitution needs to be carried out, in order to ascertain as to whether there is an adequate range of services available, particularly those who are problematic drug users.
- **Project Funding** - The current funding of some of the projects that play a key role in supporting those who are being sexually exploited is often inadequate. Not only does funding need to be on a longer-term basis but in most cases it needs to be expanded in order to provide the level of support that is required.
- **Referral to Child Protection Units** - Child protection units have a particular role to play in monitoring the numbers of those referred who are at risk, or who are

being sexually exploited. It should be ensured that national guidelines on the criteria for referral and categorising the nature of the risk are followed. The Laming Report makes specific reference to the eligibility criteria of referrals to social services (Laming: 1.14).

- **Education and Training for Staff** - Staff should receive training in relation to drugs and sexual exploitation and be aware of the issues involved. However, this should be made available to all those involved with service provision for young people, not just front line agencies. The Laming Report makes recommendations regarding training and supervision of staff (Laming: 1.58)
- **Improved Information Sharing** – Good practice exists in relation to information sharing by prolific offender projects and sexual exploitation projects, for example. But in order to target pimps/dealers, the range of agencies involved in information sharing needs to be extended. In order to achieve this it is recommended that the police take the lead by providing a standard framework to educate partner agencies about the National Intelligence Model and discuss with them as to how they could fit into that process. Although the Force Intelligence Bureau could advise on the process, it would be down to districts to facilitate and deliver such information sharing sessions with local partner agencies.

1.0 Introduction

This report has been prompted by issues highlighted by the work of a number of agencies, and previous research carried out in the county ('A Strategic Assessment of Crack Cocaine Use and Supply in South Yorkshire', Heal 2002). The links between sexual exploitation – particularly of young people - drug use and drug dealing needed further investigation, as it appears that in a significant number of cases they are inextricably linked. The immediate and long-term damage that many young people suffer as a result of sexual exploitation is of extreme concern and needs to be recognised and addressed by the statutory services.

When the terms of reference for this research were first drawn up, it concentrated on the links between sexual exploitation of young people and drug dealers. But it has become apparent through the course of this study, which commenced in January of this year that the situation that exists in South Yorkshire is far more complex and intricate and therefore the scope of the study needed to be widened. However, it is not anticipated that the situation in South Yorkshire will be much different than can be found in any other demographically, socially and geographically diverse county.

This work is part of the current national agenda concerning sexual exploitation, prostitution, and child protection that includes the following:

- **The National Crack Action Plan (Home Office 2002)** - The issue of prostitution is part of the Plan because of the strong association between crack use and sex work. Education for young people is also part of the Plan, "about the specific risk of crack...(and) the links to and risks of sex work and gun crime" (p 17).
- **High Crack Areas** - Sheffield has been designated a High Crack Area within the National Crack Action Plan, and therefore the issues related to prostitution and sexual exploitation are particularly pertinent. However, all DATs have had to draw up plans related to crack cocaine use and supply within their area, therefore this work is of relevance to the whole county.
- **Sexual Offences Legislation** - New legislation and tougher sentencing related to sexual offences against young people are expected towards the end of this year.
- **National Policing Plan 2003-2006** - This is the first national policing plan outlining the priorities for the Government, and it provides the strategic, national overview against which chief officers and police authorities should prepare their own 3-year plans and annual policing plans. These must be delivered in

partnership with other agencies. The issue of child protection is now part of the National Policing Plan.

- **The Laming Report of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry** – As a result of the hearing conducted into the murder of Victoria Climbié, Lord Laming made 108 recommendations for the overhaul of child protection. These are aimed at all agencies involved with children, but particularly social services, health care services and police forces.

But whatever current strategy or plan sexual exploitation may or may not be a part of, the most salient point remains that sexual exploitation of young people is ethically and morally, as well as legally, wrong. As agencies in positions of power and influence we are able to act to prevent it, or punish for it. However, in order to be able to take such action requires the reality of the situation to be presented. It is these issues that are the basis of this report. The main purpose of this research is to raise awareness and promote debate. It should be noted that this is not an evaluation of overall service provision to such vulnerable young people. Therefore the role of many service providers has not been included. It merely sets the problem in some context by reviewing relevant literature, and detailing the county picture. It highlights key areas of concern and makes limited recommendations.

2.0 Methodology

Little information currently exists on the men who are the subject of this study. However, the most relevant research that has been conducted in this area is outlined

below to set the South Yorkshire picture in some context. There is scant statistical data that exists, so there is little quantitative evidence to support or deny certain ideas. Therefore the most important source of information has been qualitative interviews. Semi-structured interviews have been carried out with a number of the most relevant personnel who are currently working within statutory and voluntary agencies in the county. These have either been face to face, or conducted over the telephone. Appendix B details the agencies from where people have been interviewed. Some observational research has also been conducted as I spent two evenings out on patrol with the specialist vice units in Sheffield and Doncaster. This was a valuable insight into the problems of policing red light areas, and also gave me an opportunity to talk to some of the women involved in prostitution that were working the streets on those nights. Sexual exploitation is hidden by its very nature, and therefore little hard data is available. The nature of the information included within this report is often anecdotal and subjective, as is much of the research into drugs markets. However, it goes some way to building a picture of the situation that currently exists across the county.

Due to the sensitive nature of the issue of sexual exploitation, the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act the names of young people, the male perpetrators, and agency representatives have not been included. In a number of cases that have been detailed below, the location of incidents has also been anonymised, in order to doubly protect the identity of those involved.

The number of boys and young men who are sexually exploited is probably far less than the number of girls and young women involved. However, the issue of male exploitation and prostitution is far more taboo and hidden than it is even for women, and therefore even more problematic to respond to appropriately. Little is known about the situation for young men in South Yorkshire. Therefore, for the purposes of this report references will be made to female prostitution and exploitation, unless it is appropriate to do otherwise. The hidden problem of the sexual exploitation of young men warrants a dedicated research study in its own right, to shed some light on the existing situation.

[REDACTED]

3.0 Setting the Scene

It is a commonly held belief, from a number of different agencies, that there are some drug dealers who are sexually exploiting vulnerable young people. It is very evident in Sheffield and Rotherham, where information is received from projects who have

been established to tackle the issue of sexual exploitation of young people, that significant abuse takes place. There are a handful of men in these areas for whom the traditional term 'pimp' and drug dealer would be appropriate. These terms will be clarified later. Although they may not be many in number, their influence and reach is substantial and the damage they inflict is extensive. But there are also significant numbers of other men who are exploiting young people for their own, and others, satisfaction. Sexual exploitation of young women and girls is also undoubtedly happening in Barnsley and Doncaster. However it is much more of a hidden problem in those areas, which often takes place in private accommodation or other places out of the public eye. There is no current evidence that drug dealers are involved in sexual exploitation in these areas.

But as well as the existence of pimp/dealers, there is a whole range of other situations that could be classed as exploitation. These range from excessive teenage behaviour of sexual experimentation, to coerced sex with men that involves intimidation, violence and drug and alcohol use, although money itself may not change hands. The situation at the latter end of this continuum may be more common, but equally traumatic for the young person as the presence of pimps/dealers.

4.0 Reviewing existing literature

Much has been written about women who are involved in prostitution, young people who are sexually exploited and men who sexually abuse who are, for example, family members or paedophiles. But there is little written about the men who pimp women

or children, and even less about other forms of sexual exploitation, by young men or adults that may be considered as friends or boyfriends.

In 'For Love or Money' (May et al, 2000) noted that there was little data available concerning the activities of pimps, particularly as they rarely come before the courts.

"In 1997 there were less than 200 individuals charged under Section 30 and 31 of the 1956 Sexual Offences Act ('living on the earnings of or exercising control over a prostitute'). In comparison there were over 11,400 cautions or convictions for soliciting or loitering." (May et al, 2000)

In South Yorkshire there have been 11 men and 1 woman charged with living off immoral earnings over the past 5 years. Six of those have been in Sheffield, 3 in Doncaster, 2 in Rotherham and 1 in Barnsley (Crime Management System, South Yorkshire Police).

4.1 Sex Markets and the Role of Crack Cocaine

As May et al have documented, the escalation in crack use has, undoubtedly, had a huge impact on the development of sex markets, and has been a vital factor in pulling sex and drug markets together. The increased use and availability of crack has been the single most significant factor in the development and expansion of street sex markets. Since the mid to late 1990s, dealers started to sell drugs to women working on the beat. Their entrepreneurial skill in understanding how to market crack to drug users has, at times, been impressive. They took crack to the red light areas where women, who had just been paid by punters, were congregated. Having sex with strangers for money is, by their own admission, not something they like. It is the necessity to fund a significant drug habit that motivates them. Although at that time most of the women working the streets were habitually using heroin, crack was attractive to them for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it is good for numbing them from the risks and pressures that accompany sex work. Secondly it offers a different buzz to the depressant or 'downer' effect of heroin. The dealers who sold crack to the women on the beat soon realised that in contrast to the longer acting heroin, the short acting and more-ish nature of crack encouraged binge use. Women selling sex on the street were able to raise enough money to smoke as much crack as they wanted. Having taken care of their heroin habit, they could then spend and spend on crack. It was their treat to themselves. They could do a punter, score some

crack, do another punter, buy some more crack and so on, sometimes throughout the night. The stimulant nature of the drug suited the hours women often worked, and it is a very sociable drug – there is always someone around to help them smoke it. Sometimes the women brought new customers to the dealers. These may be punters who enjoyed a smoke with them, and other women who had not previously tried crack or did not know where to buy it. All these factors helped to expand the market base.

Ward et al (1997) cited US research that has highlighted the different roles sex workers might play within the market place economics of crack distribution. These include carrying drugs, exchanging information, selling and bartering goods, and offering services including sex for drugs rather than money. Inciardi et al (1993) carried out extensive research in Miami published in 'Women and Crack Cocaine'. Within their study they describe the sexual behaviour of both women and men in crack houses. Crack can induce considerable dis-inhibited behaviour which when coupled with a desperation for crack, may result in high levels of sexual risk taking. These may include rape, violent assault and murder. One senior police officer in Sheffield said that he believed rape and assaults go unreported every week. Participating in extreme behaviour, often in very unhygienic conditions may affect women's physical and mental health for a considerable length of time. Although it may seem that such incidents would be a good motivator to exit sex work the reality is that for many, the short-term priority is to block out their behaviour and certain traumatic incidents by using more drugs, funded by more sex work. It becomes a vicious circle that can be of nightmarish proportions to any individual who is involved or being exploited. The terms dealers, pimps, users and partners have become less clear over the years, and may cause some confusion as roles usually now overlap. An attempt is made below to define their roles.

4.2 The Pimp

The definition of a pimp is a man who lives off the immoral earnings of a woman who is involved in prostitution. The traditional image of a pimp was of a man who had a number of women working for him. As a result he had fast cars, good clothes, and expensive jewellery. He distributed violence as and when was necessary. He would beat up 'his women' when he felt it necessary, but would also be very territorial with other pimps who tried to poach his women and with punters who damaged his 'goods'. Some women felt protected by their pimp, but the reality was that he was protecting those who made him lots of money. Some women considered him their

'boyfriend' and believed other women he was running to be their rivals in love, not business. Although he would hustle in a number of different criminal activities, pimping was his main source of income. However, the rise of Class A drug use has greatly affected the role of the traditional pimp.

4.3 The Pimp/Dealer

In 'Street Business' May et al (1999) state there is clear evidence of the links that exist between sexual exploiters and drug dealers. Sometimes they may be linked to crack cocaine or heroin markets, or increasingly what have become poly-drug markets. If sexual exploiters are not selling drugs themselves, they are very close associates of those who are. May et al noted that the biggest change in the drug and prostitution scene has been the increase of dependent drug use. The numbers of those in the role of dealer/pimp has increased, but the role of the traditional pimp decreased. Psychological and physical addiction to drugs has replaced the physical coercion of the pimp. It is easier for pimps/dealers to exert control over women by exploiting their reliance on drugs. They are often responsible for introducing young people they exploit sexually to drug use and drug related crime. Sexual exploitation is often aided by the victim being under the influence of drugs provided by the perpetrator. It is all part of the grooming process that will be outlined later.

In an article by Melanie Orchant (The Observer, 01.02.2001) she talks to Carlos who found that by combining the business of trafficker, drug-dealer and pimp, he has placed himself at the head of the new trend, complete with appropriate jargon.

"We get them addicted to drugs as soon as we can because they're more docile that way. It's like a fishing line, you just reel them in. A good pimp will have them acting like robots. They end up like cattle you just order them around. I don't see myself as a pimp; I'm a personal manager.'

4.4 The Boyfriend

As has been described above, the role of the traditional pimp has diminished, but the number of dealer/pimps has increased. But within the drug/sex market the role of the 'boyfriend' has become more prominent. This man is usually the partner of the woman who is involved in prostitution, but sometimes they may be 'friends'. In the case of boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/wife, they may have been together for a long time, or it may be a more recent union. They may or may not have children. In long-term relationships, apart from sex for business, they tend to be quite monogamous.

In a number of cases, he may be on licence or parole from prison or may be on a current community sentence from the courts. Therefore his ability to commit crimes to fund problematic drug use is hampered by his desire not to go to prison. In some cases the woman may have become involved in prostitution whilst he is in prison. When he comes out, he may not like what she is doing but he is more willing for her to put herself at risk by having sex with strangers and be able to provide money for both their habits, than to stop using drugs. His role is that of the 'look out'. There are now significant numbers of boyfriends who are either obvious or concealed in the red light areas. They take down the car number plates of the punters with whom their wives/girlfriends drive off with. In one incidence in Sheffield, the husband used to wait in a parked car acting as look out for her each time she disappeared with a different man. Their three young children used to sleep in the back of the car, until she finished work. The situation is very similar in platonic friendships. The woman who works the streets says she feels protected by this man, who writes down their car number plates, in case she does not return. Although in reality, this may be of some use in a later investigation following a violent assault, rape or murder, it does little to protect the woman from being attacked by a punter at that time. In return, she will share her drugs with him bought with the money she has earned.

However much a boyfriend/husband would like to portray himself as her 'protector', in reality he is still a pimp in that he is living off the immoral earnings of a woman involved in prostitution. The difference is that in these circumstances 'living off' is usually limited to using the drugs she has bought, and eating food that she has paid for with her earnings. In such situations the couple's drug use is of such proportions that fast cars, expensive jewellery, designer clothes and mobile phones are a long way from the reality of their lifestyle. Partners are far more likely to be dependent on Class A drugs than pimps. In May et al (2000), the level of criminality by pimps was far higher than boyfriends. They are often involved in other crimes such as firearms, car crime, robbery and sometimes immigration offences. In contrast, boyfriends are not always successful criminals and are often in contact with the criminal justice system.

4.5 Changing Roles

Within May et al's research, it was noted that men have different roles within sex markets as drug dealers, pimps, users and partners. They may also be sex workers themselves, although this is far less common. They also found that the traditional role of the pimp was more rare than was anticipated. Two thirds of women

interviewed in the study said they worked alone. But the pimp has broadened his portfolio to include drug dealing, thus making himself indispensable to the women he controls. In 'For Love or Money' it was evident that in certain areas the roles of seller, partner and pimp were no longer separate. This is reflected in reports received in South Yorkshire where a man may be selling drugs, living with a woman who is involved in prostitution, robbing other working women of their earnings etc. Where sex and drug markets are intertwined, the apparent independence of the sex worker conceals a deep reliance on the dealers who sell them drugs. In Eleanor Miller's 'Street Women', women involved in prostitution in Milwaukee spoke of "my man", rather than "my pimp". But that man was usually their drug dealer and usually someone that had introduced them to the life they were now leading. Inciardi noted in his American research "male dealers are often the conduit to drug use and prostitution". Whilst this may be true of younger women or men that they sexually exploit, in South Yorkshire that is less likely to be the case in adult women who become involved in prostitution. In the street scenes in Sheffield and Doncaster where it is currently rare for under 16s to be found working, Doncaster reported no known pimps, and Sheffield has three who are running two or three girls each. They are all known to be involved with drug dealing.

"They will turn their hand to anything that makes money, and there is a lot of money to be made from both young people and from drugs." (May et al 2000)

In 'For Love or Money' it was noted that younger sex workers are far more likely to be pimped, than older workers. Once the pimp/dealer has exerted their control over the young person, they are able to lock them into sex work and make it feel impossible to exit. There is some information known about the men who are pimps of younger women in the county. In Rotherham there have been up to four men involved in drug dealing that are the main perpetrators of sexual abuse and exploitation against young women. In Sheffield there are approximately 10 men who are known to be involved in such activities against younger girls, and possibly some boys.

4.6 The Grooming Process

The definition of prostitution of young people and children is given as follows:

"Prostitution involving children and young people has been defined by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights as "the act of engaging or

offering the services of a child to perform sexual acts for money or other consideration with that person or any other person".' (Barrett 1997)

As has been previously suggested, women who become involved in prostitution in their twenties and onwards are less likely to be coerced into sex work, and more likely to be working independently of any pimp/dealer apart from boyfriends/husbands. It is vulnerable young women who are most at risk of exploitation, and the ways of coercing them into sex work is well documented. The grooming process usually involves older men seeking out young women or girls, or in some known instances in the county, boys. They pay them lots of attention, flatter them, buy them presents, and introduce them to places and people that seem very adult and exciting. They often give them alcohol or drugs, which may be the young person's first introduction to substances. This also may seem exciting and very grown up, but with no tolerance and in a young person's immature body the effects will be far more potent and leave them extremely vulnerable to abuse. The perpetrators tend to target vulnerable young people who are often in care. They are ripe for grooming, as they often crave love and attention as a result of being removed from their family and living within an institutional setting. May et al (2000) interviewed a large number of young people who regularly sold sex for the price of a rock of crack cocaine. Half of the respondents had started sex work whilst still minors and over half had gone into sex work from being looked after by local authorities in residential homes or fostering. However, one young people's service in South Yorkshire noted that some men were targeting girls from middle class homes, as there were generally no statutory services involved and therefore the family were more isolated and had less support when things went wrong. This was, to a similar extent, the situation experienced by Irene Iveson, when her daughter was being sexually exploited before she was murdered (Iveson, 1997). One 13-year-old girl from such a family reported being raped on four separate weekends, by a number of men. The perpetrators threatened her, and her family, into not pressing charges. The police were unable to act without statements from the girl. Without moving house and going into hiding they were not safe to support their daughter into giving evidence. In the case of young people in care in South Yorkshire, some perpetrators have been known to intimidate local authority staff. This has sometimes resulted in certain young people not being receiving the most appropriate placements, because if they are known to associate with men who have previously intimidated or threatened staff they feel they cannot accommodate them there.

Barnados describe the four stages of young people being manipulated and dominated into being sexually exploited. The first stage is 'ensnaring' – the targeting of vulnerable and socially isolated young people. The second stage is 'establishing dependency' – this is achieved through affection and generosity, and often leading the young person to believe that the man is their boyfriend and that he loves them. The third stage is that of 'taking control' – by establishing a sexual relationship and then introducing the idea of sex work. Often the man achieves this by saying he needs money and that if they loved him, they would do this for him. One 14-year-old girl in the county said she was suddenly told that she owed £200 for drugs the man had given her. Most 14 year olds do not have access to that amount of money without admitting to their parents what they have been doing. The man made it clear how she could earn the money to pay him back, and she felt she had no choice but to agree. The final stage is that of 'total dominance' – achieved by physical coercion and violence and often drug use. Some girls reported being locked in flats or taken to hotels, to have sex with either the perpetrator of the exploitation or their associates. Another 14 year old girl who had been missing for three weeks, was reported to be found naked and drugged hiding under the bed in a hotel room. Another young girl in the county said she was kidnapped on a number of successive weekends, repeatedly raped and buggered. Her father did not feel able to formally complain to the police, as he was too frightened. He and his family still had to live near to the perpetrators. The pimp/dealers who are prepared to inflict such levels of abuse are usually well known to law enforcement agencies. They often have convictions, or are believed to be involved in, a number of different types of criminal activity. Violence, intimidation, drug use and drug dealing, property and car crime, robbery, and rape are all part of the lifestyle of such men. Girls and young women, and sometimes boys, are commodities from which money may come. If boys are required, they will be delivered. It is a simple matter of supply and demand. The physical and psychological damage and trauma that is a result of such abuse is of no concern. The young person is very frightened and scared, but the perpetrator dominates them through a mix of intimidation, violence and occasional affection – just to keep them believing he cares. In a report written by the Streets and Lanes Barnado's project in Bradford it was noted that it is not uncommon for young girls trapped in such circumstances to become 'willing victims' in the cycle of abuse. They believe they deserve what happens to them and deceive themselves that despite the humiliations and the violence their 'boyfriend' really does love them. The project told of one 14-year old girl who told a worker that her boyfriend had burnt her breasts with cigarettes and then raped her, followed by three of his friends. 'But I still love him and

I just want us to be happy together' she said. Such delusional beliefs are not uncommon with girls in this county.

4.7 Prosecutions of Men Involved in Sexual Exploitation

Ideally such men would all be prosecuted under the Sexual Offences Act, but securing convictions is extremely difficult. Understandably young people, and sometimes their families, are often too frightened to complain, make statements and give evidence in court. Reporting pimps for violence or sexual offences may have "consequences of such coercion can often be sufficiently serious to justify regarding it as a form of slow rape" (May et al, 1999). The police response to a complaint of rape, violence or intimidation in such cases is fraught with difficulties. Unless the victim makes a statement then they cannot investigate the circumstances, and subsequently charge a suspect if appropriate. If a man is charged then his case is referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), whose role it is to prepare the case for prosecution in court. They have the ultimate decision as to whether to take the case to court, or whether charges will have to be dropped. The following information is given to officers via the 'Guide to Dealing with Sexual Offences and Child Abuse' published by South Yorkshire Police:

"Police involvement in cases of child abuse stems from their primary responsibility to protect the community and to bring offenders to justice. Their overriding consideration is the welfare of the child. Police focus will be to determine whether a criminal offence has been committed, to identify the person(s) responsible and to secure the best possible evidence in order that the appropriate consideration can be given as to whether criminal proceedings should be instituted.

The decision re criminal proceedings will be based on 3 main factors:

- 1) is there sufficient evidence?
- 2) is it in the public interest?
- 3) is it in the best interests of the child?"

A significant number of complaints of sexual offences and violence will either not be referred by the police to CPS, or not be prosecuted in court because of factors 1 and 3 in the above list. Benson and Matthews (1995) noted that prosecutions against such men are rare for the following reasons. There is usually a lack of sufficient evidence to secure a conviction of living off immoral earnings. There is also a lack of

resources and manpower to secure convictions. When men are successfully prosecuted court sentences are often inadequate. Witnesses are very frightened and feel unprotected. Also there are variations in the practices of the Crown Prosecution Service across different areas. There are additional problems if a case gets to court. There are often lengthy delays and difficulties in being able to protect witnesses for a long time. However, there are areas where they are having more success in prosecuting men for pimping offences. Nottingham is reported to be one such area. The use of photographic evidence in court has been found to be useful, as there is no need for witnesses to appear. Specialist agencies can also be useful in supporting victims in throughout prosecutions.

In relation to the prosecution of kerb crawlers, the vice squad in Sheffield noted that the police should concentrate their efforts more on them. But in practice but there are only 3 officers in the vice squad and they only able to go out 1 night per week. The vice squad also has a remit to deal with paedophiles and child Internet pornography. Otherwise the problem is for uniform patrols to deal with, and to arrest one kerb crawler takes a lot of time.

Women and young people selling sex is reliant on one thing only – men who are willing to pay for their services. One may wonder about what goes on in the minds of men who may jeopardise their home lives, public lives and careers for a quick 'liaison' in a car or other place, with a woman or girl whose physical, and sometimes mental health, has been ravaged by drugs and other abuse. The attraction of such sex is obviously very strong to some. There are often media stories about men in positions of responsibility or fame who have been caught, and sometimes blackmailed about their behaviour. During the course of this research, information came to light about a number of professional men who are known to have sex with women involved in prostitution. They appear to have a dual role of being a part of the problem as well as, on the surface, tackling the problem. There have been well-publicised cases both nationally and locally. However, there are a number of other such cases that have not come to the attention of the criminal justice system and the media. In one area of the county there is a local person who has been exceptionally vocal in his complaints about the women working on the streets. However, a young woman recently gave a statement to the police having been spotted leaving his company. She openly admitted that he regularly paid her £20 for sex. The police have advised him that they know about his involvement with her. There have also been other anonymous, anecdotal accounts of women involved with other

professionals. Another account was received of a local councillor involved with a young woman, and another young woman who works in a red light area said she had sex with a police officer. He was in a patrol car in full uniform at the time. There is a few other off duty officers that women have said they have been with. A woman, who used to be involved in prostitution in a neighbouring county, relayed an account from a number of years previously. Aged 15, she was in a car with an older man performing an oral sex act, when they were discovered by the police. They were arrested and taken to the police station. She was charged with prostitution and subsequently appeared in court. At her hearing she was found guilty, [REDACTED]. The magistrate who convicted her was the very man who had paid her to have sex with him.

It goes without saying that there are few very professionals who are prepared to pay for sex with young women or girls. The above accounts are anecdotal and anonymous, and cannot be proven. There are many professional people who are working hard in areas of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. However, to ignore such reports would be to not tell their whole story.

4.8 Young People as Prosecution Witnesses

There may also be an issue of validity and reliability of some young people as prosecution witnesses. Giving evidence in court is an ordeal for any adult called as a witness. As an adult victim in cases of violence or sexual offences the emotional trauma that this can present is well documented. If the victim or witness in similar circumstances is a young person, the process they have to undergo must be incredibly unfamiliar and frightening. Full front bravado may be necessary for a young person to feel they are able to survive such an ordeal. Key prosecution witness 'Bromley' gave evidence in the trial of the Damilola Taylor murder suspects in 2002. The case against the accused was thrown out of court as a result of her evidence being deemed unreliable and described as a 'fantasist' by the judge. She swore in court, got angry and at one stage walked out. She was heavily criticised by the judiciary, and vilified in the press who published stories about her and her family life. A lot of people seemed to have lost sight of the fact that she was only 12 years old at the time Damilola was killed. One year after the accused were found not guilty, John Waite interviewed Bromley about her experiences ('It's My Story', Radio 4, 7 August 2003). She still stands by her statement about witnessing the events, and very much defends her action at the time. She says the experience has ruined her life. She has moved 39 times under police protection as part of the witness protection

programme, and has not been able to go to school for two years. She is now 15 years old, and as she has missed so much of her education sees no future for herself apart from a life on benefits. She is unable to see her family, apart from her mother who moves with her, and she lives in a tightly secured house, with a guard dog. She says she feels depressed, with no future, and has already attempted suicide twice. She was an already vulnerable young girl, who was inappropriately treated by those in the criminal justice system and the media. The effects of 'Bromley' coming forward as a witness will stay with her for a very long time. The following is an extract from her radio interview.

Waite: You swore at Mr Griffiths, the QC.

Bromley: Good, I should have slapped him.

Waite: But people don't do that.

Bromley: No well you wasn't there to hear what he said. Like, he could have put me in a state where I could have killed myself because of what he was saying, yeah, he was telling me that I'm practically lying, yeah, he trying to get my story twisted, yeah.

Waite: He was doing his job wasn't he, this is his job...

Bromley: Yeah, but...

Waite: ...to test you and see if you're telling the truth.

Bromley: But I'm not adult, you know, my mind doesn't run like an adult and especially at 12 years old. It ain't my fault that I didn't make a good impression, this is me, I can't change myself or I'm supposed to sit there with my back up and talk so like I come across all nice, no. I think the judge, yeah, didn't know, yeah about girls like me, girls, like, 'cos I think the judge has seen girls that go to Sunday school and stuff like that, if you understand where I'm coming from, and I don't do none of that so therefore I'm a bad person to him. So that got brung up in court, yeah."

This very high profile case has not been a good example to other young people who could be witnesses in cases of serious crimes. Although this was not a case of sexual exploitation, there may be some lessons to be learnt from this girl's experience. Chief Superintendent Tony Crofts of the Metropolitan Police, who was the senior investigator on Damilola's murder enquiry, is now calling for a change in

the way that young people are treated in court (BBC Breakfast, 7 August 2003). He suggests that an inquisitorial, rather than an adversarial approach is taken. He proposes that the young person is a witness for the judge rather than the defence or prosecution. He also recommends that there be specialist training for judges and barristers in child psychology, who work with young people in such trials. In one case of child abduction in South Yorkshire the young woman was deemed not to be a reliable witness for CPS, due to her behavioural problems and poor attention span. She got distressed during video interviews and on occasion walked out. Following discussions between the specialist police officer and CPS, she has now been able to submit a written statement to the court regarding her experience. The case will be heard this month.

4.9 Preventing Young Men Becoming Pimps/Dealers

Without condoning any of the behaviour of the perpetrators described above, in search of methods of prevention of such serious crimes it must be understood that they may also be a product of their social circumstances. Maher found that many of the respondents in their research grew up in sex working areas in local authority accommodation, many knew and associated with pimps/dealers in their formative years, and many had either been excluded from school or were frequent truants. May et al (2000) also noted that young men who grow up with, or spend a lot of time with older men who are pimps or women involved in prostitution are more at risk of becoming pimps/dealers themselves. This is particularly true when they have a misogynistic attitude toward women. It is important to look for ways of preventing the development of pimping and drug dealing careers. Many of the respondents in Maher's research had started their life of crime in their early teens or before, and all of them had been in Young Offender Institutions. If the issue of young people at risk of becoming pimps/drug dealers is highlighted, Youth Offending Teams could play a vital role in identifying individuals at risk, and in early intervention. However, it is not their sole responsibility. Education authorities, the youth service and youth groups all have a part to play in reducing the numbers of young people who think that their only opportunities exist in the illegal economy especially in relation to pimping and drug dealing. Information provided later states that there are boys in schools targeting girls in order to introduce them to their older brothers, for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Where primary prevention work is unsuccessful, punishment needs to be followed by constructive work and rehabilitation to help offenders find alternatives to pimping and supplying drugs. This is not just an issue for young people's services

in the large inner cities, but for those in towns as well. There needs to be an awareness of these issues and a willingness to address them when they are evident.

Having set sexual exploitation in South Yorkshire in some context in terms of existing research and other literature, the situation that is currently known to exist in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield will now be outlined.

5.0 Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution in South Yorkshire

5.1 Barnsley

Up until recently, it was believed that Barnsley did not have an issue regarding a street sex scene. Although some adult women were known to be involved in prostitution, it was believed that they always had to travel to other areas such as Doncaster, Sheffield, or Leeds to work. Some workers in Barnsley believed it would never happen, or to quote more simplistically:

“Men don’t need prostitutes in Barnsley, they can always get it for free.”

However, recent information suggests that the situation may be changing. Reports from two different sources refer to young women hanging around the bus station/interchange and on the Western Relief Road, near to where the new Morrison’s is being built. Men are pulling up to them in their cars, and then they get in and drive off with them. It has happened often enough for it to be commented on as a potential issue of concern. A project in Sheffield also said recently that they had been told that some women who used to come to Sheffield to work the streets were not coming now, as they could work in Barnsley. It is not yet clear if such work is available, and if so how often and for how many women or girls. It must be noted that the statutory agencies have responded promptly to this issue, and have been discussing the possibility of a new street sex scene, however small, and are investigating the matter further.

The child protection police officers, at Barnsley police station, have not received any reports of a street scene emerging in the town, nor of significant numbers of young people being sexually exploited. They do receive information regarding a number of cases when men are encouraging girls and boys to their houses or shops, and start the grooming process. But there has not been a noticeable increase in such reports, and it has not been thought that the purpose of the grooming has been for prostitution, but more for personal satisfaction of behalf of the perpetrators. Class B drugs such as cannabis and alcohol are known to be offered as part of the process, but Class A drugs have not been mentioned. The police were aware of some men who set up business in the [REDACTED] area last year, who were known to be involved in sexual exploitation of young people in Rotherham. However, they were soon arrested on other serious charges, before they had a chance to establish themselves in Barnsley. Barnsley has an active cottaging scene in Cawthorne, Churchfield and Brierley, but they are all adult males and there are no reports of boys involved. The district has a pro-active detective for cases of domestic violence and child protection,

but where operational officers are required a request goes to the Tasking and Co-ordinating Group in the normal way.

In order to investigate the situation of sexual exploitation in Barnsley further, contact was made with the Genito-Urinary medicine clinic at Barnsley District Hospital. One concern for them is that there has been a significant increase in the number of cases of gonorrhoea over the last six months. Gonorrhoea is linked to sex with casual partners, more so than other sexually transmitted diseases. The under 20s are particularly affected. According to the Barnsley clinic Sheffield, Doncaster and Rotherham clinics are also reporting a rise in the numbers of people presenting with gonorrhoea and it seems to be young people who are more likely to be infected and present to services.

Some girls come into clinic admit to having a number of different sexual partners. One 17-year-old girl who was having a difficult time with her parents divorce and was involved in heavy recreational drug use, admitted to having 29 sexual partners in 3 months. She has now stopped using drugs, is going to college and had put that period of her life behind her. However, it is likely that the drug use contributed to her reduced inhibitions. The clinic does not routinely ask about drug use, apart from when it is relevant for example in HIV tests. However, some patients willingly disclose such information. There have been five cases of women/girls presenting having had their drinks spiked and they cannot remember anything afterwards, but all had been raped. Not all of these incidents took place in Barnsley.

No one has admitted to clinic staff to being involved in prostitution, and grooming for the purposes of prostitution is not evident. Occasionally there may be a younger girl in for treatment, with an older man. One teenage girl brought her 40 something boyfriend in, but apart from such isolated cases there is no evidence of anything of particular concern. However, some girls admit to having sex with boyfriends who give them drugs. 'Exotic' dancers who are working clubs in Leeds may attend the clinic. Although there are reports of young women working near the new Morrison's, no men from the building site are known to have reported to the clinic as patients.

There are both men and women asylum seekers presenting to the service for treatment. Mostly they are from Eastern Europe, but some are from Zimbabwe. Some of the men may have a regular girlfriend from Barnsley, but have lots of casual sex as well. They do not use condoms and do not appear to be willing to address the

issue. Some patients are HIV positive, although non-specific infections are more common. Asylum seekers can be a very transient population. They get diagnosed following tests and they are moved on elsewhere. Sometimes there are may be problems with translation. Sexually transmitted infections are a sensitive matter and translation through a third party does not make it any easier.

There are no projects in Barnsley whose specific remit is to work with young people who are being sexually exploited, or those involved in prostitution. As stated previously, it had not been an issue for the town. Whether this continues will remain to be seen, is one that many people will be watching very carefully.

5.2 Doncaster

The red light area in Doncaster runs along Thorne Road, and has been in existence for many years. There are currently about 35 women out most nights, although there are considerably more known to be involved in prostitution. All of them are using heroin and there has been an increase in crack use in the last year or more. Most of them are using both heroin and crack now. Some girls who are working are also dealing to other girls. The red light area is in an area that has many bed sits whose residents are often on DSS benefits. Some asylum seekers are also being housed in this area. There are a number of businesses at the bottom end of Thorne Road towards the town centre and this is where the girls are supposed to stand. Although there is no official tolerance zone, if they are working away from the residential areas and do not present any trouble the police tend to leave them alone. There are thought to be three brothels currently operating in Doncaster at present. [REDACTED] years ago, a man was convicted [REDACTED]. He used to drive round the streets looking for young girls for his male customers and would ask the girls on the streets if they had any young nieces, sisters or friends. He brought Asian and Phillipino girls to work in the club. [REDACTED] Saunas, clubs, their owners and staff may not always be the acceptable side of the sex industry, as they are portrayed.

The Doncaster Town Group have two officers working from 4pm until 12midnight every day in the area. They use an unmarked car to patrol the area, and have a mobile phone which residents can contact them on to complain about the women and their punters. The Town Group has responsibility for pubwatch and licensing, football, second hand dealers and retail crime, and car crime as well as vice. They

Speak to the women; take their details and sometimes their photographs for identity purposes. They will caution or arrest them if they are not co-operating and return home underage girls (under 18), who are seen as victims and are not cautioned or arrested but cannot be left to work on the streets. Girls who were working the streets, who were under 18 years old, were more of a problem a couple of years ago. Thirteen and fourteen year olds were known to be working on the beat then. Apart from one 13 year old that worked the streets for a brief period a couple of months ago, they are not currently believed to be on the streets.

Much of the work of the Town Group, as with other operational officers in the force, is about trying to control the area where the girls are working. If they are found working in the residential areas they are warned and moved on in the first instance. Next time they receive a Home Office caution of which they are allowed two in a twelve-month period. If they are stopped again within the twelve months they are then arrested and charged with being a 'common prostitute'. Each time they are stopped again from there on, they are charged with prostitution offences, for which they will receive a fine. Prostitution is not an imprisonable offence. However, non-payment of fines is. Therefore those convicted of prostitution are invariably soon back out on the streets to sell more sex in order to pay their fines.

At present, there are not known to be any pimp/dealers in Doncaster although there were a couple of years ago. In 1993, Fiona Iveson was just 17 when a punter killed her. He was subsequently convicted of her murder. A man, who was believed to be her pimp, had taken her to Doncaster from Sheffield (Iveson). There are currently a few men and women who are 'taxing' workingwomen – robbing them of their takings before they get the chance to spend it. As in Sheffield they are targeting the more vulnerable women and threatening them with violence if they do not cooperate. One woman I spoke to out on the beat had her hand bandaged as she had been hit with a hammer by one of the female aggressors. There are a number of highly visible boyfriends loitering around in the red light area, 'looking after' their girlfriends or friends. Sexual exploitation of young people is much more hidden and probably confined to housing estates and flats. However, it was reported that some of the bus drivers had been getting involved with girls on the school run. Following a multi-agency meeting, the company was sent a letter complaining about their employees' behaviour. This approach appears to have been successful.

Doncaster has a 'name and shame' approach to charging kerb crawlers and the offender's details are published in the local paper, once they have been to court.

They have one court session held purely for kerb crawlers when the media attend. One problem the police have identified of doing crackdowns on kerb crawlers is that women tend to jump in cars more quickly, so that the punter is less likely to receive police attention. Therefore they are less able to make an intuitive assessment of the man they are intending to do business with. This puts them at greater risk of violence and/or rape.

Streetreach is the Doncaster service that works with women involved in prostitution. They also provide support for men who have sex with other men, who may either be gay, or who are married or in heterosexual relationships and do not consider themselves to be gay. All the work they do is with adults in the cottaging and cruising scene. There is no visible 'rent boy' or young male prostitution scene in Doncaster. Although other men are no doubt, exploiting boys and young men for sexual purposes, it is probably taking place via the Internet, or with men they already know and is not coming to the attention of services. Streetreach provide a number of services to women involved in prostitution, most, but not all, of who work in the red light area. Some women are also using the Internet, to advertise their services. Streetreach provide a drop-in service to the centre, where they can receive practical and emotional support, and can see a specialist drugs worker and be referred to the project doctor for detox prescribing, or referral to the community drug team for other treatment services. They have a specialist young people's worker who provides an educational programme regarding sexual exploitation as part of the Personal, Sexual and Health Education (PSHE) school curriculum. They also offer a distance-learning programme for those who wish to continue education having left school early or want to take up study again. They also offer practical shower and washing facilities, and some social activities. Their relationship with the Doncaster Town Group is excellent. They liaise with them formally at meetings and in forums and informally through exchanging information. The police from the Town Group are regular and welcome visitors at Streetreach.

5.3 Rotherham

Risky Business has been operating in Rotherham since 1996. It was set up amid concerns about the sexual exploitation of young women within the Rotherham area. Coming under the remit of Rotherham Youth Service, they work with girls and young women who have been sexually exploited and also provide an educational programme regarding sexual exploitation as part of the PSHE curriculum in secondary schools. Although Rotherham does not have a red light, there is a

significant problem regarding the sexual exploitation of young women. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Since last year, Rotherham District has provided a police constable from the community safety unit, to work with the project and other relevant agencies that have concerns about vulnerable young women. There is also an inspector for specialist staff, from the unit, who is involved with the multi-agency work. Operational meetings are held between the police, Risky Business and social services and intelligence reports may be submitted as a result. All such reports go on to the district intelligence office, where local intelligence officers decide what to put on the Operational Intelligence System (OIS). This is a force wide database that holds intelligence information that exists on individual offenders, their known associates, their criminal activities, locations, and vehicles etc. Information concerning the girls is also held on the system, as are those reported missing from home. Access to the database is limited to those who require such information, and not all information about everybody is available to all those with passwords. There are different levels of security access.

Practice and policy issues that are identified are taken to the Key Players Group in Rotherham that includes social services, the police, education, youth services and a representative from the voluntary sector etc. This operates at a middle management level regarding service provision for young people. Individuals are not discussed at these meetings. They monitor and review what is happening, and refer issues to the Policy and Procedure Committee of the Area Children Protection Committee when necessary. There is also an Executive Group in Rotherham that examines how local agencies are dealing with the issue of sexual exploitation. It includes the Chief Superintendent and Inspector of Specialist Staff from Rotherham police district, the Head of Education, the Head of Children and Families from Social Services, and Rotherham Crime Reduction Partnership. The issue of those who go missing from home has been addressed within this group, and the advent of the constable's post in the community safety unit is part of the response.

The police at Rotherham, through the Community Safety Unit with the support of the Chief Superintendent, have been the only policing district in the Force to formally

respond to the issue of those who regularly go missing from home. They ensure that enquiries are picked up quickly and that investigations are carried out effectively. It provides set procedures to follow in such circumstances. The constable visits all those who have returned, having previously been reported as missing and also has compiled a collection of photographs of those who go missing regularly, which are accessible to officers via the district system should they be required.

Understandably, police officers generally treat those who go missing from home from a purely policing perspective. The first time someone is reported missing is of most concern to the police, in case they have come to any harm. If they start going missing on a regular basis, then they are of less concern as they have always turned up previously. But set procedures are in place regarding the investigation of such cases. When the young person returns, a police officer will visit the home (whether it be family or local authority). Usually the young person says they are safe and well, but they often refuse to say where they have been or say they have been at a friend's. The officer leaves and completes the paper work to that effect. However, the reality is that the more often a young person goes missing from home, the more vulnerable they are to being sexually exploited. The police constable from Rotherham Community Safety Unit follows up all those who go missing from home, on their return. Sometimes the information they provide is no more detailed than it would be to any other officer. But other times, good information can be obtained which is also fed into the intelligence system, helping build a picture of what is occurring. But although Rotherham police have the pro-active approach of the Community Safety units, they do not have a resource such as a specialist vice squad to act on intelligence or information.

About 30 or 40 girls are believed to being sexually exploited in Rotherham at present. This is considerably reduced from 2001 when BBC News 5Live (Angus Stickler, 29.07.01.) reported:

"In Rotherham alone, for example, 80 girls are said to be working as prostitutes. There appears to be a highly organised network of pimps involving some as young as 12. There is evidence that they are being transported from Rotherham to private addresses in red light districts as far a field as Bradford and Sheffield."

Few out of town placements are required. But there is a lack of safe accommodation for young women. It is getting worse at present as accommodation staff take into consideration the risk to staff of the associates of young women who need placing. Therefore they are sometimes refused places. It is then very difficult to find them anywhere else.

A lot of the information that is known about the pimps comes from the girls to either Risky Business staff or the specialist police officer. But it is rare for any girl to be willing to make a statement about the information she provides. There are a few girls who are giving information regarding drugs and drug dealers at present, and also regarding sexual exploitation and violence. The police recalled one 12-year-old girl who described being taken to a hotel by some men, and watching while her 14-year-old sister had sex with them. They spoke of another young girl, who was doused in petrol as a threat against reporting sexual offences. Another 14-year-old girl has been selling drugs for one of the main perpetrators of sexual exploitation. He has been very violent to both her and her mother. His brother tried to strangle another young girl. Girls in Leeds also know these men. But also men from Bradford, Sheffield and Chesterfield are believed to be involved in the sexual exploitation of girls in the Rotherham area.

Virtually all the referrals to Risky Business are young white women and girls. The age range recently has mostly been in the 13 to 16 age group. Some asylum seekers, particularly Iraqi Kurds, are increasingly becoming boyfriends of the girls. There are about 20 older Iraqi Kurdish who are involved with young white women. For example there is a 27 year old living with a 16 year old girl. Some of them are reported to be dealing in Ecstasy and skunk. The girls involved in sexual exploitation in Rotherham appear to develop personal preferences for either Asian men or Iraqi Kurds. Some have become good at translating Arabic. One 16-year-old girl has been sexually involved with most of the Iraqi Kurdish men in Rotherham. As asylum seekers they may be quite a transient population at times, and will move on to other places. Information has emerged that there is a man in Rotherham who is targeting vulnerable young men. He gives them 'free' drugs and gets them to deal drugs for him. When they are under the influence of drugs, he sometimes sexually assaults them. Sexual health is the biggest issue for the young girls involved in sexual exploitation. A significant number get pregnant, the majority of whom keep their babies, who may in turn come into the child protection system. The 'boyfriends' will

not use condoms therefore they are also prone to sexually transmitted infections. There is regular contact with the Genito-Urinary clinic. Anger and depression are commonplace, which manifest themselves in a number of different ways. Acts of deliberate self-harm are sometimes evident from an early age, but for some girls their whole lifestyle could be described as one of self-harm. As more people are becoming aware of the issues of sexual exploitation, more young girls are being referred to the specialist agencies.

5.4 Sheffield

There has been a red light district in Sheffield for many years. It used to be in a residential part of the city in Broomhall. However, multi-agency interventions of traffic control and high visibility police patrols were successful in moving the women away into the town centre. There are now two main red light areas in the city. One is at Shalesmoor/Kelham Island and spreads to Upper Allen Street. The other one is by Edward street flats. There are over 250 women known to be working the streets in Sheffield. Crookes Valley Park is a traditional place for men to cruise looking for other men to have sex with. Although there is still some activity there, the opening of more gay bars has taken some of this activity from open spaces and public toilets. There were 3 girls, aged 13 -16, who were found working the streets last year. However, as has already been stated, that age group is usually groomed away from the beat. When they are about 16 or 17 years old then they work the streets, but they have usually been exploited for sometime before this. Groups of males may use these girls between themselves. There is no intelligence to confirm that money is being exchanged between the men, but it certainly cannot be ruled out. Rapes and attacks are probably taking place unreported every week. Sometimes it is regarded as an occupational hazard.

Operation Insight was a joint venture between Escafeld Sexual Abuses and Child Protection Unit and West Bar police station in Sheffield. They highlighted various entry points for sexual exploitation where young women got involved with older men. They are:

- missing from home
- having money or possessions they were unable to legitimately account for
- having an older boyfriend
- estranged from their families
- and experimenting with substances.

It is believed that young men who go missing from home regularly are equally vulnerable. However, they may be believed to be, and therefore treated, as less vulnerable than girls. Entry points for those at risk included involvement or socialising with various groups, for example taxi firms or some refugees, frequenting certain areas of the city and drug dependency (Roberts 2002).

Four women involved in prostitution from the county have been murdered over the last 10 years, but there has only been one conviction. The last woman to be murdered was Michaela Hague in November 2001. She was found in the Kelham Island area of the city having been stabbed 19 times. She died a few hours later in hospital. The women working out on the streets that night were very distressed when they heard what happened. Yet the next night they were back out on the beat, knowing that a murderer of prostitutes was at large. That is a very good indicator of exactly how powerful a motivator drug addiction is. Michaela's murder exposed just how little intelligence the police had on who was working where. The vice squad gathers intelligence on the girls in relation to their identity, address, next of kin, where they work, if anyone is 'looking after' them and take their photograph to aid identification in case they go missing or are found unconscious or dead. They also gather intelligence from the women in relation to any under age girls, other workingwomen, punters, dealers, robbers and other crimes.

There has to be a balance between gathering intelligence, supporting the women, enforcing the law and supporting local residents. It is a difficult juggling act at times. During Operation Impact there were significantly more police officers patrolling the red light area, as it was also a hot spot for robberies. A side effect of the operation was that it brought more women to work in the area, as they felt safer. Their numbers rose from 120 to 250 in four months. The police are trying to control the numbers who are working. The women have a very complex relationship with the police. They like them to be around as they feel safer, and the nastier punters disappear. They also give them information, but they do not like being arrested or think that the police are frightening punters out of the area.

It is the discarded condoms and drug paraphernalia that prompt most complaints from local businesses. If this was less evident, the issue of prostitution may be less problematic. A cleaning operation at 6am to get rid of condoms and litter before the businesses opened would reduce the number of complaints. In general the women

do not cause very much trouble. Some people complain about being approached, but they generally move on quickly if they are not punters.

Prostitution is not on the Force control strategy. It is not one of the Chief Constable's objectives, and it is not a Government priority. It is not a priority for the police district either, but it is a problem for the areas concerned. The police often feel that they just end up moving the women around, but they do play a wider role and they participate in the multi-agency forum and action groups. Kelham Action Group is an association of local residents and businesses, and agency representatives and through those meetings local people now understand it is not just a police issue. At another level senior people from the Crown Prosecution Service, magistrate's courts, education, the local MP and district Superintendent meet. Action against the problem needs to be holistic and sustainable. The police feel that there is insufficient level of service provision to be able to cope with the numbers of women who need drug treatment and other social care provision to enable them to exit their lives of prostitution. They feel that without a significant increase in multi-agency resources, little will change.

In Sheffield there is a significant problem regarding a number of young women being sexually exploited by drug dealers, and being involved in other associated crimes. Sexual exploitation has been recognised for a number of years, and in 1998 procedures were agreed between South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield Social Services to try to address some of the issues. In 2000 Operation Insight was launched to gather information to ascertain the scale of the problem. They highlighted 80 young women who were deemed to be at risk. Sheffield Social Services received funding for The Sexual Exploitation Project, which co-ordinates the multi-agency work of those involved with the young people. The other main agencies are the police, SHED young people's drug project, and Taking Stock youth service project. DC Ann Roberts of South Yorkshire Police carried out an assessment of 'The Young Women Involved in Commercial Exploitation Project' in 2002. Reference to her report will be made here. As far as specialist police officers are concerned, the numbers of young people that they see are few and far between, in terms of being able to interview and obtain evidence. Young people are, for a number of reasons already outlined, very unwilling to give evidential statements. Therefore a lot of their work is investigating the links between contacts and associates of young people. It is evident that there are a lot of links between dealers across the city. Young girls are being used as drug runners for the men, and are given jewellery, clothes, mobiles etc. They may also be paid in alcohol or drugs as well. The numbers of young people

who are known to be involved in sexual exploitation are rising, but some of this may be due to an increased awareness and subsequent reporting.

The period studied for the purposes of Roberts' report was over a twelve-month period from February 2001. There were 65 young women and 1 young man during this time. The youngest referral was 9, with the age limit of the project being 17. The majority were aged 13-15. The older age group of 16 years and over were more likely to be working the streets to fund drug dependency. Whether the habitual use of drugs preceded the involvement in prostitution is an issue. There are usually difficulties in the lives of the young people that lead to substance misuse, for example previous abuse or involvement with older men. Thirteen young people admitted to taking Class A drugs, 8 had used both Class A and Class B drugs, 6 had taken Class Bs. In 11 cases drug use was suspected but not confirmed and it was not known with another 28 young people.

Twenty-two of the 66 referred were reported to be involved in prostitution, and it was not confirmed for another 15 young people. Nineteen were known to be working on the streets, 3 in saunas, 2 in private premises, and 1 as an escort/in saunas. Only 3 of those young people had been picked up by the police for prostitution or loitering. In each case they were taken in under Police Protection Orders. Twenty-seven young women were known to have an older boyfriend, it was unconfirmed in 7 cases, and not known in 12. Six young women were known to have a pimp, and it was suspected with another 6 cases. Nine men were charged with offences as a result of involvement with a young woman. One received a six-month sentence, 1 received a six month suspended sentence, and 4 men received no further action or case discontinued. In 3 cases the result was unknown. Some offenders may not be known by their real names. Sometimes they have a number of different street names, which makes gathering intelligence and their identification much more difficult. More detailed intelligence to the extent of the exploitation often comes from young people when they are in out of city placements. Once they have been removed from the situation and from the city, they may feel more secure and inclined to talk to a project worker. Sixty-two referrals were white, 2 were white/Afro-Caribbean, one was white/Asian and one was Afro-Caribbean. The project has received 26 new referrals from April 2003 to date.

Approximately ten young women out of the 65 referred reported some or all of the following:

- being kidnapped
- being driven round the city for sex with different men
- being in situations, which involved drugs, money and firearms.

They were taken to properties in Park Hill, Pitsmoor, Uppertorpe and Walkley.

Under the Child Abduction Act 1984, it is an offence to take or detain a child under the age of 16, without lawful or reasonable excuse where the offender is not connected with the child. Under this act a number of Child Abduction Act letters have been sent to some men, and also some women, who were encouraging young people to stay away from home. With some women who have been sent letters, they have been reported to giving young girls drugs in their home and they are at risk from male friends or partners. In one case a male friend offered to pimp a young girl and told her she could earn £350 a week. In another case a dealer/husband was reported to swap sexual favours with girls for drugs. At least 20 abduction letters have been served on men and older boyfriends. Four have been to court and in the other 16 cases the men have disappeared from the young women's lives, as they do not want police involvement. In the cases of young adult boyfriends (pre-twenties, for example) they may not commit such offences again. But in other men who are very attracted to younger girls, they may have disassociated themselves with that young person but then moved on to another young person. Some men such as entrenched pimp/dealer/criminals will not be at all concerned at receiving abduction letters, and not alter their behaviour at all. But they may verbally and physically abusive to the girl concerned, blaming her or her family on the police and statutory agency involvement. Other areas, such as Barnsley, have also had some success with child abduction letters.

The primary care clinic in Sheffield offers a prescribing service to women involved in prostitution who want to exit such a lifestyle. As part of a package of care arranged by Sheffield Working Women's Opportunities Project (SWWOP) fast track referrals, of those aged 18 and over, can be made to the clinic and women can be seen within 7-10 days. Approximately 50% of women patients attending the clinic are selling sex in one way or another. Although a majority of those are working the street, some are also working in saunas or as escorts. One woman who is now drug free works as an escort, earning between £3,000-4,000 per week, through private advertisements in the newspapers. Although she has worked as an escort for a number of years, she had to work on the streets when she was heavily into drug use, as she could not

sustain the business approach that her escort work required. At that point she was taking 100ml methadone, plus £60-70 of intravenous heroin and spending hundreds of pounds on crack each day. She said that when she first started working on the street, another woman working there took her 'under her wing' and took her home, as she was homeless. The 'good Samaritan' then proceeded to pimp her and was injecting her with drugs. She described being chained to the bed during the day and worked in the house at night. She managed to escape after a number of weeks.

There are approximately 40 saunas in Sheffield. At one sauna, women were said to be working 12-hour shifts, 7 days per week. Taxis would pick them up and drop them home. CCTV cameras exist in most of the rooms to give an air of security, although apparently they did not cover the whole room. Some of the bed was out of sight. All the girls employed at that sauna were heroin users, which is contrary to previous intelligence that saunas do not like to employ heroin users. At this sauna they were given heroin all day to smoke, although it is not clear if they were supplied by a dealer or by the owner. At another city sauna all the girls were amphetamine users.

Two women who attend the treatment clinic have told staff that they have been kidnapped recently. If they attempt to exit prostitution, some women are apparently vulnerable to kidnap. Some dealers have said they owe them money, and they need to go back to work to pay them. Whether or not they do owe money is probably not the issue. The men can see their income being dramatically reduced by their customers suddenly stopping heavy crack and heroin use. One woman reported being held for 5 days. The idea is for the men to hold them hostage until they start withdrawing, in the hope they will give in and go back to work. She did not give in and they eventually let her go. Women attending the clinic do not often appear to have pimps, but a significant number do have boyfriends whose drug habits they also have to fund through prostitution. Some women have to work all night, but cannot go home until they have bought drugs for him. They score on the way back home. The main concern for a number of women is the robbery, rape, violence and intimidation that they are receiving from a small number of men who are earning a living by 'taxing' women as soon as they have earned money from a punter. These men are terrorising women on the beat. Although they give the police intelligence on what is happening, understandably they are too frightened to give statements. There are also some women involved in taxing women and girls on the streets. As they often hide their earnings in intimate places, the attacks are of a particularly unpleasant nature in an effort to rob them of their money.

Sugar daddies, or in some cases, granddaddies (50-70 years old) are regularly seen in the clinic with girls who are usually aged between 19 to their mid 30s. Approximately 50% of women patients have sugar daddies. One man has been seen with two different women. But in some cases it is not always a clear-cut case of men simply exploiting the women. In some circumstances it is a very complex issue, and may not always be one-sided. Some of the men may also be vulnerable, with mental health problems for example, and some girls fleece them for hundreds of pounds. Vulnerable ill people may be in receipt of considerable financial benefits, which may leave them open to being exploited. Whether or not the men are benefiting sexually in any way, may vary considerably. They may have sex with the women, or they may just appreciate some company and like to help them out. But as well as those vulnerable men, there are those much older men who target vulnerable young women providing them with food, shelter, and occasional gifts in return for sex.

5.5 Parents of children involved in sexual exploitation

CROP (Coalition for the Removal of Pimping) is a Leeds based nationwide organisation, founded by Irene Iveson following the death of her daughter Fiona in Doncaster in 1993. Last year CROP received Home Office funding in order to be able to supporting families whose children are being sexually exploited. They give emotional and practical support and advice to parents and also put them in touch with other parents in similar situations.

Across the country there are numerous families with children aged 12 upwards who are involved. A common pattern is that once the girls have met a man who they consider to be their boyfriend, they regularly pick them up in their cars. They give them mobile phones so they can contact them, and can arrange to meet them. The men do not need girls to work the street at that age, it can all be arranged over the phone. They may give them GHB, (Gammahydroxybutyrate) commonly known as a date rape drug, or other drugs. Usually the 'boyfriend' is nice for a while until the young girl has taken drugs and/or had sex with them and then they can blackmail her against her parents. There are a number of parents, and other family members, who are under threat of violence from these men. Some have had threats of arson made against their family homes. All parents have attempted to keep their children at home in the evenings or at night, but most have failed. Even parents on guard have to go to sleep at some time. Some parents are being threatened with legal action due to their children truanting, but parents are giving statements to the police about their child

being exploited and nothing can be done because the child will not complain. The Children's Act of 1989 removed the rights of parents in such circumstances, if the Gillick competency ruling is applied. Where children have gained rights, parents have lost their right to protect their child in such circumstances. However, under current Criminal Justice Bill proposals, there may be some alterations to the current situation:

"Rules on evidence will be changed... to allow the use of reported (hearsay) evidence where there is good reason why the original source cannot be present, or where the judge otherwise considers it would be appropriate."

(Criminal Justice Bill Summary Notes)

Most teenagers experience some difficulties in their relationship with their parents. Therefore it can be difficult to work out what is normal teenage behaviour and a passing phase, and what is not. Usually by the time the parents realise their child is involved in prostitution, it is too late. Parents describe them as having split personalities. They are nice one minute and then a complete vixen the next. The parents usually feel they cannot trust them anymore. They often steal or take excessive liberties. Some underage girls have bought older men back to the house and had sex with them when their parents are out at work.

There appears to be a typical style or look that has reportedly emerged in girls who are at risk, or are being sexually exploited. They are often blonde, slim, and very attractive. They have their hair tied back in a ponytail, wear big earrings, and tracksuit bottoms. If they do not naturally have blonde hair, they may dye it so. In one area in South Yorkshire, boys at school are targeting certain girls in the playground or classroom, chatting them up and then introducing them to their older brothers. Younger boys are being deliberately used or involved at the very start of the grooming process by their older brothers.

When the young women turn 18, any statutory agency involvement responsibility may end or change. Parents are most concerned when their daughters go missing from home for weeks. Most parents are waiting for a call to say they are dead due to drugs or murder. They have street names rather than use their real ones so to avoid recognition and their appearance may change. This makes identification of missing women quite difficult. Such a lifestyle may have become 'normal' for the child but it will never become normal to the parent. They are forced to become aware and

understand a life of drugs and prostitution that they never knew about and did not ever want to be involved in. Parents often become parents again, rather than the grandparents that they should be. They often end up looking after their child's children, but there is no additional financial support if it is a voluntary arrangement and social services are not involved. Worry is the norm for parents 24 hours a day and there is no respite from such concern and stress. They do not know when the next crisis phone call will come, following rape, assault, theft, arrest, overdose, homelessness, pregnancy, or ill health. The potential list is endless. Parents feel that most statutory agencies see parents as part of the problem, not part of the solution. The issue of confidentiality, for example, can be taken too far. A lack of communication can cause extra stress and frustrations when agencies do not give basic information. Parents do not want every detail but whether they are living in a certain hostel or not, for example, would be a relief to know especially when they are listed as next of kin.

6.0 Issues Raised

6.1 Area Differences

It is obvious from the detail given above that there are significant differences in the levels of sexual exploitation and prostitution in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. Therefore there is no one solution that will fit all. Each area, within the multi-agency arena, has to discuss its own issues, and investigate the most appropriate methods of prevention of their problem, treatment of their victims, control of their sex markets, and punishment of their offenders. However, this does not have to be done in isolation, and cross county liaison is strongly recommended as is out of county networking. It must be remembered that a problem such as sexual exploitation and prostitution does not remain static. It is influenced by a number of different factors such as vibrant drug markets, active criminals, vulnerable girls, women and boys, and eager punters. All of these features are themselves subject to change. The above descriptions of the situation in South Yorkshire may be so now, but it may not all remain the same in a few months time. It remains to be seen, for example, whether or not there is a small street scene developing in Barnsley. Only time and investigation will tell. But if there is, there will be a number of very surprised people who thought that it would never happen. The fact that the possibility is even being discussed has raised some eyebrows. It is the responsibility of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) to ensure that they are aware of the problems in their area, remain vigilant to any change and react accordingly, adapting service provision if necessary. Increasing numbers of young women and girls are being referred for support and treatment. This may be due to an increasing awareness from professionals, or it may be that the numbers involved are increasing, or a matter of both. Whatever the reason, CDRPs need to ensure that services are adequately resourced both on a financial and staffing level.

6.2 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is becoming an increasing issue, which needs to be discussed in order to put it in perspective, especially with an increase in the numbers of asylum seekers who are now living in the county. Although 11 out of the 12 suspects charged with living off immoral earnings as detailed on page 7 were white, it does appear that some of the main perpetrators who are the current pimps/dealers in South Yorkshire are from Black and minority ethnic groups. In Rotherham, there has been concern about a number of brothers who are Asian, who are the main, but not sole, offenders. In Sheffield, the main perpetrators are from the Afro-Caribbean community. However, it must be emphasised that these are a handful of men, from sizeable communities of which the vast majority are law abiding citizens who wholeheartedly disapprove of

the actions of a few. Similarly, although they do not appear to be major pimps/dealers there are reports of a number of asylum seekers who are getting involved with indigenous white girls. Kosovans, and Iraqis appear to be the most common groups involved. There are reports of some Kosovans having sex with young girls at [REDACTED], sometimes in return for money or gifts. There are some older Iraqi Kurds who are involved with younger white women in Rotherham. In Barnsley some Kosovan men have also become involved with local women, which has sometimes caused some tension within communities with local white men. A majority of the boyfriends or partners who accompany women who are working on the streets for 'their safety' taking down car number-plates, are white. There are, undoubtedly, significant numbers of white men involved in sexual exploitation of one form or another and this has always been so. However, over the last few years there has been a rise in the influence of men from minority ethnic backgrounds.

But it cannot be stated strongly enough that for the vast majority of mixed relationships there is no ill intent, and that the actions of a few individuals should not be allowed to taint the reputation of entire communities. It must be recognised that the rest of the ethnic community that the men are from, may wholeheartedly disapprove of their actions. In Rotherham the local Asian community, from where the brothers come from, are reported to rarely speak about them. They are taboo and probably equally frightened of their violent tendencies as the young women they are involved with. These are the actions of a few unscrupulous career criminals, and whole communities should not be stereotyped on this basis.

In Keighley, West Yorkshire, it has become apparent that there has been an 18-month police and social services investigation into allegations that young Asian men are targeting under-age white girls for sex, drugs and prostitution (Channel 4 news, 22 August 2003). There are similar problems that exist in Keighley, as in South Yorkshire. The girls are often willing victims, or are frightened to complain, over the course of the 1½ year investigation there has only been one prosecution for a serious sexual offence of rape, and there have been reports from others of gang rapes of their daughters. Mothers have reported 57 Asian men to the police, who their daughters say are involved. The local MP, Anne Cryer, has said that it is the Asian culture of arranged marriages of young men marrying very young girls that is the key to understanding the problem. However, police social services, community leaders and mothers of girls who are being exploited say race is not the issue. They say it is not just problem of Asian men, other groups including whites, are involved.

Asian community leaders make the point that it may be a psychological issue for the men involved. Often they have few or no skills, and have dropped out of the system. As one black man involved in pimping and drug dealing said to a SYP officer:

"I am black and unemployed, with no qualifications. How else am I supposed to earn my money?"

Undoubtedly, there are girls and young women from Asian, Black and Eastern European communities that are being sexually exploited. But this appears to be much more hidden, within families or communities, and rarely gets spoken about. This is a very covert problem. Risky Business in Rotherham, for example, through their education packages to young girls they visit in schools, hope to educate young girls from all ethnic groups to be aware of the problems they may face. It is not difficult to appreciate how young white women are attracted to older men from different ethnic backgrounds. They may offer a more interesting and exciting lifestyle to an impressionable teenager, than the boy next door. The reputation abroad of western women being sexually active, will do nothing to curb a man's interest when he arrives in England. From an asylum seeker's viewpoint, to be the centre of attention of a young, attractive, impressionable, teenager will give him extra status with his peers. She will also be an indigenous link for him to his new home. Such company, with someone who is also willing to have sex with him, he is not likely to refuse.

6.3 Trafficking of Women and Young Girls

Sexual exploitation of women and girls who have been smuggled into Britain for the purposes of prostitution has been well documented. The recent UNICEF report highlighted this again this month. Women and girls from Eastern Europe, the Far East and West Africa are the most common ethnic groups to be trafficked into the country. However, there appears to be little evidence that it is much of a problem in South Yorkshire. There is no intelligence from women working the streets or from girls involved in sexual exploitation, that there are women involved in prostitution in the county from these particular areas of the world. However, there is now known to be a small number of saunas in South Yorkshire and further north in the country who are using Thai and Eastern European women, aged 18-25, who have been trafficked into the country for the purposes of prostitution. Some saunas charge the women £85 a day to use the facilities. They then are expected to perform any sexual service requested by the punters, with whom they negotiate a price. Often unprotected sex is

requested and provided. Since Heathrow and Gatwick airports got wise to children being trafficked via Northern Italy and are more able to intercept them more effectively, the trafficker's nearest route has altered. It is reported that one of the reasons that we do not appear to have much of a problem at present is that there is no international airport in South Yorkshire. Whether that will change when Finningley Airport at Doncaster opens in 2005 remains to be seen.

6.4 Safety of Victims and their Families

One of the major barriers to prosecution of men involved in sexual exploitation is the lack of sufficient evidence for the police, or CPS, to progress cases to court. Evidential statements from girls and women who are victims of violence, exploitation, abduction or rape are rare. This is for a couple of reasons. Firstly, they are often intimidated and threatened by the perpetrator. They may make threats against them, and against their families. It is much safer, in the short term, to back down and withdraw any official complaint. However, in the longer term that probably ensures their continued involvement in exploitation, as the perpetrator knows he is in total control. The second reason is far more complex and is due to the unwillingness of the girl to give a statement, as she has become a willing victim and will not prosecute the man she sees as her boyfriend. He may use a combination of threats, violence, affection and promises it will never happen again, to ensure she does not press charges. Although the law regarding sexual offences is set to change later this year, (see Appendix D) as Barnado's states the current situation is:

"The maximum sentence under the Sexual Offences Act 1956 for causing or encouraging prostitution of girls under 16 is two years imprisonment, and is not an offence for a remand in custody. The girl's evidence alone is not enough to bring a charge, let alone a conviction, as the police require collaborating witness statements."

The fact that it is not an offence for which a court can remand a suspect, and also that other witness statements are required leaves women and girls open to threats and intimidation, if not directly by the perpetrator then by their associates. Obviously for the legal system to be rigorous in its application of the law, there needs to be a certain level and standard of evidence to secure a conviction. But this is one of the severely frustrating problems for the other agencies involved. They are often briefed by the young women about the levels of criminality they are subjected and witnesses to, and that information is passed to the police. But the police are not able to act

when they have insufficient evidence, and even if it does get passed to CPS they too may not proceed with it to court. In other cases there is an ongoing investigation but the partner agencies receive no information at all, so presume that nothing is happening. Although police confidentiality is obviously essential, informing the agency that there is an investigation, progress is being made etc, is all that may be required for better partnership working. Although partner agencies rationally understand why the system needs to work as it does, sometimes all they can see, is male perpetrators continuing to sexually exploit women and girls, commit serious crimes such as pimping, supplying drugs, gun crime, rape and other violent acts and continue to get away with it. In some circumstances it may be viewed that police do not investigate some complaints they do receive, as they are very complex, time consuming, relying on witnesses that may be deemed unreliable and unlikely to result in a conviction. It is a catch twenty-two situation. That is why it is vital that the existing systems and agencies work together as well as is possible, in order to secure as many convictions as possible with sentences that reflect the seriousness of their crimes, without jeopardising the safety of the victims. Thus allowing the women, girls and boys to recover and rehabilitate their lives as soon as they are able. It is not just the direct victims who suffer from intimidation and violence. Local people may also be too frightened to speak out or do not wish to acknowledge what is happening, as has been highlighted earlier. However, other literature has been produced on witness intimidation, support and protection schemes and this issue is not addressed within the remit of this study.

1.5. Issues for South Yorkshire Police

“Chief Constables must ensure that the investigations of crimes against children is as important as investigations of any other form of serious crime. Any suggestion that child protection policing is of a lower status than other forms of policing must be eradicated.” (Laming Report, 2003)

There appears to be some variation between districts within the Force as to how the issue of sexual exploitation and its associated problems are dealt with. This can lead to differing standards of practice and service delivery between districts within same Force. The level of service that a victim of sexual exploitation, and their family, may receive should not be dependent on the area in which they live. Districts have usually responded to the level of need in their own area, which is obviously right. But there

may be problems inherent in the systems that result in vital information not always being available to those who need it.

A number of officers interviewed for this report recognised that those under 18 who go missing from home are not always treated with the seriousness that they may require. As was noted on page 16, officers are most concerned when people go missing for the first time. Young boys who go missing may cause even less concern than girls, but may be equally vulnerable. Officers may not understand the significance for those who go missing regularly. This may also be the situation for district intelligence officers. It, understandably, may not necessarily be a policing priority, but the Force is in possession of vital information that can give some support to the notion that certain young people are becoming increasingly vulnerable due to their regular absences from home. Currently work is being undertaken to identify a suitable database for South Yorkshire Police that will capture information that is currently held on cumbersome paper records. The database will allow for a grading system as to the person's vulnerability and can identify those who are known to be involved or at risk of sexual exploitation. It will also ensure that case reviews of those who are still missing are held and officers cannot bypass such reminders. There are 3,500 cases of people of all ages that are reported missing from home in South Yorkshire each year. Therefore the new database will be very useful, if used to its full capability. It will improve officers' access to information about those they are concerned about, and it will provide more accurate intelligence about the circumstances of their disappearance. However, it is vital that intelligence is shared systematically in order to maximise its potential. The cases of young people who go missing from home cases generally stay within the district in which they occurred. They are not regularly notified to the specialist units at Sheffield or Doncaster. Police districts 'protection issues' include domestic violence, black and ethnic minorities, and child protection, but for most sexual exploitation is not a specialism in itself.

Another point that was raised during this research was the issue of trust. Traditional policing methods had always relied solely on the skills and experience of police officers to carry out investigations and achieve convictions. It has only been in the last ten years or so that partnership working has been promoted as the only way forward in order to have a long term impact on criminal activity, especially in relation to drugs. Over the years large numbers of officers have embraced the partnership ethos and appreciated the help and support that they are able to offer. However, there are still a number of officers, and support staff, that are not involved in front line

partnership working and therefore are not able to appreciate the benefits that it brings. Equally, there are some staff in partner agencies that are just as suspicious of working closely with the police and are reluctant to get involved.

Some districts have experienced problems with intelligence not getting onto the operational system, and therefore it cannot be acted upon. With all the intelligence that is received it is inevitable that intelligence officers will not be able to put it on the system as it arrives. Some districts have, at times, experienced significant delays in being able to input intelligence. They also make decisions about what is entered on the system and what is not, and therefore some information may be missed. Intelligence is often quite difficult to get from those who have gone missing from home. They often do not want to talk to police officers about where they have been, whom they have been with, and what they have been doing. Officers have often not got the time to try and get them to talk, and it is not necessarily their role. However, a lot of the girls and young women have a lot of valuable information that would be of great use to the police, if they were able to access it. Some girls will not approach the police to provide intelligence as they have warrants outstanding, for example. A man who was well-known heroin dealer in South Yorkshire had raped one 18-year-old young woman. She was willing to give information both about the rape and about his activities. She went to the police station to talk to an officer, but as soon as she gave her name and address she was arrested for theft [REDACTED]. She was kept in custody over the weekend and charged. She did not tell anybody about the rape, she was never asked why she had gone to the station. This was a tragic case of a breakdown in communication, where there has not been malpractice, but a vital opportunity was missed. That young woman is unlikely to go to the police again, and may also dissuade her friends from reporting such crimes too. In another situation, a man said he reported significant numbers of teenage girls attending the house of one of his neighbours. He said he even offered his accommodation to officers for observation purposes, if required. He reported these activities on a number of occasions, but said it was 7 months before the police responded to the complainant. By then the perpetrator had moved elsewhere.

Police at districts are often exceptionally busy and may experience difficulties in carrying out their duties to the best of their abilities. It is usual that they work within their own district and only liaise with others if there is a 'job' that requires it. It appeared that staff at ground level in the districts were working in isolation, and were not always aware of what was happening in other areas of their force. Occasional

meetings of specialist staff across the Force may be helpful in discussing problems and sharing of good practice.

6.6 Issues for Partnership Working

“Those who deliberately harm children have a tendency to cover their track. Poor record keeping, doubts about the exchange of information between services, and inadequate client information systems make that easy.”

(Laming Report, The Victoria Climbié Inquiry)

As previously stated, there are a number of good examples of partnership working, and some information shared is now useful for the purposes of tackling crime and disorder. However, it could be improved and this is a fundamental issue to tackling serious, entrenched and dangerous criminality. But, sharing information between agencies, especially with the police, remains a controversial and thorny issue. This could be improved if a number of relatively simple measures were taken. This includes a process of education for agencies as to how the police build up intelligence packages and transform them into actual operations. Agencies need to understand that information has to be very specific for the police to be able to do anything with it, and also needs corroborating from other sources. If an agency knew that there was a sudden increase in the amount of crack cocaine use and supply in the 10 storey flats at 'Peckham Moor' for example, they need to be reassured that the police could not carry out a raid based purely on such information. It would be too resource intensive, require too many officers, have a very adverse effect on community relations, and very unlikely to yield tangible results in terms of drugs seized and arrests made. This may be obvious to the police, but not so to other agencies. The process involved in obtaining warrants from magistrates to carry out such operations is also very stringent, and needs to be able to justify why such actions are needed. The National Intelligence Model is the theoretical process of receiving intelligence information, requirements necessary for informant handling, compilation of intelligence packages, obtaining warrants and executing operations. Informing partner agencies about this process will not yield any control of policing practices. To share that with local partner agencies may go a long way to dispelling some of the myths that abound, and help build mutual trust. The notion of 'intelligence' is in itself secretive and conjures up images of spies and secret service agents. It needs clarification for those unfamiliar with the terms. Pioneering

information sharing work has already proved to be successful with prolific offender projects and multi-agency public protection panels working with sex offenders for example. It is now time to open it out to the wider partnership arena and include more police staff in the process.

In terms of information sharing, there are two main types of information that partner agencies hold that would be of use to tackling serious drug and/or exploitation related crime. The first is anonymised, statistical information that states numbers, location, drug use etc that project managers have traditionally used for monitoring information. Sharing this level of information is not usually problematic and can be very useful to police in understanding the profile of their policing districts. The second type of useful information is anecdotal, that caseworkers receive often from clients, their families, other workers, or from their own observations during home visits for example. Such information often does not concern their own clients, but more so about the activities of others – drug dealing, robbery, rape, intimidation etc. If partner agencies understood the processes involved in receiving information, they may realise that information that they may be able to provide will not immediately result in police raids and will not jeopardise client safety. This is not about requesting personalised information about clients or patients and their treatment programmes. All workers tell clients that the personal information they share is confidential and will not be shared. However, one of the caveats to that is if they reveal that they, or someone else, are a danger to others. It is only this level of concern that is being discussed here. Agencies need to feel more able to share relevant information. Police, in return, need to inform them as to what has happened to that information. This does not require detail. It only has to be at the level of: "Yes that has been very useful...We are acting on it, with other information...No, unfortunately we were unable to use that as we had no other information, but please do let us know of anything else..." etc. Partner agencies are not asking for the level of information that would jeopardise the security of operations. If agencies do not know what has happened to their information they are unlikely to supply anything further. Also there needs to be recognised points of contact, so that agencies can build up trust with whom they are working with, who will also supply them with such updates. Protocols are already in place under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to facilitate these issues. Multi-agency work needs to progress them from the theory into daily practice on a wider scale than currently takes place.

With so many possibilities of information sources and recipients it is unsurprising that problems arise. These include partner agencies and projects, specialist police officers and units, CID units, intelligence units and uniform patrols. However, it must be acknowledged that there are some very good examples of partnership working within the county and some pioneering work that has been undertaken. The multi-agency meetings that have been established and both the formal and informal networking that take place, must be commended. This would not have been the case ten years ago. Sometimes it is relatively small and cheap interventions that can have some effect. For example, abduction letters can be very useful, especially with less entrenched criminals.

6.7 The Role of Local Residents, Businesses and Other Agencies

The distress suffered by local residents and business people as a result of being located within a red light area, may be considerable. When people leave their place of work or their homes, they have to encounter women soliciting on the street and men kerb crawling looking for women to proposition. For anyone who has travelled through such areas, it can be quite thought provoking to see the women standing on the streets in all types of weather, looking very thin, undernourished and exceptionally vulnerable. They also witness the men who are punters, boyfriends, dealers and/or pimps and may be forced to confront certain crimes. To live or work in the beat areas must be very difficult.

A number of residents and business people have joined local forums set up to address such problems. Through presentations and debate a lot of people now appreciate that the ability of the police to tackle the problems is limited by both the law and resources. They also realise that it is not solely the responsibility of the police to tackle prostitution, but other agencies and local people have a role to play too as well as local councillors and politicians. By being active within such forums, they can find out the best way to support the agencies and play their part in attempts to limit and control the problem.

6.8 Issues for Services for Young People

As has already been outlined, there are a number of different points at which different services for young people have a role to play. They have an educational role, in terms of preventative work and awareness raising regarding sexual exploitation and in particular the grooming process, with potential male and female victims. They have a similar role in identifying and educating potential perpetrators of

sexual exploitation and drug dealing. They also have a role in working with those who are, or have been, sexually exploited and abused. They can offer support to those who are still being exploited, are attempting to exit the exploitation, or are recovering from the traumas that they experienced. Last but not least, they have a role to play in rehabilitating offenders. They may rarely be convicted of such offences, but staff may be aware of their involvement in such situations and this must be addressed as part of their community or custodial sentence. Enforced sessions with Youth Offending Team or probation staff could be a golden opportunity to attempt to educate and rehabilitate the perpetrators of such crimes. All those involved in working with young people, whatever their perspective, can play their part in prevention or rehabilitation. It is not solely the role of the front line agencies to address this issue.

The role of social services has not been examined within this research paper. However, one interviewee felt that there was a problem with the categorisation of some referrals. They thought that a significant number of referrals who were at risk of sexual exploitation were being categorised as 'child out of control', which is of lesser concern than a 'child in need', and who do not automatically require a social worker to be allocated. Social services need to ensure that all referrals are being categorised properly, according to the Children's Act (1989) ('Working Together to Safeguard Children' DoH/DfEE 1999).

7. **Recommendations**

"I strongly believe that in future those who occupy senior positions in the public sector must be responsible to account for any failure to protect vulnerable children from deliberate harm or exploitation" (Laming: 1.27)

1. **Improving intelligence** - Specialist intelligence officers are required in relation to sexual exploitation. Roberts has already proposed such a post for Sheffield, but the recommendation from this report is that it needs to be a Force wide facility. Under the South Yorkshire Police Best Value review of Specialist Crime Services there was a recommendation for an intelligence liaison officer at both sites in Doncaster and Sheffield. The partner agencies could feed intelligence directly into the specialist intelligence officers/unit, rather than it goes to districts. The officer would be able to search the Operational Intelligence System daily for additional information and liaise with districts accordingly.
2. **Children and Young People who go Missing from Home** - There needs to be dedicated personnel to follow up those who go missing from home. Rotherham district has the only specialist police officer that carries out this role, which works well. However, other Forces use voluntary sector organisations to do a similar task. In Bradford the NSPCC are employed for this purpose. It needs to be discussed whether there is a necessity for a post to cover each district, or whether one based at Waveney and one at Escafeld would be sufficient.
3. **Regular Liaison between Specialist District Personnel** - Regular meetings should take place for specialist staff within the force to share problems and good practice. Districts are currently working in isolation, unless they have particular reason to liaise. There are regional meetings of agencies working in sexual exploitation and prostitution that meet regularly. Police units should do the same.
4. **Targeting of Suspects** - There are a number of individuals who are targeting vulnerable young people and women in particularly violent ways. The necessity to remove them from the community needs to be prioritised in a

much more formal way, and the use of intelligence maximised as far as possible. The specialist intelligence officers could prepare packages from information from all the sources, for the Tasking and Co-ordinating process using the National Intelligence Model as normal, in order to target the perpetrators for whatever offences possible. It is recognised that this is a difficult process, hampered by the lack of information and evidence. But some multi-agency forums are using creative methods to address these issues, and these should be developed further.

- 5. Safety and Respite for Young People and Women** - The number of out-of-area placements that are required varies in different areas of the county. But safe accommodation for young people and women involved in sexual exploitation is often very scarce, especially if they are currently using drugs. The viability and criteria of such a new unit in an unidentified location in South Yorkshire needs to be discussed, which can offer them a place of safety and respite, where they can recover their physical health and may feel able to start disclosing details of their experiences. This could be a countywide resource.
- 6. Witness Protection** - If girls or women agree to give evidential statements they, and any family involved, need to be properly supported by the appropriate agencies before, during and after any trial.
- 7. Service Provision Assessment** - A proper assessment of the service provision for women and girls involved in sexual exploitation and prostitution needs to be carried out, in order to ascertain as to whether there is an adequate range of services available. Those who are problematic drug users and have expressed a need to exit exploitation and prostitution can usually be fast tracked into community prescribing services and other interventions as part of a package of care. However, it may be that other drug services such as respite placements, residential rehabilitation, and in-patient detoxification beds are not so easily available, but vitally needed.
- 8. Project Funding** - The current funding of some of the projects that play a key role in supporting those who are being sexually exploited is often inadequate to say the least. Piecemeal funding is unacceptable and entirely inappropriate for staff involved in such difficult work. Not only does funding need to be on a

longer-term basis, but also in most cases it needs to be expanded in order to provide the level of support that is required.

9. Referral to Child Protection Units - Child protection units have a particular role to play in monitoring the numbers of those referred who are at risk, or who are being sexually exploited. An increase or decrease in referrals needs to be constantly examined, along with qualitative evidence from multi-agency staff, girls and women and their families. It should be ensured that national guidelines on the criteria for referral and categorising the nature of the risk are followed. The Laming Report makes specific reference to the eligibility criteria of referrals to social services (Laming: 1.14)

10. Education and Training for Staff - As previously stated education, youth services, social services, youth offending teams and probation have vital role to play in educating and treating young people. Staff should receive training on drugs and sexual exploitation in order to be aware of the issues involved. However, this should be made available to all those involved with service provision for young people, not just front line agencies. The Laming Report makes recommendations regarding training and supervision of staff (Laming: 1.58)

11. Improved Information Sharing - Those at all levels of partnership working should take more innovative and developmental approaches, in order to make better use of information that currently exists. There are examples of good practice within South Yorkshire, but also successful interventions used by agencies in other parts of the country should be researched and discussed as to their possible application here. This recommendation should be discussed by each CDRP/DAT and a lead person designated to progress this work. Discussion should take place within SYP and to decide whether a Force wide lead from the Force Intelligence Bureau is appropriate. This would provide a standard framework in educating partner agencies about the National Intelligence Model and how they could fit within that process. Although the lead could be with the Force Intelligence Bureau to advise on the process, it would be down to districts to facilitate and deliver such information sharing sessions with local partner agencies.

8.0 Conclusion

There is a lot that has not been covered within this report. It was not within the scope of this study to look at how other agencies contribute or could act to improve services for young people. The recommendations have been made particularly in relation to police and partnership working in general, but other agencies need to look at their own service provision and see how they can improve their processes. There is no room for complacency. No one has got it right.

If all this report achieves is to raise awareness of the situation that exists, then that is a start. But we owe more to our young people than that. Some are being horrendously abused, and think that it is normal behaviour. Others may think they are grown up and are seen as 'willingly' taking part, but they are children and young people and we have a duty to protect them. Often the only other influences are the criminals exploiting them, telling them it is OK. They need to know it is not.

There is no room for complacency. J's story states that very clearly. She was a child who, along with her brother and sister, slipped through the system in a way that few would have thought possible in late twentieth/early twenty-first century Britain. The Laming Report considered whether Victoria Climbié received such a poor service from statutory agencies because she was black and from Africa. Although that may well have compounded the situation, J's story proves that it can happen to any child no matter what their race, and can happen within South Yorkshire. Although most of J's exploitation by pimps took place outside of the county, following abuse and neglect from their parents three young children disappeared out of the county with apparently no one following it up.

As J's story demonstrates, without our interventions such children are destined for years of sexual abuse, violence and entrenched drug dependency. Even with our support it will not be easy. But their lives need not be wasted. They all deserve a chance. They are all someone's children.

Appendix C

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Appendix D

Current Legislation

- Sexual Offences Act 1956 (offences concerned with the control and coercion of prostitution - women)
- Street Offences Act 1959 (soliciting for prostitution in the street or public place)
- Sexual Offences Act 1967 which deals with male prostitution
- Sexual Offences Act 1985 (kerb crawling – male customers of female prostitutes).
- Living off the Earnings of a Sex Worker Section 30 Sexual Offences Act 1956
- Directing and Exercising Control over a Section 31 Sexual Offences Act Sex Worker 1956
- Keeping a Disorderly House Section 33 Sexual Offences Act 1956
- Kerb Crawling Section 1 Sexual Offences Act 1956
- Soliciting Section 1 Street Offences Act 1959

Proposed New Legislation:

Strengthened protection for children:

- Under 13 cannot give consent. Sex with child under 13 is rape.
- Range of offences concerning inappropriate behaviour with children, including a new offence of causing a child to engage in sexual activity
- A new 'grooming' offence based on meeting a child with the intention of committing a sex act, both on and off line. Enables restrictions to be placed on people displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour before an offence is committed.
- New offences with severe penalties against those who sexually exploit children (up to age 18) for their own gain. It will cover – buying services of a child, causing or encouraging children into sexual exploitation, facilitating the exploitation of a child and controlling activities of a child involved in prostitution or pornography
- Maximum penalties for sexual offences against children and vulnerable people have been raised to reflect the severity of these crimes. Any offence involving penetration against a child under 13 or person who lacks ability to consent will attract a life sentence.

- Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) – made available for anyone convicted of violent offences where there is evidence they present a risk of causing serious sexual harm.
- New category for vulnerable people added – includes breach of a relationship of care.
- Strengthen offences for sexual violence:
- Clarifying law on consent in regard to rape
- New offence of sexual assault by penetration
- New offence of causing sexual acts without consent
- Strengthening drug rape offences
- Rape extended to include oral penetration.