

# Why the rising price of drugs feeds sad cycle of prostitution

Police have been cracking down after a big increase in the amount of prostitution in Derby. **Claire Duffin** joined officers on patrol.

WEIGHING just five-and-a-half stone, Nikki cuts a sorry figure as she stands on the corner of Normanton Road with two other women. Every night, she leaves the flat she shares with her boyfriend to go out and earn money towards the £1,000 a week they need to feed their drug addictions.

Nikki's drug problem has led to her baby girl being taken into care. Yet two years ago, she had a normal life, working as a hairdresser. "I used to be a size 12 but now I don't really eat," she said. "I just want to stop all of this but I can't. I feel depressed, very down all the time but I would rather do this than go out shoplifting."

Life went downhill two years ago after Nikki (not her real name) met her boyfriend. He started taking drugs and then she started taking them too and became addicted. "I can't say he made me. I am my own person," she said. "But I wish I'd never done it."

"I see my little girl every six weeks. It makes me want to change my life and move away from here."

"I need to get off the drugs or I am going to end up killing myself. I go out at 8.30pm every night and don't get home until 8am and then I just sleep all day long."

Nikki is one of 44 street workers, most of whom are addicted to drugs, known to police in Normanton.

She spoke to the Derby Telegraph, as we went on patrol with PC Carl Anderson and Sergeant Simon Adams, of the Normanton Safer Neighbourhood Team.

## CHARITY HELPS STREET WORKERS

WOMEN'S Work, based in Charnwood Street, is an independent charity set up to help street workers.

It helps the women by offering them shower and laundry facilities, pregnancy testing, counselling, leisure activities, outings, emergency food parcels, contraception and support.

The charity now also supports drug users, women in prison and

the inner city Derby suburb after a rise in complaints – 177 since January, with 44 in the past two weeks alone.

They put the rise down to a successful operation to tackle the sale of drugs, which has seen the price increase, meaning that the women are having to work more often.

PC Anderson said: "Now the dealers are off the street the price of drugs has gone through the roof."

"It has completely destroyed the drug supply in the area, which means that the women need more money to fund their habit."

Officers say that there has also been a "huge influx" of Eastern European street workers, who are competition for the English prostitutes.

Police say they fear the women are being "trafficked" into the county.

"They are not hooked on drugs," said PC Anderson. "They are doing it for the money which they send home. They often stay for just a few months."

To combat the rise, the Pear

"I feel very down all the time but I would rather do this than go out shoplifting."

**NIKKI, A PROSTITUTE**

Tree Safer Neighbourhood Team applied for £800 to pay for 24 signs on lamp posts in Portland Street and Normanton Road, warning kerb crawlers that their number plates would be taken.

The cash has also been used to pay for 100 rape alarms for street workers after figures showed that 90 per cent of them had been assaulted, robbed or raped.

Derbyshire police have been working with Women's Work, a charity which helps prostitutes by providing showers, food and counselling, and Derby Community Safety Partnership, to produce cards and leaflets

vulnerable families through workshops and counselling.

On Thursday, volunteers from Women's Work will be raising cash so that the organisation can continue its work in the city.

It has teamed up with Alexandra Rose Charities, which helps other charities raise cash by selling roses.

The volunteers will be at Tesco in Mickleover.



The man on the left was seen letting a girl in and out of his car. He was followed by police and given a summons after admitting soliciting.

Picture: Laura Page LP3009102-12



Sergeant Simon Adams, left, and PC Carl Anderson on patrol in Normanton. They say a crackdown on drug dealing has seen the price of drugs rocket in the area and that has led to a rise in the number of women needing to work as prostitutes to feed their increasingly expensive drug habits.

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about how street workers can get help. The leaflets have also been translated into Slovakian and Romanian.

Sergeant Adams said most of the street workers were in their 20s and drug addicts.

"Only a very small minority actually do it out of choice; either they are being forced

by a pimp or partner or they have a dependency on drugs," he said.

While the Telegraph was on patrol in Normanton, the officers spotted a young woman at the side of the road getting into a green car which pulled up alongside her.

The car drove off but PC Anderson and Sergeant Adams followed. After a short drive, the car stopped abruptly, the woman jumped out and the car sped off.

PC Anderson and Sergeant Adams spoke to the woman. She was 18 and denied being a prostitute but the officers found she had seven condoms and £70 in cash in her bag.

The officers told her it was not safe for her to be alone at night. PC Anderson warned her: "I have seen it all too often, girls are raped, assaulted and robbed. I don't want that to happen to you."

After the warning, the teenager was allowed to go as the officers heard on their radio that the green car had been stopped by a marked police car nearby.

The driver, a man in his 50s, said he dropped the girl off after they could not agree a price; he wanted to pay £20, she wanted £30.

The officers discovered the man had a wife and children and was on his way to deliver pizzas when he picked up the teenager.

After admitting soliciting, the man was given a summons to court where it is likely he will be fined. He could also get points on his licence.

Later, a suspected kerb crawler in a silver Mercedes was observed and eventually stopped by officers in Portland Street.

The driver, a man in his 60s,

broke down in tears as he admitted he was looking for a prostitute and had a wife and children at home.

Sergeant Adams said: "A lot of people are businessmen, and usually always have wives at home."

Men caught soliciting usually face a fine.

If street workers get two cautions in three months, they can be charged. They then usually receive an £80 fine – but often the only way they can pay it is to go back out to the streets.

"We have had girls who are back out on the street within an hour of being arrested," said Sergeant Adams.

The police hope a change in legislation will see convicted prostitutes given drug treatment orders rather than a fine, to help them kick their habits and get off the streets.

They say they want to help the woman, but also have to think about the residents whose lives they effect.

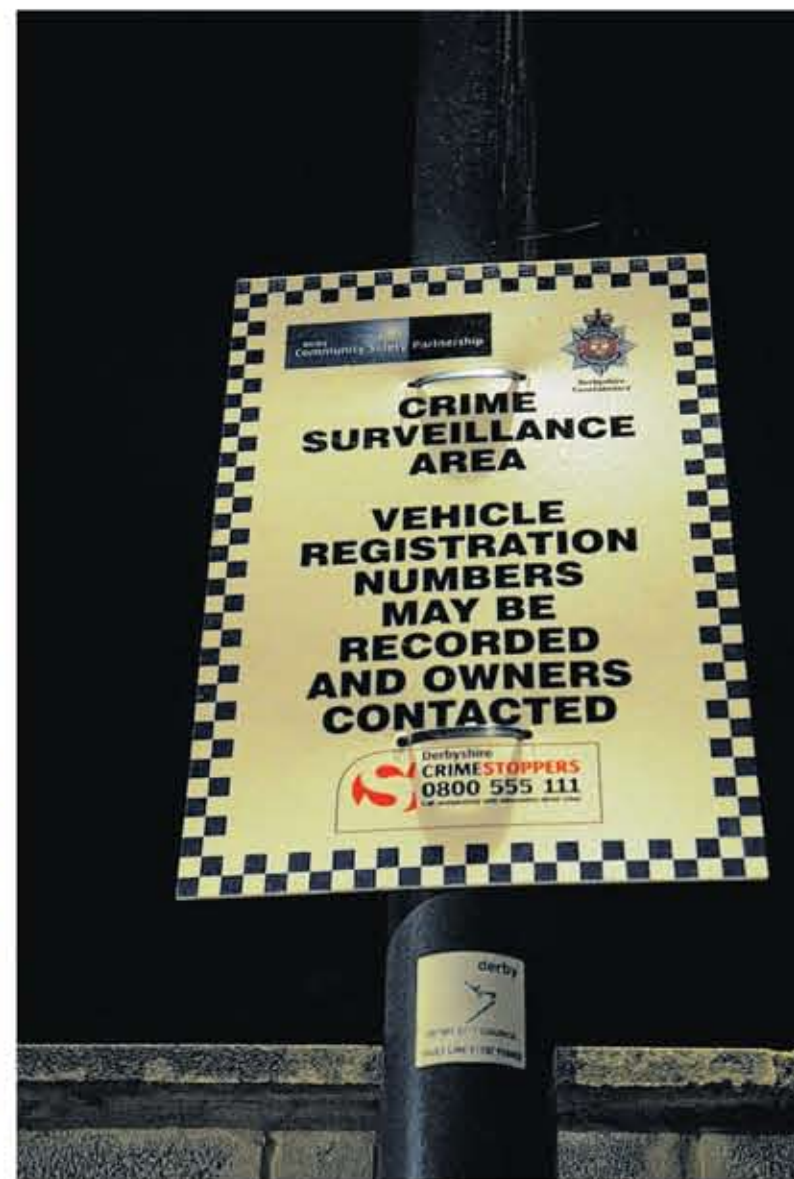
Recruitment consultant Hannah Roberts, 24, of Harrington Street, near Portland Street, says she has been plagued by prostitutes and pimps who congregate in an alleyway beside her house.

"The police are trying their best to do something about it but they don't have the resources," she said.

"I have considered moving, when it got really bad."

"Being a young single female, living on my own, it does make me scared when there are men hanging around outside my house and prostitutes shouting abuse."

Police say they are looking to take anti-social behaviour orders out against two women.



# Mother welcomes latest ADHD research findings

THE mother of a boy who has a behaviour disorder has welcomed the findings of research into the condition.

Anne Hughes's 16-year-old son David has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which causes a short attention span, impulsiveness and restlessness.

Researchers at the University of Cardiff last week revealed the condition may be genetic rather than lifestyle-related, as had previously been widely thought.

Anne, a founder member of local ADHD support group Butterflies, said she hoped the findings would get rid of stigma about the condition.

Anne, of Coleman Street, Alvaston, said: "For years I had to put up with people, including family members, making remarks about my parenting skills, and that if I didn't give my son sweets etc then he wouldn't behave in the way he did."



Anne Hughes has had to put up with critical comments about her parenting skills.

"We have tried behaviour charts, rules, removing food colourings, e-numbers, additives, sugar from his diet, supplements, alternative therapies, strict routines and various parenting classes."

"Like many other conditions, ADHD isn't a one-size-fits-all condition and a combination of things help manage the symptoms."

"These findings only mark the beginning of this research but it is a very positive beginning."

For more on ADHD, visit [www.butterflies-adhd.com](http://www.butterflies-adhd.com) or e-mail [communications@butterflies-adhd.com](mailto:communications@butterflies-adhd.com).

# £10k to help staff communicate with victims of abuse

TALKING about domestic abuse and self-harm will be the focus of extra training for hospital staff in Derby.

The city's two hospitals have been given £10,000 for their Talking About the Hard Stuff project.

The aim is to improve communication between NHS staff and children and adults who self-harm or are victims of domestic violence.

The project will be developed by a team of people from Derby's hospitals, the county's mental health trust, the Derby Safeguarding Children Board and health authority NHS Derby City.

Then training for hospital staff will begin late this month and run for eight months.

Lucy May Cooper, ward sister, said: "Staff can find it difficult to talk about these issues with patients. We've heard this anecdotally and through research."

"Although clinical staff do receive communication training, some conversations can be particularly tricky."

"It's all about knowing the sorts of questions to ask and being prepared to hear and able to respond to the sometimes very difficult stories of trauma and abuse."

The cash is from the National Leadership Council.

# Pub flattened next week

A DERELICT Derby pub, badly damaged in an arson attack, will be demolished by the end of next week.

The Derby Telegraph had previously reported work to

knock down the Rhino Inn, Max Road, had begun.

Riverside Group has applied to Derby City Council for permission to build 11 family homes on the site.

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<p><b>NELSONS SOLICITORS</b> Tim Dysterre-Clark – 01332 372372 Sterne House, Lodge Lane, Derby DE1 3WD</p>	<p><b>ageUK</b> The new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged</p>	<p><b>BREASTCANCER</b></p>
<p><b>PINDERS SOLICITORS</b> Ian Robertson – 01332 364751 10 St Mary's Gate, Derby DE1 3JJ</p>	<p><b>action for children</b></p>	<p><b>THE BLUE CROSS</b> Britain's pet charity</p>
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<p>The scheme pays for simple Wills. If your Will is more complex, you may pay the solicitor direct for extra advice. There is no obligation to leave a gift to any of the charities.</p>		

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